



INTRODUCTION.....	2
FORMAT.....	4
WORK LOAD.....	4
VENUE.....	4
SCHEDULE.....	4
Wednesday 22 January 2025.....	5
Introductions and multimodality.....	5
Thursday 23 January 2025.....	5
Ideology.....	5
Friday 24 January 2025.....	5
Fanfiction and child-authored texts.....	5
KEYNOTE LECTURES.....	6
Rosalyn Borst.....	6
Farriba Schulz.....	9
Jenny Duggan.....	12
COURSE REGULATIONS & ASSESSMENT.....	14



INTRODUCTION

Children's and Young Adult (YA) literature is literature, but it is also visual art, an educational tool, a socialising device and more. It is literature by adults for children, but it can also be literature by children. The many complex layers behind its seemingly simple facade allow for multiple ways of reading and invite diverse methodological approaches. For instance, Max Velthuis' *Frog* series can be seen as a collection of simple stories about an anthropomorphised frog, yet deeper studies of the books show the complex way through which the image-texts together communicate and explain complex emotions like grief, xenophobia and love, and encourage empathy for children up to four years old. The very nature of the (intended) audience means that researchers must use methodologies specific to the field of children's literature. For instance, the multimodal nature of picturebooks poses particular semiotic and cognitive challenges in their interpretation, therefore requiring specific approaches particular to the genre. The young adult-dominated digital sphere of fanfiction provides avenues of empowered franchise interactions hitherto unknown in mainstream publishing. The study of these texts, which are often written by young (and sometimes marginalised) people, raises several ethical issues that influence the choice of methodological approaches. Finally, the disagreements surrounding "appropriateness" of children's media reveal the deep underlying adult anxieties surrounding the moral and political influences children's stories can have.

How do we as researchers deal with these moral and political influences? How can we study their reception by children and young adults? And what role does our own ideological positionality play in our analysis of children's and YA literature? In this Winter School, we will discuss different methodological approaches to expand on broader questions surrounding and inherent in the field of children's literature. Over the course of three days, we will cover the three topics of: picturebooks and multimodality, literature by young people, and the socializing aspect of children's and YA literature, particularly through the lens of children's literature and activism. Through in-depth discussions of seminal children's texts, we encourage a new critical understanding of this foundational genre, both regarding its very nature and the potentiality it holds in relation both to the literary arts, as well as its young audience.



FORMAT

We invite ResMa students and PhD candidates to participate in this winter school by means of a research portfolio and active participation during the three-day gathering (full instructions at end of document).

The programme offers keynote lectures, guided workshops, and a roundtable discussion. Readings and mandatory reading assignments will be provided in advance by the organizers.

WORK LOAD

- Reading and preparation: 40 hours
- Attending the seminars: 20 hours
- Constructing portfolio: 80/108 hours*

Total: 140 / 168 hours (= 5/6 EC)

For more information see the Course Regulations below.

VENUE

The Ravenstein Seminar 2025 is hosted by Tilburg University.
Tilburg University Campus (train station: Tilburg Universiteit)
Warandelaan 2,
5037 AB Tilburg

Keynotes in Cobbenhagen building - room CZ005

Workshops in Cobbenhagen building -room CZ005 and Dante building - room D005.



SCHEDULE

Wednesday 22 January 2025

Introductions and multimodality

12:00 to 12:30	Registration & tapas
12:30 to 13:30	Introductory remarks from organizers, ice breaker activity
13:30 to 13:50	Coffee Break
13:50 to 15:05	Keynote Rosalyn Borst
15:05 to 15:25	Coffee break
15:25 to 16:55	Workshop picturebooks
17:00 to 19:00	Mingle & drinks

Thursday 23 January 2025

Ideology

10:00 to 11:30	Workshop ideology #1
11:30 to 11:50	Coffee break
11:50 to 13:20	Workshop ideology #2
13:20 to 14:20	Lunch break
14:20 to 15:35	Keynote Farriba Schulz
15:45 to 17:45	Students work on portfolio group work (Students who are not submitting the portfolio are welcome too)

