



# Newsletter

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## President's Message

Michelle H. Martin

As the inaugural Augusta Baker Endowed Chair in Childhood Literacy at the University of South Carolina in the fourteenth year of my professional career and the first African-American President of the Children's Literature Association, I am where I am in large part because of ChLA and many of its fabulous members. Roberta Seelinger Trites, who was my dissertation advisor at Illinois State University, who held my hand throughout my first terrifying MLA interviews, also wrote a letter of recommendation for the Chair that I now hold. June Cummins, whom I met at my first ChLA, who became my lifelong friend when we agonized over finishing our dissertations under time duress, still serves as my sounding board for new academic projects. Jack Zipes, whom I first met at the ChLA Paris conference, facilitated the publication of *Brown Gold*, my first individual book. Dianne Johnson-Feelings, a ChLA member who counseled me through that first publication process, is now one of my colleagues at USC. And Jennie Miskec, who came into the field partly because she learned from me at an African American Studies conference that one really *could* earn a degree in Children's Literature and teach it at the college level, now serves on the ChLA Board and chairs a ChLA Committee. I could go on *and on*, but I won't. I mention these few examples—among many—to illustrate that ChLA quite literally changed the course of my life in so many ways and has also served as my academic family for the past eighteen years. As I reflect on this fact, I'd like to encourage each ChLA member, regardless of the fact that we're now an organization whose membership tops 1,000 annually, to continue to create safe spaces for academic expression and to be an organization where scholars—both fresh and seasoned—can take intellectual risks necessary to foster growth.

Enough about who we are. What is the organization *doing*? This spring, Kathy Kiessling, Administrator extraordinaire, notified the board that she is ready to move on to other adventures, and as a result the board has spent much of the fall investigating what sort of administrative configurations other organizations of similar size with similar purpose have. By the October board teleconference, we plan to have some recommendations, although "replacing" Kathy is nothing more than a pipe dream. The board also decided at the summer meeting to allow scholars to submit only one proposal/abstract for consideration by future conference paper committees. Given the growth of the organization, double presentations are making the session numbers more unwieldy every year. In addition, Kathy will finally be able to clean out her basement of all of our back issues of our journals and let JHUP handle them; in the near future, those who want back issues will be able to purchase them from JHUP. The board has depleted the Hannah Beiter Fund that helped graduate students attend the conference at a reduced fee and decided not to solicit members to replenish those funds. Given the high numbers of graduate and undergraduate attendees at the Hollins Conference, we are confident that the Beiter Fund served its purpose of increasing student involvement. The conference, however, will continue to have a reduced student rate.

Enjoy your fall semester.



**Simmons College**  
June 14-16, 2012



## The New Phoenix Picture Book Award

A new Phoenix Award for picture books is on the horizon! Established by the ChLA Board in 2010, the award will be a companion to the original Phoenix Award, which recognizes a book published twenty years previously that did not win a major award at that time, but that the committee has determined to be of lasting value.

The emphasis of the original award has been on the quality of writing, and the winners have without exception been novels. The new award will honor a picture book. The award is innovative, in that unlike most awards for picture books, it will honor not only the illustrator, but also the author (if they are two separate people). The book will be judged both on the quality of its illustrations, and on the way pictures and text work together to tell a story (whether fact or fiction). In the case of wordless books, the book will be judged on the success of the pictures alone in telling a story.

The committee spent its first year setting up criteria and procedures for the award and is now deep into selecting and reading books published in 1993. Committee members are submitting monthly suggestions of titles, based on their reading and perusal of 1993 reviews and award lists and will submit nominations twice in the spring. The very first Phoenix Picture Book Award will be chosen by the committee at the annual meeting in 2012 and presented at the 2013 conference.

Suggestions of 1993 and 1994 books are welcome! Please send to Kathy Kiessling (kkiessling@childlitassn.org) or to Linnea Hendrickson (linnea.borealis@gmail.com).

