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*Children's Literature and Imaginative Geography* ed. by Aïda Hudson (review)

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changes that he made in *The Nursery "Alice"* illustrations, the delays in its publication—Carroll rejected the first printing as too gaudy—caused Alice to appear dated. As Vaclavik suggests, “she was not anti-fashion but *unfashionable*” (80; orig. emphasis). The featuring of the covers with the awkward illustrations by Carroll’s friend Thompson also signals Carroll’s willingness to have Alice interpreted by other artists than Tenniel.

When I first looked at the cover of *Fashioning Alice*, I was shocked since I assumed that Alice had made the classic fashion faux pas of coming dressed for an important event wearing the exact same dress as someone else. The cover features the same enlarged, colorized Tenniel illustration of Alice in the railway carriage from *Through the Looking-Glass* that appears on the cover of James Kincaid’s *Child-Loving: The Erotic Child and Victorian Culture* (1992). But after reading *Fashioning Alice* and applying Vaclavik’s process of close attention to the fashion details in the visual representations of Alice, I began to notice subtle differences between the two versions of the same illustration. The cover of *Fashioning Alice* features the gentleman dressed in the white paper suit, who is indeed wearing a white hat, but an orange jacket, while the same figure on the cover of *Child-Loving* wears an orange hat and a blue jacket. Alice on *Fashioning Alice* wears a white dress, but the *Child-Loving* Alice’s dress is violet, as is the plume in her porkpie hat. There are also subtle differences in the coloring of the conductor and the Goat as well.

With her careful examinations of the many visual representations of Alice within the context of fashion study, Vaclavik reveals how Carroll’s heroine has been visually transformed over the years and guides readers in addressing well-known texts with new eyes.

## Works Cited

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***Children’s Literature and Imaginative Geography*. Edited by Aida Hudson. Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2019.**

**Reviewed by Laurel Krapivkin**

Aida Hudson situates her edited collection at the intersection of three concentric ideas surrounding place: Edward Said’s imaginative geographies, Lawrence Buell’s place attachment, and the idea of mythical spaces. The volume’s seventeen essays are divided into four sections with two

interludes and a postlude. Some of the authors in the collection engage with Said's imaginative geographies, while others use postcolonial and ecocritical theories in conjunction with Buell's place-attachment theory. Still others explore particular spaces, or *topoi*, and their relationship to power structures and binaries (14).

Part 1 contains six essays divided into two sections. The first three are grounded in the Old World, while essays four through six "reflect viewpoints that are 'landed' in the New World" (15). In chapter 1, "Pullman and Imperialism: Navigating the Geographic Imagination in *The Golden Compass*," scholar Cory Sampson traces imperialist themes in *His Dark Materials* by positing that Lyra's universe is reminiscent of Victorian Britain. While Sampson doesn't necessarily argue that *The Golden Compass* is "unconcealedly" imperialist, his work investigates the series' imperialist themes of geographical exploration, child adventurers, and the ethnic "othering" of non-Europeans (43). In "Nineteenth-Century British Children's Literature and the North," Colleen M. Franklin does similar work in mapping imperialist themes and tropes. Margot Hillel also traces imperialism in "Envisioning Ireland: Landscape and Longing in Children's Literature," focusing on nineteenth-century Ireland and the unique migration of Irish citizens away from "our land" to the New World.

Hillel's piece transitions the section nicely to essays focused on North America. In "From Vanity to World's Fair: The Landscape of John Bunyan's *Allegory* in Frances Hodgson Burnett's

*Two Little Pilgrims' Progress*," Shannon Murray maps a third imaginary landscape that orphan protagonists Meg and Robin create when they find a copy of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* and leave their farm home to set out for Chicago's World Exposition. Their imagined geography is a rejection of both the rural life that they have left as well as the industrial city that they travel to. Both Linda Knowles and Petra Fachinger conclude part 1 with essays that illustrate a restorative connection back to indigenous spaces—in particular, the harsh Canadian wilderness—which they argue creates fertile ground for imaginative geographies in fiction written for children.

In the first interlude, Hudson offers her audience a change of genre in the interview "History, Hills, and Lowlands: In Conversation with Janet Lunn." Lunn, a prolific writer of Canadian historical fiction for young adults, talks about the connection between Canadian geography and mythology in several of her novels. The interview functions well as a transitional piece from themes of imperialism and migration to a series of essays in part 2 on particular *topoi*, or "places like gardens, a riverbank, and a rural countryside," and their particular connection to a child's geographical imagination (17).

In chapter 8, "How Does Your Garden Grow? The Eco-Imaginative Space of the Garden in Contemporary Children's Picture Books," Melissa Li Sheung Ying focuses on the importance of the garden as an educational space for children, arguing that it invites them into a greater environmental consciousness and,

hopefully, activism. Ying's analysis of the interplay of text and image is particularly effective, calling attention to the parallel of text with visual elements such as color transitions and the use of panels.

