

tions on what makes children's literature valuable as a tool to further self-awareness and social justice" (xv).

The book is divided into three sections. The first section contains chapters devoted to picture books. The second section considers chapter books. The final section addresses the "multiplicity of approaches that philosophy can offer toward the same text" (xxiv). The chapters in this final section use philosophy to develop new ways of reading children's literature. Taken together, they show that philosophy is a useful tool for children's literature criticism.

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There are nine chapters about picture books. In Chapter 1, Kirsten Jacobson uses the work of Heidegger and D. W. Winnicott to analyze *The Velveteen Rabbit*. Chapter 2, by Claudia Mills, offers a Nietzschean reading of *The Rainbow Fish*. In the third chapter Dina Mendonça uses the *Absolutely Positively Alexander: The Complete Series* to illustrate two paradoxes of emotional response to fiction. In Chapter 4, Licia Carlson suggests that "*Are You My Mother?*" is a book about otherness and identity. She uses Simone de Beauvoir to illustrate the philosophical themes found in the book. The fifth chapter, by Carl F. Miller, is devoted to *Horton Hears a Who*. In this chapter Miller uses the works of Alain Badiou to discuss the philosophical insights found in *Horton*. In Chapter 6, Kelly Jones discusses *The Mysteries of Harris Burdick*. Jones considers three ways of reading this book and ultimately defends one of them. She appeals to Derrida, Guattari, and Deleuze in support of her reading. In chapter 7, Matthew F. Pierlott uses *The Missing Piece* and *The Missing Piece Meets the Big O* to discuss "the interconnections between Silverstein, Plato, Jacques Lacan, and Slavoj Žižek . . ." (119). Chapter 8, by Karin Murrin, uses Aristotle and several contemporary philosophers to explore *Angry Arthur*. The section devoted to picture books ends with a chapter on friendship. In this chapter, Peter R. Costello uses Aristotle, Derrida, and Husserl to examine the *Frog and Toad* series.

The section dealing with chapter books contains five chapters. In Chapter 10, Aaron Allen Shiller and Denise H. B. Shiller examine language. Shiller and Shiller use the works of Wittgenstein and Searle to explore the word play found in *Ramona the Pest*. In chapter 11, Oona Eisenstadt uses "*Harriet the Spy*" to illustrate literary theorist Maurice Blanchot's un-

derstanding of writing and its relation to what he sometimes calls *the system*" (191). Chapter 12 contains an investigation of the relationship between intelligence and morality. In this chapter, Sarah O'Brien Conly uses *Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH* coupled with the Aristotle, Hume, and Kant to argue that "becoming morally better is something made easier with intelligence . . ." (215). In the next chapter, Chapter 13, Court Lewis uses *The Cricket in Times Square* to engage in ethical inquiry. Lewis argues that "*The Cricket in Times Square* illustrates a specific understanding of the good life known as eireneism (i.e., the life of 'peaceful' flourishing)" (219). The final chapter of this section, written by Claire M. Brown, examines two characters from *Pollyanna*. Brown asks whether these characters make "compelling 'personal ideals'" (236).

There are four chapters in the final section. Chapters 15 and 16 both discuss *The Giving Tree*. In Chapter 15, Ellen Miller offers ecological and feminist readings of the book. Chapter 16, by Milena Radeva, "combines Derrida's ideas about the (im)possibility of giving with a new historicist reading of the book" (269). Chapters 17 and 18 both examine *Where the Wild Things Are*. In Chapter 17 Tyson F. Lewis argues that the book is "a dramatization of the work of the anthropological machine and its relation to the child" (288). Chapter 18, by Lindsay Lerman, reads the book through the lens of Georges Bataille's work.

This book is an interesting and thought provoking look at some beloved children's stories. The readings offer new ways to read children's literature and new ways to think about philosophy. Many readers will appreciate this book. It should be noted, however, that this book is not about how to teach philosophy to children. Those looking for such a book should look elsewhere. Additionally, readers primarily interested in analytic philosophy might be disappointed as well. That said, this book makes an important contribution to the field of children's literature. The authors have succeeded in their attempt to "use philosophy as a central tool by which to reach out and join an already existing, fairly well-developed conversation about children's literature" (xiv). This book will appeal to anyone interested in children's literature and either literary criticism or philosophy.

By Ben Gorman

About the Contributors

Spencer Beaudette is an undergraduate at the University of Washington majoring in mathematics.

Tim Fisher teaches history and philosophy to high school students at the Spartanburg Day School in Spartanburg, SC. He also runs the philosophy club for the lower school at SDS and is an adjunct professor of philosophy at Wofford College.

Ben Gorman is an adjunct professor of philosophy at York College of Pennsylvania, and works with the ETS on the GRE exam.

Jonathan Hodgson has a bachelors in psychology from McGill, a MBA from the University of British Columbia, and a wanderlust. His traveling bug is largely fulfilled through his work as a tour leader for Adventures Abroad. You can find more of his photography at owilybug.com.

Lucas Jackson is a graduate of Maine West High School in Des Plaines, IL. He will be attending Illinois Wesleyan University in the fall.

Tim McCarthy is a student at Maine West High School in Des Plaines, IL

Jana Mohr Lone is the director and founder of the Northwest Center for Philosophy for Children, and an affiliate faculty at the University of Washington's Department of Philosophy. Her book on pre-college philosophy, *The Philosophical Child*, is coming out in September from Rowman & Littlefield.