

position children as moral agents, Sainsbury's final chapter draws a number of conclusions from her preceding analyses. As it emphasises the trust children's literature obviously has in the thoughtful engagement of its readers, *Ethics in Children's Literature* contains several important insights that have wider implications for the study of children's literature. Sainsbury's careful readings will certainly be welcomed by those who are wary of reducing children's reading to entertainment and identification or of sparing the child by rendering children's literature a sanitised ground with clear rules and closure. As the children's books discussed by Sainsbury encourage their readers to explore different ways of reading with critical awareness, they imply child readers who are agents and ethical agents at that. As a consequence, these readers must be taken seriously in a way that encourages, challenges and trusts in the readers' thoughtfulness. Creating safe worlds, sparing the child or offering clear moral guidelines might suit the cultural myth of childhood innocence, but will not support moral agency. Sainsbury's thoughtful monograph demonstrates convincingly that children's literature can and should be demanding for its readers. Simultaneously, her book makes a strong plea for trusting young readers to read with critical awareness and to be capable of moral judgement.

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Flicktion: perspektiv på flickan i fiktionen [Flicktion: perspectives on the girl in fiction]. Eds Eva Söderberg, Mia Österlund, Bodil Formark. Malmö: Universus Academic Press, 2013. 328 pages.

Flicktion: perspektiv på flickan i fiktionen [Flicktion: perspectives on the girl in fiction] is an anthology containing an introduction and sixteen articles focusing on the girl in fiction, hence the term *flicktion*, a blend of the Swedish word 'flicka' (girl) and 'fiction'. The anthology is interdisciplinary and is initiated by two Nordic networks for girlhood studies: Tyttötutkimusverkosto in Finland and FlickForsk! Nordic Network for Girlhood Studies in Sweden.

In the introductory chapter, the editors explain that their aim is to create a terminology and develop the theorisation of girlhood through theories which gather, comment and confront fictional constructions of girlhood. This is a strong incentive to read this volume. The articles are grouped into four themes: 'Omförhandlat flickskap' [re-negotiated girlhood], 'Gurleska skiftningar' [shades of 'gurlisque', a blend of 'girl' and 'burlesque'], 'Att flicka sig' [to girl oneself—that is to express oneself as a girl] and 'Flicka i rörelse' [girl in motion]. Each theme includes analyses that draw on a vast variety of theoretical perspectives, and the empirical material covers different kinds of fiction such as film, drama, fairy tale, song lyrics, picturebook, poetry, visual

art, critique and popular literature as well as literature for children and young adults.

Overall, the articles present a comprehensive view on aspects of girlhood, historically and, to a lesser extent, also contemporarily. However, the analyses are not grounded on material such as social media, girls' magazines, films where the protagonist is a child or a young teenager, visual art made by young people (for example fan art) or TV series. There are fleeting references to that kind of material but no analyses based on it. It may be understandable that the primary material consists predominantly of literary fiction, but in an anthology named *Flicktion*, readers could possibly expect a slightly better balance between different types of fiction. Equally, there are perspectives that are not covered. Angry or violent girls, as well as girls who challenge heteronormativity, or the girl as a self-construction in social media and art, are not central topics of any of the chapters. That these perspectives are missing is underscored, as both the introduction and some analyses make references to the girl-power discourse. Perhaps this lack can be explained by the fact that the girl is researched by adults, through the experience of adults? As a reader, one might also question the lack of diversity of the anthology, as it only offers glimpses into a few fictional works or a selection of authorships. Given that the anthology is the result of a collaborative work of two Nordic research networks, one would have expected the primary material to be Nordic. The majority of the chapters do focus on Nordic, almost exclusively Swedish, material. However, six chapters deal with fictional works in English from a few Western countries: Canada, the United States, England and Australia.

This said, the positive aspects of the anthology are significant. The objective of theorising girlhood and establishing a terminology that is used in different contexts to analyse *flicktion* seems productive. Among these terms, some are innovative. In Österlund's analysis of two of the most distinguished authors of Swedish picturebooks, namely Pija Lindenbaum and Stina Wirsén, the term *flicklaboratorium* (a place where girlhood is produced, reproduced and negotiated) is used as an analytical point of departure. Nilsson analyses how girls in chick lit junior and teen noir 'do' gender and, in her analysis, she uses the term *att flicka sig* [to girl oneself] in order to describe the renegotiation of gender that takes place in girlhood fiction, where girls 'girl themselves', both as a reaction to the old-fashioned feminism of their mothers' generation and as a way of performing gender in a manner accepted by other girls and in order to attract a boyfriend. However, not all the terms are original: *skeva flickor* [queer, strange or twisted girls] and *gurlesque*, used by, for instance, Österholm, are not new, but the use of these terms in different contexts contributes to the establishment of a terminology for the analysis of girlhood fiction. When Öhrn writes about 'skeva pojkar' [queer boys], the term 'skev' [queer] does not primarily refer to sexual orientation. Instead, it is used to analyse and discuss *könsförvirring* [gender confusion] in boyhood fiction where boys act or behave like girls. Österholm's *gurlesque* is to be understood as a girlhood reclaiming the colour of pink and girliness, combining it with contrary notions such as danger or aggression.

Equally engaging is that established and new theoretical perspectives are juxtaposed in a number of articles. For example, in Jarlsdotter Wikström's analysis, the grotesque body in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is interpreted through Bakhtinian and Deleuzian readings. Johansson's analysis of a Mai Zetterling film includes both de Beauvoir's and Butler's gender theories, whereas Lundberg's analysis discusses theatre for young adults from different theoretical perspectives: Bakhtin, Mouffe and Butler, and so on. In these chapters, the juxtaposition creates a tension that challenges the reader.

The decision to include analyses taking their starting point in different disciplines is particularly fruitful. Studies of literature (Österlund), art (Wadstein McLeod), gender studies (Österholm and Widegren) and the history of ideas (Formark) mirror the intent to emphasise the importance of girlhood studies in different disciplines. These qualities will most likely be appreciated by anyone interested in gender and fiction, professionally or for personal reasons.

To sum up, this anthology represents a collection of interpretation strategies that point at the subversive potential of girlhood studies, between interdisciplinary fields and in the use of terminology. It should be appealing to scholars as well as producers and consumers, not only of *flicktion*, but of fiction more generally.

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Secrets, Lies and Children's Fiction. Kerry Mallan. London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013. 224 pages.

Insisting that children should be honest and always tell the truth is, ironically, a necessary deception by adults. Kerry Mallan's *Secrets, Lies and Children's Fiction*, part of the expanding Palgrave/MacMillan Critical Approaches to Children's Literature series, takes this dilemma as its theme in order to examine how the moral choices that open up between truth telling and lies can play out in children's literature and can, as Mallan states, reveal 'other secrets, paradoxes and silences' (2).

Despite the occasional nods to the likes of Kant, Nietzsche and Foucault, Mallan's discussions do not become mired in a more deeply theoretical and philosophical exposition of truth telling and lying. Instead, the three main sections of the book provide a wide ranging survey of the issue through often close examination both of canonical texts, such as E. B. White's *Charlotte's Web* (1952), and of those that are less well known, with many texts providing discussion points across the sections. The novels, films and picturebooks that are examined here