### **Committee Members**

Linnea Hendrickson (chair),  
Karen Coats, Eliza Dresang,  
Dianne Johnson-Feelings, and  
Carol Sibley.

Alisa Clapp-Itnyre completed  
her term on the inaugural  
committee in 2011.

## ChLA 2011 Conference Wrap-Up

### “Revolt, Rebellion, Protest: Change and Insurrection in Children’s Literature”



From June 22 to June 26, children’s literature scholars from around the world gathered at Hollins University in Roanoke, Virginia, for the Thirty-Eighth Annual Children’s Literature Association Conference. The conference theme was Revolt, Rebellion, Protest: Change and Insurrection in Children’s Literature.

The conference itself attracted a record number of participants, with 107 panels, plus ten bonus panels of “Writers on Writing” and over 430 attending from countries including the United Kingdom, Australia, Taiwan, Turkey, Greece, Albania, and Poland, as well as the United States and Canada.

The Francelia Butler Lecture, “Radical Children’s Literature Now!” was presented on Saturday morning by Philip Nel, professor of English and director of the program in Children’s Literature at Kansas State University, and Julia Mickenberg, associate professor of American Studies at the University of Texas at Austin, co-editors of *Tales for Little Rebels: A Collection of Radical Children’s Literature*.

Hollins Children’s Literature summer writer-in-residence Ellen Kushner and summer faculty member Delia Sherman spoke Friday on the importance of fantasy. Illustrator Thatcher Hurd spoke Saturday afternoon on “From Goodnight Moon to Art Dog” as part of the Eleanor D. Wilson Museum’s exhibit, “Goodnight, Hush: Classic Children’s Book Illustrations.” Phoenix Award winner Virginia Euwer Wolff accepted her award for *The Mozart Season* and spoke at the Saturday night banquet, held amid the fireflies on the University’s historic Front Quadrangle.

Other events during the conference included a Thursday night screening of the documentary *The Library of the Early Mind* and a Friday night Readers’ Theater performance by Bruce Coville, Alexandria LaFaye, Carmen Viviano-Crafts, and David Witanowski.

Amanda Cockrell served as conference chair, and past president Lisa Fraustino took over chair duties on Saturday. Kathryn Graham chaired the Paper Selection Committee that also included Mark Armstrong, Tina Hanlon, Amberyl Malkovich, and Anastasia Salter. Bridgid Shannon organized the “Writers on Writing” panels. Amie Rose Rotruck designed the conference program and all promotional materials.

President Mike Cadden presided at the General meeting and Vice-President/President Elect Michelle Martin assumed her role as President of ChLA at the final Board meeting of the conference.

A special mention goes to all the Hollins Ambassadors, students and alumnae/i of our MA/MFA Program in Children’s Literature who worked behind the scenes before, during and after the conference. The conference was dedicated to the memory of J. D. Stahl, 2001-2002 ChLA president and visiting professor in the Children’s Literature program at Hollins from its beginning in 1992 until his death in 2010.

# 39th Annual Children's Literature Association Conference

## "Literary Slipstreams"

Simmons College

Boston, Massachusetts

June 14-16, 2012



Send a 300-500 word paper or panel proposal to Conference Chairs ([childrensliterature@simmons.edu](mailto:childrensliterature@simmons.edu)). Multiple submissions will not be considered.

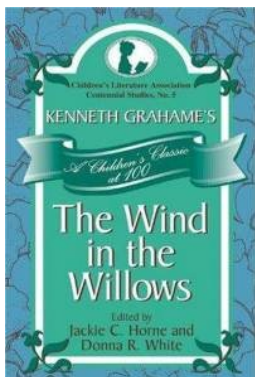
As we enter the second decade of the 21st century, our theme of "Literary Slipstreams" invites participants to think about literature for children and young adults as a literature both of and in transition. Bruce Sterling's use of the term *slipstream* to mean a "fiction of strangeness" and "a parody of mainstream" and the literal definition of slipstream (the partial vacuum created in the wake of a moving vehicle) allow us to consider revisions, re-versions, retellings, challenges to the historical record, questions of hybridity, parody, irreverence, playfulness, books as moving objects, prequels and sequels, graphic novels and machinima, multimedia projects. How does children's literature and its criticism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century straddle, cross, confuse, redefine genre boundaries?

