



Podcasting and YA Lit: Critique and Conversation Beyond Bookclub

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Colorado Teen Literature Conference
April 13, 2019

Land Acknowledgment

We are currently on land traditionally belonging to Cheyenne, Ute, and Lakota indigenous peoples.

Session Outline

<http://bit.ly/YABeyondBookclub>

- Origin Story
- Reading Practices
- What is Intersectionality?
- Race
- Class
- Gender
- Sexuality
- Ability & Illness
- Colonialism
- Other Reader Podcasts
- People to Support & Follow
- Resources
- Q&A. Book Recs!

Origin Story

- Library meet cute
- YA Fantasy books
- Creating a podcast
 - [JK, It's Magic](#)





Do you typically read in isolation or in community? Why?

What makes a good (or bad) book discussion?

Our Reading Practices

“Hello and welcome to JK, It’s Magic, a bi-weekly podcast in which two bookish besties read YA fantasy through a critical lens. Why? Because critique is our fangirl love language. And because talking about books is pretty magical.”



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Our Reading Practices...in Practice

- Reading generously
- Reading outside of what we know, which requires making a concerted effort to diversify our TBR
- Choosing [#ownvoices](#) books when possible
- Citing our sources
- Keeping intersectionality in mind



What is Intersectionality?

- Women of Color Feminisms (e.g., Gloria Anzaldúa, bell hooks, Audre Lorde, Cherríe Moraga, the Combahee River Collective, and many more) have been theorizing for decades (with relatively little visibility or credit) about the confluences and combinations of identities and how those inform the ways we encounter each other and the world.
 - These identities are multiple, simultaneous, shifting, and even conflicting
 - See also [Feminist Standpoint Epistemology](#)
- The term “intersectionality” was coined by legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989 and has come to dominate social justice conversations that examine various identities at once (e.g., race & class, race & gender, ability & race, etc.). It is not the only theory/approach (see also, [Jasbir Puar’s “assemblage”](#))

Race

2018

- African/African American:
 - By: 5.86%
 - About: 11.69%
- American Indian/First Nations:
 - By: 0.66%
 - About: 0.99%

Children's Books By and About People of Color and First/Native Nations Received by the CCBC*--US Publishers Only 2015 -

Last Updated: March 8, 2019

Year	Number of Books Received at CCBC from US Pubs	African / African Americans		American Indians / First Nations		Asian Pacifics/ Asian Pacific Americans		Latinx	
		By	About	By	About	By	About	By	About
2018	3,308	194	387	22	33	298	280	186	239
2017	3,500	126	334	18	44	260	286	109	205
2016	3,200	92	267	8	35	195	225	95	157
2015	3,200	106	244	9	28	156	107	56	79

Race

2018

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 - By: 9%
 - About: 8.46%
- Latinx:
 - By: 5.62%
 - About: 7.22%

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Talking About Race

- First, check your positionality and privilege. Admit what you don't know. Then, consider who is writing the story.
- How are characters racialized in the text? Is the (false) “neutral” of white assumed? How much representation is there?
- Does racialization coincide with cultural, religious, or linguistic elements?
- How are characters (of same or different races) interacting with each other? Do you notice any echoes of what happens in our empirical reality?
- What other identities come to bare on race in the story? (intersectionality)



Close Reading: Race in *Children of Blood and Bone* by Tomi Adeyemi

“Zélie’s pain falls through the air like rain.

It sinks into my skin.

My chest heaves with her sobs. My heart rips with her anguish.

And all the while I feel a terror unlike anything I’ve ever known . It crushes my soul.

It destroys all will to live.

This can’t be the life Father built. But the longer her pain grips me, the more I realize: this fear is always there.

‘If your guards were here, everything would be just as broken, just as hopeless. There’s no living under their tyranny. Our only salvation is power.’

As soon as the words leave her mouth, Zélie’s sob quiet. It’s like she remembered a deeper truth. A way to escape the pain.

‘Your people, your guards — they’re nothing more than killers, rapists, and thieves. The only difference between them and criminals is the uniforms they wear.’

She pulls herself to her feet and palms the tears from her eyes.

‘Fool yourself all you want, little prince, but don’t feign innocence with me. I won’t let your father get away with what he’s done. I won’t let your ignorance silence my pain.’

With that, she disappears. Her quiet footsteps fade into the silence.

