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**The depiction of social space in "Childish Thoughts": A
material cultural analysis of a painting**

McQuade, Caitlin, M.A.

University of Delaware, 1991

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**THE DEPICTION OF SOCIAL SPACE IN CHILDISH THOUGHTS:
A MATERIAL CULTURAL ANALYSIS OF A PAINTING**

by

Caitlin McQuade

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the
University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Early
American Culture

June 1991

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A MATERIAL CULTURAL ANALYSIS OF A PAINTING

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Figure 1
William Henry Lippincott, Childish Thoughts, 1895.
Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts
(Source: Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.)



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cademy of the Fine Arts.)

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ABSTRACT

In Childish Thoughts, painted by William Henry Lippincott (1849-1920) in 1895, two women and a child occupy a domestic interior. Nearly all the material culture portrayed--architecture, decorative arts and costume--derives from the late nineteenth-century colonial revival movement and it invests the painting with the values attributed to "colonial" society by people in the late nineteenth century. However, the depicted space does not resemble a typical 1890s interior, even one influenced by the colonial revival.

The combination of the material culture, with its historical and moral associations, and the three female figures of different generations suggests a model for socialization that corresponds with the nineteenth-century "separate spheres" ideal: women preserve moral values and acculturate successive generations within domestic space. Social historians have demonstrated how this ideal departed from reality, and Childish Thoughts acknowledges the departure both in its compositional structure and in its fanciful depiction of a domestic interior.

INTRODUCTION

My interest in the painting called Childish Thoughts (1895) by William Henry Lippincott (1849-1920) began as an interest generally in paintings of domestic interior scenes. Searching for such images, I perused catalogues of American genre painting, and naturally discovered many interiors. However, I gradually realized that not all interior scenes qualify as genre painting, nor does "domestic interior" constitute an undifferentiated type, even within the category of genre painting. I would like briefly to explore some of the variations in domestic interior scenes that I encountered, and to discuss the ways that images of people and of material culture function within these scenes. This partly mirrors the process of selection that I followed in narrowing my paper topic, and also demonstrates the kinds of questions with which I approached paintings for this project.

In her catalogue The Painter's America, Patricia Hills describes the characteristics of the earliest American genre paintings, such as John Lewis Krimmel's of the 1810s and '20s (figure 2).¹ These paintings convey "moralizing or

humorous stories," and usually depict many figures whose gestures, rather than individual facial expressions, communicate their roles and tell the story. The interior scenes are set in shallow spaces, and the objects depicted around them often contribute to the anecdote. In Krimmel's Country Wedding Hills points out the print labeled "Mariage" [sic] over the mantel, and the paired doves over the couple.² In this painting the space and objects function not just to create an appropriate background; by their appearance and position they actively participate in the story-telling, furthering the narrative iconographically. In fact, the images of objects and the images of people communicate with the viewer in similar ways.

A distinction can be made between this narrative painting and a later one, by Lippincott, called Infantry in Arms (1887) (figure 3). There is something of a story in this image, but not as fully formed as the anecdotal event in Country Wedding. In Infantry in Arms the space also has a shallow, theatrical quality to it, especially in the strip of floor that separates the foreground from the action in the middle ground. Yet the figures are much more differentiated and individualized than in the earlier painting. The room and its furnishings provide a most convincing background and offer some information about the

scene, but do not function iconographically. For instance, by the type and placement of dishes on the table we can identify the meal as breakfast and ascertain that one place at the table has already been occupied and vacated.³ The material culture helps to establish where the figures are and what they are doing, but does not actively participate in the narrative. Between the scenes in the Lippincott and the Krimmel paintings there is also a class difference, which we can discern from the material culture in each image. Hills points out the shift in American genre painting after the Civil War from images of lower class scenes to those of the middle or upper class.⁴

Apart from genre scenes, another conventional category of paintings that often depict domestic interiors is portraiture. In general, the material culture in portraits can range from simply the sitter's clothes and a chair, to a full room, to a background view of a subject's house and land. Sometimes interior space and artifacts in portraits can function iconographically to communicate biographical information about the sitter, much as the material culture contributed to the narrative in Country Wedding. An example of this in portraiture is Thomas Eakins' Mrs. William D. Frishmuth (1900) (figure 4). An interior setting can also serve as an environment in which the psychological relationships between the people portrayed

are enacted. Edgar Degas' portrait The Bellelli Family (1858-1860) or Eastman Johnson's The Joseph Mabbett Warren Family, Troy, New York (1874) could be interpreted this way (figures 5 and 6). In any case, the depiction of domestic material culture can clearly furnish meaning to a person's portrayal.

This being the case, perhaps even paintings of uninhabited rooms in people's homes might be considered a type of portraiture. George Bacon Wood's painting Interior of the Library of Henry C. Carey (1879) recalls Renaissance images of kunstkammern, or curiosity cabinets: pictures of rooms filled with icons of nature and art (figure 7). Both the room and the room's image demonstrate their owner's mastery over his world. In William Launt Palmer's DeForest Interior (1878), even though the pictured room contains a woman, her figure is incidental to the image (figure 8). She and the depicted material culture do not interact, and neither informs the other--we know nothing more about her from her surroundings, nothing more about the room from her presence in it. In this case, if the image is a portrait, it represents someone other than the woman whose image we see in it.

Some of the types of interior images just described were ones I considered analyzing for this paper. I rejected them because they would yield little to questions about how

the interaction between people and domestic material culture in the artists' societies was conceived of in their paintings. For instance, because the material culture in Krimmel's paintings is so actively integrated in their narrative fictions, it seems more fruitful to analyze it within its fictive context than its social context. So, to study the paired doves in Country Wedding one would research the iconographic convention of using doves to represent lovers, rather than the history of birds as house pets.

A similar interdependent dynamic between the represented people and the represented material culture exists in portraiture; persons and objects define one another. Once a painting is identified as a portrait, everything within its frame--flesh, clothing, objects, space--bears on the subject's portrayal. Outside of this primary defining function, there is little other interaction between the image of Mrs. Frishmuth and the depicted objects around her. We cannot learn much about how she, the artist or their society regarded musical instruments or music. Wood's and Palmer's paintings presented the inverse of this difficulty: in these scenes there are no depicted people demonstrating a social interaction with the represented material culture. Of course, not all paintings fit neatly inside or outside the definition of "portrait," and it would be interesting to pursue how this definition is affected by

the relationship between the people and material culture depicted. Such a large (and perhaps irresolvable) question seemed outside the scope of this paper.

As for Lippincott's Infantry in Arms, there is much to discover in it about late nineteenth-century middle-class conceptions of family life. In the end, though, Childish Thoughts simply offered me the most intriguing problems.

I would like to describe one last type of interior scene that raises some interesting questions. Though I did not single one of these paintings out for this paper, the difficulties they present to a material culture analysis allow me to introduce what I feel is a central question in approaching paintings from this standpoint.

At the turn of the nineteenth-century, two overlapping groups of artists, the Ten and the Boston School, were particularly known for their images of women in interiors (figures 9 and 10). These female figures--some alone, some in small groups--are pictured idle or in quiet activities such as reading or taking tea. Often the material culture surrounding them is limited; that is, we see only a portion of a room, and the few, discrete objects provide barely enough furnishing to constitute a domestic space. In fact, the rooms which they painted are often not

domestic: they were the artists' studios, containing the necessary props and inhabited by professional models.

While the same is certainly true of other painters' work, in these images there is less effort than in those described above to create an illusion of domestic interiors and activity. The painting methods used by the Ten and the Boston School, informed by French Impressionism, involved the artist more in imitating or manipulating visual experience than in creating a coherent narrative, which preoccupied the more academically influenced painters. Impressionistic paintings reflect the primary concern of their creators with visual experience even when they also communicate, through their chosen subject matter, the artists' assumptions about the social world around them.

Some formalist analyses claim that impressionistic painters were wholly unconcerned with content and chose their subjects purely by aesthetic criteria. For instance, it is said that to William McGregor Paxton, of the Boston School, "the intrinsic nature of the objects he elected to paint meant comparatively little;" and that he chose things to paint for their color, selecting and arranging them according to their tones (figure 10).⁵ Yet such claims do not explain why the allegedly purely aesthetic choices made by impressionistic painters resulted so consistently in images of tranquil women indoors. In Paxton's case

specifically the above assertion does not account for his frequent decisions to portray his models as housemaids. Given that these painters' primary concerns might have been aesthetic, the issue remains: they found some subjects more appropriate or useful for their purposes than others. The question then is: why did "women quietly at home" qualify as appropriate subject matter for their projects? This question has been addressed by several cultural historians.⁶ The larger question that applies to my paper is: within the society that forms an image-maker and his audience, what causes the content of an image to seem acceptable or appropriate? This paper suggests an answer with regard to Childish Thoughts.

In pursuit of my argument, the path I take in analyzing the painting will not parallel the sequence in which most viewers experience the image. The first chapter attends to the material culture represented in Childish Thoughts, and the second chapter examines the cultural movement that engendered both the objects and Lippincott's image of them. Using the analysis in the first two sections, the next chapter discusses how the painting's conception of women, children and domestic life corresponds with conceptions current in Lippincott's society, and what relationship these notions had to contemporary reality.

Domestic interior space provides powerfully evocative images for artists with which to represent their world. Within the Western cultures that produced easel paintings, the social functions of protecting, inhabiting, owning, sequestering oneself and including or excluding others can all be represented by domestic space. In addition, being a container for humanity, domestic space easily operates as a metaphor for the human body, a container for consciousness.⁷ While not all of these meanings may apply to each evocation of a domestic interior, they nonetheless account for the image's resonance.



Figure 2

John Lewis Krimmel, The Country Wedding, 1820.

The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts

Source: Milo M. Naeve, John Lewis Krimmel: An Artist in Federal America, [Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1987], catalogue number 11, color plate.)

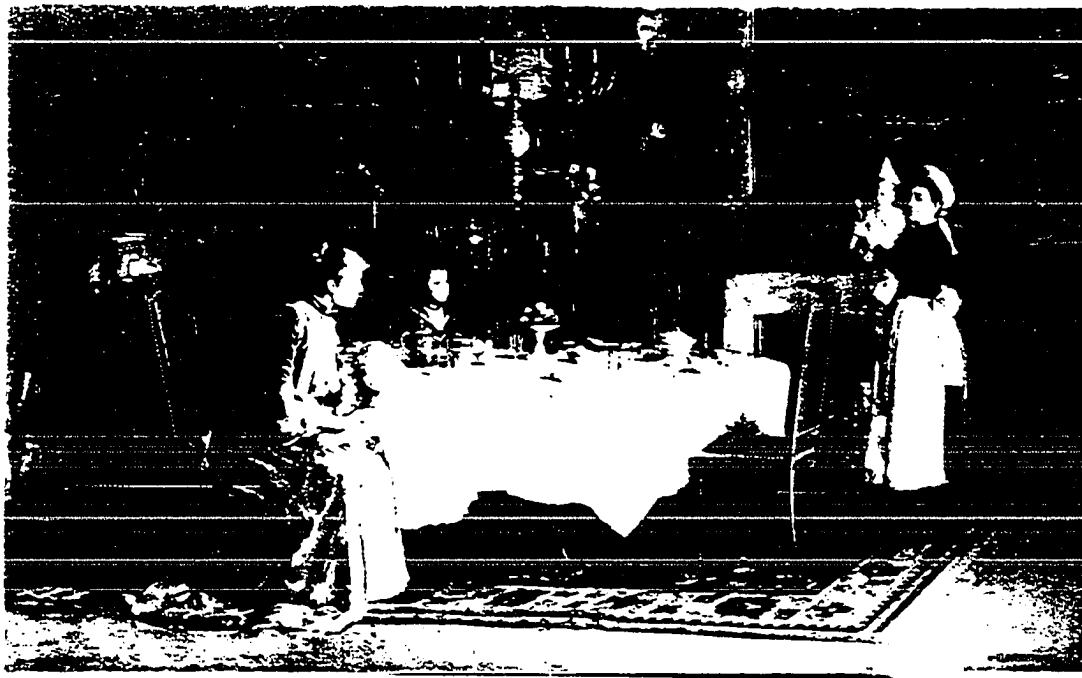


Figure 3
 William Henry Lippincott, Infantry in Arms, 1887.
 Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts
 (Source: Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.)



Figure 4
Thomas Eakins, Mrs. William D. Frishmuth, 1900.
The Philadelphia Museum of Art
(Source: Lloyd Goodrich, Thomas Eakins: His Life and Work,
[New York: Whitney Museum of Art, 1933], plate 55.)



Figure 5

Edgar Degas, The Bellelli Family, 1858-60.

Musee d'Orsay

(Source: Rafael Fernandez and Alexandra R. Murphy, Degas in the Clark Collection, [Williamstown, Massachusetts: Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 1987], p. 10.)



Figure 6
 Eastman Johnson, The Joseph Mabbett Warren Family, Troy, New York, 1874.
 Shelburne Museum
 (Source: Edwards, Domestic Bliss, p. 35.)



Figure 7

George Bacon Wood, Interior of the Library of Henry C. Carey, 1879

Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts

(Source: The American Paintings in the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art: An Illustrated Checklist, [Philadelphia: the Museum, 1989], p. 168.)



Figure 8
Walter Launt Palmer, De Forest Interior, 1878.
National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution
(Source: Mann, Walter Launt Palmer, p. 33.)



Figure 9

Edmund C. Tarbell, Girl Crocheting, 1904.

Canajoharie Library and Art Gallery

(Source: Trevor J. Fairbrother, The Bostonians: Painters of an Elegant Age, 1870-1930, [Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1986], p. 153.)



Figure 10
William McGregor Paxton, Girl Sweeping, 1911.
Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts
(Source: Betsky, "Inside the Past," p.250.)

Chapter 1

MATERIAL CULTURE IN CHILDISH THOUGHTS

In Childish Thoughts we see the image of a white-panelled room with a bare, wood floor. Three female figures occupy the space. On the left, an older woman in a maroon dress sits in a rocking chair, knitting and looking down at a young girl in a yellow dress who is playing with a doll. On the right, a young woman in a blue dress plays a piano, and though she sits facing the wall her head is turned over her shoulder to regard the girl. On the piano lie a reticule and a glass vase holding flowers, beside it on the left a sheaf of papers has fallen, while on the right sits a canterbury containing bound volumes. Under the piano rests an oriental ceramic vase, and over it, on the wall, hangs the portrait of a man. The older woman's chair is turned toward a fireplace in which burns a low fire. The hearth is equipped with a fireplace insert, andirons, a fender, and a bellows, and on the mantel sit a pair of girandoles, a model sailing ship and a looking glass. The only other furnishings in the depicted space are an armchair centered against the wall and a tripod table behind the rocking

chair, which carries two tea cups and saucers, a sugar bowl, a creamer, and a copper kettle, all arranged on a white cloth, as well as a book and an eyeglasses case.

