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Oyan Review

oregon young adult network

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2014 ALA Annual Las Vegas Highlights and Celebrating the Alex Award By Danielle Jones, Multnomah County Library-Hollywood

There is nothing like 13,000 library folk descending on Sin City during 110-degree weather. How is one to don their favorite cardigan in that? Outside of the conference, 110-degree weather makes for some interesting fashion choices, or should I say complete lack of fashion choice, it is amazing what you do with a little duct tape, (and I wish I could say a little goes a long way, but not always).

OYAN was kind enough to give me scholarship to help fund the cost of attending the conference.

This year I am currently serving as administrative assistant to the Alex Award Committee, so most of my time spent at the conference was in committee meetings. Still, there was enough networking and tapping into the buzz to know what the big take-aways of the conference were.

If you haven't had a chance to read through YALSA's [The Future of Library Services for and with Teens: A Call to Action](#) already, you can start with the [executive summary](#), but it is worth your

while to delve deeper into the [full report](#). Many workshops focused on supporting libraries in the ways outlined in the report in "How will we get there? What do libraries need to do?" The steps it sees are:

1. Embracing our role as facilitator rather than expert.
2. Refocusing beyond our traditional roles and traditional measurements of success.
3. Partnering strategically to reach beyond the library's walls.
4. Creating a whole-library and whole-



Continued on page 2

STEM programming for the non-scientist, thanks to the MythBusters by Sonja Somerville, Salem Public Library

I made a magical discovery that saved (one day of) my summer and engaged eager teens in learning fun.

After my Teen Advisory Board suggested "something like MythBusters" would make a good program to go with the Spark a Reaction Summer Reading Club, I thought I might have to call in reinforcements to get it done. Venturing out online for a

few ideas, I quickly discovered that the MythBusters themselves had already come to my rescue.

<http://www.mythbusterstheexhibition.com/educators/>

Right there at my fingertips were 10 fully formed activities with complete instruction, supply lists, and explanations about what makes them legitimately "science-y." Better yet,

they hit on different areas of science and different skill sets and used easy to find, inexpensive materials.

I chose the five that seemed most do-able with a large group and prepared for the 40 middle and high school students that I thought were coming. When 55 showed up, I found myself very grateful that I tend to over-purchase supplies.



Stable structures building test.

Continued on page 2

2014 ALA Annual Las Vegas Highlights (Continued from Page 1)

school approach to serving teens in physical spaces and online.

- Supporting library staff in gaining new skills.

Colleagues that were able to attend workshops commented that many focused on supported [Connected Learning](#). Traci Glass of the Eugene Public Library commented during the Summer OYAN meeting in reference to the conference and Connected Learning is that “many of us are already doing this.” We all care about creating interesting, thoughtful programs for our teens that meet their interests and information needs. For myself, getting a better understanding of the philosophy behind Connected Learning has really helped to put my work with teens into focus, and has given me better tools to advocate for the work that we do.

Serving this year as the administrative assistant to the Alex Award Committee has been an enlightening experience. I am not an actual voting member, my main duties so far have been to serve as liaison between the committee and publishers, keep the group organized, support the chair, and research eligibility. As a fairly new youth librarian, I have spent a lot of time focused on learning all that I can about the books published as YA that I have forgotten how as a teen it was mainly adult books that I read outside of school that showed me that there was more out there to look forward in life, and showed me the power of writing. Books like *Minor Characters* by Joyce Johnson, *Beloved* by Toni Morrison, *Jitterbug Perfume* by Tom Robbins, Hurston’s *Their Eyes Were Watching God*,

and Tan’s *The Joy Luck Club* are all books that I remember being pivotal to me as a teen reader. I see the Alex Award as fostering that. Turning teens into lifelong readers by highlighting some of the best books out there that they can find beyond the teen bookshelves in the library and bookstore.

