



Verbal

Visual **Texts Symposium**

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THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

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SYMPOSIUM SCHEDULE

DAY 1 – Tuesday, June 25

Location: Convocation Hall on second floor of Wesley Hall, University of Winnipeg

9:00-9:30 – Openings

Chair: Mavis Reimer

Greetings from the University of Winnipeg - Neil Besner, VP-Academic

Morning Panel 1

Chair: Cat Tosenberger

9:30-10:20 – Phil Nel – Kansas State University, USA, “‘He came up thinking fast’; or, How Does Crockett Johnson’s *Harold and the Purple Crayon* Work?”

10:20-11:10 – Helene Høyrup – Royal School of Library and Information Science, Denmark, “Literature between *Bookspace* and New Literacy Space: Towards a Connective Ethnography of Word and Image, Children’s Literature and Digital Media”

MORNING BREAK: 11:10-11:25

Morning Panel 2

Chair: Nyala Ali

11:25-12:15 – Lian Beveridge - University of British Columbia, “Books Are For Biting”

LUNCH 12:15-1:45

Afternoon Panel 3

Chair: Audrey Barkman-Hill

1:45-2:35 – William Moebius – University of Massachusetts at Amherst, USA, “Orders of Proximity in the Picture Book”

2:35-3:25 – Nina Christensen – University of Aarhus, Denmark, “Through the Eyes of a Child: Perspectives on Childhood in Graphic Novels for Children and Adults”

AFTERNOON BREAK 3:25-3:40

Afternoon Panel 4

Chair: Doris Wolf

3:40-4:30 – Eva Maagerø – Vestfold University College, Norway, and Elise Seip Tønnessen– Agder University, Norway, “Making Meaning from Images and Words”

4:30-5:20 – Torsten Janson – Lund University, Sweden, “The Politics of Picturing: Representational Restraint and Renewal in English-Islamic Picture Books”

Location: University of Winnipeg Library Mezzanine

5:30-6:30 – Reception, featuring a display of the Nodelman Little Red Riding Hood Collection

DAY 2 – Wednesday, June 26

Location: Convocation Hall on second floor of Wesley Hall, University of Winnipeg

Morning Panel 1

Chair: Karen Magro

9:00-9:50 – Elizabeth Marshall – Simon Fraser University, “Graphic Knowledge: Picture Books, Trauma, and the Child Witness”

9:50-10:40 – Kari-Lynn Winters - Brock University, “Co-authoring Picture Books: How Young Audiences Semiotically and Critically Interact with Professional Authors During Author Visits”

MORNING BREAK: 10:40-10:55

Morning Panel 2

Chair: Jenny Wills

10:55-11:45 – Naomi Hamer – University of Winnipeg, “Night & Day Studios and Nosy Crow: The Design and Development of Picture Books for Interactive Mobile Applications”

11:45 – 12:35 - Brian Hornberg – Caulfeild Elementary School and University of British Columbia, “Beyond Word and Image on the Screen”

LUNCH 12:35-2:05

Afternoon Panel 3

Chair: Devon Kerslake

2:05-2:55 – Joseph Thomas – San Diego University, USA, “‘I Guess I Won’t Write That Book After All’: Literary Estates, Permissions, and Their Effect on Image/Text Studies”

2:55-3:45 – Candida Rifkind – University of Winnipeg, “Irradiated Lives: Graphic Scientific Biographies and the Atomic Age”

AFTERNOON BREAK 3:45-4:00

Afternoon Panel 4

Chair: Kelsey Williams

4:00-4:50 – Erica Hateley – Queensland University of Technology, Australia, “Art, Adaptation, and the Antipodean in Shaun Tan’s *The Lost Thing*”

4:50-5:40 - Bettina Kümmerling-Meibauer - Eberhard Karls University Tübingen, Germany, “Manga Hybrids in Contemporary Picture Books”

Location: Eckhardt-Gramatté Hall on third floor of Centennial Hall, University of Winnipeg 7:30-9:00 – Panel Discussion of Collaborators on *Pisim Finds Her Miskanow*

This panel discussion is about the development of *Pisim Finds Her Miskanow*, a collaborative picture book about the life of Kayasochi Kikawenow, Our Mother from Long Ago, a young Cree woman who lived in northern Manitoba during the proto-Contact period. The panel will feature some of the collaborators, including Kevin Brownlee (Manitoba Museum), William Dumas (Storyteller), Leonard Paul (Illustrator), Deborah Schnitzer (U of Winnipeg), and Mavis Reimer (U of Winnipeg).