Friday 24 January 2025

Fanfiction and child-authored texts

10:00 to 11:15	Keynote Jenny Duggan
11:15 to 11:35	Coffee break
11:35 to 13:00	Workshop fanfiction
13:00 to 14:00	Lunch break
14:00 to 16:30	Methodology roundtable and concluding remarks



KEYNOTE LECTURES

Keynote Lecture 1

From Silent Containment to Empowering Rage: Multimodal Analysis of Gendered Constructions of Anger in Contemporary Picturebooks

Rosalyn Borst

Tilburg University

Psychological research shows that girls and women suppress and internalize their anger much more than boys and men because the former are socialized to view this emotion as a



threat to their femininity and social relationships (Cox et al., 1999, 2004). This type of anger regulation (also called ‘anger diversion’) impedes girls and women from benefiting from the positive effects that assertive anger expression can have (e.g., protecting oneself against violations and injustice) and can lead to harmful health effects, such as making them more vulnerable to depression and anxiety (Cox et al., 2004). At the root of the gendering of emotion expression lie gendered socio-emotional norms and stereotypes (Brody, 1999; Brescoll, 2016). These are acquired young (Birnbaum, 1983; Birnbaum & Chemelski, 1984; Widen & Russell, 2002) and can be transmitted through media, such as picturebooks, as they provide frames and scripts for expressing and evaluating emotions (Coats, 2018; Mar & Oatley, 2008; Nikolajeva, 2018).

In this keynote, I present an instrument to examine how contemporary picturebooks reinforce or challenge gendered socio-emotional norms and stereotypes relating to anger expression. Theoretically, this instrument draws on feminist theory, psychological studies,



and cognitive linguistics. Methodologically, it draws on frameworks for multimodal analysis of picturebooks. It investigates elements of the visual and verbal text at three levels: at the level of anger processing in characters, of interactions between characters, and of the different subject positions offered to readers. I apply this instrument to two cases: *Zien jullie mij?* (*Do You See Me?*, Enzerink & Bonenkamp, 2016) and *Roef* (Thijssens & Brink, 2017). These picturebooks both revolve around a child (one a girl and one a boy) who becomes angry when their attempts to capture the attention of a parent engrossed in a digital device keep failing. In my case studies, I will demonstrate how this multimodal analysis tool is effective for examining how the verbal and visual features of picturebooks reinforce or contest gendered norms and stereotypes relating to anger expression.

Biography

Rosalyn Borst is a PhD candidate at the Department of Culture Studies at Tilburg University in the Netherlands, where she is finalizing her dissertation that examines from a gender perspective how anger is constructed in contemporary picturebooks. Her research explores how these picturebooks for young children can reproduce or challenge socio-emotional norms and stereotypes associated with expressed and diverted anger.

Prior to her PhD project, she published articles on the historical reception and framing of fairy tales (*Literatuur zonder leeftijd*, 2012) and the portrayal of “evil” children in children’s books (*Literatuur zonder leeftijd*, 2014). Published and forthcoming articles related to her PhD project investigate how contemporary picturebooks represent aggressive “willful” princesses (*Marvels & Tales*, 2022), gender differences in emotion regulation (*The Routledge Companion to Gender and Childhood*, 2025), and female emotionality and embodied knowledge (*Dzieciństwo. Literatura i Kultura [Childhood: Literature and Culture]*, 2025).

Over the past five years, she has delivered numerous guest lectures at Tilburg University and presented at multiple international conferences. In 2023, she was a research fellow at the International Youth Library in Munich and a visiting scholar at the University of Glasgow. In 2024, she was a guest lecturer at the University of Padua.

Workshop Readings:

- Anthony Browne – *Voices in the Park*
- Clare Painter – “Multimodal Analysis of Picturebooks” from *The Routledge Companion to Picturebooks*, 2017



- Rosalyn Borst - Straightening Agentic Women: The "Willful" Princess in Contemporary Fairy-Tale Picturebooks. *Marvels & Tales*, Volume 36, Number 2, 2022.

