ENGLISH 208C
CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Instructor    Nadine Gingrich
Office        HH 228B
Extension     3886 or call the Graduate Secretary 3358
Office Hours  Wednesday 10-12

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Children's Literature is not a course in child psychology or development, nor is it a guide to the selection of literature for children. Rather, it is a course that examines the literature created for, or appropriated by, a specific audience. We will examine the two large functions, didacticism and entertainment, that have traditionally been assigned to children's literature, and we will keep in mind some deceptively simple questions: What is children's literature? Is it different from other literature? How do we, as adults, assess it?

ASSIGNMENTS

There will be two essays in the course each worth 30% of the final grade; one short essay of 5-6 pages will be due June 21 and one longer essay of 8-10 pages will be due July 29. There will be a final examination worth 40% of the final grade.
SCHEDULE

May 3
Introduction: brief history of children’s literature and overview of the course

May 10
Fairy Tales: an examination of fairy tales from both the oral and literary traditions*

May 17
Folk and Fairy Tales, ed. Martin Hallett and Barbara Karasek (Broadview Press)

May 24
What makes a “classic” text and the establishment of the canon

Lewis Carroll, Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass (Puffin)

May 31
E.B. White, Charlotte’s Web (Harper)

June 7
NO CLASS -- LEARNED SOCIETIES’ CONFERENCE

June 14
The Bildungsroman

L.M. Montgomery, Anne of Green Gables (McClelland-Bantam)

June 21
Historical Fiction

Rosemary Sutcliff, The Eagle of the Ninth (Puffin)

June 28
The Adventure Novel

Robert Louis Stevenson, Treasure Island (Dover)

July 5
Fantasy

Kenneth Grahame, The Wind in the Willows (Signet)

July 12
T.H. White, The Sword in the Stone (Lions)

July 19
Madeline L’Engle, A Wrinkle in Time (Dell)

July 26
Natalie Babbitt, Tuck Everlasting (Farrar)

*For May 10, please read the selections in the text from the sections “The Loss of Innocence,” “Damsels in Distress,” “The Child as Hero,” “Villains,” and “Animal Bridegroom,” as well as the essays by Tolkien, Bettelheim, Rowe, and Stone.
*For May 17, please read the selections from the section “Brawn Over Brain,” the tales by Hans Christian Andersen and Oscar Wilde, and the essay by Lüthi.