

Summer Reading List

2011

(Note: Visit <http://www.amazon.com> or www.barnesandnoble.com for more information about these titles)

** = This is new this year!

Table of Contents

Fantasy & Science Fiction - Pages 1-5
Spirituality/Personal Journey - Pages 5-8
Growing Up (Coming of Age) - Pages 8-12
Adventure/Sports - Pages 12-14
Biography/Memoir - Pages 14-19
Books about Teens - Pages 19-22
Math/Science - Pages 23-25
History - Pages 25-30
Hot Topics - Pages 30-33
Romance/Friendship/Family - Pages 33-36
Poetry - Pages 36-38
Books in Spanish 38-39

Fantasy & Science Fiction

The Amulet of Samarkand (Bartimaeus Trilogy #1) by Jonathan Stroud

Nathaniel is a young magician's apprentice, taking his first lessons in the arts of magic. But when a devious hotshot wizard named Simon Lovelace ruthlessly humiliates Nathaniel in front of everyone he knows, Nathaniel decides to kick up his education a few notches and show Lovelace who's boss. With revenge in his mind, he masters one of the toughest spells of all: summoning the all-powerful djinni, Bartimaeus. But summoning Bartimaeus and controlling him are two different things entirely, and when Nathaniel sends the djinni out to steal the powerful Amulet of Samarkand, Nathaniel finds himself caught up in a whirlwind of magical espionage, murder, blackmail, and revolt.

The Andromeda Strain by Michael Crichton

This novel portrays the threat of a killer microscopic organism from outer space. When the unmanned satellite crashes in an Arizona town, all but two of the inhabitants die. Thus begins the fight to understand and conquer the organism, as four scientists go five stories under the Nevada desert to find a cure. When a seal breaks, the scientists are in a fight to solve the problem before an atomic blast that will kill not only the organism, but also the scientists. This book is based on the novel, *The War of the Worlds*, by H.G Wells.

Bras & Broomsticks by Sarah Mlynowski

Rachel Weinstein, 14, wants many things - she'd love to remain best buds with her newly popular friend Jewel, get a date to the Spring Fling, and stop her dad from marrying her "Soon To Be Step-Monster." When her younger sister, Miri, discovers that she is a witch, Rachel just knows that her dreams are within her grasp. Though the girls' mother warns them that magic can lead to unexpectedly harsh consequences, the sisters secretly come up with plan after plan to stop their father's wedding and help Rachel find popularity. The plot is fairly predictable, but Rachel's cheeky voice and painfully obvious desperation to make her life perfect keep her appealing. The relationship between the sisters is the book's real strength. The pain they feel at watching their father remarry is real, as is the vulnerability they show while trying scary new adult roles. Minor characters, while briefly sketched, seem like real people, though their development is clumsily handled at times, and bends more toward plot needs than true growth. This is a busy book, but winning characters rise above the chaos. A breezy read that is sure to be popular.

Cirque du Freak by Darren Shan

From beginning to end, these books are full of unusual characters, from the various members of the Cirque du Freak to Desmond Tiny, the mysterious and very sinister man that appears from time to time to remind everyone that he ultimately controls the fate of the world – yet is giving them a chance to have a small bit of control over the outcome. Darren befriends Harkat Mulds, one of the strange hooded creatures known as the Little People that accompany the circus, and the loyalty they share with one another is a strong theme throughout the books.

****Dune by Frank Herbert**

The tale of a desert planet called Arrakis, the focus of an intricate power struggle in a byzantine interstellar empire. Arrakis is the sole source of Melange, the "spice of spices." Melange is necessary for interstellar travel and grants psychic powers and longevity, so whoever controls it wields great influence. The troubles begin when stewardship of Arrakis is transferred by the Emperor from the Harkonnen Noble House to House Atreides. The Harkonnens don't want to give up their privilege, though, and through sabotage and treachery they cast young Duke Paul Atreides out into the planet's harsh environment to die. There he falls in with the Fremen, a tribe of desert dwellers who become the basis of the army with which he will reclaim what's rightfully his. Paul Atreides, though, is far more than just a usurped duke. He might be the end product of a very long-term genetic experiment designed to breed a super human; he might be a messiah. His struggle is at the center of a nexus of powerful people and events, and the repercussions will be felt throughout the Imperium. *Dune* is one of the most famous science fiction novels ever written, and deservedly so. The setting is elaborate and ornate, the plot labyrinthine, the adventures exciting. Five sequels follow.

Ender's Game by Orson Scott Card

Imagine a brilliant young child, ripped from his family at a young age and forced to train for battle against an alien monster. Filled with surprises, this novel charts the growth of a deeply complicated young man as he prepares for inter-galactic battle. The ending will surprise you.

Eragon by Christopher Paolini

Eragon, a young farm boy, finds a marvelous blue stone in a mystical mountain place. Before he can trade it for food to get his family through the hard winter, it hatches a beautiful sapphire-blue dragon, a race thought to be extinct. Eragon bonds with the dragon, and when his family is killed by the marauding Ra'zac, he discovers that he is the last of the Dragon Riders, fated to play a decisive part in the coming war between the human but hidden Varden, dwarves, elves, the diabolical Shades and their neanderthal Urgalls, all pitted against and allied with each other and the evil King Galbatorix. Eragon and his dragon Saphira set out to find their role, growing in magic power and understanding of the complex political situation as they endure perilous travels and sudden battles, dire wounds, capture and escape.

****Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury**

Ray Bradbury's classic, frightening vision of the future, firemen don't put out fires--they start them in order to burn books. Bradbury's vividly painted society holds up the appearance of happiness as the highest goal--a place where trivial information is good, and knowledge and ideas are bad...Guy Montag is a book-burning fireman undergoing a crisis of faith...should he continue burning books?

The Field Guide- Spiderwick Chronicles #1 by Holly Black and Tony Diterlizzi

Twins, Jared and Simon Grace, along with their sister, Mallory, and their mom move into the rundown Spiderwick Estate of their great-aunt Lucinda after their father leaves them. Upon seeing the shabby old Victorian, Mom says it is just like she remembers it. "Only crappier," adds Mallory. That night, strange things happen which lead Jared, Simon, and Mallory to believe they are being tormented by fairies and brownies. The children find a secret room, an odd book (which turns out to be a field guide to fairies), and eventually a little house brownie named Thimbletack who is about the size of a pencil and talks in rhyme, Light on humor, heavy on suspense and mystery, these tales will be enjoyed by fantasy fans.

Feed by M.T. Anderson

Spending time partying on the moon and riding around in his "upcar," Titus is an average teen of the future, complete with a computer chip implant -- the "Feed" -- that lets corporate marketers and government agencies broadcast directly into his brain. Then Titus meets Violet, and an anti-Feed hacker shuts down their Feeds for a short time; but when Violet's Feed is seriously damaged, she begins spouting some radical ideas.

The Giver by Lois Lowry

In a world with no poverty, no crime, no sickness and no unemployment and where every family is happy, 12-year-old Jonas is chosen to be the community's Receiver of Memories. Under the teaching of the Elders and an old man known as the Giver, Jonas discovers the disturbing truth about his utopian world and it isn't so perfect. The book examines the idea that people might freely choose to give up their feelings in order to create a more stable society. Gradually Jonas learns just how costly this ordered and pain-free society can be, and boldly decides he cannot pay the price.

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone by JK Rowling

Harry hates living with his Uncle Vernon, Aunt Petunia, and their spoiled-rotten son, Dudley. Harry's room is a tiny closet beneath the stairs, and the entire family treats him with disdain. What's more, Harry keeps getting into trouble for making strange things happen -- things he seems to have no control over. But then Harry discovers the truth about himself - it turns out that Harry's deceased mother was a witch, his deceased father a wizard, and not only is Harry also a wizard, he's a famous one! But all is not rosy when Harry discovers his true destiny and finds he must once again face the evil one who killed his parents. His survival will depend upon the help of his newfound friends, as well as his own wit and powers.

The Hobbit by J.R. Tolkien

The hobbit-hole in question belongs to one Bilbo Baggins, an upstanding member of a "little people, about half our height, and smaller than the bearded dwarves." He is, like most of his kind, well off, well fed, and best pleased when sitting by his own fire with a pipe, a glass of good beer, and a meal to look forward to. Certainly this particular hobbit is the last person one would expect to see set off on a hazardous journey; indeed, when Gandalf the Grey stops by one morning, "looking for someone to share in an adventure," Baggins fervently wishes the wizard elsewhere. No such luck, however; soon 13 fortune-seeking dwarves have arrived on the hobbit's doorstep in search of a burglar, and before he can even grab his hat or an umbrella, Bilbo Baggins is swept out his door and into a dangerous adventure.

****How to Build a Robot Army: Tips on Defending Planet Earth against Alien Invaders, Ninjas, and Zombies by Daniel H. Wilson**

It goes without saying that robots kill. They hunt, swarm, and fire lasers from their eyes. They even beat humans at chess. So who better to stand with us when the real villains arrive? Movies instruct us that, whether we like it or not, we will one day be under siege by pirates, ninjas, zombies, aliens, and Godzilla. Also great white sharks. And—let's face it—we're not prepared. But with the advice contained in this brilliantly illustrated, ingenious book, you can build your own robot army to fend off hordes of bloodthirsty foes. From common-sense injunctions ("never approach an unfamiliar robot in a militarized zone") to tactical pointers ("low-power radar beats cameras for detecting mummies in a fog-shrouded crypt") to engineering advice ("passive-dynamic exoskeleton suits will increase sprint speeds but not leg strength"), this book contains all the wisdom you'll need to fend off the coming apocalypse.

The Hunger Games Trilogy by Suzanne Collins

In the ruins of a place once known as North America lies the nation of Panem, a shining Capitol surrounded by twelve outlying districts. The Capitol is harsh and cruel and keeps the districts in line by forcing them all to send one boy and one girl between the ages of twelve and eighteen to participate in the annual Hunger

Games, a fight to the death on live TV. Sixteen-year-old Katniss Everdeen, who lives alone with her mother and younger sister, regards it as a death sentence when she is forced to represent her district in the Games. But Katniss has been close to dead before-and survival

Jurassic Park by Michael Crichton

Bioengineers clone 15 species of dinosaurs and establish an island preserve where tourists can view the large reptiles; chaos ensues when a rival genetics firm attempts to steal frozen dinosaur embryos, and it's up to two kids, a safari guide and a paleontologist to set things right. PW called this, "A scary, creepy, mesmerizing technothriller with teeth.

The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe by C.S. Lewis

While playing hide-and-seek, four English schoolchildren- Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy -find their way through the back of a wardrobe into the magic land of Narnia. Narnia was once the peaceful land of Talking Beasts, Dwarfs, Giants, and Fauns, but now has been frozen into winter by the evil White Witch. The children help the talking beasts to battle against the evil White Witch and free Narnia from everlasting winter. During the battle, the siblings must overcome their own failings to become the heroes and heroines of Narnia. This is the second book in a series called *The Chronicles of Narnia*.

Lord of the Rings by J.R.R. Tolkien

The Lord of the Rings tells of the great quest undertaken by Frodo and the Fellowship of the Ring: Gandalf the Wizard, Merry, Pippin, and Sam, Gimli the Dwarf, Legolas the Elf, Boromir of Gondor, and a tall, mysterious stranger called Strider to rid the world of evil power. The story follows the group along their quest to destroy the ring.

****Journey to the Center of the Earth by Jules Verne**

This science fiction tale delves into the depths of the Earth, and by so doing, reveals the staggeringly long history of our planet.

****The Martian Chronicles by Ray Bradbury**

Ray Bradbury's stories of the colonization of Mars form an eerie mesh of past and future. Written in the 1940s, the chronicles drip with nostalgic atmosphere--shady porches with tinkling pitchers of lemonade, grandfather clocks, chintz-covered sofas. But longing for this comfortable past proves dangerous in every way to Bradbury's characters--the golden-eyed Martians as well as the humans. Starting in the far-flung future of 1999, expedition after expedition leaves Earth to investigate Mars. The Martians guard their mysteries well, but they are decimated by the diseases that arrive with the rockets. Colonists appear, most with ideas no more lofty than starting a hot-dog stand, and with no respect for the culture they've displaced.

Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of Nimh by Richard C. O'Brien

Mrs. Frisby, a widowed mouse with four small children, is faced with a terrible problem. She must move her family to their summer quarters immediately, or face almost certain death. But her youngest son, Timothy, lies ill with pneumonia and must not be moved. Fortunately, she encounters the rats of NIMH, an extraordinary breed of highly intelligent creatures, who come up with a brilliant solution to her dilemma. And Mrs. Frisby in turn renders them a great service.

Slaughterhouse Five by Kurt Vonnegut

Centering on the infamous fire-bombing of Dresden, Billy Pilgrim's odyssey through time reflects the mythic journey of our own fractured lives as we search for meaning in what we are afraid to know. Unstuck in time, Billy Pilgrim, a survivor of the Dresden bombing, relives his life over and over again. Under the gaze of aliens he at last comes to some understanding of the human comedy. The basis of George Roy's great 1972 film and perhaps the signature student's novel in the 1960's embracing protest and the absurdity of war.

The Thief Lord by Cornelia Funke and Christian Bermingham

Wacky characters bring energy to this translation of an entertaining German novel about thieving children, a disguise-obsessed detective and a magical merry-go-round. After their mother dies, 12-year-old Prosper and his brother, Bo, five, flee from Hamburg to Venice (an awful aunt plans to adopt only Bo). They live in an abandoned movie theater with several other street children under the care of the Thief Lord, a cocky youth who claims to rob "the city's most elegant houses." A mysterious man hires the Thief Lord to steal a wooden wing, which the kids later learn has broken off a long-lost merry-go-round said to make "adults out of

children and children out of adults," but the plan alters when Victor, the detective Aunt Esther hired to track the brothers, discovers their camp and reveals that the Thief Lord is actually from a wealthy family. There are a lot of story lines to follow, and the pacing is sometimes off (readers may feel that Funke spends too little time on what happens when the children find the carousel, and too much on the ruse they pull on Prosper's aunt). But between kindhearted Victor and his collection of fake beards, the Thief Lord in his mask and high-heeled boots, and a rascally street kid who loves to steal, Prosper's new world abounds with colorful characters. The Venetian setting is ripe for mystery and the city's alleys and canals ratchet up the suspense in the chase scenes.

War of the Worlds by H.G. Wells

This is the granddaddy of all alien invasion stories, first published by H.G. Wells in 1898. The novel begins ominously, as the lone voice of a narrator tells readers that "No one would have believed in the last years of the nineteenth century that this world was being watched keenly and closely by intelligences greater than man's..."

Wizard of Earthsea by Ursula LeGuin

Often compared to Tolkien's Middle-earth or Lewis's Narnia, Ursula K. Le Guin's Earthsea is a stunning fantasy world that grabs quickly at our hearts, pulling us deeply into its imaginary realms. Four books (*A Wizard of Earthsea*, *The Tombs of Atuan*, *The Farthest Shore*, and *Tehanu*) tell the whole Earthsea cycle--a tale about a reckless, awkward boy named Sparrowhawk who becomes a wizard's apprentice after the wizard reveals Sparrowhawk's true name. The boy comes to realize that his fate may be far more important than he ever dreamed possible. Le Guin challenges her readers to think about the power of language, how in the act of naming the world around us we actually create that world. Teens, especially, will be inspired by the way Le Guin allows her characters to evolve and grow into their own powers.

Wrinkle in Time by Madeleine L'Engle

Everyone in town thinks Meg Murry is volatile and dull-witted, and that her younger brother, Charles Wallace, is dumb. People are also saying that their physicist father has run off and left their brilliant scientist mother. Spurred on by these rumors and an unearthly stranger, the tesseract-touting Mrs Whatsit, Meg and Charles Wallace and their new friend Calvin O'Keefe embark on a perilous quest through space to find their father. In doing so, they must travel behind the shadow of an evil power that is darkening the cosmos, one planet at a time. This is no superhero tale, nor is it science fiction, although it shares elements of both. The travelers must rely on their individual and collective strengths, delving deep within themselves to find answers.

The Uglies Series by Scott Westerfeld

Tally is about to turn sixteen, and she can't wait. Not for her license -- for turning pretty. In Tally's world, your sixteenth birthday brings an operation that turns you from a repellent ugly into a stunningly attractive pretty and catapults you into a high-tech paradise where your only job is to have a really great time. In just a few weeks Tally will be there.

But Tally's new friend Shay isn't sure she wants to be pretty. She'd rather risk life on the outside. When Shay runs away, Tally learns about a whole new side of the pretty world -- and it isn't very pretty. The authorities offer Tally the worst choice she can imagine: find her friend and turn her in, or never turn pretty at all. The choice Tally makes changes her world forever.

****Venus by Ben Bova**

Bova matter-of-factly describes Venus as "the most hellish place in the solar system." Sci-fi authors (Bova included) have all but colonized Mars by now, but few have boldly gone to the aluminum-melting, sulfuric-acid-soaked surface of the Morning Star. Venus proves a mighty, unthinking antagonist indeed--frustrating the efforts of sickly but likable rich kid Van Humphries to land there and recover the remains of his older brother Alex, who died two years earlier on another ill-fated mission.

Spirituality/Personal Journey

The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho

The Alchemist presents a simple fable, based on simple truths and places it in a highly unique situation. And though we may sniff a bestselling formula, it is certainly not a new one: even the ancient tribal storytellers knew that this is the most successful method of entertaining an audience while slipping in a lesson or two. Brazilian storyteller Paulo Coelho introduces Santiago, an Andalusian shepherd boy who one night dreams of a distant treasure in the Egyptian pyramids. And so he's off: leaving Spain to literally follow his dream.

****The Awakening by Kate Chopin**

The Awakening tells the story of one woman's emotional journey from a stifled, miserable marriage to a spirited and lusty freedom. Young Edna Pontellier feels trapped in a loveless, although pampered, life with husband, Leonce. Stirrings of independence begin one summer while resorting in Grand Isle, an island off the coast of Louisiana. These new feelings have begun a profound change in Edna, liberating her beyond belief. Thus ensues an infidelity that dreams are made of, although at the expense of her marriage and motherhood.

