



## Meet the Team: Dr. Rebecca Rowe (Editor)

### Who are you and where do you teach?

I'm Assistant Professor of Children's Literature at East Texas A&M University. I research how adaptations--both professional and fanish, especially those created by and around Disney--change character identities due to cultural, media, and audience differences.

### What's your favourite city?

To visit: Orlando (my family's vacation destination growing up). That I've ever lived in: London. To settle down in: wherever my family is.

### Do you have a favourite academic conference to attend?

The ones I'm attending regularly these days: Children's Literature Association Annual Conference, Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association National Conference, and the Disney, Culture and Society Research Network Annual Conference. All of them are very welcoming spaces, and I would recommend them to anyone!

### What was your first Disney experience?

I'm pretty sure I've been experiencing Disney since I was born, but the first experience I actually remember was being at EPCOT, sitting on the wall outside The American Adventure, in a red-checkered dress, and burning my legs on the wall because it was so hot. I was 2 or 3, and, even though that was a bad moment, I remember I was having fun until then.

### Favourite Disney Character?

I love so many of the characters, but I always come back to Merida from *Brave*. I aspire to her courage in speaking up for herself, and her family's relationships remind me of my own when I was a teenager.

### Favourite Disney Movie/ feature?

So many great movies to choose from! I go through phases when I favor different films (often *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* and *Lilo & Stitch*), but I usually go back to *The Princess and the Frog*. The movie reminds me of home (in both good and bad ways), and when I'm far away, it's a comfort to return home, at least for an hour and a half.

### Favourite Disney song?

I'm constantly singing Disney songs, but my favorite is "God Bless the Outcasts" from *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. I think that movie, and especially that song, had a hand in shaping my desire to help "outcasts", and it serves as a reminder today that I should help others rather than myself.

### Cel or CGI animation?

That depends: I think both can be quite sophisticated and magical, so deciding whether I want to watch cel or CGI generally depends on my mood.



### **Favourite academic book?**

This changes, but currently, it's *No Kids Allowed: Children's Literature for Adults* by Michelle Ann Abate. It's been extremely helpful in my research, it's well-researched, and it's an enjoyable read. Highly recommend!

### **Biggest influence on your scholarship?**

Marah Gubar in general, but especially her concept of the kinship model of childhood. A lot of my research examines conceptions of age, and her models of childhood are the basis of most of my work.

### **Why should we check out the *International Journal of Disney Studies*?**

IJDS is about Disney, which is interesting to learn about, but really, the journal uses Disney to understand larger issues around media, culture, marketing, business, tourism, and so much more. If you want to learn more about how media conglomerates affect our daily lives, then this is the journal for you!

### **Why a journal, why not a book series?**

Our goal in founding this journal is to give Disney Studies a place to connect and grow. A journal allows more people to publish more frequently than a book series would, bringing more voices into the conversation to accelerate Disney Studies' growth.

### **What was the topic of your PhD.?**

My PhD dissertation was about how adult characters and the conception of adulthood change when a story is adapted from children's literature to family film.

### **What advice would you give to a first time article writer?**

Have confidence in yourself and your ideas. It's important to know what others have said before you, but the whole point of writing an article is for you to add to that conversation. So make your contribution front and center!

### **Why is Disney important to you?**

Disney is the way that I connect to all the most important people in my life: my family, most of the friends I've made through my life, my students, etc. Disney has become a common language for generations of people, and I enjoy engaging in that language but also think it's vital we understand how that language works and what it says about our world.

### **What is original about the journal?**

IJDS is the first journal to focus on the Walt Disney Company, bringing together research from a variety of disciplines and fields to better understand a company that so permeates our lives.

### **How are you addressing DE&I?**

We started with appointing Equity, Diversity and Inclusion editors who can help us navigate the best practices of publishing such an international and interdisciplinary



journal focused around a company that doesn't have the best track record when it comes to questions of equity or diversity. From there, we're planning special issues focused on diversity, seeking articles with a diversity focus, and reaching out to scholars from the Global South to publish work that examines the impact of such a global brand.

**Is the journal associated with an association?**

*IJDS* is associated with the Disney, Culture and Society Research Network, first established by Robyn Muir in 2022.

**What are you working on?**

I'm currently working on turning my dissertation into a book, and Robyn and I have started a major project exploring how the Disney Princesses change from animation to live-action.

**Favourite museum?**

My favorite museum is the Perot Museum of Nature and Science in Dallas, TX. Really, I love any museum that gives visitors the chance to be hands-on in their learning.

**What are your top 5 films of all time?**

I don't even know how to pick a top five, but five movies I have loved: *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, *Lilo & Stitch*, *The Princess and the Frog*, *How to Train Your Dragon* (and all the spin-offs and sequels), and *Clue* (or *Ocean's 8* or *Knives Out*; some kind of mystery).



