

Rebekah Fitzsimmons

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Address: School of Literature, Media, and Communication
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EDUCATION

Doctor of Philosophy in English, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL. May 2015

Dissertation: The Chronicles of Professionalization: the Expert, the Child, and the Making of American Children's Literature.

Director: Dr. Kenneth Kidd, University of Florida

Master of Arts in English, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL. May 2010

Thesis: Children's Literature and the Tastemakers: Canonicity, Cultural Distinction and the 'Harry Potter Effect' in Bestseller Lists.

Bachelor of Arts in Creative Writing/English, *High Honors*, Emory University, Atlanta, GA. May 2006

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

Marion L. Brittain Postdoctoral Fellow, Writing and Communication Program, School of Literature, Media, and Communication, Georgia Institute of Technology. 2016-Present.

Full Time Lecturer, Writing and Communication Program, School of Literature, Media, and Communication, Georgia Institute of Technology. 2015-2016.

Graduate Assistant, English Department and University Writing Program, University of Florida. 2008-2015

PUBLICATIONS

Refereed Articles

"Testing the Tastemakers: Children's Literature, Bestseller Lists, and the 'Harry Potter Effect.'" *Children's Literature* 40.1 (2012): 78-107.

"Dialectical 'Complexifications': The Centrality of Mary Malone, Dust, and the Mulefa in Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials*." *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts* 22.2 (2012): 212-33.

Book Chapters

"Prizing Popularity: How the Blockbuster Book has Shaped Children's Literature." *Prizing Children's Literature: The Cultural Politics of Children's Book Awards*. Ed. Kenneth Kidd and Joseph Thomas. (Forthcoming – In Press.)

"Creating and Marketing Early Reader Picture Books." *The Early Reader in Children's Literature and Culture: Theorizing Books for Beginning Readers*. Ed. Jennifer M. Miskec and Annette Wannamaker. Routledge, 2016.

Book Reviews

“*Human Rights in Children’s Literature: Imagination and the Narrative of Law* (review).” *The Lion and the Unicorn* (Forthcoming – scheduled for issue 40.3).

“*The Nineteenth-Century Child and Consumer Culture* (review).” *The Lion and the Unicorn* 35.2: (2011) 185-189.

“*Theodor SEUSS Geisel* by Donald E. Pease (review).” *ImageText* 6:1: (2011) np.

Selected Blog Articles (2011-2015)

Swampish: The blog of the University of Florida’s Center for Children’s Literature and Culture. Launched in 2014. <http://swampish.wordpress.com/>

A sample of blog post titles from my 5 posts published from 2014-present (typically 1400-2000 words):

- Sept 2014 “Dear NPR: Hazel is Not Spiderman: A Response to the *Diane Rhem Show’s* ‘Readers’ Review of *The Fault in Our Stars*.”
- Jan 2014 “Reading Elizabeth Wein: A Comparative Review of *Code Name Verity* and *Rose Under Fire*.”

Kid Lit @ UF: A blog dedicated to children’s literature and culture as seen through the eyes of the graduate students in children’s literature from the University of Florida’s English department. (Merged with *Swampish* in 2014). <http://ufkidlit.wordpress.com/>.

A sample of my 15 blog post titles published from 2011-2013 (typically 1000-1500 words):

- Oct 2012 “Parallel Worlds in *Once Upon a Time*.”
- July 2012 “On Archery.”
- June 2012 “The Problem with Marketing Categories: Trilogy Style.”
- May 2012 “Childhood Favorites: *The Phantom Tollbooth*.”
- Oct 2011 “Fearing Children’s Literature.”

REFEREED PRESENTATIONS

Invited Talks

“The Hunger Games and the Dystopian Tradition.” *The Hunger Games: A Roundtable Discussion*. Gainesville, FL. April 10, 2013. Sponsored by the Center for Women Studies and Gender Research, University of Florida.

“Publishing Challenges for Graduate Students.” *Publishing Workshop*. English Graduate Organization. Gainesville, FL. March 29, 2012. University of Florida.

Expertise and Professionalization of Children’s Literature

“Professional Disputes and Early Reader Picture Books.” The 15th Annual Conference of the Marxist Reading Group: *Rethinking Work*. Gainesville, FL. March 21-23, 2013. University of Florida.

“Experts on Children’s Literature: Communities without Children.” English Graduate Organization: *Borders and Beyond: Considering Communities*. Gainesville, FL. October 12, 2012. University of Florida.

