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### **Adolescence and Adolescents: Defining the Culture of Youth**

How we conceive of adolescence influences our perception of adolescents. Through a biological lens, we might envision adolescence as an inevitable stage of life in which raging hormones determine behavior. Through a coming of age lens, adolescence might be defined by individual self-discovery and attainment of adult norms. Through a sociocultural lens, adolescence might be seen as a socially mediated practice created and shifted by societal expectations and influences. Taken together, these perspectives offer sophisticated and diverse means of defining the culture of youth.

In this issue, we invite you to consider how young adult titles (and those who write, teach, and promote them) might offer, challenge, confirm, or critique conceptions of adolescents or adolescence. How do authors present the young people they describe? How do readers respond to these representations? How do educators envision the young people in their care—and how does this vision influence how they care for them? How might stories help readers navigate adolescence (as defined through any lens) and work through the complexity expressed by David Levithan and John Green: “My face seems too square and my eyes too big, like I'm perpetually surprised, but there's nothing wrong with me that I can fix” (*Will Grayson, Will Grayson*)?

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](mailto:alan-review@uconn.edu) prior to **July 1, 2015**. Please see the ALAN website (<http://www.alan-ya.org/page/alan-review-author-guidelines>) for submission guidelines.