

## **Reading for Empathy and Global Citizenship: How John Green Instructs His Readers**

John Green occupies a unique space within the world of young adult literature, simultaneously achieving fame over the past decade as both an author and YouTube celebrity. Green is also notable for the ways in which he uses his multi-platform reach to engage his audience in the act of reading itself, not just the reading of his own novels but also reading literature generally. With this paper I seek to expand critical work on John Green as author and mentor to a young adult audience by analyzing content he creates as a form of reading instruction. Specifically I outline how he uses both books and new media to construct the value of reading as social and global rather than simply personal and to promote reading as an act of empathy that allows readers to “imagine others complexly.” To do this, the paper places his novels in conversation with content posted online, specifically across YouTube, Twitter, and Tumblr, to provide a portrait of reading as it evolves and coalesces over time. The paper then places that work within the broader context of global citizenship as a value and practice within his fan community. Operating at the intersection of young adult literature criticism, fan studies, and reading research, the paper ultimately seeks to highlight connections between books, social media, and global awareness, and to offer insight into how reading informs youth activism.