“Testing the Tastemakers: Children’s Literature, Bestseller Lists and the ‘Harry Potter Effect.’” 2010 English Graduate Organization Conference: *Allusion, Adaptation, and Appropriation*. Gainesville, FL. October 22, 2010. University of Florida.

Picture Books and Visual Culture

- “‘Now I Had a Secret Life’: Decoding Remy’s Coming Out Narrative in Disney Pixar’s *Ratatouille*.” Children’s Literature Association’s 43rd Annual Conference: *Animation*. Columbus, OH. June 9-11, 2016. The Ohio State University.
- “Introducing Early Reader Picture Books.” Children’s Literature Association’s 40th Annual Conference: *Play and Risk in Children’s and Young Adult Literature*. Biloxi, MI. June 13-15, 2013. Hosted by University of Southern Mississippi (IP Resort Biloxi).
- “Monstrous Myths: Manipulation of Text and the Suspension of Disbelief in *Octavian Nothing* and *The Knife of Never Letting Go*.” The 33rd International Conference on the Fantastic in the Arts: *The Monstrous Fantastic*. Orlando, FL. March 23, 2012.
- “Intimate Text: Novelty Through Typeface in *Octavian Nothing* and *The Knife of Never Letting Go*” 2011 English Graduate Organization Conference: *Nothing New Under the Sun?: Novelty, Game-Changing, and Genre-Breaking*. Gainesville, FL. October 29, 2011. University of Florida.
- “New Baby: Picture Book Depictions of Becoming an Older Sibling.” Children’s Literature Association 34th Annual Conference: *The Best of 3*. Charlotte, NC. June 11-14, 2009. University of North Carolina-Charlotte.

Young Adult Literature

- “YA Shaming; or, The Generation Who Wouldn’t Grow Up.” **Proposed Panel:** Panic! at the Bookstore: Deconstructions of the American Dream In Young Adult Literature and Culture. Children’s Literature Association 42nd Annual Conference: “*Give me liberty, or give me death!*”: *The High Stakes and Dark Sides of Children’s Literature*. Richmond, VA. June 18-20, 2015.
- “Writing Reality (Television): The Role of Technology in Identity Formation in *The Hunger Games*.” Children’s Literature Association’s 37th Annual Conference: *Children’s Literature and Media*. Ann Arbor, MI. June 11, 2010. Eastern Michigan University.
- “Competing Identities: Representations of Self and Historical Memory in *The Hunger Games*.” English Graduate Organization Conference: *Home/sickness: Desire, Decay, and the Seduction of Nostalgia*. Gainesville, FL. November 13-14, 2009. University of Florida

Dystopia/Fantasy

- Co-written with Casey Wilson.** “Overcoming Dystopia: The Genre Conventions and Pedagogical Potential of YA Dystopian Trilogies.” 36th International Conference on the Fantastic in the Arts: *The Scientific Imagination*. Orlando, FL. March 18-22, 2015.
- Co-written with Casey Wilson.** “Overcoming Dystopia: The Utopian Pedagogy of YA Dystopian Trilogies.” The 16th Annual Conference of the Marxist Reading Group: *Art in Interesting Times*. Gainesville, FL. March 27-29, 2014. University of Florida
- “Dialectical ‘Complexifications’: The Centrality of Mary Malone, Dust, and the *Mulefa* in Philip Pullman’s *His Dark Materials*.” Children’s Literature Association’s 38th Annual Conference: *Revolt, Rebellion, Protest: Change and Insurrection in Children’s Literature*. Roanoke, Virginia. June 23-25, 2011. Hollins University.

Pedagogy

"Twitter in the Composition Classroom and Professional Academic Circles." Writing and Communication Research and Development Laboratory (DevLab) Presentation. February 25, 2016. Georgia Institute of Technology.

"Utopian Pedagogy: Using YA Dystopian Fiction to Teach Utopian Studies" **Proposed Panel:** "Diverse Approaches to Archives in the Classroom." Children's Literature Association 41st Annual Conference: *Diverging Diversities: Plurality in Children's & Young Adult Literature Then and Now*. Columbia, SC. June 18-21, 2014. University of South Carolina.

"Visual Analysis: Integrating Visual Presentations into the Writing Classroom." 2009 University Writing Program Symposium on Rhetoric and Pedagogy. Gainesville, FL. November 5, 2009. University of Florida.

