

as a relativist, neither idealist nor realist, “for to reduce the world into a set of formulae is to let it slip through our fingers in a fine dust”, (Eliot, 2014, p. 192) his words recall a well-known line in *The Waste Land*.

Barry Spurr’s chapter on Eliot’s Christianity, although marooned at the back of the book, sheds an interesting light on the literary works. He clarifies what Eliot’s Anglo-Catholic Anglicanism was, and dispels the notion of a sudden conversion, holding that “The continuities in his oeuvre [. . .] are more remarkable than any striking change [. . .] as the result of a mid-career renunciation”: all his major poems are a sort of journey or quest. Eliot himself said that he was of “a Catholic cast of mind, a Calvinistic heritage, and a Puritanical temperament” (Eliot, 1957, p. 209). Professor Spurr expatiates on what Eliot’s faith entailed – a very “Catholic” practice, a belief in original sin, a faith in the Incarnation and also in the role of the Virgin Mary – and shows how it manifested itself in his poetry, in particular *Ash Wednesday* and the *Four Quartets*, and in his plays.

Compared to some other Cambridge Companions, this is a fairly slim volume for the price: it would have been nice to have included some other aspects, for example, the American-ness of Eliot – the 1994 *Companion*, I notice, had a chapter on Eliot as a product of America, also one on Eliot’s impact on Anglo-American poetry and others of interest. Another additional chapter could have been on the influence of *il miglior fabbro* himself, Ezra Pound, particularly in creating *The Waste Land*; and of several French poets, such as Laforgue, Gautier and others. Eliot’s light verse, and perhaps even his “improper” verse, as Faber coyly calls it in the new collected edition, also deserve scrutiny: as W. H. Auden wrote, “Light verse can be serious”, and takes both skill and the right circumstances to do well: “For poetry which is at the same time light and adult can only be written in a society which is both integrated and free” (Auden, 1937). Perhaps the ideal thing would be to have both volumes – libraries should not discard the 1994 *Companion* if they buy this one, which they should if they want to remain up to date with Eliot studies (without investing in a whole new library of them!).

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Young Adult Literature: From Romance to Realism (3rd edition)

Michael Cart

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The first edition of Michael Cart’s *From Romance to Realism: 50 Years of Growth and Change in Young Adult Literature* was published in 1996. A lot has changed since then. The late 1990s saw the release of the first *Harry Potter* titles. *Twilight* and *The Hunger Games* were still in the distant future. The promise (or threat) of digital books and their impact on the printed page had not yet come to pass. LGBT characters and diverse protagonists with multicultural perspectives were still woefully underrepresented. The second edition, called *Young Adult Literature: From Romance to Realism* (2010), addressed many of these issues but, with continued commercial success, the quantity and scope of young adult literature has continued to evolve rapidly, sometimes blurring the lines between genres and audience. In this third edition of the text, larger and longer than the previous edition, Cart demonstrates his expertise in the field as he addresses all of the new trends and titles that have emerged in recent years.

The book is split into two parts, That Was Then and This Is Now. Readers of the previous edition will recognize the chapter headings and content in the That Was Then section as largely unchanged. Those new to the book will discover a clear chronology and contextual explanation of the development of young adult literature as a unique literary category from the 1960s through

the late 1990s. Milestone titles such as S. E. Hinton's *The Outsiders* and Robert Cormier's *The Chocolate War* paved the way for the propagation of titles we see today. Part 2, *This Is Now*, starts with the new millennia, although considering that we are now 17 years past that event, some of the information in this section could justifiably be moved into the section chronicling the past. Part 2 discusses the recent emergence and success of various young adult literature forms including the graphic novel, grittier realistic fiction, dystopian fiction and even steampunk.

Throughout the book, Cart does an excellent job of not only explaining trends but also identifying the factors driving them, such as a plethora of new awards for different young adult genres. One of the most interesting (although upon reflection not surprising) threads woven throughout the text is the idea that young adult literature has been driven not by literary quality or merit, but by profitability. As young adults began to spend money of their own, publishers realized that they held enormous consumer potential. With the huge financial success of *Harry Potter* and the subsequent films and merchandise tie-ins, publishers began looking for the next big hit. The following success of *Twilight*, *The Hunger Games* and the *Divergent* series reinforced this business model. Cart explains that movie tie-ins are now practically essential, undermining the ability of many new writers to find publishing opportunities and potentially threatening the diversity of genres if selections are based solely on what might translate to the big screen. Cart also examines the confusing and subjective definition of "young adult" and new phenomena such as the "new adult" reader (readers aged 18-25). Publishers may choose to market a title under different categories in an effort maximize sales and readers may feel more comfortable exploring reading selections outside of their age range than in the past.

Cart draws heavily on his own experiences, bringing humor and warmth to what, in the

wrong hands, has the potential to be a stilted chronology. That said, occasionally what reads as the author's personal beliefs are presented as interchangeable with fact, specifically when discussing ideas of intellectual freedom and the freedom of information for young readers. To many librarians, this is readily defensible as those beliefs are in accordance with the values presented by the American Library Association. However, some readers (specifically non-librarians) may wish for a stronger line between scholarship and personal reflection. As evidenced by the myriad challenges to young adult literature, we may still have a long road ahead before everyone is on the same page about teens and their right to read as they choose.

The arena of young adult literature and all of the overlapping crossover genres have evolved rapidly in recent years, to the extent that it would be impossible to keep up with all the new titles and categories. This book is remarkably successful at providing a context and understanding of the trends and, while it does offer specific examples of titles that fit into discussed categories, it gives the reader the tools to assess young adult literature on their own rather than offering an annotated bibliography. Cart also acknowledges that, while the diversity of young adult offerings has expanded, there continues to be room for improvement in the areas of minority representation, both in the characters and in the publishing field itself. Cart's respect, knowledge and love for young adult literature is palpable, making for an engaging and accessible reading experience. *Young Adult Literature: From Romance to Realism* should be an essential purchase for any academic or library program dealing with the young adult literary canon.

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