WELCOME TO SECOND SEMESTER!
BY JENNIFER HILTNER

To quote Bon Jovi: "Woahhh - we're half way there..."

What does the second portion of the inaugural year of the Academies of Loudoun hold for its students? With most of the initial opening hurdles out of the way, one thing is for certain: there is going to be a ton of amazing research done. With over 1,000 articles being downloaded monthly by students across our extended database collection (Science Direct was added this month and Wiley Online should be accessible by the end of February), we are excited to see what our students are going to be able to create.

To support all this innovation, we are proud to showcase the new Students Self-Service Production Center in the research library. Supplies for attaching, cutting, and creating are available to "grab and go" as inspiration strikes. We only ask that you return all non-consumables when complete.

WHAT WE'RE READING

This moving memoir by children's writer Jarrett Krosoczka is his first on the young adult market (he's better known for his Lunch Lady comics). The book's subtitle reveals its theme: How I Lost My Mother, Found My Father, and Dealt with Family Addiction. In graphic form, he tells the story of his childhood and adolescence in Worcester, Mass, where he was raised by his colorful but loving grandparents while his mother battled and eventually succumbed to a heroin addiction. His father was not only absent but even his identity was a complete mystery. What is made perfectly clear by the memoir is the warning of how addiction can plague a family in different ways. Krosoczka's fierce desire to be an artist would not only help him to survive but ultimately will lead him to a happy ending.

You also might want to check out Jarrett Krosoczka's TED talk titled "How a boy became an artist."


National Book Award Winner from 2017, Far From The Tree is the multiple point of view stories of Joaquin, Grace, and Maya - three biological siblings who are about to meet for the first time. Grace, who is the middle child, recently put her own baby up for adoption and is struggling with the guilt of how this will make her siblings feel. Maya, the baby, is dealing with her parents failing marriage and the fear of being an item on the chopping block if they head for divorce. And Joaquin, who never made it out of the foster care system, isn't sure if he can handle the pressure of caring for his new found family. This book runs the gauntlet of emotions; I advise having tissues.

THE BACKSTORY...

Librarians play many roles, but my favorite one is "search engine" - I love finding resources to help our students and staff. When tasked by our Practical Nursing instructor, Mrs. Cypher, to develop a collection to support all of the nursing classes 19 new VERSO competencies on pain management (CTE's versions of SOLs), Ms. Roberts and I were happy to jump on board. The more we found, the more intrigued we were about the science of addiction and how pain management has changed over the years. More specifically, the mismanagement of opioids. Below, is a portion of what Ms. Roberts has written from her research through developing this collection, in addition to reading Beth Macy's *Dopesick: Dealers, Doctors, and the Drug Company that Addicted America* with Mrs. Settle's twelfth-grade Radiology class. If you'd like to read the full, unedited piece please do not hesitate to contact her at froberts@lcps.org.

**DOPESICK EXPOSES THE TRUTH BEHIND THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC**

**BY: FRANCES ROBERTS**

The numbers are truly staggering. The National Institute on Drug Abuse estimates that 72,000 Americans died in 2017 from drug overdoses, most of them due to opioids like heroin and fentanyl, a potent synthetic version. That number is up significantly from 64,000 the previous year and 52,000 the year before that. Drug overdoses now kill more Americans under 50 than anything else. More now die from drug overdoses than from HIV, guns or automobile accidents. More than the number of Americans killed in the wars in Vietnam and Iraq combined. If the numbers for 2018 and 2019 are on par with the latest statistics for drug overdose deaths, then the total number of Americans killed by opioids since 2014 will rival the number killed in World War II. That must give one pause.

With these numbers, it's hard to understand why the nation's response to this opioid epidemic has been so slow, which is why Beth Macy's new book, *Dopesick: Dealers, Doctors and the Drug Company that Addicted America*, published last August, couldn't have come at a more critical time. It's already garnered numerous accolades: one of *New York Times* Book Review's 100 Notable Books of 2018; New York Times critic Janet Mastin's Top Five Best Books; *A Chicago Tribune* Best Book of the Year; *A Washington Post* Best Book of the Year; An Amazon Best Book of 2018, and more.
Students in the Academies Radiology program will be required in the coming weeks to read it. As students read, they will engage in a book club discussion forum and will research a facet, be it, physical addiction factors, cultural influences, pharmaceutical /healthcare industry influences, of personal interest to develop a collaborative video to share with middle school students. We are hopeful that students can in some measure appreciate their role in the remedy to this societal crisis.

I think it’s a book every American teen and adult should read. That said, it’s not an easy read. There’s plenty of heartbreak between these pages, particularly when you stop to consider the lost potential of so many young lives who took their last breath way too soon. But, there are heroes here, too: the stunned, grieving parents of some of the teenagers who died of drug overdoses and then lead the charge as impassioned activists, as well as some of the first responders – a few alarmed doctors, pharmacists, and clinic workers who tried to warn of the growing epidemic.

In her gripping and dark exposé on the opioid epidemic, Macy brings to light the factors that have combined to create the perfect storm. She lays the bulk of the blame on Perdue Pharma with its mass production and super aggressive marketing of their signature drug OxyContin after it came to market in 1995. Physicians were told that the blockbuster prescription painkiller was a nonaddictive opioid and could be safely prescribed at high dosages not just for cancer but for arthritis, post-operative pain relief, back problems and other causes of chronic pain. Tragically, this was not the case, and Purdue Pharma is now being sued by several states, cities and counties.

There were other factors: some overly-aggressive prescribers; the pain pills themselves, which carry an alarmingly high risk of addiction in a short time frame; the high resale value of them on the black market; the lack of responsible and timely oversight by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA); the shortage of addiction treatment programs and/or their sometimes prohibitive cost, and the heroin influx into numerous communities across the country, making this street drug more readily available, thereby creating new users out of previously small heroin-using demographic groups, such as women, the privately insured, and people with higher incomes.

If the opioid epidemic got started with the over prescription of opioids, the sad souls caught up in this maelstrom of addiction have far too often been undertreated, if treated at all. But, that seems to be changing. In 2017, President Trump declared a national public-health emergency, and this past October, he signed bipartisan legislation aimed at curbing the opioid epidemic. The bill's provisions will hopefully accelerate substance-use treatment and research and promote medication-assisted treatment. The accompanying $6 billion in funding to fight the epidemic will also help, but is it enough? Time will surely tell, but at least it's a start.

**SOURCES**


BREAKING OUT

Escape rooms are currently all the rage, and this has been no exception at the Academies of Loudoun - from the history of cosmetology to the digestive system, totally '80s to aseptic technique, Schrodinger's cat to APA citation - your research library can build a puzzle to stump them all! Here's some photos to recap all the fun we've had just this first semester!

Tired of Breakout? Try a Goose Chase!

Think old school scavenger hunt, with a modern twist. Create teams, load the challenges, share the codes and watch the fun begin. Be sure to check out the K-12 resources to sign up for an educational account for free. Great for review and team-building.