Awareness by Anthony DeMello S.J.

Anthony de Mello was a priest and a psychiatrist living in India. The ideas in his short essays are about religion, psychiatry and Buddhism. He proposes some insights to be happy such as people are not happy because they believe they need the approbation of others, to be successful and to care for others. In his writing, De Mello invites us to wake up and realize that these beliefs are false and reduce our freedom because they make us vulnerable to manipulation through critics, rejection and accusation of selfishness. The book is a fun read because De Mello illustrates his ideas with stories and jokes.

The Five People You Meet in Heaven by Mitch Albom

Part melodrama and part parable, Mitch Albom's *The Five People You Meet in Heaven* weaves together three stories, all told about the same man: 83-year-old Eddie, the head maintenance person at Ruby Point Amusement Park. As the novel opens, readers are told that Eddie, unsuspecting, is only minutes away from death as he goes about his typical business at the park. Albom then traces Eddie's world through his tragic final moments, his funeral, and the ensuing days as friends clean out his apartment and adjust to life without him. In alternating sections, Albom flashes back to Eddie's birthdays, telling his life story as a kind of progress report over candles and cake each year. And in the third and last thread of the novel, Albom follows Eddie into heaven where the maintenance man sequentially encounters five pivotal figures from his life (a la *A Christmas Carol*). Each person has been waiting for him in heaven, and, as Albom reveals, each life (and death) was woven into Eddie's own in ways he never suspected. Each soul has a story to tell, a secret to reveal, and a lesson to share. Through them Eddie understands the meaning of his own life even as his arrival brings closure to theirs.

****The Hiding Place by Corrie ten Boom**

Corrie ten Boom was a woman admired the world over for her courage, her forgiveness, and her memorable faith. In World War II, she and her family risked their lives to help Jews escape the Nazis, and their reward was a trip to Hitler's concentration camps. But she survived and was released--as a result of a clerical error--and now shares the story of how faith triumphs over evil. For thirty-five years Corrie's dramatic life story, full of timeless virtues, has prepared readers to face their own futures with faith, relying on God's love to overcome, heal, and restore. Now releasing in a thirty-fifth anniversary edition for a new generation of readers, *The Hiding Place* tells the riveting story of how a middle-aged Dutch watchmaker became a heroine of the Resistance, a survivor of Hitler's death camps, and one of the most remarkable evangelists of the twentieth century.

****How to Be Good by Nick Hornby**

In Nick Hornby's *How to Be Good*, Katie Carr is certainly *trying* to be. That's why she became a GP. That's why she cares about Third World debt and homelessness, and struggles to raise her children with a conscience. It's also why she puts up with her husband David, the self-styled Angriest Man in Holloway. But one fateful day, she finds herself in a Leeds parking lot, having just slept with another man. What Katie doesn't yet realize is that her fall from grace is just the first step on a spiritual journey more torturous than the interstate at rush hour. Because, prompted by his wife's actions, David is about to stop being angry. He's

about to become good--not politically correct, organic-food-eating good, but good in the fashion of the Gospels. And that's no easier in modern-day Holloway than it was in ancient Israel.

****Life of Pi by Yann Martel**

The precocious son of a zookeeper, 16-year-old Pi Patel is raised in Pondicherry, India, where he tries on various faiths for size, attracting "religions the way a dog attracts fleas." Planning a move to Canada, his father packs up the family and their menagerie and they hitch a ride on an enormous freighter. After a harrowing shipwreck, Pi finds himself adrift in the Pacific Ocean, trapped on a 26-foot lifeboat with a wounded zebra, a spotted hyena, a seasick orangutan, and a 450-pound Bengal tiger named Richard Parker ("His head was the size and color of the lifebuoy, with teeth"). It sounds like a colorful setup, but these wild beasts don't burst into song as if co-starring in an anthropomorphized Disney feature. After much gore and infighting, Pi and Richard Parker remain the boat's sole passengers, drifting for 227 days through shark-infested waters while fighting hunger, the elements, and an overactive imagination. In rich, hallucinatory passages, Pi recounts the harrowing journey as the days blur together, elegantly cataloging the endless passage of time and his struggles to survive.

****Lies Young Women Believe: And the Truth that Sets Them Free by Nancy Leigh DeMoss**

You have been lied to! Have you been deceived? Through a nationwide survey and in-depth discussion groups, Nancy and Dannah have listened carefully to the heart of your generation. And here are some things they've heard: "I know God should be the only thing that satisfies, but if it could be Him and my friends, then I could be happy." - "It seems like I have been struggling with depression forever. I always feel like I am not good enough." - "I tell myself that I don't really listen to the song lyrics, but once I hear a song a few times and start thinking about what they're saying I realize that it's too late. It's already stuck in my head." - "For me, the whole wife and mom thing is overrated. It isn't cool to want a husband and a family." Maybe you can identify. Trying to listen to the right voices can be difficult. This book has been written by friends who will help you find the Truth. Maybe your heart is telling you that some things in your life are way off course. Certain habits and relationships have left you confused and lonely. This is not the way it's supposed to be. In this book, Nancy and Dannah expose 25 of the lies most commonly believed by your generation. They share real-life accounts from some of the young women they interviewed, along with honest stories about how they've overcome lies they believed themselves. They get down in the trenches of the battle with you. Best of all, they'll show you how to be set free by the Truth.

The Little Prince by Antoine de Saint Exupery

The narrator is a downed pilot in the Sahara Desert, frantically trying to repair his wrecked plane. His efforts are interrupted one day by the apparition of a little prince, who asks him to draw a sheep. "In the face of an overpowering mystery, you don't dare disobey," the narrator recalls. "Absurd as it seemed, a thousand miles from all inhabited regions and in danger of death, I took a scrap of paper and a pen out of my pocket." And so begins their dialogue, which stretches the narrator's imagination in all sorts of surprising, childlike directions. The story of The Little Prince describes a journey from planet to planet, each tiny world populated by a single adult.

A Prayer for Owen Meany by John Irving

Owen Meany is a dwarfish boy with a strange voice who accidentally kills his best friend's mom with a baseball and believes--accurately--that he is an instrument of God, to be redeemed by martyrdom. Johnny is Owen's friend who claims that despite the death of his mother that "Owen gave me more than he ever took from me. . . . What did he ever say that wasn't right?" Why Johnny "is a Christian because of Owen Meany" is the novel's central mystery and is explored through a friendship of extraordinary power.

The Return of the Prodigal Son: A Story of Homecoming by Henri Nouwen is a spiritual adventure story.

A chance encounter with a poster depicting a detail of Rembrandt's *The Return of the Prodigal Son* set in motion a chain of events that enabled Nouwen to redefine and claim his vocation late in his life. This book interweaves elements of art history, memoir, Midrash, and self-help, Nouwen brings the parable to life with empathic analyses of each character. Nouwen's absorption in the story and the painting is so complete that the father's challenge to love the son, and the son's challenge to receive that love, become Nouwen's own.

Seven Years in Tibet by Heinrich Harrer

Originally published in 1953, this adventure classic recounts Austrian mountaineer Heinrich Harrer's 1943 escape from a British internment camp in India, his daring trek across the Himalayas, and his happy sojourn

in Tibet, then, as now, a remote land little visited by foreigners. Warmly welcomed, he eventually became tutor to the Dalai Lama, teenaged god-king of the theocratic nation. The author's vivid descriptions of Tibetan rites and customs capture its unique traditions before the Chinese invasion in 1950, which prompted Harrer's departure.

****The Shack by William P. Young**

Mackenzie Allen Philips' youngest daughter, Missy, has been abducted during a family vacation and evidence that she may have been brutally murdered is found in an abandoned shack deep in the Oregon wilderness. Four years later in the midst of his Great Sadness, Mack receives a suspicious note, apparently from God, inviting him back to that shack for a weekend. Against his better judgment he arrives at the shack on a wintry afternoon and walks back into his darkest nightmare. What he finds there will change Mack's world forever. In a world where religion seems to grow increasingly irrelevant "The Shack" wrestles with the timeless question, "Where is God in a world so filled with unspeakable pain?" The answers Mack gets will astound you and perhaps transform you as much as it did him. You'll want everyone you know to read this book!

Siddhartha by Hermann Hesse

Siddhartha's life takes him on a journey toward enlightenment. Afire with youthful idealism, the Brahmin joins a group of ascetics, fasting and living without possessions. Meeting Gotama the Buddha, he comes to feel this is not the right path, though he also declines joining the Buddha's followers. He reenters the world, hoping to learn of his own nature, but instead slips gradually into hedonism and materialism. Surfeited and disgusted, he flees from his possessions to become a ferryman's apprentice, learning what lessons he can from the river itself. Herman Hesse's 1922 Bildungsroman parallels the life of Buddha and seems to argue that lessons of this sort cannot be taught but come from one's own struggle to find truth.

****The Sunflower: On the Possibilities and Limits of Forgiveness by Simon Wiesenthal**

Author Simon Weisenthal recalls his demoralizing life in a concentration camp and his envy of the dead Germans who have sunflowers marking their graves. At the time he assumed his grave would be a mass one, unmarked and forgotten. Then, one day, a dying Nazi soldier asks Weisenthal for forgiveness for his crimes against the Jews. What would you do? *This* important book and the provocative question it poses is birthing debates, symposiums, and college courses. The Dalai Lama, Harry Wu, Primo Levi, and others who have witnessed genocide and human tyranny answer Wiesenthal's ultimate question on forgiveness

****Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission to Promote Peace, One School at a Time by Greg Mortenson**

Some failures lead to phenomenal successes, and this American nurse's unsuccessful attempt to climb K2, the world's second tallest mountain, is one of them. Dangerously ill when he finished his climb in 1993, Mortenson was sheltered for seven weeks by the small Pakistani village of Korphe; in return, he promised to build the impoverished town's first school, a project that grew into the Central Asia Institute, which has since constructed more than 50 schools across rural Pakistan and Afghanistan. Coauthor Relin recounts Mortenson's efforts in fascinating detail, presenting compelling portraits of the village elders, con artists, philanthropists, mujahideen, Taliban officials, ambitious school girls and upright Muslims Mortenson met along the way. As the book moves into the post-9/11 world, Mortenson and Relin argue that the United States must fight Islamic extremism in the region through collaborative efforts to alleviate poverty and improve access to education, especially for girls.

Growing Up (Coming of Age)

**** Ball Don't Lie by Matt de la Pena**

That white boy can ball....He don't play like no regular white boy. Sticky, 17, has spent his life being abused by pimps living with his prostitute mother, bouncing from one foster home to another, and living on the street between failed placements. But he's developed incredible hoop skills that have given him considerable social standing among his mostly black peers. And he gets a girlfriend named Anh-thu, who loves him and wants to help him reach his dreams. Sticky sees basketball as his way out of his dead-end life and is determined to make the right moves in the game to attain his goal. But he doesn't quite know how to make the right moves in his life, until a bad decision leads him to confront dark secrets. Jumping back and forth in time, this first

novel has a unique narrative voice that mixes street lingo, basketball jargon, and trash talk to tell Sticky's sorry saga from a variety of viewpoints.

****The Bean Trees by Barbara Kingsolver**

Feisty Marietta Greer changes her name to "Taylor" when her car runs out of gas in Taylorville, Ill. By the time she reaches Oklahoma, this strong-willed young Kentucky native with a quick tongue and an open mind is catapulted into a surprising new life. Taylor leaves home in a beat-up '55 Volkswagen bug, on her way to nowhere in particular, savoring her freedom. But when a forlorn Cherokee woman drops a baby in Taylor's passenger seat and asks her to take it, she does.

****Bee Season by Myla Goldberg**

A family is shaken apart by a small but unexpected shift in the prospects of one of its members. When 9-year-old Eliza Naumann, an otherwise indifferent student, takes first prize in her school spelling bee, it is as if rays of light have begun to emanate from her head. Teachers regard her with a new fondness; the studious girls begin to save a place for her at lunch. Even Eliza can sense herself changing.

Bless Me, Ultima by Rudolfo Anaya

Set in New Mexico on the border between a small village and the huge llano (plains), Bless Me, Ultima is Rudolfo Anaya's much acclaimed and award-winning coming-of-age novel from the Hispanic perspective. Antonio is torn between his father's cowboy side of the family who ride on the llano and his mother's village and farming relations. Antonio's life is forever altered when his aunt Ultima, a curandera (healer) comes to live with the family; she teaches Antonio many things, most importantly how to gather the self-knowledge that will help carry him into adulthood.

The Bluest Eye by Toni Morrison

The Bluest Eye tells the story of the Breedloves, a poor black family living in Lorain, Ohio in the early 1940s. Each chapter tells something different -- the journey of the dad, Cholly, from curious young boy to a drunk and unloving father; the history of the mother, Pauline, and her dreams of movie stars and romance; and the childhood of the children, Sammy and Pecola, and how they deal with life as they've been given. Full of hardships and unfairness, the Breedloves have been through tough times most of their lives. And young Pecola's wishes of blue eyes and blonde hair in order to be loved and respected by others is a testament to the unjust world they lived in.

Breadwinner by Deborah Ellis

Since the Taliban took over Afghanistan, 11-year-old Parvana has rarely been outdoors. Barred from attending school, shopping at the market, or even playing in the streets of Kabul, the heroine of Deborah Ellis's engrossing children's novel *The Breadwinner* is trapped inside her family's one-room home. That is, until the Taliban hauls away her father and Parvana realizes that it's up to her to become the "breadwinner" and disguise herself as a boy to support her mother, two sisters, and baby brother. Set in the early years of the Taliban regime, this topical novel for middle readers explores the harsh realities of life for girls and women in modern-day Afghanistan.

****Breath, Eyes, Memory by Edwidge Danticat**

The story begins in Haiti, on Mother's Day, when young Sophie discovers that she is about to leave the only home she has ever known with her Tante Atie in Croix-des-Rosets, Haiti, to go live with her mother in New York City. These early chapters in Haiti are lovely, subtly evoking the tender, painful relationship between the motherless child and the childless woman who feels honor bound to guard the natural mother's rights to the girl's affections above her own. Presented with a Mother's Day card, Tante Atie responds: "'It is for a mother, your mother.' She motioned me away with a wave of her hand. 'When it is Aunt's Day, you can make me one.'" Danticat also uses these pages to limn a vibrant portrait of life in Haiti from the cups of ginger tea and baskets of cassava bread served at community potlucks to the folk tales of a "people in Guinea who carry the sky on their heads." With Sophie's transition from a fairly happy existence with her aunt and grandmother in rural Haiti to life in New York with a mother she has never seen.

The Color Purple by Alice Walker

Celie is a poor black woman whose letters tell the story of 20 years of her life, beginning at age 14 when she is being abused and raped by her father and attempting to protect her sister from the same fate, and continuing over the course of her marriage to "Mister," a brutal man who terrorizes her. Celie eventually learns that her

abusive husband has been keeping her sister's letters from her and the rage she feels, combined with an example of love and independence provided by her close friend Shug, pushes her finally toward an awakening of her creative and loving self.

Esperanza Rising by Pam Muñoz Ryan

This exciting, well-written historical novel is based on the true-life experiences of the author's grandmother, Esperanza Ortega. Thirteen-year-old Esperanza and her newly widowed mother are forced to leave their fairytale existence at beautiful Rancho de las Rosas in Mexico, to live and work in a migrant worker camp in the San Joaquin Valley during the Great Depression. Adjustments to her new life are difficult for Esperanza—the harsh living conditions and hard labor are so different from her earlier life of privilege and wealth, especially after Mama becomes seriously ill with valley fever. But like the phoenix in her beloved grandma's story, Esperanza endures, "Rising again, with a new life ahead..."

Flowers for Algernon by Daniel Keyes

When we first meet Charlie he is about to embark on a compelling but dangerous journey from retardation to genius. He has only a vague understanding of what will happen, but he is aware that knowledge and the ability to write are of paramount importance. So he doesn't hesitate for a moment to cooperate in a radical experiment designed to increase his intelligence, the key - he hopes - to being valued as a human being and to being loved. Charlie becomes the focus of attention by the scientific world as his intellectual capacities far surpass those of the psychologists and neurosurgeons who engineered his metamorphosis. We also follow the progress of his romance with two women, one who knew him before the experiment as well as with another, who knows him only as the attractive, bright, and sympathetic man he has become.

****Homeless Bird by Gloria Whelan**

But Koly never gets a chance to find out if she does care for her intended groom. Married and promptly widowed at 13, Koly finds herself in the grim position of being cast out by a society that has no place for girls like her. With a seemingly hopeless future in India, this courageous and spirited young woman sets out to forge her own destiny. Through perseverance, resourcefulness, and sheer luck, she manages not only to find a niche for herself, but even to find happiness again.

Jacob Have I Loved by Katherine Paterson

Sara Louise Bradshaw is sick and tired of her beautiful twin Caroline. Ever since they were born, Caroline has been the pretty one, the talented one, the better sister. Even now, Caroline seems to take everything: Louise's friends, their parents' love, her dreams for the future. For once in her life, Louise wants to be the special one. But in order to do that, she must first figure out who she is . . . and find a way to make a place for herself outside her sister's shadow.

The Joy Luck Club by Amy Tan

Four mothers, four daughters, four families whose histories shift with the four winds depending on who's "saying" the stories. In 1949 four Chinese women, recent immigrants to San Francisco, begin meeting to eat dim sum, play mahjong, and talk. United in shared unspeakable loss and hope, they call themselves the Joy Luck Club. Rather than sink into tragedy, they choose to gather to raise their spirits and money. "To despair was to wish back for something already lost. Or to prolong what was already unbearable." Forty years later the stories and history continue.

****Holes by Louis Sachar**

Stanley Yelnats is unjustly sent to Camp Green Lake where he and other boys are sentenced to dig holes to build character. Stanley learns the warden has them digging holes for something else- but what?