We're delighted that Karen Hesse will accept the 2012 Phoenix Award for *Letters from Rivka*. We share our enthusiasm that Gregory Maguire will deliver the Francelia Butler Lecture. Dr. Maguire was the first alumnus of the Simmons graduate program in children's literature ('78) and its associate director for many years before he entered a literary slipstream with the publication of *Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West*. He has published over 25 books for children, young adults, and adults. The recent *Making Mischief: An Appreciation of Maurice Sendak* tracks a critical slipstream.

That spirited playfulness embedded in the conference theme and its delightful logo by David Macaulay will characterize activities throughout the conference. We're planning walking tours in the wake of McCloskey's ducklings and the steps of Edward Everett Hale, visits to the neighboring Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum (perhaps including a peek at her children's book collection) and the Alice M. Jordan Collection at the Boston Public Library, as well as unscheduled time to visit the stunning new American wing two blocks away at the Museum of Fine Arts Boston. We are excited about literary excursions to Concord for visits to Orchard House, Authors' Ridge, and other landmarks in New England's bookish heritage. We're working with our partners at The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art to set up a post-conference day-trip.



**The submission window for proposals is October 15, 2011 - January 15, 2012.**



The second winner of the **Edited Book Award** is the fifth volume in the Children's Literature Association Centennial Studies series, *Kenneth Grahame's The Wind in the Willows: A Children's Classic at 100* (2010). The strength of the field once again pushed the founding members of this committee to refine their ideas about the characteristics and qualities of an excellent edited collection. In this case, the word "exemplary" came up repeatedly in committee members' responses to the editors' introductory essay, which one reader described as "scholarly, thorough and thoughtful." Editors Donna White & Jackie Horne will be honored for their role in putting together this impressive contribution to children's literature scholarship during the official awards ceremony at the ChLA conference next summer in Boston.

## \*MLA 2013: Call for Papers

### Children and Fame (ChLA Sponsored Session)

Media critics often discuss how Americans are hooked on fame starting from childhood. Many popular book series have protagonists who suddenly find themselves famous and must learn how to negotiate that fame.

These series, along with many YA films, perpetuate the idea that given the right circumstances anyone can be famous. This panel—held at the MLA in Boston, January 2013—will investigate the relationship between children and fame. How do authors and directors present fame? What are the different attitudes regarding fame presented in texts? Do texts with famous protagonists fuel American readers' fascination with fame? Does fan fiction exist because of our addiction to fame? Please send 500 word abstracts and a short bio to Nicole Wilson (n.wilson@wayne.edu) by March 15, 2012.

### Race, Girlhood and Social Justice in Children's Literature

#### (Co-Sponsored by ChLA and MLA's Committee on the Literatures of People of Color)

This proposed panel explores the intersections of race, girlhood and social justice in children's literature from the mid-nineteenth century to the present. Focusing especially upon the work of children's authors and illustrators of color, this panel examines how and why narratives of girlhood often function as a medium for social commentary. Through the lens of literature, we also consider how race, gender, and sexuality shape the contours of coming-of-age for girls in the United States and beyond. Possible topics include, but are not limited to: twentieth- and twenty-first-century multi-ethnic narratives of girlhood, such as the works of Cynthia Kadohata, Jacqueline Woodson, Julia Alvarez, Louise Erdrich, and Ed Young; teaching narratives of race and girlhood, from K-12 to the college-level; transnational representations of girlhood and race; and, African American girlhood and children's literature of the U.S. Civil Rights movement. Please send a 250 word abstract along with a one page CV to Kristen Proehl (kproehl@clemson.edu) by March 1, 2012.

