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## *Jakten på fortellinger: Barne- og ungdomslitteratur på tvers av medier* [The hunt for narratives: children's and youth literature across media]. Ed. Elise Seip Tønnessen

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Elise Seip Tønnessen has been exploring children's involvement in media for decades. This book is the result of a three-year project in which she has been head of a team of leading Norwegian researchers, organised by the Norwegian Institute for Children's Books (Norsk barnebokinstitutt), most of whom come from the field of children's literature. The aims of the project were to provide insight into how stories function in different media and to identify what roles they play in the reading habits and lives of modern-day children. The book sets out to establish analytical tools that can be useful for scholars who want to understand the complex digital and literary cycles of our day. The study, then, moves in two opposite directions simultaneously, trying to structure what is a complex matter.

*Jakten på fortellinger* aims to give educators, librarians and reviewers a good understanding of how media events and new media redefine the traditional narrative genres in books. The scope is wide and the diachronic element present, ranging from the classic Mrs Pepperpot to the present-day textual negotiations in children's culture related to the massacre of Utøya in 2011. The fifteen chapters are organised into four parts that focus on: 1) theory; 2) adaptations of stories in new media; 3) children's literature that incorporates digital experiences and 4) readings of stories that exist primarily on one platform. The reason for such divisions is not entirely clear. Some of the articles could undoubtedly fit in different sections, and the sections overlap somewhat. The chapters behave in the same way as the modern media items they describe – they exist as a plethora of texts where each one sheds light on the others but without complying with a fixed reference point.

Together, the introductory chapters on new media and new media theory by Elise Seip Tønnessen, Agnes-Margrethe Bjørvand and Lin Prøitz represent a systematic approach to the field. The reader learns about the diverse platforms where stories are available to children, such as apps, e-readers and games. There is also an outline of the theory related to the concepts of text, genre, media and readers. Here, Kristin Hallberg's ground-breaking ideas relating to what she has termed the iconotext are complemented with references to the works of Roland Barthes, Gunther Kress, Linda Hutcheon, Wolfgang Iser and more to discuss the concepts of adaptation, remediation, play, performance and interpretation.

In the second section, where we find in-depth analyses of stories, the articles do not make much use of the theories presented in the first section. That being said, the biblical nativity story (Astri Ramsfjell) is a good example to demonstrate how old narratives are remediated. Most Nordic readers will also know Albert Åberg (Alfons Åberg) and his movie, which is the focus of the next article. Here Ingeborg Mjør refers to some theories discussed in the introduction, but much of the analysis of the movie is based on a traditional literary approach. The same could be said of the next chapter (Hanne Kiil), devoted to *Skylappjenta* (2009), a movie with a female hero belonging to an ethnic minority.

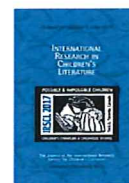
Anne Skaret's reading of Alf Prøysen's *Mrs Pepperpot* as a sculpture defends its place in the volume by expanding its scope to include physical and tactile platforms that are also part of children's lives. The case study where children's voices are allowed to resound is a welcome exception in a volume comprising typical textual analyses. School and kindergarten practitioners and readers with a cross-curricular focus will especially appreciate this chapter.

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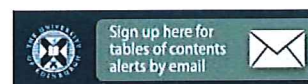
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Maria Nikolajeva  
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Tønnessen has written several of the contributions to the collection – for example, the article on the distinction between picturebooks and apps (Chapter 8). Here she comments on several of the most interesting apps, for instance the commercially successful *Kubbe*, while leaving out *Troll i ord*, a widespread pedagogical language tool with literary ambitions. Her subsequent chapter presents a study of a picturebook app used in kindergartens, where she considers it in the context of reading as a playful activity.

Chapter 10, by Åse Marie Ommundsen, deals with the national trauma of the Utøya extremist massacre of 2011, which has had a deep impact on public opinion in Norway and also affected children as media consumers. The national broadcasting company aired news bulletins addressed to children, featuring children who were eyewitnesses. Children's literature can contribute to processing such direct reports, and Ommundsen looks closely at examples of such texts to determine how this has been facilitated.

Violence is also the focus of Kjersti Lersbryggen Mørk's essay on *The Hunger Games*, while Chapter 12, by Silje Hernæs Linhart, presents musical taste as an identity marker in young adult literature. This is an example of young people's self-definition processes that take place through the consumption of different media and narratives. Chapter 13, by Lisa Nagel, discusses the performative aspects of literary events (such as reading a picturebook). The reader's position is the subject of both Kristin Ørjasæter's contribution and the last chapter, by Lin Prøitz, which surveys the digital text cycle with interesting examples of young digital readers in the role of critics. She shows how paper versions of stories still appeal to young generations because the materiality cannot be replaced by digital representations.

One of the strong points of this anthology is the versatile approach to the field. When 'remediating' is exemplified by readings of apps, movies and a bronze sculpture, the reader has ample opportunity to reflect on questions of principle. This could give the collection a lifespan that extends beyond the age of *MovieStarPlanet* or *The Hunger Games*. In addition, the articles are filled with useful references that inform the reader of an entire field and a variety of different voices.

Some examples of problematic areas are covered, but the overall focus of this volume is on the benefits of storytelling. The chapters complement each other, but an occasional fresh gust of disagreement is quite absent. Some readers may also miss studies of Pokémon, Minecraft, Lego and *Star Wars*, all phenomena that have had defining roles in the world of stories for children.

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The Journal welcomes submissions from scholars in the field, both IRCL members and others. Acceptance of papers is subject to rigorous international peer review and revision. The Journal publishes four issues in a biennium: a general issue, a special themed issue, and two issues largely based on the most recent IRCL Congress theme. IRCL is indexed by Thomson Reuters Arts and Humanities Citation Index and Current Contents/Arts & Humanities, by MLA and by the British Humanities Index.

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