Call for Papers: 2020 ChLA Diversity Committee’s Annual Sponsored Panel
Children’s Literature Association Conference 2020
June 18-20, 2020
Bellevue, Washington

Sustaining #OwnVoices Scholars

Increasingly, the field of children’s literature has been endorsing texts that fit within the #ownvoices umbrella, a tag used to describe “kidlit about diverse characters written by authors from that same diverse group” (@corinneduyvis). However, as Kate Slater notes in her introduction to the 2017 #WeNeedDiverseScholars Forum in The Lion and the Unicorn, “our field can do more to incorporate and recognize the voices of scholars of color and Native scholars” (79). The discrepancy between #ownvoices books and #ownvoices scholars must be remedied. Thus, because of this year’s conference theme’s emphasis on eco-activism, it is important to create an environment within children’s literature scholarship that fosters voices of diverse scholars.

The Diversity Committee invites papers from #ownvoices scholars that explore the connections children’s texts and a scholar’s identity. We are interested in a variety of topics associated with #ownvoices scholarship, but we encourage scholars to consider how their backgrounds are or are not reflected in the broad field of children’s literature? How do we sustain an environment for both scholarship and literature that celebrates diverse identities? What’s more, because of the historical dearth of diverse scholars, how do #ownvoices scholars assert their necessity within the ecology of the field?

While we welcome submissions from all diverse scholars, given the conference’s special emphasis on Washington being “home to twenty-nine federally-recognized tribes and several non-federally-recognized tribes” we are especially interested in Indigenous and First Nations scholars. We also strongly encourage undergraduate and graduate student applicants, as well as junior scholars.

For queries, please contact Cristina Rhodes (profa.cristinarhodes@gmail.com) or Vivian Yenika-Agbaw (vxy102@psu.edu). Email a 350-word abstract, which should include a positionality statement, and a 2-page CV to Cristina by September 20, 2019. Authors of proposals selected for the panel will be notified by October 1, 2019. Scholars whose proposals are not selected will have the opportunity to submit their abstracts to the Children’s Literature Association's general Call for Papers, which has a deadline of October 15, 2019.