In selecting objects to surround the two women and the girl in Childish Thoughts, William Henry Lippincott drew almost exclusively from a design fashion new to late nineteenth-century America: the colonial revival. By so choosing, he shaped both the meaning his viewers could extract from his image and the mechanism by which they could extract it. In this first section I will discuss the material culture depicted in Childish Thoughts, describing its references to America's "colonial" past and the details with which those references are made.

Most of the furnishings depicted in Childish Thoughts were made in the late nineteenth century. Regardless of their date of manufacture, nearly all of them make clear reference to "colonial" design. In the late nineteenth century, "colonial" style was understood to extend into the 1830s or even the 1840s, and was applied to furnishings that we now label "Empire." The only major furnishings in Lippincott's image that might have been crafted before Queen Victoria's reign began are the mirror, the piano, and, in a somewhat different incarnation, the Windsor rocking chair.⁸

Although rocking chairs developed in the eighteenth century as comfortable alternatives for the elderly, they were uncommon at that time.⁹ The chair Lippincott depicted was originally made to stand with its legs planted four-square on the ground, without rockers. The scrolled ears, curved arms, elongated back, and the forms of turning on the legs and stretchers all resemble characteristics of early Windsor chairs made in Philadelphia starting in the 1760s (figures 11 and 12).¹⁰ In the nineteenth century, people commonly transformed such older chairs with rockers, initially intending them still for the elderly.¹¹ By the end of the century, the rocking chair's meaning had altered substantially: it was a seating option for people of any age, and it was closely associated with the colonial period.¹² The Windsor chair embedded in Lippincott's rocking chair actually has the "most colonial" provenance of any object represented in the painting, and yet for Lippincott's contemporaries its colonial association was intensified by having been altered in the nineteenth century.

By the second half of the century, pianos had become expectable features in middle- and upper-class American homes, made available to a wide market by mass-production.¹³ Pianos of late nineteenth-century manufacture bore no resemblance to the one that Lippincott chose to paint,

however. It probably dates from the two decades bracketing 1800 (compare figures 13 and 14). Such slender, tapered legs would not support the weight of the cast-iron frames introduced into piano engineering in 1825.¹⁴

Apart from the objects to which we can attribute provenances reaching back to the eighteenth century, all the other furnishings depicted are of middle to late nineteenth-century manufacture. Many home furnishings from that time period are now accused of being "over done." In A Dictionary of American Antiques, for instance, "Victorian" is defined, "Pertaining to the period or reign of Victoria in England, often apostrophized as 75 years of prissiness, stuffed-shirtism, bombast, expansion, and poor taste...."¹⁵ However one characterizes it, the interior that Lippincott represented seems to display few of the qualities associated with high-style Victorian material culture. The nineteenth-century objects in this scene imitate the forms of earlier American styles, and though they could not be mistaken for colonial, the allusions they make to it are so clear, and so different from other Victorian forms, as to be unmistakable.

These references to the "colonial" occur at every scale in the image. The white-painted, panelled wall is quite distinct from the dark, wall-papered surfaces that had been the convention since early in the century, and which Lippincott had pictured in Infantry in Arms (figure 3).

White panelling still existed in eighteenth-century buildings, and so the reference would be clear, but as depicted in Childish Thoughts the wall is too large for an eighteenth-century room, and therefore must be an imitation.¹⁶ The hearth and mantel resemble earlier, square, classical forms far more than the more recent, circular, rococo examples. On a smaller scale, the fireplace insert and the andirons carry the classical urn shape popular at the turn of the eighteenth century. The little copper kettle on the tripod table is a striking alternative to the large, ornate, rococo revival silver-plated kettles available to nineteenth-century homes.

The clothes that Lippincott depicted on his figures also display "colonial" details that set them apart from the characteristic sequence of late nineteenth-century fashion. Changes in women's dress design in the 1890s are fairly easy to pinpoint, even sometimes from year to year. In 1895, the year Childish Thoughts was painted, the mode was for tight-fitting bodices that tapered down to a corseted, mid-level waistline; over relatively plain, smooth skirts, flared out from waist to hem in an almost triangular line (figure 15). In that year also, the "leg-o-mutton" sleeves reached a pinnacle of puffiness. While the younger woman's dress in Childish Thoughts shows the fashionable sleeves, its waistline is higher, its skirt more gathered and its hem

more fussily ornamented with ruffles than current fashion dictated. The girl's dress departs similarly from the latest style. Of course, not all women would have chosen or could have afforded to maintain a modish wardrobe, but even silhouettes from the previous years do not match these depicted dresses (figure 16). However, the early 1890s had seen a brief revival of Empire styles in women's dresses, mostly in France, which could account for the higher waistline.¹⁷ We might conclude that Lippincott's contemporaries would have identified the departures from fashion in his figures with "colonial" style, without seeing the modern leg-o-mutton sleeves as inconsistent, because they were "normal" for the 1890s.

In that decade, the chair featured so prominently in the center of the canvas would also have been identified as "colonial," but would not have appeared normal a century earlier. It has the shield-shaped back, curved arms and generally slender lines characteristic of Federal furniture, but a Federal chair-maker would not have combined these elements with cabriole legs (see figure 17). In addition, the chair fails to imitate the earlier style's proportions, as does the tripod table on the left. The table has the basic elements of a similar Federal object--a small, circular top on a turned pedestal, with three curved legs attached at the bottom--but such abstracted, attenuated

"ball-and-claw" feet never occurred to any mid-eighteenth-century craftsman. Still, if we add a typical late nineteenth-century parlor table to the comparison, Lippincott's image shifts closer to the eighteenth- than the nineteenth-century style (figures 18 and 19).

Most remarkable is the overwhelming consistency of the colonial references in Childish Thoughts. The only obvious exception is the pair of girandoles on the mantel. These were produced in large numbers in Philadelphia, New York and Boston, mostly in the years 1845 to 1865.¹⁸ Of all the lighting devices produced in the nineteenth century, according to one history on the subject, these are the most characteristic of the era.¹⁹ In trios or in pairs such as this, they were meant as "mantel sets," reflecting the convention in nineteenth-century decor of placing candleholders or lamps on the mantel.²⁰ Yet one might even find reason in the inclusion of these obviously nineteenth-century objects in the midst of a "colonialized" interior. One of the characteristics of such girandoles, along with their trinary branches and cut-glass prisms held by foliate rings, was that the molded bronze bases often represented some mythicized historical figure such as George Washington or Daniel Boone (figure 20).²¹

Throughout the nineteenth century, home furnishing designs that made general references to European styles had

proliferated. In the century's second half, a different historicizing impulse appeared, centered around an interest in earlier American lifestyles. The colonial revival impulse affected not only the form of decorative arts objects, but also architecture, literature and visual art.²² The painting under consideration in this paper can certainly be considered a product of this impulse, but it differs from most colonial revival images in that it does not portray a historical scene; as we have discovered, these are almost all nineteenth-century objects. The next chapter will discuss how the colonial revival movement bears on an interpretation of Childish Thoughts.



Figure 11

Windsor armchair, Philadelphia, 1765-1780.

Private collection

(Source: Charles Santore, The Windsor Style in America,
Volume II, [Philadelphia: Running Press, 1987], p. 53.)

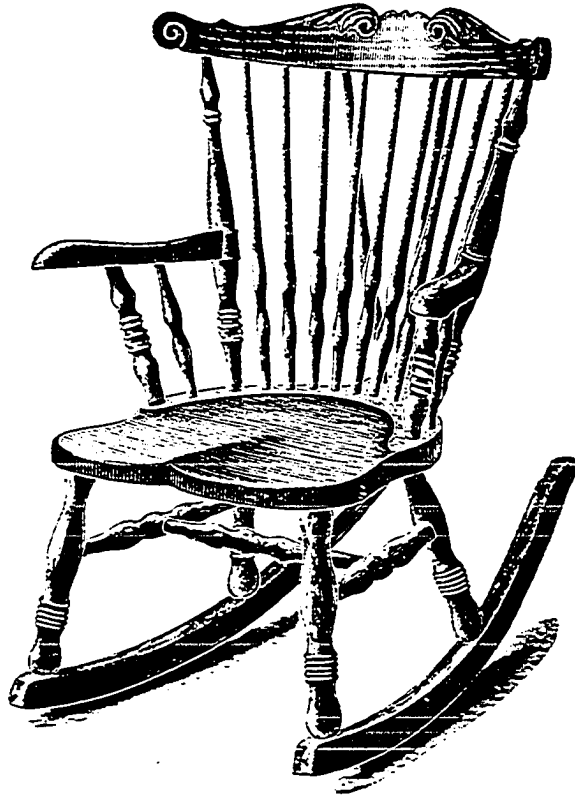


Figure 12

Rocking chair, illustration from catalog of Walter Heywood Chair Co., Boston, Massachusetts, 1895.

Rattan, Wood, Cane & Upholstered Chairs, (Boston: The Company, 1895), p. 255, no. 733.

Even a chair pictured in an 1895 catalogue, clearly meant to imitate an early Windsor, did not quite capture the form as Lippincott did.

(Source: The Winterthur Library, Printed Book and Periodical Collection.)

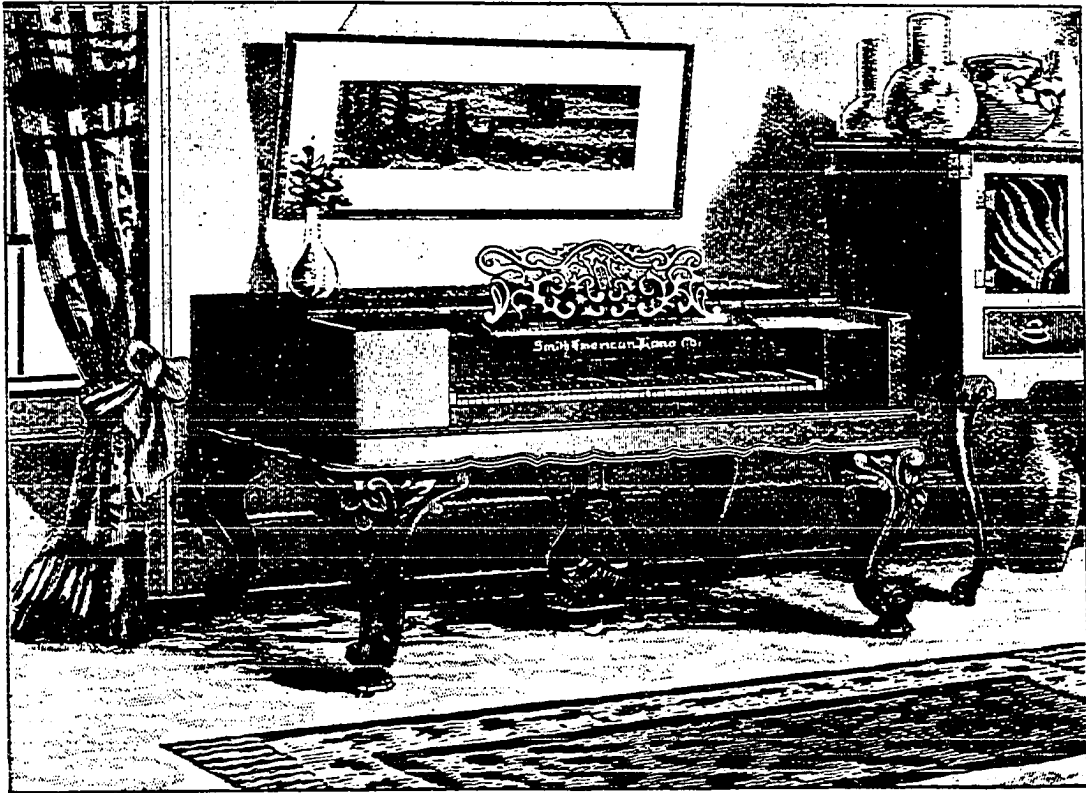


Figure 13

Pianoforte, illustration from catalog of Smith American Organ and Piano Co., Boston, Massachusetts, ca. 1895.
Illustrated Catalog of the Smith American Piano-fortes,
 (Boston: The Company, ca. 1895), Styles 1 and 2.
 (Source: The Winterthur Library, Printed Book and Periodical Collection.)

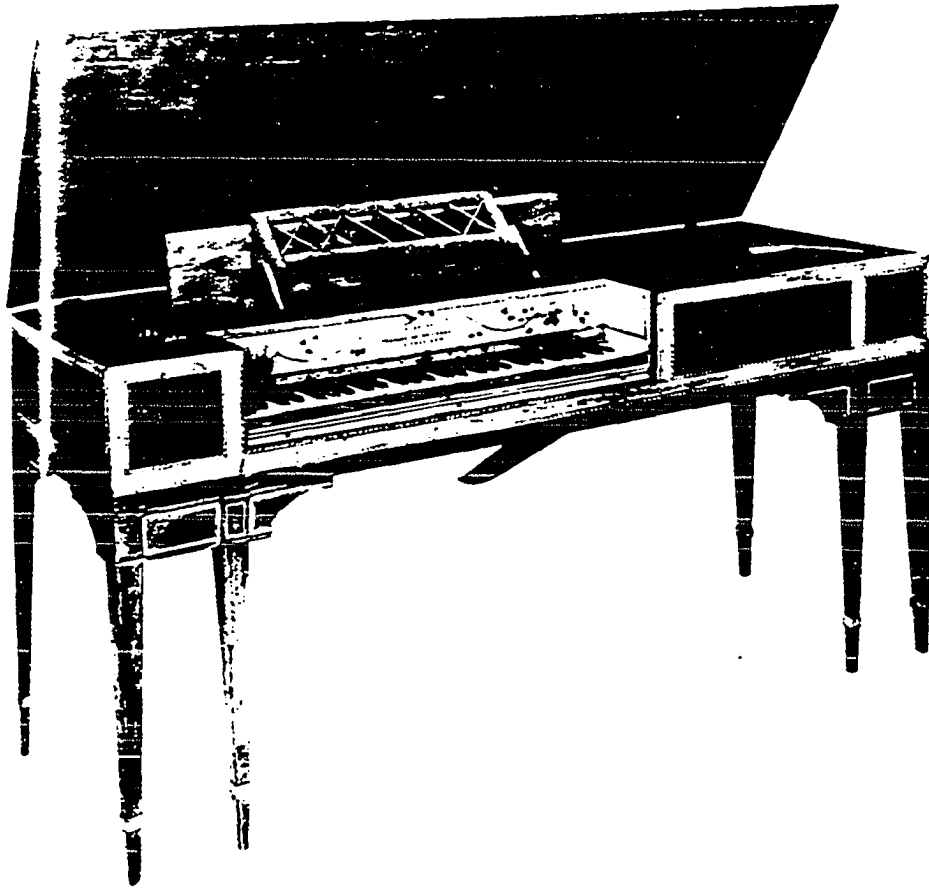


Figure 14

Pianoforte, Charles McDonnell, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania,
ca. 1800.

