Call for Papers: 2018 ChLA Diversity Committee’s Annual Sponsored Panel Children’s Literature Association Conference 2018 June 28-30, 2018 San Antonio, Texas

Barriers, Borders, and Bridges

Borders can be set to separate and demarcate; or, borders can demonstrate a limited boundary that distinguishes one thing or place from another; the margins of a particular location. Within these spaces, individuals and communities define and complicate notions of identity as they relate to these borders, often challenging real and assumed barriers. Bridges are structures designed to connect, typically over obstacles such as bodies of water that would otherwise hinder extending beyond. How does children’s literature extend borders or help readers cross borders and build bridges – of understanding, experiences, perspectives, and ways of knowing, thinking, and acting in the world?

The Diversity Committee welcomes paper proposals on all forms of borders and bridges, including but not limited to those that relate to the theme of water, in children’s literature. Our special interest in the theme of water is tied to the general ChLA conference theme of "Refreshing Waters: Springs, Rivers, and Literary Oases." Water is symbolic in many ways related to breaking barriers, extending borders, and building bridges. Books such as Long Walk to Water (Park), Inside Out and Back Again (Thanhha Lai), Ninth Ward (Rhodes), and The Water Seeker (Holt) explore the (literal and metaphorical) relationships between barriers, borders, bridges and water. Even in Out of My Mind, Draper explores the main character's cerebral palsy as it makes her feel like “a fish out of water” compared to her classmates, and could be read as an example of breaking intellectual barriers.

Other suggested topics include but are not limited to the following:

*Barriers or borders that impede the “flow” of communities *Folklore and folkloric figures of the borderlands *Rights of access and entry *Shifting or eroding borders or bridges *Emotional, social, or psychological borders *Race and racism in borderlands *Transnational or transoceanic bridging narratives *Racial geographies *Brokering or bridging languages *Xenophobia and immigration bias

For queries, please contact Domino Perez (drperez@austin.utexas.edu) or Mary Henderson (mary.couzelis@morgan.edu). Email a 500-word abstract and a 2-page CV to Domino Perez (drperez@austin.utexas.edu) by September 15, 2017. Authors of proposals selected for the panel will be notified by September 30, 2017. 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, 2017.