

YART July 18, 2012
Current Fiction

Bacigalupi, Paolo. *The Drowned Cities*.

In a dark future America that has devolved into unending civil wars, orphans Mahlia and Mouse barely escape the war-torn lands of the Drowned Cities, but their fragile safety is soon threatened and Mahlia will have to risk everything if she is to save Mouse, as he once saved her.

Comments from YART attendees: companion to *Ship Breakers*, but can stand alone; non-stop action – like a screenplay; themes include family, replicating family outside your family of origin; open-ended conclusion; reminds one reader of *Beauty and the Beast*. (Recommended for grades 7+)

Black, Holly. *Black Heart*.

Cassel Sharpe, a powerful transformation worker, is torn between his decision to work for the federal government and his love for Lila, who has joined her father's criminal organization.

Comments from YART attendees: 3rd in the *Curse Workers* series (should be read in order); modern day urban fantasy; elements of crime and suspense (magical violence); explores moral gray areas; interesting magical system; recommend to readers who liked *Chime*. (Recommended for high school readers)

Caletti, Deb. *The Story of Us*.

After jilting two previous fiances, Cricket's mother is finally marrying the right man, but as wedding attendees arrive for a week of festivities, complications arise for Cricket involving her own love life, her beloved dog Jupiter, and her mother's reluctance to marry.

Comments from YART attendees: explores transition/change of high school seniors; girls that like Sarah Dessen will like this book; jacket copy is dull (Recommended for ages 10+)

Eulberg, Elizabeth. *Take a Bow*.

Emme, Sophie, Ethan, and Carter are seniors at a performing arts high school in New York City, preparing for the senior recital and feeling the pressure to perform well and take the next step in their careers and their lives--whether they want to or not.

Comments from YART attendees: fast read; each chapter is a different character; may be popular due to reality television series about singers, dancers, etc.; also recommended on a similar theme - *Bunheads* by Sophie Flack.

George, Madeleine. *The Difference Between You and Me*.

School outsider Jesse, a lesbian, is having secret trysts with Emily, the popular student council vice president, but when they find themselves on opposite sides of a major issue and Jesse becomes more involved with a student activist, they are forced to make a difficult decision.

Comments from YART attendees: looks like a romance, but romance is not the main focus; not a coming out story, the character's parents already know their daughter is a lesbian; written by a playwright – one character is written in a first person monologue (does not advance plot, explores her feelings) and the other is in 3rd person; explores social activism; interesting secondary characters; for readers who feel like outsiders OR who have a cause they are passionate about. (Recommended for high school)

Green, John. *The Fault in our Stars*.

Sixteen-year-old Hazel, a stage IV thyroid cancer patient, has accepted her terminal diagnosis until a chance meeting with a boy at cancer support group forces her to reexamine her perspective on love, loss, and life.

Comments from YART attendees: very popular book; John Green's best book; it's a "romantic epic"; explores what it means to be a hero; love story/coping story/more than a terminal illness story; good crossover book for adults and teens. (Recommended for high school)

Kagawa, Julie. *The Immortal Rules*.

Allison Sekemoto survives in the Fringe, the outermost circle of a vampire city, until she too becomes an immortal vampire. Forced to flee into the unknown, outside her city walls, she joins a ragged band of humans who are seeking a legend -- a possible cure to the disease that killed off most of humankind and created the rabids, the mindless creatures who threaten humans and vampires alike.

Comments from YART attendees: Fast read, despite being 500 pages long (not hard to read); mash-up of vampire and dystopian, for fans of either; learn a lot about vampires!

LaCour, Nina. *The Disenchantments*.

Colby's post-high school plans have long been that he and his best friend Bev would tour with her band, then spend a year in Europe, but when she announces that she will start college just after the tour, Colby struggles to understand why she changed her mind and what losing her means for his future.

Comments from YART attendees: Not a great cover; long chapters (each one represents a day); interesting situation – Bev applies to college, and is accepted at RISD, without telling Colby. Colby, who hasn't applied to college, thinks they will be backpacking through Europe together after their band tour is over.

Marchetta, Melina. *The Piper's Son*.

After his favorite uncle's violent death, Tom Mackee watches his family implode, quits school, and turns his back on music and everyone who matters, and while he is in no shape to mend what is broken, he fears that no one else is, either.

Comments from YART attendees: A little hard to follow at first/jumps around; about an Irish family in Ireland; it's a family story worth having in your collection, although it is not likely to be wildly popular; for teens who like *Flowers for Algernon* and *A Separate Peace*.

McCormick, Patricia. *Never Fall Down*.

Cambodian child soldier Arn Chorn-Pond defied the odds and used all of his courage and wits to survive the murderous regime of the Khmer Rouge.

Comments from YART attendees: enjoyed the treatment of unique and important subject matter

Meyer, Marissa. *Cinder*.

As plague ravages the overcrowded Earth, observed by a ruthless lunar people, Cinder, a gifted mechanic and cyborg, becomes involved with handsome Prince Kai and must uncover secrets about her past in order to protect the world in this futuristic take on the Cinderella story.

Comments from YART attendees: Cinderella meets Star Wars; exciting; highly recommended; part of a series, but has a satisfying ending; recommended as a 10 to RITBA. (Recommended for middle and high school)

Neri, Greg. *Ghetto Cowboy*.