Greenfield Village and Henry Ford Museum

(Source: The Winterthur Library, Decorative Arts
Photographic Collection.)



Figure 15

Women's costumes, 1895.

The Young Ladies Journal (England)

(Source: Blum, Paris Fashions, p. 29.)



Figure 16

Day costumes, early 1890s.

The Young Ladies Journal (England)

(Source: Blum Paris Fashions, p. 16.)

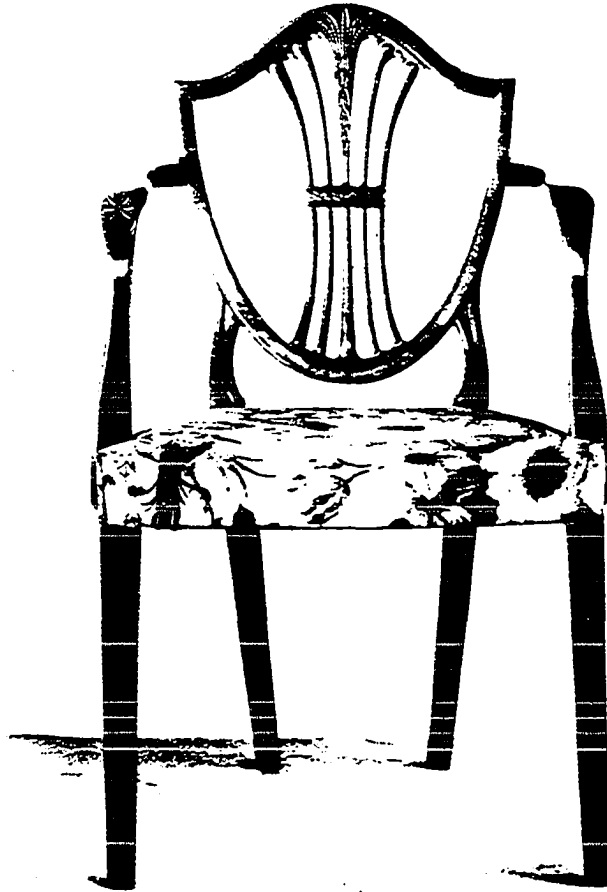


Figure 17
Armchair, attributed to Jacob Wayne, Philadelphia,
Pennsylvania, ca. 1796.
Private collection
(Source: The Winterthur Library, Decorative Arts
Photographic Collection.)

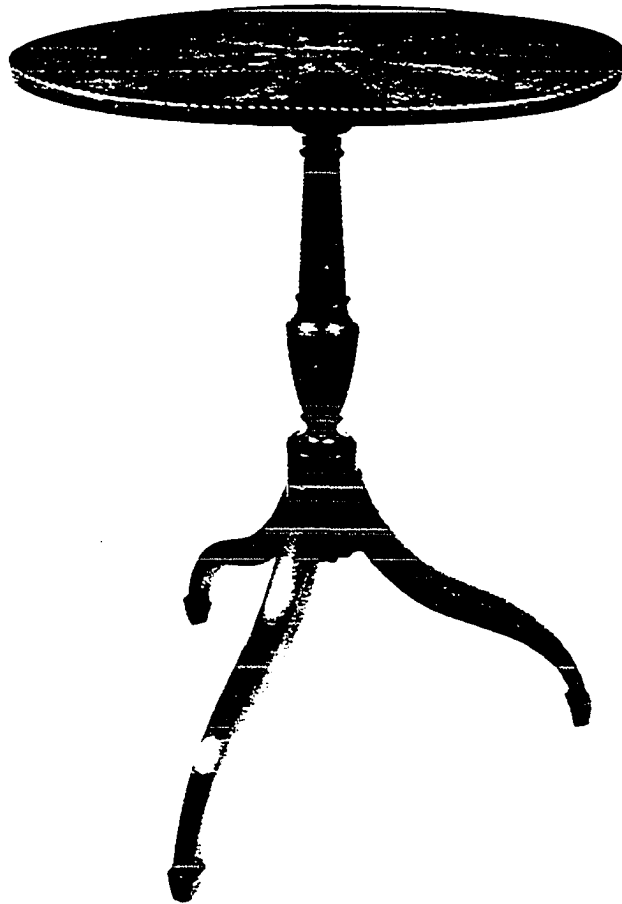


Figure 18

Stand, probably Connecticut, ca. 1805.

The Henry Francis DuPont Winterthur Museum

(Source: Charles F. Montgomery, American Furniture: The Federal Period, [New York: The Viking Press, 1966], p. 388.)

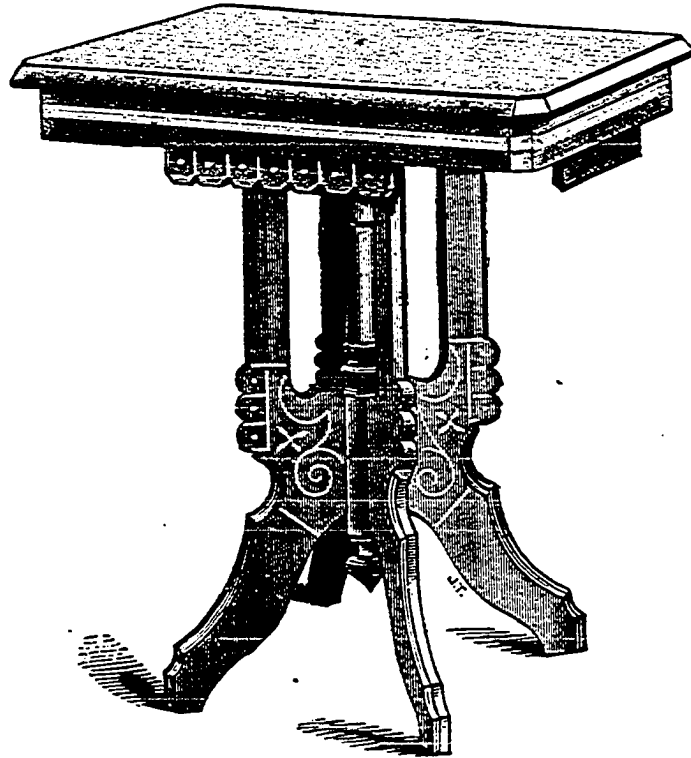


Figure 19

Parlor table, illustration from catalog of Bagby & Rivers, Baltimore, Maryland, 1893.

[Catalog], (Baltimore: The Firm, 1893), p. 42, no. 446.

(Source: The Winterthur Library, Printed Book and Periodical Collection.)

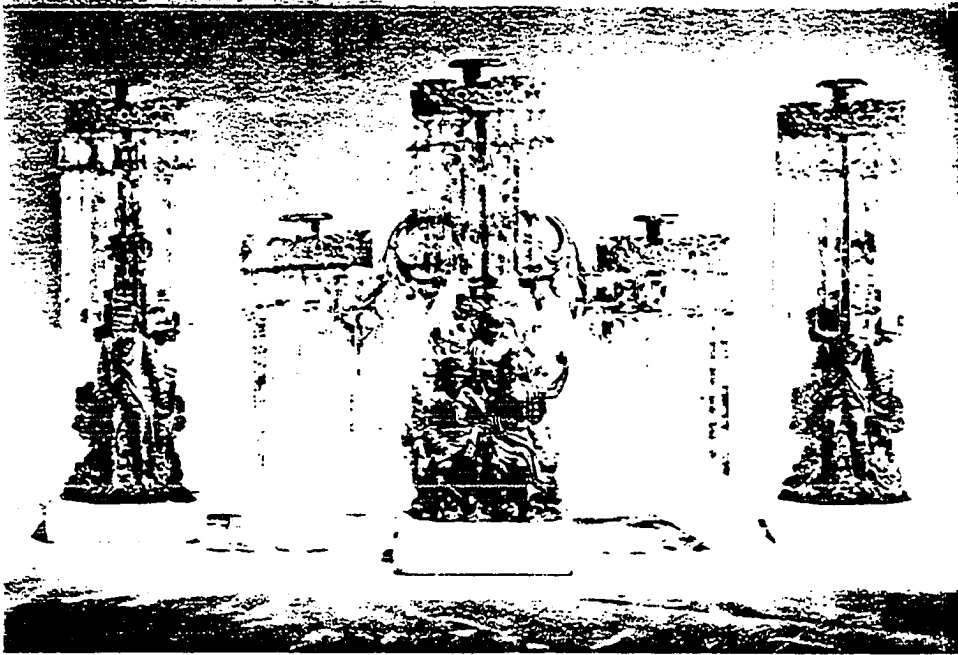


Figure 20

Girandoles, Cornelius and Company, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, ca. 1840-1850.

Daniel Boone and two Indians are represented in the center candelabrum; eighteenth-century soldiers support the flanking candlesticks.

Metropolitan Museum of Art

(Source: 19th Century America, plate 111.)

Chapter 2

THE COLONIAL REVIVAL AND CHILDISH THOUGHTS

Searching for the origins of the colonial revival, scholars encounter difficulty. Pinpointing the beginning of any cultural "movement" is problematical, since it is manifested in scattered gestures: when was there enough activity around America's past to merit the label "colonial revival"? Susan Schoelwer suggests that the movement was not generally recognizable or codified until the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago.²³ Another difficulty, inherent to this movement, is the question: revival or survival? William Rhoads points out that America's older families never stopped passing their material culture to following generations, and that some artifact forms have been in continuous production since their introduction.²⁴ These cases cannot constitute revival. There has also been some historical "neatening": it would be so tidy if the colonial revival materialized around the 1876 Centennial Exposition. However, Rodris Roth demonstrates a more accurately messy truth concerning so-called "Centennial Furniture."²⁵ Similar difficulties surround the questions

of where Lippincott's image fits into the colonial revival's chronology, and whether or not he was choosing objects for their familiarity or their novelty.

Nonetheless, in analyzing the material culture in Childish Thoughts, the next task is to place the depicted artifacts within the larger context of this colonial revival movement. How might Lippincott's contemporaries have identified these objects? How pervasive was the movement? Who had access to such objects? In this section I will trace some points in the history of the colonial revival movement, which manifested itself most powerfully through material culture, and I will discuss the movement's meanings within late nineteenth-century culture. At the end of this chapter and into the next, I will apply this discussion of the colonial revival to an interpretation of Childish Thoughts.

In its beginnings, the colonial revival appeared as an interest in icons--artifacts associated with famous people and events. In the 1850s, efforts were made to preserve buildings associated with George Washington.²⁶ An 1864 sanitary fair in New York, staged to raise money for Civil War medical supplies, included a "New England Kitchen" at which were displayed antique chairs. A publication accompanying the fair proclaimed of these artifacts, "Almost all had a history, and many of them were peculiarly

interesting for their associations" (figure 28).²⁷ In the late 1870s Clarence Cook, in his decorating manual The House Beautiful, was advocating "picking up" and rehabilitating abandoned antiques from the attics and henhouses of ignorant colonial heirs.²⁸ At this later date, Cook advocated antiques not for their historical associations, but for the comfort, aesthetics and economy he claimed for them. He also detested copies, but not everyone agreed with him.²⁹ Just as Victorian manufacturers had ransacked European design history for "Elizabethan," "Renaissance," and "Louis XVI," they began to select random details from early American styles to ornament their parlor and dining room suites, resulting in oddly hybrid objects (figures 21 and 22).

Furniture meant to reproduce colonial styles accurately apparently began appearing in the 1880s (figure 23).³⁰ Yet a brief survey of trade catalogues and interior photographs dating from the same time as Lippincott's painting reveals little evidence of such reproductions.³¹ Mary Northend's photographs of Salem, Massachusetts interiors document many pieces of furniture that appear to be nineteenth-century reproductions. These photographs are dated 1900 in the Winterthur Library, but based on an early biographical sketch of Northend and on the evidence from cultural historians, they likely represent

interiors from later in that decade (figures 24 and 25).³² The fact is, even in the early twentieth century, most reproduction furniture was made in small shops without the complex machinery that aided mass-production.³³ This means that, while "colonial" details were familiar to many Americans in mass-produced furniture, anything approaching authentic design was available only to very few people.

The major nineteenth-century furnishings depicted in Childish Thoughts--specifically the tripod table, armchair and piano stool--do not authentically reproduce earlier American forms, as we have discovered. Yet whatever his models, Lippincott's images of these objects capture some element of a distinctively colonial aesthetic. For instance compare Lippincott's armchair to a drawing of a turn-of-the-eighteenth-century chair (figure 26). (The drawing itself, from an 1895 publication entitled A Collection of Scale Drawings, Details and Sketches of What is Commonly Known as Colonial Furniture, manifests the late nineteenth-century interest in an earlier American aesthetic.) It seems likely that Lippincott's contemporaries would have recognized the "colonialness" of the objects in his painting, but might have found the objects themselves somewhat novel. Certainly the depicted rocking chair and piano, compared to the same forms made in the nineteenth

century's second half, would have struck contemporaries with their early American quality.

