

Fear, Anxiety, and Hope in Children's Literature Online Symposium

30 Nov – 1 Dec 2020

From folk and fairy tales featuring menacing creatures and children lost in the woods, to more contemporary texts that deal with COVID-19, racism, poverty, the environment, terrorism and more, children's literature is caught up in the politics and experiences of worry. This online symposium explores fear, anxiety, and hope in children's literature. There will be two keynotes, a panel discussion, and pre-recorded audio contributions. All scheduled times are set in Australian Eastern Daylight Time.

30 Nov
1-2 pm
AEDT
(UTC+11)

Keynote 1: Mess, Wounds, and (Be)longings: The Discourse of Hope in Contemporary Taiwanese Picturebooks
Andrea Mei-Ying Wu, Professor of Children's Literature and Taiwanese Literature, National Cheng Kung University, Taiwan

Audio contributions: <https://soundcloud.com/user-409580962>

Hair and the Anxiety of Adulthood

Vanessa Joosen, Professor of English and children's literature, University of Antwerp

Slavery and Fear in Marjorie Stoneman Douglas's *Freedom River*

Kenneth Kidd, Professor of English, University of Florida

Fear in Picture Books about Refugees and Forced Migration

Mary Tomsic, Research Fellow, Research Centre for Refugees, Migration and Humanitarian Studies, Australian Catholic University

The Pains and Pleasures of Anthropomorphism in Picturebooks about COVID-19

Chengcheng You, Assistant Professor of English, University of Macau

Fear and Food

Sabine Planka, Subject Librarian, FernUniversität Hagen/Visiting Lecturer, University of Bielefeld, Germany

1 Dec
10-11 am
AEDT
(UTC+11)

Keynote 2: Dreaming DMZ: A Guide to Division for the South Korean Child
Dafna Zur, Associate Professor, Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures, Stanford University, USA

1 Dec
11:15 am-
12:15 pm
AEDT
(UTC+11)

Fear, Anxiety, and Hope in Children's Literature Panel Discussion
Sue Chen, Kristine Moruzi, Paul Venzo
Senior Lecturers in Writing and Literature, School of Communication and Creative Arts, Deakin University

Organised by the Literature and Its Readers Research Cluster, Deakin University

To register, please email sue.chen@deakin.edu.au

Mess, Wounds, and (Be)longings: The Discourse of Hope in Contemporary Taiwanese Picturebooks

Andrea Mei-Ying Wu, Professor of Children's Literature and Taiwanese Literature, National Cheng Kung University, Taiwan

Children's literature abounds with the discourse of hope, in the imagination and for the formation of young readers as fitting social subjects in and for the future. Hope in this context is often construed as a generative power to enact a change, for instance, in the heroic aspirations in times of trouble. Hope, on the other hand, is frequently conceptualized as a therapeutic given or a vital source for young audience to live by and to envisage a safe and better world, when environmental devastations, ecological imbalances, and other natural and socio-political conflicts and problems become recurrent issues and constant threats to modern lives.

Despite that the message it communicates is by and large affirmative and forward-looking, hope may paradoxically be deployed or redefined as a negative drive adversely yielding to detrimental effects, typically in a capitalist society where massive consumption and economic needs overwhelm and virtually determine our daily activities. In this lecture, a collection of Taiwanese picturebooks published in the past decade will be introduced to discuss and illustrate the various notions of hope and examine how such concepts are represented, reinforced, and/or renegotiated in the articulation of "mess, wounds, and (be)longings," motifs and narrative strategies central to the discourse of hope, in addressing challenging ideas and difficult situations in relation to environmental, ecological, and social changes and loss in contemporary Taiwan and other global societies as a whole.



Andrea Mei-Ying Wu is Professor of Children's Literature and Taiwanese Literature at National Cheng Kung University in Taiwan. She is currently President of Taiwan Children's Literature Research Association (TCLRA) and has served on the Executive Board of the International Research Society for Children's Literature (IRSCL, 2013–17). Her most recent publications include "Children's Literature and Childhood Imagination in 1960s Taiwan: Jen-Mu Pan and the Discourse of 'Child Heart.'" in *Asian Children's Literature and Film in a Global Age: Local, National, and Transnational Trajectories* (2020), "Access to Books Matters: Cultural Ambassadors and the Editorial Task Force" in *The Reading Teacher* (2019), and "Postcoloniality, Globalization, and Transcultural Production of Children's Literature in Postwar Taiwan" in *The Routledge Companion to International Children's*

Literature (2018). She is also the author of a Chinese book [Discourses of Subject, Gender, Place, and (Post)modern Childhood in Postwar Taiwanese Juvenile Fiction] (2017). She was awarded a Fulbright Senior Research Scholar fellowship (2014–15) and is currently working on a research project: "Pictorial Narrative and Transcultural (Re)production—Contemporary Taiwanese Picturebooks as World Literature."

Dreaming DMZ: A Guide to Division for the South Korean Child

Dafna Zur, Associate Professor, Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures, Stanford University, USA

“Dreaming DMZ” interrogates the representations of the demilitarized zone in South Korean films and literature for young readers. Starting from the earliest film for children that was shot, incredulously, in the DMZ right after the armistice was signed, and culminating in an examination of a dozen books about the DMZ published for young readers between 2009-2019, this paper argues that film and literature on the DMZ exposes the extent to which the site is as much a palimpsest of war and division as it is a celebrated ecological haven. I argue that the representation of the DMZ, particularly the ecological aspects of this site, has elided the much more thorny and difficult discussions about the costs of South Korea’s economic development, the country’s dependence on unrenowable energy, and its knotty implication in a complex East Asian economy. It has also turned young readers’ attentions away from the political constructedness of the site, presenting instead a dreamscape untouched by politics—when the DMZ is anything but that.



Dafna Zur is an Associate Professor in the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures at Stanford University where she teaches courses on Korean literature, cinema, and popular culture. Her book, *Figuring Korean Futures: Children’s Literature in Modern Korea* (Stanford University Press, 2017), traces the investments and aspirations made possible by children’s literature in colonial and postcolonial Korea. She is working on a new project on science and literature in Cold War North and South Korea. She has published articles on North Korean popular science, North Korean science fiction, North Korean translations of Russian Science Fiction, the Korean War in North and South Korean children’s literature, childhood in cinema, and Korean popular culture. Her translations of Korean fiction have appeared in wordwithoutborders.org, *The Columbia Anthology of Modern Korean Short Stories*, and the *Asia Literary Review*.