

Graduate Centre for International Research  
in Childhood: Literature, Culture, Media



University of  
Reading

# MASTER'S IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

## MRes CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

The world famous Master's in Children's Literature, run by CIRCL, is the oldest accredited degree in the field in Britain (since 1984), and is taught by specialists in Children's Literature, whose research is published internationally.

The Master's degree is an 'MRes', which means it is a taught MA course but one that fully prepares for PhD research. CIRCL also runs the largest PhD programme in the Department of English Literature at the University of Reading, and every year MA and PhD students from all over the world join together in CIRCL's inspirational and cutting-edge research environment to produce globally unique and original research in this fascinating and burgeoning field.

The University of Reading has unique archive-holdings relating to Children's Literature, including the Nineteenth-Century Special Collection, School Story books, and publishers' archives, and students on the degree receive training on how to make use of these archives for their work.

## OUR STAFF

### Professor Karin Lesnik-Oberstein

Professor Lesnik-Oberstein is the course Director and the Director of CIRCL. She has published extensively on children's literature and historical and cultural constructions of childhood, including in her books *Children's Literature: Criticism and the Fictional Child* (Clarendon Press of Oxford University Press, 1994) and *On Having an Own Child: Reproductive Technologies and the Cultural Construction of Childhood* (Routledge, 2007) and in her edited volumes (with other CIRCL staff contributing) including: *Children in Culture: Approaches to Childhood* (Palgrave, 1998); *Children in Literature* (a special section of the Yearbook of English Studies, 2002), and *Children's Literature: New Approaches* (Palgrave, 2004) and its follow-up volume, *Children in Culture Revisited: Further Approaches to Childhood* (Palgrave, 2011). Karin continues to publish on children's literature and theory, including in relation to gender, sexuality and ecocriticism.

### Dr Sue Walsh

Dr Walsh has published on theoretical issues in children's literature in her book *Kipling's Children's Literature: Language, Identity and Constructions of Childhood* (Ashgate, 2010) and in articles and chapters on animals and childhood, children's literature and irony, children's literature and biography, and childhood and the Gothic.

### Dr Neil Cocks

Dr Cocks has published on theoretical issues in the philosophy and policies of education and teaching in his book *Student-Centred: Education, Freedom and the Idea of Audience* (Inkermen Press / Axis Series, 2009) and on reading childhood in nineteenth-century English literature in his book *The Peripheral Child in Nineteenth Century Literature and its Criticism* (Palgrave, 2014). He has also published on children's literature and childhood in his articles and chapters on ideas of child-readers, and language, sexuality and death in children's fiction.

## OUR COURSE

**MRes Children's Literature: 12-month (full-time) or 24-month (part-time) course, consisting of four modules taught over nine months. Students write one assessed essay per module of around 4000 words (four essays in total). At degree end students write a 20,000 word dissertation which is completed during the summer months. Students receive one-to-one specialist supervision for their dissertation, as well as attending dissertation-preparation classes.**

The four taught modules have core elements and optional elements as follows:

**Theory of Children's Literature (ENMCHT):** this module is co-designed by the tutor and students together, so there is no core element.

**Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Children's Literature (ENMCH8):** this module has a core reading list for the first semester and then has a second semester of archival research training co-designed by the tutor and the students.

**Global Children's Literatures in English (ENMCHG):** this module has a core reading list for the first semester but in the second semester the students choose the readings and focus, including potential archival resources.

