

UHLS I Youth Services Advisory Council Meeting

January 12, 2018

**Large Library Discussion Group
Meeting**

9:00 am - 10:00 am

10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Small Library Discussion Group

12:00 am - 1:00 pm

Attendance:

Mary Fellows (UHLS), Diane Riganti (UHLS), Lee Ackerman-Sawyer (RVLL/WSTR), Elissa Valente (COLN), Joelle Adler (CAST), Carol Gaillard (HOOF), Lisa Smith (HOOF), Barbara Goetschius (RCSC), Jane Chirgwin (RENS), Lisa Neuman (APLM), Natalie McDonough (BETH), Jenna Zaborowski (EGRN), Amy McCarhy (GUIL), Amy Relea (TROY), Gail Brown (VOOR).

Meeting Minutes:

UHLS Updates:

Deadline to register for the Summer Reading Planning workshop at Schenectady Public Library on February 1st is 1/26/2018. Snow date for workshop is February 15, 2018.

Teen Librarian Meetup is on Thursday, April 26, 2018 at the East Greenbush Community Library. This is free and it will be BYOL (Bring Your Own Lunch). More information to come.

Best of the Best: Youth Books 2017

Sue Rokos from MVLS presented the best youth books of 2017.

Handout: Best books of 2017

Collection Development

Mary gave a presentation slideshow of suggestions for your collection development.

Tween collections

Mary presented the benefits/process of having tween collections.

Benefits:

- School separates students into elem, middle, hs; why not books too?
- Some YA is really adult
- Very successful for libraries who have created a tween collection

Process:

- Labels: YA labels of a different color than the YA labels used for teens. Or create your own: "M" or "Tween"
- Located: near the YA section
- What to call it: Tween, Middle Readers, Young adult (grades 6-9) and Teen (grades 9-12)
- What to include: books in your chosen age group as designated in a review source; subject matter and plot description, age of character

Diversity in our Collections

Mary gave a presentation and led a discussion on diverse books.

Some presentation notes:

- What are "diverse books?" Diverse books reflect the varied experiences of people around the world, including people of color, Native people, people with disabilities, people with a variety of religious beliefs, and people on the GLBTQ spectrum.
- Where do we find them? How do we recognize them?
 - o Criteria from [presentation by Joyce Laiosa and Edie Ching at NYLA](#)
 - o Reviews
 - o Lists, such as [this one](#)
- What if we don't have that population in our community?
 - o Doesn't matter. Children need windows and mirrors. A diverse book can be a window. Sell it. Use it in programs and displays.
 - o <http://gracelin.com/media/press/diversitycheatsheet.pdf>
 - o Koester "[Selection is a privilege](#)" article

Handout:

["Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights"](#), adopted by ALA Council on June 27, 2017

Helping reluctant readers with poetry

A Youtube video by Jason Reynolds on how poetry can help kids turn a fear of literature into love was shown and discussed.

Great reads:

The Misadventures of the Family Fletcher by Dana Alison Levy

SLJ review

Gr 3–6— With four brothers, a dog, a cat, school projects, soccer matches, and a grumpy neighbor, the Fletchers are your typical American family...with two dads, and siblings who are adopted kids from various ethnic backgrounds. While 12-year-old Sam ponders whether trying out for the school play will interfere with his identity as a soccer player, 10-year-old Jax negotiates changing friendships and a veteran project that involves talking to the unfriendly Vietnam vet next door. Meanwhile, Eli, also age 10, finds that his new, academically oriented school isn't everything he expected it would be, and six-year-old Frog attempts to convince his family that his kindergarten best friend is not imaginary. Turtles and kittens are requested, camping trips are taken, and holiday celebrations (Halloween, Thanksgiving, Chanukah, and Christmas) involve minor kitchen fires, missing turkeys, and other mishaps. Through it all, Dad and Papa complain about the mischief as often as they join in themselves. Although the tone is never preachy, the brothers nevertheless learn over the course of the year that identities can expand, friendships can evolve, and making mistakes is okay. With its semi-episodic structure, laugh-out-loud humor, and mix of zaniness and love, Levy's debut offers something truly significant: a middle-grade family story featuring gay parents and interracial families that is

never about either issue. Fans of Beverly Cleary's Quimbys, Judy Blume's Hatchers, and, more recently, Jeanne Birdsall's Penderwicks will fervently hope that more Fletcher misadventures are yet to come.—Jill Ratzan, I. L. Peretz Community Jewish School, Somerset, NJ

