

Contemporary Dystopian Fiction for Young Adults: Brave New Teenagers (Children's Literature and Culture)



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Winner of the Children's Literature Association Edited Book Award

From the jaded, wired teenagers of M.T. Anderson's Feed to the spirited young rebels of Suzanne Collins' The Hunger Games trilogy, the protagonists of Young Adult dystopias are introducing a new generation of readers to the pleasures and challenges of dystopian imaginings. As the dark universes of YA dystopias continue to flood the market, Contemporary Dystopian Fiction for Young Adults: Brave New Teenagers offers a critical evaluation of the literary and political potentials of this widespread publishing phenomenon. With its capacity to frighten and warn, dystopian writing powerfully engages with our pressing global concerns: liberty and self-determination, environmental destruction and looming catastrophe, questions of identity and justice, and the increasingly fragile boundaries between technology and the self. When directed at young readers, these dystopian warnings are distilled into exciting adventures with gripping plots and accessible messages that may have the potential to motivate a generation on the cusp of adulthood. This collection enacts a lively debate about the goals and efficacy of YA dystopias, with three major areas of contention: do these texts reinscribe an old didacticism or offer an exciting new frontier in children's literature? Do their political critiques represent conservative or radical ideologies? And finally, are these novels high-minded attempts to educate the young or simply bids to cash in on a formula for commercial success? This collection represents a prismatic and evolving understanding of the genre, illuminating its relevance to children's literature and our wider culture.

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