Past Alex Award are great to be familiar with for those harder reader’s advisory moments where you have the teen that has read everything. It is exciting to see a couple of past winners (*Ready Player One* and *Mr. Penumbra’s 24-hour Bookstore*) on this year’s Oregon Battle of the Books. The 2014 titles is another fantastic list with my personal favorites of Abigail Tarttelin’s *Golden Boy*, John Searles’ *Help for the Haunted*, and Lucy Knisley’s *Relish* just to

name a few. To read more on the Alex Awards Presentation from ALA Annual, Paige Battle, 2015 Alex Award Chair and Grant High School Librarian in Portland wrote a great piece for YALSA’s Hub <http://www.yalsa.org/thehub/2014/07/08/ala-2014-the-alex-awards-presentation/>. The Alex Award winners are so important to teens to bridge the transition from teen reader to lifelong reader and have a place in all collections serving teens.



STEM programming for the non-scientist (Continued from Page 1)

Here are some thoughts about the activities I chose that might be helpful to someone planning a similar program:

Spin It – Paper helicopters – Deceptively simple, really cheap, and lots of fun. Kids really got into thinking up creative modifications to improve (or not) their tiny helicopters.

Reflexes – Catching a falling ruler – Too easy, too fast, and not very interesting.



Mythbusters Superhero Strength Activity

Better to find another activity.

Airspeed – Balloons traveling down strings – Blowing up

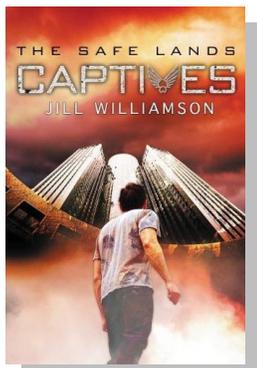
balloons and letting them go is just plain fun – even when their movement is controlled by a string track. I ramped up this one by setting up tracks with several different kinds of string.

Superhero Strength– Endurance test with a rubber band across your fingers – another simple, cheap activity that the participants enjoyed a great deal. Best quote of the night from a kid with

crazy long endurance, “Finally, all those hours playing video games are paying off!”

Stable Structures – Building and testing marshmallow and toothpick structures – Hands down, the best activity of the bunch. The participants built some amazing structures. Some kids would have happily spent the rest of the week designing and building.

The Safe Lands series by Jill Williamson reviewed by Mary A. Hake, Wagner Community Library



This dystopian trilogy transports readers to 2088 America, where much destruction has devastated the earth and many people suffer from a plague. Citizens ensconced within the area known as the Safe Lands cannot bear unafflicted offspring. In fact, their reproduction and child-rearing methods are not what we'd call "family friendly." The people there pursue pleasure before being "liberated."

Their only hope is to bring

in outsiders who are uninfected. Brothers Levi, Mason, and Omar each play a major role in the story but are often antagonistic to each other. Schemes, betrayal, kidnapping, murder, and advanced technology add drama. Can those imprisoned be rescued or do they even want to return to their simple, old-fashioned lifestyle?

In the second novel, the women from Glenrock have escaped from the harem, including sixteen-year-old Shaylinn, who is expecting twins from the implant procedure.

Mason, Omar, and Levi strive to help their community and plan to free the children who are being held as the "future" of Safe Lands. Mason has discovered something strange

going on in the medical treatment for the plague, for which he hopes to find a cure, and tries to uncover hidden history and suspicious agendas in this supposedly "safe" land. Omar can't overcome his addiction to stimulants, which could compromise his ability to effectively complete his mission. Levi struggles to find his way as leader and in relating to his brothers.

Romantic threads play a role in the unfolding story too. Red wants Omar, but he's growing tired of her demands. Shaylinn wonders if she and Omar could ever work as a couple, but he now has the plague. Kendall, the former "queen" who recently birthed baby Promise, also competes for Omar's attention. Mason and Ciddah, his

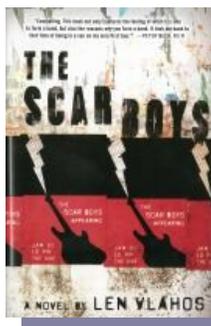
supervisor, are attracted to each other, but this relationship might prove dangerous. Who can be trusted? Award-winning author Jill Williamson leaves us majorly hanging at the end of the first two books, *Captives* and *Outcasts*. The third one, *Rebels*, released in August, so readers can now devour the entire series without having to wait while yelling at the author for the cliffhanger endings. In the concluding volume, the scattered remnant fights to survive and overthrow the "safe" government. Will this rebellion mean their deaths or the end of the "safe" way of life?

