

Papers

Explorations into Children's Literature

Foreword

The editorial team and I are pleased to be able to bring you this new edition of *Papers: Explorations into Children's Literature* which, after more than twenty years under the stewardship of Professors Clare Bradford and Kerry Mallan, has recently moved to a new home with a new editorial team.

During their time at the Helm, Clare and Kerry saw *Papers* undergo significant changes; from its initial life as a co-publication of *Magpies Magazine*, intended for professional and general readers with an interest in children's literature studies, through its transformation into a peer-reviewed academic journal and, more recently, into its current form as a fully online, open-access journal. Under their careful and considered guidance, *Papers* has developed into an outward looking, multinational journal with an excellent reputation for publishing quality scholarship, and which attracts interest from around the globe. In the back issues of *Papers* you'll find articles from most of the significant names in children's and young adult literature studies over the last twenty years. It's largely because of the work of scholars like Clare and Kerry that we've seen such a significant shift in attitudes surrounding the importance of children's literature as an area of social and cultural discourse.

As well, *Papers* has become an important springboard for early career academics and PhD students to launch into the experience of submitting their work for peer review and for publishing their research. We're extremely proud of this legacy and have every intention of continuing to make our journal a place where rigorous and engaging research from scholars at all points in their careers can find a home.

We're thrilled, and more than a little daunted, to be given the opportunity to take on such a significant publication. At the end of 2016, the journal moved from its former home at Deakin University to the auspices of the *Centre for Creative and Cultural Research* at the University of Canberra. It continues to be the official journal of the *Australasian Children's Literature Association for Research (ACLAR)*, and will continue to provide an important voice for researchers throughout the world, but with particular reference to those working and researching within Australasia and the Pacific.

In many ways, the four articles that comprise this edition speak clearly to the breadth and scope of *Papers*. The first, *I'm sorry, I don't speak Bear*, by Tharini Viswanath of Illinois State University is a fascinating examination of the intricate relationship between voice, agency and the mother-daughter relationship in the Disney-Pixar movie *Brave*. As it interrogates a shift in the trope of the 'Disney Princess' the paper intersects with ideas and theory about gender and belonging that might be applied right across the field of children's and young adult literature studies. In doing so it offers a thought-provoking reading of the film, with strong potential for intertextual and cross-genre conversations.

In the second paper Dr. Vivien van Rij, of Victoria University of Wellington, takes us into the historical contexts driving Maurice Gee's 1998 novel *Orchard Street*. Adopting a structuralist approach to her examination of the novel, Dr van Rij unravels the intertwined relationship between Gee's own political and religious ideologies and the creative expression of them in his work. It's a paper that will expose those not familiar with Gee's work to this highly regarded New Zealand author, and which will also be of particular interest to anyone whose research intersects with the politics surrounding the representation of embedded ideology in history.

Notions of embedded ideology are also evident in the third paper in this edition, *Dead Funny? The ideological use of humour and comedy in Saci Lloyd's 'The Carbon Diaries 2015 and 2017'*. This paper, by Doctors Alyson Miller, Rebecca Hutton and Elizabeth Braithwaite of Deakin University, looks not to the past but to the future in its examination of the way

humour acts as a powerful vehicle for ideas surrounding environmental degradation and climate change in UK writer Saci Lloyd's 2008-2009 duology. It's a welcome examination of the degree to which an aging text can be leant a degree of longevity through the careful and measured application of humour to a dystopic and unsympathetic literary world.

Finally, Dr. Dion McLeod, from the university of Wollongong, gives us a thought provoking paper; *'try-error-try-it': Love, Loss and the Subversion (?) of the Heteronormative Romance Story in Will Grayson, Will Grayson*. This engaging piece examines the intertwining of narrative, sexuality and happiness in John Green and David Levithan's 2010 co-written novel *Will Grayson, Will Grayson*, and both questions and interrogates the degree to which the novel actually challenges the tropes of heteronormative romance.

Taken together, all four papers present an array of perspectives on children's and young adult narratives drawn from across a range of genres and cultures. They speak, I think, to the tremendous shifts that have occurred in our corner of the academic world over the last two decades, and they contribute to an increasingly global conversation that *Papers* is proud to be a part of.

You will notice some other immediate changes with this edition – the website has been redesigned to (hopefully) make for a more streamlined reading experience, and in months to come we have a number of other plans coming to fruition. By the end of 2017 we intend to have applied to have *Papers* indexed with SCOPUS, and over the coming twelve months we will be slowly backfilling our archive of past editions.

I'd like to encourage anyone with a scholarly interest in Children's and Young Adult literature studies or writing to consider submitting their research papers for consideration. We will be continuing to publish two editions a year, in July and December, with occasional special editions in between times.

Enormous thanks to everyone who has contributed to this edition, in various capacities. Special thanks and acknowledgement to Clare Bradford and Kerry Mallan for their care and dedication to *Papers* over the years. We will do our very best to live up to the very high standards that you both set.

I hope you enjoy this edition of *Papers: Explorations into Children's Literature*.

Associate Professor Anthony Eaton

Editor