Dear Fahrenheit 451: Love and Heartbreak in the Stacks: A Librarian's Love Letters and Breakup Notes to the Books in Her Life by Annie Spence

Kirkus review

A librarian delivers a charming epistolary volume that begs to be read with pencil in hand. In her debut book, Spence celebrates some of modern literature's darlings while scathingly reducing other works to pulp. Covering selections from across a vast range of subjects and genres, the author delivers flirty essays and cruel-to-be-kind rejection letters to books as she "weeds" her library's collection. Unafraid to take shots at publishing's most lucrative franchises, her letters to Nicholas Sparks and the Twilight series convey the exasperation of a woman who has seen these books checked out constantly while worthier books remain on the shelf. "You made me say 'erotica' to an old lady, Grey," Spence admonishes E.L. James' *Grey: Fifty Shades of Grey as Told by Christian*. "I'm going to hate you forever for that!" Valedictions to obscure nonfiction works—e.g., *Better Homes and Gardens Dieting for One*—signal shifting societal mores and remind us of the never-ending nature of a librarian's job curating a collection. "Just looking at you makes me feel as if I'm squandering my life," she writes to *The Leisure Alternatives Catalog, 1979*. "We can't all be art-cinema buffs and sailing experts like you." Readers will find plenty to agree with—the letter to the Frog and Toad books is delightful—and plenty to take issue with—only one work of Russian literature is included—as well as an amusingly disproportionate amount of time devoted to the work of Jeffrey Eugenides. We also get letters to nonbooks that every bookish person will appreciate: a love letter to the library in *Beauty and the Beast*, a note to an acquaintance's too-perfect bookshelf. In the hearty second section, Spence provides a useful list of references, recommendations, and resources. Among the other notable works discussed include books by Agatha Christie, Stephen King, Walter Mosley, and Judy Blume. A smart, funny, forthright librarian in book form.

Librarian of Auschwitz by Antonio Iturbe

SLJ review

Gr 8 Up—Based on the true story of Holocaust survivor Dita Kraus, this novel features a protagonist who exemplifies courage in the face of death. Fourteen-year-old Dita is imprisoned at Auschwitz along with her mother and father in the "family camp." Her work assignment is to assist the Jewish leader in charge of Block 31, a section created to entertain the children so that their family can work. This block has many secrets, but the most important is that eight books were smuggled in by Jewish prisoners. Dita has been entrusted with their care, making her "the Librarian of Auschwitz." As time passes on, she becomes aware that Dr. Mengele has taken an interest in her, and while she is terrified that "Doctor Death" is paying attention to her, she finds the courage to protect her books, family, and friends at all costs. Throughout, well-known Nazi leaders and lesser-known Jewish heroes play pivotal roles, making the connection with the historical elements of the horrors of Auschwitz, and later Bergen-Belsen more credible and relatable. Despite being a fictional retelling of a true story, this novel is one that could easily be recommended or taught alongside Elie Wiesel's *Night* and *The Diary of Anne Frank* and a text

that, once read, will never be forgotten. VERDICT A hauntingly authentic Holocaust retelling; a must for YA collections.—Stephanie Wilkes, Good Hope Middle School, West Monroe, LA

Reminder: request Advance Reader Copies from UHLS (to keep!) at <http://horizon.uhls.lib.ny.us/cgi-bin/reports/arc.pl>

Next meetings: February 1 SRP workshop at Schenectady Co. PL, March 9, April 26 (Teen Librarian Meetup at EGRN), May 11, June 8

Quote of the day:

If you find yourself thinking “*I don’t need this title because we don’t really have many X readers here,*” your privilege is showing. You have probably never had to open more than one or two books in a row in order to find a character who looks/speaks/lives like you do. That is privilege. And whether we intend it to or not, our privilege influences our thinking and our decisions.

This is a problem because our decisions affect the capabilities of young readers to find books in which they can find themselves and in which they can meet new people. Confronting our privilege is hard. It is uncomfortable. . . [and] the ability of every child I serve to feel valuable and see themselves as a beautiful, complex individual is what hangs in the balance. Amy Koester, Selection Is A Privilege