Nov. 2-6, 2026



Defining YA Studies and Culture

Conference Program

YASA

YA Studies Association

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Participants

Welcome

It is with great pleasure and honor that we welcome you to the Young Adult Studies Association's (YASA) fourth biannual conference! Our organization exists to foster research, teaching, and practice in the vibrant, evolving field of Young Adult (YA) literature, media, and related disciplines. This virtual gathering reflects our shared passion and dedication to expanding knowledge, encouraging dialogue, and strengthening connections across our international community.

At YASA, we are committed to advancing understanding of how YA literature and media impact the lives of young people and broader societal landscapes. As YA studies continues to grow in relevance, from the classroom to popular culture, the importance of collaboration across disciplines, professions, and communities has never been more vital. This conference represents a unique opportunity to celebrate this spirit of cooperation, bringing together researchers, educators, librarians, creators, and practitioners from around the world who all share a common commitment to the significance of YA in today's world. Notably, if you'd like to get more involved, YASA is also in the process of electing Executive Board members, including a Vice-President and Membership Manager. More details on this at our Annual General Membership Meeting (AGMM), taking place on Thursday, 5 November from 23:00-00:00 UTC.

Over the next few days, you will have the chance to engage with innovative scholarship, explore new ideas, and connect with equally passionate peers about this dynamic field. Whether you are presenting cutting-edge research or attending discussions, we encourage you to immerse yourself fully in the experience and embrace the diversity of perspectives our participants bring. Thank you for being part of this conference and for contributing to the ever-growing landscape of Young Adult Studies. Together, we will continue to deepen our understanding and appreciation of YA literature and media, and the transformative role they play for young people, scholars, and society. Over the five conference days, we are hosting over twenty-five live events—roundtables, panels, and socials—for you to enjoy. We're also recording each of the live events. The recordings will be available until the end of November 2026 for you to watch and rewatch at your leisure.

Below, we have included a guide for how to make the most of our online conference. It details how to access materials and gives some logistical information about engaging with the different types of events. For now, we'd like to thank you, the YASA community, for supporting this conference as participants and audience members. We wish you all an enjoyable week.

Signed,
The YA Studies Association's Executive Board

Jeremy Johnston, President
Susanne Abou Ghaida, Vice-President
Nichol Brown, Secretary
Cassandra Whisenant, Social Media Manager
Tânia Cerqueira, Membership Manager
Caylee Tierney, Website Manager

Conference Guide

Defining YA Studies and Culture has two main components: asynchronous, pre-recorded papers and live events taking place between 2 Novcember and 6 November. These live events comprise:

Roundtables	Live discussions taking the place of the traditional conference Q&A for pre-recorded papers (stored in our Google Drive). Please review the relevant papers/presentations in advance of attending.
Panels	Live discussions between experts on a specific topic. No material to review in advance of the session.
Workshops	Pre-organized workshops. No materials to review in advance of the session.
Office Hours	A chance to speak with a member of the Executive Board about any questions, concerns, or ideas.
Socials	Themed social events for attendees to mingle and unwind.

The Zoom links for live events, access to pre-recorded papers on Google Drive, and other conference materials are available with YASA membership.

If you have any questions, reach out to us at yastudiesassociation@gmail.com



Schedule

Monday, 2 November 2026

14:00 - 14:45 UTC **Opening Session: Welcome to Defining YA Studies and Culture**
Jeremy Johnston

15:00 - 15:45 UTC **Roundtable: Complex YA Histories**
Moderator: Cassandra Whisenant
Ritwika Roy, Supriya Baijal, Kajori Patra

17:00 - 18:00 UTC **Panel: Who Defines YA Literature? An Historical Review**
Moderator: Nichol Brown
Amanda K. Allen, LuElla D'Amico, Melanie J. Fishbane, and Emily Hamilton-Honey

19:00 - 19:45 UTC **Roundtable: Queer YA**
Moderator: Cassandra Whisenant
Edcel J. Cintron Gonzalez, Celia M. Ayala Lugo, and V Millen

Tuesday, 3 November 2026

14:00 - 14:45 UTC **Roundtable: Dystopian YA**
Moderator: Susanne Abou Ghaida
Luísa de Souza Mello, Carolina Celeste Granini, and Alison Tedman

15:00 - 15:45 UTC **Roundtable: YA & Community**
Moderator: Tânia Cerqueira
Sarah E. Jackson, Nithya Sivashankar, Rebekah Degener, Cara Scheibe, and Janieke Koning

17:00 - 17:45 UTC **YASA President Office Hours**
Jeremy Johnston

19:00 - 20:00 UTC **Panel: Spotlighting Your Research in YA Studies**
Moderator: Jeremy Johnston
Brianna Anderson, Amy Cummins, and Ritwika Roy

20:00 - 20:45 UTC **Social: Coffee & Conversation (hosted by Spotlight Committee)**
Brianna Anderson, Amy Cummins, and Ritwika Roy

