



Croatian Association of Researchers in Children's Literature

Department of Croatian Studies  
at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb

Department of Comparative Literature  
at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb

Centre for Research in Children's Literature and Culture  
at the Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb

invite you to the **International Academic Conference**

## **At the Same Table: The Position and Status of Research in Children's Literature and Culture**

Zagreb, 23–25 November 2023

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Ivana Lučića 3, Zagreb

The striking metaphor of "the children's table" is aptly employed by Anna Mae Duane (2013) with the aim of illustrating the position of childhood studies in the humanities: the guests at the children's table know they occupy a marginal space, placed out of earshot of the juiciest adult conversations and denied an opportunity to take an active and valued part in adult discussions. Is that really (still) the case and what does research in children's literature and culture have to offer to the humanities – these are the main questions posed by this conference.

It was only at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that children's literature was acknowledged as the object of study in a separate field, but discussions of its existence continued for decades. The condescension towards children's literature and the denial of its existence typically stem from the perspective of immanent literary criticism, which begrudges children's literature its simplicity and its frequently (overly) pronounced utilitarian function. It is as if the study of "simple texts" has resulted in "simple scholarship".

Children's literature is produced, distributed, purchased, and researched by adults. And all of them strive to gain an insight into that unique children's world to which they used to belong and which, once abandoned, survives solely as a series of subjective flashbacks. Yet, as children's literature is informed by broader cultural conceptions of the child and childhood, researchers must pay equal attention to the artistic autonomy of authorial visions and the cultural and social conditions in which children's literature is produced. It is, therefore, not surprising that, in addition to its implicit readers, children's literature often attracts adult readers, to whom it brings a unique pleasure. Given all of the above, researchers dealing with children's literature are faced with some important

questions: What is the relationship between research in children's and non-children's literature and culture? What are some of the methodological specificities of research in children's literature?

Even though discussions of the existence of children's literature are rare nowadays, the borders of children's literature appear more blurred than ever, and its functionality is gaining importance once again. In a context characterised by the influence of new electronic media, changing economic and social conditions, a transformation of children's everyday life, different reading habits and heterogenous modes of literacy, children's literature is undergoing an inevitable change, which calls for an elaboration of an adequate scholarly approach under the changed contemporary circumstances.

The conference subtopics include but are not limited to the following:

- The position of research in children's literature in the humanities. Children's literature and culture, childhood studies
- Is there a history of children's literature? Can we speak of the theory or theories of children's literature? What is their relationship with other cultural and literary theories?
- The relationship between the utilitarian and the artistic in children's literature (educational aims, emotional development, developmental support, inclusion, ecology, etc.)
- Children's literature and adult literature (specific characteristics of children's literature, overlaps between children's and adult literature, children's literature and trivial literature, the relationship between the history of literature and the history of children's literature)
- Media and the poetics of children's literature (intermediality and transmediality of children's literature)
- Children's literature and social control (the role of ideology in children's literature, the issue of censorship, the literary canon)
- Children's literature and the social and cultural context (the relationship between children's literature and popular culture, children's literature and the everyday, the economic aspects of children's literature)

## Plenary lectures:

**Matthew O. Grenby**

Newcastle University, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

**Tijana Tropin**

Institute for Literature and Arts in Belgrade, Republic of Serbia

**Peter Svetina**

Institute of Slavic Studies at the University of Klagenfurt, Republic of Austria

## Application

We invite you to submit 250-word presentation abstracts and up to 5 keywords via the official conference email: [ziskonf.hidk@gmail.com](mailto:ziskonf.hidk@gmail.com). The abstract submission deadline is 1 May 2023. The authors will be informed of the outcome of their submissions by 15 June 2023.

## Conference fees

	<b>Early bird fee (until 15 July 2023)</b>	<b>Late fee (from 15 July 2023)</b>
<b>Conference fee</b>	EUR 50	EUR 70
<b>Conference dinner (optional)</b>	EUR 30	EUR 30

MA students, PhD candidates and unemployed presenters are exempt from paying the conference fee.

The latest news on the conference is available at the official website of the Croatian Association of Researchers in Children's Literature: [www.hidk.hr](http://www.hidk.hr), on a separate page dedicated to the conference: <https://hidk.hr/ziskonf>.

## Important dates:

1 May 2023	Abstract submission deadline
15 June 2023	Abstract acceptance notification
15 June 2023	Registration opening
15 July 2023	Early bird fee deadline
23–25 November 2023	Conference

**Organising committee:**

Sanja Lovrić Kralj, chair, Croatian Association of Researchers in Children's Literature

Marijana Hameršak, Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research, Zagreb

Katarina Ivon, Department of Teacher and Preschool Teacher Education at the University of Zadar

Ivana Milković, Centre for Research in Children's Literature and Culture, Faculty of Teacher Education at the University of Zagreb

Lana Molvarec, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Zagreb

Petra Požgaj, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Zagreb

Vladimira Rezo, Faculty of Croatian Studies at the University of Zagreb

Dubravka Zima, Faculty of Croatian Studies at the University of Zagreb