

MA Children's Literature

The world-famous MA run by CIRCL



MA Children's Literature

'Studying the Children's Literature MA at Reading was a hugely challenging and rewarding experience for me. When I began the course I had no idea how much my own thinking, reading and argument would develop, ... I would recommend the Children's Literature MA to anybody who wishes to develop their critical thinking in any subject area, not just Children's Literature. The reading and analytical skills that I developed on the MA are now central to the argument of my PhD thesis.'

Helen Ainslie
MA student 2003–4

The world-famous MA Children's Literature, run by CIRCL, is the oldest accredited degree in the field in Britain (since 1984), and is taught by specialists in Children's Literature, whose research is published internationally.

CIRCL also runs the largest PhD programme in the highly research-rated Department of English Language and Literature of the University of Reading, and every year MA and PhD students from all over the world join together in CIRCL's inspirational and cutting-edge research environment to produce globally-leading, unique and original research in this fascinating and burgeoning field.

The University of Reading has unique archive-holdings relating to Children's Literature, including the Nineteenth-Century Special Collection, School Story books, and publishers' archives, and students on the degree receive training on how to make use of these archives for their work.

Our course

MA Children's Literature

12-month (full-time) or 24-month (part-time) course, consisting of six modules taught over nine months. Students write one assessed essay per module of around 3000 words (six essays in total). At degree end students write a 20,000 word dissertation which is completed during the three summer months. Students receive one-to-one specialist supervision for their dissertation, as well as attending dissertation-preparation classes.

The six taught modules consist of three core modules and three option modules.

Core modules – Theory of children's literature, Nineteenth-century children's literature and Twenty- and Twenty-first century children's literature.

Option modules – chosen by students together in advance of start of degree, possible options: Myth and folktale, Popular forms of children's fiction, Children's film, Radio, Television, Commonwealth children's literature, North American children's literature.

Staff

Professor Karín Lesnik-Oberstein

Professor Lesnik-Oberstein is the Director of CIRCL and the MA. She has published extensively on children's literature and historical and cultural constructions of childhood, including in her books *Children's Literature: Criticism and the Fictional Child* (Clarendon Press of Oxford University Press, 1994) and *On Having an Own Child: Reproductive Technologies and the Cultural Construction of Childhood* (Karnac Books, 2007) and in her edited volumes (with other CIRCL staff contributing) including: *Children in Culture: Approaches to Childhood* (Palgrave, 1998); *Children in Literature* (a special section of the *Yearbook of English Studies*, 2002), and *Children's Literature: New Approaches* (Palgrave, 2004). A follow-up volume, *Children in Culture Revisited: Further Approaches to Childhood* is forthcoming from Palgrave in 2011.

'Be prepared to completely challenge the way you think about interpreting texts and media'; 'take this course if you want to go for a doctorate and actually do something original ... there's no program like it in the States.'

American student,
MA student 2008–9:



'I gained much more than I had expected from the MA. The course was not just about children's literature; it led me to reconsider the way I read, think, and argue. It prepared me for my PhD research and had an influence on my whole life. I can sincerely say that the MA Children's Literature at Reading is worth attending, even if you need to travel all the way from the other side of the earth (which is more or less what I did, as an international student).'

Yuko Ashitagawa
MA student 2001-2

MA Children's Literature

i For more information, please contact:

Mrs Jan Cox

University of Reading
Whiteknights
Reading RG6 6AA
United Kingdom

j.f.cox@reading.ac.uk

www.reading.ac.uk/circl

Dr Sue Walsh

Dr Walsh has published on theoretical issues in children's literature in her book *Kipling's Children's Literature: Language, Identity and Constructions of Childhood* (Ashgate, 2010) and in articles and chapters on animals and childhood, children's literature and irony, children's literature and biography, and childhood and the Gothic.

Dr Neil Cocks

Dr Cocks has published on theoretical issues in the philosophy and policies of education and teaching in his book *Student-Centred: Education, Freedom and the Idea of Audience* (Inkermen Press/Axis Series, 2009) and on children's literature and childhood in his articles and chapters on ideas of child-readers, and language, sexuality and death in children's fiction.

For more information

Contact Mrs Jan Cox, postgraduate secretary
j.f.cox@reading.ac.uk

For information on our staff, admissions procedures and requirements and careers or research after the MA please go to our website

www.reading.ac.uk/circl



THE QUEEN'S
ANNIVERSARY PRIZES
2009 & 2011