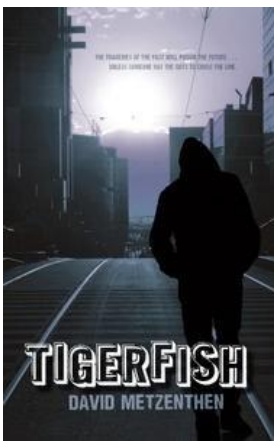


CBCA Book Discussion Group – Books Read in 2015



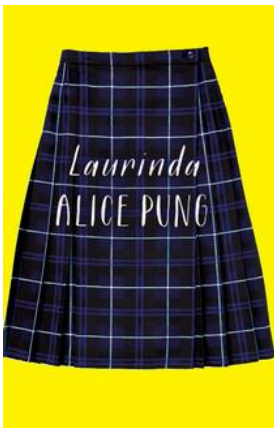
***Crashing down* by Kate McCaffrey**

Age: 15+ *Crashing down* by Kate McCaffrey is an issues-based novel that poses a series of ethical questions around the subjects of relationships, teen pregnancy and abortion. Lucy needs to focus on her exams and decides to break up with Carl at the Year 12 ball. When Carl ends up in a coma after crashing his car and Lucy discovers she is pregnant, Lucy explores her obligations to herself, her family and Carl as well as her options regarding the pregnancy. The reactions to Lucy's decision reflect the various views in society today. The perspective of Carl's grieving parents and the action they take add an extra complication to the complex circumstances. *Crashing down* is McCaffrey's fourth novel for young adults.



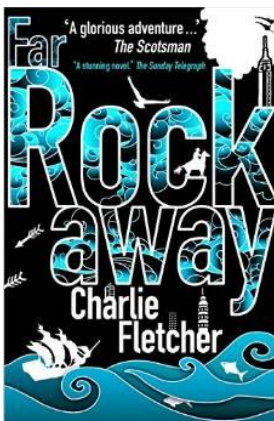
***Tigerfish* by David Metzenthen**

Age: 13+ *Tigerfish* by David Metzenthen is set in a fictional Melbourne suburb where the narrator, Ryan Lanyon, says it's a good idea to be like the tigerfish and 'swim quietly, stay down deep, protect yourself at all times and have your weapons at the ready....' (p 60-61). A sense of foreboding builds as we learn that a girl and three greyhounds have been found dead and a night stalker sighted in the paddocks behind Ryan's street. Despite his tough surroundings, Ryan is an empathetic character who looks out for his Doberman, his big brother, his best mate, the psycho, school bully's little sister and the new girl living in the rundown house. Like his beloved Western Bulldogs footy team Ryan shakes himself off and soldiers on. *Tigerfish* has themes of love and loyalty and was a Notable Book in the 2015 CBCA Book of the Year Awards.



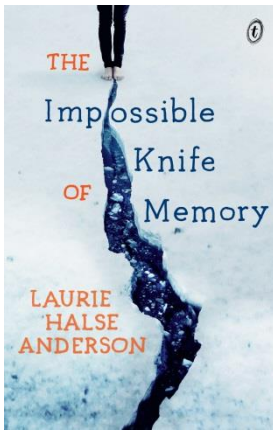
***Laurinda* by Alice Pung**

Age: 12+ *Laurinda* by Alice Pung is a coming of age novel and a satire about class set in the mid-1990s. When fifteen-year-old Lucy Lam receives the Equal Access Scholarship to *Laurinda*, an exclusive private girls' school, she finds herself in a struggle for her identity when the Cabinet, a group of three girls who rule the students and bully some of the staff, take an interest in her. Lucy begins to distance herself from family and friends and it is only her letters to the mysterious Linh that keep her grounded and give her the courage to find her voice. Loosely based on Pung's own experience of changing high schools five times, *Laurinda* is Pung's first work of fiction following her memoirs *Unpolished gem* and *Her father's daughter* and was a Notable Book in the 2015 CBCA Book of the Year Awards.



***Far Rockaway* by Charlie Fletcher**

Age 10+ *Far Rockaway* by Scottish author Charlie Fletcher brings together a mythic world with twenty-first century reality. Books and stories are central to the relationship between Cat Manno and her grandfather Victor. When both fight for life in hospital after a traffic accident in Manhattan, Cat slips into a coma and finds herself in a world of books Victor has read to her: *Treasure Island*, *The last of the Mohicans* and *Kidnapped*. Cat becomes embroiled in swashbuckling adventures as she embarks on a quest to find the castle of Far Rockaway and rescue Victor. With themes of love, loss and hope the messages in *Far Rockaway* are that 'story makes the world' and 'real girls rescue themselves'.