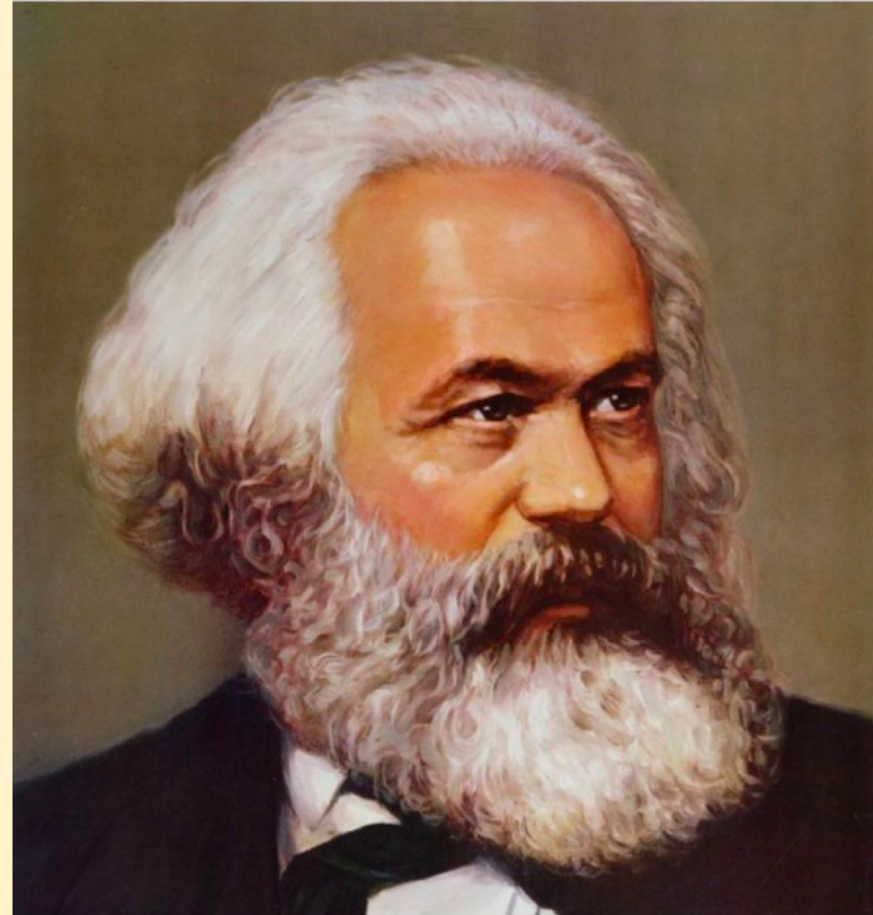
In that moment I realize how wrong I’ve truly been.

It doesn’t matter if I’m in her head. I’ll never understand all her pain.’

When your students complain that your class is a struggle but all of history is class struggle

Talking About Class

- Is there wealth? How is it distributed?
- How is wealth connected to (political) power? (e.g., monarchies & princess stories)
- How are the different classes portrayed? (watch out for stereotypes)
- What spaces do characters from different classes inhabit? (e.g., housing & neighborhood differences)
- How do other identities factor in? (intersectionality)

