

February 16, 2017

### **ChLA Statement on Intellectual Freedom, Diversity, and Global Citizenship**

The Children's Literature Association promotes the development and dissemination of research on children's literature and culture. Our purpose is to support scholars committed to research, critical thinking, and public dialogue in a global context. Our scholarship is often interdisciplinary and international, and our organization depends upon its diverse membership, including its international students and scholars, who often travel to North America to study or work. Recently, the U.S. president has signed an executive order banning refugees and citizens of seven majority-Muslim countries from entry into the United States, an order that originated in the president's unconstitutional campaign promise to shut down Muslim immigration. In light of this action, and in the broader context of resurgent nationalist rhetoric around the world, the ChLA rejects the malignancy of nativism and affirms in unqualified and uncompromising terms a commitment to the free flow of persons and ideas across borders. It is critical that the U.S., and our modest scholarly organization, welcome scholars of all backgrounds and nationalities, as this diversity is essential to our intellectual health. International scholars must be able to travel without restriction, and international graduate students studying in the U.S. must be supported and protected. We also affirm the basic principles of intellectual freedom and the right to dissent in a climate increasingly hostile to alternative views (however fond of alternative facts).

Joining with scholarly organizations such as the Modernist Studies Association and the Society for Cinema and Media Studies, we endorse the Modern Language Association's Statement on the 2016 Presidential Election, which reads thus:

*Throughout the campaign and in the aftermath of the presidential election in the United States, sharp political lines have been drawn that pit groups and individuals against one another on the basis of national origin, race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, migration status, ability, class, and other forms of identity. The Modern Language Association reaffirms in the strongest terms possible its commitment to free inquiry and academic freedom for all, unimpeded by acts of prejudice and hate. We note especially the need to offer support to those who are the most vulnerable and condemn the unjust rhetoric that targets them. We recognize that the humanities and humanistic knowledge are now more essential than ever to help guide us in these difficult times, and we pledge to maintain the MLA as an organization open to all individuals who share our commitments.*