To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee

Set in the small Southern town of Maycomb, Alabama, during the Depression, *To Kill a Mockingbird* follows three years in the life of 8-year-old Scout Finch, her brother, Jem, and their father, Atticus--three years punctuated by the arrest and eventual trial of a young black man accused of raping a white woman. Though her story explores big themes, Harper Lee chooses to tell it through the eyes of a child. The result is a tough and tender novel of race, class, justice, and the pain of growing up.

The Lords of Discipline by Pat Conroy

Aspiring novelist and basketball player, Will McLean, finds himself a college student at the Carolina Military Institute (The Citadel--thinly disguised). Will is not interested in the military, but decides to fulfill the promise he made to his dying father to attend his dad's alma mater. Will and his roommates survived the trials and tribulations of their underclassmen years, but circumstances change very rapidly. The first black student enrolls at the Institute and Will is asked to be a secret mentor to Cadet Tom Pearce. It quickly becomes apparent that a group of cadets is trying to run Pearce out of the Institute. Will steps in to intervene, and he discovers a truth so horrendous that this knowledge can bring down the Institute. It also makes Will and his roommates targets. Not only is their graduation now in jeopardy, but their lives are also in danger.

****Mexican White Boy by Matt de la Pena**

Biracial Danny Lopez doesn't think he fits anywhere. He feels like an outsider with his Mexican father's family, with whom he is staying for the summer, and at his mostly white school, and he wonders if his confusion drove his father away. He also struggles with his obsession for baseball; a gifted player with a blazing fastball, he lacks control of his game. With the support of a new friend and his caring cousins, Danny begins to deal with the multitude of problems in his life, which include his tendency to cut himself, an unusual characteristic in a male YA protagonist. The author juggles his many plotlines well, and the portrayal of Danny's friends and neighborhood is rich and lively. Where the story really lights up is in the baseball scenes, which sizzle like Danny's fastball. A violent scene, left somewhat unresolved, is the catalyst for him to confront the truth about his father. Danny's struggle to find his place will speak strongly to all teens but especially to those of mixed race.

Parrot in the Oven: Mi Vida by Victor Martinez

Manny wants to be *vato firme*, a guy to respect, and the year leading up to his initiation into a gang is filled with pain and tension. Meanwhile, his family struggles with violence, discrimination, and inner turmoil in the dusty California town where Manny is trying to grow up. Manny has to decide where his loyalties lie: with the gang or with his family?

The Red Pony by John Steinbeck

Raised on a ranch in northern California, Jody is well-schooled in the hard work and demands of a rancher's life. He is used to the way of horses, too; but nothing has prepared him for the special connection he will forge with Gabilan, a hot-tempered pony his father gives him. With Billy Buck, the hired hand, Jody tends and trains his horse, restlessly anticipating the moment he will sit high upon Gabilan's saddle. But when Gabilan falls ill, Jody discovers there are still lessons he must learn about the ways of nature and, particularly, the ways of being a responsible man.

Scorpions by Walter Dean Myers

Jamal, who is pressured to become leader of the Scorpions gang, worries about school, family, and the rough kids on the street. When a fellow gang member gives him a gun, Jamal suddenly gains a new level of respect from his enemies. A realistic look at a boy who wants to do the right thing but gets caught up in the culture of violence.

The Secret Life of Bees by Sue Monk Kidd

In Sue Monk Kidd's *The Secret Life of Bees*, 14-year-old Lily Owen, neglected by her father and isolated on their Georgia peach farm, spends hours imagining a blissful infancy when she was loved and nurtured by her mother, Deborah, whom she barely remembers. These consoling fantasies are her heart's answer to the family story that as a child, in unclear circumstances, Lily accidentally shot and killed her mother. All Lily has left of Deborah is a strange image of a Black Madonna, with the words "Tiburon, South Carolina" scrawled on the back. The search for a mother, and the need to mother oneself, are crucial elements in this well-written coming-of-age story set in the early 1960s against a background of racial violence and unrest. When Lily's beloved nanny, Rosaleen, manages to insult a group of angry white men on her way to register to vote and has to skip town, Lily takes the opportunity to go with her, fleeing to the only place she can think of--Tiburon, South Carolina--determined to find out more about her dead mother.

Shabanu: Daughter of the Wind by Suzanne Fisher Staples

When eleven-year old Shabanu, the daughter of a nomad in the Cholistan Desert of present-day Pakistan, is pledged in marriage to an older man whose money will bring prestige to the family, she must either accept the decision, as is the custom, or risk the consequences of defying her father's wishes. However, Shabanu is a

head-strong, independent girl who doesn't want to just marry anyone. The richness and tragedy of a whole culture are reflected in the fate of this girl's family.

****Shattered: Stories of Children and War by Jennifer Armstrong**

For children who live in war times, whether they understand the issues or not, the future is precarious. According to the United Nations, armed conflicts now kill and maim more children than soldiers. In *Shattered*, editor Jennifer Armstrong gathers 12 stories that explore the ways young people are affected by war. From Afghanistan to Hawaii, Civil War times to the present, Joseph Bruchac, Ibtisam Barakat, Lois Metger, Marilyn Singer, and others describe, in painful, sometimes wry, detail small slices of their war-splintered world. M.E. Kerr depicts the mixed feelings of the family of a conscientious objector. Graham Salisbury writes about a high-school boy woken out of a complacent existence to discover his island is under attack and he must don his wrinkled high-school ROTC shirt to defend his home. A single line of text runs along the bottom of each story, providing cold, dismaying background information about each war portrayed. Authors' notes at the end of the book allow contributors to give a little more of the personal history behind the stories.

A Yellow Raft in Blue Water by Michael Dorris

Michael Dorris has crafted a fierce saga of three generations of Indian women, beset by hardships and torn by angry secrets, yet inextricably joined by the bonds of kinship. Starting in the present day and moving backward, the novel is told in the voices of the three women: fifteen-year-old part-black Rayona; her American Indian mother, Christine, consumed by tenderness and resentment toward those she loves; and the fierce and mysterious Ida, mother and grandmother whose haunting secrets, betrayals, and dreams echo through the years, braiding together the strands of the shared past."

Where the Red Fern Grows by Wilson Rawls

In spite of being written during the Depression, there is a timelessness to this simple story. Young Billy works two long, hard years to earn the money to realize his dream-to own a pair of dogs for hunting raccoons. Rawls instills this autobiographical piece with a strong sense of right and wrong, as well as innocence and integrity. Anthony Heald is wonderful with this action and emotion-laden story. He aptly delivers a tone and sense appropriate to the text. He also does a particularly good representation of young and old voices and a variety of Southern accents. This title is an excellent selection for family listening or for anyone desiring an uplifting, but realistic tale.

Walk Two Moons by Sharon Creech

Thirteen-year-old Salamanca Tree Hiddle's mother has disappeared. Although her mother promised to return before the tulips bloomed, she hasn't come back. Meanwhile, Salamanca's dad has moved Sal from the farm she loves so much to town and has begun dating the unpleasantly named Mrs. Cadaver. To help her find her mother and the truth, Sal's grandparents drive her across the country, tracing her mom's postcards from Ohio to Idaho. To pass the time in the car, Salamanca tells stories about her best friend Phoebe Winterbottom whose mother also vanished. Sal's search for the truth about her mother becomes a journey of discovery about much more.

Adventure/Sports

****20,000 Leagues under the Sea by Jules Verne**

Verne's amazing undersea adventure is one of the earliest science fiction novels ever written. Since that time, generations of readers have plunged below the ocean's waves with Captain Nemo and his first-ever submarine, *The Nautilus*. It's a voyage of exploration and the imagination.

At Play in the Fields of the Lord by Peter Matthiessen

Set in the South American jungle, this thriller follows the clash between two misplaced gringos--one who has come to convert the Indians to Christianity, and one who has been hired to kill them. Now the basis for a major motion picture.

Great Moments in Baseball History by Matt Christopher, S. Peters, Little Brown

Matt Christopher describes nine dramatic moments from baseball's historical past, featuring Babe Ruth, Ted Williams, Reggie Jackson, and Jim Abbott. These accounts depict courageous aspects as well as the spectacular, including Dave Dravecky's comeback after cancer surgery, and the hobbled Kirk Gibson's game-winning home run in the 1988 World Series. Matt Christopher has captured all the suspense and play-by-play action of nine remarkable major league players and the personalities of the athletes who made them.

Guts: The True Stories behind "Hatchet" and the Brian Books by Gary Paulsen

Survival stories appeal to our elemental needs of hunger and warmth. To satisfy hunger you must seek your prey, kill it, drag it to your campsite, clean it and cook it. You'd better know how to build a fire and how to make a bow and arrow. Then you must protect yourself against weather, insects and wild animals. Gary Paulsen writes honestly about these needs because he personally endured and survived them—attacks by moose, killing deer, plane crashes, heart attacks, surviving blizzards and much more.

Hatchet by Gary Paulsen

Thirteen-year-old Brian Robeson is on his way to visit his father when the single engine plane in which he is flying crashes and the pilot dies. Suddenly, Brian finds himself alone in the Canadian wilderness with nothing but his clothing, a tattered windbreaker, and the hatchet his mother has given him as a present -- and the dreadful secret that has been tearing him apart ever since his parents' divorce. But now Brian has no time for anger, self-pity, or despair -- it will take all his know-how and determination, and more courage than he knew he possessed, just to survive.

Heartbreak & Triumph: The Shawn Michaels Story by Shawn Michaels, Aaron Feigenbaum

Heartbreak & Triumph introduces us to Michael Shawn Hickenbottom, the youngest of four children whose "really conservative upbringing" made him shy and "afraid that people wouldn't like me if I showed who I really was." But upon discovering Southwest Championship Wrestling (SWCW) one night, Hickenbottom realized instantly what he wanted to become. Heartbreak & Triumph tells what dissolved Michaels's partnership with Marty Jannetty and started his transformation into "The Heartbreak Kid." You'll learn firsthand of the "unfair" allegation that brought about HBK's classic Ladder match with Razor Ramon at WrestleMania X; the incident in Syracuse that set the stage for Shawn's unbelievable "comeback" victories at Royal Rumble 1996, and in the Iron Man WWE Championship match with Bret Hart at WrestleMania XII; and how his escalating backstage feud with Hart inadvertently built toward the formation of "D-Generation X," as well as the first-ever "Hell in a Cell" contest against Undertaker.

Heat by Mike Lupica

When Michael Arroyo is on the baseball diamond, everything feels right. He's a terrific pitcher who dreams of leading his South Bronx All-Stars to the Little League World Series in Williamsport, PA. It's a dream he shared with his father, one they brought with them as they fled Cuba and wound up living in the shadow of Yankee Stadium. Michael's ultimate dream is to play in the major leagues like his hero, El Grande, Yankee star and fellow Cuban refugee. Tragically, Papi died of a heart attack a few months back, leaving Michael and his older brother, Carlos, to struggle along on their own. Afraid of being separated, they hide the news of their father's death from everyone but a kindly neighbor, Mrs. Cora, and Michael's best friend, Manny Cabrera. When a bitter rival spreads rumors that Michael is older than he appears, the league demands that he be benched until he can produce a birth certificate.

Hoop Dreams: The True Story of Hardship and Triumph by Ben Joravsky

This is a chronicle of the lives and high-school careers of two inner-city youths who both harbor legitimate hopes of playing professional basketball. This book by Chicago journalist Joravsky looks at the dream of ghetto youths to play in the NBA. The only way to do that, according to the author, is to attend the appropriate high school, like St. Joseph's in suburban Chicago, which sent Isiah Thomas onto Indiana University and the NBA. However, these two athletes face many challenges in attending such schools. This is at once a heart-wrenching and uplifting story of survival.

****The Last Shot: City Streets, Basketball Dreams by Darcy Frey**

Coney Island, Brooklyn, once New York City's playground, is now an archetypal ghetto, filled with high-rise housing projects and populated almost exclusively by African Americans. High schoolers there attend Abraham Lincoln High, known all around the East Coast for its outstanding basketball teams, where players see the sport as their way out of second-class citizenship. In his first book, Frey, a contributing editor at Harper's and the New York Times Magazine, has composed a sensitive account of a year in the lives of four

exceptional players (three seniors and one freshman), their coach and their families, and he shows that the game can indeed be a means of escape in spite of their school's poor academic reputation. But the way out is fraught with difficulties. For instance, Frey offers devastating anecdotes about dishonest college recruiters and about the NCAA.

LeBron James: The Rise of a Star by David Lee Morgan Jr.

LeBron James truly has become a star. After appearing on the cover of *Sports Illustrated* and having his high school basketball games broadcast on ESPN, he was the first pick of the lowly Cleveland Cavaliers in the 2003 NBA draft, and actually had them in playoff contention. Through interviews with those who knew LeBron while he was growing up (poor but lived in Akron, OH), the author draws a portrait of a boy who almost always had that special spark that defines him in the NBA today. Two inserts of color photographs depict the athlete from toddlerhood to recent NBA draftee, and most show him with his recognizable smile—and truly having fun with his gift.

Lord of the Flies by William Golding

A plane crashes on an uninhabited tropical island during wartime. A group of schoolboys—the sole survivors—form their own society, an experiment that quickly descends into chaos and death. This is the classic tale of a group of English school boys who are left stranded on an unpopulated island, and who must confront not only the defects of their society but the defects of their own natures.

Pride of Puerto Rico: The Life of Roberto Clemente by Paul Robert Walker

The great right fielder for the Pittsburgh Pirates, Roberto Clemente was proud of his family, his native Puerto Rico, and his ability to play baseball. “Baseball fans will welcome this book because of the fast-paced action, but the temper of the man and his concern for human beings will leave a lasting impression on the younger reader.”

Shoeless Joe by W. P. Kinsella

“If you build it, he will come.” Those mysterious words of an Iowa baseball announcer lead Ray Kinsella to carve a baseball diamond in his cornfield in honor of his hero, the baseball legend Shoeless Joe Jackson. This is a book “not so much about baseball as it is about dreams, magic, life, and what is quintessentially American,” said the Philadelphia Inquirer. He went to Canada in the 1960's to avoid the draft. Now, back in the USA, he has a vision: build a ballpark in an Iowa cornfield. Two people who do come to ball field are the tragic ballplayer, Joe Jackson and the lead's father.

Story of Muhammad Ali: Heavyweight Champion of the World by Barry Denenberg

Muhammad Ali is one of the world's best-known figures, and this incredible biography delves into precisely why. From his unlikely beginnings as a skinny, young Cassius Clay learning to box at a local gym to becoming the heavyweight champion of the world at the famous “Rumble in the Jungle,” where even the skies let loose with rain right after his victory. Ali's story has captivated the world--this book traces the athlete's triumphs in the ring, his conversion to the Nation of Islam, his refusal to participate in the Vietnam War when drafted and the eventual decline of his boxing career.

Whale Talk by Chris Crutcher

It is hard enough living with the name The Tao Jones, but seventeen-year-old T. J. is also partially black, white and Japanese. Neglect and abandonment by his birth mother have left him with a deep-seated rage and an urge to protect the weak of the world. When T.J. observes Mike, a linebacker on the football team, harassing Chris, a mentally handicapped student, for wearing his deceased brother's team jacket, he decides the best revenge is to put together a swim team of misfits. Meanwhile, T.J. has made some powerful enemies, and matters come to a head when a mother and her abused multiracial daughter take refuge in T.J.'s house and an unexpected tragedy ensues.

Biography/Memoir

Always Running by Louis Luis Rodriguez

In his memoir, Rodriguez, an award-winning poet and publisher of the small press Tia Chucha, describes his youth as an East Los Angeles gang member in an effort to steer his teenaged son, Ramiro, away from joining

a gang. As member of various Latino gangs based in and around the South San Gabriel Valley during the late 1960s, Rodriguez participated in random acts of violence, and was imprisoned on several occasions for the crimes he committed. Finally, Rodriguez bonded with a neighborhood organizer who never lost faith in Rodriguez's one-step-forward--two-steps-back "dance" toward a future as a journalist, poet, and organizer.

The Autobiography of Martin Luther King, Jr. by Martin Luther King, Jr.

Martin Luther King Jr. stands tall as one of the greatest heroes in American history. Not content with a system that saw his people -- or people of any color -- as second-class citizens, he set out to bring equality to the land of his birth, and to the world. Though we lost him far too soon, his words and deeds continue to inspire, to provoke, to educate, and to comfort. *The Autobiography of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, compiled from King's own words, reveals the man behind the legend.

Bad Boy: A Memoir by Walter Dean Myers

As a boy, Walter Dean Myers was quick-tempered and physically strong, always ready for a fight- so he often got into fights. Growing up in a poor family and living in Harlem, his hope for a successful future diminished as he came to realize fully the class and racial struggles that surrounded him. In a memoir that is gripping and funny, Walter Dean Myers travels back to his roots of growing up in New York in the 1940s and 1950s.

Boy by Roald Dahl

Roald Dahl's childhood stories are so outrageous and funny that it is often hard to believe they are true! "Some are funny. Some are painful. Some are unpleasant. I suppose that is why I have always remembered them so vividly. All are true," says Dahl. We are told of his first automobile ride, in which he nearly lost his nose and of the canings by Headmasters and older schoolboys. There were glorious times, too, with his big family at home in Wales and in the class of an endearing math teacher who thought numbers the dreariest things in the world. Roald Dahl's adventures and misadventures during his school years are crowded with people as strange and wonderful.

Breaking Through by Francisco Jimenez

Maturity means breaking through the cocoon into freedom for Panchito, whose adolescence is described in this sequel to *The Circuit: Stories from the Life of a Migrant Child*. The simplicity of life and the unending work for the whole family continues here, but is mitigated by Panchito's increased awareness and gradual loss of innocence as he learns to make his life a success. His father's bitterness, pain, and need for unquestioning obedience is matched by his mother's ability to coax agreement out of her son. The clash of cultures between teen insolence in the U.S. and Mexican respect for elders' authority is vividly portrayed, as is the injustice and casual bigotry often endured by young and old. Fortunately, the protagonist, now often known as Frankie, finds friends and employers willing to recognize his strength of character and ability. Jimenez ably helps readers see the world of 1950s and 1960s California through adolescent eyes. Rock 'n' roll, Kennedy versus Nixon, the old-boy network of service clubs, the humiliation of deportation, and the painful struggle to have the right clothes are among the pieces of that world that readers see with a startling clarity from a new perspective.