In fact, "colonialness" as an abstract concept, rather than historic authenticity, was clearly the objective sought in most artifacts of the colonial revival. We have already seen that hybrid "colonial" furniture far outnumbered more authentic reproductions. An eighteenth-century Windsor chair such as the one depicted in Childish Thoughts was seemingly more colonial for having rockers, in spite of the fact that few eighteenth-century rocking chairs were known. Two years before Lippincott made Childish Thoughts, at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago, a blend of actual and neo-colonial artifacts were displayed, and the literature published for the fair made no distinction between the two. Schoelwer explains this by referring to the contemporary "assumption that lively narrative and sentimental symbolism... [outweighed] authenticity."³⁴

The symbolic content in colonial revival artifacts has been analyzed by several material culture scholars, and they share some conclusions. Perhaps the most comprehensive analysis is William Rhoads'. While he focused primarily on architecture, many of his assertions in response to the question "Why the Colonial Revival?" describe the design movement as a whole. Kenneth Ames provides a larger intellectual framework for explaining the colonial revival's

appearance in late nineteenth-century culture. Susan Schoelwer, Jean Follett, and Rodris Roth have located stages of the movement's development. Roth and Cheryl Robertson have examined the roles written for women within the colonial revival ideals. Christopher Monkhouse, on the trail of spinning wheel imagery in the nineteenth century, covers much colonial revival ground.³⁵

In general, the movement romantically idealized the American past, describing it as a time when life was superlative: people were healthier, morals purer, homes more harmonious, objects better crafted.³⁶ The nineteenth-century science of heredity held that vices and weaknesses were more often inherited than virtues and strengths, and therefore that Americans had steadily degraded in their inherited qualities.³⁷ In the 1880s, one physician described the "common observation" that American women's physical strength had decreased from colonial times.³⁸ Caught in the cult of domesticity, which privileged home as the site of moral indoctrination, people seized on artifacts of earlier, supposedly happier home life. The hearth, the spinning wheel, the rocking chair (especially if occupied by a grandmother), all signified the solid family life that had created the high moral standards of an earlier age.³⁹ Rhoads called the colonial revival "The Ethical Style," and found that in the late nineteenth and early twentieth

century people characterized it as: honest, clean-living, pure, sincere, simple, rugged, sturdy, noble, chaste, restrained, plain, and hard-working.⁴⁰ Clarence Cook praised the superior craftsmanship of American antiques.⁴¹ Roycroft, the arts and crafts furniture company, relied on the colonial's connotation of high quality for promoting its "Aurora Colonial Dining Room Set" in 1904 (figure 27). The simplicity that Rhoads found ascribed to colonial design was also valued by arts and crafts promoters. Finally, nationalism infused all these sentiments, as it permeated the artifacts whose references were specifically, self-consciously American. In a defensive extreme, nationalism merged into nativism: it was no coincidence that the colonial was revived at a time of unprecedented immigration.⁴²

The design tradition from which Lippincott selected the objects for Childish Thoughts had recognizable cultural meanings, and these adhere to the painting through the objects. Viewers necessarily build the painting's meaning using the associations that inhere in the things represented. The abstract concepts that people instilled and scholars have extracted from colonial revival artifacts are instilled and can be extracted from Childish Thoughts. The painting was as much a product of a late nineteenth-century movement as were the objects depicted in it.

In translating these objects into two dimensions for his composition, Lippincott emphasized some of their "colonial" qualities. He kept the number of objects in his composition to a minimum and so produced a neat, uncomplicated image, showing the slender, simple lines of the tea table, armchair and piano to greatest effect. Because the light-colored floor and wall face us frontally, with no darkened corners or hidden spaces, there is an openness to the image that suggests sincerity. Finally, the room's inhabitants domesticate the space by implying a family and performing their mildly productive tasks.

We should note that, while Childish Thoughts conforms to colonial revival aesthetics and values, it does not display every aspect in which the movement revealed itself. Conspicuously absent are any items associated with rough or rural colonial life.⁴³ Here is no log cabin, and there is no spinning wheel, no shotgun over the mantel, no rag rug, no oil lamp, no coarse or heavy furniture, no cast-iron cooking pots slung over the fire, no herbs drying from open rafters. These manifestations of the colonial revival had appeared in the "old time" kitchens of the 1860s sanitary fairs and of the 1876 and 1893 Expositions (figures 28 and 29). Such representations make use of frontier images to describe early American life. In these versions, the colonial revival emphasizes hard work for men and women

both, and simplicity resulting from lack. In this way modern life could be favorably compared with "colonial" life: at the Centennial Exposition, the kitchen in its log cabin was juxtaposed with a newly designed structure.⁴⁴

That Lippincott deliberately excluded this version of the colonial revival from Childish Thoughts is revealed in infrared photography of the painting. It seems that Lippincott had originally depicted a less high-style chair in the prominent spot now occupied by the "Hepplewhite" armchair (figures 30 and 31). The rush-seated, turned chair he painted originally is of a type produced in both the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with much stylistic similarity between earlier and later objects. Such a chair occupied a relatively low rank in the style canon in both centuries, although the craft revival that accompanied and permeated the colonial revival accorded lower-end productions a certain value. A 1905 review in International Studio asserted that, "It is as possible for the poor man as for the rich to have his surroundings artistic," and illustrated two chairs similar to the one that Lippincott painted over, "as evidence of the fact that excellence of design is not exclusively monopolized by high-priced furniture (figures 32 and 33).⁴⁵ But Lippincott chose against an artifact affordable to a poor man, and replaced

it with one almost certainly produced in a small, custom handcraft shop with a limited clientele.

Before concluding this section, I feel it necessary to address the armchair's position in the image, and so will launch on a short digression. Though not geometrically centered on the canvas, the chair claims the image's center. It is emphasized both by the panel framing it from directly behind and by the composition's rigid geometry that makes successive frames out to the canvas' edge. Its prominence seems problematic in the image's composition and demands some explanation in the interpretation for the painting presented in this paper. I can suggest explanations for the chair's position in both compositional and interpretive terms, though neither is wholly satisfactory.

Lippincott's composition is not particularly strong; in several places it is imbalanced and awkward. Figures and objects combine in a dense group on the canvas' left side, and they are not effectively countered by the artificially linear group on the right side. The unrelieved expanse of floor in the lower right adds little to the composition. Given this context, I speculate that Lippincott, not a master draftsman, perhaps did not anticipate the chair's glaring centrality.

On the other hand, the chair's delicate outline does underscore the scene's gentility, and perhaps its

femininity. In the next chapter I will argue that in Childish Thoughts the domestic interior is represented as a gendered space, meant for women exclusively. A case might be made that the (emphatically unoccupied) chair operates as a sign of men's absence from the scene. It forms a neat triangle with the other "masculine signs," the portrait and the model ship. If the painting presents a patriarchal social structure, as I hope to suggest, it would be appropriate if the man had been saved a seat in it.

To continue: Childish Thoughts portrays a genteel scene through many details. While the women are not idle (which would be immoral), their productivity is refined to a gentle flutter of knitting needles and a well-educated display of musical accomplishment. These are not tasks performed out of a need for household production, such as a spinning wheel might represent. They are almost decorative tasks: piano playing certainly had high aesthetic value, and knitting belonged to the visual cliché of grandmother-in-rocking-chair. The space in which the women act is clean and highly finished, with labor-intensive panelled walls and a polished, narrow-board wood floor. This is far from the "log-cabin colonial" image created at the Centennial Exposition (figure 29).

The gilt-framed painting over the piano signifies gentility by referring to an ancestry with wealth and pride

enough to commission a portrait. The model ship on the mantel appears associated with the portrait, perhaps in part by their "pendant" placement in the composition. Also, they are the most explicit references to men in the image. A sailing ship was part of the non-industrialized past that the colonial revival idealized, and it also represented the major source of individual wealth in that earlier time, accumulated by merchants who owned the deep-sea trading vessels and their cargo. Not only did Lippincott assemble an image with homogeneously colonial references, he also chose to represent objects with particularly upper-class associations.

The "colonial" values that we have examined in this section were projected onto the past, and then the material culture of the past was used to represent these values in the present. The ideals of craftsmanship, family life, morality and nationalism that we have identified in the colonial revival were purely nineteenth-century, and in various manifestations and degrees they pervaded the society. This accounts for values shared by the colonial revival and the arts and crafts movements: they grew out of the same society at about the same time.⁴⁶ In the next chapter, we will examine further the values expressed in Childish Thoughts, and explore their sources in the contemporary society.

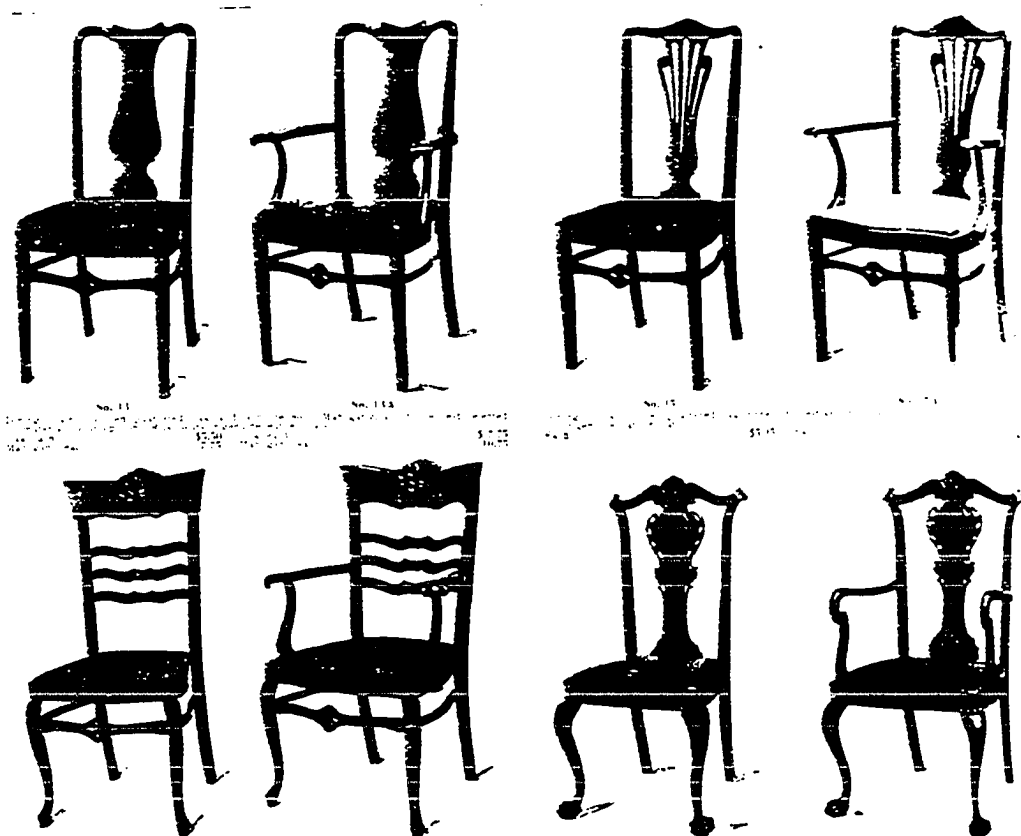


Figure 21
 Dining chairs, Stickley-Brandt Furniture Company,
 Binghamton, New York, ca. 1902.
 (Source: Dubrow, Furniture Made in America, p. 154.)

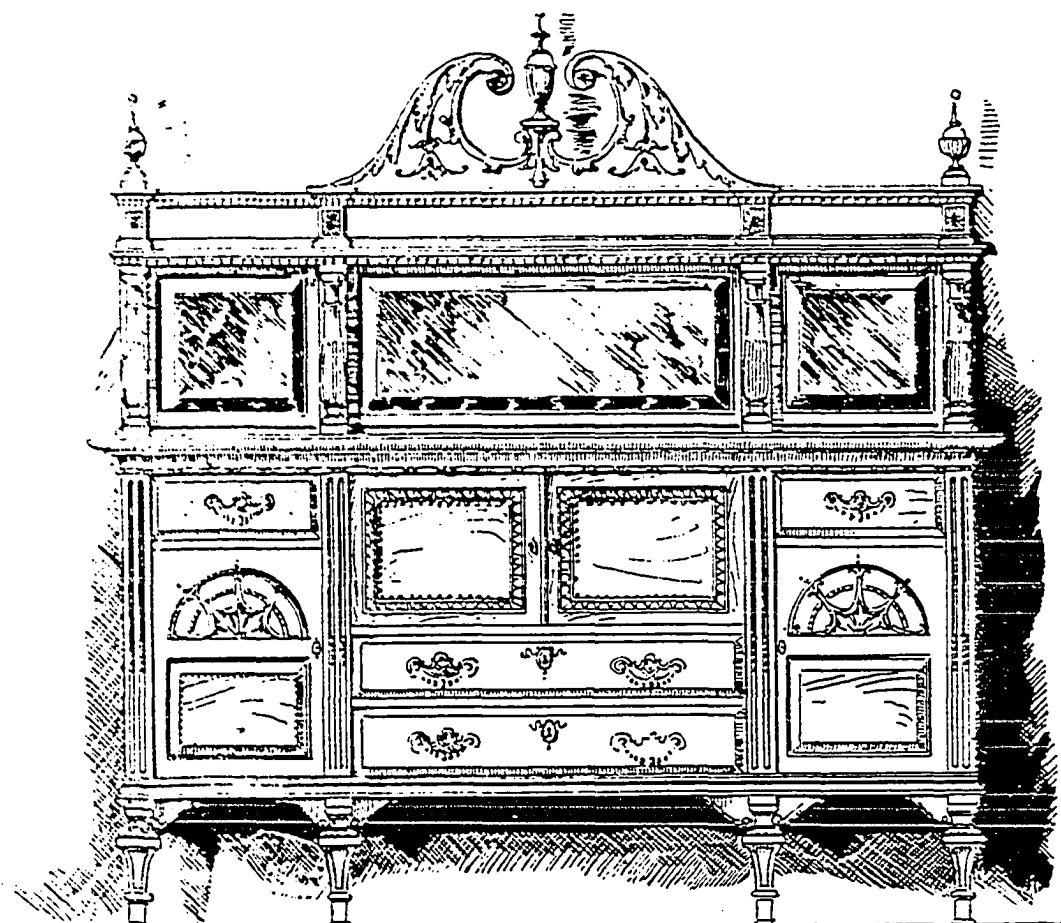


Figure 22

"Modern Colonial Sideboard," design by James Thomson, 1893.

Decorator and Furnisher 22 (September 1893)

(Source: The Winterthur Library, Printed Book and Periodical Collection.)

