

SASQUAN YA COMMITTEE REPORT

C.3.2 YA Hugo Committee

At Loncon 3, Katie Rask was appointed chair of the reconstituted committee for 2014–2015, whose members are Jodie Baker, Adam Beaton, Warren Buff, Johnny Carruthers, Aurora Celeste, Peter De Weerd, Martin Easterbrook, Chris Garcia, Helen Gbala, Tim Illingworth, Dina Krause, Laura Lamont, Farah Mendelsohn, Sue “Twilight” Mohn, Christine Rake, Kate Secor, Marguerite Smith, Kevin Standlee, Adam Tesh, Tehani Wessely, Clark B. Wierda, and Lew Wolkoff.

The Committee was (re)formed at Loncon 2014 in order to consider the issues surrounding a possible Young Adult Hugo. Such an award was first proposed at Chicon 1991 and in the 24 intervening years of debate, several proposals have been nixed, and discussions have at times been contentious. This Committee was therefore formed to approach and research the issue in a (somewhat) systematic manner, and to report its research to the Business Meeting.

Findings: The Committee looked into comparable awards, addressed past debates at Business Meetings, and considered the present Hugo Awards. Details of this work can be found in the Exhibits to this report, entitled ‘Common Concerns Expressed at the WSFS BM’, ‘Definitions of YA,’ and ‘The Hugo vs. The Newbery.’

The Committee finds that requests for an award recognizing teen literature (or YA) are indeed reasonable: teen lit, despite its popularity and quality, is not well represented by the current Hugos; the majority of YA awards are given by juries; the Worldcon community of teens, adults, and professionals would make the award unusual; the long-lasting demand for such an award is attested by repeated debates during almost a quarter-century of Business Meetings.

Under the existing methodology of the Hugo Awards, however, a separate category for YA fiction is not practical. That is, the Hugo fiction categories are defined by word count, not by age categories. We suggest instead the creation of a Campbell-like award, since the Campbell addresses authors and thereby functions outside the Hugo methodology.

Motion: The Committee requests that the Business Meeting reform the Committee for another year (with the addition of new members). The new version of the Committee will focus specifically on the issues surrounding the creation of a Campbell-like YA/teen lit award (possible topics of discussion presented in Exhibit 4), with the results presented at next year's Business Meeting.

EXHIBIT 1: COMMON CONCERNS EXPRESSED AT THE WSFS BM

1. Isn't YA already eligible?: YA works have already won Hugo Awards, so why is there a need for a separate category? The most recent win was 2001, unless you don't consider the Harry Potter books to be YA.

Most readers of YA/teen lit do not consider Harry Potter or Neil Gaiman books to be representative of the field. Harry Potter was a worldwide phenomenon well-known to the general population, while Neil Gaiman is a much-beloved member of this community who (nearly) always receives a nomination and a win for his books. In other words, HP and The Graveyard Book's Hugo wins do not make a solid case for the presence of YA on the Hugo Ballot, as they are exceptional cases not representative of any field, either YA or adult.

YA/teen lit is a major component of publishing these days, and a great deal of it is speculative fiction. It is often stated at the Business Meetings that if a YA book is worthy of a Hugo nomination, it will be nominated and receive one. In the 64 years the Hugos have existed, five books that fall within YA have been nominated for Best Novel. As a comparison, if one looks to the prestigious Newbery Award from the American Library Association, a number of speculative fiction titles either won the award or were specially designated an 'Honoree.' In the time that the Hugo awards have nominated five YA works for Best Novel, thirty-five YA works have been honored with the Newbery. Nine of those works

have won the Newbery Medal. Three of the five works nominated for Best Novel have won the Hugo.

First, the Newbery list shows that there are clearly quality, award-winning works of speculative fiction being written for YA audiences. Second, the Hugos, particularly when compared to the Newberys, have done a poor job of recognizing those works. (The details of this comparison, with titles, can be found in Exhibit 3).

1. The slippery slope: Hugo Award “story” categories are currently for works of science fiction and fantasy, delimited by length. A YA-work Hugo would effectively be trying to divide “science fiction and fantasy” into sub-genres. If you create a YA-work Hugo, why shouldn’t we replace Best Novel with “Best Science Fiction Novel,” “Best Fantasy Novel,” “Best Alternative History Novel,” “Best Military SF Novel,” and so on.

