

CCBC

Choices

2008

Kathleen T. Horning

Merri V. Lindgren

Megan Schliesman

with

Tessa Michaelson

Denise Aulik

Hollis Rudiger

Tana Elias

Cooperative Children's Book Center

School of Education

University of Wisconsin–Madison

Copyright ©2008, Friends of the CCBC, Inc.

ISBN-10: 0-931641-18-7

ISBN-13: 978-0-931641-18-3

CCBC Choices 2008 was produced by University Communications,
University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Cover design: Lois Ehlert

This publication was created by librarians at the Cooperative Children's Book Center, School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison. Funding for the production and printing was provided by the Friends of the CCBC, Inc. For more information, see the Appendices, or go to www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc/

Contents

Acknowledgments	4
Introduction	5
Organization of <i>CCBC Choices 2008</i>	6
The Charlotte Zolotow Award	8
Publishing in 2007	10

The *Choices*

The Natural World	18
Seasons and Celebrations	22
Folklore, Mythology, and Traditional Literature	26
Historical People, Places, and Events	28
Biography and Autobiography	32
Contemporary People, Places, and Events	37
Issues in Today's World	38
Understanding Oneself and Others	39
The Arts	42
Poetry	44
Concept Books	48
Picture Books for Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers	49
Picture Books for School-Aged Children	61
Books for Beginning Readers	75
Books for Newly Independent Readers	77
Fiction for Children	80
Fiction for Young Adults	97

Appendices

Appendix I: The Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC)	124
Appendix II: Obtaining CCBC Publications	130
Appendix III: The Compilers of <i>CCBC Choices 2008</i>	131
Appendix IV: The Friends of the CCBC, Inc.	134

Author/Title Index	137
Subject Index	146

Acknowledgments

The Friends of the CCBC underwrites the publication of *CCBC Choices* each year, making *Choices* available free of charge to Wisconsin librarians, teachers, and others in the state. (For more information about the Friends of the CCBC, see Appendix IV.) Thank you to the current Friends board of directors for their support of this year's edition of *CCBC Choices*. Membership in the Friends of the CCBC makes *Choices* possible, and for that we thank Friends members near and far.

Friends member Tana Elias has created the index for *CCBC Choices* as a volunteer for thirteen years. She continues to make *Choices* a more professional and more user-friendly publication each year and we thank her for her skillful work.

Librarian Hollis Rudiger, who left the CCBC at the end of June, shared opinions and reading suggestions throughout the first half of the year. Librarian Denise Aulik worked at the CCBC throughout the fall, contributing ideas and insights on many books, and writing annotations. We appreciate the perspectives each of them brought to our work.

A number of individuals with specialized interests and expertise evaluated one or more books at our request, or volunteered their comments for this edition of *Choices*. Thank you to Anne Altshuler, Joan Houston Hall, Margaret Jensen, Ginny Moore Kruse, Augustino Ting M. Mayai, Fumiko Osada, Sharon Potrykus, and Toni Pressley-Sanon for contributing to our work in this way.

We greatly value the insights and perspectives shared during CCBC book discussions in 2007. Participants in CCBC monthly book discussions gave valuable feedback on a number of the books published throughout the year. Conversations on CCBC-Net, our online book discussion community, were also beneficial. Thank you for thoughts shared both in-person and online.

Thanks to the staff in the Creative Services Office of University Communications, whose work transforms *Choices* from word-processed document into eye-catching publication.

The CCBC's friendly and accomplished student staff not only helps the library function all year long but also makes it possible for us to focus almost exclusively on writing *Choices* in the frenzied days before deadline. We thank them along with our families—partners and assorted children—who support our work throughout the year.

*Kathleen T. Horning, Merri V. Lindgren,
Tessa Michaelson, and Megan Schliesman*

Introduction

CCBC Choices is created by librarians at the Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC), a library of the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin–Madison (see Appendix I for more about the CCBC).

The CCBC receives review copies of about 3,000 new books for children and young adults annually, including most of the trade books published in English by corporate publishers in the United States. Our goal in creating *CCBC Choices* is to highlight some of the outstanding titles published for children and young adults among the 3,000 or more we receive. In choosing titles, we look for books that are well-written and that will appeal to the needs and reading interests of children and teenagers. We also seek to identify titles that hold the same appeal for teachers, librarians, and others who use books with children and teens. It is a highly subjective process in many respects. As we look for books that are accurate, interesting, and engaging, we often agree on titles to include. But sometimes we disagree. We talk about our differences and determine where consensus lies. *Choices* is a reflection of that consensus.

After *Choices* goes to press, we're likely to find a handful of titles we overlooked—books we would have included in *Choices* had we known about them in time. This may happen because we just didn't have the book in hand. There are always some gaps in what we receive from publishers, no matter how hard we—and they—try to avoid them. Other times, we simply miss some terrific reads. We make an effort to draw attention to these books as we find them in other ways. And we are comforted when we see one or more of these titles on one of the other annual best-of-the-year lists that offer perspectives on excellence in publishing.

We are confident that the 279 titles we have singled out for inclusion in *CCBC Choices 2008* will offer contemporary readers entertaining, enlightening, challenging, and stimulating choices. We know that not every book in *Choices* will be suitable for every child or teen. But we also know that librarians, teachers, parents, caregivers, and others face an enormous challenge in navigating the thousands of new books available for purchase each year, and an enormous challenge in meeting the diverse reading needs and interests of children and teens today. We have created *CCBC Choices* keeping that challenge in mind, and are confident that it offers something for everyone.

Organization of *CCBC Choices 2008*

The organization of the books in *CCBC Choices* into thematic and format categories has been developed over the years to help teachers, school and public librarians, and others who work with children quickly find books that meet their needs. We often make refinements from year to year in the organization, in part due to our ever-growing understanding of what our colleagues who work directly with children want and need, and in part to reflect the books we have chosen in a particular year.

Books have been placed into one of the following thematic categories when appropriate:

- The Natural World
- Seasons and Celebrations
- Historical People, Places, and Events
- Contemporary People, Places, and Events
- Issues in Today's World
- Understanding Oneself and Others

The remaining books have been placed into one of the following genre or format categories:

- Folklore, Mythology, and Traditional Literature
- Biography and Autobiography
- Poetry
- Concept Books
- Picture Books for Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers
- Picture Books for School-Aged Children
- Books for Beginning Readers
- Books for Newly Independent Readers
- Fiction for Children
- Fiction for Young Adults

Picture books about people who actually lived have been placed in the Historical People, Places, and Events section or the Biography and Autobiography section. Novels set in the past have been placed in one of the Fiction categories. Graphic novels are assessed individually based on content and placed in the category that best suits each individual title.

The subject index can be used to find books across all of the categories about specific topics and in specific genres and formats ("Graphic Novels," "Historical Fiction," "Fantasy," etc.).

Age Recommendations

We provide suggested age ranges for each title. These are meant to be general guidelines based on appeal and age-appropriateness of the content. We know that some children and teens are ready for and will enjoy books recommended for older readers. Our suggested age recommendations cannot substitute for professional judgment and personal knowledge of individual readers, classrooms, and communities.

There is considerable overlap of ages in the two picture book categories as well as in the fiction categories. Given the wide range of individual variation among readers, we encourage you to look through both age categories for each genre. For consistency of organization, we have divided the books as follows:

- Picture Books for Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers: younger age recommendation is three or younger (e.g., Ages 1–4, Ages 3–6)
- Picture Books for School-Aged Children: younger age recommendation is four or older (e.g., Ages 4–7, Ages 5–8)
- Fiction for Children: younger age recommendation is 10 or younger (e.g., Ages 9–12, Ages 10–14)
- Fiction for Young Adults: younger age recommendation is 11 or older (e.g., Ages 11–15, Age 13 and older)

Publication Information

All but one of the books in *CCBC Choices 2008* was published in 2007 (one title has a January 2008 publication date). The citation for each book includes the prices and ten-digit international standard book number (ISBN) for any edition we were able to find in print in late 2007. Most of the books are available in hardcover trade editions. Some are also or only available in library editions with reinforced bindings. A few are only, or also, available in paperback. Whether or not hardcover-only titles eventually make it into paperback is influenced by a number of factors, including sales of the hardcover edition.

This information will be helpful when looking for the books in *CCBC Choices* at your public library, school library media center, or bookstore.

The Charlotte Zolotow Award

The Charlotte Zolotow Award is given annually to the author of the best picture book text published in the United States in the preceding year. Established in 1997, the award is named to honor the work of Charlotte Zolotow, a distinguished children's literature editor for thirty-eight years with Harper Junior Books and an author of more than seventy picture stories, including such classic works as *Mr. Rabbit and the Lovely Present* (Harper, 1962) and *William's Doll* (Harper, 1972). Ms. Zolotow attended the University of Wisconsin in Madison on a writing scholarship from 1933 to 1936. She studied with Professor Helen C. White.

The award is administered by the CCBC. Each year, a committee of children's literature experts selects the winner from the books published in the preceding year. The committee works with a shortlist of titles they develop along with input from the CCBC professional staff. All titles are subject to the approval of the CCBC professional staff.

Any picture book for young children (birth through age seven) originally written in English, and published in the United States in the preceding year, is eligible for consideration for the Charlotte Zolotow Award. The book may be fiction, nonfiction, or folklore, as long as it is presented in picture book form and aimed at the birth through seven age range. Easy readers and poetry collections are not eligible. Books written by Charlotte Zolotow are also not eligible for the award.

In addition to choosing the award-winning title, the committee may select up to three Honor Books and up to ten titles to be included on a Highly Commended list that will call attention to outstanding writing in picture books.

The selection committee is comprised of five members who are appointed to a two-year term by the CCBC professional staff. These appointments are based on knowledge of children's books, demonstrated ability to evaluate children's books and discuss them critically, and/or direct experience working professionally with children from birth through age seven.

Members of the tenth annual Charlotte Zolotow Award Committee were Megan Schliesman, chair (librarian, Cooperative Children's Book Center, Madison, Wisconsin); Tammy Boyd (first-grade teacher, Madison, Wisconsin); Kim Dahl (library media specialist, Madison, Wisconsin); Jean Elvekrog (children's librarian, retired, Waunakee, Wisconsin); and Diane Lee (Dane County Parents Council, Madison, Wisconsin).



2008 Charlotte Zolotow Award

Winner: *Thank You Bear.*
 Written and illustrated by Greg Foley.
 Viking, 2007

Honor Books: *At Night.*
 Written and illustrated by Jonathan Bean.
 Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007

Dragon Dancing.
 Written by Carole Lexa Schaefer. Illustrated by
 Pierr Morgan. Viking, 2007

Pictures from Our Vacation.
 Written and illustrated by Lynne Rae Perkins.
 Greenwillow Books / HarperCollins, 2007

Highly Commended Titles:

The All-I'll-Ever-Want Christmas Doll. Written by Patricia C. McKissack. Illustrated by Jerry Pinkney. Schwartz & Wade, 2007

The Chicken-Chasing Queen of Lamar County. Written by Janice N. Harrington. Illustrated by Shelley Jackson. Melanie Kroupa Books / Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007

A Good Day. Written and illustrated by Kevin Henkes. Greenwillow Books / HarperCollins, 2007

Granddad's Fishing Buddy. Written by Mary Quigley. Illustrated by Stéphane Jorisch. Dial, 2007

Jazz Baby. Written by Lisa Wheeler. Illustrated by R. Gregory Christie. Harcourt, 2007

Only You. Written by Robin Cruise. Illustrated by Margaret Chodos-Irvine. Harcourt, 2007

Pierre in Love. Written by Sara Pennypacker. Illustrated by Petra Mathers. Orchard / Scholastic, 2007

Those Shoes. Written by Maribeth Boelts. Illustrated by Noah Z. Jones. Candlewick Press, 2007

"The Trouble with Dogs . . ." Said Dad. Written and illustrated by Bob Graham. U.S. edition: Candlewick Press, 2007

What Happens on Wednesdays. Written by Emily Jenkins. Illustrated by Lauren Castillo. Frances Foster Books / Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007

Publishing in 2007

As we look at the shelves and consider what we read over the past year, one of the most noticeable trends of the 2007 publishing year is the remarkable increase in the amount of fiction being published, particularly young adult fiction.

In the past we've noted what we've come to call "The Harry Potter Effect"—that is, a proliferation of fantasy novels being published in series of hefty volumes. It seems that every publisher is trying to find the next big thing or the next J. K. Rowling. But the increased interest in substantial fantasy on the part of publishers (and, we assume, readers) is not necessarily a bad thing.

In addition to the *Harry Potter* imitators, we're also seeing a wealth of young adult books that break new ground or raise provocative issues. *Evolution, Me, and Other Freaks of Nature* by Robin Brande (Knopf) deals with the teaching of evolutionary theory in a public school; *The Silenced* by Jim DeVita addresses political oppression and freedom of speech. Neal Shusterman's *Unwind* imagines a future where abortion is illegal but parents have the option to "unwind" their children between the ages of thirteen and eighteen, to make their bodies available for organ harvesting.

We also continue to see books that break down long-held taboos in terms of sex and sexuality. In *Dangerously Alice* (Atheneum), the twenty-second volume of Phyllis Reynolds Naylor's popular series, Alice, now sixteen, is exploring her sexual desire and thinking about sexual activity with her boyfriend, a high school senior. *Harmless* by Dana Reinhardt (Wendy Lamb Books) follows the impact that a web of lies concocted by three fourteen-year-old girls to cover up their attendance at a party with older teenage boys—a party in which one of them gets involved in a sexual encounter she isn't ready for—has on their lives and the lives of others. In *Story of a Girl*, the first novel by dazzling new talent Sara Zarr, readers see the inner turmoil of a sixteen-year-old girl who is perceived as a slut by both her high school peers and her father. And Barry Lyga's *Boy Toy* looks at the impact and aftermath of a teacher's seduction of a middle school student.

Out in Numbers

Over the past few years there has been a welcome increase in young adult novels dealing with gay and lesbian themes and topics, and 2007 proved to be the best year yet, not only in terms of quantity but in terms of quality as well. We were pleased to see several newcomers pen their first novels for young adults with LGBTQ themes. Among these are published adult authors writing for the first time for teenagers, including Peter Cameron (*Someday This Pain Will Be Useful to You*) and James St. James (*Freak Show*). First-time novelists M. Sindy Felin (*Touching Snow*) and Perry Moore (*Hero*) both got off to a great start with their original, finely crafted stories.

Established authors Julie Peters (*grl2grl*) and Ellen Wittlinger (*Parrotfish*) expanded the genre by offering a variety of LGBTQ characters, including transgender teens. And Nancy Garden, a pioneer in the field, published a collection of short stories (*Hear Me Out*) that shows the changes that have occurred in the lives of gay and lesbian teens over the past six decades. This year also marked the

twenty-fifth-anniversary edition of *Annie on My Mind* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux), which was so groundbreaking when it came out—the first gay/lesbian love story with a happy ending. We have come a very long way, indeed, since John Donovan published *I'll Get There: It Better Be Worth the Trip* (Harper & Row), the first gay novel for teens, in 1969.

In addition to *Annie on My Mind*, 2007 was an anniversary year for another landmark young adult novel. S.E. Hinton's *The Outsiders*, now a classic, came out in a fortieth-anniversary edition. Both of these books were important precursors of things to come.

Retro Themes and Recast Classics

In contrast to the groundbreaking young adult fiction, we saw a number of books published this year that seemed to be reflections of adult nostalgia. The surprising sales success of the *Dangerous Book for Boys* (HarperCollins) led to several imitators: *The Boys Book: How To Be Best at Everything* (Scholastic), *For Boys Only: The Biggest, Baddest Book Ever* (Feiwel & Friends), *The Curious Boys' Book of Adventure* (Razorbill), and gender-equity editions that include *The Daring Book for Girls* (HarperCollins) and *The Girls Book: How To Be Best at Everything* (Scholastic). All of these volumes would be at home—at least visually—on the shelves of the CCBC Historical Collection, next to their nineteenth-century counterparts, *The Boy Craftsman* and the *American Girl's Handy Book*.

We also noted a dozen or so 2007 books that dealt with manners and etiquette, another type of book that was more prevalent in earlier centuries. These ranged from the earnest (*The Golden Rule*) to the hilarious (*Do Unto Otters*), from books for toddlers (*Emily's Magic Words: Please, Thank You, and More*) to books for teenagers (*Teen Manners: From Malls to Meals to Messaging and Beyond*). We're not quite sure what accounts for the sudden onslaught of etiquette books. It will be interesting to see if there is any noticeable improvement in the behavior of the general population in the coming years.

There were also a number of modern editions of classic stories, some showing playful approaches to the subject, such as a recasting of *Aesop's Fables* in a contemporary classroom with *The Fabled Fourth Graders of Aesop Elementary School* by Candace Fleming. Greek myths are also being reimaged for a new generation in creative and humorous ways in such novels as *The Titan's Curse* by Rick Riordan, which continues his entertaining “Percy Jackson and the Olympians” series; *Iris, Messenger* by Sarah Deming; and *Dussie* by Nancy Springer (Walker). Christopher Myers' *Jabberwocky* (Jump at the Sun/Hyperion) interprets Lewis Carroll's classic nonsense poem as a modern-day basketball game taking place in an urban neighborhood.

Publishers have returned this year to the well of adult best sellers, drawing children's editions from them with books such as *Marley: A Dog Like No Other* by John Grogan (HarperCollins), *Yeah, Yeah, Yeah: The Beatles, Beatlemania and the Music that Changed the World* by Bob Spitz (Little Brown), *Woe Is I Jr.* by Patricia T. O'Connor (Putnam), and an adaptation of Al Gore's *A New Generation* into *An Inconvenient Truth*, a book for teens that bears the same name as the well-known movie on global warming that highlights Gore's work.

These works of nonfiction are of particular interest since we continue to see a drastic decrease in original trade nonfiction. We seem to be returning to that time in the mid-1980s when publishers were telling us that nonfiction was all but dead, since there was no market for it. For this reason, we cannot take for granted the outstanding nonfiction that we did see, including *Muckrakers* by Ann Bausum, *Frida* by Carmen T. Bernier-Grand, *Tracking Trash* by Loree Griffin Burns, *Who Was First?* by Russell Freedman, and *The Many Rides of Paul Revere* by James Cross Giblin. It's up to librarians, teachers, and parents to show publishers that nonfiction is of vital interest to them, as well as to children and teens.

The Pictures Tell (Part of) the Story

Another trend of the past few years that continued in 2007 was the expansion of graphic novel publishing. Many trade publishers have launched their own graphic novel imprints, while traditional graphic novel publishers expanded their marketing and publishing to better meet the needs of libraries and schools. This has led to some exciting new developments, such as DC Comics' new Minx imprint, which specializes in graphic novels aimed at girls.

Authors of traditional novels are also venturing into writing graphic novels. Jennifer Holm continued her "Babymouse" series and Cecil Castellucci published her first graphic novel, *Plain Janes*.

And pictures aren't just for graphic novels any more. We're seeing a renaissance of illustrated novels for both children and young adults in books such as *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, the first young adult novel by adult author Sherman Alexie, *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* by Jeff Kinney and *Book of a Thousand Days* by Shannon Hale.

Perhaps most noteworthy was *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* by Brian Selznick, a 533-page novel, about one-third of which is told through wordless illustrations. So integral are the illustrations that the book was awarded the 2008 Caldecott Medal, making it the first novel to have ever been honored in this way.

But with a novel winning the Caldecott Medal, we worry that we will continue to see the demise of picture books as a unique art form. Along with the increase in the number of novels, we have also seen a steady drop in the number of picture books published, which was particularly noticeable in 2007. Fortunately, we haven't seen a drop in the quality of picture books. Among those most notable for their venturesome creativity are *First the Egg* by Laura Vaccaro Seeger, *Thank You Bear* by Greg Foley, *Orange Pear Apple Bear* by Emily Gravett, *Who's Hiding* by Satoru Onishi, and *Pictures from Our Vacation* by Lynne Rae Perkins. We also continue to see picture books that defy traditional ideas of who picture books are for, with titles such as *The Wall: Growing Up Behind the Iron Curtain* by Peter Sis, *The Arrival* by Shaun Tan, and *Woolvs in the Sitee* by Margaret Wild. The latter is a postapocalyptic story that uses nonstandard spelling to depict a chilling future.

Seeking Diverse Reflections of the World in Which We Live

Every year at the CCBC, we document the number of books we receive that are by and about people of color, which is how we define the term “multicultural literature.”

We do this because represented in these numbers are two critical concepts that can have a huge impact on the relationship of children and teens to books and reading: choice and visibility. In our ever-more-diverse nation, we need books that provide all children the opportunity to see themselves and the world in which they live reflected. And we need a variety of books so that a single title or handful of titles is not viewed as representing “the” experience of any single culture or race. Diversity does not just exist across racial and cultural groups, but within them as well, and this can only be honored when there are many choices, and a constant influx of new perspectives.

During 2007, we documented the following among the 3,000 or so titles we received at the CCBC:

- 150 books had significant African or African American content
- 77 books were by black book creators, either authors and/or illustrators
- 44 books featured American Indian themes, topics, or characters
- 6 were created by American Indian authors and/or illustrators
- 68 had significant Asian/Pacific or Asian/Pacific American content
- 56 books were created by authors and/or illustrators of Asian/Pacific heritage
- 59 books had significant Latino content
- 42 books were created by Latino authors and/or illustrators

These statistics represent only quantity, not quality or authenticity. Additionally, a significant number—well over half—of the books about each broad racial/ethnic grouping are formulaic books offering profiles of various countries around the world.

The statistics, of course, tell only one part of the story. Throughout the year, it wasn't the numbers but individual books that made a profound impact on us—compelling, vivid works that represent some of the finest creative output of authors and artists in 2007: *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie, *Elijah of Buxton* by Christopher Paul Curtis, *Touching Snow* by M. Sindy Felin, *The Arrival* by Shaun Tan, *Keeping Corner* by Kashmira Sheth, *Revolution Is Not a Dinner Party* by Ying Chang Compestine, *Frida* by Carmen T. Bernier-Grand, *Birmingham, 1963* by Carole Boston Weatherford, *M.L.K.: Journey of a King* by Tonya Bolden, *Henry's Freedom Box* illustrated by Kadir Nelson, and the vivid reimagining of Lewis Carroll's *Jabberwocky* by Christopher Myers (Jump at the Sun / Hyperion).

These and other books don't tell the whole story when it comes to our multicultural nation and world, but each one is a remarkable contribution to children's and young adult literature, and to the story of who we are as a nation.

While we don't document books by and about individuals from the Middle East in our annual statistics, we do pay attention to these as they come in, and we

are happy to report, at least anecdotally, that we are seeing more books reflecting the diverse experience of individuals from a number of cultures and countries in that part of the world. Two of the most extraordinary we read this year were Ibtisam Barakat's *Tasting the Sky: A Palestinian Childhood*, and Paula Jolin's *In the Name of God* (Roaring Brook Press), a daring, thought-provoking look at a young woman in Syria whose sympathies become more and more closely tied to radical Islam.

Fresh Voices, New Experiences

While the statistics tell only one part of the story of multicultural literature, they are an important part, because choice and visibility, as well as diversity, are tied to numbers that have, in large part, remained static for years.

In fact, one of the things that struck us profoundly this year was the fact that publishing reflecting the experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, and questioning youth has, in just a few years, grown exponentially, and in that growth we are seeing more new voices and greater diversity of experience than we see within any single component of multicultural literature.

We aren't suggesting this is a competition. We *are* suggesting that publishers need to show as much enthusiasm and commitment for seeking out new voices and reflecting diverse experiences in multicultural literature as we are seeing in LGBTQ books.

Of course there are always new voices of color emerging on the publishing scene, joining the talented, ever-changing chorus that includes the incomparable voices of individuals such as Ashley Bryan, Jacqueline Woodson, Christopher Paul Curtis, Joseph Bruchac, Walter Dean Myers, Christopher Myers, Patricia C. McKissack, and others. But the need to actively seek out new authors and artists, and new expressions of the multicultural experience, cannot be overstated.

We want to see the vibrant landscape of multicultural literature expand with the same enthusiasm that we saw in decades past, and that means publishing houses need to support editors who champion the work of new authors and artists of color along with the established names in the field.

It also means librarians, teachers, parents, and others must purchase the outstanding works of new talent along with the names they know, so that those in publishing houses who look at the bottom line can see that multicultural literature can and does matter to consumers.

This year we relished the debut of M. Sindy Felin, and celebrated Sherman Alexie's first young adult novel.

Among the other first-time authors and artists whose works we welcomed Carla Messinger, who coauthored *When the Shadbush Blooms*, and Taeun Yoo, artist of the wordless marvel *The Little Red Fish*. Greg Foley created a picture book that speaks to a universal experience of childhood in *Thank You Bear*, while Kelly A. Tinkham's first picture book, *Hair for Mama*, deftly weaves cultural identity into a story about a child dealing with his mother's illness. Sundee T. Frazier's novel *Brendan Buckley's Universe and Everything in It* (Delacorte Press) is a spirited look at an upbeat boy whose fascination with rocks unearths knowledge of a rift that occurred when his biracial parents first married.

Both Tinkham and Frazier's books are welcome portraits of contemporary children of color—something we'd like to see more of in publishing for youth. Last year we commented on the fact that there are too few books that acknowledge the present as well as the past when it comes to multicultural literature. We were happy to see more books this year featuring contemporary children and families of color, from picture books such as *A Box Full of Kittens*, *Dragon Dancing*, *Jazz Baby*, *The Wakame Gatherers*, *My Dadima Wears a Sari*, and the newly illustrated edition of *A Father Like That* to novels such as *The Year of the Rat*, *Peiling and the Chicken-Fried Christmas*, *The Way*, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, and *Home of the Brave*. Patricia C. McKissack's *Scraps of Time* series, including this year's *A Song for Harlem*, frames a historical story with the curious questions of two contemporary African American children.

As always, we are amazed at what authors and illustrators—of every culture and color—are capable of. The 2007 publishing year brought books and ideas, visions and voices that have deepened our own understanding of experience and possibility, and we have no doubt the books we find so extraordinary will do the same for young readers. It is this belief that has us looking back on every year with such immense appreciation, and looking forward to the coming year with such anticipation. Bring on the books of 2008!

The *Choices*

The Natural World

Arnosky, Jim. *Babies in the Bayou*. Putnam, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-399-22653-2, \$16.99)

“There are babies in the bayou with black and yellow tails / and smiling mouths with rows of sharp white teeth.” Consummate nature writer and painter Jim Arnosky uses both words and visual images to create a simple picture book that flows like the water in the bayou, moving from one baby animal to the next. Arnosky’s illustrations always provide a visual clue of the animal to come in addition to showing a host of other bayou creatures never mentioned in the narrative, which focuses on alligators, raccoons, turtles, and ducks. White birds described at the beginning of the book are referenced only visually at the end, and young children will delight in discovering this circularity. (Ages 3–6)

Bishop, Nic. *Spiders*. Scholastic Nonfiction / Scholastic, 2007. 48 pages (trade 0-439-87756-3, \$16.99)

Photographer Nic Bishop is willing to do a lot to get a good shot. For some of the images in this striking book, he hosted a number of eight-legged houseguests in order to capture incredible examples of spider behavior on film. Bishop’s dazzling, larger-than-life photographs are not for the fainthearted, at least where spiders are concerned. The sight of dozens of baby wolf spiders clinging to their mother’s back in full-page photographic glory is enough to make even spider enthusiasts shiver. An engaging informational narrative, and a fascinating essay from Bishop on how he achieved some of the shots, rounds out this creepy—literally—volume. (Ages 7–12)

Burns, Loree Griffin. *Tracking Trash: Flotsam, Jetsam, and the Science of Ocean Motion*. (Scientists in the Field) Houghton Mifflin, 2007. 56 pages (trade 0-618-58131-6, \$18.00)

Dr. Curtis Ebbesmeyer compiles data gathered from beachcombers all over the world who find items washed ashore from cargo spills at sea. Recovered Nike sneakers and children’s bathtub toys reveal a lot about the motion of the sea, but the motion of the sea also reveals a lot about human civilization. Human debris—shampoo bottles, fishing nets, and other sorts of trash, mostly plastic—gathers in huge masses called garbage patches. These garbage patches ride the currents of the ocean—one is bigger than the state of Alaska. They threaten the well-being of marine life and the ocean itself, and challenge us all—as individuals and as nations—to think carefully about how our actions impact the earth. Loree Griffin Burns is a new contributor to Houghton’s excellent “Scientists in the Field” series, and her dynamic writing is enhanced by ample photographs and other illustrative matter, making for an outstanding photodocumentary. (Ages 8–12)

Carson, Mary Kay. *Emi and the Rhino Scientist*. Photographs by Tom Uhlman. (Scientists in the Field) Houghton Mifflin, 2007. 57 pages (trade 0-618-64639-6, \$18.00)

With spotlights on Sumatran rhinoceroses and Terri Roth of the Cincinnati Zoo, the “Scientists in the Field” series adds another excellent title to its growing body of high-interest books about contemporary scientists and their work. A general introduction to the five species of rhinoceros is followed by the story of Sumatran rhinos Emi and Ipuh, and Dr. Roth’s efforts to help the zoo pair breed and produce healthy offspring. The pressure and uncertainty of working with rare species is palpable, as Terri Roth makes decisions based on her experience with other animals, not knowing if these rhinos will respond in a similar manner. Connections between work with captive animals and the protection and support of wild populations are carefully outlined. Appealing photos and lively page design boost accessibility to the topic. (Ages 9–13)

Davies, Nicola. *White Owl, Barn Owl*. Illustrated by Michael Foreman. U.S. edition: Candlewick Press, 2007. 29 pages (trade 0-7636-3364-X, \$16.99)

After a young girl helps her Grandpa mount a nesting box high in an old oak tree, the duo must return many evenings before they finally spot an owl resident. When the owl lands in a nearby tree, the girl can “see the tiny ruff of feathers around its face, like stiff lace.” While observing the owls nesting, hunting, and feeding their chicks, Grandpa shares his knowledge of owl behavior with his granddaughter. Watercolor and colored pencil illustrations show the human and bird activity, while the lyrical text captures the wonder of the child’s birding experience. Each double-page spread also features a sentence or two of smaller-sized text offering additional information about barn owls. A final note describes nest boxes. (Ages 5–9)

Fleming, Denise. *Beetle Bop*. Harcourt, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-15-205936-9, \$16.00)

“Striped beetles, spotted beetles, all-over-dotted beetles . . . chewing beetles, sawing beetles, noisily gnawing beetles.” Denise Fleming’s whimsical walk through the world of beetles is a dancing, dizzying narrative with bouncy rhythm, playful rhymes, and ample alliteration. Fleming’s deeply hued, richly textured illustrations, created from hand-cut stencils and colored cotton fibers, brim with bugs as they showcase beetles of many stripes (and solids, too, not to mention those spots and dots), and also an occasional skunk, frog, human, or other creature. Very brief information about the six-legged bugs is provided at the conclusion of a beetle extravaganza. (Ages 2–5)

Hatkoff, Isabella, Craig Hatkoff, and Dr. Paula Kahumbu. *Owen & Mzee: The Language of Friendship*. Photographs by Peter Greste. Scholastic Press, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-439-89959-1, \$16.99)

When a baby hippo, orphaned by the Indian Ocean Tsunami of 2004, was placed in a sanctuary in Mombasa in an enclosure with a 130-year-old giant tortoise named Mzee, scientists and the interested public alike

were fascinated with the relationship that developed between the two. The social hippo, now known as Owen, and reclusive tortoise were soon inseparable, whether eating, sleeping, or playing, as related in the authors' earlier book, *Owen & Mzee: The True Story of a Remarkable Friendship* (Scholastic Press, 2006). This volume highlights the eighteen months the two animals have spent together since then, and what has been observed in their relationship, with a focus on communication. A growing Owen often acts protective of Mzee, while the tortoise seems to retain dominance over the hippo. Through physical actions (nips, nudges, and squeezes) the two have developed a form of communication. In addition, they both direct an auditory rumbling noise—a vocalization that neither hippos nor tortoises typically produce—towards the other. The text also conveys unanswered questions that the scientists working with the unusual duo entertain, such as whether Owen would be accepted by a pod of hippos, despite some of his tortoise-like behavior. The engaging text is interspersed with large, crisp color photographs. (Ages 5–10)

Jenkins, Steve. *Dogs and Cats*. Houghton Mifflin, 2007. 40 pages (trade 0-618-50767-1, \$16.00)

Jenkins' magnificent cut-and-torn paper collages illustrate this spritely introduction to the two most popular types of household pets. One side of the book gives us the basics on cats, with an emphasis on aspects of their behavior. Turn the book over and you'll get the same sort of information about dogs. And just so you don't forget about dogs when you're reading about cats, each page spread has a small silhouette of a dog with a short dog-related fact that provides either a contrast or comparison to the information you've just read about cats. There is a paragraph or two of information, as well as pertinent captions under the illustrations. This cleverly designed volume is sure to be a favorite with young animal lovers, who will likely be as intrigued with Jenkins' illustrations as they are with the information provided in the text. (Ages 6–11)

Jenkins, Steve. *Living Color*. Houghton Mifflin, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-618-70897-9, \$17.00)

Artist Steve Jenkins examines the dynamic palette of the natural world in a playful and informative volume. Jenkins organizes the book by color (red, blue, yellow, green, orange, purple, pink), using the various creatures he depicts in his boldy colored, cut-paper collages to exemplify that color in nature and also assign it attributes. "Yellow says . . . Boo!" (Madagascar moon moth, whose unfolded wings reveal a yellow face and eyes.) But it also says, "I'm complicated." (Common cuttlefish, which changes color to suit its needs in a given moment.) The striking illustrations stand out against bright white pages, which feature a variety of creatures on each page spread. As in his other highly visual volumes about the natural world, Jenkins incorporates factual information into his narrative, and at the end of the volume, where there are additional facts about each creature along with a thumbnail reproduction of its full-color image. (Ages 6–10)

Miles, Victoria. *Old Mother Bear*. Illustrated by Molly Bang. Chronicle, 2007. 40 pages (trade 0-8118-5033-1, \$16.95)

An old bear raises three cubs, certain of what to do even as her body grows weary. Victoria Miles' narrative follows the mother bear and her cubs through their first seasons together. The mother bear's actions are instinctive but also drawn from experience, whether she is foraging for food or defending her cubs against a male bear. Her cubs learn by watching her. Miles offers a detailed and dramatic account of the bears' activities in a substantial picture book narrative set against Molly Bang's deeply hued oil and chalk illustrations. (Ages 4-8)

Oliver, Narelle. *Twilight Hunt: A Seek-and-Find Book*. Star Bright Books, 2007. 33 pages (trade 1-59572-107-X, \$16.95)

A Screech Owl heads out to hunt at twilight but her attempts at capturing prey are thwarted by one of nature's best defenses: crypsis, or camouflage and disguise. In a spare narrative that accompanies striking, hand-colored linocut illustrations, Narelle Oliver depicts the Screech Owl's journey through the night as one creature after another appears . . . and then disappears before she can catch it. Finally the Screech Owl is able to snatch a Luna Moth from the air, only to realize she is being watched by a Great Horned Owl who just might want to snatch her. It turns out the Screech Owl is a master of crypsis, too, as she alights on a rough-barked tree and disappears. A detailed end-note provides additional information on how camouflage and disguise work in nature. Oliver's captivating art will provide careful observers with the fun of discovery, as she has incorporated numerous examples of crypsis into each illustration. (Ages 3-8)

Ross, Michael Elsohn. *Mama's Milk*. Illustrated by Ashley Wolff. Tricycle Press, 2007. 24 pages (trade 1-58246-181-3, \$12.95)

"Cuddle little baby warm and tight / Mama's going to feed you day and night." Nursing babies are everywhere in the natural world. Michael Elsohn Ross' gentle, rhyming text describes the many places babies drink their mother's milk, from high in a tree to deep in a burrow, inside a cave or under the water. Ashley Wolff's illustrations show a specific creature for each location: monkey and infant (tree), coyote with pups (burrow), bat with pup (cave), dolphin with calf (sea), and many others. Of course human infants nurse, too, and there are scenes of mothers and nursing babies in a bed, at a park and in a rocking chair interspersed throughout this singular volume. (Ages 1-5)

Sayre, April Pulley. *Vulture View*. Illustrated by Steve Jenkins. Henry Holt, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-8050-7557-7, \$16.95)

"Vultures smell the air. They sniff, search, seek for foods that . . . REEK!" April Pulley Sayre takes an uncompromising and surprisingly enticing look at the habits of turkey vultures in a short, poetic text that touches on flight, food, and family. Sayre uses rhyme, changing rhythm, and alliteration in a skillful narrative that is dramatically illustrated by Steve Jenkins with his trademark, arresting collage images. An author's note provides additional

information to supplement the brief picture book narrative about “nature’s cleanup crew.” (Ages 4–8)

Schwartz, David M. and Yael Schy. *Where in the Wild? Camouflaged Creatures Concealed ... and Revealed*. Photographs by Dwight Kuhn. Tricycle Press, 2007. 22 pages (trade 1–58246–207–0, \$15.95)

This entertaining and informative work introduces a variety of creatures that use camouflage techniques to hide from predators, sneak up on prey, or both. Each page spread features a clever “Who am I?” poem matched with a stunning photo of an animal hidden in the wild. The photo unfolds to show the location of the hidden animal, along with a brief description of its habitat and disguise behaviors. “Silent and Still” is the poem accompanying a weasel, the whiskers on its sharp face barely discernable in a snapshot of a snowy field. A powerful predator for its size, weasels eat almost half their weight in food every day, as the fact page reveals: “This is like a 100-pound person eating fifty pounds of hamburger every day—that’s 200 quarter-pound burgers. Imagine how many more mice and rats would be running around if it weren’t for weasels!” Eye-opening and enlightening, this book does nothing to camouflage its own appeal. (Ages 7–12)

Winter, Jeanette. *The Tale of Pale Male: A True Story*. Harcourt, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0–15–205972–5, \$16.00)

When two Red-tailed Hawks build a nest on a Fifth Avenue apartment building in New York City, they attract the attention of many New Yorkers. Bird watchers observe with interest as the birds, named Pale Male and Lola, raise a pair of chicks in their urban home. “But not everyone loves the hawks. On a cold, rainy day in December—when no one is watching—the apartment people install a window-washer platform near the empty winter nest. Workers stuff all four hundred pounds of the carefully gathered sticks, twigs and bits of bark into big plastic bags—even the pigeon spikes that supported the nest. The apartment people are happy.” The nest removal attracts media attention, which triggers a public outcry, and the apartment’s residents eventually comply with the protesters’ request. Soon after the re-installation of the pigeon spikes, Pale Male and Lola build a new nest on their old spot. Boxed acrylic paint illustrations provide a tightly focused view of the birds and their urban home. A one-page author’s note offers additional information on Pale Male and Lola’s story. (Ages 5–10)

Seasons and Celebrations

Bae, Hyun-Joo. *New Clothes for New Year’s Day*. Translated from the Korean. U.S. edition: Kane/Miller, 2007. 32 pages (trade 1–933605–29–4, \$15.95)