DAY 3 – Thursday, June 27

Location: Convocation Hall on second floor of Wesley Hall, University of Winnipeg

Morning Panel 1

Chair: Murray Gordon

9:00-9:50 – Janet Evans - Liverpool Hope University, United Kingdom, "Who Are These Books For?: Exploring Unconventional, Controversial Picture Books and Their Audience"

9:50-10:40 – Andrea Schwenke Wylie – Acadia University, "Picture Book Poesis: The Ecology of Narrative Space in Poetry Picture Books"

MORNING BREAK: 10:40-10:55

Morning Panel 2

Chair: Deanna England

10:55-11:45 – Nathalie op de Beeck – Pacific Lutheran University, USA, "Little Greens: Children's Picture Books and the Representation of Environment"

LUNCH 11:45-1:30

Afternoon Panel 3

Chair: Josina Robb

1:30-2:20 – Brandon Christopher – University of Winnipeg, "Manga Shakespeare or Shakespeare Manga?: Adaptation and the Fight for Youth Culture"

2:20-3:10 – Debra Dudek – University of Wollongong, Australia, "How Narrative and Formal Properties of Graphic Novels Accommodate a Compassionate Reader"

AFTERNOON BREAK 3:10-3:25

Afternoon Panel 4

Chair: charlie peters

3:25-4:15 – Michael Chaney – Dartmouth University, USA, "Pictorial Picaresque: The Child In and As Comics"

BREAK 4:15-4:30

4:30-5:00 – Next Steps – Mavis Reimer, Naomi Hamer, Brendon Yarish, and Larissa Wodtke

Chair: Mavis Reimer

5:00-5:50 - Perry Nodelman – Professor Emeritus, University of Winnipeg, "Response to Symposium"

Location: Winnipeg Art Gallery (300 Memorial Boulevard)

7:00-10:00 – Banquet and Tour of the 100 Masters: Only in Canada Exhibition

ABSTRACTS:

TUESDAY, JUNE 25

“He came up thinking fast’; or, How Does Crockett Johnson's *Harold and the Purple Crayon* Work?”

Phil Nel

Inspired by Perry Nodelman's tour-de-force reading of John Burningham's *Mr. Gumpy's Outing* (in Peter Hunt's *Understanding Children's Literature*), my paper offers a close reading of Johnson's *Harold and the Purple Crayon* (1955), a classic picture book not addressed in *Words About Pictures* (1988). Following Nodelman's model, I examine the meanings of visual objects (moon, balloon, tree, pie, windows), the book's style of representation (the clear line school of cartooning), and its dynamic relationship between words and images. Building on this analysis, my talk explores how Johnson's minimalist cartoon aesthetic distills imaginative possibility, blurs boundaries between art and life, and inspires readers of many backgrounds to pick up their crayons and draw (or write). In so doing, my paper answers the question of why some picture books endure (become classics) and others do not.

“Literature between *Bookspace* and New Literacy Space: Towards a Connective Ethnography of Word and Image, Children's Literature and Digital Media”

Helene Høyrup

How can the meeting between "old" and "new" media become a fruitful encounter? In the 20th century children's literature research developed into a theoretically reflexive investigation of the relation between children, childhood, and texts. It could be said to have undergone the linguistic "turn", which has often been seen as a parallel to the emergence of digital media. Digital media, however, challenge the paradigm of print culture and the theories developed under previous media ecologies. The field of New Literacy research has emerged as an interdisciplinary movement aiming at analyzing the processes and "texts" of the emerging digital knowledge system. Digital media increasingly make it clear that all media both have a material and a semiotic side. With picture books as a case study, my paper suggests that children's literature studies and New Literacy research should be seen as a converging theoretical field.