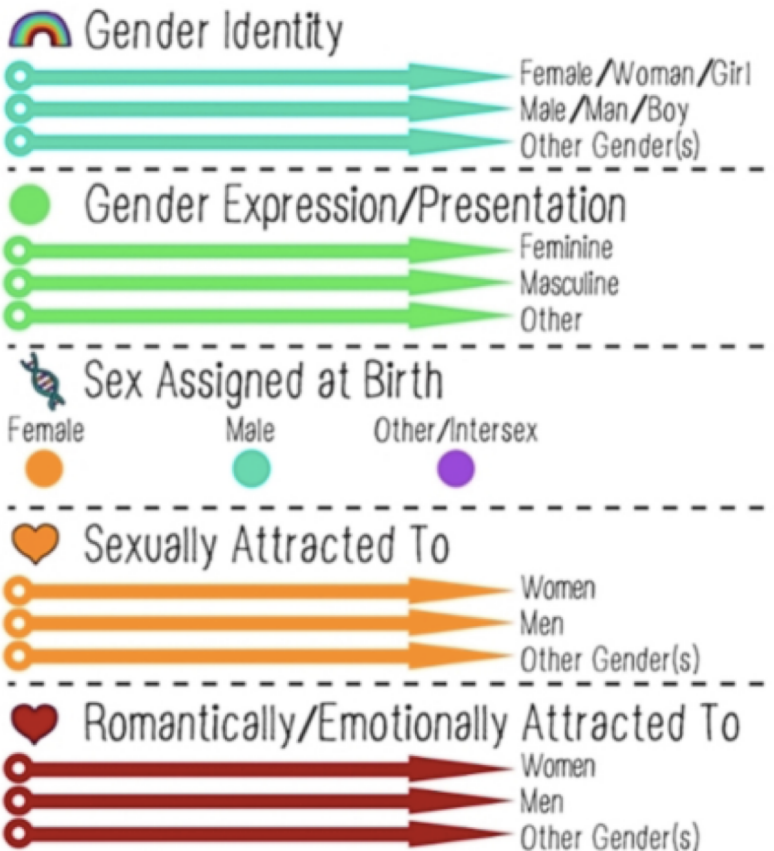


Grishaverse



The Gender Unicorn

Graphic by:
TSER
Trans Student Educational Resources



To learn more, go to:
www.transstudent.org/gender

Design by Landyn Pan

Talking About Gender

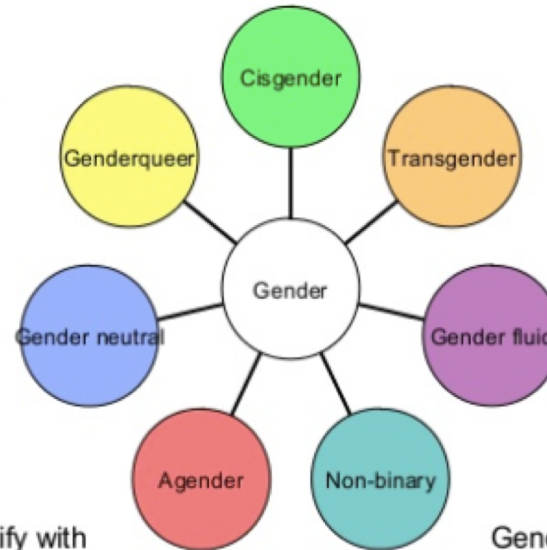
- [Gender as a social construct](#)
- Which genders are represented and how are they represented? (gender binary or a spectrum?)
- How does gender affect the characters' arcs? Does gender determine social role?
- Is cisnormativity assumed?
- How do different genders interact? (e.g., female friendships vs. competition)
- How do other identities factor in? (intersectionality)

Gender terms

Gender identity, gender expression and sex match up

Umbrella term to describe non-normative genders like agender/gender fluid etc

Umbrella term-where sex, gender expression and gender identity do not match up



Identities not easily categorized as masculine or feminine. Often a blend of the two.

Gender identity changes or fluctuates

Do not identify with a gender

Gender outside the male/female binary

Talking About Sexuality

- Do characters feel sexually or romantically attracted to others (allosexuality)? Are characters on the [asexuality spectrum](#)?
- What sexualities are represented? How do characters express these sexualities? Which are accepted and which aren't?
- Are relationships monogamous? Polyamorous?
- How do other identities factor in? (intersectionality)

Other considerations:

- Representation vs Queerbaiting
- Side characters vs. main characters

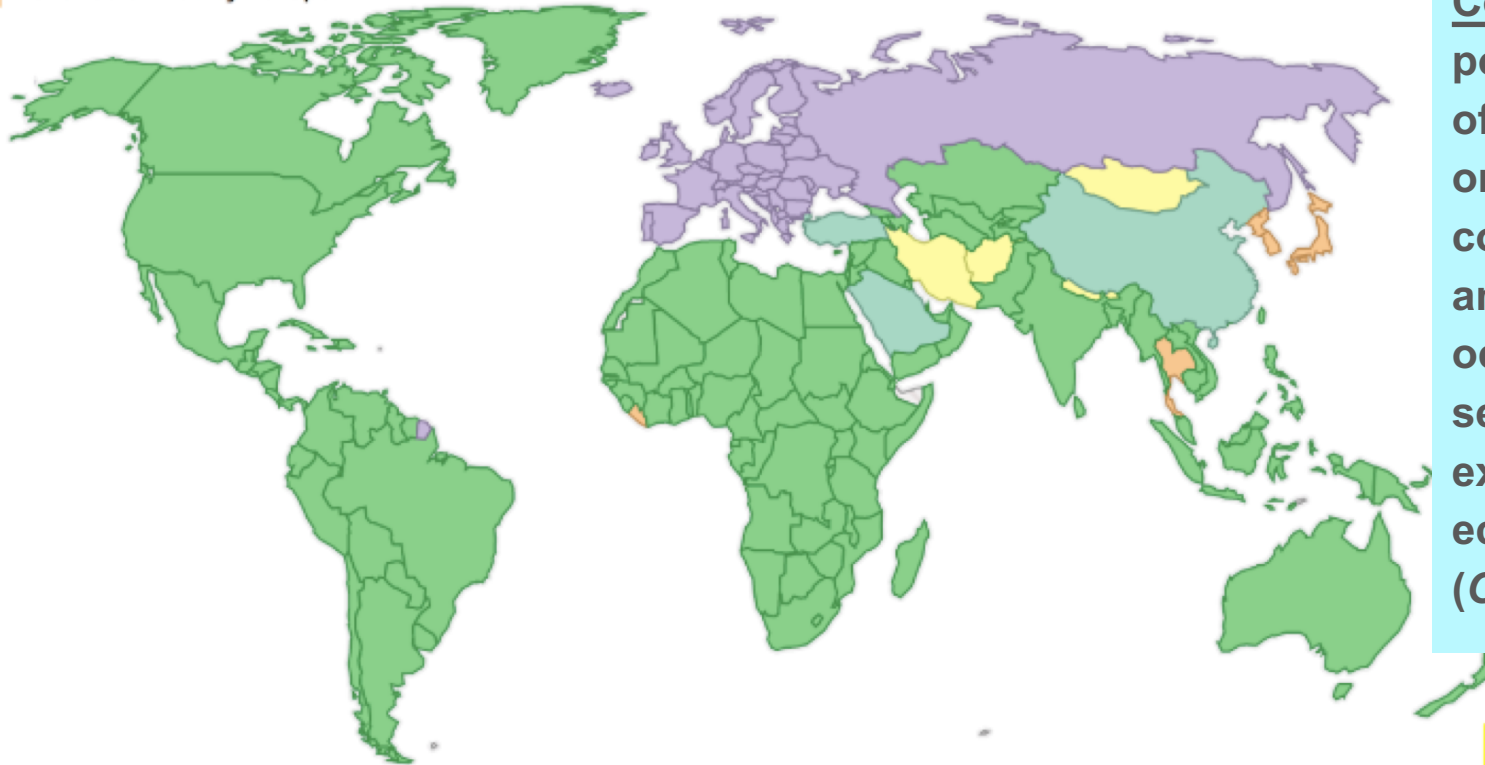
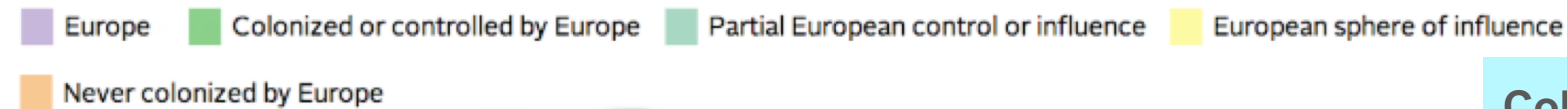


Talking About Ability & Illness

- Are mental and physical wellness assumed? (This is often the default)
- Is the disability/illness visible or invisible?
- How is mental health portrayed? Are any characters neurodivergent?
- How do other identities factor in? (intersectionality)
- Ableism and everyday language