To go further (optional):

- Frank Serafini & Stephanie F. Reid. Analyzing picturebooks: semiotic, literary, and artistic frameworks. *Visual Communication*, vol. 23, n.2, 2024.
- Maria Nikolajeva & Carole Scott. *How Picturebooks Work*. Routledge, 2006.
- Lawrence Sipe. Revisiting the Relationship between Text and Pictures. *Children's Literature in Education*, vol.43, 2012.



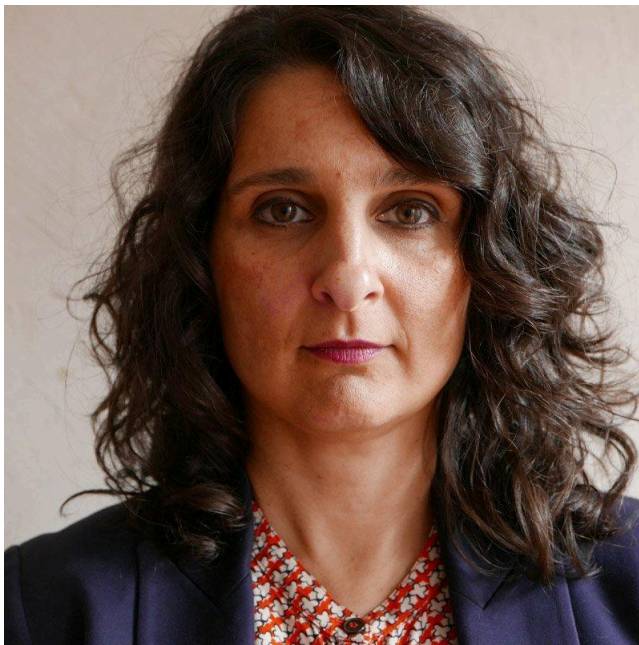
Keynote lecture 2

Agencies within trilemmatic inclusion: what's children's literature and its culture got to do with it?

Farriba Schulz

Humboldt University Berlin

With its four empirical verifiable components of availability, access, acceptability and adaptability, the right to education as defined by the UN plays a central role for community cultural wealth (Yosso 2006) in post-migrant societies (Foroutan 2019). The presentation will



discuss how discourses of agency and voice in educational contexts (Gallagher 2019), throughout heterogeneous assemblages (Bennett 2010), create ambivalence against the background of trilemmatic inclusion (Boger 2023). Results from the international „Seen & Heard: Young People's Voices and Freedom of Expression” project will be taken into account. “Seen & Heard” is a collaboration between the University of Malta (project leader), Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, University of Wroclaw and Amnesty International Poland and co-funded by the European Union as part of the Erasmus+

HED Cooperation Partnership Project (2023-2026). At the project's heart is the co-production of creative protest and the mobilisation of the human right to freedom of expression with young people, as enshrined in the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Especially when approval of the idea of democracy is losing acceptance and more than half are dissatisfied with the functioning of democracy in everyday life in Germany, the right to freedom of expression is a valuable good, as the Leipzig Authoritarianism Study 2024 (Decker et al. 2024) shows.

Which models of reality in which media are available to students (Malanda 2023, Mickenberg 2017, Reynolds 2016), what is important to them, what interests them and captivates their imagination, are the questions that we need to be engaging with in



classrooms, because these are the questions that help us face social injustice (Darmody et al. 2011) and address inequalities to focus “on the historical/cultural production of knowledge and power in order to empower learners to make better informed choices” (Andreotti 2014: 30).

Using the participatory research method of a/r/tography, an assemblage of the voices of all those involved in the project, creative protest, and contemporary art practice is created. Following LeBlancs, Davidsons, Ryus and Irwins description of a/r/tography as “a practice of living enquiry combines life-writing with life-creating” (2015; see Leavy 2015), and allows to observe from the perspective of communities of practice “what an art education practice set in motion does” (LeBlanc et al. 2015: 355). Through a/r/tography the multiple identities of all participants as students, artists, teachers and researchers are acknowledged, as well as their individual creative protest ideas and practices. Experimenting with the possibilities of practice(s) with regards to exercising freedom of speech and to comment on issues of social justice relevant to the students’ lives and their communities through re-working, re-theorising, re-imagining, re-seeing, re-looking, re-listening, re-acting and re-revising the project reveals different perspectives in rhizomatic ways.

