**LWQA episode 117**

You're listening to wife work, QA episode 117. Hey there, and welcome to life work QA where I answer a listener question each week and provide resources and guidance to help you take your life and work to the next level. I'm your host. Dr. Katie Linder. As I mentioned in an episode earlier this week about my 2018 goals run down.

I've been doing a lot more reading this year. And so I thought of this episode I would talk about some of my favorite books from 2018 and these are definitely not books that weren't necessarily published in 2018, but books that I read over the year. And I've broken them out into fiction and nonfiction and then some series that I really got into this year.

So if you're looking for some reading recommendations some of these might be for you. I'm going to link to all of them in the show notes if you want to check them out. So I read at this point that I'm recording this a little under 90 books this year. Maybe I'll hit that 90 in the next few days before the the year officially ends 61 of the books.

I read were fiction and over half of those came from some kind of series and then about 27 were nonfiction. So almost 30 or nonfiction. So let me do a breakdown of just my top 5 fiction my top 5 nonfiction and then my top 5 series that I read this year. So in the fiction category, there were a lot of new Authors for me this year.

And so these were my top five. The first one is called the Alice Network by Kate Quinn and I'm almost positive that this was recommended to me by a podcast listener. So if you know that you emailed me about this or tweeted me or some other way communicated to me about this book. It was wonderful.

This is a. For fiction novel and it's basically about women who spied during World War One and Two and it kind of goes back and forth between a present day or a more contemporary shouldn't say present-day a more contemporary scenario and then the past and so you get kind of this back and forth between the stories and it was wonderful its pretty long.

If I remember correctly. I think it was like four or five hundred pages, but I just sped through it and really loved both the story lines of that. The second book that made my top five was a book called the things that keep us here by Carla Buckley and I like this book so much that I read I think two or three other of Carla Buckley's books throughout the year that she has just Standalone novels.

And this one in particular was a book about a pandemic and I love a good pandemic novel and basically it's a story of a family that is trying to survive a pandemic and as kind of stuck in their home and dealing with people around them go. Little bit crazy as this pandemic is spreading. So if you're into stuff like that, I would definitely recommend this book the third book that made my list is one that's kind of unusual for me, but I had heard so many good things about it that I picked it up and it's called Dark Matter by Blake Crouch and it's kind of a Sci-Fi.

I guess it's sci-fi. It's a time travel novel. It's hard for me to describe because it's I don't want to give anything away but there's basically it's very mind-bending. So it's like it's like a movie that you would watch were at the end of the movie your mind is kind of like blown and you want to watch the movie all over again.

It's a book like that where you have to after you get to the end of it. You want to kind of reread it so that you can kind of fully understand what happened. But it's very good and it's for people I think who this is not really your genre. I think it's something that you would still enjoy. I don't consider sci-fi really a genre that I dip into too often.

But if you're looking for something that's a little bit mind bendy. Go ahead and pick it. The fourth book on my fiction list top 5 is Lisa Jehovah's every note played which is about a family who is dealing with a diagnosis of a member of the family getting ALS. And what's interesting about this book is Lisa.

Genova has kind of a she does stand-alone novels. But in every novel she picks a different kind of disease or issue that a family is dealing with and she does a lot of research and kind of Deep dive so that you can get a very kind of close up. Look of what that experience would be like for a family to deal with that particular situation.

So in another book she did this with early-onset Alzheimer's disease and then in this book it focus on ALS, and she's had a few others and it's it's. Difficult to read I mean it's an interesting book and and it's one that you know, the storyline and everything is very interesting but it is definitely challenging to kind of see close up.

You know, what does it look like for people to experience these challenges these physical challenges, but the general premise of This Book Is that there's a couple that is actually divorced and then the husband of that couple. Is diagnosed with ALS and the ex-wife basically has to take care of him and they have to come back together.

And so it's a little bit of how they are dealing with kind of the aftermath of breaking up in the midst of her needing to care for him basically as he's dying from this disease. So anyway, I definitely recommend it. It was very well done. And I recommend her other books as well. The last one that was on my fiction list top five is a book called burial rites by Hannah Kent.

And this is a book that is incredibly atmospheric. It is one of my I like this kind of sub genre of books where it's basically a book that is based on a historical incident. So clearly the author has done quite a bit of research, but it's fictionalized and the idea is that the author is kind of imagining what led up to this particular situation.