This exquisitely illustrated story opens with a young Korean girl at her window welcoming in the New Year. The best part about New Year’s Day, she explains, is wearing new clothes! Taking each piece off the hanger, the little girl dresses herself and describes the significance of her new skirt, shirt,

and rainbow-striped jacket. The New Year is about new beginnings and is a celebration of growing one year older. With authority and excitement, the girl pulls on her embroidered socks and special flowered shoes. From head to toe, the little girl clothes herself with colorful newness for the big day. Outfitted and adorned, she is ready to visit family and friends and wish them good luck in the New Year. A complete illustration of the girl's wardrobe, along with cultural information, follows the text. (Ages 4–7)

Bowen, Anne. *Christmas Is Coming*. Illustrated by Tomek Bogacki. Carolrhoda, 2007. 32 pages (trade 1-5750-934-7, \$15.95)

“You know Christmas is coming when you see lights like ribbons of stars shining in the dark—glittering, shimmering, everywhere glimmering, on trees and fences, windows and doors, all around the neighborhood!” A young girl tells her baby brother about all the preparations that mean Christmas is on its way. A letter mailed to Santa, hunting for the perfect Christmas tree, caroling, cookies, and much more all mean Christmas is almost here. And when it comes to presents, the little girl notes, there is something special this particular Christmas: “YOU. And that is the best present of all.” Anne Bowen’s delightfully detailed picture book is warmly illustrated by Tomek Bogacki. (Ages 3–7)

DiCamillo, Kate. *Great Joy*. Illustrated by Bagram Ibatoulline. Candlewick Press, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-7636-2920-0, \$16.99)

Looking out her window to the snowy city streets below, bustling with holiday shoppers and the twinkling lights of storefronts, Frances notices something. An organ grinder and his monkey have appeared on the corner of Fifth and Vine. The man plays music for all to hear while the monkey, in his green vest and red cap, holds out a collection cup. Frances watches them keenly as they play through the day and into the evening. “Where do they go at night?” she asks her mother. Her mother hushes her and supposes that they must go somewhere. Unsatisfied, Frances keeps herself awake until midnight. Looking out the window, she sees the duo on the corner, huddling in the cold. The organ grinder raises his hat to Frances in the window above. In the morning, Frances asks if they can come to dinner. “Oh, Frances . . . They’re strangers.” On the way to her Christmas pageant, Frances drops a coin in the monkey’s cup and invites both man and monkey to watch her be an angel in the church play. Beautiful acrylic illustrations capture the outer cold and inner warmth of the season, and illuminate how one small act can produce great joy. (Ages 5–9)

Falconer, Ian. *Olivia Helps with Christmas*. Atheneum, 2007. 40 pages (trade 1-4169-0786-6, \$18.99)

The irrepressible Olivia brings her unique brand of porcine charm to the holiday season. Whether she’s “helping” with the tree lights or standing at a rain-slicked window on Santa watch, Olivia’s got the situation covered—at least from her perspective. Ian Falconer uses perfect pacing and a deceptively simple illustrative style to offer up a hysterical look at Christmas, Olivia-style. The expression on her parents’ faces when they are gifted with Olivia’s

extremely pink and larger-than-life self-portrait (“Won’t it be beautiful over the fireplace?”) is especially memorable. Olivia’s experience reflects that of youngsters everywhere, with holiday ups and downs and a few moments of magic. (Ages 5–8)

Horse, Harry. *Little Rabbit’s Christmas*. Peachtree, 2007. 32 pages (trade 1-56145-419-2, \$15.95)

Little Rabbit is overjoyed when he gets the sled he’d been hoping for on Christmas. “It’s mine,” he tells his admiring friends, refusing to let anyone else take a turn on it. The sled goes “Whoosh!” just like Little Rabbit knew it would. And it goes “Crash!” when Little Rabbit slides too fast down the biggest hill he can find. Cold, tired, and trailing a broken sled, a forlorn Little Rabbit is buoyed by the true spirit of friendship when Molly, Benjamin, and Rachel come to the rescue, using *their* new presents—the ones Little Rabbit dismissed just a short time before—to make things right. Little Rabbit is convincingly childlike, full of wonder and delight, but also demanding and self-centered until true friends remind him of the joy in sharing. This gives a refreshing edge to Harry Horse’s holiday story, which is full of terrific personality and charm. (Ages 3–6)

Laminack, Lester L. *Snow Day!* Illustrated by Adam Gustavson. Peachtree, 2007. 32 pages (trade 1-56145-418-4, \$16.95)

There is eager anticipation of a day off from school when the forecast promises snow. “Just imagine . . . so much snow, even the buses can’t go. No—so much snow even the *teachers* can’t go.” The narrator makes big plans for winter fun in anticipation of a snow day and awakens to discover . . . no snow! Dizzying hopes and dashed dreams are pitch-perfect in Lester Laminack’s picture book that ends with a surprising and hilarious twist when the identity of the narrator is revealed. Adam Gustavson uses a variety of intriguing perspectives in his full-color illustrations. (Ages 5–9)

Livingston, Myra Cohn. *Calendar*. Illustrated by Will Hillenbrand. Holiday House, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-8234-1725-5, \$16.95)

A poem that first appeared in a 1959 collection by Myra Cohn Livingston makes for a spirited trip across the year as a stand-alone picture book. Livingston marks each month by a distinctive action or activity. January “shivers,” March “blows off the winter ice.” June is “deep blue swimming.” December brings snow and sleds and Santa. Livingston’s brief poem is in the first-person, and artist Will Hillenbrand depicts the speaker as a lively, dark-haired, white-skinned girl in his vibrant mixed-media illustrations. (Ages 4–7)

Pickering, Jimmy. *Skelly the Skeleton Girl*. Simon & Schuster, 2007. 32 pages (trade 1-4169-1192-8, \$12.99)

Skeleton girl Skelly’s search for the owner of a bone that doesn’t belong to her leads her to question a host of other distinctive inhabitants of her home. The bone doesn’t belong to her pet bat, or to the monster of the house. The man-eating plants, ghosts, and spiders don’t know whose it is, either. Jimmy

Pickering's charming, Burtonesque mystery for young readers is light on plot but heavy on tongue-in-cheek atmosphere. Pickering blends a slightly gothic look with a lighthearted tone in a refreshingly un-Halloweeny story with a decidedly droll resolution. (Ages 4–7)

McKissack, Patricia C. *The All-I'll-Ever-Want Christmas Doll*. Illustrated by Jerry Pinkney. Schwartz & Wade, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0–375–83759–0, \$16.99, lib. 0375937595, \$19.99)

Nella dreams of getting a Baby Betty doll for Christmas. Neither of her sisters believes it will happen; there's a Depression going on, after all. But when Christmas morning comes, there isn't just a stocking full of wonderful treats (walnuts, an orange, a peppermint stick, *and* a box of raisins), but a Baby Betty doll for the three girls to share. And that's when the trouble begins, because Nella has no desire to share Baby Betty. "Okay, chickadees, fix it," Mama tells the squabbling trio. The argument ends with Nella in possession of Baby Betty while her sisters go off to play. She won! Or did she? It turns out Baby Betty isn't all that fun, at least on her own. She doesn't laugh at the funny parts of Nella's stories, or sing harmony on Nella's songs. Patricia C. McKissack's lively story about three close-knit African American sisters facing an authentic—and authentically resolved—conflict is told with vivid language that brings both the period and the people into full relief. Jerry Pinkney's watercolor illustrations provide additional details and a wonderful visual backdrop for the story. *Highly Commended, 2008 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 6–9)

Messinger, Carla, with Susan Katz. *When the Shadbush Blooms*. Illustrated by David Kanietakeron Fadden. Tricycle Press, 2007. 32 pages (trade 1–58246–192–9, \$15.95)

The voice of a contemporary Lenape girl opens this picture book that marks the cycle of the seasons and the activities associated with each month of the year and also references the link between present and past generations and the continuity of tradition and family. The girl notes that "my grandparents' grandparents' walked beside the same stream where I walk with my brother, and we can see what they saw." Each two-page spread describes an activity in a specific month, identified by its Lenape name in both Lenape and English. During *Mechakhokque* or Cold Makes the Trees Crack Moon, "Grandma mends our winter clothes and Grandpa tells us stories." Illustrator David Kanietakeron Fadden brings a wonderful visual dimension to the storytelling by showing the contemporary girl and her family on the right-hand page of each spread, while the girls' ancestral family is engaged in a parallel activities on each left-hand page. There is also a girl in the long-ago family, along with a brother and a baby, parents and grandparents. The two families are identical in structure, and the narrative often has a fluid feel of moving back and forth through time, with only occasional markers establishing which girl might be speaking. Author's notes provide additional information about Lenape culture and the seasons, along with a pronunciation guide for the Lenape name of each moon. (Ages 4–8)

Rotner, Shelley and Anne Love Woodhull. *Every Season*. Photographs by Shelley Rotner. A Neal Porter Book / Roaring Brook Press, 2007. 32 pages (trade 1-59643-136-9, \$16.95)

Every season brings special things to notice in nature, not to mention special things to do, from planting in spring to swimming in summer, picking pumpkins in fall to sledding in winter. The cycle of the seasons and many things to appreciate about each time of year are celebrated in a shining photoessay featuring images of diverse children engaging in an array of seasonal activities. A spare, lyrical text in the voice of a child comments on the many things to see and do at each time of year, creating an endless cycle of reasons for loving each season. (Ages 4-8)

Wells, Rosemary. *Max Counts His Chickens*. Viking, 2007. 24 pages (trade 0-670-06222-7, \$15.99)

The Easter Bunny hides ten hot-pink marshmallow chicks all over Max and Ruby's house. "Finder's keepers," Ruby cries as they begin their search. Goal-driven Ruby is pure focus and drive and quickly spots the hidden-in-plain sight peepers. Max is more thorough but less successful, searching out intricate hiding spots Ruby might never think of, emptying a tube of toothpaste, a can of coffee, and a carton of orange juice among other things, but he's left with just a marshmallow-chickless mess in the end. Lucky for Max that Grandma has the Easter Bunny's phone number, and all is well in the end of Rosemary Wells' winning counting book. (Ages 2-5)

Folklore, Mythology, and Traditional Literature

Lamstein, Sarah Marwil. *Letter on the Wind: A Chanukah Tale*. Illustrated by Neil Waldman. Boyds Mills Press, 2007. 32 pages (trade 1-932425-74-8, \$16.95)

In a year of great drought, there are no olives, and therefore no olive oil to light the Chanukah menorahs. An earnest man, Hayim writes a letter to the Almighty asking for oil, and the villagers tease him for his foolishness. He sends the letter off on a strong wind, and it makes its way not to the Almighty but to a wealthy merchant who believes the Almighty has chosen him to answer Hayim's plea. The merchant sends food, oil, and a sparkling silver menorah to Hayim's village, but when someone spots the merchant's mark on the bottom of the menorah, everyone accuses Hayim of stealing it as well as all of the other bounty. A gratifying tale ends with the triumph of faith and generosity and the defeat of cynicism in a story featuring handsome watercolor and ink paintings. (Ages 5-8)

Matthews, Tina. *Out of the Egg.* Houghton Mifflin, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-618-73741-3, \$12.95)

Tina Matthews' surprising and fresh rendition of "The Little Red Hen" is distinguished by striking Japanese woodblock prints and unexpected twists to the storyline. The Little Red Hen plants and tends a seed without any help at all from the Fat Cat, Dirty Rat, or Greedy Pig, who reply to her requests for assistance with the familiar refrain: "Not I." A sapling grows from the seed, and Little Red Hen weeds and shelters it on her own when they still refuse to help. Years pass, and the sapling has grown into a lovely tree that provides the perfect shelter for the Little Red Hen's egg, out of which Little Red Chick hatches. Not long after, a little cat, little rat, and little pig appear, asking who will let them play under the tree. "Not I," replies the Little Red Hen, shocking her offspring: "Mum, that's MEAN!" Matthews' handsome four-color woodblock illustrations are predominantly black and white, with judicious use of red (for the hen and chick) and green providing eye-catching contrast. (Ages 3-7)

Pinkney, Jerry. *Little Red Riding Hood.* Little, Brown, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-316-01355-2, \$16.99)

Jerry Pinkney's straightforward retelling of "Little Red Riding Hood" is distinguished by illustrations in which the title character is a young black girl. Pinkney's lovely watercolor images of nature create a stunning stage for the familiar tale, with Red Riding Hood's crimson cape a striking visual focal point as she travels through a subdued brown and white forest snowscape to her grandmother's cabin. The wolf is deliciously realistic, his slinky body suggestive of muscle and danger; a sensibility at once heightened and made absurd once he dons Grandmother's cap and glasses. Pinkney's choice to make Grandmother light-skinned reflects the diversity that is embodied in so many families in this welcome recasting of a traditional tale. (Ages 3-7)

Shannon, George. *Rabbit's Gift: A Fable from China.* Illustrated by Laura Dronzek. Harcourt, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-15-206073-1, \$16.00)

Snow is coming, coming soon, and Rabbit must hurry to his home before it falls. First he must find food, and he happily unearths not one but two turnips! Thinking that Donkey might not have found a meal before the snowfall, Rabbit deposits the extra vegetable as a gift on her doorstep. Donkey, returning home with a potato, decides to pass the turnip on to Goat for the very same reason. The circular fable continues until the turnip returns to Rabbit's doorstep. Not knowing who to thank, Rabbit brings his friends together to share it. Gorgeous paintings reflect the warmth of each animal's generous gesture in a winning tale that will delight and satisfy. (Ages 3-7)

Historical People, Places, and Events

Bausum, Ann. *Muckrakers: How Ida Tarbell, Upton Sinclair, and Lincoln Steffens Helped Expose Scandal, Inspire Reform, and Invent Investigative Journalism.* National Geographic, 2007. 111 pages (trade 1-4263-0137-5, \$21.95)

Investigative journalism is something we take for granted today. But early in the twentieth century it was just developing as a facet of journalism—one seeded by the fierce desire to expose corruption and foment change. Ann Bausum profiles the emergence of investigative journalism through the work of three pioneers in the field: Ida Tarbell, Upton Sinclair, and Lincoln Steffens. Steffens laid bare political corruption in St. Louis, Minneapolis, and other cities; Tarbell took on the Rockefeller family and the monopoly of Standard Oil that trod on smaller businesses and workers; Sinclair exposed the terrible conditions in the meatpacking industry, hoping to improve the plight of its workers (instead his work horrified the American public about unsanitary food and inspired food safety legislation). Bausum also touches upon the work of other journalists, as well as groundbreaking editors at magazines such as *McClure's* who supported and published their work. Brief accounts of key events and individuals in the history of investigative journalism, from the mid-eighteenth century though today, end this eye-opening volume. (Ages 11–15)

Cook, Sally and James Charlton. *Hey Batta Batta Swing! The Wild Old Days of Baseball.* Illustrated by Ross MacDonald. Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2007. 48 pages (trade 1-4169-1207-X, \$17.99)

Baseball has always been an enjoyable pastime to play and watch. However, it has not always been the game it is today. Turning back the clock to baseball's beginnings, the authors explore what made early baseball so different. Old-time watercolor and pencil crayon illustrations complement the candid descriptions of baseball uniforms, team names, equipment, and game rules. Fluid explanations offer humorous and interesting insights into the way the sport has changed over the years. Early on, teams selected their uniform colors, but leagues determined the color of players' stockings, which is the origin of both the Boston Red Sox and Chicago White Sox names. Important vocabulary and colorful lingo is written in bold and defined in sidebars. A “fly chaser” is an outfielder while a “can of corn” is an easy fly ball. Tales of trading a player for a turkey and trading a uniform number for a set of golf clubs are just a couple of the unusual stories that put this history book in a field of its own. (Ages 10–14)

DeSaix, Deborah Durland and Karen Gray Ruelle. *Hidden on the Mountain: Stories of Children Sheltered from the Nazis in Le Chambon.* Holiday House, 2007. 275 pages (trade 0-8234-1928-2, \$24.95)

The small French village of Le Chambon was a haven for both Jews and non-Jews fleeing the Nazis during World War II. Some were natives of Le Chambon, but most were not. This community—many descendants of the

Huguenots—was committed to providing safe refuge for those who had no where else to turn when the Germans tore into France. Some people, many of them children, hid in Le Chambon for the duration of the war. Others were helped over the border into Switzerland by a network of activists based in the town. Authors Deborah Durland DeSaix and Karen Gray Ruelle tell the remarkable story of a single town's commitment to their fellow human beings through a series of interviews with individuals who lived in La Chambon during that time. Most were children then—both refugees and townspeople. The authors devote a single chapter to each individual, providing background information to set the scene. They made the decision to use present tense for most accounts, as if the speaker was describing things as they happened rather than reflecting on events decades in the past. And true to the nature of memory, accounts are often comprised of vignettes rather than a cohesive narrative whole. The result is a book that feels a bit choppy at times, but that does not diminish the power of this inspiring and fascinating piece of history that is marked by courage and intrigue. (Ages 10–15)

Freedman, Russell. *Who Was First? Discovering the Americas*. Clarion, 2007. 88 pages (trade 0-618-66391-6, \$19.00)

With an even hand, Russell Freedman presents several theories about who were the first people to “discover” the Americas, while acknowledging that many were already living here when Columbus and other explorers arrived. A chapter about the journeys of Christopher Columbus is followed by accounts of Chinese travelers of the 1400s, the voyages of Leif Eriksson and the Vikings around the year 1000, and the Native Americans' long presence in the Americas. A final chapter looks at archeological evidence of prehistoric humans in the New Mexico area about 13,500 years ago, and firepits found near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, dating back 18,000 years, which takes the mystery back even further in time. “Recently uncovered sites . . . in South Carolina and . . . Brazil hint that migrants may have been coming to the Americas for as long as 50,000 years—far earlier than any previously known human presence.” While making it clear that scientists do not agree on any single answer to the question of who was first, Russell Freedman opens the window to a wide range of thought-provoking theories. (Ages 11–15)

Judge, Lita. *One Thousand Tracings: Healing the Wounds of World War II*. Hyperion, 2007. 32 pages (trade 1-4231-0008-5, \$15.99)

The terrible postwar shortages in Europe after World War II led many people in the United States to send care packages of food and clothing overseas. One such effort to provide relief was spearheaded by noted ornithologists (and longtime Wisconsin residents) Frances and Frederick Hamerstrom. It was a letter from friends of the Hamerstroms in Germany that alerted them to the difficult circumstances of people in that country and across Europe. This lovely, compelling volume details an extraordinary outpouring of support from the perspective of the Hamerstroms' young daughter, who describes her parents' work to assist an ever-expanding number of families. Letters from Europe arrived and out would fall the tracings, or outlines, of feet. People needed shoes to get through winter, or to get to work each day. The

Hamerstroms spread the word among their colleagues and donations—of shoes, of clothes, of food—poured into their home. Author/illustrator Lita Judge is the Hamerstroms' granddaughter. Her spare, restrained narrative beautifully captures the voice of a young child (her mother) who doesn't fully comprehend the reasons behind the need, but who does understand, with the help of her mother, the need for caring and compassion. Judge's stunning illustrations incorporate letters, photographs, and the actual tracings sent to her grandparents, all of which she found in her grandmother's attic. An author's note provides more information on the Hamerstroms' efforts, and on the Kramer family, their German friends whose letter inspired their efforts. (Ages 6–10)

Levine, Ellen. *Henry's Freedom Box: A True Story from the Underground Railroad*. Illustrated by Kadir Nelson. Scholastic Press, 2007. 40 pages (trade 0-439-77733-X, \$16.99)

Drawing from an actual historical account, Ellen Levine details some of the hardships and heartbreaks of slavery, and the creative resiliency of Henry "Box" Brown, a man who mailed himself to freedom. Levine's account begins with the child Henry, who is cautioned by his master never to tell a lie when he gives Henry as a gift to his son. "Henry 'didn't say thank you. That would have been a lie.'" Henry grows up and falls in love. Soon he and Nancy, his wife, have a family. When Nancy and his children are sold away, "Henry's heart twisted in his chest." He emerges from a period of despair determined to be master of his own fate, conceiving of the plan to mail himself to freedom. Henry succeeds with the help of an African American friend and a white abolitionist. There are questions that Levine's narrative cannot answer because the answers are unknown, such as what happened to Henry's wife and children, but the tragedy of slavery, and Henry's dignity and self-determination, shine in both her words and Kadir Nelson's stirring images. (Ages 8–12)

Low, William. *Old Penn Station*. Henry Holt, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-8050-7925-4, \$16.95)

William Low's dramatically illustrated picture book chronicles the rise and fall of New York City's original Pennsylvania Railroad terminal, as well as Penn Station's important place in the architectural and social history of the city. Low explores the building as both a work of architecture and a significant gathering place for trains and people alike in the first half of the twentieth century. His images convey a sense of intricate detail while capturing the sweeping expanse of the building and its role. Torn down in the mid-1960s to make way for Madison Square Garden, Penn Station's demise was a wake up call for preservationists, who used its destruction as a rallying cry to save Grand Central Terminal in the 1970s. Most of Low's illustrations were created on a computer using techniques that masterfully capture the warmth and texture of oil paintings. (Ages 6–10)

Lyons, Kelly Starling. *One Million Men and Me*. Illustrated by Peter Ambush. Just Us Books, 2007. 32 pages (trade 1-933491-07-8, \$16.95)

Author Kelly Starling Lyons covered the 1995 Million Man March in Washington D.C. as a journalist. She was struck by the sight of a little girl “clutching her Daddy’s hand. Her eyes, big as quarters, glittered like diamonds. She walked like a little princess among kings.” That scene inspired this picture book, told in the voice of a small girl attending the march with her daddy. “Everywhere I looked, fathers and sons, friends and strangers, clasped hands in unity. Their faces filled with pride. Their hearts swelled with hope. I held my head a little higher.” Lyons’ brief, purposeful narrative captures the awe of a young child who is taking in everything she sees and hears and holding it in her heart. (Ages 4–8)

Schlitz, Laura Amy. *Good Masters! Sweet Ladies! Voices from a Medieval Village*. Illustrated by Robert Byrd. Candlewick Press, 2007. 85 pages (trade 0-7636-1578-1, \$19.99)

First-person monologues from twenty-three children all living on the same medieval English manor in 1255 offer a window into what life was like more than 700 years ago. Since they all come from the same little piece of land, their world view is necessarily constricted, but each child has a distinct life experience, and, taken as a whole, their voices provide rich insight into time, place, and character. We see children of varying classes, from the son of a knight and daughter of a lord to the children of tradesmen, a shepherd, a plowboy, and a beggar. Sometimes we also see their interactions: the nephew of the lord of the manor describes his first boar hunt (he’s terrified) while the blacksmith’s daughter describes a visit from the lord’s nephew (she’s terrified). Two of the poems are written for two voices. One describes a chance encounter between a Jewish boy and a Christian girl, who each have prejudicial feelings toward the other, and the second shows dual points of view of the glass-makers daughters, who have very different feelings about their father’s apprentice. Interspersed between the monologues are background notes about medieval life covering topics such as the three-field system, pilgrimages, falconry, and Jews in medieval society. In addition, marginal notes provide necessary definitions and context, and are often tinged with humor, as are the monologues themselves. Exquisite pen-and-ink miniatures suggest thirteenth-century illuminated manuscripts, and an opening double-page spread provides an illustrated map of the manor, placing each character within it. (Ages 8–12)

Sís, Peter. *The Wall: Growing Up Behind the Iron Curtain*. Frances Foster Books / Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007. 48 pages (trade 0-374-34701-8, \$18.00)

Renowned author and illustrator Peter Sís’ brilliant autobiographical exploration of the creative spirit offers his trademark blend of intricate visual images and narrative. Sís was born in Communist-controlled Brno, Czechoslovakia, in 1949 and displayed artistic interests from very early on. His talents were indulged and encouraged within his home. At the same time, creativity and freedom of thought were being repressed in his

school and throughout his homeland as the Iron Curtain rose and the Cold War escalated. Sís beautifully outlines the tension between socio-political repression and creativity through journal excerpts, actual drawings from his developing years as an artist, and hauntingly complex images outlining the historical context of turbulent times in Eastern Europe. Each image underscores how he questioned the world around him as a developing child and adolescent, especially as news of Western popular culture filtered through the curtain. Creative expression and opportunity exploded for the author in the spring of 1968, only to be crushed quickly by the totalitarian strong arm. Sís was able to hold on to his dreams, however, fueled by his indomitable spirit and the force of his own imagination. (Age 9 and older)

Biography and Autobiography

Adkins, Jan. *Frank Lloyd Wright: A Twentieth Century Life.* (Up Close) Viking, 2007. 301 pages (trade 0-670-06138-7, \$16.99)

This exciting and eloquent biography offers a refreshing examination of the life of Frank Lloyd Wright, legendary architect. The introduction of the book reads like an introduction to the man himself—Adkins' vivid descriptions and helpful historical contexts make it seem as though we are meeting Mr. Wright at one of his infamous parties rather than through the pages of a book. A captivating character, the author shows Frank Lloyd Wright as a phenomenon whose work impacted the way we interact with buildings and spaces. The word *rogue* is introduced to show additional dimensions of Frank Lloyd Wright's influence. As one kind of rogue, Wright was liar and scoundrel who manipulated facts and figures his whole life through. *Rogue* can also mean *beggar*, and Wright was constantly in debt, both personally and professionally, despite his success. Wright was a mesmerizing and talented person—a master trickster who got exactly what he wanted—yet another definition of rogue. An architect of words, Adkins offers a highly engaging look at one of America's most notable, and controversial, figures. (Age 12 and older)

Barakat, Ibtisam. *Tasting the Sky: A Palestinian Childhood.* Melanie Kroupa Books / Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007. 176 pages (trade 0-374-35733-1, \$16.00)

Ibtisam Barakat grew up in Ramallah during the late 1960s and 1970s. With a poet's gift for acute observation and expression, she chronicles her early childhood in this riveting memoir. When the Six Day War erupted in early June of 1967, preschool-aged Ibtisam, her two older brothers, and her parents became refugees along with thousands of other Palestinians, making a harrowing flight from Israel to the relative safety of Jordan. When they are finally given permission to return to Ramallah, her family does so both eagerly and anxiously. They try to return to the rhythm of their daily life, but it has been altered forever. Ibtisam is aware of her mother's fears and the strain on her family even as she and her brothers experience the more typical

joys and sorrows that go hand-in-hand with childhood. In recounting these times, Ibtisam seamlessly weaves together the ordinary and the extraordinary, from her fascination with letters and the excitement of learning to read to the dangerous thrill of playing near the Israeli soldiers who trained not far from their rural home outside Ramallah. The narrative is framed by several of the author's poems, and by chapters set in 1981, when teenage Ibtisam is "midway from forgetting to remembering." These chapters reveal a life filled with challenges both typical of adolescence (tensions with her mother) and far beyond what most teen readers in the U.S. have experienced (detention by soldiers, and the very real fears that her city may be under siege). They clearly mark a point of transition between the little girl she was, resilient and loving and eager to read and write and learn, and the woman whose adult understanding—still openhearted but no longer innocent—informs a narrative grounded in that little girl's perspective on all that was happening to and around her, from the haunting to the beautiful. (Age 13 and older).

Bolden, Tonya. *M.L.K.: Journey of a King*. Harry N. Abrams, 2007. 128 pages (trade 0-8109-5476-1, \$19.95)

Tonya Bolden's meticulous and personal biography of Martin Luther King, Jr., offers young readers compelling insight into the man's life and work. The author's description of Reverend King's uncertainty, fear, and self-doubt lends even greater importance to the difficult moral choices he made while illuminating his devotion to the principle of *agape*, a "love that has nothing to do with liking a person, a love worthy of people who do you no good and even do you wrong." An honest account of topics such as King's uninspired early academic career, the disagreement among the leaders of the civil rights movement regarding his role, and King's decision to speak out against the war in Vietnam also lend depth and humanity to an iconic figure. Frequent photographs, some familiar and some new, and the judicious use of boxed text and color blocks combine in a visually appealing, inspiring volume. (Ages 10-15)

Burleigh, Robert. *Stealing Home: Jackie Robinson Against the Odds*. Illustrated by Mike Wimmer. A Paula Wiseman Book / Simon & Schuster, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-689-86276-8, \$16.99)

Much has been written about Jackie Robinson's athletic career and his breakthrough role as an African American ballplayer into a strictly segregated sport. But in this picture book Robert Burleigh chooses to spotlight just a few seconds in the athlete's life: the time it takes Robinson to steal home during game one of the 1955 World Series. Tension runs high when Robinson leaves third base "bursting suddenly in two strides from absolute stillness to full speed, until there is nothing now but the tiny ball and the all-out sprinting man blurring toward the crouched catcher." While Burleigh's poetic words tell the story of Robinson's famous steal in large font, additional information about the man's lifetime accomplishments can be found on each page in small type cleverly contained within a baseball card-shaped box. Oil paintings capture the energy and excitement of the moment in many tightly focused scenes of Robinson and other Yankee and Dodger players, and of the

fans, whose faces clearly reflect the importance of the man's achievement in their own lives. (Ages 7–11)

Giblin, James Cross. *The Many Rides of Paul Revere.* Scholastic Press, 2007. 85 pages (trade 0–439–57290–8, \$17.99)

Silversmith. Engraver. Family Man. Patriot. James Cross Giblin chronicles the highly principled, multifaceted life of Paul Revere in a fascinating biography that sets straight the facts about his most famous ride and, more important, illuminates his larger role in the fight for American independence. Revere did indeed take many rides on behalf of the Patriot cause as a messenger, sometimes barely escaping British capture. He also fought the British in battle and contributed to the Revolutionary cause as a publisher and printer. A skilled artisan, he had already earned a reputation as a silversmith and engraver prior to the war, and added bellmaker to the list later in his life. Giblin's lively account of Revere's life concludes with the poem by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow that made Revere well known among generations of children. Giblin details the famous ride in his narrative, providing readers the opportunity to discover where Longfellow took poetic license with the truth. Black-and-white reproductions of maps and paintings, along with photographs of Revere's work, round out this lively volume. (Ages 9–13)

Hemphill, Stephanie. *Your Own, Sylvia: A Verse Portrait of Sylvia Plath.* Alfred A. Knopf, 2007. 261 pages (trade 0–3758–3779–X, \$16.99)

"Who are you, Sylvia Plath? . . . Something shimmers out of your chasm. / Your language feels like words / trapped under my tongue / that I can't quite spit out on my own." (from "Owning Sylvia Plath") Stephanie Hemphill undertook a daunting task when she set out to explore the life of Sylvia Plath through poems, including those that reflect Plath's own work stylistically and thematically. The result is an uncommon biography and remarkable achievement. Hemphill has succeeded in not only in revealing the depth of Plath's talent but also the arc of her illness, one that saw Sylvia move between uncontainable energy and paralyzing despair. Hemphill's finely crafted poems share perspectives on Sylvia from a host of people in her life: mother, brother, neighbors, teachers, doctors, friends, and others. She drew from many sources—published letters, biographies, interviews—to create accessible poems of extraordinary insight, providing readers with a keen, uncompromising portrait of Plath's life and death. The beauty of Hemphill's poems illuminates the brilliance of her subject even as she minces neither words nor facts. Notes accompanying many of the poems provide additional factual information, while black-and-white photographs, and a wonderful author's note detailing her research and sources (which are listed) complete this astonishing work. Teen readers who already know of Plath will revel in Hemphill's words, while others may discover Plath through them. Many will undoubtedly be inspired to read—or reread—Plath's own words. (Age 15 and older)

Kirkpatrick, Katherine. *The Snow Baby: The Arctic Childhood of Admiral Robert E. Peary's Daring Daughter*. Holiday House, 2007. 49 pages (trade 0-8234-1973-8, \$16.95)

On Admiral Robert E. Peary's second Arctic expedition to try to reach the North Pole, his wife, Josephine, gave birth to a baby girl in Greenland. She was named Marie Ahnighito Peary, but to many she was known as "The Snow Baby." Katherine Kirkpatrick tells the fascinating story of Marie's childhood in a volume illustrated with captivating black-and-white photographs. Through age eight, Marie and her mother continued to spend time in the Arctic with Peary on his journeys, returning to the United States between ventures. She was at home on board a ship or on the frozen tundra, where her playmates were Inuit children. But by the time she was nine, she and her mother were living in Maine year-round, a change that young Marie seemed to take in stride. Marie was a young woman in 1909 when her father became the first to reach the Pole (an accomplishment that was quickly challenged but ultimately upheld). And she was almost forty when she finally returned to the land that was her very first home. Kirkpatrick's account draws on numerous primary sources, including the writings of Marie Peary and her mother, as it tells the story of a privileged child's unusual early life, and the journeys that made her father famous. (Ages 9-12)

Lutes, Jason and Nick Bertozzi. *Houdini: The Handcuff King*. Introduction by Glen David Gold. The Center for Cartoon Studies. Hyperion, 2007. 81 pages (trade 0-7868-3902-3, \$16.99)

On May 1, 1908, Harry Houdini, locked into handcuffs and leg irons, leapt from the Harvard Bridge in Cambridge, Massachusetts, into the frigid water of the Charles River. This book's graphic novel format is perfectly suited to capture the tension of Houdini's escape, as a series of panels visually draws out the suspense as the seconds tick by. Apprehension, doubt, and anticipation on the spectators' faces contrast with scenes of the magician working alone in inky water to unlock the handcuffs before his breath gives out. For those who speculate about Houdini's methods, the authors suggest a possibility: a lock pick passed to Houdini in a kiss from his wife, Bess. A thoughtful closing discussion offers additional information about Houdini and Bess, and relates fascinating details under headings such as "Locks of the Day and How Houdini Prepared to Pick Them" and "In the Early Part of the Twentieth Century Everybody Wore Hats." Glen David Gold's introduction places the magician within the framework of the early 1900s and outlines the character traits that carried him to fame: obsession, energy, loyalty, and the inability to refuse a challenge. With few words and many images, readers will be caught up in a dramatic moment of magical showmanship. (Age 10 and older)

Nau, Thomas. *Walker Evans: Photographer of America*. A Neal Porter Book / Roaring Brook Press, 2007. 63 pages (trade 1-59643-225-X, \$19.95)

Photographer Walker Evans emerged into the world of artistic photography during the late 1920s and helped define it for the next decade and more. Evans was among the first to find striking subject matter in the lives of

ordinary citizens and buildings. Thomas Nau's biography of this innovative artist documents Evans' growth and development as an artist as he refined his understanding of the kinds of photos he wanted to take. During the Depression, Evans accompanied writer James Agee across the south to document the lives of tenant farmers. One of the photographs he took, of a girl named Lucille Burroughs (mistakenly identified as Louise in this volume) will be recognizable to many children and teens today: it is the photograph on the cover of Karen Hesse's Newberry-award-winning novel *Out of the Dust*. Evans hit some difficult times in later decades, but in the mid-1960s he reemerged with new ideas about photography and subjects that intrigued him. Nau's volume examines Evans' life chronologically through defining periods in his development and expression as an artist. His engaging narrative is enhanced by crisp reproductions of Walker's photographs. (Age 10 and older)

Stauffacher, Sue. *Nothing but Trouble: The Story of Althea Gibson*. Illustrated by Greg Couch. Alfred A. Knopf, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-375-83408-7, \$16.99)

As a girl, Althea Gibson didn't care much about school or following the rules, but "Give her a stick, a paddle, a hoop, or a ball, and Althea Gibson was good to go." Althea grew up to become the first African American to compete and win at Wimbledon. Her journey from wild girl to women champion is chronicled in this lively picture-book biography. When Althea's mentor, Buddy Walker, first spotted her playing ball, he saw "pure possibility." It was Buddy who arranged for Althea to learn tennis, and who later helped Althea understand that following rules didn't mean she had to change who she was or how she played. "With Buddy's help, Althea realized she could dress up in white and act like a lady, and still beat the liver and lights out of the ball." Sue Stauffacher's fresh, spirited writing is paired with Greg Crouch's energizing art, which is full of color and motion. (Ages 5-9)

Sullivan, George. *Helen Keller: Her Life in Pictures*. Scholastic Nonfiction / Scholastic, 2007. 80 pages (trade 0-439-91815-4, \$17.99)

A photobiography of one of the most famous and heroic women of the twentieth century opens with a forward from Keller Johnson Thompson, who explains how her famous great-grandaunt inspired her to make a difference in the world. An introduction from the author expands on this sentiment by describing how Helen Keller inspired the whole world with her story and her work. These insights offer a fresh perspective for examining the life of Helen Keller. The collection of photographs presented in this accessible work are arranged chronologically. Large black-and-white photos fill the majority of the pages, with a short paragraph caption above or below. From her well-known beginnings as a child in Alabama to her life as a student at schools for the blind and deaf and eventually Radcliffe College, and from her work as an advocate for people with disabilities to her experiences as a world traveler, photos of Helen Keller justly portray her as a remarkable woman who lived an extraordinary life. (Ages 10-14)

Contemporary People, Places, and Events

Ancona, George. *Capoeira: Game! Dance! Martial Art!* Lee & Low, 2007. 48 pages (trade 1-58430-268-2, \$18.95)

With origins in Brazil, *capoeira* has become widespread in the United States and other countries among both children and adults. A blend of dance and martial art, participants compete to outmaneuver each other in a graceful exchange performed to musical accompaniment that establishes the rhythm of each game. George Ancona's appealing, high-interest photodocumentary offers insight into both the movements and the music in *capoeira*, as well as its history and traditions. Ancona's photos and narrative follow a group of young students here in the United States, as well as their instructors, who journey to Brazil in order to learn and to teach. (Ages 7-11)

Fine, Edith Hope and Judith Pinkerton Josephson. *Armando and the Blue Tarp School.* Illustrated by Hernán Sosa. Lee & Low, 2007. 32 pages (trade 1-58430-278-X, \$16.95)

For the children living in a *colonia* near a large city dump, school is held on a blue tarp spread on the ground. Teacher Señor David tells Armando and his friends that a school can be anywhere, and the children sit on the tarp as they study reading and math, sing songs, and play games. Armando must work beside his father at the dump, searching for discarded items to sell or use, and he wonders what he is missing at the blue tarp school. When his parents tell him that "learning is important," he is thrilled to leave the dump early each day to return to Señor David's classroom. The *colonia* is devastated when a fire sweeps through the dump, but the resulting newspaper article triggers a donation of money to build a school, and the blue tarp is exchanged for a small building with books and supplies. An informative authors' note tells of this fictional story's real-life inspiration: David Lynch's school for children in a *colonia* of the Tijuana city dump. Vibrant watercolor and ink illustrations with white masking fluid outlines show Armando and his family and neighbors at home, work, and school. Several Spanish words are smoothly incorporated within the text, and listed with definitions and pronunciation guide in a concluding glossary. (Ages 5-9)

Peterson, Cris. *Clarabelle: Making Milk and So Much More.* Photographs by David R. Lundquist. Boyds Mills Press, 2007. 32 pages (trade 1-59078-310-7, \$16.95)

