CHAPTER 10 Evaluating, Promoting, and Using Young Adult Books

Archetypes in Literature and Pop Culture

Another template activity is to work with archetypes as they are reflected in literature and in pop culture. A benefit of supervising student teachers is that we get to see successful classroom activities, and the one that excited us this year was on archetypes taught by Cynthia Kiefer and her student teacher, Jessica Zellner, at Saguaro High School in Scottsdale. On our third visit, we walked in and found every bulletin board and practically every chalkboard and every inch of the wall covered with one-page "posters." Cynthia said it was the only assignment she had ever given where every student in every class followed through and brought in their work to be explained to the other students and pinned or taped up for everyone to see. Each poster had a downloaded picture of a celebrity or a character from a film, a television show, or an advertising campaign, plus the identification of an archetype and a couple of paragraphs written by the student explaining why this character fit into the particular archetype. The most surprising part was that we saw very few duplicates of the specific characters, but many repeats of particular archetypes being illustrated.

Studying archetypes is a perfect way to bring some consistency and commonality to discussions and considerations of the variety of literacy experiences illustrated through the Media Watch in Chapter 3 and in the comments from students taking our survey. Working with archetypes helps people understand the circular way in which literature and popular culture work together to create the collective unconscious, that is, those images related to the deepest, most permanent aspects of people's lives including death, fear, love, ambition, the biological family, and the unknown.

Carl Jung, Joseph Campbell, and Northrop Frye have all written on how these images find their way into people's minds and underlie the way we communicate with each other. People not privy to such cultural images could not understand the thirty-second commercials we watch on television, the cartoons that tell a whole story in one picture, and the cover lines that attract us to magazine stories, and so forth. The small "bubbles" from which comic strip characters speak allow for only a few words, while the small screens on cell phones used for Instant Messaging encourage the creation of even more succinct messages. This push toward efficient communication promotes a reliance on archetypal images in which just three or four words or the mention of a name is enough to trigger full-blown images in the minds of readers or listeners.

Beth Ricks, one of our Ph.D. graduates who now teaches at the University of Louisiana–Monroe, wrote to tell us about her frustrations in trying to get the high school students she was teaching to approach literature through a critical lens or perspective. They would lose interest long before she could teach them the backgrounds for Marxism or feminist theory, or even Reader-Response,

> But when I used archetype theory as a way to introduce mythology and Homer's *Odyssey*, they were actively involved. And I realized it's because they already have the foundation with archetypes because the archetypes are part of the subconscious and myth is part of who we are. They easily picked up the concept of looking at texts through an archetypal lens. So far, we have applied archetypes to film, music, the newspaper, magazines, and of course, the *Odyssey*. We watched *Shrek* in class, and they saw it through new eyes. . . . With my senior class, we watched an Adam Sandler movie and they wrote essays in which they traced the Innocent's Journey. They loved this exercise and from it realized that many of the books they had previously read included an Innocent embarking on a journey.[2]

In closing, she said the best part was that her students had fun and that for the first time they understood they could criticize literary texts without being negative. And long after the class studied archetypes, students were still identifying and arguing about the archetypal roles of particular characters. In a spillover to real life, one of her students reported on how she tried to calm her parents by explaining the nature of the archetypal Seeker when they were upset about their popular new minister's resigning and going to "find himself" in a different town. They weren't impressed until she explained the concept of a Shadow Seeker as someone who has the archetypal characteristics to such an extent that they go beyond reason—for example, the interfering mother-in-law as a Caregiver or the control freak or micromanager as a Leader or Ruler.

The following are brief descriptions of archetypes that we have found easy for students to understand and to "discover" in both the popular culture and in the literature we are reading. We took most of these from Carol S. Pearson's *Awakening the Heroes Within: Twelve Archetypes to Help Us Find Ourselves and Transform Our World* (HarperOne, 1991), but over the years we've changed the descriptions and added a couple of new ones, including the Junex versus the Senex.

The Innocent Embarking on a Journey This most archetypal of all stories begins with a young person setting out either willingly or through some kind of coercion on a journey or a quest and meeting frightening and terrible challenges. After proving his or her worth, the young person receives help from divine or unexpected sources. Even though a sacrifice is usually demanded, readers rejoice in the success of the young protagonist as when David slays Goliath, when Cinderella is united with the noble prince and given the fitting role of queen, and when Dorothy and Toto find their way back to Kansas. In every culture, legends, myths, and folk and fairy tales follow the pattern of the adventure/accomplishment romance. They are called romances because they contain exaggeration. The bad parts are like nightmares, while the good parts are like pleasant daydreams. Such romances came to be associated with love because the traditional reward for a successful hero on such a quest was the winning of a beautiful maiden.

