

## CANADIAN SOCIAL ISSUES FOR YOUNG ADULTS

Books, websites and magazines

*Written by Laura Little*

Library staff may wish to share with youth at a YA programming event about democratic involvement and social issues. The intended age audience for the pamphlet is youth aged 15 and up.

1.



Inspire Democracy, 2018 [Website]  
[inspirerlademocratie-inspiredemocracy.ca/rsch/yth/index-eng.asp](http://inspirerlademocratie-inspiredemocracy.ca/rsch/yth/index-eng.asp)

Inspire Democracy's website targets an older young adult audience, as it deals with political involvement in elections. It provides relevant information to Canadian young adults about voting and democratic participation. Did you know that 26% of Canadian young adults did not vote in the 2011 general election?<sup>1</sup> There is recommended

reading and suggestions for further reading curated by Inspire Democracy, an Elections Canada initiative to inspire young adult civic engagement in Canada. Also, bilingual.

*I think this practical website is good to include alongside pleasure reading to achieve a healthy balance of resources.*

2.



*Teen Vogue* from Condé Nast Inc., 2019 [Website & newsletter]  
[teenvogue.com/tag/canada](http://teenvogue.com/tag/canada)

"The young people's guide to conquering (and saving) the world" describes *Teen Vogue's* vision as a

---

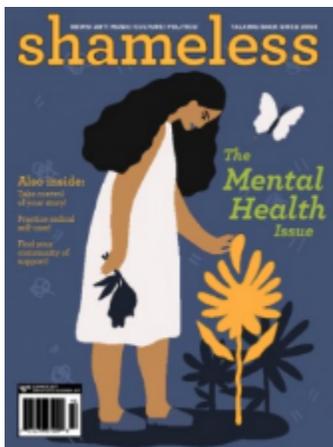
<sup>1</sup> Elections Canada. (2011). National youth survey report. Retrieved from

<http://inspirerlademocratie-inspiredemocracy.ca/rsch/yth/nysr/page4-eng.asp#a66>

part of their new digital strategy. This website has the style of a high fashion magazine with the feel of a blog. It deals with issues like cultural appropriation, sex, politics and culture. The Canadian tagged articles help those of us up North stay in vogue.

*I can remember reading this magazine when it was still being printed on glossy paper. I loved the neon, fun colours, and creative fashion. Since then, the magazine stopped circulating in print and began publishing provocative political articles touching on global warming, feminism, and still a dash of pop culture. Now, the editing team is made up of millennials catering to Gen Z.<sup>2</sup>*

3.



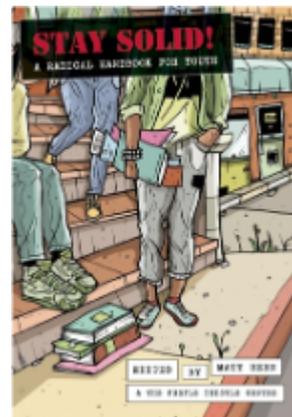
*Shameless*, 2019 [Blog & Magazine] shamelessmag.com

*Shameless* is the antidote to *Teen Vogue*'s heteronormative shortcomings. For queer and trans youth, it is a serious look at the

world. It preaches good values and offers sage guidance to girls and trans folx about a range of topics from avoiding catcallers to new books to read.

*I chose this resource because it is cool and fun to look at but also includes important representation for non binary youth. The articles reflect harsh realities of life that I believe young adults want to educate themselves about.*

4.



*Stay Solid!: A Radical Handbook for Youth* by Matt Hern (Editor), Eli Clare (Goodreads Author) (Contributor), 2013 [Book]

This nontraditional (scrap)book is a source of knowledge and inspiration for young adults. It is nice to look at and easy to follow while dealing with serious issues that young adults might face.

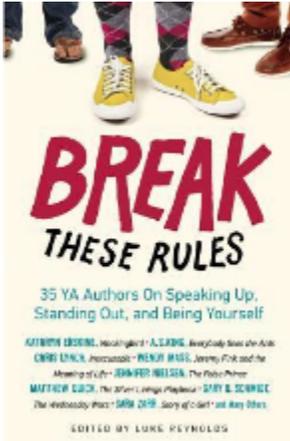
*I personally love collections of essays so I might be biased in selecting two of them (see next), but I also know that young adults often*

<sup>2</sup> Sherman, L. (2016). Inside the new Teen Vogue. Retrieved from

<https://www.businessoffashion.com/articles/intelligence/new-teen-vogue-millennials-generation-z-anna-wintour>

go to university and write essays of their own so I think it is important to expose them to a lot of them.

5.

