

Challenging the Master Subject: Adolescent Literature as Space for Activism in *The Hate U Give*

In her article “The Female Subject of Feminism Making Space for the Female Subject of Feminism,” Gillian Rose argues that the “connection between subjectivity and spatiality elaborated most fully by feminists is probably the mutually constitutive link between the ‘the master subject’ – that is, white, heterosexual, middle-class masculinity – and the view of everywhere from nowhere which hopes to construct a transparent space in which the whole world is visible and knowable” (335). In other words, feminists often argue against creating one perspective, one way of knowing things about the world because that one perspective is almost always reflective of the patriarchy.

In this paper I will argue that *The Hate U Give*, by Angie Thomas, is an important part of the trend against the master subject. The novel gives a voice to those who dissent against hegemonic powers, and (I hope) marks the trend away from books and the publishing industry being represented by a dominant (white) perspective. Specifically, I will look at how the novel gives voices to lots of different characters, including the protagonist Starr, but also her white boyfriend Chris, her father Maverick, her brother Seven, and many other characters to establish multiple perspectives about many different issues.

The crucial section of the novel for my argument will be the explosion of anger, violence, and agency at the end of the book. This section of the novel is very fast-paced and chaotic, but the space of the protest (including the rioting) is an example of what Rose imagines as “the multiple and shifting dimensions of feminist subjectivity as layers and layers of acetate transparencies, their lines mobile, fusing with and repelling each other...several specialties entangled, contradictory and shifting, mapped by and mapping each female feminist subject” (337). Coming from an intersectional feminist perspective, the space of the protest in Starr’s neighborhood then becomes a metaphor for the voices that have been suppressed for too long.