The biblical story of Joseph is a prototypical example of a worthy young hero being forced to go on a journey. Early in life, Joseph was chosen and marked as a special person as shown by the prophetic dreams he related to his brothers and by his father's special love demonstrated through the multicolored coat. When Joseph was sold to the Egyptian traders, he embarked on his quest for wisdom and knowledge. Just when all seemed lost, Joseph was blessed with the ability to interpret dreams. This got him out of prison and into the Pharaoh's court. The climax came years later during the famine that brought Joseph's brothers to Egypt and the royal palace. Without recognizing Joseph, they begged for food. His forgiveness and his generosity were final proof of his worthiness.

A distinguishing feature of such romances is the happy ending achieved only after the hero's worth is proven through a crisis or an ordeal. Usually as part of the ordeal the hero must make a sacrifice, be wounded, or leave some part of his or her body, even if it is only sweat or tears. The real loss is that of innocence, but it is usually symbolized by a physical loss, as in Norse mythology when Odin gave one of his eyes to pay for knowledge. J. R. R. Tolkien used a similar theme in *The Lord of the Rings* when Frodo, who has already suffered many wounds, finds that he cannot throw back the ring and so must let Gollum take his finger along with the ring.

Among the world's great stories of journeys are Homer's *Iliad* and *The Odyssey*, John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, and the biblical story of Adam and Eve being banished from the Garden of Eden. Modern children's journey stories include William Steig's *Sylvester and the Magic Pebble*, Ezra Jack Keats's *The Snowy Day*, and Maurice Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are*. See Focus Box 4.6, Literal Journeys/Figurative Quests (p. 138), for examples of YA stories that follow this archetypal pattern.

The Archetypal Seeker The Archetypal Seeker has much in common with the real lives of young adults because they know that sooner or later they must leave their parents' homes and make a life for themselves. Joseph, in the Bible story, was forced to go on his journey; in contrast, Moses, who led the Jews in their Exodus from Egypt, comes closer to being a Seeker because he chose to go forth and find a better life. The Pharaoh, who wanted the Jews to stay and work for him, represents the part of the human psyche that resists change and wants to preserve the status quo.

An important part of being a Seeker is knowing when to stop. Shadow Seekers—those for whom the grass is always greener on the other side—abound in modern culture as with marriage partners and the owners of cars and houses, who continuously "trade up." The boy in Willa Cather's short story "Paul's Case" is a Shadow Seeker who wants to live in the fantasy world of the theater and in the glamorous world that he imagines for the wealthy. Paul commits suicide rather than face the dreary life he foresees for himself after his father repays the money he stole to finance his trip to New York. The parents in Gary Paulsen's *The Island* are Shadow Seekers who have such wanderlust that they constantly move from one town to another in search of an idealized sense of community.

The Junex versus the Senex This archetype simply represents another way of talking about the conflict that exists between young and old. From an adult view-

point, this is the idea of the *Dennis the Menace* cartoons and *The Little Rascals* movie gang. From a child's viewpoint, this is perhaps what is behind referring to someone as a Scrooge, with implications of stinginess, to someone as an old Witch or a Grinch, with implications of mean-spiritedness, or to someone as a dirty old man, with implications of sexual exploitation. This archetype is often referred to as the generation gap, but in fact it does not have to cross a whole generation. With teenagers, only a few years can make a difference in one's attitudes and loyalties, as when high school seniors "lord" it over freshmen, or when older siblings make life miserable for younger brothers and sisters. Because of where they are on their life journeys, teenagers find this archetype important.

In an interesting switch, a reversal is sometimes shown in which young protagonists skip a generation and identify with people of their grandparents' ages. This may relate to the fact that teenagers and elderly people are both living on the edges. They are not really in control of their lives, and so as "outsiders" may join with each other to present a united front against the mainstream adults in the middle. Examples include Jimmy and his grandmother in Walter Dean Myers's *Somewhere in the Darkness*, Miracle McCloy and her grandfather in Han Nolan's *Dancing on the Edge*, and Tree and his grandfather in Joan Bauer's *Stand Tall.*

The Orphan The Orphan has always been a well-loved character, probably because deep in our subconscious all readers fear being the lost child. Harry Potter is the latest orphan to tug at our heartstrings, but before Harry, we had the orphans in Charles Dickens's *Little Dorrit* and *Oliver Twist*, the children in C. S. Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, and the endearing young redhead in Lucy Maud Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables.* The comic strip character Little Orphan Annie is so famous that she inspired a Broadway musical. To play the literary role of orphan, young protagonists can have lost both of their parents, as in Robert Cormier's *I Am the Cheese*, or only one parent, as in Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn.* A child might be a temporary orphan as was the boy in the *Home Alone* film, or the protagonist might still have one or both parents, but the parents are unable to play their role, as with the mother in Cynthia Voigt's Homecoming series. A higher percentage of orphans appear in children's literature than in real life because many authors do what Betsy Byars has confessed to. When planning a book, she says the first thing she does is figure out some way to get rid of the parents so that the children can be free to make decisions and get credit for their own actions.