Meet Clarabelle, a Holstein cow on the Norswiss family farm. As the title suggests, Clarabelle is a milking cow, but her role on this large, modern-day Wisconsin dairy farm goes beyond making milk, butter, cheese, and ice cream. Brothers Sam and Josh, whose parents and grandparents own the farm, give a visual tour of Clarabelle's function on the farm. Crisp photographs show the hay-filled stall where Clarabelle lives and close-up images of the grains she eats. The photos also offer a look at less-familiar farm scenes—the high-tech

milking center and the anaerobic digester system (which converts manure to electricity, fertilizer, and bedding). An appreciation for dairy production and dairy by-products is evoked by the clear text and informative captions that help explain the machinery and other workings of the farm. (Ages 6–10)

Thong, Roseanne. *Gai See: What You Can See in Chinatown.* Illustrated by **Yangsook Choi.** Abrams, 2007. 40 pages (trade 0–8109–9337–6, \$16.95)

Shopping with different family members throughout the seasons, a young boy identifies what makes a *gai see*, or street market, special. Told in rhyming text with a sprinkling of Cantonese terms, the boy shops for velvet slippers and tastes oodles of noodles while introducing readers to the sights, smells, and sensations of the marketplace. Vibrant paintings complement the savory and descriptive verses. Each spread captures the seasonal specials of the market—songbirds in the springtime, fresh seafood in the summer, incense sticks in the fall, and firecrackers for wintertime Chinese New Year celebrations. A glossary at the end offers additional information about the *gai see* and the items sold there. (Ages 5–8)

Issues in Today's World

David, Laurie and Cambria Gordon. *The Down-to-Earth Guide to Global Warming.* Orchard / Scholastic, 2007. 112 pages (pbk. 0–439–02494–3, \$15.99)

“You know that Popsicle in your freezer? At 32°F it freezes and stays solid enough for you to bite it. But at 33°F it falls off the stick.” That one practical example provides an image that young readers can relate to when they hear that the release of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere has caused a one degree rise in the Earth’s average temperature. Divided into four sections that distill the science behind global warming theory into a lively, kid-friendly narrative, this engaging work gives examples of related changes in weather, highlights effects on animal species facing extinction, and offers realistic ways children can help turn the environmental tide. The hip, highly visual format is packed with accessible substance, designed to invite a page-flipping browse as well as a more traditional read-through. (Ages 9–14)

Gore, Al. *An Inconvenient Truth: The Crisis of Global Warming.* Viking / Rodale, 2007. 191 pages (trade 0–670–06271–5, \$23.00)

This volume adapted from *A New Generation*, Gore’s book for adults, focuses on the history and science of global warming and the impact of climate change on the earth. The straightforward narrative and compelling visuals jump from idea to idea, designed to showcase cause and effect as they highlight the stunning environmental changes that have taken place in recent decades, and the impact those changes have had on the lives of plants, animals, and people. Gore clearly understands the need to leave his audience empowered rather than merely overwhelmed, ending with a chapter titled “Crisis=Opportunity” that documents real-world solutions that can make a

difference, and the Kyoto Protocol that has been adopted by many nations around the world, and individual cities in the United States. Older children and teens who have seen the movie *An Inconvenient Truth* will recognize the substance of this book from Gore's public lectures on climate change that are documented in that film. They can turn to this volume as a refresher on facts and figures, and for provocative examples of global warming's impact on the earth. Those unfamiliar with the film, or with the scope of the issue, will find this an accessible—and sobering—introduction to the topic. (Ages 11–16)

Understanding Oneself and Others

Boelts, Maribeth. *Those Shoes.* Illustrated by Noah Z. Jones. Candlewick Press, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-7636-2499-3, \$15.99)

"Those Shoes" are black high-tops with two white stripes, and it seems as if everybody has them. Everybody but Jeremy, that is. When Jeremy and Grandma go shopping for the winter boots he needs, they take a look at "those shoes," but they are far too expensive. Then they find a pair at the thrift store—almost new, but too small for Jeremy's feet. He insists they fit, and when Grandma won't buy them, Jeremy uses his own money. "I squeeze them on and limp to the bus stop." In Maribeth Boelts' achingly realistic story about a young boy who wants something that it simply isn't possible for his family to provide, Jeremy's desire is fierce, but so, too, is his reason, and his compassion. Resigned after all to wearing a hand-me-down pair that are an embarrassment, Jeremy finds a way to pass on the too-small pair of "those shoes" to Antonio, a smaller classmate whose need, desire, and pride match his own. Noah Z. Jones' illustrations set the story of Jeremy, who is black, and Antonio, who is white, in a multiracial urban neighborhood. *Highly Commended, 2008 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 5–8)

Cochran, Bill. *The Forever Dog.* Illustrated by Dan Andreasen. HarperCollins, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-06-053939-9, \$15.99; lib. 0-06-053940-2, \$16.89)

Corky and Mike are inseparable. The little dog and little boy are best friends—forever friends. When Corky gets sick and dies, Mike is not only devastated, he's hurt and angry, too. Corky broke their pact. With the help of his mom, Mike is able to move beyond his anger by remembering many good times he and Corky shared—good times he'll never forget. "Then he let Corky all the way into his heart. And it felt warm inside." Bill Cochran's child-centered story is a sensitive look at the death of a pet and a child's experience of loss, warmly illustrated by Dan Andreasen. (Ages 4–8)

Coffelt, Nancy. *Fred Stays with Me!* Illustrated by Tricia Tusa. Little, Brown, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-316-88269-0, \$16.99)

A little girl stays part of each week at her mom's and part at her dad's. No matter where she is, her dog, Fred, stays, too. But Fred has issues. At her mom's he barks at the neighbor's dog . . . a lot. At her dad's he steals socks

. . . all of them. He can be masterful at making messes, too. Now neither parent wants Fred to stay at their home. Nancy Coffelt takes a realistic look at a child who has learned to navigate the demands of her parents' divorce with relative ease but relies on—and asserts her need for—the friend who is a constant in the midst of all the change. A little creative problem solving and behavior modification is the key in this spare, ultimately upbeat story. Tricia Tusa's illustrations deftly blend a subdued palette with whimsical lines to create images that are neither somber nor too lighthearted. (Ages 4–7)

Johnson, Dinah. *Hair Dance! Photographs* by Kelly Johnson. Henry Holt, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0–8050–6523–7, \$16.95)

A joyous and poetic homage to African American girls' hair features brightly colored pages framing bold photos of proud girls and their hair. Different colors, different textures, different styles, and different accessories are ways in which hair makes an individual. At the same time, the words and photographs communicate the message that hair is a unifying part of African American heritage. The smiling girls on these pages show that hair is definitely something of which to be proud. (Ages 5–8)

Marcus, Eric. *What If Someone I Know Is Gay? Answers to Questions about What It Means To Be Gay and Lesbian.* Simon Pulse, 2007. 183 pages (pbk. 1–4169–4970–4, \$8.99)

This new edition follows the same style as the one that was originally published in 2000, with a series of common questions (Do you have to have sex to know if you're gay or not? How can you tell if someone is gay? Can gay people become straight through prayer?), answered in a light, conversational tone. The question-and-answer format makes this information especially accessible to teen readers. They will be able to browse through this volume quickly and easily, taking from it the information they need. The author is up front about the fact that he is a gay man himself, and his responses to questions often make reference to his own experiences and to those of other gays and lesbians, most of whom are teens. This anecdotal approach makes the answers sound more personal and keeps the narrative from becoming too dry. Although most of the questions and answers are the same as those in the first edition, there are some obvious updates, such as those about gay marriage. The last chapter, aimed at parents, is completely new to this edition. All in all, this is a useful resource for teens, both gay and straight, and for the adults in their lives. (Age 12 and older)

Raschka, Chris. *The Purple Balloon.* Schwartz & Wade, 2007. 24 pages (trade 0–375–84146–6, \$16.99)

A picture book conceived for terminally ill children, their families, and friends offers gentle and affirming acknowledgment of difficult feelings while recognizing the importance of relationships in the life of a child who is dying. Time with a child “listening or talking, sitting or holding, being noisy or being quiet. . . makes dying less hard” and “living easier.” Author/artist Chris Raschka's spare narrative is gracefully illustrated in prints colored with watercolors. His images depict balloons rather than people, personified with

faces that convey a range of emotions. A note from the founding director of Children's Hospice International notes that the balloon imagery was inspired by the pictures created by terminally ill children across many cultures, who often draw a blue or purple balloon floating free as a way to depict their feelings about dying. An endnote offers simple advice for children who have a terminally ill friend. (Age 5 and older)

Tinkham, Kelly A. *Hair for Mama*. Illustrated by Amy June Bates. Dial, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-8037-2955-3, \$16.99)

Mama has lost all her hair because of chemotherapy treatments for cancer. Eight-year-old Marcus is determined to find her more, thinking if Mama can have hair, she'll want to be in the annual family picture. "I kept my thinking cap buckled, working on finding hair." When a silly wig won't do, Marcus gets the idea to give her his own hair, only to discover—too late—that his plan won't work. Author Kelly A. Tinkham's own experience as a mother with cancer inspired her debut picture book, which is masterful in its honest, sensitive approach to a difficult topic. Tinkham's finely detailed narrative acknowledges the uncertainty of Mama's illness as well as the side effects of her treatment, but also incorporates moments of humor, and always stays focused on Marcus's effort to help. Details specific to the loving family's African American culture, from hairstyles to headwraps, are seamlessly woven into a story featuring warm illustrations by Amy June Bates, and ending with news that Mama's treatments are almost over. "At least for now, no more cancer." (Ages 5-8)

Van den Abeele, Véronique. *Still My Grandma*. Illustrated by Claude K. Dubois. Translated from the French. U.S. edition: Eerdmans, 2007. 24 pages (trade 0-8028-5323-4, \$16.00)

Camille's visits to her grandma's are marked by ritual: they always look at old photos and go shopping, they always walk through the park, and the night always ends with stories about grandma's childhood, a special kiss, and a special song. "Then, a few months ago, Grandma started acting differently." She doesn't remember the things they always do, she calls Camille "Susan," and she puts orange juice on cereal at breakfast. An authentic portrait of Alzheimer's Disease from the perspective of a child acknowledges inevitable change as new ways of being together develop for Camille and her grandma. The one constant is Camille's love: "It's true that she's not the same person she used to be but she's still my Grandma and I love her very much." Intimate, soft-hued illustrations capture the tender emotional tenor of the story. (Ages 4-8)

The Arts

Artist to Artist: 23 Major Illustrators Talk to Children about Their Art. Philomel, 2007. 105 pages (trade 0-399-24600-2, \$30.00)

Twenty-three children's book illustrators provided biographical commentaries for this volume that also includes a self-portrait from each artist, photographs of them in their studios, and selected images from their work. It is intriguing to see the illustrators' visual representation of themselves in the portraits, while the brief biographical sketches illuminate pieces of their childhood and their development as artists. Many of the selected images include pictures they did in childhood or adolescence, as well as work from some of the picture books they illustrated. A selected bibliography for each individual is included in a book that will be especially appealing to young artists. (Ages 8-12)

Bernier-Grand, Carmen T. *Frida: ¡Viva la vida! Long Live Life!* Marshall Cavendish, 2007. 64 pages (trade 0-7614-5336-9, \$18.99)

"On the right, the Frida Diego loves, / the Frida wearing the Tehuana clothes he likes, / the Frida whose heart is whole, . . ." (from "The Two Fridas"). Poet Carmen T. Bernier-Grand explores the life of artist Frida Kahlo in probing poems written in Frida's first-person voice. The result is an arresting, emotional portrait in words. The poems are arranged chronologically in the order of significant events in Kahlo's life, from her childhood and relationship with her parents, to the bus accident when she was a young woman that left her seriously injured and in chronic pain, to her relationship with and two marriages to painter Diego Rivera, in which she found both healing and hurt. This captivating volume includes reproductions of many of Kahlo's paintings, arranged to visually relate to images and events referenced in the poems. (Age 11 and older)

Bryan, Ashley. *Let It Shine: Three Favorite Spirituals.* Atheneum, 2007. 40 pages (trade 0-689-84732-7, \$16.99)

Ashley Bryan's electrifying illustrations for three well-known African American spirituals, "Let It Shine," "When the Saints Go Marching In," and "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands," were constructed from cut paper, which he used to compose vibrant tableaus. Bryan uses both concrete and abstract imagery to convey visual ideas for lines in the songs, creating art that references rural and urban landscapes and elements of nature, as well as expressing ideas about freedom and spiritual beliefs. Warm, vivid colors and an abundance of round or fluid lines suggest a sense of embrace in this singular volume. An author's note provides background information on the importance of spirituals in African American life. (All ages)

Gonyea, Mark. *Another Book about Design: Complicated Doesn't Make It Bad.* Henry Holt, 2007. 150 pages (trade 0-8050-7576-3, \$19.95)

Mark Gonyea's second design book doesn't contradict his first offering, *Complicated Doesn't Make It Good* (Henry Holt, 2005), despite what the

title may suggest. Instead, he complements his prior volume with additional information on elements of design. Gonyea's emphasis is once again on showing rather than telling, so he keeps words to a minimum as he offers striking visual examples of concepts such as foreground and background (Chapter 2: Down in Front!), negative space (Chapter 4: Two for the Price of One), and the spatial relationship of design elements (Chapter 5: Don't Stand So Close to Me). As the chapters progress, he offers everything needed to deconstruct his seemingly complicated final image (which also appears in part on the cover) into understandable components that are thoughtfully combined to create a complex whole. (Ages 9–14)

Rubin, Susan Goldman. *Delicious: The Life & Art of Wayne Thiebaud*. Chronicle, 2007. 108 pages (trade 0–8118–5168–0, \$15.95)

Artist Wayne Thiebaud made a name for himself with serious paintings of whimsy. Bowties and gumballs, cupcakes and lollipops, pie and pinball machines are among the subjects Thiebaud has painted in striking compositions showcasing his mastery of color, line, and form. For Thiebaud, success as an artist came when he turned to painting what he loved without apology, and freeing himself to paint what interested him helped him develop his distinct visual style. Susan Goldman Rubin offers an enticing look at Thiebaud's career and work in a book that illuminates the talent, vision, and work that goes into creating such artful expressions of the sublime. Rubin's engaging examination of Thiebaud's art is accompanied by handsome reproductions of his paintings in this artfully designed volume. (Ages 10–14)

Sciorba, Katie. *Oye, Celia! A Song for Celia Cruz*. Illustrated by Edel Rodriguez. Henry Holt, 2007. 24 pages (trade 0–8050–7468–6, \$16.95)

"Oye, Celia!" a girl calls out as she walks through her neighborhood, a Celia Cruz album under her arm. It's a shout-out to the crowd, a call for dancing, and a cry of praise to the queen of salsa music. Pulsating colors and rhythmic words convey the pride, passion, and emotion evoked by Celia Cruz's music. Dancing through the streets, the young girl exclaims her admiration for her favorite singer, introducing young readers to a Latin American legend. A Spanish glossary at the end provides helpful pronunciations and cultural information. (Ages 6–12)

Wolfe, Gillian. *Look! Seeing the Light in Art*. U.S. edition: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, 2007. 45 pages (trade 1–84507–467-X, \$16.95)

Dramatic light, mysterious light, dappled light. Heavenly light. Light that is cold, light that is hot, light that is stormy. Gillian Wolfe uses masterworks from museums in Europe and the United States to illustrate—and illuminate—various types of light found in paintings. M. C. Escher's *Three Worlds* showcases reflected light, while *Indoor Gossip*, *Cairo* by John Frederick Lewis features patterned light shining through woven shades. Wolfe uses direct questions to engage readers in the discussion of each type of light, and suggests ways they can try creating an effect on their own. Each painting is

beautifully reproduced in its entirety, with selected areas also enlarged to highlight the lighting effect. (Ages 8–12)

Poetry

Alexander, Elizabeth and Marilyn Nelson. *Miss Crandall's School for Young Ladies & Little Misses of Color*. Illustrated by Floyd Cooper. Wordsong / Boyd's Mills Press, 2007. 47 pages (trade 1–59078–456–1, \$17.95)

In 1831, Patience Crandall opened a school for girls and young women in Canterbury, Connecticut, and soon after began accepting African American students, to the anger and dismay of many Canterbury citizens. Free black families throughout the East sent their daughters to be educated while opponents in Canterbury looked for ways to close Miss Crandall's school. When arresting Miss Crandall didn't deter her, they turned to violence and eventually succeeded in shutting the school down. Connecticut poets Elizabeth Alexander and Marilyn Nelson imagine the feelings of the students, their teacher and families, townspeople, and others in powerful sonnets that also incorporate historical facts to mark moments on the timeline of events in the remarkable school's brief history. The final sonnet, in the voice of student Julia Williams, concludes, "I have twice seen bloodlust / and ignorance combust. I have seen it." The volume's introduction is an essay giving the history of Miss Crandall's school, and the authors' endnote discusses the collaborative process by which they found inspiration in striving to understand many perspectives on this piece of the past. (Age 11 and older)

Brooks, Gwendolyn. *Bronzeville Boys and Girls*. Illustrated by Faith Ringgold. Amistad / HarperCollins, 2007. 40 pages (trade 0–06–029505–8, \$16.99)

First published in 1956, Gwendolyn Brooks' *Bronzeville Boys and Girls* offers poems at once specific to urban experience and universal in their treatment of themes that reach across the landscape of childhood. Each poem's title includes the name of a child or children who are its subject: Mexie and Bridie have a tea party beneath the clouds; Narcissa sits as still as a princess while the girls around her play; Charles lies sick in bed, watching out the window; Rudolph is tired of feeling crowded and is ready to leave city life behind. Thirty-four poems highlight the experiences of thirty-four black children but speak to the experiences to which all children can relate. This newly illustrated edition is buoyed by Faith Ringgold's stylized, spirited illustrations in her distinctive style. (Ages 5–9)

Gilchrist, Jan Spivey. *My America*. Illustrated by Ashley Bryan and Jan Spivey Gilchrist. HarperCollins, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0–06–079104–7, \$16.99)

"Have you seen my country? / Seen my magic skies?" Jan Spivey Gilchrist celebrates America's land and its people in a stirring poem that is imaginatively illustrated in two strikingly different styles. Alternate page spreads feature an

image by Gilchrist and by illustrator Ashley Bryan. Gilchrist's paintings, in lovely, muted tones, feature images of African American children set against backdrops that usually depict the natural world. Bryan's bright, vibrant illustrations are stylized renderings of landscapes and living creatures, from birds to beasts to human beings. Both artists incorporate people of many colors and cultures in their final images in a book that illuminates the best of what America can be. (Ages 5–8)

Issa, Kobayashi. *Today and Today*. Illustrated by G. Brian Karas. Scholastic Press, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-439-59078-7, \$16.99)

It is life's simple moments that are often overlooked in the fast-paced world: sitting beneath new fruit blossoms in spring, untangling a kite caught in a tree in summer, building a snowman in the heart of winter, reflecting on the promise of the seasons. Illustrator G. Brian Karas emphasizes the deep meaning of simple moments with images he has created to accompany selected poems by the Japanese haiku master Issa. The haiku are arranged in the cycle of the seasons, while Karas' artwork provides a lovely, cohesive visual narrative depicting one family's living process over the course of the year. In the images is the story: the year is one marked by growth, celebration, and the eventual loss and mourning of a family elder. Karas incorporates traditional Japanese mixed-media elements into his art. The result is delicate images with a simplicity of style that underscores the idea of simplicity. An introductory note provides information on the haiku form. (Ages 7–10)

Miller, Kate. *Poems in Black & White*. Wordsong / Boyd's Mills Press 2007. 40 pages (trade 1-59078-412-X, \$17.95)

Crisp imagery and imaginative insights distinguish Kate Miller's fine poems in a collection on a variety of topics drawn together by their connection to the colors black and white (sometimes one or the other; often both). The subjects of Miller's poems include a comet, a closet, popcorn, a blackboard, a cow, and a fly (in February), among others. She turns daily sights into revelations, such as a blackboard that offers an imagined glimpse of past generations: "A ghostly penance / Scribbled hastily / By some naughty / Student of the past . . . I must not talk in English class." Miller created monotypes to illustrate each of her poems. The black-and-white visual images are at their best when providing a subtle backdrop for her words. (Ages 8–12)

Park, Linda Sue. *Tap Dancing on the Roof: Sijo (Poems)*. Illustrated by Istvan Banyai. Clarion, 2007. 40 pages (trade 0-618-23483-7, \$16.00)

"Lightning jerks the sky awake to take her photograph, *flash!* / Which draws grumbling complaints or even crashing tantrums from thunder— / He hates having his picture taken, so he always gets there late." ("Summer Storm") Linda Sue Park explains in her introduction that *sijo* is a traditional type of Korean poetry featuring three lines—one to introduce a topic, one to develop it, and the third to add a twist. Each line is fourteen to sixteen syllables (sometimes these are divided to make a poem of six shorter lines). Park's playful collection of *sijo* will have readers looking at the world in new ways, or pondering their own possible twists and turns of perception. Her

poems focus on nature or everyday objects and events in children's lives (bedtime, teethbrushing, pockets, school lunch). Istvan Banyai's illustrations are largely literal interpretations achieved in a spare, whimsical graphic style. (Ages 8–11)

Sidman, Joyce. *This Is Just to Say: Poems of Apology and Forgiveness.* Illustrated by Pamela Zagarenski. Houghton Mifflin, 2007. 47 pages (trade 0-618-61680-2, \$16.00)

Inspired by William Carlos Williams' poem "This Is Just to Say," a class of fictional sixth-grade students write poems of apology as part of their poetry unit. Their poems express regret (often genuine and occasionally feigned) for a host of things. Reuben is sorry he hit Kyle in dodge ball, and Kyle is sorry he hit Reuben (although he'd do it again). Carmen is sorry for making a joke about the dress her teacher, Mrs. Merz, was wearing one day ("You smiled, / but your smile looked like a frozen pond."). José apologizes to his dad for the window he broke as a kid, and DaRon apologizes to his big brother, Lamar, for being an embarrassment. The students' poems have been compiled in a book that also features responses—poems they asked the recipients of the apologies to write. Kyle and Reuben pen a poem in two voices, "Dodge Ball Kings," while Mrs. Merz writes a haiku of forgiveness to Carmen. José's dad writes that he doesn't know how to write a poem but "I'm proud, real proud / of you . . . forget about the window / it's ancient history." And Lamar writes DaRon a poem expressing immense pride in his little brother. Joyce Sidman's wonderfully imagined collection is full of humor and tenderness, expressed in poems that offer brief yet exacting portraits of the diverse children she's created, as well as glimpses into their lives. Pamela Zagarenski's whimsical illustrations, presented as the work of one of the students and the art teacher, along with footnotes in the voice of the fictional student editor of the compilation, add further charm to this captivating volume. (Ages 8–11)

Vecchione, Patrice. *Faith and Doubt: An Anthology of Poems.* Henry Holt, 2007. 138 pages (trade 0-8050-8213-1, \$16.95)

"What will you believe?" asks Patrice Vecchione in her introduction to this challenging anthology that explores faith and doubt in expected and surprising ways. Faith—and lack of faith—can apply to religion and spirituality, to magic and miracles, to self and others. These and others ways of being and believing are how readers of these poems can find meaning and be challenged to consider the shape of their own philosophies. The poems and poets are from around the world and across the centuries, illuminating the power of questions that span human cultures and history. Brief biographies of each of the anthologized poets as well as titles for suggested reading are included in a volume that surely offers faith in the power of words. (Age 12 and older)

Weatherford, Carole Boston. *Birmingham, 1963.* Wordsong / Boyd's Mills Press, 2007. 39 pages (trade 1-59078-440-5, \$17.95)

Child's-eye details ground Carole Boston Weatherford's story of the Civil Rights movement in 1963, especially in Birmingham, Alabama. Her spare and deeply affecting narrative poem gradually builds to the church bombing

in that city in which four African American girls were murdered. There is a shocking numbness in the matter-of-fact voice of the fictional narrator, a young girl describing significant events in that year. “The year I turned ten / I missed school to march with other children / For a seat at whites-only lunch counters.” That terrible Sunday in May is also her birthday: “The day I turned ten . . . / My brother sopped red-eye gravy with biscuits . . . The day I turned ten / Someone tucked a bundle of dynamite / Under the church steps / Then lit the fuse of hate.” The young narrator goes on to remember each of the four girls, ending with these poignant, painful lines about Carole Robinson: “Carole, who thought she might want / To teach history someday / Or at least make her mark on it.” Archival photographs on each two-page spread provide haunting and disturbing visual imagery (e.g., firehoses on marchers, a hooded Klansman, the heavily damaged church, four smiling faces in school photographs). Extensive notes at the volume’s end elaborate on historical details referenced in the poem and photographs of this compelling work. (Age 10 and older)

Worth, Valerie. *Animal Poems*. Illustrated by Steve Jenkins. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007. 48 pages (trade 0-374-38057-0, \$17.00)

Using masterful, imaginative free verse, Valerie Worth has penned a menagerie of poems about twenty-three different animals. Worth’s alluring descriptions capture both personality and place, conveying a sense of her subject and the environment in which each creature resides. Steve Jenkins’ textured, cut-paper collage images of each animal provide a striking visual complement to the sophisticated poems. His eye-popping illustrations invite an immediate visceral response, whether it’s alarm at the poised quills of the porcupine, disgust at the armored parade of cockroaches, or delight in the suggested softness of the tail of a squirrel. (Ages 6–12)

Yolen, Jane and Andrew Fusek Peters, collectors. *Here’s a Little Poem: A Very First Book of Poetry*. Illustrated by Polly Dunbar. Candlewick Press, 2007. 104 pages (trade 0-7636-3141-8, \$21.99)

A festive collection of poems is comprised of fresh, engaging selections about people, places, and events familiar to young children. Divided into sections titled “Me, Myself, and I,” “Who Lives in My House,” “I Go Outside,” and “Time for Bed,” the poems range from lilting rhymes to soothing free verse, tickling humor to warm expressions of love and affection. The poems come from across the English-speaking world, including Great Britain and the United States, Australia, and the Caribbean. The expansive illustrations for the oversized volume feature diverse children and convey a sense of warmth and celebration. (Ages 1–4)

Concept Books

Adler, David A. *Working with Fractions*. Illustrated by Edward Miller. Holiday House, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-8234-2010-8, \$16.95)

David A. Adler explores fractions in action at a birthday party, which provides ample opportunities to examine pieces and parts. A clown at the party holds ten balloons, three of which, or $3/10$, are red. When the birthday cake is cut into twelve slices, each piece is $1/12$. Building on these and other examples, Adler goes on to explain more about fractions, from terminology such as “numerator” and “denominator” and what they indicate to how different fractions can equal the same amount (e.g., $2/3$ and $8/12$). Brightly colored graphic illustrations by Edward Miller depict the partygoers and entertainers and provide clear visual examples of the concepts addressed in Adler’s lucid narrative. (Ages 7–10)

Ayres, Katherine. *Up, Down, and Around*. Illustrated by Nadine Bernard Westcott. Candlewick Press, 2007. 28 pages (trade 0-7636-2378-4, \$16.99)

Two preschool-age children are busy in the garden in Katherine Ayers’ breezy picture book highlighting the concepts of “up,” “down,” and “around.” Digging, planting, and watering quickly give way to the garden’s bounty: “Corn grows up. Carrots grow down. Cucumbers climb around and around.” The playful narrative is complemented by Nadine Bernard Westcott’s bright, whimsical illustrations depicting a host of mouthwatering vegetables, a plethora of wiggly, wide-eyed garden creatures, and a light-skinned boy and a brown-skinned girl taking obvious delight in the fun. (Ages 2–4)

Hutchins, Hazel. *A Second Is a Hiccup: A Child’s Book of Time*. Illustrated by Kady MacDonald Denton. Arthur A. Levine Books / Scholastic, Inc., 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-439-83106-7, \$16.99)

“Twelve months together make a year. / A great big circle spinning round / Climb aboard, you’re one year bound / You’ll grow right out of your old shoes / And taller too—now that’s good news!” Author Hazel Hutchins offers a lively catalog of child-centered ways to define time, from a span as short as a second to one as long as a year. Hutchins’ verse reflects two truths about time: its circular nature as it moves forward, and the constant change that can be found within that circle of measure. Katy MacDonald Denton’s soft, pleasing illustrations affirm the warmth that is also conveyed in the engaging narrative. (Ages 4–7)

Seeger, Laura Vaccaro. *First the Egg*. A Neal Porter Book / Roaring Brook Press, 2007. 28 pages (trade 1-59643-272-1, \$14.95)

Laura Vaccaro Seeger’s quietly dazzling picture book begins as a straightforward and highly visual look at the order of things in nature: “First the egg then the chicken . . . First the seed then the flower . . .” Each “first . . . then” statement spans two double-page spreads, offering the drama of set-up and then resolution with the turn of a page. Beautifully textured artwork with

perfectly executed die-cuts add to the appeal. When Seeger's narrative shifts to "First the word then the story" the deceptively simple volume becomes a stunning representation of its subject matter: creativity. Small in size but expansive in concept, *First the Egg* expresses ideas that will fascinate and inspire. An unexpected conclusion brings the book full circle, underscoring its brilliance while creating a wholly satisfying experience for readers and listeners. (Ages 4–9)

Picture Books for Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers

Allen, Jonathan. *"I'm Not Scared!"* U.S. edition: Hyperion, 2007. 24 pages (trade 0-7868-3722-5, \$14.99)

When Baby Owl leaves his nest at night to take a walk in the moonlit woods, he takes his stuffed toy, Owly, along for comfort. Along the way, he is startled by a badger, a bear, and a bat. Each one tells Baby Owl not to be scared but also admonishes him for being out so late. And each time Baby Owl replies that he's supposed to be out at night—he's an owl! He also states firmly, "I'm Not Scared." Despite his attempts to convince himself otherwise, it's clear from the spritely ink and watercolor paintings that Baby Owl is indeed scared to be out alone at night. When he finally finds his Papa, Baby Owl tells him that he wasn't a bit scared, although his stuffed toy, Owly, was. Young children with nighttime fears will identify with Baby Owl and find comfort this humorous but reassuring story. (Ages 2–4)

Banks, Kate. *Fox.* Illustrated by Georg Hallensleben. Frances Foster Books / Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-374-39967-0, \$16.00)

"It is spring. / In the forest, among the roots / of a great oak tree in a brown earthen den, / a baby fox is born." With her trademark blend of vivid language and soothing tone, Banks chronicles passing days and changing seasons as she details skills the young fox is learning from its parents and his eagerness to explore the wider world on his own. The brief narrative's emotional refrain comes in two lyrical lines that are never identical but reference one another rhythmically and thematically, affirming—in different ways—that time brings change and growth. That sense of growth, change, and security imbedded in the story is echoed in Georg Hallensleben's warm, richly colored and textured paintings, which further suggest ways the fox is growing to maturity and readying himself to meet the ever-changing world. (Ages 3–6)

Bean, Jonathan. *At Night.* Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-374-30446-7, \$15.00)

A small girl lies awake while the rest of her family sleeps, listening to the sound of their breathing until a breeze calls her out of bed and up to the roof of her building. Looking out at the city and thinking about what lies

beyond, “She looked up, breathed, closed her eyes . . . and slept.” Illustrator Jonathan Bean makes his first foray into writing with a picture book that is intimate in feel and expansive in scope as a child draws comfort from the wider world around her. The changing pace of his skillful narrative suggests both the unease of lying awake and the lull of the breeze the child finds so enticing. Soothing as a lullaby, Bean’s story is enriched by warm illustrations that offer engaging details of the child’s home and family, as well as tender reassurance in the presence of her mother, who has awoken and follows the girl, unnoticed, on her nighttime foray. *Honor Book, 2008 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 3–7)

Blake, Michel. *Baby’s Day*. Photographs by Trish Gant. (Easy-Open Board Book) Candlewick Press, 2007. 16 pages (trade 0–7636–3368–2, \$5.99)

Blake, Michel. *Let’s Play*. Photographs by Trish Gant. (Easy-Open Board Book) Candlewick Press, 2007. 16 pages (trade 0–7636–3369–0, \$5.99)

Two entries in Candlewick’s ingenious “Easy-Open” board book series feature eye-catching black-and-white photographs of babies or toddlers engaged in typical activities of young children. On each page, a single object in the photograph appears in color, with the object labeled in large type (e.g., “Teether,” “Cups,” “Shoes,” “Wagon”). *Baby’s Day* features an African American child; *Let’s Play* features two children, at least one of whom is Asian. The “Easy-Open” feature of these board books refers to the page edges, which are staggered so that small children can easily grasp the pages for turning. (Ages birth – 2)

Casanova, Mary. *Some Dog!* Illustrated by Ard Hoyt. Melanie Kroupa Books / Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007. 40 pages (trade 0–374–37133–4, \$16.00)

George has a good life with the man and the woman. As an aging dog who likes to take it slow, he fits comfortably into their steady, everyday routines. But life changes dramatically when a stray dog comes to stay. Zippity, a small, noisy energetic dog, not only livens up the household but also does amazing things for the man and the woman—things that George has never done. He fetches the newspaper, runs ahead to the grocery store to deliver the shopping list, and even catches fish by himself on their frequent fishing trips. George is not particularly fond of Zippity and the changes he’s brought with him, but when the new dog runs away during a bad storm, it’s dependable old George who manages to track him down. Ard Hoyt’s lively illustrations capture both the humor and the drama of a story showing two very different types of dogs and many ways of contributing to a family. (Ages 3–6)

Cate, Annette LeBlanc. *The Magic Rabbit*. Candlewick Press, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0–7636–2672–4, \$15.99)

Amazing Ray is magician who performs in the park with his trusty assistant, Bunny. Ray and Bunny are not only business partners but best friends who do everything together. During one of their performances one day, the magician and rabbit become separated. Suddenly alone in the big city, Bunny is wide-eyed and bewildered. Fetching ink and watercolor pictures in black, white, and gray illustrate Bunny’s shadowy journey to find Ray. Kernels of popcorn

and some magical stars lead the brave bunny back to his home inside the top hat, and in the company of his top friend in a warm look at a wonderful friendship. (Ages 3–7)

Cruise, Robin. *Only You*. Illustrated by Margaret Chodos-Irvine. Harcourt, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0–15–216604–1, \$16.00)

The love of a parent for a child is expressed in a lyrical picture grounded in child-friendly details. “I love each hop, each spin, each shout. I love you from the inside out! . . . I love your laugh, your frown, your grin. I love you from the outside in!” The narrative’s soothing cadence affirms a sense of warmth and security that has, as its focus, the baby or young child listening to the words. Margaret Chodos-Irvine’s bold, colorful illustrations show three diverse parent-child pairs. *Highly Commended, 2008 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages birth – 3)

Donnio, Sylviane. *I’d Really Like To Eat a Child*. Illustrated by Dorothee de Monfreid. Translated from the French by Leslie Martin. U.S. edition: Random House, 2007. 24 pages (trade 0–375–83761–2, \$14.99)

Achilles the baby crocodile suddenly has no interest in the bananas his parents usually feed him to grow big and strong, announcing that he’d really prefer to eat a child. His parents offer him sausage and chocolate cake to try to satisfy his appetite, but Achilles insists that he’s only hungry for one thing: a child. He sets off on his own, and indeed does find a small girl sitting on the riverbank. Yummy! The only problem is that Achilles is much smaller than she is, and she’s not the least bit intimidated by the cute, scrawny, teeny-tiny crocodile. The surprising, satisfying ending is made even funnier by the sudden change in scale when Achilles meets the child and goes from looking like a big, fierce crocodile to a small, harmless reptile that needs to eat a few more bananas. He comes to that same conclusion himself. (Ages 3–6)

Dunbar, Polly. *Penguin*. Candlewick Press, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0–7636–3404–2, \$15.99)

When Ben tears the ribbon and wrapping paper off a present, he is thrilled to find a stuffed penguin. In Ben’s mind, the penguin has great potential as a playmate, and he’s sorely disappointed when it won’t do anything at all. Penguin doesn’t smile when Ben makes his best funny face or when he tickles it. Penguin doesn’t even react when Ben does rude things such as sticking out his tongue or making fun of him. Penguin just stands there, doing nothing. In frustration, Ben tries to feed the penguin to a passing lion, but the lion doesn’t want to eat Penguin—he wants to eat Ben. And he does, which elicits a surprising and hilarious a reaction out of Penguin at last. Mixed media illustrations cleverly set up a delightfully predictable contrast between Ben’s exuberant antics and Penguin’s static state. (Ages 2–5)

Ehlert, Lois. *Wag a Tail*. Harcourt, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-15-205843-2, \$16.00)

Lois Ehlert skillfully captures both the personality and appearance of a host of dogs in a playful, visually dynamic picture book. Ehlert uses color, texture, and line to marvelous effect, creating a parade of pooches and their owners at a farmer market and dog park. Her vibrant hues and varied edges pop against solid green pages. The dogs exchange comments in a sparse, rhyming text, but the dialogue is secondary to the arresting display of canine companions, each of which appears in a brief biographical portrait at the book's end. (Ages 3-6)

Emmett, Jonathan. *This Way, Ruby!* Illustrated by Rebecca Harry. U.S. edition: Scholastic Press, 2007. 28 pages (trade 0-439-87992-2, \$16.99)

Ruby is a duckling with four highly adventurous siblings: Rory, Rosie, Rebecca, and Rufus. When the ducklings go exploring, Ruby always seems to lag behind. "This way, Ruby!" yell her eager brothers and sisters. But Ruby doesn't like to be rushed. She'd much rather go slowly and observe the things around her. Ruby's observations come in handy when a storm breaks. In a panic to get home, the little ducklings become lost. Only Ruby keeps her head. Remembering everything she saw, heard, and smelled on the journey, she's able to retrace their route and lead them all back to the safety and security of home. Jonathan Emmett's pleasing story—a terrific storytime read-aloud—features soft-edged illustrations by Rebecca Harry. (Ages 2-5)

Foley, Greg. *Thank You Bear*. Viking, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-670-06165-4, \$15.99)

Greg Foley's accomplished debut picture book is dedicated to "anyone who ever thought they had something great." His simple storyline follows a small bear whose enthusiasm for the box he has found is tempered by growing uncertainty when each animal he meets responds with either criticism ("I think it's too small" from Elephant) or dismisses the box—and the bear—altogether ("I've seen those before" from Owl). Foley's brief text is masterful—each simple statement is suited to young children's understanding of the personality or perspective of the animal that is speaking. His superb illustrations and design are a perfect complement, elegantly spare images that reference and amplify the tone and attitude expressed while poignantly capturing the bear's increasing sadness. The result is a picture book that shows and reads-aloud beautifully, and a story that is deeply resonant with the emotional landscape of childhood, where enthusiasm is too often dismissed by peers and adults alike. For Bear, and for young readers and listeners, there is sweet and joyful satisfaction in the end: "It's the greatest thing ever!" says Mouse. *Winner, 2008 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 3-7)

Gleeson, Libby. *Half a World Away.* Illustrated by Freya Blackwood. U.S. edition: Arthur A. Levine Books / Scholastic, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-439-88977-4, \$15.99)

