

English 470.01: **Studies in the Literature of Young People:
Children's Visual Culture from Picture Books to New Media**

Fall 2010 Professor: Jan Susina

Class Meets: 5:30 p.m.--8:20 p.m. Wednesdays

Meeting Place: Stevenson 221-A

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Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday: 11 a.m.--noon.

Tentative Syllabus

Aug. 25: Introduction and Overview to of the Course
Assignment of the Presentations.

Sept. 1: Perry Nodelman's *Words about Pictures*

Oral Report 1: Joseph Schwarcz's *The Way of the Illustrator: Visual
Communication in Children's Art* (1982). _____.

Sept. 8 Molly Bang's *Picture This: How Pictures Work*

Oral Report 2: Rhoda Kellogg's *Analyzing Children's Art* (1970).
_____.

Sept. 15: Visual Culture in International Context. Childhood and Globalization: An
International Colloquium. Session III: Childhood in Image & Sound
6:10—8:20 p.m. Schroeder Hall, Room 236, ISU.

"Once Upon a Heimat: Fairy Tale Films as East German Heimat." Sonja
Fritzsche, German & European Studies, IWU.

"Changing Notions of Childhood Among the Swahili of Coastal Kenya."
Rebecca Gerhart, Anthropology, IWU.

"Images of Childhood in 20th Century Photography." Oksana Gavrishina,
Russian Humanities University, Moscow.

Sept. 22: Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm. *Household Stories by the Brothers Grimm*.

Illustrated by Walter Crane. Oral Report 3: Walter Crane's *The Decorative
Illustration of Books* (1896). _____.

Guest Speaker: Kathleen Lonbom on the ISU International Collection of
Children's Art

**Analysis of a Children's Picture Book version of a Grimm Fairy Tale (3-5
pages) Due.** (Options: Snow White, Rapunzel, Little Red Cap/Little Red
Riding Hood Ashenputtel/Cinderella).

Sept. 29: Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland & Through the Looking-
Glass*. Illustrated by John Tenniel.

Oral Report 4: Michael Hancher's *The Tenniel Illustrations to the "Alice" Books*
(1985) _____.

Visual Description of Children's Artwork for the ISU International Collection of Art (2-3 pages) Due.

- Oct. 6: Beatrix Potter's *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*
 Oral Report 5: Margaret Mackey's *The Case of Peter Rabbit: Changing Conditions of Literature for Children* (1998). _____.
- Oct. 13: Virginia Lee Burton's *The Little House*
 Crockett Johnson's *Harold and the Purple Crayon*
 Oral Report 6: John Cech's *Imagination and Innovation: The Story of Weston Woods* (2009). _____.
Analysis of a children's film that is base on a children's picture books (3-5 pages) Due.
- Oct. 20: Maurice Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are*
 Oral Report 7: Maurice Sendak's *Caldecott & Co: Notes on Books & Pictures* (1988). _____.
Proposal for critical paper (1-2 pages) Due.
- Oct 27: Margaret Musgrove. *Ashanti to Zulu: African Traditions*. Illustrated by Leo & Diane Dillon
 David Macaulay's *City: A Story of Roman Planning and Construction*
 Oral Report 8: Patricia Crain's *The Story of A: The Alphabetization of American from The New England Primer to The Scarlet Letter*. _____.
Analysis of an Alphabet Book (3-5 pages) Due. Bring Book to Class.
- Nov. 3: Scott McCloud's *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art*
 Jennifer L. Holm & Matthew Holm's *Babymouse Rock Star*
 Oral Report 9: Will Eisner's *Comics and Sequential Art: Principles & Practice of the World's Most Popular Art Forum* (1985). _____.
- Nov. 10: Art Spiegelman & Francoise Mouly's *Big Fat Little Lit*.
 Oral Report 10: Francoise Mouly & Art Spiegelman's *Toon Books*.
 _____.
Analysis of a Children's Comic, Graphic Novel or Caldecott Award winning Picture Book (3-5 pages) Due. Bring Book to Class.
- Nov. 17: Brian Selznick's *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*
 Oral Report 11: George Melies as Film Maker _____.
- Nov. 24: Thanksgiving Break: no class
- Dec 1: Children's Films and Television
 Oral Report 12: Heather Hendershot's *Nickelodeon Nation: The History, Politics, and Economics of America's Only TV Channel for Kids* (2004).
 _____.

Critical Paper on Children's Visual Culture (15-18 pages and 1 page abstract) Due. (Extension to Friday, Dec. 3, 1 p.m.)

Dec 8: Children's Video Games, and Websites

Victoria Rideout, Ulla Foehrer & Donald Robert. *Generation M²: Media in the Lives of 8-to-18 Year Olds: A Kaiser Family Foundation Study*. Online
Nicholson Baker's "Painkiller Deathstreak: Adventures in Video Games"
(handout)

Oral Report 13: James Paul Gee's *What Video Games Have to Teach Us About Learning and Literacy* (2003). _____.

Analysis of children's video game, children's web site or children's author web site (3-5 pages). Due.

Dec. 15: Final Exam 5:30 p.m.--8:20 p.m: Five minute presentations on critical papers.

Required Texts:

Perry Nodelman. *Words about Pictures: The Narrative Art of Children's Picture Books*. University of Georgia Press. .

