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English 328 - The Golden Age of Children's Literature in Britain - syllabus

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Pronouns: she/her
Email: veronica.schanoes@qc.cuny.edu **(this is the best way to reach me, but please note that I do not check email between sundown on Friday and sundown on Saturday)**
Course number: English 328-01 (45556)
Day, time, room: MW 10:45AM - 12:00 PM, Rathaus 106
Office hours: W 3-5 and by appointment
Office number: Klapper Hall 733

The Golden Age of Children's Literature in Britain 1865-1926

Our current idea of what children's literature should be—imaginative, exciting, and fun—is almost entirely the creation of the Golden Age of children's literature, beginning in 1865 with Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and ending in 1926 with A.A. Milne's *Winnie-the-Pooh*. These years produced the majority of what we regard as children's classics today. Whereas previous decades had stressed the importance of moral improvement and education for young readers, the children's literature of the Golden Age brought into being an awareness of the child as a reader to be entertained with adventure, magic, and wordplay. How did these two ideas about how children's books should be written interact? How did the ideas of childhood and what it meant to be a child change? How were these ideas of childhood related to gender and class? And given that the Golden Age coincides quite closely with the height of British imperial power, how did imperialist ideologies influence children's literature—and did the influence run only one way? How did these texts construct the idea of England for the child reader? And which children are we talking about anyway?

Course Objectives

1) To survey the development of the Golden Age of children's literature in Britain, and to understand its historical influences and significant themes
2) To understand how the Golden Age has influenced the development of the genre
3) To write thoughtful, original literary criticism.

Texts

This is a Zero Textbook-Cost course.

The books we are reading are all in the public domain, and most of them can be found in many editions both online and in print. A few are available only online, and you will need to access them through Google Books. The most important thing is for you to make sure that you are reading a complete, unabridged, unadapted edition. I am going to try to put good editions of all of these on reserve at the library, on e-reserve if possible. Other readings will also be available at the library e-reserve site.

The e-reserve site is here; the password is sch328.

JM Barrie	*Peter and Wendy (Peter Pan)*
Frances Hodgson Burnett	*A Little Princess*
Lewis Carroll	*Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*
Juliana Horatia Ewing	*A Flatiron for a Farthing*
Jean Ingelow	*Mopsa the Fairy*
AA Milne	*Winnie-the-Pooh*
Mrs. Molesworth	*The Carved Lions*
E. Nesbit	*The Story of the Treasure Seekers*
Anna Sewell	*Black Beauty*
Robert Louis Stevenson	*Treasure Island*

Note: These books were written by white British gentile authors during the height of the British Empire, whose ideological justification was based on white supremacy. Many, though not all, of these books express racism and/or antisemitism. We will be discussing these issues extensively. I just want to make sure you're all aware of this going in.

It is your responsibility to make sure you obtain all relevant readings in good time.

Schedule

Monday, Jan. 27: **cancelled due to instructor's illness**

Wednesday, Jan. 29: **no classes**

Monday, Feb. 3: **Library session – Library Room 227**

Wednesday, Feb. 5: introductions: What is the Golden Age of children's literature
Syllabus, Assignment sheet, etc.
writing review: close reading

Monday, Feb. 10: Introduction and Chapter 1 - *Reading Children's Literature* - Carrie Hintz and Eric Tribunella
Part I - *The History of Childhood* 2nd ed. - Colin Heywood
writing review: close reading

Wednesday, Feb. 12: **no class - college closed**

Monday, Feb. 17: **no class - college closed**

Tuesday, Feb. 18: **class - Monday Schedule**

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland (1865) – Lewis Carroll
writing review: thesis

Wednesday, Feb. 19: *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*
writing review: paragraphs

Monday, Feb. 24: *Mopsa the Fairy* (1869) – Jean Ingelow
writing review: structure and argument

Wednesday, Feb. 26: *Mopsa the Fairy*
writing review: plagiarism and academic integrity

Monday, Mar. 3: *A Flatiron for a Farthing* (1872) – Juliana Horatia Ewing

Wednesday, Mar. 5: *A Flatiron for a Farthing*

Thursday, Mar. 6: **class - Wednesday schedule**
discussion of childhood as ideology and experience

Monday, Mar. 10: *Black Beauty* (1877) – Anna Sewell

Wednesday, Mar. 12: *Black Beauty*

Monday, Mar. 17: *Treasure Island* (1883) – Robert Louis Stevenson

Wednesday, Mar. 19: *Treasure Island*

Monday, Mar. 24: *The Carved Lions* (1895) – Mary Louisa Molesworth

Wednesday, Mar. 26: *The Carved Lions*

Monday, Mar. 31: **no classes**
Paper 1 due

Wednesday, Apr. 2: *The Story of the Treasure Seekers* (1899) – E. Nesbit

Monday, Apr. 7: *The Story of the Treasure Seekers*

Wednesday, Apr. 9: Introduction - *Artful Dodgers* - Marah Gubar

Monday, Apr. 14: **no class - Spring Break**

Wednesday, Apr. 16: no class - Spring Break

Monday, Apr. 21: *A Little Princess* (1905) – Frances Hodgson Burnett

Wednesday, Apr. 23: *A Little Princess*

Monday, Apr. 28: *Peter and Wendy* – J. M. Barrie (1911)
Excerpt – *The Transatlantic Indian* – Kate Flint (2008)