“Coo-ee!” Amy and Louie are best friends, calling each other with their special word, sharing secrets and a love of imaginative play. When Amy and her family move far, far away, the distance is incomprehensible. “If I call Amy really loudly, she’ll hear me, won’t she?” Louie asks. “Amy is too far away . . . When you are awake in the day, she is asleep at night.” Louie’s grandma understands the importance of trying the impossible. Louie calls and his cry is carried on dragon-shaped clouds across the ocean and into a city of tall buildings where Amy lives. “I had a lovely dream . . . about Louie,” Amy announces at breakfast. Amy and Louie’s shared experiences matter far more than the distance between them in Libby Gleeson’s tale of friendship, loss, and lasting connection that will resonate with children whether they’ve experienced a move (or the move of a friend) across town or across country. Freya Blackwood’s elegant illustrations beautifully reflect the emotional tenor of Gleeson’s tender story. (Ages 3–7)

Global Fund for Children. *Global Babies.* Charlesbridge, 2007. 14 pages (trade 1-58089-174-5, \$6.95)

“Wherever they live, wherever they go, whatever they wear, whatever they feel, babies everywhere are beautiful, special, and loved.” These sentiments are spectacularly captured with sweet and stunning photographs of babies from around the world. Babies from Mali and Spain, the United States and Thailand, Iraq, Guatemala, and beyond are included in this board book. Swaddled in colorful cloth, wrapped in warm fur, or tucked into cradling arms, these babies are an affirmation of love. (Ages birth – 3)

Gorbachev, Valeri. *Red Red Red.* Philomel, 2007. 40 pages (board 0-399-24628-2, \$16.99)

Turtle is in a hurry. “I’m off to see something red red red.” Everyone he encounters wonders what it could be. Mrs. Raccoon’s red roses? Fox’s red roof? Captain Dog’s red ship? Each animal’s guess is wrong, and as curiosity grows so, too, does the parade of citizens following Turtle to his unknown destination. Young children will be delighted by the growing suspense in author/illustrator Valeri Gorbachev’s simple, satisfying story. What *is* Turtle rushing to see? They’ll also be eager to shout out everything red that is revealed with the turn of each page. And like Turtle and his followers, they’ll delight in the resolution when Turtle’s journey comes to an end on a hill overlooking a glorious sunset. Red, red, red indeed. (Ages 3–6)

Gravett, Emily. *Orange Pear Apple Bear.* U.S. edition: Simon & Schuster, 2007. 24 pages (trade 1-4169-3999-7, \$12.99)

Four words—orange, pear, apple, and bear—are rearranged and visually reinterpreted several times in a clever bout of wordplay. Syntax, punctuation, and illustrations all play an important part in getting the meaning of the words across. For example, “Apple, pear” is illustrated with simple watercolor painting showing a pear balancing on top of an apple. On the facing page,

the words “Orange bear” are illustrated with an orange-colored bear. A pear-shaped bear holding an apple and orange illustrates the phrase “Apple, orange, pear bear.” In the end, each piece of fruit is eaten by the bear in quick succession: “Orange, bear / Pear, bear / Apple, bear” and finally “There.” Emily Gravett’s jaunty illustrations display an expert use of white space, color, and composition. (Ages 2–4)

Harper, Jamie. *Night Night, Baby Bundt*. Candlewick Press, 2007. 24 pages (trade 0-7636-3239-2, \$6.99)

A little girl helps her even younger brother get ready for bed in a board book offering a step-by-step recipe for success. Beginning with an ingredients list (e.g., 1 tired Baby Bundt; 1 blankie, well-loved; 2 bunches of cuddly toys) the playful narrative continues with instruction such as “Add a cup of kisses . . . Transfer Baby to bed. . . Drizzle generously with binkies” in Jamie Harper’s warm, entertaining story for babies, and bigger kids, too! (Ages 1–3)

Henkes, Kevin. *A Good Day*. Greenwillow / HarperCollins, 2007. 24 pages (trade 0-06-114018-X, \$16.99)

A day starts out badly for four creatures—a bird loses her favorite tail feather, a dog’s leash gets tangled, a fox can’t find his mother, and a squirrel drops her nut. “But then . . .” Henkes’ swift, finely paced text belabors nothing. Instead, there is a simply stated turn of events. The bird that lost its tail feather discovers it can fly, the fox that lost his mother turns around and finds her, and so on. It turns into a good day for each animal, and for a little girl who finds a lovely yellow feather in her yard. “Mama! What a good day!” Kevin Henkes’ pleasing story seems uncomplicated, but it has sophisticated ideas at its core for those who ponder the turn of events more deeply: frame of mind and point of view. Inviting watercolor and brown-ink illustrations on matte paper, another visual departure for this author/illustrator, complement the story’s buoyant feel. *Highly Commended, 2008 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 2–6)

Jenkins, Emily. *What Happens on Wednesdays*. Illustrated by Lauren Castillo. Frances Foster Books / Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-374-38303-0, \$16.00)

Emily Jenkins’ lively stream-of-conscious narrative is grounded in the experiences and perspective of a small girl describing her Wednesday routine. It’s a day for bagels at the deli and a trip to the park with Daddy, for school with friends, and for reading, napping, swimming, and a trip to the library with Mommy. “Then we go down the steps, up the block where we once saw an umbrella caught in a tree, past the bakery where we got that chocolate croissant . . . past my friend Errolyn’s building, past Maria and the shop where she lives, to home.” Jenkins offers a spot-on portrayal of a preschool-age child reveling in her “bigness” and secure in her world. “Today is not a kissing day,” the girl reminds Mommy, and Daddy, too, when he forgets. Kisses aside, there is plenty of love and warmth apparent in and between the lines, and in first-time illustrator Lauren Castillo’s expressive illustrations. *Highly Commended, 2008 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 3–6)

Kasza, Keiko. *Badger's Fancy Meal*. Putnam, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-399-24603-7, \$16.99)

Tired of apples, worms, and roots, Badger sets off in search of something more appealing to eat. Mole taco with salsa? Rat burger with cheese sauce? Rabbit-banana split with hot fudge? Every animal he encounters presents a tasty possibility, but each creature gets away before he can capture it. By the time he has a run-in with a horse and is sent flying with a kick back to his hole, Badger has come to appreciate what he already has . . . or rather had. His food is gone, with only a note of explanation left behind: "Dear Whoever Lives Here, Sorry for dropping by uninvited. A nasty badger was chasing us . . . The apples, worms and roots were delicious. Thanks for the fancy meal!" Badger's disappointment won't be a big surprise to readers and listeners who have been paying attention to author/illustrator Keiko Kasza's charming visual storytelling, which incorporates small inset pictures of the mole, rat, and rabbit taking refuge in a handy hole and finding a feast inside. (Ages 3-7)

Lee, Suzy. *The Zoo*. U.S. edition: Kane / Miller, 2007. 32 pages (trade 1-933605-28-6, \$15.95)

A little girl recounts her trip to the zoo with her mom and dad. She tells about visiting the monkey house and Bear Hill. It is an ordinary trip to the zoo, at least as described in words. It's the visual images where the real excitement takes place. As her parents walk from one dull exhibit to the next (almost all of the animals are out of sight), the little girl's attention is drawn to a wandering peacock. Following the colorful bird, the girl has one remarkable encounter after another: sliding down the neck of a giraffe, splashing in the pond with elephants and a bear, soaring in the sky with a fleet of jewel-tone birds. Realizing she is no longer with them, her parents run frantically from one empty pen to the next. The rosy-cheeked youngster is found sleeping contentedly on a bench in an imaginative journey illustrated with a pleasing combination of pencil drawings and collage. This is *not* an ordinary trip to the zoo after all. (Ages 3-6)

Lloyd-Jones, Sally. *How To Be a Baby—by Me, the Big Sister*. Illustrated by Sue Heap. Schwartz & Wade, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-375-83843-0, \$15.99)

Unlike most of the picture books about new babies that deal with the jealousy an older sibling, this one focuses on the things an older sibling can do that a baby can't. It cleverly helps to build the older child's self-esteem while showing what life with a new baby is like. The older sister here is a confident, chatty girl who is eager to tell us just how boring it is to be a baby, like her little brother. He can't talk or do anything for himself, he has to eat boring food and play with boring toys, he has no real friends, is unpopular with cats, and can't even face the right direction while riding in the car. The older sister makes being a baby sound entirely unappealing. By the end of the story, however, the big sister makes it clear that she loves her little brother and is looking forward to the day when he'll be old enough for some real fun. Spritely watercolor illustrations show an energetic little girl, in charge of her

world, and her roly-poly baby brother who is destined to be her sidekick. (Ages 3–7)

Manzano, Sonia. *A Box Full of Kittens*. Illustrated by Matt Phelan. Atheneum, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0–689–83089–0, \$16.99)

Ruthie wants to be Superman. When her mami asks her to spend the day with her pregnant Aunt Juanita, Ruthie sees the opportunity to help as a way to use her superhero strengths. Speeding out the apartment and dashing through her Puerto Rican neighborhood, Ruthie arrives breathless at her aunt's door. "Is it time for the baby to come? Should I get help?" Ruthie eagerly inquires. It's not time for the baby yet, but Ruthie helps Aunt Juanita by running errands at the speed of light. Flying to the bodega for another snack that her aunt is craving, Ruthie's swiftness falters when Don Felix presents her with a box full of kittens. Ruthie *loves* kittens. Her aunt, the errand, and Superman are forgotten—Ruthie is smitten. She is so absorbed with their cuteness that Ruthie fails to realize that an ambulance has arrived to take Aunt Juanita to have her baby. Later, a dejected Ruthie realizes she has not saved the day after all. But at the welcome home party, her aunt announces that it was the *coquito* (coconut ice) delivered by Ruthie that made the baby finally come, and Ruthie goes from feeling like a zero to feeling like a hero, especially when she is the first at the party who gets to hold the new baby. Warm watercolor and pen-and-ink drawings illustrate a sensitive and funny story about what it takes to be a superhero. (Ages 3–7)

Mazer, Norma Fox. *Has Anyone Seen My Emily Greene?* Illustrated by Christine Davenier. Candlewick Press, 2007. 24 pages (trade 0–7636–1384–3, \$15.99)

"Has anyone seen my Emily Greene? Her lunch is ready. It's half past noon. The table's set—knife, fork, and spoon. I've made oodles of noodles, brown-sugar ham, and fresh-baked bread with strawberry jam." A lilting text describes a father's playful search for his missing toddler daughter, who is always hidden in plain sight in a pleasing picture book depicting an exchange familiar to many young children. Norma Fox Mazer's buoyant narrative is paired with whimsical illustrations by Christine Davenier underscoring a warm, loving, merry encounter between father and child. (Ages 1–4)

Merz, Jennifer J. *Playground Day!* Clarion, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0–618–81696–8, \$16.00)

A jubilant young girl is in constant motion at the playground, and her many activities mirror the actions of a host of animals. "Skipping, giggling, springing, wiggling, I hop like a . . . bunny." The energetic rhyming text offers enough information for children to guess what the animal will be, but the answer is referenced visually even before the revealing turn of a page: each of the bright, textured illustrations, created from cut and torn paper, feature one of the menagerie of favorite stuffed animals the girl has brought with her to the park, and which she is pretending to be. (Ages 1–4)

Morales, Yuyi. *Little Night*. A Neal Porter Book / Roaring Brook Press, 2007. 32 pages (trade 1-59643-088-5, \$16.95)

Mother Sky tells daughter Little Night that it is bedtime. Like any child, Little Night wants to play a little longer and engages her mama in a game of hide-and-seek. Mother Sky searches hidden corners and finds Little Night camouflaged behind a dark hill. Sweeping her up, she bathes her in a tub of stars. Wrapped in her towel, Little Night hides again, begging Mother Sky to find her. The ritual is played out again and again while the sun sets. Soon it is time for Little Night to take her place in the evening sky, stars in her hair and moon ball under her arm. Sumptuous paintings with celestial details illuminate a dreamlike bedtime story. (Ages 3–6)

Mortensen, Denise Dowling. *Wake Up Engines*. Illustrated by Melissa Iwai. Clarion, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-618-51736-7, \$16.00)

“Garbage truck with empty loader. Alley-crawling diesel motor. Trash-can thunder, sooty plume. Grinding lever. BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!” An engine-obsessed preschooler spends the day playing with his toy cars, trucks, airplanes, and other vehicles. Denise Dowling’s vivacious narrative gains a delightful visual dimension with Melissa Iwai’s colorful illustrations, which alternate scenes of the little boy at play with those showing real-life versions of his toy vehicles at work in the city where he lives in a lively picture book sure to please many toddlers and preschoolers. (Ages 2–5)

Norac, Carl. *My Mommy Is Magic*. Illustrated by Ingrid Godon. U.S. edition: Clarion, 2007. 29 pages (trade 0-618-75766-X, \$16.00)

A small girl tells why her mommy is magic: she chases away the monsters after a nightmare, guesses secrets that are only half-told, kisses a sore spot and makes it better, plants seeds that always grow. Her mommy can even make things disappear by telling stories that make “everything else fall away.” These and other reasons sited in Carl Norac’s lovely, loving story will make perfect sense to young children, who know the magic of a grown-up’s love. Ingrid Godon’s paint and pastel illustrations feature a soothing palette. Her figures show a refreshing lack of sweetness and many adults will welcome the image of a mother who has a body that is real-world rather than rail-thin. (Ages 2–4)

Onishi, Satoru. *Who’s Hiding?* Translated from the Japanese. U.S. edition: Kane/Miller, 2007. 32 pages (trade 1-933605-24-3, \$14.95)

Eighteen animals are lined up in an orderly six-by-three formation on a white background. Standing at attention are Dog, Tiger, Hippo, Zebra, Bear, and other animals. Each animal has a distinct, geometrically rounded shape and color. The animals peer from the page with expressive eyes of simple black-and-white dots and emotive, line-drawn mouths. With a turn of the page, the background turns yellow—who’s hiding? A quick scan shows that the yellow reindeer is invisible, save for its orange antlers and unblinking eyes. On the next page the question is “Who’s crying?” A careful examination shows that the blue rabbit has a tearful face. The pattern continues with requests to identify animals based on emotion, direction, action, and shape.

These curious and colorful beasts encourage playful interaction with their wide-eyed, silent peek-a-boo in a primer for visual literacy. (Ages 3–7)

Reiser, Lynn. *My Way: A Margaret and Margarita Story = A mi manera: Un cuento de Margarita y Margaret.* Greenwillow / HarperCollins, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0–06–084101-X, \$15.99)

Margaret and Margarita like things done in their own way. On the left side of the page, Margaret tells how she likes to style her hair. On the right side of the page, in Spanish, Margarita explains *her* hairstyle. The young friends each have their own way of doing things—how to eat lunch, how to do art, how to sleep at naptime. Yet, sometimes they like to swap their ways. Sometimes they like to mix up their preferences up all together! A charming bilingual story honors individuality and compromise. (Ages 2–5)

Schaefer, Carole Lexa. *Dragon Dancing.* Illustrated by Pierr Morgan. Viking, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0–670–06084–4, \$16.99)

Storytime and a birthday celebration inspire creative expression and imaginative play for a group of children in Carole Lexa Schaefer's merry picture book. After their teacher reads a book about dragons, Mei Lin and her classmates decorate for her birthday. Mei Lin turns herself into a birthday dragon, and soon everyone has something to contribute to the costume: “boink-boink” eyes from Willy, a “ricky-rack” back from Emma, feathers, spangles, scales, and more. Soon Mei-Lin is leading everyone in a dragon dance, “stomp, bomp-tromping away . . . out the whish-whoosh doors . . . creep-crouching through tall forests . . . swirl-whirling around whispery meadows . . .” Schaefer uses alliteration, onomatopoeia, and rhythmic variation to create a delightful and satisfying story about a diverse and dynamic group of young children who travel far and wide across the landscape of their collective imagination. *Honor Book, 2008 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 3–6)

Seeger, Laura Vaccaro. *Dog and Bear: Two Friends, Three Stories.* A Neal Porter Book / Roaring Brook Press, 2007. 32 pages (trade 1–59643–053–2, \$12.95)

Perfect as a read-aloud for younger children or as a book for beginning readers, three short stories star a charming duo of toy bear and dachshund. Dog provides emotional support and a creative solution when Bear finds himself high on a chair and afraid to jump down. Then it's Bear's turn to show compassion when Dog pesters him to put down his book and play. In the final story, Dog declares that his name is boring and runs a list of new possibilities past his friend Bear. Dog proposes that he be called Spot (but Dog is spot-free), or Fluffy (but he's not), or Champ (“Probably not,” says Bear). After further thought, Bear comes up with the perfect name: “My Best Friend Dog.” “I like that!” said Dog. “Or just Dog for short!” The simple text is matched by colorful, boldly outlined illustrations of Bear and Dog sharing center stage on an uncluttered, white backdrop. (Ages 3–6)

Sherry, Kevin. *I'm the Biggest Thing in the Ocean.* Dial, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-8037-3192-2, \$16.99)

A giant squid with an even bigger ego just can't get over himself. The squid proclaims—proudly and loudly—that he's the biggest thing in the ocean: bigger than the shrimp, bigger than the clams, bigger than the turtles . . . even bigger than the octopus and the shark (though he doesn't shout about that one). But there's a big surprise in store for the squid, one that momentarily turns his world upside down. The squid's ego proves to be nothing if not resilient in Kevin Sherry's droll picture book that plays a single idea in the narrative off an abundance of understated visual humor. (Ages 3-8)

Stein, David Ezra. *Leaves.* Putnam, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-399-24636-3, \$15.99)

A young bear in his first year is joyful until the leaves begin to turn and fall. "Are you okay?" he asks the first leaf he sees on the ground. Overwhelmed by changes, the young bear finally slumbers while the world around him continues to transform. When the bear eventually awakens, it is to the sight of small buds "on the bare arms of the trees" and small leaves unfurling. "Welcome!" he cries. David Ezra Stein's tender, lovely picture book celebrates nature's wonder and a gentle, open heart. The author/artist's text and captivating illustrations are a sophisticated, graceful pairing imbued with childlike innocence. (Ages 2-5)

Stevens, April. *Waking Up Wendell.* Illustrated by Tad Hills. Schwartz & Wade, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-375-83621-7, \$15.99)

A singing bird wakes Mr. Krudwig at #2 Fish Street, who lets his dog outside. The dog's barking rouses Mrs. Musky next door, who puts on the tea (and yells at the dog). The tea kettle's whistle startles Mrs. Depolo out of a deep sleep. She's late—again—and rushes out the door. The screech of her tires as she backs out of the driveway stirs Henry Whittlespoon at #5 Fish Street, who immediately begins playing his shiny new harmonica. One noisy incident leads to another, waking each neighbor in turn on Fish Street. Finally Lilah Hall at #9 Fish Street starts singing, waking up baby Wendell who lives at #10. "Well Wendell Willamore, my little bird," sings his mother, "finally you are awake!" April Stevens' terrific story is marvelously illustrated by Tad Hill, whose pictures extend both the humor and warmth of the lively narrative. Hill chose to make the characters pigs, and uses both large-scale and spot illustrations to track the chain of events. He also adds elements of humor, such as the bedside reading of the parents in the Darjeeling family, whose five children share their bed (*Whose Bed Is It Anyway?*) (Ages 3-7)

Tashiro, Chisato. *Five Nice Mice.* Translated from the Japanese by Sayako Uchida. Adapted by Kate Westerlund. U.S. edition: minedition / Penguin, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-698-40058-5, \$16.99)

A family of five mice sneaks out of their quiet den one night, entranced by the sound of singing nearby. Creeping up on a chorus of frogs in the park, the mice are in awe of the splendid music. "Can't you read the sign? Frogs only! Out you go!" shouts a fellow concert-goer, and the mice head for home

with frog melodies in their ears. Snuggled in bed that night, the mice are inspired to host their own concert. By crafting instruments from old cans, pencils, matchboxes, and things that cling and clang, the family practices making mice music. Soon they are ready for a concert and put posters up all over the city. The night of the show, the Five Nice Mice make their debut to a full house! The audience is packed with furry friends, including some green amphibians disguised with whiskers. Song after song, the Five Nice Mice are a hit. But it is not until the frog guests are revealed that true musical harmony is achieved. (Ages 3–7)

Wheeler, Lisa. *Jazz Baby*. Illustrated by R. Gregory Christie. Harcourt, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0–15–202522–7, \$16.00)

“Brother’s hands tap. Sister’s hands snap. Itty-bitty Baby’s hands CLAP-CLAP-CLAP.” Lisa Wheeler’s spirited narrative cascades to an energizing rhythm in a playful picture book full of beat and bounce. Wheeler skillfully uses word- and sound-play in a book that is less story than celebration of a baby’s place in the hearts of his immediate and extended family, and even the larger community, all of whom participate in one way or another in a spirited musical gathering with the baby at its center. R. Gregory Christie’s dynamic illustrations feature fluid lines that suggest motion and movement as they depict a vibrant African American family and community. *Highly Commended, 2008 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages birth – 3)

Wild, Margaret. *Piglet and Papa*. Illustrated by Stephen Michael King. Abrams, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0–8109–1476-X, \$14.95)

While Piglet and Papa are playing she chews his tail too hard. “ ‘Ouch!’ said Papa. ‘You little rascal!’ ” Uncertain if Papa is really mad, Piglet seeks reassurance but Papa doesn’t hear her. So Piglet asks the other animals in the barnyard if *they* love her. Each one singles out something about Piglet that is endearing, from her cute little ears to her snub little nose to her little pink trotters and curly-whirly tail. “I do love you—but someone else loves you ten times more,” Horse tells her. It turns out that Sheep knows someone who loves Piglet a hundred times more, Donkey a thousand, Duck a million, Dog a billion. Piglet wonders, Who could it be? The answer will be clear to many young listeners even before the satisfying conclusion of Margaret Wild’s wholly charming, gently reassuring picture book featuring winning illustrations by Stephen Michael King. (Ages 2–4)

Willems, Mo. *Knuffle Bunny Too: A Case of Mistaken Identity*. Hyperion, 2007. 40 pages (trade 1–4231–0299–1, \$16.99)

Trixie, the headstrong toddler introduced in *Knuffle Bunny: A Cautionary Tale* (Hyperion, 2004), is a talkative preschooler now and still very attached to her Knuffle Bunny. Bringing her treasured toy to school one day, Trixie is crushed to find out that classmate Sonja has a Knuffle Bunny too. In that aching moment, her Knuffle Bunny is no longer one-of-a-kind. The girls begin quarreling until Ms. Greengrove intervenes, taking the stuffed animals away until the end of the day. Eventually, the rabbits are returned and the girls go their separate ways. It isn’t until the middle of the night that Trixie

awakes with a panicked realization—she has the wrong Knuffle Bunny! With high drama, she convinces her parents that it is not an option to wait until morning: the exchange must happen *now*. This captivating sequel stands on its own as a testament to the trials of childhood (and parenthood). (Ages 3–6)

Yee, Wong Herbert. *Who Likes Rain?* Henry Holt, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0–8050–7734–0, \$14.95)

“Who wants rain? Who needs April showers? I know who. . . the trees and the flowers!” A delightful series of rhyming questions and answers are prefaced by playful descriptions of the rain as it falls on various objects. “Pit pit pit” on the windowpane. “Gurgle Gurgle” in the gutters. “Rum-a-tum-tum” on a child’s umbrella. A young Asian girl’s experience throughout the gentle rainstorm is showcased in illustrations that begin with her sadly watching the rain through a window and then going outside to play. Wong Herbert Yee’s quietly engaging picture book invites active participation among young listeners, who will use text and rhyming clues to eagerly offer up answers to the questions posed. (Ages 2–4)

Picture Books for School-Aged Children

Ahlberg, Allan. *Previously.* Illustrated by Bruce Ingman. Candlewick Press, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0–7636–3542–1, \$16.99)

A girl named Goldilocks has just arrived home, all “bothered and hot” from a mad rush through the woods. “Previously she had been sleeping in somebody else’s bed, eating somebody else’s porridge, and breaking somebody else’s chair! . . . Previously she had bumped into a hurling and older boy named . . . Jack.” It turns out Jack is running like mad as well, away from the beanstalk he’d just descended. Previously, he’d done an unlikely trade: his cow for magic beans. Before that, he’d been playing soccer. And before that, “he had come tumbling down the high hill with his argumentative little sister . . . Jill.” Allan Ahlberg trips blithely backwards through the things that came before in the interconnected lives of four other familiar fairy tale characters in a distinctive picture book offering terrific fun for readers and listeners, and creative writing inspiration for the classroom. Where does it all end? At the origins of it all, of course: “once upon a time.” (Ages 4–9)

Baker, Sharon Reiss. *A Nickel, a Trolley, a Treasure House.* Illustrated by Beth Peck. Viking, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0–670–05982–X, \$16.99)

Lionel likes to draw. In fact, his teacher is so impressed with his art that she arranges to take him on a journey into the heart of the city—to the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Lionel knows, however, that traveling to the museum means taking the trolley, at a fare of 5 cents each way. How will he ever find a way to come up with that king’s ransom? It’s a seemingly

insurmountable challenge for a nine-year-old Polish immigrant living in the tenements of New York City, but one that proves anticlimactic, especially in the wake of the wonders Lionel experiences on a trip that enriches and expands his understanding of himself, of art, and of the world around him. Beth Peck's beautifully rendered impressionist illustrations accompany a story set in the early 1900s and based on shreds of author Sharon Reiss Baker's own family history. (Ages 5–8)

Best, Cari. *What's So Bad about Being an Only Child?* Illustrated by Sophie Blackall. Melanie Kroupa Books / Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0–374–39943–3, \$16.00)

Rosemary Emma Angela Lynette Isabel Iris Malone is an only child. In addition to being saddled with everyone's favorite names, she's also saddled with attention from a bevy of adoring relatives. At first it's wonderful. "I am the honey in their hive," gurgles toddler Rosemary. But all that attention can't ease the loneliness as she grows. It feels to Rosemary as if her friends with brothers and sisters belong to a special club, and she wants to be part of it. When insisting that her parents have another child doesn't work, Rosemary finds a different solution. And while her parents may not see any need for the family to acquire a turtle, a cat, a dog, two birds, a spider, and a pig named Wilbur, the menagerie provides the companionship Rosemary craves at last: "although she was still an only child, she hardly ever felt like one." Cari Best offers an amusing take on being an "only" in a picture book with engaging illustrations by Sophie Blackall. (Ages 4–8)

Breen, Steve. *Stick*. Dial, 2007. 40 pages (trade 0–8037–3124–8, \$16.99)

Stick is an independent soul, but he has a lot to learn. Determined to catch his own dinner, the young frog gets carried away—literally—when his tongue latches on to a dragonfly. Steve Breen's spirited story unfolds primarily through its art, in illustrations that show Stick buffeted from one hilarious twist of fate to another. Breen offers wonderful perspectives in his imaginative visual storytelling, from the multifaceted images of Stick as seen through the dragonfly's eyes to the comical appearance of two middle-aged travelers as well as a muscled motorcyclist. They all play a role in sending Stick on to the next unexpected leg of an unpredictable journey that brings him, in the end, right back to where he started. (Ages 4–8)

Burningham, John. *Edwardo: The Horriblest Boy in the Whole Wide World*. U.S. edition: Alfred A. Knopf, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0–375–84053–2, \$16.99)

Edwardo is a regular kid. He eats, goes to school, plays, and goes to bed. He sometimes makes too much noise or a mess. But when Edwardo is told that kicking cats is a cruel thing to do, he is admonished as the cruelest boy in the whole wide world. When he forgets to wash himself, he is chastised as the dirtiest boy in the whole wide world. Hearing these negative superlatives, Edwardo soon becomes the cruelest, the dirtiest, the noisiest, the messiest, etc., boy, living up (or down) to each person's idea of him until he is the horriblest boy in the whole wide world. Then someone acknowledges

something Edwardo does as being kind, which is the start of another—more positive—transformation in a funny picture book illuminating the sometimes powerful and edgy relationship between language, self-perception, and behavior. (Ages 5–8)

Cecil, Randy. *Gator*. Candlewick Press, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0–7636–2952–9, \$15.99)

Gator is the happiest animal on the carousel until the crowds start to thin out and the amusement park has to close down. Boredom is great motivator, and it causes Gator to leave the carousel altogether to go out into the world. Although the cold winds blow through the hole in his heart, he remains optimistic, and tries to befriend the other creatures he meets. When he wanders into a zoo, he finds some real alligators, but they are all as inactive as the carousel animals he left behind. Happily, a father at the zoo with his children recognizes Gator as his favorite animal on the carousel from when he was a little boy, and Gator leads all the people back to his home, revitalizing the amusement park. Randy Cecil's green-tinged oil paintings drolly follow the progress of plucky little Gator who finds a way to fill the hole in his heart at last. (Ages 4–8)

Chaconas, Dori. *Pennies in a Jar*. Illustrated by Ted Lewin. Peachtree, 2007. 36 pages (trade 1–56145–422–2, \$16.95)

A story set in the 1940s begins with a young boy and his mother seeing his father off to war. Worried about what will happen with his father gone, the boy feels fearful of small things and big things. Scared of the air raid sirens and spooked by the big horses pulling wagons down his street, the boy struggles to quiet his fears. Meanwhile he collects pennies, hoping to buy something worthy to send to his dad for his birthday. Rich watercolor illustrations portray the boy's reactions to the large horses that help deliver the milk, and collect newspapers, scrap metal, and garbage. The boy balks at the chance to have his picture taken on a pony, but then accepts the opportunity as a way to overcome his fear and to make his father proud. An author's note provides a brief explanation of what life was like for kids on the United States home front during World War II in a heartening picture book with luminous watercolor paintings. (Ages 7–11)

Choldenko, Gennifer. *Louder, Lili*. Illustrated by S. D. Schindler. Putnam, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0–399–24252–X, \$16.99)

Lili is so quiet that her teacher marks her absent during roll call. She never gets a partner when the class pairs up because no one knows she's there. Lili likes to spend recess curled up in a corner of her classroom with the guinea pig, Lois. Lili's classmate Cassidy isn't quiet at all. In fact, she's a steamroller, and she's chosen Lili to be her friend. Cassidy takes credit for Lili's work and eats the cake from Lili's lunch, and Lili doesn't say a word in her own defense. But when Cassidy takes Lois out of her cage without permission ("Let's give Lois a haircut . . . Let's pour glue in her water") Lili finds her voice at last ("STOP IT!"). Gennifer Choldenko deftly uses humor to illuminate characters and situations that will be immediately recognizable

in one way or another to many children in an entertaining picture book invitingly illustrated by S. D. Schindler. (Ages 5–8)

Cocca-Leffler, Maryann. *Jack's Talent*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0–374–33681–4, \$16.00)

On the first day of school, Miss Lucinda tells her students that she wants to learn everyone's name and special talent, and it seems that everyone in Jack's class is good at something: Michael is good at spelling, Francesca is good at soccer, Matthew is good at fishing, and Olivia is good at bug-catching. When it comes round to Jack, he confesses that he has no special talent: "I am not good at spelling like Michael. I am not good at soccer like Francesca. I am not good at fishing like Matthew. I am not good at bug catching like Olivia." After Jack recounts the special talents of all his classmates, Miss Lucinda points out the obvious: he's good at remembering. Engaging cartoon-style illustrations show a diverse classroom of talented children, in a story with a patterned text accessible to beginning readers. (Ages 5–7)

Cole, Brock. *Good Enough to Eat*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0–374–32737–8, \$16.00)

A penniless, homeless girl sells paper birds and stale buns in the village. The townsfolk call her Scraps-and-Smells, or Skin-and-Bones, and some even call her Sweets-and-Treats for the wares she peddles. Considered a pest and a beggar, the girl is disliked by all. A giant hungry ogre comes to town and demands a delicious bride. Volunteers are short in supply so the mayor holds a vote and the town elects to sacrifice the girl. Glad to be rid of two problems, the townsfolk leave the girl in a sack outside the gate to be taken by the ogre. With the clever use of her unfortunate names, the girl manages to escape the ogre and outwit the townsfolk. In the process, she also gains dignity and a proper identity in Brock Cole's humorous picture book that delivers a delicious dose of comeuppance in the girl's triumph over those who dismiss her, or never really see her at all. (Ages 5–8)

Fagan, Cary. *Ten Old Men and a Mouse*. Illustrated by Gary Clement. Tundra Books, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0–88776–716–8, \$18.95)

Max, Nat, Bud, Al, Mose, Herm, Lem, Tov, Gabe, and Saul are the only ones who come regularly to the once-vibrant synagogue, until the mouse arrives. The men decide to adopt it. When the mouse has babies, it's a cause for celebration ("Our mouse is a *ber* . . . and a mother to boot!"). But as the babies grow there are simply too many feet underfoot. They transport the four-footed family to a lovely spot in the country, but their daily trips to the synagogue are now a little wistful. Then the mouse returns with the cold winds of autumn. "Don't tell me . . . your children grew up and moved away. An old story," Herm tells her. "Don't worry," Saul adds. "You'll hear from your kids again . . . when they need something." "Welcome home mouse," they all chorus. Distinctive personalities, including the mouse's, and a sweetly funny premise distinguish Cary Fagan's story, keenly illustrated by Gary Clement with a perfect balance of realism and humor. (Ages 6–9)

Fletcher, Susan. *Dadblamed Union Army Cow.* Illustrated by Kimberly Bulcken Root. Candlewick Press, 2007. 24 pages (trade 0-7636-2263-X, \$16.99)

Susan Fletcher turns a scrap of unusual history into a delightful picture book set during the Civil War. In an author's note Fletcher reveals the facts: the 59th Regiment of Indiana Volunteers traveled for three years and through many campaigns and skirmishes with a cow, who gave milk to the soldiers. Fletcher spins the spare facts into a lighthearted story that showcases both human and bovine bravery and loyalty. The first-person narrative is in the vivid yet plainspoken voice of the cow's imagined owner. The cow follows him to the enlistment office and then on through years of active duty and fighting. At first annoyed and then beleaguered by her presence (she gets stuck in the mud and bolts in the midst of battle) he comes to appreciate the cow, especially when she won't leave his side after he's wounded, and later provides milk for his regiment when food is scarce. Through it all, the cow herself has only one thing to say: "Moo." Kimberly Bulcken Root's illustrations don't try to embellish an already incredible, though not unbelievable, tale. Her straightforward depiction of the action, whether amusing or alarming, is a perfect accompaniment to Fletcher's story. (Ages 6-10)

Geeslin, Campbell. *Clara & Señor Frog.* Illustrated by Ryan Sanchez. Schwartz & Wade, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-375-83613-8, \$16.99)

Clara's mother is a magician's assistant. Every night, Clara watches her mother get "sawed" in half and "float" through the air. Clara is unimpressed with these stale magic tricks. Seeing a vibrant painting while visiting her aunt, Clara believes that the artist created real magic. By coincidence, Clara and her mother meet the painter. Clara thinks he looks like a frog, but her mother thinks differently, and the two promptly fall in love and are married. Both Clara and her mother are inspirations for Señor Frog (as Clara calls him) and pose for his paintings. But it is not until Clara stands on the other side of the canvas that she comes to fully appreciate Señor Frog's artistic eye, and when he hands Clara her own brush and canvas, she begins to make her own magic. Campbell Geeslin's unusual and engaging story set in Mexico features illustrations by Ryan Sanchez referencing the influence of artist Diego Rivera, to whom Señor Frog bears a striking resemblance. (Ages 5-8)

Gerstein, Mordicai. *Leaving the Nest.* Frances Foster Books / Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-374-34369-1, \$16.00)

Mordicai Gerstein examines how growth and transformation can happen in a string of moments in a story about a baby blue jay, a baby squirrel, a kitten, and a young girl. One moment, the child is wobbling on her bike, fearful and uncertain. The kitten is eagerly contemplating the great outdoors from behind a screen door. The baby jay is enjoying the security of his cozy nest. The little squirrel is observing it all from the safety of his tree. In an instant, the kitten has gotten outside, the jay has fallen from his nest, the girl has tumbled from her bike, and the squirrel emerges to get an avid, up-close look at all the excitement. Everyone has a different perspective

on the turn of events, which continue to change as the girl seeks to save the terrified jay while the kitten and squirrel get acquainted. The chaos is effectively conveyed through the speech bubbles scattered across each page spread. These provide a narrative to accompany the visual storytelling. In the end, everyone is safe, everyone is hungry, and everyone has taken one more step toward independence. (Ages 5–8)

Graham, Bob. *Dimity Dumpty: The Story of Humpty's Little Sister*. U.S. edition: Candlewick Press, 2007. 40 pages (trade 0-7636-3078-0, \$15.99)

Bob Graham gives an old nursery rhyme a wholly unexpected new twist in this tale that offers a hilarious back story and surprising conclusion to the famous tumble of an egg named Humpty. The Dumpty family lives with the circus, where mom, dad, and son Humpty perform nightly on the flying trapeze as the Tumbling Dumpties. Youngest family member Dimity willingly forgoes the bright lights and roar of the crowd for moments of quieter repose with her little silver flute. Humpty, meanwhile, spends his time out of the spotlight creating a name for himself in a different way—graffiti. He'd just finished spraying "Humpty Rules" with an old can of paint on a factory wall when he slipped. On the other side of the circus Dimity feels—deep within her shell—that something is very wrong. When no one hears her pleas to help Humpty, the shy egg takes it upon herself to do the very thing she hates the most. Resolutely placing herself center stage, she draws attention to Humpty's plight with a boldness she never knew she had in an entertaining story about a very good egg indeed. Graham's already funny premise is heightened further by an abundance of visual humor, not the least of which is the Dumpty family's cozy egg-carton camper. (Ages 5–9)

Graham, Bob. *"The Trouble with Dogs..." Said Dad*. U.S. edition: Candlewick Press, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-7636-3316-X, \$12.99)

"The trouble with dogs," said Dad, "is that they take over your life. Run the show." Two recent canine additions to the household, Rosy and Dave, have personalities as opposite as their appearances. Rosy is big and mellow, while Dave is small and wild. He wreaks havoc on a daily basis, ignoring his soft-hearted owners' feeble attempts to rein him in. The day he steals a cupcake from a guest's plate is the last straw. Kate and her parents consult the telephone directory, and soon the Brigadier arrives to train Dave. His sharp, no-nonsense commands demand Dave's attention, but at the cost of the puppy's spirit. "The trouble is," said Dad, "he's lost his sparkle." "The trouble is," said Mom, "he's lost his crackle and fizz." "The trouble," said Kate, "is the Brigadier's lessons." When Kate informs the Brigadier that her family has elected to give up the obedience training to regain Dave's high-energy affection, the man behind the mirrored aviator sunglasses shows that he, too, has a soft spot for the little dog. This sequel to *"Let's Get a Pup!" Said Kate* (Candlewick Press, 2001) showcases Bob Graham's extraordinary ability to capture the importance and humor of everyday family life in both story and art. Kate's hip and laid-back parents, sporting tattoos and piercings, invite readers' entry into their warm, welcoming home. *Highly Commended, 2008 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 4–7)