Biography

Farriba Schulz is a Senior Lecturer in the Institute of Education at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin and Universität Potsdam. She was the Visiting Professor of Primary Education in the Department of German at Technische Universität Dresden and worked as a guest lecturer at Freie Universität Berlin. Her research centers on construction of childhoods, (visual) literacy, inclusion with and in children’s literature; and working collaboratively with schools, cultural institutions, and artists. She is a member of the advisory board of *The Child and the Book*, co-editor of *Political Changes and Transformations in Twentieth and Twenty-first Century Children’s Literature* (2023), and the Humboldt-Universität coordinator and academic lead in *Seen & Heard: Young People’s Voices and Freedom of Expression*.

Workshop readings:

- Shel Silverstein - *The Giving Tree*
- Angie Thomas - *Nic Blake and the Remarkables*



- Lydia Kokkola & Sara Van den Bossche – Ideological Approaches to CYA Literature. From *Engagement with Children’s Young Adult Literature* (forthcoming. PDF attached in email)

To go further (optional):

- Philip Nel. *Was the Cat in the Hat Black? The Hidden Racism of Children’s Literature and the Need for Diverse Books*. Oxford University Press, 2017.
- John Stephens – “Picturebooks and Ideology”. From *The Routledge Companion to Picturebooks*, 2017
- John Stephen - *Ideology and Language in Children’s Fiction*, 1992
- Peter Hollindale - *Ideology and the Children’s Book*, 1989.



Keynote lecture 3

**Beyond the Text:
New Directions in the Study of Children's Literature**

Jenny Duggan

University of South-Eastern Norway

The dominant approach in children's literature studies—a term I here use to encompass the study of children's, young adult, and new adult literature—has long been close reading through specific theoretical lenses, but as interdisciplinary frameworks become more prevalent, close reading can sometimes prove insufficient for addressing our research



questions. Moreover, a growing emphasis on innovation is making the use of new methods and tools essential to securing research funding. This keynote aims to provide listeners with a larger methodological toolbox for considering children's literature and will focus specifically on how we can explore fan fiction as/and children's literature.

This keynote begins by offering a historical overview of reader response theory, tracing its development from viewing readers as passive recipients of textual messages, to recognizing their active roles in interpreting and co-creating textual meanings, and finally, to considering how interpretation happens within specific contexts and communities of interpretive practice. The talk will then explore contemporary approaches to studying readers, informed by media studies, fan studies, and childhood studies. It will focus on how these interdisciplinary perspectives can offer fresh insights into how texts and readers affect each other. Special attention will be paid to young readers and their creative responses to texts, including the production of “transformative works” like fan fiction.

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This keynote will touch upon dynamic and fluid methods for researching readers and their interactions with texts, while acknowledging the ethical and practical challenges involved in studying young readers and their engagements in digital spaces. The keynote



aims to broaden the scope of children's literary studies beyond traditional literary analysis by considering alternative methods for considering readers, texts, and their interactions. It will highlight the importance of ethical considerations when working with research participants, marginalized communities, and minors, including some tips for how young researchers can navigate the constraints imposed by legislative and institutional regulations. By offering a multidisciplinary perspective, the keynote underscores the need for innovative, ethical, and inclusive methodologies in literary studies today, particularly when engaging with younger audiences and digital platforms.

Biography

Jennifer Duggan is an Associate Professor of English at the University of South-Eastern Norway (USN). In the main, her research concerns how the digital present affects children's and young adult literature and media, with a specific focus on readers' modes of reading/viewing, reception of texts, and identity-building practices through/alongside textual practices. Jennifer is best known for her work on the complex politics surrounding the Harry Potter series, focusing on gender nonnormativity, queer/trans reading practices, and the tensions between J.K. Rowling, her texts, and her fans.

