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Fetching the Jingle Along: Mark Twain's *Slovenly Peter*

by Susanna Ashton and Amy Jean Petersen

"Poetry is a sandy road to travel, and the only way to pull through at all is to lay your grammar down and take hold with both hands."

—Mark Twain

Der Struwwelpeter, which has been variously translated as *Slovenly Peter*, *Shock-headed Peter*, and *Tousle-Headed Peter*, is a collection of eleven children's poems written by Dr. Heinrich Hoffmann in 1844. In its assorted translations, *Struwwelpeter* is arguably the best-known children's book of the nineteenth century. Few nurseries in Europe or North America were without a tattered copy of it, although the work was not originally intended for a public audience. Indeed, Hoffmann was always somewhat embarrassed by its great success: "Those bad boys got further around the world than I did. . . . They learned all kinds of languages that even I don't understand. . . . it is quite natural that one would reprint them with enthusiasm in North America," he wrote.¹ As a doctor who frequently had to make house calls on children, Hoffmann created a repertoire of rhymes and pictures to distract them during his visits. One Christmas, discouraged by the selection of children's books available to him, he wrote out his own verses as a gift for his young son. At the urging of friends, Hoffmann published 1,500 copies of his Christmas book under the title *Lustige Geschichten und drollige Bilder* (Jolly Tales and Funny Pictures), although it soon became known simply by the name of its most famous character. Within four weeks the first edition was completely sold out. Hundreds of authorized and unauthorized versions began to appear around the world, and the success of *Struwwelpeter* was born.

Nearly fifty years later, in 1891, these morbidly humorous poems caught the attention of America's foremost humorist, Mark Twain, who translated the collection as *Slovenly Peter* while visiting Germany with his family. Some investments having recently failed, the family was short of funds, and translating *Struwwelpeter* may have seemed an excellent way to earn money fast. These hopes were reasonable, for despite his financial ups and downs, Twain's name was renowned throughout Europe and the United States. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876) had been a great success, and Twain had become well known as a children's writer. Combining his name with *Struwwelpeter* must have sounded like a sure thing. On 27 October 1891 Twain wrote to his publisher, "I have worked myself to death the last 3 days and nights translating . . . the most celebrated child's book in Europe" (*Letters* 287). He had hoped to publish *Slovenly Peter* in time for the Christmas shopping season, but was quickly frustrated by copyright problems. Twain's *Slovenly Peter* was not published until it appeared in a limited edition in 1935, twenty-five years after his death.

Commercial considerations aside, Twain's interest in *Struwwelpeter* is not surprising. Hoffmann's poems focus upon and perhaps even glamorize bad children, a theme that had a lifelong fascination for Twain. Hence Twain highlighted aspects of *Struwwelpeter* that had gone unremarked in earlier English-language versions, added some of his own embellishments, and

succeeded in creating a work of energy and wit that may have better reflected the tenor of the original Hoffmann poems than did many of the more widely published translations.

Full of graphic illustrations and grim humor, Hoffmann's poems are cautionary tales with a twist. Unlike the standard Sunday School morality so commonly found in nineteenth-century American children's works, *Struwwelpeter* features violence and gore in conjunction with what might be termed black humor. Moreover, Hoffmann's illustrations gave *Struwwelpeter* a surreal, even loony, quality. Occasionally categorized as nonsense and sometimes placed in the realm of cautionary tales, *Struwwelpeter* has consistently been hard to define. Even so, it has been repeatedly hailed as Germany's greatest contribution to children's literature since the Brothers Grimm (Hürlimann 62). In her exhaustive analysis of *Struwwelpeter*, critic Marie-Luise Könniker addresses the debate surrounding the effect of this book on German culture; some have argued that because of the large number of people who had contact with the text at an impressionable age, Hoffmann's bad children might have had a greater influence on German consciousness than *Faust* or even the *Communist Manifesto*.²