### Theorizing the Early Reader (MLA Children's Literature Division Sponsored Session)

Early readers, such as the Babymouse, Junie B. Jones and Stink, Keena Ford, Ivy and Bean, and Ruby Lu series, are designed to be a young reader's first multi-chapter, independent reading experience. Frequently written as a series, often only lightly illustrated, and representative of a variety of genres, these novels too often fly below the critical radar. For presentation at the MLA to be held in Boston in January 2013, we invite papers invested in a critical, theoretical analysis of the children's literary category called early readers. To be considered as one of the panelists, please send a two-page abstract to Abbye Meyer (abbyemeyer@gmail.com) by March 1, 2012.

## ChLAQ Call for Papers

### Sexualities and Children's Cultures

To both extend and challenge contemporary discourses regarding sexualities and children's cultures, this special issue of the *ChLAQ* is devoted to considerations of queerness and sexualities in children's and young adult literature, media, and culture. Co-editors Thomas Crisp and Lance Weldy invite papers that address any aspect of these ongoing conversations, including (but not limited to):

\*The sexual(ized) and/or queer child in literature, media (i.e., film, television, technology), and toy culture

\*Borders and boundaries: the adult and the [sexualized] child (i.e., point-of-view and implied readership/viewership; constructing childhood/adulthood; adult portrayals of [sexualized] children; adult media about children; voyeurism and adult creation/consumption of media depicting underage sexuality; depicting adults as children or children as adults; pedophilia/hebephilia; child-loving/child-hating)

\*Constructions and representations of gender, sexualities, and/or identities (i.e., essentialism/fluidity of identity categories; coming-of-age and rites of passage; [hetero]normativity and deviancy)

\*Morality, politics, and the policing of sexuality (i.e., the age of consent, pre-marital sex, teen pregnancy)

Papers should conform to the usual style of *ChLAQ* and be between 5000-7000 words in length. Please submit completed essays to Thomas Crisp (tcristp@sar.usf.edu) by 1 November 2011. The selected articles will appear in *ChLAQ* 37.3, Fall 2012.

\* The 2013 Modern Language Association conference will be held in Boston, January 3-6, 2013. All participants in convention sessions must be MLA members by April 7, 2012.

## ChLA Diversity Committee - Call For Papers

### “Diversity in Children’s and Young Adult Literature: State of the Scholarship”

As U. S. society has grown more diverse, Americans’ responses to differences in ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, and physical and cognitive ability still range from respect and understanding to mistrust and fear. In various ways, writers of children’s and young adult literature have confronted this divide, interrogating the nature of personal and group identities, the composition of “America,” and the most salient ways to represent cultural nuance.

**Deadline**

**15 Dec 2011**

For this panel, we invite papers that explore patterns or theorize problems in the production or reception of children’s and YA literature about diversity. This might entail considering contexts (e.g., aesthetic, political, disciplinary) that inform such literature or the scholarship about it. Other directions include exploring the cross-fertilization between children’s and YA literature and such genre as drama, film, or new media, and examining how the literature is marketed. We are less interested in papers about a single text or case than in larger patterns in the development, production, dissemination, reception, or conceptualization of diversity in children’s and young adult literature.

If you have questions, please contact the chair, Karen Chandler ([karen.chandler@louisville.edu](mailto:karen.chandler@louisville.edu)). Email your 500-word abstract and 2-page CV by 15 Dec 2011, attaching your abstract in .rtf, .doc, or .docx format, and including your email and phone number.