Wednesday, April 30: *Peter and Wendy*

Monday, May 5: *Winnie-the-Pooh* (1926) – A. A. Milne

Wednesday, May 7: *Winnie-the-Pooh*
Final chapter – *The House at Pooh Corner* – A. A. Milne (1928)

Monday, May 12: Make-up presentations and exam prep

Wednesday, May 14: Make-up presentations and exam prep
final paper due - final class

Monday, May 19 11AM-1PM: Final Exam

Assignments

This course requires one historical or critical presentation, two analytical essays, and a final exam. I am very liberal with extensions for written work; please contact me before the assignment is due if you need one, and I will almost always say yes. Because your presentation should be given on the day we are discussing the book you are presenting on, it is harder to find a way to make those up if you miss the day. But if we must, we will, perhaps on the final day of class.

Class Participation

You are responsible for completing the readings and coming to class prepared to discuss them. You must bring copies of all readings with you to class.

If there is a reason why class participation is a difficulty for you (for example, social anxiety or something similar) please contact me over email, and we can make alternate arrangements. If a situation arises that is interfering with your ability to participate in class, please contact me over email so we can work around it.

If you know in advance that you will miss a meeting due to a religious observance, please let me know as soon as possible. If you must miss a meeting due to illness, family reasons, or other issues, please shoot me an email and let me know as soon as you know, or, in the event of an emergency, when it becomes feasible. If you have childcare issues, please know that I would rather you bring your kids with you to class than have you miss a class, but I understand that this may not be possible. It is fine with me if you eat or nurse a baby during class.

If *I* can't make it, either because I get sick or *my* childcare falls through, I will do my best to set up a Zoom meeting for our class that day instead.

Policy on Classroom Photography and Recording

Neither photographs nor recordings (audio or video) of all or parts of classes at Queens College may be made without written permission from the course instructor(s).

The Office of Student Affairs and the Office of Special Services may provide for the recording of classes on behalf of a student receiving disability accommodations, missing class due to religious beliefs, or experiencing extended absence due to medical or other exigent circumstances.

The Queens College Classroom Photography and Recording Policy applies to both students and visitors. Students and visitors are not authorized to copy, download, or disseminate authorized recordings and photographs to others. Students in violation of this policy are subject to disciplinary action, and visitors in violation of this policy are subject to removal from the classroom and/or campus.

Accessibility Concerns

"The Office of Special Services (SPSV) is committed to supporting students with qualifying disabilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by providing reasonable accommodations to ensure equal access. If you have previously received accommodations due to a disability, believe you may have a disability, or have a temporary disability, please visit the office's website for further information on the assistance they can offer you. Accommodations are not retroactive, so you are encouraged to get registered sooner rather than later. You may also contact their office at qc.spsv@qc.cuny.edu or call 718-997-5870 during office hours for assistance as well."

Beyond that boilerplate, if you have any concerns about the accessibility of this class, including but not limited to issues of visibility or audibility, please contact me over email. I will do my very best to work with you to make sure you have the access you need to succeed in this course, whether or not you wish to involve the Special Services Office.

Grading

Class Participation	10%
Presentation	10%
Paper #1	25%
Paper #2	30%
Final exam	25%

Useful Links

The Writing Center: https://sites.google.com/qc.cuny.edu/qcwritingcenter/home
Office for Special Services:
https://www.qc.cuny.edu/StudentLife/services/specialserv/Pages/default.aspx
The Library: https://library.qc.cuny.edu/
Knight's Table Food Pantry: https://www.qc.cuny.edu/sdl/food-pantry/
Astoria Food Pantry: https://www.astoriafoodpantry.com/
Petrie Student Emergency Grants:
https://petriestudentemergency.formstack.com/forms/petrie_student_emergency_grants

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

"Academic Dishonesty is prohibited in The City University of New York and is punishable by penalties, including failing grades, suspension, and expulsion as provided at https://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/legal-affairs/policies-procedures/academic-integrity-policy/."

Plagiarism is the presentation of somebody else's words, thoughts, or ideas as if they were your own (although LLMs, or genAI are not people, presenting work it generated as if it was your own is also plagiarism). It is a serious violation of academic integrity and it is one of the few things I have no sense of humor about and am not even slightly flexible about. **Plagiarism will result in an immediate report to the Office of Student Conduct, and, when they uphold my determination, failure of the class.** We will discuss this in greater detail later in the semester.

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