In Hoffmann's poems, misbehaving children meet with fates generally construed as disproportionate to their crimes. The "Daumenlutscher Bub" (thumb-sucking boy) who disregards his mother's warnings has his thumbs cut off by a mysterious tailor who wields a giant pair of scissors. The colorful accompanying illustration features blood spurting from the little boy's hands. Little Pauline plays with matches and thus burns to death. In another instance, pudgy young Kaspar refuses to eat his soup, and the illustrations show him withering into a stick figure. The depiction of a grave with his name on it indicates his final fate.³

Not all the poems are so grim. Hanns Stare-in-the-Air, for example, simply fails to look where he is walking and falls into the water. He emerges wiser and wetter, but none the worse for wear. The title poem does not even have a clear story; it merely describes a victim of bad grooming. Underneath the famous illustration of a defiant boy with foot-long fingernails and wild bushy hair, Twain writes:

See this frowzy "cratur"—
Pah! it's Struwwelpeter!
On his fingers rusty,
On his tow-head musty,
Scissors seldom come;
Lets his talons grow a year,
Hardly ever combs his hair,—
Do any loathe him? Some!
They hail him "Modern satyr—
Disgusting Struwwelpeter."

But the overall tenor of the collection is indeed one of crime and punishment. Bad things happen to bad children. This circumstance does not necessarily mean that Hoffmann

intended his book to be didactic.⁴ As Charles Frey and John W. Griffith argue in *The Literary Heritage of Childhood*, “Hoffmann’s attitude toward the moral lessons of his poems is difficult to locate” (51). On the one hand, it seems too simplistic to read the poems as a strict mockery of nineteenth-century morality, for however absurd the consequences of misbehavior, in each case a child is punished. Indeed, Hoffmann’s introductory poem states that good children shall be rewarded with “picture books” and that “naughty, romping girls and boys” deserve no gifts at all. This introduction, if taken as a guide for approaching the poems, suggests the standard bourgeois approach to nineteenth-century child rearing. For all its nonsense humor and subversive qualities, it seems probable that many adults purchased *Struwwelpeter* thinking it a straightforward albeit unusually entertaining example of didactic literature. On the other hand, Hoffmann’s own writings explicitly deny the didactic intent (Müller, “Struwwelpetriaden” 155). He thought the stories were funny and belonged to a greater tradition, one that also included the Grimms’ fairy tales.

As might be expected, contemporary critics take different positions on the intent and effects of these stories.⁵ Margaret Higonnet, for example, posits Hoffmann as a parodist. She argues that since the purpose of writing *Struwwelpeter* was to keep children entertained and distracted during the doctor’s visits, a strictly didactic text would not serve his purposes. Thus the pictures in particular were “designed to link him to children” and “to enable him to cross the barrier erected by punitive adults” (133). This alignment of child and Hoffmann against the adult world suggests to Higonnet a carefully posed text that works against the didactic tradition. Several critics share this view, notably Helmut Müller, who finds that children notice the “surreality” of the figures and thus appreciate the humor Hoffmann intended.⁶

In contrast, Thomas Freeman admits that it is “surprising that a doctor interested in psychiatric medicine would produce a book which would deliberately frighten young children and increase their anxiety” (808). Nevertheless, Freeman concludes that this is indeed what occurred, even though Hoffmann’s sympathetic view of his own patients might suggest—erroneously—that he “opposed the popular Victorian practice of using threats to scare children into their ‘proper’ place, where they are to be seen and not heard.” Freeman even argues that if Hoffmann’s patients were quieted by the pictures he drew for them, it was only because they were probably “shocked” into “a state of stupified horror” (809). This view chimes with Alice Miller’s well-known stance on pedagogy of any kind: “My antipedagogic position is not directed against a specific type of pedagogical ideology but against all pedagogical ideology per se, even if it is of an anti-authoritarian nature. . . . all advice that pertains to raising children betrays more or less clearly the numerous, variously clothed needs of the *adult*” (96-97).

