



LIT 848

Young Adult Fiction

S2 External 2018

Dept of English

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

Nerida Wayland

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By appointment - please email to arrange.

Toby Davidson

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Credit points

4

Prerequisites

Admission to MChildLit or MCrWrit or GradDipChildLit or GradDipCrWrit or MA in Children's Literature

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit examines a range of literature written for adolescents and young adults. Issues which will be addressed include: the idea of a literature for young people, concepts of adolescence, representations of subjectivity, sexuality, gender, ideology and forms of social organisation. The unit also examines a range of genres, including fantasy, realism, experimental and historical genres.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

A broad knowledge of the kinds of literature produced for adolescents.

The ability to apply concepts such as ideology, gender and subjectivity to adolescent fiction.

An understanding of the various ways in which YA literature is oriented by cultural assumptions, practices and ideologies.

The ability to use an effective conceptual and analytic language with which to discuss the genre of YA fiction.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Participation	10%	No	Weeks 1-12
Early Feedback Critical Review	40%	No	24 August, 2018
Major Essay	50%	No	11 November, 2018

Participation

Due: **Weeks 1-12**

Weighting: **10%**

A threshold requirement for participation marks is **attendance and involvement** in all the seminars. Students must prepare for classes by reading and reflecting on the unit readings and contribute meaningfully to the weekly online discussions.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- A broad knowledge of the kinds of literature produced for adolescents.
- The ability to apply concepts such as ideology, gender and subjectivity to adolescent fiction.
- An understanding of the various ways in which YA literature is oriented by cultural assumptions, practices and ideologies.
- The ability to use an effective conceptual and analytic language with which to discuss the genre of YA fiction.

Early Feedback Critical Review

Due: **24 August, 2018**

Weighting: **40%**

Students must select 2 of the set novels for this unit and write a critical appraisal of these texts. Please see the LIT 848 Unit Handbook for further details.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- The ability to apply concepts such as ideology, gender and subjectivity to adolescent fiction.
- An understanding of the various ways in which YA literature is oriented by cultural

assumptions, practices and ideologies.

- The ability to use an effective conceptual and analytic language with which to discuss the genre of YA fiction.

Major Essay

Due: **11 November, 2018**

Weighting: **50%**

Please complete an essay on ONE of the topics supplied in the LIT 848 Handbook. Refer to at least two books from the set text list in your answer. You may choose to confine your discussion to books published in one country (for example, Australia, Britain or America) or a particular genre (for example, realism, fantasy, historical realism, etc.).

On successful completion you will be able to:

- A broad knowledge of the kinds of literature produced for adolescents.
- The ability to apply concepts such as ideology, gender and subjectivity to adolescent fiction.
- An understanding of the various ways in which YA literature is oriented by cultural assumptions, practices and ideologies.
- The ability to use an effective conceptual and analytic language with which to discuss the genre of YA fiction.

Delivery and Resources

Weekly Seminars will involve **online** discussion of the primary and secondary readings. Contribution to all seminars is mandatory (please see 'Participation' under the heading Assessment).

Required Reading:

Critical Texts:

1. Roberta Seelinger Trites, *Disturbing the Universe: Power and Repression in Adolescent Literature*. University of Iowa Press (1998). ISBN: 087745857X
2. Robyn McCallum, *Ideologies of Identity in Adolescent Fiction*. New York: Routledge, 2012. ISBN: 9781135581299

Primary Texts:

1. M.T. Anderson, *Feed*, 2002, Candlewick Press. ISBN 0-7636-2259-1
2. Judith Clarke, *The Winds of Heaven*, 2009, Allen and Unwin. 9781741757316
3. Cory Doctorow, *Little Brother* (available for free download), 2010. ISBN: 9780765323118
4. Jennifer Donnelly, *A Northern Light*, (also published as *A Gathering Light*) 2004,

Harcourt

5. John Green, *Looking for Alaska*, 2005, ISBN: 9780007523160
6. Steven Herrick, *By the River*, 2004, Allen and Unwin. 9781741143577
7. David Levithan, *Two Boys Kissing*, 2013. ISBN: 9780307931900
8. Lauren Myracle, *ttyl*, 2005. ISBN: 978-0810987883
9. Patrick Ness, *The Knife of Never Letting Go* (Book 1 of the Chaos Walking Trilogy, 2008. ISBN: 978-0763676186)
10. Mariko Tamaki, *Skim*, 2010. ISBN: 9780888999641
11. Markus Zusak, *The Book Thief*, 2005, Pan MacMillan. 9780330423304

Unit Schedule

Week 1: Defining Adolescent and Young Adult Fiction

* There is no set reading for this first week

Discussion Topic

Literature written specifically for adolescents is a relatively recent cultural development. This session examines various issues in defining adolescent or young adult literature:

- Is there a need for a literature specifically for young people?
- Is young adult literature to be defined by what young people read or are there identifying features constituting 'YA fiction' as a genre?
- What kinds of subject matter do books for young people deal with?
- What kinds of narrative and textual strategies and genres are used?
- Are there predominant thematic and ideological concerns?

