

Abouzeid, Chris. *Anatopsis*. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 2006. 0-525-47583-4. \$16.99. Gr. 7-10.

Anatopsis longs to become a knight errant like her father, but her mother has different ideas. On her thirteenth birthday, a new tutor, the demigod Mr. Pound, arrives at the castle to prepare Anatopsis for the Bacchanalian exam. Treachery, myth, friendship, courage, magic, prophesy – this story has them all. Ana joins with her friends to discover the secret of the *Os Divinitas* and save their world from disaster. **Fantasy**

Constance Roupp

Alegria, Malin. *Estrella's Quinceanera*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006. 0-689-87809-5. 260p. \$15.99. Gr. 9-12.

Estrella, or Star, as her non-Hispanic friends call her, is faced with the conflict of which culture she wants to be hers: the Hispanic culture she was born into, and in which her family and previous best friends firmly reside, or the Anglo culture of her new private school and the friends there who know nothing about her non-school life and culture. In this great coming-of-age story, Estrella rebels against the usual rite of passage known as the quinceanera, but eventually finds her way to her own version of this important time in her life, and to her own real self. **Fiction/Teen Story**

Nancy Chrismer

Alexander, E.M. *Death at Deacon Pond*. Montreal, Quebec: Lobster Press, 2006. 189p. 1-897073-42-9. \$12.95. Gr. 9-12.

Kerri, still grieving from the loss of her father in a supposed suicide, has psychic visions. When she accidentally stumbles over a body near the beach, she has a vision of the man being killed and pleading with her to help him. Unable to tell the police about her vision because they dismissed the vision she had about her father's death, Kerri decides to investigate on her own. Then her best friend Seth is accused of selling marijuana and of being involved with the murder victim, so Kerri cannot trust him. Kerri's mother also dismisses her visions, and although her sister Ann believes her, Ann is unable to keep Kerri from danger. Kerri is kidnapped by the murderer, who is committing the murders to cover up a girl-trafficking ring. Kerri escapes to go for help, but the murderer catches her, and she nearly falls to her death in the exciting ending, where the reader finds out who killed Kerri's father and why.

Mystery/Teen story

Nancy Chrismer

Almond, David. *Clay*. New York : Delacorte Press, 2006, c2005. 0-385-90208-5. 247p. \$19.42. Gr. 6-9.

Davie enjoys his friends and his alter boy duties and is quite content. Then Stephen Rose, an older boy, with a dark, mysterious past moves in and his influence on Davie is strong and controlling. He has supernatural powers, which he uses with sinister intent to create a monster and soon Davie finds himself in over his head. I think readers will relate to the strange influence that Stephen is able to exert over Davie. This book pulls you in and holds you because you want to see how it ends.

Fantasy Fiction.

Ginger Bardi.

Alvarez, Julia. *Saving the World*. Chapel Hill, NC: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 2006. 1-56512-510-X. 384 p. \$24.95. Gr.9+

When her husband Richard goes to the Dominican Republic on a humanitarian mission, Alma stays home in Vermont, quietly writing a novel about Isabel Sendales y Gomez, the only woman to accompany Francisco Xavier Balmis, who attempted to stop the spread of smallpox in the New World. But Richard is taken hostage and Alma must try to save him. Told in interwoven threads, these parallel stories create a novel within a novel, and plummet headlong to a tragic ending. **Multicultural, Historical Fiction**

Pat Naismith

Anderson, M.T.. *The Pox Party: Taken From Accounts by His Own Hand and Other Sundry Sources; Collected by M.T. Anderson of Boston*. (The Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing, Traitor to the Nation, vol. 1) 0-7636-2402-0. \$15.50. YA/Adult

It's hard to put into words all of the things that make this a truly remarkable work of fiction. Anderson, the author, reveals an impressive and extensive knowledge of this time period in America's history. The plot goes between satire and realism. His characters are always in context, in much the same way as the actors in Williamsburg or various reenactments. The story is elegantly written in the style of the great prose of the day. Octavian and his mother, both Negro slaves, become part of a "great experiment." There is no doubt that the text and plot can be challenging, but this should be required reading in high school. This book will yield great material for stimulating conversations about free will, totalitarism, human suffering, and brain-washing.

Fiction

Ilene Goldis Grayev

Bondoux, Anne-Laure. *The Killer's Tears*. New York: Delacorte, 2006. 978-0-385-73293-2. 162p. \$ 15.95. Grade 9-12.

Young Paolo (age unknown) lives in a remote part of Chili on the southern most tip with his parents. The story and Paolo's life begins when a wanderer comes through and kills his parents. Paolo must now rely on this stranger named Angel who keeps Paolo alive because he needs him. When, another traveler, Luis, a good and educated man, arrives at the home, Angel feels threatened because he has a criminal past as well as the fact that he has killed Paolo's parents. The three end up living together for a number of years but things unravel when they must travel to the city for supplies and animals to keep the farm going. Paolo is left by these men when Luis runs off with a woman and Angel is arrested and sent to jail. Angel is transformed through his relationship with Paolo. This is a beautiful and complex story of redemption in a little book translated from the French. **Fathers and Sons/Metamorphosis**

Susan Krenicky

Boniface, William. *The Hero Revealed*. New York: Harper Collins Children's Books, 2006.

0060774646. \$15.99. 294 p. Gr. 4-7.

It's hard being an ordinary person in a town full of super heroes. This is a great book with action, adventure, and a little humor. The main character, Ordinary Boy, learns that you don't need to have powers to be a special person. This was an excellent book that kids from fourth grade onward will love. **Heros, Adventure A.B., Gr. 6, The Haverford School**

Booth, Coe. *Tyrell*. New York: PUSH/Scholastic, 2006. 0-439-83879-7. 310 p. \$16.99. Gr. 9-12.

Nothing seems to be going right for 15-year-old Tyrell. His father is in jail. And he must care for his drug-addled mother and younger brother who are living in a vermin-infested homeless shelter in the Bronx. Tyrell drops out of school, but refuses to sell drugs as his mother wants him to do. Tyrell comes up with the idea of an underground dance party to raise some money. Can Tyrell juggle the responsibilities of caring for his family, getting them out of the roach motel, and still maintain his relationship with his girlfriend, Novisha? Booth handles them all admirably, with authentic voices and a fairly plausible ending. Frank sexual passages make this book appropriate for older readers. **Realistic Fiction, Multicultural Pat Naismith**

Box, C. J. *In Plain Sight*. New York: G.P. Putnam's, 2006. 978-0-399-15360-0. 305p. \$24.95. Gr. 11 and up.

Straddled between worry for Joe Pickett and his family and a sort of sad wonder at J.W. Keeley's horrifying lack of humanity and eager willingness to destroy others, readers will need to know what's next in this Wyoming cowboy story. The brutality that's embedded within the Scarlett family feels very close to the harsh realities that are part of the heritage of the Old West. Readers will find this tale of adventure of the game warden, the convict, and the Wild West a satisfying read.

Western Thriller. Erika Thickman Miller

Brewer, Sonny. *A Sound Like Thunder*. New York: Ballantine Books, 2006. 0-343-47633-6. \$23.95. Gr. 9-12.

Rove MacNee, son of an abusive sea captain, Dominus MacNee, looks back on this coming-of-age period of his youth from his advanced age. Most of the story is set along Alabama's Gulf Coast in the time period when the U. S. is about to enter World War II. Rove's father is alcoholic and abusive to Rove, his little brother Julian, and their mother, though Rove seems to be the focus of most of his abuse. Rove finds comfort in fishing with a mullet net, especially after his beloved Granny Whooten dies, and he is trying to make sense of life and death. His life becomes much more complicated, however, when a family friend, Joseph Unruh, gives him a boat to fix up. Despite the Captains' dislike of Joseph, Rove is allowed to keep the boat and fix it up. Already disliking Joseph because he is German, the Captain suspects that his wife, Rove's mother, may like Joseph more than is seemly, so he and his friends hoist Joseph to the top of his windmill, nearly killing him. Life has gotten so confusing and bad that Rove decides to enlist in the U.S. Navy, and agrees to help his father with on one more sail before he says good-bye to his girlfriend and leaves for the war. Disaster strikes on that trip, and Rove's life is changed forever. **Coming-of-age Story Nancy Chrismer**

Broach, Elise. *Desert Crossing*. New York : Henry Holt & Co., 2006. 0-8050-7762-6. 278p. \$16.95. Gr. 9-12.

Lucy Martinez, her brother and his friend are on a road trip to visit their father in Phoenix. During a terrible rainstorm they hit something and when they backtrack to investigate they find a dead girl. During the police inquiry, an artist living nearby lets them stay with her. Over the protests of her brother's friend, Lucy begins her own investigation into the girl's death and puts them in danger. Contains a mature sexual theme. **Realistic Fiction Ginger Bardi**

Broach, Elise. *Desert Crossing*. New York: Henry Holt, 2006. 0-8050-7762-6 278p. \$16.95. Gr. 9-12.

Lucy and her older brother, Jamie, and his friend, Kit are driving across the New Mexico desert when a driving rain cuts off their visibility and they hit something in the road. They discover a young woman lying by the road. As they wait in artist Beth's home, life changes for all involved. Jamie becomes romantically involved with Beth, who is in her thirties. Lucy and Kit start kissing and that boy does that change everything! They find out their car did not hit the young woman and Lucy needs to know how she died and who she was. Mystery, romance and suspense all combine for a satisfying, exciting novel you won't be able to put down!

Mystery- Realistic Fiction

B.J. Neary

Brockmeier, Kevin. *Grooves: A Kind of Mystery*. NY: Katherine Tegen Books/HarperCollins, 2006.

978-0060736910. \$15.99. 199 p. Gr. 4-7.

Imagine listening to sound coming out of the grooves in your jeans or potato chips, this is what happened to Dwayne Ruggles one day. He had just learned how records produce sound by placing a needle in the grooves of the record and having the sound travel up and out through a cone. The town's millionaire, Howard Thigpen, visits Dwayne's school and Dwayne notices that Mr. Thigpen is surrounded by little flickering lights. Next he makes his discovery that the grooves in his Thigpen jeans have something to say. This imaginative, funny mystery will appeal to both girls and boys. **Mystery, Humor, Adventure Sandra Krieg**

Brooks, Kevin. *The Road of the Dead*. New York : The Chicken House/Scholastic, 2006. 0-439-78623-1. 339 p. \$16.99. Gr. 9-12.

Half-Gypsy, 14-year-old Ruben has second sight when it comes to his siblings. When he psychically witnesses the brutal rape and murder of his older sister, Rachel, he and his older brother, Coe, travel from London to remote Dartmoor to find her killer. As the story unravels, so does façade of the tiny village of Lychcombe. A tantalizing mystery; fragments of incredible narrative beauty

PSLA TITLES FOR 2006

FICTION

woven with threads of unbelievable brutality and violence. Not for younger or squeamish readers, but a riveting thriller the reader will not want to put down. **Mystery (with psychic elements)**
Pat Naismith

Buffie, Margaret. *Out of Focus*. Tonawanda, NY: Kids Can Press Ltd., 2006. 978-1-55337-955-3. \$16.95. Gr. 8-12.
 Sixteen year old Bernie Dodd sees the world best through a camera lens. This time Bernie is really angry with her mother. She has disappeared again, probably on a drinking binge and on the night before her wedding. It doesn't look good. With no money and now no prospect of a new husband to help them out they'll soon have to sneak off in the middle of the night to avoid the landlord. Then Bernie finds out that her mother has inherited Black Spruce Lodge in Ontario, Canada. Bernie forces her mother to move the family there believing that it might be the way to get their lives in focus. It's a lot of work and the anger won't let go. Will their lives change for the better or will it be the same old story? **Realistic Fiction.**
Ginger Bardi

Buffie, Margaret. *Out of Focus*. Tonawanda, New York: Kids Can Press, 2006. 1-553337-955-1. 239p. \$16.95. Gr. 9-12.
 Bernice Dodd's mother is an alcoholic, and Bernice has to take care of her younger brother and sister, run the house, and try to make up for her mother's deficiencies. Just when she thinks things may get better with her mother's expected marriage to a good man, her mother calls off the wedding, goes on a binge, and things explode. Bernice finds hope in an inheritance from her great-aunt in the form of a lodge in the countryside north of Winnipeg, Canada. Despite a rocky beginning, things work out for Bernice as she and her mother discover some wonderful people who help them get the lodge ready to open for business, and best of all, make peace with each other. **Teen Story**
Nancy Chrismer

Cadnum, Michael. *Nightsong: The Legend of Orpheus and Eurydice*. New York: Scholastic, Inc., 2006. 0439545358 \$16.99. 144 p. Gr. 4-7.
 Orpheus is a prince, who is madly in love with Eurydice, the princess. Orpheus is a man who is loved by the gods, so he was gifted by the talent of music and poetry. During the day of his and his loved one's marriage, something terrible happens to Eurydice. It is up to her husband to do the impossible; bring Eurydice back from the kingdom of Hades, the underworld. How will he try to do it? He will use his greatest weapon: his voice. This book will appeal for romance and Greek myth-loving people. **Greek mythology, Fantasy, Romance, Drama. H.M., Sixth grade, The Haverford School**

Calhoun, Dia. *Avielle of Rhia*. New York: Marshall Cavendish, c2006. 0-7614-5320-2. 397 p. \$16.99. Gr. 8+
 Rhia is at war with Dredonia and its evil wizard-priests. Princess Avielle is shunned by her own people because she is a "silver skin," a part-Dredonian with a magical gift, and resembling her ancestor who put a curse on Rhia. When she alone escapes the massacre of the royal family, she is faced with the decision of remaining in hiding or using her magical gifts to save her people. Thought-provoking and spell-binding coming of age story. **Fantasy**
Pat Naismith

Carlson, Dale. *The Mountain of Truth*. Madison, CT: Bick, 2005. 169p. 1-884158-30-7. \$14.95. Grades 5-9.
 Summer at an international camp for teenagers turns into something more when Michael and Peter become part of a covert group developing extra-sensory powers to change the world. First published in 1972, in this book the author honors the search for the truth about what it is to be truly human. An ALA Notable Book by an award-winning author. **Recommended. Fiction**
Candy Blessing

Carlson, Melody. *Notes from a Spinning Planet: Ireland*. Colorado Springs, Colorado: Waterbrook Press, 2006. 1-4000-7144-5. 240p. \$12.99. Gr. 9-12.
 This book is about a teenage girl named Maddie who goes on a trip to Ireland with her Aunt Sid and her friend Ryan. The characters experience physical and emotional struggles as they try to find out what happened to Ryan's dad and what is going on with Aunt Sid. This book is a perfect mix of comedy, mystery, and excitement. **Fiction/Teen Story**
T. K., 10th grade student , Juniata High School

Carlson, Melody. *Notes from a Spinning Planet: Ireland*. Colorado Springs, Colorado: Waterbrook Press, 2006. 1-4000-7144-5. 240p. \$12.99. Gr. 9-12.
 Maddie, a 19-year-old who has never traveled before, goes on a trip to Ireland with her Aunt Sid and Sid's godson, Ryan. Aunt Sid is a journalist, and while she gathers stories for her article, Maddie and Ryan go exploring on their own and discover many things, including that tensions between Protestants and Catholics still exist. In a surprising twist, Aunt Sid's old boyfriend, whom she thought had died years before in an IRA bombing, is found very much alive. As in Carlson's other novels, there are Christian themes woven into the plot that give the story added depth. The growing relationship between Maddie and Ryan will attract teen readers. **Teen Story**
Nancy Chrismer

Carey, Janet Lee. *The Beast of Noor*. New York: Antheneum. 2006. 0-68987-644-0 .512p. \$16.95. Gr. 5-8.
 Hannah and Miles Ferrell's family are the town pariahs for the last 300 years. Their ancestor caused the Shriker to stalk their village although their parents scoff at the old tales, Miles is determined to use his magic to break the curse. As he hunts the beast in the magic world, he becomes a beast himself. He is unaware that it is only with Hannah's help he can succeed. **Fantasy. Barb Wray**

Cheek, Gene. *The Color of Love: A Mother's Choice in the Jim Crow South.* Guilford, Ct.: Lyons Press, 2006. 1-59228-626-7. 258pgs. \$14.95. Grade 11+

The Color of Love is an autobiographical account of the challenges that life presented to a young boy who lived in the south at a time when Jim Crow ruled. Gene's mother was forced to choose between the man she loved and the raising of her son. A narrow-minded white judge thought that life with an alcoholic, abusive, father was better than with a white mother and a supportive, loving, black man as a father. The judge was horribly wrong. After many episodes, Gene was enrolled at a private school. He learned to cope with the loneliness, but he became a bitter man. He never let his mother feel guilty for "abandoning" him but it made later relationships difficult. At his father's death bed, Gene resolved to let the past go and start a new life. This book is the result of his growth as a person. Young adults will recognize the truth and reality of the situations and learn from the strength the author finds inside. **Family Relationships, Biography.** **Ilene Goldis Grayev**

Clarke, Judith. *One Whole and Perfect Day.* Asheville, NC: Front Street, 2007. 250 p. \$14.40. 1-932425-95-0 YA.

Although this family tale takes place in Australia, many teens will identify with 17-year-old Lily, growing up in a single parent home, which also houses her eccentric grandparents and older brother. She feels the burden of the world on her as the only responsible one in the family and also experiences first love during the story. We follow the ups and downs of the many characters as they prepare for Lily's grandfather's 80th birthday party. **Family Fiction** **Candy Blessing**

Cole, Stephen. *Thieves Like Us.* New York : Holtzbrinck, 2006. 978-1-58234-653-3. 349p. \$16.95. Gr. 7- 12.

Surprised when a group of kids break into the Young Offenders' Institution to "free" him, Jonah wonders why his talents using the computer to decode almost anything are so valuable to Coldhardt and his "family." Jonah's bad foster home experiences seem to fit uncomfortably well with this group of misfits who'd been abused and abandoned before being noticed by Coldhardt. Their exciting adventure contains elements of the mystical in a race to locate the ancient Greek Ophiucus and his secrets exploring the search for eternal life. More traditional motivations of riches and treasure mix with the search for belonging and family to round out a satisfying story. **Adventure Fiction.** **Erika Thickman Miller**

Collier, Kristi. *Throwing Stones.* New York : H. Holt, 2006. 0-8050-7614-X. 204p. \$16.95. Gr. 7-12.

Set in World War I, Andrew Soaring wants to play basketball. He hopes that if his team wins the State Championship his father will be proud of him and his family can begin to enjoy life again. It has been somber in his house since his brother was killed in the war. He has honed his skills and the season begins well but a foolish decision threatens his dream. He is offered a job at the newspaper and uncovers some unpleasant secrets that cause dramatic events as well as a growth in maturity for Andrew. **Historical Fiction** **Ginger Bardi**

Collier, Kristi. *Throwing Stones.* New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2006. 0-8050-7614-X 204p. \$16.95. Gr. 7-12.

Andy is a ninth grader in 1920's Indiana who wants to take his high school basketball team to the state finals. He likes his best friend's sister, misses his brother who died in World War I and aches to help his family during farming financial woes. You really enjoy getting to know Andy and his impetuosity, from his stunt that breaks his collarbone and sidelines his basketball glory, to his grand (if somewhat biased) basketball reporting for the *Pierre Journal*. The drama continues to unfold as Andy hides a family secret, stumbles upon a bootlegging operation and stands up for a friend he considered a rival in more ways than one.

Historical Fiction

B.J. Neary

Collins, Suzanne. *Gregor and the Marks of Secret.* New York: Scholastic, 2006. 0-439-79145-6. 343 p. \$16.99. Gr. 5-8.

In the fourth book in the *Underland Chronicles*, twelve-year-old Gregor and his little sister, Boots, assist the Underlanders when Queen Luxa receives a distress call from the mice who helped her survive in *Gregor and the Curse of the Warmbloods (2005)*. They discover that the immature and arrogant "Bane", the young white rat prophesized to be king, is systematically killing the mice. Gregor and his group of adventures encounter danger and suspense as they travel across the strange underland to stop the Bane.

Fantasy Adventure

Michelle Stone

Connolly, John. *The Book of Lost Things.* New York: Atria, 2006. 0743298853. 339p. \$23.00. Gr. 9+.

Twelve-year-old David is an English boy whose mother died of a lengthy illness at the start of World War II. His father remarries and his stepmother is pregnant. Angry and lonely in his grief, he spends much of his time in his attic bedroom in the company of his books. Reality and fantasy collide as David discovers a portal to a world of fairy tales, heroes, beasts, and monsters, a world that is not always pretty. The story describes David's quest, his journey from innocence, and the power of stories.

Highly recommended.

Joyce Valenza

Cooney, Caroline. *A Friend at Midnight.* New York : Delacorte Press, 2006. 0-385-73326-7. 183p. \$13.56. 7-12.

Eight-year-old Michael is dropped off by his biological father at the airport by himself with no belongings, no airplane ticket and no money. In misery and panic he contacts Lily, his 15-year-old sister who immediately comes to his rescue. He makes her promise that she won't tell anyone what really happened and he is so traumatized that she agrees. The secret takes its toll on both of them but primarily Lily who is thought to be unreasonably rigid in her contempt of the father. It all boils over when Lily's sister announces

her engagement and wants her biological father to walk her down the aisle. Blended families and the love of a child for his parent are strong themes in this engaging book. **Realistic Fiction** **Ginger Bardi**

Cornish, D.M. *Monster Blood Tattoo: Foundling*. New York: G.P. Putnam .2006 0-3992-4638-X. 404p. \$16.95. Gr. 8+
Rossmunde Bookchild is hapless orphan who sets off to find his way in a harsh world where hideous monsters lurk in the wilds Half-Continent. He admires those who bear the Monster Tattoo, the mark of a monster slayer. Readers wanting to explore a fantasy world will find this fresh and exciting. This is the first book in a trilogy and the adventures are only just beginning as the book ends. A 100 page glossary further explains the world of Half-Continent. **Fantasy** **Barb Wray**

Cushman, Karen. *The Loud Silence of Francine Green*. New York : Clarion Books, 2006. 978-0-618-50455-8. 225p. \$13.60. Gr. 5-9.

Set in 1949 during the “communist scare” when Americans feared that Russia would drop a bomb on the United States, this is a story of two friends who are opposites. Francine has grown up in a household where you stay out of trouble and speak only when spoken to; no one wants to hear her opinions. Sophie’s family speaks their mind and regularly shares their opinions. Both attend a Catholic school where Sophie’s outspoken ways cause her trouble. When acquaintances are targeted as pro-communist and begin to lose their jobs they suddenly see the cost of nonconformity. **Historical Fiction** **Ginger Bardi**

Davis, Jim. *Garfield Blots out the Sun*. New York: Ballantine Books, 2007. 978-0345-46615-0. 94 p. \$11.95. Gr. 6-12.
This is a series of very funny comic strips. Much of it is about how Garfield is far too fat for his own good. The stories mainly revolve around the three main characters; Garfield, the cat, Odie, the dog, and Jon, their owner who can’t seem to get a date. This might be for older audience because of certain references, but there is no profanity and everything is “G” rated. **Comic Strips.** **L. Z., 8th grade student, Sandy Run Middle School**

DeFelice, Cynthia. *Bringing Ezra Back*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006. 0-374-39939-5. 148 p. \$16.00. Gr
In this sequel to *Weasel* (Simon & Schuster 1990) 12-year-old Nathan goes to find Ezra, the man brutally mutilated by the evil Weasel, and finds a whole lot about human nature. Traumatized earlier in his life by the events of the previous book, Nathan has a hard time trusting anyone. When he learns that Ezra might be on display as a freak in a traveling show, Nathan leaves home to save the man who saved him. Ohio in 1840 is the Wild West and there are all sorts of characters. Nathan travels with a peddler and traveling artist. The ongoing humorous banter between the two men help bring Nathan out of his shell. DeFelice shows the power of human touch and contact as Nathan and Ezra both heal . **Ohio Territory; Dignity; Self -worth** **Jeannie Bellavance**

DeHaven, Tom. *It's Superman! A Novel*. New York: Ballantine, 2006. 417 p. \$13.95. 0-345-49392-3 (pbk.) Adult for YA.
The author recounts the early years of Superman with a strong emphasis on the pop culture of Depression-era America in the 1930s, beginning in rural Smalltown, Kansas. DeHaven presents a wonderful re-imagining of the popular superhero/mild-mannered Clark Kent, including his romance with Lois Lane and clash with adversary, Lex Luthor. Recommended. **FANTASTIC FICTION** **Candy Blessing**

De Mari, Silvana. *The Last Dragon*. New York: Miramax Books/Hyperion Books for Children, 2006. 0-7868-3636-9. 361p. \$16.95. Gr. 5-8.