But if we consider Hoffmann’s own version of what happened, we see the likelihood that the children were indeed entertained, because they were able to follow the story as it visually unfolded. Hoffmann would take a notebook out of his bag, tear out a page, and quickly sketch a small boy, telling his young patient the story of how the rascal would not let anyone cut his hair or his nails. Hoffmann would keep drawing until nothing was left to be seen of the original figure but strands of

hair and long clawlike nails. That would enthrall and confuse the little patient into an awed and watchful silence. In the meantime, Hoffmann would have measured the patient’s pulse and temperature.⁷ He professed to thus “attain [his] goal” (calming down the child), which was “achieved” not by terrorizing children, but by capturing their interest. Hoffmann himself believed that his was a playful process: “The wild malcontent becomes calm, the tears dry and the doctor can playfully fulfill his obligations.”⁸ It is not until later in the nineteenth century that these stories begin to seem morbid to a German audience. Müller tells us that nineteenth-century children experienced “unadulterated glee” when looking at Hoffmann’s figures, that they were able to recognize easily the exaggeration in the figures, and that therefore they did not read them as a serious threat (“Erfolg” 60).

Struwwelpeter’s appeal to Twain may have lain precisely in this ambiguity. If it was a collection of subversive poetry, it was supremely entertaining. If solely a collection of cautionary tales, it deserved attention for its shameless techniques. That it was not clearly in one camp or the other likely contributed to the “mysterious fascination” it exerted upon him (see Twain’s “Translator’s Note”). Moreover, Twain further complicated the issue of *Struwwelpeter*’s didactic intent (or lack thereof) by emphasizing much of the violence skimmed over in the anonymous earlier English translation used in most legitimate and illegitimate editions. Twain’s version is starkly unlike that found in so many British and American nurseries. In the popular English version, for instance, the dog is “whipp’d” until “sore.” Twain, however, emphasizes Frederick’s nasty behavior with gusto, writing:

He whacked him here, he whacked him there,
He whacked with all his might and main,
He made him howl and dance with pain.

Although full of awkward rhymes and structures, Twain’s renditions may be seen as far more faithful to the *spirit* of the original illustrations and text than the previous translations had been; his difference from the standard English version will strike many readers as all to the good. The language of Twain’s work, however, often differs dramatically from the German. He elaborates extensively on scenes that receive little, if any, treatment in the original German version, presumably a reason for his decision to describe his version of Hoffmann’s poems as “freely translated” (11). Indeed, one critic has gone so far as to accuse Twain of having written verses using the illustrations, rather than the German, as his guide (Krumpelmann 20).⁹ Twain’s self-proclaimed poor command of German—he pokes fun at his own linguistic deficiencies in his essay “The Awful German Language”—makes this criticism believable, but the illustrations are so compelling that one can hardly condemn him for having leaned so heavily upon them.

In Hoffmann’s original version, each poem was accompanied by a series of pictures, usually framed or connected by borders and lattices that would weave themselves in and around each poem. These frames were occasionally omitted from pirated versions, but their fanciful use of vines, twigs, and in one case an actual picture frame, served to integrate the poems vividly with the images. This integration was so important to Hoffmann that he tightly controlled the reproduction of his

work within Germany and, as far as he could, in other countries. (It was this firm copyright control that presumably frustrated Twain's plans for publication.) Fortunately, most pirated versions recognized the significance of Hoffmann's illustrations. Pirates tampered with his drawings and did occasionally omit the carefully designed borders, but rarely replaced the artwork wholesale. In fact, *Struwwelpeter* was probably successful in its many translations precisely because of its vivid images. Verses may have faltered, but the pictures could speak for themselves.¹⁰

"The Story of Ugly Frederick" provides a typical example of how Twain would infuse life into his translations, using the illustrations as a guide. Frederick is a cruel and violent child who beats a dog. The dog, in revenge, finally bites Frederick. Frederick is put to bed, and the dog sits downstairs eating all of Frederick's dinner. Hoffmann writes:

Der Hund an Friedrichs Tischchen saß,
wo er den grossen Kuchen aß;
aß auch die gute Leberwurst
und trank den Wein für seinen Durst.
Die Peitsche hat er mitgebracht
und nimmt sie sorglich sehr in acht.¹¹

A literal translation of the first four lines would read: "The dog sat at Friedrich's little table, / where he ate the big cake; / [he] also ate the good liverwurst / and drank the wine for his thirst." In the popular English version we hear the story rhymed:

But good dog Tray is happy now;
He has no time to say "bow-wow"
He seats himself in Frederick's chair
And laughs to see the nice things there;
The soup he swallows, sup by sup,—
And eats the pies and puddings up.