Week 2: Concepts of Adolescence

Primary Reading

Jennifer Donnelly, *A Gathering Light*

Secondary Reading

Peter Hollindale, 'The Adolescent Novel of Ideas', *Children's Literature in Education*, 26, 1, 1995

Roberta Seelinger Trites, *Disturbing the Universe: Power and Repression in Adolescent Fiction*, Chapter 1

Cat Yampbell, "Judging a Book by Its Cover: Publishing Trends in Young Adult Literature." *The Lion and the Unicorn* 29.3 (2005) 348-372

Discussion Topic

How is adolescence represented in YA literature? What cultural assumptions about adolescence underlie its representation?

Week 3: Representing Subjectivity in Young Adult Fiction

Primary Reading

M.T. Anderson, *Feed*

Secondary Reading

Robyn McCallum, *Ideologies of identity in Adolescent Fiction*, Chapter 3

Discussion Topic

How is the formation of subjectivity represented in fiction for young people? Examine the effects of narrative techniques and structuring devices on the representation of subjectivity in *Feed*.

Week 4: Representing Femininity

Primary Reading

Judith Clarke, *The Winds of Heaven*

Secondary Reading

Roberta Seelinger Trites, *Disturbing the Universe*, Chapter 4

Discussion Topic

How does this novel represent the experience of growing up female? Compare/contrast the representation of female development and male/female relationships. What impact does genre and narrative technique have on the representation of gender?

Week 5: Representing Masculinity

Primary Reading

John Green, *Looking for Alaska*

Secondary Reading

Beverly Pennell, 'Redeeming Masculinity at the end of the second Millenium: Narrative Reconfigurations of Masculinity in Children's Fiction', in (Stephens, editor) *Ways of Being Male: Representing Masculinities in Children's Literature*.

Romeren, Rolf, and John Stephens, "Representing Masculinity in Norwegian and Australian Young Adult Fiction: A Comparative Study." Pp. 216-33 in (Stephens, editor) *Ways of Being Male: Representing Masculinities in Children's Literature*.

Discussion Topic

How does Green represent the experience of growing up male? Compare/contrast the representation of male development and male/female relationships.

Week 6: Representing Gay Subjectivity

Primary Reading

Mariko Tamaki, *Skim*

David Levithan, *Two Boys Kissing*

Secondary Reading

Beverly Pennell and John Stephens, 'Queering Heterotopic Spaces: Shyam

Selvadurai's *Funny Boy* and Peter Well's *Boy Overboard*" in *Ways of Being Male*.

Discussion Topic

How do these novels represent the experience of growing up gay? Compare/contrast their representation of sexuality and male/female relationships. What impact does genre and narrative technique have on the representation of gender and sexuality?

Week 7: Individuals, Families and Society

Primary Reading

Cory Doctorow, *Little Brother*

Secondary Reading

Roberta Seelinger Trites, *Disturbing the Universe*, Chapter 2

Robyn McCallum, *Ideologies of Identity*, Chapter 4

Discussion Topic

How are relationships between individuals, families and society, and relationships within families, conceived of in young adult fiction? To what extent are individuals depicted as empowered within the family, or society? What are the conditions of empowerment / disempowerment?

Week 8: The Young Adult *Bildungsroman*

Primary Reading

Mariko Tamaki, *Skim*

Jennifer Donnelly, *A Gathering Light*

Secondary Reading

Elizabeth Abel, Marianne Hirsch, and Elizabeth Langland, *The Voyage In: Fictions of Female Development* (extract)

Further Reading

Mikhail Bakhtin, 'The *bildungsroman* and its significance in the history of realism' in *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, 1986

Jerome Buckley, *Seasons of Youth: The bildungsroman from Dickens to Golding*, 1974

Discussion Topic

How have the generic conventions and ideologies of the *bildungsroman* shaped the representation of development in young adult novels?

Week 9: Historical Fiction

Primary Reading

Markus Zusak, *The Book Thief*

Secondary Reading

John Stephens, *Language and Ideology*, Chapter 6

Robyn McCallum, *Ideologies of Identity*, Chapter 6

Discussion Topic

To what extent do the generic conventions of young adult fiction 'rewrite' history?

Week 10: Experimental Fiction

Primary Reading

Lauren Myracle, *ttyl*

Secondary Reading

Victoria Flanagan, *Technology and Identity in Young Adult Fiction: The Posthuman Subject*, Chapter 6.