## ChLA International Focus: Philippines



The International Committee of the Children’s Literature Association is planning a special country focus panel on the Philippines, to be presented at the upcoming 39<sup>th</sup> ChLA Conference. The committee invites paper proposals that focus on any aspect of Philippine children’s literature—for example, the origins of and/or developments in Philippine children’s texts; issues of regionalism and nationalism; Philippine folklore as children’s texts; Philippine children’s literature in the diaspora; or the state of children’s literature studies in the Philippines. Preference will be given to proposals with the potential to inspire American and international scholars to develop

active interest in Philippine children’s literature and to integrate it into their own research. The authors of two papers selected for the panel to accompany a presentation by a Philippine Distinguished Scholar (invited by the committee) will be awarded a \$500 travel grant each. Up to four other proposals may be selected as well, pending the approval of an additional panel by the conference paper selection committee. The papers must be presented in English and must not exceed the twenty-minute reading time. Send 500-word abstracts accompanied by up to 250-word bios to International Committee: Children’s Literature Association, P.O. Box 138, Battle Creek, MI 49016-0138, USA; fax +269-965-3568; or electronically to [info@childlitassn.org](mailto:info@childlitassn.org). The deadline for submissions is November 30, 2011.

**Deadline**

**30 Nov 2011**

### Host a future ChLA Conference!

ChLA invites proposals for hosting the Association’s forthcoming annual conferences.

If interested in obtaining information about serving as a host site, please contact

ChLA Administrator, Kathy Kiessling ([kkiessling@childlitassn.org](mailto:kkiessling@childlitassn.org)).

## 2012 Phoenix Award Winner



The 2012 Phoenix Award is granted to Karen Hesse for her 1992 novel, *Letters from Rifka* (Henry Holt and Company). Hesse portrays the courage and determination of twelve-year-old Rifka. She bases her heroine on her great-aunt Lucy who escaped from Russia in 1919. Rifka and her family survive brutal treatment by Russian soldiers, embarrassing medical inspections, and severe cases of typhus. Rifka contracts ringworm and cannot accompany her family to America. After a year of treatment in Antwerp, she is cured but remains bald. She sails for America, but a severe storm at sea nearly causes her death and immobilizes the ship. Finally, she is denied entry to America and must remain on Ellis Island while waiting to be cleared.

Using the blank pages and margins of a volume of Alexander Pushkin's poetry, Rifka writes letters to her beloved cousin Tovah. Reading Pushkin and writing the letters help Rifka survive. Her sympathy for others, illustrated particularly in her relationship with Ilya, a seven-year-old Russian peasant, whom she nurtures while detained on Ellis Island, attests to her understanding of what it means to be caught between two worlds. Her proficiency in English and Russian enables her to help the medical staff on Ellis Island communicate with other immigrant detainees. Hesse's prose captures both the tragic and joyful experiences of an adolescent coming of age in a world defined by hatred and uncertainty. The Pushkin quotation at the beginning of each letter deepens our appreciation of Rifka's sense of her Jewish and Russian heritage, as well as of her desire for a new life of hope (and self-expression) in America.



## ChLA Research Grants - Faculty/Graduate Student

### Faculty Research Grants

These grants are awarded for proposals dealing with criticism or original scholarship in children's literature with the expectation that the undertaking will lead to publication and make a significant contribution to the field. Applications will be evaluated based upon the quality of the proposal and the potential of the project to enhance or advance Children's Literature studies. Funds may be used for—but are not restricted to—research-related expenses such as travel to special collections or purchasing materials and supplies. The awards may not be used for obtaining advanced degrees, for researching or writing a thesis or dissertation, for textbook writing, or for pedagogical projects.

### Hannah Beiter Graduate Student Research Grants

These grants are intended as support for research that may be related to the dissertation or master's thesis and are not to be used for tuition. The funding may be used to purchase supplies and materials (e.g., books, videos, photocopies, equipment) or to underwrite travel to special collections or libraries.