As Philip Hofer points out in his introduction to Twain's *Slovenly Peter*, "as anyone can see, in the picture [are] a fine liver sausage, a big cake, and red wine glowing in a carafe and glass!" (8). The anonymous Victorian editor/censor/translator apparently decided to water the wine down and substitute pies and puddings. Twain, as might be expected, had no such scruples about using the illustrations as his guide. He describes the triumph of the dog with enthusiasm, if not with grace:

He hangs the whip upon the chair,
And mounts aloft and seats him there;
He sips the wine, so rich and red,
And feels it swimming in his head,
He munches grateful at the cake,
And wishes he might never wake
From this debauch; while think by think
His thoughts dream on, and link by link
The liver-sausage disappears,
And his hurt soul relents in tears.

The comparative forcefulness and vivid imagery of Twain's translation may be a reflection of the more American nature of his work, his own artistic inclinations as a writer, or more progressive ideas about what children were and were not

equipped to handle. Of course, his concerns were not always consistent. Twain suggested to his publishers that they might want to remove the illustration of the chamber pot from under Frederick's bed: "It is too frank . . . though I don't see any real harm about it," he wrote, perhaps meaning too frank for prudish Americans, although perfectly acceptable by European standards and his own (*Letters*, 287-88).

In the popular translation circulated within the United States and Britain, the narrator is unobtrusive. In Twain's version, however, the storyteller and/or translator are continually intruding and involving themselves in the reader's experience. Alongside excruciatingly painful couplets, such as "The dog's his heir, and this estate / That dog inherits, and will ate," Twain adds paratextual explanatory notes that were published on the same page as the poem in the 1935 edition. On the "will ate" problem Twain instructs,

My child, never use an expression like that. It is utterly unprincipled and outrageous to say ate when you mean eat, and you must never do it except when crowded for a rhyme. As you grow up you will find that poetry is a sandy road to travel, and the only way to pull through at all is to lay your grammar down and take hold with both hands. M.T. (15)

In another poem, after writing "He took his game-bag, powder, gun / And fiercely to the fields he spun," Twain remarks, "Baby, you must take notice of this awkward form of speech and never use it. Except in translating. M.T."

These notes do more than extricate Twain from grammatical culpability while entertaining his audience; they also introduce a warm and personal element, picking up Hoffmann's intimate tone and exaggerating it still further. Although Twain speaks, as Hoffmann does, directly to the child/(adult) reader, Hoffmann speaks to a general, informal "you" ("Du siehst hier, wie schwarz sie sind") or to a group of "dear children" ("Seht, ihr lieben Kinder, seht, wie's dem Philipp weiter geht!"). Twain, on the other hand, addresses what seems to be a *specific* child, taking the adult/child relationship beyond the text and into the world of real actions and consequences. His humorous and self-reflexive critique adds verisimilitude and intimacy. Thus instead of leaving it in the "nursery rhyme" genre, Twain's margin notes place the work in a category all its own. Twain's narrator's voice is personalized—he even adds his own initials. Hence the Twain voice seems more real than the generic adult advice-giver/storyteller tone Hoffmann uses. Furthermore, there is the implication that the child reader was one of Twain's own children. Since Twain presented this book to his children on Christmas day (just as Hoffmann did) in 1891, the direct address takes on an authenticity, which does not at all diminish its charm. As *Slovenly Peter* was intended for the very young—Twain guessed "3-7 years old"—it also seems likely that Twain envisioned adults reading it aloud to their children, while privately enjoying the ironic humor aligning the translator's frustrations with those of parents in the age-old problem of reconciling words with actions: "Do as I say not as I do" (*Letters* 287). The "My child" and "Baby" would have created, in any case, an interactive reading experience for adult and child.

