

Special Issue

African American Children's Literature

Message from the Guest Editor

This Special Issue of *Humanities* focuses on African American children's literature, and looks at the many diverse ways in which reading and studying children's texts teach as much about the adult world as about the world of children. This issue is not a history of African American children's literature though histories certainly inform the texts being written, published, lauded, celebrated, banned, taught, or ignored. Those who study and teach African American children's literature know that stories and narratives about Black children were not always available in ways and forms that celebrated Black children when they were not altogether erased or absent. From stereotypes to violence, literary and creative expressions about Black children by non-Black authors—when available—engaged problematic tropes of white saviorism, animalization, primitivism, violence, and tokenism—too often in efforts to “educate” and entertain white children. When Black authors endeavored to rescue Black children from the damaging tropes that denied humanity, they too often subscribed to respectability politics, “toxic positivity,” and classism.

Guest Editor

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Deadline for manuscript submissions

closed (15 November 2024)



Humanities

an Open Access Journal
by MDPI

Impact Factor 0.3
CiteScore 0.5



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