An or using kind of as many facts as they can gather to try to generate a hypothesis like a fictionalized hypothesis of what would have happened. And in this particular book, there's a woman. And you're really going to test my memory here because I read it earlier in the year. I want to say this is from like the 1800s maybe earlier maybe even as early as the 1700s.

This is where you see like how horrible I am with history and I don't really pay attention to that part of the book. But basically there is a historical situation where a woman has been accused of murdering someone and she's about to be hanged. And she sent to live with a family to basically await her execution.

And the the story is basically about her kind of connecting with his family. And also you get the back story of what caused her to be involved in this violent incident. So it's a little bit of a mystery but the atmosphere of it because it takes place in the winter and they're in this kind of like isolated kind of cabin house with each other like there's this very kind of dark.

Atmosphere of the book that is perfect to read, you know in colder months, but I really enjoyed it and it's very it's this is probably the most like literary of the books on the list. I know it won a bunch of awards and that was part of the reason that I picked it up is I'd heard really good things about it.

Now as you can see like my memories really being tested here. So you're going to have to go back and look at these books like in the links I use in the show notes, if you really want to find out a lot of details. Okay. So for the non-fiction books of my top five, the first one is a book called The on Settlers by Mark Sundin and this book was so fun to read.

It's basically a mark Sundin profiling a bunch of people who live kind of unconventional lives like they live off the grid for example or there. To grow like Urban Gardens and he really kind of Dives in and like does his research of living with these people to kind of learn a little bit about the story of how they came to be where they are.

And also what their larger goals and vision is for why they're taking those kind of unconventional. And I love books like that. I definitely feel like there is a part of me that would love to like go live off the grid. I don't think I'll ever do it. But I think that reading about it is really really fascinating for me.

So that's the on Settlers by Mark sending. I also did kind of a deep dive in Jon Ronson this year. He the book that I'm putting on my nonfiction top five is called Lost at Sea, but I read several of his other books this year including the psychopath test, which I also recommend and Jon Ronson. You may be aware of because he wrote The Men Who Stare at Goats which was made into a film and I have known his work for a while and have really enjoyed it.

He's a brilliant essayist and also really. Follow on Twitter as well. Basically, he just writes about some really strange phenomena and you read it and you're just like, okay. This is so bizarre that you would even be like involved in this situation to be reporting on it. His background is in journalism.

And so he just kind of gives you a behind-the-scenes peek at a lot of really strange stuff. One example is he was given access to Stanley Kubrick's house after he died where he just has all these boxes of stuff. And Jon Ronson was given permission from his family to go through a bunch of these boxes and just kind of see what was there and it's basically this Museum of like random stuff from Stanley Kubrick and so he kind of reports on what he finds there.

And it's that's just one of the essays in Lost at Sea that was really fast. The third book of my nonfiction list is life work by Donald Hall and I love this book. I picked it up because Donald Hall who's a poet recently died. And this was one of his kind of memoir type books that he wrote and he also was married to Jane Kenyan who's another poet that I really appreciate and like.

And this book was really inspiring for me. It actually inspired how I tied a lifework QA because he does such an interesting job of talking about what does it mean to shape your life around your work and the opposite how do you shape your work around your life? And this was it's a relatively short book, but I really appreciated his Reflections on what does it mean to kind of be so devoted to a craft that you really need to shape your life around it, which he did?

Both himself and his wife both together kind of shape their lives as poets together. So love that book. The fourth book on my list is a little bit business. See it's by Mike Michael wits it's called profit first. And this is a book that also really inspired some changes that I made in my business this year in terms of how I was organizing the revenue from the business and I it just kind of stuck out to me as a book that.

You know, I like books that teach you something and that make you make a change based on what you learn and this was definitely one of those books for me is basically what allowed me to start drawing a salary from my business and to reorganize the ratio of how I was organizing our business income in order to allow that to happen.

So this is a book that I've also mentioned I think a couple of times on make your way. Okay, the fifth book is at 70 by mace Arden and I know I mentioned met certain a couple episodes ago on the show. She is also a poet and a writer she writes fiction and Memoir. She's also a journaler who publishes her journals and at 70 is a journal of her 70th year.