“Books Are For Biting”

Lian Beveridge

In this presentation I explore the contradictions of adult understandings of babies chewing on books. Adults "count" a wide range of activities as "reading" a baby book, including lifting flaps, singing, talking, and physical interaction such as tickling. We understand "reading" baby books to be an activity which involves all the senses. Simultaneously, adults understand that babies chew on books; however, we do not publish baby books which encourage chewing. Why do adults validate other forms of "reading," but not this very common activity? I consider the relationship between (mainly positive) metaphors of adults "devouring" texts and (mainly negative) understanding of babies chewing on books and argue that baby books which acknowledged and experimented with the notion of chewing would be aesthetically and physically enjoyable. I also argue that such books would positively acknowledge infant reading and literary appreciation practices (i.e. babies chew more on their favourite books).

“Orders of Proximity in the Picture Book”

William Moebius

Getting close to an image or a text has long been a part of the quest for meaning. This presentation, based on one offered in French in Cerisy in 2010, interrogates aspects of that experience of "being close to" or "too close to" in picture books for children, drawing on a selection of picture books from the British, American, French, Italian, and East European traditions, and on the work of Michael Fried, Svetlana Alpers, Quentin Blake, Norman Bryson, Meyer Schapiro, Hubert Damisch and others.

"Through the Eyes of a Child: Perspectives on Childhood in Graphic Novels for Children and Adults"

Nina Christensen

Perry Nodelman writes: "Children's literature most centrally teaches children how to be childlike, in terms of adult-authorized ideas of childlike-ness" ("Words Claimed" 19). This paper asks what it is to be "childlike" in graphic novels for children and adults, and how the representation of childhood in this media differs from images of childhood in picture books. A number of graphic novels for adults are visual narratives or autobiographies where the experience of a child is told by an adult for an adult audience. The paper analyzes the representation of child characters in graphic novels for children, such as in Kim Fupz Aakeson and Rasmus Bregnhøi's *I Love You Denmark* (2012). How is a child's perspective constructed through text and image, what are the qualities attributed to a child character, and which processes of change do child characters go through when the intended audience comprises both children and adults?

"Making Meaning from Images and Words"

Eva Maagerø and Elise Seip Tønnessen

In this paper, we will present results from a research cooperation between the UK and Norway on children's reading of iconotexts across cultures. The twenty-four children investigated are 6-7 years old (twelve in each country [twelve boys and twelve girls]). Two books were chosen for the readings, one published in Norwegian (Svein Nyhus's *Pappa!* [1998]) and one in English (Rachel Bright's *What Does Daddy Do?* [2009]). The main research question was: how do children from different cultures interpret the iconotext of contemporary picture books? The more detailed research questions for this symposium will be: to what extent do the children refer to the words, to the visual images, and to the interplay of words and images in their interpretations of the two books? In our presentation, we will use the work of Perry Nodelman, Kristin Halberg's notion of iconotext, and social semiotics as the theoretical framework.

"The Politics of Picturing: Representational Restraint and Renewal in English-Islamic Picture Books"

Torsten Janson

This presentation aims at discussing transforming representational programs in recent English-Islamic picture books. It demonstrates how Muslim organizations have been active in emulating new cultural forms in the reformulation of young religious identity relevant for a European migrant setting. In this sense, minority/marginality experiences have stimulated religious reinterpretation and entrepreneurship. One important venue for this reformulation is a new brand of Islamic children's literature. Such literature tends to simultaneously reproduce and renegotiate Islamic traditional representational codes, most notably, the traditional Islamic restraints in depicting human beings and other animate creatures. While recent Islamic literature tends to abandon such restraints, this is compensated for with other visual markers, underscoring Islamic specificity, yet accommodating the literature to novel pedagogic and artistic demands. The paper concludes with a more general discussion of politics and power of visual design, in the pictures of an emergent English-Islamic children's book tradition.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26

"Graphic Knowledge: Picture Books, Trauma, and the Child Witness"

