

YART: Current Realistic Fiction

May 5, 2015

*Entries in red were discussed during the May 5 meeting.*

*All Fall Down (Embassy Row Series #1) by Ally Carter. Scholastic, 2015.*

Three years ago, Grace Blakely witnessed her mother's murder, but no one else seems willing to even acknowledge that it was a homicide, so this daredevil teenager decided that she will have to solve the killing herself. It doesn't take long for Grace to realize that none of her Embassy Row connections will help a jot; in fact, her powerful ambassador grandfather and his cohorts badly want her to stop ruffling feathers and return to her place as a just another pretty face at the government receptions.

*Alex as Well by Alyssa Brugman. Henry Holt, 2015. (Danielle Margarida)*

Alex is ready for things to change, in a big way. Everyone seems to think she's a boy, but for Alex the whole boy/girl thing isn't as simple as either/or, and when she decides girl is closer to the truth, no one knows how to react, least of all her parents. Undeterred, Alex begins to create a new identity for herself: ditching one school, enrolling in another, and throwing out most of her clothes. But the other Alex—the boy Alex—has a lot to say about that.

*All the Bright Places by Jennifer Niven. Random House, 2015. (Danielle Margarida)*

When Finch and Violet meet on the ledge of the bell tower at school, it's unclear who saves whom. And when they pair up on a project to discover the “natural wonders” of their state, both Finch and Violet make more important discoveries: It's only with Violet that Finch can be himself—a weird, funny, live-out-loud guy who's not such a freak after all. And it's only with Finch that Violet can forget to count away the days and start living them. But as Violet's world grows, Finch's begins to shrink.

*Boys Don't Knit (in Public) by T.S. Easton. Feiwel & Friends, 2015. (Brandi Fong)*

After an incident regarding a crossing guard and a bottle of Martini & Rossi (and his friends), 17-year-old worrier Ben Fletcher must develop his sense of social alignment, take up a hobby, and do some community service to avoid any further probation. He takes a knitting class (it was that or his father's mechanic class) with the impression that it's taught by the hot teacher all the boys like. Turns out, it's not. Perfect. Regardless, he sticks with it and comes to discover he's a natural knitter, maybe even great. It also helps ease his anxiety and worrying. The only challenge now is to keep it hidden from his friends, his crush, and his soccer-obsessed father.

*The Bunker Diary by Kevin Brooks. Learner Publishing, 2015. (Charlotte Burnham)*

People are really quite simple, and they have simple needs. Food, water, light, space, privacy. Maybe a small measure of dignity. A bit of freedom. What happens when someone simply takes all that away?

*City of Savages by Lee Kelly. Saga Press, 2015. (Linda Archetto)*

After the Red Allies turn New York City into a POW camp, two sisters must decipher the past in order to protect the future in this action-packed thriller with a dual narrative.

*Complicit* by Stephanie Kuehn. St. Martin's Press, 2014. (Colleen LeComte & Peggie Facker)

Two years ago, fifteen-year-old Jamie Henry breathed a sigh of relief when a judge sentenced his older sister to juvenile detention for burning down their neighbor's fancy horse barn. The whole town did. Because Crazy Cate Henry used to be a nice girl. Until she did a lot of bad things. Like drinking. And stealing. And lying. Like playing weird mind games in the woods with other children. Like making sure she always got her way. Or else. But today Cate got out. And now she's coming back for Jamie. Because more than anything, Cate Henry needs her little brother to know the truth about their past. A truth she's kept hidden for years. A truth she's not supposed to tell.

*Dogs of War* by Sheila Keenon. Scholastic, 2013. (Peggy Facker)

A graphic novel that tells the stories of the canine military heroes of World War I, World War II, and the Vietnam War. This collection of three fictional stories was inspired by historic battles and real military practice.

*(Don't You) Forget About Me* by Kate Karyus Quinn. HarperCollins, 2014.