When floods cover the elf camp, young Yorsh sets off alone into the world of humans, who fear his powers. His innocent naiveté encourage Sarja and Monser to protect him as they wander the country side. While escaping from the town of Daligar, Yorsh glimpses a prophecy which sends the three in search of the last dragon. They find an old dragon, and Yorsh cares for him for 13 years, until the dragon dies, leaving behind an egg. When the egg hatches, Enbrow, the dragon, and Yorsh learn that Sarja and Monser have been hanged for helping Yorsh. Their daughter, Robi nearly meets the same fate, but Yorsh rescues her, and they set off with a group 98 others and begin their own country. **Fantasy** **Michelle Stone**

Dessen, Sara. *Just Listen*. New York : Viking, 2006. 0-670-06105-0. 371 p. \$17.99. Gr. 8-11.

"Don't think, or judge. Just listen." Those are loner Owen’s words to Annabel whose life is falling apart around her. Her best friend, Sophie, won’t talk to her. Her sister Whitney has an eating disorder. She has inherited the family trait of putting on a brave face and pretending nothing is wrong. But it is wrong, and Owen finally helps Annabel to find a voice. Reminiscent of Laurie Halse Anderson’s *Speak*. Strong characters, well-plotted and absorbing, this is the teen novel that may well be the best of the year. **Realistic Fiction** **Pat Naismith**

D’Lacey, Chris. *Icefire*. New York: Orchard Books, 2006, c2003. 0-439-67245-7. 421 p. \$13.59. Gr. 7+.
Action and mystery abounds in this sequel to *The Fire Within* (Scholastic, 2005). As David researches the history of the Artic, dragon lore, and the secret of icefire as part of a college assignment, he finds himself drawn into the mystique of dragons along with his friends. Face-paced action to the end and one more to come in the trilogy. **SUPERNATURAL FICTION.** **Candy Blessing**

Dobkin, Bonnie. *Dream Spinner*. Woodbury, MN: Flux, 2006. 0-73870-919-0. 257p. \$8.95. Gr 9+

Jori has lost her father in a car accident that left her scarred. She returns to school and is treated like an outcast. Her younger sister, Lisa has disappeared. How much worse could her life get? She meets Mr. DePris who promises a world where all her dreams can come true. He has a tapestry of dreams woven by a spider named Arachnea. Two classmates willing enter the tapestry. Jori is suspicious and discovers her sister Lisa is trapped in the dream world. She must rescue her sister and her classmates.

Fantasy.

Barb Wray

Doig, Ivan. *The Whistling Season* Orlando, FL: Harcourt, c2006. 978-0-15-101237-4. 345 p. \$25.00 Gr. 10-up.

The narrator of the story is a seventh grade boy who lives with his widowed father and two brothers. As the boys try to attend school in a one room schoolhouse and help with the household chores, their father employs a woman to help with the housework. The novel struggles with the pain of losing a parent, but also reveals the joy of loving someone new.

A. C., Plymouth Whitmarsh HS

Draper, Sharon. *Copper Sun*. New York: Atheneum, 2006. 0-689-82181-6. 302 p. \$16.95. Gr. 9+.

A compelling story of the slave trade, which traces the experiences of 15-year-old Amari as she is brutally captured in her home village of Africa, travels in the most inhumane conditions across the ocean to Charles Town, where she is sold to a wicked plantation owner. The narrative follows Amari's relationship with Polly, a white indentured servant girl of the same age as they endure the life in the slave quarters. When life becomes unbearable the two girls flee to find Fort Moses, as Spanish colony in Florida where they are led to believe that freedom awaits them. Some mature content. Coretta Scott King Award winner. Highly recommended. **HISTORICAL FICTION.**

Candy Blessing

Durrant, Lynda. *My Last Skirt: The Story of Jennie Hodgers, Union Soldier*. New York: Clarion Books, 2006.

0-618-57490-5. 198p. \$16.00 . Gr. 7+

Two of my students researching the Civil War came upon an unusual photo. Although the photo was of a woman in a dress, they were not convinced it was a woman. They assumed it was a man. What they discovered was a photo of Jennie Hodgers and an accompanying photo of her as soldier Albert Cashier. For over 50 years, Jennie lived as a man, beginning with her childhood in Ireland where she earned money for her family by working as a shepherd for the bishop by disguising herself as a boy and wearing pants. When she emigrated to the United States, she discovered that her manly disguise opened up more opportunities that she ever would have had as a woman. When the Civil War began, Jennie enlisted as Albert Cashier and fought through many battles with her regiment and was discharged with a pension. Many years later, her true identity is revealed. Her former comrades signed a petition so that Jennie could keep her pension and she was buried in her Union uniform. The historical facts of Jennie's life are interwoven with her first person narrative, which explores the issues of gender identity and the obstacles Jennie faced in living the only life she knew how to live. A fascinating read. **Historical Fiction.**

Rosanne Zajko - Ancillae Assumpta Academy

Edwards, Kim. *The Memory Keeper's Daughter*. New York: Penguin Books, c2005. 0-143-03714-5. 414p. \$8.40. Gr. 9+

Right from the start readers are faced with quite a controversial scenario: During the 60's, Dr. David Henry makes a startling decision to secretly give his newborn daughter away because she is afflicted with Down Syndrome. He deceives his wife, Nora (who has also given birth to a healthy, twin boy) by telling her that their baby daughter did not survive the birth. Through a 25-year period, we learn of the drastic affect this decision has on David as he deals with his deceitful secret. Nora and her son, Paul, also struggle with the loss and absence of their daughter/sister. In addition to the Henry family, we alternately hear from Caroline – the nurse who decides to keep their daughter, Phoebe, and raise her as her own.

With well-developed characters and intense scenes, this is a good book selection for some meaningful discussion.

Fiction, Family Relationships

Mary Schwander

Enthoven, Sam. *The Black Tattoo*. New York: Penguin, 2006. 1595141146. 503p. \$19.99 Gr. 9 +.

Jack and Charlie are ordinary London teens, best mates. Angry over his parents' impending divorce, Charlie is vulnerable, and his body taken over by a demon. With the help of Esme, a young woman with remarkable martial arts abilities (and also a member of a secret evil-fighting cult), the boys find themselves tangled in a fight to save the universe from destruction. Charlie is an unwitting host for the Scourge, also known as Khentimentu. Jack and Esme follow him to Hell in an attempt to free him. Hell is a wildly original universe, complete with gladiators and monsters. A gripping, substantial, and funny read with lots of action, as well as icky demons who suck blood and vomit meals for others. **Fantasy.**

Joyce Valenza

Ernst, Kathleen. *Hearts of Stone*. New York: Dutton, 2006. 978-0-525-47686-3. 248 p. \$16.99. Gr. 5 – 8.

Hannah is left an orphan in Tennessee during the Civil War when her father is killed fighting with the Union Army and her mother dies from a heart attack. She is also left to care for her younger brother and baby twin sisters. Her closest neighbors are supporters of the Confederate cause so they offer no help. In order to keep the family together Hannah leaves the family home with her siblings and makes a treacherous trip to Nashville to find their Aunt Helen. There is tragedy, terror and hunger on their journey to Nashville. And, Nashville turns out to be a terrible place and they learn that Aunt Helen is dead, too. A story of survival, forgiveness and the home-front side of war. **Historical Fiction/Civil War.**

Susan Krenicky

Feinstein, John. *Vanishing Act*. NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006. 037583592x. \$16.95. 279 p. Gr. 5-9.

Vanishing Act by John Feinstein is a very well-written book. It is about two people named Thomas and Susan Anderson. They go to the U.S. Open to watch the tennis matches and see more than they bargained for when teenage tennis star Nadia Symanova is kidnapped. The book is a very exciting mystery. I highly recommend it.

Mystery, Adventure, Tennis

N.D., sixth grade, The Haverford School.

FitzGerald, Dawn. *Soccer Chicks Rule*. New Milford, CT : Roaring Brook Press, 2006. 1-59643-137-7. 150p. \$16.95.

Tess Munro eats, sleeps and breathes soccer; not just soccer but all sports. It's the only reason she can find for going to school each day. One of her best buds is Bo Taubman, a talented athlete himself who has silly girls just drooling over him. When the school sports program is threatened with cancellation they decide to get involved to rally the townspeople to vote to keep it. But between pulling up her grades and being punished for the trouble that always seems to find her, how will she manage to put in the effort it requires? **Sports Fiction.**

Ginger Bardi

Fletcher, Christine. *Tallulah Falls*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2006. 1-58234-662-3. \$16.95. Gr. 9-12.

Tallulah, whose real name is Debbie, gets a frantic phone call in Oregon, from her very best friend Maeve in Florida, asking her to please go to Maeve's apartment, retrieve the journals she needs, and bring them to Florida. Tallulah gets the journals and gets her boyfriend of one date to drive her to meet Maeve without telling anyone where she is going. When the guy steals all her money and dumps her in the middle of nowhere in rural Tennessee, Tallulah has some tough choices. As she is walking at night, she stumbles over an injured dog, and rather than let him die, she gets help and takes him to a veterinary clinic. The vet has her arrested and put in jail for the night, actually to keep her safe, although she doesn't know that. Tallulah works temporarily at the vet clinic while she earns money to continue her trip, because she wants to prove that she can be responsible, despite her past history of irresponsibility. Tallulah meets handsome Kyle while she is working there, and is attracted to him. When Maeve shows up at the clinic, she is very different, and Tallulah is torn. She decides to go with Maeve, a decision that nearly costs her her life. Finally, Debbie, formerly Tallulah, grows up when she is forced to confront the manic-depressive disorder that has ruined Maeve's life. An excellent story, somewhat reminiscent of Lett's *Where the Heart Is*, that will fly off the shelf. **Coming-of-age Story**

Nancy Chrismer

Fletcher, Susan. *Alphabet of Dreams*. New York: Atheneum, 2006. 0689850425. 294p. \$16.95. Gr. 7+.

Mitra, who is disguised as a boy, and her younger brother, Babak (royal victims of a political upheaval involving their father), live as exiles in a cave ancient Persia, barely scraping by on the food they can steal in the marketplace. Babak possesses the ability to dream the dreams of others. He is discovered by a local magus, Melchior. Melchior takes the children with him on his caravan as he travels west, following signs in the stars. They are later joined by two more wise men. Barak's dream of a special star leads them on a difficult journey through Roman territories, into the village of Bethlehem. Though this story is Mitra's, readers gradually develop awareness of the major event Barak dreams for the three men. This historical coming-of-age novel is filled with suspense and offers insights into a New Testament story. It is also a story of children in the midst of war and the universal longing to return home. **Historical fiction.**

Joyce Valenza

Fletcher, Susan. *Alphabet of Dreams*. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2006. 0-689-85042-5. 291p. Gr. 7+

Fourteen year old Mitra and her young brother, Persian children orphaned in a bloody coup, travel by caravan with a powerful Magus, Melchior. Five year old Babak has the extraordinary power of foretelling dreams for others when he sleeps with their personal articles. Mitra, Babak, Melchior join with the Magi Balthazar and Gaspar to follow Babak's dream of a star and a new king in the far off town of Bethlehem.

Iran, Ancient history, Family Relationships, Zoroastrianism.

Barbar Baroody, Learning Center, the Haverford School.

Foster, Alan Dean. *The Candle of Distant Earth*. New York: Ballantine Books/Delray Books, 2006. 0-345-46131-2. 262pgs. \$20.36. Grade 11+

This is the third title in this recent trilogy by Foster. Although I had not read the first two, I did not feel at a disadvantage. In this science fiction novel, human Marcus Walker is taken capture by the Vilenji, an alien race who "collect" things. Also taken is George, Walker's speech enhanced dog. The adventure is highlighted by the successful rescue of Walker and his fellow captives. The band of travelers begins to search for their respective home worlds. Along the way, they meet with many disasters, but also learn to work together and respect each other. Many readers will be happy to follow the bands' adventures through the galaxy. Together they decide to return to fight the evil Vilenji and save other species from harm. Alan Dean Foster and his stories are reminiscent of the Lucas Star Wars Trilogy which is loved by many. One advantage for a school librarian, is that Foster is a prolific writer and there are many other books to recommend. **Science Fiction**

Ilene Goldis Grayev

Friedman, D. Dina. *Escaping into the Night*. Grimes, New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006. 1-4169-0258-9. 199p. \$15.95 Grades 5-8

Thirteen-year-old Halina Rudowski has been forced to move from Berlin to a Polish ghetto. Now she must flee for her life as the Nazi round up more Jews. Escaping through a tunnel into the forest Halina and her friends Batya and Rueven find strength that they

never knew they had. Life is perilous and difficult. Not everyone can take it. Halina, never a religious person, wants to believe and yet circumstances keep her wondering. Friedman is realistic in her telling. Students will be able to relate to both Halina's fears and hopes. **Holocaust; friendship; survival.**

Jeannie Bellavance

Friend, Natasha. *Lush*. New York: Scholastic, 2006. 0-439-85346-X. 178 p. \$14.44. Gr. 7 & up.

Thirteen-year-old Sam's dad is an alcoholic. She tries to sort out his deteriorating state, her mother's denial, keep her little brother safe, and keep the whole state of affairs hidden from her circle of friends. When it all gets to be too much, she starts writing notes to an anonymous older teen at the library and receives advice about her family circumstances, as well as some insight about her crush on a high school athlete. Things come to a head when her father injures her brother while on a bender. The story is sensitive and has believable characters and realistic dialog. The ending is cautiously optimistic and will give teens in similar situations hope. Resources and hotlines for teens are listed as the end of the book. Highly recommended. **REALISTIC FAMILY FICTION.**

Candy Blessing

Frost, Helen. *The Braid*. New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 2006. 0-374-30962-0. 95p. \$16.00. Gr. 9-12.

The deceptively simple appearance of this book belies the wonderfully rich prose and poetry within. This is the story of two sisters, Sarah and Jeannie, whose family is ousted from their tenant land on the western isles of Scotland. Sarah refuses to leave their Grandma, and hides, missing the ship, while Jeannie accompanies the rest of the family on the terrible voyage which costs them their father and two siblings, who die at sea. With no father, no job, no house, and no food, Jeannie must try to keep her mother and baby brother alive in Cape Breton, while back home Sarah must care for their grandmother and herself on another of the Scottish isles, Barra. The night before they separate, Sarah braids their hair into one braid, which she then cuts off and halves, so that each of them has a part of the other with them. Throughout their struggles, both girls constantly touch their part of the braid to give themselves strength, courage, and memories. Throughout the text, the author weaves wonderful poems into the narrative, as seamlessly as within a braid. This story is more than just the sum of its parts: it illuminates the strength of the human spirit in a coherent and cohesive narrative that raises itself above the ordinary. This book should be in every high school library.

Historical fiction/Teenage stories

Nancy Chrismer

Gaiman, Neil. *Fragile Things: Short Fictions and Wonders*. New York: William Morrow, 2006. 0-06-051522-8. \$23.90.

YA/Adult

This collection of short stories and poems all have one thing in common- the un-common voice of Neil Gaiman. The stories range from the mildly funny to the wildly fantastic. Gaiman has the ability to help the reader make sense of incongruent characters and plots. Some of the stories are familiar, but have a twist. Others are genuinely dark. While the poetry is enjoyable, it seems better suited to a book of its own. *Fragile Things* is an apt title because the heart and soul of man, as expressed in these tales, are also fragile things. This book could be used successfully with a sophisticated group of teenagers. **Short Story**

Ilene Goldis Grayev

Gantos, Jack. *The Love Curse of the Rumbaughs*. New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux. 0374336903. 192p. \$17.00.

Gr. 8-10.

This bizarre gothic, set in a small Pennsylvania town, centers on the science of genetics and the power of maternal love. We meet Ivy, the narrator, when she is seven. Ivy and the mother she dearly loves live across the street from the drug store where the reclusive, aging identical twins Abner and Adolph Rumbaugh live and work. As Ivy grows, and learns the art of embalming from the twins, she learns her own mother's dark secrets and the mystery the twins have held from her. (Spoiler: One of the twins is really her father and their very dead mother is still in the house!) This sometimes perverse tale provokes thought about the issues of nature vs. nurture and the existence of free will. Note: a bizarre sex scene and a discussion of human taxidermy may limit the audience for this dark and comic novel. **Gothic. Humor. Family.**

Joyce Valenza

Geary, Rick. *The Case of Madeleine Smith*. New York: Comicslit, 2006. 1-56163-467-0. unpagged. \$15.95. Gr. 7-12.

Emile L'Anglier suffers from a violent illness and dies suddenly. In his possession are letters from "Mimi" or Madeleine.

These notes lead to the scandal of Ms. Smith's and Emile's love affair. Madeleine goes to court for the murder of Emile and is found 'not guilty'. The rest of her life is simple and uneventful. **Graphic Novel/Mystery**

E. H., 8th grade SRMS student

Geras, Adele. *Ithaka*. 1st U.S. ed. Orlando, FL: Harcourt, 2006. 0-15-205603-3. \$17.00. 351 pp. Grades 9-12.

In this sequel to her highly regarded *Troy*, Geras tells the story of Penelope who waited on Ithaca for the return of her husband, Odysseus, from the Trojan War. Seen through the eyes of her house servant, Klymene, the events at home may not be as dramatic as those encountered by Ulysses, but they nonetheless pose dilemmas and bring unexpected challenges, conflicts, and, and loss. Issues include the power and powerlessness of women, ethical versus unethical behavior, the means versus the end, assuming adult interests and responsibilities, the power of faith and ideals, and the intervention of the Gods in character, decisions, and events. While Geras' writing is both ethereal and vividly realistic, telling the story through Klymene allows the story to be interesting to and accessible by teens. Sexual feelings and events are presented but not described graphically. Some knowledge of the tales of the *Odyssey* will facilitate understanding of the some of the allusions. **Historical Fiction. Odysseus legend. Eleanor Howe**

Gibbons, Kaye. *The Life All Around Me by Ellen Foster*. New York : Harcourt, c2006. 0-15-101204-0. 218 p. \$23.00. Gr. 9+
 Finally a sequel to Ellen Foster. Now 15, with a maturity and IQ that belies her age, Ellen writes to the president of Harvard, asking for early admittance, sells poetry assignments to classmates to earn her way to a gifted program at Johns Hopkins, and yearns for a life beyond her small Southern town. A fitting ending to the saga, begun as an Oprah selection 20 years ago. Ellen's unique voice and spirit still delight. **Realistic Fiction**
Pat Naismith

Glatshsteyn, Yankev. *Emil and Karl*. New Milford, CT: Roaring Brook Press, 2006. 1-59643-119-9. 194 p. \$17.95 Gr. 6 and up.

This story of the horrors and tragedies that occur to two boys living in the brutal world of Nazi-controlled Austria was originally published in 1940. Though translated from the Yiddish the book maintains the lilting language used to speak to the young. The sentence structure is not complex, the language is not difficult. The truth of the children's experiences ring deep and true. Within just days both boys lose their families and their kind rescuers to death and to capture that will no doubt lead to more death. They have one another at least through this story, and that helps to let them retain hope that they will be able to "Live! Live! Live!"

Historical Fiction.

Erika Thickman Miller

Going, K.L. *Saint Iggy*. New York: Harcourt, 2006. 0152057951. 260p. \$17.00. Gr.9-12

Eighteen-year-old Iggy Corso, has every reason to give up in the weeks leading up to Christmas. He lives in a run-down project in New York City with a drunken father. His drug addicted mother has been gone for a month. He is suspended from school pending a hearing. Older friend and mentor Mo, though from a wealthy family with a supportive mother, is an addict himself. Though Iggy was born addicted to crack, he avoids drugs, and lives on hope. Despite the odds against him, Iggy finds the parental support he desperately needs with Mo's mother. This novel is about Iggy's gritty journey as he reaches out and seeks to change peoples' opinions of him, as he searches for an honest and clean way to live. Iggy's innocent voice shares quiet insights about the city, social class, forgotten children, and ultimately how we treat each other. **Realistic.**

Joyce Valenza

Goobie, Beth. *Hello, Groin*. Victoria, Canada: Orca Book Publishers, 2006. 1-55143-459-8 272p. \$17.95. Gr. 9-12.

Dylan is struggling to fit in at school and find out who she really is in the world. She dates an amazing guy, Cam and has a best friend since kindergarten, Jocelyn. Dylan loves her boyfriend, but finds herself in love with her best friend. Scared of the repercussions of coming out as a lesbian, Dylan tries to force herself to be "normal." After reading, *Virgin King* by Joyce Carol Oates and creating an exhibit for the library display case, Dylan's sexual orientation is called into question. Dylan tells her boyfriend, her family and Jocelyn how she truly feels. This book shows it is perfectly fine to just be you no matter what your sexual orientation may be. High school drama is not the end of the world and no matter who or what you are; you should never pretend to be different to fit in. **Realistic Fiction** **J. D. – Senior – Abington Senior High**

Goobie, Beth. *The Dream Where Losers Go*. Custer, WA: Orca Book Publishers. 2006. 1-55143-455-5. 204p. \$8.95. Gt. 7+
 Skey is living in an institution after attempting suicide. She is very detached and dreams she is in a system of dark tunnels. She discovers a boy hiding in those tunnels but can not quite connect with him. In her real life, she returns to school by day and returns to the institution at night. School isn't what is important. She lives only to be with her boyfriend Jigger, who demands her undivided attention. The kids she hangs with are into risky behavior. Jori is fascinated by a boy in her class who seems as damaged as she is. As her friends drag her down she faces the truth of what led to her suicide attempt. This is a hard hitting story of sexual abuse and betrayal. **Realistic Fiction**
Barb Wray

Graf, Mike. *Danger in the Narrows*. Golden, CO: Fulcrum Press. 2006. 1-55591-532-9. \$9.95. Gr. 6-8.

Part of the series: Adventures with the Parkers, this title follows the family as they visit the Bryce and Zion National Parks. The story is presented in a "scrapbooking" style with many photos interspersed among the narrative. The book tells the story of the family's hiking and backpacking adventures, as well as giving much information about the national park system. Each member of the family keeps a journal of the trip. Maps, illustrations, and colorful photos are included. **National Parks, Family**

Constance Roupp

Grant, K.M. *Green Jasper*. New York: Walker, 2006. 0802796273. 249p. \$16.95. Gr. 5-10.

Blood Red Horse ended with King Richard imprisoned in Jerusalem and presumed dead. Back in 12th century England, brothers Will and Gavin de Granville, now returned from the crusade, are with the scars and memories of horrendous battles. Gavin has lost an arm. His betrothed, Ellie, a ward of their now-dead father, awaits their marriage. But evil Constable de Scabious disrupts the wedding with the rumor that King Richard is dead and that Richard's brother John has taken the throne. Scabious kidnaps Ellie and plans to marry her himself. Will feels it is duty to attempt to rescue Ellie. Gavin, who has been injured again, argues for caution. The brothers' disagreement about how to handle the situation leads to their estrangement. All the while, Ellie holds the green jasper necklace, a wedding gift from Gavin. Hosanna, the famous blood red horse figures in bringing about a resolution. This one has romance, history, swords, horses, and a throne to save. What more could you want? **Historical fiction.** **Joyce Valenza**

Gratz, Alan. *Samurai Shortstop*. NY: Dial Books, 2006. 0803730756. \$17.99. 280 p. Gr. 6-10.

It is 1890, and in Japan the old ways are being left behind and the new ways of the emperor are being put into place. Toyo, who was sent to Tokyo for high school, has to face many challenges including hazing by the upper classmen, not being allowed to try out

for the baseball team and the death of his uncle. The way of samurai has been outlawed and Toyo's uncle was sentenced to death for not giving up its practice. Toyo and his father, a samurai scholar, are recruited to help the uncle commit suicide in the traditional Suppuku way of the samurai. While these scenes are not extremely graphic, the horror of the uncle dying is conveyed. Gratz's well researched story will hold the interest of your male students as he brings the cultural differences in the new and old Japan to life.

Historical fiction, Father/son relationships, Baseball, Multicultural.

Sandra Krieg

Green, John. *An Abundance of Katherines*. New York : Dutton Books, 2006. 0-525-47688-1. 256p. \$16.99. Gr. 8-12.

Colin Singleton is a former child prodigy; former because he just graduated from high school and must now prove himself. He wants to make a difference and discover something of importance to leave the world and he wants to have a relationship. He's particularly attracted to girls by the name of Katherine but they don't last; he was just dumped by Katherine 19. He is also upset that he has not discovered anything of importance yet and he is worried he won't. His friend, Hassan, takes him on a road trip, which he hopes will solve everything. They end up in a backwoods town where Colin finds some unexpected help on his theories.

Realistic Fiction

Ginger Bardi

Green, John. *An Abundance of Katherines*. New York: Dutton, 2006. 0525476881. 256p. \$16.99. Gr. 8-12.

