Event Title: Young Adult Literature: The Essentials

Event Category: Children’s and Young Adult Literature

Event Description: Many university students are interested in writing YA literature, but many university instructors are unfamiliar with the field, its history, and how to adapt their pedagogy for such a dynamic, experimental, and nuanced genre. By discussing the genre traits of YA literature (including graphic novels) and how to write and teach it, this session aims to deliver a crash course in YA literature that will help creative writing teachers support students who want to write YA.

Event Moderator
Spencer Hyde has published two YA novels. His stories have appeared in *Glimmer Train, Image, Michigan Quarterly Review*, and elsewhere. He teaches creative writing and literature at Brigham Young University.

Event Participants

Chris Crowe is the author of 12 books, including fiction and nonfiction for young adults. Two of his best-known books are *Mississippi Trial, 1955* and *Getting Away with Murder: The True Story of the Emmett Till Case*. A past president of the Assembly on Literature for Adolescents of the NCTE (ALAN), he has taught university courses in YA literature and creative writing since 1989.

Ann Dee Ellis is the author of three young adult novels, *This is What I Did:, Everything is Fine, The End or Something Like That* and two middle grade novels: *You May Already be a Winner* and *The War with Grandma*. Her sixth untitled novel is slated to come out in 2025 with Peachtree Publishing. Her novels have been featured on multiple lists and received starred reviews. She has taught creative writing at Brigham Young University since 2003.

Sharlene Swan is a student at Brigham Young University, pursuing a BFA in Illustration and a minor in Creative Writing. Her studies explore how art, writing, music, and web design can be combined to create new and engaging...
stories. Her comic, *American Cryptid Road Trip*, will be available to read online in late 2024.

**Event Agenda**
Spencer Hyde will begin the event by introducing the panelists. After the introductions, each of the three panelists will deliver a 15-minute presentation. After the presentations, the panelists will discuss current trends and controversial issues in YA literature for 10-15 minutes. The final 15 minutes will be devoted to Q&A between the panelists and the audience,

**Panelist Presentations**

**Chris Crowe: What is Young Adult Literature—and What’s Not?**
Since its unofficial origin in 1967 with the publication of The Outsiders, YA literature has evolved in a myriad of interesting ways. This presentation will discuss genre traits of contemporary YA fiction and nonfiction by citing innovative texts that have stretched the boundaries of the field.

**Ann Dee Ellis: Writing the Young Adult Novel**
Writing for young people invites surprising challenges for fiction writers: the audience is eager, discerning, and in many ways more demanding than adult readers—no one is better at calling out fakes than teenagers. This presentation will explore the differences between middle grade and young adult novels, discuss how to craft an authentic voice for young readers, and give practical writing exercises and assignments for the classroom.

**Sharlene Swan: Reading Pictures: Everything You Need to Know about YA Graphic Novels**
With the internet providing more content than they could dream of reading, teenagers are on the hunt for stories that engage them in new and interesting ways. This presentation will discuss graphic novels as an emerging medium, their potential as champions of diverse voices, and how to engage student writers in a comic-based curriculum.