The Circuit: Stories from the Life of a Migrant Child by Francisco Jimenez

The story begins in Mexico when the author is very young and his parents inform him that they are going on a very long trip to "El Norte." What follows is a series of stories of the family's unending migration from one farm to another as they search for the next harvesting job. Each story is told from the point of view of the author as a young child.

****The Color of Water: A Black Man's Tribute to His White Mother by James McBride**

In it, the author, a man whose mother was white and his father black, tells two stories: that of his mother and his own. Tautly written in spare, clear prose, it is a wonderful story of a bi-racial family who succeeded and achieved the American dream, despite the societal obstacles placed in its way.

The Diary of Anne Frank by Anne Frank

Anne Frank hid from the Nazis for 2 years with her family and friends in the "secret annex" and recorded her experiences in a diary which is now one of the most moving and eloquent documents of the Holocaust. She rages at her mother, Edith, smolders with jealous resentment toward her sister, Margot, and unleashes acid comments at her roommates. Anne died in the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in March 1945, three

months before her 16th birthday, but her diary tells the story of Anne's teen angst, her profound insights, her self-discovery and her unbroken faith in good triumphing over evil.

The Diary of Frida Kahlo by Sarah M. Lowe (Editor), Frida Kahlo and Carlos Fuentes

Mexican artist Frida Kahlo (1907-1954) kept this haunting journal during the last decade of her life. She is preoccupied with death, beset by declining health, isolation and repeated surgical operations resulting from the bus accident that severely damaged her spine, pelvic bones, right leg and right foot at the age of 18. The book includes some sketches, doodles and paintings, which fuse surrealism, pre-Columbian gods and myths, biomorphic forms, animal-human hybrids, archetypal symbols that has made Frida's art unique.

Dispatches from the Edge: A Memoir of War, Disasters, and Survival by Anderson Cooper

In 2005, two tragedies--the Asian tsunami and Hurricane Katrina--turned CNN reporter Anderson Cooper into a media celebrity. *Dispatches from the Edge*, Cooper's memoir of "war, disasters and survival," is a brief but powerful chronicle of Cooper's ascent to stardom and his struggle with his own tragedies and demons.

****Daughter of the Ganges: The Story of One Girl's Adoption and Return Journey to India by Asha Miro**

This memoir is an assemblage of two books chronicling Miró's first trips back to her native land of India since being adopted in Barcelona at the age of six in 1974. Miró (who works on cultural documentaries) begins with her only memory of India "a Christian orphanage in Bombay" interspersed with her adoptive mother's journal entries. In India, she struggles with stories that reinforce her history of being abandoned by her father, as well as the stunning news that she has siblings. The second book tells of her subsequent return to India to film a documentary about her story. Retracing the steps of her first trip, Miró finds that not all the stories she first heard were true. The woman documented as her mother is not her mother after all, and her father didn't simply abandon her as she'd been led to believe. These discoveries encourage Miró to become a public speaker on adoption, yet the voice of this section lacks the intimate tone of the first. Regardless, Miró's moving attempt to create a personal history from two distant worlds and a few scattered facts will enlighten readers about the emotional journey many adopted children undertake when searching into their past.

****Father Greg and the Homeboys by Celeste Fremon**

Fremon, a writer for the Los Angeles Times, presents a beautifully composed exposition of the work that Father Greg Boyle, S.J., has done with young Latino gang members of East Los Angeles. Boyle has received national recognition for his dedicated efforts to redirect lives: finding jobs and decent alternative schooling and offering unqualified support and love for kids whose homes are so emotionally impoverished or destructive that gang affiliation is a surrogate family tie. Boyle couldn't save all the "homies" from the results of gang-banging, gun attacks, alcohol, dope, and prison, but they knew he was there, and many have made it to responsible adulthood. Interspersed with the descriptive narrative are first-person vignettes from some of the young people. In her three years of involved research.

****Finding Fish by Antwoine Q. Fisher**

Antwone Quenton Fisher was raised in institutions from the moment his single mother gave birth to him in prison. As a foster child, he suffered more than a dozen years of emotional abandonment and physical abuse, until he escaped and forged a life on the streets. And just as his life was about to hit rock bottom, Antwone enlisted in the U.S. Navy -- a decision that would ultimately save him. There, he became a man and discovered a loving family he never had. Through it all, Antwone refused to allow his spirit to be broken and never gave up his dreams of a better day. A miraculous true story of one courageous man's journey from abandonment and abuse to extraordinary success, here is a modern-day, African-American *Oliver Twist* you will never forget.

****Gandhi, Great Soul by John B. Severance**

Severance sets the stage for his chronological narrative with an opening chapter on Gandhi's legacy, including the impact of his message on the likes of Nelson Mandela and Martin Luther King, Jr. He then portrays the pivotal experiences, public actions, and private struggles of the man. Gandhi's developing awareness and subsequent move toward self-esteem, self-control, and self-rule are interwoven with the threads of historical events, religious and class struggles, and his relationships with contemporaries and family. In a refreshing

departure from stock photographs and textbook trivia, the book reveals the results of on-location, primary-source research. The concluding close-up of Gandhi with a young child and another of his few possessions at death are particularly compelling. Little else is available for young people regarding this important leader that combines this book's depth of scholarship, clarity, and the human element.

****Glass Caste: A Memoir by Jeannette Walls**

Walls chronicles her upbringing at the hands of eccentric, nomadic parents--Rose Mary, her frustrated-artist mother, and Rex, her brilliant, alcoholic father. To call the elder Walls's childrearing style laissez faire would be putting it mildly. As Rose Mary and Rex, motivated by whims and paranoia, uprooted their kids time and again, the youngsters (Walls, her brother and two sisters) were left largely to their own devices. But while Rex and Rose Mary firmly believed children learned best from their own mistakes, they themselves never seemed to do so, repeating the same disastrous patterns that eventually landed them on the streets.

The Greatness of Girls by Susan Strong

Behind almost every inspiring woman is a tale of the shy, fearful, or searching girl she once was and what transformed her life. The Greatness of Girls captures these poignant moments from women such as Eleanor Roosevelt, Golda Meir, Queen Latifah, Frida Kahlo, Maya Angelou, and Judy Blume, and provides the perfect encouragement for preteens on up who are eager to blossom in the world. This book is about hope. It offers personal, little-known anecdotes as beacons of light for young readers who are working through adolescent struggles

Gutsy Girls: Young Women who Dare by Tina Schwager, Michele Schuerger

In the first section, the authors profile 25 young women between the ages of 14 and 24 who have demonstrated considerable mental and physical courage in pursuit of personal challenges. Their adventures range from physically daring, including skydiving and mountain climbing, to those that include public service, such as home building for Habitat for Humanity. Each profile offers a personal narrative, brief biographical information, and two black-and-white photographs as well as a list of titles, Web sites, and organizations for readers who might want to find more information on a specific activity. Part two, "How to Be Gutsy Yourself," offers information on getting one's mind and body in shape.

****Hands of My Father: A Hearing Boy, His Deaf Parents, and the Language of Love by Myron**

Uhlberg

Touching story of a boy, born to stone deaf parents who had to learn to communicate with them through signs, and with the rest of the world through speech, without their help. He had to become an "adult" as a very young child as his father took him with him when he had to communicate with the speaking world. Really is a touching story, and I think some of our kids, with severe family problems could relate to the boy in this story.

****Hole in My Life by Jack Gantos**

A gaping hole of misery is what popular young adult author Jack Gantos remembers when he thinks back to 1972, "the bleakest year of my life." Just 20 years old, Gantos was in a medium security prison for his participation in a get-rich-quick drug scam. Scared silly by the violence he saw around him daily, Gantos's only lifeline was a battered copy of *The Brothers Karamazov*, which he painstakingly turned into an impromptu journal by scratching his own thoughts into the tiny spaces between the lines. There, he recorded both his fears and his dream of someday writing a book of his own. Before prison, Gantos had penned a scattered myriad of journals, but had never been able to pull them together into a cohesive narrative. It was during his time behind bars that he found himself growing into a focused, diligent writer who eschewed drugs for the bigger high of watching his words fill the hole once and for all.

Hope in the Unseen, An American Odyssey from the Inner City to the Ivy League by Ron Suskind

Cedric Jennings is the illegitimate son of a drug dealer/ex-con and a hardworking, badly paid mother; it is her single-minded vision to have the boy escape the mean ghetto streets unscathed. Cedric has listened to her and is, as the book opens, an A+ student at a run-down Washington, DC, high school where he treads a thin line between being tagged a nerd and being beaten by gang leaders. Suskind, a Wall Street Journal reporter, follows the African-American boy through his last two years of high school and freshman year at Brown University. Inspirational sermons at a Pentecostal church, guidance from his mother, a love of black music and a refuge in the logic of math keep him focused on his goal of getting a great college education. Despite many low moments and setbacks, this story is one of triumph within both cultures, black and white

Into the Wild by John Krakauer

After graduating from Emory University in Atlanta in 1992, top student and athlete Christopher McCandless abandoned his possessions, gave his entire \$24,000 savings account to charity and hitchhiked to Alaska, where he went to live in the wilderness. Four months later, he turned up dead. His diary, letters and two notes found at a remote campsite tell of his desperate effort to survive, apparently stranded by an injury and slowly starving.

An Island Like Yours: Stories of the Barrio by Judith Ortiz Cofer

"Dating is not a concept adults in our barrio really get." The contemporary teenage voices are candid, funny, weary, and irreverent in these stories about immigrant kids caught between their Puerto Rican families and the pull and push of the American dream. The young people hang out on the street in front of the tenement El Building in Paterson, New Jersey, where the radios are always turned full blast to the Spanish station and the thin walls can't hold the dramas of the real-life *telenovelas*. As in her autobiographical adult collection *Silent Dancing* (1990), Cofer depicts a diverse neighborhood that's warm, vital, and nurturing, and that can be hell if you don't fit in.

It's Not About the Bike: My Journey Back to Life by Lance Armstrong

The ascent triggered something in me. As I churned upward, I reflected on my life, back to all points, my childhood, my early races, my illness and how it changed me... I saw my life as a whole. I saw the pattern and the privilege of it, and the purpose of it, too. It was simply this: I was meant for a long, hard climb. People around the world have found inspiration in the story of Lance Armstrong—a world-class athlete nearly struck down in his prime, who fought back to win the world's most grueling test of cycling. *It's Not About the Bike* is the amazing story of Armstrong's long, hard climb from inauspicious beginnings through early success, near-fatal cancer, recovery, victory in the Tour de France, marriage, and first-time fatherhood. Told in Armstrong's down-to-earth Texas style, it's an unforgettable story about tragedy, transformation and ultimate triumph.

Jarhead : A Marine's Chronicle of the Gulf War and Other Battles by Anthony Swofford

Former sniper's debut is a worthy addition to the battlefield memoir genre. ...Swofford describes the sheer terror of being fired upon by Iraqi troops; the elite special forces warrior freely admits wetting himself once rockets start exploding around his unit's encampment. But the adrenaline of battle is fleeting, and Swofford shows how it's in the waiting that soldiers are really made.

My Life in Dog Years by Gary Paulsen

This book has scenes of Paulsen's life viewed in terms of the dogs who graced them. The author had a rough-and-tumble childhood as the son of alcoholics with dogs as his lifelong friends. Profiling such dogs as Dirk, who "had Airedale crossed with hound crossed with alligator" and who unfailingly protected him from hoodlums who routinely menaced him in his youth, he both reveals himself and pays vivid tribute to his canine companions.

One Bullet Away: The Making of a Marine Officer by Nathaniel C. Fick

The global war on terrorism has spawned some excellent combat narratives—mostly by journalists. Warriors, like Marine Corps officer Fick, bring a different and essential perspective to the story. A classics major at Dartmouth, Fick joined the Marines in 1998 because he "wanted to go on a great adventure... to do something so hard that no one could ever talk shit to me." Thus begins his odyssey through the grueling regimen of Marine training and wartime deployments—an odyssey that he recounts in vivid detail in this candid and fast-paced memoir.

****Pursuit of Happyness by Chris Gardner**

Gardner chronicles his long, painful, ultimately rewarding journey from inner-city Milwaukee to the pinnacle of Wall Street. Born in 1954, he grew up like too many young blacks: poor and fatherless, with a mother strong on children and church, yet soft on men. His violent, hateful stepfather refused to accept Gardner as a stepson and thwarted him at every turn. By his own account, Gardner was a good kid who got into trouble occasionally, but stayed on a steady, upward track. After a stint in the navy, he set his sights on a medical career, but a foray into sales led him to the stock and bond market. Gardner's own weakness was women, and

when one of them left him with a son, it led to a period of homelessness on the San Francisco streets. Determination and resourcefulness brought father and son not merely to safety but to the top.

A Summer's Life by Gary Soto

Gary Soto writes that when he was five "what I knew best was at ground level." In this lively collection of short essays, Soto takes his reader to a ground-level perspective, recreating in vivid detail the sights, sounds, smells, and textures he knew growing up in his Fresno, California, neighborhood. The "things" of his boyhood tie it all together: his Buddha "spotted with gold," the taps of his shoes and the "engines of sparks that lived beneath my soles," his worn tennies smelling of "summer grass, asphalt, the moist sock breathing the defeat of baseball." The child's world is made up of small things--small, very important things.

****This Boy's Life by Tobias Wolff**

Fiction writer Tobias Wolff electrified critics with his scarifying 1989 memoir, which many deemed as notable for its artful structure and finely wrought prose as for the events it describes. The story is pretty grim: Teenaged Wolff moves with his divorced mother from Florida to Utah to Washington State to escape her violent boyfriend. When she remarries, Wolff finds himself in a bitter battle of wills with his abusive stepfather, a contest in which the two prove to be more evenly matched than might have been supposed. Deception, disguise, and illusion are the weapons the young man learns to employ as he grows up--not bad training for a writer-to-be.

Tuesdays with Morrie by Mitch Albom

Do you know someone older who understood you when you were young and searching, who helped you see the world as a more profound place, and gave you advice to help you make your way through it? For Mitch Albom, that person was Morrie Schwartz, his college professor. Even though Mitch lost track of Morrie for almost 20 years, he got a second chance to know him. Mitch rediscovered Morrie in the last months of the older man's life- as he was slowly dying from Lou Gehrig's disease. Knowing he was dying, Morrie visited with Mitch in his study every Tuesday to explore Morrie's insights on life and on his impending death.

One Bullet Away: The Making of a Marine Officer by Nathaniel C. Fick

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Tattoos on the Heart by Greg Boyle S.J.

As a pastor working in a neighborhood with the highest concentration of murderous gang activity in Los Angeles, Gregory Boyle created an organization to provide jobs, job training, and encouragement so that young people could work together and learn the mutual respect that comes from collaboration. *Tattoos on the Heart* is a breathtaking series of parables distilled from his twenty years in the barrio. Arranged by theme and filled with sparkling humor and glowing generosity, these essays offer a stirring look at how full our lives could be if we practiced compassion.

Books about Teens

****Born Confused by Tenuja Desai Hidier**

Dimple Lala, a New Jersey teen interested in photography, has been confused about her identity since she entered the world the "wrong way," causing her mother "twelve treacherous hours of painful labor." Her fascination with photography reveals Dimple's keen sense of perception as well as her role as an observer rather than a participant. "Not quite Indian, and not quite American," Dimple unsuccessfully tries to blend in, riding on the coattails of her blue-eyed, blonde best friend, Gwyn... On one level, the book explores the growing pains, rebellious phases, peer pressures and first love experienced universally by teens. On a deeper level, it celebrates a harmonious blending of cultures as it traces one adolescent's bumpy trek towards self-actualization. If a few subplots take the main action on a slight detour (e.g., Gwyn's relationship with her high school-cum-college boyfriend, etc.), the sparkling prose will carry readers along.

Buried Onions by Gary Soto

Eddie can always smell onions in the air--the sharp bitter odor of hopelessness and anger that haunts the poor side of Fresno. "I had a theory about those vapors, which were not released by the sun's heat but by a huge onion buried under the city. This onion made us cry. Tears leapt from our eyelashes and stained our faces." Eddie tries to escape from the poverty and gang society that surrounds him by taking vocational classes and staying away from his old "cholos," (gang friends).

The Dive From Clausen's Pier by Ann Packer

Carrie Bell is about to break up with her boyfriend when he has an accident and is paralyzed. The devastating accident turns Carrie's world of family, friends, and love upside down. Soon, Carrie feels conflicted between her obligation to fulfill the needs of others and her inner desire to discover herself and her potential. Carrie embarks on a journey to New York where she discovers the necessity of change and the degrees to which individuals owe the people they love.

****Do Hard Things: A Teenage Rebellion Against Low Expectations by Alex Harris**

Adult expectations for youth are too low. And these twins are out to raise them. Don't adapt to the low cultural expectations for youth. Set high ones. Youth can become examples for adults. Think that way. Dream that way. Or as the Harris brothers would say, 'Rebel against low expectations.

Efrain's Secret by Sophia Quintero

To 17-year-old Latino valedictorian-to-be Efrain, the number 1650 is like a death sentence. With an SAT score like that, there's no way he is going to get into Harvard and escape the poverty that has so exhausted his single mother, estranged Dominican father, and South Bronx community at large. With a \$32,000 tuition staring him in the face, Efrain turns to his old pal Nestor, a dropout drug peddler who hooks him up with a similar gig. Even the arrival of a new girl in school, a gutsy Katrina survivor named Candace, can't knock Efrain from his resolve to earn some serious cash.

