



Fresh from the Fight:
Heroes, Tricksters, and Villains in Children's and Young Adult Literature and Culture

Call for Paper Proposals
Deadline for Submission: February 28th, 2021

A virtual peer-reviewed graduate student conference on children's literature, media, and culture
University of British Columbia | Vancouver, Canada | Unceded traditional territory of the
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Friday July 2nd – Sunday July 4th, 2021

Note that *Fresh From the Fight* will now be FULLY ONLINE. While we had hoped to host everyone in beautiful Vancouver, we are conscious that neither world-wide travel nor gathering in large groups is likely to be safe and/or accessible by the summer. More information regarding the logistics of our virtual panels will be posted on our website as they are confirmed.

Taking inspiration from how Greta Thunberg, Autumn Peltier, and Emma González have become advocates for global, social, and environmental change, more and more children, teens, and young adults are stepping into the roles of heroes and champions to some—and as troublemakers or rebels to others. For years, children's and young adult media has told the same story—from crime-fighting vigilante groups to the 'Chosen One' narrative—and as a new generation comes of age in the wake of such stories, life once again begins to imitate art. In the context of children's and young adult literature, villains often, but don't necessarily, take the form of powerful governments or adults who won't listen. At the same time, diverse narratives and nuanced figures (such as tricksters and anti-heroes) reveal ambiguities within this dichotomy of heroes, villains, and perceptions of "good" and "evil." *Fresh from the Fight: Heroes, Tricksters, and Villains in Children's and Young Adult Literature and Culture* is a space to interrogate these narratives. This three-day conference will be held on July 2nd – 4th, 2020 and will showcase graduate student research in children's and young adult literature. We are particularly interested in research and creative work that draw on the broadly interpreted themes of heroes, tricksters, and villains.

Topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Heroes, tricksters, and villains in children's and young adult literature
- Tricksters in indigenous storytelling
- Anti-heroes and anti-heroics
- Tricksters and meta-narratives
- Historical and mythological archetypes in children's literature
- Good, evil, and the grey morality in-between
- Power dynamics between adults and children
- Action and agency in children's and young adult texts and culture
- Counter-culture activism in children's literature and culture (protests, rallies, strikes, etc.)
- Greta Thunberg, Autumn Peltier, Emma González, and other teen activists

- Monsters and monstrosity
- Clones, cyborgs, AI, and the posthuman as heroes and/or villains
- Child kings, queens, gods, deities, and other ruling authorial figures
- Groups of vigilante, crime-fighting kids and their side-kicks and arch-nemeses (*Teen Titans, Sailor Moon, Power Puff Girls*, etc.)
- Diversity of the hero (race, gender, sexuality, ability, etc.)
- Interrogating negative stereotypes depicted in villains (race, gender, sexuality, ability, etc.)
- Historical and postcolonial readings of heroism and villainy
- Indoctrination and perceptions of heroic and villainous groups
- Disrupted childhoods (environmental activism, school shootings, child soldiers, sexual assault survivors, trauma, etc.)

The topics above are suggestions, but we are eager to receive paper proposals on any facet of heroes, tricksters, or villains in children's and young adult texts and culture.

Academic Paper Proposals

Please send a 250-word abstract that includes the title of your paper, as well as a list of references, a 50-word biography, your name, your university affiliation, your home country, and email address to the review committee at submit.ubc.conference@gmail.com. Please include "Academic Conference Proposal Submission" in the subject line of your email.

Creative Writing Proposals

Submissions of creative writing for children and young adults in any genre are also welcome, including novel chapters, poetry, picture books, graphic novels, scripts, etc. Please send a sample of your work no longer than 12 pages, double-spaced. (Shorter samples are also welcome--poetry, for example, might only be a page). The submission should include the title of your work, a 150-word overview of your piece (describe age group, genre, and links to the conference theme), a list of references in MLA format (if you have any), a 50-word biography, your name, your university affiliation, your home country, and email address. Please send your submission to the review committee at submit.ubc.conference@gmail.com. Please put "Creative Conference Proposal Submission" in the subject line of your email.

Participants are welcome to submit both an academic and creative paper. Each paper will be adjudicated by the appropriate committee and you may be accepted for one or both streams. Please follow the guidelines for both submissions above and attach them as two separate files to submit.ubc.conference@gmail.com. Please include "Both Conference Proposal Submission" in the subject line of your email.

For more information, please contact ubc.conference.2020@gmail.com.

Thank you and we look forward to seeing you this summer!