Gregory, Nan. *Pink*. Illustrated by Luc Melanson. Greenwood Books / House of Anansi Press, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-88899-781-7, \$17.95)

Vivi wants pink. The other girls have it—Merrillee, Miranda, and Janine. Head to toe pink perfection. Vivi is lacking such pinkness. In a store window, Vivi sees a beautiful pink bride doll and wants it more than anything. Her parents, who cannot afford to buy the doll for her, encourage Vivi to earn the money herself. Running errands for her neighbors, Vivi saves up to buy the doll, hoping to be friends with the Pinks. Meanwhile, Vivi's mom declares an all-pink day for the family because "Pink is for everyone." After their "pinknic" (cranberry tea, cherry blossoms, petits fours) the special day has a rosy glow. But on the walk home Vivi sees Merrillee with the precious pink bride doll under her arm. Vivi's heart is full of ache, and her parents are helpless, until her dad helps her see that there are some things that money—and pink—just cannot buy. Nan Gregory's extraordinarily sensitive and engaging story is illustrated with lots and lots of—you guessed it—pink! (Ages 5–8)

Harrington, Janice. *The Chicken-Chasing Queen of Lamar County*. Illustrated by Shelley Jackson. Melanie Kroupa Books / Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-374-31251-6, \$16.00)

"Pruck! Pruck! . . . Squawkkk!" Despite Bigmama's admonishment, a young African American girl can't resist the chase when it comes to the family's chickens. "I don't want just any chicken. I want my favorite. Her feathers are shiny as a rained-on roof. She has high yellow stockings and long-fingered feet, and when she talks—'Pruck! Pruck! Pruck!'—it sounds like pennies falling on a dinner plate." Janice Harrington's animated story pits the girl's determination to embrace that standoffish chicken against the chicken's own determination to evade capture. Harrington's narrative flows with fresh, descriptive language and engaging use of hyperbole and onomatopoeia. Artist Shelley Jackson used materials suggestive of a rural or farm environment to create the chickens and other elements of her dynamic, richly textured illustrations. Her art is full of action and extends both the humor and overall appeal of this entertaining picture book. *Highly Commended, 2008 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 5–8)

Harshman, Marc and Barbara Garrison. *Only One Neighborhood*. Illustrated by Barbara Garrison. Dutton, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-525-47468-4, \$15.99)

"There may be only one bakery, but there are many kinds of bread." A single shoe store has many kinds of shoes, a single pizzeria many kinds of pizza, and a single school has many children. Marc Harshman and Barbara Garrison draw connections between young children's immediate sphere of experience and the larger world of which they are a part in a picture book that ends with a single idea shared by all the neighborhoods in all the cities in all the countries of the world: peace. Their quiet text uses concrete, familiar examples to articulate an abstract idea. Barbara Garrison's intricate and appealing collograph illustrations in warm hues work to further facilitate the

leap in understanding the connection between self and the larger world, not to mention idea and ideal. (Ages 4–7)

Hume, Lachie. *Clancy the Courageous Cow*. U.S. edition: Greenwillow / HarperCollins, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0–06–117249–9, \$16.99)

Clancy is a Belted Galloway—a breed of cow distinguished by the wide white belt around the middle of its otherwise black hide. But Clancy is beltless, and his varied attempts to remedy the situation (white paint, snow, sugar) are to no avail. Clancy's herd faces an even bigger problem: every year, they lose the wrestling match with the Herefords that determines who gets to graze on the greener—and richer—side of the fence. Because the Herefords get the better grass, they grow stronger and easily win the annual competition. “The Belted Galloways were trapped in a vicious cycle.” Droll delivery, delightful details, and marvelous naïve-style illustrations that extend the humor on every page combine in Lachie Hume's very funny debut picture book. The hoof-and-mouth tale ends more than happily with a call for reconciliation (“I say we pull down the fence and be cows together”) and an implied declaration of love, and getting there is so much fun. (Ages 6–10)

Hurst, Carol Otis. *Terrible Storm*. Illustrated by S. D. Schindler. Greenwillow / HarperCollins, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0–06–009001–4, \$16.99)

The Blizzard of 1888 is legendary. Unexpected and devastating, a massive amount of snow fell on New England and New York City in three days time. Carol Otis Hurst's grandfathers were young men living in the town of Westfield, Massachusetts, when the blizzard struck, but they had very different experiences. As her story opens, the two old men are reminiscing, and they have very different opinions on where the worst place was to be. Grandpa Otis (Walt), a gregarious and lively young man, became snowbound in a barn with only farm animals for company. Grandpa Clark (Fred), an all-around shy person, was stuck at the White Horse Tavern during the storm. While Fred fretted away the hours in the boisterous boarding house, solitude made Walt's time whittle by slowly. This charming and humorous slice of history is cleverly captured with parallel illustrations showing Walt and Fred's equally trying experiences during the terrible storm. (Ages 5–9)

Lehman, Barbara. *Rainstorm*. Houghton Mifflin, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0–618–75639–6, \$16.00)

During a dismal rainstorm, a lonely boy kicks a ball around a big mansion. To his surprise, he uncovers a mysterious key while dislodging the ball from under a chair. Puzzled by its appearance, the boy's boredom quickly dissipates as he searches for the object that the key will unlock. Opening an old trunk, the boy finds a ladder leading him downward. Following a winding tunnel and spiraling up a dizzying staircase, he finds himself in an unfamiliar place, yet the precise place he wants to be. This enchanting plot is conveyed wordlessly through Barbara Lehman's uncomplicated, colorful illustrations. The misery of a rainy day indoors leads to the unexpected discovery of new friends and sunshine in a pleasing story of possibility. (Ages 5–10)

Lewin, Ted. *At Gleason's Gym.* A Neal Porter Book / Roaring Brook Press, 2007. 40 pages (trade 1-59643-231-4, \$17.95)

Spilling across a portrait of a common office building, powerful red letters shout “Bam Bam Bam!” “Smack!” and “Thump Thump!” This is the entrance to Gleason’s Gym. For those unfamiliar with the boxing world, Gleason’s Gym is landmark—“It’s down on the Brooklyn waterfront just a left hook away from the Brooklyn Bridge. It’s the most famous boxing gym in the world.” Inside the nondescript building is an impressive world of sights, sounds, and the smell of sweat. Boxers of all ages, boys and girls, men and women, novices and professionals train at Gleason’s Gym. Meet Sugar Boy, a nine-year-old fighting champion. Sugar Boy works on his boxing skills six days a week. “Bzzzzz!” rings the bell during practice rounds. “Pop! Pop! Pop!” is the sound of padded punches. “Ratatatatata” is the rhythmic pounding of swings on a punching bag. As Sugar Boy trains for an upcoming championship, he is surrounded by a community of boxers who exhibit tremendous strength in mind and body. Author, illustrator, and former professional wrestler Ted Lewin portrays boxing in a fresh light in this action-filled visit to Gleason’s Gym. (Ages 8–12)

Lindenbaum, Pija. *Mini Mia and Her Darling Uncle.* Translated from the Swedish by Elisabeth Kallick Dyssegaard. U.S. edition: R&S Books, 2007. 32 pages (trade 91-29-66734-8, \$16.00)

Ella stays with her grandmother and her uncles while her parents take a trip to Miami, and what Ella most looks forward to during this visit is spending time with her Uncle Tommy, who knows how to keep a small child entertained: dying her hair a different color every day, going to listen to music, and people-watching at their favorite café. Even though he doesn’t enjoy playing soccer himself, Uncle Tommy recognizes Ella’s skills and nicknames her “Mini Mia” after Mia Hamm. Life seems perfect to Ella until Tommy’s new friend, Fergus, starts joining them wherever they go. Ella doesn’t like sharing her Uncle Tommy and she doesn’t particularly like Fergus. She expresses her displeasure in childlike ways: pouring sugar on his shoes and pulling his towel into the swimming pool. Then she learns they both have a passion for playing soccer. While it will be clear to adult readers that Uncle Tommy and his friend Fergus are a gay couple, nothing explicit is ever mentioned in the text and young readers are likely to see the two only through Ella’s eyes. Lindenbaum’s trademark humor comes through in both her understated text and comic illustrations. (Ages 4–8)

McNamara, Margaret. *How Many Seeds in a Pumpkin?* Illustrated by G. Brian Karas. Schwartz & Wade, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-375-84014-1, \$14.99)

Charlie is the smallest kid in his class. When his teacher brings in three pumpkins and challenges everyone to guess how many seeds are inside each, the results are surprising—to Charlie and to everyone else. It turns out that size has nothing to do with how many seeds are in a pumpkin. For Charlie, who alone among his classmates has chosen to count the seeds in the smallest pumpkin, it’s a sweet revelation. By chance, his small, dark, many-lined pumpkin turns out to have the most seeds of all. Margaret McNamara’s

pleasing story integrates math (the kids count their pumpkin seeds by twos, fives, and tens) and scientific observation as their teacher encourages the class to comment on how the pumpkins differ on the outside—which turns out to be the best prediction of what they will find on the inside. (Ages 5–8)

Milgrim, David. *Another Day in the Milky Way*. Putnam, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-399-24548-0, \$15.99)

David Milgrim offers up an amusing extraterrestrial dreamscape in a story about a boy named Monty who wakes up on the wrong planet. Because it's happened before, Monty isn't too worried, but he is struggling to remember how he made it home again in the past. Neither his three-headed mother, his four-armed father, nor the plethora of creatures wandering around in horse costumes (because "everybody loves a horse") are a help. Monty finds the answer he seeks on a visit to the Starman. "The sky was as big as it was beautiful. I wondered how I would ever find the earth in such a large place. It all made me feel very sleepy . . . Then I closed my eyes. And when I woke up, I was home." Milgrim's droll picture book features engaging, childlike illustrations. (Ages 4–7)

Palatini, Margie. *The Cheese*. Illustrated by Steve Johnson and Lou Fancher. Katherine Tegen Books / HarperCollins, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-06-052630-0, \$16.99; lib. 0-06-052631-9, \$17.89)

"The cheese stands alone." Those familiar final words of "The Farmer in the Dell" open Margie Palatini's rollicking picture book, appearing on a posted notice beneath the words "Rules and Regulations." "What a waste of a chunk of cheddar," laments the rat. Palatini's twist on the traditional nursery song is a hilarious unraveling of the order of things. Deciding some rules and regulations are made to be broken, the rat heads to the dell intent on feasting. The cat, immediately suspicious, accuses him of "scurrying and sneaking." Proclaiming innocence, the rat is thwarted by the napkin around his neck. The cat soon concludes, "You know. I believe you may be correct. That cheese should not stand alone." It doesn't take long for the dog, the child, the mother (wife), and the farmer himself to agree: no cheese, especially a cheese as large and tasty as the one in the dell, should stand alone. In fact, not only shouldn't it stand alone, it shouldn't be eaten alone either. Crackers anyone? (Ages 6–9)

Pennypacker, Sara. *Pierre in Love*. Illustrated by Petra Mathers. Orchard Books / Scholastic, 2007. 40 pages (trade 0-439-51740-0, \$16.99)

Pierre is in love. "His face melted into a loopy smile whenever he heard her name—Catherine!—or even a word that sounded like Catherine: *aspirin*, for example, or *bathroom*." But Pierre can't bring himself to tell her how he feels: he is an "ordinary fisherman"; she is "an angel of grace." So he is miserable. When Pierre finally manages to confess his feelings to Catherine, he discovers that she loves another. But it turns out that Catherine, too, has been living in misery, unable to tell him how she feels because her beloved is "an adventurer" and she is "only a ballet teacher." Sara Pennypacker blends droll wit and tender-hearted humor in this beguiling story of a seemingly star-

crossed duo whose biggest hurdle to happiness is the belief each one holds of not being worthy of the other. Pierre and Catherine's passion, cloaked in two cases of mistaken identity, finally meets its purpose in the resolution of a sparkling picture book that blends humor, heart, and elements of mystery. Vivid descriptions ("He felt all bloopy and love-swoggled.") and playful turns of phrase abound in a story that charms children and adults alike. Petra Mathers' illustrations bring a wonderful visual dimension to love story between Pierre (a mustachioed rat) and Catherine (a dainty rabbit). *Highly Commended, 2008 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 5–9)

Perkins, Lynne Rae. *Pictures from Our Vacation*. Greenwillow / HarperCollins, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-06-085097-3, \$16.99)

A girl describes her family vacation to the farm where her father spent many summers as a child in a story rich with acute observation and dry humor. The two-day drive is long stretches of boredom punctuated by the occasional spark of something that captures her interest ("an orange truck with the word YELLOW on it . . . a sign for a motel that had a red roof") and inspires her imagination ("if I had a motel, I would call it The Blue Motel . . ."). Once at the farm, she notes, "Our dad saw happy memories everywhere he looked. All we could see was old furniture and dust." A memorial service ("Do I have to wear a dress?") for a relative she never knew marks a turning point. Aunts, uncles, and cousins have gathered, and the days following the service are filled with friendship, warmth, and laughter. A child-centered perspective on adult nostalgia is just one of the many distinct aspects of this highly original picture book full of captivating visual and narrative detail. Perkins' playful, sometimes poignant exploration of the tension between nostalgia and reality is even more intriguing given the girl's realization that the photographs she took early on in the trip have little connection to the experiences she finds most meaningful at its end. It's the pictures in her mind—her memories—that matter most. *Honor Book, 2008 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 6–9)

Polacco, Patricia. *Ginger and Petunia*. Philomel, 2007. 40 pages (trade 0-399-24539-1, \$16.99)

Virginia Vincent Folsom is a very elegant woman with only a few passions in life—fabulous clothing, classical music, and a pig named Petunia. When Virginia receives a last-minute invitation to be the guest soloist at the International Congress of Pianists in London, she cannot possibly pass up the opportunity. But who will handle her obligations? And who will care for Petunia? As Virginia hurries off to London, her well-laid if hasty plans go awry, leaving Petunia to not only fend for herself, but also save Virginia's reputation. It won't be easy. "Mud deprivation does terrible things to a pig." Polacco takes a hilarious romp through the fashion-conscious world of high society with a pig who poses as her owner, and no one is the wiser. According to Virginia, "You are what you wear." It's a philosophy that turns out to serve both her and Petunia well. (Ages 6–10)

Quigley, Mary. *Granddad's Fishing Buddy*. Illustrated by Stéphane Jorisch. Dial, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-8037-2942-1, \$16.99)

Sara doesn't want to miss anything during her visit with her grandparents at their lakeside cabin. While the sky is still dark and the stars still shining, she asks her grandfather to take her fishing. Her grandpa warns her that she'll have to be "real quiet," so the fish won't know they are there. She'll have to help row the boat. And, she'll have to bait her own hook. Although Sara's not too sure about that last requirement, she eagerly agrees. She's thrilled to go along, and curious to meet her granddad's "fishing buddy," whose identity remains a mystery for much of their early-morning outing. Mary Quigley deftly weaves multiple elements of gentle surprise into a satisfying, lyrically told story. Stéphane Jorisch captures the quiet early morning of the natural world and the loving bond between Sara and her granddad in soft, warm illustrations. *Highly Commended, 2008 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 4-8)

Rex, Adam. *Pssst! Harcourt, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-15-205817-6, \$16.00)*

The gorilla wants a new tire. The javelina is in need of trash cans. The bats want flashlights (they're asking for the hippopotamus) and the penguins want paint. A girl's trip to the zoo takes one unexpected turn after another when each and every animal makes a whispered request for something surprising. Adam Rex's hilarious picture book builds to an even bigger (and funnier) surprise before ending with a final zing in a story that starts with an absurd premise and realizes its full potential with a skillful blend of understated dialogue and outrageous visual humor. (Ages 5-9)

Schwartz, Amy. *Starring Miss Darlene*. A Neal Porter book / Roaring Brook Press, 2007. 32 pages (trade 1-59643-230-6, \$16.95)

Darlene has visions of being a star of the stage. To realize her dream, she auditions for *Noah's Ark* and lands the role of the Flood. Her job: dash onstage with a pan of water and throw it on the ground. As the director says, "It's simple, yet vital." On opening night Darlene trips on her long blue gown and launches the water directly at the front row of the audience, into the lap of the theater critic. His review in the Sunday paper reports that the "show was a drenching, yet refreshing experience. Miss Darlene's performance was especially exciting." In the next production about space aliens, Miss Darlene freezes with stage fright, and when she plays Sleeping Beauty she falls so deeply asleep that the Prince has to progress from a kiss to a kick to awaken her. But Miss Darlene somehow always earns the theater critic's praise. Miss Darlene is a stout hippo, the critic is a dapper pig, and the rest of the cast and audience are a menagerie of animals in picture book that takes center stage. (Ages 4-8)

Scieszka, Jon. *Cowboy & Octopus*. Illustrated by Lane Smith. Viking, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0-670-91058-9, \$16.99)

The dynamic duo of Scieszka and Smith offer another offbeat tale—this time featuring the unusual twosome of Cowboy and Octopus. Cowboy and Octopus meet on a playground when Octopus offers to help Cowboy utilize the teeter-totter. Deciding that they should be friends, they shake on it. And

shake and shake and shake and shake and shake and shake and shake. Their friendship has a few peculiarities, such as Octopus not being too fond of Cowboy's favorite meal of beans and bacon and Cowboy not understanding how to respond to Octopus's knock-knock jokes. While the two have different opinions, they also have a real good time together. The wacky jokes in this story are complemented perfectly by the collage illustrations made from paper dolls, cartoon cutouts, photos, and fabric. (Ages 5–9)

Sheth, Kashmir. *My Dadima Wears a Sari.* Illustrated by Yoshiko Jaeggi. Peachtree, 2007. 32 pages (trade 1–56145–392–7, \$16.95)

Rupa's grandma never wears pants or dresses or skirts. She wears a sari every day. "Your saris are beautiful, Dadima . . . but don't you get tired of wearing them?" Dadima explains many things she can do with her sari: the fabric can be a fan if it's hot, or an umbrella if it starts to rain; she can carry shells she collects on the beach; and Rupa and her little sister, Neha, can play hide-and-seek in its folds. Her saris also tell stories: "I wore this sari on the plan when I came from India to America . . . this is my wedding sari." The warm relationship between two girls and their grandmother is at the heart of Kashmir Sheth's lyrical story grounded in details full of child appeal. The two little girls may not yet fully understand the cultural heritage and family history their Dadima is sharing, but they do fully appreciate the delight of dressing up in Dadima's saris, and the love with which both hers saris and her stories are shared. (Ages 4–8)

Siméon, Jean-Pierre. *This Is a Poem That Heals Fish.* Illustrated by Olivier Tallec. Translated from the French by Claudia Zoe Bedrick. U.S. edition: Enchanted Lion Books, 2007. 40 pages (trade 1–59270–067–5, \$16.95)

Arthur's fish is going to die and he needs an immediate cure. "Leon is going to die of boredom!" he cries to his mother. Taking a deep look at her son and his fish, she smiles and prescribes a poem. "A poem!?" Arthur wonders. Not knowing what a poem is or how to find one, he searches in the cupboards and under the bed. Lolo at the bicycle shop offers this explanation, "A poem, Arthur, is when you are in love and the sky is in your mouth." Still confused, Arthur presses on. He asks the baker, his neighbor, his pet canary, and his grandma. All offer lyrical sentiments, but none that make sense to Arthur. Not until Arthur speaks to Leon from his heart does he realize what a poem is in a quiet, lyrical, lovely picture book. (Ages 6–10)

Taylor, Sean. *When a Monster Is Born.* Illustrated by Nick Sharratt. U.S. edition: Roaring Brook Press, 2007. 32 pages (trade 1–59643–254–3, \$16.95)

"When a monster is born" is the opening phrase in this circular story explaining what happens in the life of a monster. Through an entertaining pattern of possibilities and consequences, the author explains what would happen in a variety of monstrous situations. For example, if you take a monster to school, there are two possibilities. Either the monster will sit quietly, do its homework, and become a basketball star *or* it will eat the principal. As the situations unfold, different conclusions are presented, each

sillier than the last. The text is laid out in a consistent pattern and each scenario is accented with bold font work. Bright illustrations of mixed media jump from the black and white backgrounds in this lively story. (Ages 5–9)

Thompson, Holly. *The Wakame Gatherers*. Illustrated by Kazumi Wilds. Shen's Books, 2007. 32 pages (trade 1–885008–33–3, \$16.95)

Nanami has two grandmothers: Gram, who lives in Maine, and Baachan, who lives with Nanami's family in Japan. Both live in seaside towns, but neither woman speaks the other's language. While Gram is visiting, Nanami acts as translator on an outing to collect wakame seaweed. For Nanami, a moment of childlike delight as she asks Baachan about gathering wakame when she was a child turns into one of painful understanding: once, when they were young, her two grandmothers were on opposite side of a war, one in which American bombs left Baachan motherless. But the pain is transcended by the obvious bond that the two women now share in their mutual respect and appreciation for nature, and their love for their granddaughter. Holly Thompson's warmly told, richly detailed story, illustrated by Japanese artist Kazumi Wilds, is a celebration of family. (Ages 5–8)

Van Leeuwen, Jean. *Papa and the Pioneer Quilt*. Illustrated by Rebecca Bond. Dial, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0–8037–3028–4, \$16.99)

Rebecca's father has wandering feet. Her family has already moved from Pennsylvania to Ohio to Indiana to Missouri. Now, they're off to Oregon with other pioneers. Rebecca's trip west is marked by stories for each piece of fabric she collects for a keepsake quilt she plans to make at journey's end. Her father's shirt was torn in a treacherous river crossing. The girl she walked across Kansas with donated her bonnet before they parted ways. A tablecloth along the trail was abandoned by earlier travelers who had to lighten their load before crossing the mountains, just as Rebecca's family has to leave some of their own precious keepsakes behind. Rebecca's faded dress at journey's end is as much a testament to her resiliency as the quilt she finally makes during her family's first winter in Oregon. Jean Van Leeuwen's spirited story is graced by Rebecca Bond's folksy illustrations rendered in faded tones suggestive of worn fabric. (Ages 4–8)

Williams, Karen Lynn and Khadra Mohammed. *Four Feet, Two Sandals*. Illustrated by Doug Chayka. Eerdmans, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0–8028–5296–3, \$17.00)

A truck comes to the refugee camp where ten-year-old Lina lives with her mother and baby brothers on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. From the truck, relief workers throw clothing to the crowd. Lina, who has gone barefoot for two years, is delighted to discover a yellow sandal adorned with a blue flower. It fits her foot perfectly. Looking up, she sees a girl her age with the other sandal. The two girls work out a compromise: "You wear them both today, and I will wear them tomorrow." As the young girls take turns with the sandals, they share the stories they brought them both to the camp. Doing the washing, waiting in the water line, and tending to Lina's brothers, they continue to share their dreams and memories. When Lina finds out

that her family is on the list to go to America, the girls find a way to keep their friendship, and the pair of sandals, unbroken in a moving story that brings life in one small corner of the world into fuller relief for readers here. (Ages 7–11)

Yoo, Taeun. *The Little Red Fish*. Dial, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0–8037–3145–0, \$15.99)

Black etchings with cream coloration visually invite readers into a library in the woods, where a boy is spending the day with his grandfather. Beige tones lend a feeling of olden times as the young boy explores the shelves of ancient books. While his grandfather works, Jeje wanders the library with his red fish in a fishbowl under his arm. Reading stacks of wondrous books, Jeje eventually falls asleep on the floor. Waking up, he discovers his red fish missing. A magical sequence follows as the red fish begins swimming in and out of the sea of library books. Like an M. C. Escher painting brought to life, Jeje moves in and out of book illustrations as he tries to catch his pet. Landing back in the library after swimming through the ocean and flying through the sky, Jeje finds his little red fish and places it back in the bowl in a cozy and imaginative visual read. (Ages 6–9)

Zolotow, Charlotte. *A Father Like That*. Illustrated by LeUyen Pham. HarperCollins, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0–06–027864–1, \$16.99; lib. 0–06–027865–X, \$17.89)

Charlotte Zolotow's sensitive story about a boy who daydreams about the father he does not have is updated with warm and comforting illustrations by LeUyen Pham. Portraying a young African American boy and his hopeful fantasies, Pham affectionately captures the essence of a loving father and son relationship. Zolotow's story ends with a perfect sense of satisfaction when the boy's mother gently reminds her son that even if such a father never comes, he can always be that kind of father himself. (Ages 4–8)

Books for Beginning Readers

Caple, Kathy. *Duck & Company*. Holiday House, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0–8234–1993–2, \$14.95)

Duck and Rat have been running Duck & Company bookshop forever. But that does not mean that things are always running smoothly. In five short chapters, Duck and Rat deal with a host of challenges, from questionable customer requests to how to appeal to children to falling asleep on the job. Cat wants a cookbook for cooking rats (!), but Duck convinces him that a carrot cookbook will help make his fur shinier. (Rat hides under the desk.) A menagerie of young mice, rabbits, turtles, frogs, and rats beg Duck to play the guitar and do magic during story hour. Rat tells Duck to wing it and so Duck lies down, doing his best “dead duck” trick. As the duo close up shop for the night, Duck comments how quickly days go by in the shop. “I guess time just flies when you're doing what you love,” Rat replies. Fans of

quirky humor will appreciate these short episodes from the bookshop Duck & Company. (Ages 4–7)

Chaconas, Dori. *Cork & Fuzz: Good Sports*. Illustrated by Lisa McCue. Viking, 2007. 32 pages (trade 0–670–06145-X, \$13.99)

Best friends Cork & Fuzz are back, but the spirit of competition is driving them apart. A running race, a game of stickball, and a game of tackleball all end in victory for Fuzz the possum, and frustration for Cork the muskrat, who was certain he would come out on top. When Cork suggests a swimming race, Fuzz doesn't even have time to say he can't swim before Cork is across the pond. But when Cork thinks Fuzz has sunk, winning no longer matters in Dori Chaconas' sweetly comical beginning reader featuring Lisa McCue's finely detailed illustrations. (Ages 4–7)

Moser, Lisa. *Squirrel's World*. Illustrated by Valeri Gorbachev. Candlewick Press, 2007. 44 pages (trade 0–7636–2929–8, \$14.99)

Energetic squirrel is “busy busy busy” gathering food for Mouse, playing games with Turtle, helping Rabbit stay dry in a storm. Squirrel is full full full of desire and good intentions, but he's so enthusiastic that he often doesn't pay attention to what his friends really want. Luckily for Squirrel, his irrepressible spirit is met by patience and goodwill among his friends. And luckily for his friends, Squirrel can come through when it really counts in Lisa Moser's fun fun fun and buoyant chapter book for beginning readers, winningly illustrated by Valeri Gorbachev. (Ages 4–7)

Silverman, Erica. *Cowgirl Kate and Cocoa: School Days*. Illustrated by Betsy Lewin. 48 pages (trade 0–15–205378–6, \$15.00)

Kate and her horse Cocoa are back in the third Cowgirl Kate and Cocoa book. Kate has less time to spend with Cocoa, however, because school is back in session. Disappointed but determined to spend time with his pal, Cocoa gallops after Kate's school bus. When Kate explains that school is not for horses, Cocoa concedes but insists that she hurry home to play with him. In the next few chapters Cocoa learns about Kate's school life, including her new friend (he's a little jealous) and homework. It takes several lessons, but eventually Cocoa discovers that even though their routine has changed, their friendship has not. (Ages 4–7)

Speck, Katie. *Maybelle in the Soup*. Illustrated by Paul Rátz de Tagyos. Henry Holt, 2007. 57 pages (trade 0–8050–8092–9, \$15.95)

Maybelle the cockroach lives under the refrigerator at Number 10 Grand Street. A narrow escape for Maybelle during a fancy dinner party (she's so tired of crumbs and castoffs and wants to taste the soup) leads the refined and stuffy Myrtle and Henry Peabody to call . . . exterminators! The Peabodys take refuge in an elegant hotel, unaware the Maybelle and her best friend, Henry the Flea, have smuggled themselves along. Maybelle and Henry's vacation doesn't just bug the snooty guests and staff, it wreaks satisfying havoc on their sense of superiority. Katie Speck's entertainingly absurd story will delight readers ready for a short, easy chapter book. (Ages 5–8)

Willems, Mo. *My Friend Is Sad.* (An Elephant & Piggie Book) Hyperion, 2007. 57 pages (trade 1-4231-0297-5, \$8.99)

Willems, Mo. *There Is a Bird on Your Head!* (An Elephant & Piggie Book) Hyperion, 2007. 57 pages (trade 1-4231-0686-5, \$8.99)

Gerald the Elephant and Piggie are best friends who help each other out. In *My Friend Is Sad*, Piggie is perplexed to find Gerald feeling low. Piggie dons a variety of costumes—cowboy, clown, robot—in an attempt to cheer him up. Nothing seems to work until Piggie returns as herself. Gerald is overjoyed and explains to Piggie how sad he was because she missed so much excitement. This funny look at friendship and communication is repeated in *There Is a Bird on Your Head!* when a small bird alights on Gerald's head, much to his chagrin. Looking to Piggie for advice and sympathy, he gets a play-by-play instead. First there's a second bird, and then, "They are making a nest!" Finally, "You have three eggs on your head." When frustrated Gerald explodes in anger, Piggie calmly suggests that Gerald use his words and simply ask the birds to leave. He does, and they do, only to relocate on Piggie's head. These humorous episodes are illustrated with Mo Willems' friendly cartoon-like style and pastel hues, complete with dialogue bubbles that convey Gerald and Piggie's words and emotions. (Ages 4-7)

Books for Newly Independent Readers

Bauer, Marion Dane. *The Secret of the Painted House.* Illustrated by Leonid Gore. Random House, 2007. 96 pages (trade 0-375-84079-6, \$11.99)

Emily is completely charmed by the small playhouse she finds in the woods near her new house. There are amazing murals of the woods—including the playhouse—painted on the walls. On a return trip, Emily is armed with information from a neighbor: the playhouse belonged to the little girl who once lived in Emily's house. She died in a fire years before, not long after her painter mother left the family. Then Emily notices elements of the painting changing. When a young girl appears and invites her to step into the painted woods, Emily does, only to discover the girl is lonely—and angry—and doesn't want Emily to leave. Emily manages to escape, only to discover her little brother, whom she'd left on his own in the woods, has fallen into the ghost girl's trap. Marion Dane Bauer's ghost story has just enough tingle to keep young readers on the edge of their seats. As Emily works out a way to free her little brother, she is also able to help the ghost of a girl who is still looking for her mother find peace. (Ages 7-10)

Borden, Louise. *The John Hancock Club.* Illustrated by Adam Gustavson. Margaret K. McElderry, 2007. 48 pages (trade 1-4169-1813-2, \$16.99)

For many children, learning to write in cursive is something they eagerly anticipate. As the school year starts, however, new third grader Sean McFerrin is nervous. School is hard work for Sean, and cursive is one more worry—

what if he can't do it? Luckily, Sean has a terrific teacher—one who keeps him fully engaged from the first day. When Mrs. Tovani finally does start teaching Sean and his classmates cursive, she emphasizes the importance of practice and offers an intriguing incentive—the promise of induction into the “John Hancock Club.” Sean soon has favorites among the letters he's learning as he works toward mastering the lowercase and uppercase alphabets. In the meantime, he and his classmates are also learning about John Hancock and the Declaration of Independence in preparation for the day when Mrs. Tovani announces they are ready to sign their names—with quill and ink no less—as newest members of the John Hancock Club. Louise Borden captures the realistic anxiety and ultimate pride of a child for whom things don't always come easily, as well as the excitement of a classroom working toward a common goal in this engaging story. (Ages 6–9)

Fine, Anne. *Jamie and Angus Together*. Illustrated by Penny Dale. U.S. edition: Candlewick Press, 2007. 102 pages (trade 0-7636-3374-7, \$15.99)

First introduced in *The Jamie and Angus Stories* (U.S. edition: Candlewick Press, 2002), Anne Fine's charming duo continues to delight in this second volume featuring preschool-age Jamie and Angus, his (stuffed) Highland bull. Whether engaged in a vigorous game of “Let's Pretend,” with Jamie an orphaned prince and Angus playing dual roles (“During the orphanhood bits, he'll be my best friend in the whole wide world. But during my princely moments he might turn into my trusty steed.”) or fearfully anticipating a playdate with rough-and-tumble Bella (“Angus looked anxious.”), Jamie and Angus are almost inseparable. But Angus is not always a principal player in the episodic chapters, which engagingly explore Jamie's relationship with friends (real and imaginary) and, especially, family. Even when he's not the center of Jamie's attention, however, Angus is never far away in a winsome book that is terrific for reading aloud or as a read-alone for young, newly independent readers. (Ages 5–8)

Lechner, John. *Sticky Burr: Adventures in Burrwood Forest*. Candlewick Press, 2007. 54 pages (trade 0-7636-3054-3, \$15.99)

“He's small! He's prickly! He's a HERO!” The teaser on the cover of John Lechner's utterly absurd, absolutely hilarious easy graphic novel is only the beginning in a story distinguished by its droll humor. Sticky Burr lives with all the other burrs in his village in Burrwood Forest. He sticks out for being different, preferring art and music to trouble-making. “How come you never do prickly things like the rest of us burrs?” asks his nemesis, Scurvy Burr (“You might say he's a bad seed.”). The light plot puts its hero in a number of sticky situations that are set-ups for the verbal and visual humor that abounds in this singular, captivating volume. Sticky saves his village and the day, and even shares a little philosophy in the end: “Mossy Burr says stars are like burrs . . . Each of us tries to shine out in the darkness and be seen. And every once in a while, we are.” (Ages 6–10)

McKissack, Patricia C. *A Song for Harlem*. Illustrated by Gordon C. James. (Scraps of Time, 1928) Viking, 2007. 108 pages (trade 0-670-06209-X, \$14.99)

An appealing novel for newly independent readers is set in 1928 Harlem, where Lilly Belle is spending the summer as a member of the Harlem Young Writers Workshop sponsored by A'Lelia Walker, daughter of Madame C. J. Walker. Lilly Belle is from Smyrna, a small town in Tennessee, and even as she misses home she's delighted by so much of what Harlem has to offer, not the least of which are the workshop seminars led by a woman named Zora Neale Hurston. She's made good friends with Melvon, one of the boys about her age attending the workshop, but a girl named Alice is a problem. She teases Lilly Belle and another girl, Cora Mae, about their lack of sophistication and rural, southern ways. Then Lilly Belle discovers that Alice stole words from a magazine called *The Crisis*, turning in someone else's writing as her own. Lilly Belle makes the choice to reach out rather than get revenge in Patricia McKissack's lively fictional story, populated with a host of real figures from Harlem's history. Part of McKissack's *Scraps of Time* series, Lilly Belle's story is framed by a narrative featuring two contemporary African American children. (Ages 7–10)

Orr, Wendy. *Mokie & Bik*. Illustrated by Jonathan Bean. Henry Holt, 2007. 72 pages (trade 0-8050-7979-3, \$15.95)

A delicious romp reminiscent of Pippi Longstocking features twins Mokie and Bik, who live on a houseboat. Wendy Orr's account of the duo's over-the-top escapades on and around their home is rife with language play. Their seafaring dad is a "parrot with a pirate on his shoulder," their busy mom spends time "Arting," and their nanny, Ruby, sings songs about the "illy-ally-o." The twins have a "saggy, shaggy, long licky-tongue" dog named Laddie, and a "turtle" named Slow. From the fisk in the ocean to the botormike on which their mother rides off for a day of painting, the rollicking twists and turns of phrase never stop, nor do Mokie and Bik, who go from one unlikely adventure to another before Orr brings their tale to a satisfying conclusion. This short chapter book will make a terrific read-aloud, or independent reading choice for children in early elementary who are proficient readers. (Ages 6–8)

Perkins, Mitali. *Rickshaw Girl*. Illustrated by Jamie Hogan. Charlesbridge, 2007. 91 pages (lib. 1-58089-308-4, \$13.95)

Ten-year-old Naima lives in Bangladesh, where her father earns a meager living as a rickshaw driver. With the best of intentions, Naima tries pedaling her father's new rickshaw, determined to prove she can handle the job and help out. Instead, she accidentally crashes the vehicle. Burdened with guilt despite her family's reassurances, Naima decides to turn to something she *knows* she can do—painting and design—to help pay for the rickshaw repairs. Since it goes against her cultural traditions for a woman or girl to work for money, she takes the plan she had for pedaling the rickshaw—posing as a boy—and puts it to a different use. Determined to convince the owner of the new rickshaw repair shop in the neighboring village to

hire her to decorate rickshaws, Naima discovers—to her astonishment—that the owner is a woman. She opened her business with the support of a loan from the Woman's Bank, and she offers Naima the opportunity to work—as a girl!—and develop her talents. Mitali Perkins introduces Bangla culture and customs in the context of an appealing, child-centered story that also highlights changing attitudes and times. An author's note provides additional information on microfinance—the system that has enabled small businesses throughout Bangladesh to start up and thrive, including many run by women. (Ages 7–10)

Fiction for Children

Applegate, Katherine. *Home of the Brave*. Feiwel and Friends, 2007. 249 pages (trade 0–312–36765–1, \$16.95)

“When the flying boat / returns to earth at last / I open my eyes / and gaze out the round window. / What is all the white? I whisper. / Where is all the world?” Kek is feeling the disconcerting displacement and overwhelming loss that comes with being a refugee. While he's grateful to be with his aunt and cousin, who are already settled, although struggling, in America, he is also filled with guilt—his father and brother were killed, and his mother disappeared in their harrowing journey to a refugee camp to escape the fighting that tore their lives apart in Sudan. Arriving in Minneapolis in the midst of winter, there is nothing in the landscape to remind Kek of his homeland until he spots a cow on the drive from the airport into the city. Kek and his family were cattle herders. With the help of Hannah, a girl living in his aunt's building, Kek takes a bus back to the farm and convinces Lou, the woman who is struggling to keep it going, to let him work for her. He doesn't care about money—a good thing because she has little to spare—he just craves the companionship of the cow and the sense of calm that comes over him when he's with her. But Kek finds that friendship, as well as a sense of purpose, also help lift the weight of his sorrow, and help him deal with the challenges of life in a new land. Katherine Applegate's quiet, stirring novel in verse only once specifies Kek's homeland. Her story is told in the restrained yet powerful voice of a boy for whom it is simply, profoundly, thought of as “home.” (Ages 10–14)

Carey, Mike. *Re-Gifters*. Illustrated by Sonny Liew and Marc Hempel. Minx, 2007. 176 pages (pbk. 1–4012–0371-X, \$9.99)