Wednesday, 4 November 2026

12:00 - 12:45 UTC **Workshop: Reading Young Adult Nigerian Literature: A Critical Reintroduction through the Study of Cyprian Ekwensi's The Rain Maker**
Moderator: Tânia Cerqueira
Esther Omoye

14:00 - 14:45 UTC **Roundtable: Mind and Body in YA**
Moderator: Susanne Abou Ghaida
Dibya Singh and Shanjida Nowshin Chowdhury

16:00 - 16:45 UTC **Panel: Problematizing Contemporary YA Fantasy: Perspectives from the Global South**
Moderator: Tânia Cerqueira
Alazne Cameron, Raven Lingat, and Claudia Excaret Santos

18:00 - 19:00 UTC **Social: YA Jeopardy**
Cassandra Whisenant

21:00 - 21:45 UTC **Roundtable: Latinx YA Literature**
Moderator: Nichol Brown
Gustavo Velázquez Lazcano, Amy Cummins, and Regan Postma-Montaño

Thursday, 5 November 2026

12:00 - 12:45 UTC **Roundtable: Global YA Culture**
Moderator: Susanne Abou Ghaida
Siddhi Jangid, Suman Sigroha, and Andrea Anne I. Trinidad

14:00 - 14:45 UTC **Roundtable: Girlhood**
Moderator: Nichol Brown
Jia Zuo, Hannah Doermann, Grammeni Eleni Pourni, and Anjali Singh

16:00 - 17:00 UTC **Panel: From Submission to Publication in The International Journal of Young Adult Literature (IJYAL): Navigating Submissions and Peer Review as Author and/or Reviewer**
Moderator: Susanne Abou Ghaida
Patricia Kennon and Elizabeth Leach-Leung

17:15 - 18:15 UTC **Panel: Sugar, Spice, and Everything YA Speculative Fiction**
Moderator: Nichol Brown
Elizabeth Leach-Leung, Leah Phillips, and Emma Tueller Stone

19:00 - 20:00 UTC **Workshop: Shaping Social Issues: How Young Adult Literature Reveals the Layers of Systemic Inequity and Possibility**
Moderator: Nichol Brown
Morgan King, Kaitlyn Nye, and Heather Dunham

23:00 - 0:00 UTC **Annual General Membership Meeting (AGMM)**
Susanne Abou Ghaida

Friday, 6 November 2026

7:00 - 7:45 UTC **Roundtable: The Politics of Gender**
Moderator: Caylee Tierney
Helen Penet, Sharon Crossett, and Jade Dillon-Craig

14:00 - 14:45 UTC **Roundtable: Politics & YA #1**
Moderator: Susanne Abou Ghaida
Sara Kabir, Susan Driver, and Dimitris A. Goulis

15:00 - 15:45 UTC **Roundtable: Politics & YA #2**
Moderator: Jeremy Johnston
Rodrigo Zavala-Cintora, Dalia Mostafa Adulrahman, Allison Estrada-Carpenter

16:00 - 17:00 UTC **Workshop: Beyond "Never Forget": Re-defining the "Young Adult" through the Lens of Genocide Literature**
Moderator: Cassandra Whisenant
Sarah Donovan

22:00 - 22:45 UTC **Roundtable: Constructing YA**
Moderator: Tânia Cerqueira
Emma K. McNamara, Jesus Montaño, Natalie Liptak, and Lauren Vandever

23:00 - 0:00 UTC **Closing Session: Defining YA Studies and Culture**
Jeremy Johnston



Participants

Participants

Alazne Cameron, Problematizing Contemporary YA Fantasy: Perspectives from the Global South

Alison Tedman, Sunrise on the Reaping and The Hunger Games' prequel marketing: fandom and social media

Allison Estrada-Carpenter, "She Helps You Better See What Is Already There": Survey of 21 st-Century Representations of Working-Class Motherhood in Kid Lit

Amanda K. Allen, Who Defines Young Adult Literature? An Historical Review

Amy Cummins, Spotlighting Your Research in YA Studies, and Ray Villareal's Bildungsroman of a Luchador

Andrea Anne I. Trinidad, Young and Broke: Narrating Third-World Romance in #PondPhuwin FILO AU on TikTok

Anjali Singh, Monstrous Puberties: Menstruation, School Discipline, and the Making of Girlhood in Tiger Stripes

Brianna Anderson, Spotlighting Your Research in YA Studies

Cara Scheibe, The Importance of Friendship in Young Adult Fiction

Carolina Celeste Granini, Hunger at the End of the World: Food, Ecology, and the Adolescent Body in *Exodus*

Celia M. Ayala Lugo, Juliet Takes a Breath: Puerto Rican Coming of Age Queer Worldmaking Through Prose and Graphic Narratives

Claudia Excaret Santos, Problematizing Contemporary YA Fantasy: Perspectives from the Global South

Dalia Mostafa Adulrahman, Not Child, Not Adult: Young Adult Literature and the Politics of Social Legibility

Dibya Singh, The Cost of Competition: Reframing Youth Vulnerability and Mental Health in Indian Streaming Narratives

