

Study and Scrutiny: Research on Young Adult Literature

CRAG HILL, LEILYA PITRE, STEVE BICKMORE, AND ANTHONY KUNKEL

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the fourth issue of *Study and Scrutiny: Research on Young Adult Literature*. This issue opens with a critical study that draws on Foucault's examination of de Certeau's "The Gaze Nicholas of Cusa" as a disciplinary mechanism, as well as de Certeau's discussion of how people use tactics to resist oppressive power systems. In this article, Sean Connor advocates reading "The Gaze" in young adult dystopian fiction. To illustrate the complex readings that doing so makes possible, Connor examines three young adult dystopic novels, and then demonstrates how they depict adolescents as having varying degrees of agency to resist the gaze. Connor concludes his study with a discussion on the implications for teachers and students of reading "The Gaze" in young adult literature.

Our second study is an empirical study by Louise Freeman, Martha S. Guarisco, and Celine Brooks. The study tested sixth graders for empathy and theory of mind before and after an academic unit on either *Wonder* or *The Crossover*. The authors noted that with *Wonder* there was an improvement with perspective-taking while with the students who read *The Crossover* there was an increased concern for others. Faux pas detection increased in both genders with *Wonder* and in girls with *The Crossover*. Students who read *The Crossover* in print showed improved understanding of facial expressions, while students who used iPads declined in understanding of facial expressions. Young adult fiction is associated with improved social cognitive skills the authors argue, but effects depend on gender and reading format, as well as on the choice of the individual book.

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issue.

As usual, we invite teachers, librarians, graduate students, and educators who would like to review for us in the future. We invite reviewers who are passionate about YA literature and are able to share their knowledge and expertise to improve *Study & Scrutiny* as well as to spread the word about the journal. Please email Leilya Pitre (Leilya.Pitre@selu.edu), and we will gladly include your name and contact information in our database of reviewers.

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