## Meet the Team: Dr. Lisa Fiore (Editor)

### **Who are you and where do you teach?**

I work as an Assistant Dean in the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences and teach in the Child Study & Human Development department at Tufts University. Throughout my lifetime, young children have always captured my attention. I was attracted to a career in early childhood education at a very early age, likely because my own early education experiences were anchored in respect for children's creativity. Those experiences and relationships with colleagues across disciplines have fueled my own desire to honor and celebrate children's and families' well-being in the most holistic sense.

### **What's your favourite city?**

My favorite city is Reggio Emilia, Italy. It is a city that has demonstrated a commitment to children as citizens and community members' vital, individual roles in the collective health of the city. Appreciation for art and education, including asking questions and challenging ideas, is evident in the social fabric of the city. It is also the city proudly acknowledged as the place where the "tricolore" (Italian flag) originated. My family has enjoyed many visits to Reggio Emilia, and its proximity to Bologna, Florence, Venice, and other Italian cities has enriched our lives. The food in Reggio Emilia is also my favorite food in the world – pasta, pizza, gelato, wine, cheese, and more! It is a city where old traditions and new ideas meet, prompting important dialogue and awareness of the community's shared values and investment in its citizenry.

### **Do you have a favourite academic conference to attend?**

I always enjoy the National Art Education Association conferences because many sessions include hands-on components, which are energizing and inspiring. I integrate art experiences into my teaching as often as possible, so welcome new ideas. Also, the materials that vendors present in exhibit halls are so fun to play with!

### **What was your first Disney experience?**

My first Disney experience was going to Disneyland with my parents when I was two years old. There's a photo of me looking up at Mickey Mouse, trying to kiss his nose, as he leans over me. I also have a vague memory of vanilla ice cream melting all down the cone and over my hand – I think I was trying to savor it, but too slowly for the warm California sunshine...

### **Favourite Disney Character?**

There are so many characters that I enjoy, but if pressed to pick one I'll choose Elastigirl (a.k.a., Helen Parr/Mrs. Incredible) from the Disney/Pixar film *The Incredibles*. The character personifies a combination of qualities that I value, like caring for her family, standing up for important people and causes, and striving to be her best! And she is able to fight crime and save the world, so what's not to admire?

### **Favourite Disney Movie/ feature?**

My favorite Disney movie is *Pinocchio* – I love the characters, especially Jiminy Cricket. I also appreciate the longing for love and how the bond between caregiver and child can be so strong and magical.



### **Favourite Disney song?**

My favorite Disney song is “I Wanna Be Like You” from *The Jungle Book*. I was in a children’s theater production of that musical when I was in third grade, and I played Sher Khan – the only villain I ever played! While I loved my part, I really wanted to sing the song that King Louie sang.

### **Cel or CGI animation?**

I prefer cel animation! There’s a quality to it that I can only boil down to imperfect, which is what makes it so perfect. I love thinking about all of the small steps that are required to result in a complete film. While I’m sure that there’s an argument for small steps being involved in CGI, too, the slower process of hand-drawn images underscores the power of art and collaboration.

### **Favourite academic book?**

My favorite academic book remains the *Norton Anthology of Poetry* that I used in college, beginning in 1989. I am captivated by people’s abilities to use language masterfully and creatively. I never grow tired of the inspiration that poets and poetry provide, even decades/centuries after they were written. Something about capturing the human condition...

### **Biggest influence on your scholarship?**

The biggest influence on my scholarship was my PhD mentor, who warmly invited me into his work, which included research and writing. He was always generous with elevating students’ work and acknowledging their contributions to his work. He possesses a tremendous sense of humor and wisdom gained from living life and making mistakes. I was very fortunate to have such a caring mentor, and our collaborations evolved for many years, resulting in different projects and publications.

### **Why should we check out the *International Journal of Disney Studies*?**

This is such a special journal, primarily because it invites scholarship that bridges traditional categories and disciplines. The journal specifically seeks to bring attention to the multi-directional interactions/influences between a complex corporate entity and socio-cultural communities that exist around the world. The influences are similar and different, old and new, geographically connected and apart – it’s truly a unique field of study that can be accessible to everyone.

### **Why a journal, why not a book series?**

The flexibility of a journal makes it appealing to more readers, since there can be something interesting or challenging included in every issue. Book series are wonderful, particularly when there’s a defined topic or beginning, middle, and end to explore. Journals provide greater opportunities for authorship and engagement across an audience that includes scholars as well as fans in the broadest sense.

### **What was the topic of your PhD?**

My Ph.D. focused in Generalized Anxiety Disorder in children, and children and caregivers completed self-report surveys that contributed to an understanding of the extent to which people perceived themselves as anxious. Not surprisingly, parents of anxious



children also scored high on the anxiety measures, and the focus groups for participants brought out some really interesting patterns and ideas.

### **What advice would you give to a first time article writer?**

Focus less on changing the world with a single idea and more on examining something in a novel way, making new connections, and/or contributing to a broader conversation. I think that authors sometimes get stuck trying to articulate the “aha!” idea – something new that no one has ever discovered before. A beautiful thing about ideas is that they can be different and can spark new ideas!