YA and teen lit is usually not described as a ‘genre’ or a ‘subgenre’. In fact, just as with ‘adult lit’, it encompasses all possible genres, including fantasy, science fiction, military SF, alternate history, paranormal romance, urban fantasy, etc. Instead, it is usually considered an age category. Academics and professionals have noted certain themes common to YA/teen lit (e.g., the coming of age story), but those themes are by no means confined to that age category. Tracy van Straaten, VP at Scholastic, tells Wire.com, “Something people tend to forget is that YA is a category not a genre, and within it is every possible genre: fantasy, sci-fi, contemporary, non-fiction.”

A YA/teen lit award would therefore not be comparable to a Hugo award divided into ‘subgenres.’ This problem can be further avoided through the creation of a Campbell-like award.

1. Voter competency: Most of the people who cast Hugo Award ballots are likely to not be the target audience for YA works. Would this award be coached as “Best Work of YA Fiction that Adults Like”?
 - There are many Worldcon members who are well-versed in YA/teen lit, a reality borne out by the growing popularity of the YA track. Several recent Worldcons have had a specifically designated paneling track on YA that

appeals to teens, adult readers, and professionals. Loncon 2014 had an especially popular track, with 36 YA literature panels, two talks, and one workshop. There were 158 panel participants; teens, authors of YA/teen lit, publishers, and other professionals were well-represented. Moreover, 305 program participants expressed an interest in YA literature on their program surveys. The panels usually occurred in rooms with 100–200 person occupancies, with many of the panels standing-room-only or people turned away because of capacity issues. In other words, a large number of Worldcon attendees have knowledge of this category and fandom, although those attendees typically do not come to the Business Meeting. (Numbers provided by Loncon Programming.)

- For the 2014 Hugo Awards, 3,587 ballots were received for the final vote. The Campbell Award received 1,770 votes. The category of Best Fan Writer received 1,372 votes, while Best Fancast received 1,177 (This suggests that the voting competency level required for a teen-lit related award should be reflected in at least the same number of votes as Best Fancast. In other words, a YA award needs the participation of 30% of the voting participants to be equivalent with Best Fancast, or 50% to be equivalent with the Campbell. (<http://www.thehugoawards.org/content/pdf/2014HugoStatistics.pdf>)
- Many teen-lit/YA awards are juried by adults, not voted on by teens. Such adult-juried awards include the Newbery, the YALSA awards, the Walter Dean Myers Award, the Golden Duck Awards, etc. A fan award given by Worldcon attendees would include both adults AND teens, as well as professional writers, publishers, and librarians. In this respect, such an award would represent a unique voting population.

EXHIBIT 2: HOW IS TEEN AND YA LIT USUALLY DEFINED?

Awards and Organizations:

ALSC Notable Children's Books:

“Younger Readers – Preschool–grade 2 (age 7), including easy-to-read books

Middle Readers – Grades 3–5, ages 8–10

Older Readers – Grades 6–8, ages 11–14

All Ages – Has appeal and interest for children in all of the above ages ranges”
(<http://www.ala.org/alsc/aboutalsc/alscfaqs>)

The Newbery Medal (ALSC)

“A “contribution to American literature for children” shall be a book for which children are an intended potential audience. The book displays respect for children’s understandings, abilities, and appreciations. Children are defined as persons of ages up to and including fourteen, and books for this entire age range are to be considered.”