This coming-of-age road story involves lovelorn Colin Singleton, a child prodigy (not a genius) who speaks multiple languages and is obsessed with anagrams. Colin has just been dumped by the 19th Katherine in his life and his best friend, Hassan, who himself prefers watching Judge Judy to doing anything, including college applications, decides a road trip would do them both good. The boys leave Chicago and land in Gutshot, Tennessee, where Archduke Franz Ferdinand might be buried and where Colin meets a Lindsey (not a Katherine), who helps him with his mathematical theorem to predict the duration of romances. Lindsey's mother invites the boys to stay and to take oral histories of the locals during the summer. The boys and Lindsey learn the importance of these stories, of everyone's stories. Green's characters are beautifully drawn; they speak with authentic humor and intelligence. A charming, clever book with rare mathematical and anagrammatical appeal! **Realistic.**

Joyce Valenza

Gregory, Nan. *I'll Sing Your One-O*. New York: Clarion, 2006. 0-618-60708-0. 220 p. \$16.00. Gr. 5-8.

Twelve-year-old Gemma must unwillingly leave her beloved foster home, on a farm, to live with her unknown aunt, uncle and twin brother in an upscale environment that seems very foreign to her. She does not know where to turn to make her world return to the happiness and balance she felt before the move. Discovering the key in a library book, she decides that good deeds to earn a saint will restore her world to rights. The story is told in first person beautifully so that other adopted children will identify with the uncertainty of Gemma's situation. Others will fall for Gemma on the first page and not put the book down until its conclusion. Highly recommended. **FAMILY FICTION.**

Candy Blessing

Grief, Jean-Jacques. *The Fighter*. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2006. 1-58234-891-X- 211p. \$16.95. Gr. 9-12.

Moshe Wisniak, an unforgettable character, tells his story of surviving three years in Auschwitz. Moshe changes his name to Maurice when he moves from Warsaw to Paris with his family in 1929 to escape the rising anti-Semitism that is permeating Europe. With unflinching, searing details, Maurice recounts the horrors of the death camps; his will to survive and how sometimes luck played a part in "survival of the fittest." The SS find out he was a champion boxer and command him to fight and kill another prisoner. Maurice's humanity and the prisoner guards' maniacal cruelty are juxtaposed. Maurice emerges a changed man and so does the reader. I couldn't put it down, but it was horrific to read at times. **Historical Fiction**

B.J. Neary

Grimes, Nikki. *The Road to Paris*. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2006. 0-399-24537-5. 153 p. \$15.99. Grades 4-7.

Paris, a biracial child, has experienced brutal and cruel foster homes since her alcoholic birth mother had given her up. Now she is in Ossining, New York a far train ride from the familiar city and without her loving older brother Malcolm. Life is totally different from what she had expected. There is love and guidance and pride in this family that becomes part of Paris' life.

Keep God in your pocket. That is the advice Paris' foster brother, David gives her. In this tender story Paris learns to trust and love the Lincoln family and herself as she thrives in her school and church. She also learns to forgive her mother and finds a foundation that gives her the strength to face a future that may be uncertain. **Foster children; racial prejudice; family life; brothers and sisters**

Jeannie Bellavance

Gruen, Sara. *Water for Elephants*. Chapel Hill, NC : Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 2006. 1-56512-499-5. 335 p. \$23.95. Gr. 9+

Jacob Jankowski life suddenly derails when his parents die in an automobile accident. He finds himself homeless and penniless, unable to finish his last days of veterinary school. Hopping aboard a train belonging to the Benzini Brothers circus, he finds a new home with the circus family. His romance with Marlena is complicated by her abusive and unbalanced husband. Told in retrospect by a 90-year-old Jacob from his nursing home, this is a magical and endearing look at life during the Depression. 2007 Alex Award winner. **Historical Fiction.**

Pat Naismith

Gruen, Sara. *Water for Elephants*. Chapel Hill, NC: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 2006. 1-565-12499-5. 335p. \$23.95. Gr. 9+

At the start of the Great Depression, Jacob Jankowski's dreams of becoming a veterinarian are shattered when his parents are suddenly killed in an automobile accident. With no money to his name, Jacob is forced to drop-out of Cornell and soon after finds himself aboard the Benzini Brothers Circus train. And there begins his relationship with the intriguing people and endearing animals which frame the enchanted world of the circus. Readers will be touched by the innocence and intelligence of the circus animals and by the strength and veracity of Jacob. While mostly told in the voice of young Jacob, we intermittingly hear from ninety-one-year-old Jacob as he attempts to remember and relive his fascinating days of the circus.

Great Depression. Circus.

Mary Schwander

Guene, Faiza. *Kiffe, Kiffe Tomorrow*. Harvest Books, 2006. 0156030489. 192p. \$13.00. Gr. ++

This debut novel focuses on 15-year old Doria, who live her illiterate Moroccan mother, in a Parisian housing project called The Paradise. After they are abandoned by Doria's alcoholic father (who wanted a son). Doria and her mom live a grim life on welfare, visited by succession of social workers, and apparently plagued by *mektouh* (destiny). Doria begins babysitting for a neighbor's four-year-old daughter and her mother begins literacy classes. When Nabil, a smart older boy becomes her tutor, Doria sees the potential of dreams that might take her beyond her neighborhood, beyond the influence of Hamoudi and Youssef, her friends who are imprisoned for drug dealing and car theft. The narrative is poignant, funny, and hopeful. In an authentic teen voice, it offers sharp insights into modern prejudices and patriarchal nature of Muslim culture. **Realistic. Multicultural. Joyce Valenza**

Haddix, Margaret Peterson. *Among the Free*. New York: Simon & Shuster, 2006. 0-689-85798-5. 195p. \$16.95. Gr. 4-8.

Fans of the Shadow Children series won't be disappointed in this concluding novel in which Luke, an illegal third child, unexpectedly contributes to a revolt that ultimately crushes the Population Police regime. There is a new freedom for all, but at what risk and who is in charge? Although part of a series, this stands on its own merits. **Science Fiction Elizabeth McChesney**

Haddon, Mark. *A Spot of Bother*. New York: Doubleday, 2006. 0-385-52051-4. 354p. \$24.95. Gr.10+.

The planning of a wedding sets the stage for this wonderfully funny and touching story of a quirky English family. George and Jean are less than thrilled that their daughter, Katie, is engaged to Ray, whom they deem "inappropriate" as a mate for Katie. Katie can't decide whether she truly loves Ray or whether she is simply using him as a provider and good father for her son. George is slowly going mad because he is certain that his eczema is misdiagnosed and that it is actually cancer spreading throughout his body. Jean is dismayed that George, now retired, remains at home thus making it quite a challenge for Jean to continue her affair with David. And finally we have their son, Jamie, who is having relationship problems with his lover, Tony. This comical farce will have most readers laughing out loud throughout. But beware: this is for mature readers only, as there are some graphic homosexual sex scenes.

Family Relationships.

Mary Schwander

Hale, Shannon. *River Secrets*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2006. 1-58234-901-0. 290 p. \$17.95. Gr. 7-12.

An uneasy peace has just been set up between Bayern and Tira, and Razo is a member of the Bayern ambassador's party which is going to live in Tira for a while in a show of goodwill. Enna, also a member of the ambassador's party, will have to be guarded very well, for if the Tiran citizens realize she is the fire-speaker who destroyed part of the army, she will be killed. When the company gets to their destination, Razo realizes that someone is attempting to start the war over again by depositing burned corpses near Bayern's ambassadors, to make it look like the Bayern fire-speaker is killing Tiran citizens again. Razo feels completely useless as a soldier, because of his stature and lack of fighting skills, but his commander tells him that his strength is in his ability to observe and note things, and it is as a scout and a spy that Razo saves the day, despite nearly being killed. Along the way, Razo befriends a Tiran girl, Dasha, and must decide whether to trust her or not. An excellent adventure fantasy, which certainly leads the way for sequels. **Fantasy Fiction Nancy Chrismer**

Harris, Charlaine. *Definitely Dead*. New York: Ace Books, 2006. 0-441014003. \$21.65. Adult

In this novel, the author of *Dead as a Doornail*, has again used the supernatural, to convey a humorous mystery peopled by a quirky cast of characters. Sookie Stackhouse, a waitress in Louisiana inherits a house from a dead cousin who just happens to be a vampire. Trouble abounds when Sookie attempts to clean out her cousin's belongings. The setting of this book and the dialogue adds to the plot's credibility as the reader suspends his or her disbelief. This is an entertaining story for a more sophisticated booklover.

Supernatural, Humor, Fiction

Ilene Goldis Grayev

Harrison, Lisi. *It's Not Easy Being Mean*. New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2007. 0-316-11505-3. 224 pgs. \$9.99. Grade 7+

This book is part of the Clique series that is very popular with young teenage girls. The title is appropriate because the main characters are very mean to everyone who is not in the "Pretty Club." The leader of the clique is an alpha female eighth grader named Skye. I have included a review because of the popularity of the series, although I think the characters are very shallow and the plot in this book is thin. It is after all, as it says on the cover, "the #1 New York Times Best Selling Series." I would not want to

give the impression that the behavior in these stories should be emulated. I do realize that some teens identify with the characters, both the bullies and the victims. I would look for a more hopeful novel to give to teenage girls. **Relationships, Fiction**

Ilene Goldis Grayev

Hartnett, Sonya. *Surrender*. New York: Candlewick Press, 2006, c2005. 0-7636-2768-2. 248 p. \$16.99. Gr. 9-12.

20-year-old Gabriel is looking back over his troubled life from his deathbed. Receiving no support from his dysfunctional repressive family after inadvertently causing the death of his mentally disabled brother, solitary Anwell renames himself after the archangel. His only friend is the feral and vaguely dangerous Finnegan. After a series of arson fires plagues his small Australian town, Gabriel's tale of jealousy, arson and murder escalates to an explosive climax. A psychological thriller, not for the faint of heart or younger readers. 2007 Michael Printz Honor Book. **Problem Fiction/Mystery**

Pat Naismith

Hartnett, Sonya. *Surrender*. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick, 2006. 0763627682. 248p. \$16.99. Gr. 9-12.

Told in flashbacks, this disturbing and dark psychological thriller is set in a small Australian town. At seven Anwell (who later calls himself Gabriel) causes the death of his mentally disabled older brother, Vernon. His parents are cold and distant and he has only two friends--his dog Surrender and Finnigan, a feral boy, with whom he forms a strange and powerful pact. Finnigan and Gabriel decide to be each other's reflection—one all good, the other all bad. For years, a series of arson attacks plagues the town. The situation spins out of control as Gabriel realizes how dangerous his doppelganger truly is. Now, Gabriel looks back on his 20 years as he lays dying and readers slowly recognize his schizophrenia. A powerful, literary story with memorable characters. Highly recommended. **Mystery. Thriller.**

Joyce Valenza

Harvey, Gill. *Orphan of the Sun*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2006. 1-58234-685-2. 310 p. \$16.95. Gr. 6-8.

In this realistic glimpse of life in Ancient Egypt, thirteen-year-old Meryt-Re's is growing up in Set Maat, the town dedicated to building tombs in the Valley of the Kings. She lives with her aunt and uncle, but her uncle considers her a burden and is anxious to marry her off. Objecting to marriage, Meryt-Re seeks guidance from the gods and finds it in her dreams. She uses her gift to assist one of the foremen who has been framed for theft. Details throughout the story immerse the reader in the Ancient Egyptian culture.

Historical / Mystery

Michelle Stone

Hathaway, William T. *CD-Ring*. Montreal, Quebec: Lobster Press, 2006. 1-897073-29-1. 144p. \$8.95. Gr. 9-12.

Gabriel Estrada wants to make money to help support his family. And be able to take out his girlfriend. He also wants his band, Rip Chord, to make it big because he knows they are good. When the band job goes south and their equipment is repossessed, Gabriel makes a very bad choice to get quick bucks - helping to distribute counterfeit CDs. When he tries to get out of the job, disaster strikes and the bad guys move in. He loses his girlfriend, his friends, and when he tries to set things right, almost loses his life. Students into the band scene will enjoy this book. **Teen Fiction**

Nancy Chrismer

Hautman, Pete, *Rash*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006. 978-689-86801-6. 249 p. \$15.95. Gr. 9 and up.

Bo Marsten lives in the late twenty-first century, in a society with lots of rules about how to stay safe and protected, and where punishments for those who violate the law include working for the largest employer in the nation, McDonald's Rehabilitation and Manufacturing. We meet Bo when he's still in high school, working on his AI assignment to develop a program that can pass as human. Bo seems to enjoy the challenge, but the reader is aware that more difficult for Bo is learning to control his temper, a problem that runs in his family. Bo is sent to prison camp, where he gets recruited for the football team. Hautman has created a believable future where a kid with an attitude can still grow up with grace and humor. Bo's experiences at the prison camp are exciting and touching at the same time. The same is true for Bo's escape and his return home. A satisfying, wonderful read.

Science Fiction.

Erika Thickman Miller

Hautman, Pete, *Rash*. New York : Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, c2006. 0-689-86801-4. 249 p. \$16.99.

Hautman (*Hole in the Sky*) returns again to science fiction. Antisocial behavior is illegal in the United Safer States of American. After a fist fight, Bo has been sent to a private penal colony, McDonald's Rehabilitation and Manufacturing Corporation, in the frigid northern wastes of Canada. While making pizzas, Bo is recruited by the sadistic camp director to play in an illegal football game. Is it a sports novel? Humor? Science fiction? All of the above and an enjoyable read to boot.

(Defies description)

Science Fiction?

Pat Naismith

Hazlewood, Robin. *Model Student: A Tale of Co-Eds and Cover Girls*. New York: Crown, 2006. 0-307-33718-9. 390 p. \$20.36. Adult.

Former 1980s model Hazelwood delves into the world of up and coming models with her first novel about a 17-year-old college freshman, Emily Woods, who is trying to juggle a career and being a co-ed. The lure of the glitzy and the dark side of modeling seem to be winning out for most of the novel, including eating disorders and substance abuse. The story gives readers an insider's view of the fast pace and physical and emotional dangers of a modeling career. Will appeal to older teens who watch *America's Next Top Model*.

Candy Blessing

Hernandez, Gilbert. *Sloth*. New York: Vertigo, c2006. 11401203663. (unpaged). \$16.99. Gr. 10+

PSLA TITLES FOR 2006

FICTION

Urban legends, teenage frustrations and love relationships are components which mature teenage readers will find compelling in this surrealistic graphic novel. Frustrated with the boring, mundane life of his suburban community, Miguel manages to induce himself into a coma for a year. Once awoken, Miguel (whose movements then become much slower, hence his nickname 'Sloth') resumes his love relationship with Lita. Things begin to get a bit interesting when Miguel, Lita and their fellow band-member, Romeo, investigate the truth behind the eerie urban legend of the nearby lemon orchard. Mid-story, the three characters completely switch roles and we see their personalities from different perspectives. The story is littered with profanities which may offend some readers. **Graphic Novel, Teenage-life.**

Mary Schwander

Hernandez, Jo Ann Yolanda, *The Throwaway Piece*. Houston, TX: Pinata Books, 2006. 978-1-55885-353-9. 246 p. \$9.95. Gr. 9-12.

“In my mom’s box of crayons, I’m the piece that won’t fit. I’m the throwaway piece.” 16-year-old Jewel feels this way most of the time, but especially after her mother places her in foster care at the beginning of the story so that she can marry her boyfriend and move in with him. Like Janie/Leshaya in Han Nolan’s *Born Blue*, Jewel survives – barely – the hard and fast balls that life throws at her. Instead of music, however, Jewel writes poems, all of which begin with the word “Wasted” and appear at the end of most chapters. This mostly sad story is published by Pinata Books, an imprint of Arte Publico Press, which is committed to publishing work by Hispanic authors about Hispanic characters. Girls, especially those who can’t get enough abuse survivor stories, will love this book. **Realistic Fiction.**

Sarah Braxton

Hirsch, Odo. *Have Courage, Hazel Green*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2006. 1-58234-659-3. 252 p. \$15.95. Gr. 6-8.

In the 3rd book of the Hazel Green series, Hazel demonstrates her courage by doing the right thing despite a harsh and unjust punishment. When Hazel overhears the well respected Mr. Davis verbally attack the apartment building custodian, Mr. Egozain, she decides to show Mr. Davis how nasty he sounded. Her plan backfires when a gossipy neighbor overhears Hazel yelling the same prejudice statements at her friend. After much soul searching, Hazel finds a way to expose Mr. Davis and make things right for both herself and Mr. Egozain. **Realistic**

Michelle Stone

Hoffman, Alice. *Incantation*. New York : Little, Brown, 2006. 0-316-01019-7. 166p. \$16.99. 7-12.

This riveting narrative is set in Spain during the Spanish Inquisition. Estrella is being brought up as a good, Catholic girl along with her best friend Catalina. At 16 she is just becoming interested in boys and likes her best friend’s cousin, Andres who Catalina is slated to marry. She discovers her family is secretly Jewish. Because of her jealousy, Catalina reveals it to the authorities with devastating consequences. **Historical Fiction**

Ginger Bardi

Hodgen, Christie. *Hello, I Must Be Going: A Novel*. New York : W.W. Norton, c2006. 0-393-06139-0. 312p. \$23.95. Gr. 9 and up.

This is a story of loss and survival. Hodgen chooses a nine year old as the narrator of the book and it helps the reader to connect with her pain and desire to cover it up. The journey from the suicide of her father to leaving home for college is full of heartache and pain but also the innocence of a child that doesn’t understand the world around her. This is a well-written book and can be enjoyed by anyone who has lost a loved one.

A. C., Plymouth Whitmarsh HS

Hodgen, Christie. *Hello, I Must Be Going: A Novel*. New York: W.W. Norton, c2006. 0-393-06139-0. 312p. \$23.95. YA

I don’t have anything snappy to say about this book—no puns, no wordplay—I found it disturbing. It is a very realistic look at some unhappy lives—from the amputee VietNam vet father who commits suicide to the mother stuck in a dead end job waitressing at Friendly’s and addicted to TV, to the main character who has to try to grow up. While all this is going on, plus help her younger brother cope. These people seem to be caught in a LaBrea tar pit of a life and barely manage to drag themselves out. I think it would appeal to older teens; the writing style is serious. It is fascinating—I couldn’t put it down—I had to find out what was going to happen! **Realistic Fiction.**

P. P., Plymouth Whitmarsh HS.

Hopkins, Ellen. *Burned*. New York: Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2006. 1-4169-0354-2. 532p. \$16.95. Gr. 10-12.

This story written in verse tells the tale of Pattyn, a 17-year-old girl from a large Mormon family, who struggles with the inconsistencies between what she is taught at church, how she feels inside, and the realities of her abusive father. When a sexual dream opens her mind up to boys, she finds herself looking for the love and acceptance that she’s been denied her whole life. After Pattyn makes a few poor decisions that the church feels were spurred by the devil, her father sends her to live with his sister, whom he hasn’t talked to in decades. Pattyn’s punishment becomes the saving grace in her life because she finds exactly what she has been searching for. That is, until the summer ends and her father demands that she come back home to help her mother with her younger siblings. Pattyn has to make a decision whether to go to the authorities to report the domestic abuse which has only gotten worse since she’s been away, to run away, or to go back and surrender to her father and the strict ways of the Mormon church. This book will be as popular as Hopkins’ other book, *Crank*.

Fiction/Teen Stories/Abuse

Tiffany Reickart, Computer Teacher/Librarian Wannabe, Juniata High School

Hostetter, Joyce Moyer. *Blue. Pennsylvania: Boyds Mills Press, 2006. 1-59078-398-1. 197p. \$16.95. Gr. 7-12.*

Ann Fay Honeycutt's father is going to fight Hitler, and she must now be the man of the family to her younger twin sisters and brother. Ann works hard and tries to make her sisters and brother help her, until one day her little brother Bobby collapses in the garden, and is diagnosed with polio. Ann blames herself for his disease, thinking that by making him help her in the garden, she caused him to get polio. Bobby eventually dies, and Ann has her hands full with her mother's grief as well as trying to keep the family going since her father is still overseas. It isn't until Ann herself contracts polio that she realizes that polio can strike anyone, anytime. Ann has a different strain than Bobby had, and she survives, thanks to a wonderful polio hospital (that really existed). This is a wonderful story about a devastating disease and a confusing period of time in American history. **Historical Fiction**

Nancy Chrismier

Hostetter, Joyce Moyer. *Blue. New York : Boyds Mills Press, 2006. 1-59078-389-1. 197 p. \$16.95. Gr. 6-9.*

When her father goes off to fight the Nazis, 13-year-old Ann Fay must become the "man of the house" and care for her mother and younger siblings. This proves to be harder than she ever imagined. When a polio epidemic hits Hickory, NC, her brother dies and Ann Fay herself is stricken with the disease. Told in riveting first person style, this narrative manages to weave history, unforgettable characters and the true story of the polio hospital in Hickory into a very satisfying read. **Historical Fiction**

Pat Naismith

Hull, Maureen. *The View from a Kite. Canada: Vagrant Press, 2006. 1-55109-591-2. 338p. \$15.95. Gr. 10-12.*

This is a book the reader will find hard to put down. It centers on Gwen, a teenager in the 1970's in Cape Breton, Canada, who has tuberculosis. Not only does she have to deal with life in the Cape Breton sanatorium while her friends go about normal lives, but Gwen has also lost her parents: her father has shot her mother in the head, and then killed himself. Her mother is still physically alive, living in an institution, but her brain is completely gone and she doesn't recognize Gwen. Gwen's home is with her beloved Aunt Edith, who is losing her mind to encroaching senility, and who, Gwen discovers, is really her grandmother. Gwen has to rely on cousins George and Elizabeth who live next to Aunt Edith to take care of both of them. This novel is funny, touching, sad, and down-to-earth in ways that must be read to be appreciated. As Gwen tells her own story, she weaves in her research about how the disease was regarded and treated throughout the centuries, and relates this to her own situation with comic irony. A wonderful book.

Fiction/Teen story

Nancy Chrismier

Hunt, Scott, illustrator. *Twice Told: Original Stories Inspired by Original Art. New York: Dutton Books, 2006.*

0-525-46818-8. \$19.99. Gr. 9-12.

Scott Hunt is an illustrator of books who had the creative idea of giving authors the illustration first and having the story come second. Scott created nine original black and white illustrations. He then sent each illustration to two different popular young adult authors and asked each author to interpret the illustration and write a short story about it. The eighteen stories that accompany the nine illustrations are fascinating, entertaining, and varied. There is a note from the artist at the beginning of the book and notes from the authors at the end of the book. **Short Stories**

Constance Roupp

Ibbotson, Eva. *The Beasts of Clawstone Castle. New York: Dutton, 2006. 0-525-47719-5. 243 p. \$16.99 Grades 4-7.*

Toss in ghastly but caring ghosts, unscrupulous greedy developer, an evil doctor on a lonely island, rare white cattle, and clever children and you have a moving adventure with not a few funny plot twists. Will Madalyn and Rollo save their great aunt and uncle's castle from development? How can a ghost with a rat gnawing his heart or the ghost of a bride who strangles men help? When great Uncle George's cattle disappear, presumed dead, this appears to be the end of Clawstone Castle. Fantasy lovers will enjoy this. **Fantasy; brothers and sisters; ghosts**

Jeannie Bellavance

Ibbotson, Eva. *The Beasts of Clawstone Castle. New York: Dutton, 2006. 0-525-47719-5. 243p. \$16.99. Gr.7-10.*

When Madlyn and Rollo are sent to live with their relatives in an old decrepit castle near the Scottish border, they are expecting boredom. But they find more excitement than they expected when they help Great-Uncle George and his sister Miss Emily to save the castle and their famous unique cattle from an unscrupulous neighbor who is determined to destroy everything to build apartment houses on their land. The children are aided in their quest by a series of helpful ghosts, especially Percival, who has lived in the castle for years. There is excitement and mystery as Madlyn, Rollo, and their new friend Ned find out more about the cattle-nappers and their evil plan. An excellent ghost story with mystery and adventure! **Fantasy/Ghost stories**

Nancy Chrismier

Jansen, Hanna. *Over a Thousand Hills I Walk with You. Minneapolis MN : Carolrhoda, 2006. 978-1-57505-927-3. 342 p.*

\$16.95. Gr. 8 and up.

Based on the real-life experiences of her adopted daughter, Jansen intersperses the horrors of Jeanne's childhood experiences during the 1994 Rwandan genocide with brief commentaries at the outset of each chapter that describe their shared experiences once Jeanne has arrived in Germany. This important book provides meaningful, accessible background about this distressing contemporary issue.