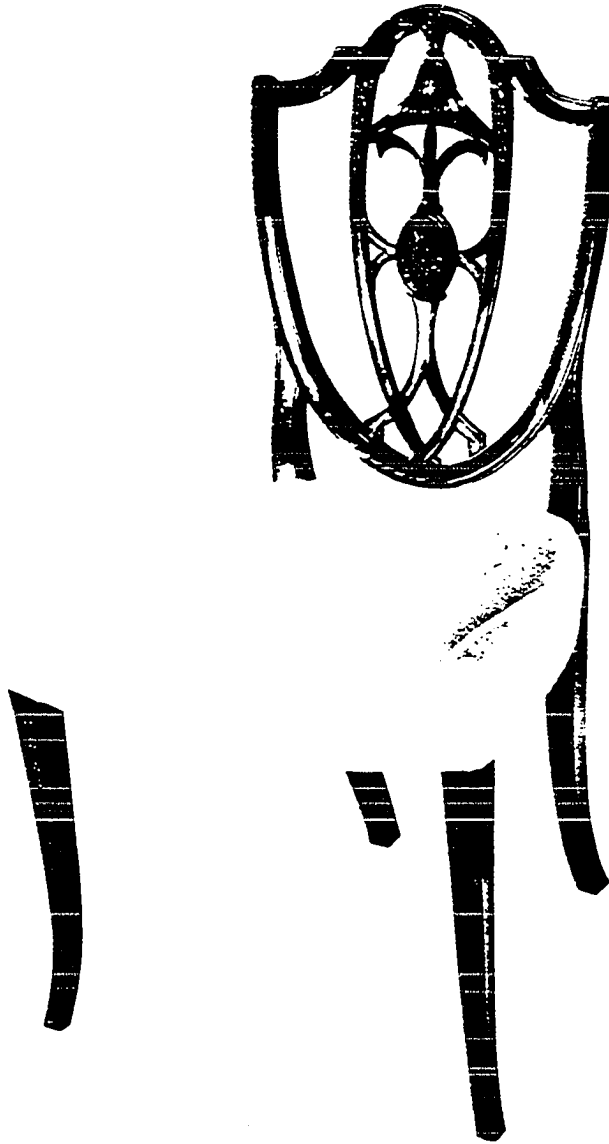


Figure 23
Reception chair, New York (?), ca. 1880-1900.
The Newark Museum
(Source: Dietz, Century of Revivals, p. 60.)



Figure 24
Parlor of Mrs. Benjamin, after 1900.
(Source: The Winterthur Library, Mary H. Northend Collection.)



Figure 25
Living room of Fred H. Curtis, after 1900.
(Source: The Winterthur Library, Mary H. Northend
Collection.)

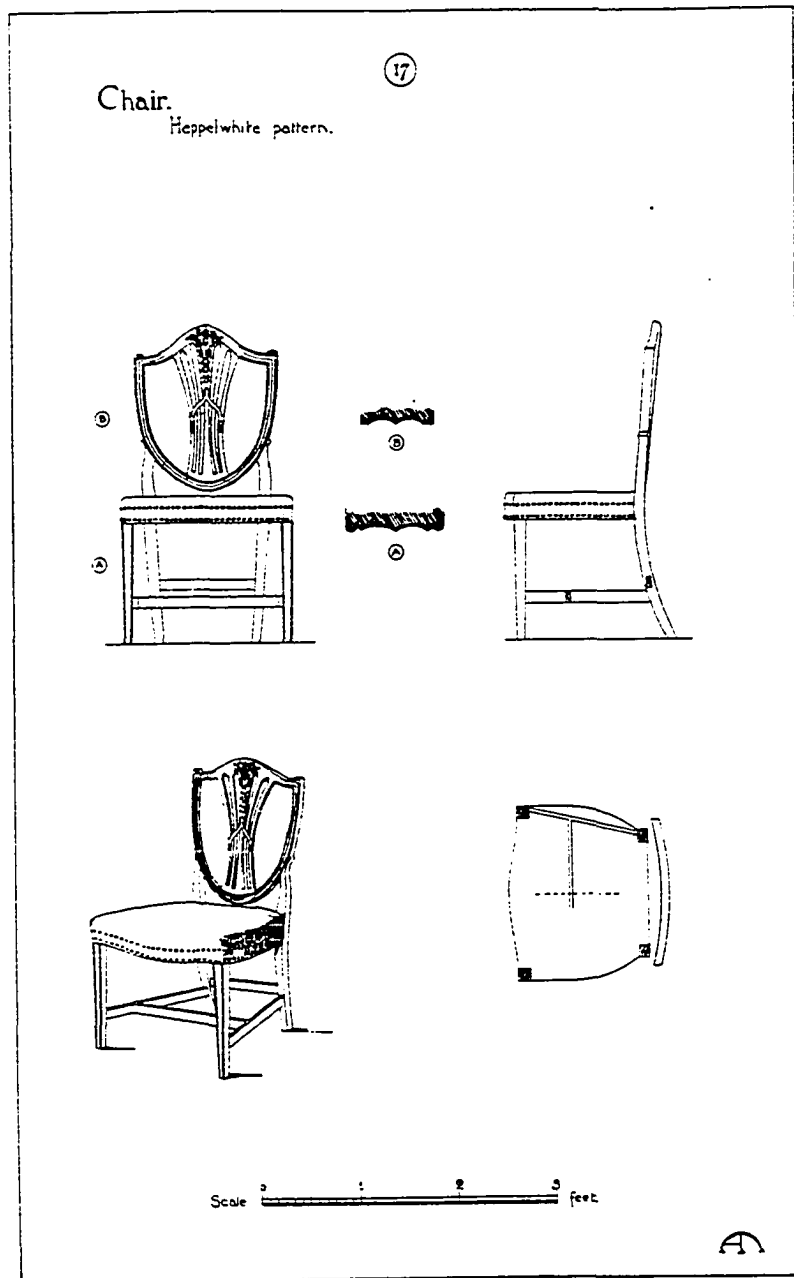


Figure 26

"Chair, Heppelwhite pattern," 1895.

Alvan Crocker Nye, A Collection of Scale Drawings, Details and Sketches of What is Commonly Known as Colonial Furniture, (New York: W. Helburn, 1895), plate 17.

(Source: The Winterthur Library, Printed Book and Periodical Collection.)

Colonial Furniture in Demand

Old Boston and old Gotham, as represented by several spirited individuals, had an interesting contest in bidding for old Colonial furniture at an afternoon sale of the Gilbert collection at the American Art Galleries.

Boston, in the person of J. J. Higginson, was the victor in every contest, and won the chief prizes of the day. But the prizes cost him a good round sum to take to his new home outside the modern Athens.

He gave his check calling for \$1540 for a set of twelve Heppelwhite chairs, \$255 for a drop-front desk, \$440 for a Hogarth chair settee, \$365 for a Chippendale lowboy, \$260 for a Colonial sofa and \$300 for six Colonial chairs. New England was represented also by Governor Bulkeley of Connecticut, who gave \$2400 for a pair of Jefferson tables and \$740 for a pair of Sheraton knife urns. James Breese paid \$1020 for six Chippendale chairs originally owned by Lord Fairfax of Virginia, \$285 for six mahogany chairs, \$410 for a snap table and \$105 for a high-post bed. The total for the session was \$37,867.00.—*Boston Transcript*, December 20, 1904.

ALL the furniture here mentioned was made a hundred years ago by men who had the time, talent and inclination to make it well. *We think* that we are making by far *The Best Furniture* in America to-day. We make Furniture which is an endowment investment for you—you use it and

can pass it on to your heirs. It does not wear out, and like true friendship, grows better with the passing years. We have the plant, the people, the materials, and the time.

Figure 27

Front page of catalog, Roycroft Shop, East Aurora, New York, 1905.

Aurora Colonial Furniture, (East Aurora, New York: The Shop, 1905).

(Source: The Winterthur Library, Printed Book and Periodical Collection.)



Figure 28

The New England Kitchen at the Brooklyn and Long Island Sanitary Fair, 1864.

History of the Brooklyn and Long Island Fair (illus. ed.; Brooklyn: Unicorn, Steam Presses, 1864), Smithsonian Institution

(Source: Roth, "New England Kitchen Exhibit," p. 163.)



Figure 29

New England kitchen interior, Centennial Exposition,
Philadelphia, 1876.

Leslie's Illustrated (June 10, 1876), Smithsonian
Institution

(Source: Roth, "New England Kitchen Exhibit," p. 176.)

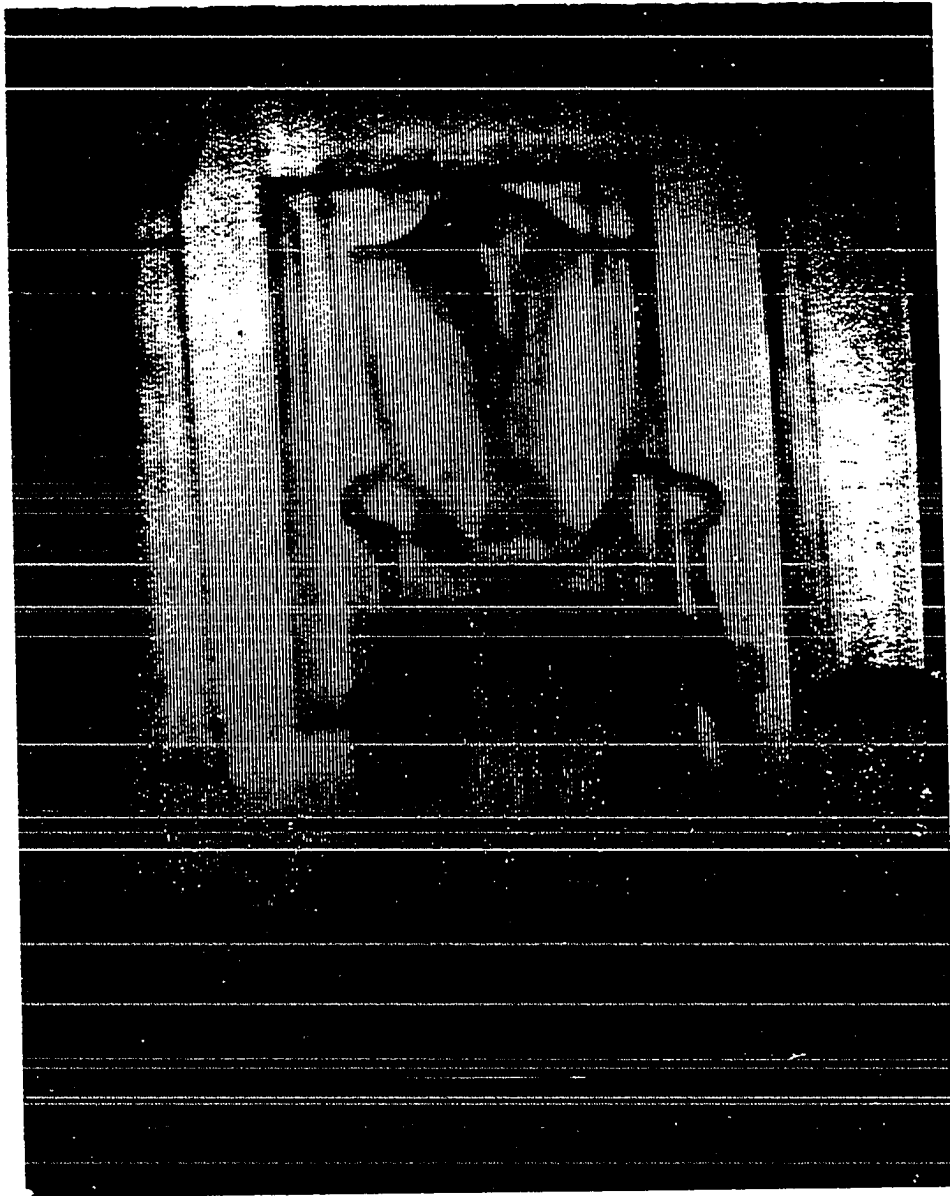


Figure 30

Childish Thoughts, detail in infrared.

(Source: Mark Bockrath, Paintings Conservator, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.)



Figure 31
Childish Thoughts, detail in infrared with pentimento outlined.

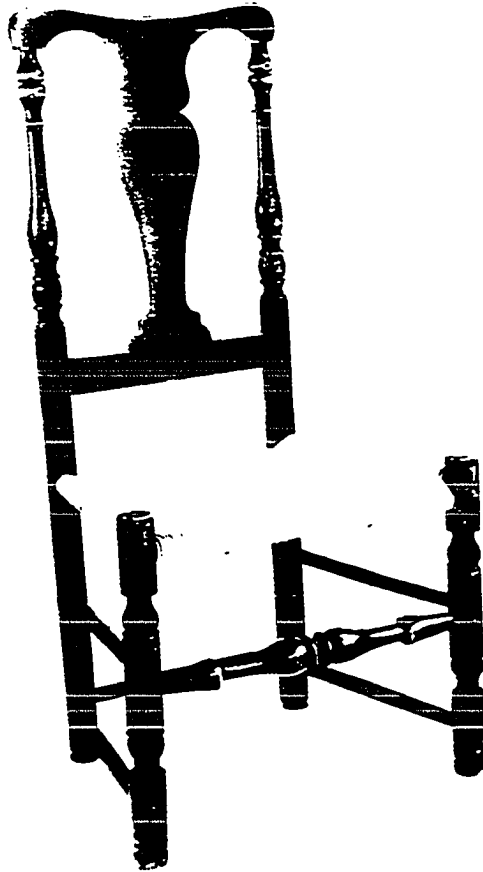


Figure 32

Chair, Nathaniel Dominy V, East Hampton, New York, ca. 1790-1830.

Private collection

(Source: The Winterthur Library, Decorative Arts Photographic Collection.)

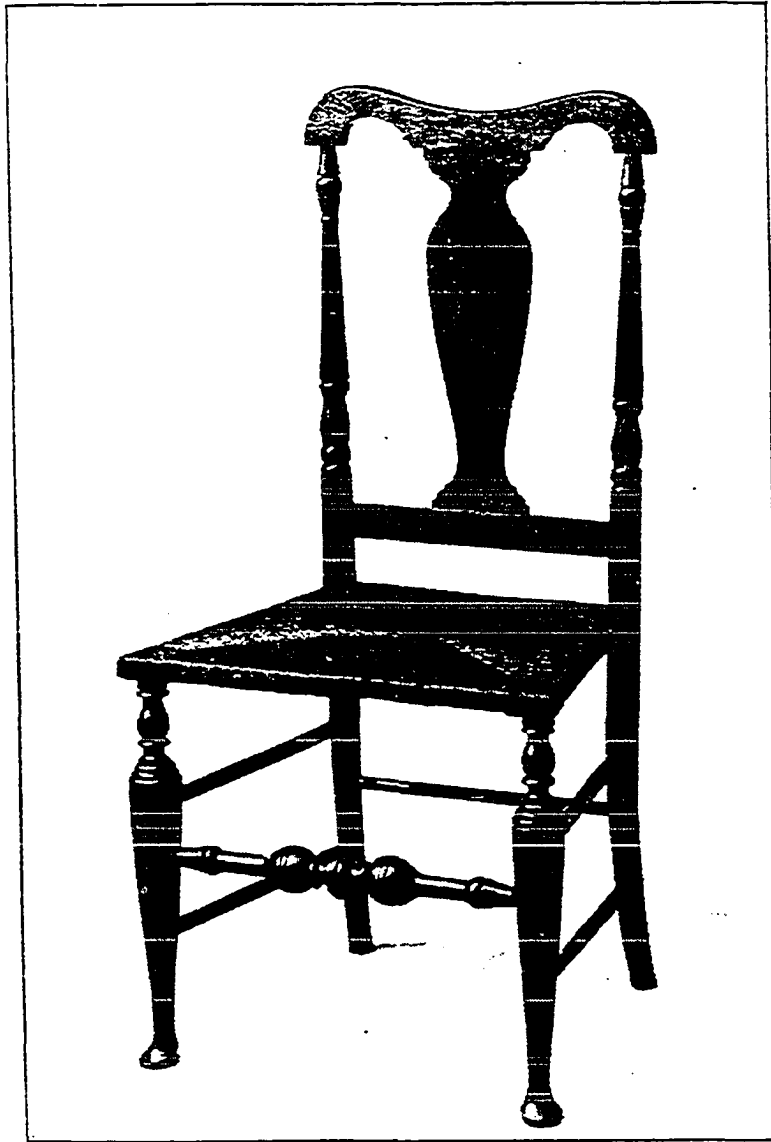


Figure 33
Dining-room chair, Sheraton Chair Co., Boston,
Massachusetts, 1905.
(Source: International Studio 25, (March-June 1905),
p. LVII.)