Jun Dik Seong, aka “Dixie,” has a big crush on Adam, another student in her hapkido class. Dixie is good at the martial art—so good, in fact, that her dad is hopeful her performance in an upcoming city tournament will impress a local Korean businessman, who in turn will offer him a business loan. Dixie's family has struggled financially ever since her dad's market was burned down in the Los Angeles riots. Her family has scraped together the tournament's \$100 entrance fee, but in a moment of what seems like inspiration, Dixie spends the money on an extravagant gift for Adam's birthday, certain it will

get him to notice her in a whole new way. Dixie gets into the tournament by winning a street competition and earning a free spot. In the meantime, she's met Dillinger, a kid off the streets who is willing to offer her some competition tips and advice if she's willing to take them. When Dixie makes it to the tournament final only to discover she'll be fighting against Adam, her dreams, expectations, and desires all converge. Mike Carey, Sonny Liew, and Marc Hempel have collaborated on a winning graphic novel with a gutsy if sometimes misguided protagonist who discovers that what goes around comes around in more ways than one, making some things crystal clear in the process. Racial and economic issues explored in the narrative are seamlessly integrated as realities of Dixie's life. (Ages 10–14)

Chen, Pauline. *Peiling and the Chicken–Fried Christmas*. Bloomsbury, 2007. 133 pages (trade 1–59990–122–6, \$15.95)

Peiling hates the first day of school after Christmas vacation, when all the kids giddily exchange news of what they received. Her Chinese American family doesn't celebrate Christmas. This year, however, Peiling convinces her parents to embrace the holiday. She has a picture-perfect vision of what Christmas should be, and everything seems to be going along fine until her mother attempts a traditional Christmas dinner. The embarrassing meal is all wrong, at least to Peiling, and in the aftermath of the celebration, she feels let down. Her disappointment at home is compounded at school, where she's been standing in for another student during rehearsals of *The Prince and the Pauper* but doubts she'll ever get the chance to shine on stage. Pauline Chen's novel has some wonderful moments of quiet revelation in the context of a story that blends humor and depth, and features a cast of warm and appealing characters. (Ages 8–10)

Clements, Andrew. *No Talking*. Illustrations by Mark Elliott. Simon & Schuster, 2007. 146 pages (trade 1–4169–0983–4, \$15.99)

The fifth graders at Laketon Elementary School have taken a vow of silence. It started as an experiment for Dave Packer, who was inspired by Gandhi to go a day without speaking. But when Dave explodes at classmate Lynsey Burgess during lunch period, his personal challenge becomes an all-out competition between the boys and the girl: no talking for forty-eight hours. The two sides agree on some carefully considered rules: at home and at school, they will respond to any question from an adult, but their answers must be three words or less. It may seem a teacher's dream to have a class of silent and attentive students, especially *these* students, who are known as the "unshushables." But the teachers and principal aren't sure what to make of the strange turn of events. Gradually they figure out what's going on, and their responses range from annoyed to intrigued to ecstatic. It is the responses of adults as much as the actions of the kids that turns the very funny premise of Andrew Clements' novel into a story that is thought-provoking, too. When the principal challenges the students on their right to remain silent, it brings an unspoken but heartfelt truce to the battle of the sexes. Clements story makes a terrific classroom read-aloud—one that just might inspire the sound of silence. (Ages 8–11)

Collins, Suzanne. *Gregor and the Code of Claw*. (Book Five in the Underland Chronicles) Scholastic Press, 2007. 412 pages (trade 0-439-79143-X, \$17.99)

Picking up where *Gregor and the Marks of Secret* (Scholastic, 2006) left off, twelve-year-old Gregor is plunged into a war in the Underland, a world far beneath New York City, where people and giant rats vie for dominance along with human-sized bats, insects, and other rodents. A cryptic prophecy has convinced Gregor that he must die or the Underland will be doomed. As he struggles to accept what he feels is his inevitable fate, Gregor, together with his two younger sisters, works to crack the Code of Claw and free the human city of Regalia from invading rats. As in the earlier books in this series, the prophecy's true meaning lies beneath the surface riddle, and Gregor lives to confront another destiny. He's alive, but he faces a life in New York City, apart from his friends and allies of the Underland. Can he function as a "normal" boy again, after being honored as a Warrior, and scarred by intense physical and emotional experiences? Although *Gregor and the Code of Claw* works as a stand-alone story, readers will want to start with book one and work their way through to this final volume. Suzanne Collins wraps up her five-book series with a deft hand, sure to leave fans begging for one more descent to the Underland. (Ages 9-14)

Compestine, Ying Chang. *Revolution Is Not a Dinner Party*. Henry Holt, 2007. 248 pages (trade 0-8050-8207-7, \$16.95)

The impact of China's Cultural Revolution on the lives of a Chinese family unfolds through the eyes Ling, who is nine as this story begins. Her father is a doctor who admires the west and is teaching her English; her mother is a traditional healer. Ling's perspective on the revolutionary changes is authentically childlike. At school, she is singled out and bullied as one of the few children who hasn't joined the Young Pioneers. At home, as government restrictions tighten, she longs for the pretty dresses her mother used to make her (flowered fabric is no longer sold) and misses her favorite foods. When Comrade Li, a political officer for Mao's government, moves into her building, and indeed, into a room that was formerly part of her own apartment, Ling sees only his charm at first. She gradually realizes what her parents already understand—he is a threat. Comrade Li becomes the driving force behind many arrests and scenes of public humiliation as the Red Guard rounds up neighbors, friends, and eventually family. The moment Ling realizes her father, whom she idolizes, cannot protect her family is painful and powerful—one of many aching real revelations in Ying Chang Compestine's compelling novel, based in part on her own family's experiences. (Ages 10-14)

Creech, Sharon. *The Castle Corona*. Illustrated by David Díaz. Joanna Cotler Books / HarperCollins, 2007. 320 pages (trade 0-06-084621-6, \$18.99; lib. 0-06-084622-4, \$19.89)

When a peasant girl and her brother discover a leather pouch bearing the King's seal in the woods, Pia and Enzo instinctively choose to hide it, guessing the contents must be important. Eventually the pouch brings them

to the Castle Corona, where they take on the post of King's Tasters and their lives become intertwined with those of the royal family. Pia, Enzo, the King, the Queen, and their three children, along with two wise hermits and a storytelling Wordsmith, weave a magical fable of forgotten promises, hidden identity, and unfulfilling lives on the brink of positive change. Breaking down boundaries between social classes benefits both royalty and commoner in this satisfying, often humorous tale. Deckled pages, illuminated letters, and occasional full-color illustrations lend this new book the air of a vintage volume. (Ages 9–12)

Curtis, Christopher Paul. *Elijah of Buxton*. Scholastic Press 2007. 341 pages (trade 0-439-02344-0, \$16.99)

Just over the Canadian border from Detroit, Buxton is a small town established by runaway slaves. Eleven-year-old Elijah was the first free child born in Buxton and feels certain he'll never live down the moment in infancy when he threw up on famous abolitionist Frederick Douglass. It's hard for Elijah to fully comprehend the horrors his parents and other adults escaped; they are spare with their stories, clearly wanting to protect their children. Elijah is such a sensitive child that his parents are more determined than most to shelter him from harsh truths. But when a man known as Preacher steals the money a neighbor was saving to purchase his wife and children's freedom, Elijah is determined to make things right. He follows Preacher over the border, not wholly innocent of the danger, but clearly far from comprehending its depth. Elijah's openhearted, first-person voice is often funny and always forthright as he describes the adventures of a boy growing up in Buxton, and coming of age on a journey that exposes him to evidence of the darkest side of humanity. At first Elijah does not fully understand the significance of the facts before him as the harsh and harrowing truth about slavery is revealed. But as comprehension begins to dawn, he draws on knowledge of the best of humanity, rooted in his experiences as a member of a sensitive and caring community, to strengthen his courage and resolve. Christopher Paul Curtis has penned a remarkable novel that is both humorous and heartrending. Some readers may struggle at first with the mid-nineteenth century dialect in which Elijah tells his story, but the rewards are worth the challenge. (Ages 10–14)

Delaney, Joseph. *Night of the Soul Stealer*. Illustrated by Patrick Arrasmith. (The Last Apprentice: Book Three) U.S. edition: Greenwillow / HarperCollins, 2007. 512 pages (trade 0-06-076624-7, \$16.99; lib. 0-06-076625-5, \$17.89)

Frigid temperatures and snow-swept moors set the stage for Thomas Ward's latest adventures as apprentice to the Spook, a formidable practitioner who keeps witches, boggarts, ghosts, and a plethora of other evil creatures at bay. Soon after arriving at the Spook's winter home, Thomas begins to suspect he's not been told the whole truth about Meg, a lamia witch who seems to be both loved and imprisoned by the Spook. When the Spook is injured on the job, Thomas must face grave danger without his master's help as he seeks out Meg's real story and struggles to escape the clutches of a former apprentice

to the Spook who has turned to dark necromancy. Tom learns of events from the Spook's past that illustrate the fine line between trust and betrayal—the Spook may be powerful in his profession, but he is also human and fallible. Meanwhile, Tom's friend Alice, a witch finding her own path between good and evil, plays a crucial role in the book's exciting conclusion. In this third volume of the series, author Joseph Delaney is still on a roll, as he continues to tell of Tom's satisfyingly scary apprenticeship. (Ages 10–14)

Deming, Sarah. *Iris, Messenger*. Harcourt, 2007. 209 pages (trade 0–15–205823–0, \$16.00)

“Didn't you ever wonder, Iris, what happens to gods when people stop worshipping them? Where do they go? What do they do?” The mysterious message in the margins of the *Bullfinch's Mythology* that Iris Greenwold receives as an anonymous twelfth birthday gift sets the action in motion in Sarah Deming's witty debut novel. Iris soon discovers that the gods and goddesses are right in her own hometown. Poseidon is the depressed, lovelorn owner of a seafood shack. Apollo is a jazz musician at a club where Dionysus tends bar. Aphrodite owns a spa. Athena and Artemis run a detective agency. Deming deftly balances outrageous humor with insightful revelations about the very human nature of gods and people alike as Iris looks for the reason behind the mysterious message and begins to believe her life is about to change in wonderful ways. The stories from Greek myth woven into the narrative are sometimes a bit long in the retelling, but Deming's deadpan delivery (“The motto of Erebus Middle School was ‘We ♥ Children.’ This gave Iris Greenwold a funny feeling in the pit of her stomach, which she later learned was called ‘irony.’”) and hilarious manifestations of the gods and goddesses in modern-day vocations, are a winning combination. (Ages 10–13)

Ellis, Deborah. *Sacred Leaf: (The Cocalero Novels)* Groundwood Books, 2007. 206 pages (trade 0–88899–751–5, \$16.95)

Deborah Ellis' sequel to the harrowing *I Am a Taxi* (Groundwood, 2006) continues the story of twelve-year-old Diego, who has found refuge with a peasant family after escaping from cocaine producers in the Bolivian forest. The Ricardo's treat Diego as a son and brother, and their farm and family are sweet respite after the terrible trauma he endured. Even his prickly relationship with their daughter, Bonita, who is sure Diego's presence means trouble, can't alter the relief he feels. When the government destroys the Ricardo's and other farmers' coca crops as part of a U.S.-funded eradication program that fails to distinguish between coca's role in the production of cocaine and its legitimate use for traditional purposes—which plays an important role in the local economy—Diego joins a protest that stretches on for days. The *cocaleros* close down the bridge across a major highway in a political action that is part of a larger protest for change across Bolivia. Diego's old life in the city, where he worked as an errand runner in the women's prison, make him a skilled messenger and important contributor to the efforts. Ellis' story is an inspiring look at the struggle among the *cocaleros* and other laborers across Bolivia to obtain justice for the country's working poor. An author's note briefly recounts the widespread protests in that country in the year 2000, and

the election of the head of the *cocaleros* labor union as Bolivia's president in 2005. (Ages 10–15)

Farmer, Nancy. *The Land of the Silver Apples. A Richard Jackson Book / Atheneum, 2007. 496 pages (trade 1–4169–0735–1, \$18.99)*

Jack's younger sister Lucy has always been spoiled and capricious, but he never suspected that she might not be human until his father reveals a long-held secret: Lucy is not the baby born into their family, but one that was substituted for their real child as an infant. This knowledge, and Lucy's abduction by the Lady of the Lake, compels Jack headlong into a new adventure in the realm of elves. Familiarity with the first volume about Jack and his family, *The Sea of Trolls* (A Richard Jackson Book / Atheneum, 2004), will ease readers entry into this original story set in Britain around the year 790 A.D., at a time when beliefs in the traditional gods and Christianity are colliding. Memorable characters (human and otherwise), a gallant quest, and frequent dollops of humor combine in this second installment in a planned three-book series. (Ages 10–14)

Flanagan, John. *The Icebound Land. (Ranger's Apprentice: Book Three) U.S. edition: Philomel, 2007. 266 pages (trade 0–399–24456–5, \$16.99)*

A fine balance of action-packed plot and deft character development combine in this third volume of a first-rate fantasy series. At the cliff-hanging close of *The Burning Bridge* (Philomel, 2006), apprentice Ranger Will and Evanlyn, the king's daughter, were taken captive by the outlaw captain of a raiding wolf boat. Ranger Halt is determined to rescue his apprentice, even if it means defying the King to whom he is sworn. Joined by Will's friend Horace, the two travel toward Skandia, overcoming challenges from knights whose lands they must pass through along the way. Meanwhile, Will and Evanlyn attempt to orchestrate their escape while coping with both the tedium and oppression of captivity. As in the earlier books, moments of humor alternate with those of suspense, intrigue, and knightly battle. Halt's experience, Horace's fighting skills, Will's creative problem solving, and Evanlyn's determination all play a vital role as their adventures unfold. (Ages 10–14)

Fleming, Candace. *The Fabled Fourth Graders of Aesop Elementary School. Schwartz & Wade, 2007. 186 pages (trade 0–375–83672–1, \$15.99)*

Every class has a reputation, and the incoming fourth graders of Aesop Elementary School have been described as "precocious," "robust," or "just plain naughty." In fact, their infamous reputation made it hard to hire a new fourth grade teacher until Mr. Jupiter applied for the job. With a varied resume that includes dog groomer, Bigfoot translator, and dodo bird expedition leader, Mr. Jupiter seems ready for any challenge his students might bring. And, in fact, Mr. Jupiter has no problems keeping the class in line. As the school year proceeds, each chapter presents a classroom situation which culminates with an Aesopian moral. When Calvin Tallywong is stumped by multiplication facts, he wishes he were back in kindergarten, where the going was easy. Summoned to the kindergarten classroom as a student helper, he's

quickly disenchanted by the reality of five year olds' behavior and discovers to "be careful what you wish for—it might come true." In a variant of "the boy who cried wolf," a student raises a false alarm about the approach of the martinet lunchroom monitor, enjoying the short-term attention he receives. His fellow students soon disregard his warnings and he learns the hard way that "liars are not believed even when they tell the truth." This riotous and clever twist on traditional Aesop tales is laugh-out-loud funny from the first page to the last. (Ages 8–11)

Gardner, Lyn. *Into the Woods*. Illustrated by Mini Grey. U.S. edition: David Fickling Books, 2007. 428 pages (trade 0–385–75115-X, \$16.99)

When Storm's dying mother gives her a small musical pipe and cautions her to keep it safe from "the wrong hands," Storm can't begin to imagine what she means. After her father deserts the family, she's focused on helping her sisters, Aurora and Anything, get by without parents. But when the three girls run from their home to escape the threat of menacing Dr. DeWilde and his wolf pack, Storm brings the pipe along. In a cleverly crafted mosaic of familiar fairy tales, Storm's story follows the sisters to a sinister gingerbread house, a village emptied by a pied piper, and, eventually, the castle of an ogress, with Dr. DeWilde and his wolves hard at their heels. By the book's end Storm has learned much about the value of family and her role within it as she creates her own definition of "happily ever after." (Ages 9–13)

Gifford, Peggy. *Moxy Maxwell Does Not Love Stuart Little*. Photographs by Valerie Fisher. Schwartz & Wade, 2007. 91 pages (trade 0–375–83915–1, \$12.99)

Thanks to Moxy Maxwell's extraordinary gift for procrastination (and a companion arsenal of excuses), she hasn't even begun *Stuart Little*, the book assigned at the end of third grade by her new fourth grade teacher. Peggy Gifford's whirlwind story takes place over the course of a single afternoon and evening on the last day of summer vacation. Moxy's mom has delivered an ultimatum: finish the book by 6 p.m. or else. Moxy's intent to avoid the consequences by finally reading the book is quickly sidetracked by a string of ideas too good to be ignored. Gifford's narrative moves with great humor and lightning speed. Funny, long-winded chapter titles ("Chapter 7 In Which Moxie's Mother Says 'No.' ") offer glimpses of what's to come in the smart, pithy, perfectly-paced prose (the text of Chapter 7 in its entirety: "No."). Black-and-white photographs, presented as the work of Moxy's twin brother Mark, document an afternoon gone awry in this breezy, entertaining story. (Ages 8–11)

Goscigny, René. *Nicholas and the Gang*. Illustrated by Jean-Jacques Sempé. Translated from the French by Anthea Bell. U.S. edition: Phaidon Press, 2007. 113 pages (trade. 0–71484–439–4, \$19.95)

Originally published in France in 1963, the *Nicholas* stories by René Goscigny have been loved by generations of readers in that country. The first book, *Nicholas*, was published in the United States in 2005 (U.S. edition: Phaidon Press). *Nicholas and the Gang* continues the escapades of this French

schoolboy and his friends, who are endearingly and enduringly childlike (and perhaps, more specifically, boy-like, a matter of very important distinction to them all) even as Nicholas's observations on the ways of both children and adults will make readers of all ages laugh out loud. The humor in the stories is often straightforward but there is also a delicious playfulness in Nicholas's innocent accounting of events that reveal the ironies and absurdities of the adult world and the social dynamics of children. The stories are charmingly illustrated with the original line drawings of French artist Jean-Jacques Sempé. (Ages 8–12)

Hest, Amy. *Remembering Mrs. Rossi*. Illustrated by Heather Maione. Candlewick Press, 2007. 185 pages (trade 0-7636-2163-3, \$14.99)

"Nobody, absolutely nobody, expected Mrs. Rossi to die." But Mrs. Rossi did die, and her eight-year-old daughter, Annie, and Annie's daddy are learning how to live without her. Mrs. Rossi's sixth-grade students have made a book for Annie and her dad about Mrs. Rossi, and Annie turns to it again and again in the months after her mother dies. During that time, there are wonderful things that happen, like going to work with Daddy on a snow day, and awful things, too, like trying to make Daddy's birthday special and getting mad at him instead. Amy Hest's authentic, engaging story is about loss but also about living, and wanting a dog, and loving (mostly) third grade, and more. Hest's storytelling stays true to a child's experience, which means Annie's emotions are intense but often short-lived. Her sadness or anger sometimes takes her by surprise, but so, too, does delight. Hest ends her novel with the collective work of Mrs. Rossi's sixth-grade students—the book they made for Annie and her dad (and also, of course, themselves), and these, too, ring with honesty, expressing a range of feelings as they share memories and anecdotes that reveal much about the teacher they (mostly) loved, as well as their own lives. (Ages 8–10)

Holm, Jennifer L. *Camp Babymouse*. Illustrated by Matthew Holm. (Babymouse #6) Random House, 2007. 96 pages (pbk. 0-375-83988-7, \$5.99; lib. 0-375-93988-1, \$12.99)

Holm, Jennifer L. *Babymouse: Skater Girl*. Illustrated by Matthew Holm. (Babymouse #7) Random House, 2007. 91 pages (pbk. 0-375-83989-5, \$5.99; lib. 0-375-93989-X, \$12.99)

The inimitable Babymouse returns for volumes 6 and 7 of this popular graphic novel series. Babymouse takes on a classic milestone of childhood in *Camp Babymouse*: summer camp. Overcoming her initial dim view of the latrine, Babymouse is certain that her two weeks at Camp Wild Whiskers will be a roaring success. But stuck in Buttercup cabin with a group of "veteran" campers, she quickly becomes the camp outcast. At her lowest point, Babymouse helps a lost Buttercup camper find her way back to their cabin, turning the tide at last. In *Skater Girl*, Babymouse is spotted gliding on the ice by an Olympic coach and given the opportunity to join the coach's dedicated students in their rigorous training regimen. At first, Babymouse's dreams of glory sustain her through pre-dawn practices and after-school training, but those dreams fade in the face of other realities: she has no time

to spend with friends, and *cupcakes* are banned! As in the earlier volumes, Babymouse's vivid imagination provides an extra layer of whimsy to her escapades, as when she transforms a canoe disaster at camp into a Moby Dick-esque voyage, or morphs climbing to the top bunk into a Mouse Kong feat. Black, white, and pink illustrations deftly capture the humor and grade-school level drama of Babymouse's exploits, sure to please her current fans and also gain new ones. (Ages 8–11)

Kent, Rose. *Kimchi & Calamari*. HarperCollins, 2007. 220 pages (trade 0–06–083769–1, \$15.99)

Fourteen-year-old Joseph Calderaro is having an identity crisis thanks to a school assignment to write about his ancestors. Adopted as a baby from Korea, Joseph is interested in writing about his Korean ancestors, even though he worries about hurting his Italian American parents' feelings. A growing friendship with a Korean student at his school gives Joseph the opportunity to learn about Korean traditions and customs but also reminds him how little he knows about his background and culture. After a promising lead from an online inquiry leaves Joseph certain he's tracked down at least one member of his birth family, he discovers that both family and heritage are things that cannot be defined by blood alone. Rose Kent's story is one with substance but refreshingly buoyant at the same time. Joseph is able to explore big questions about who he is from a place of security in the midst of a realistic (and therefore not perfect), loving family. (Ages 10–13)

Kinney, Jeff. *Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Greg Heffley's Journal*. Amulet Books, 2007. 217 pages (trade 0–8109–9313–9, \$12.95)

Jeff Kinney uses laugh-out-loud humor to convey the middle school experience of Greg Heffley: a video-game playing, cartoon-drawing, undersized geek, who computes his class ranking to be "around 52nd or 53rd most popular this year." In a combination of text and comics, Greg brings us through his sixth-grade year, as he runs for class treasurer (he loses), survives the wrestling unit in Phys Ed, and participates in the school play under parental duress. When he takes his buddy Rowley for granted, Greg discovers he's underestimated the importance of Rowley's friendship. Often lighthearted and silly, Greg's journal also manages to tap into common issues of early adolescence—controlling parents, school bullies, evolving friendships—that will resonate with his real-life peers. (Ages 10–14)

Landy, Derek. *Skullduggery Pleasant*. HarperCollins, 2007. 392 pages (trade 0–06–123115–0, \$17.99)

One of the most intriguing book jackets of the year (a dapperly dressed skeleton holding a ball of fire with the caption "And he's the *Good Guy*" beneath) more than lives up to expectation in this highly entertaining, wholly original fantasy featuring a smart, strong-willed girl as protagonist. Stephanie Edgely is hardly prepared for news that she has inherited her uncle's mansion after his untimely death. Even more surprising is the realization that the inheritance brings with it grave danger, along with *entré* into a world of magic and mayhem that Stephanie never knew existed. As evil forces

seek out a key that is part of Stephanie's inheritance, she is protected by Skullduggery Pleasant, an old friend of her uncle's who becomes her self-appointed bodyguard and tutor in all things good and evil. It turns out the key in question is needed as part of the grand plan of Mevolent, who is trying to return to power, and doing a pretty good job of succeeding. When Skullduggery tries to keep Stephanie out of harm's way, she's having none of it. Stephanie is not only eager for a little excitement, it turns out she has quite an untapped talent for magic. Theatrical violence and moments of high tension are part of the nonstop action in a story grounded in the warm and dryly funny relationship between Stephanie and Skullduggery. (Ages 10–14)

Lin, Grace. *The Year of the Rat*. Little, Brown, 2008. 182 pages (trade 0–316–11426-X, \$14.99)

A sequel to *The Year of the Dog* (Little, Brown, 2006), this warm and funny novel opens with a scene from Pacy's family's Chinese New Year celebration. "Happy Year of the Rat!" her father toasts. Since the rat is the first animal of the Chinese New Year calendar, the Year of the Rat symbolizes new beginnings. New beginnings also mean changes, Pacy soon realizes: her best friend Melody is moving away. As the year unfolds, Pacy learns how to live without Melody at her side, and in doing so discovers what kind of person and friend she wants to be. She also questions her desire to write and illustrate books when she grows up, uncertain if it's a profitable career path. When Melody finally returns for a visit, she comments on how much taller Pacy seems. It's clear the Pacy has grown in other ways too, especially in her acceptance of change. Grace Lin's second novel follows a similar recipe as her first, but has an even richer and more lasting flavor. (Ages 8–11)

Lindgren, Astrid. *Pippi Longstocking*. Illustrated by Lauren Child. Translated from the Swedish by Tiina Nunnally. Viking, 2007. 202 pages (trade 0–670–06276–6, \$25.00)

The antics and adventures of irrepressible Pippi Longstocking have delighted readers worldwide since first published in Sweden in 1945. Pippi, a plucky red-headed girl, lives on her own with her monkey, Mr. Nilsson, and a horse in Villa Villekulla, while her father is away at sea. Pippi makes her own rules, such as wearing mismatched socks and cutting out cookies on the kitchen floor. Her manners are both a surprise and delight to the siblings next door, Tommy and Annika, who quickly become Pippi's playmates. From having a tea party in a tree to climbing on the furniture while playing "Don't Step on the Floor," the brother and sister embrace Pippi's way of looking at things upside down. Pippi even sleeps with her feet on the pillow and head under the covers! Pippi has many run-ins with adults who want to change her ways, but her clever strategies save the day every time. This colorfully designed new edition features bold collage illustrations from Lauren Child. In addition, playful font work and creative page spreads lend the book a fun and fresh look while still maintaining authenticity. This edition also presents a new translation by Tiina Nunnally that preserves the distinct Swedish cultural

elements at the same time it refreshes the language for modern readers. (Ages 7–11)

McKissack, Patricia C. *A Friendship for Today*. Scholastic Press, 2007. 172 pages (trade 0–439–66098-X, \$16.99)

Rosemary Patterson is worried about attending the formerly all-white Robertson Elementary School. Her anxiety is compounded when polio leaves her best friend fighting for his life and Rosemary the lone black student in her sixth-grade class. A terrific teacher helps Rosemary and her classmates, some of whom are more welcoming than others, with the difficult transition to desegregation, even as an administrator seems determined to undermine Rosemary's efforts to succeed. But the most surprising outcome of the huge social change is the friendship Rosemary forms with Grace Hamilton, a white girl in her neighborhood who has always been unfriendly, and at time downright mean. Both girls are outsiders at school—Rosemary because she is black, Grace because she is poor. But they find they have more than their outsider status in common as each navigates difficult family situations. Rosemary is struggling with her parents' separation, and Grace's racist, sometimes violent father casts a shadow in her life. Patricia McKissack's evenhanded novel set in 1954 Missouri deftly juggles big themes while keeping her story firmly grounded in the experiences of a girl who discovers that she has support in both expected and unexpected places to navigate the changes in her family and in the larger world. (Ages 10–14)

Miller, Sarah. *Miss Spitfire: Reaching Helen Keller*. Atheneum, 2007. 208 pages (trade 1–4169–2542–2, \$16.99)

Sarah Miller's arresting debut novel will deeply satisfy readers who already know about Helen Keller and her teacher, Annie Sullivan, but it will be no less exceptional to those who come to the enthralling story without prior knowledge. Miller takes the title of her marvelously well-researched novel from the nickname given to Annie Sullivan while she was a student at the Perkins School for the Blind in Massachusetts. It's a name Sullivan quickly realizes fits young Helen, whom she has agreed to teach. Helen is a wild child. Her family gives in to her every whim in order to minimize her volatile tantrums. She is clearly bright, but can this girl who can't hear, see, or speak really learn? Even as she struggles with that question, Annie knows that the first thing she must do is teach Helen to control herself, and to respect Annie's own authority. But to do so means battling not only Helen, but the will of a family that can't bear to see the little girl upset. In Miller's affecting, first-person narrative Annie Sullivan describes four transformative weeks of frustration, pain, sorrow, anger, determination, tenderness, and joy. Each chapter opens with an excerpt from the letters Sullivan was writing to one of her teachers back at Perkins during that time, and Miller weaves those brief lines and phrases into a richly textured tapestry of storytelling. (Age 10 and older)

Miyabe, Miyuki. *Brave Story*. Translated from the Japanese by Alexander O. Smith. U.S. edition: Viz Media, 2007. (trade 1-4215-1196-7, \$23.99)

Wataru Mitani is an eleven-year-old boy living in a suburb of Tokyo. He likes playing video games with his best friend Katchan more than going to school or studying for exams at evening cram school. Recently, a school rumor has been swirling suggesting that a building near Wataru's house is haunted. Wataru doesn't believe in ghosts so he's not surprised when nothing supernatural appears the night he and Katchan explore the building, although the two boys do have a strange, unsettling encounter with the building's owner. This is followed by something even more unsettling at home: Wataru's father announces that he is leaving Wataru and his mother. The shocking announcement turns Wataru's world upside down. His mother spirals into physical and emotional chaos, becoming a risk to herself and others when she attempts suicide, and his father becomes even more distant and detached. Filled with desperation and confusion, Wataru returns to the building and discovers a rare portal into a fantasy world called Vision. The realm of Vision is ruled by the Goddess who lives in the Tower of Destiny. Seeing the opportunity to change the fate of his family through the help of the Goddess, Wataru embarks on a quest. The deft blending of fantasy and reality in *Brave Story* extends to Vision itself, which strangely parallels people and circumstances from the real world (in addition to features from video games). *Brave Story* offers a tantalizing adventure and fresh new fantasy wrapped up in a hefty translation of fate, love, and family. The novel will give readers a strong sense of contemporary youth culture in Japan, where it was originally published, and where both Manga and Anime spinoffs of the story have been produced. (Ages 10-14)

O'Connor, Barbara. *How To Steal a Dog*. Frances Foster Books / Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007. 170 pages (trade 0-374-33497-8, \$16.00)

Georgina Hayes is living with her mother and her little brother, Toby, in the family car. Her mom's struggles to earn enough money for a down payment on an apartment seem endless, inspiring Georgina to take matters into her own hands. A flyer offering a reward for a missing dog has given her an idea: she'll steal a dog and then return it and collect a reward. Of course it can't be just any dog, and Georgina scouts out the perfect candidate. Willy is obviously loved, and his owner lives in a big, old house; clearly she must have money. An uneasy conscience is just one of many things plaguing Georgina after she lures Willy away in Barbara O'Connor's surprisingly sensitive and believable story. Georgina's anger and frustration, as well as her inability to understand some realities of the adult world, is always honest, and sometimes heartbreaking. Her fierce desire to improve a living situation in which she feels utterly powerless is palpable, and her missteps in doing so are painful. But she is far from powerless when it comes to doing the right thing in the end, and Georgina's journey to that point is the culmination of this fine story. (Ages 9-11)

Petersen, David. *Mouse Guard: Fall 1152*. Archaia Studios Press, 2007. 192 pages (trade 1-932386-57-2, \$24.95)

A beautifully produced, full-color graphic novel tells a satisfying story of intrigue and adventure set in a medieval kingdom of mice. Lieam, Saxom, and Kenzie are members of the Mouse Guard. Originally soldiers that defended the kingdom against a weasel warlord, the Guard members now act as escorts and guides in the time of peace, maintaining the balance so that citizens can thrive. But the disappearance of a grain merchant begins a chain of events that leads the trio into the heart of a plot to overthrow the Guard as an unknown enemy of the kingdom makes a grasp for power. Most of the story is told through dialogue between the characters in Petersen's intricate, elegant artwork, which is the centerpiece of the storytelling as he brings his medieval fantasy world vividly alive. (Ages 9–14)

Riordan, Rick. *The Titan's Curse*. (Percy Jackson & the Olympians: Book 3) Miramax Books / Hyperion, 2007. 312 pages (trade 1-4231-0145-6, \$17.95)

Percy Jackson and his fellow demigods face a devious foe in the third book of this stellar series. Combining forces with Artemis' Hunters, Percy and Grover travel west following the cryptic words of the Oracle of Delphi. They must rescue Artemis from imprisonment and free their friend Annabeth from her captors, all before Winter Solstice and the annual meeting of the gods on Olympus. As in the earlier books, starring this contemporary son of Poseidon, *The Lightning Thief* (Miramax/Hyperion, 2005) and *The Sea of Monsters* (Miramax / Hyperion, 2006), Rick Riordan casts classic mythology into a twenty-first century mold, resulting in memorable, and often hysterical, images. Apollo draws the sun across the sky in an unconventional chariot (a red convertible Maserati Spyder) while spouting atrocious haiku ("Dreams like a podcast, / Downloading truth in my ears. / They tell me cool stuff.") A final showdown at Mount Orthrys against the Titan Atlas finds Percy and his friends ingeniously besting their enemies . . . at least until Book 4. (Ages 10–14)

Rowling, J. K. *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*. Illustrated by Mary GrandPré. U.S. edition: Arthur A. Levine Books / Scholastic, Inc., 2007. 759 pages (trade 0-545-01022-5, \$34.99)

J. K. Rowling brings her seven-part, sweeping story to its dramatic conclusion in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, a tense and riveting narrative that moves at breakneck speed, despite its bulk, toward the inevitable final confrontation between now-seventeen-year-old Harry and the evil wizard Voldemort. This time around Rowling deviates from the pattern that is so familiar in the others—there is no return to Hogwarts for Harry, Ron, and Hermione at the start of the school year. Voldemort and the Death Eaters now control the Ministry of Magic and the school. And so while the dwindling members of the Order of the Phoenix battle on like the resistance fighters they are, and while thousands of innocents face persecution and death, the three friends are committed to completing the task Dumbeldore set for Harry—hunting down and destroying the Horcruxes that harbor

pieces of Voldemort's splintered soul. Rowling does follow the cycle of the seasons that has been so much a part of the passage of time in the previous stories, offering this comforting familiarity as she chronicles the distress in the world she's created and the three friends' dangerous, uncertain journey. And she continues to weave her spell of magic—blending an imaginative and inventive plot, teasing humor, and complex, fascinating characters into an irresistible story. As Rowling's narrative moves through fall and winter into spring, she is preparing both Harry and readers for its conclusion, which comes in a dazzling, ferocious battle involving all those they have come to either love or despise. At the center of it all is the young wizard who is willing to do whatever it takes to save all that he holds in his heart. Rowling has done both her story and her readers justice as she brings her smart and incredibly satisfying tale to an end. (Age 10 and older)

Selznick, Brian. *The Invention of Hugo Cabret.* Scholastic Press, 2007. 533 pages (trade 0-439-81378-6, \$22.99)

Brian Selznick's compelling, cinematic narrative is a deft combination of visual and verbal storytelling in a novel full of mystery, intrigue, and the irresistible lure of possibility. Hugo Cabret is a boy living in a Paris train station in 1931. He is following in his uncle's footsteps as caretaker of the station clocks. Hugo is hopeful that if he can keep the clocks wound and running on time, no one will notice his uncle is missing and he'll be able to continue to carry out his most important work: repairing the automaton that he salvaged from a museum fire. Hugo is convinced that if he can get the mechanical man with the pen in his hand working, it will convey a message from his dead father. Hugo's plans are disrupted when the old man who runs the station toy booth catches him stealing his small, mechanical toys for parts. The man confiscates the notebook that had all of the plans sketched by Hugo's father for repairing the automaton. Hugo is determined to get the notebook back, even as he begins to wonder why the man found the sketches so upsetting, and why his mechanical toys have parts that fit perfectly into the robot. Selznick's story unfolds through prose and dozens of dramatic, full-page, black-and-white drawings. The two mediums create a narrative whole that is further unified by the use of black to frame every page spread in a tale that is cinematic in theme as well as scope and appearance. Readers will be captivated by the fictional Hugo, whose quest encompasses the real-life French filmmaker Georges Méliès as well as a sweetly satisfying search for friendship and family. (Ages 9–13)

Springer, Nancy. *The Case of the Left-Handed Lady: An Enola Holmes Mystery.* Sleuth / Philomel, 2007. 234 pages (trade 0-399-24517-0, \$12.99)

Struggling detective Enola Holmes is determined to solve the mystery of the missing Lady Cecily, a teenager who has disappeared without a trace. Enola needs the money the case would bring, and as she learns about the baronet's daughter she feels increasingly compelled to find her. Although Lady Cecily appears to be a respectable, genteel young woman on the surface, her collection of dark-themed charcoal drawings and a secret diary suggest a different story. Assuming an alias, donning disguises, and venturing into the

dangerous nighttime streets of Victorian London, Enola risks her own safety as she searches for the missing teen. In her quest, she views firsthand the desperate living situation of London's large impoverished population, and encounters the prevailing attitude differentiating between the "deserving" poor, and those who are considered undeserving of assistance. Although this is the second in the series, fourteen-year-old Enola's newest case stands alone. Newly converted fans will want to seek out *The Case of the Missing Marquess* (Sleuth / Philomel, 2006) to learn how Sherlock Holmes' younger sister was launched on her detective career. (Ages 9–12)

Spinelli, Eileen. *Where I Live*. Illustrated by Matt Phelan. Dial, 2007. 112 pages (0–8037–3122–1, \$16.99)

"This is where I live— / in the yellow house / with the white shutters." For Diana, the idea of "home" is defined by her immediate world of comfort and familiarity. But when Diana's dad loses his job, her family has to move all the way across Pennsylvania to live with her grandfather, leaving her beloved house, and her beloved best friend, far away. Even surrounded by her loving and supportive family, Diana finds nothing is the same. Eileen Spinelli takes a tender, honest look at displacement in this novel-in-poems written in aspiring poet Diana's first-person voice. E-mailing her best friend helps, so does the poetry workshop Diana is able to attend when she goes back "home." But what matters most is time to embrace a new idea of where home is, and what it can be. Matt Phelan's lyrical illustrations are a wonderful grace note to Spinelli's quietly compelling story. (Ages 8–10)

Stewart, Trenton Lee. *The Mysterious Benedict Society*. Illustrated by Carson Ellis. Megan Tingley Books / Little, Brown, 2007. 485 pages (trade 0–316–05777–0, \$16.99)

Responding to an unusual newspaper advertisement ("Are you a gifted child looking for special opportunities?"), Reynie Muldoon follows the ad's directive to take a special test at a designated place and time. Of the many children who show up for the test, only Reynie and three others are selected to undertake a dangerous mission for the Mysterious Benedict Society. Acting as secret agents, the four children must infiltrate the exclusive Learning Institute for the Very Enlightened. The Mysterious Benedict Society's eccentric leader is convinced that the Institute is the source of insidious messages being delivered directly into human brains. He believes these messages are causing the "Emergency"—a worldwide deterioration of all aspects of civilization that is triggering a demand for dramatic government upheaval. At the center of an intricate and dryly comic plot lies a message of cooperation and tolerance as the four quirky and very different children learn that none of them can solve the mystery (and save the world!) without the help of the others. (Ages 10–13)

Thomson, Sarah L. *Dragon's Egg*. Greenwillow / HarperCollins, 2007. 267 pages (trade 0–06–128848–9, \$16.99)

