

Call for Manuscript Submissions: The ALAN Review 42:2 (Winter 2015)

Race Matters: The Presence and Representation of Authors and Characters of Color in YA Literature

Statistics suggest that, by 2019, approximately 49% of students enrolled in U.S. public schools will be Latina/o, Black, Asian/Pacific Island, or American Indian (Hussar & Bailey, 2011). However, the field has been increasingly criticized for not reflecting these demographics in the literature published for young adult readers. For readers of color, this can result in a sense of disconnect between lived reality and what is described on the page. For readers from the dominant culture, this can result in a limited perception of reality and affirmation of a singular way of knowing and doing and being. For all readers, exposure to a variety of ethnically unfamiliar literature can encourage critical reading of text and world, recognition of the limitations of depending upon mainstream depictions of people and their experiences, and the building of background knowledge and expansion of worldview.

In this issue, we invite you to share your experiences, challenges, hesitations, and successes in using or promoting young adult literature that features characters and/or authors of color. Invite us into your classrooms, libraries, and school communities to better understand the potential value and necessity of broadening the texts we use to capture the imaginations of all readers.

Consider the experiences of Walter Dean Myers: “All the authors I studied, all the historical figures, with the exception of George Washington Carver, and all those figures I looked upon as having importance were white men. I didn't mind that they were men, or even white men. What I did mind was that being white seemed to play so important a part in the assigning of values” (*Bad Boy: A Memoir*). And ponder Jacqueline Woodson's words, “Someday somebody's going to come along and knock this old fence down” (*The Other Side*). What have you done (or might you do) to give that fence a nudge?

As always, we also welcome submissions focused on any aspect of young adult literature not directly connected to this theme. All submissions may be sent to alan-review@uconn.edu prior to **July 1, 2014**. Please see the ALAN website (<http://www.alan-ya.org/page/alan-review-author-guidelines>) for submission guidelines.