

## Booktalking the Best: Teen Nutmeg Nominees & Beyond

### Presenters:

- Leslie Poulos
- Caitlyn Augusta,
- Miriam Neiman,

In the midst of a busy CLA Conference there's nothing like sitting back, relaxing, and being entertained by three talented librarians booktalking some new and exciting YA titles.

Emako Blue is beautiful, talented, and popular at her new school, but just as things seem to be going so well for her, violence erupts in her neighborhood and life takes a terrible turn. Leading off with *Emako Blue* by Brenda Woods, Leslie Poulos, media specialist at East Hartford Middle School, booktalked several selections on the 2008 Teen Nutmeg List. Real life characters, adventure, and a great story make *Shackleton's Stowaway* by Victoria McKernan a must read. Life on the ship *Endurance*, encased in, and slowly being crushed by Antarctic ice floes is harrowing. Survival becomes everyone's preoccupation. Most genres are reflected on the Nutmeg list: mystery, adventure, historical fiction, contemporary issues, and multicultural stories. Leslie's vivid descriptions convinced us to make sure our teen departments were fully stocked with Nutmegs. For a complete annotated list go to: [www.nutmegaward.org](http://www.nutmegaward.org).

Miriam Neiman, YA Librarian at Glastonbury's Welles Turner Memorial Library, is a booktalking queen. My guess is that most of the audience rushed back to their libraries and grabbed several of her choices after falling under her spell. I know I went right home and checked out *Code Orange* by popular Carolyn Cooney. Who could resist a plot in which a boy finds an envelope containing 100-year-old smallpox scabs and fears that he has infected himself and all of New York City? Or how about *I Am the Messenger* by Markus Zusak (author of *The Book Thief*): after capturing a bank robber, nineteen-year-old cab driver Ed Kennedy begins receiving mysterious messages that direct him to addresses where people need help, and he begins getting over his lifelong feeling of worthlessness. All of Miriam's booktalks will be available on [www.readingfool.blogspot.com](http://www.readingfool.blogspot.com) soon.

Caitlin Augusta is assistant head of children's services at the Darien Library. Her talk and PowerPoint presentation featuring teen books that will make an impression certainly made an impression on all of us adults. She grouped the titles in useful categories such as Realistic Fiction for Boys (*Mercy on These Teenage Chimps* by Gary Soto); Realistic Fiction for Girls (*Dairy Queen* by Catherine Murdock); Fantasy (*The Foreshadowing* by Marcus Sedwick); and lots more. A nonfiction selection, *Tales of the Cryptids* by Kelly Milner Halls, is a compilation of research on all the weird things teens are interested in finding out about; e.g., Loch Ness Monster, Bigfoot, Thylacine of Tasmania, Marozi of Kenya, etc. Caitlin included graphic novels and Manga, wildly popular in many of our libraries these days, in her program. Caitlin's enthusiasm was infectious and stayed with us as we left this wonderful program equipped with many titles to share with our teen patrons. All of Caitlin's annotated selections are available at [www.darienlibrary.org/teens/cla2007.ppt](http://www.darienlibrary.org/teens/cla2007.ppt) (titles with covers) and [www.darien.library.org/teens/titlelist.doc](http://www.darien.library.org/teens/titlelist.doc) (title annotations).

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