The Caregiver From the world's bank of great stories, we have such caregivers as The Good Samaritan, Robin Hood, Snow White, Jiminy Cricket, Mary Poppins, Wendy from Peter Pan, and Charlotte from E. B. White's *Charlotte's Web.* From real life we occasionally hear someone referred to as a Florence Nightingale or a Mother Teresa. Even preschoolers know about Horton, the wonderfully patient elephant from Dr. Seuss's *Horton Hatches the Egg*, and about the mother duck who majestically leads her ducklings through Boston traffic in Robert McCloskey's *Make Way for Ducklings.* One of the most touching contemporary stories about a caregiver is Katherine Paterson's *The Great Gilly Hopkins.* Galadriel, shortened to Gilly, is in foster care because, as one of our students described the situation, her "flower-child parents went to seed in the garden of

motherhood." While searching for her birthmother, Gilly fails to appreciate her larger-than-life foster mother until it is too late.

The Wicked Stepmother is a universally understood archetype of the Shadow Caregiver. Bruno Bettelheim, along with other critics, has suggested that she isn't a stepmother at all. Instead, she's the dark side of everyone's mother—the scapegoat for the resentments that build up as part of the Junex–Senex conflict. The character is portrayed as a wicked stepmother instead of a wicked stepfather because on a daily basis the mother enforces discipline and teaches children a sense of responsibility as well as the skills of daily living.

The Sage Sages offer spiritual and intellectual care as opposed to the physical care that is thought of as being part of the Caregiver role. The Giver in Lois Lowry's book of that name is an archetypal Sage. By holding the community's memories, he shields the members from responsibilities. In his wisdom, he questions this role and leads Jonas, who has been chosen to be his successor, to also question it. In more traditional literature, Merlin is a Sage, and it could make an interesting study to compare how authors ranging from C. S. Lewis to T. H. White and from Mary Stewart to Walt Disney's scriptwriters have portrayed this legendary Sage. Jeff's father at the beginning of Cynthia Voigt's *A Solitary Blue* is portrayed as a Shadow Sage. In response to his wife's leaving the family, Jeff's father places himself in "an ivory tower," but finally, as the book progresses, he is able to come down and relate to his son. Our students have argued about whether Darth Vader from *Star Wars* is a Shadow Sage because he is obsessed with perfection and being right, but at the same time is cynical and wants to obtain wisdom not so he can help others, but so he can feel superior and criticize them.

A true Sage is wise enough to realize that people cannot search for just one truth, but instead must understand a multiplicity of truths. This is the point made in Hisako Matsubara's *Cranes at Dusk*, set in post–World War II Japan. When a Shinto priest allows his daughter to attend Christian services, the Christian missionaries are disappointed to learn that the daughter and her father are not being "converted." Instead, the father is just putting into practice his belief that "No religion is enough to answer all the questions."

The Friend Friends in literature range from Robin Hood and his Merry Men to Harry Potter, Ron, and Hermione. Friendship is the theme of some of the most popular children's books—for example, Arnold Lobel's *Frog and Toad Are Friends*, Lois Lowry's Anastasia books, Barbara Parks's Junie B. Jones books, and Beverly Cleary's Ramona books. Middle school girls have loved the friendships shown in books by Judy Blume, Ellen Conford, and Paula Danziger. Friendship was also at the root of the success of The Babysitters' Club and the Sweet Valley High series. (See Focus Box 4.7, p. 141, for books that explore friendships among contemporary teens.) Since the story of David and Jonathan in the Old Testament, there have been strong stories about friendships between boys, as in John Knowles's *A Separate Peace*. The runaway success of Ann Brashares's 2001 *Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants* shows that friendships among girls can also be satisfying.

