Kyle Adona

**Book Talk: Bluescreen**

* Dan Wells
* Born March 4th, 1977
* Wells grew up on Sci-fi and fantasy at a very young age because of his parent’s influence. He also has a massive love for board games such as Dungeons & Dragons, collectible card games and an assortment of other intricate board games.
* Wells grew up in Utah where he spent a lot of time writing and reading at his local library. When Wells was old enough to go to the library alone, he was exposed to different forms of literature, not that he had outgrown fantasy; but discovered inspiration in “classical literature” and non-English works.
* http://thedanwells.com/index.php/about-dan/

**Summary**

*Bluescreen* is a cyber noir set in the not so distant future of Los Angeles, 2050. Through a neural implant called the djinni, everyone remains connected online blurring virtual reality and the real world seamlessly. The connection is now oxygen and it is hard to function in society without it. Marisa Carneseca is one of denizens enjoying the fruitful bliss of djinni life, playing virtual reality games on her spare time, attending school when she wants, and breaking cyber law when it is convenient for her. Marisa’s peaceful life ends when her friend Anja obtains a thumb drive containing an immersive program that plugs into the djinni to induce a euphoric high. Its name is Bluescreen- and the users become sleepwalking puppets as a result. Marisa is on a race to eradicate this mysterious digital drug before its puppet master infects all of L.A. Not all drugs come from reality.

**Three Quotes and their Significance**

* “Please just tell me what it does,” said Marisa… “Anja, don’t!” yelled Omar. (53-54)
  + This is Marisa’s first time witnessing the digital drug known as Bluescreen. By allowing her friend to use the digital substance, Marisa drags herself into solving the mystery of Bluescreen in order to save her friends digital life.
* “She had to protect Pati… The line went dead.” (209-210)
  + Bluescreen, a drug only used by rich people and clubs has finally made its way into Elementary schools. Marisa’s sister risked becoming infected like Anja and decides that this is suddenly over her paygrade and informs the local gangs that someone is dealing on their territory. The gang isn’t known for being friendly and her actions set off a chain of events that come back to haunt her. This is her moment of weakness before deciding that she had to personally put an end to Bluescreen.
* “What are you doing?” …. “They always patch the good toys as soon as we exploit them.” (5-6)
  + Marisa displays her cunning ingenuity early on in the book. She is always thinking outside of the box, and uses her logic and reasoning to turn the insurmountable tide that is against her. Marisa is a strong character when she is in the zone.

**Elements**

* Wells has written a lot of horror books, mostly horror with *Bluescreen* taking a different direction as a Cyber Noir thriller. Growing up, Wells admits to neither reading very much horror and expected to write about fantasy. After noticing he had a theme of lurking darkness throughout each of his writings, he began to test this lurking darkness further and further. This factor remains within Bluescreen, the creeping darkness contrasting between drugs, gangs, and hidden agendas.
* http://thedanwells.com/index.php/about-dan/

**Classifications**

* *Bluescreen* has a Lexile measure of 830L, matching with the age group of 14 to 17. The Dale-Chall Formula also grades *Bluescreen* to be match the grade levels of 9 through 10.
* This book fits well with “The Archetypal Seeker”
* Themes of the story include family, drug awareness, mystery, cyber-punk, and realism.
* Assesses the repercussions of the over-reliance in technology.
* Substance abuse can come in all sorts of forms.

**Exeter Qualities**

2. Exciting plots that include secrecy, surprise, and tension brought about through narrative hooks and a fast pace.

3. Characters who reflect experiences of teen readers, something that is not found in much of the literary canon, especially when it comes to strong female protagonists.

5. Lively, varied, and imaginative language that is grammatically correct while being neither patronizing and simplistic nor unnecessarily confusing through lexical density or complexity.