



Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows*: A Children's Classic at 100 (Children's Literature Association Centennial Studies)

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In 1908, Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows* was published to surprisingly little critical fanfare. But readers championed its cause, and Grahame's novel of a riverbank life soon proved both a commercial_ and ultimately critical_ success. One hundred years after its first publication, Grahame's book and its memorable characters continue their hold on the public imagination and have taken their place in the canon of children's literature. However, little academic criticism emerged in the wake of the book's initial publication. Only after the appearance of Peter Green's biocritical study did the academy begin to wrestle with Grahame's complex work, though many read it in terms of Grahame's often unhappy personal life. The essays in *Kenneth Grahame's The Wind in the Willows: A Children's Classic at 100* focus on recent discussions of the book in regards to class, gender, and nationality but also examine issues previously not addressed by Grahame criticism, such as the construction of heteronormative masculinity, the appeal of this very English novel to Chinese readers, and the meaning of a text in which animals can be human-like, pets, servants, and even food. This volume also revisits some of the issues that have engaged critics from the start, including the book's dual-strand narrative structure, the function of home, and the psychological connections between Toad and Grahame. Scholars of fantasy and children's literature will find great value in this collection that sheds new light on this enduring classic.

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