****Enrique's Journey by Sonia Nazario**

Soon to be turned into an HBO dramatic series, Nazario's account of a 17-year-old boy's harrowing attempt to find his mother in America won two Pulitzer Prizes when it first came out in the *Los Angeles Times*. Greatly expanded with fresh research, the story also makes a gripping book, one that viscerally conveys the experience of illegal immigration from Central America. Enrique's mother, Lourdes, left him in Honduras when he was five years old because she could barely afford to feed him and his sister, much less send them to school. Her plan was to sneak into the United States for a few years, work hard, send and save money, then move back to Honduras to be with her children. But 12 years later, she was still living in the U.S. and wiring money home. That's when Enrique became one of the thousands of children and teens who try to enter the U.S. illegally each year. Riding on the tops of freight trains through Mexico, these young migrants are preyed upon by gangsters and corrupt government officials. Many of them are mutilated by the journey; some go crazy.

Gingerbread by Rachel Cohn

The 16-year-old "recovering hellion" (as her stepfather refers to her) who narrates Cohn's debut novel, breathes a joie de vivre into this story of her bicoastal family. Cyd Charisse (named for the dancer/actress), a wealthy and wild love child, begins her story after being booted out of boarding school. Nearly the first half of the novel is set in San Francisco, where she's having trouble settling back into life with a mother obsessed with weight and a perfect house, and a boyfriend, Shrimp, who suddenly wants his space. Her mother and stepdad agree to send her to her biological father in New York City, whom she's only met once (when he gave her Gingerbread, a still-treasured rag doll). Cohn creates a vivid sense of place and culture on both coasts and, although Cyd doesn't find the perfect family in either place, she is able to find a more mature version of herself. Plus, she learns to appreciate both sides of her family; she's even able to finally tell her mother about her secret abortion. Cohn covers a lot of ground, from prep school flashbacks to Cyd's discovery of the secrets on her father's side of the family. Some of the characters and plot points are more developed than others; for instance, Cyd's elderly hip and clairvoyant friend, Sugar Pie, and Shrimp may seem more vivid to readers than Cyd's younger West Coast half-siblings. In the end, it's Cyd's creativity and energy that keep the story on course, and her magnetic narrative will keep readers hooked.

Go Ask Alice by Anonymous

The torture and hell of adolescence has rarely been captured as clearly as it is in this classic diary by an anonymous, addicted teen. Lonely, awkward, and under extreme pressure from her "perfect" parents, "Anonymous" swings madly between optimism and despair. When one of her new friends spikes her drink with LSD, this diarist begins a frightening journey into darkness. The drugs take the edge off her loneliness and self-hate, but they also turn her life into a nightmare of exalting highs and excruciating lows. Although there is still some question as to whether this diary is real or fictional, there is *no question* that it has made a profound impact on millions of readers during the more than 25 years it has been in print. Despite a few dated references to hippies and some expired slang, *Go Ask Alice* still offers a jolting chronicle of a teenager's life spinning out of control.

****Letters to a Young Brother: MANIFEST Your Destiny by Hill Harper**

A young black actor and graduate of Brown University and Harvard Law School, offers similar inspiration to young men clamoring for advice and encouragement at a time when popular culture offers little positive direction. Interspersed throughout are e-mail inquiries from young men and Harper's responses and those of other celebrities, including Nas, Venus Williams, and Barack Obama. He devotes separate chapters to school and work, sex, and life aspirations, tackling such issues as single parenthood, sexually transmitted diseases, the allure of materialism, and the power of words and faith. Harper offers his personal story: a young man brought up by a demanding father, who developed a relationship with his mother only as he grew older. He views the youth of today as an evolved species, like the latest model car, with improvements that come from the experiences of those who came before. Although aimed at young black men, this book, with its contemporary language and approach, should have appeal for youth of both sexes and all races

****Letters to a Young Sister: DeFINE your Destiny by Hill Harper**

In his follow up to his ALA award-winning self-help *Letters to a Young Brother*, actor and author Harper uses an epistolary format, interrupted by youth-centric digressions, to capture the hearts and minds of his audience, young women. Each chapter is a letter beginning with an uplifting quote and post-scripted with a question posed via email (the formatting is lifted whole) and answered by a famous, successful woman like Nikki Giovanni, Michelle Obama, Ruby Dee and Eve. Writing in a conversational style, Harper focuses on a variety of different issues loosely grouped into topics like blues, love, family relationships, saving money and appreciating life (though not overly religious, Harper isn't shy with his beliefs).

****Love, Stargirl by Jerry Spinelli**

This brilliant sequel to *Stargirl* takes place a year later. Now living in Pennsylvania, Stargirl, 15, continues to pine for Leo, who dumped her, and struggles to make a place for herself in her new community. Fortunately, her eclectic neighbors, who include Dootsie, a five-year-old "human bean"; Betty Lou, an agoraphobic divorcée; and Perry Delloplane, an amiable thief, draw her back into life and happiness. Written in diary format-the "world's longest letter," as Stargirl calls it-this novel is as charming and unique as its sensitive, nonconformist heroine. Addressing loss, growing pains, and staying true to oneself, this stellar follow-up is both profound and funny.

Monster by Walter Dean Myers

"Monster" is what the prosecutor called 16-year-old Steve Harmon for his supposed role in the fatal shooting of a convenience-store owner. But was Steve really the lookout who gave the "all clear" to the murderer, or was he just in the wrong place at the wrong time? In this innovative novel by Walter Dean Myers, the reader becomes both juror and witness during the trial of Steve's life. To calm his nerves as he sits in the courtroom, aspiring filmmaker Steve chronicles the proceedings in movie script format. Interspersed throughout his screenplay are journal writings that provide insight into Steve's life before the murder and his feelings about being held in prison during the trial. "They take away your shoelaces and your belt so you can't kill yourself no matter how bad it is. I guess making you live is part of the punishment." Myers proves with *Monster* that he has kept up with both the struggles and the lingo of today's teens. Steve is an adolescent caught up in the violent circumstances of an adult world--a situation most teens can relate to on some level. Readers will no doubt be attracted to the novel's handwriting-style typeface, emphasis on dialogue, and fast-paced courtroom action. By weaving together Steve's journal entries and his script, Myers has given the first-person voice a new twist and added yet another worthy volume to his already admirable body of work.

****The Perks of Being a Wallflower by Stephen Chbosky**

Stephen Chbosky is the resounding accuracy with which the author captures the voice of a boy teetering on the brink of adulthood. Charlie is a freshman. And while he's not the biggest geek in the school, he is by no means popular. He's a wallflower--shy and introspective, and intelligent beyond his years, if not very savvy in the social arts. We learn about Charlie through the letters he writes to someone of undisclosed name, age, and gender, a stylistic technique that adds to the heart-wrenching earnestness saturating this teen's story. Charlie encounters the same struggles that many kids face in high school--how to make friends, the intensity of a crush, family tensions, a first relationship, exploring sexuality, experimenting with drugs--but he must also deal with his best friend's recent suicide.

The Outsiders by S. E. Hinton

According to Ponyboy, there are two kinds of people in the world: greasers and socs. A soc (short for "social") has money, can get away with just about anything, and has an attitude longer than a limousine. A greaser, on the other hand, always lives on the outside and needs to watch his back. Ponyboy is a greaser, and he's always been proud of it, even willing to rumble against a gang of socs for the sake of his fellow greasers--until one terrible night when his friend Johnny kills a soc. The murder gets under Ponyboy's skin, causing his bifurcated world to crumble and teaching him that pain feels the same whether a soc or a greaser. This classic, written by S. E. Hinton when she was 16 years old, is as profound today as it was when it was first published in 1967.

****Rule of the Bone by Russell Banks**

The first half, a starkly realistic, powerful portrait of a troubled adolescent whose life has spiraled out of control, packs a visceral punch. Flunking out of school and already hooked on drugs, the 14-year-old narrator, secretly molested by his stepfather, emotionally abandoned by his weak mother, leaves his mobile home in the depressed upstate New York community of Au Sable and becomes a homeless mall rat. In a burst of bravado, he acquires a crossed bones tattoo, changes his name from Chappie to Bone, and attempts to find some focus in his dead-end existence. Convinced that he is destined for a criminal career, Bone vents his anger in acts of senseless destruction.

The Skin I'm In by Sharon G. Flake

Seventh-grader Maleeka Madison is miserable when a new teacher comes to her depressed inner-city school. Miss Saunders evidently is rich, self-assured in spite of the white birthmark across her black skin, and prone to getting into kids' faces about both their behavior and their academic potential. Black and bright, Maleeka is so swamped by her immediate problems that Miss Saunders's attentions nearly capsize her stability. The girl's mother has just emerged from a two-year period of intense mourning for her dead husband, during which time her daughter has provided her with physical and moral support with no adult assistance. At school, Maleeka endures mean-spirited teasing about the darkness of her skin and her unstylish clothing. She seeks solace in writing an extended creative piece, at Miss Saunders's instigation, and also in the company of a powerful clique of nasty girls. Told in Maleeka's voice, this first novel bristles with attitude that is both genuine and alarming. The young teen understands too well that her brains aren't as valuable as the social standing that she doesn't have. In the end, she is able to respond positively to Miss Saunders; she also becomes socially anointed through the affections of the most popular boy in the school. This message rings true in spite of the fact that Maleeka's salvation isn't exactly politically correct. Young teens will appreciate Flake's authenticity and perhaps realize how to learn from Maleeka's struggle for security and self-assurance.

Ten Things I Hate About Me - Randa Abdel-Fattah

Jamilah Towfeek hides her Lebanese-Muslim background from the other kids at her Australian school "to avoid people assuming I fly planes into buildings as a hobby." She dyes her hair blonde, wears blue contacts and stands by when popular kids make racist remarks. Passing as "Jamie" is fraught with difficulties: she can't invite friends to her house, lies to cover up her widower dad's strict rules and reveals her true self only to an anonymous boy she meets online (her e-mail address is "Ten_Things_I_Hate_About_Me"). Tensions at home and school culminate when the band she plays in at her madrassa (Islamic school) is hired to perform at her 10th-grade formal. Abdel-Fattah (*Does My Head Look Big in This?*) follows a predictable pattern and uses familiar devices, such as the understanding teacher ("If [your friends] don't know the real you, then you've already lost them"). On the other hand, the author brings a welcome sense of humor to Jamilah's insights about her culture, and she is equally adept at more delicate scenes, for example, Jamilah's father recounting memories of Jamilah's mother. For all the defining details, Jamilah is a character teens will readily relate to.

Math/Science

Celebrating Women in Mathematics and Science by Miriam Cooney

A collective biography detailing the struggles and triumphs of women in the fields of mathematics and sciences from ancient times to the present. Particular attention is paid to the subjects' younger years, and to the character traits that contributed to their successes.

Cod: A Short History of the Fish that Changed the World and Salt by Mark Kurlansky

You probably enjoy eating codfish, but reading about them? Mark Kurlansky has written a fabulous book--well worth your time--about a fish that probably has mattered more in human history than any other. The cod helped inspire the discovery and exploration of North America. It had a profound impact upon the economic development of New England and eastern Canada from the earliest times. Today, however, overfishing is a constant threat. Kurlansky sprinkles his well-written and occasionally humorous history with interesting asides on the possible origin of the word codpiece and dozens of fish recipes.

****Darwin's Black Box: The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution By Michael J. Behe**

Michael J. Behe, a biochemist at Lehigh University, presents here a scientific argument for the existence of God. Examining the evolutionary theory of the origins of life, he can go part of the way with Darwin--he accepts the idea that species have been differentiated by the mechanism of natural selection from a common ancestor. But he thinks that the essential randomness of this process can explain evolutionary development only at the macro level, not at the micro level of his expertise. Within the biochemistry of living cells, he argues, life is "irreducibly complex." This is the last black box to be opened, the end of the road for science. Faced with complexity at this level, Behe suggests that it can only be the product of "intelligent design."

Genome: The autobiography of a species in 23 chapters By Matthew Ridley

This popular science book takes readers on a tour of the human genome, focusing each chapter on a newly discovered gene on the human body's 23 chromosomes and discussing the implications of the Human Genome Project. This examination offers insight into the outcome of the Human Genome Project. By picking one newly discovered gene from each pair of chromosomes and telling its story, the author recounts the history of our species. Can genes be used to determine whether or not someone will be a criminal? Can genes be used to determine what the intelligence of a child will be based on its parents? This book helps you to understand how the Human Genome Milestones may affect your life.

Gorillas by Paul Hermann Burgel and Manfred Hartwig

People are fascinating to humans because of the close genetic relationship we share with them. Although the endangered status of the gorilla is explored here, it is not the focus of the book. Facts are not laid out in sharp, exquisite full-color photographs and an animated text. Readers learn about the rainforests in which mountain gorilla families live in the Virunga parks in central Africa. This book allows a peek at the habitat and the daily lives of these creatures as they eat, play, give birth, and sleep.

****Handle with Care by Jodi Piccoult**

Charlotte and Sean O'Keefe's daughter, Willow, was born with brittle bone disease, a condition that requires Charlotte to act as full-time caregiver and has strained their emotional and financial limits. Willow's teenaged half-sister, Amelia, suffers as well, overshadowed by Willow's needs and lost in her own adolescent turmoil. When Charlotte decides to sue for wrongful birth in order to obtain a settlement to ensure Willow's future, the already strained family begins to implode. Not only is the defendant Charlotte's longtime friend, but the case requires Charlotte and Sean to claim that had they known of Willow's condition, they would have terminated the pregnancy, a statement that strikes at the core of their faith and family.

****Junk Science: An Overdue Indictment of Government, Industry and Faith Groups that Twist Science for their Own Gain by Dan Agin**

The American public is suffering from a rampage against reason by special interests in government, commerce, and the faith industry. In *Junk Science*, Dan Agin offers *an overdue indictment* of the groups that twist science for their own gain. Provocative, comprehensive, and hard-hitting, Agin argues from the center

that we will pay a heavy price for the follies of people who consciously distort the public's understanding of the real world. With entertaining candidness, he reveals the data faking, reality ignoring, fear mongering, and outright lying that contribute to intentionally manufactured public ignorance. Agin outs the factions twisting scientific data to maintain riches and power in sections including: -- "Buyer Beware" (genetically modified foods, aging, and tobacco companies) -- "Medical Follies" (chiropractics, health care, talk therapy) -- "Poison and Bombs in the Greenhouse" (pollution, warfare, global warming) -- "Religion, Embryos, and Cloning" -- "Genes, Behavior, and Race" We already pay a heavy price for many groups' conscious manipulation of the public's understanding of science, and *Junk Science* arms us with understanding, cutting through the fabric of lies and setting the record straight.

****The Origins of Virtue: Human Instincts and the Evolution of Cooperation by Matt Ridley**

Human life, scientific journalist Matt Ridley suggests, is a complex balancing act: we behave with self-interest foremost in mind, but also in ways that do not harm, and sometimes even benefit, others. This behavior, in a strange way, makes us good. It also makes us unique in the animal world, where self-interest is far more pronounced. "The essential virtuousness of human beings is proved not by parallels in the animal kingdom, but by the very lack of convincing animal parallels," Ridley writes. How we got to be so virtuous over millions of years of evolution is the theme of this entertaining book of popular science, which will be of interest to any student of human nature.

****The Science of God: The Convergence of Scientific and Biblical Wisdom by Gerald L. Schroeder**

Schroeder (Genesis and the Big Bang, LJ 9/15/90) is an Israeli physicist and scholar of Genesis who maintains that a properly understood Bible and a properly understood science provide consistent sets of data. In recent decades, scientific discoveries in cosmology, paleontology, and quantum physics do not demonstrate or prove the activity of God, but they do remove conflict with that activity. Rapprochement occurs when believers read the Bible on the Bible's terms, avoiding literalism, and when scientists realize that science is powerless to pronounce on a purpose for life. Schroeder is very lucid in explaining difficult scientific concepts, such as the passage of time according to the theory of relativity, and religious data, such as the original Hebrew words. Schroeder's careful and responsible handling of the data on origins from science and Genesis 1, combined with a fresh, judicious correlation between the two, is compelling.

****My Sister's Keeper by Jodi Piccoul**

Kate Fitzgerald has a rare form of leukemia. Her sister, Anna, was conceived to provide a donor match for procedures that become increasingly invasive. At 13, Anna hires a lawyer so that she can sue her parents for the right to make her own decisions about how her body is used when a kidney transplant is planned.

Phineas Gage: A Gruesome but True Story about Brain Science by John Fleischman

Phineas Gage was truly a man with a hole in his head. Phineas, a railroad construction foreman, was blasting rock near Cavendish, Vermont, in 1848 when a thirteen-pound iron rod was shot through his brain. Miraculously, he survived to live another eleven years and become a textbook case in brain science. At the time, Phineas Gage seemed to completely recover from his accident. He could walk, talk, work, and travel, but he was changed. Gage "was no longer Gage," said his Vermont doctor, meaning that the old Phineas was dependable and well liked, and the new Phineas was crude and unpredictable. What happened and what didn't happen inside the brain of Phineas Gage will tell you a lot about how your brain works and how you act human.

The Snow Leopard by Peter Matthiessen

In the autumn of 1973, the writer Peter Matthiessen set out in the company of zoologist George Schaller on a hike that would take them 250 miles into the heart of the Himalayan region of Dolpo, "the last enclave of pure Tibetan culture on earth." Their voyage was in quest of one of the world's most elusive big cats, the snow leopard of high Asia, a creature so rarely spotted as to be nearly mythical; Schaller was one of only two Westerners known to have seen a snow leopard in the wild since 1950. Published in 1978, *The Snow Leopard* is rightly regarded as a classic of modern nature writing. Guiding his readers through steep-walled canyons and over tall mountains, Matthiessen offers a narrative that is shot through with metaphor and mysticism, and his arduous search for the snow leopard becomes a vehicle for reflections on all manner of matters of life and death. In the process, *The Snow Leopard* evolves from an already exquisite book of natural history and travel into a grand, Buddhist-tinged parable of our search for meaning. By the end of their expedition, having seen wolves, foxes, rare mountain sheep, and other denizens of the Himalayas, and having seen many signs of the

snow leopard but not the cat itself, Schaller muses, "We've seen so much, maybe it's better if there are some things that we don't see."