This series is from Blink and available in print and e-book.

Check out Page 8 for an interview with the author Jill Williamson.

The Scar Boys by Len Vlahos reviewed by Elvira Sanchez Kisser, Woodburn Public Library

A story told in a form of a college personal essay about the journey of "Harry," Harbinger Robert Francis Jones, the kid who was almost struck by lightning, his struggles to live with his scars, his trouble finding friendship, and eventually learning to find solace in music. Harry navigates through school being bullied because of his scars and lives a life of solitude. Until the day



comes when he is befriended by Johnny, the good looking athlete, who becomes his first friend and teaches him about friendship, betrayal, and acceptance. Even though the idea of starting a band wasn't his, Harry learns to find salvation and confidence through creating and performing music which changes him forever.

Harry's story is told through a series of short chapters with song head-

ings providing a theme and a great soundtrack for those who know the music. The story is set in the 1980's so the music will probably not be familiar to most teens of this generation, given that many are fairly obscure songs to begin with. Those that are interested in music may take the time to look up the music online, but I fear for many they will ignore the references. Though the story has many musical references, the story is about Harry living with his physical and emotional scars from being

burned as a child and learning how others react to him, such as his dad calling him a "toaster". Vlahos peppers his writing with geeky references to Star Wars and Star Trek, decision making lists, and fantasy scenarios that bring a lightheartedness to some of the more serious scenes, such as getting bullied or getting over a broken heart. Overall an engaging story for teens and adults alike that will provide a glimpse of why people form bands and what music can mean for these people.

Maker Idea: Glass Jar Collage by Elvira Sanchez Kissler, Woodburn Public Library



This summer I showed the Woodburn teens an interesting technique used by many artists to incorporate collages in their paintings or drawings and that photographers have used to mount their images on different materials like glass or wood called an image lift/transfer using acrylic medium. The image and ink are suspended in the acrylic medium enabling the removal of the paper backing and transferring of the image to other material backings.

In our maker session we created luminescent glass jars with collaged images printed from the laser printer or cut out from magazines. The process took the full two hours we had planned which allowed them to spend some time on the computers printing out images they wanted to use.

Here are the steps and materials needed for this project.

Materials:

- Preserving jars (usually easily found on sale during the summer months)
- Acrylic gel medium (matte or glossy, I used matte for this project)
- synthetic bristle brushes
- Hair Dryer
- Tray, plate, or shallow tub for soaking the paper
- Scissors
- Magazine pictures or printed images from laser or inkjet printer

Distribute small amount in paper cups of acrylic medium, brushes and shallow dishes of water to each teen. Begin by brushing a thin coat of acrylic medium evenly across the image in one direction, then again in the other direction. The image should be coated with two coats then blow dried on the cool setting until the image is dry. Repeat the coating and drying before moving onto soaking the paper.

Make sure to trim the image to the exact size wanted on the glass before

soaking the image.

After trimming lay photos image side down in shallow trays of warm water. The warm water will help soften the paper and removal will be easier. Soak the image between one and five minutes before rubbing the paper backing.

Once the image has soaked, leave print in the water and start gently rubbing the paper side remov-



ing the backing. This will take time and patience. The gel film that remains will be fragile and if torn can be pieced back together when placing on the glass jar.

Once all the paper backing has been removed, brush a thin coat of matte medium on the glass jar. Carefully remove film from water and blot excess wa-

ter off. Then place image side up on the coated area of the glass jar. At this time you can carefully piece tears together and move until in the correct spot.