Discussion Topic

What effects do the use of innovative techniques and forms have for the representation of adolescence, subjectivity, sexuality and/or social relationships?

Week 11: Versions of Realism

Primary Reading

Steven Herrick, *By the River*

Secondary Reading

Clare Bradford, 'Editorial comments', *Papers: Explorations in Children's Literature*, 7, 1, 1997

Heather Scutter, *Displaced Fictions: Contemporary Australian Books for Teenagers and Young Adults*, Chapter 4

Discussion Topic

To what extent are the so-called 'real' themes, such as alienation, dislocation, suicide and so on, associated with so much fiction for young people,

ideologically shaped and driven by social concerns and by the conventions of the genre? In what ways is 'reality' distinct from textuality?

Week 12: Versions of Fantasy

Primary Reading

Patrick Ness, *The Knife of Never Letting Go*

Secondary Reading

John Stephens, *Language and Ideology in Children's Fiction*, Chapter 7

Discussion Topic

What kinds of fantasy writing for young adults are there? What thematic and ideological functions does it perform?

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central) (<https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central>). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Academic Progression Policy](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Fitness to Practice Procedure](#)
- [Grade Appeal Policy](#)
- [Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)

- [Special Consideration Policy](#) (**Note:** The Special Consideration Policy is effective from 4 December 2017 and replaces the Disruption to Studies Policy.)

Undergraduate students seeking more policy resources can visit the [Student Policy Gateway](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway) (<https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway>). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

If you would like to see all the policies relevant to Learning and Teaching visit [Policy Central](http://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central) (<http://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central>).

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: <https://students.mq.edu.au/study/getting-started/student-conduct>

Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au.

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Graduate Capabilities

PG - Capable of Professional and Personal Judgment and Initiative

Our postgraduates will demonstrate a high standard of discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgment. They will have the ability to make informed choices and decisions that reflect both the nature of their professional work and their personal perspectives.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcome

- An understanding of the various ways in which YA literature is oriented by cultural assumptions, practices and ideologies.

Assessment tasks

- Participation
- Major Essay

PG - Discipline Knowledge and Skills

Our postgraduates will be able to demonstrate a significantly enhanced depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content knowledge in their chosen fields.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- A broad knowledge of the kinds of literature produced for adolescents.
- The ability to apply concepts such as ideology, gender and subjectivity to adolescent fiction.
- An understanding of the various ways in which YA literature is oriented by cultural assumptions, practices and ideologies.
- The ability to use an effective conceptual and analytic language with which to discuss the genre of YA fiction.

Assessment tasks

- Participation
- Early Feedback Critical Review
- Major Essay

PG - Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

Our postgraduates will be capable of utilising and reflecting on prior knowledge and experience, of applying higher level critical thinking skills, and of integrating and synthesising learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments. A characteristic of this form of thinking is the generation of new, professionally oriented knowledge through personal or group-based critique of practice and theory.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- The ability to apply concepts such as ideology, gender and subjectivity to adolescent fiction.
- An understanding of the various ways in which YA literature is oriented by cultural assumptions, practices and ideologies.
- The ability to use an effective conceptual and analytic language with which to discuss the genre of YA fiction.

Assessment tasks

- Participation
- Early Feedback Critical Review
- Major Essay

PG - Research and Problem Solving Capability

Our postgraduates will be capable of systematic enquiry; able to use research skills to create new knowledge that can be applied to real world issues, or contribute to a field of study or practice to enhance society. They will be capable of creative questioning, problem finding and problem solving.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcome

- The ability to use an effective conceptual and analytic language with which to discuss the genre of YA fiction.

Assessment tasks

- Participation
- Early Feedback Critical Review
- Major Essay

PG - Effective Communication

Our postgraduates will be able to communicate effectively and convey their views to different

social, cultural, and professional audiences. They will be able to use a variety of technologically supported media to communicate with empathy using a range of written, spoken or visual formats.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- The ability to apply concepts such as ideology, gender and subjectivity to adolescent fiction.
- An understanding of the various ways in which YA literature is oriented by cultural assumptions, practices and ideologies.
- The ability to use an effective conceptual and analytic language with which to discuss the genre of YA fiction.

Assessment tasks

- Participation
- Early Feedback Critical Review
- Major Essay

PG - Engaged and Responsible, Active and Ethical Citizens

Our postgraduates will be ethically aware and capable of confident transformative action in relation to their professional responsibilities and the wider community. They will have a sense of connectedness with others and country and have a sense of mutual obligation. They will be able to appreciate the impact of their professional roles for social justice and inclusion related to national and global issues

This graduate capability is supported by:

Assessment tasks

- Participation
- Major Essay