Gardnerville seems like a paradise. But every four years, a strange madness compels the town's teenagers to commit terrible crimes. Four years ago, Skylar's sister, Piper, led her classmates on a midnight death march into a watery grave. Now Piper is gone. And to get her back, Skylar must find a way to end Gardnerville's murderous cycle.

*Glory O'Brien's History of the Future* by A.S King. Little, Brown, 2014. (Peggy Facker)

Graduating from high school is a time of limitless possibilities—but not for Glory, who has no plan for what's next. Her mother committed suicide when Glory was only four years old, and she's never stopped wondering if she will eventually go the same way...until a transformative night when she begins to experience an astonishing new power to see a person's infinite past and future.

*The Haunting of Sunshine Girl* by Paige McKenzie & Alyssa Sheinmel. Weinstein Publishing, 2015.

After her sixteenth birthday, Sunshine Griffith and her mother Kat move from Austin, Texas, to Ridgmont, Washington. From the moment they arrive, Sunshine feels her world darken with an eeriness she cannot place. In the days that follow, things only get stranger. Sunshine is followed around the house by an icy breeze, phantom wind slams her bedroom door shut, and eventually, the laughter Sunshine hears on her first night evolves into sobs. As the spirits haunting her house become more frightening—and it becomes clear that Kat is in danger—Sunshine must accept what she is, pass the test before her, and save her mother. *The Haunting Of Sunshine Girl* is spinoff of a web series created by Nick Hagen and Mercedes Rose. The book is written by Paige McKenzie (the actress who portrays Sunshine in the videos) with Alyssa Sheinmel.

*I Am Her Revenge* by Meredith Moore. Penguin, 2015. (Jenn Cournoyer)

Vivian was raised with one purpose in life: to exact revenge on behalf of her mother. Manipulative and cruel, Mother has deprived Vivian not only of a childhood, but of an original identity. With an endless arsenal of enticing personalities at her disposal, Vivian is a veritable weapon of deception. When it's time to strike, she enrolls in a boarding school on the English moors, where she will zero in on her target: sweet and innocent Ben, the son of the man who broke Mother's heart twenty years ago. With every secret she uncovers, Vivian comes one step closer to learning who she really is. But the more she learns about herself, the more dangerous this cat and mouse game becomes. Because Mother will stop at nothing to make sure the truth dies with her.

*I Was Here* by Gayle Forman. Penguin Young Readers Group, 2015. (Stefanie Blankenship)

When her best friend, Meg, commits suicide by drinking a bottle of industrial-strength cleaner alone in a motel room, Cody is understandably shocked and devastated. But when Cody travels to Meg's college town to pack up the belongings left behind, she discovers that there's a lot that Meg never told her

*The Kidney Hypothetical* by Lisa Yee. Scholastic, 2015. (Danielle Margarida)

Higgs Boson Bing has seven days left before his perfect high school career is completed. Then it's on to Harvard to fulfill the fantasy portrait of success that he and his parents have cultivated for the past four years. Everything they wanted for Higgs's older brother Jeffrey, in fact. But something's not right. And when Higgs's girlfriend presents him with a seemingly innocent hypothetical question about whether or not he'd give her a kidney . . . the exposed fault lines reach straight down to the foundations of his life. . .

*King Dork, Approximately* by Frank Portman. Random House, 2014. (Charlotte Burnham)

Outside from the stitches and the head wound, Tom Henderson is the same old King Dork. He's still trying to work out who to blame for the new scar on his forehead, the memory loss, and his father's mysterious death. But illicit female hospital visitations, *The Catcher in the Rye*, and the Hillmont High sex-pocalypse have made him a new man. What doesn't make you stronger can kill you, though, and tenth grade, act two, promises to be a killer.

*The Life and Times of Benny Alvarez* by Peter Johnson. HarperCollins, 2014. (Peggy Facker)

Everyone thinks Benny Alvarez is Mr. Negativity. According to Benny, he's just realistic about seeing the "other side" of things—when it comes to just about everything. But maybe there's another way to deal with the things Benny can't control—like his ailing grandfather, his wild younger brother, and the know-it-all girls at school.