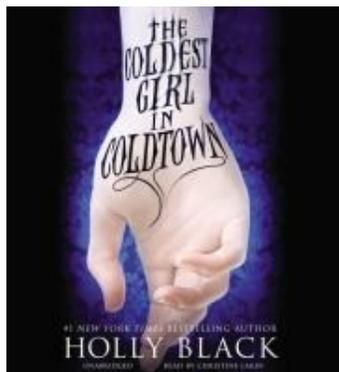
Continue to add more images to the jar until it is filled and they can also place images on top of each other in a collage form. Once completed, a thin coat of matte medium can be varnished on top of the images, this is op-

tional. Then let the jars dry. The completed jars can be used as a lamp with candles or with a LED light. Variations on the candle holder include punching holes in the lid to create a starlight pattern, the center can be removed for the flame, or adding a thin bendable wire wrapped around the jar lip create a handle on top for hanging.



Completed jars by teen group.

Coldest Girl In Coldtown by Holly Black, read by Christine Lakin reviewed by Kristy Kemper Hodge, Corvallis-Benton County Public Library



Recently, I listened to the audiobook of Holly Black's *The Coldest Girl in Coldtown*, read by Christine Lakin, and I highly recommend giving it a listen. This is vampires as you have never experienced them before! Black creates a semi-post apocalyptic world, a world where vampirism spreads like a disease and infected cities are quarantined behind

guarded walls and called Coldtowns. At the center of this story is Tana, a strong 17-year-old girl, older sister, and general bad-ass who rises to the ever-escalating occasion as the story progresses.

Tana wakes in a farmhouse at the end of an all-night party as the lone uninfected survivor of a vampire massacre. She rescues her infected, charismatic ex-boyfriend and a chained up vampire, who then join her on a madcap adventure to a famous Coldtown. On their journey they encounter many dangers along the way, including violent vampires hunting them down, crazed vampire wannabes, and themselves as they deal with their own vampirism

and infection. Well-timed flashbacks fill in Tana's horrific back story as well as the impact of her nationally-broadcasted story on her family. Once they arrive in Coldtown, there are increasingly terrifying dangers to be faced and Tana is constantly pushed further and further down a road to brutality just to survive.

With twists and turns you won't expect – and some that you will see coming due to Black's subtle foreshadowing – this compelling story will have you ensnared. It's got just the right blend of action, suspense, gore, horror, romance, and humor as only Holly Black can deliver. Hopefully, you, like me, will find yourself thinking about

the characters and their mad world whenever you're not reading or listening to this excellent new teen vampire novel. The characters are incredibly engaging and endlessly fascinating. This is especially so because of Christine Lakin's skillful voice acting; she has distinct, identifiable voices for each of the characters that help them come alive in the listener's mind.

If you like fast-paced, enthralling stories with a sci-fi-fantasy twist and appreciate a great voice actor, then give this audiobook a listen. I dare you to turn it off midway or not spend your non-listening time thinking about the characters who you will doubtlessly get attached to.

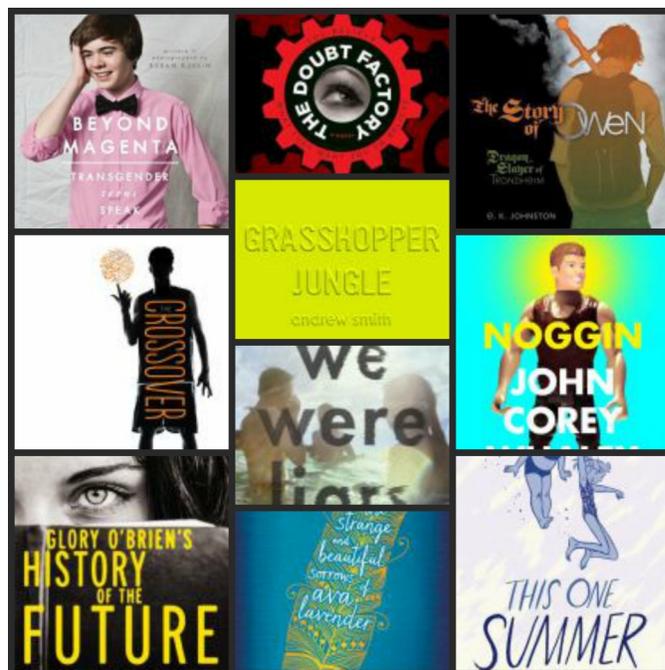
Announcing 2015 Mock Printz Reading List By Susan Smallsreed, OYAN Mock Printz Committee