The Lover Lovers are such popular protagonists that for general readers they have coopted the whole genre of romance. From a literary standpoint, the first romances were stories told in the Roman (or Latin) manner; that is, those told by speakers of Latin, Italian, Spanish, and French. These stories were often about bold adventurers slaying dragons, rescuing princesses from ogres, and defeating the wicked enemies of a righteous king. Love came into the stories because a successful knight was often rewarded by being given the hand of a beloved maiden. The world's lovers are as different as Adam and Eve, Beauty and the Beast, Jane Eyre and Rochester, Catherine and Heathcliff, and even Tarzan and Jane. Shadow Lovers, those whose love is out of control or damaging, might include Samson and Delilah, J. Gatsby and Daisy, Humber Humbert and Lolita, and perhaps even the gangsters Bonnie and Clyde.

Being rewarded with the love of a respected character is a common theme in YA books. Stories of star-crossed lovers, the most famous of which is Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, are intrinsically interesting because of the possibility for greater suspense and tension. Such protagonists come close to being Shadow Lovers if their actions bring about tragic results. The possibility for tragedy and conflict is frequently at the heart of YA books about love between characters of the same sex, but in fairly recent years YA authors have begun to portray lesbian and gay characters filling the role of Lovers rather than Shadow Lovers. When Nancy Garden was interviewed for *School Library Journal* after she won the Margaret A. Edwards Award (see p. 414), she showed how differently the two protagonists have been portrayed on the cover designs of three paperback editions of *Annie on My Mind.* Only on the most recent cover do the two girls look comfortable and equally interested in each other.

The Warrior, the Hero, the Villain or Destroyer These archetypes are strong characters; people who will stand up and fight. Those who become heroes or Superheroes choose to fight on the side of good, as with Superman, Spiderman, Wonder Woman, and Batman and Robin. If warriors make the wrong choice and go in the other direction, they become Villains or Destroyers. Female villains are called such names as Jezebels or Witches, while male villains might be referred to as Hitlers or Devils. A fairly new eponym for a Destroyer Warrior is a Rambo, taken from the name of the lead character in David Morrell's *First Blood*, made famous in the Rambo movies starring Sylvester Stallone. Another reason the name caught on is that society was becoming aware of a new kind of Destroyer—young, hostile males who were not thieves or criminals in the old sense of the word, but instead were toughs and bullies. Thirty years after Morrell created his Rambo character, society is even more puzzled by these kinds of Destroyers and the ripple effects of their actions in schools and communities. (See Focus Box 4.3, Bullies and Buddies, p. 125.)

The Ruler These characters are more likely to be called leaders in the United States because of the country's history as a haven for common people and its rejection of the idea of royalty and inherited power. The good ruler is like Aslan in C. S. Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* or like Simba in Walt Disney's *The Lion King*. Alison Lurie in her 1991 *Don't Tell the Grownups* observed

that the great appeal of the Winnie the Pooh books to young children is that the child Christopher Robin gets to play the role of the beneficent dictator in charge of the whole "Hundred Akre Woods."

Great rulers make mistakes, but when this happens, they are mature enough to recognize their folly and to learn from it. A recognition of this fact has brought changes in the biographies written for young people. It used to be that authors put in only the positive aspects of leaders' lives, but today they include both the good and the bad, in the hopes that young people will be even more inspired to see that "imperfect" people, which all of us are, can still make great contributions.

The Fool and the Trickster These archetypes appear in American jokes about "The Little Moron," in some of the Muslim stories about Mullah Nasruddin (sometimes he's wise and other times he's foolish), in Jewish tales about the Fools of Chelm, and in European and American folktales about Foolish Jack. Readers and listeners enjoy the humor that comes from the surprise, incongruity, spontaneity, and violations of social norms that are part and parcel of stories about fools or clowns. While clowns play the role of the fool, they are really Tricksters, since they are only pretending to be ignorant. Children have an extra reason for enjoying stories about fools—because of their powerlessness and lack of experience, they are often left feeling foolish and so are glad when they find characters even more foolish than they are. Literary fools include such characters as Sheridan's Mrs. Malaprop, who always mixes up her words, and Thurber's Walter Mitty, whose mind keeps wandering away from real life and into fantasy daydreams.

Tricksters are only pretending to be fools so that they can get away with something, as when Tom Sawyer tricks the neighborhood boys into whitewashing the fence. Ulysses was a Trickster when he managed to escape with most of his men from the cave of the Cyclops. The Joker in the Batman movies is a trickster. In YA books, portrayals of fools and tricksters are fairly subtle and usually have the serious purpose of teaching young people not to be fools or to be tricked, a point discussed in more detail in relation to realistic problem novels in Chapter 4.

