

as to have commanded thorough editing to achieve its maximum impact. It is, however, replete with broad generalizations and essentialisms. The scope of this study, especially its international perspective, and the limits of a single, average-sized volume necessitate brevity in references, but comments such as that Disney films are "typical American interpretations of European texts" (1:26), or that in "Japan or among Australian Aborigines ... most art is created within predetermined rules" (51) are neither felicitous nor constructive, let alone true. One such statement reveals the definite limitations of Nikolajeva's work as cultural scholarship, namely that "There is little in the *Anne of Green Gables* series that makes the books specifically Canadian" (22). This comment demonstrates a severe lack of knowledge of Canada and Canadianness, for Montgomery's works are profoundly Canadian as variously indicated by Rubio and Waterston and throughout the 1996 conference on L.M. Montgomery and Canadian Culture at the University of Prince Edward Island in Charlottetown, PEI. A reader necessarily challenges some of the many such statements, presented as authoritative judgments, when they are made in his/her area of expertise, and comes to doubt other aspects in what is in many respects a ground-breaking analysis. Nikolajeva's various comments about folk tradition, especially folktales, strike me just this way, as she fails to appreciate accepted knowledge within the field, e.g., distinctions between mutable oral tales and literary established versions. Still, her study is an impressive and valuable piece of scholarship.

It is high-calibre works such as these two volumes which are needed in abundance to provoke further study that will, in turn, drive forward scholarly enquiry into children's literature. The field is richer as an academic enterprise when its practitioners are challenged to think more deeply and appreciate more fully, but it is the works themselves that will reap even greater benefit from quantitative and qualitative advancements in criticism. We owe that to tomorrow's children.

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The Powerful Pleasure of a Performer of Poems

Teaching to Wonder: Responding to Poetry in the Secondary Classroom. Carl Leggo. Pacific Educational P, 1997. 144 pp. \$19.95 paper. ISBN 1-895766-31-1. Poet, professor, teacher, with two master's degrees and a doctorate "all sig-

nificantly informed by deconstruction" (74), Carl Leggo's pedagogical poetic/prose scholarship is in itself a work of art. Thoughtfully and skilfully crafted, Leggo's text coherently suggests devices we can use to become "enthusiastic performers of poetry" (12). Chapter one offers the promise that a learned poet will answer the age-old question "What is a poem?" and then surprises us by solving problems we may have encountered with this genre.

In a deceptively simple structure of a Forward and Afterword sandwiching five chapters about his modern approach to poetry, Leggo compresses a world of wisdom for those open to exploring. He interweaves research and scholarly literature in support of his ideas with ease and logically deconstructs opposing arguments en route to reconstructing them in his reader-response approach, illustrated with examples and activities. In the end, he returns to where he began, extending the invitation to continue pursuing what is a poem and offering a poetic response followed by a rich variety of anthologies to help us continue the performance-in-progress.

To read Leggo is to relish the domain of a master craftsman of the English language. Unintelligibility equalling profundity is happily not a criticism anyone could level against this text. It is thoroughly readable. His words, like Donne's, will no doubt "continue to exercise their power in the lives of readers, generation after generation" (14).

While Leggo is the first to defer closing down a poem or to preclude alternative readings, he seems to succeed only partially in avoiding closure in his presentation of cultural-criticism, which by its very nature can all too easily become exclusive. He elaborates only five perspectives which, by virtue of selection, assume superiority and, not surprisingly, become privileged over the multitude of equally deserving others. Such is the dilemma of diversity. An unsuspecting, perhaps uninformed, reader may not be aware of how easily privileging occurs. Reference to the multitude of other paradigmatic choices could help ensure that readers understand the endless possibilities here.

Rarely do we revel in a pedagogical text but some, like this one, are a must in our libraries. As much about good teaching as responding to poems, this book opens new vistas of teaching, reading, writing and appreciating poetry. Alone, or with a companion video, it can revolutionize the teaching/performing of poetry. Multitudes of learners deserve direct access to Leggo's powerful voice, perhaps through a parallel volume addressed directly to secondary students.

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