To other poems Twain added cultural and period

references. These references may have been designed to make the work more contemporary, more American, or perhaps just more funny. As Dixon Wecter points out, Twain "improves" on the German (36). Wecter does not elaborate on this issue, but it is clear that among Twain's innovations are amusing and distinctive American literary references. In German, Konrad's thumbs are cut off and "Hei! Da schreit der Konrad sehr." (Literally, "Hei! Thus Konrad screams very much.") Twain tells us that "While that lad his tongue unfurled / [he] fired a yell heard 'round the world." As might be expected, this is in stark contrast to the pallid "Snip! Snap! Snip! the scissors go / And Conrad cries out—Oh! Oh! Oh!" of the popular nineteenth-century version.

Similarly, Twain's "The Tale of the Terrible Hunter Man" incorporates American slang. This story differs from the others in that no particular child is involved and no particular misdeed is punished, although as it involves active and punitive animal players it bears a strong family resemblance to verses such as "Ugly Frederick." Here a rabbit steals the glasses and gun of a sleeping hunter and chases him simply because he is a hunter. In German the story explains:

Er legte sich ins grüne Gras;
das alles sah der kleine Has.
Und als der Jäger schnarcht' und schlief,
der Has ganz heimlich zu ihm lief,
und nahm die Flint' und auch die Brill',
und schlich davon ganz leis' und still.

The popular version, "The Story of the Man That Went Out Shooting," describes the scene as follows:

And, while he slept like any top,
The little hare came, hop, hop, hop,
Took gun and spectacles, and then
On her hind legs went off again.

Far more vibrant are Twain's hunter and rabbit, described in colloquial American:

And as he dreamed and snored and slept,
The furry rascal to him crept,
And stole his gun and smooched his specs,
And hied him hence with these effects.

In "The Tale of Soupy Kaspar" (which the popular translation calls "The Story of Augustus Who Would Not Have Any Soup"), Twain does not even attempt to find equivalents for emphatic terms such as "gar."¹² Instead, he constructs his own playful references, and concludes:

The fourth day came, and here you see
How doth this little busy bee
He weighed perhaps a half a pound—
Death came and tucked him in the ground.

The "busy bee" from the famous poem "Against Idleness and Mischief" (1715) is obviously another inside joke for the English-speaking audience. Most nineteenth-century English or American children would have recognized the busy bee poem as the

didactic and often satirized work that it was. Twain's jab here is thus especially appropriate in the context of *Slovenly Peter*.¹³

Twain's translations are easily criticized for their inaccuracy and general awkwardness. Nevertheless, they retain a charm evocative of Ogden Nash or Hilaire Belloc. Some of his rhymes are quite clever, or at least mischievous (modern satyr/Struwwelpeter; unfurled/around the world; smeller/umbrella; pawses/lawses). He occasionally manages to incorporate German (Waves his shears, the heartless grub / And calls for Dawmen-lutscher-bub), onomatopoeia (ker-slam, ker-blam, ker-blim), alliteration (hied him hence), and internal rhyme. His version also exploits the typeface to hyperbolic effect (And fled; and *fled!* and *FLED!* and *FLED!*). The popular version is frequently included in anthologies of nonsense, but Twain's version would be even more appropriate. Compare the cries of the cats in the popular version of the story of the child who played with matches with those in Twain's rendering. The popular reads:

The pussy cats saw this,
And said: "Oh, naughty, naughty Miss!"
And stretch'd their claws
And rais'd their paws:
"Me-ow, mee-o, me-ow, me-o,
You'll burn to death, if you do so."

While Twain writes:

And Mintz and Mountz, the catties,
Lift up their little patties,
They threaten with their pawses:
"It is against the lawses!
Me-yow! Me-yo! Me-yow! Me-yo!
Drop it or you are ashes, O!"