The Magician Magicians appear in stories of fantasy where authors create a make-believe world with no explanation of how the magic works. Internal consistency is all that is required. Ursula Le Guin's books about Earthsea are especially good at illustrating the role of the Magician. Ogion is the Magician/Sage, but readers are most interested in the young people who are training to become Magicians as when the boy Sparrowhawk becomes the archmage Ged, the girl Goha becomes the wise woman Tenar, and in the last book, an abused Orphan becomes Tehanu, destined to become the next archmage. Honest Magicians use their powers for good, while Shadow Magicians use their powers for evil or destructive purposes. Some stories about Magicians and Creators are cautionary tales that warn against humans trying to take the power of the gods for themselves, as illustrated by the host of troubles released when Dr. Frankenstein created his monster.

The Creator Creators do not lift a finger to their noses or bring out an array of helpers to make happy endings possible; instead they transform reality by

Margaret A. Edwards Award Winner (1993)

M. E. Kerr, A Genius with Names

Edwards Honor Books include *Dinky Hocker Shoots Smack!*; *Gentlehands*; *ME, ME, ME, ME, ME: Not a Novel*; and *Night Kites*. Other highly acclaimed books include *Little Little*; *If I Love You, Am I Trapped Forever?*; and *Deliver Us from Evie*.

One of Kerr's first jobs when, in 1972, she wrote *Dinky Hocker Shoots Smack!* was to choose a penname to use with her YA books since she was already known as a writer of mysteries and of love stories about lesbians. Her real name is Marijane Meaker, and so for her penname she chose M. E. Kerr, a play on her surname. The next thing she had to do was to argue with her publishers who wanted a softer title than *Dinky Hocker Shoots Smack!*

The story is about a do-gooder mother who is oblivious to the needs of her own overweight daughter, who is ironically called Dinky. The title comes from what Dinky paints on the walls and the sidewalk for people to see when her mother exits a meeting where she is being honored for her work with drug addicts. In a lighter, naming incident, Dinky names the stray cat she finds cowering under a car Nader, in honor of Ralph Nader, who, as a critic of the American automobile industry, also spent considerable time under cars.

In *I'll Love You When You're More Like Me*, Wally has a crush on a girl who has created for herself the fancy sounding stage name of Sabra St. Amour—she used to be plain old Maggie Duggy. When Wally meets her at the beach and she asks him for a cigarette, he tells her she has to be a little crazy to let the cigarette companies manipulate her with such names as Merit and Vantage. She responds that she came to the beach for a swim and some sun, not for a lecture, but Wally goes right on asking her if True, More, and Now mean that she will get more out of life by living for the moment because she won't live long if she is being True to her filthy habit. While this isn't enough to convince Sabra to quit smoking, she becomes interested in Wally as a "thinker."

Kerr's *Gentlehands* is the story of a post-WWII hunt for one of the cruelest of the Nazi SS guards at Auschwitz. He taunted Jewish prisoners from Rome by playing Puccini's opera *Tosca* and singing "O dolci mani," which translates to "gentle hands." The plot centers around whether Buddy's mysterious German grandfather is this man. He has named his keeshond dog Mignon, a name that he says comes from an opera, but a more gruesome interpretation could be that it comes from filet mignon, as a reminder of how Gentlehands used to turn selected prisoners over to his dogs.

Deliver Us from Evie is the story of a lesbian relationship between Evie Burrman and Patsy Duff, two high school seniors who live in the fairly prosperous farming community of Duffton. A boy from a neighboring farm, Cord Whittle, would like to court Evie and when she turns him down he gets even with her in church during the recitation of "The Lord's Prayer." He stands near her and says in an extra loud voice, "Deliver us from Evie," and then laughs and nudges Evie as if he has made a good joke.

Kerr named the protagonist of her YA mysteries John Fell so she could have such titles as *Fell*, *Fell Back*, and *Fell Down*, and then make such additional puns as "fell apart," "fell to pieces," and "fell in love." *Little Little* is about a girl who is a dwarf and her relationship with Sidney Applebaum, a dwarf with a humpback who grew up in the Twin Oaks Orphans home run by Miss Lake. The boys, all deformed in some way, called their home Mistakes Cottage, and chose for themselves such names as Wheels, Cloud, Pill, and Worm. Miss Lake objects, but she does not understand that the boys have taken "naming rights" for themselves so as to take away the pain that might come from outsiders calling them names. In keeping with their attitude, they refer to "regular" people as Sara Lee, an acronym for "Similar And Regular And Like Everyone Else."