Chapter 3

CHILDISH THOUGHTS AND THE ROLE OF THE DOMESTIC INTERIOR IN LATE NINETEENTH-CENTURY SOCIETY

Some scholars have remarked on the mythological functions of the colonial revival. Kenneth Ames identified specific mythic structures in the movement: ancestor worship, the myth of beginnings and the myth of a golden age.⁴⁷ Ames, Harvey Green and Jackson Lears find modernization to be the engine driving such myth-making.⁴⁸ People in the late nineteenth century felt ambivalent about the transition to modern social structures and experienced a palpable sense of loss. They constructed a mythic, pre-industrial American past--describing it in novels, images and objects--in answer to their ambivalence and loss. The descriptions were based on perceived absences in the contemporary culture, rather than on evidence from the earlier culture, and so were not often accurate representations of colonial American life. The fact that the word "colonial" was used to describe Empire-style objects, produced fifty or even sixty years after America ceased to be a colony, suggests that the term itself was

more a construction than a description.⁴⁹ We have seen this departure from accuracy in examining the hybrid furniture advertised in trade catalogues and appearing in Lippincott's image.

The mechanism by which the colonial revival represented "colonial" life, then, was not so much mimesis as symbology. In other words, the movement was not representing nature or reality, it was representing abstract ideals. I would argue that this was not only true of the colonial revival material culture depicted in Childish Thoughts, but also of the painting itself. The image it displays does not mimetically describe the daily life of three people, nor does it represent accurate assumptions about the structure of contemporary society. Rather, it portrays a constructed scene and expresses an idealized social structure.

Childish Thoughts's symbologic mechanism can be detected at several levels, which I will explore in this chapter. Closest to the canvas, we find evidence that Lippincott's model for this image was as much envisioned as viewed; in other words, that he worked from a mental conception more than from a collection of objects and people, a method consistent with his academic training.⁵⁰ Secondly, while the individual objects that Lippincott depicted had near counterparts in the colonial revival

movement, their arrangement in the fictive space does not correspond with the contemporary conventions of domestic interiors. (I will discuss these two points in the first part of this chapter.) Finally, the image operates with some fairly complex assumptions about domestic life and its place in the social structure. These do not reflect idiosyncratic notions of Lippincott's; we can easily locate (and, with greater difficulty, segregate) similar assumptions in the social history of this period. (This I will do in the second part of this chapter.) Yet these notions, while conventional, were not necessarily born out in the real experience of people at the time. The final part of this chapter will concentrate on how Childish Thoughts departs from reality on this last level.

The Domestic Interior Envisioned in *Childish Thoughts*

The way in which Lippincott structured his composition is suggested by evidence in the painted surface of the canvas. The gridded wall panelling and the precisely lined floorboards were built up from ruled lines, visible with an infrared camera. Against the wall's grid, Lippincott centered the armchair and balanced the manteled fireplace and the piano in near perfect symmetry. His diffuse lighting suggests no hierarchy--no single areas are privileged by light or obscured by shadow, each carries

equal weight by this standard. A single cluster of elements, made of the older woman in her chair, the girl and the tea table, stands in the shallow middle ground. All the other discrete elements sit or hang in a parallel plane with the wall. On the canvas' right half the objects barely overlap. The geometrically laid-out planes and the linear arrangement of objects and people all suggest that Lippincott used an abstract scheme to order his composition, rather than relying primarily on an observed group of people and things in a real space.

To the right of the tea table we can see pentimenti where Lippincott moved the table "forward" and reworked the tripod legs. If left where it was, the table would have occupied the same fictional space as the rocking chair, flaunting the laws of physics. This suggests that Lippincott might not have had the objects grouped before him when he painted the scene. The pentimento described earlier, beneath the armchair, allows a similar speculation. Lippincott seems to have finished or nearly finished the rush-seated chair's image before he decided to paint over it with another.⁵¹ If he had had all the objects for his painting gathered and arranged before his eyes, surely he would have known sooner that the rush-seated chair did not match his conception for the painting.

The evidence cannot conclusively prove that Lippincott pieced his composition together with images of objects from various places and with "backdrops" designed entirely on the canvas. However, if we demand of the images that they integrate into the illusion of a furnished, inhabited room--adherent to either contemporary or historical material cultural conventions--we find that the illusion fails. This is certainly not a scene of typical eighteenth-century life, and neither is it representative of nineteenth-century life.

Lippincott's choice of colonial revival objects was so nearly exclusive that, in spite of the modern products, the room he created hardly resembles a nineteenth-century interior at all. The parlors documented in photographs often show colonial revival objects, but they are usually outnumbered by other late nineteenth-century styles (figure 34). In fact, reproduction "colonial" furniture had the same novelty value as the exotic, patented designs of George Hunzinger.⁵² Seale published photographs of one residence that resembles the insistently historic sparseness depicted in Childish Thoughts (figure 35). Of the Providence, Rhode Island dining room and parlor from 1895-98, he wrote, "Barren rooms like these, even for the most impassioned colonial revivalist, were very unusual for the 1890s...."⁵³ Most contemporary photographs show floor and

wall space far more densely packed than in the room Lippincott represents. His space does not contain many of the things with which people inhabited rooms at the time--no rug or carpet, no larger seating furniture, not much upholstery, few surfaces for holding bric-a-brac or books (figure 36). Nor do the depicted objects sit in relationship to one another in a way that resembles furnishing plans in the photographs. The only recognizably nineteenth-century arrangements are the girandoles on the mantel and the painting over the piano.⁵⁴ Given the conventional lifestyle, this room appears uninhabitable.

We have found some obstacles to interpreting Lippincott's painting as a scene of everyday life in a nineteenth-century home. Then what does it represent? Within the frame of a painting we expect to find some consistent relationships that create a context for the things represented. If the things in Childish Thoughts do not integrate well into the relationships typical of genre painting, then how are all the objects connected within the painting's context? Lippincott's deliberate choice of objects laden with symbolism provides the beginning of an answer. It may be that the primary relationship between tea table, chair, wall panelling and piano in this image is not that they furnish the physical structure of a room, but that

together they furnish an abstract, symbologic structure for the painting.

The Domestic Interior and Ideal Socialization

The figures in Childish Thoughts, three females of varying ages, resonate with an allegorical association. The stages of life, conventionally represented by a group of people of different ages, can be interpreted as a means of describing mortality. However, I would argue that in Childish Thoughts the device describes a cycle of regeneration. In late nineteenth-century homes needlepoint pictures of the stages of life were common decoration, and the other popular images included reproductions of Renaissance madonnas and photographs of family generations; all of which describe regeneration.⁵⁵ Because the generations in Childish Thoughts are all female, they allude to women's particular power to further the species, multiplying ad infinitum. The painting's title and the older figures' gazes direct our attention to the youth represented, rather than to the aged, hardly a motion toward vanitas. From the title's pun we might understand that the women not only regard the child depicted but also reflect on their own youths, with implied wistfulness. Yet the pun also discourages any grim interpretation by trivializing

these implicit reflections; it tells us they are "childish," after all.

Furthermore, the material culture surrounding the figures provides for a parallel understanding of regeneration. The depicted artifacts are not, as we have found, relics of a past era. They are revived, reshaped, and they unmistakably reflect both nineteenth-century values and the historical sources with which some people in the modern society constructed ideals. The depiction of these artifacts and these figures together conveys a notion about society's perpetuation. We see not only the values that are to be preserved and passed on (embodied in the colonial revival objects), but also the instrument by which this will occur: women in the home. The image drafts women to perform not just biological, but also cultural, regeneration. The women's activity serves as a model for the girl. She is being socialized as we watch; learning about knitting, reading music and playing the piano, serving tea and caring for children. In the sparsely accessorized room, a book on the tripod table stands out as one of the child's resources, a further sign of good breeding. Within this domestic space, female kin will ensure that social skills and values continue along with the species. With her future implied by her elders and her environment, the child in this image yet

retains her childishness: there are only enough tea cups for the grown-ups, and she can play carelessly with her doll.

In this interpretation of the painting--that it presents a view of acculturation--the material culture carries meaning at two levels. At one level, the objects are the props of acculturated behavior. Manipulating a piano keyboard or a pair of knitting needles, a tea cup or even a doll, demonstrates one's social competence. At the same time, even when not in use, the objects' forms display their lineage and the associated values that go with it, and imply a passage of time across which those values have been transferred.

Lippincott's painting was not alone at the time in calling women to the task of acculturation. Nor was Childish Thoughts alone in situating this responsibility within the home. The nineteenth-century set of beliefs regarding "separate spheres" for men and women rested in part on the assumptions 1) that women's primary role was to raise children; 2) that this role included exclusive responsibility for moral training and evaluation; and 3) that women were to act within the home environment in pursuing their goals.⁵⁶ The other half of the doctrine assigned exclusive tasks to men and situated their activity in the world outside the home, away from moral influence. An 1888 social manual was quite explicit: "Home is the

sphere of the mother's action, and the care and training of her children, her life-work."⁵⁷ Within this conception women were responsible for the home's decor, since physical environment was seen to influence people's moral state, and by the 1870s, decisions about household furnishings were most often made by women, where previously this had been a husband's prerogative.⁵⁸

Nancy Cott interprets the "separate spheres" metaphor in such a way that we can trace one of the nearly seamless lines grafting colonial revival values, such as those espoused by Childish Thoughts, onto this more pervasive social ideal.⁵⁹ Cott distinguishes the work activities of the two spheres. In the men's world, with its factory shifts and lunch-time whistles, people performed time-oriented work, measuring their progress by the clock rather than by the tasks they completed. In contrast, work in the women's sphere, the home, was task oriented. These terms, task-oriented and time-oriented, come from E.P. Thompson's distinction between pre- and post-industrialized work activity. Cott argues that, because women's activity in the home still followed the pre-industrial pattern, it was backward looking and "reassuringly comprehensible" in contrast to the anxiety-producing environment of the men's sphere. She wrote, "In the home, women symbolized and were expected to sustain traditional values and practices of work

and family organization."⁶⁰ The "separate spheres" ideal encouraged a pre-industrial environment in the home to help educate and protect the family against the immoral world outside; the colonial revival could furnish the home with pre-industrial values in tangible form.

The ideal, cleft world appears in Childish Thoughts. Women gather in a home, segregated from men and the men's sphere; they work on small, discrete tasks; nurture the future in the child they raise and in the culture they preserve and pass on. No male figures populate Lippincott's domestic space, but he included male presence in the portrait and in the clipper ship. Celia Betsky found such symbolic male presence in other colonial revival images of interiors: although men are absent from domestic scenes, their protective presence is signified by a gun over the mantel. She described this as a "further attraction of the colonial revival interior...that it allowed for a masculine presence at a time when the absence of men from the domestic scene had increasingly become the frequently regretted norm."⁶¹

Betsky sees the male symbols in colonial revival images of interiors as surrogates that restored something lacking in nineteenth-century social conceptions; that is, the notion of men at home. Were this the goal, however, the creators of colonial revival interiors could as easily have

populated their spaces with the men themselves. In Childish Thoughts, the male symbols insist on the existence of men but also on men's physical absence from the room depicted. It seems to me that the expression of colonial revival values, as in Childish Thoughts, functioned harmoniously and uncritically alongside a strictly gendered conception of social space current in the nineteenth century.

By representing a domestic interior inhabited exclusively by women and furnished with historically referential objects, the painting weaves together several distinct cultural and social threads, many of which we have examined: the colonial revival, gendered roles and social spaces, the function of home life, interior decorating. The nineteenth-century social fabric surrounding Lippincott also interwove these issues. The "separate spheres" notion, with which Childish Thoughts seems aligned, gave gender to domestic space and the socializing activity in it. Within this conception, home furnishings had a moral function, and we have examined the particular moral value of colonial revival furnishings. Ames has written, "The domestic sphere may well be the major focus of colonializing activity." The colonial revival movement as a whole has been identified as gendered. Rhoads called it "The Feminine Style," and documented women's initiatives in the preservation movement. By the end of the century, Robertson argues, interior

decoration, Revolutionary history and domesticity all belonged to women.⁶²

We have drawn some broad connections between the scene in Childish Thoughts and the contemporary social and cultural scene. In the combination of its domestic setting, all-female cast, and historically and morally loaded props, the painting enacts a particular version of late nineteenth-century assumptions about the home environment and women's roles in it. Lippincott could integrate these elements in his painting because his society allowed for this particular combination of gender, class, historical and moral ideals. While all of the painting's discrete images contribute to its expression of this blended ideal, I will examine one image, the piano, in detail. Mixed into people's perception of this object were an astonishing number of the complex conceptions about women, home and socialization that we have identified.

As I mentioned earlier, by the late nineteenth century the piano had become a fixture in most middle- or upper-class American homes, although the instruments manufactured at the time were quite unlike the one represented by Lippincott. Playing the piano was overwhelmingly regarded as a feminine activity, and had been for some time. Piano-playing involved just the right balance of idleness and productiveness: not so idle as to be

sinful, not so productive as to endanger a woman's abstract qualities.⁶³ It also carried well-dampened sexual overtones. Men and women courted around the piano, and could even make physical contact while playing a duet. Performing for people was an acceptable way for a woman to give them pleasure. Yet it allowed her to maintain a modest posture: feet together, back straight, face serene.⁶⁴

The piano also represented many conceptions about the home, in its functioning as both men's asylum from the amoral world outside and as children's moral training ground. Music was morally both restorative and preventive.⁶⁵ It was a socializing influence, and so it was entirely appropriate for girls to learn to play the piano and for women to continue playing it for the people they were responsible to socialize.⁶⁶ A young woman at a keyboard testified to her moral fitness to marry and raise children.