### **Why is Disney important to you?**

In the simplest sense, Disney is important to me because relationships matter to me, and healthy, affirming relationships make people feel good. When people feel good, then they may be inspired to do good and be kind to themselves and others. When I think about Disney, I think about people experiencing a place together or a film together, and there are shared memories that can be revisited and which contribute to people’s self-confidence and happiness. Disney characters and stories reflect human lived experiences, and therefore resonate with many people across generations and geographical locations.

### **What are you working on?**

I am currently reading about poison and how it was used during different times in recorded history, often by women and often as an act of resistance against oppressive, terrible forces. I have an idea for a book and am following my ideas where they lead me...  
Favourite museum?

### **Favourite museum?**

The Isabella Stewart Gardner museum in Boston! There are two buildings – the original built in the style of an Italian villa with a beautiful courtyard – and a new wing that is home to a concert hall and changing, contemporary exhibitions. The contents of the museum were collected by Isabella Stewart Gardner over many years, and reflect friendships and stories, some that are known and some remain a mystery. She left explicit directions in her will that nothing can be moved or changed, but must remain as she designed the collections/locations. It’s a magical place, and one of my favorite places to spend time.

### **What are your top 5 movies of all time?**

*Sense & Sensibility* (1995) – Emma Thompson, Kate Winslet, Hugh Grant

*Big Night* (1996) – Stanley Tucci, Tony Shalhoub

*About a Boy* (2002) – Nicholas Hoult, Hugh Grant, Toni Collette

*The Color Purple* (1985) – Whoopi Goldberg, Danny Glover, Oprah Winfrey Shakespeare

*in Love* (1998) – Joseph Fiennes, Gwyneth Paltrow, Judi Dench



## Meet the Team: Dr. Laura Miranda (Editor)

### Who are you and where do you teach?

I am Laura Miranda, Music Professor in the Art History and Musicology Department at the University of Oviedo in Northern Spain.

### What's your favourite city?

Buenos Aires.

### Do you have a favourite academic conference to attend?

The Music and the Moving Image Conference at New York University. I haven't been able to attend yet, so I'm really looking forward to it!

### What was your first Disney experience?

I was 4 years old and went with my maternal grandparents to watch *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* at a small cinema in Northern Spain that no longer exists. The animation impressed me, and the songs still stay with me.

### Favourite Disney Character?

Ariel: redheaded, subversive, and lives "Under the sea".

### Favourite Disney Movie/ feature?

Lots of them, but let's say *Fantasy*, closely followed by *Wall-E*. In both, animation, sound and music are enjoyed without dialogue.

### Favourite Disney song?

"The Bare Necessities" from *The Jungle Book*.

### Cel or CGI animation?

I grew up in the 1980s. Cel, please!

### Favourite academic book?

*Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music* (Indiana University Press and the British Film Institute, 1987) by film scholar Claudia Gorbman, a milestone in screen studies.

### Biggest influence on your scholarship?

Anahid Kassabian, a reference on screen studies.

### Why should we check out the *International Journal of Disney Studies*?

Because it will be the only way to find academic articles about Disney from different research areas in just one volume. The journal has a unique aura of 'interdisciplinarity at Disney'.

### Why a journal, why not a book series?

A subject as in demand as Disney, which is studied from so many perspectives and areas of research, needs a fresh, up-to-date and active publication in terms of continuous publication. What better than a journal for approaches on Disney as different as gender, film and theme parks in the same publication?



**What was the topic of your PhD.?**

Spanish film music during the first decades of the Franco regime (1939-1960).

**What advice would you give to a first time article writer?**

Be clear about your ideas, concisely organize your proposal and methodologically argue your hypothesis. And keep trying again and again. If you are smart enough to learn from the scientific rigour of seminal authors, in the end you will succeed.

**Why is Disney important to you?**

Because Disney is key in understanding the collective consciousness of Western society in the 20th and 21st centuries. And, of course, today's popular Western culture is inconceivable without Disney.

**What is original about the journal?**

It is the first academic journal to analyze the role of Disney in our society from a scientific approach. This journal should have been conceived many decades ago. It's beyond me to think that this magazine has been launched in 2025!

**What are you working on?**

I am working on female Spanish artists who strengthened diplomatic ties between Spain and its allied powers in 1939-1950 through their performances in German, Italian and Argentinean film productions.

**Favourite museum?**

El Prado in Madrid.

**What are your top 5 movies of all time?**

- 1.CARTOONS: *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (Disney, 1937)
- 2.MUSICAL: *Singin' in the Rain* (Stanley Donen and Gene Kelly, 1952)
- 3.ROMANCE: *The quiet man* (John Ford, 1954)
- 4.COMEDY: *Some Like It Hot* (Billy Wilder, 1959)
- 5.CIVIL RIGHTS: *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* (Stanley Kramer, 1967)  
(I know 'civil rights' is not a genre, but I had to include this last Katharine-Tracy collaboration!)