*Saint Anything* by Sarah Dessen. Penguin, 2015.

Sydney has always felt invisible. She's grown accustomed to her brother, Peyton, being the focus of the family's attention and, lately, concern. Peyton is handsome and charismatic, but seems bent on self-destruction. Now, after a drunk-driving accident that crippled a boy, Peyton's serving some serious jail time, and Sydney is on her own, questioning her place in the family and the world. Then she meets the Chatham family. Drawn into their warm, chaotic circle, Sydney experiences unquestioning acceptance for the first time.

*Scar Boys* by Len Vlahos. Egmont, 2014. (Peggy Facker)

In attempting to describe himself in his college application essay Harbinger (Harry) Jones goes way beyond the 250-word limit and gives a full account of his life. The first defining moment: the day the neighborhood goons tied him to a tree during a lightning storm when he was 8 years old, and the tree was struck and caught fire. Harry was badly burned and has had to live with the physical and emotional scars, reactions from strangers, bullying, and loneliness that instantly became his everyday reality. The second defining moment: the day in 8th grade when the handsome, charismatic Johnny rescued him from the bullies and then made the startling suggestion that they start a band together.

*The Shadow Cabinet (Shades of London Series #1)* by Maureen Johnson. Penguin, 2015. (Charlotte Burnham)

Rory and her friends are reeling from a series of sudden and tragic events. While racked with grief, Rory tries to determine if she acted in time to save a member of the squad. If she did, how do you find a ghost? Also, Rory's classmate Charlotte has been kidnapped by Jane and her nefarious organization. Evidence is uncovered of a forty-year-old cult, ten missing teenagers, and a likely mass murder. Everything indicates that Charlotte's in danger, and it seems that something much bigger and much more terrible is coming. (Can be a standalone.)

*Since You've Been Gone* by Morgan Matson. Simon & Schuster, 2014. (Shannon Bloom)

Emily is about to take some risks and have the most unexpected summer ever. Before Sloane, Emily didn't go to parties, she barely talked to guys, and she didn't do anything crazy. Enter Sloane, social tornado and the best kind of best friend—someone who yanks you out of your shell. But right before what should have been an epic summer, Sloane just... disappears. There's just a random to-do list with thirteen bizarre tasks that Emily would never try. But what if they can lead her to Sloane? Getting through Sloane's list will mean a lot of firsts, and with a whole summer ahead of her—and with the unexpected help of the handsome Frank Porter—who knows what she'll find.

*Six Feet Over It* by Jennifer Longo. Random House, 2014. (Brandi Fong)

Leigh sells graves for her family-owned cemetery because her father is too lazy to look farther than the dinner table when searching for employees. Working the literal graveyard shift, she meets two kinds of customers: Sarcastic and smart, Leigh should be able to stand up to her family and quit. But her world's been turned upside down by the sudden loss of her best friend and the appearance of Dario, the slightly-too-old-for-her grave digger

*Swim that Rock* by John Rocco & Jay Primiano. Candlewick, 2014. (Peggy Facker)

When his dad goes missing in a fishing-boat accident, fourteen-year-old Jake refuses to think he may have lost his father forever. But suddenly, nothing seems certain in Jake's future, and now his family's diner may be repossessed by loan sharks. In Narragansett Bay, scrabbling out a living as a quahogger isn't easy, but with the help of some local clammers, Jake is determined to work hard and earn enough money to ensure his family's security and save the diner in time.

*Through the Woods* by Emily Carroll. Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2014.

Discover a terrifying world in the woods in this collection of five hauntingly beautiful graphic stories that includes the online webcomic sensation "His Face All Red," in print for the first time. Journey through the woods in this sinister, compellingly spooky collection that features four brand-new stories and one phenomenally popular tale in print for the first time.