****The Third Chimpanzee: The Evolution and Future of the Human Animal by Jared Diamond**

Jared Diamond states the theme of his book up-front: "How the human species changed, within a short time, from just another species of big mammal to a world conqueror; and how we acquired the capacity to reverse all that progress overnight." *The Third Chimpanzee* is, in many ways, a prequel to Diamond's prize-winning [Guns, Germs, and Steel](#). While *Guns* examines "the fates of human societies," this work surveys the longer sweep of human evolution, from our origin as just another chimpanzee a few million years ago. Diamond writes: It's obvious that humans are unlike all animals. It's also obvious that we're a species of big mammal down to the minutest details of our anatomy and our molecules. That contradiction is the most fascinating feature of the human species.

****What It Means to be 98% Chimpanzee: Apes, People and their Genes by Jonathan Marks**

Humans share about 98 percent of our genetic makeup with chimps, which would be impressive, biological anthropologist Marks says, if we could figure out what it means. We also share about half our genes with fish and about a third with daffodils, but almost no one argues that anything can be learned from fish and flowers about human behavior or that fish and flowers should have human rights. Both are advocated for chimps and the other great apes, from what, Marks demonstrates, are pretty spongy grounds, since we know hardly anything about how genes form bodies. We are also told that genes for homosexuality have been found, but, as Marks shows, the studies said to have found them aren't genetic studies, can't be replicated, are faultily grounded, and characteristically approach homosexuality as if it were a disease. Furthermore, scientists who should know better waste their time, our money, and lots of goodwill on research shaped by racialism and other forms of what Marks calls folk heredity, which may be culturally interesting but is scientifically worthless.

The Velocity of Honey by Jay Ingram

Why doesn't honey flow out in all directions across your toast? How do stones skip? When visiting a new place, why does it seem to take longer to get there than to return? Catching flies, the ATM and your brain, and speeding to a stop are all scientific curiosities. The explanation behind these and other everyday events are presented from a scientific and entertaining perspective.

History

All Quiet on the Western Front by Erich Maria Remarque

Paul Baumer and his friends begin World War I as teenagers so sure of the justice of their cause and the glory that they join Germany's Iron Youth to fight. This twenty-year-old boy faces trench warfare on the front lines for nearly three years escaping the gas, the shelling, and the bullets. Most of his friends have not. Now, like his close comrades, he has become a life-less killing machine. For Paul, life is one moment of intense fear and death, the next of boredom and intense sorrow. This novel portrays the grotesque wounds, suffering, and death of the soldiers both in the field and in the hospital. It also portrays Paul's struggle as his beliefs about war and who is "right" change.

Black Boy by Richard Wright

Autobiography by Richard Wright, published in 1945 and considered to be one of his finest works. The book is sometimes considered a fictionalized autobiography or an autobiographical novel because of its use of novelistic techniques. *Black Boy* describes vividly Wright's often harsh, hardscrabble boyhood and youth in rural Mississippi and in Memphis, Tenn. When the work was first published, many white critics viewed *Black Boy* primarily as an attack on racist Southern white society. From the 1960s the work came to be understood as the story of Wright's coming of age and development as a writer whose race, though a primary component of his life, was but one of many that formed him as an artist.

Black Duck by Janet Taylor Lisle

A teen's determination to be published in the local paper leads him to Ruben Hart's front door and an unlikely friendship. The elderly man has a mysterious past, and David soon becomes wrapped up in his tale of how he played an integral part in the adventures surrounding the legendary rum-running ship called the *Black Duck*. In 1929, in Newport, RI, Ruben and his friend Jeddy, 14, found a body on the beach. By the time they convinced the authorities to check it out, the dead man had disappeared, and soon both the New York and Boston mobs were after Ruben. The author explores the subject of Prohibition as well as various underlying

social themes. She shows the difficulty of staying honest when everyone else is breaking the law and when local authorities all seem to be in on the action. Another issue involves the Coast Guard's shooting of three men believed to be rumrunners, and whether the murders were justified.

The Boy Who Dared by Susan Campbell Bartoletti

In the newly formed Third Reich, Hitler's initial political doctrine is filled with hopeful solutions for a country plagued with unemployment, poverty, and a post-World War I feeling of defeat. Propaganda and promises quickly turn to oppressive new laws including the required participation in the Hitler Youth. Helmuth Hübener enters the program and is at once impressed with the bravado, shiny uniforms, boots, and patriotic fever sweeping the country. But his Mormon-based teachings trigger questions in his mind about the reality behind the regime's invasions of neighboring countries, mistreatment of Jewish citizens, and closely controlled media. He creates an underground newsletter with information gathered from BBC reports using an illegal shortwave radio. Bartoletti offers another perspective on the Holocaust, demonstrating that even if the effort proves unsuccessful, the courage and convictions of a minority should be motivation to speak the truth rather than remain silent. It's a message that must be continually emphasized as a lasting legacy of the Holocaust.

Code Talker: A Novel about the Navajo Marines of World War Two by Joseph Bruchac

Six-year-old Ned Begay leaves his Navajo home for boarding school, where he learns the English language and American ways. At 16, he enlists in the U.S. Marines during World War II and is trained as a code talker, using his native language to radio battlefield information and commands in a code that was kept secret until 1969.

****Country of My Skull: Guilt, Sorrow and the Limits of Forgiveness in South Africa by Antjie Krog**

In the year following South Africa's first democratic elections, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established to investigate human rights abuses committed under the apartheid regime. Presided over by God's own diplomat, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the first hearings of the commission were held in April 1996. During the following two years of hearings, South Africans were daily exposed to revelations and public testimony about their traumatic past, and--like the world that looked on--continued to discover that the relationship between truth and reconciliation is far more complex than they had ever imagined.

****Cry the Beloved Country by Alan Paton**

Cry, the Beloved Country is a beautifully told and profoundly compassionate story of the Zulu pastor Stephen Kumalo and his son Absalom, set in the troubled and changing South Africa of the 1940s. The book is written with such keen empathy and understanding that to read it is to share fully in the gravity of the characters' situations. It both touches your heart deeply and inspires a renewed faith in the dignity of mankind. *Cry, the Beloved Country* is a classic tale, passionately African, timeless and universal, and beyond all, selfless.

The Devil's Arithmetic by Jane Yolen

Hannah, 12, is tired of remembering, and is embarrassed by her grandfather, who rants and raves at the mention of the Nazis. Her mother's explanations of how her grandparents and great-aunt lost all family and friends during the Holocaust have little effect. Then, during a Passover Seder, Hannah is chosen to open the door to welcome the prophet Elijah. As she does so, she is transported to a village in Poland in the 1940s, where everyone thinks that she is Chaya, who has just recovered from a serious illness. Soon after, she is captured by the Nazis and taken to a death camp, where she is befriended by a young girl named Rivka, who teaches her how to fight the dehumanizing processes of the camp and hold onto her identity.

****Dreaming in Color, Living in Black and White: Our Own Stories of Growing up Black in America
Edited by Laurel Holliday**

17 African Americans who vary in age from teen to senior citizen recount pivotal, painful experiences from their youth that exposed them to the continuing reality of racism in 20th-century America. Their occupations include church minister, English professor, death-row inmate, school librarian, journalist, psychologist, and college student. The accounts bear witness to cruelties or injustices that shaped their attitudes and futures and propelled them toward retaliation, self-reliance, perseverance, and/or justice. Issues of affirmative action, racial inferiority, cultural differences, slavery, and black pride are raised. An epithet shatters an interracial childhood friendship; a white teacher disparages the abilities of two African-American students; an 11-year-old boy is arrested and brutalized by two sheriffs after robbing a white boy; a shy, outcast sixth grader strikes

out at the racism around her; and a Yale student with limited finances justifies shoplifting books from the college bookstore

****The Essential Gandhi: An Anthology of His Writings on His Life, Work and Ideas**

"Gandhi believed in revealing himself. He regarded secrecy as the enemy of freedom—not only the freedom of India but the freedom of man. He exposed even the innermost personal thoughts which individuals usually regard as private. In nearly a half-century of prolific writing, speaking, and subjecting his ideas to the test of actions, he painted a detailed self-portrait of his mind, heart, and soul.

Farewell to Manzanar by Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston

During World War II a community called Manzanar was hastily created in the high mountain desert country of California, east of the Sierras. Its purpose was to house thousands of Japanese American internees. One of the first families to arrive was the Wakatsukis, who were ordered to leave their fishing business in Long Beach and take with them only the belongings they could carry. For Jeanne Wakatsuki, a seven-year-old child, Manzanar became a way of life in which she struggled and adapted, observed and grew.

Flags of Our Fathers by James Bradley, with Ron Powers

In this unforgettable chronicle of perhaps the most famous moment in American military history, James Bradley has captured the glory, the triumph, the heartbreak, and the legacy of the six men who raised the flag at Iwo Jima. Here is the true story behind the immortal photograph that has come to symbolize the courage and indomitable will of America. In February 1945, at the end of World War II, American Marines plunged into the surf at Iwo Jima—and into history. Through a hail of machine-gun and mortar fire that left the beaches strewn with comrades, they battled to the island's highest peak. And after climbing through a landscape of hell itself, they raised a flag. Now the son of one of the flagraisers has written a powerful account of six very different young men who came together in a moment that will live forever.

Frederick Douglass: Fights for Freedom by Margaret Davidson

This biography is about the life of Frederick Douglass who was born a slave in 1818 on a plantation in Maryland. There Douglass taught himself to read and write. Later, he managed to escape to the North and to freedom. After reaching liberty, Douglass became a persuasive editor, orator, and writer

Incidents of the Life of a Slave Girl

Going After Cacciato by Tim O'Brien

In Tim O'Brien's novel Going After Cacciato, a private deserts his post in Vietnam, intent on walking 8,000 miles to Paris for the peace talks. The remaining members of his squad are sent after him, but what happens then is anybody's guess: "The facts were simple: They went after Cacciato, they chased him into the mountains, they tried hard. They cornered him on a small grassy hill. They surrounded the hill. They waited through the night. And at dawn they shot the sky full of flares and then they moved in.... That was the end of it. The last known fact. What remained were possibilities."

Hiroshima by John Hersey

When the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, few could have anticipated its potential for devastation. Pulitzer prize-winning author John Hersey recorded the stories of Hiroshima residents shortly after the explosion and, in 1946, *Hiroshima* was published, giving the world first-hand accounts from people who had survived it. The words of Miss Sasaki, Dr. Fujii, Mrs. Nakamura, Father Kleinsorg, Dr. Sasaki, and the Reverend Tanimoto gave a face to the statistics that saturated the media and solicited an overwhelming public response.

I Am Rosa Parks by Rosa Parks and James Haskins

This is the autobiographical story of Rosa Parks, the black woman who refused to give up her seat on the bus to a white customer in Birmingham, Alabama, in the early 1960's. Rosa tells of her life growing up in the South and how it felt to be Black in that culture. Following her refusal to give up her seat on the bus, the story recounts the resulting buss boycott as well as the ensuing struggles for civil rights.

I Have Lived A Thousand Years: Growing Up in the Holocaust by Livia Bitton Jackson

Elli Friedmann's recollections of the horror of the Holocaust begin in her native Hungary in 1944 when she and her family are taken from their home and sent on a journey that would eventually lead to Auschwitz. Her memoir covers 1944 to 1945, her thirteenth and fourteenth years, and relates in excruciating detail the living nightmare she endured in cattle cars on endless train rides and in several Nazi concentration camps. Her

stories of humiliation, degradation, and despair vividly express her feelings about her loss of freedom and self. But the wonder of her story is her ability to overcome her nightmare through her spirit and determination never to give up.

****Looking like the Enemy: My Story of Imprisonment in Japanese American Internment Camps :by Mary Matsude Gruenewald**

In 1941, Mary Matsuda Gruenewald was a teenage girl who, like other Americans, reacted with horror to the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Yet soon she and her family were among 110,000 innocent people imprisoned by the U.S. government because of their Japanese ancestry. In this eloquent memoir, she describes both the day-to-day and the dramatic turning points of this profound injustice: what it was like to face an indefinite sentence in crowded, primitive camps; the struggle for survival and dignity; and the strength gained from learning what she was capable of and could do to sustain her family. It is at once a coming-of-age story with interest for young readers, an engaging narrative on a topic still not widely known, and a timely warning for the present era of terrorism.

Manhunt: The 12-Day Chase for Lincoln's Killer by James L. Swanson

In the early days of April 1865, with the bloody war to preserve the union finished, Swanson tells us, Abraham Lincoln was "jubilant." Elsewhere in Washington, the other player in the coming drama of the president's assassination was miserable. Hearing Lincoln's April 10 victory speech, famed actor and Confederate die-hard John Wilkes Booth turned to a friend and remarked with seething hatred, "That means nigger citizenship. Now, by God, I'll put him through." On April 14, Booth did just that. With great power, passion and at a thrilling, breakneck pace, Swanson (*Lincoln's Assassins: Their Trial and Execution*) conjures up an exhausted yet jubilant nation ruptured by grief, stunned by tragedy and hell-bent on revenge. For 12 days, assisted by family and some women smitten by his legendary physical beauty, Booth relied on smarts, stealth and luck to elude the best detectives, military officers and local police the federal government could muster. Taking the reader into the action, the story is shot through with breathless, vivid, even gory detail. With a deft, probing style and no small amount of swagger, Swanson, a member of the Lincoln Bicentennial Commission, has crafted pure narrative pleasure, sure to satisfy the casual reader and Civil War aficionado alike.

Master Harold . . . And the Boys by Athol Fugard

Set in Port Elizabeth, South Africa, in 1950, this powerful three-character play considers the interwoven relationships of young Harold (Hally), the seventeen-year-old son of the white proprietor of a tea room, and two of the African men who have worked there for years. Hally, unable to depend on his alcoholic father, now living in an institution, has always depended on Sam, the waiter, for guidance and knowledge about the real world. They share a long history in which Sam has been very much a father substitute for Hally, who has always shown him respect.

My Brother Sam Is Dead by James and Chris Collier

All his life, Tim Meeker has looked up to his brother Sam. Sam's smart and brave -- and is now a part of the American Revolution. Not everyone in town wants to be a part of the rebellion. Most are supporters of the British -- including Tim and Sam's father. With the war soon raging, Tim knows he'll have to make a choice -- between the Revolutionaries and the Redcoats . . . and between his brother and his father.

Number the Stars by Lois Lowry (170-210)

Ten-year-old Annemarie Johanssen becomes involved in the evacuation of Jews from Denmark when her family hides her friend, Ellen Rosen. As Annemarie and her family try to smuggle Jews out of their Nazi-occupied homeland to safety in Sweden, Annemarie learns about the meaning of bravery and the necessity of being protected by lies from loved ones in a time of life-threatening secrets.

The Perilous Journey of the Donner Party by Marian Calabro

In the spring of 1846, George and Jacob Donner, James Reed, and their families left Illinois bound for the California territory. A series of accidents and bad decisions slowed their progress along the trail west. By the beginning of November, the group was snowed in at Truckee Lake in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Ultimately, half of the party died, and in desperation, many of the remaining travelers were forced to eat the dead in order to survive. This well-written account of this ill-fated expedition draws heavily on the

observations of 12-year-old Virginia Reed and pays particular attention to the plight of the children who were part of the band. A final chapter describes the later lives of some of the survivors.

A Place Called Heartbreak: A Story of Vietnam by Walter Dean Myers and Frederick Porter

In a book that reads more like a novel than nonfiction, Myers tells the story of Col. Fred V. Cherry, U.S.A.F. (Ret.), who was a prisoner of the North Vietnamese from Oct. 22, 1965-Feb. 12, 1973. He relates how Cherry, an African American, overcame obstacles during his youth to attend college and fulfill his boyhood dream of becoming an Air Force fighter pilot. It was on a mission from Thailand to North Vietnam that squadron leader Cherry was shot down, thus becoming the first black pilot to become a prisoner of war in North Vietnam.

Rebels Against Slavery: American Slave Revolts by Patricia C. McKissack and Frederick McKissack

In this well-researched book, we learn of rebels known and unknown, lauded and unsung. Some of the names are familiar: Nat Turner, Harriet Tubman, John Brown while others are less well known, but their stories are no less compelling. Perhaps most arresting of all, on the high seas aboard the slave ship Armistad and then in the courtroom, there is the man known as Cinque who brought to his struggle the dignity and courage of his Mende upbringing with him on his struggle to end slavery and injustice. The stories of all these people are told in clear and riveting narrative.

Riddle of the Rosetta Stone: Key to Ancient Egypt by James Cross Giblin

In 1799, one year after they invaded Egypt, Napoleon's soldiers discovered an eleven-inch-thick, roughly 2- x 3-foot slab of black basalt covered with writing in three different scripts, one Greek and two Egyptian-hieroglyphs and demotic. James Giblin has written an engrossing account of the numerous unsuccessful attempts to translate the hieroglyphs prior to the stone's unearthing and Jean-Francois Champollion's brilliant success in breaking The Riddle of the Rosetta Stone with the discovery that hieroglyphs represented both things and sounds. The book is a both a "biography" of the stone itself and how its message was translated.

Saving Private Ryan by Max Collins

June 6, 1944. Military forces converge on the beaches of Normandy for one of the most decisive battles of World War II. America would call it a victory. History would call it D-Day. But for Captain John Miler and his squad of young soldiers, this fateful day would become something much more. Washington has sent them on a personal mission to save one life. One paratrooper missing in action. One soldier who has already lost three brothers in the war. Captain Miller and his men quickly realize this is not a simple rescue operation. It is a test of their honor and their duty. Their sole obsession - and their last hope for redemption. In a war of devastating proportions, saving one life could make all the difference in the world Other books about World War II.

****Say You're One of Them by Uwen Akpan**

The peace-loving agrarians of Milagro find themselves oppressed by the city slickers & suits who draw up water-compacts & grazing regulations. Slowly, but certainly, they're being squeezed off their ancestral lands, having their buccolic lifestyle eroded by the landed, the government, and the wealthy. But this is not a grim, revolutionary novel, full of dogma and bloodshed. It's a tale of a bunch of characters, who really just want to be left alone, backed against the wall and making their last stand.

