

Graduate Centre for International Research  
in Childhood: Literature, Culture, Media



University of  
Reading

# MASTER'S IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

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The world famous Master's in Children's Literature, run by CIRCL, is the oldest accredited degree in the field in Britain (since 1984), and is taught by specialists in Children's Literature, whose research is published internationally.

The Master's degree is an 'MRes', which means it is a **taught** MA course but one that fully prepares for PhD research. CIRCL also runs the largest PhD programme in the Department of English Literature at the University of Reading, and every year MA and PhD students from all over the world join together in CIRCL's inspirational and cutting-edge research environment to produce globally unique and original research in this fascinating and burgeoning field.

The University of Reading has unique archive-holdings relating to Children's Literature, including the Nineteenth-Century Special Collection, School Story books, and publishers' archives, and students on the degree receive training on how to make use of these archives for their work.

"Be prepared to completely challenge the way you think about interpreting texts and media'; 'take this course if you want to go for a doctorate and actually do something original...there's no program like this in the States."

**American student,** MA student 2008–9

## OUR COURSE

**MRes Children's Literature:** 12-month (full-time) or 24-month (part-time) course, consisting of six modules taught over nine months. Students write one assessed essay per module of around 3000 words (six essays in total). At degree end students write a 20,000 word dissertation which is completed during the three summer months. Students receive one-to-one specialist supervision for their dissertation, as well as attending dissertation-preparation classes.

The six taught modules consist of three core modules and three option modules.

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**Core Modules:** Theory of children's literature, Nineteenth-century children's literature and Twenty- and Twenty-first century children's literature.

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**Option Modules:** Chosen by students together in advance of start of degree, possible options: Myth and folktale, Popular forms of children's fiction, Children's film, Radio, Television, Commonwealth children's literature, North American children's literature.

# STAFF

## Professor Karin Lesnik-Oberstein

Professor Lesnik-Oberstein is the course Director and the Director of CIRCL. She has published extensively on children's literature and historical and cultural constructions of childhood, including in her books *Children's Literature: Criticism and the Fictional Child* (Clarendon Press of Oxford University Press, 1994) and *On Having an Own Child: Reproductive Technologies and the Cultural Construction of Childhood* (Karnac Books, 2007) and in her edited volumes (with other CIRCL staff contributing) including: *Children in Culture: Approaches to Childhood* (Palgrave, 1998); *Children in Literature* (a special section of the Yearbook of English Studies, 2002), and *Children's Literature: New Approaches* (Palgrave, 2004). A follow-up volume, *Children in Culture Revisited: Further Approaches to Childhood* was published by Palgrave in 2011.

## Dr Sue Walsh

Dr Walsh has published on theoretical issues in children's literature in her book *Kipling's Children's Literature: Language, Identity and Constructions of Childhood* (Ashgate, 2010) and in articles and chapters on animals and childhood, children's literature and irony, children's literature and biography, and childhood and the Gothic.

## Dr Neil Cocks

Dr Cocks has published on theoretical issues in the philosophy and policies of education and teaching in his book *Student-Centred: Education, Freedom and the Idea of Audience* (Inkermen Press / Axis Series, 2009) and on reading childhood in nineteenth-century English literature in his book *The Peripheral Child in Nineteenth Century Literature and its Criticism* (Palgrave, 2014). He has also published on children's literature and childhood in his articles and chapters on ideas of child-readers, and language, sexuality and death in children's fiction.

"This course has changed my professional life entirely, and much for the better. I currently have a two-book deal with Palgrave Macmillan: my first monograph on Louisa May Alcott will be out later in 2019, and my second, on childhood and the Salem witch trials, is due out late 2020. I work as a lecturer and personal tutor in English and American literature, and am a board member of The Ralph Waldo Emerson Society. I have also been invited to speak several times on BBC Radio Berkshire about children's literature and the Salem witch trials. It is entirely through my studies at Reading, and the support of the staff, that this has been possible."

## Dr Kristina West



"While I am working with my students, I often feel that the CIRCL faculty members' openness, enthusiasm, professional ability and kindness inspired me a lot! I am always thankful that I could have an opportunity to study the MA in Reading."

**So Jin Park**

Associate Professor at The School of English in Sookmyung Women's University in Seoul and Director of the Research Institute of Asian Women.

## MRES CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

**i** For more information, please contact:

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