Mella knows that true dragons—huge dangerous beasts that breathe fire—only exist in legend. Common dragons, the small domestic creatures kept in

the yard as providers of the prized eggs that Mella's mother whips into her famous breakfast dish, aren't perilous or intimidating. So when a stranger arrives at the Inn and claims to be a Knight of the Order of Defenders in search of a rogue dragon of the ancient variety, Mella is skeptical. She's converted into a believer after encountering a massive dragon in the forest, and she promises the dying beast to deliver its precious egg to the secret Hatching Grounds. Accompanied by Roger, a squire hiding some mysteries of his own, Mella sets off on a thrilling and treacherous quest to fulfill her vow. This fresh fantasy stars a smart and independent heroine who bravely takes on a momentous responsibility in order to honor her promise. (Ages 8–11)

Wolf, Joan M. *Someone Named Eva*. Clarion, 2007. 200 pages (trade 0-618-53579-9, \$16.00)

Joan M. Wolf's debut novel is a riveting story about identity set during World War II and based on historical events. When the Nazi's round up the citizens of Malida's Czech village, she is one of ten children singled out. All of them have Aryan features, and all of them have been chosen for a retraining program designed to turn them into model German citizens. Malida's name, her language, her identity are all taken away. She is given a new name—Eva—and a new language—German. It is forbidden—and punishable—to use anything else. As time passes, Eva finds it harder and harder to remember her past. Eventually, even the name that she tried so hard to hold in her heart is gone from her memory. With the “retraining” complete, Eva is adopted into the family of a German officer. She acquires a loving, mild-mannered mother; a stern, distant father; and two siblings. Her new sister is especially welcoming, and the two grow close, but some part of Eva feels uneasy about loving and being loved by this family. Memories are tied to small acts of rebellion she can't fully comprehend in a novel that requires readers look beyond an unappealing cover to discover the fascinating story inside. An extensive author's note provides more information on Nazi persecution, especially as it relates to the Lebensborn program to “retrain” children from eastern Europe as citizens of the Reich. (Ages 10–14)

Woodson, Jacqueline. *Feathers*. Putnam, 2007. 118 pages (trade 0-399-23989-8, \$15.99)

“Hope is a thing with feathers.” Frannie loves the sound of the Emily Dickinson poem her teacher read in class. But she doesn't understand it. “It's a metaphor,” her older brother Sean explains. Metaphor or not, Frannie is having a hard time feeling hopeful. Her mother is spending a lot of time in bed again, like she did after losing the baby. Teenage girls flirt with Sean until they realize he's deaf and turn away. The highway bordering her neighborhood is a dividing line—like a wall—between rich and poor, white and black. And then there is the new kid at school. Everyone calls him Jesus Boy because of his curly brown hair—and because he's white. Or is he? In a seamless, stirring narrative, Jacqueline Woodson explores how assumptions and labels are barriers to genuine understanding and meaningful relationships. Looking for something to believe in, Frannie briefly thinks it might be Jesus Boy. He's calm and centered, and he seems to see more than anyone else. Maybe

he really is a savior. But it turns out he's only a boy—a boy who knows from experience the importance of looking beneath the surface. For sensitive Frannie, Jesus Boy's open heart and open mind are a hopeful affirmation of the way she wants to be in the world and the way she wants the world to be in a stirring novel about an African American girl growing up in the early 1970s. (Ages 10–14)

Wynne-Jones, Tim. *Rex Zero and the End of the World*. U.S. edition: Melanie Kroupa Books / Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007. 186 pages (trade 0–374–33467–6, \$16.00)

Rex Norton-Norton and his family have just moved to Ottawa from Vancouver. The year is 1962, and while adults worry about the possibility of the Cold War unleashing an atomic bomb, Rex and his new friends have much more pressing and immediate concerns: the escaped panther spending its nights in nearby Adams Park. Rex has heard its growl. Kathy has several blurry photos. But not a single adult is willing to believe it's there. Tim Wynne-Jones' observant and entertaining novel captures what it was like to be a kid growing up in the shadow of the burgeoning nuclear age, turning fear of a panther that may or may not be real into a metaphor for the general sense of unease that filters down from the adult world into the lives of children. Unlike the adults around them, who watch disturbing documentaries about Cold War cruelties or build bomb shelters to survive impending doom, Rex and his friends are determined to take decisive action. They make plans to capture the wild beast in a story featuring a likeable eleven-year-old protagonist who is constantly forming new and deeper insights, small leaps of understanding that go hand-in-hand with growing up. (Ages 9–13)

Yee, Lisa. *So Totally Emily Ebers*. Arthur A. Levine Books / Scholastic, 2007. 280 pages (trade 0–439–83847–9, \$16.99)

Since her parents' divorce, Emily Ebers hasn't stopped missing her dad and blaming her mom. Her mom is the one who decided she and Emily were moving across the country to California after all. Emily's longing comes through clearly in a novel written as a series of letters to her dad describing her new life in California. So, too, does her unwillingness to even consider the possibility that her dad might bear some responsibility for her parents' marriage ending. Emily's letters reveal her denial through her upbeat, at times painfully funny approach to their relationship. Emily also writes about her developing friendship with a girl named Millicent Min and her burgeoning romance with a boy named Stanford Wong as Yee explores the relationships between and among these three appealing characters first presented in *Millicent Min: Girl Genius* (Arthur A. Levine / Scholastic, 2003) and then in *Stanford Wong Flunks Big-Time* (Arthur A. Levine / Scholastic, 2005) from Emily's perspective. Yee deftly balances fine humor with keen insight as Emily's relationship with her dad and with Millicent and Stanford challenge her ability to admit the truth and, ultimately, to offer forgiveness. (Ages 10–14)

Fiction for Young Adults

Alexie, Sherman. *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian.* Illustrated by Ellen Forney. Little, Brown, 2007. 240 pages (trade 0-316-01368-4, \$16.99)

Arnold Spirit, known as Junior on the Spokane Indian reservation where he lives, has always been teased and picked on by his peers because of his multiple physical disabilities. Only his family and his best friend, a tough kid named Rowdy, understand that beneath Junior's odd exterior there is a brilliant, artistic, athletic, and extraordinarily witty kid. When Junior decides to start ninth grade at the nearest white high school, twenty-two miles off the reservation, he is thought of as a traitor by those he left behind on the reservation, and as a weird Indian kid by his new peers. But Junior is smart and resilient, and manages to prove himself to the students and staff at his new school through his academic prowess and basketball skills. The reservation kids, however, are not so quick to accept Junior's new life, especially Rowdy, who feels rejected and betrayed. Sherman Alexie's first novel for young adults is hilarious and touching at the same time. With occasional cartoons, frequent self-deprecating humor, and unwavering depth, Junior struggles with his cultural identity as an Indian teenager who wants a different kind of life from his that of his parents and friends. (Ages 13-16)

Anderson, Laurie Halse. *Twisted.* Viking, 2007. 250 pages (trade 0-670-06101-3, \$16.99)

Tyler Miller embodies a tremendous sense of decency that few around him see or acknowledge. At school, he's been a favorite target for both physical and verbal bullying for years. At home, Tyler's father thinks he's a screw-up—his opinion fueled in part by Tyler's single act of protest against all he's endured—spraying graffiti on the school, and getting caught. Tyler begins his senior year with a new physique thanks to the court-ordered community service that had him working for a landscape company over the summer. For awhile, it seems as if his reputation as a loser might have changed right along with his appearance, but it isn't to be. While no longer the victim of physical aggression, Tyler soon discovers that he's still an easy target—of his peers, the school administration, even the police—when new and ugly troubles emerge. Tyler's first-person voice is funny, sarcastic, insightful and tender—a reflection of Tyler himself. As the novel progresses, it becomes increasingly clear how hard Tyler has been battling not only depression and suicidal tendencies, but also a rage that grows ever more understandable and frightening as the novel progresses. In this riveting portrait of a teen pushed to the edge, Laurie Halse Anderson writes about a boy who finds the strength to keep from going over. But in his triumph, she also reveals how tenuous the line between reason and reckless abandon can be, and how some kids who fail to hold off despair have been failed by others first. (Age 13 and older)

Brooks, Martha. *Mistik Lake*. U.S. edition: Melanie Kroupa Books / Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007. 207 pages (trade 0-374-34985-1, \$16.00)

When Odella's mother, Sally, was sixteen, she and her friends crashed through the ice on Mistik Lake while joyriding. Sally was the only survivor. Odella knows the facts, but not the feelings that have haunted her mother for years. Now her mom has left her dad and moved with another man to Iceland. Reeling from their mother's abandonment, Odella and her younger sisters cling to each other, but teenage Odella soon resents how much Janelle and Sarah need her. Then word comes of their mother's death, and they struggle to make sense of an absence that has gone from hazy to absolute. For Odella, respite from her hurt and anger and fear comes in the form of Jimmy Tomasson, the boy she met at the end of last summer while vacationing at Mistik Lake. As Odella makes plans to spend the coming summer at the lake, she unwittingly opens a door that has been kept closed on too many secrets for too long. Consummate writer Martha Brooks weaves an extraordinary story of loss, regret, forgiveness, and enduring love across three generations of a Canadian family and the lives theirs touch. Brooks' story covers vast emotional territory, but always stays true to the hearts of its characters, and to the sensibilities of teen readers, for whom it offers affirmation in the importance of honesty and the power of love. (Age 13 and older)

Bruchac, Joseph. *The Way*. Darby Creek, 2007. 156 pages (trade 1-58196-062-X, \$16.95)

Cody LeBeau sometimes daydreams about being a hero. He imagines himself a ninja, saving his classmates from terrorists. The reality is that he's a small kid with big feet who doesn't garner much attention unless it's negative. Cody is genuinely interested in martial arts, healthful living, and the traditional Native beliefs of his Abenaki ancestors, and he gets little support for any of his interests at school (except from the librarian). When Cody's Uncle John arrives to compete in a fight tournament at the casino where his mom works, it's an opportunity for Cody to learn about martial arts firsthand. Uncle John integrates martial arts moves and philosophy with Native beliefs. It's like a dream come true for Cody to find a teacher and to feel so understood. Joseph Bruchac's high-interest, purposeful novel takes a gripping and unexpected turn in a story that also explores the serious issue of bullying. It isn't Cody but two other high school students who show signs of increasing anger and isolation. Bullying at school, as well as violent home lives, push them over the edge, but reality plays out nothing like Cody's fantasy in the chilling climax. Terrified Cody becomes a hero in the eyes of the world, but not through amazing physical feats. Instead, as he knows better than anyone, he was simply in the right place at the right time and able to put all the pieces together. It's an experience that broadens Cody's understanding of what a hero can be. (Ages 11-14)

Caletti, Deb. *The Nature of Jade*. Simon & Schuster, 2007. 288 pages (trade 1-4169-1005-0, \$16.99)

Jade has learned that watching the elephant cam from the nearby zoo is a great mechanism to calm her anxiety when it flares. Diagnosed with Panic

Disorder, Jade is never sure when an attack will strike, and she has to work hard to keep it from consuming her life. It's while watching the elephants on her bedroom computer that she first sees a teenage boy carrying a baby. Jade manages to meet the mystery duo, and soon finds herself falling hard for Sebastian and his young son, Bo. When she discovers that Sebastian has not been entirely truthful in his account of how he ended up as Bo's primary caretaker, Jade must grapple with difficult decisions about what is fair and what is right, weighing her feelings and thoughts against the possibility of hurting someone she loves. While Sebastian's backstory lacks some believability, this is more than compensated by artful observations and a moving, powerful portrayal of a teen dealing with a disabling anxiety disorder. (Age 14 and older)

Cameron, Peter. *Someday This Pain Will Be Useful to You*. Frances Foster Books / Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007. 229 pages (trade 0-374-30989-2, \$16.00)

At eighteen, James Sveck seems to have everything going for him. He's a bright, witty teen from an affluent family living in Manhattan, and he'll soon be headed to Brown University for his freshman year. But James is far from happy. He has no desire to attend college in the fall because he can't stand being around people his own age. He feels superior, in fact, to most people he encounters. It's a defense mechanism he's built up over the years to avoid looking deeper into himself or others, and to avoid making connections for fear they might be lost. Peter Cameron's first young adult novel is a funny, heartrending portrait of a depressed and struggling teen. What James really wants to do, he tells his parents, is buy a house—in the Midwest. Someplace like Kansas or Indiana. His obsession with the idea of bucolic, small-town life takes on a startling new meaning when it is revealed that James was a firsthand witness to the events of 9/11. Each of James' parents also ask him, point-blank, if he is gay, and he never gives a direct answer. Cameron's singular, affecting novel is an in-depth portrait of a teen who is not only questioning his sexuality but also fearful of moving into the future. James takes his first, tentative steps into that scary void by the story's end, and the sense of hope is palpable. (Age 14 and older)

Castellucci, Cecil. *Beige*. Candlewick Press, 2007. 307 pages (trade 0-7636-3066-7, \$16.99)

Katy is not a music lover. When her mother heads to Peru on an archeological expedition, Katy is sent off to visit her father in L. A., where she describes her response to a live show: "It's not easy to listen to. It's scary. I like music to be in the background. Not in my face." As the daughter of The Rat, drummer of the infamous rock band Suck, Katy's lack of musical ambition comes as a surprise to many. That includes Lake, daughter of another Suck original member, who has intense musical ambitions. Lake shows her contempt for Katy's disinterest, and what she perceives as her bland personal style, by nick-naming her "Beige." When Katy's tenure in L. A. is extended against her wishes, she finds herself involved in the lives of her new acquaintances: Lake, with her driving musical aspirations; Garth, an uncool Skater boy who

idolizes The Rat; and Leo, a gorgeous teen who inspires Katy to infatuation. There's also Trixie, a burlesque dancer and The Rat's girlfriend, and her young son, Auggie. And there's The Rat himself, with a personal history clouded by substance abuse, but a responsible wish to truly act as Katy's father for the first time. With chapter titles taken from songs and band names, *Beige* rocks to the underlying music that drives this novel from start to finish as Katy learns to look outside her narrow comfort zone for friendship and love. (Age 13 and older)

Castellucci, Cecil, and Jim Rugg. *The Plain Janes*. Minx, 2007. 172 pages (pbk. 1-4012-1115-1, \$9.99)

Jane's parents move her to the safety of a small town halfway across the country after a terrorist attack hits Metro City. Jane is eager to establish a new identity at Buzz Aldrin High School in the small town where she now lives. She cuts her hair short and eschews the kids at the popular table. Instead she chooses to sit with the table of perennial losers, who all turn out to be named Jane, too. As she gets to know them, she learns that each one has a talent: one is theatrical, one is brainy, and one is athletic. And all of them are outsiders. Main Jane is determined to change things, not just for the Janes but for the entire bland town. She forms an avant-garde guerrilla art group called P.L.A.I.N. (People Loving Art in Neighborhoods), and she and the other Janes surreptitiously create art installations around the town under the cover of night. No one suspects the Plain Janes. But their art attacks become increasingly risky once the police and school principal make it their mission to catch the culprits. Cecil Castellucci's first graphic novel is both funny and serious in its depiction of our post-9/11 world where conformity is too often equated with security. Much of the humor comes from Jim Rugg's illustrations, which perfectly capture the sense of adolescent ennui and enthusiasm. Ultimately, the book's message is about the transformative and healing power of art, and the role outsiders have always played in bringing that message to the masses. (Ages 13-16)

Clarke, Judith. *One Whole and Perfect Day*. U.S. edition: Front Street / Boyd's Mills Press, 2007. 250 pages (trade 1-932425-95-0, \$16.95)

At sixteen, Lily is the most responsible member of her family, a burden she is tired of bearing. Lily's mother is consumed by her work with older adults—work she sometimes brings home in the form of weekend guests like the elderly Mrs. Nightingale. Her brother, Lonnie, has drifted from one plan for life to another, annoying their stern grandfather to the point of disowning him. Her grandmother, Nan, seems to be getting a bit flighty, which doesn't bode well for the big party she's planning. What Lily doesn't know is that Lonnie has a new girlfriend, Clara, and his life suddenly has new focus. Clara is estranged from her overbearing father and meek, mild mother and may finally be finding the courage to pursue the course of study she loves rather than the one she was pressured to take. Clara's Chinese mother and Lily's racist grandfather are strangers, but their chance encounter has left an impression on them both. Judith Clarke once again moves in and out of the lives of a host of captivating characters, mapping extraordinary

connections and moments of transformation. Everything is significant in Clarke's tightly plotted, heartening story, and that's part of the point. So, too, is understanding that the journey beyond pain or uncertainty, bitterness or anger, toward happiness begins by taking a risk and opening one's heart, and by being true to what's inside. (Age 13 and older)

Cohn, Rachel, and David Levithan. *Naomi and Ely's No Kiss List*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2007. 230 pages (trade 0-375-84440-6, \$16.99)

Naomi and Ely are older teens, living on the cutting edge of cool in Manhattan. They are both a year out of high school, attending NYU, and they've been best friends all their lives, having grown up in the same apartment building. Naomi is deeply and hopelessly in love with Ely, and always has been. She's always pictured that they would some day grow up and get married, and she's been saving herself for him, even though she continues to date other boys as she bides her time. But Ely is gay and has never hidden it. In fact, Naomi and Ely have drawn up a "no kiss list" of boys they like who are off-limits to both of them, in order to preserve their friendship. It never occurred to either of them to put Naomi's boyfriend, Bruce the Second, on the list, because it never occurred to either of them that Ely and Bruce would fall in love. But it's not Ely's relationship with Bruce that deeply pains Naomi, it is her sudden inability to deny the truth Ely thought was obvious all along: he will never fall in love with her. Told from multiple points of view, the funny, fast-paced chapters explore Naomi and Ely's friendship and falling out, with plenty of pop-culture references, club scenes, and sardonic observations about life in general. But underneath the humor is a serious story about the nature of romantic love and the ability of a friendship to endure. (Age 14 and older)

de Lint, Charles. *Little (Grrl) Lost*. Viking, 2007. 288 pages (trade 0-670-06144-1, \$17.99)

Fourteen-year-old T. J. has just moved with her family from their farm to the suburbs, and she's lost both her best friend and her adored horse. Introverted T. J. is mired in self-pity. Elizabeth, on the other hand, is vocal about her feelings. A sixteen-year-old blue-haired punk, Elizabeth is defiant and proud of it, running away from home despite her parents' warnings to be cautious. The world holds many dangers for Elizabeth, a "Little" person, only six inches tall. When T. J. and Elizabeth meet, they soon discover they have much in common, despite their obvious physical differences. When Elizabeth is inadvertently abducted by a gang of delinquents, quiet T. J. risks danger to rescue her new friend. Contemporary reality meets a fantastical underworld of magic, inhabited by goblins, gnomes, fairies, and, of course, Littles in a richly imagined tale. Fans of Charles De Lint will welcome this return to Newford, the fictional city featured in several of the author's other works, including *The Blue Girl* (Viking, 2004). (Ages 11-15)

DeVita, James. *The Silenced. Eos / Laura Geringer Books / HarperCollins, 2007.* 504 pages (trade 0-06-078462-8, \$17.99; lib. 0-06-078464-4, \$18.89)

Imagine a future where our government monitors every move of its citizens, where independent thought is suspect, when dissent is deadly. Teenage Marena can barely remember when life was any other way. The Zero Tolerance Party has ruled the United States since she was a child. Her mother, an outspoken journalist, was arrested and executed in the early days of the party's rule. Now, the insidious level of mistrust and fear that permeates the country has become normal . . . almost. Living with her father and younger brother in a government-controlled community, attending a school whose purpose is to teach students to be compliant, unquestioning citizens. Marena and two friends begin a campaign to defy government authority. They call themselves the White Rose Movement in honor of Marena's mother, who often referred to the White Rose in the articles Marena keeps secreted away. Marena has no way of knowing her mother was referencing another time of resistance and the work of another group of young people—the White Rose Movement against Adolf Hitler, led by Sophie and Hans Scholl in Munich, Germany, during World War II. James DeVita presents a harrowing yet hopeful journey through the darkness of political repression and mind control in a novel that is at once far removed from the present day and eerily recognizable. His provocative, highly discussable story is driven by a riveting plot as the net slowly closes in on Marena and her friends in a novel in which betrayal and heroism are sometimes difficult to distinguish. DeVita's author's note provides background on Sophie Scholl and the White Rose Movement. (Age 13 and older)

Felin, M. Sindy. *Touching Snow. Atheneum, 2007.* 234 pages (trade 1-4169-1795-0, \$16.99)

Thirteen-year-old Karina is a first-generation Haitian girl living in Chestnut Valley, a community her mother chose to escape the dangers of living in nearby New York City. Looming large over everything and everyone in Karina's family is her brutal stepfather, whom she simply calls "the Daddy." The Daddy regularly dishes out "beat-ups" to Karina and her sisters for small, everyday transgressions. One night he flies into such a severe rage that he nearly kills Karina's older sister. Karina's mother won't call the police or take Enid to the hospital. Already working long hours, she can't support the family without the Daddy's income, and attention from authorities may also draw attention to members of their extended household who are in the country illegally. A haunting look at family violence and issues that complicate the lives of immigrant families is never unbearably heavy, for several reasons. First, it is told in flashback a year after the terrifying events unfold, so readers have knowledge that Karina is okay. Second, there are good things happening in other parts of Karina's life, most notably her developing relationship with a girl named Rachael, the white, wealthy daughter of the community center director who is helping the Daddy in a misguided attempt to be sensitive to cultural difference. Karina and Rachael don't agonize over their sexuality or what same-sex attraction means—they're

just happy to have found each other. Karina's relationship with Rachael gives her the intimacy and friendship she has been craving, and helps fuel her strength and determination to defend herself and her family from the Daddy's rage. The grace of Karina's honest voice shines in M. Sindy Felin's exquisitely beautiful novel. (Age 13 and older)

Garden, Nancy. *Hear Us Out! Lesbian and Gay Stories of Struggle, Progress, and Hope, 1950 to the Present*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007. 227 pages (trade 0-374-31759-3, \$18.00)

Garden's collection of short stories about gay and lesbian teens is organized into six sections by decade, with two stories for each period. To provide context for the stories, each section opens with an excellent essay about what life was like for gays and lesbians in that particular time, including an account of major historical events and, in particular, what life was like for gay teens coming of age then. Taken on their own, these essays provide a succinct—and much needed—overview of U. S. gay and lesbian history for teens. The themes explored in the stories are those of concern to both gay and straight teenagers everywhere: fitting in at school, finding a boyfriend or girlfriend, falling in love, making decisions about sex, and establishing an independent identity. But for the gay and lesbian teens, there are the added concerns about coming out to friends and family, finding other gay and lesbian teens, and worrying about queer-bashing (and there are two very blatant instances of violence against gays in the stories that are included). The stories in the last two decades are by far the most upbeat, reflecting the major advances in our culture over the past twenty years. (Age 12 and older)

Hale, Shannon. *Book of a Thousand Days*. Illustrated by James Noel Smith. Bloomsbury, 2007. 306 pages (trade 1-59990-051-3, \$17.95)

Dashti has only just arrived to take her place as Lady Saren's maid when the two are locked in a stone tower. It is Lady Saren's punishment for refusing to marry Lord Khasar. Saren languishes in the tower, her soul so troubled that even Dashti's skill with healing songs doesn't help. A visit from Khan Tegus, the young man to whom Saren has promised herself, brings no change: Saren insists that Dashti speak for her through the small window that gives them a glimpse of the outside world. Worse, she insists Dashti pretend to *be* her, and the maid is shocked at the severity of her own transgression even as she enjoys the verbal exchanges with the young Khan. A visit from Lord Khasar is far more frightening; his anger at being refused poses a threat not just to Saren and Dashti but to the entire kingdom. The two young women escape and discover devastation at the hands of Khasar's army. Making their way to the realm of Khan Tegus, the two find work as kitchen maids when Saren refuses to reveal herself. Shannon Hale's riveting story of loyalty, sacrifice, and love builds to a dramatic climax as word comes of Khasar's army marching toward the gates. Hale's fantasy is based on a tale recorded by the Brothers Grimm ("Maid Maleen") and is set against a richly imagined backdrop inspired by medieval Mongolia. Told in the eloquent voice of Dashti, a peasant girl with

a poet's heart, the graceful narrative features spot illustrations by James Noel Smith in a shining tale of courage and heart. (Ages 11–15)

Hartinger, Brent. *Split Screen*. HarperTempest / HarperCollins, 2007. 288 pages (trade 0–06–082408–5, \$16.99)

It doesn't matter which side of Brent Hartinger's fun, far-from-frivolous novel readers start first, they'll end up in the middle, where two best friends catch one another up on the craziness of love that has been consuming and complicating each of their lives. The backdrop for both stories featuring characters from Hartinger's *Geography Club* (HarperTempest, 2003) is the production of a campy horror film. Min, Russell, and their friends have gotten jobs as extras. It's while auditioning that Min meets Leah. As the two dance around and finally act on their mutual attraction, Min falls head over heels, but finds her principles and her pride suffering when Leah reveals she's in the closet at home and at school. Meanwhile, Russell's work on the film has reunited him with Kevin, the boy who dumped him the year before. Since then, Russell has fallen in love with Otto, but Otto lives across the country while Kevin is right here, sending definite signs of interest Russell's way. Hartinger offers their two points of view on many overlapping events in a novel comprised of two stories that literally meet in the middle. Perspectives on characters and events change not only between the stories, but within them as the tender hearts of characters are revealed. A delightful, tight-knit circle of friends surround Russell and Min, providing both levity and advice for the lovelorn along the way. (Ages 12–16)

Hautman, Pete, editor. *Full House: 10 Stories about Poker*. Putnam, 2007. 161 pages (trade 0–399–24528–6, \$17.99)

Short stories by a gathering of contemporary writers for teens reveals how a simple game of Texas Hold 'Em can illuminate the best and worst of human nature, and a lot that comes in between. K. L. Going's "Poker for the Complete Idiot" is a stellar examination of classism and stereotyping as a teenage boy is outsmarted at the poker table by his country girlfriend's "redneck" father and brothers, whose restraint makes his humiliation all the more complete. "Positively Cheat Street" by Francine Pascal features a teenage girl going up against the boys, one of whom can't handle being beaten by a woman, but she may have lost more than she gains when she succumbs to the temptation of cheating to put him in his place. "Up the River" by Will Weaver examines the addictive lure of high-stakes gambling to a teen in over his head. These and seven other stories comprise an anthology that reveals more than one straight flush among its hands. (Ages 12–16)

Jenkins, A. M. *Repossessed*. HarperTeen / HarperCollins, 2007. 218 pages (trade 0–06–083568–0, \$15.99)

Fallen angel Kirael (please, don't call him a demon) is tired of being an anonymous cog in the wheels of hell. "Tormenting the damned—it practically does itself, no lie." Eager to experience life as a human, Kirael hijacks the body of a suburban American teenager, one who was about to step mindlessly off of a curb and into the path of a cement mixer. All-knowing Kirael is already

familiar with the inhabitant's of Shaun's life—his family, his friends, and his acquaintances. The overwhelming newness comes in having a physical form, in feeling, touching, smelling, tasting, and Kirael is eager to make the most of the extraordinary opportunity—the very most. Determined to experience sex, he sets his sights on Lane, a girl he knows has a secret crush on Shaun. Surely this will be easy. A. M. Jenkins's furiously funny novel makes the most of Kirael's naiveté in the ways of the physical world, but it's also remarkably astute. By changing the way slacker Shaun relates to some of the people in his life, Kirael is not only altering how they perceive Shaun but how they perceive themselves as well. (Age 13 and older)

Kephart, Beth. *Undercover*. Laura Geringer Books / HarperTeen / HarperCollins, 2007. 278 pages (trade 0-06-123893-7, \$16.99; lib. 0-06-123894-5, \$17.89)

In a family graced by great beauty, Elisa sees herself as the odd one out. A teenager drawn to reading and writing poetry, she is the odd one out at school, too, or would be were it not for the quirky niche she has carved out, penning love notes for boys to give to the girls they like. Elisa has a keen, observant eye and extraordinary grace as a writer. She thought she was comfortable being invisible, an undercover observer of the world, but now she finds a bitterness to that reality. A boy for whom she has written love notes has become a friend, but he can't seem to imagine her as anything more. Her father—always traveling—wants her to record what he is missing while he's away, but all Elisa and her mother and sister really want is for him to come home. Elisa's parents' troubled marriage is an undercurrent in the first part of this lyrical, deeply felt novel, and becomes a raging torrent of emotion in the second. It is in acknowledging her pain and unhappiness that Elisa begins to assert her claim on the world, taking a step into the spotlight without apology for who she is, and with the love and support of those who see the beauty that shines from her. (Age 13 and older)

Kim, Derek Kirk. *Good As Lily*. Illustrated by Jesse Hamm. Minx, 2007. 147 pages (pbk. 1-4012-1381-2, \$9.99)

“By the time Joan of Arc was 18, she had led an army . . . By the time Mozart was 18, he had written two operas . . . Me? I just learned how to cook ramen in the microwave.” It isn't until the day she turns eighteen that exceptional things start to happen in Grace Kwon's life. That's the day Grace meets herself—literally. Four-year-old Grace is whiny; Grace in her thirties is disillusioned and bitter; Grace as an old woman is cynical and angry. Keeping her selves a secret from her parents is less of a challenge for Grace than coming up with plausible identities for the threesome with her friends, and when her twenty-nine-year-old self starts flirting with the drama teacher she has a crush on, her already worn patience just about snaps. What is going on? It turns out that each of Grace's four selves needs something: reassurance, encouragement, security, love. And each has the power to give and to receive if she will open her heart. Grace at eighteen has no idea how past events and present decisions can impact the future, but Grace as an old woman does, and it is her elder self who plays the biggest role in opening Grace's

eyes to everything she has going for her, from loving parents (Grace has felt inadequate since the death of her older sister, Lily, when she was young) to wonderful friends, one of whom has the potential to be much more. The characterizations and humor in *Good as Lily* have a wonderful edge in a satisfying story that offers depth and delight (Age 12 and older)

Knox, Elizabeth. *Dreamquake*. (Book Two of the Dreamhunter Duet) U.S. edition: Frances Foster Books / Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007. 449 pages (trade 0-374-31854-9, \$19.00)

In a land where some individuals have the gift of dreamhunting, a large group gathers to enjoy the talents of celebrated dreamhunter Grace Tiebold and her rendition of a delightful dream called Homecoming. Instead they find themselves plunged into a horrific nightmare about being buried alive, and chaos erupts. Tiebold's teenage daughter, Laura, has used her monumental dreamhunting strength to impose the buried alive nightmare on the unsuspecting dream-goers in an effort to raise awareness of political corruption and the governmental misuse of shared dreams to manipulate society. Book Two of the "Dreamhunter Duet" picks up right where the beautifully-written tale that began in *Dreamhunter* (Frances Foster Books / Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006) left off. While Laura deals with increasing government suspicion, she also struggles with conflicting feelings for Sandy, a fellow dreamhunter, and is consumed with the fate of the sand-creature, Nown, that she brought to life to help her on her quest to expose corruption and find her missing father. Meanwhile, Laura's cousin Rose has had to let go of her own hopes of being a Dreamhunter, and the two girls' lives are drifting apart. With a complicated plot that demands the full attention of its audience, Knox's wholly original story concept grapples with real-world issues and ends with an epilogue that may raise more questions than it answers. (Age 13 and older)

Konigsburg, E. L. *The Mysterious Edge of the Heroic World*. Gineeo Seo Books / Atheneum, 2007. 244 pages (trade 1-4169-4972-0, \$16.99)

Twelve-year-old Amadeo Kaplan has just moved to Florida with his mother, next door to a rambling old mansion occupied by a reclusive old woman named Mrs. Zender. She has old-world ideas about the way things should work, but Amadeo is drawn to her and her odd assortment of possessions. He learns that William Wilcox, one of his new classmates, is the son of the woman handling Mrs. Zender's estate sale, and when William asks Amadeo to help him sort and label objects, he jumps at the chance. Mrs. Zender loves recalling her glorious past as an opera singer and a member of high society and Amadeo likes to listen, for the most part. His keen attention to detail helps him recognize an art masterpiece among Mrs. Zender's possessions, and he and William piece together a mystery related to its provenance that shows Mrs. Zender's past wasn't entirely glorious. In the process, Amadeo also uncovers some mysteries about his own family history. How his family history intertwines with that of Mrs. Zender makes for an intriguing twist that spirals back to World War II, when a gay art dealer in Holland facing persecution by the Nazis managed to save both his younger brother and

some of the “degenerate” art that the German’s sought to steal or destroy. Some of the characters in this complex novel first appeared in Konigburg’s earlier works *Throwing Shadows* (Atheneum, 1979) and *The Outcasts of 19 Schuyler Place* (Atheneum, 2004). (Ages 11–14)

Lanagan, Margo. *Red Spikes*. U.S. edition: Alfred A. Knopf, 2007. 167 pages (trade 0–375–84320–5, \$16.99)

Australian writer Margo Lanagan’s short stories create a sense of displacement as readers navigate unsettling geographic and emotional terrain. Lanagan is a master at blending the familiar with the extraordinary, and from the friction between the two she not only weaves arresting stories but also invites challenging questions about nature and human nature. The toy figures of a child’s war game come to life, casting a pall of sleep over all but a single boy who acts as midwife as a queen gives birth, and is left with the baby she leaves behind with a return to battle. An adolescent monkey mourns her ailing tribal leader. With his death comes violence and violation as males vying for dominance, and then instinctual appreciation for the victor. A clinging girl has been cast out by her mother to spend the night with another family. She fears a man who walks the night and in trying to get home again is caught. Her rescue is born of a mother’s love and the knowledge of women, which she now shares without full comprehension. The soul of a bird returns with a cloak of its earthly form in order to save a teenage girl who has alighted down a dark and dangerous path. In ten remarkable stories, Lanagan offers hard and harsh realities pierced by moments of tenderness that not only sustain a sense of the worth of it all, but define it. (Age 15 and older)

Larbaletstier, Justine. *Magic’s Child*. U.S. Edition: Razorbill. / Penguin, 2007. 304 pages (trade 1–59514–064–6, \$16.99)

A story begun in *Magic or Madness* (U.S. edition: Razorbill, 2005) and continued in *Magic Lessons* (U.S. edition: Razorbill, 2006), concludes with fifteen-year-old Reason Cansino determined to reunite with the father of her unborn child. His painful rejection is quickly usurped by other concerns: her mother, Sarafina, whose refusal to use her magic has led to mental illness, has been kidnapped by her dark-hearted grandfather, who wants to use Sarafina’s magic as a means of obtaining Reason. Meanwhile, one of her best—friends, Jay-Tee, is dying, the result of using her magic up. The double-edged danger that comes with being magical—not using it leads to insanity, using it up leads to death—is something that Reason and Reason alone may be able to change. An earlier encounter with one of her ancestors—an ancient Cansino—has done something to her magic, and as she pursues her mother and grandfather, she enters the inviting realms of pure magic for the first time. There, she begins to understand the possibility of stripping magic from DNA. Her newfound knowledge raises challenging questions of personal identity and moral responsibility for Reason, her friends, and family. Followers of Larbaletstier’s highly original series will particularly enjoy its conclusion as it plays out through Reason’s journey, the bittersweet romance between Jay-Tee and Tom, and the fates of others in its cast of complex characters. (Ages 12–15)

Lester, Julius. *This Strange New Feeling: Three Love Stories from Black History*. Dial, 2007. 193 pages (trade 0-8037-8491-0, \$16.99)

First published in 1982, Lester's three historical short stories about freedom are just as fresh today as they were when they were first published. In his introduction to the new edition, the author asks, "What does freedom feel like when it is something about which you've only been able to dream? How much are you willing to risk to be free? Are you willing to die?" The three ensuing short stories seek to answer those questions from the points of view of African Americans who sought freedom from slavery in the mid-nineteenth century. Each character is based on a documented person: William and Ellen Craft, who escaped slavery when light-skinned Ellen passed as white with her dark-skinned husband posing as her servant; Ras, a young man who pretends to be stupid in order to gain the information he needs so that he and the woman he loves can escape; and William Yates, a free man of color who tried, unsuccessfully, to buy his wife's freedom upon his death. As short stories go, each of these is quite long, reading more like novellas, but the complexity of the subject matter and need for historical context call for slightly longer narratives. Author's notes at the end of the book cite sources for each story's inspiration. (Age 14 and older)

Lipsyte, Robert. *Yellow Flag*. HarperTeen / HarperCollins, 2007. 234 pages (trade 0-06-055708-9, \$16.99; 0-06-055708-7, \$17.89)

Teens who dream of NASCAR racing will feel as if they're in the driver's seat with Robert Lipsyte's newest sports novel, brimming with the details and language of the race. Seventeen-year-old Kyle was born into a family of racers. Starting with his grandfather and continuing through his older brother Kris, the Hildebrands have been a vital dynasty in regional stock car racing. But after a crash injury ended Kyle's father's driving career, the family has struggled to maintain the support needed to keep them in contention. Potential sponsorship by a corporate backer could represent a turning point in the Hildebrand's future as a force in the big leagues of racing. Although he enjoyed competing in the youth circuit, Kyle has turned away from racing and now finds pleasure and satisfaction in the music he makes on his trumpet. When a risky stunt puts Kris out of commission for the short term, Kyle bends to family pressure to step in and take up the driving slack. To his surprise, he rediscovers the joy he used to feel behind the wheel and realizes that he brings his own set of skills to the race. Conflicting expectations and demands from his family and his music teacher mingle with his own mixed emotions, and present a question that Kyle struggles to answer: what will he choose, racing or music? Glimpses of the celebrity culture of stock car racing, and the potential of two very different romantic relationships add layers of interest to Kyle's compelling story. (Age 14 and older)

Lyga, Barry. *Boy Toy*. Houghton Mifflin, 2007. 410 pages (trade 0-618-72393-5, \$16.95)

When he was twelve, Josh Mendel developed a close relationship with his history teacher—disturbingly close. But Josh has never fully comprehended that Mrs. Sherman manipulated him into a sexual relationship. Even though

the facts of the case came out in court and even though Mrs. Sherman has been in prison, he still thinks of what happened as his fault. Now a senior in high school, Josh is eager to move on, to get out of the town where everyone seems to know what happened but no one knows how he really feels. He keeps having flashbacks—flickers he calls them—just like the one that happened in a closet with Rachel Madison five years before, the incident that broke everything wide open. Barry Lyga's daring novel is uncomfortable to read and hard to put down. Lyga reveals the physical and emotional aspects of Josh's relationship with his teacher with unflinching honesty while remaining true to the perspective of a boy—still a child—who could not possibly begin to truly grasp the psychological implications of what was going on. Still struggling with the aftermath six years later, Josh and his family are on the edge: his parents marriage is clearly failing, while Josh himself is sabotaged by guilt and anger that affects his relationships with everyone from his baseball coach to his best friend to Rachel Madison, who has unexpectedly come back into his life, offering compassion and understanding he doesn't know how to accept. (Age 14 and older)

McCaughrean, Geraldine. *The White Darkness*. U.S. edition: HarperTempest / HarperCollins, 2007. 373 pages (trade 0-06-089035-5, \$16.99)