She also evidenced her family's ability to buy the piano and the lessons. Even covered and quiet, a piano in the parlor was a sign of money and good-breeding, of knowing and affording the rules of right behavior. The author of A History of the American Pianoforte, published in 1890, used a telling adjective in describing the instrument as "a source of household joy, a silent symbol in every home of the mysterious and humanizing influence of music" (emphasis

mine).⁶⁷ By the time Lippincott painted Childish Thoughts, pianos were being mass-produced and were affordable enough for many American parlors to contain them. Yet they retained their genteel associations.⁶⁸ Lippincott insisted on the instrument's gentility in his image by choosing as his example one made for an earlier society in which many fewer households could have afforded it.

By depicting his woman figure playing the piano, Lippincott underscored many of the social conceptions we have thus far extracted from his image. In particular, the painting insists on women as socializers, on home as the site of socialization, and on an elite set of values to be perpetuated.

The Domestic Interior Idealized in Childish Thoughts

The painting's focus, in many ways, is the girl playing with her doll. Her figure's position in the image, the other figures' gazes and the painting's title, all direct attention to her. As the subject of socialization, she motivates the women's activity and the collection of historically and morally loaded artifacts. Having established some of the assumptions about women and the home contained in Childish Thoughts, I will now examine contemporary associations with the child's image, as it

figures centrally in both the painting and the domestic "sphere."

Around the turn of the eighteenth century, the conception of children had changed. Previously they had been seen as essentially flawed; as yet-to-be-perfected, and perhaps unperfectible; and as basically smaller versions of adults. In the nineteenth century, they came to be regarded as essentially innocent; as yet-to-be-corrupted, though certainly corruptible; and as different creatures entirely from adults.⁶⁹ Their innocence was to be protected while they were trained in making moral decisions, and their protection and training were in the hands of their mothers. They were women's raisons d'etre; in fact, some people believed that childbirth and motherhood were necessary to a woman's good health.⁷⁰ By the late nineteenth century, children belonged to the home's sphere as much as women did. Karin Calvert has discovered that

near the end of the century Kate Douglas Wiggin reminded her readers that Shelley had said "a home is never perfectly furnished for enjoyment unless there is a child in it rising three years old, and a kitten rising three weeks." One was as much a necessary 'furnishing' as the other.⁷¹

The focus of Lippincott's painting, then, mirrors a late nineteenth-century ideal for the focus of women and home life.

Even the depicted child's attention seems to be directed toward domesticity. Doll's were conventionally a girl's toy, for practicing skills needed to assume her future role--mothering, dressmaking and fashion, entertaining.⁷² Yet some evidence indicates that girls did not always behave so ideally. Mid-century diaries and an 1890s survey reveal many girls who were more interested in rolling hoops and other active play (usually reserved for boys) than in conventional dolls.⁷³ There is further evidence that contemporary children's behavior generally missed the ideal mark. A late nineteenth-century etiquette manual itemizes in detail those situations which should be forbidden to children. Among them were funerals, picnic parties, the visits of strangers in the drawing room, sitting on a sofa with adults, and handling store goods.⁷⁴ Clearly, children were not to be trusted.

The quiet, contented and conventionally occupied figure in Childish Thoughts is less a portrait of a real child than a manifestation of late nineteenth-century sentimentality about childhood. The women's gazes and the direction of their thoughts, revealed by the painting's title, reinforce this conclusion. Calvert remarked on the nostalgia that adults displayed in dealing with children, and speculatively attributed it to Americans' sense of "the collective loss of the nation's youth when life had seemed

simpler and more heroic."⁷⁵ Lippincott's image re-captures this idealized youth both in the girl's figure and in the "colonial" material culture.

The gap between nineteenth-century reality and the ideal childhood depicted in this painting does recall the gap between eighteenth-century reality and the idealizations of "colonial" life depicted by the colonial revival movement and quoted in Childish Thoughts. In light of these nostalgic reconstructions, I would like to reconsider the conceptions of women in gendered social space that were discussed earlier.

In her book Imaging American Women, Martha Banta examines the way in which images of women in the period 1876 to 1918 were categorized into abstracted types that purported to represent national values.⁷⁶ Banta codifies these types and describes their appearance in both elite and popular culture, but more relevant to our project here is her discovery that generally women were considered appropriate subjects for this transformation into symbols.⁷⁷ In particular, Banta examined the representation of women in painting, and found that the movement away from academic naturalism--with its mimetic goals--and toward a more "idea-based" picture-making corresponded with the increasing use of women's images as abstracted types.⁷⁸ Banta's research suggests that, on encountering an image of women produced in

the late nineteenth century, one can reasonably ask if the image represents real people or if it represents a set of ideas.

Approaching from a different direction, Bernice Kramer Leader reached a similar conclusion. She examined images of women in the Boston School's paintings from 1890 to 1918 (many of which were portraits), and compared these images to the real women whom the artists and their patrons encountered in their society.⁷⁹ She found that discrepancies abounded: the paintings show idle, dreamy women in domestic interiors, while Boston women increasingly left home to participate in social and political reform movements. Leader investigated the society of male artists and patrons, finding it conservative and resistant to changes in Boston that resulted from growing immigration, industrialization and women's activism. Therefore Leader attributed the gap between the reality and the representation of women in Boston to these men's protection of their diminishing social dominance.⁸⁰ Defensively, the Boston School artists painted women as they wished them to be, not as they could see the women around them to be.

We can find a similarly contradictory relationship between the colonial revival movement's portrayal of women and the real ways in which women participated in the

movement. In her paper "Women, Style and Decoration: Inside the Colonial Revival Home," Cheryl Robertson wrote,

A central irony of the colonial revival, which made much of the centrality of the home and of the wife and mother in it, is that its popularization owed much to women who went out of their homes...to participate in associations that sought to preserve remnants of the past.⁸¹

Regarding the women who organized New England kitchen exhibits at 1860s sanitary fairs, Rodris Roth made a similar remark: "There are ironies in this: here were women, working outside the home, but still in the kitchen."⁸²

Carl Degler finds reason for such contradictions in the elasticity of the "separate spheres" concept as it was applied in the late nineteenth century. With women's work defined as acculturation and moral guardianship, the female "sphere" could actually be expanded outside the home, providing it still centered around these tasks.⁸³ Degler argues that women actually exercised increasing social power, both in the expanded "domesticating" sphere outside the home and also within the home. He documents women's influence in family decisions and the total responsibility given them for raising children, and he links the decline in the American birth rate over the century to women's fear of childbirth and their growing ability to control their own sexuality.⁸⁴ The irony detected by Robertson and Roth in the colonial revival arises because, whatever their actual

influence on society, women were still defined by the boundaries of a domestic sphere.

Finally returning to Childish Thoughts, we find none of these ironies reflected in its image. Here are women firmly ensconced in the home, idealized and content, as are the women in the Boston School's paintings.⁸⁵ These figures do not threaten to break out of or even expand their gendered social space, nor is there any evidence in their representation of the hard work, fears and powers that went along with operating a home in the late nineteenth century. All the inner life of these women is dismissed as "childish thoughts." In fact, these figures are not real women, but rather idealized types such as Banta described. The evident harmony in this image between the symbol-laden, inauthentic colonial revival and the rigid, "separate spheres" ideal can be explained in part by the fact that each are constructs of a patriarchal world view. Linda Kerber has demanded that modern scholars re-examine the metaphor of "separate spheres," which was created in the nineteenth century to describe or, as Kerber might argue, to justify a contemporary social ideal. She wrote:

The years 1870-1920 may be the high-water mark of women's public influence: through voluntary organizations, lobbying, trade unions, professional education, and professional activity. But women also met unprecedented hostility and resistance that seems disproportionate.⁸⁶

The evidence that the woman's sphere is a social construction lies in part in the hard and constant work required to build and repair its boundaries.⁸⁷

The rigidly geometrical wall and floor that confront us in Childish Thoughts might represent just such defensive boundaries as Kerber described. The domestic social structure assumed by the painting diverged from contemporary reality, and the painting actually mediates this separation between idealization and reality. On the one hand, with material culture that insistently refers to past American society, the image embodies values that other Victorian material culture could not have described. The message, here, is that the contemporary society in 1895 lacked the ideal values and needed to turn elsewhere, to an earlier society, to find them. On the other hand, the material culture depicted in the painting was contemporary, and so the image represents its society as capable of realizing the same standards as the earlier America. Had Lippincott chosen to depict an eighteenth-century scene, his painting would have contained neither the implicit criticism nor the implicit defense of his society that operate inherently in his choice of colonial revival material culture. Finally, Childish Thoughts actually acknowledges the departures from reality that we have discovered in it. The painted image of an interior bears evidence of having been constructed from

disparate parts and abstract structures, rather than from observation of domestic space. This admission by the painting contributes to what must have seemed a rather fanciful image in 1895, given what we have learned about real life in domestic interiors at the time.



Figure 34
Drawing room of Benjamin B. Comegys, 4205 Walnut Street,
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, ca. 1890.
Smithsonian Institution
(Source: Seale, The Tasteful Interlude, p. 118.)

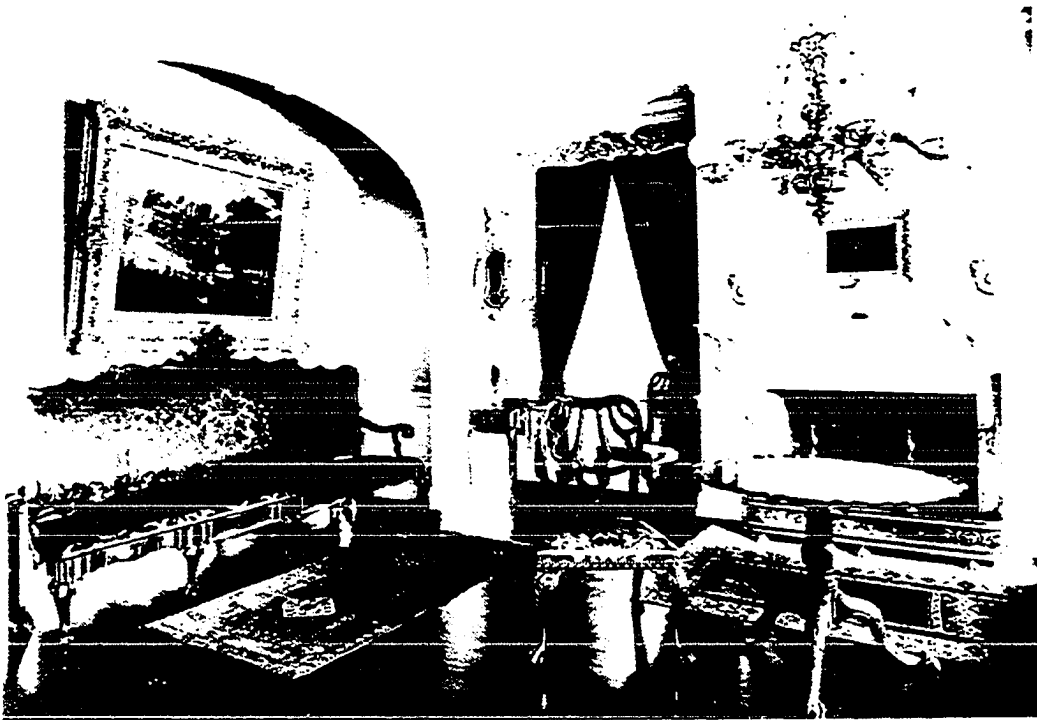


Figure 35

Parlor of E.W. Blake, 72 Waterman Street, Providence, Rhode Island, ca. 1895-98.

The Rhode Island Historical Society, Providence
(Source: Seale, The Tasteful Interlude, p. 142.)



Figure 36
 Library of T.B. Winchester, 138 Beacon Street, Boston,
 Massachusetts, 1894.
 Library of Congress
 (Source: Seale, The Tasteful Interlude, pp. 111-12.)

CONCLUSION

In his earlier painting, Infantry in Arms, Lippincott depicted a domestic space more typical of the late nineteenth century than that in Childish Thoughts (figure 3). As in many genre paintings, the representation in Infantry in Arms is careful enough that one can justify using it as a documentation of domestic material culture. Several scholars have mined interior scenes in various media for their representations of object arrangement and use.⁸⁸ Their studies offer information unavailable through other sources, and the authors acknowledge the potential "inaccuracy" of some images, since most were made for purposes other than documenting material culture. For instance, Harold Peterson deplores the "insidious...prejudice of the artist. Often a picture is created as an editorial or a crusading document, and facts are accordingly distorted."⁸⁹ Childish Thoughts would appear to be an effective object lesson in the deceptiveness of genre painting. The image has many ingredients of a domestic scene, and yet does not typify daily life in 1895.

But the "facts" that one finds in a painting depend entirely on the questions asked of it. The "fact" is that all paintings distort reality. If, instead of searching in Childish Thoughts for the reality of an 1895 domestic interior, we look for the ways in which it "distorts," or re-presents, that reality, then we learn some facts about the possible ways to conceive of domestic life at the time. Childish Thoughts also represents a late nineteenth-century view of the colonial past, and so we see the process of history being constructed.

This returns us to the question posed in the Introduction: within the society that forms an image-maker and his audience, what causes the content of an image to seem acceptable or appropriate? There are several "nodes" in this question that can be investigated: the society, the image-maker, the audience, the image and the image's content. This paper has studied only three of these: late nineteenth-century society; the painted image of Childish Thoughts; and the image's content, which includes issues of domestic life, women's roles, and the values expressed by the colonial revival movement. We have discovered certain correspondences between the representation of these issues in Childish Thoughts and other representations of them in the society, and so we can describe the painting as a reflection of its society (in spite of its "inaccuracy")

regarding interior decor). However, this study has not investigated Lippincott's role in filtering the reflection. We have not discussed what his idiosyncratic experience may have contributed to his representation of domestic life. Nor have we considered the specific audience for this painting, and how the experience of its individual members may have influenced their understanding of Lippincott's image. Such questions remain for another study.