Erika Thickman Miller

Jarvis, Robin. *The Witches of Whitby. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2006. 0-8118-5413-2. 296p. \$17.95. Gr. 7-12.*

PSLA TITLES FOR 2006

FICTION

Buy this book for the legions of *Harry Potter* fans that inhabit your libraries. It is the story of Jennet and her younger brother Ben, who lose their parents and go to live in Whitby with Alice Boston, an old family friend who has agreed to take them in. Jennet is hoping to keep Ben's mysterious power of "seeing" a secret, but once they get to Whitby, they find that to be the least of their problems. Alice, whom they grow to love, also has powers. When a great evil in the form of new tenant, Rowena Cooper, starts killing all of Alice's friends, the three work together to solve the mysteries that involve fisherfolk, an abbey, a ghost, an age-old secret, mysterious sea creatures, and much more. **Fantasy**
Nancy Chrismer

Jarvis, Robin. *The Whitby Witches*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2006. 0811854139. 295 pgs. \$17.95. Grades 5-8

A brother and sister who are orphaned go to live with a very kind, but peculiar old lady. She is a good match for the children because of the secrets all three hide. Together, they live in a small, quaint, fishing village that also holds many secrets. Evil lives there, too. Through a series of events, some of the elderly ladies of the village are found murdered. "Aunt Alice" is determined to find the killer and solve the mystery that envelopes them. As the story unfolds, we learn of the legend of the "Aufwaders" creatures who inhabited the seas around the village before the coming of man. There is a mixture of magic, myth, and mystery that keeps the book moving. Soft, pencil drawings add to the illusions stirred by the dialogue. This book was first published in Great Britain and has a distinctly English flavor reminiscent of Harry Potter. A list of the inhabitants of Whitby will help younger readers follow the events of the story. **Fantasy, Mystery**
Ilene Goldis Grayev

Joern, Pamela Carter. *The Floor of the Sky*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 2006. 978-0-8032-7631. 238p. \$ 16.95. Grade 9-12.

A moving, emotional family story set in the Nebraska Sandhills that features Toby, a 72 year old aging widow who is in danger of losing the family home and ranch that her father built in the 1920's to a big conglomerate. Toby lives in the family home with her older sister, Gertie, whose husband has Alzheimer's disease and has been placed in a nursing home. Then, Lila, Toby's 16 year old pregnant granddaughter arrives to spend the summer and the last months of her unwanted pregnancy. Lila's arrival begins to stir up family tensions. This is an intertwined story of characters that struggle with their own issues and fail to share what's truly on their minds with each other – resulting in decades of family secrets, lost loves, jealousy and regrets. A wonderful first novel.
Grandmothers/Family
Susan Krenicky

Johansen, K.V. *The CassandraVirus*. Custer, WA: Orca Book Publishers, 2006. 1-55143-497-0. 33p. \$7.95. Gr. 5-8.

Two teens face a boring summer until one writes a computer program that spreads itself to every computer in the world. No ones secrets will ever be safe. Of course the government will do anything to have that program. Enjoyable action adventure for the computer lover. **Science Fiction**
Barb Wray

Johnson, Catherine. *Face Value*. New York: Walker, 2006. 0-8027-8920-X. 249 p. \$16.95. Gr. 9+.

A gripping story of past and present told in alternate chapters. Follow the budding model career of Lauren (15) and the reservations of her foster mother, Nessa, in present day, along with a revealing story of the her family history, when Lauren's mother, Paula led a promiscuous and sometimes violent life as a exploited model and girlfriend of a gangster. Lauren never had the chance to meet her mother, but she comes to learn about Nessa and Paul's friendship and their checkered past as the story unfolds into a suspenseful tale. A unique quality of this book is that the reader sees how a teen protagonist turned out through the present day story of Nessa. **Recommended.**
Candy Blessing

Johnson, Harriet McBryde. *Accidents of Nature*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2006. 0-8050-7634-4 229p. \$16.95. Gr. 9-12.

Jean is seventeen and has cerebral palsy, uses a wheelchair and has never really known any other disabled kids like her. Jean has been raised by her parents to consider herself normal. She arrives at Camp Courage (referred to as "Crip Camp") for ten days and it is this vacation that will change her outlook on life forever. Jean meets all the other disabled campers, referred to as "MR's", "aussies", wheelchair bound and "walkie talkies" who appear normal. It is when Jean meets Sara and her group of friends, that things become really interesting. Sara has attended the camp for seven years and she is to the point, honest, harsh and angry about everything, especially disability rights. It is Sara who makes Jean question everything she knows and it is Sara's friendship and Camp Courage which allows Jean to be happy with herself. **Realistic Fiction**
B.J. Neary

Johnson, Maureen. *Devilish*. New York : Razorbill, 2006. 1-59514-060-3. 263 p. \$16.99. Gr. 8-11.

Faust and "chick lit?" It works Johnson's *Devilish*! Everyone knows that high school is hell, but when Jane's best friend, Allison, trades her soul to a demon for beauty and style, Jane must figure out how to get it back. Fast paced, funny, suspenseful, and a great cover to boot. This one will not stay on the shelf. **Fantasy (Horror?)**
Pat Naismith

Jones, Traci. *Standing Against the Wind*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006. 0-374-37174-1. \$16.00. 184 pp. Grades 6-9.

Patrice has moved from her grandmother's home in rural Georgia to her aunt's apartment in Chicago because her mother is in jail. Patrice, a good student in middle school and a caretaker at home, finds herself bullied and teased because of her accent and her abundant hair. She finds support in two unexpected places: Monty, a boy who always defends her against his bullying friends, and

PSLA TITLES FOR 2006

FICTION

Mrs. Hutton, the principal who encourages her to apply for a scholarship to a prestigious African American boarding school in Mississippi. While the detail of urban life is gritty, Patrice's spirit rises above it. This inspirational story is the author's first novel.
African Americans. Teenagers. Eleanor Howe

Kaaberbol, Lene. *The Serpent Gift*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2005. 0-8050-7770-7. 377p. \$18.95. Gr. 7-12.
The Serpent Gift, third book in The Shamer Chronicles, continues the story of Dina and her family. Dina's Shamer gift of seeing the truths hidden behind people's eyes has faded. Just when she thinks that she can rebuild friendships with those who began to fear her, Dina becomes plagued by another invisible force. Sezuan, Dina's father and previously unknown to her, comes to claim her in the hopes that she has inherited his Serpent gift—that of dream weaving and illusion. Fans of the first two books will not be disappointed. Ample background information ensures that new readers will enjoy the tale as well. Highly recommended for most collections. **Fantasy Elizabeth McChesney**

Kaaberbol, Lene. *The Shamer's War*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2005. 0-8050-7771-5. 356p. \$17.95. Gr. 7-12.
This concluding volume in The Shamer Chronicles finds Dina, her family, and neighboring townsfolk fighting Drakan, the Dragon Lord, who delights in enslaving children and feeding enemies to his dragons. Dina, with her multiple magical gifts and Nico, the rightful heir to the lordship of Dunark, join forces to free the children and to triumph over Drakan in one final suspense filled battle. Highly recommended for most collections. (Contains minor language and sexual references) **Fantasy Elizabeth McChesney**

Kadohata, Cynthia. *Weedflower*. New York: Atheneum, 2006. 0-689-86574-0. 260 p. \$16.95. Gr. 6-12.
This is the compelling story of twelve-year-old Sumiko and her family as the US enters WWII. They are forced to leave their flower farm to live in the Poston internment camp, an Indian reservation in the Arizona desert. The conditions are dehumanizing, but Sumiko soon settles into her life. She makes friends, begins a flower garden and feels safe from the outside world and its prejudice. Sumiko befriends a Mohave boy, Frank, who convinces her to leave the camp and pursue her dreams. The characters are well developed and varied. The author's father was actually held in this camp. **Historical Fiction Michelle Stone**

Kaslik, Ibi. *Skinny*. New York: Walker and Company, 2006. 0-8027-9608-7 212p. \$16.95. Gr. 8-12.
Holly and Giselle are two very different sisters. Giselle, once the over-achiever, has demons she is chasing with the death of her father. She must drop out of college because of a breakdown and anorexia. Worse still, she believes, her father loved her sister much. Holly is fourteen, a great long distance runner, who sees her dead father watching her track meets. Past and present family tensions are woven throughout but Holly and Giselle struggle to help each other through some very difficult times.
RealisticFiction B.J. Neary

Katz, John. *A Good Dog*. New York: Villard, 2006. 1-4000-6189-X. 224p. \$21.95. Gr. 10-12.
Orson is a border collie who unknowingly helps his owner, Katz, reconnect to life and about a man who does his best to help a troubled dog. Orson comes to his owner after being an obedience dog in Texas, but shows no obedience. He tries to chase and herd school buses, skateboarders, cats and anything else in his sights. Katz decides for safety reasons to move himself and his dogs to upstate New York where Orson can realize his potential as a sheep herding dog, but Orson terrifies the sheep and has difficulty following commands. It is a journey to find Orson a job and help him overcome his "issues." It is funny and sad and Katz and Orson forge an unbreakable bond between them. **Dog Memoir B.J. Neary**

Klass, David. *Firestorm*. New York: Frances Foster Books (Farrar Straus Giroux), 2006. 0-374-32307-0. 289 p. \$17.00.
Grades 9+.
"Never forget you are our beacon of hope." Life was pretty normal for 17-year-old Jack Danielson until he scored big in a football game. Now he's attracted attention, the wrong kind from the wrong people. Suddenly everything is changed. His parents aren't his parents. He must escape from the Gorms and other horrors from a thousand years in the future. Helped by Gisco, a huge dog; trained mercilessly by Eko, an awesome Ninja babe, Jack learns that he was sent from the future to find the Firestorm, to save the world before the irreversible Turning Point. Catastrophe is barely averted. Klass does not offer a comforting solution but leaves the reader hanging, hoping for resolution in future books in this trilogy. As in other of his book Klass presents an environmental message. This time he focuses on the damage that is being done by the commercial fishing. Although the message is a bit preachy while trying to incorporate the statistics into the drama, teens, especially boys will be engrossed in this fantastic adventure. **Science fiction/fantasy; environmental concerns Jeannie Bellavance**

Klause, Annette Curtis. *Freaks: Alive on the Inside*. New York: McElderry, 2006. 068987037X. 331p. \$16.95. Gr.9 +.
Abel Dandy is 17 and lives in Faeryland. In 1899, he is the normal son of a legless father and an armless mother who live and work among a community of other "human oddities" including fat ladies, dwarves, and Siamese twins. But Abel seeks adventure. He longs to kiss a girl who is not bearded, like Phoebe, his first girlfriend. When he runs away, Abel is unaware that he is followed by Phoebe's brother, Apollo, the hairy puppy boy. But life is harsh beyond Faeryland. After Abel works in a traveling circus and the spend some time in a brothel, the boys join a show, run by the evil Dr. Mink. Apollo is caged and forced to work in the show with other children born with deformities. Abel is continually visited by dreams of a beautiful dancing girl who appears in some way connected with his Egyptian scarab ring. This fascinating coming-of-age story, with its appropriate doses of sensuality, bawdiness,

and truth, reminds us of the nature of humanity and the horror of exploitation. **Fantasy. Adventure. Historical fiction. Romance.**
Joyce Valenza

Korman, Gordon. *Born to Rock*. New York: Hyperion, 2006. 0786809205. 272p. \$15.99. Gr. 7-10.

Leo Carraway is bound for Harvard on a full scholarship. He is president of the high school Young Republicans. His hip best friend Melinda--his political and musical opposite--asks him to tutor Owen, their gay classmate. After being wrongfully accused of cheating by a homophobic assistant principal, this high achiever's life is turned upside down.

Leo loses his scholarship and learns that his (probable) biological father is the famous 1980s punk rock musician, Marion X. McMurphy, a.k.a King Maggot. Though he is not proud of this "X factor" in his blood, Leo spends the summer traveling with the Oz Fest-like revival tour of the Purge in the hopes of getting King Maggot to support his Harvard tuition. This coming-of-age story faces Leo with drugs, and groupies, and general rock and roll decadence. Leo discovers his true feelings about Melinda and recognizes his own reality and integrity. The end features a paternal plot twist and a dramatic motorcycle scene. Leo, his friends, and his parents (all of them) are particularly believable and sympathetic. The humor, rock and roll, and romance should satisfy many teen readers. **Realistic.**
Joyce Valenza

Koss, Amy Goldman. *Side Effects*. New Milford, CN: Roaring Brook Press, 2006. 1-59643-294-2. 143 p. \$16.95. Gr. 5-10.

With startling honesty, the author tells the story of eighth grader, Isabelle, as she discovers and deals with lymphoma. For six months, she endures chemo therapy and every nasty side effect possible. Besides her family, only one friend, Kay, knows how to deal with and support her. She maintains her sarcastic sense of humor until her energy disappears from the discomforts she must endure. With Kay's encouragement, Izzy participates in her graduation. After her final treatment, Izzy is cancer free. In the final paragraphs, she is happy and enjoying college. **Realistic**
Michelle Stone

Kring, Sandra. *The Book of Bright Ideas*. New York : Bantam Dell, 2006. 0-385-33814-7. 310p. \$13.00. Gr. 9-Adult.

Evelyn Mae Peters, nicknamed Button by her family, is an anxious, nervous 9 year old who is spending her summer days with her warm, good-hearted Aunt Verdella while her mother works. It's a quiet unexciting existence until the day red-headed Freeda Malone and her 9 year old sister Winnalea breeze into town; Winnalea clutching the ashes of her dead mother. With their bohemian ways they immediately begin to change the lives of everyone they meet. Then all goes wrong when a simple gesture of friendship has unfortunate consequences and reveals a long-hidden secret. **Realistic Fiction.**
Ginger Bardi.

Kuhn, Betsy. *The Race for Space: The United States and the Soviet Union Compete for the New Frontier*. Minneapolis, MN: Twenty-first Century Books, 2007. 0-8225-5984-6. 112p. \$29.27. Gr. 7-12.

This excellent volume details the space race between the United States and the Soviet Union. It is an overview of the main milestones in space exploration, focusing mainly on the Cold War era, although more recent events are mentioned. There is a timeline, an index, and some exact conversation from the moon walk, as well as a list of resources for further exploration. It is easy to read, and provides some interesting tidbits, such as where author Stephen King and rocket scientist/author Homer Hickam were when they heard about Russia's Sputnik. **Nonfiction/Technology/History**
Nancy Chrismer

LaFevers, R.L. *Werewolf Rising*. New York : Dutton Children's Books, 2006. 0-525-47665-2. 199 p. \$16.99. Gr. 5-8.

Werewolf Rising is about a boy named Luc who is about to turn thirteen. Two days before his birthday, his Uncle Ranger come to tell him that he is a werewolf. He moves into the middle of the Washington state forest to live with his father's pack, only to be hunted by fanatics. A great book to read if you like werewolf stories.

D. K., 10th Grade Springfield High School (Delco)

Lalicki, Tom. *Danger in the Dark: A Houdini & Nate Mystery*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006. 0-374-31680-5. \$14.95. 186 pp. Grades 5-8 (HiLo in High School)

Magic and Houdini will appeal to upper elementary and middle school students in this engagingly written first novel by a noted author of biography and nonfiction for young adults. The characters from a variety of social classes are well drawn, and the setting accurately depicts scenes in New York in 1911: the new IRT subway, Little Italy, 5th Avenue, Columbia University library and lawns, and brown stones. While it may seem improbable that Houdini would come to the aid of a family entranced by a medium with criminal intents, it is true that fraudulent mediums were numerous at the time and that Houdini spent much time and money unmasking them. The author's note reveals that the family is fictitious but Houdini's escape from a rattan hamper did occur and his statements in the novel are drawn from his books and articles. The result is a good story based on historical research, with clear delineation between the fiction and nonfiction elements. **Historical fiction. Mystery fiction.**
Eleanor Howe

L'Amour, Louis. *The Collected Short Stories of Louis L'Amour: The Adventure Stories. Volume 4*. New York: Bantam Books, 2006. 0-553-80494-4. 659 p. \$24.00

L'Amour (1908-88) fans will not be disappointed by these 45 entertaining global adventure tales, even though they are not the familiar westerns, the genre for which he is so well known. Nine of the stories feature, Ponga Jim, a freighter captain who navigates the Indian Ocean during World War II. **ADVENTURE SHORT STORIES**
Candy Blessing

Lanagan, Margo. *White Time*. New York: Eos, 2006. 006074393x. 216 p. Gr. 9+ This collection of surreal short stories is sure to intrigue and motivate creative reflection among readers. The ten stories vary in length and subject, but all are consistent in their intensity of emotions and in the ways in which reality is slightly shifted. Offer this book to students who are up to a challenging, stimulating read similar to Lanagan's *Black Juices*. **Short stories, Science Fiction.** **Mary Schwander**

Langston, Laura. *Exit Point*. Custer, WA: Orca Book Publishers, 2006. 155143525x. 110p. \$7.95 Gr. 8+ What happens when you choose to die before your time? Sixteen year old Logan dies in a car accident he was meant to survive. He must explain his choices in the afterlife. He is shown the life he was meant to have. He realizes the impact his death has on his family, only to learn he was the only one who could save his younger sister from being molested by their Uncle. Sort of a teen it's a wonderful life. **Realistic Fiction** **Barb Wray**

Lansens, Lori. *The Girls*. New York: Little, Brown and Company, c2005. 0-316-06903-5. 345p. \$23.95. Gr. 9+. This is truly a fascinating novel about twin girls who are conjoined at the head and live well into adulthood. We mostly hear about their life story from Rose, the twin who loves to read and write. But as the story continues and Rose becomes ill, Ruby speaks to us more frequently and we learn about their experiences and relationships from a whole different perspective. The author does such a brilliant job of detailing the girls' daily lives and delving into their relationships that it is hard to believe that this is a novel rather than a memoir. A beautiful story, beautifully written! **Fiction, Conjoined Twins** **Mary Schwander**

Larbalestier, Justine. *Magic Lessons*. New York: Razorbill. 2006. 1-59514-054-9. 275p. \$16.99. Gr. 8+. Reason Cansino is magic. The catch is if she uses her magic she will die young or go mad just like her mother. Her grandmother Esmeralda must teach her and two friends how to use magic wisely. Can Esmeralda be trusted? Each friend sees magic in a different way. One sees it as mathematical formulas while Reason perceives it as aromas. She is pulled through a magic door from Sydney to New York City. She falls in love with J-Tees older brother. This is the sequel to *Magic or Madness*. **Fantasy.** **Barb Wray**

Larson, Kirby. *Hattie Big Sky*. New York: Delacorte Press, c2006. 0385903324. 289 p. \$19.42. Gr. 7-10 In 1918, sixteen-year-old orphan, Hattie Inez Brooks, finds her life completely changed when she learns that her estranged uncle has died and left her his 320-acre, Montana farm. Having to meet the condition that the farm be cultivated within one year, Hattie is faced with an intense challenge which involves surviving a wicked Montana winter, protecting her farm from the cruelties of nature, and facing the Spanish influenza which whips through the village. This is a story beautifully told through first-person narrative as well as through letters to an uncle and good friend serving in the war. Readers will get a vivid glimpse into the mood of Americans towards the war effort and the anti-German sentiment which many held. The author includes an interesting end note which explains her inspiration for the story and the parallels she found with the present Iraq war. **Historical Fiction, Homesteading, World War I.** **Mary Schwander**

Lavender, William. *Aftershocks*. Orlando, FL: Harcourt, 2006. 0-15-205882-6. \$17.00. 344 pp. Grades 9-12. Jessie Wainwright, whose younger sister died, wants to become a doctor, like her well-respected father, so she can help sick children. Her upper-class family, complete with an Irish cook and Chinese houseboy, however, has typical turn-of-the-century Victorian beliefs about women and their role in the family and society: her father threatens to take Jessie out of school even though she is a good student. While not destroying their home, the San Francisco earthquake of 1906 brings a variety of aftershocks to their lives, including the child of Dr. Wainwright's liaison with their young Chinese housemaid, Mei, while his wife was recovering from an operation. Jessie is determined to save her "orphaned" half-sister from earthquake-devastated Chinatown and enlists the help of several friends to do so. Intertwined in this story of devastation and redemption are romance and issues of racial prejudice, class-consciousness, and feminism. **Historical fiction. San Francisco Earthquake of 1906.** **Eleanor Howe**

Leavitt, Martine. *Keturah and Lord Death*. Ashville, NC: Front Street, c2006. 1932425292. 216 p. \$16.95. Gr. 8+ Leavitt weaves a mystical folktale which includes romance, magic and heroism. Keturah is a sixteen-year-old girl living in the close-knit village of Tide-by-Rood with her grandmother. Upon meeting up with Lord Death in the forest, Keturah is given one more day of life to finish the enthralling story she begins telling him, as well as to find her one true love. She also goes on a mission to save her village from the approaching plague which Lord Death foresees. Young, female readers who enjoy romantic folklore will particularly appreciate this read and will be pleasantly surprised by the meaningful and unexpected ending. **Folktale, Romance.** **Mary Schwander**

Lenhard, Elizabeth. *Chicks with sticks: Knit two together*. New York: Dutton, c2006 0-525-47764-8 \$16.99. Gr. 10 + As they knot, purl and yarnover, four teenage girls realize that what they are really knitting together is their friendship and reliance on one another. But, throw in a few boy problems and the carefully constructed fabric starts to unravel. Fortunately, friendship, like knitting, is forgiving and dropped stitches (and friendships) can be recovered. **Realistic Fiction.** **P. P., Plymouth Whitemarsh HS.**

Lisle, Janet Taylor. *Black Duck*. New York: Sleuth/Philomel, 2006. 0399-23963-4. 252 p. \$15.99. Grades 7-10.

On a foggy night in December 1929 the *Black Duck* full of liquor was stopped by the Coast Guard and 3 men died. In 2006 14-year-old David Peterson, not wanting work in from his dad's landscaping business, decides to break into journalism by interviewing Ruben Hart, alleged rum runner/bootlegger. Ruben reveals to David the events that lead up to that night and the dangers that followed. Ruben dispels the romance built up by Hollywood and television about this violent era. He and his best friend Jeddy had discovered a body with a bullet hole in his neck. It disappears but Ruben, Jeddy and his sister Marina are questioned about what was in the dead man's pockets. The *Black Duck* was an independent boat that could outrun the Coast Guard. The gang who ran it had an almost Robin Hood- hero reputation among the locals. Things get tense when the Boston and New York mobs want to take over the action. Families break apart. Friendships are lost. There is betrayal. Lives change forever. Set off the coast of Rhode Island this story is based on an actual incident. **Prohibition, friendship, family relationships, mystery, historical fiction**

Jeannie Bellavance

Love, D. Anne. *Semiprecious*. New York: Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2006. 978-0-689-85638-9. 293 p. \$16.95. Gr. 6-10.

When Garnet and her sister Opal are dumped by their mother in Oklahoma on her way to seek stardom in Nashville, Garnet's world falls out from under her. How could her mother just leave them? Life gets even worse after her father has a terrible accident on an oil rig in Texas. Set in the 1960's, conflicting events of the day are internalized by Garnet. Her new-found friends, including her disenfranchised aunt, an elderly Indian man and a socially-conscious art teacher, help her come to grips with her new life through self-expression. Garnet's triumphant voice will resonate with teen girls everywhere. **Historical Fiction.**

Sarah Braxton

Lowell, Pamela. *Returnable Girl*. Tarrytown, NY: Marshall Cavendish, 2006. 0-761453-17-2. 229p. \$16.99. Gr. 8+ Veronica Hautman lies, steals and has violent outbursts. Her mother left her alone to follow a boyfriend to Alaska. She misses her brothers but her mother's drug problems prevent their reunion, Roni moves in with a therapist named Alison who loves her despite her problems. Should she give her mother another chance or should she start a new life with Alison? Roni abandons her best friend Cat when she needs her most. Lowell's experience as a social worker gives richness to her characters.

Realistic Fiction.

Barb Wray

Lowery, Lois. *Gossamer*. Boston:Houghton Mifflin Books, 2006. 0-618-68550-9. 140p. \$16.00. Gr. 6-12.Littlest One and Thin Elderly bring strengthening dreams to the lonely woman and her ward, an angry young boy, who live in the small house. But the job of Littlest and Thin Elderly is not an easy when the Sinisteeds arrive with their nightmares. This is a story of change and courage; for Littlest, the woman, and the young boy. A wonderful tale of fantasy.

Constance Roupp

Lukasik, Gail. *Destroying Angels*. Waterville, ME: Five Star, 2006. 0-59414-360-9. \$25.95. 295 pp. Grades 10-Adult. Leigh Girard left her husband in order to recover from a mastectomy and to start life anew in a small idyllic Wisconsin town on Lake Michigan. Her first assignment as a reporter for the local newspaper is to write an obituary for a carpenter whose flamboyant wife thinks he was killed in the hospital. Shortly thereafter, the body of the town's library assistant is found in her apartment. She was a high school friend of the carpenter's daughter who is an angry rebellious young woman. As Leigh tries to discover the links between these events, she finds herself followed at night and driven off the road. Accompanying Leigh's understanding of small-town life and the life stories of its inhabitants are literary allusions, interesting ideas, keen observations, and issues of child and spouse abuse, infidelity, and infanticide. Characters and topics make this most appropriate for the mature reader.