Twelve-year-old Cole's behavior causes his mother to drive him from Detroit to Philadelphia to live with a father he has never known, but who soon has Cole involved with a group of African-American "cowboys" who rescue horses and use them to steer youths away from drugs and gangs.

Comments from YART attendees: based on real events; fantastic illustrations (Recommended for middle school)

Ockler, Sarah. *Bittersweet*.

Hudson Avery gave up a promising competitive ice skating career after her parents divorced when she was fourteen years old and now spends her time baking cupcakes and helping out in her mother's upstate New York diner, but when she gets a chance at a scholarship and starts coaching the boys' hockey team, she realizes that she is not through with ice skating after all.

Comments from YART attendees: like Sarah Dessen; will be extremely popular, but one reader hated the main character!; engaging and fast; recommended for RITBA. (Recommended for middle school + high school)

Petrucha, Stefan. *Ripper*.

Adopted by famous Pinkerton Agency Detective Hawking in 1895 New York, fourteen-year-old Carver Young hopes to find his birth father, but when he becomes involved in the pursuit of notorious killer Jack the Ripper, Carver discovers that finding the truth can be worse than ignorance.

Comments from YART attendees: reminds the reader of *Artemis Fowl*; some elements of steam punk (Recommended for middle school and up)

Picoult, Jodi and Samantha Van Leer. *Between the Lines*.

Told in their separate voices, sixteen-year-old Prince Oliver, who wants to break free of his fairy tale existence, and fifteen-year-old Delilah, a loner obsessed with Prince Oliver and the book in which he exists, work together to seek his freedom.

Comments from YART attendees: Very popular with lots of holds.

Reader #1: fun; recommended with a 10 for RITBA

Reader #2: if teens liked *The Princess Bride*, they'll like this book; no issues – sex, swearing, drugs, etc.; some plot holes; despite the story line (potentially thwarted love), there is no angst, swooning romance, or drama of any kind most teens seem to enjoy. I would have no problem recommending this book to kids in middle school or even more mature elementary school students. It's really that mild.

Price, Lissa. *Starters*.

To support herself and her younger brother in a future Beverly Hills, sixteen-year-old Callie hires her body out to seniors who want to experience being young again, and she lives a fairy-tale life until she learns that her body will commit murder, unless her mind can stop it.

Comments from YART attendees: similar elements to *Feed*, *Unwind*, *Hunger Games*, *Divergent*, *Uglies*; *Enders* will be the companion/next in series; recommended as a 10 for RITBA. There were many readers and all recommended it for purchase. (Recommended for middle school and high school)

Quick, Matthew. *Boy 21*.

Finley, an unnaturally quiet boy who is the only white player on his high school's varsity basketball team, lives in a dismal Pennsylvania town that is ruled by the Irish mob, and when his coach asks him to mentor a troubled African American student who has transferred there from an elite private school in California, he finds that they have a lot in common in spite of their apparent differences.

Comments from YART attendees: includes mysteries, but more character driven than plot driven; for older middle school students due to issues more familiar to older kids, not content.

Reed, Amy. *Crazy*.

Connor and Izzy, two teens who met at a summer art camp in the Pacific Northwest where they were counselors, share a series of emails in which they confide in one another, eventually causing Connor to become worried when he realizes that Izzy's emotional highs and lows are too extreme.

Comments from YART attendees: fast/easy read (written as emails); parts are funny; lots of swearing and some sex. (Recommended for grades 10+)

Schumacher, Julie. *The Unbearable Book Club for Unsinkable Girls*.

When four very different small-town Delaware high school girls are forced to join a mother-daughter book club over summer vacation, they end up learning about more than just the books they read.

Comments from YART attendees: different book than we usually see; strongly recommended

Smith, Jennifer E. *The Statistical Probability of Love at First Sight*.

Hadley and Oliver fall in love on the flight from New York to London, but after a cinematic kiss they lose track of each other at the airport until fate brings them back together on a very momentous day.

Comments from YART attendees: easy/fun read; some plot twists, yet predictable; recommended for RITBA

Sonnenblick, Jordan. *Curveball: the Year I Lost My Grip*.

After an injury ends former star pitcher Peter Friedman's athletic dreams, he concentrates on photography which leads him to a girlfriend, new fame as a high school sports photographer, and a deeper relationship with the beloved grandfather who, when he realizes he is becoming senile, gives Pete all of his professional camera gear.

Comments from YART attendees: lots of time discussing photography equipment; slow/gentle way of dealing with people; fans of Jordan Sonnenblick won't be disappointed. (Recommended for middle school)

Volponi, Paul. *The Final Four*.

Four players at the Final Four of the NCAA basketball tournament struggle with the pressures of tournament play and the expectations of society at large.

Comments from YART attendees: play by play/floor action; exciting; includes flashbacks/history of the 4 players; loved it; recommended as a 10 for RITBA. (Recommended for high school due to swearing)

Wein, Elizabeth. *Code Name Verity*.

In 1943, a British fighter plane crashes in Nazi-occupied France and the survivor tells a tale of friendship, war, espionage, and great courage as she relates what she must to survive while keeping secret all that she can.

Comments from YART attendees: excellent; recommended for teens and adults; a war book, but focuses on characters.