Zlata's Diary by Zlata Filipovic

From September 1991 through October 1993, young Zlata Filipovic kept a diary. When she began it, she was 11 years old, concerned mostly with friends, school, piano lessons, MTV, and Madonna. As the diary ends, she has become used to constant bombing and snipers; severe shortages of food, water, and gas; and the end of a privileged adolescence in her native Sarajevo. Zlata has been described as the new Anne Frank.

Watsons Go to Birmingham – 1963 by Christopher Paul Curtis

Enter the hilarious world of 10-year-old Kenny and his family, the Weird Watsons of Flint, Michigan. There's Momma, Dad, little sister Joetta, and brother Byron, who's 13 and an "official juvenile delinquent." When Momma and Dad decide it's time for a visit to Grandma, Dad comes home with the amazing Ultra-Glide, and the Watsons set out on a trip like no other. They're heading South. They're going to Birmingham, Alabama, toward one of the darkest moments in America's history.

The Weight of All Things by Sandra Benitez

Nicolas de la Virgen Veras lives with his grandfather Tata in Chalatenango, El Salvador, but on March 30, 1980, his mother, Lety, who works in San Salvador for Don Enrique, brings him to the city to witness the burial of a martyred saint, Archbishop Romero. In a bloodbath based on a real-life event, 35 people in the crowd of 80,000 are killed and 450 wounded by soldiers' fire. Lety dies protecting Nicolas. When her body is taken away, Nicolas cannot believe she is dead and tries first to find the hospital for the wounded, then to get home to find Don Enrique's address. As he journeys through the bleak Salvadoran landscape, Nicolas is caught in the violent clashes between the National Army and guerrilla rebels.

Hot Topics

Amazing Grace: Lives of Children and the Conscience of a Nation by Jonathan Kozol

Kozol (*Savage Inequalities*) began visiting New York's South Bronx in 1993, focusing on Mott Haven, a poor neighborhood that is two thirds Hispanic, one third black. This disquieting report graphically portrays a world where babies are born to drug-using mothers with AIDS, where children are frequently murdered, jobs are scarce and a large proportion of the men are either in prison or on crack cocaine or heroin. Kozol interviewed ministers, teachers, drug pushers, children who have not yet given up hope. His powerfully understated report takes us inside rat-infested homes that are freezing in winter, overcrowded schools, dysfunctional clinics, soup kitchens. Rejecting what he calls the punitive, blame-the-poor ideology that has swept the nation, Kozol points to systemic discrimination, hopelessness, limited economic opportunities and New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani's cutbacks in social services as causes of this crisis.

Annie's Baby: The Diary of Anonymous, a Pregnant Teenager by Anonymous and Beatrice Sparks (*It Happened to Nancy*) shares another slice of a troubled teen's life, this time focusing readers' attention on the topic of teen sex and pregnancy. The first, most excruciating entries in 14-year-old Annie's diary trace her victimization and impregnation by a manipulative and sadistic boyfriend. Completely obsessed with 16-year-old Danny ("He called me an 'Earth Angel.' And I think I'm going to commit myself completely to being just that for him, no matter what!"), Annie is less prepared than readers for the devastating fall she takes the day her home pregnancy test comes out pink. The remaining, more solution-oriented segments of the book convey Annie's arduous climb from rock-bottom ("I CANNOT BEAR TO FACE IT! I WILL NOT!") to a state in which she can confront her mistakes and plan for herself and her child. With the support of her exceptionally tolerant mother, patient teachers and a nonjudgmental therapist (supposedly Sparks), Annie changes from a self-deprecating romantic ("Could plain me possibly be good enough for awesome him?") to a more level-headed realist, who learns, painfully, to put her baby's needs before her own.

Can't Stop Won't Stop: A History of the Hip Hop Generation by Jeff Chang and DJ Kool Herc

Many good books have been written about the history of hip-hop music and the generation that nurtured it. *Can't Stop Won't Stop* ranks among the best. Jeff Chang covers the music--from its Jamaican roots in the late 1960s to its birth in the Bronx; its eventual explosion from underground to the American mainstream--with style, including DJs, MCs, b-boys, graffiti art, Black Nationalism, groundbreaking singles and albums, and the street parties that gave rise to a genuine movement. But the book is about more than beats and rhymes. What distinguishes his book from the pack is Chang's examination of how hip-hop has shaped not only pop music, but American history and culture over the past 30 years. He shows how events such as urban flight, race riots, neighborhood reclamation projects, gang warfare in the Bronx and Los Angeles, and grassroots movements that influenced political agendas are as integral a part of the hip-hop story as the music itself. He also charts the concurrent rise of hip-hop activism and the commodification of the music and the ideological clashes that developed as a result.

Crank by Ellen Hopkins

Ellen Hopkins's semi-autobiographical verse novel, *Crank*, reads like a *Go Ask Alice* for the 21st century. In it, she chronicles the turbulent and often disturbing relationship between Kristina, a character based on her own daughter, and the "monster," the highly addictive drug crystal meth, or "crank."

In Cold Blood by Truman Capote

"Until one morning in mid-November of 1959, few Americans--in fact, few Kansans--had ever heard of Holcomb. Like the waters of the river, like the motorists on the highway, and like the yellow trains streaking

down the Santa Fe tracks, drama, in the shape of exceptional happenings, had never stopped there." If all Truman Capote did was invent a new genre--journalism written with the language and structure of literature--this "nonfiction novel" about the brutal slaying of the Clutter family by two would-be robbers would be remembered as a trail-blazing experiment that has influenced countless writers. But Capote achieved more than that. He wrote a true masterpiece of creative nonfiction. The images of this tale continue to resonate in our minds: 16-year-old Nancy Clutter teaching a friend how to bake a cherry pie, Dick Hickock's black '49 Chevrolet sedan, Perry Smith's Gibson guitar and his dreams of gold in a tropical paradise--the blood on the walls and the final "thud-snap" of the rope-broken necks.

The Crossing by Gary Paulsen

A potent expression of the brutal realities of a bridge that joins the golden highways of "el norte" (the U.S.) and the mud streets of neighboring Mexico. Young Manny wants to cross the bridge to the land of dreams and opportunity. Sargeant Locke, in turn, crosses the border from Fort Bliss, Tex., for a night in Juarez. There he drinks himself into a "brain dead" state to keep the ghosts of departed friends from coming to visit. Somewhere between misery and ugliness these two meet; both of them, on the periphery of normal living, are joined in a fateful, violent act that provides one with life and hope, and the other the chance to give, without giving up.

****Dead Man Walking by Helen Prejean**

When Helen Prejean is invited to write to a prisoner on Death Row who brutally killed two teenagers, she has little idea how much it will change her life. Although she abhors his crime, she befriends one man as he faces the electric chair. Dead Man Walking is Helen Prejean's gripping true story, which formed the basis for a major motion picture event. As powerful an indictment of the death penalty as has ever been written, her book was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize.

Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal by Eric Schlosser

The author attacks America's fast food industry, blaming it for the downfall of the contemporary American lifestyle. He blames burgers and shakes, readily available on the way home from work, for reducing quality time families once shared in their kitchens and dining rooms. He also condemns the industry for promoting high-fat diets, which he believes may be responsible for many health problems.

****The First Part Last by Angela Johnson**

This gem of a novel tells the story of a young father struggling to raise an infant. Bobby, 16, is a sensitive and intelligent narrator. His parents are supportive but refuse to take over the child-care duties, so he struggles to balance parenting, school, and friends who don't comprehend his new role. Alternate chapters go back to the story of Bobby's relationship with his girlfriend Nia and how parents and friends reacted to the news of her pregnancy.

****Free the Children: A Young Man's Fight: A Young Man Fights against Child Labor and Proves that Children Can Change the World**

Twelve-year-old Craig Kielburger, upset by a newspaper article about the forced slavery and subsequent murder of a child in Pakistan, began in 1995 to research worldwide injustice against children. Armed with the disturbing facts, he convinced friends at his Canadian grade school to form a group to advocate for children's rights. With world-changing zeal, Free the Children gathered information, wrote world leaders, and led conferences on the issue with other youth. Kielburger himself was given the opportunity to accompany a human rights worker through cities in South Asia.

****Gang Leader for a Day by Sudhir Venkatesh**

In the late 1980s and 1990s, rogue sociologist Venkatesh infiltrated the world of tenant and gang life in Chicago's Robert Taylor Home projects. He found a complex system of compromises and subsistence that makes life (barely) manageable. Venkatesh excellently illustrates the resourcefulness of impoverished communities in contrast to a society that has virtually abandoned them. He also reveals the symbiotic relationship between the community and the gangs that helps sustain each.

****Iqbal by Francesco D'Adamo**

In smoothly translated prose, D'Adamo retells the boy's story through the eyes of a fictional coworker. Also sold into servitude to pay her father's debt, Fatima worked in Hussain Khan's carpet factory for three years

and had forgotten almost everything about her previous life. She had grown used to the long hours, the scanty rations, the heat, and the cramped quarters of a life spent tying carpet knots and sleeping beside her loom. She and the others in the workshop are stunned when Iqbal appears and tells them that their debts will never be paid. He tries to convince the children that their situations can change and he escapes to the market where he hooks up with members of the Bonded Labor Liberation Front. Fatima doesn't come alive as a character in her own right, but the situation and setting are made clear in this novel. Readers cannot help but be moved by the plight of these youngsters. This thinly disguised biography makes little effort to go beyond the known facts of Iqbal's life.

****A Lesson before Dying by Ernest J. Gaines**

In a small Cajun community in the late 1940s, a young black man named Jefferson is an unwilling party to a liquor store shootout in which three men are killed. The only survivor, he is convicted of murder and sentenced to death.

Lucky by Alice Sebold

When journalist Sebold was a college freshman at Syracuse University, she was attacked and raped on the last night of school, forced onto the ground in a tunnel "among the dead leaves and broken beer bottles." In a ham-handed attempt to mollify her, a policeman later told her that a young woman had been murdered there and, by comparison, Sebold should consider herself lucky. That dubious "luck" is the focus of this fiercely observed memoir about how an incident of such profound violence can change the course of one's life. Sebold launches her memoir headlong into the rape itself, laying out its visceral physical as well as mental violence, and from there spins a narrative of her life before and after the incident, weaving memories of parental alcoholism together with her post-rape addiction to heroin. In the midst of each wrenching episode, from the initial attack to the ensuing courtroom drama, Sebold's wit is as powerful as her searing candor, as she describes her emotional denial, her addiction and even the rape (her first "real" sexual experience. Addressing rape as a larger social issue, Sebold's account reveals that there are clear emotional boundaries between those who have been victims of violence and those who have not, though the author attempts to blur these lines as much as possible to show that violence touches many more lives than solely the victim's.

****The Milagro Beanfield War by John Nichols**

The peace-loving agrarians of Milagro find themselves oppressed by the city slickers & suits who draw up water-compacts & grazing regulations. Slowly, but certainly, they're being squeezed off their ancestral lands, having their bucolic lifestyle eroded by the landed, the government, and the wealthy. But this is not a grim, revolutionary novel, full of dogma and bloodshed. It's a tale of a bunch of characters, who really just want to be left alone, backed against the wall and making their last stand.

No Easy Answers: The Truth Behind Death at Columbine by Brooks Brown and Rob Merritt

When Eric Harris walked up to Brooks Brown in the Columbine High School parking lot on April 20, 1999, and told him, "Brooks, I like you now. Get out of here. Go home," Brown's life changed forever. Minutes later, Harris and Brown's close friend Dylan Klebold murdered 12 students and a teacher. Brown immediately became the subject of rumor and innuendo, eventually being named as a "potential suspect" by the police. Besides the misery of being falsely associated with the murders, Brown endured unremitting guilt and confusion over having known Harris and Klebold well. Here Brooks tells his harrowing story, analyzing the Columbine murders along the way. Insisting that video games and rock music had nothing to do with the murders, he focuses instead on the horrific teasing and bullying rampant at Columbine. He insists that while Harris and Klebold were responsible for the deaths of 13 people, the school was responsible for making them into desperate, angry boys.

An Ordinary Man by Paul Rusesabagina

Paul Rusesabagina, words are the most powerful weapon in the human arsenal. For good and for evil, as was the case in the spring of 1994 in Rwanda. Over 100 days, some 800,000 people were slaughtered, most hacked to death by machete. Rusesabagina's "inspiration for the movie *Hotel Rwanda*" used his facility with words and persuasion to save 1,268 of his fellow countrymen, turning the Belgian luxury hotel under his charge into a sanctuary from madness. Through negotiation, favor, flattery and deception, Rusesabagina managed to keep his "guests" alive another day despite the homicidal gangs just beyond the fence and the world's failure to act.

Stuck in Neutral by Terry Trueman

Fourteen-year-old Shawn McDaniel loves the taste of smoked oysters and his mother's gentle hugs. Unfortunately, it's impossible for Shawn to feed himself or to hug his mom back. Shawn has cerebral palsy, a condition he has had since birth that has robbed him of all muscle control. He can't walk, talk, or even focus his eyes on his own. But despite all these handicaps, despite the frustration of not being able to communicate, Shawn is still happy to be alive: "Somehow all the things I think about and remember turn to joy... favorite movies... pinecones... chocolate pudding... the scent of Comet in a stainless steel sink.... Life can be great, even for me. Even for me." That is why he panics when he begins to suspect that his father is thinking of killing him. Shawn knows that his father is trying to be kind; he imagines that his son's life is an endless torment. His dad has no idea of the rich life that Shawn lives inside his head. And Shawn, helpless and mute, has no way of telling him.

**** Outliers: The Story of Success by Malcolm Gladwell**

Malcolm Gladwell poses a more provocative question in *Outliers*: why do some people succeed, living remarkably productive and impactful lives, while so many more never reach their potential? Challenging our cherished belief of the "self-made man," he makes the democratic assertion that superstars don't arise out of nowhere, propelled by genius and talent: "they are invariably the beneficiaries of hidden advantages and extraordinary opportunities and cultural legacies that allow them to learn and work hard and make sense of the world in ways others cannot." Examining the lives of outliers from Mozart to Bill Gates, he builds a convincing case for how successful people rise on a tide of advantages, "some deserved, some not, some earned, some just plain lucky."

****Tortilla Curtain by T.C. Boyle**

Tortilla Curtain is the phrase used to describe the thin borders between Mexico and the United States which immigrants cross over in their attempt to live better lives. In this "blow you away novel," TC Boyle offers his readers a plot and characters who are not only involved in the world of illegal aliens but whose lives will never be the same. And for many of us it is as if this novel's premise was lifted off the pages of our daily newspapers and one for which there is no easy solution.

Romance/Friendship/Family

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain

A seminal work of American Literature that still commands deep praise and still elicits controversy, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is essential to the understanding of the American soul.

Bridge to Terabithia by Katherine Paterson

All summer, Jess pushed himself to be the fastest boy in the fifth grade, and when the year's first school-yard race was run, he was going to win. But his victory was stolen by a newcomer, by a girl, one who didn't even know enough to stay on the girls' side of the playground. Then, unexpectedly, Jess finds himself sticking up for Leslie, for the girl who breaks rules and wins races. The friendship between the two grows as Jess guides the city girl through the pitfalls of life in their small, rural town, and Leslie draws him into the world of imagination—a world of magic and ceremony called Terabithia. Here, Leslie and Jess rule supreme among the oaks and evergreens, safe from the bullies and ridicule of the mundane world. Safe until an unforeseen tragedy forces Jess to reign in Terabithia alone, and both worlds are forever changed.

****The Brothers K by David James Duncan**

Highly inventive formally, the novel is mainly narrated by Kincaid Chance, the youngest son in a family of four boys and identical twin girls, the children of Hugh Chance, a discouraged minor-league ballplayer whose once-promising career was curtailed by an industrial accident, and his wife Laura, an increasingly fanatical Seventh-Day Adventist. The plot traces the working-out of the family's fate from the beginning of the Eisenhower years through the traumas of Vietnam. One son becomes an atheist and draft resister; another immerses himself in Eastern religions, while the third, the most genuinely Christian of the children, ends up in Southeast Asia. In spite of the author's obvious affection for the sport, this is not a baseball novel; it is, as Kincaid says, "the story of an eight-way tangle of human beings, only one-eighth of which was a pro ballplayer." The book portrays the extraordinary differences that can exist among siblings—much like the

Dostoyevski novel to which *The Brothers K* alludes in more than just title--and how family members can redeem one another in the face of adversity.

Caramelo by Sandra Cisneros

Exhibiting a humor that is at once Mexican, American, and Mexican-American, Sandra Cisneros tells the story of an immigrant family that is as universal and yet particular as these stories are. Lala Reyes is the seventh child of the family and the only girl. They live in Chicago, where her dad and his two brothers run an upholstery shop. There are cousins (my favorites are three brothers named Elvis, Byron, and Aristotle), loong caravan-style car trips to Mexico City to visit the Awful Grandmother, and some snooping into the past by Lala.

****Five Smooth Stones by Ann Fairbairn**

David Champlin is a black man born into poverty in Depression-era New Orleans who achieves great success and then sacrifices everything to lead his people in the difficult, day-by-day struggle of the civil rights movement. Sara Kent is the beloved and vital white girl who loved David from the moment she first saw him, but they struggled over David's belief that a marriage for them would not be right in the violent world he had to confront. Likening the struggle of black Americans to the "five smooth stones" the biblical David carried against Goliath in lieu of arms, this novel's range encompasses decades and continents—but that range is insignificant compared with the intimate picture of its hero's irresistible warmth and inner conflicts. First published in 1966, this epic has become one of the most loved American bestsellers.

****For Young Men Only: A Guy's Guide to the Alien Gender by Shaunti Feldhahn**

Guys, in your hands you hold a treasure—a book where young women honestly tell you what they want, need, and desire. I learned a lot, even after nearly fifty years of trying to figure women out. If you listen to what they're telling you, you'll avoid a mountain of confusion, anger, and heartache... Turn off your iPod and cell phone, grab this book, and delve into the secret thoughts of hundreds of young women boiled down into eight simple, fresh chapters. Trust me, you won't be disappointed.

