



## Reading Boyishly: Roland Barthes, J. M. Barrie, Jacques Henri Lartigue, Marcel Proust, and D. W. Winnicott

By Carol Mavor



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An intricate text filled to the brim with connotations of desire, home, and childhood—nests, food, beds, birds, fairies, bits of string, ribbon, goodnight kisses, appetites sated and denied—*Reading Boyishly* is a story of mothers and sons, loss and longing, writing and photography. In this homage to four boyish men and one boy—J. M. Barrie, Roland Barthes, Marcel Proust, D. W. Winnicott, and the young photographer Jacques Henri Lartigue—Carol Mavor embraces what some have anxiously labeled an over-attachment to the mother. Here, the maternal is a cord (unsevered) to the night-light of boyish reading.

To “read boyishly” is to covet the mother’s body as a home both lost and never lost, to desire her as only a son can, as only a body that longs for, but will never become Mother, can. Nostalgia (from the Greek *nostos* = return to native land, and *algos* = suffering or grief) is at the heart of the labor of boyish reading, which suffers in its love affair with the mother. The writers and the photographer that Mavor lovingly considers are boyish readers *par excellence*: Barrie, creator of Peter Pan, the boy who refused to grow up; Barthes, the “professor of desire” who lived with or near his mother until her death; Proust, the modernist master of nostalgia; Winnicott, therapist to “good enough” mothers; and Lartigue, the child photographer whose images invoke ghostlike memories of a past that is at once comforting and painful.

Drawing attention to the interplay between writing and vision, *Reading Boyishly* is stuffed full with more than 200 images. At once delicate and powerful, the book is a meditation on the threads that unite mothers and sons and on the writers and artists who create from those threads art that captures an irretrievable past.

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## Reading Boyishly: Roland Barthes, J. M. Barrie, Jacques Henri Lartigue, Marcel Proust, and D. W. Winnicott By Carol Mavor Bibliography

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

“*Reading Boyishly* is as complete and mesmerizing a work of reflection on art, time, gender, and family (mothers anyhow) as I have ever seen. It is a remarkable and rare invitation to find ways to extend our nostalgia into a positive mode of being that does not close off the future at all but relocates it within desire.”—**James R. Kincaid**, author of *Erotic Innocence*

“From time to time a book comes along that totally changes the way we look at things in the humanities and does it less by manifestos than by quietly doing its work or singing its song in another voice. Anyone taking the time to look into Carol Mavor’s fabulous meditation on Edwardian culture and its discontents will not have to ponder such problems as the relation of history and literature, fact and fiction, the image and the text, reading and looking, past and present, and even nature and culture in abstract, theoretical ways. Carol Mavor has first dreamed what she has then deeply studied and then dreamed it again, for her readers. This book is performed rather than merely written. And it shows how to do a new kind of cultural historiography that renders most of the theoretical questions raised by postmodernism quite moot.”—**Hayden White**, University Professor of History of Consciousness, Emeritus, University of California, Santa Cruz, and Professor of Comparative Literature, Stanford University

“It is rare for such an informative book to be so evocative, and indeed for such a wide-ranging book to be at once so subtle and so precise. *Reading Boyishly* allows mothers and sons to be as close as they are—as close as they somewhere know themselves to be; and allows that this relationship is an aesthetic education of astounding possibilities. Carol Mavor gives the idea of close reading a new genealogy. She has written a marvelous book.”—**Adam Phillips**, psychoanalyst and author of *Side Effects*

#### From the Publisher

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From the Back Cover

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**Daniel Smith:**

The book untitled Reading Boyishly: Roland Barthes, J. M. Barrie, Jacques Henri Lartigue, Marcel Proust, and D. W. Winnicott contain a lot of information on the idea. The writer explains the girl idea with easy way. The language is very clear and understandable all the people, so do definitely not worry, you can easy to read this. The book was published by famous author. The author will bring you in the new age of literary works. You can actually read this book because you can continue reading your smart phone, or device, so you can read the book in anywhere and anytime. In a situation you wish to purchase the e-book, you can start their official web-site along with order it. Have a nice go through.

**Chad Brown:**

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