

Coming of Age

Because I Am Furniture by Thalia Chaltas

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How Beautiful the Ordinary, edited by Michael Cart



How Beautiful the Ordinary, edited by Michael Cart, is a welcome addition to the small but growing collection of young adult fiction exploring gender identity and sexual orientation. Being a young person is difficult, what with all the changes physical, emotional, and social. Most of us spend our whole lives getting to know ourselves, and those initial explorations in our youth are some of the most confusing and painful (and exhilarating and profound) because they are so new. All of this can be overwhelming, and when you throw in societal condemnation of some of these identities and/or lifestyles it is especially hard. This collection of short fiction by well-respected young adult authors takes a loving and unrelenting look at the struggle not only to discover what we are as young women and men, but to accept and own that identity as well.

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Whip It

No, this post is not an ode to Devo (though I do love [that song](#)), but rather a look at the world of roller derby. I attended my first bout the other night and had the opportunity to see Bloomington's Bleeding Heartland Roller Girls win. Afterwards, I was inspired to pick up the feature film [Whip It](#), a look at one teen's coming of age through the roller derby.

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The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate



I admit to being a streaky reader - I think this time last year I was on a World War I fiction kick. And this winter I read three books in a row about the Johnstown Flood including both fiction and non-fiction titles - [Three Rivers Rising](#), [In Sunlight In a Beautiful Garden](#), and [The Johnstown Flood](#). The latter is by David McCullough, a famous historian and two time Pulitzer Prize recipient who is from Pittsburgh near the area where the flood occurred.

Recently though it seems I am reading a lot of coming of age novels featuring girls as the main character. E. Lockhart has written some wonderful contemporary coming of age novels, but for something historical I also have recently fallen for [The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate](#) by Jacqueline Kelly.

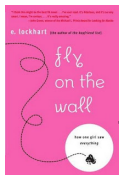
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Newest Most Favoritist Young Adult Author



The teenage female protagonists of E. Lockhart's novels are funny, smart, interesting, questioning and underneath it all resilient and strong. They don't always make the best initial choices, but are willing to learn and adjust as they go. These coming-of-age novels feature a romance (or two), but not at the cost of ignoring other similar and frequently troublesome themes of any young life - parents, school, friendships and finding your niche.

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Posted by Sarah B. on Feb 16, 2011 [Sarah B.'s blog](#) [Add new comment](#)



Scott Pilgrim vs. the World



I wasn't sure what to expect when I first put [Scott Pilgrim vs. the World](#) in my DVD player. It was not even close to what I got. For those who are not familiar with the plot Scott Pilgrim [Michael

Cera], the bass player in a small band, has fallen for the new "cool girl" in town, Ramona Flowers [Mary Elizabeth Winstead]. In order to date her he must first defeat her seven "evil exes". [Read more »](#)

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