(<http://www.ala.org/alsc/awardsgrants/bookmedia/newberymedal/newberyterms/newberyterms>)

YALSA (Young Adult Library Services Association):

Refers to books for “teens, aged 12–18” and “materials of interest to adolescents”

(<http://www.ala.org/yalsa/>)

Margaret A. Edwards Award (YALSA):

No definition of young adult literature

(<http://www.ala.org/yalsa/bookawards/booklists/members>)

The Michael L. Printz Award (YALSA):

No definition of young adult literature in award description

(<http://www.ala.org/yalsa/bookawards/booklists/members>)

“Young adult meant persons ages twelve through eighteen; and a young adult book meant a book published expressly for that readership. Thus, books published for adults – even though they might find a young adult audience – would not be eligible. The reasoning? This was to be an award for the best young adult book, not the best book for young adults.” [Cart 2010, 69–70 (see below)]

Riverby Awards (John Burroughs Association):

No apparent definition of “young readers” on site

(<http://johnburroughsassociation.org/index.php/literary-awards>)

Dolly Gray Award for Children's Literature in Developmental Disabilities (Council for Exceptional Children):

"1. Children's books that include a main or supporting character with developmental disabilities. Developmental Disability is defined as follows: This condition occurs before a person is 22 years of age and limits him/her in at least three of seven major life activities (e.g., receptive and expressive language, self-care, and economic self-sufficiency)..."

"2. For the picture book award, the book must be recognized as a picture book written for children in story format..."

"3. For the chapter book award, the book must be recognized as a fictional chapter book (generally a novel divided into chapters) written for children or young adults in story format. This includes easy readers, juvenile fiction, and young adult fiction..."

(<http://daddcec.org/ArticleDetails/tabid/76/ArticleID/512/Dolly-Gray-Award-Information-and-Procedures.aspx>)

Phoenix Award (Children's Literature Association):

No apparent definition of children's literature on site

(<http://www.childlitassn.org/phoenix-award>)

Americas Award (Consortium of Latin American Studies Programs):

"The title may be for primary or secondary reading levels."

(http://claspprograms.org/uploads/Americas_Guidelines2011-1320961588.pdf)

Orbis Pictus (National Council of Teachers of English):

"each nomination should be useful in classroom teaching grades K-8"

(<http://www.ncte.org/awards/orbispictus>)

National Book Award (National Book Foundation):

No apparent definition of “Young People’s Lit” on site

(<http://www.nationalbook.org/nbaentry.html#.VCHzci5dUkg>)

The Andre Norton Award (SFWA)

No apparent definition of “young adult or middle grade work”

(<http://www.sfwaworld.com/awards/the-andre-norton-award/>)

The Sunburst Award for Excellence in Canadian Literature of the Fantastic
(Sunburst Award Society)

No apparent definition of “young adult”

(<http://www.sunburstaward.org/>)

Locus Young Adult Book Award (Locus)

No apparent definition of “young adult”

(<http://www.locusmag.com/News/2015/06/2015-locus-awards-winners/>)

RT Young Adult Urban Fantasy/Futuristic/Paranormal (Romantic Times Reader’s
Choice Awards)

No apparent definition of “young adult” on site

(<http://www.rtbookreviews.com/rt-awards>)

Hal Clement Award (Golden Duck Awards)

“The award is for science fiction books written for ages 12–18 that have a
young adult protagonist, a teenager who must make adult decisions.”

(Helen Gbala, Golden Ducks)

Walter Dean Myers Award:

No apparent definition of “a YA work”

(<http://weneeddiversebooks.org/grants-and-awards/>)

Explanatory Rider from 2012 Proposed WSFS Amendment (Short Title: Hugo
Category Young Adult Fiction):

“A young adult book is defined as one in which the author(s) and/or the publisher specifically targeted a potential nominee to this intended audience. In the event of any confusion on the issue, the Hugo Administrator may inquire with the author(s) of potential nominated work for clarification.”

Academic Definitions:

Michael M. Levy and Farah Mendlesohn (Forthcoming 2016), Introduction to Children’s Fantasy Literature(Cambridge University Press).

- “We have also taken decisions around the definition of children’s literature that argue for a flexible and reader-oriented understanding... children’s literature is that set of fiction read to or by children, whether or not it was originally published for children and whether or not adults have approved of children reading it... The second decision is almost more important because it explains the changing scope of the book as it proceeds to narrate three centuries of fiction for children: this book might best be understood as a history of fantasy for school-age children. It is extremely noticeable that the age at which fiction specifically for children is pitched has been gradually extended. In our earliest chapters the protagonist is rarely over eight years old; by the 1930s twelve seems to be the cut-off point, by the 1950s and into the 1980s fourteen-year-olds are regularly appearing in children’s fantasy. From the 1980s onwards a new category begins to develop – first through appropriating the work of adult writers, later as new teen lists, until it emerges as Young Adult, which features protagonists in their late teens. By the time this book concludes, there is a swathe of fiction labelled Young Adult (or more recently New Adult) which features protagonists in their early twenties and is clearly aimed at late teens and early twenties readers, readers who are in this modern world still quite likely to be in school.”