Dimitris A. Goulis, Already Political: Adolescent Agency and the Political Imagination of YA Alternate History

Edcel J. Cintron Gonzalez, Juliet Takes a Breath: Puerto Rican Coming of Age Queer Worldmaking Through Prose and Graphic Narratives

Elizabeth Leach-Leung, From Submission to Publication in The International Journal of Young Adult Literature (IJYAL): Navigating Submissions and Peer Review as Author and/or Reviewer, and Sugar, Spice, and Everything YA Speculative Fiction

Emily Hamilton-Honey, Who Defines Young Adult Literature? An Historical Review

Emma K. McNamara, The Composite Protagonist

Emma Tueller Stone, Sugar, Spice, and Everything YA Speculative Fiction

Esther Omoye, Reading Young Adult Nigerian Literature: A Critical Reintroduction through the Study of Cyprian Ekwensi's The Rain Maker

Grammeni Eleni Pourni, Silenced Bodies, Hidden Narratives: Teenage Pregnancy and Abortion in Greek Young Adult Literature

Gustavo Velázquez Lazcano, Expanding the Notions of Identity and Nationhood: A Transborder Comparison of Chicanx Diaspora and Mexican YA Literature

Hannah Doermann, Defining YA, Defining Childhood: Black Girlhood in The Hate U Give and On the Come Up

Heather Dunham, Shaping Social Issues: How Young Adult Literature Reveals the Layers of Systemic Inequity and Possibility

Helen Penet, Where are the boys? Is Irish YA literature failing its young male readers?

Jade Dillon-Craig, Adolescent Girlhood and the Coming-Of-Age Conflict in Teen Films

Janieke Koning, Who Gets to Decide? Reading Mentors, Intergenerational Community, and the Construction of Youth with The Hunger Games saga

Jesus Montaño, Is Shakespeare YA?

Jia Zuo, The Success/Failure of a Girl Entrepreneur: Female Agency and Subjectivity within Neoliberal and Biopolitical Spaces

Kaitlyn Nye, Shaping Social Issues: How Young Adult Literature Reveals the Layers of Systemic Inequity and Possibility

Kajori Patra, Displaced Deaths and Religious Dialogues: YA Mutiny Fiction and Validity of British Archival Research

Lauren Vandever, Genre in Motion: Multimodal Narratives and YA Literary Innovation

Leah Phillips, Sugar, Spice, and Everything YA Speculative Fiction

LuElla D'Amico, Who Defines Young Adult Literature? An Historical Review

Luísa de Souza Mello, Growing Up in Ruins: Dystopian worlds as metaphors for adolescence in young adult literature

Melanie J. Fishbane, Who Defines Young Adult Literature? An Historical Review

Morgan King, Shaping Social Issues: How Young Adult Literature Reveals the Layers of Systemic Inequity and Possibility

Natalie Liptak, Understanding YA Adaptation Through Shakespeare Reimaginings in Chloe Gong's These Violent Delights and Foul Lady Fortune

Nithya Sivashankar, Shifting Margins: An Investigation of Peritexts Across Multiple Editions of YA Books

Patricia Kennon, From Submission to Publication in The International Journal of Young Adult Literature (IJYAL): Navigating Submissions and Peer Review as Author and/or Reviewer

Raven Lingat, Problematizing Contemporary YA Fantasy: Perspectives from the Global South

Rebekah Degener, Shifting Margins: An Investigation of Peritexts Across Multiple Editions of YA Books

Regan Postma-Montaño, Bodymindspirit, or the Negotiation of Spiritual Identity in Latina Youth Novels

Ritwika Roy, The First YA Novel in India, and Spotlighting Your Research in YA Studies

Rodrigo Zavala-Cintora, What it means to be an adolescent: Immigration and the Limits of Adolescence in Francisco Jiménez's The Circuit Series

Sara Kabir, Consuming Adolescence: Food, Survival, and YA Citizenship in Suzanne Collins' Panem

Sarah E. Jackson, Shifting Margins: An Investigation of Peritexts Across Multiple Editions of YA Books

Sarah Donovan, Beyond "Never Forget": Re-defining the "Young Adult" through the Lens of Genocide Literature

Shanjida Nowshin Chowdhury, The Selves Through the Screen: Social Anxiety and Digital Identities in Young Adult Literature

Sharon Crossett, Ways of being monstrously female in recent young adult fiction

Siddhi Jangid, Publishing, Academia, and the Production of Young Adult Literature in India

Suman Sigroha, Publishing, Academia, and the Production of Young Adult Literature in India

Supriya Baijal, Invented Histories of Europe: Counterfactual Britain and Ruritania in Joan Aiken and Violet Needham

Susan Driver, Writing, teaching and caring for peers: young adulthood as a process of mentoring

V Millen, Towards More Inclusive Storyworlds: Exploring the Possibilities of Race and Queerness in Graphic Novel Adaptations of Tamora Pierce’s Lady Knights