changing the way characters perceive matters, often with long-term effects on the real world. The Wizard in Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* was this kind of a magician when he convinced Dorothy's companions that he was giving them what they obviously already had: courage for the lion, brains for the scarecrow, and a heart for the tin woodman. In old folktales, the role of the magical Creator was filled by dwarves, elves, fairy godmothers, fortune-tellers, shamans, witches, healers, and priests and priestesses. In modern life, psychiatrists, therapists, religious leaders, politicians, teachers, friends, and parents are more likely to play these roles. Shadow Creators are the con artists and others who exploit people's emotional needs for selfish purposes. Both kinds of Creators are commonly included in YA books where authors explore some fairly subtle differences between Creators who play a positive role and those who play a negative role by killing others' dreams—usually through being overly controlling or overly negative. The power of Robert Lipsyte's *Raiders*, already discussed in Chapter 6, is the way it demonstrates the damage that can come to young athletes when parents and coaches are Shadow Creators.

Names and Naming in Young Adult Literature

Looking at names and naming in YA books is a third template activity for working with different books under an overall umbrella topic. The Nilsens (Don in his linguistics classes and Alleen in her literature classes) have had such success in looking at names of not only characters but also places and items that they wrote *Names and Naming in Young Adult Literature*, which was published in the summer of 2007 as part of the Scarecrow Studies in Young Adult Literature series, edited by Patty Campbell.

The book starts with the idea that names are discrete discourses—little epiphanies or stories in miniature. When authors create names for their characters, they have more freedom than they do in any other aspect of their writing. When people create new words, they mostly have to use sound combinations that have already been agreed upon, but when creating names for characters, places, or imagined items, authors can make up entirely new sound combinations and devise their own spellings. Chapters include "Names for Fun" (M. E. Kerr, Gary Paulsen, Louis Sachar, and Polly Horvath), "Names to Establish Tone and Mode" (Robert Cormier and Francesca Lia Block), "Names to Establish Time Periods" (Karen Cushman), "Names to Establish Realistic Settings" (Gary Soto, Adam Rapp, Meg Rosoff, and Nancy Farmer), "Names to Establish Imagined Settings" (Yann Martel, Orson Scott Card, and Ursula K. Le Guin), "Names to Reveal Ethnic Values" (Amy Tan, Sandra Cisneros, Maya Angelou, Cynthia Kadohata, Sherman Alexie, and others), "Names to Build a Dual Audience" (Daniel Handler and the Lemony Snicket books), and "Names as Memory Hooks" (J. K. Rowling and the Harry Potter books). People who are interested in pursuing this approach should find the book (many libraries have standing orders for the series), and also look at Focus Box 10.1, Names and Naming in Multicultural Books, and see the write-up on M. E. Kerr as a Margaret A. Edwards Award winner on p. 331.

Focus Box 10.1

Names and Naming in Multicultural Books

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian by Sherman Alexie. Little, Brown, 2007. Alexie's first book written specifically for teenagers won the 2007 National Book Award in the category of young people's literature. One of the ways he illustrates the mixing of cultures is to combine Indian naming practices with mainstream names when he writes about the mysterious Turtle Lake which he and his friend Rowdy dare each other to dive into. He explains that Indians love mysteries and that some people say that Turtle Lake, which no one has ever been able to find the bottom of, got its name because of being home to a giant snapping turtle that ate Indians. Then he shows the universality of such exaggerations by going on to call it "A Jurassic turtle," "A Steven Spielberg turtle," and "A King Kong versus the Giant Reservation Turtle turtle."

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings by Maya Angelou. Random House, 1970. One of the stories does a wonderful job of explaining why Margaret and everyone she knew "had a hellish horror of being called out of his name." She was twelve years old and traumatized by having been raped when she was sent to work at Mrs. Cullinan's house. All went pretty well until Mrs. Cullinan's friends convinced her it would be easier to call Margaret, Mary.

Jip: His Story by Katherine Paterson. Lodestar, 1996. When the story starts, the year is 1855 and Jip West is probably eleven or twelve years old. No one knows for sure because he was abandoned on West Hill Road when he was a toddler. Townspeople named him Jip thinking that he must have fallen from a Gypsy wagon, but actually he was purposely left behind by his slave mother who was being taken back to the South and did not want her boy to be a slave.

The Joy Luck Club by Amy Tan. Random House, 1989. Waverly was named for the California street where her immigrant family lived. She is an adult before she learns that her mother named her oldest brother, Winston, because she "liked the meaning of those two words wins ton," and her second brother, Vincent, because it "sounds like win cent, the sound of making money."

