Notes: KUCLC 2018

Notes from my University Children’s Literature Conference book talk:

**News:**

1. We lost these children’s authors in the past year;
   Michael Pond - author of Paddington and Olga da Polga
   Jean Marzollo - I Spy books and many others
   Julius Lester - best know for his version of Uncle Remus
   Ursula LeGuin - the Wizard of Earthsea series
   Russell Freedman - amazing non-fiction writer
   Iona Opie - nursery rhyme and play rhyme collector
   Anne Rockwell - informational picture books

2. Jane Yolen published her 365th book this Spring.

3. Beverly Cleary is 103 years old

**Memes and Themes:** things that crop up in more than one book.

Orphans that wash up on shore. I call this the “Moses Complex”. *Orphan Island, Beyond the Bright Sea.* I read a review of a THIRD book with the Moses complex. Alas, I cannot remember it or find the review.

Fathers. Most of the fathers - in books that featured families - were active and engaged even if they lived apart. This was notable in books about poor and/or racially diverse families. A nice trend!

Poor and racially diverse students attending private schools on scholarship. This is not a new theme. However, in the current books, most of these students are more comfortable with themselves and have more, if sometimes misguided support from the adults around them.

Characters from classic books appearing in new situations. Sherlock Holmes, the Bronte’s characters, Jane Austen’s characters - they or their offspring’s offspring show up in books of note.

Escaped prisoners: Two books out this Spring and Summer feature escapees. *Breakout, and Wild Blues*

**MORE Books:**

*Turtles All the Way Down* by John Green. Aza fights her anxiety and OCD while helping her Best Friend EVER hunt for a billionaire in hopes of getting a reward for finding him.

*Saints and Misfits* by S. K. Ali. An observant Muslim high school student likes a non-Muslim boy, is assaulted by the mosque’s favorite teen, deals with the return of her older brother and his engagement to “saint” Sarah, the model of things acceptable.
The Night Diary by Veera Hiranandani. In 1947, Pakistan and India separate and violence breaks out between Muslim and Hindo factions. Nisha is half and half but she is not safe on either side. She, her father and her brother must flee their home. Nisha writes letters to her dead mother that tell the story of the family's flight.

Other Stuff:

Cynthia Rylant's Rosetown is out now - new book about adventures in a small town.

New Fly Guy book out next week Fly Guy and the Alienzz by Todd Arnold

Erin Entrada Kelly's new book You Go First is about finding good friends online - and internet Scrabble.

Vera Brosgol's Be Prepared graphic novel features misadventures at summer camp.

Emergency Contact is out this week. Two lonely strangers risk becoming intimate. I actually read a portion - and it looks good. Mary H. K. Choi

More Artemis Fowl family books coming out - The Fowl Twins is out in February

Boots on the Ground about Vietnam by Elizabeth Partridge came out last week.

The Button War by Avi turns a playground game into a deadly battle - set in Poland in WWI.

My Plain Jane is a take off on Jane Eyre putting Jane and Charlotte Bronte at the same school at the same time.

The Golden Thread by Colin Meloy about Pete Seeger comes out in October of this year.

The Cardboard Kingdom - kids create costumes that they claim imbue them with special powers. Their parents weigh on their character choices. Illustrations show the difference between how they see themselves and what their costumes look like. Chad Sell, June

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