Mystery fiction.

Eleanor Howe

Lupica, Mike. *Heat*. New York: Philomel, 2006. 0399243011. 220 p. \$16.99. Gr. 7 – 10.

Michael Arroyo is the best chance that his baseball team has to get to the Little League championship in Williamsport, PA. Unfortunately, he is tall for his age, and must produce a birth certificate to prove that he is 12. He can't, because his father died before it could be obtained from their native Cuba. If anyone finds out that his father is dead, then Michael is sure to be separated from his 17-year-old brother. In an enduring voice from the Bronx, Michael pulls readers into his world of baseball and constant fear of being discovered as an orphan. Readers will cheer him on throughout the story and be rewarded in Yankee Stadium at its end. **Realistic Fiction.**

Sarah Braxton

Lupica, Mike. *Heat*. NY: Philomel, 2006. 0399243011. \$16.99. 220pp. Gr. 5-8.

Mike Lupica, the author of *Travel Team*, has written a timely novel about Little League and its politics as well as a heart-warming story of family. Michael Arroyo, his brother Carlos and their father left Cuba for the freedom of the United States. Soon after, their father dies and Carlos and Michael hide the fact so that they can stay together. Michael dreams of leading his baseball team to Williamsport. He has "heat" in his arm and is a star pitcher. When the coach of a rival team questions Michael's age...Michael's problems really begin because he doesn't have a birth certificate. Members of the community come to his rescue. This will appeal to reluctant readers as well as baseball fans. **Baseball, Family, Illegal Aliens, Multi-cultural.**

Sandy Krieg

Lynn, Tracy. *Rx*. New York: Simon Pulse. 2006. 1-41691-155-3. 262p. \$7.99. Gr 9+

PSLA TITLES FOR 2006

FICTION

Thyme is a high school junior who is overwhelmed school. She learns that Ritalin helps her to focus on her school work. She begins to diagnose and treat her classmates' depression, anxiety and other ailments with prescription drugs. A cautionary tale of the growing dangers of prescription drug abuse among teenagers. **Realistic Fiction.** **Barb Wray**

MacCready, Robin Merrow. *Buried*. New York: Dutton, 2006. 978-0-525-47724-2. 198p. \$16.99. Grade 9-12.

Claudine, a high school senior takes care of her mother, a severe alcoholic. But after her mother disappears, she can't seem to keep herself together. She becomes severely obsessive compulsive and at the same time she attends support group meetings for children of alcoholics where she hides the truth about her situation. Details about her mother's alcoholism and their relationship are told through letters Claudine writes to her mother. The story ends with a shocking final scene where the truth is revealed.

Alcoholism Fiction/Mental Illness Fiction

Susan Krenicky

MacHale, D. J. *The Quillan Games*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006. 1-4169-1423-4. 486 p. \$15.99. Gr. 5-8.

In the seventh book in the *Pendragon* series, Pendragon is captured and forced to play in the "Quillan Plays". He wins many of the challenges. He does not know that the person he is competing against is his arch foe in disguise. The antagonist can transform his appearance. The antagonist escapes at the end and Pendragon ends with a quest to kill him.

Science Fiction.

E. H., 8th grade student, Sandy Run Middle School

Mackall, Dandi Daley. *Eva Underground: A Novel*. Orlando, FL: Harcourt, 2006. 0-15-205462-6. \$17.00. 236 pp. Gr.9-12.

Eva Lott is looking forward to her senior year with her girl friends, her popular boyfriend Matt, and her new position on the varsity swim team when her father announces that she is going with him on his sabbatical in Poland. Eva finds Poland in the late 1970s to be an intrusive police state with few material goods, and she secretly plans her escape back to America. She nevertheless soon finds herself drawn into both the culture and strength of the Polish people by her father's involvement with an underground group seeking greater freedom, a weekend in the country harvesting plums on a family orchard, and the joyous public reaction to Archbishop Karol Wytola's election to the Papacy. She also begins to enjoy the company of Tomek, a college student who serves as her father's translator. The author's years in Poland during the 1970s bring reality to the setting and events, and teen readers will relate to Eva's increasing participation in adventure and romance. **Historical fiction. Moving. Poland. Romance.** **Eleanor Howe**

Manning, Sarra. *Let's Get Lost*. New York: Dutton, 2006. 978-0525-47666-5. 308p. \$16.99. Gr. 9-12.

Sixteen year old Isabel is the queen of the "mean girls" at her all girls school. She is rude to everyone and has her group of minions whom she rules. Her mother has recently died and on the surface Isabel seems unaffected. But, she engages in reckless behavior going on drinking binges and lies about her age to hook up with an older college boy for sex. It isn't until the end that the reader understands the real root of Isabel's pain. **Fiction/Death/Emotional Problems.** **Susan Krenicky**

Manning, Sarah. *Let's Get Lost*. New York: Dutton, 2006. 0-525-47666-0. 308 p. \$16.99. Gr. 10-12.

Sixteen-year-old Isabel is spiraling out of control. Before the summer, she led 3 other girls in bullying and tormenting anyone available. Over the summer, however, Isabel's mother died. When school begins, she tries to keep up the tough girl act and deny her pain. Lying about her age, Isabel drinks to excess, dates a college boy, and becomes sexually active. While vulnerable, her friends turn the tables on Isabel by exposing her lies to her father and boyfriend. Their rejection sends her further into despair until she hits bottom, nearly dying in a car accident. Finally, Isabel opens up to her father and the family begins to heal. The author began writing this book after her mother's death. The emotions are and characters are very real. **Realistic** **Michelle Stone**

Marks, Graham. *Missing in Tokyo: A Novel*. New York: Bloomsbury : Distributed to the trade by Holtzbrinck Publishers, 2006. 978-1-58234-907-7. 253p. \$16.95. YA.

Adam's sister has gone missing in Tokyo. The police seem to be doing nothing and his parents, distracted with caring for his mum's elderly parents, feel trapped and unable to be useful. The pressure builds until Adam decides he will be the one to act. So, with a certain amount of deception, Adam flies to Tokyo in search of his sister. His exciting adventure is full of twists and turns, good guys and girls and bad. Marks keeps the reader on edge through to the satisfying conclusion, while providing a real taste of life in Japan. **Adventure Fiction.** **Erika Thickman Miller**

McCaffrey, Anne and Todd McCaffrey . *Dragon's Fire*. New York: Ballantine Books, 2006. 0-345-48028-7. 366p. \$24.95. Gr. 10-12.

Dragon's Fire is another great saga between human, dragons, and fire lizards trying to prepare those living in Pern for the coming of the deadly Thread. The dragons will need firestone to breathe fire and firestone, deadly but essential, is very dangerous to mine. Pellar is a deaf Masterharper apprentice who makes it his mission with a miner's son, Critisov and the orphan, Halla, to save the dragonriders and the Shunned. An epic tale, readers are drawn in with the drama of Pern once again. **Holocaust-Historical Fiction** **M. H. Senior – Abington Senior High School**

McCandless, Sarah Grace. *The Girl I Wanted to Be*. New York: Simon and Schuster Paperbacks, c2006. 0743285182. 175 p. \$10.20. Gr. 7-12

PSLA TITLES FOR 2006

FICTION

Presley's relationship with her mother's young sister, Betsi, could be better described as "friend" than as "aunt". The fourteen-year-old had always admired Betsi as the "girl she wanted to be" and eagerly accepts her advice on everything from clothes to boyfriends. However, Betsi has substance abuse problems and this warrants her to live with Presley's family until she can straighten-out her life. Presley gradually begins to lose her veneration for Betsi as she sees her flaws and learns of a disturbing secret which Betsi hides from the family. This is a poignant story of an adolescent girl who learns to believe in who she is and to trust her instincts of right and wrong. **Teenage Girls, Family Relationships.** **Mary Schwander**

McCaughrean, Geraldine. *Cyrano*. New York: Harcourt, 2006. 0-15-205805-2. 114 p. \$16. Gr. 5-8.

The tragic love story of Cyrano and Roxane is retold in this entertaining novel. Set in 17th century France, Cyrano is a quick witted poet and accomplished swordsman, respected throughout the country for his panache. Believing Roxane could never love him because of his astounding nose, Cyrano helps Christian to court and eventually wed her. Christian and Cyrano are immediately rushed off to war where Christians discovers Cyrano's true feelings for Roxane, and kills himself. Roxane mourns for 15 years in a nunnery while Cyrano struggles to survive. As Cyrano lies dying, Roxane realizes that he wrote all the letters that made her fall in love with Christian and once again, she is losing her love. **Historical** **Michelle Stone**

McCormick, Patricia. *Sold*. New York: Hyperion, 2006. 078685171-6. 263 p. \$15.99. Gr. 10-12.

From the very first page, Patricia McCormick's story of Lakshmi, a thirteen-year-old Nepali girl sold into prostitution, is compelling and life-altering. One cannot read the heart-wrenching story of a mother and daughter that are torn apart by lies, exploitation and physical distance yet stay united in heart and spirit, and remain unchanged by the experience. McCormick's novel, written in free verse, is full of simple, direct and powerful images. The fact that McCormick traveled to India and Nepal to do extensive research on the sex slave industry, and incorporated her appalling and disheartening findings within the work, renders the novel even more life-changing. Readers experience a variety of emotions as we are forced to accept the harsh reality of many young girls, not only in Asia, but throughout the world, and at the same time, fall in love with a young girl whose triumphant spirit leaves us hopeful and optimistic about her fate.

Modern Day Slavery. Multicultural Fiction.

D. M.-Abington Senior High

McGowan, Anthony. *Hellbent*. New York: Simon Pulse, 2005. 1-4169-0814-5. 257p. \$8.99. Gr. 10-12.

Sledding Hill meets *Ned Vizzini* meets *Dante*. This book begins with an interesting premise: a classmate's fart makes Conor O'Neill so sick that he isn't watching where he's going as he leaves school, gets hit by an ice cream truck, and goes straight to Hell (along with his dog, who chokes to death on the ice cream sprinkles that spilled out of the truck.). Conor narrates his arrival in Hell and describes in nauseating detail what Hell is like for him, including the services of Clarence, his personal "caretaker" devil, his friendship with a cross-dressing Viking, as well as some other disturbed and disturbing lost souls, and the tortures that exist in the various Circles of Hell. All of these improbable elements actually work together to form a wonderfully funny, very philosophical book about a hapless teenager and what happens if you just tell "white" lies, don't cheat "too much", and are guilty of some sins of omission. Conor eventually discovers that he could have avoided Hell if he had followed the simple advice to "be nice" to others. He has one chance to see if he can find his way back. Parts of this book will definitely be read by teens to their friends, especially the gross and disgusting parts. Librarians need to know that there is strong language. **Fantasy Fiction**

Nancy Chrismer

McNab, Andy and Robert Rigby. *Payback*. NY: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2006. 0399244654. \$16.99. 263 p. Gr. 6-10.

Danny and his grandfather Fergus are hiding out in Spain, in this sequel to *Traitor*. The reader is drawn into the adventure and suspense from the first chapter as Danny and Fergus set out to clear Fergus' name and find out who is responsible for the suicide bombing in London. A double agent, the true traitor and Danny's computer whiz girlfriend all add to this page-turner of an adventure. **Adventure, Spies, Terrorism, Interpersonal relationships.** **Sandra Krieg**

McNair, Don. *The Long Hunter*. Odessa, FL: Medallion Press. 2006. 1-932815-51-1. 294p. \$19.95 Gr. 8+

Matt McLarren survives an Indian raid. His parents are killed and his younger sister is kidnapped. He is taken in by an abusive inn keeper who works him near to death until he is rescued by a kinder man. Life is pretty good until the inn keeper kills his rescuer and is in turn murdered by Matt. He works as a trapper on the frontier and is determined to find his sister. Matt is captured by the Indians, escapes finds his sister after four years and learns what family really means. **Historical Fiction.** **Barb Wray**

McNish, Cliff. *Breathe : A Ghost Story*. Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Books, 2006. 0-8225-6443-2. 261p. \$15.95. Gr. 7-12.

Imagine moving into a house and realizing there are ghost children trapped inside! Thirteen year old, Jack, who has severe asthma, can see and hear them. With eerie trepidation, the reader watches the wicked Ghost Mother keep herself alive by preying upon the ghost children and ultimately possessing Jack's mother, Sarah. You will be riveted by Jack's determination, even as he is consumed by life-threatening asthma attacks to get his mother back, save himself and the ghost children. There is lots of tension in a taut well written thriller. **Ghosts- Fiction** **B.J. Neary**

McNish, Cliff. *Silver City*. Minneapolis: Carolrhoda, 2006. 1-57505-926-6. 253 p. \$15.95. Gr. 6-10.

PSLA TITLES FOR 2006

FICTION

This is the second book in the *Silver* series, but the story stands alone. In the first book, *Silver Child*, a group of children develop unusual gifts designed to help the world survive the coming disaster: the return of the Rage. Now all the children on Earth are called toward the city of Coldharbor, where Milo, a 4 mile long boy, floats above. He is protecting the children from the Rage, a massive force that has traveled through space for eons, devouring all life it encounters. Through many twists and turns, Milo and the children find the strength to defeat the Rage. Nonstop adventure makes this a page turner. **Fantasy/Adventure Michelle Stone**

Medley, Linda. *Castle Waiting*. New York: Fantagraphics Books, 2006. 1-56097-747-7. 457p. \$29.95. Gr. 9-12
Books like this one are a breath of fresh air from the normal novel. It allows the reader to see the faces of the characters and understand their emotions. The author incorporates well-known fairy tales and builds story upon story. It gets a little tedious but it is worth the long read because it is such an enjoyable story. **M. Carey Scranton Prep School**

Medley, Linda. *Castle Waiting*. New York: Fantagraphics, 2006. 1560977476. 457p. \$29.95. Gr. 9+.
This graphic novel and comic fairy tale extends the tale of Sleeping Beauty into a set of 12 linked modern feminist tales and is slightly reminiscent of Chaucer. The princess awakens after 100 years and goes off with her charming prince. But what happens to the castle full of characters? Three ladies in waiting, Patience, Prudence and Plenty, stay on in the hobgoblin-infested castle. They are joined by Sister Peace, a bearded nun, Sir Destrier, a horse-headed knight who seeks rest between adventures, and Beakie, a kind bachelor merchant. Lady Jain, a pregnant woman fleeing an abusive husband arrives seeking refuge. All tell their stories. All are welcomed by the friendly castle folks. The art is clever and its details build the character. **Great multilayered storytelling. Graphic novel. Fantasy. Highly recommended. Joyce Valenza**

Meyer, Carolyn. *Loving Will Shakespeare*. Orlando: Harcourt, 2006. 0-15-205451-0. 264p. \$17.00 – Gr. 7+
History records a marriage between William Shakespeare and Anne Hathaway, who was 7 years his senior. Not much is known about the marriage, but in Meyer's capable hands, she fashions a believable story out of a few tidbits of historical facts. Agnes (Anne) Hathaway has an almost Cinderella existence after the death of her mother and the re-marriage of her father. She's had a few chances at romance that did not blossom into marriage, and after the death of her father, and at the insistence of her step-mother, she agrees to marry a man she does not love. Anne has known Will all her life and never considered him husband material, but when Will comes home after a long absence, sparks fly and the two become lovers, and after an unplanned pregnancy, husband and wife. Anne tells her story in an authentic voice. Fans of the Young Royals series will enjoy this look at the non-royal life of a young woman in Elizabethan England. For more mature readers, follow this up with *The Two Loves of Will Shakespeare*.
Historical Fiction Rosanne Zajko

Meyer, Stephenie. *New Moon*. New York: Little, Brown and Company, c2006. 0316160199. 563 p. \$17.99. Gr. 9+.
Readers who enjoyed Meyer's last novel, Twilight, will be very anxious to get their hands on this sequel of a vampire-love story. Realizing that Bella's blood is a bit too tempting to him after she get accidentally cuts herself, Edward and his family decide to leave town soon after the novel begins. Some readers may miss the charisma of Edward's character almost as much as Bella does; he is absent for a good part of the story. But the action and adventure are still present as Bella becomes involved with Jacob, a young man who is involved with a pack of werewolves. This novel will be much more appealing to readers who have first read Twilight. **Fantasy, Suspense, Romance Mary Schwander**

Miller, Kirsten. *Kiki Strike*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2006. 1582349606. 250p. \$16.95. Gr. 5-8.
Ananka Fishbein, a seventh grader at an expensive New York City school wakes up one Saturday morning to discover that the small park across the street has become a sinkhole. There she meets Kiki Strike, a white-haired leprechaun sized creature with whom she explores the secret life in the Shadow City, the tunnels underneath Manhattan. Kiki discovers a group of girls with interesting special talents-- including hacking, lock picking, forging, chemistry, and explosives--who call themselves the Irregulars. This one is packed with twists and turns, a climax filled with international intrigue, and beautifully drawn heroic girl characters.
Mystery. Fantasy. Adventure. Joyce Valenza

Miller-Lachman, Lyn. *Dirt Cheap*. Willimantic, Connecticut: Curbstone Press, 2006. 1-931896-29-1. 368p. \$15.95. Gr. 9-12.

This book details the search for the causes of many people dying in a small town from cancer-related illnesses. The main character, Nicholas Baron, works at a community college and uses the resources of the science department to test soil samples from the town's river, because he believes it has been contaminated by the chemical plant that shut down fifteen years earlier. The story is compelling and suspenseful, as he uncovers more evidence of the chemical plant leaching toxins into the town's water supply and land. The pressure builds as other townspeople fight to keep the information from the public. The story is very relevant to today's issues of environmental pollution and the responsibility of businesses to the public's well-being. This is a good book for those who like good character development and who would like to read about the conflict between ethical and financial issues in modern society. **FICTION/CURRENT ISSUES**

Shirley Covert, Spanish/Accelerated Reading Committee, Juniata High School

Mitchell, David. *Black Swan Green*. New York: Random House, c2006.

1400063795. 294 p. \$23.95. Gr. 9+

In the span of exactly one year, we hear of Jason Taylor's story as a thirteen-year-old living in England during the 80's. Jason wants nothing more than to survive his first year as a teen by going unnoticed. He avoids certain words so his stammer remains hidden. He tries to be a perfect, agreeable son so as to not trigger another argument between his parents. And when at all possible, he does his best to be out of the radar of picked-on kids. Jason has a passion and talent for writing poetry, but keeps that secret hidden by submitting his work under a pseudonym. This is an eloquent coming-of-age story which will certainly remain with readers for a very long time. Though the English jargon may be a little tough to interpret through some of the reading, it is a novel with which all can identify and appreciate for the wonderful piece of literature it is. **Coming-of-age, England. Mary Schwander**

Moranville, Sharelle Byars. *A Higher Geometry*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2006. 0-8050-7470-8. 212p. \$16.95. Gr. 8-12.

Anna is a teen in 1959, just loves and excels at math, and misses her dead grandmother, Meema desperately. Through Anna's eyes we see her blossoming romance with Mike, the next door neighbor, her parents resistance to Anna's math aspirations and the social constraints of the times. We root for Anna as she comes in first in the statewide math contest and persuades her parents to let her participate in a national competition. Anna's belief in herself makes her future happen. A sweet, coming of age story.

Historical Fiction

B.J. Neary

Moriarty, Jaclyn. *The Murder of Bindy Mackenzie*. New York: Arthur A. Levine, 2006. 0-439-74051-7. 491p. \$16.99.

Gr. 9-12.

Bindy Mackenzie, an Australian teenager, is not satisfied with her life, but can't seem to do the right things to change it. Through journal entries, e-mails, memos, and notes, Bindy tells her story. She has been left with an aunt and uncle while her parents move to the city; she is striving to stay at the top of her class academically; she is trying, and usually failing, to establish positive social relationships with her classmates through a special class called Friendship and Development. Everything starts to collapse around Bindy: her academics get derailed, her mind starts to go, she has no friends left, and her health starts to deteriorate, but it isn't until later in the book that the reader realizes that someone is trying to murder her. This is a good story in the same style and place as the author's other very successful books, *Feeling Sorry for Celia*, and *The Year of Secret Assignments*. **Teen Fiction/Mystery**

Nancy Chrismer

Mosley, Walter. *Fortunate Son*. Boston : Little, Brown, 2006. 0-316-11471-5. 313 p. \$23.95. Gr. 9+

With pitch-perfect prose, Mosley tells the story of two "brothers." Tommy was born with a hole in heart, Eric with a silver spoon in his mouth. In an unlikely twist of fate, they are raised as brothers when Tommy's Black mother moves in with Eric's widowed father. The death of Branwyn separates the boys, and they are reunited many years later, Tommy having to scrape by on the streets and Eric, privileged but empty. Beautifully written, heart-stopping and incandescent. Frank language and sexual situations. This books is for older readers and adults. **Problem Fiction**

Pat Naismith

Mourlevat, Jean-Claude. *The Pull of the Ocean*. New York: Delacourte, 2006. 978-0-385-90364-6. 190p. \$13.95.

Grades 9-12.

A modern day fairy tale based on Charles Perrault's story of Tom Thumb and translated from the French. The story of seven siblings who have run away from home is told in short chapters by Yann, the main character, and his three sets of identical twin brothers as well as others who have seen or interacted with the boys. They run away one night after Yann, a miniature and mute child who is only 2 feet tall at 10 years of age, hears his parents talking about "killing all seven of them". Thus begins the boys trying journey to escape to the sea based on what turns out to be a tragic misunderstanding. **Fiction/French Susan Krenicky**

Murdock, Catherine Gilbert. *Dairy Queen: A Novel*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2006. 0-618-68307-0. 275 p. \$16.00.

Gr. 7-10.

A new look on being in high school. It tells you the good, the bad and the ugly about what happens during the summer months and in September when high school begins. This book is about a girl named D.J. Schwenk and how she grows up in one summer. D. J. has to deal with lots of unexpected changes in her life with family, friends and football. D.J. ends up having a lot to say about it in the end. I would recommend this book to any girl who likes funny books that tell the real life story about growing up.

A. G., 8th Grade E. T. Richardson Middle School

Murdock, Catherine Gilbert. *Dairy Queen*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2006. 0-618-68307-0. 275p. \$16.00. Gr. 9-12.

Murdock's debut novel is an enjoyable story about D.J. Schwenk, a 15 year-old girl who lives and works on the family farm in Wisconsin. D.J. is pressured into training Brian Nelson, a rival high school quarterback, for the upcoming football season. The events of the summer help DJ realize her football aspirations and she develops a better understanding of her families' communication issues, making for a touching, coming-of-age novel. **Farm life-Fiction and Football-Fiction B.J. Neary**

Murphy, Jim. *Desperate Journey*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2006. 0-439-07806-7. 278 p. \$16.99. Gr. 6-10.

