

English 363

Spring 1980

Lectures: M. Steig
Seminars: M. Harris
M. SteigVarieties of Fantasy: Children's Literature

Children's literature has been referred to as "the great excluded"-- that is, an important branch of literature which is not normally taken seriously. We shall be taking it seriously. The reading list is set up roughly in terms of age-levels of appeal and historical chronology, though these conflict at some points.

Whereas the reading may seem "easy," the work will be hard, because we are asking for full participation in an ongoing experiment: the examination of response as a primary factor in reading and interpretation. David Bleich's book will provide a convenient--though not prescriptive--introduction to the theory and practice of subjective criticism. Lectures will deal with questions of genre, historical considerations, and the relation of children's literature to "adult" literature, as well as with method. The seminars will be the main arenas for the sharing and discussion of responses--see Course Requirements, below.

Required Texts:

David Bleich	<u>Readings and Feelings</u>	NCTE
Munro Leaf	<u>The Story of Ferdinand</u>	Penguin-Puffin
William Steig	<u>The Amazing Bone</u>	Penguin-Puffin
Andrew Lang	<u>The Blue Fairy Book</u>	Airmont
George MacDonald	<u>The Light Princess</u>	Dell
Lewis Carroll	<u>Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking-Glass</u>	Penguin-Puffin
Kenneth Grahame	<u>The Wind in the Willows</u>	Signet
E. B. White	<u>Charlotte's Web</u>	Harper & Row
Mordecai Richler	<u>Jacob Two-Two Meets the Hooded Fang</u>	Bantam
C. S. Lewis	<u>The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe</u>	Penguin
Ursula LeGuin	<u>A Wizard of Earthsea</u>	Penguin
Louise Fitzhugh	<u>Harriet the Spy</u>	Dell
Lloyd Alexander	<u>The Book of Three</u>	Dell
Alan Garner	<u>The Owl Service</u>	Collins

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Course Requirements:

Two papers, one medium-length, due in the fifth week of classes, and one longer, due at the beginning of the final week of classes. The first of these will deal with response, but the second may be a more conventional critical or "research" paper if you prefer. In addition, you will be required to write a 300-600 word response paper for every other seminar (approximately) after the first; some of these will be duplicated and distributed for discussion, and the seminar leader will distribute his own response paper at the same time; total: 4 or 5 short response papers. These will not be graded individually, but note will be taken of failure to hand in response papers. On those days when response papers are not due, you will still be expected to have prepared detailed notes on your response to the work under discussion. The success of the course will depend upon students' and seminar leaders' willingness to participate fully and candidly in discussions.

No final examination.

*Note: No smoking will be permitted in lectures or seminars.
Seminars will be held in the first week of classes.*