Michael Cart (UCLA): “Chapter 1. From Sue Barton to the Sixties: What’s in a Name and Other Uncertainties” in *Young Adult Literature: From Romance to Realism* (2010). [see GoogleBooks]

- Discusses history of juveniles, teen lit, YA, and changing definitions. Settles on age ranges (12–18 yrs), although in a new book (2013, p.6) he argues for ‘teen lit’ (12–18 yrs) and ‘young adult’ (19–24 yrs).

“A Young Adult Novel is a work of science fiction or fantasy which is written about teens (Age 12 to 21) in a distinctly teen voice and which explores one or more of the following issues of adolescent life: the onset of puberty, sexuality, and sexual identity; detachment from parent or parents; the emergence of more advanced reasoning abilities; the shift in interest from parental to peer relations; the training for adult work, family, and citizenry roles; and legal status as juveniles.”

- Based on Joseph Stevens, “Young Adult: A Book by Any Other Name . . . Defining the Genre,” *The Alan Review* 35 (2007). [<http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/ALAN/v35n1/stephens.html>] and April Dawn Wells, *Themes Found in Young Adult Literature: A Comparative Study Between 1980 and 2000* (Master’s Paper: UNC, 2003) [<http://www.ils.unc.edu/MSpapers/2861.pdf>]

Marketing Categories:

- Perhaps remove the ‘subjective’ quality by requiring that a work be published by a YA/teen imprint and creating a list of imprints which qualify?
 - Marketing categories are notoriously fluid, with imprints going in and out of business quickly, and YA books often published with an ‘adult lit’ author’s standard press
 - Marketing Categories have developed historically
 - Fantasy written for children has always been popular with and acclaimed by adults. However, if we go with the age of the protagonists as a guide, there was no real development of fantasy for teens as a group until well into the 1970s.
 - Science fiction for younger readers appeared in dime novels in the nineteenth century, then emerging as the Juvenile market in the 1930s through the 1970s.
 - The teen SF market switches to what is called the YA mode in the 1980s

- 'YA' as specific Marketing Category begins in the 1980s and especially the 1990s, when the age range targeted expands as far as 11–25 yrs old

EXHIBIT 3: THE HUGO VS. THE NEWBERY

In the debate regarding creating a Hugo award for Young Adult (“YA”) speculative Fiction, it is sometimes stated that if a YA book is worthy of a Hugo nomination, it will be nominated and receive one. YA books are eligible, but they have not often won the award. In the 64 years the Hugos have existed, five books that fall within YA/teen lit have been nominated for Best Novel. These books are:

Ender’s Game– Orson Scott Card

(1986 Hugo winner)

Harry Potter and the Prisoner Of Azkaban– J. K. Rowling

(2000 Hugo nominee)

Harry Potter and the Goblet Of Fire– J. K. Rowling

(2001 Hugo winner)

The Graveyard Book– Neil Gaiman

(2009 Hugo winner)

Little Brother– Cory Doctorow

(2009 Hugo nominee)

As a comparison, we have likewise examined the Newbery Awards. The Newbery Award lists itself as an award given “annually by the Association for Library Service to Children (“ALS”), a division of the American Library Association, to the author of the most distinguished contribution to American literature for children.” Not all Newbery winners are given the “Newbery Medal” that is reserved for what the ALS believes to be the most distinguished contribution. However, the ALS also awards “Newbery Honoree” designations for worthy works of children’s fiction that the ALS believes deserve recognition.