Panel Moderator

PANEL 14: "Cinema and Temporality." The 16th Annual Conference of the Marxist Reading Group: *Art in Interesting Times*. Gainesville, FL. March 27-29, 2013. University of Florida.

Panel 1: "CLASS." The 15th Annual Conference of the Marxist Reading Group: *Rethinking Work*. Gainesville, FL. March 21-23, 2013. University of Florida.

"Children's Fantasy in Its Historical Context." The 33rd International Conference on the Fantastic in the Arts: *The Monstrous Fantastic*. Orlando, Florida. March 24, 2012.

"Institutions." The 14th Annual Conference of the Marxist Reading Group: *Toward a Democracy with Rights*. Gainesville, FL. March 16, 2012. University of Florida.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Children's Literature

Writing Through Media: Fairy Tales and Adaptation: ENG 1131. English Department, University of Florida. (Enrollment 19). Sections taught: Fall 2013

Special Topics in American Literature: Teenage Wastelands: American Dystopian Young Adult Fiction: AML 2470. English Department, University of Florida. (Enrollment 19). Sections taught: Fall 2012

Golden Age of Children's Literature: LIT 4334. English Department, University of Florida. (Enrollment 35). Sections Taught: Spring 2013

American Literature

Survey of American Literature: 1865- Present: AML 2070. English Department, University of Florida. (Enrollment 15). Sections taught: Spring 2011

Survey of American Literature: American Myth: Stories We Tell (American) Children: AML 2070. (Enrollment 19). Sections Taught: Fall 2010

Composition

Hybrid Course: English Composition I: “Adulging: Coming of Age in 21st Century America.” (Typical Enrollment 25) Writing and Communication Program, Georgia Institute of Technology. Sections taught: Fall 2016 (3 sections).

English Composition II, Honors Section: “The Enemy’s Gate Is Down: Reorientation, Propaganda, and the High Stakes of Dystopian Fiction.” (Typical Enrollment 19) Writing and Communication Program, Georgia Institute of Technology. Sections taught: Spring 2016 (1 section).

Introduction to College Writing: ENC 1101 University Writing Program, University of Florida. (Typical Enrollment 19). Sections taught: Fall 2014, Fall 2011, Fall 2009 (2 sections), Fall 2008 (co-taught).

Introduction to Argument and Persuasion: ENC 1101. University Writing Program, University of Florida. (Typical Enrollment 19) Sections taught: Spring 2015 (as mentor and individually), Spring 2014 (as mentor), Spring 2012 (as mentor), 2009 (co-taught)

Technical and Professional Communication Courses

Technical Communication: LMC 3403. (Typical Enrollment 23) Writing and Communication Program, Georgia Institute of Technology. Sections taught: Fall 2015 (3 Sections), Spring 2016 (2 sections).

Online Course: Technical Communication for Engineers: ENC 3254. University Writing Program, University of Florida. (Typical Enrollment 19). Sections taught: Summer 2013

Professional Communication: ENC 3254. University Writing Program, University of Florida. (Typical Enrollment 19). Sections taught: Summer 2014

Technical Writing: ENC 2210. English Department, University of Florida. (Typical Enrollment 19). Sections taught: Summer 2010, Summer 2009, Spring 2009, Fall 2008

Tutoring

Strategy Tutor, University Athletic Association, University of Florida, 2010-2015.

- Tutored student-athletes in remedial English and reading courses and tutored student-athletes as a strategy tutor, focused on improving student time management and study skills, planning major projects, refining research skills, and maintaining records. Worked with multiple students for 2+ years.
- Supervised “homework room” or structured study hall for 10-15 students per semester, focused on improving study skills, time management, prioritizing tasks, and maintaining active participation in online classes.
- Designed, composed, edited and distributed detailed tutoring guides for remedial English and Reading courses, focused on grammar, sentence construction, parts of speech and study tips; aimed at facilitating improved tutoring and supporting new tutors in the program.

EVENT PLANNING

Conferences Coordinator, Office of International Affairs and The Claus M. Halle Institute for Global Learning, Emory University. 2006 – 2008.

