

Calls for Papers / Appels à contribution

Preschool Culture: Theory and Practice

Perhaps more than literature and film geared toward children of older ages, books and television programs for preschool children allege that they have very specific pedagogical goals, teaching children letters, numbers, colours, music, sports, and values. What is not clear is what specific research on cognitive and emotional development supports these pedagogical tools.

Canadian Children's Literature / Littérature canadienne pour la jeunesse seeks papers that examine the wide range of materials that comprise preschool culture and the discrepancy between how they are supposed to function in theory and how they do so in practice. Specific questions to consider are as follows:

- Are some books and television programs better than others at promoting development and acuity in small children — and, if so, in what ways?
- What does research in developmental and behavioural paediatrics and in social learning tell us about optimizing infant development, about the role of observational learning, and about how to promote moral reasoning and language development?
- What roles do books, television programs, and films play in all this?
- How can literary critics, teachers, and care providers use the findings from this research?
- What bearing might new developments in philosophy, history, and in literary, art, and cultural criticism have on the kinds of materials we give children and what lessons they offer?

The deadline for final papers is 1 Sept. 2002. Please send inquiries via e-mail to ccl@uoguelph.ca and final papers via regular mail to The Editors, *CCL*, 4th Floor, MacKinnon Building, University of Guelph, Guelph, Ontario N1G 2W1, Canada.

We welcome papers in English and in French. Current guidelines for contributors can be found at our website <<http://www.uoguelph.ca/englit/ccl/>>.

Telling Tales of Trauma

“Now you know the fear your ancestors drove into the hearts of my people! Now you suffer as they suffered. It was the first of your father’s family who came to this land. They took salmon with their nets and drove away our people with guns and killed them for no reason. This arrow can cut the life from you as bullets cut it from us. Think of the agony of this arrow into your flesh and then a knife slashed across your throat!”

— Kevin Major, *Blood Red Ochre* (1994)

Genocide, infanticide, incest, abuse, political violence, abandonment, murder: from Cinderella (whose father at least in one version of the tale insists on marrying her himself) through Shanawdithit to Anne Frank, young people have been witnesses to and victims of physical and mental atrocities, the like of which leave us staggering, open-mouthed. We want children to learn about war, divorce, pedophilia, and all the dangers of the world, but how should we best tell them?

Canadian Children’s Literature / Littérature canadienne pour la jeunesse is interested in narratives of escape from and confrontation with trauma — political, domestic, or personal. We invite papers that explore the pedagogical and/or literary strategies associated with reading and teaching such tales and the psychological and philosophical issues they raise. Some questions to consider are as follows:

- How do we as teachers, librarians, parents, and artists handle tales of trauma? Are there pedagogical strategies that we can share to help us teach these stories to young people?
- Are some tales just too risky to tell?
- How necessary are these stories to the psychological development of children? What is the value of vicarious experience of trauma?
- What sort of portrait of the world — personal, national, or international — do they offer? This is particularly relevant to tales of escape from political oppression or violence.
- How negative is the portrait of humanity in these books?
- How are human agency and duty, particularly those of the young, portrayed?
- Who or what is “blamed” for the harrowing experiences the tales relate?

We are interested in young people’s testimonials (factual or fictional), historical accounts about or by young people, picture books, films, and novels. We require that at least one of the works under examination be Canadian.

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