Twain's poetry may not have been as controlled as the more popular verses, but it was in keeping with his stated goal: maintaining the "jingle" of the work. As Twain wrote in his introduction,

It was Dr. Hoffmann's opinion that the charm of the book lay not in the subjects or the pictures, but wholly in the jingle. That may be true, for rhymes that jingle felicitously are very dear to a child's ear. In this translation I have done my best to fetch the jingle along. (9)

The *Slovenly Peter* venture may have been Twain's major foray into the world of translation, but it was nowhere near his sole attempt at poetry. The author of more than 120 poems (Scott 2), he wrote verse throughout his life, some comic, some serious. His novels are full of characters who write or recite poetry (the Duke's version of Hamlet's Soliloquy in *Huckleberry Finn* [1885] is just one memorable example). Twain also wrote parodies of Shakespeare, Swift, Poe, and others, with the sentimental poets being his favorite target. In a survey of Twain's poetry, Arthur L. Scott observes that in Twain's later years, "there was scarcely a major theme of his prose which did not find a voice in his poetry" (38). The verses of *Slovenly Peter* share

many traits with his other poetic works: the humor, the difficult moral stances, the penchant for explanatory or pseudo-apologetic notes, and the imaginative manipulation of grammar. Nevertheless, *Slovenly Peter* stands alone as a collection of poetry Twain intended for publication. Despite its frivolous nature, this translation featured themes and ideas that Twain had been toying with for years.¹⁴

In 1865, Twain wrote a series of short articles and stories for various publications while he was in California, several of which exhibit a Struwwelpetrian humor. A pair of these articles, titled "Advice for Good Little Boys" and "Advice for Good Little Girls," featured cynical guidance such as "You ought never take anything that don't belong to you—if you can not carry it off" and "You ought never to 'sass' old people—unless they 'sass' you first." These sketches, along with "The Story of the Bad Little Boy That Bore a Charmed Life," have been described as a "faint but intriguing anticipation of Clemens' lifelong interest in satirizing 'Sunday School Fiction'" (Branch and Hirst in Twain, *Early Works* 241).¹⁵ *Slovenly Peter*, coming after *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn*, may thus be seen as another manifestation of Twain's determination to show that bad boys are more interesting than good ones. The final poem in the collection, "The Story of Flying Robert," is a particularly telling example. This poem tells the story of a boy who goes outside in the rain and is carried away in a storm. Frey and Griffith sensibly ask why flying is seen as a punishment when in most children's literature "flying away is a distinct privilege" (58). Flying Robert, like Huck Finn, gets to escape social institutions: we see a church receding in the distance as he is carried farther and farther away. Robert may be miserably wet, but he is having an adventure, one that would greatly have appealed to Twain himself.

English-language *Struwwelpeters* have been reprinted again and again in nonsense anthologies, often alongside Edward Lear's limericks. In most cases, it is the anonymous earlier version that has been disseminated. It seems a pity that the Twain translation, with its distinctly idiosyncratic and American nature, has never been given much of an opportunity to educate, entertain, or corrupt young—and old—readers.

NOTES

¹⁴"Die bösen Buben sind weiter auf der Erde herumgekommen als ich. . . . Sie haben allerlei Sprachen gelernt, die ich selbst nicht verstehe . . . daß man sie in Nordamerika lustig nachdruckt, ist ganz selbstverständlich" (qtd. in Vogt 11).

²⁴[Ein] Buch . . . das das Bewußtsein der Deutschen vermutlich nachhaltiger geprägt hat als der *Faust* oder das *Kommunistische Manifest*" (1).

³In her introduction to the 1935 edition, Twain's daughter Clara recalls that her father "had always had a soft spot in his heart for Kaspar, because he too, did not care for German soup" (3).

⁴For further critical discussion of *Struwwelpeter's* mirroring of bourgeois ideology and discussion of the book's didactic effects, see Könneker, Flitner, and Vogt.

