



## **J. M. Barrie's Peter Pan In and Out of Time: A Children's Classic at 100 (Children's Literature Association Centennial Studies)**

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**J. M. Barrie's Peter Pan In and Out of Time: A Children's Classic at 100 (Children's Literature Association Centennial Studies)** From Brand: Scarecrow Press

Celebrating 100 years of Peter Pan, this fourth volume in the Centennial Studies series explores the cultural contents of Barrie's creation and the continuing impact of Peter Pan on children's literature and popular culture today, especially focusing on the fluctuations of time and narrative strategies. This collection of essays on Peter Pan is separated into four parts.

The first section is comprised of essays placing Barrie's in its own time period, and tackles issues such as the relationship between Hook and Peter in terms of child hatred, the similarities between Peter and Oscar Wilde, Peter Pan's position as an exemplar of the Cult of the Boy Child is challenged, and the influence of pirate lore and fairy lore are also examined. Part two features an essay on Derrida's concept of the grapheme, and uses it to argue that Barrie is attempting to undermine racial stereotypes. The third section explores Peter Pan's timelessness and timeliness in essays that examine the binary of print literacy and orality; Peter Pan's modular structure and how it is ideally suited to video game narratives; the indeterminacy of gender that was common to Victorian audiences, but also threatening and progressive; Philip Pullman and J.K. Rowling, who publicly claim to dislike Peter Pan and the concept of never growing up, but who are nevertheless indebted to Barrie; and a Lacanian reading of Peter Pan arguing that Peter acts as "the maternal phallus" in his pre-Symbolic state. The final section looks at the various roles of the female in Peter Pan, whether against the backdrop of British colonialism or Victorian England. Students and enthusiasts of children's literature will find their understanding of Peter Pan immensely broadened after reading this volume.



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### Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

The Edwardian playwright and novelist first introduced the character Peter Pan in a novel for adults, *The Little White Bird* (1902). Two years later, his wildly successful play, *Peter Pan*, opened in London, and in 1911 he published a novelized version of the play, *Peter and Wendy*. Over the past 100 years, Barrie's creation, which grew out of the stories he told two young brothers, has taken on a life of its own. Besides inspiring animated and live-action films, musical theater, and a best-selling prequel, the story has been a major influence on a century of children's writers. The 15 scholarly articles in this collection chart that influence and place Peter Pan in historical context, examining the story from the modern viewpoints of feminism, post-colonial studies, and popular culture. The valuable, well-organized introduction outlines the development of English pantomime, a tradition unfamiliar to many modern American scholars, showing clearly how the play *Peter Pan* is firmly rooted in this tradition. Academic libraries that support the scholarly study of children's and Edwardian literature will want this multifaceted study of the immortal boy who never grew up.—*Margaret A. Chang, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, North Adams*

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### Review

Academic libraries that support the scholarly study of children's and Edwardian literature will want this multifaceted study... (*School Library Journal*, January 2007)

The combined work of the book's eighteen contributors...exemplifies not only how this children's classic continues to fascinate young readers, but why *Peter Pan* is also a surprisingly?often shockingly?adult story. (*English Literature In Transition*, Vol. 50, No. 2 (2007))

This collection of essays featuring contributions by young, mostly American scholars marks the centenary of the first publication of the play *Peter Pan* (1904). (*Bookbird: A Journal of International Children's Literature*, Vol. 45, No. 4, 2007)

This new centenary collection provides appropriately rich and protean responses to its subject, the most fruitful of them investigating the textual, narrative, and linguistic challenges presented by the many-faceted and multiple versions of *Peter Pan*. Donna White and Anita Tarr deserve our thanks for compiling an exemplary collection of essays....*Peter Pan in and out of Time* exhibits the richness and variety that can come with maturity, in this case, critical maturity. At the same time that this essay collection provides a fitting tribute to the durability of the *Peter Pan* mythos and the complex of desires and fears it encodes, it also provides entertaining, incisive, and useful ways of understanding this complex of texts. (*Children's Literature Association Quarterly*, Vol. 32, No. 1 (Spring 2007))

...a seminal collection that adds to the growing scholarship on children's literature and attests to the popularity of and growing interest in literature for children. It is a work that is informed by scholarship and research of which only experts are capable; but is addressed to all...the book is a great accomplishment and deserves praise. (*H-Net: Humanities and Social Science Reviews Online*)

...academic readers will find this book useful. (*Literary Criticism*)

### About the Author

**C. Anita Tarr** is an associate professor of English at Illinois State University, where she teaches children's and young adult literature with additional specialties in fantasy and science fiction, poetry, and women's studies.

**Donna R. White** teaches young adult literature, linguistics, science fiction and fantasy, and writing at Arkansas Tech University.

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