

MLA Convention 2009

I went to the MLA Convention on Thursday, October 15, 2009. The first three sessions I attended had to do with Readers' Advisory (50 in 75: RART's Second Annual Blast of Booktalks; Scary Monsters and Super Creeps: Taking the Fear Out of Horror Readers' Advisory; and 60 in 75: Booktalks for Elementary School-Age Children).

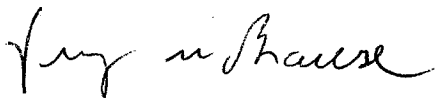
I attended these sessions to improve my Readers' Advisory skills. I never know what to recommend to people who ask me about "good books". The most important thing to remember is to not "pigeonhole" the readers. You should never assume that you know who would read horror or who would read romances. It's also important to remember that it's not about you. Readers want a book that is right for them. You should try to understand what they might like, not what you yourself might enjoy.

It's important to catalog the genre fiction. If you don't, it makes it hard for librarians and readers alike to find them. Since I do a lot of the cataloging of books, I need to remember to add the genres. This will help provide reading suggestions and also help with creating bookmarks or displays.

There is no substitute for reading widely, but we just can't read everything, so book talks like this help spread knowledge.

The fourth session I attended was Gay Penguins, Atheists, and Barefoot Evangelists: Tales from the Front Lines of Intellectual Freedom. It was a little hard to follow the speaker. The main thing I learned from this session was that it's very important to have written policies in place that address the choosing of material and the use of the meeting room. The policies should also outline the criteria used for review of challenges. It is also important to enforce these policies consistently.

All in all the sessions were very informative and I was glad I attended them.



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