The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fist Fight in Heaven by Sherman Alexie. Grove Press, 2005. Alexie's book is set on the Coeur d'Alene Indian Reservation in northern Idaho and much of the humor comes from the way he mixes Indian and white naming practices as when he writes, "I was always falling down; my Indian name was Junior Falls Down. Sometimes it was Bloody Nose or Steal-His-Lunch. Once, it was Cries-Like-a-White-Boy, even though none of us had seen a white boy cry."

The Meaning of Consuelo: A Novel by Judith Ortiz Cofer. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003. Consuelo, whose Spanish name means "consolation" or "joy" is the older sister in a middle class Puerto Rican family. She is the "good one," while her younger sister, Mili, whose name is short for "miracle" or "wonder," drifts into increasingly bizarre behavior and then suicide. Consuelo must decide whether to stay and "console" her family or to move to New York and make her own life. *Call Me María: A Novel in Letters, Poems, and Prose* by Judith Ortiz Cofer (Orchard, 2004) is written for younger teens.

My Name Is Not Angelica by Scott O'Dell. Houghton Mifflin, 1990. O'Dell dedicated this historical novel "To Rosa Parks, who would not sit in the back of the bus." Raisha and her two young friends, Dondo and Kanje, are put on a slave ship and taken from Africa to St. Thomas. The boys' names are changed to Abraham and Apollo, and Raisha's to Angelica. When revolts and violence occur on the island, the boys commit suicide rather than return to slavery, but pregnant Raisha is determined to live and save her baby, but not ever to think of herself as Angelica.

Naming Maya by Uma Krishnaswami. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2004. Maya grew up in New Jersey, but now she finds herself back in India with her mother, who is intent on selling the family home after her parents' death. Maya's parents are divorced and Maya falsely thinks their problems started with a disagreement over her name.

Weedflower by Cynthia Kadahota. Atheneum, 2006. Sumiko is a young Japanese/American girl living in California during the years leading up to World War II. Sumiko's family is sent to the Poston Internment Camp, located on a Mohave Indian reservation near Parker, Arizona. The camp was run by Native Americans and Sumiko develops a shy friendship with an Indian boy named Frank. Names and their symbolic meanings are at the heart of several incidents in this well written piece of historical fiction.

When My Name Was Keoko: A Novel of Korea in World War II by Linda Sue Park. Clarion, 2002. Between 1940 and 1945, South Korea was occupied by Japan and the people were forced to adopt Japanese names and study the Japanese language. Chapters alternate between Keoko and her brother, who is trying to get used to his new name of Sun-hee.

Focus Box 10.2

Good Internet Resources for Teachers and Librarians

Arizona State English Education Website

www.asu.edu/clas/english/englished/yalit/webquest.htm: Professor James Blasingame directs his YA literature students in creating WebQuests for outstanding new YA books. The best ones are posted for downloading.

Assembly on Literature for Adolescents

www.alan-ya.org: The National Council of Teachers of English's Assembly on Literature for Adolescents website offers activities, links to related websites, as well as online access to *The ALAN Review*. ALAN's webmaster is David Gill.

Authors 4 Teens

www.authors4teens.com: This subscription site by noted YA short story editor Don Gallo contains interviews and up-to-date author information.

Carol Hurst's Children's Literature Site

www.carolhurst.com: Professional educator Carol Hurst offers reviews, annotations, and lesson plans in this comprehensive site, featuring books geared toward the younger adolescent.

Children's Book Council

www.cbcbooks.org: An association of publishers presents classroom ideas, previews of new books, discussions about current issues and trends, links to authors' websites, bibliographies, and news about the publishing business and available promotional materials.

Children's Literature Web Guide

www.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown: David Brown of the University of Calgary provides information on author resources, reader's theater, illustrators, and publishers.

Cynthia Leitich Smith

See Smith's YA Authors Speak Out statement on p. 98. Her site, www.cynthialeitichsmith.com, contains articles, interviews, reading recommendations, publishing news, and annotated links from the noted author.

Database of Award-Winning Children's Literature

www.dawcl.com: This useful site has many search options and includes YA lit. Frequently updated, it is maintained by Lisa R. Bartle, reference librarian at California State University, San Bernardino.

Lesson Plans and Resources for Adolescent and Young Adult Literature

www.cloudnet.com/~edrbsass/edadolescentlit.htm: This site features a collection of YA lit lesson plans and resources by Ed Sass, professor at the College of St. Benedict/St. John's University.

Notes from the Windowsill

www.armory.com/~web/notes.html: This e-magazine that reviews children's and YA lit is edited by Wendy Betts, librarian.