PSLA TITLES FOR 2006

FICTION

Living and working on the Erie Canal in 1848, twelve-year-old Maggie and her family lead very difficult and sometimes brutal lives. Maggie's father, Tim, and Uncle Henry are arrested and charged in a viscous beating. On the canal, a group of bullies take advantage of anyone weaker than themselves, so Tim often fights to protect and defend others. Maggie, her younger brother and sick mother must hurry to deliver their cargo in order to save their boat from being repossessed. The kindness of other Canal people and the strange Billy Black help them reach their destination on time, and demonstrates to Maggie that she does not need to live on land to have neighbors. Tim and Henry are freed when 67 of their friends testify that Tim only fights to protect others, and never fights dirty. When Maggie's mother reveals her pregnancy, Tim agrees to never fight again. Fighting in front of his children, and feeling justified to do so, bothered me, but didn't stop me from enjoying the book. A glossary of canal and boating terms is included. **Historical/Adventure**
Michelle Stone

Myers, Walter Dean. *Street Love*. New York: Amistad/HarperTempest, 2006. 0-06-028080-8. 134 p. \$15.99. Gr. 6-12. In hip-hop poetry, with no sex and no expletives, Myers tells a modern-day Romeo and Juliet story. Middle class, college bound Damien meets street wise Junice and the attraction is instant. From entirely different backgrounds (he's off to Brown, her mother has just been sent to prison for drug dealing), they are both drawn to each other. But will Damien give up everything for Junice? The characters are fresh, each with something to add in these poems from many voices. Would make a great choral reading or reader's theater. A short and compelling read, with truly lyrical and evocative poetry. **Novel in verse/Multicultural**
Pat Naismith

Na, An. *Wait for Me*. New York : Penguin Group USA/Putnam, 2006. 0-399-24275-9. 169 p. \$15.99. Gr. 8-11. This new novel by An Na is much more mature in theme and content than her award-winning *A Step from Heaven*. Mina has fabricated a life of lies, academically and personally, to convince her Harvard-obsessed mother that she has been accepted to the prestigious school. When her house of cards comes falling down, she is forced to face her lying and stealing, and make a life for herself. Told in the alternating voices of Mina and her hearing-impaired younger sister, Suna, this is a compelling coming of age story. **Multicultural**
Pat Naismith

Na, An. *Wait for Me*. New York: Putnam, 2006. 0399242759. 169p. \$15.99 Gr. 8-11. By the author of the Printz award winner *for A Step From Heaven*, Na presents another Korean-American family. The story is lyrically told in the voices of two sisters—Mina and Suna. To satisfy her mother's high expectations, Mina finds herself trapped in a web of lies as her senior year approaches. She is responsible for caring for her younger, hearing-impaired sister, Suna. She will never get into Harvard. Using the Stanford-bound friend, who loves her--Jonathan Kim--Mina doctors her report cards and steals money from her family's dry cleaning business in a plan to escape. She doesn't return Jonathan's love and he eventually forces himself on her. Mina does develop feelings for a forbidden love, Ysrael, the gifted musician and Mexican immigrant who comes to work in the family's cleaning business. Along the way Mina learns the secret that has tortured her mother since Mina's birth. This coming-of-age tale and family drama is ripe for discussion with its issues of loyalty and betrayal, family responsibility, the immigrant struggle, and generational differences. **Korean-American, Realistic. Deaf. Family.**
Joyce Valenza

Napoli, Donna Jo. *Fire in the Hills*. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 2006. 0-525-47751-9. 215p. \$16.99. Gr. 7-10. This sequel to *Stones in Water* furthers the adventures of Roberto. Now 14 and trying to return to his beloved Venice during WW II. He is used as a translator by German soldiers and witnesses firsthand many of the horrors of war. Students will love this survival story and the hardships he has to endure to return home. **Historical Fiction**
Donna Darmofal

Naylor, Phyllis Reynolds. *Alice in The Know*. New York: Atheneum, 2006. 0-689-87092-7. 277 p. \$15.95 Grades 7-10 This is the summer after Alice's sophomore. Instead of working at her father's music store (his idea) Alice has a job at Hecht's department store in the mall. Alice and her friends are working to understand some other things as well: dating, sexual cyber bullying, interracial marriage, remarriage, marijuana. When her brother Lester, thinks of getting married, Alice ponders family and traditions. Naylor really has her finger on the pulse of teens and their concerns. Alice's thoughts and discussions sound very natural and readers will be glad that someone besides themselves is concerned about these things. There are 20 other books about Alice, starting with her as a third grader and moving through high school.
Jeannie Bellavance

Nesbit, Edith. *The House of Arden*. New York: New York Review of Books, 2006. 1-59017-202-7. 242p. \$17.95. Gr. 7-9. This republication of E. Nesbit's fantasy novel brings a new source of pleasure to readers who like *Harry Potter*-type fantasy. Edred and Elfrida are the last of the Arden line, believing their father to be dead. They inherit the crumbling old Arden Castle, but in order to fix it up, they need to find the family treasure before Edred turns ten years old. With the help a magical creature called a Mouldiwarp, they are able to go back in time by going through doors in the castle and putting on clothing from times past. The two experience many spine-tingling adventures in their search, including visits with a witch, attacks by highwaymen, and dangerous travels. A delightful read. **Fantasy.**
Nancy Chrimer

Nolan, Han. *A Summer of Kings*. Orlando, FL: Harcourt, 2006. 0152051082. \$17.00. 334 pp. Gr. 6-9. It is 1963 and Esther Young, the black sheep of her very talented family, is looking forward to an exciting summer of freedom. The African American son of her mother's friend, the daughter of her family's maid, is coming to stay because of trouble he had gotten

PSLA TITLES FOR 2006

FICTION

into down South. This is the time of Black Power, the start of the Nation of Islam and Malcolm X. Han Nolan has managed to intertwine the philosophy of Gandhi, the awakening of fourteen-year-old Esther's social conscious and her coming-of-age in this novel to bring this time in our history alive for your students.

Race Relations, Civil Rights Movement, Family Life, Black Muslims, Multi-Cultural Sandra Krieg

Nolan, Han, *A Summer of Kings*. Orlando, FL: Harcourt, 2006. 0-15-205108-2.334 p. \$17.00. Gr. 9 and up.

Esther has written a memoir of her summer in 1963 when King-Roy Johnson came north from his home in Alabama seeking refuge with the family of his mother's childhood friend after being accused of killing a white man. Cross-eyed Esther who had to repeat the third grade learns from King-Roy about the powerful draw of Malcolm X's message to those left dissatisfied with the progress of Martin Luther King's pacifist approach to demanding civil rights. Esther explores the meaning of love and the value of following her conscience and her dreams, discovering her importance to her family quite by accident. **Historical Fiction**

Erika Thickman Miller

Nolan, Han. *A Summer of Kings*. New York: Harcourt, 2006. 0-15-205108-2. 334 p. \$16.99. Gr. 6-9.

14-year-old Esther Young was ready for the summer of her life. This was the time to break free from the shadow of her perfect parents and her over-achieving siblings. But her notions of the world are turned upside down when King-Roy Johnson, a young Black man, sent North to live with her family because he has been accused of murder, opens her eyes to the inequality in the world. **Multicultural/Historical Fiction**

Pat Naismith

***The O. Henry Prize Stories: The Best Stories of the Year 2006*. New York: Anchor Books, 2006. 1-4000-9539-5 361p. \$14.00. Gr. 10-12.**

Series editor, Laura Furman does an excellent job with prize jurors, Kevin Brockmeier, Francine Prose and Colm Toibin, of selecting the best winners of short stories that have appeared in literary magazines like *Harper's* and *The New Yorker* throughout the year. I especially enjoyed the publisher's note and Introduction by Laura Furman as she encapsulates the many stories that appear in the book, I kept returning to the Introduction for which story to read next. Outstanding reading by exceptional writers, especially *Windows* by Deborah Eisenberg and *Old Boys, Old Girls* by Edward P. Jones. Highly recommended. **Short Story Collection**

B.J. Neary

Orme, David. *Something Evil*. Mankato, MN: Stone Arch Books, 2006.1-59889-017-4. 33p \$14.95. Gr.5-8.
High Interest-low level for the reluctant reader. **Horror.**

Barb Wray

Orme, David. *Space Pirates*. Mankato, MN: Stone Arch Books, 2006. 1-59889-016-6. 40p. \$14.95. Gr 5-8.
High Interest-low level for the reluctant reader. **Science Fiction.**

Barb Wray

Orme, David. *Space Wreck*. Mankato, MN: Stone Arch Books, 2006. 1-5988-015-8. 40p. \$14.95. Gr 5-8.
High Interest-low level for the reluctant reader. **Science Fiction.**

Barb Wray

Page, Katherine Hall. *Club Meds*. New York: Simon Pulse, 2006. 1-4169-0903-6. 166p. \$6.99. Gr. 6-9.

Jack Sutton and his friends are among those who take daily medications while in school. His group has come to refer to their noon meeting at the nurse's office as Club Meds. Unfortunately, being in Club Meds does not have the same perks as the other club. Jack's nemesis Chuck shows up at Jack's high school, and Chuck forces Jack to hand over a portion of his Ritlan pills. Creative thinking on the part of the Club Meds group helps Jack overcome the threat of Chuck, but not without several suspenseful moments.

Friendship

Constance Roupp

Parkhurst, Carolyn. *Lost and Found*. New York: Little, Brown and Company, c2006. 0316156388. 292 p. \$20.36. Gr. 9+
Students who like reality shows such as *Amazing Race* will really enjoy this captivating tale about contestants on the television show, "Lost and Found". As pairs race around the world in search for items based on clues, we learn that each couple comes with personal issues which the contest swiftly brings to the surface. As each team is eliminated, the show's host dramatically (and quite annoyingly) asks, "you've lost the game, but what have you found?" The story is fun and engaging as we hear it told from each of the individual contestants. **Contests, Relationships.**

Mary Schwander

Paterson, Katherine. *Bread and Roses, Too*. New York: Clarion, 2006. 0-618-65479-8. 275 p. \$16.00 Grades 5-8.

Katherine Paterson brings alive the Bread and Roses strike of 1912 in the textile mills of Lawrence, MA. The strike arises when the mill owners cut back hours. Union organizers unite the mostly immigrant workers. Factory owners are surprised when the women join in and form a united front. The situation turns violent when a young woman is killed. Paterson writes from the alternating point of view of two children are caught up in this. Rosa Serutti has aspirations of getting an education and escaping the life in the mill where her mother and sister work. Jake Beale, on the other hand, is illiterate and works in the mills to provide for his alcoholic father and himself. Rosa's mother, who is very involved with the strike, sends her to Vermont with other children where sympathetic unionist live. Jake at the last minute hops on the train when he thinks that he might have killed his father. Rosa and

PSLA TITLES FOR 2006

FICTION

Jake are taken in by the generous Gerbati who own a stone cutting shop. Rosa continues school, but Jake, ashamed of his illiteracy, works for Mr. Gerbati. Both children, used to having to scramble for the merest crumbs, flourish. Paterson incorporates real historical figures and events to give the story weight. Readers get a picture of the horrific working and living conditions of immigrants, the ethnic and class conflicts, prejudice, and the cooperation of the unions. The historical note at the end will aid researchers although I wish that the books mentioned were in a list. **Labor unions, family life, immigrants, prejudice, textile workers**

Jeannie Bellavance

Patron, Susan. *The Higher Power of Lucky*. New York: Atheneum, 2006. 1-4169-0194-9. 134 p. \$16.95. Gr. 4-8. 2007 Newbery Award winner.

Lucky, an outgoing and intelligent ten-year-old, has abandonment issues. She eavesdrops on twelve step meetings in her small, friendly town (population 43) in the California desert, and is searching for her 'higher power'. At eight, her mother died suddenly, and Brigitte became her guardian. Fearing that Brigitte intends to return to France, Lucky lashes out at six-year-old Miles, and runs away. In the midst of a terrible dust storm, Lucky comes across an injured Miles and takes him to safety. When they are able to return home, Lucky finds that Brigitte is in the process of adopting her. **Realistic**

Michelle Stone

Paulsen, Gary. *The Legend of Bass Reeves: Being the True and Fictional Account of the Most Valiant Marshal in the West*. NY: Wendy Lamb/Random House, 2006. 0385908989. \$15.95. Gr.5-8.

This is a true and fictionalized story of a runaway slave who heads West, lives among the Creek Indians after one saves his life, and ends up being a Federal Marshal. Paulsen fleshes out this story from the tales he heard and newspaper accounts he found about Bass Reeves. He concentrates on Bass' childhood and shows how he developed into the man he was to become. This belongs in any Middle School collection, Multicultural collection and would work for ninth grade reluctant readers.

Multicultural, Slave, U. S. Marshals

Sandra Krieg

Pausewang, Gudrun. *Traitor*. Minneapolis: Carolrhoda, 2006. 0-8225-6195-6. \$16.95. 220p. Grades 7-10.

Originally published in Germany in 1995, this title is translated by Rachel Ward. Students of World War II will be especially intrigued by the dilemma in this story. Fifteen-year-old Anna discovers a wounded Russian soldier and decides to hide him from the Nazis. What follows is a story of soul searching. Who is an enemy? Who is a traitor? . The issues are not black and white as Anna's younger brother, Felix would believe from the propaganda he has received through the Hitler youth program. War is bloody and red Anna starts to think for herself, pondering the treatment of people other than Germans and questioning Hitler's motives. Various characters emerge and help Anna form her thoughts. Readers will also be challenged by Anna's dilemmas.

World War II – Germany, Nazi Germany, Families,

Jeannie Bellavance

Pearce, Johathan. *Nobody's Fault: Surprises from the Earth and the Heart*. Stockton, CA : Balona Books, 2006. 0-9765-4793-8. \$17.00. 222 p. Grades 7-12.

Bright and talented Tery Ordway is assigned to write an interview for the upcoming summer issue of the high school newspaper, *The Korndogger*, whose editor is the gum-clacking wisecracking girlfriend of her next-door neighbor, bully-braggart Richie Kuhl. Tery decides to interview a 105 year-old survivor of the San Francisco earthquake in 1906, who also happens to be Richie's great grandfather. Julius "Junior" Kuhl is a toothless elderly man who snoozes frequently but has vivid memories of the event. The result is a compelling story of the quake and a developing friendship between Junior and Tery. Issues of death and loss, love in families, and ethical behavior are intertwined in both the current and historical story lines. Pearce's jaunty writing and dialogue will pull teens into the novel, and his realistic descriptions of the earthquake are based on available historical records. Includes bibliography of works about the earthquake. **Historical fiction. San Francisco Earthquake of 1906.**

Eleanor Howe

Pearsall, Shelley. *All of the Above*. NY: Little, Brown & Co, 2006. 978-0316115247. \$15.99. 239 p. Gr. 5-8.

Based on a true story, Pearsall tells of a frustrated math teacher, a disinterested group of inner city math students and an idea to bring excitement to the classroom. Mr. Collins' has had it with his bored students so he comes across the idea to build the world's largest tetrahedron. Told by each of the four students and Mr. Collins, the reader will be drawn into these five people's lives as they set out on this attempt to make the Guinness Book of World Records.

Math, Self-confidence, Relationships.

Sandra Krieg

Peters, Kimberly Joy. *Painting Caitlyn*. Canada: Lobster Press, 2006. 1-89707340-2. \$12.95. YA

When her mom and step dad announce they are having a baby, teenager Caitlyn knows her life is about to change, but she is unprepared for the kind of change that takes place when she meets Tyler. Caitlyn can't believe her luck in having such a smart, attractive boyfriend. As the relationship develops, readers realize that Tyler is controlling and abusive. Caitlyn refuses to see that side of their "love." She is forced to face reality when Tyler becomes physically abusive. The story has a good lesson without being overly moralistic. The author's portrayal of teenage angst about relationships is realistic. Teenage girls will enjoy this story because it is told in the first person. **Realistic Fiction**

Ilene Goldis Grayev

Pfeffer, Susan Beth, *Life As We Knew It*. Orlando: Harcourt, 2006. 0-15-205823-5. 337 p. \$17.00. Gr. 9 and up.

After an asteroid collides with the moon Miranda's life and the Earth's climate change dramatically. Miranda's tests shift from a focus on schoolwork to the more practical matters of survival. The dramatic changes in her environment pull Miranda's family together, though the reader recognizes that other families are not so lucky. As she confronts and overcomes a variety of hardships Miranda learns a great deal about what she values while simultaneously recognizing both how strong and loving she is and how much her family means to her. **Fiction.**

Erika Thickman Miller

Pfeffer, Susan Beth. *Life as We Knew It*. New York: Harcourt, 2006. 0-15-205826-5; 337 p. \$17.00. Gr. 6-8.

When a meteor hits the moon, life will never be the same for 16-year-old Miranda. Living in a rural Pennsylvania community, her life changes drastically as the meteor causes tsunamis, volcanoes, earthquakes, loss of electricity and contact with the outside world. Her diary, from May through March, paints a picture of increasing hardship and a bleak future, yet the strength and closeness of her family shine through. Thought provoking. **Science Fiction**

Pat Naismith

Picoult, Jodi. *Nineteen Minutes*. New York: Atria Books, 2007. 0-7434-9672-8 455p. \$26.95. Gr. 9-12.

Jodi Picoult does a superb job of crafting a story about the victims of school violence. Peter Houghton is a sixteen year student who shoots and kills ten students and wounds nine others at Sterling High School. He has been bullied in school since kindergarten, called names, pushed into lockers, had his head stuck in the toilet and much more. On trial for his life, Peter's parents wonder if they are to blame while other Sterling parents want justice and more as they mourn their loss in the aftermath. Picoult deftly weaves the varying narratives between past and present. The high school atmosphere of fitting in and belonging are key to sixteen year old Josie's difficult choices. As a judge, Josie's mother, Alex, faces choices that could alienate her from her daughter's affections and affect her own ability to try the case fairly. Picoult has the ability to ask hard questions with no easy answers. I was so riveted by this story and in the end so very disturbed. **Realistic Fiction**

B.J. Neary

Plum-Ucci, Carol. *The Night My Sister Went Missing*. Orlando: Harcourt, 2006. 0-15-204758-1. 202p. \$17.00 – Gr. 9+

Kurt and his air-head sister Casey are partying at an abandoned pier with friends when a shot rings out and Casey disappears. Did Casey dive or did she fall? The police are treating her disappearance as a possible murder. They have the weapon, they don't have a body but there are witnesses and some teens with possible motives. As the clues unfold, the story takes an unexpected turn as family secrets are uncovered. Kurt is able to hear the police interviews because the police left the microphone on in their brand new interrogation room and he can hear not only the questioning but he can see through the one way mirror as well. This plot device is almost too obvious to be believable. As in her previous stories, Plum-Ucci brings the shifting friendships and cliques among teens front and center. Aside from the obvious plot device, Plum-Ucci unravels the mystery slowly, keeping Kurt and readers guessing until the last page. Note: occasional strong language. **Realistic Fiction.**

Rosanne Zajko

Portman, Frank. *King Dork*. New York: Delacorte Press, 2006. 0-385-73291-0. 344 p. \$16.99. Gr. 10-12

Tom Henderson's satirical look on high school life include a tyrannical assistant principal, boring AP classes and forming non-existent rock bands with his only friend, Sam. His obsessions also center on the death of his father and the notes in the margins of his dad's copy of *Catcher in the Rye*. Frank language, Salinger and sexual situations notwithstanding, this is a quirky and compelling read. **Realistic Fiction**

Pat Naismith

Rayban, Chloe. *My Life Starring Mum*. New York: Bloomsbury Books, 2006. 1-58234-713-1. 278 p. \$16.95. Gr. 5-8.

A first person account of a teen daughter (Holly, age 13) of an English pop star tells her tale of being a poor little rich girl who is yanked out of her secure boarding school to be kept under wraps in a luxury hotel with high security after a kidnapping attempt. When her mother is not ignoring her altogether, they seem to be at odds. Her diary entries narrate her lonely existence in a glamorous setting with only her pet rabbit and cell phone to alleviate the boredom. Those with highly driven parents might identify in Holly. Middle school fans of glitz and glamour will like that aspect of the story. **FAMILY FICTION. Candy Blessing**

Reeve, Philip. *Larklight*. NY: Bloomsbury, 2006. 1599900203. \$16.95. 400 p. Gr. 6-9.

Larklight gets few visitors as it is located out in its own space orbit so when Art and Myrtle Mumby get a letter stating that a Mr. Webster will be visiting, they begin preparing for this treat. Only Mr. Webster is not a human being but a band of spiders looking for a key that is hidden in Larklight. Art and Myrtle manage to escape only to be stranded on the moon, captured by insects and rescued by a pirate. This is for your students who enjoy pirate stories like *Airborn* and Dave Barry's Peter Pan adventures.

Pirate Story, Adventure, Family relationships.

Sandra Krieg

Reeve, Phillip. *Larklight or, The Revenge of the White Spiders!, or, To Saturn's Rings and Back! : A Rousing Tale of Dauntless Pluck in the Farthest Reaches of Space*. New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2006. 1-59990-020-9. 399p. \$16.95. Gr. 5-8

This highly original, extremely inventive Science Fiction novel, with elements of fantasy, is sure to grab readers from page one and whisk them through various dangerous adventures, both in the "aether" of space as well as on the ground in Victorian England, before leaving them breathless on the last page. Young Art Mumby and his prissy older sister Myrtle live at Larklight, a manor house that belonged to their departed (or so they think) mother. Larklight is part of the British Empire's vast holdings in outer space

and orbits Earth. Art and Myrtle's father is a scientist; unbenowst to them, Larklight is in danger from The First Ones, giant spiders who want to take over Larklight and its energy source in their quest to return to power. When they attack Larklight, Art and Myrtle escape and are rescued by pirate Jack Havlock. They bounce from one perilous adventure to another before foiling the First One's plans. Surprises abound, a romance blossoms and the good guys win over the dastardly villains. The writing is an excellent approximation of Victorian style, with footnotes of explanation for the more modern reader. Belief is suspended but at the same time, the story is so well constructed and the plot so tight that the reader can easily believe the existence of Star Wars-type creatures and the existence of a British Empire in space in the mid-19th century. This fun read is also a must read. **Science Fiction**

Rosanne Zajko

Reich, Susanna. *Penelope Bailey Takes The Stage*. Tarrytown, NY : Marshall Cavendish, 2006. 0-7614-5287-4. 198 p. \$16.95. Gr. 5 – 8.

In 1889, 11 year old Penny Bailey is sent to live with her uncle, an utterly impossible aunt, and unbelievably snobby cousins while her parents are off in Hawaii doing scientific research. Penny loves the theater, but Aunt Phyllis is a strict and rigid woman who believes that the theater is not the proper place for a young lady so she forbids Penny from participating in the school's production of Romeo and Juliet. Penny can't let it go and she forges her aunt's signature on the permission form. There are some predictable consequences but the interactions with a famous Shakespearean actor and a group of young actors make it interesting and give the reader a look at life in 1880's San Francisco. **Historical Fiction/Theater**

Susan Krenicky

Reinhardt, Dana. *A Brief Chapter in My Impossible Life*. New York : Wendy Lamb Books, c2006. 978-0-385-74698-4. 228 p. \$15.95. Gr. 9 and up.

Simone tells her reader about her life at sixteen and a half when she meets her birth mother who is dying from cancer. With power and strength this girl talks about her life in high school with her adopted mom, lawyer for the ACLU and her artist dad, a great cook, and her younger brother. We get to know her friends, once inseparable, now growing apart but remaining supportive of one another. And then we meet Zack, whose questions, interest, and experiences help Simone learn about both her family and herself. A powerful story about family, death, righteousness, and love. **Realistic Fiction**

Erika Thickman Miller

Reiss, Kathryn. *Blackthorn Winter*. New York: Harcourt, 2006. 0-15-205479-0. 335 p. \$14.45. Gr. 7 & up.

Juliana, 15, travels to England with her adopted mother and younger siblings where her mother seeks solace to paint and time to determine if her marriage is worth saving. As the story progresses, Juliana's life and past unravel, murder, budding romance, family secrets and problems add to the fast-paced plot. A great read for gothic mystery fans. **MYSTERY FICTION** **Candy Blessing**

Richards, Justin. *The Death Collector*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2006. 1-58234-721-9. 320 p. \$16.95. Gr. 9 -12.

From the opening line, "Four days after his own funeral, Albert Wilkes came home for tea", the reader is caught up in this suspenseful thriller set in Victorian London. There are three characters a young street boy named Eddie; George, an employee of the British Museum who repairs clocks and automata; and, Elizabeth the daughter of a minister who really wants a life on stage. They end up together working to solve this mystery that involves a scrap of paper from the scene of a friend's death, a dead man walking, and a giant fire breathing monster. A great adventure with lots of chases. **Mystery/Monsters** **Susan Krenicky**

Richardson, V.A. *The Moneylender's Daughter*. New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2006. 1-58234-885-8. 382p. \$17.95. Gr. 7+
Intrigue and adventure abound in this stand alone sequel to *The House of Windjammer*. Sixteen-year-old Adam Windjammer takes to the high seas in 1637, at the height of the Dutch mastery of business and commerce. Adam sails to the New World in search of his uncle in hopes that his uncle will be able to help restore the Windjammer family fortune. Upon finding the remains of his uncle, Adam returns to Amsterdam to find that Jade van Helsen, the daughter of the man who brought financial ruin to the Windjammer's, is now his ally. Jade rebels against an arranged marriage and is determined to assert her independence, but has conflicting feelings that in doing so she is being disloyal to her father, especially when her chosen path undermines her father's plan to become the major owner of Quadrant Shipping, the former company of the Windjammers. Adam and Jade's struggles are told in alternate chapters and the relationship between the two adds an added dimension to a well told, fast paced story. The historical accuracy of 17th century Amsterdam and the well defined characters combine to make this a sure hit for historical fiction fans. Readers who have not read the first book will want to read it to learn more about Adam and Jade; all will look forward to the conclusion of their story in an expected third book. **Historical Fiction.**

Rosanne Zajko

Richter, Jutta. *The Summer of the Pike*. Minneapolis, MN: Milkweed Editions, 2006. 1-57131-762-8 92p. \$6.95. Gr. 7-12.

I ached as I read about two boys' mother dying of cancer as the children try to understand what is happening. Anna is best friends with Daniel and Lucas, has grown up with them, and loves their mother, Gisela deeply. Now everything is changing. As Gisela becomes sicker, Anna's mother becomes the boys and Gisela's caregiver, taking great pains to cook large meals for the boys. Anna's voice conveys the beauty and carefree fun of lazy summer days of fishing but also the heartache and bewilderment of loss as Gisela grows sicker and weaker and loses her hair. This German translation brings a new, exciting author for young adults.