Elizabeth Marshall

Picture books are increasingly used as a form through which to tell trauma narratives, including stories of war, abuse, residential schooling, and illness. Since the 1990s, "children's literature is the most rather than the least appropriate forum for trauma work" (Kidd 120). Visual images offer another language for representing events that often resist telling. Using trauma theory (Caruth) as well as theories about graphic narratives (Chute; Nodelman; Salisbury and Styles), I discuss how contemporary picture book creators (Nicola Campbell, author of *Shin-chi's Canoe*; John Mardsen, author of *The Rabbits*) ask readers/viewers to witness trauma through the perspective of the child. I consider how these graphic narratives allow authors/illustrators to engage with traumatic material in ways that expose conventional ideas about youthful knowledge, agency and the child witness.

"Co-authoring Picture Books: How Young Audiences Semiotically and Critically Interact with Professional Authors During Author Visits"

Kari-Lynn Winters

Instruction in children's literature, like so many learning experiences, is changing in the twenty-first century because of the immersion in contemporary technologies such as Web 2.0 tools, animation, and access to hand-held or mobile devices. Through their own agency, children are increasingly choosing tech-enhanced media, especially since children are given opportunities to be positioned as co-authors when they use these tools. How then do we as educators and researchers integrate 21st century technologies without compromising the integrity and significant role of traditional children's literature? Comparing author visits from three Canadian children's authors, we explore how young audiences semiotically and critically interact before, during, and after author visits. My findings demonstrate that children's literature is still very much alive in schools and that professional authors and educators may better engage with young audiences when they give students opportunities to act as co-authors who simultaneously mediate words, pictures, and multimodal materials together.

"Night & Day Studios and Nosy Crow: The Design and Development of Picture Books for Interactive Mobile Applications"

Naomi Hamer

Contemporary picture books are increasingly produced and consumed through interactive picture book applications ('apps') for mobile devices such as the iPad. This analysis focuses on the design and development of picture book apps by two distinct companies: Night & Day Studios (USA) and Nosy Crow (UK). Night & Day Studios primarily produces apps that adapt well-known picture books such as Eric Carle's *Counting with The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (Night & Day Studios 2012). In comparison, Nosy Crow produces apps based on popular fairytales in collaboration with illustrators and animators including: *The Three Little Pigs, the Nosy Crow animated storybook* (Nosy Crow 2012). Framed by theoretical and methodological approaches from game studies, social semiotics, and New Literacies Studies, this paper elucidates how the designers of picture books apps negotiate the tensions between the interactivity offered by mobile technologies, and the cultural discourses historically associated with picture books within early literacy education.

“Beyond Word and Image on the Screen”

Brian Hornberg

This research project explores how changes in the shift from page to screen are marked in the presentation of stories in different modes with implications for pre-reading students through a social-semiotic comparative analysis of stories produced in both traditional print picture books and in digital form (iPad picture book apps), delineating key differences between multimodal storytelling in analogue and digital picture books. Young children have opportunities to be able to interpret a variety of texts through technological changes in the way stories are presented. These technological developments make it possible to unpack from a text not just word and image, but sound, music, and motion often in user-defined ways. The interactive aspects of these texts open natural extensions of authentic Rosenblatt-style reader-response opportunities. The development of traditional print literacy can be supported by the autonomy provided by being part of the literate world through multiliteracies (verbal, visual, symbolic) developed in earlier, pre-school years.

“I Guess I Won’t Write That Book After All’: Literary Estates, Permissions, and Their Effect on Image/Text Studies”

Joseph Thomas

My talk concerns an issue central to the study of images -- especially corporately controlled images-- and emerges from a vexing situation in my scholarly life: for the last few years I have been working on a monograph on the life and work of Shel Silverstein, but recently in pursuing permissions, the owners denied me the right to quote or use any words or images from Shel's work. My talk, then, discusses our ever-shrinking cultural commons and the troubled history of intellectual property, a discussion informed by Louis Hyde's *Common as Air*, Ian Hamilton's *Keepers of the Flame*, and a variety of recent documented cases in which publisher and estate holds on images have chilled and transformed scholarly and critical work. My talk thereby explores the negative effect literary estates can have on both the reputation of deceased artists and our understanding and appreciation of their contribution to our cultural commons.