## Grants Deadline

**1 Feb 2012**

Individual awards in each category typically range from \$500 to \$1,500 based on the number and needs of the winning applicants. Up to \$5,000 per category is available to be awarded this year. **Applications will be accepted from January 1, 2012, through February 1, 2012.** Proposals must be sent by email and dated within the stated time frame. Application guidelines are posted online at [www.childlitassn.org](http://www.childlitassn.org) (under Professional Opportunities); if clarification is needed, you may contact the ChLA office ([info@childlitassn.org](mailto:info@childlitassn.org)) or Kenneth Kidd ([kbkidd@ufl.edu](mailto:kbkidd@ufl.edu)), chair of the 2012 Grants Committee. Winners must either be members of the ChLA or join the association before they receive any funds.

## Call for Nominations

### Nominations Deadline: 1 Feb 2012 (for essays written in 2011)

#### Carol Gay Award Nominations

ChLA is now accepting submissions for the Carol Gay Award for outstanding undergraduate essays on children's literature. Faculty members should submit nominations and papers electronically on behalf of the undergraduate student author. In order to enable blind review, please submit papers to Kathy Kiessling as two PDF files or Word documents: one a cover letter providing the paper's title, contact information (street and email addresses) for faculty member and student, an endorsement of the paper, and an explanation of the faculty member's familiarity with the student's work, the other the paper with title but without identifying information as to its author or nominator. Submissions will be forwarded to the members of the Carol Gay Award Committee for blind review.

Papers must be original, show evidence of scholarly research, and include a bibliography listing more than the primary works cited. Written in MLA documentation style, essays should be no fewer than 8 pages and no more than 15 pages including notes and works cited. Senior theses are not eligible. Award winners will receive a \$200 prize, a certificate, and a complimentary year's membership to the Association. With the author's permission, the award-winning essay may also be posted on the ChLA web site. The recipient will have the opportunity to present the winning essay during a session at the annual ChLA conference and to receive his/her award during the awards banquet. If the winner attends the conference, a complimentary banquet ticket is also awarded, and conference registration is waived. Only two submissions per ChLA faculty member will be accepted.

#### ChLA Graduate Student Essay Award Nominations

Submissions for the Graduate Student Essay Award are now being accepted. Submissions should demonstrate familiarity with previous scholarship, contain original, distinctive ideas, and conform to MLA style.

They should be at least 10 pages in length and should not exceed 25 pages, including notes and works cited. The awards are comprised of both a Ph.D. level award and a separate Master's level award. Award winners receive a \$200 prize, a certificate, and a complimentary year's membership to the Association. Recipients are also offered the opportunity to present their winning essays during a session at the annual ChLA conference and to receive their awards during the awards banquet. If the winner attends the conference, a complimentary banquet ticket is also awarded, and conference registration is waived.

Nominations should be submitted by a faculty member on behalf of the graduate student author. Graduate students may not nominate themselves or other graduate students. A cover letter must accompany the submission and provide an endorsement of the paper and explain the faculty member's familiarity with the student's work. Please include both the member's and the student's e-mail and street addresses and indicate if the student is a Ph.D. or Master's level student in the cover letter only. Submissions will be forwarded from the ChLA office to the members of the ChLA Graduate Student Essay Awards Committee and read blind (without cover letter). Only two, whether MA or Ph.D. student, submissions per ChLA member will be accepted.

All application guidelines are posted on the ChLA web site [www.childlitassn.org](http://www.childlitassn.org), or you may contact the ChLA office ([kkiessling@childlitassn.org](mailto:kkiessling@childlitassn.org)).

## New Co-editor Introductions

We are excited to be a more active part of the ChLA as the newsletter co-editors. We have both been dedicated ChLA members since our earliest years in graduate school, attending and presenting at ChLA conferences and chairing ChLA-sponsored sessions at MLA. ChLA has provided a rich resource for us, and we would now like to give back with service to the organization by editing the newsletter. Thank you for this opportunity to serve such a great organization.

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Want to support ChLA? Add a link to the newly redesigned ChLA web site to your personal webpage, school webpage, Facebook account, Jacketflap.com account, or anywhere else appropriate.

The ChLA website is [www.childlitassn.org](http://www.childlitassn.org).

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