I have read a few different books by me certain one of my other favorite ones is about Solitude and she does a journal of living in solitude and she writes journals all the way up through like her 80s and publishes them. And so I've loved her books. I think that her Reflections on what it means to age and also how she's living a creative life as she ages is really interesting.

All right. So those are the non-fiction books now. I also wanted to talk about some series because I had as I mentioned over half of the fiction books. I read this year were series books and in my top five, I just talked about stand-alones, but I wanted to give a shout out to some series that I read this year that I just thought were really fun.

So the first one that I read seven books in was the Virgin River series, which is a romance novel series by Robin car and let me tell you romance is not. Really my genre, but you wouldn't know it from what I read this year because I got really kind of sucked into this series, which is basically about a small town and all the different characters in it and like many romance series.

It'll take like a different couple each book and tell their story and then you get kind of the Back stories of all the other people in the town as well. And I really like how the author of this series. Just kind of weaves these stories together. It's kind of an interesting puzzle that she's created.

And if someone who's kind of dabbled in fiction, I'm really enjoying that and kind of seeing how she's tough. She's pulling this together. So I think right now I'm actually in the middle of like the eighth book in the series, but I went through many of those this year. The second series I have on this list is the Temperance Brennan series by Kathy reichs, which I read six books in this year.

And this is the series that the television show Bones was based on so if you're familiar with that the book series is quite different than the television series and I'm pretty sure I've talked about this series on the show before because I just enjoy it and I've read many of the books. In recent years, but it's basically about a an anthropologist who studies bones and gets pulled into all different kinds of crimes and the science side of it is really interesting to me.

The third series on my list which I read three of this year is a series by Alex kava that has a main character named Creed and he has a basically a freelance business where he has dogs that get utilized in like crime scene searches. So this is another mystery series and there are only like three or four books in the series right now, but it basically kind of merged with I think another series that she.

About a female FBI agent and of course, there's a little bit of romance Brewing between the dog handler and the female FBI agent over the series The Books but it's a really interesting look at kind of how dogs are used. Not just for the recovery of things like bodies, but also for finding drugs finding in this book they talk about how dogs can smell illness which I thought was really interesting and it's just a fun kind of mystery series.

The fourth series on my list is the cork O'Connor series by William Kent Krueger. This is another mystery series and I read three of the books in the Series this year. I think I'm almost caught up. If not caught up with the series. There's probably 18 to 20 books in it. And this is a series that weaves together.

It takes place in Minnesota and weaves in a lot of Native American kind of Mythology and it's basically about a family who the. There is an investigator now he used to be a sheriff and every book there's some kind of crime obviously they gets investigated. But what's interesting about this series is how the characters have developed over time the books started with the his children being very young and now they're all adults.

And so you see their growth and development over all the books, which is really interesting. And then the last series I put on my list was a new one to me. This is the man and Bradshaw series by Susie Steiner and the first book in the series is called missing presumed and then I read the second book in the series as well.

This is a newer series that just launched and it's basically a police procedural series as you can tell a little bit of a pattern here. I read a lot of mystery series and I really enjoyed about this series how it jumps from different perspectives like every chapter is a. Character's perspective and that was something that I found really interesting.

And also I just really enjoy police procedurals. So if that's something that is interesting to you, you might want to check that out that series out. Okay, so I will link to all of these books in the show notes, but a quick rundown if you were kind of wanted me to repeat the books in the fiction category the Alice Network by Kate Quinn the things that keep us here by Carla Buckley.

Dark matter by Blake Crouch every note played by Lisa Genova and burial rites by Hannah Kent in the nonfiction category the on Settlers by markson Dean Lost at Sea by Jon Ronson life work by Donald Hall profit first by Mike Michael widths and at 70 by me certain and in the series category Virgin River by Robin car Temperance Brennan by Kathy reichs Creed by Alex cava.

Cork O'Connor by William Kent Krueger and man and Bradshaw by Susie Steiner. I hope this list gives you some fun books to check out. Especially if you're taking a little bit of a break over the winter holidays. If not, maybe I'll add it to your to read Pile in 2019. And of course, I love to hear what you're reading and what you think I should be reading.

You can always connect with me on my Goodreads profile if you want to check out what I'm reading there, and so I can see what you're reading as well. But also you can always email me great books to read at contact at Katie Linder dot work tweet to me at Katie underscore lender or connect with me on.

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