While Ying's essay focuses on both image and text, Alan West's "Into the (Not So) Wild: Nature Without and Within in Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows*" focuses primarily on the textual representations of Grahame's idyllic landscape. West discusses the lack of "wild" in the work, in which the main characters wear clothing and are civilized—except for the othered stouts and weasels, whose wildness threatens Toad Hall in the climax of the story. West's analysis fits appropriately within the conversation of the Saidian dualism of "ours/theirs" or "tame/wild." Continued scholarship surrounding West's argument might explore this tame/wild dualism as it is represented visually in the many illustrated representations of *Willows*.

The second interlude contains Deirdre F. Baker's "Earth, Sea and Sky Writing in *Becca at Sea*," in which Baker challenges the "humanocentricity" of interpretations of imaginative geographies in service to humans (187). Focusing on British Columbia, her own homeland and the backdrop of her novel *Becca at Sea*, Baker's essay pushes back against Said's dualistic othering and instead explores how to represent geographies in a way that allows them "to be themselves . . . To celebrate the natural world's Otherness, and human's capacity to apprehend and be moved by that Otherness" (188).

In part 3, both Joanne Findon and Sarah Fiona Winters present essays that look at the effects of remediation on fantasy geographies; Findon analyzes the reimagination of Hans Christian Andersen's North in Eileen Kernaghan's *The Snow Queen*, and Winters examines the prolonged camping scene in both the novel and the movie versions of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* as a "geography of boredom" (216).

In chapter 13, Christine Bolus Reichert locates steampunk for children as a genre that depends on the past as well as on children's "upward" imaginative geographies, and she analyzes the "re-enchantment of flight" in three steampunk novels for children (229). Monika Hilder also looks at mythical re-enchantment, focusing on Madeline L'Engle's Time Quintet. Hilder argues that L'Engle's series "challenges and seeks to repair cultural rationalism with a holistic spirituality" in a move away from the post-Enlightenment rationalism of the day (259).

In chapter 15, Peter Hynes analyzes the gendering of spaces in Ursula K. Le Guin's *Earthsea* series. In the final essay, Heather Fitzsimmons Frey looks at the material geography of dancers on a stage in theater for young adults. Hudson concludes the collection by including a piece in which Canadian author Alan Cymyn writes on the geographies of his own fiction, exploring the ways in which his past experiences with place have unconsciously woven themselves into his narratives.

The aesthetic design of *Children's Literature and Imaginative Geography* is beautiful—a compliment worth

noting about an edition concerned with space and materiality. Besides its physical appeal, Hudson's collection provides readers a variety of genres including the critical essay, interview, and narrative prose through which to explore imaginative geographies in children's literature. Readers working through the collection as a whole, as well as those interested in a particular geography or *topoi*, will find the organization of these essays into four categories by theme to be helpful.

A particular strength of the collection is that the essays included are not just US-centric; the essays touch on works for young people written in the Northern Hemisphere, including Canada, Britain, the US, and Ireland. Because of the geographical diversity of the authors, the critical essays examine important topics in imaginative geographies, such as Indigenous sense of place, emigration from one's homeland to unfamiliar geographies, and a variety of *topoi* from the gardens of Britain to the coastline of Ireland.

As much as the collection does include essays from a variety of authors in various locations, the authors and essays are restricted to the Northern Hemisphere, leaving a variety of *topoi* still to be explored, as well as voices from non-English speaking (besides Ireland), non-North American and European countries. The essays are also primarily focused on works of fiction, leaving out other genres of literature for young people such as graphic novels, children's and young adult poetry, and verse novels, on which there is much more work to be done. Further scholarship may explore imaginative geographies across

various genres of children's literature.

Hudson's collection invites readers to consider the imaginative geographies that young people encounter in the world of fiction. From the frightening Wild Wood, to the regenerating Secret Garden, to the vast Canadian wilderness, these essays continue necessary dialogue about the places and spaces that characters of children's literature, as well as readers, inhabit and interact with.

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*The Artistry of Neil Gaiman: Finding Light in the Shadows.* Edited by Joseph Michael Sommers and Kyle Eveleth. University Press of Mississippi, 2019.

Reviewed by David Rudd

As the editors of this volume point out, there have been "only a scant few book-length critical examinations" (xxi) of Gaiman's work, so this edited collection is a welcome addition. The editors have certainly tried to cover a range of Gaiman's output, with discussions extending far beyond his most celebrated works (arguably *The Sandman* and *Coraline*, both examined here) to a consideration of Gaiman's picturebooks (*Blueberry Girl*, *The Wolves in the Walls* and *The Sleeper and the Spindle*, *The Day I Swapped My Dad for Two Goldfish*, *Crazy Hair*), his graphic novels (*The Tragical Comedy or Comical Tragedy of Mr. Punch* and *Violent Cases*)