Countries that have been under European control

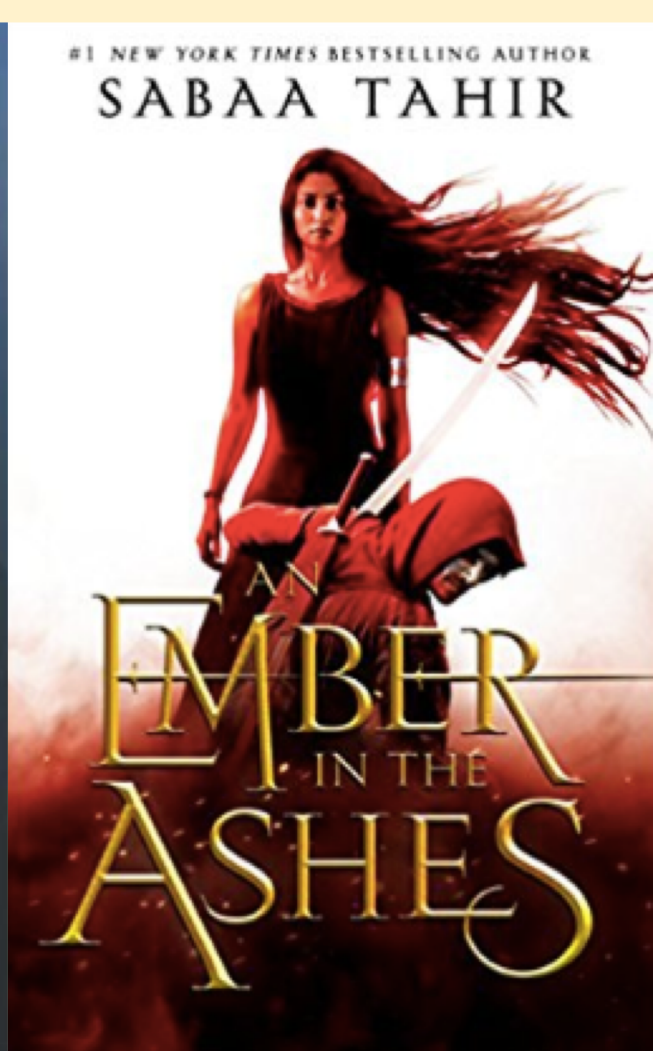
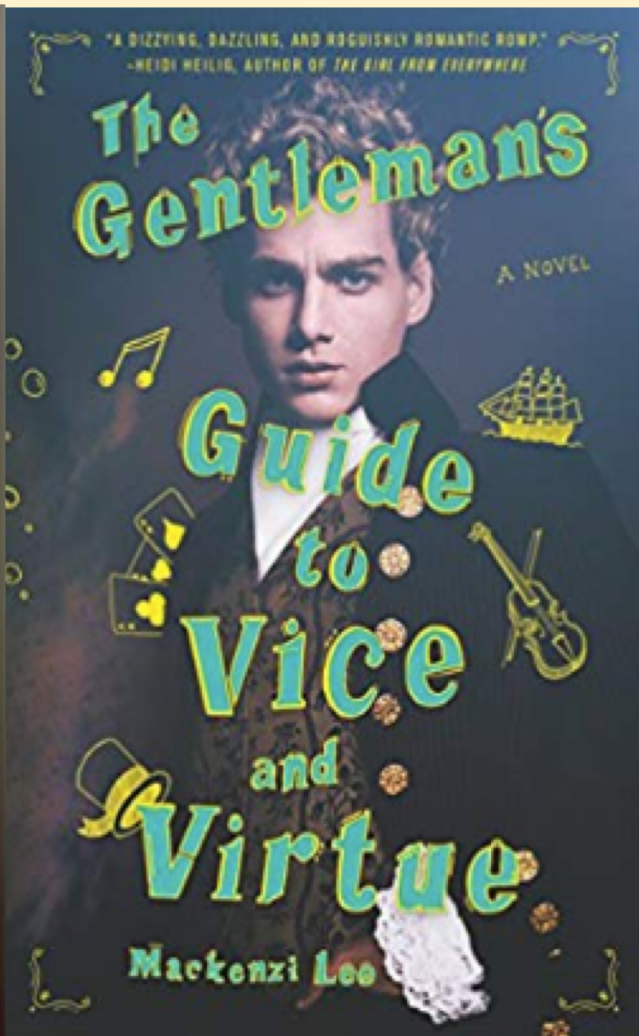


Colonialism: The policy or practice of acquiring full or partial political control over another country, occupying it with settlers, and exploiting it economically. (OED)

Talking About Colonialism

- Are the inhabitants of the land indigenous? Or was there a history of empire or colonial expansion? How do the various cultures interact with one another (e.g., power dynamics)?
- What are the mechanisms by which colonial rule is expanded or enforced? (religious conversion, 'education', violence, etc.) What are the consequences?





Some People to Support & Follow

- [Rachel Cargle](#)
- [Shishi Rose](#)
- [Erika Hart](#)
- [Erica Smith](#)
- [No White Saviors](#)
- [Code Switch](#)
- [Good Ancestor Podcast & Layla Saad](#)
- [Leesa Renee Hall](#)
- [Guerrilla Feminist](#)
- [Pod Save the People](#)
- [Reni Eddo-Lodge](#)
- [Wear Your Voice](#)
- [Ta-Nehisi Coates](#)





Resources

- [Cooperative Children's Book Center](#)
- [Native Land](#)
- [Pexels](#) - photos

Other Reader Podcasts

- [Witch, Please](#)
- [88 Cups of Tea](#)
- [First Draft Pod](#)
- [Hazel & Katniss & Harry & Starr](#)

Thank you!

Does anyone have any questions or book recommendations?

Want to keep in touch?



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