****For Young Women Only by Shaunti Feldhahn**

Guys will be guys. And now girls can know what that means! *For Young Women Only* dives into the mysterious inner-workings of the teenage male mind so that you can begin to understand why guys say and do what they do. Exploring critical topics including respect, insecurity, appearance, physical affection, and the "tough and tender"-ness of guys, this book is also packed with "ask the expert" sections, quotes, and fun personal stories from guys in all walks of life. *Why is he so visually stimulated?* You may wish it weren't so, but that won't *make* it so. *I don't want to put on a front for him to like me.* Actually, he wants your genuineness, too! This book will help you grasp how God wired the opposite sex so you can enjoy your relationships with them.

Heartbreak and Roses by Janet Bode and Stan Mack

This book is a collection of a dozen real-life stories exploring teenage relationships, focusing on such topics as interracial dating, codependence, coping with a disability and breaking up. This book will appeal to teens who are, like the characters here, seem to be "looking for love in all the wrong places."

If You Come Softly by Jacqueline Woodson

Once again, Woodson handles delicate, even explosive subject matter with exceptional clarity, surety and depth. In this contemporary story about an interracial romance, she seems to slip effortlessly into the skins of both her main characters, Ellie, an upper-middle-class white girl who has just transferred to Percy, an elite New York City prep school, and Jeremiah, one of her few African American classmates, whose parents (a movie producer and a famous writer) have just separated. A prologue intimates heartbreak to come; thereafter, sequences alternate between Ellie's first-person narration and a third-person telling that focuses on Jeremiah. Both voices convincingly describe the couple's love-at-first-sight meeting and the gradual building of their trust. The intensity of their emotions will make hearts flutter, then ache as evidence mounts that Ellie's and Jeremiah's "perfect" love exists in a deeply flawed society. Even as Woodson's lyrical prose draws the audience into the tenderness of young love, her perceptive comments about race and racism will strike a chord with black readers and open the eyes of white readers ("Thing about white people," Jeremiah's father tells him, "they know what everybody else is, but they don't know they're white"). Knowing from the beginning that tragedy lies just around the corner doesn't soften the sharp impact of this wrenching book

Like Water for Chocolate by Laura Esquivel

Main character Tita is the youngest of three daughters born to Mama Elena, virago extraordinaire and owner of the de la Garza ranch. Tita falls in love with Pedro, but Mama Elena will not allow them to marry, since family tradition dictates that the youngest daughter remain at home to care for her mother. Instead, Mama Elena orchestrates the marriage of Pedro and her eldest daughter Rosaura and forces Tita to prepare the wedding dinner. What ensues is a poignant, funny story of love, life, and food which proves that all three are entwined and interdependent.

Little Women by Louisa May Alcott

This timeless children's classic is read and enjoyed by many adults as well as children. Unlike most classics considered children's works today, Little Women was intended for an audience of children. It takes place during the Civil War and the years following, and narrates the story of 4 girls as they grow up, including their friends and their family. Louisa May Alcott based this work in large part on her family, although many of the events are born totally of her imagination. Jo is based on Louisa May; Meg is based on her older sister Anna; Beth is based on her younger sister Elizabeth, or Lizzie; and Amy is based on her youngest sister May. Because the character Jo is based on the author herself, she is the most well defined character in the book and the one most children identify with. A tomboy, a writer, and quite determined, Jo is the central figure in the book and most events center around her growing up, but all of the other girls get special attention in stories particularly about them from time to time.

****Mr. Ives's Christmas by Oscar Hijuelos**

For Edward Ives, a graphic artist employed by a Madison Avenue advertising firm, Christmas has always been an emotionally charged holiday. It was during the Christmas season that Edward's foster father first visited him at the foundling home, and at Christmas a few years later Edward was finally adopted. Ives met his wife at an art students' Christmas party, and-most importantly-it was during the 1967 Christmas season that Ives's 17-year-old son was senselessly gunned down as he left choir practice. Ives has never fully recovered from the killing, and his unshakable depression threatens to destroy his marriage, as does his strange obsession with rehabilitating the murderer.

****The Namesake by Jhumpa Lahiri**

Gogol Ganguli is The Namesake of the title of this book. A first generation American, born to Bengali parents, Gogol is named after a Russian author his father admires. The name was given to him as a temporary name, while his parents await a letter from home in which a grandmother will send with his true name. The letter never arrives and Gogol becomes a name that never seems to fit, just as Gogol himself never seems completely at home in America or on his frequent trips back to his parent's home country.

Of Mice and Men by John Steinbeck

Steinbeck's narrative voice is seemingly simple in his descriptions of nature of as well as the details of the bunkhouse. His characterizations of the people are magnificent. We meet the other workers, all loners, and appreciate the beauty of the unique friendship between Lennie and George. We meet Candy, the old man who is outliving his usefulness. We meet Crooks, the black stable hand, shunned by the men and therefore turning to books for companionship. We meet the cruel Curley who taunts Lennie into a fight. And we meet Curley's wife, another lonely soul who uses her femininity to get the wrong kind of attention.

**** A Raisin in the Sun by Lorraine Hansberry**

"A Raisin in the Sun," the play by Lorraine Hansberry, was produced in New York City in 1959. Hansberry creates the story of the Youngers, a struggling African-American family whose members deal with poverty, racism, and painful conflict among themselves as they reach for a better life.

****Redeeming Love by Francine Rivers**

In this splendid retelling of the biblical story of Hosea, bestselling author Francine Rivers pens a heartbreaking romance between a prostitute and the upright and kind farmer who marries her; the story also functions as a reminder of God's unconditional love for his people. *Redeeming Love* opens with the Gold Rush of 1850 and its rough-and-tumble atmosphere of greed and desire. Angel, who was sold into prostitution as a child, has learned to distrust all men, who see her only as a way to satisfy their lust. When the virtuous and spiritual-minded Michael Hosea is told by God to marry this "soiled dove," he obeys, despite his misgivings.

Romiette and Julio by Sharon Draper

A contemporary retelling of the Romeo and Juliet story with a happy, upbeat ending. Julio Montague, a recent Texas transplant to Cincinnati, quickly falls for "Afroqueen" during cyber-chats on the Internet. He soon discovers his soulmate is African-American Romiette Cappelle, who coincidentally attends his high school. The two are destined to meet and fall in love, despite warnings from the local gang who strongly disapproves of their romance.

Stargirl by Jerry Spinelli

"She was homeschooling gone amok." "She was an alien." "Her parents were circus acrobats." These are only a few of the theories concocted to explain the weirdness of Stargirl Caraway, a new 10th grader at Arizona's Mica Area High School. She wears pioneer dresses and kimonos to school, strums a ukulele in the cafeteria and dances when there is no music. The whole school is stunned by her, including our 16-year-old narrator Leo Borlock. In time, the school begins to adore Stargirl, unable to resist Stargirl's wide-eyed charm, pure-spirited friendliness, and love for celebrating the achievements of others. In the ultimate high school symbol of acceptance, she is even recruited as a cheerleader. But this popularity can't last. What will happen to Stargirl and the boy who loves her when the rest of the school decides to hate her?

Staying Fat for Sarah Byrnes by Chris Crutcher

This novel highlights the lives of two students who are considered "different" based on their appearances. Eric Calhoun, who has been the only friend of misfit Sarah Byrnes, attempts to seek answers to Byrnes's dramatic cry for help, while at the same time maintaining her trust and friendship. This novel makes the reader think about the true definition of friendship at the same time that it addresses contemporary issues.

****Sula by Toni Morrison**

"Sula" is a peculiar and haunting novel exploring the lives of several women who live in the Bottom, a black neighborhood on top of a hill in Ohio. Spanning the years 1919 to 1965, Morrison's book stitches together snippets of episodes and pieces of relationships. Because of its focus on character and community, the book's plot is difficult to summarize without oversimplification and, despite its brevity, the novel weaves many themes into its patchwork: motherhood, the tyranny of traditionalism, racism, the paradox of gentrification, and more.

****Twilight by Stephenie Meyers**

Bella Swan's move to Forks, a small, perpetually rainy town in Washington, could have been the most boring move she ever made. But once she meets the mysterious and alluring Edward Cullen, Bella's life takes a thrilling and terrifying turn. Up until now, Edward has managed to keep his vampire identity a secret in the small community he lives in, but now nobody is safe, especially Bella, the person Edward holds most dear.

****A Thousand Splendid Suns by Khaled Hosseini**

Hosseini's riveting story—an in-depth exploration of Afghan society in the three decades of anti-Soviet jihad, civil war and Taliban cruelty. He impels us to empathize with and admire those most victimized by Afghan history and culture—women. Mariam, a 15-year-old bastard whose mother commits suicide, is married off to 40-year-old Rasheed, who abuses her brutally, especially after she has several miscarriages. At 60, Rasheed takes in 14-year-old Laila, whose parents were blown up by stray bombs. He soon turns violent with her. Although Laila is united with her childhood beloved, the potential return of the Taliban always shadows their happiness.

Thwunk by Joan Bauer

Imagine having a personal cupid—an actual winged being—pop into your life and offer to make your dreams come true. The catch is he can help you in one way only: artistically, academically, or romantically. That's what happens to aspiring high school photographer A. J. McCreary. A. J. knows she should concentrate on getting into a top-notch art school, but she's spent five torturous months obsessed with handsome hunk, Peter Terris. Just one shot from Cupid's bow and *thwunk*, A.J. will have the devotion of Peter, which turns out to be more than she bargained for.

Poetry

Bronx Masquerade by Nikki Grimes

This is no ordinary English class. It is a mix of every race you can imagine and teens facing grown-up problems from pregnancy to jock stereotypes, these teens share their personal stories to each other through "open mike Friday" a time they can read poetry or rap to each other in class. By listening to each other, the class learns more about each other during open-mike Friday than any of the other things they do together in school. If you like poetry and rap, you'll like this book.

****Holocaust Poetry: Edited by Hilda Schiff**

Sixty-two poets of different ages, citizenships and perspectives make their voices heard. There is Primo Levi on being an Auschwitz survivor; Randall Jarrell speaks in the voice of a death-camp worker. There are poems that have no need for complexity of form or vocabulary. Poets from Eastern and Western Europe, Russia, Israel and the U.S. declare the simple truths that propel the reader through the eight parts of this collection, each section a stage marked with a title of forewarning, beginning with "Alienation" and "Persecution," on to "Lessons" and, finally, "God." We learn what was left of the body?smoke, empty shoes, "a faded plait/ a pigtail with a ribbon"?and we uncover what was freed of the poet's mind?rage, testimony, legacy.

Out of the Dust by Karen Hesse

Like the Oklahoma dust bowl from which she came, 14-year-old narrator Billie Jo writes in sparse, free-floating verse. In this compelling, immediate journal, Billie Jo reveals the grim domestic realities of living during the years of constant dust storms: That hopes--like the crops--blow away in the night like skittering tumbleweeds. That trucks, tractors, even Billie Jo's beloved piano, can suddenly be buried beneath drifts of dust. Perhaps swallowing all that grit is what gives Billie Jo--our strong, endearing, rough-cut heroine--the stoic courage to face the death of her mother after a hideous accident that also leaves her piano-playing hands in pain and permanently scarred.

The Rose That Grew From Concrete by Tupac Shakur

A collection of poetry written by the rapper between 1989 and 1991, before he became famous. The poems are passionate, sometimes angry, and often compelling. Selections are reproduced from the originals in Shakur's handwriting, personalized by distinctive spelling and the use of ideographs (a drawing of an eye for I, etc.), and complete with scratch outs and corrections. With the exception of "In the Event of My Demise," all of the pieces are accompanied by typed text, which leaves his spelling intact. Some poems are also accompanied by his drawings. A few black-and-white photographs appear throughout. A preface by Shakur's mother, a foreword by Nikki Giovanni, and an introduction by his manager, Leila Steinburg, in whose writing group the poems were written, complete this unique volume.

Tears for Water: Songbook of Poems and Lyrics by Alicia Keys

No doubt Keys has a fascinating story to tell—raised by a single mother, she's a classically trained, New York born-and-bred neo-soulster with two multiplatinum albums and five Grammys to her name—but she merely hints at it in this gathering of poems and lyrics. With their themes of loneliness, confusion, wonder and desire, most of Keys's free-verse poems could be the *cris de coeur* of any American 20-something: "Sometimes I feel/ like I don't belong anywhere/ And it's going to take so long/ for me to get somewhere/ Sometimes I feel so heavy-hearted/ but I can't explain/ cause I'm so guarded." But other poems hint at her world travels, her budding sense of social justice and her concerns about stardom ("When gone is the glory/ When gone is the shine/ Is gone the whole/ Of your fortune and pride?"). Nearly half of the book consists of lyrics from her two albums, *Songs in A Minor* and *The Diary of Alicia Keys*; while they make a nice complement to the poems, the words feel a bit flat without the blaxploitation beat of "Heartburn," say, or the impassioned vocal delivery of "Fallin.'" For the Keys completist, however, this will be a compelling book of rock ephemera.

Things I Have to Tell You: Poems and Writing by Teenage Girls by Betsy Franco and Nina Nickles *In Things I Have to Tell You: Poems and Writing by Teenage Girls*, editor Betsy Franco gathers more than 30 poems by adolescents into a poignant collection of prose and poetry. Black-and-white photographs by Nina Nickles accompany each work, and the pairings offer glimpses into the writers' raw anger, budding sexuality and search for identity.

You Hear Me?: Poems and Writing by Teenage Boys by Betsy Franco and Nina Nickles

Through these mostly free-verse lines, the hopes, dreams, fears, and desires of young men from different cultures and backgrounds shine through. They pull no punches with their words in these openly honest, raw, and sometimes tender selections. They talk about what you'd expect—drugs, girls, AIDS, sex, parents—sometimes in unexpected ways. For example, 12-year-old Quantedius Hall's first stanza—"Time Somebody Told Me/That I am lovely, good and real/That I am beautiful inside/If they only knew/How that would make me feel." What do these boys want? "I want to live my life/through peace and knowledge./-I want to wake up/to clean, fresh air/blowing in my face," says 14-year-old John Merrell. Others speak of the fear of alternately being abandoned and loved, of being shunned or ridiculed. Obviously, there's some harsh language and tough situations but they add to the believability and timeliness of the words. *You Hear Me?* is a fresh approach to hearing what today's youths have to say, and it's refreshing that the words came straight from them.

Books in Spanish

(You may read one of your three books from this section.

All work for these books must be done in English.)

****El Artifice del Metodo by Francis Bacon**

En este libro, al repasar la vida y los trabajos científicos de Francis Bacon, asistimos al nacimiento de una práctica cuya vitalidad hoy es innegable.

****Cronica de una Muerte Anunciada by Gabriel Garcia Marquez**

In a departure from the magical realism for which he is famous, Garcia Marquez tells a dreamlike detective story that investigates the question of why and how two young men have undertaken a brutal murder that they seem not to have wanted to commit. This is the original Spanish-language version of the text.

****La Fuerza de la Garcela by Carmen Vazques-Vigo**

A ferocious tiger is lurking in the jungle, and the other animals attempt to rid themselves of him. They return tired and injured, but the gazelle surprises the others by volunteering to try again. Despite the animals' doubts and laughter, the gazelle proves that dialog and good manners are indeed powerful tools.

****La Hija del Ganges: La Historia de una Adopcion by Asha Miro**

**See summary of Daughter of the Ganges under memoir section

****Hermano en la Tierra by Robert Swindells**

HABÍA MISILES. BAJO LA TIERRA. EN EL CIELO. BAJO LAS OLAS. MISILES SUFICIENTES PARA MATAR A TODOS EN LA TIERRA. TRES VECES. Y ALGO LOS DESENCADENÓ; LOS LANZÓ, DE OESTE A ESTE Y DE ESTE A OESTE. POBLACIONES Y CIUDADES ENTERAS SE EVAPORARON. LA LLUVIA DE OJIVAS ESTREMECIÓ, EXPLOSIÓN TRAS EXPLOSIÓN Y UN TRUENO TERRIBLE DESGARRÓ LOS CIELOS.

****Juventud en Extasis by Carlos Cuautemoc Sanchez**

An acclaimed author relates issues that involve dating and premarital sex among young adults--a must for every parent and teenager. Exploring the consequences of making bad choices when it comes to promiscuity, this book has been endorsed by hundreds of schools as a guide to prevent teenage sex and unwanted pregnancies.

****El Misterio Velazquez by Eliacer Cansino**

Velazquez, court painter to Spain's Felipe IV, was especially fond of painting the midgets that lived at the Palace. Nicolas Pertusato, who appears in the artist's most famous painting -- *Las Meninas* -- narrates this award-winning novel. As he recounts his life story, he tells of his enigmatic relationship with the artist and reveals the mystery behind the creation of his masterpiece.

****El Pariquillo Sarniento by Jose Fernandez de Lizardi**

El Periquillo Sarniento es la primera novela de toda Hispanoamérica. Fue escrita en México por José Joaquín Fernández de Lizardi en 1816. El libro muestra una marcada influencia neoclásica y pretensiones moralizantes. Cuenta la vida de un anciano que ante la cercanía de la muerte escribe un texto biográfico con consejos para sus hijos. Allí entre otras cosas relata su experiencia con la iglesia mexicana y su salida de un convento franciscano donde estuvo recluido algunos meses.

****El Viajero Incomparable by Charles Darwin**

Nadie duda de que la ciencia es importante para el progreso de la humanidad, lo que casi nunca nos dicen es que también es sumamente divertida. La historia de la investigación científica es tan apasionante como una buena novela de misterio o una película de acción. En este libro damos a conocer la historia y la obra de Charles Darwin, quien con la idea de la selección natural, explica el origen de las especies animales y vegetales, reservándole el papel protagónico al azar. Queremos que niños y jóvenes puedan acercarse a la obra fundamental de Darwin; para eso seleccionamos sus fragmentos importantes y los volcamos en un lenguaje claro y comprensible. Ojalá se diviertan todos al leer este libro tanto como nosotros al publicarlo.