

This paper recovers a history of child labor in the Ragged Schools of Victorian Britain, and in doing so reveals the unexpected relationship between two very different types of domestic space: doll's house and tenement. My primary sources come from *Household Words*, the *Ragged School Union*, and other periodicals that document housing reformer Octavia Hill's early career as a teacher in London's Ragged Schools; specifically, she taught a group of female workers aged eight to seventeen to produce doll's house furniture for "ready customers among the juvenile aristocracy and gentry," to quote *Chambers's Edinburgh Journal*. I argue that through much of the nineteenth century, the educational value of the doll's house was understood as deriving from the object's ability to teach lessons in temporality. The divisions of the home anticipate both short and long term cycles of time: the daily pattern beginning and ending in the bedroom, or the longer cycles beginning in the nursery and lying-in room. Children required access to regulated and delimited domestic spaces in order to form a viable identity. In examining the relationship between Hill's experiences as a teacher in the Ragged Schools and as manager of a housing estate in London, I argue that the self-contained model of self instantiated in the doll's house was later used by Hill as a compensatory pedagogical object for children whose homes in urban slums bore little resemblance to these miniature domestic havens. To grow up in a one-room home was to grow up unaware of the careful segmentation of time occurring in a house with many rooms, and this spatial deprivation was conceived of as a kind of temporal, and consequently developmental, irregularity. The doll's house models spatial, and thus temporal differentiation so that working-class children might learn to conceive of futurity.