The following list indicates speculative fiction titles/authors that have received Newberys since 1950:

The Secret River– Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings

(1956 Newbery Honoree)
The Gammage Cup- Carol Kendall
(1960 Newbery Honoree)
A Wrinkle in Time- Madeleine L'Engle
(1963 Newbery Winner)
The Black Cauldron- Lloyd Alexander
(1966 Newbery Honoree)
The Animal Family- Randall Jarrell
(1966 Newbery Honoree)
The Fearsome Inn- Isaac Bashevis Singer
(1968 Newbery Honoree)
The High King- Lloyd Alexander
(1969 Newbery Winner)
Journey Outside- Merry Q. Steele
(1970 Newbery Honoree)
Enchantress from the Stars- Sylvia Engdahl
(1971 Newbery Honoree)
Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH - Robert C. O'Brien
(1972 Newbery Winner)
The Tombs of Atuan- Ursula K. Le Guin
(1972 Newbery Honoree)
The Headless Cupid- Zilphia Keatley Snyder
(1972 Newbery Honoree)
The Dark is Rising- Susan Cooper
(1974 Newbery Honoree)
The Grey King- Susan Cooper
(1976 Newbery Winner)
A String in the Harp- Nancy Bond
(1977 Newbery Honoree)
Anpao: An American Indian Odyssey- Jamake Highwater
(1978 Newbery Honoree)
A Ring of Endless Light- Madeleine L'Engle
(1981 Newbery Honoree)
The Blue Sword- Robin McKinley
(1983 Newbery Honoree)
Sweet Whispers, Brother Rush- Virginia Hamilton

(1983 Newbery Honoree)
The Wish Giver- Bill Brittain
(1984 Newbery Honoree)
The Hero and the Crown- Robin McKinley
(1985 Newbery Winner)
The Giver- Lois Lowry
(1994 Newbery Winner)
The Ear, the Eye, and the Arm- Nancy Farmer
(1995 Newbery Honoree)
The Moorchild- Eloise McGraw
(1997 Newbery Honoree)
The Thief- Megan Whalen Turner
(1997 Newbery Honoree)
Ella Enchanted- Gail Carson Levine
(1997 Newbery Honoree)
The House of the Scorpion- Nancy Farmer
(2003 Newbery Honoree)
The Tale of Despereaux- Nancy Farmer
(2004 Newbery Winner)
Princess Academy- Shannon Hale
(2006 Newbery Honoree)
The Graveyard Book- Neil Gaiman
(2009 Newbery Winner)
Savvy- Ingrid Law
(2009 Newbery Honoree)
When You Reach Me- Rebecca Stead
(2010 Newbery Winner)
Where the Mountain Meets the Moon- Grace Lin
(2010 Newbery Honoree)
Splendors and Glooms- Laura Amy Shlitz
(2013 Newbery Honoree)
Doll Bones- Holly Black
(2014 Newbery Honoree)

In the time that the Hugo awards have nominated five YA works for Best Novel, thirty-five YA works have been honored with the Newbery. Nine of those works

have won the Newbery Medal. Three of the five works nominated for Best Novel have won the Hugo.

Among the especially famous speculative fiction works missed by the Hugos are:

A Wrinkle in Time- Madeleine L'Engle

(1963 Newbery Winner)

The High King- Lloyd Alexander

(1969 Newbery Winner)

The Tombs of Atuan- Ursula K. Le Guin

(1972 Newbery Honoree)

The Grey King- Susan Cooper

(1976 Newbery Winner)

The Giver- Lois Lowry

(1994 Newbery Winner)

The only book that has won both the Hugo and the Newbery in 64 years is:

The Graveyard Book- Neil Gaiman

(2009 Newbery Winner)

EXHIBIT 4: NEXT YEAR'S YA AWARD COMMITTEE

The present Committee has touched upon some of these issues, but next year's committee would need to debate in more detail:

- Will the award be sponsored like the Campbell's?
- Will the award be named for a person?
- How will the votes be tallied?
- How will the category be defined? By age, by marketing category, or by general 'teen' designation?
- Will the award be for science fiction/fantasy or speculative fiction?
- Will the award be called 'YA', 'teen lit', or some other such thing?
- Will there be a word length limit, such as 40,000 words?
- Details of the sunset clause?
- The issue of dual eligibility?