*Trust Me I'm Lying* by Mary Elizabeth Summer. Random House, 2014. (Brandi Fong)

Julep Dupree tells lies. A lot of them. She's a con artist, a master of disguise, and a sophomore at Chicago's swanky St. Agatha High, where her father, an old-school grifter with a weakness for the ponies, sends her to so she can learn to mingle with the upper crust. But when she comes home one day to a ransacked apartment and her father gone, Julep's carefully laid plans for an expenses-paid golden ticket to Yale start to unravel. Even with help from St. Agatha's resident Prince Charming, Tyler Richland, and her loyal hacker sidekick, Sam, Julep struggles to trace her dad's trail of clues through a maze of creepy stalkers, hit attempts, family secrets, and worse, the threat of foster care.

*The Unlikely Hero of Room 13B* by Teresa Toten. Random House, 2015. (Danielle Margarida)

The instant Adam Spencer Ross meets Robyn Plummer in his Young Adult OCD Support Group, he is hopelessly, desperately drawn to her. Robyn has an hypnotic voice, blue eyes the shade of an angry sky, and ravishing beauty that makes Adam's insides ache. She's also just been released from a residential psychiatric program—the kind for the worst, most difficult-to-cure cases; the kind that Adam and his fellow support group members will do anything to avoid joining. Adam immediately knows that he has to save Robyn, *must* save Robyn, or die trying. But is it really Robyn who needs rescuing? And is it possible to have a normal relationship when your life is anything but?

*We All Looked Up* by Tommy Wallach. Simon & Schuster, 2015. (Jenn Cournoyer)

Four high school seniors put their hopes, hearts, and humanity on the line as an asteroid hurtles toward Earth. They always say that high school is the best time of your life. Peter, the star basketball player at his school, is worried “they” might actually be right. Meanwhile Eliza can't wait to escape Seattle—and her reputation—and perfect-on-paper Anita wonders if admission to Princeton is worth the price of abandoning her real dreams. Andy, for his part, doesn't understand all the fuss about college and career—the future can wait. Or can it? Because it turns out the future is hurtling through space with the potential to wipe out life on Earth.

*We Are All Made of Molecules* by Susan Nielsen. Random House, 2015. (Danielle Margarida)

Thirteen-year-old Stewart is academically brilliant but socially clueless. Fourteen-year-old Ashley is the undisputed “It” girl in her class, but her grades stink. Their worlds are about to collide when Stewart and his dad move in with Ashley and her mom. Stewart is trying to be 89.9 percent happy about it, but Ashley is 110 percent horrified. She already has to hide the real reason her dad moved out; “Spewart” could further threaten her position at the top of the social ladder.

*We Were Liars* by E. Lockhart. Random House, 2014. (Peggy Facker)

Cadence struggles to remember last summer's accident on her family's private island.

*Winger* by Andrew Smith. Simon & Schuster, 2013. (Peggy Facker)

Ryan Dean West is a fourteen-year-old junior at a boarding school for rich kids. He's living in the dorm for troublemakers, and rooming with the biggest bully on the rugby team. And he's madly in love with his best friend Annie, who thinks of him as a little boy. With the help of his sense of humor, rugby buddies, and his penchant for doodling comics, Ryan Dean manages to survive life's complications and even find some happiness along the way. But when the unthinkable happens, he has to figure out how to hold on to what's important, even when it feels like everything has fallen apart. (Sequel: *Stand Off*. Simon & Schuster, 9/08/2015.)

*Yaqui Delgado Wants to Kick Your Ass* by Meg Medina. Candlewick, 2013. (Peggy Facker)

One morning before school, some girl tells Piddy Sanchez that Yaqui Delgado hates her and wants to kick her ass. Piddy doesn't even know who Yaqui is, never mind what she's done to piss her off. Word is that Yaqui thinks Piddy is stuck-up, shakes her stuff when she walks, and isn't Latin enough with her white skin, good grades, and no accent. And Yaqui isn't kidding around, so Piddy better watch her back. At first Piddy is more concerned with trying to find out more about the father she's never met and how to balance honors courses with her weekend job at the neighborhood hair salon. But as the harassment escalates, avoiding Yaqui and her gang starts to take over Piddy's life. Is there any way for Piddy to survive without closing herself off or running away?