Save the date, **Saturday, January 24, 2015**, and plan to attend the FREE 2015 Mock Printz workshop. We'll call for registration at a later date. In the meantime, start reading and analyzing the following...

- *Grasshopper Jungle* by Andrew Smith
- *This One Summer* by Tamaki
- *We Were Liars* by E. Lockhart
- *The Story of Owen: Dragon Slayer of Trondheim* by E.K. Johnston
- *The Strange and Beautiful Sorrows of Ava Lavender* by Leslye Walton
- *Glory O'Brien's History of the Future* by A.S. King
- *The Crossover* by Kwame Alexander
- *Beyond Magenta: Transgender Teens Speak Out* by Susan Kuklin
- *Noggin* by John Corey Whaley
- *Doubt Factory* by Paolo Bacigalupi

Lavendar by Leslye Walton

Remember, we welcome teen participation in the workshop, so share this list with your teen readers!



Back to School: Making New Connections

by April Witteveen, Deschutes Public Library (originally appeared in the YALSA blog)



Courtesy of the National Library of Australia <http://nla.gov.au/nla.pic-an24229822>

With the end of summer reading and learning programs on the horizon, thoughts turn to the quickly approaching school year (perhaps with a well-earned vacation in between...). For front-line public librarians, it's a new year full of opportunities to make connections with area school library staff. Perhaps you've tried this type of outreach in the past with minimal success; maybe there's been a staffing change at a school where you've had a continuous presence but now you're not sure how things will go. If you're lucky

enough to have an excellent relationships that will pick up right where you left off, then share your advice in the comments at <http://oyan-peeps.wordpress.com>.

This is not a time to be retreating, this is a time to sell your incredible and unique services and support for both students and teachers. Stepping outside your comfort zone and making a tough cold call, email, or in-person visit can yield amazing results. Here are some ideas on how you could get started:

- Create a one-sheet that clearly and succinctly lays out what your services are (instruction/database presentations, book talks, lunchtime outreach, etc.). Include this in a promotional packet with library swag and business cards, and deliver to school libraries

- Browse online staff directories of area schools to identify teachers who might be most likely to take you up on services: traditionally this would be language arts and social studies teachers, but with the STEM/STEAM movement it's time to expand our message to science and technology teachers.
- Try a lunch time outreach pilot project in conjunction with school library staff. This could be a lunch book club meeting or providing a presence in the cafeteria with library information and swag to bring attention to you and your public library. This also helps you create relationships with students and school staff.
- Check in with career and college preparation offices in your high schools to let them know about your resources and services for this

population. You could find out about hosting a booth at college and career fairs.

These ideas all sound great at the outset-- but then what? Patience and perseverance! Follow up is going to be incredibly important-- we don't want to pester but we want to be sure that our message is heard. Being aware of any school's given reality is also important; perhaps they are going through an intense testing year or drastically changing their curriculum. Both of these situations have impacted my own school outreach in the past, but hooray, it's a brand new year! It's also great to reassure school library workers that we aren't looking to take over their jobs or their libraries, we want to add value and create relationships that will help students succeed and give teachers additional support.

My strange summer discovery: Teens LOVE Perler Beads

by Sonja Somerville, Salem Public Library



Teen working on a minions.

It all started because I needed an activity and we

had SO MANY Perler Beads and I was looking for a third station for a craft program. My small stroke of genius was investing a few hours in looking up and printing "teen interest" Perler Bead patterns.