***The impossible knife of memory* by Laurie Halse Anderson**

Age: 14+ *The impossible knife of memory* by American author Laurie Halse Anderson explores the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder on Andy, a decorated veteran of Iraq and Afganistan, and his daughter Hayley who return to their upstate New York hometown after years of home schooling on the road. Hayley finds it hard to adjust to 'normal' schooling and when Andy loses his trucking job and his health deteriorates, Hayley's role as carer becomes overwhelming. With the support of her school friend Finn and her estranged step-mother Trish, Hayley and her father work towards a solution.



***A small madness* by Diane Touchell**

Age: 15+ *A small madness* by W.A. author Diane Touchell is a cautionary tale about an unwanted pregnancy and the possible consequences of decisions made when teenagers don't feel able to seek help from parents. Written in alternating chapters from the perspectives of Rose and Michael, two high-achieving Year 12 students, the reader is drawn to empathise with the protagonists and consider whether doing something monstrous makes someone a monster. *A small madness* is Touchell's second novel following *Creepy and Maud* which was shortlisted for the CBCA Book of the Year: Older Readers in 2013.



***Prince of Afganistan* by Louis Nowra**

Age: 14+ *Prince of Afganistan* by Louis Nowra is an action-adventure narrated by an 18-year-old Australian soldier, Corporal Mark Hollis, who is caught behind enemy lines in Afganistan with a Doberman pinscher sniffer dog called Prince. When a hostage rescue goes wrong and Prince's handler Casey is killed, Mark and Prince form an inseparable bond as they attempt the dangerous journey back to base braving hunger, thirst and the threat of capture by the Taliban. As they travel Mark reflects on his childhood in the Snowy Mountains with Casey and his reasons for joining the army. This is Nowra's second YA novel after *Into that forest*, a Notable book in the 2013 CBCA Book of the Year Awards: Older Readers.



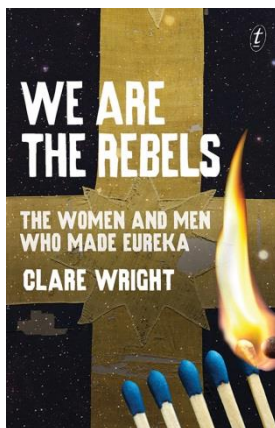
***A single stone* by Meg McKinlay**

Age: 14+ *A single stone* by Meg McKinlay is a dystopian novel set in a village isolated from the outside world by a massive rock-fall. Jena is the leader of the line of girls who are valued for their smallness and ability to penetrate the mountains and harvest mica, a commodity essential for the survival of the villagers through bitter winters. A chance discovery leads Jena to question the authority, motives and practices of the Mothers who govern the village. *A single stone* explores themes of tradition, community and identity and tackles questions about gender and power. *A single stone* won the Griffiths University Children's Book Award in the 2015 Queensland Literary Awards.



***The accident season* by Moira Fowley-Doyle**

Age: 15+ *The accident season* is Irish writer Moira Fowley-Doyle's first novel. The title refers to October every year when 17 year old Cara and her family members become inexplicably accident-prone, sustaining all kinds of injuries and in previous years even losing lives. Reality and fantasy are interchangeable in this story set in a fictional town in Galway, Ireland. Cara becomes obsessed with Elsie who has disappeared from school and is reappearing in her photos. Cara's best friend Bea's tarot cards predict that this will be the worst accident season ever. There is a sense of foreboding as Halloween approaches and a Black Cat and Whisky Ball is planned in an abandoned house. *The accident season* is a journey through a family's secrets, lies and fears.



***We are the rebels: The women and men who made Eureka* by Clare Wright**

Age: 10+ *We Are The Rebels* is a YA edition of Clare Wright's *The Forgotten Rebels of Eureka* which took ten years to research and write and won the Stella Prize in 2014. In her quest to discover who the men and women of Eureka were Wright finds rich pickings in characters such as hotelier Claire Bentley and shopkeeper Martha Clendinning. She uses primary sources including letters, diaries, songs, poetry, news articles and public records to focus on the people who followed the gold rush to Australia and were present at the Eureka Stockade in Ballarat in 1854. By telling their stories from sea journey to life in the camp, Wright provides a cultural and political context in Australia and in the goldfields for the events at Eureka.