“Irradiated Lives: Graphic Scientific Biographies and the Atomic Age”

Candida Rifkind

This paper explores a recent efflorescence of non-fiction graphic narratives about atomic science, notably biographies of famous researchers in the fields of radiation, atomic, and nuclear experimentation. I argue that, in different ways, these works use the spectacular display of the comics page to both clarify and mystify their subjects, using a popular medium associated with fantastical transformations and larger-than-life heroes to convey factual scientific information and the everyday ordinariness of laboratory life. I focus here on Lauren Redniss's *Radioactive: Marie & Pierre Curie: A Tale of Love and Fallout* (2010), Jonathan Fetter-Vorm's *Trinity: A Graphic History of the First Atomic Bomb* (2012), and Jim Ottaviani, Leland Myrick, and Hilary Sycamore's *Feynman* (2011). Read together, they raise more general questions about what visual-verbal texts can bring to the genre of biography, as well as specific questions about the visualization of science and complex ethical debates over atomic research in a popular medium.

"Art, Adaptation, and the Antipodean in Shaun Tan's *The Lost Thing*"

Erica Hateley

Australian artist and writer Shaun Tan has received popular, critical, and academic acclaim as one of the foremost figures of contemporary children's literature. In 2011, this was marked by Tan winning both an Academy Award for the short film *The Lost Thing*, and the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award for lifetime achievement in children's literature. To the degree that adaptation constitutes interpretation, this paper considers the 'art of interpretation' as it can be traced in Tan's picture book, *The Lost Thing*, and its animated film adaptation. The two versions of *The Lost Thing* sustain a productive tension between aesthetic pleasure and critical thinking. However, by formally 'unfixing' visual and verbal elements from the printed page the film adaptation actually works to 'fix'---and thus, arguably, limit---the meanings of the narrative.

"Manga Hybrids in Contemporary Picture Books"

Bettina Kümmerling-Meibauer

By addressing the conspicuous transformations in recent picture books through the prism of manga, this paper intends to make the fundamental complexity of this art form and its crossover appeal even more apparent. Moreover, it will be demonstrated that the emergence of newly developed multimodal art forms in Western countries, such as "Global Manga", "La Nouvelle Manga", "Haida Manga", and "Germanga", played a seminal role in the development of diverse hybrid manga-like styles which also appear in picture books for children. Finally, the paper points to a special intercultural case, namely Allen Say's involvement with Japan. The biographical fact that in his youth he was taught there by the now almost forgotten Noro Shinpei, a manga cartoonist who saw his heyday in the 1930s through 1950s, indicates that the understanding of "manga" is not to be limited to the manga style preponderant today and this style's increasing presence even in picture books.

THURSDAY, JUNE 27

"Who Are These Books For?: Exploring Unconventional, Controversial Picture Books and Their Audience"

Janet Evans

This presentation will begin by looking at some strange, ambiguous and often shocking picture books along with a consideration of the picture book as art. It will continue with a more in-depth consideration of some controversial picture books and will consider: who is the audience for these extremely unconventional and yet emotionally moving books?; does the question of audience affect why they are so controversial?; why are books such as these not normally translated and published outside their own countries?; what is the role of the publisher and how much power do publishers have in allowing books to be published or in censoring them even before they reach the publishing stage?; and how might texts such as these shape our thoughts and our future?

"Picture Book Poesis: The Ecology of Narrative Space in Poetry Picture Books"

Andrea Schwenke Wylie

In picture books, the centre of arts and play resides in narrative space. The combination of the compressed yet image rich forms of poetry and picture book brings us to the "serious art" (Nodelman, *Words* x) of what we might call ut picturalibris poesis. This paper furthers ways of thinking about the page, the book, and the "reading event" and "ecology" (Lewis) of poetry picture books by mapping narrative space through a comparative exploration of Sheree Fitch's *Night Wheel Sky Ride* (2012), which reworks and expands one poem in the collection *Merry-Go-Day* (1991) into a full picture book, and its originary poem and collection. Drawing on Mieke Bal's and W.J.T Mitchell's claims about space, I argue that these picture books open up perceptual narrative spaces that multiply rather than reduce interpretive possibilities, contrary to Perry Nodelman's claim that words and pictures limit one another (*Words* viii).