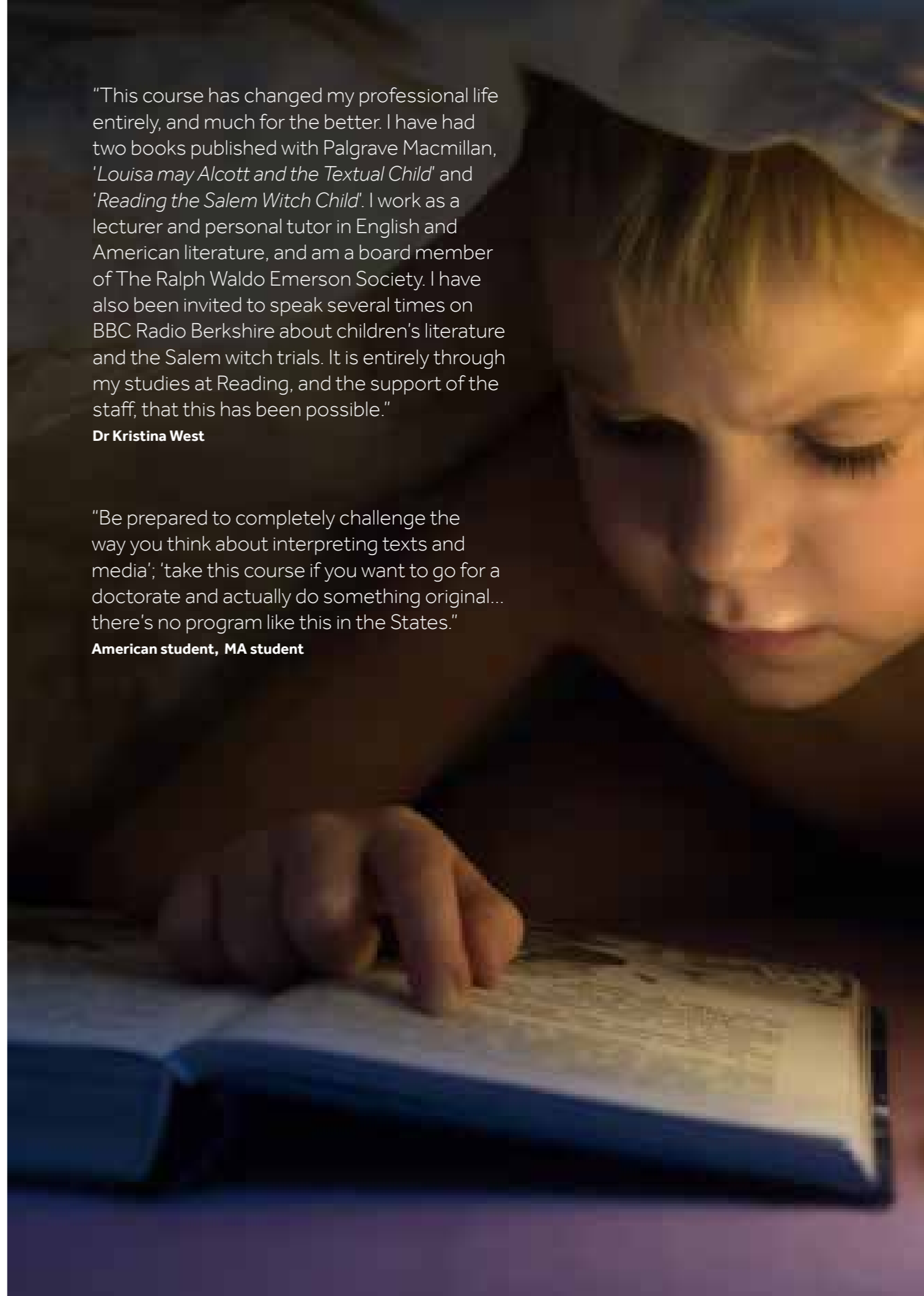
**Myth, Folktale and Popular Culture (ENMCHL):** this module has a core reading list for the first semester but in the second semester the students choose the readings and focus, including potentially work on children's film, radio, television and/or other media and/ or on toys, comics and other popular culture.


"This course has changed my professional life entirely, and much for the better. I have had two books published with Palgrave Macmillan, 'Louisa May Alcott and the Textual Child' and 'Reading the Salem Witch Child'. I work as a lecturer and personal tutor in English and American literature, and am a board member of The Ralph Waldo Emerson Society. I have also been invited to speak several times on BBC Radio Berkshire about children's literature and the Salem witch trials. It is entirely through my studies at Reading, and the support of the staff, that this has been possible."

**Dr Kristina West**

"Be prepared to completely challenge the way you think about interpreting texts and media'; 'take this course if you want to go for a doctorate and actually do something original... there's no program like this in the States."

**American student, MA student**





“While I am working with my students, I often feel that the CIRCL faculty members’ openness, enthusiasm, professional ability and kindness inspired me a lot! I am always thankful that I could have an opportunity to study the MA in Reading.”

**So Jin Park**

Associate Professor at The School of English in Sookmyung Women’s University in Seoul and Director of the Research Institute of Asian Women.

## **MRES CHILDREN’S LITERATURE**

**i** For more information, please contact:

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