NOTES

1. Patricia Hills, The Painter's America: Rural and Urban Life 1810-1910, (New York: Praeger Publishers in association with the Whitney Museum of American Art, 1974), pp. 2-5, 84-85.
2. Hills, p. 5.
3. The sets of dishes and utensils do not represent the full complement of different forms that one would have found at a late nineteenth-century dinner; and the flatware includes fruit knives, common at breakfast. At the place setting on the table's far side, a knife lies across the plate, sign of a finished meal. Breakfast was the only meal at which one could acceptably leave the table before others had finished (Conversation with Susan Williams, 10/4/90; Richard A. Wells, Manners, Culture and Dress of the Best American Society, [Springfield, Massachusetts: King, Richardson & Company, 1890], p. 212; The Social Mirror: A Complete Treatise on the Laws, Rules and Usages that Govern Our Most Refined Homes and Social Circles, [St. Louis, Missouri: Dan Linahan Publishing Company, 1888], p. 169).
4. Hills, pp. 84-85.
5. R.H. Ives Gammell, The Boston Painters 1900-1930, (Orleans, Massachusetts: Parnassus Imprints, 1986), p. 121; E.W. Lee, M.F. Krause and R.H.I. Gammell, William McGregor Paxton 1869-1941, (Indianapolis, Indiana: Indianapolis Museum of Art, 1979), p. 55.
6. For instance, see Bernice Kramer Leader, "The Boston Lady as a Work of Art: Paintings by the Boston School at the Turn of the Century," Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1980; Bailey Van Hook, "Decorative Images of American Women: The Aristocratic Aesthetic of the late Nineteenth Century," Smithsonian Studies in American Art 4 (Winter 1990): 45-69; Martha Banta, Imaging American Women: The Idea and Ideals in Cultural History, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), 339-374.
7. Robert St. George has explored such metaphors in seventeenth-century American writing in two lectures to the Winterthur Guild, February 8, 1990 and January 24, 1991, Winterthur Museum,

Winterthur, Delaware; John Hollander described some of Edward Hopper's interiors as "representations of the minds of those figures we perceive within them" in his "Hopper and the Figure of Room," Art Journal 41 (Summer 1981), p. 159.

8. In addition, the bellows probably dates from the 1820s, according to Don Fennimore, Curator and in Charge of Metals at the Winterthur Museum, in conversation, August 7, 1990. Judging by early twentieth-century photographs of rooms furnished in "colonial" style, a bellows hanging by the hearth was a conventional reference to early American life (see figures 24 and 25).

9. Ellen and Bert Denker, The Rocking Chair Book, (New York: Main Street Press, 1979), pp. 28, 52.

10. Nancy Goyne Evans, Research Fellow at the Winterthur Museum, in conversation, July 31, 1990. Evans was not troubled by the few discrepancies between Lippincott's image and eighteenth-century chairs. In the image, she pointed out that the turnings on the side stretcher, while accurately shaped, belong on the medial stretcher. The arm has slightly more inward curve than usual and it terminates in a smaller pad than Evans expects to see. Finally, the arm rail is somewhat low in proportion to the back's height. Since most of these details in the painting are governed by proportion or perspective, the process of creating an illusion of three dimensionality might account for the discrepancies.

11. Evans, August 31, 1990; Denker, p. 28.

12. Denker, pp. 28, 152.

13. Loesser, Arthur. Men, Women and Pianos: A Social History, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1954), p. 429; Craig H. Roell, The Piano in America 1890-1940, (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1989), p. 23.

14. Roger G. Gerry, "Some Early Pianos in Philadelphia," The Chronicle of the Early American Industries Association 6 (July 1953), p. 26.

15. Carl W. Drepperd, A Dictionary of American Antiques, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1952), pp. 376-77.

16. In an eighteenth-century room, a fireplace on a wall would be centered (conversation with Bernard Herman, Associate Director, Center for Historic Architecture and Engineering, University of Delaware, August, 1990). If the fireplace in CT is centered on

the wall, then the fictional space extends beyond the canvas to the left another two-thirds the width of the canvas; this would represent an abnormally large domestic for an eighteenth century domestic structure.

17. Madeleine Ginsburg, Victorian Dress in Photographs, (London: B.T. Batsford Press, 1982), p. 92.

18. H. Parrott Bacot, Nineteenth Century Lighting, Candle-powered Devices: 1783-1883, (West Chester, Pennsylvania: Schiffer Publishing, 1987), pp. 155-199.

19. Bacot, p. 153.

20. 19th Century America: Furniture and Other Decorative Arts, (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1970), text accompanying plate 112.

21. 19th Century America, text accompanying plate 112; Bacot, p. 152.

22. For colonial revival architecture, see William B. Rhoads, The Colonial Revival, (New York: Garland Publishing, 1977); for literature and visual art, see Beverly Seaton, "A Pedigree for a New Century: The Colonial Experience in Popular Historical Novels, 1890-1910," and Celia Betsky, "Inside the Past: The Interior and the Colonial Revival in American Art and Literature, 1860-1914," both in The Colonial Revival in America, edited by Alan Axelrod, (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1985).

23. Susan Prendergast Schoelwer, "Curious Relics and Quaint Scenes: The Colonial Revival at Chicago's Great Fair," in The Colonial Revival in America, pp. 203-204.

24. Rhoads, pp. 344-45.

25. See Rodris Roth, "The Colonial Revival and 'Centennial Furniture,'" Art Quarterly 27 (1964): 57-81.

26. Cheryl Robertson, "Women, Style & Decoration: Inside the Colonial Revival Home," in The Colonial Revival in Rhode Island (1890-1940), (Providence: The Providence Preservation Society, 1989), p.13; Harvey Green, "The Ironies of Style: Complexities and Contradictions in American Decorative Arts, 1850-1900," in Victorian Furniture: Essays from a Victorian Society Autumn Symposium, edited by Kenneth L. Ames, (Philadelphia: The Victorian Society in America, 1983), p. 27. Both Mount Vernon and Washington's Newburg, New York headquarters were the objects of preservation efforts. Robertson characterized "modes of

expression" in the colonial revival: associative, aesthetic and archeological. In the following discussion of the movement's history, we see it progressively achieving these modes.

27. History of the Brooklyn and Long Island Fair, (Brooklyn, 1864), p. 74, quoted in Christopher Monkhouse, "The Spinning Wheel as Artifact, Symbol and Source of Design," in Victorian Furniture, p. 157.
28. Clarence Chatham Cook, The House Beautiful: Essays on Beds and Tables, Stools and Candlesticks, (New York: Scribner, Armstrong & Company, 1878; reprint, Croton-on-Hudson, New York: North River Press, 1980), p. 162.
29. Cook, pp. 66-68, 75, 80-81.
30. Rhoads, p. 360; Robert Bishop, Centuries and Styles of the American Chair 1640-1970, (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1972), p. 448; Ulysses G. Dietz, Century of Revivals: Nineteenth-Century American Furniture in the Newark Museum, (Newark: The Newark Museum, 1983), p. 60. Other cultural historians cite later dates. William McKenzie Woodward, writing about the colonial revival movement in Rhode Island, dated the "archeological approach" in architecture to after 1910 ("Town and Country," in The Colonial Revival in Rhode Island, p. 5), and William Seale put the development of historically accurate revivals in furnishings even later, at World War I (The Tasteful Interlude: American Interiors Through the Camera's Eye, 1860-1917), [2nd ed., Nashville, Tennessee: American Association for State and Local History, 1981], p. 26).
31. Trade catalogues are listed in the bibliography. Photographs and other information about contemporary interiors appear in Seale, The Tasteful Interlude; I. Mackson, American Architecture, Interiors and Furniture During the Latter Part of the Nineteenth Century, (Boston: G.H. Polley & Co., 1900); Edgar deN. Mayhew and Minor Myers, Jr., A Documentary History of American Interiors From the Colonial Era to 1915, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1980).
32. Charles Arthur Higgins, "Mary Harrod Northend: Authority and Writer on Colonial Homes of New England," Massachusetts Magazine 8 (1915), pp. 23-24. Seale, p. 142; see note 30.
33. Gregory R. Weidman, Furniture in Maryland 1740-1940, (Baltimore: The Maryland Historical Society, 1984), pp. 214-15, 233; Dietz, pp. 62-63. Weidman identified "a number" of shops reproducing or adapting antique furniture in Baltimore in the

1890s, and suggested that they prospered because of the city's conservative taste.

34. Schoelwer, p. 211.

35. Rhoads, The Colonial Revival; Kenneth Ames, "Introduction," in The Colonial Revival in America; Jean A. Follett, "Colonial Revival Origins," in The Colonial Revival in Rhode Island; Roth, "'Centennial Furniture,'" Schoelwer, "Curious Relics;" Robertson, "Women, Style & Decoration;" Roth, "The New England, or 'Olde Tyme,' Kitchen Exhibit at Nineteenth-Century Fairs," in The Colonial Revival in America; Monkhouse, "The Spinning Wheel."

36. Rhoads wrote, "The Colonial Revivalist typically saw the Colonial period as a good time, when people were honest, sincere, strong--in a word, virtuous" (p. 408).

37. Karin Calvert, "To Be a Child: An Analysis of the Artifacts of Childhood," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Delaware, 1984), pp. 163-166.

38. John Harvey Kellogg, The Household Manual of Domestic Hygiene, Food, and Diet, quoted in Green, The Light of the Home: An Intimate View of the Lives of Women in Victorian America, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1983), pp. 5-6, 113.

39. Betsky, p. 247; Monkhouse, p. 169.

40. Rhoads, pp. 408-414.

41. Cook, p. 187.

42. Ames, pp. 8-9; Betsky, p. 266; Follett, p. 2; Rhoads, pp. 503-504. Rhoads claimed that nativist sentiments cannot have caused the colonial revival because the movement began before nativism emerged, but that such conservatism did sustain the colonial revival's popularity later on.

43. Margi Hofer noted this aspect of painting.

44. Monkhouse, p. 157.

45. "Notes on the Crafts and Industrial Arts," International Studio 25 (March-June 1905), p. LVII.

46. Ames argued that the celebration of pre-industrial handicraft was a characteristic response to modernization in many Western cultures (Ames, p. 11).

47. Ames, p. 9.

48. Ames, pp. 9-11; Green, "The Ironies of Style," pp. 19-20; Jackson Lears, No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture: 1880-1920, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981).

49. Ames suggests that the term "colonial," as used in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, can be understood to mean "anti-Victorian" or "anti-modern" (Ames, p. 12).

50. Lippincott studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in Philadelphia and under Leon Bonnat at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris, and was himself a teacher at the National Academy of Design in New York. "Initially it was the goal of academic instruction to develop in the student a consciousness of inner order and the ability to reveal its perfection in the rendering of all manner of things" (Lois Fink and Joshua Taylor, Academy: The Academic Tradition in American Art, [Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978], p. 1.)

51. With the infrared camera we could make out details of the turnings on the chair's stiles and front legs, suggesting Lippincott had progressed beyond a sketch of the object.

52. Dietz, p. 60.

53. Seale, p. 142. He continues, "...but [barren rooms like these] had become rather common in some places on the East Coast by the time of World War I." Places such as Salem, for instance, where Mary Northend made many of her photographs (figures 24 and 25).

54. Green wrote, "Sometimes a painting of particular value to the family--a large family portrait, a pleasant landscape, or an inspirational print--would be hung above the piano or parlor organ to create an area ripe for positive familial interaction" Light of the Home, (p. 109).

55. Green, The Light of the Home, p. 109.

56. On the related nineteenth-century concepts of "separate spheres" and the "cult of domesticity," see Nancy Cott, The Bonds of Womanhood: "Woman's Sphere" in New England, 1780-1835, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977); Clifford E. Clark, Jr., "Domestic Architecture as an Index to Social History: The Romantic Revival and the Cult of Domesticity in America, 1840-1870," Journal of Interdisciplinary History 7 (1976): 33-56; Carl Degler, At Odds: Women and the Family in America from the

Revolution to the Present, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980); Harvey Green, The Light of the Home; Linda Kerber, "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History," Journal of American History 75 (June 1988): 9-39; Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood, 1820-1860," American Quarterly 18 (1966): 151-174.

57. The Social Mirror, p. 371.

58. Green, Light of the Home, pp. 93-111; Seale, p. 19. On the subject of decorating a living room, Clarence Cook wrote, "For it has a serious relation to education, and plays an important part in life, and therefore, deserves to be thought about a great deal more than it is" (Cook, p. 49).

59. Cott, pp. 58-62, 68-70.

60. Cott, pp. 61, 70.

61. Betsky, p. 248.

62. Ames, p. 12; Rhoads, pp. 415-17; Robertson, p. 12.

63. Loesser, p. 267.

64. Roell, pp. 26-27; Loesser, p. 65.

65. Roell, pp. 17-21.

66. Most of the children who took piano lessons were girls (Roell, p. 5).

67. Daniel Spillane, A History of the American Pianoforte, (New York: D. Spillane, 1890), p. ix.

68. Roell, p. 23.

69. Calvert, pp. 125-131; Degler, pp. 66-72; Green, Light of the Home, pp. 34-35; Mary Lynn Stevens Heininger, "Children, Childhood and Change in America, 1820-1920," in A Century of Childhood, (Rochester, New York: The Margaret Woodbury Strong Museum, 1984), pp. 15-16.

70. Green, Light of the Home, pp. 29-30. Women who did not bear children allegedly encountered greater difficulty in menopause, had shorter life-spans and suffered greater risk of disease in general than women who gave birth.

71. Calvert, pp. 134-135.

72. Calvert, pp. 148, 157.
73. Calvert, pp. 153-155.
74. Wells, Manners, Culture and Dress, pp. 421-424.
75. Calvert, pp. 135-136.
76. Banta, Imaging American Women, pp. xxvii-xxxi.
77. Banta, pp. 1-39.
78. Banta, pp. 192-206.
79. Leader, "The Boston Lady as a Work of Art." See also her "Antifeminism in the Paintings of the Boston School," Arts Magazine 56 (January 1982), pp. 112-119.
80. Leader, pp. 340-341, 18-19, 20.
81. Robertson, p. 13.
82. Roth, "The New England Kitchen Exhibit," p. 182.
83. Degler, pp. 298-327.
84. Degler, pp. 33-46, 66-85, 178-278.
85. Lippincott's figures are somewhat more active than many of those that Leader analyzes but they display the same dreamy expression.
86. Kerber, p. 27.
87. Kerber, p. 28.
88. Elisabeth Donaghy Garrett, At Home: The American Family 1750-1870, (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1990); Edgar deN. Mayhew and Minor Myers, Jr., A Documentary History of American Interiors From the Colonial Era to 1915, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1980); Harold L. Peterson, American Interiors From Colonial Times to the Late Victorians, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971); Mario Praz, An Illustrated History of Furnishing, From the Renaissance to the 20th Century, trans. William Weaver (New York: G. Braziller, 1964); Praz, An Illustrated History of Interior Decoration: From Pompeii to Art Nouveau, trans. William Weaver (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1982); Peter Thornton, Authentic Decor: The Domestic Interior 1620-1920, (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1984).

89. Peterson, p. XIV. He specifically refers to images of blacks' homes and of slum dwellings.

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