There are hundreds. I found:

- Dr. Who themes
- Hello Kitty
- Minecraft
- My Little Pony

- Angry Birds
- Super Mario
- Hunger Games
- Despicable Me
- Spongebob Squarepants
- Star Wars

The teens flocked to the table, boys and girls alike. I could hardly pry them away from the table at the end of the night. It was so popular, I trotted it all out again at our End-of-Summer Party where kids were so desperate for ac-

cess, they were sitting on the floor with their trays of beads and Perler boards just to get in on the fun.



Group of teen perlers.

2014 OYAN Fall Workshop and Quarterly Membership Meeting By Sonja Somerville, Salem Public Library

An open invitation to the Oregon Young Adult Network (OYAN) Fall Workshop and Quarterly Membership Meeting ...
A Focus on Non-Fiction for Young Adults: Selection, Suggestions, and How It All Relates to Supporting the Common Core

10 a.m.-12 noon Friday, October 24

US Bank Room at Multnomah County Library's Central Library
801 SW 10th Ave., Portland

The OYAN Fall Workshop brings a focus on building stronger, more useful non-fiction collections, responding both to the interests of teen readers and the changing needs driven by the adoption of Common Core in the schools. At this FREE workshop, presenters will discuss best practices for assessing non-fiction texts for young adults, highlight excellent non-fiction graphic novels and narrative non-fiction, and discuss the impacts and realities of Common Core adoption.

Presenters include:

Jen Maurer, School Library Consultant, Oregon State Library – The Low-Down on the Common Core and How Non-Fiction Selectors Should Respond

Ruth Allen, Multnomah County Library – Assessing Non-Fiction Texts for Young Adults

Sonja Somerville, Salem Public Library – Narrative Non-Fiction Booktalks and Booklist

Traci Glass, Eugene Public Library – Non-Fiction Graphic Novels Booktalks and Booklist

So we can be sure to have the right number of seats and handouts prepared, please email OYAN Chair Sonja Somerville (ssomerville@cityofsalem.net) if you plan to come!

After a break for lunch (plenty of great options in downtown Portland!), the Fall Workshop will be followed by the OYAN Quarterly Meeting from 1-4 p.m. Stay for ...

- Resource sharing—programming and other great ideas
- Discussion: How is your Teen Summer Reading program structured?
- Vote on the annual budget
- Reports and updates

2015 Book Raves Nominations by Sonja Somerville, Salem Public Library

We have the promising beginnings of a list of nominations for the 2015 OYAN Book Rave list. All we need now is a nomination (or two or three ...) from YOU!

Nominations should be for excellent fiction or non-fiction young adult books published between **November 1, 2013 and October 31, 2014**. (*Graphic novels will be addressed separately through the Graphic Rave nomination process.*)

Please tell us about any book you think is worthy,

but I will note that we have a particularly lively interest in hearing about books that represent cultural diversity, books suitable for middle-grade readers, and non-fiction selections.

The books nominated to date can be viewed on at:

[goodreads](http://www.goodreads.com)

(<http://tinyurl.com/jwrhyma>) or an Excel file can be emailed to you upon request.

When you send a nomination, please include:

- Title
- Author

- Month and year of publication
- Genre
- 2-5 suggested tags
- A brief synopsis (not required, but encouraged!)

Nominations will be accepted until December 1.

Please send all nominations to ssomerville@cityofsalem.net.



Interview with Jill Williamson, author of *The Safe Lands Trilogy* Interviewed by Elvira Sanchez Kissler



Author, Jill Williamson

Jill Williamson, award-winning author of several young adult books including the *Blood of Kings* trilogy, *Replication*, the *Mission League* series, and the *Safe Lands* trilogy. She also enjoys working with teenagers and gives writing workshops at libraries, schools, camps, and churches. And she was kind of enough to be interviewed for our newsletter.

Can you tell us a little about your latest dystopian series, *Safe Lands*?