Realistic Fiction

B.J. Neary

Roberts, Katherine. *I am a Great Horse*. New York: Chicken House, 2006. 0-439-82163-0. 401 p. \$14.44. Gr. 6-10.

The adventures, conquests and relationships of Alexander the Great are seen through the eyes of his stallion, Bucephalus. This gives the book a unique perspective as the narrator describes Alexander's actions through the norms of the world of the stallion, which puts a different spin on the brutality of historical conquerors. Action-packed with battles as well as heartwarming scenes with his groom, Charmeia. This will keep the attention of fantasy fans. Recommended. **HISTORICAL/FANTASY FICTION.**

Candy Blessing

Rorby, Ginny. *Hurt Go Happy*. New York: Tom Doherty Associates, 2006. 0-765-31442-8 267p. \$17.95. Gr. 9-12.

Joey Willis is thirteen, deaf and a prisoner in her own world. Her mother will not let her learn sign language because in her mother's mind, that would make Joey different. As she picks mushrooms for her mother one day, Joey meets an old man and his chimpanzee, Sukari, who uses sign language. There is an instant bonding between Joey, Dr. Mansell and Sukari. A very compelling story where you empathize with Joey's isolation and larger issues as Dr. Mansell tries to help her inflexible mother see the many possibilities for Joey. The bond between Joey, Sukari and Dr. Mansell is tested almost immediately with the environmental theme of protecting chimpanzees. Engrossing, a great animal story! **Realistic Fiction B.J. Neary**

Rosoff, Meg. *Just in Case*. New York : Wendy Lamb Books, 2006. 0-385-74678-4. 246 p. \$16.99. Gr. 9-12.

After saving his toddler brother, Charlie, from "flying" out a window, 15-year old David Case begins obsessing about his own mortality. He decides to cheat Fate by assuming a new identity, Justin. All the while he is trying to cheat Fate, the reader also hears Fate's voice, trying to entrap him. Sexual situations are not gratuitous, but make this a book for older readers. Humor, angst and action give this novel just the right mix. **Magical Realism? Pat Naismith**

Roy, Jennifer. *Yellow Star*. Tarrytown, NY: Marshall Cavendish, 2006. 0-7614-5277-X. 227 p. \$16.95. Gr. 5-9.

Imagine being a Jewish child growing up in a Polish ghetto during WWII, nearly starved and fearing for your life and those of your family day after day. Sylvia tells her gripping story of living in the Lodz ghetto with her family in a beautiful, thought-provoking narrative verse. This fictionalized account of a real Holocaust survivor, who was one of twelve children survivors in Lodz, will touch the hearts of many as it is read. An excellent choice for a read aloud to personalize that historical period. A timeline of the war in the back puts the events into perspective. Highly recommended. **HISTORICAL FICTION Candy Blessing**

Rylant, Cynthia. *Ludie's Life*. New York: Harcourt, Inc., 2006. 0-15-205389-1. 116 p. \$16.00. Grades 9-12.

Ludie married Rupe at 15, not so much for love but to escape from home. We read of Ludie's life from her teens to her death at 95. She accepts her difficult lot (six babies, five too many), and does her duty. Ludie's life just is – nothing spectacular. It is an ordinary life but through Rylant's poetry the reader realizes how special, loving and enduring Ludie is. This is a book that reads deceptively easily, but inspires a lot of thought. **West Virginia, coal mining, family life, poetry Jeannie Bellavance**

Sachar, Louis. *Small Steps*. New York: Delacorte, 2006. 0385733143. \$16.95. 272p. Gr.4-9.

In this 2-years-later sequel to *Holes*, 16-year-old Armpit, an African-American former resident of Camp Green Lake, works for a landscaper in his hometown, Austin. Armpit works hard to make good choices and turn his life around, but former detainee X-Ray, lures him into a money-making scheme involving scalping tickets for an upcoming concert by pop star Kaira DeLeon. Armpit takes his best friend and neighbor, 10-year old Ginny, a white girl with cerebral palsy, to the concert. After a narrowly escaping being arrested for scalping, Armpit meets Kaira and gets romantically involved. Kaira's celebrity life and her family are far from perfect. Armpit becomes a hero on his trip to California when he saves Kaira from the stepfather who tries to kill her and frame Armpit. Very unlike *Holes*, this novel is more realistic and gently satirical, exploring issues of race, class, and family dynamics. Armpit's relationship with Ginny, as they both attempt their small steps, is sweet and compassionate. Armpit is a memorable character trying hard to do the right thing. **Realistic. African-Americans. Joyce Valenza**

Sachs, Brad. *When No One Understands*. Boston: Trumpeter, 2007. 1-59030-407-5. 142p. \$14.00. Gr. 9-12.

Dr. Sachs has set his book of advice to teens in the format of letters to a patient named Amanda. Full of good and sensible advice, this is a book that appeals to many teens because of all of the variety of important teen issues addressed within. It will be especially helpful for troubled teens who take the time to read it. **Nonfiction/Teen Issues Nancy Chrimer**

St. Anthony, Jane. *The Summer Sherman Loved Me*. New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 2006. 0-374-37289-6. \$16.00. Gr. 7-10.

A delightful coming-of-age story, this novel tells the story of Margaret, a 12-year-old who has to deal with three-year-old twin sisters, "friends" who nearly cause her to drown at the lake, a best friend who has different expectations for Margaret, and a next-door neighbor boy named Sherman. Sherman is the root of several of Margaret's problems, but Margaret can't seem to figure out how she feels about him, especially when he gets a pet squirrel which he names Little Margaret. Margaret is frantic when one of her twin sisters disappears, and even more upset when Sherman is struck by his brother's car at night when he and Little Margaret were out bike-riding to put on a show to impress the "Big Margaret." **Coming-of-age novel Nancy Chrimer**

Sanchez, Alex. *Getting It*. New York : Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2006. 1-41690-896-X. 210 p. \$16.95. Gr. 8-11.

Inspired by *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*, Carlos enlists the help of openly gay Sal to help him get the attention of Roxy, the most popular girl in school. In return, Carlos agrees to help Sal start a Gay-Straight Alliance at school. Although nothing quite goes as planned, Carlos gains maturity and compassion as a result of his friendship with Sal. Told with humor, this will be a welcome addition to any collection, and will appeal to even reluctant readers. **Realistic Fiction (GLBT)** **Pat Naismith**

Schmidt, Gary. *First Boy*. New York : Henry Holt, 2005. 978-0-8050-7859-6. 197 p. \$16.95. gr. 8-11.

Is he or isn't he—the First Boy—as in son of the President and the First Gentleman? Cooper Jewett is a happy teen—decent student, cross country runner, budding dairy farmer with his grandfather. Then his grandfather dies and the black sedans start appearing in his small New Hampshire home town. As Cooper struggles to maintain the farm, circumstances worsen progressively until, in a fight for his very existence, he discovers who his family really is. **Realistic Fiction.**

P. P., Plymouth Whitmarsh HS.

Schultz, Jan Neubert. *Battle Cry*. Minneapolis: Carolrhoda, 2006. 1-57505-928-2. 239 p. \$15.95. Gr. 6-12.

This is the story of friends Johnny and Chaska, during the 1812 war between the Dakota Indians and the U.S. government. When the Dakota attack local settlers, Chaska, who is ½ Dakota, is caught in the middle. Both boys fight for the settlers, and are captured by the Dakota. While Johnny is freed, Chaska is forced to accompany the war party, until he escapes and returns to the army camp. Many people are killed on both sides, but the conflict ends when army reinforcements arrive. During the trials that follow, Chaska is accused of killing settlers and sentenced to death. Johnny investigates the allegations and clears Chaska's name.

Historical

Michelle Stone

Setterfield, Diane. *The Thirteenth Tale*. New York: Atria Books, 2006. 1-585-47892-x. \$26.00. 295 pp. Grades 10-Adult.

This spellbinding Gothic novel with overtones of *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights* is a gripping page-turner. Vida Winter, an elderly flamboyant author of popular novels, believes in the power of story and has tightly guarded her privacy. Nearing the end of her life, she invites Margaret Lea, a young budding biographer who believes in the power of truth, to write the story of her life as she dictates it. Skeptical of Vida's intentions, Margaret asks for three verifiable facts about Vida's life and takes the job only when she finds they are true. At her remote estate in Yorkshire, Vida describes to Margaret her unsupervised childhood in an unkempt estate with a mother who died in an insane asylum, a well-intentioned and competent governess who left the family, and an unknown baby abandoned on a doorstep during a fire that destroyed the mansion, killed one twin, and scarred the other's face. Excellent writing, interesting observations, and well-developed characters keep the reader entranced but wondering if this is really the truth or yet another tale from the prolific writer. **Historical fiction. England.**

Eleanor Howe

Shimko, Bonnie. *Kat's Promise*. Orlando: Harcourt, Inc., 2006. 0-15-205473-1. 272 p. \$17.00. Gr. 7-10.

After Kat's mother dies from cancer, she is all alone except for one relative – Aunt Paulina, who Kat blames for her mother's death. When Kat is forced to move in with her aunt, her name might as well be Cinderella. Instead of stepsisters, she must endure Aunt Paulina's boyfriend, who is much more interested in Kat than Aunt Paulina. Fortunately, a fairy godmother appears in the form of Nettie, Aunt Paulina's housekeeper. When Kat discovers that Nettie is really her long, lost grandmother, life starts to improve. *Kat's Promise* is sure to be hit with middle school girls, especially if they have precarious relationships with older women.

Realistic Fiction.

Sarah Braxton

Shiple, Jocelyn. *Seraphina's Circle*. Toronto, Ontario: Sumac Press, 2005. 1-894549-51-1. 141p. \$9.95. Gr.7-10.

Upset at being sent to her grandmother's farm for the summer, Morgan wants to stay home, get ready for an important track meet, and especially, hang out with her new friend Jade, whom her mother dislikes. Morgan's mother wants her to grow up and mature and be more like her perfect cousin, Clare, who lives on the next farm. Morgan likes Clare, but doesn't get to hang out with her because Clare is always busy. Part of Clare's busy-ness is because she is sneaking out to meet her much older boyfriend, of whom her parents disapprove. Morgan, Clare, and Clare's little sister, Dulcy, romanticized their great-aunt Seraphina's story of "dying for love," but when their real lives take a turn in that direction and history seems about to repeat itself, things are not so romantic anymore. Clare nearly dies in an accident, and Morgan has to grow up quickly. **Teen Story** **Nancy Chrismer**

Shreve, Susan. *Kiss Me Tomorrow*. New York: Scholastic, Inc., 2006. 0-439-68047-6. 220p. \$21.99. Gr. 6-8.

Blister has several problems experienced by early teens: she is starting a new school, her family is moving, her best friend, a guy whom she thought would always be loyal to her, ignores her to try to move with the "cool" kids, and her father's new trophy wife gives her problems whenever she visits them. When her friend Jonah gets in trouble and disappears, only Blister knows where he is and how much trouble he is in. She must make some tough decisions about herself, her friends, whether or not to tell the truth, and whether she wants Jonah for a boyfriend or the guy whom she has always disliked. **Fiction/Teen stories** **Nancy Chrismer**

Shulman, Polly. *Enthusiasm*. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2006. 0-399-24389-9. 198 p. \$15.99. Gr. 9-12.

Fifteen year old, Julie Lefkowitz's best friend, Ashleigh, becomes "crazed" over one thing after another, an "Enthusiast" as Julie calls her. Usually, Julie willingly goes along and participates in Ashleigh's crazy antics. However, this time it involves the book *Pride and Prejudice*, which happens to be Julie's own passion. And, Ashleigh has taken it to a new level with plans to crash a local boys' school dance to search for their own Mr. Darcy. Julie reluctantly participates. At the dance the girls meet two boys and they

all become friends. One is the mysterious stranger Julie has seen around town and has romantic feelings for already. The girls end up attracted to the same guy of course and Julie can't reveal her true feelings because she and Ashleigh are best friends. A light, comic romance. **Relationships/High School**
Susan Krenicky

Shusterman, Neal. *Duckling Ugly*. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 2006. 0-525-47585-0. 211 p. \$15.99. Gr. 6-12.
 Cara DeFido is so ugly she breaks mirrors. Her biting personality contributes to her nickname of the 'Flock's Rest Monster'. After discovering that her father paid a boy to take her to the prom, Cara runs away and discovers the mysterious town of De León, as in Ponce de León, its leader. The town is built around the Fountain of Youth. Cara drinks from the fountain and becomes beautiful, but her past torment draws her home for revenge. Realizing that maintaining her beauty drains her surroundings of beauty, she heads back to De León, but the Fountain and its people have moved. She is left to search the world for the group, draining beauty from everything she sees. This is the 3rd book in the *Dark Fusion* series. **Fantasy**
Michelle Stone

Shusterman, Neal. *Everlost*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2006. 0689872372. \$16.95. 313p. Gr. 8+.
 Following a fatal car accident, Nick and Allie meet heading down a tunnel toward the light, arriving in Everlost. In this new state of existence, no longer living, but not yet at the end of their journey, they are met by other young spirits and learn the rules for "greensouls." But Allie is determined to go home. Leaving the accident site in upstate New York, she and Nick set off for their New Jersey, despite the warnings about McGill, the dreaded monster of Everlost. Along the way, they meet Mary Hightower who watches over the ghosts of the Twin Towers and who has also written the rule books for Everlost. Nick wants to settle but Allie fights to escape. This coming-of-age story offers unique exploration of life after death, the nature of power, and charity while it presents a compelling, amusing adventure in a fascinating world. **Adventure. Fantasy.**
Joyce Valenza

Simmons, Michael. *Vandal*. New York: Roaring Brook, c2006. 1-5964-3070-9. 173 p. \$16.95. gr. 9-12.
 Will uses a pleasant yet straightforward tone. He's a guy you'd like to learn more about; you might like to get to know him. Over the course of this book Will tells an important and difficult story about one fall when he was in high school. The story begins the September after Will's older brother Jason returned home from juvenile detention. Jason has some serious issues with self-control. Will describes his love of playing guitar and his pleasure and sense of success playing in a KISS tribute band, his infatuation with Amanda and the love and conflict within his family. Will provides the background and then describes the tragedy that ensues following Jason's car accident and the permanent changes that incident have on the family. Powerful. **Realistic Fiction.**
Erika Thickman Miller

Simon, Scott. *Pretty Birds: A Novel*. New York: Random House, c2006. 0-8129-7330-5. 345 p. \$13.95. gr. 11 and up.
 Wow! This book, a fictionalized but very graphic version of a teen girl's life in Sarajevo, packs a whallop! Its brutal realism brings to life the hardships of life in a war zone and the decisions and sacrifices that must be made to merely survive. Goes far beyond the headlines and news reports to bring the situation to life. Interesting twist at the ending took me by surprise. Writing style would make it suitable for older teens, especially ones who like reading. Some graphic sex (between the teen and her basketball coach) might make it unsuitable for some readers.
Realistic Fiction.
P.P., Plymouth Whitmarsh HS.

Skelton, Matthew. *Endymion Spring*. New York: Random House, Inc., 2006. 0-385-73380-1. 392p. \$17.95. Gr. 6-8.
 The book weaves two stories together: first, the tale of Johann Gutenberg's assistant, Endymion Spring, who uncovers a dangerous book of knowledge. Then, the setting switches to present day Oxford, where Blake, a boy of roughly the same age, rediscovers Endymion's book. He embarks on a quest to find its significance and encounters unexpected friends and enemies in the adults around him. This book combines in several subplots (e.g. family conflict) in addition to the main one, and will mainly appeal to intermediate fiction readers. A well-researched story based on actual historical figures and a light, easy read. **Adventure/Fantasy.**
Roland Yang/Sandy Krieg

Sloan, Brian. *Tale of Two Summers*. New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers., 2006. 0-689-87439-0. 244 p. \$15.95. Ages 12 up.
 Best friends since first grade, Chuck and Hal, almost 16 now, are spending their first summer apart and have set up a "blog" to keep connected. This is an important phase in their lives as it will be Hal's (who has just come out of the closet) and Chuck's summer of sexual exploration. Hal's summer friend is a young French student and Chuck is spending time with "divas" at drama camp. I found some of the "sharing" by the frenchman of time spent watching porn films with his "best friend" to be inappropriate for middle-schoolers, among other topics including drinking and dope. In my opinion, this book has a small audience of freshmen and sophomore students.
Coming-of-age, Friendship.
Maureen Kirk, Library Services Coordinator, The Haverford School

Smelcer, John. *The Trap*. New York: Henry Holt, 2006. 0-8050-7939-4 170p. \$15.95. Gr. 9-12.
 This thin Alaskan survival tale is told alternately by 80 year old Albert Least-Weasel and his grandson, Johnny. We know Albert Least-Weasel has become trapped by his own animal trap, while his hatchet, blanket and snowmobile with gear are within view but

not near enough to reach. Johnny worries about why his grandfather has not returned and the suspense becomes unbearable as the days begin to slip by and the temperatures dip. A gripping adventure with no easy answers. **Realistic Fiction B.J. Neary**

Smith, Gordon. *The Forest in the Hallway*. New York: Clarion, 2006. 0-618-68847-1. 232 p. \$16.00. Grades 5-8.

Beatriz's parents have vanished. Now she is living with her mysterious Uncle M in New York City. Exploring the old apartment building she travels to the top floor and wanders into an enchanted forest in the upper halls. On her quest to find her parents she meets all sorts of characters including Death who very companionable and offers some help. Other characters are more subtly sinister. There are Dora and Bill who seem to be bon vivant but literally are draining the life from their party. Angela is just the opposite of her name. Why do the photographs keep getting younger? This is a very unique fantasy that cleverly incorporates elements from other stories such as the *Wizard of Oz*. The very imaginative plot has enough twists and turns to keep a fantasy lover going. It is a different world with just enough similarities to be confusing. **Magic, witches, family Jeannie Bellavance**

Sniegowski, Tom. *The Sleeper Code*. New York: Razorbill, 2006. 1-59514-052-2. 278 p. \$6.99. Gr. 8+

In this first of the two-part *Sleeper Conspiracy*, Tom, a victim of debilitating narcolepsy, finds out that in his periods of lost time he is being groomed as an assassin by the Janis Project. Well-drawn characters, a breakneck pace and agonizing suspense make this a thriller that can't be put down. Great for reluctant readers. **Suspense Pat Naismith**

Sonenblick, Jordan. *Notes from the Midnight Driver*. New York: Scholastic, 2006. 0-439-75779-7. 265 p. \$16.99. Grades 8+.

Sixteen-year-old Alex Gregory decides to get revenge on his parents who have recently split. Not exactly planning well, he drinks a pint of vodka, steals his mother's car and ends up decapitating his neighbor's lawn gnome, getting alcohol poisoning, charged with "dui", and serving 100 hours of community service. As penance he must spend 100 hours with Solomon Lewis, a bitter old man with no family and emphysema. At first turned off by Sol's sharp comments, Alex eventually takes this as challenge. His best friend, Laurie whom Sol calls Alex's wife, helps Alex find the sunnier side of Sol. Eventually it is music that unites the two. Alex brings his guitar and Sol is soothed. Sol was a jazz musician. Sol teaches Alex more than music. He gets Alex to care about what happens even if life isn't what you expect. In the end though, it is Alex who helps Sol finish the business of his life. This book is about taking responsibility and Alex is not the only one who needs to learn this. Sonenblick writes well for the teens with a slight sarcastic edge, humor and a lot of understanding. **Friendship, family problems, senior citizens, jazz, self-perception Jeannie Bellavance**

Soto, Gary. *Accidental Love*. New York : Harcourt, 2006. 0-15-205497-9. 179 p. \$16.00. Gr. 7-10.

Opposites attract. Tough girl Marisa finds herself attracted to nerdy Rene when they accidentally exchange cell phones in an elevator. Through a series of romantic ups and down, they both change and become more in touch with themselves. Romance, but no sex, make this an appealing book for both middle and high school students. **Multicultural/Romance Pat Naismith**

Spain, Susan Rossin. *The Deep Cut*. Tarrytown, NY: Marshall Cavendish, 2006. 0761453161. 218 p. \$16.99. Gr. 5-7.

When I first picked up *Deep Cut* I thought it was going to be mostly about the Civil War, but as I read it, I realized that the 1860's were just a way for the author to get her point across. The main plot is about a boy whose father never really thought much about him compared to his other brothers; however at the end the Lonzo shows that his talent, running, can save many people's lives. Another reason the book was so good is that the author based her characters on her own family tree. The book didn't have as much about the Civil War as I would have hoped however I felt that the moral, "keep on trying," was satisfying. I would recommend this book to anyone who likes intricate plots and lots of great details. **Civil War, Family Relations G. S. 6th grade, The Haverford School**

Stork, Francisco X. *Behind the Eyes*. New York : Dutton, 2006. 0-525-47735-8. 246 p. \$16.99. Gr. 9-12.

Hector Robles is a 16 year old Mexican American boy living in a tough area of El Paso, Texas. He is a good student with hopes of a college education. His brother, the total opposite of Hector is killed in a gang incident and Hector seeks revenge and has a fight with a leader of one of the biggest Hispanic gangs in El Paso. He is now a target but a caring social worker makes arrangements for Hector to go to a reform school which is as much for his protection than for punishment for his attack on the gang leader. He experiences the culture of a prison like setting but trouble still follows him when a new resident with ties to the gang makes Hector a murder target. Hector makes some unusual friends and receives unexpected help from them. He learns to see his way to a better life. Some obscenities and violence help to portray the rough culture of gang life. **Fiction/ Gangs, Mexican Americans.**

Susan Krenicky

Sturtevant, Katherine. *A True and Faithful Narrative*. New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 2006. 0-374-37809-6. 247p. \$17.00. Gr.6-9.

Meg is the daughter of a bookseller, has liberal ideas about the place of women in her world, and hopes to become a published writer. Meg's love of writing brings her many trials as well as joy. Her story recounts her relationship with her father, a first love and the capture of a friend by Barbary pirates. **Historical Fiction Constance Rupp**

Sullivan, Stephen D. *The Warrior's Heart*. (Goodlund Trilogy, Volume One). Renton, Washington: Mirrorstone, 2006. 247p. 0-7869-4187-1. \$5.99 Gr. 7-10.

Catriona is a knight who returns to her hometown, Heart of Purespring, to find it destroyed by an evil dragonlord who is terrorizing the countryside, and her family dead or missing. Catriona and her allies must find a way to stop the destruction and havoc wreaked by the dragonlord, his dragon, and his gargoyles. Her quest is also to retrieve the jewel that brought water to Heart of Purespring if there is to be any hope of recovery. She and her allies must find a way to sneak into the fortress of the dragonlord, kill him and his dragon, free the slaves, and recover the jewels. She almost succeeds, but for the betrayal and treachery of a person she thought was her ally. There is a cliffhanger ending, as the story continues in the forthcoming book, *Warrior's Blood*. **Fantasy Nancy Chrisher**

Taylor, Theodore. *Billy the Kid: A Novel*. New York: Harcourt, Inc., 2005. 0-15-204930-4. \$17.00. Gr. 6-10.

Taylor uses his storytelling magic to spin a very readable story of one of the Old West's most well known outlaws. The author presents a very human characterization of William H. Bonney Jr., aka Billy the Kid. Taylor tells a story of what might have happened to Billy had his life had a few different turns. **Historical Fiction Constance Roupp**

Tezuka, Osamu. *Ode to Kirihito*. New York: Vertical, Inc., 2006. 1-93-223464-0. 822p. \$24.95. Gr. 10-12.

Ode to Kirihito is a very good story. A mixture of suspense and action make it an excellent read. The story follows Kirihito, a scientist who is trying to study the mysterious monmow disease which has been afflicting some people in a remote village. Haunted by a mysterious plot to ruin Kirihito's career, he tries to get justice for himself.

Graphic novel/Horror

H. H., 11th Grade student, Juniata High School

Tharpe, Tim. *Knights of the Hill Country*. New York: Knopf, 2006. 0375836535. 240p. \$16.95. Gr. 9+.

In an Oklahoma town where football is king, senior linebacker Hampton Green begins a journey of self-realization that causes him to question his loyalty to best friend, Blaine, and his direction in life. Lots of football action, mixed with quiet introspection and explosive danger make this a book teen readers, and not just boys, will not want to put down. Pair this with *Friday Night Lights*.

Sports/Realistic Fiction

Pat Naismith

Thomson, John. *A Small Boat at the Bottom of the Sea*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Milkweed, 2005. 1-57131656-1. 148p. \$6.95. Gr. 7-12.