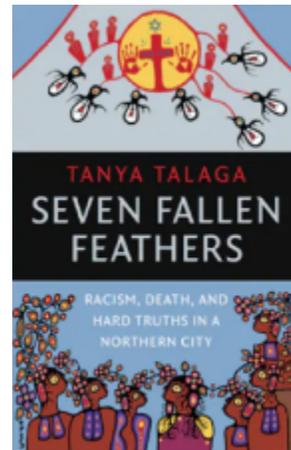


*Break These Rules: 35 YA Authors on Speaking Up, Standing Out, and Being Yourself*  
by Luke Reynolds (Goodreads Author) (Editor), 2013 [Book]

A mix of serious and funny but ultimately realistic advice from a variety of young writers. It is a collection of essays all about breaking the so-called rules of life. There is a point at which everyone needs to learn how to stand up for themselves and this book will encourage anyone to make that stand.

*It is important for youth to learn when and how to stand up for themselves. It's a tough world out there and eventually young adults become adults. Fear not! Hilarity and realizations await thee!*

6.

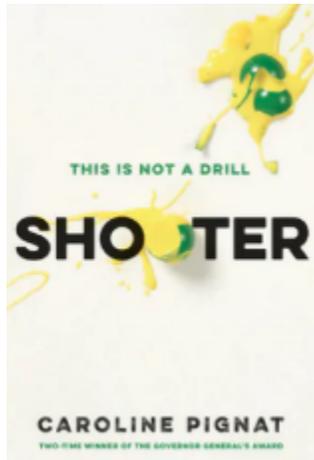


*Seven Fallen Feathers* by Tanya Talaga, 2017 [Book]

*Seven Fallen Feathers: Racism, Death, and Hard Truths in a Northern City* is a poignant and massively popular new Canadian work. It won the 2017 Shaughnessy Cohen Prize for Political Writing and the First Nation Communities Read Indigenous Literature Award among many others. It recounts the story of Chanie Wenjack and how his death echoed on decades later in the residential schools of Thunder Bay, Ontario. It follows the interwoven stories of seven teenage students following their tragic deaths in 2000-2011. It exposes the heavy consequences of inaction in Canadian politics. This journalistic nonfiction narrative is eye-opening and heart breaking.

*I chose this book because it is readily available as a paperback and has widespread appeal. It is a good book to teach and foster empathy.*

7.



*Shooter* by Caroline Pignat, 2017  
[Book]

Canadian author Caroline Pignat is a two time Governor General's Award winner. She writes about high school shooting in a fast paced style with a diverse cast. It is a book like a play, contained within its own world. This novel is thrilling and gut wrenching. It exposes a broken system busting at the seams and the people who are trying to hold it together.

*I chose this book because I imagine that young adults today are very curious about school shootings and I think that reading about it might help them understand the world they're living in.*

8.



*Sea Change* by Frank Viva, 2016  
[Illustrated Book]

A beautiful poetic and heartbreaking work of fiction. A short read packed full of beautiful artwork. It is a coming of age story that will leave the reader feeling *feelings*.

*I think it is good sometimes to read books that don't necessarily follow a typical story format. Sometimes, a story demands fluidity and artwork without spelling it out.*

9.

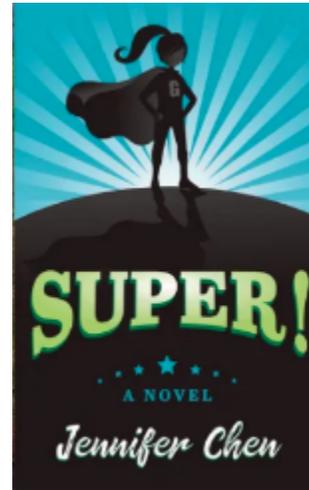


*The Lost Ones* by Sheena Kamal, 2017 [Book]

The suspenseful story of a teenage girl in foster care, shifts perspectives to reflect on the mother's decision to place her child for adoption 15 years earlier. The author critically examines issues of poverty, race and dysfunction in downtown Vancouver. Readers will experience tension, a frustrating, damaged protagonist, and beautiful, gritty vernacular.

*I chose this book because it's easy to believe that big city problems don't happen in Canada, but downtown Vancouver proves that disparities between the rich and poor persist in this country too.*

10.



*Super* by Jennifer Chen, 2018 [Book]

Suddenly teens possess the power to turn the world into a better place in this science fiction novel where puberty is accompanied with the development of supernatural abilities. Jennifer Chen writes speculative fiction about the state of the world from a young adult perspective.

*I think it's important to take a lighter approach to world issues sometimes. It can't all be doom and gloom. That's why I included this novel.*