



From the Editors

Teenagers can face a variety of conflicts during their adolescent years: conflicts involving friends, family members, peers, adults, even inner conflicts involving only the individual. Conflicts can also center on sexual and gender identity, on love and hatred, on moral choices, and even the issues presented as our country goes to war. Some conflicts simmer beneath the service of those who experience them while others are as evident as the world news and daily headlines.

So how do we help these young people find a way to learn to live with such conflicts and put them into their proper perspectives? This issue of *The ALAN Review* provides a look at young adult literature and how it can help pave the way for a better understanding of the conflicts that surround them.

The centerpiece of the summer issue comes from the 2005 ALAN Workshop and the Books on War panel presentation given by Marc Aronson, Jim Murphy, Walter Dean Myers, Paul Fleischman, and Harry Mazer. The title of the composite, “The Author’s Responsibility: Telling the Truth About War,” comes from the final line from Walter Dean Myers, an admonition to authors to tell the truth about war. The personal experiences with war which Harry Mazer and Walter Dean Myers have recast in fiction tell the story of young men facing death. The nonfiction and mythological updatings of Marc Aronson, Jim Murphy and Paul Fleischman also tell the truth about the war.

Gerrit W. Bleeker, Barbara S. Bleeker, and Martha M. Bleeker focus on conflict resolution skills in their research on the use of young adult literature for this purpose in, “Finding Common Ground: Learning the Language of Peace.” They focus on giving students

voice in their classrooms, to provide new perspectives and to encourage a resolution of conflict, through reading, writing, and discussion.

One of the most obvious conflicts in a young person’s life is learning to understand and embrace individual differences...especially your own. In “Stargirls, Stray Dogs, Freaks, and Nails: Person vs. Society Conflicts and Nonconformist Protagonists in Young Adult Fiction,” young adult author Patrick Jones examines the perplexity of a specific kind of protagonist in young adult literature—those characters who choose to function outside the mainstream of life.

Patricia M. Hauschildt continues our look at conflict with her focus on “Worlds of Terrorism.” She shares her vision on how educators, and others can address some of the issues of terrorism and war as perceived by teenagers trying to make sense of the world.

In another aspect of adult responsibility to help teens make sense of their world, C.J. Bott explains why educators must become familiar with YA books that deal with sexual content, for the sake of our students. Ignorance is not bliss when it comes to some of the more explicit books that flow through our students’ and children’s hands, and we as adults need to be familiar with the issues kids face in the present environment as these issues are reflected in the books they choose to read.

One of the United Kingdom’s favorite fantasy authors, David Clement-Davies stops along his first US book tour to ask the question, “Are You Living in the Real World?” David discusses the role of fantasy in the lives of readers of all ages and asks if it doesn’t have deep connection to the real world. Louel C. Gibbons,

Jennifer S. Dail, and B. Joyce Stallworth provide an opportunity for classroom teachers to speak out regarding the use of YA literature in the English curriculum and their use in reaching state standards.

Veteran contributors Joan F. Kaywell, Patricia P. Kelly, Christi Edge, Larissa McCoy, and Narisa Steinberg share their research on “Growing Up Female around the Globe,” and the role of young adult literature. Meanwhile, Wendy Glenn takes a look at first love among gay teens in “Boys Finding First Love” in *The Center of the World* and *Swimming in the Monsoon Sea*.

Leslie Ann Salley and Witt Salley take a fresh look at Francesca Lia Block’s work and her role in establishing the parameters and pushing the boundaries of the young adult novel. Taking a further look at popular culture, classroom teacher Robyn Seglem offers “YA Lit, Music and Movies” Creating REEL Interest in the Language Arts Classroom. Seglem

demonstrates how to incorporate music, movies and YA lit into a successful and meaningful classroom activity.

This issue also features our regular Clip and File collection of 31 reviews of the newest releases in young adult literature.

And, finally, don’t forget to check out our preview of the 2006 ALAN Workshop, with its theme of “Young Adult Literature: Key to Open Minds.” Scheduled for November in Nashville, Tenn., the workshop features dozens of the top names of authors and researchers and other leaders in the field of young adult literature. And this year’s ALAN Breakfast will feature guest speaker Naomi Shihab Nye.

So get set for some engaging articles regarding conflict, and take a sneak peek at what’s headed your way for the annual ALAN Workshop. We’re glad you’re joining us for this adventure.

Call for Manuscripts

2007 Winter theme: Young Adult Literature: Key to Open Minds

The theme for our 2007 winter issue will reflect the theme of the 2005 ALAN Workshop: “Young Adult Literature: Key to Open Minds.” This theme is meant to be open to interpretation and support a broad range of subtopics; in addition, articles about any of the authors scheduled to appear at the 2006 ALAN Workshop in Pittsburgh, as well as general articles on any topic dealing with young adult literature and its use, are welcome. October 15 submission deadline.

2007 Summer theme: Seeing Myself in the Story

This theme is intended to solicit articles dealing with the relationships between young adult readers and the characters in their reading. The theme is meant to be open to interpretation, but might, for example, deal with what kinds of protagonists individual readers find appealing and/or identify with, the effects this kind of reading may have on young readers and how teachers use this to help students on the path to making meaning of their reading and their lives. General submissions are also welcome. February 15 submission deadline.

2007 Fall theme: Young Adult Literature: No Genre Unwanted

This theme is intended to solicit articles about the many genres within young adult literature and the approaches teachers take in addressing them, from poetry to plays, from autobiography to horror. This theme is meant to be open to interpretation and support a broad range of subtopics, but some possibilities include choosing and using the best of young adult drama, helping students make the connections between their own lives in the present day and the lives of characters in historical fiction, creating a thematic unit on mysteries, performance poetry and more. The sky is the limit! We welcome and encourage other creative interpretations of this theme. General submissions are also welcome. May 15 submission deadline.