Donovan has been sent to live with his Uncle Bix and Aunt Hattie for the summer, and is quite unhappy. His father hasn't gotten along with Uncle Bix because Uncle Bix has a prison record, but Aunt Hattie is ill with cancer, and Donovan is forced to go help them. Though uncomfortable at first, Donovan soon feels at ease with them, and is especially intrigued when Uncle Bix, somewhat of a mechanical genius, decides to raise a wrecked, sunken boat. And when Donovan realizes that his uncle truly needs his help, he feels much better about being there. The two work on restoring the boat and relate to each other in good ways. Aunt Hattie is getting worse, and Donovan must deal with knowing she will soon die. Another element that is disturbing to Donovan is that he suspects his uncle is racist. By the story's end, Donovan has learned about himself, family relationships, and especially, that things are not always what they seem. An excellent coming-of-age story. **Coming-of-age Story Nancy Chrisher**

Toutonghi, Pauls. *Red Weather: A Novel*. New York: Shaye Areheart Books, c2006. 0-307-33675-0. 245 p. \$23.00. Gr. 11 and up.

Writing in the first person allows Toutonghi to explore Communism from Yuri's perspective. Yuri is enamored with fellow high school classmate Hannah and her idealistic desire to stop the exploitation of workers. Through the course of this work Yuri develops a more realistic understanding about the Communist system as he learns about his family's experiences in Latvia. Yuri is the son of immigrants with a father who drinks regularly and works in a Milwaukee car dealership but doesn't drive. Yuri has a license, but no car, and no girlfriend, though he's infatuated with Hannah. Then things get more complicated as his aunt and uncle and their son move in after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Car theft, a crash and bisexuality mix in to make this an interesting story with revelations about freedoms and true oppression, lying and guilt, family, forgiveness and love.

Realistic Fiction. Erika Thickman Miller

Tschinag, Galsan. *The Blue Sky*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Milkweed, 2006. 1-57131-055-X. 209p. \$22.00. Gr. 9-12.

This unique novel gives a rare and fascinating glimpse of the nomadic life of the Tuvan people of Mongolia. Told by a young shepherd boy who values his dog and his family, the story tells of his losses: his siblings go to a boarding school, family members depart to live in town, his grandmother dies, the family loses sheep during a particularly hard and bitter winter, and finally, his beloved dog dies. It is moving, being both sad and joyful at the same time. A very unique story about a rare subject that should be in all multicultural collections. **Multicultural Novel Nancy Chrisher**

Turner, Megan Whalen. *The King of Attolia*. New York: Greenwillow Books, 2006. 0-06-083578-8. 387 p. \$16.99. Gr. 7-10.

Eugenides, the former Thief of Eddis, has returned at last in this sequel to *The Thief* and *The Queen of Attolia*. Now the reluctant King of Attolia, Eddis must prove himself both worthy of the love of the Queen, Irene, and his right to rule her subjects. Lots of action and political intrigue. Fans will delight in this latest installment. **Fantasy Pat Naismith**

Valente, Catherynne M. *The Orphan's Tales, Vol. 1: In the Night Garden*. New York: Bantam Dell, 2006. 0-553-38403-1. 482p. \$14.00. Gr. 10-12.

The story is spun in golden waves of intertwining tales. A maiden is banished from the kingdom because of an unusual dark birthmark surrounding her eyes like a mask. Fear keeps them from actually hurting her but she is forced to live her life in the garden without human companionship. Then one night a young prince comes to meet her out of curiosity. She entertains him with fantastic stories and he returns night after night. This book is a deeply woven fantasy evocative of fairy tales of old. Beautifully descriptive.
Fairy Tale/Fantasy. Ginger Bardi

Vaughan, Brian K. *Pride of Baghdad*. Art by Niko Henrichon. New York: D.C. Comics/Vertigo, 2006. 1401203140. 136p. \$19.99. Gr. 9+.

This powerful graphic novel shares the allegorical story of four lions who escape from the Baghdad Zoo during a 2003 bombing raid. Along the way explores life in a war zone. These animals pose deep questions relating to the nature and the price of freedom. What roles do sacrifice and self-determination play? The lives of the animals parallel the lives of Iraqi citizens, themselves displaced by the events of the past four years. Henrichon's animals are drawn with details and pathos.
Graphic novel. Historical fiction. Joyce Valenza

Villareal, Ray. *My Father, the Angel of Death*. Houston: Pinata Books, 2006. 1-55885-466-6. 164 p. \$9.95. Gr. 6-9.

If your father were a WWF wrestler named The Angel of Death, wouldn't life be great for you? Life is not great for Jesse. His constant headaches are the first sign that his father's frequent absences, the fans who use him to get to his father, his parent's troubled marriage and his worries about his father's unplanned injuries are getting to him. It takes a life-threatening injury to his father that changes life for Jesse in a positive way. Middle school wrestling fans will clamor for this action-packed story from Hispanic press Pinata Books. **Realistic Fiction. Sarah Braxton**

Vizzini, Ned. *It's Kind of a Funny Story*. New York: Miramax Books/Hyperion, 2006. 0-7868-5196-1. 444 p. \$16.99. Gr. 9+

You would think that depression, eating disorders and attempted suicide would be anything but funny, but Vizzini portrays Craig's descent into hell and eventual "resurrection" as frightening, careening, heart-stopping, and, yes, funny. In fact, it is the narrator's sense of humor that paints such delightful portraits of the inmates of the psychiatric ward to which Craig is admitted after calling a suicide hotline. Quirky characters, compelling narration, but the frank language, sexual and drug references, make this one for older audiences. **Suicide/Realistic Fiction Pat Naismith**

Walters, Eric. *Laggan Lard Butts*. Custer, Washington: Orca, 2006. 1-55143-518-7. 108p \$7.95. Gr. 7-10.

Sam's 8th grade basketball team is not impressive and when a winning team abuses their school's name, Laggan, to hurl the epithet "Laggan Lard Butts" at them, Sam nearly loses his temper. Sam and his teammates think their school mascot name, the Laggan Lairds, is just not cool, and they decide to hold an election to choose a new one. Accidentally, the epithet "Laggan Lard Butts" gets nominated as one of the choices, and the way it happens, Sam is given no choice but to support it in the election. Typical high school politics, an upset that actually lets the Laggan team win a championship game, and other events all add to Sam's bewilderment as he tries to sort everything out. **Teen Fiction/Sports Nancy Chrismer**

Walters, Eric. *Laggan Lard Butts*. Victoria, B. C.: Orca, 2006. 1-5514-3-5187. 108 p. \$7.95. Gr. 5-8 (High-Low).

When Sam, the eighth grade basketball team captain, complains about the team's name, the 'Laggan Lairds', his teacher decides to demonstrate the democratic process by holding an election for a new name. The entire school gets involved, from the Principal to the kindergarteners. Sam and his friends campaign for the name 'Laggan Lard Butts'; it's funny and relevant (they always lose). His rival throughout the book, Sarah, campaigns for the 'leopards' which ultimately wins. Through luck and skill, the basketball team comes in 2nd place in the finals and wins the school's first banner. This is a great reluctant reader selection. **Realistic Michelle Stone**

Weiss, M. Jerry and Helen S. Weiss. *Dreams and Visions : Fourteen Flights of Fantasy*. New York : Starscape (Tom Doherty), 2006. 0-7653-1249-2. 251 p. \$19.95. Gr. 7-10.

Fourteen tales of fantasy, and not quite fantasy, from renowned YA authors such as Joan Bauer, David Lubar, Tamora Pierce, Nancy Springer, Suzanne Staples, etc. Uniformly well written, from humor to horror, magical realism to pure fantasy. This collection will delight...just avoid reading the introduction and the summaries that precede each story. They are spoilers, and a flaw to an otherwise superlative collection. **Story Collection/Fantasy Pat Naismith**

Westerfeld, Scott. *The Last Days*. New York : Razorbill, 2006. 1-59514-062-X. 286 p. \$6.99. Gr. 8-11.

In this sequel to the popular *Peeps*, Moz discovers Pearl, a talented musician, at the same time as a vintage Fender Stratocaster falls from the sky. With this a band is born, amid the disintegration of New York City, as vampires roam the streets. As they recruit parasite-positive Minerva and synesthete Alana, their music begins to draw forth the dark powers towards a cataclysmic ending. Fans will not be able to put this one down, and while it can stand alone, it will be better enjoyed if *Peeps* is devoured first. **Science Fiction. Pat Naismith**

Westerfeld, Scott. *Specials*. New York: Simon Pulse, 2006. 0-689-86540-6. 372 p. \$15.95. Gr. 8-11.

At last, the end of the trilogy, begun in *Uglies*. Tally, has now been re-engineered as a Special, a super soldier. When her elite group of Cutters goes undercover to flush out the Smokies, she finds that even her nanotechnologically-enhanced body cannot overcome the cunning of her former boyfriend, David or her love for damaged Zane. As she pursues the Smokies, the tangled web begins to unravel toward the cataclysmic and unexpected ending. Fans will not be able to wait to read this one, but knowledge of the first two novels is essential to understanding the dynamics of the story. **Science Fiction. Pat Naismith**

Werlin, Nancy. *The Rules of Survival*. New York: Dial Books, 2006. 0-8037-3001-2. 259 p. \$16.99. Gr. 7-10.

In a letter to his youngest sister, Emmy, 17-year-old Matt recounts their life with their abusive, psychotic mother, Nikki. The fear is palpable as Matt recounts the physical and emotional abuse meted out to them by their mentally disturbed mother. A haunting portrayal of domestic dysfunction, The suspense and uncertainty of the narrative will keep the reader turning the pages. **Child Abuse/Realistic Fiction Pat Naismith**

White, K I... *Splizaroni*. Mankato, MN: Stone Arch Books, 2006. 1-5988-015-8. 40p. \$14.95. Gr 5-8.

High Interest-low level for the reluctant reader. **Horror.**

Barb Wray

Whitmore, Benette. *Shelter*. New York: Walker , c2006. 0-8027-8884-9. 298 p. \$16.95. gr. 8-12.

The easy, breezy (like text messaging) format/writing style of this book makes it a quick read for mid to older teens, especially for those reluctant readers. A coming of age story set during a girl's 16th summer, Skyler faces the usual problems—with some not so usual ones thrown in. In her desire to protect her children, Sky's mother denies the obvious drug problems of Sky's brother, their sexual activities and lack of a father and instead focuses on building a bomb/fallout shelter in the backyard. Said shelter turns out to be the perfect place to hide from Mom and do most of the things she's trying to protect them from. **Realistic Fiction. P. P., Plymouth Whitmarsh HS.**

Wilson, Christopher. *Cotton*. Orlando: Harcourt, c2005. 01510112230. 314 p. \$20.40 Gr. 10+

Lee Cotton is a "black soul in a white wrapper" as his mother bluntly advises him. Born from a white father and black mother, Lee is as white as can be on the outside, but is raised by his mother in a black section of a Mississippi town. After struggling to survive among the segregated deep-south in the 50's, Lee has further clashing identities to deal with when he accidentally undergoes a sex-change operation by a physician who is disbarred. As outlandish as the plot may seem, the author's effective writing help to make this book quite funny and engaging. A warning that this is for mature readers only since some of the writing is sexually explicit.

Racial Identity, Historical fiction.

Mary Schwander

Wilson, Diane Lee. *Firehouse*. New York: Margaret K. McElderry, 2006. 1-41691-551-6. 336p. \$16.95. Gr. 5-8.

Rachel is happiest riding her horse. Her newspaperman father thinks it is unseemly for a fifteen year old girl not to ride side saddled. She is forced to leave her beloved horse in Illinois and move to Boston where her father find job with another newspaper. She is expected to act like a lady. Instead she nurses a fire horse who suffered severe burns. Rachel is determined to become a veterinarian. The 1872 Boston fire is the backdrop for the main events of the story. Realistic depiction of the social constraints endured by women of that time. **Historical Fiction Barb Wray**

Winterson, Jeanette. *Tanglewreck*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2006. 1-58234-919-3. 415 p. \$16.95. Gr. 7 – 10.

Eleven year-old Silver lives in a strange old house called Tanglewreck. Her cold-hearted Aunt, Mrs. Rokabye, moved in when Silver's parents and sister disappeared 4 years ago. After a strange man, Able Darkwater comes searching for the valuable 'timekeeper', a clock that controls time itself, Silver's perilous adventures begins. These include traveling through worm holes, rescuing a friend from a black hole, and repeatedly escaping from the evil Darkwater and Regalia Mason. In the end, given the opportunity to be with her family in an alternate reality, Silver chooses to return home alone in order to keep Darkwater and Mason from controlling the Universe. The characters are well developed and the science is briefly explained. Students will enjoy the nonstop adventure though occasionally very simple solutions resolve very complex issues. **Science Fiction. Michelle Stone**

Wolfson, Jill. *Home and Other Big Fat Lies*. New York: Henry Holt, 2006. 08050-7670-0. 281 p. \$16.95. Grades 5-8.

You can't help but like Whitney aka Termite with her malapropisms, unshowered body and other quirks. She is a mighty kid who knows how to survive as a foster child. She's just been assigned her 12th home but this one isn't in the usual urban setting. It is in northern California in the trees! There are many foster children in this town because, as the kids soon realize, this lumber town is on the verge of disaster and the families need the \$700+ a month subsidy. Ecology is a four letter word in this town. The local diner serves Spotted Fowl Burgers. Termite surprises herself when she starts to feel an affinity for the trees and the other foster kids. Termite is not the only one making a transition. Striker, her foster brother, secretly is an ecologist. This does not sit well with his parents and the others who now think he's an outsider. A nearly tragic accident brings resolution. There is lots of humor as well as a serious message that students will appreciate Compare this book to California Blue by David Klass.

Ecology, environment, foster children

Jeannie Bellavance

Wooding, Chris. *Storm Thief*. New York: Scholastic, 2006. 0-439-89676-2. 310 p. \$9.99. Gr. 6-12.

In a world where probability storms result in random, bizarre, and frequently deadly physical changes to both people and the environment, ghetto teens Rail and Moa survive by helping each other and stealing. Surrounded by evidence of a once technologically advanced society, the isolated island of Orokos is controlled by the strict Protectorate, and mysterious forces. After stealing an artifact that allows them to penetrate walls, Rail and Moa meet Vago, a golem in search of his maker. Pursued by the Protectorate, they run to Moa's childhood home of Kilatas, where the people are planning to escape the island despite evidence of machinery in the surrounding ocean that will kill them. When Rail, Moa and Vago are captured, the artifact turns out to be the key to understanding and ending the probability storms. The Chaos Engine, the machinery that has controlled the island's mysterious forces for 600 years, is destroyed. Rail and Moa escape the island with the group from Kilatas. The intricate plot and unending adventure make this a page turner. **Science Fiction/Adventure** **Michelle Stone**

Woodrell, Daniel. *Winter's Bone*. New York: Little, Brown and Company, c2006. 031605755x. 193 p. \$19.54. Gr. 10+

Ree Dolly is a tough, determined sixteen-year-old who is faced with responsibilities most adults could not face-up to, let alone a young, teenage girl. The Dolly family lives in a grim, destitute Missouri town where front yards are decorated with slaughtered deer and most town-folk are related in some way. When Ree learns that her father, a "crank cooker", may have jumped bail and thereby force the family to loose their home, she goes on a dangerous hunt to find her father and save her home. Ree is faced with unfathomable obstacles as she has two young brothers to look after as well as a mother who is mentally incapable of the simplest of chores. The most compelling element of this fascinating novel is the intensity of the author's writing. Readers may find themselves re-reading lines just to appreciate his meaningful blending of words. **Family relationships, Teenage heroism.**

Mary Schwander

Wulf, Linda Press. *The Night of the Burning: Devorah's Story*. New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 2006. 0-374-36419-2.

\$16.00. 210 pp. Grades 6-12.

This novel is based on the life of the author's mother-in-law, Devorah Lehrman, whose family suffered during World War I and its aftermath. Devorah and her sister Nechama lived with their orthodox Jewish parents in a small thatched cottage in a largely Jewish village in rural Poland. The Great War brought the conscription of her uncle, increasing poverty, the Spanish flu, typhoid fever, and rampaging Cossacks. Orphaned, Devorah cared for her younger sister during the long sea journey to South Africa where Jewish benefactor Isaac Ochberg wanted to begin a new and better life for 200 European Jewish orphans. Once in South Africa Devorah clings to the past at her parents' request "never to forget" and finds it more difficult than her sister to accept her new family. Details seen through the eyes of a child provide both reality and comic relief, and the first person narrative brings the reader into the story. While the basic story line and many names are accurate, the bulk of the novel is fictional. Glossary, Afterword, and Historical Notes provide context to this award-winning first novel. **World War I. Orphans. Jews. HiLo for High School. Eleanor Howe**

Yang, Gene Luen. *American Born Chinese*. New York: First Second, 2006. 1596431520 . 240p. \$29.95. \$16.95. Gr. 7+.

This Printz Award-winning graphic novel portrays the lonely, Chinese-American childhood of Jin Wang as one of its three plots. In another, the Chinese folk hero, Monkey King strives beyond his roots to be revered as a god. In the third, all-American Danny is plagued each year by a visit from his Chinese cousin Chin-Kee, who displays every possible hateful Asian ethnic stereotype. The tales climax in a clever convergence with a powerful message about self-acceptance. All young people will relate to these stories of how it feels to grow up different and learning to live in your own skin. The story is enriched by the traditional Chinese fables that are part of the Monkey King story. **Highly recommended. Graphic novel. Asian American. Joyce Valenza**

Yang, Gene Luen. *American Born Chinese*. New York : First Second, 2006. 978-1-59643-152-2. 233 p. \$16.95. Gr. 8 and up.

This graphic novel tells through words and pictures the story of Jin Wang. Yang blends tales of the Monkey King and the immigrant experience with normal adolescent concerns. This graphic novel is an exciting examination of identity, conflict, desire, and truth. **Graphic Novel** **Erika Thickman Miller**

Zucker, Jonny. *Steel Eyes*. Mankato, MN: Stone Arch Books, 2006. 1-59889-019-0. 340p. \$14.95. Gr 5-8.

High Interest-low level for the reluctant reader. **Horror.**

Barb Wray

Zusak, Martin. *The Book Thief*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006. 0-375-83100-2. 552p. \$16.95. Gr. 10 and up.

This powerful, well-written story invites the reader into the adolescence of Liesel Meminger, left after the death of her brother in 1939 to live outside of Munich with her foster parents Hans and Ilse Huberman. The tale is told from the not entirely uninvolved, somewhat tired, more interested than might be wise voice of Death. Chapter headings have that old-fashioned ring, outlining the topics to be covered, but the words here provide only a glimpse and, as appropriate, an opportunity to prepare for upcoming tragedy. We meet good, honorable Germans torn by their country's actions. We learn about the depth of friendships, kindnesses and love through the eyes of Liesel and the understanding of Death. **Historical Fiction with a twist. Erika Thickman Miller**

Zusack, Markus. *The Book Thief*. New York: Knopf, 2005. 0-375-93100-7 552p. \$16.95. Gr. 10-12.

PSLA TITLES FOR 2006

FICTION

The Book Thief has become a favorite of mine and one that I recommend to anyone who likes to get completely immersed in a story. The first fifty pages are somewhat slow, but don't give up. This book is well worth the wait. The narration of the story is unique; it is told by Death. It is Death who tells of Liesel's ordeal, of her abandonment in war-time Germany, her resilience, her encounter with those who give her solace, and the importance of acquiring and sharing books. It is a tale that is humorous, poignant, and makes you feel that you are there with Liesel, *The Book Thief*, when she comforts her friend, Rudy or protects the hidden Jew, Max. Zusack's style of writing paints vivid images that make you see as well as feel the turmoil of a child struggling to survive during a dangerous time. **Holocaust Fiction**
Jan Kline – Principal, Copper Beach Elementary School

SERIES:

Graphic Flash Series. Minneapolis: Stone Arch Books, 2007. 46 p. \$23.93. Gr. 6 – 8.

Burgan, Michael. *Hot Iron*. 1-59889-311-4.

Gunderson, J. *Fire and Ice*. 1-59889-310-6.

Gunderson, J. *The Last Rider*. 1-59889-312-2.

O'Donnell, Liam. *Blackbeard's Sword*. 1-59889-309-2.

Stone Arch Books pulls through for struggling, reluctant and ELL readers again with this high-interest historical fiction series. The format combines large-type, controlled vocabulary text and graphic-novel type illustrations that help readers comprehend the story without feeling that they are reading a phonics book. Additional features, including a table of contents, glossary, discussion questions, writing prompts and Internet sites accessed through Fact Hound make this series a winner for teachers as well. Whether reading for pleasure or delving deeper for research and writing assignments, students will be engaged with this series. **Accelerated Reader Reading Practice Quizzes available. Historical Fiction.**
Sarah Braxton

Penny, Patricia G. *Not Just Proms and Parties* series. Montreal, Quebec: Lobster Press, 2006. \$8.95 each. Gr.

***Chelsea's Ride*. 1-8970734. 9-10.**

***Rica's Summer*. 1-89707345345.**

Each volume in this fiction series for young adults shows a young woman who must cope with a situation that is typical for many teens. *Rica's Summer* shows how Rica gets in over her head when she is trying to attract boys in the wrong way and almost becomes a victim. *Chelsea's Ride* tells the story of Chelsea's troubles when her parents take away her car keys and she attempts to use others to get what she wants. Both are easy reads that will be enjoyed by teenagers. **Teen Fiction**
Nancy Chrismer

Rex Jones Series. Minneapolis: Stone Arch Books, 2005. \$21.26. Gr. 6 – 8.

Zucker, Jonny. *Alien Attack*. 1-59889-329-7.

Zucker, Jonny. *Creature Chase*. 1-59889-336-x.

Zucker, Jonny. *Cut-Throat Pirates*. 1-59889-332-7.

Zucker, Jonny. *Inside the Game*. 1-59889-330-0.

Zucker, Jonny. *Safecrackers*. 1-59889-331-9.

Zucker, Jonny. *Soccer Showdown*. 1-59889-334-3.

Zucker, Jonny. *Speed Star*. 1-59889-335-1.

Zucker, Jonny. *Spin Off*. 1-59889-333-5.

In another successful Stone Arch Books series, Rex Jones is the central character. Like most middle school boys, he has a cell phone. His cell phone, however, is unique – it has two buttons that say “Explore” and “Return.” Who could resist pushing the “Explore” button when it lights up green? Not Rex, especially when he and his friends Carl and Dave are ready for a new adventure. Like Joe, Fred and Sam of Scieskza and Lane's *Trip Warp Trio*, this trio gets magically transported to an exciting situational conflict where they are in the middle of the action. For example, in *Soccer Showdown*, the trio has no problem playing professional soccer when transported to a final game. But can they protect themselves from the other team's dirty tricks? Not as complex as *Trip Warp Trio*, the format of this adventure series is accessible to the lowest middle school readers. **Accelerated Reader Reading Practice Quizzes available. Fantasy.**
Sarah Braxton

Zone Books Series. Minneapolis: Stone Arch Books, 2007. \$21.26. Gr. 6 – 8.

Dahl, Michael. *Attack of the Paper Bats*. 1-59889-325-4.

Dahl, Michael. *Beast Beneath the Stairs*. 1-59889-323-8.

Dahl, Michael. *The Book that Dripped Blood*. 1-59889-324-6.

Dahl, Michael. *The Eye in the Graveyard*. 1-56889-328-9.

Dahl, Michael. *Poison Pages*. 1-59889-327-0.

Dahl, Michael. *The Smashing Scroll*. 1-59889-326-2.

In the Library of Doom, The Librarian is in charge of keeping the world's most dangerous books out of the hands of innocent readers. High quality art by Bradford Kendall that is visually linked to the text keeps the reader on edge from page to page as the stories unfold. This small size (6" x 8") of these books contributes to the reader's experience in this fantasy world. In the real world, this book-based fantasy series is a librarian's good dream come true for struggling readers. **Accelerated Reader Reading Practice Quizzes available. Horror/Fantasy.**
Sarah Braxton

Committee Members:

Virginia Bardi, Tohickon Middle School
Jeannie Bellavance, Gwynedd-Mercy Academy
Candace Blessing, Ephrata High School
Sarah Braxton, Juniata Valley High School
Nancy Chrismer, Juniata High School
Ilene Goldis Grayev, Radnor High School
Eleanor Howe, Pine-Richland High School
Susan Krenicky, Phoenixville Area Middle School
Sandra Krieg, The Haverford School
Elizabeth McChesney, Greenville High School
Erika Miller, Plymouth Whitmarsh High School
Pat Naismith, Springfield High School (Delco)
B.J. Neary, Abington Senior High School
Constance Roupp, Retired
Mary Schwander, New Hope-Solebury High School
Michelle Stone, Sandy Run Middle School
Joyce Valenza, Springfield Township High School (Montco)
Barbara Wray, Sayre Middle School
Rosanne Zajko, Ancillae-Assumpta Academy