Vandergrift's YA Literature Page

www.scils.rutgers.edu/~kvander/YoungAdult: Kay Vandergrift's comprehensive site includes an overview of YA lit, a "top 100" list, bibliographies, and more.

The WebQuest Page

webquest.sdsu.edu/webquest.html: Maintained by Bernie Dodge, this is the definitive site for WebQuests (an online, process-oriented lesson). The WebQuest Page includes lessons for many YA books.

YALSA Booklists

www.ala.org/yalsa/booklists: This site contains book lists from the Young Adult Library Services Association of the ALA. It includes Quick Picks for reluctant readers as well as lists of award-winning books.

Focus Box 10.3

Teenagers outside the Continental United States

Chanda's Secrets by Allan Stratton. Annick, distributed by Firefly, 2004. Sixteen-year-old Chanda lives in sub-Saharan Africa, and is faced with arranging for the burial of her baby brother and eventually for her mother, both of whom succumb to AIDS.

City of the Beasts by Isabel Allende, translated from Spanish by Margeret Sayers Peden. HarperCollins, 2003. Allende's first novel for young readers is part magical realism and part contemporary politics. A fifteen-year-old boy accompanies his journalist grandmother on an expedition into an Amazon jungle in search of a legendary beast that is perhaps human.

Colibri by Ann Cameron. Farrar/Frances Foster Books, 2003. A twelve-year-old Guatemalan girl, whose original name meant "Hummingbird Star," learns that at age four she was kidnapped by "Uncle" Baltasar, a man who calls her Rosa and uses her as his assistant while he pretends to be blind.

Facing the Lion: Growing up Maasai on the African Savanna by Joseph Lemasolai Lekuton and Herman J. Viola. National Geographic, 2003. The author tells his own story of growing up in a nomadic subgroup within the Maasai people in Kenya. By law, each family designates a child to attend school, and he was the one chosen from his family. He went from the mission school to an elite high school and then to college in the United States.

Haveli by Suzanne Fisher Staples. Knopf, 1993. In this sequel to the well-received *Shabanu: Daughter of the Wind* (Knopf, 1989), Staples continues the story of the strong-willed young woman who because of custom and family needs becomes the fourth wife of a powerful land owner in the Cholistan desert of Pakistan.

Island Boyz: Short Stories by Graham Salisbury. Random House, 2002. The preface to these ten stories is a free-verse poem in which Salisbury establishes what it takes to qualify as "island boyz/not boys/boyz," and adds information about his own years of growing up in Hawaii, "I would not have traded places with anyone/not even God."

Our Stories, Our Songs by Deborah Ellis. Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2005. In the summer of 2003, the author traveled to Malawi and Zambia to gather stories from children and teens whose lives have been touched by AIDS. Factual information, along with quotes, are woven through the book, but what will stick with readers are the stories told in the words of the interviewees, many of whom are orphans.

Red Glass by Laura Resau. Delacorte, 2007. A shy sixteen-year-old Arizona girl develops new strengths when she and her Bosnian great-aunt Dika get involved in helping a Guatemalan immigrant and his six-year-old son go back across the U.S. border that they had crossed illegally.

Running with the Reservoir Pups and Bring Me the Head of Oliver Plunkett by Colin Bateman. Delacorte, 2005. Bateman is a popular Irish writer for adults, but decided to do an *Eddie and the Gang with No Name* trilogy for tweeners. These are the first two books and are a welcome contrast to many of the more serious problem novels set in foreign countries.

The Sweet, Terrible, Glorious Year I Truly, Completely Lost It by Lisa Shanahan. Delacorte, 2007. Gemma Stone is Australian, but that does not explain why her older sister turns into bridezilla and why in her fourteenth year, Gemma learns that "Love is doves *and* dog poo."

Tasting the Sky: A Palestinian Childhood by Ibtisam Barakat. Farrar, 2007. A Palestinian woman who now lives and works in the United States tells the story of her life between 1967 and 1970 when, as a young child, she was caught during the Six-Day War.

Tonight by Sea by Frances Temple, Orchard, 1995. Temple writes about Paulie and her family trying to escape from their troubled Haitian community. She has also written *Taste of Salt: A Story of Modern Haiti* and *Grab Hands and Run*, which is about a family fleeing El Salvador.

What the Moon Saw by Laura Resau. Delacorte, 2006. Fourteen-year-old Clara Luna is invited to spend the summer with her father's parents, people she has never met, in a remote Mexican village. Readers get to share her experience as she learns about a life style foreign to the one she has in the United States.