- Prepared logistical aspects of visits for incoming delegations, high profile guests, and potential donors, as well as for large public events, including but not limited to: international travel arrangements, transportation, lodging, catering, audiovisual needs, publicity
- Facilitated scheduling, messaging and events between the Office of the President, Office of the Provost, and various Deans and Directors and managed internal calendars and records for Vice Provost of International Affairs
- Planned logistical details for events and conferences outside of Atlanta, (the United Nations, Germany, India, Belgium) often working with the Halle Foundation, various Consul Generals in Atlanta, and staff at foreign universities while maintaining databases with contact information for 300+ faculty, staff, and other mailing list participants
- Designed publicly distributed schedule documents, event programs, and electronic invitations

Conference Coordinator, Office of University Conferences, Division of Campus Life, Emory University. Summer 2005

- Coordinated preparation of twenty residence halls for 66 conference groups and over 8,000 guests for three months.
- Acted as a liaison between multiple professional staffs, including custodial, maintenance, central laundry, and conferences staff as well as student conference managers.
- Utilized customer service and problem solving skills as well as creativity and organization.

Conference Manager, Office of University Conferences, Division of Campus Life, Emory University. Summer 2005

- Worked as a liaison for three conference groups, responsible for arranging all necessary elements of their stay at Emory University's summer facilities. Compiled three separate group bills totaling over \$100,000.
- Assisted in daily conference operations including building preparations, administrative work, and team building.

ACADEMIC SERVICE

Scholars Council for the Baldwin Library

Chair 2015-present

- Assists curator with planning and execution of special programs
- Maintain communication between curator and council on a quarterly basis

Council Member 2014-Present

- Advised Baldwin curator on potential programs to increase scholarly use of special collections
- Consulted on grant application for Baldwin digital programs

Curricular Innovation Committee

Member 2015-Present

- Identify, develop and disseminate curricular/pedagogical innovations to Georgia Tech faculty
- Organize programmatic curricular innovations such as Celebrating Teaching Day, GTRI projects, Direct to Discovery and National Day for Writing

DevLab CommitteeMember 2015-Present

- Support Brittain Fellows in developing innovative digital pedagogies, digitally-based research and other special projects
- Maintain DevLab (departmental technology lab) work space and recording studio

Departmental AssessmentParticipant 2015-Present

- Participate in department-wide assessment to help develop methods and materials for assessing the learning and teaching of WOVEN communication
- Meet once a month with small groups to assess composition course final portfolios; submit data to chair of Assessment committee to measure departmental-wide metrics

University Writing Program Mentor ProgramMentor (AY 2014-2015, AY 2011-2012, Spring 2014, AY 2014-2015)

- Awarded \$1000 fellowship per semester to act as mentor
- Coached 2-3 first year graduate students per semester to develop pedagogical strategies, classroom management techniques and teaching philosophies
- Supervised co-instructors grading, teaching and planning and filed formal evaluations

English Graduate OrganizationPresidential Advisory Board 2012-2013Co-President 2011-2012

- Organized 2011 EGO Conference ““Nothing New Under the Sun?: Novelty, Game-Changing, and Genre-Breaking” with members of the EGO board. Secured keynote speaker, Dr. Richard Flynn of Georgia Southern University
- Developed the EGO Board Handbook to secure institutional memory of EGO officers

Chair, New Student Welcome Committee 2009-2011Member 2008-2014**Administrative Work for the University Writing Program:**Instructor Evaluator AY 2011-2012

- Observed 3-4 graduate student instructors each semester
- Documented and filed formal evaluation reports with the department

Young Adult Reading Group:2011-2016 Organizer

- Coordinated summer reading group of graduate students and faculty interested in children’s and young adult literature (6-10 members)
- Standardized book nomination and scheduling process, as well as group social media presence and advertising

AFFILIATIONS**Children’s Literature Association:** Member, 2009-Present**International Association for the Fantastic in the Arts:** Member, 2012-Present**MLA:** Member, 2014-Present

REFERENCES

- Georgia Tech Supervisor **Dr. Rebecca Burnett**, Professor and Director of Writing and Communication, School of Literature, Media and Communication
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- Georgia Tech Faculty Mentor **Dr. Carol Senf**, Professor, School of Literature, Media and Communication
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- Dissertation Director **Dr. Kenneth Kidd**, Professor of English
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Gainesville, FL 32611-7310
- Committee Member **Dr. Anastasia Ulanowicz**, Associate Professor of English
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- Scholars Council Contact **Suzan Alteri**, Curator, Baldwin Library of Historical Children's Literature
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