"Little Greens: Children's Picture Books and the Representation of Environment"

Nathalie op de Beek

Over the past two decades, a growing nature literacy movement has encouraged eco-literacy from a young age and suggested an earnest demand for environmental children's literature. Recent articles (Wells and Zeece; Williams et al.) suggest an unmet need for picture books that address the natural world; collections like *Companions in Wonder* (Dunlap and Kellert) acknowledge childhood as a time of environmental revelations. Yet picture books for young readers remain characterized by cartoonish representations of domestic and wild animals, and abstract depictions of built and forested landscapes. Superficial accounts of green subjects, however technically beautiful, may well demonstrate a decline in even the most concerned authors' (and editors') ability to accurately represent ecological subjects, as artists themselves lack sufficient familiarity with the outdoors. My paper examines whether the modern, industrial form and concise content of the picture book suitably represent the outdoors, animal lives, and topics in environmental sustainability, or whether the environmental picture book fails to stimulate readers' capacity for attention and meaningful wonder.

"Manga Shakespeare or Shakespeare Manga?: Adaptation and the Fight for Youth Culture"
Brandon Christopher

This paper argues that SelfMadeHero's Manga Shakespeare series, with its repeated emphasis on scenes of domesticated foreignness, works to appropriate and reconfigure a non-Western medium into a form more easily promulgated by Western cultural (especially educational) institutions -- a process that I believe is indicative of a desire to domesticate and control the explosion of manga readership in the youth of English-speaking countries in the last two decades. It analyzes ways in which the Manga Shakespeare series underscores the extent to which comics engage readers not simply through the dialectic of image/text but also through the extra-diegetic cultural space that the comics themselves occupy. That is, when, for example, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is reproduced as ersatz manga, is the medium adapting the content, or is the content being deployed as a means of adapting or controlling the medium and the reading culture that has grown up around it?

"How Narrative and Formal Properties of Graphic Novels Accommodate a Compassionate Reader"
Debra Dudek

In this presentation, I shall analyze how graphic novels perform ethical evaluations based on emotions and in turn how they invite readers to account for their own value judgments. I focus on graphic novels, such as Art Spiegelman's *Maus* and Alison Bechdel's *Fun Home* and *Are You My Mother?*, in which the relationship between a parent and child drives the narrative and creates the ethical dilemmas. My analysis of these graphic novels draws upon Martha Nussbaum's *Upheavals of Thought*, in which she argues for the importance of emotions in ethical evaluations. I situate my analysis within the burgeoning body of work about graphic novels including Charles Hatfield's *Alternative Comics: An Emerging Literature*, Thierry Groensteen's *The System of Comics*, and the Why Comics Are and Are Not Picture Books symposium published in the Winter 2012 issue of *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*.

"Pictorial Picaresque: The Child In and As Comics"
Michael A. Chaney

This talk investigates the comic form's association with the child. All protestations aside, comics and graphic novels have been historically linked to the child and still connote children and children's reading. This is not to say that the medium is essentially juvenile, only that it signifies such a quality regardless of content due to formalistic, historical, and even phenomenological liaisons with imaginary children. Indeed, my analysis of Joe Sacco's *Palestine* (1993) will demonstrate that the child in the comics enacts a juvenile function in even the most serious of graphic novels. The primary forms that this function takes are then examined in the prophetic child of Kyle Baker's *Nat Turner* (2008) and the melancholic child in Chris Ware's *Jimmy Corrigan, the Smartest Kid on Earth* (2000). My aim throughout will be to track the ways that childhood engages the form of the comics---appearing before us as an effect of our successful training in dialogical reading and seeing, the curriculum inherent to every comic.