

From the Editors

Becoming an adult is never simple. Societal expectations can conflict with personal desires and goals. Obtaining protective coverage by imitating one's friends comes with a loss of personal identity, but nonconformity is frequently punished. Interacting with peers, progressing through rites of passage, and evaluating the society in which they will live have been rendered difficult and even impossible in the age of Covid.

For this issue, the YA speculative section was construed broadly to include traditional "hard sf," as well as speculative fiction, fantasy, horror, and magical realism. We expanded parameters that usually guide our selection process to account for the wide range of YA speculative fiction and to recognize aspects of this genre across diverse cultures and cultural constructions.

Anish Bhattacharyya's essay "The Construction of 'Limbo' as Resistance in Select Speculative YA Fiction: A Reading of Haruki Murakami's *Kafka on the Shore*" examines Murakami's juxtaposition of varied realities as a form of rebuke to authority. This essay explores the representation of education, rebellion, and student activism as one bridges the gap from adolescence to adulthood.

Gwen Rose brings together two works by Indigenous authors: Cherie Dimaline's *The Marrow Thieves* and D'Arcy McNickle's *Runner in the Sun*. The trials and tribulations their protagonists undergo in transitioning to manhood lead them to an appreciation of their environment and their place in their communities.

Ambelin Kwaymullina and Ezekiel Kwaymullina are a brother and sister team who are descended from the Palyku people of the Pilbara region of Western Australia. The central figures in their book, *Catching Teller Crow*, as described by Lucas

Mattila and Bettina Burger, are the aboriginal, female protagonists, whose current tragic circumstances have long shadows back to the repression by white supremacists in Australia. The book also makes clear the importance of family relationships in developing spiritual strength.

The repercussions of societal restrictions on who is accepted and who is considered "other" are also explored through the lens of race in a collection of essays by Meghan Gilbert-Hickey and Miranda A. Green-Barteet and reviewed by Juia Haba-Osca. While some of the essays confront shortcomings in the genre, the reviewer believes "all the essays point toward the potential of YA science fiction to both address and interrogate racial inequities in the West and beyond".

This genre has been useful for tracking and understanding cultural shifts; as our society becomes more accepting of queer and trans people, YA literature is increasingly responsible for offering representation to coming-of-age experiences of LGBTQIA+ folks. Arguing for the importance of transgender science fiction, Jaimee Cook examines April Daniels' *Dreadnought* for how it challenges contemporary anti-trans rhetoric.

YA speculative fiction routinely engages with many of life's most important questions: love, death, relationships, the future of the planet, identity, belonging, and our very future as human beings. Whether styled after the classical bildungsroman or otherwise, coming of age narratives in the speculative genre encourage readers to challenge existing power structures and advocate self-expression and self-confidence. They also return agency to those often divested of power by institutional and social structures that restrict freedoms based on age, and recenter the adolescent as a critical social figure.

The Editors
MOSF Journal of Science Fiction