

Fictive Fathers and Henpecked Husbands: Parenting and Marriage in Baum's Oz: Judy Bieber

Orphans are ubiquitous in children's literature, and L. Frank Baum's fantasy books for children are no exception. There are few depictions of nuclear families and heteronormative marriages in his books. Baum breaks gender norms by creating the transgender Tip/Ozma, and the nonbinary Chick the Cherub. Was he similarly innovative in his representations of parenting and marriage? Bieber will analyze representations of protective and nurturing father figures, and examine depictions of heteronormative marriage, which are infrequent and none too flattering. While Aunt Em and Uncle Henry are the most visible and well-developed married couple in Baum's children's fantasies, Bieber also examines minor characters.