Sure! The people who live in the *Safe Lands* are dying of a plague. Their scientists need uninfected people to study if they're going to find a way to survive. So *Safe Lands* enforcers raid the village of Glenrock and take the survivors captive. The series follows three of those captive brothers. Levi wants to get his people—and his fiancé—out of the *Safe Lands* and back to life as normal. Mason would like to help find a cure for the

thin plague, which would solve the problem for good. And Omar thinks life in the *Safe Lands* is so much better than what he had in Glenrock. The series follows each brother as they strive to succeed in their goals and become drawn into the plight of the *Safe Lands* people.

Your final book in the *Safe Lands* series, *Rebels*, has just been released, how do you feel and do you think you will revisit this world again?

It always feels good to finish a series and hear that my readers are satisfied. The only way I might revisit this world would be to publish the prequel, which takes place in current day and follows the story of the three brothers' grandfather when he was a teenager. That book is called *Thirst*, and I've written about half of it. So I might have to finish it someday.

While you were writing, did you ever feel as if you were one of the characters?

I always feel as if I am every point-of-view character as I'm writing the book. I think that helps me really get into their heads. Sort of like acting. I need to know what it feels like to be each of those people if I'm going to portray them well in print.

Where do you seek inspiration for your stories?

For me, ideas are everywhere! I just look around me. One way is finding the right "What if?" question. Sometimes an idea will just pop into my head, like the idea for *Replication*. I was riding in a car on our way to pick apples. We passed farm after farm and I thought, "What if there was a farm that grew people? Clones. They could call it Jason Farms!" And I was ready to start writing!

Another thing I like to do is combine two unrelated things. For my *Blood of Kings* trilogy, I was on a walk with my son and we came upon a house that had burned down. There was a tree in the yard that was half charred and half leafy green. I thought it was the coolest image. I ran home and Photo-shopped it. I knew I wanted to write a story about that tree. But on its own that wasn't good enough. So I eventually combined the tree, or the idea of a land half-cursed in darkness, with telepathy. And that was enough to get me going.

What books/authors have most influenced your writing?

J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series were the books that made me want to be a writer. I was so taken in by her story-world building ...

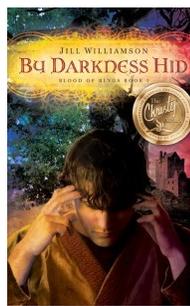
I wanted to do something similar. And world building is one of my favorite aspects of writing speculative fiction. I also love Tolkien, Peretti, and Jane Austen, though I don't know how much Jane's work has influenced my own.

Is there anything you find particularly challenging in your writing?

Getting that first draft written is always my biggest challenge. I love editing. I love going back in and adding details and perfecting my world and planting clues. But I can't do any of that until I write the first draft. And that sometimes takes me a while, especially on the first book in a new series when I am creating a world and haven't got it all figured out yet.

On your website, you state that you are a Whovian. Which doctor is your favorite, and what do you like most about him?

The Tenth Doctor is my favorite. I love David Tennant. I love his voice, his crazy hair, that long coat, his pinstripes, his glasses, his sneakers. I think the fact that he became an actor with the goal of one day playing the Doctor makes him the very best at it. He just IS the Doctor to me.



Interview with Jill Williamson, continued from page 8

Do you have any advice to librarians on how to inspire teens interested in writing?

Encourage them to finish their first draft. So many new writers get stuck rewriting, trying to perfect their beginning. And they'll spend years writing and never finish a book. Give them permission to write horrible first drafts. That's what I do. Because I know that I will fix it later. And I also know that I can't fix it until I have something to fix. I can't paint my pottery until I create the pot! Writers learn so much from finishing a book. It's something they must do.

Give them books like *Self-Editing for Fiction Writers* by Browne and King, *Writing for Dummies* by Randy Ingermanson, or anything by James Scott Bell. I learned so much from writing-craft books, and those are some of my favorites.