Molly Bang. *Picture This: How Pictures Work*. SeaStar Books.

Scott McCloud. *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art*. Harper Perennial, 1993.

Jacob & Wilhelm Grimm. *Household Stories by the Brothers Grimm*. Illustrated by Walter Crane. Dover.

Lewis Carroll. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland & Through the Looking-Glass*. Illustrated by John Tenniel. Ed, Hugh Haughton, Penguin.

Beatrix Potter. *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*. Warne.

Virginia Lee Burton. *The Little House*. Sandpiper.

Maurice Sendak. *Where the Wild Things Are*. Harper Trophy.

Margaret Musgrove. *Ashanti to Zulu: African Tradition*. Illustrated by Leo & Diane Dillon, Puffin.

David Macaulay. *City: A Story of Roman Planning and Construction*. Houghton Mifflin.

Jennifer L. Holm & Matthew Holm. *Babymouse Rock Star*. Random House.

Brian Selznick. *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*. Scholastic.

Victoria Rideout, Ulla Foehrer & Donald Roberts. *Generation M²: Media in the Lives of 8-to 18 Years Old: A Kaiser Family Foundation Study*. Online.

Joseph Gibaldi. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. Seventh edition. MLA.

Course Description:

Children's literature has always involved the combination of images and text. This course will examine the many ways that words and images combine to create compelling children's narratives. This course will survey a variety of children's media including picture books, illustrated books, informational books, alphabet books, comics and graphic novels, television programs, and websites created for children as well as the artwork produced by children found on the ISU Digital Collection of International Child Art. We will examine how different designers and illustrators chose to present the same fairy tale,

the design elements of alphabet books, the process by which children's books are adapted into films and television programs, the use of author's websites created for children and adolescents. While this course is intended for graduate students working in the fields of children's and adolescent literature, it should be applicable to those students interested in visual culture, popular culture & theory, and new media.

Course Format:

The course will be conducted as a seminar which means that students are expected to come to class for active discussion of the reading assignments. All students will give an oral presentation on a prearranged topic and will create and distribute a handout (2-3 pages) on the topic for every member of the class. Students should provide a Powerpoint presentation as part of their presentation and turn in a storyboard of their presentation. Students will write an analysis and critique (3-5 page) on a picture book, illustrated book, graphic novel or comic appropriate for children or adolescents. Students will also write a several short papers (3-5 pages) on a fairy tale illustration, a children's film based on a children's picture book, an alphabet book, a children's comic, graphic novel or Caldecott winning picture book and a children's video game, children's web site or children's author web site. Each student will write a longer critical paper (14-18 pages) dealing with a topic of children's visual culture and an abstract (1 page) of their critical paper. Students will give a five-minute presentation on their research topic. Throughout the semester, there will be short written assignments related to the primary texts and critical readings. Students will be expected to attend class and contribute to the class discussion.

Class Attendance:

Class attendance is an important and valuable aspect of the course. If you aren't in class, you ought to have a good reason for your absence. Since the class meets once a week, missing a class session is missing a week of class. Since you can't be two places at the same time, avoid scheduling other activities during class time. If you must miss a session, contact me before class by email or telephone, if at all possible. Since class participation will be evaluated as part of your responsibilities in this course, missing more than one class will lower your final grade one half a letter grade for each additional class sessions missed.

Research Paper:

Each student will write a critical paper (14-18 pages) on some aspect of children's visual culture topic that has been approved by the instructor. Students are encouraged to write on one of the texts that the class is reading in common or another one composed by one of the authors read in the class. Students will write a short (1-2 page) proposal for their research topic, which needs to be reviewed and approved by the instructor. For the final exam, students will present a 5-minute presentation on their research and provide a one-page abstract of the research paper. Written work should conform to the format presented in the *MLA Handbook* for appropriate quotation and citation. Critical papers need a minimum of *eight* secondary sources in their Works Cited section. Only half of the secondary sources used in the Works Cited can be electronic sources. Students need to keep a copy of all their written work.

Class Presentation and Presentation Handout:

Each student will give a 20-minute class presentation selected from a list of rearranged topics. Students will introduce the topic to the class and lead a class discussion on the subject. In addition to the presentation, each student will construct a handout (2-3 page) to accompany their presentation to be distributed to each member of the class on the day of the presentation. Presentation handouts should list at least *three* secondary sources as part of the handout's Works Cited section.

Class Assignments:

Throughout the semester, students will be asked to complete a series of short writing assignments linked to the reading and class discussion.

Plagiarism/ Cheating:

Please review the Illinois State University policy in the *Graduate Catalog* under "Academic Integrity" (29-30) and chapter 2: "Plagiarism" (66-75) in the *MLA Handbook*. Plagiarism and cheating are serious academic offenses and will be punished by failure on an exam, paper, project, and in some cases result in failure in the course and/or expulsion from the university. All written work submitted for this course needs to be your own and produced for this specific course. Please consult the *MLA Handbook* for appropriate format for quotations and citations for your written work.

Grading:

Grades will be assigned according to the following standard:

Class presentation: 10%

Presentation handout: 5%

Critical Paper: 40%

Class Assignments/Short Papers: 30%

Class Participation: 15%