Workshop readings:

- A (minimum 1) fanfiction of a work you are familiar with (bonus points if it is not *Harry Potter*). *Nota bene*: written or multimodal fanfiction texts (e.g. "imagines") also count. See AO3, fanfiction.net, or other archives for texts.
- Catherine Tosenberger – "Mature Poets Steal: Children's Literature and the Unpublishability of Fanfiction", *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*, 2014.
-

To go further (optional):

- Ruth A. Deller. Ethics in Fan Studies Research. From: Paul Booth (ed.) *A companion to media fandom and fan studies*, 2018.
- Jenny Duggan. The lamentable status of (queer) children in fandom: On being a fannish pariah. *Participations*, vol. 18, n.2, 2021.
- Jenny Duggan. Transformative Readings: Harry Potter fan fiction, trans/queer reader response, and J. K. Rowling. *Children's Literature in Education*, vol.53, n.2., 2021
- Ebony E. Thomas & Amy Stornaiuolo. Restorying the self. Bending towards Textual Justice. *Harvard Education Review*, vol.86, n.3, 2016.



COURSE REGULATIONS & ASSESSMENT

In order to obtain 5 ECs, participants need to:

- be present on all three days of the event
- hand in their research portfolio on **25 February 2025**

In order to obtain 6 ECs, participants need to:

- perform the requirements for 5 ECs
- submit an additional critical reflection section as part of their research portfolio on **25 February 2025**

Research portfolio

The research portfolio consists of 3 prompts, which correlate to the methodologies covered over the course of the winter school and to which you are asked to respond to demonstrate comprehension of said methodologies.

Prompts:

1. Adapt an extract of a text in 3 spreads of a picturebook **as a group**. You will receive the text during the workshop on group work. There is time scheduled in the programme to accommodate group work, but you are free to continue discussions outside of the scheduled activities. Next, add an **individual** critical reflection on the choices made in this multimodal production. (1000 words)
2. Find a controversial (either deemed or *should* be deemed so, according to you) children's book. In your individual, critical reflection section, apply a suitable ideology methodology to analyse this text. (2000 words)
3. Write a fanfiction or other form of fan text. (No word count) Write an individual critical reflection in which you analyse your text as a fan production, reflecting methodologies and insights gained from the winter school. (1000 words)

Note that you are not graded on your creative products, but only on your critical reflections. You are required to fulfill all 3 prompts of your portfolio to receive 5 ECs. However, only 1 prompt of this research portfolio will be graded. Carefully consider which part reflects your learning best. Make sure to indicate which of the three prompts you want to have graded when you submit your portfolio.



Critical reflection

This optional section of your portfolio consists of a reflective essay, in which you reflect critically on your readings and/or the keynotes for the winter school. Focus on one or more aspects that have retained your attention, either because they were new to you, because you (dis)agreed, or because they opened up new ways for you to think about children's literature, childhood, society, an aspect of your life or anything else you deem relevant.

You are also invited to recall your own engagement with childhood texts (text having a broad meaning here, including games, books, film, etc.) in light of newly gleamed insights. Has your experience at the winter school impacted your perspective on your childhood texts? If so, how?

Criteria of evaluation

- Engagement with the literature from the reading list (mandatory literature) and/or the keynote presentations. Engagement with secondary readings beyond the reading lists is welcome.
- Understanding and Application of Theories and Concepts: The extent to which relevant theories and concepts are understood and effectively used in the reflective work.
- Critical Engagement with Secondary Literature: The ability to challenge, question, and critically engage with concepts, theories, and propositions of different sources.
- Coherence and Precision of the Argument
- Accuracy and Completeness of the Bibliography: Ensuring the bibliography is complete, correctly formatted, and includes page numbers for in-text citations. Bibliographies should be included after each assignment, not at the end of the portfolio. You are free to use your own reference style, but please indicate which one you use so that we can check it for consistency.

Following submission of the portfolio you will obtain written feedback from the organizers.



Submission of required assignments

You can send your portfolio (deadline: 25/02) to osl@rug.nl.

Please specify if you want to obtain 5 or 6 EC when submitting your final portfolio, and which of the 3 prompts you wish to have graded.