⁵Müller ("Erfolg" 94-95) offers various critical opinions on *Struwwelpeter*. Horst Kunze, for example, throws up his hands

after looking at a century's worth of pedagogical/psychological arguments for and against the book, and concludes: "Es lohnt freilich nicht mehr, sich mit dem ganzen pädagogischen und psychologischen Wust zu befassen, der im Für und Wider um Hoffmanns Kinderbuch aufgetürmt worden ist. Sicher würde sich der Dr. med. Heinrich Hoffmann köstlich amüsiert haben, wenn er hätte lesen können, daß ein ganz Gelehrter unter unsern Zeitgenossen herausgefunden hat, daß eine Verwandtschaft zwischen seinem Frankfurter Struwwelpeter und dem indischen Gott Schiwa, dem Zerstörer, bestehen soll." ("It is hardly worth the trouble to deal with the deluge of pedagogical and psychological work that has built up around the Hoffmann book, both for and against it. Dr. Hoffmann would certainly have been heartily amused if he had been able to read that a very educated person among our contemporaries has discovered that a relationship exists between his Frankfurt Struwwelpeter and the Indian God Shiva, the destroyer.")

⁶Elke and Jochen Vogt have pointed out, however, that Müller's articles avoid such judgment calls by focusing on *Struwwelpeter's* publishing history—which seems to them to be the responsibility of an archivist. In concentrating on the scattered political parodies and virtually ignoring the impact of the original text on masses of readers, Müller (and his editor Klaus Doderer) avoid confrontation with the "critical" aspect of critical discourse on pedagogical issues in children's literature.

⁷"Da nahm ich rasch das Notizbuch aus der Tasche, ein Blatt wird herausgerissen, ein kleiner Bube mit dem Bleistift schnell hingezeichnet und nun erzählt, wie sich der Schlingel nicht die Haare, nicht die Nägel schneiden läßt; die Haare wachsen, die Nägel werden länger . . . und immer länger zeichne ich Haare und Nägel, bis zuletzt von der ganzen Figur nichts mehr zu sehen ist als Haarsträhne und Nägelklauen. Das frappt den kleinen Desperaten derart, daß er schweigt, hinschaut, und mittlerweile weiß ich, wie es mit dem Pulse steht, wie seine Temperatur sich verhält. . . . und der Zweck ist erreicht" (Hoffmann, qtd. in Könneker 15).

⁸"Der wilde Oppositionsmann wird ruhig, die Thränen trocknen, und der Arzt kann spielend seine Pflicht thun" (Hoffmann, qtd. in Müller, "Struwwelpetriaden" 147).

⁹John Krumpelmann writes, "In general, the mercurial Mark seems to have been unable to restrain an impulse to be funnier than the original. . . . although the first couplet of each story is, as a rule, a real translation of the original, the remainder of the story diverges from the German and is characterized by padding . . . approximation, and more or less free invention" (20 n.88).

¹⁰Much work has been done on the popular imagery and illustrations of Hoffman's work. Ségolène Le Men, for instance, raises questions about a possible French source of the Struwwelpeter theme and image.

¹¹German quotations of *Struwwelpeter* have been taken from *Der Struwwelpeter Polyglott*.

¹²Which means both "(not) at all" (*gar*) and "thoroughly cooked/ready" (to be eaten): "Am vierten Tage endlich gar/der Kaspar

wie ein Fädchen war." ("On the fourth day, finally ready / Kaspar was like a thin thread.")

¹³*Struwwelpeter* is frequently compared to *Alice in Wonderland* in terms of its widespread impact upon the nineteenth-century child. Twain's use of Isaac Watts's 1715 poem may be a tip of his hat to Carroll, another parodist of these verses and an author he greatly admired.

¹⁴With regard to Twain's moral stance, consider "The Story of the Young Black Chap" in his *Slovenly Peter*, a translation of Hoffmann's "Die Geschichte von den schwarzen Buben." In this poem a group of white children is punished for teasing a black child. In light of the perpetual discussions concerning Twain's attitude and approach to racial matters, critics might do well to consider this part of the *Struwwelpeter* collection, although the issue of Twain and transcultural race attitudes lies beyond the scope of this paper. For an example of German critical opinion, see Vogt (17-18).

¹⁵A useful discussion of Twain's interest in "bad-boy" literature can be found in Stone; see also Blair.

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