And you can also send them to check out the www.GoTeenWriters.com blog. We blog five days a week for teen writers. There they can connect with a community of other teen writers, find critique partners, and enter contests that will continually encourage them.

So you are a Photoshop



addict, did you have any influence in your cover designs and do they meet your expectations? If you didn't what would you have liked to see on your book covers?

I have been so blessed in my book covers. I think they're all beautiful. I did have some influence. Each publisher asked me to fill out a form on which I was able to describe my characters and scenes from the books.

But the publishers and graphic artists took that information and came up with their own ideas. I love my covers. The only one I designed myself is the cover of *Storyworld First*. I did that myself because I was in a hurry to have it ready before Salt Lake Comic Con, and I couldn't find a designer to work on such short notice.

You worked as a fashion assistant before becoming a writer, has your experiences as a fashion assistant helped you in your writing, if so how?

I think all my life experiences help my writing because they made me who I am.

Specifically, though, the fashion industry taught me about cutthroat business, about being the little guy, about being under-appreciated. It also taught me that sometimes our dreams aren't what we

hoped they'd be, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't chase them anyway. It also taught me that I should always respect my dream, whatever it is. I did that for fashion. I studied and worked hard for almost ten years. It was a fascinating time in my life, and I'm so glad I went for it.

When I first started writing, I'd forgotten that. I thought, *How hard could it be to write a book?* I figured anyone could do it. But I was wrong. When I first started writing, I hadn't respected the dream at all, and it showed! When it hit me, I pretty much put myself back to school. I spend the next four years honing my craft, writing, writing, writing. I read every writing craft book I could get my hands on. I went to more conferences. I learned everything I could. And it made a huge difference.

Can you give us your top 5 current YA author recommendations?

Brandon Sanderson. Anything by him is brilliant, but his YA series is called *Steelheart*. I love Megan Whalen Turner's books, *The Thief*, *The Queen of Attolia*, *The King of Attolia*. I adore Shannon Dittmore's *Angel Eyes* trilogy. Then I'll have to say Suz-

anne Collins and her *Hunger Games* and J. K. Rowling and her Harry Potter books, of which only the last four were YA. Both those series were so perfectly executed that I marvel each time I read them.



Can you share a little about what you are currently working on with us?

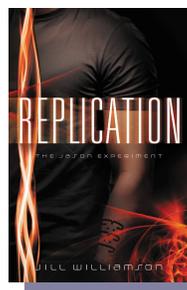
Yes! I'm writing an epic fantasy trilogy tentatively called *The Kinsman Chronicles*. The first book, *King's Folly*, will come out in September 2015.

Here is the logline for book one: In a fantasy world, a grieving prince struggles to solve his beloved's murder—a mystery that uncovers a conspiracy of apocalyptic proportions.

This series takes place on the same planet as my *Blood of Kings* series. These are some of Achan's ancestors, so the story happens long before Achan was born. I hope my readers will enjoy it!

Thank you for taking the time for this interview for the Oregon Young Adult Network Review.

Thanks so much for talking with me! Come find me online at www.JillWilliamson.com, and we'll talk more.



OYAN: Finding great reads for Oregon teens!



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ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 2015 OYAN Book Rave nominations due Dec. 1, 2015
- OYAN Mock Printz—Saturday, January 24, 2015

We welcome all your comments, articles, photos, book reviews, ideas, and suggestions for future OYAN Review newsletters, blog or Facebook! Please submit to oyanpublications@gmail.com.

Upcoming Meetings

Fall Workshop and Meeting 2014	October 24 10 am—12 pm workshop; 1-4 pm meeting	Portland (MCL Central Library)
Winter Meeting 2015	January 16	Woodburn Public Library
Spring Meeting 2015	TBA	TBA

OYAN [Oregon Young Adult Network] exists to provide a network for communication and growth among people who provide library services to teens, to increase awareness of teen library services in the state of Oregon, and to promote cooperation between school and public libraries.

Visit us online at <http://tinyurl.com/8mzjq5n>.