Socially awkward Sym is a fourteen year old with an unusual obsession. She is fascinated with the Antarctic, to the point of relying on an interior dialogue with Captain Titus Oates (a deceased member of Scott's Antarctic expedition) to guide her through difficult moments. When Uncle Victor, a family friend, arranges for Sym to accompany him on a trip to the South Pole, she is initially dazzled by the amazing gift of a visit to destination about which she has always dreamed. Although Victor's manipulations will make readers immediately wary of his intentions, Sym's naïvete and single-minded interest allow her to disregard these warning signals. Victor's behavior becomes increasingly peculiar, until even Sym is forced to recognize that his motivations lie beyond the scope of anything she—or the reader—could have imagined. Exceptional writing and careful characterizations combine in creating a creepily bizarre—yet believable—plot, set amidst the isolating landscape of the Antarctic. (Age 14 and older)

Moore, Perry. *Hero*. Hyperion, 2007. 428 pages (trade 1-4231-0195-2, \$16.99)

High school basketball star Thom Creed's father is a disgraced, washed-up superhero. Thom's father is a bitter, emotionally distant man who has made it clear that he has no time for either superheroes or "fruits." So Thom feels it necessary to hide two profound aspects of who he is. He knows he is gay and he also knows that he has a superpower of his own: he can heal living things just by touching them. When Thom's talent comes to the attention of a superhero organization known as the League, he's invited to audition for membership. He's placed on a team of hopefuls that must compete against other teams of prospective League members. Disagreements and clashing personalities among members of Thom's team are challenging enough. To make things even more complicated, Thom has had a long-standing crush

on a League superhero named Uberman, and his attempts to impress him always seem to fall short. In his non-superhero life, Thom is attracted to a boy on a rival basketball team whom he meets for early morning workout sessions. Their encounters are intense and electric and Thom feels a definite attraction, but is it mutual? When Thom is forced to out himself to his father and to the League, he is immediately terminated from the probationary team. But the adventure doesn't end there. It turns out that a tremendous threat against humanity is being mounted from within the League, and Thom joins forces with his former teammates, his father, and one very mysterious superhero to save the day. *Hero* is a funny, entertaining, action-packed story about a gay teen's search for his place in the world, and for people he can trust and love, whether they have superpowers or not. (Age 12 and older)

Moranville, Sharelle Byars. *The Snows*. Henry Holt, 2007. 225 pages (trade 0-8050-7469-4, \$16.95)

Sharelle Byars Moranville looks at the pivotal age of sixteen in the lives of four main characters in a novel that spans seventy-five years of enormous social change in our country and four generations of an American family. Jim Snow is sixteen in 1931; with the Depression turning lives upside down, Jim is not only trying to hold on but maintain a sense of stability for his family, especially his little sister, Cathy. Cathy's sixteenth year arrives in 1942, when World War II weighs heavily on the lives of everyone on the home front. Cathy is too young to tell her family she's fallen in love with Paul, but their secret plans to marry after his return change when she discovers she is pregnant. In 1969, Jill loves to have fun with her friends. Her worried father, Jim, can't get over the recklessness of Jill's generation, and an accident scares him enough to send her to stay with her half-sister, Mary Suzanne, who is teaching at Kent State. Mona is Jill's sixteen-year-old-daughter in 2006. Her jetsetting mother travels to hotspots all over the world for stories, but Chicago is the place Mona calls home, until a trip to Iowa for her great aunt Cathy's funeral gives her a new sense of belonging as she makes connections to a place where generations of family history unfold, and to people, from cousins her own age to her grandfather, Jim, that unlock a deeper place in her heart. Moranville's captivating storytelling is steeped in the details of each era, creating a vivid sense of each time and place, and a warm sense of the people who inhabit them. (Ages 12-16)

Murdock, Catherine Gilbert. *The Off Season*. Houghton Mifflin, 2007. 277 pages (trade 0-618-68695-9, \$16.00)

D. J. Schwenk has a lot on her plate: a budding romance with quarterback Brian, work responsibilities on her family's Wisconsin dairy farm, the academic load of her junior year, and her new highly visible role as linebacker on the high school football team. As the school year commences, D. J.'s initial optimism quickly takes on a downward trend. Brian only seems to like her when they are alone. A separated shoulder forces her to choose between playing football, as her team expects, or giving it up for basketball, which will likely result in an important college scholarship. Her best friend Amber is taking heat from classmates for her relationship with her girlfriend,

Dale. D. J. is sure that things have hit bottom when an embarrassing article on her football career (including asides about her personal life) appears in *People* magazine, but when her older brother Win is seriously injured on the football field everything else moves back stage. Compelled to stand in for her parents following Win's injury, D. J. must come to terms with her family's dynamics, her own choices for her future, and her responsibilities to herself and those around her. Picking up D. J.'s story from where it left off in *The Dairy Queen* (Houghton Mifflin, 2006), Catherine Murdock again shows an understanding of small town culture, athletics, and farm life, while continuing to develop her cast of likable characters. (Ages 14–17)

Myers, Walter Dean. *Harlem Summer*. Scholastic Press, 2007. 165 pages (trade 0-439-36843-X, \$16.99)

Mark is trying to figure out what he might do with his life in this novel about an African American teen set in Harlem during the 1920s. He dreams of being a famous sax player, but appears to be more enamored with the idea of musical glory than the concept of regular practice. Over the course of one summer, he has some fascinating, and sometimes frightening, encounters with a wide range of Harlem's famous and infamous residents. He helps Fats Waller transport bootleg whiskey, and runs into Langston Hughes in the office of *The Crisis* magazine, where Mark has an errand job. While a little bewildered by the purpose of *The Crisis* and the intellectuals and artists it attracts, Mark likes Langston. (Following the poet's recommendation to rewrite other people's poems to get a feeling for the art, Mark pens "The Negro Looks at Livers"—his own hysterical take on Langston Hughes' "The Negro Looks at Rivers.") When the bootleg whiskey Mark was helping Fats Waller unload disappears, gangsters take a great interest in Mark, whose various schemes for recovering the money the gangsters say they are owed don't pan out. Mark is a real kid—bright but not brilliant or precocious, and not particularly motivated either—although he realizes he IS highly motivated to save his own skin. By summer's end, Mark is living less on the power of pipe dreams and unrealistic fantasies, and more in the real world. Walter Dean Myers has written a winning story full of warm, memorable characters and funny events. A section at the book's end offers photographs and brief descriptions of the real people and places glimpsed in this work of fiction. (Ages 12–15)

Myers, Walter Dean. *What They Found: Love on 145th Street*. Wendy Lamb Books, 2007. 243 pages (trade 0-385-32138-4, \$15.99)

Walter Dean Myers goes back to the Harlem neighborhood that was the setting for *145th Street* (Delacorte Press, 2000), penning a collection of short stories that explores many facets of love and loving. Myers' characters range from an eight-year-old girl caring for her little brother and mother, to a quiet teenage girl who recognizes the tender side of a tough street kid named Burn but can't find the words to bridge the gap between them; from a young woman helpless to save her brother from the scourge of drugs or her parents from the pain, to a single young mother who sees her love for her baby shining through the struggle of daily life in the portrait created by a young

man who asked to paint them. Myers doesn't look away from the challenges of urban life or love or even war, but his stories clearly assert that loves makes so much bearable, and sometimes possible. As in his earlier collection, the 145th Street neighborhood itself is both setting and character in a volume where several characters move in and out between and among the stories, like the neighborhood fixtures and visionaries they are. (Ages 13–16)

Okorafor-Mbachu, Nnedi. *The Shadow Speaker. Jump at the Sun / Hyperion, 2007. 336 pages (trade 1–4231–0033–6, \$16.99)*

Ejii is fourteen, and a shadow speaker. She is still learning to develop her skills for reading the hearts and minds of people, plants, and animals when she embarks on a dangerous journey across the desert to join Jaa, the Red Queen of Niger, at a meeting aimed at avoiding all-out war between earth and the world of Ginen. Jaa both intrigues and frightens Ejii, but after “reading” the queen’s intention to murder the Ginen leader, she pushes her fear aside, certain that she must thwart Jaa’s plan if peace is to be preserved. Nnedi Okorafor-Mbachu has penned an original and intriguing work blending science fiction with fantasy as she describes a future in which nuclear devastation has changed the very fabric of human existence on earth. Ejii, like Dikéogu, a boy who has escaped from slavery and becomes Ejii’s traveling companion, is a metahuman, endowed with mystical powers that were all but nonexistent before the Great Change. The author’s story is set in part on the continent of Africa, where Ejii lives, and on the fictional world of Ginen. Her settings integrate recognizable elements with richly imagined possibilities in a coming-of-age story grounded by complex and wholly believable characters who are navigating personal challenges and political tension alike. (Ages 11–14)

Peet, Mal. *Tamar*. U.S. edition: Candlewick Press, 2007. 424 pages (trade 0–7636–3488–3, \$17.99)

In 1944, two members of the Dutch resistance stationed in Britain for special training return to their homeland on a mission for the British Secret Service. Their code names are Tamar and Deet, and they are best friends. Tamar will be returning to the relative safety of a farm run by a young woman named Marijke. They are in love, although he’s told no one, not even Deet, about their relationship. Deet will be staying in the nearby village. His undercover role is much more visible and dangerous, something he begins to resent as the strain takes a toll on his perspective. His occasional trips to the farm provide respite from the unyielding tension, and also a chance to spend time with Marijke, with whom he becomes infatuated. In 1994, a fifteen-year-old girl named Tamar is thrust into the middle of a mystery after her grandfather commits suicide. He left her a box full of crossword puzzles, maps, and coded messages, and she is convinced that unraveling their meaning will lead her to an answer about why he took his own life. She’d like to ask her grandmother, Marijke, but the older woman’s memories are too clouded, and her own father abandoned the family years before. Mal Peet’s intricately plotted novel of intrigue, betrayal, and love moves back and forth between the taut World War II narrative and teenage Tamar’s winding journey to arrive at an answer.

Peet's historical characters in particular are achingly human, displaying the best and worst of themselves under intense pressure during incredible times. His modern-day protagonist finds purpose in a search that reveals even more complex dimensions to characters whose lives and stories Tamar herself will continue. (Age 13 and older)

Peters, Julie Anne. *grl2grl: Short Fictions.* Megan Tingley Books / Little, Brown, 2007. 151 pages (pbk. 0-316-01343-9, \$11.99)

Most of the ten short stories in this collection center on teenage lesbians dealing with common situations: making up after a break up, coming out, reconciling with a former straight best friend, or having a crush on an unattainable older woman. They are gritty, raw, and intense, like adolescent love itself, often driven more by the heart than the head. The author plays a bit with narrative style in her stories. "TIAD" is written mostly as a series of chat room, IM, and email messages as Hayley pours out her broken heart to several anonymous participants in a teen lesbian chat room, and finds herself latching on to the most sympathetic among them, the mysterious Black_Venus. "Outside/Inside," follows a crushed-out teen as she selects just the right mushy greeting card to send to the object of her affections as a way of expressing her true feelings for the first time. The most unusual story is about a trans boi who has just gotten his first prosthetic penis. Peters doesn't gloss over the loneliness and violence that's part of reality for many queer teens, and some of her stories, like "Boi" are painful to read. But there are also stories with a more optimistic outlook, including one with a satisfyingly romantic, walk-into-the-Sunset, happy ending. (Age 14 and older)

Pixley, Marcella. *Freak.* Melanie Kroupa Books / Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007. 131 pages (trade 0-374-32453-0, \$16.00)

Seventh grader Miriam Fisher's vivid imagination and gift for the spoken and written word aren't talents appreciated among her peers. A social outcast at school, at home the bond she once shared with her older sister has dissolved with Deborah's initiation into high school and the cult of the beautiful. High school senior Artie Johnson has moved in with Miriam's family to complete the school year after his parents move. Miriam's personality shines around Artie, the one person she feels truly understands her. And he truly likes her as a friend. But if Miriam ever harbored the idea there could be something more between them, it's dashed with an unintentionally cruel statement from Artie about her looks, and ground to bits when he and Deborah start dating. Her hurt bleeds over into school, where endless teasing by Jenny Clarke, a leader of the pack of popular girls, turns crueler by the day. In a raw and haunting scene expressing her hurt and self-hatred, Miriam effects a physical transformation. At first, she only gets more negative attention, but the change marks the beginning of her transcendence. By the story's end, Miriam is a young woman unwilling to be afraid any longer, one who is at peace with herself, and ready to meet the world. The realistic depiction of two sisters struggling with their changing relationship, and parents unable to see the depth of their child's pain, are just two of the many fine dimensions

of Marcella Pixley's heartbreaking and ultimately hopeful first novel. (Ages 11–14)

Resau, Laura. *Red Glass*. Delacorte, 2007. 275 pages (trade 0–385–73466–2, \$15.99)

Six-year-old Pablo, the lone survivor of a group crossing into the United States from Mexico, has been living with Sophie, her mother, and her stepfather for almost a year. The thought that he could leave their family terrifies Sophie, but when contact is finally made with Pablo's relatives, a road trip to Santa María Nuquimi in southern Mexico is planned. Along with her aunt Dika, a Bosnian war refugee, Dika's boyfriend Mr. Lorenzo, and his teenage son Ángel, Sophie will be accompanying Pablo to his hometown. For Sophie, who has always been able to imagine the worst-case scenario of any situation, traveling through Mexico ignites every fear possible. But her biggest worry by far is that Pablo will choose to stay in Mexico rather than come back home with her. At the same time, the journey becomes one of sweet possibility as she and Ángel grow close. Ángel and his father are continuing on to visit Guatemala, their homeland, on a personal, painful journey, and Sophie begins to worry that he, too, will choose to remain behind. Laura Resau's exceptionally beautiful story is lyrically written and peopled with memorable characters full of human kindness. Sophie's journey takes her much farther than she ever expected to go on the map of the Americas, and she travels immeasurable distances within her own heart and mind as well. She is buoyed not only by her wonderful traveling companions, but by the countless acts of kindness, small and large, she encounters along the way. A girl once full of fear finds courage she never knew she had in an exceptional novel. (Ages 11–15)

Ryan, P. E. *Saints of Augustine*. HarperTeen / HarperCollins, 2007. 308 pages (trade 0–06–085810–9, \$16.99; lib. 0–06–085811–7, \$17.89)

Once best friends, Charlie and Sam no longer associate with each other. After his mother dies, Charlie's father buries his grief in alcohol, and Charlie tries to go on as if nothing has changed. He immerses himself in basketball, his girlfriend, Kate, and in taking care of his vintage Volkswagen bug. After his dad leaves the family, Sam tries to keep his anger in check as he struggles to get along with his mother's new boyfriend. He knows his father has left the family to be with his lover, David, even though neither of his parents wants to talk about it openly. Both Charlie and Sam have secrets: Charlie is \$500 in debt to a drug dealer who has let him buy pot on credit all year long and now wants him to pay up. Sam is realizing that he is probably gay himself, but he's hesitant to come out since his father has left the family. He is most afraid of upsetting his mother, who has done nothing to stop her boyfriend's frequent homophobic remarks. And he remembers every casual homophobic jeer Charlie has ever made. Sam and Charlie live parallel lives for the last few weeks of summer vacation before their senior year, until a crisis in each boy's life brings them both together again in a novel that offers a sensitive, in-depth portrait of two teenage boys, one of who is on the brink of coming out. (Age 14 and older)

Sharenow, Robert. *My Mother the Cheerleader.* Laura Geringer Books / HarperCollins, 2007. 289 pages (trade 0-06-114896-2, \$16.99; lib. 0-06-114897-0, \$17.89)

Louise Collins is the thirteen-year-old daughter of a cheerleader: her mother is one of the women who jeers at six-year-old Ruby Bridges each morning when she walks into William Frantz Elementary School in New Orleans. Like most white children, Louise is taking part in a boycott of the school to protest desegregation. Most days, while her mother is at the school making a scene, Louise is at home working in her mother's boarding house, where she cleans, does dishes, and waits to welcome the few guests who come to stay. She's intrigued by a cultured, intellectual guest from New York, Morgan Miller, who always treats her with respect and who seems genuinely interested in her opinions of the books she's read. Louise's mother, who regularly throws herself at the single male guests, is intrigued by Morgan Miller, too. But Mr. Miller is different from the others: he doesn't take advantage of her flirtations as other men do. On a snooping expedition to find out more about this gentle man, Louise learns that Mr. Miller is both Jewish and a Communist, facts that challenge everything she has learned about the social order. Characterizations of Louise, her mother, and Morgan Miller are particularly strong in a story told in Louise's sardonic voice. This engaging, unusual novel set in 1960 offers a point of view not often seen in literature for youth about the Civil Rights Movement. (Ages 11-14)

Sheth, Kashmira. *Keeping Corner.* Hyperion, 2007. 288 pages (trade 0-7868-3859-0, \$15.99)

In a spellbinding story, one girl's struggle to determine her own future plays out against the backdrop of India's fight for independence as a nation. Twelve-year-old Leela is widowed before she even has a chance to move in with her husband and his family. Now, the tradition of her caste dictates she will spend a year "keeping corner." Head shaved, she is not allowed to leave home. For the rest of her life, she will be a widow. Leela's older brother is outraged: Leela's future should not be sacrificed to tradition. India is changing, he tells his parents. Under the leadership of Gandhi, people are finding the strength and inspiration to stand together and defy the status quo in the name of justice. Leela is her parent's beloved youngest child. They are devastated by what has happened, but they also believe that following tradition is a way to protect both Leela and their family. But they do agree to let Saviben, the principal of Leela's school, come into their home and give Leela lessons. Saviben encourages Leela to read the paper, to think about what is happening in India and the larger world. Leela begins to understand she can be part of something bigger—part of the intoxicating changes happening in her country—but it's all dependent on convincing her parents to let go of their fears. Kashmira Sheth's storytelling is steeped in evocative descriptions of place and time, and peopled with vivid, complex characters in a rich, multilayered novel. (Ages 12-16)

Shusterman, Neal. *Unwind*. Simon & Schuster, 2007. 335 pages (trade 1-4169-1204-5, \$16.99)

An extraordinarily thought-provoking novel is based on a deeply disturbing premise: to end the bloody Heartland War, also known as the Second Civil War and fought over the issue of abortion, a set of constitutional amendments known as The Bill of Life was passed. They protect human life from the time of conception until a child turns thirteen. Between the ages of thirteen and eighteen, however, children may be “retroactively aborted” if parents choose “unwinding,” a process that draws on modern science to harvest every part of the body for transplant into another human being. In this horrifying future, three teens—two determined to escape their fate, and one who has been raised to welcome it as a way to honor God—find themselves thrown together and on the run. Neal Shusterman paints a portrait of a controlled and controlling society where teens are viewed with suspicion, babies are abandoned on doorsteps (by law those that find them must raise them as their own), and most adults have accepted the unacceptable. There are voices of protest but there is also a government that is amazingly proficient in its ability to deconstruct human life. Shusterman’s chilling narrative draws deft parallels between his imagined time and our society today, extending the polemics of the abortion debate to a disquieting extreme that compromises both the sanctity of life and the right to control one’s own body; illuminating suburban insulation; and highlighting society’s willingness to turn its back on many teens. (Age 13 and older)

St. James, James. *Freak Show*. Dutton, 2007. 298 pages (trade 0-525-47799-3, \$18.99)

Could Billy Bloom be any more fabulous? Having just moved from Darien, Connecticut, to finish out his senior year in a conservative suburb of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, Billy faces extreme culture shock: he is a teenage drag queen, super freak, and self-proclaimed gender obscurist. He has great wit, style, and attitude; unfortunately, his classmates at Dwight D. Eisenhower Academy don’t appreciate him. From the moment he throws open the door to his first period Biology class, wearing a ruffled lace shirt, high-waisted blue pants, and a Prussian-blue military jacket (“What’s straighter than a pirate?”), Billy becomes the school pariah. He’s gay-baited and queer-bashed relentlessly, particularly by the Backseat Boys, as Billy calls the members of the varsity football team who occupy the last row of seats in the classroom. In the face of daily taunting, pummeling, and general humiliation, Billy maintains his dignity and his sense of humor. Even though he curls up in a cupboard and cries at home, he courageously returns to school each day, daring to be himself. Beneath Billy Bloom’s hilariously melodramatic rantings and capitalized pronouncements, there’s a serious story about a sensitive boy’s search for love and acceptance. There’s also a strong streak of social satire running throughout the book, as Billy makes his witty, acerbic observations about life in the “reddest of the red states. . . where even the crustiest crack whore is a registered Republican and Gloria Estefan is inexplicably the biggest star in the world.” (Age 13 and older)

Stinson, Kathy. *101 Ways to Dance*. U.S. edition: Second Story Press, 2007. 150 pages (pbk. 1-897187-10-6, \$9.95)

Tender. Exciting. Sweet. Scary. Passionate. Complicated. Kathy Stinson explores sexual anticipation and sexual engagement among teenagers in fourteen short stories comprising this absorbing collection. Stinson's characters are all adolescent teens, experiencing everything from the first charged feelings of excitement to physical desire and physical pleasure. They are also navigating an array of emotional responses—both their own and others—to their sexual awakening and experience. Two teenage boys hot to score have an unexpected encounter with the mother of a pregnant teen girl. A crush on a boy takes a surprising turn when two teenage girls find unexpected, welcome pleasure with one another. Two developmentally disabled teens in love face patronizing adults and prejudice. A teenage boy agonizes over coming out to his best friend. Another teenage boy is so in love that the responsibility of parenthood seems like a game, albeit a serious one, until he discovers his girlfriend wasn't playing by the rules. Stinson treats her subject with honesty and her audience with respect in a collection that acknowledges and accepts that many teens are curious about sex and offers them, as she notes in an interview at the volume's end, "the safe context of a book in which to explore that curiosity." (Age 12 and older)

Tan, Shaun. *The Arrival*. U.S. edition: Arthur A. Levine Books / Scholastic, Inc., 2007. 128 pages (trade 0-439-89529-4, \$19.99)

A riveting wordless book follows a young man as he journeys from home to a new land. In a place where he is the outsider and everything is strange to him, he struggles to communicate, to make a living, and to connect with others. He does this while missing the family he left behind and longing for the day they can be reunited. Artist Shaun Tan's story of the immigrant experience may not sound either unusual or extraordinary, but it is both. The new land in which the young man arrives is otherworldly—full of flying airships, strange buildings, and odd creatures, in addition to many, many people with customs and language he can't understand. Whom can he trust? How will he survive? With his strange new world, Tan has created a powerful yet wholly accessible visual metaphor that conveys the complete sense of displacement and confusion that is part of the immigrant experience. His images—black-and-white and sepia-toned—are marvelous at setting tone and mood, whether conveying the sense of threat and urgency that led the young man, and others with whom he finally makes friends, to flee their homes; the chaos and sensory overload that comes with arrival in the new world; or the lightness—and even moments of levity—when friendships are formed and reunions take place. *The Arrival* has appeal for fans of graphic novels and fantasy alike, while offering rich possibilities for classroom use. (Age 11 and older)

Thompson, Kate. *The New Policeman*. U.S. edition: Greenwillow / HarperCollins, 2007. 441 pages (trade 0-06-117427-0, \$16.99)

Fifteen-year-old J. J. Liddy is one in a long line of talented Irish musicians committed to keeping traditional music alive. J. J.'s passionate mother is the

driving force in his family, and he is determined to give her the thing she wants most for her birthday—more time. What J. J. doesn't realize is that time is literally disappearing. Somewhere there is a leak between the human world and Tír na n'Óg, the land of eternal youth. Time is slipping away from one—leaving everyone stressed and scrambling to get things done—and into the other, making it the land of eternal youth no more. An alarmed and astonished J. J. finds himself in Tír na n'Óg, scrambling to understand the place and the people while searching for the leak with Aengus, his self-appointed guide. In the meantime, back in the human world, J. J. is missing, and as time passes so, too, does hope that he will ever be found or return, although his case is strangely compelling to the newest member of the local police force. Thompson's intriguing, singular story features a host of appealing, well-developed characters; a fascinating plot that moves back and forth between the two worlds and alludes to multiple mysteries within and between them; and superb pacing, with short, tightly wound chapters that reflect the importance and impact of time in the story. It also features music—captivating, pulsing, lilting descriptions of traditional Irish music being played, and actual sheet music that forms bridges between the chapters, with each piece carefully chosen to reflect what is happening in the story. Many of these are traditional Irish pieces, while several are original songs composed by author. (Ages 11–15)

Thompson, Kate. *Origins*. (The Missing Link Trilogy, Book Three) U.S. edition: Bloomsbury, 2007. 313 pages (trade 1–58234–652–6, \$17.99)

Kate Thompson brings her Missing Link science fiction trilogy to a close in an absorbing finale that moves back and forth between two narratives. In one, teenager Christie, his half-brother, Danny, and the other human and talking animal inhabitants of the insular northern Scotland research community known as “The Fourth World” have an unwelcome visitor. Christie's journal entries chronicle the mysterious arrival and ever-more-threatening activity of a clearly sentient but amorphous being that has taken over their computer lab. In another, teenager Nesa is on the run after the Dogs attack her Cat community. She is soon joined by Farral, one of the Dogs, a young man whose ideas are both upsetting and surprising. Farral wants to work with Nesa to find a way for the Dogs and Cats to live in peace. Accompanied by the talking crow Yorrick, and followed by a pack of Rumors, human-like creatures who don't speak, the two head north, following rumors and information passed on by the birds of a community of humans who are neither Cat nor Dog. The two start with an uneasy truce and gradually build trust and friendship, but their contradictory creation stories form an unspoken barrier between them. The Cats are descended from Atticus, the Dogs are descended from Ogden, and each set of beliefs asserts its followers' moral superiority over the other's. Thompson's two separate and compelling narratives remain disparate until the startling and satisfying conclusion, which weaves the stories together in a novel that illuminates the profound and transformative power of language, which is the seed of great accomplishment, and the source of both division and unity in the world. (Age 12 and older)

Trueman, Terry. *7 Days at the Hot Corner*. HarperTempest / HarperCollins, 2007. 150 pages (trade 0-06-057494-1, \$15.99)

A surprising sports novel takes an in-depth look at homophobia from the point of view of a straight teenage boy. Scott, a high school senior, plays third base (the “hot corner”) for his unbeaten team. Scott lives and breathes baseball, and each chapter begins and ends with his own personal baseball philosophy. The story unfolds during the week leading up to the championship game. On Day 1, Scott is getting an HIV test. His best friend, Travis, recently came out to him, and all Scott can think about is a recent incident when Travis was hurt and Scott got his blood all over his hands. Travis is now living with Scott’s family because his own parents kicked him out, but the relationship between them is strained. Scott is not only terrified he might have AIDS, he’s worried that other kids at his school will find out that Travis is gay and think that he is, too. And he’s also angry—why did Travis keep it a secret from him for so long? Travis points out that Scott’s reaction—paranoia, ungrounded fear, distancing himself from their friendship—is precisely *why* he didn’t tell Scott before. Scott’s transformation, by week’s end, may seem to come unrealistically fast, but he has three wonderful adult role models who help to guide his thinking: each of his parents, who are divorced, and a teacher who addresses homophobia in his classroom by folding it into a discussion of the Holocaust. This accessible, easy-to-read novel deals with substantial issues while leaving room for readers to think, discuss, and draw their own conclusions. (Age 12 and older)

Wells, Rosemary. *Red Moon at Sharpsburg*. Viking, 2007. 236 pages (trade 0-670-03638-2, \$16.99)

Rosemary Wells’ novel of the Civil War juxtaposes the struggle of a girl named India Moody for a life beyond the traditional role for women—she longs to get an education—against the struggle for her family and the Confederacy to survive. A compelling narrative follows India over four years that see her go from twelve-year-old girl to young woman, and sees the life of her family and of the South forever altered. Wells deftly examines issues of class (India’s family are tenant farmers; her best friend is from a wealthy family able to leave the Shenandoah Valley) and race as well as gender in a story that never strays from India’s perspective as she goes from a girl confident in southern victory to one devastated by pain, loss, and firsthand experience of the battlefield. India’s hunger for an education is buoyed by her relationship with Emory Trimble, the son of the nearby manor family who shares his knowledge and love of science with her while facing harsh criticism for his unwillingness to support the Confederate cause. The war changes India’s outlook in every way, a fact underscored by a powerful scene in which she suddenly understands that the free black couple working for the manor family may not have fled the south and the small plot of land bestowed upon them by their former owner in gratitude for a lifesaving act years before, but neither do they offer it allegiance. Why would they? India realizes. Why should they? The war, ironically, changes India’s prospects as well, opening the door to new opportunities, and opening her heart to love in Rosemary Wells’ finely detailed, richly realized novel. (Age 12 and older)

Wild, Margaret. *Woolvs in the Sitee*. Illustrated by Anne Spudvilas. U.S. edition: Front Street, 2007. 40 pages (trade 1-59078-500-2, \$17.95)

Woolvs In the Sitee is written in the invented spelling style of Ben, a preteen boy living alone in an unknown city in strange circumstances. Dark, jagged illustrations visually reinforce Ben's plea that something sinister has taken over: "These woolvs are hatefuls. And hating. They are in the sitee. They are everewhere. They spare no won." These wolves are not "lurvee wyld creechis, running in the woods" but representative of an unknown evil. Mrs. Radinski is the only ally Ben has, but her interpretation of the outside forces is different. The borders of reality are murky in this haunting story, but as a mature and metaphoric picture book it invites discussion about dissolution of safety and sanity. (Age 11 and older)

Wittlinger, Ellen. *Parrotfish*. Simon & Schuster, 2007. 294 pages (trade 1-4169-1622-9, \$16.99)

Books about transgender youth are few and far between and *Parrotfish* is a welcome addition to this small body of literature. Grady is a teenage boy trapped in the body of a girl named Angela Katz-McNair. He's just made the difficult decision to come out at home and at school at the same time, to tell people who he really is, and to start living life as a boy. His family—particularly his mother—has difficulty accepting him as Grady. But his home life is easy compared to what he faces at school, where most of his fellow students view him as strange at best, and perverted at worst. His best friend since early childhood rejects him, and he is bullied by Danya, a popular girl who has much of the student body under her thumb. Grady finds a new friend in Sebastian, a short, funny kid that he's never paid much attention to before. Sebastian is excited about Grady's change on an intellectual level because he's in the midst of doing a school report on the parrotfish, a species known for changing its gender from female to male in order to survive. Other students and teachers at the school show a range of reactions, from the principal who refuses to alter Grady's school records to acknowledge the change to the wonderful gym teacher who allows Grady to use the private shower connected to her office. And while the students at first viewed Grady as an oddity, most of them come around to tolerating him, if not outright accepting him. Grady has a habit of thinking in dialogue, often imagining what others must be saying about him or rewriting the words he wished he had said. This skill comes in handy in the book's resolution, which underscores the themes of learning to accept change, to stop playing proscribed roles, and to be oneself. (Age 14 and older)

Zarr, Sara. *Story of a Girl*. Little, Brown, 2007. 192 pages (trade 0-316-01453-2, \$16.99)

When she was thirteen, Deanna Lambert's dad caught her having sex with seventeen-year-old Tommy Webber. "I didn't love him. I'm not even sure I liked him." In the two years since, Deanna has not been able to move beyond that moment. At school, she's often treated like a nonentity or someone deserving of abuse. At home, she's been stripped of her father's affection, while her ineffective mother is unable to bridge the gap. Her dream of

moving out keeps her going. Her older brother, Darren, and his girlfriend, Stacy, are living in the basement with their baby. Stacy faces constant criticism from their dad, while Darren is an obvious disappointment to him. They all need to get out of that house, and if Deanna earns enough to help out, she's sure they can get a place together. But the only job Deanna can find is at a rundown pizza joint, and her night shift coworker is none other than Tommy Webber. Sara Zarr's insightful and unforgettable debut novel is heartbreaking and transformative. Over the course of a summer that delivers one painful jolt of reality after another, Deanna plants the seeds of her own healing as she finally confronts the hurt and confusion she has held inside. Zarr paints a remarkable portrait of a family unable to communicate, drawing characters that are achingly real in their inability to express love or talk about hurt and anger. They all make small missteps and huge mistakes, but ultimately come through in moments that matter most, to the best that they are able. Sometimes, that's enough. Sometimes, it's a beginning. (Age 13 and older)

Zevin, Gabrielle. *Memoirs of a Teenage Amnesiac*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007. 271 pages (trade 0-374-34946-0, \$17.00)

A compelling exploration of identity is built on a fascinating premise: as the result of a head injury, seventeen-year-old Naomi can't remember anything that's happened since she was twelve. She learns that her parents divorced two years before, and she has been estranged from her mother ever since. She has to get to know her best friend, her boyfriend, and her school all over again. More important, she has to get to know herself, and she doesn't necessarily understand who this teenager Naomi is. Does she really like playing on the tennis team? What does she possibly have in common with her jock boyfriend, Ace? Why is she coeditor of the yearbook? She finds herself drawn to a boy named James, a true unknown in a life where everyone has become a stranger. His life on the edge makes her feel alive, and spending time with him is far more appealing than going through the motions of the life she apparently led. As Naomi struggles to make sense of the distance—and difference—between herself at twelve and herself at seventeen, she gains numerous facts and occasional insight from Will, who explains in a series of notes and letters that he is her best friend (and coeditor of the yearbook). But it's what Will *isn't* saying that turns out to be the most important thing in Gabrielle Zevin's intriguing story. Naomi is adopted and Zevin deftly explores the idea of being an "orphan" in multiple ways throughout her captivating novel. (Age 12 and older)

Appendices

Appendix I

The Cooperative Children's Book Center

Vision Statement

All children and young adults deserve excellent literature that reflects their own experience and encourages them to imagine experiences beyond their own, that satisfies their innate curiosity, and that invites them to dream. We believe such literature fosters a fundamental understanding of themselves and one another, stimulates their creativity, and, most importantly, enriches their lives.

At the Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC), a library of the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, we are committed to identifying excellent literature for children and adolescents and bringing this literature to the attention of those adults who have an academic, professional, or career interest in connecting young readers with books. The identity of the Cooperative Children's Book Center is grounded in literature for children and young adults. This is reflected in its collections, its role as a book examination center and research library, and its staff expertise in book arts, book evaluation, multicultural literature, alternative press publishing, and intellectual freedom. Within each of these areas, the CCBC is acknowledged as a leader and a catalyst for change. We are committed to fulfilling these roles by advocating and actively modeling a philosophy that embraces diversity, promotes understanding, and respects the rights of the individual child.

The concepts of access and inclusiveness are vital to the discussion and evaluation of literature for children and young adults. These elements are also central to any discussion of the CCBC itself with regard to its collections and information services. Therefore, the CCBC seeks to expand both the means by which CCBC information is made available and the types of information to which users have access. We will be at the forefront in:

- collecting a wide range of contemporary and historical literature for children and young adults, including literature published by alternative presses and that created by current and former Wisconsin residents;
- encouraging awareness and discussion of issues essential to literature for children and young adults;
- advocating the First Amendment rights of children and young adults by: (1) providing Wisconsin teachers and librarians with in-depth information on literature whenever a minor's access to books is questioned, and (2) preparing Wisconsin teachers and librarians to respond to challenges to intellectual freedom;
- providing educational support for students in higher education and individuals with an interest in literature for children and young adults;

- shaping electronic means of access to and dissemination of information about literature for children and young adults within the School of Education, across the university, throughout the state of Wisconsin, and beyond; and
- networking nationally and internationally with colleagues in related fields to create coalitions that recognize the importance of high quality materials for all children and young adults.

The CCBC is a unique and vital gathering place for books, ideas, and expertise. The CCBC vision for the future is the continued promotion of excellence in literature for children and young adults by whatever resources are available, unwavering commitment to the First Amendment rights of children and young adults, and the establishment of a national and international network to connect all who share the belief that excellent literature can insure a brighter future for the world's children.

*Adopted by the External Advisory Board, September 1994
Reaffirmed September 1999*

Intellectual Freedom Information Services Mission Statement

The Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC) will provide free, extended information services at the time of any attempt to limit access to a book available for use by a minor in a Wisconsin classroom or library. If additional assistance is requested by a Wisconsin teacher, school library media specialist, public librarian, or school or library administrator, the CCBC professional staff will connect or refer the individual to others in the state who can provide additional types of information.

The CCBC will serve as a first point of contact for professionals responsible for selecting materials to which minors in Wisconsin have access when there are attempts to limit their access to non-print materials, or to non-book print materials.

The CCBC will develop and maintain relationships with other organizations that share the library's commitment to upholding the First Amendment rights of all Wisconsin citizens, including minors.

According to professional ethics exercised in all libraries, all CCBC Intellectual Freedom Information Service interactions are confidential.

*Affirmed by the CCBC Advisory Board
September 20, 2002*

Purpose

The Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC) is a unique examination, study and research library of the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. The CCBC's noncirculating collections include current, retrospective, and historical books published for children and young adults.

The CCBC supports teaching, learning, and research related to children's and young adult literature and provides informational and educational services based on its collections to students and faculty on the UW–Madison campus and

librarians, teachers, child care providers, researchers, and other adults throughout the state of Wisconsin.

A vital gathering place for books, ideas and expertise, the CCBC is committed to identifying excellent literature for children and adolescents and bringing this literature to the attention of those adults who have an academic, professional, or career interest in connecting young readers with books.

The CCBC is funded by the UW–Madison School of Education and by an annual contract from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction/Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning. The CCBC was established in 1963.

Collection

The library collection contains review copies of newly published juvenile trade books, recommended children's and young adult trade books, historical children's books, contemporary and historical reference materials related to children's and young adult literature, children's and young adult books by Wisconsin authors and illustrators, and alternative press books for children.

Services

- CCBC collections are available for use by any adult with an interest in children's and young adult literature.
- References service is available in person during the library's public services hours, either by phone (608–263–3720) or via e-mail at ccbcinfo@education.wisc.edu. Reference service is provided by CCBC librarians and student reference assistants.
- On-site tours and/or lectures can be arranged for university classes, Wisconsin library and school book selection groups, early childhood educators, and other adults with a professional interest in children's and young adult literature. The CCBC welcomes groups from outside Wisconsin as well.
- Presentations on outstanding new books and other topics related to children's and young adult literature are provided for Wisconsin librarians and teachers in Madison and around the state.
- Book Discussions apply literary standards and book evaluation techniques to new books and are open to any interested adult.
- Continuing education opportunities occur throughout the year, and may include hands-on workshops, or distance education.
- CCBC-Net is a unique listserv providing opportunities for focused discussion of contemporary children's and young adult literature, including multicultural literature, translated books, outstanding and award-winning books, and various themes and topics in literature.
- Free Public Lectures by authors and artists, including the annual Charlotte Zolotow Lecture, bring book creators in the field of children's and young adult literature to the UW–Madison campus several times throughout the year.

For more information about any of these services, visit the CCBC web site at www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc/ or contact the CCBC at 608–263–3720.

Governance

The University of Wisconsin–Madison School of Education is responsible for policies and funding of the Cooperative Children’s Book Center. Julie Underwood is the dean of the School of Education.

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning, provides contract support for the CCBC services to Wisconsin libraries and schools. Richard Grobschmidt, Assistant Superintendent of the Division, administers the DPI contract.

The CCBC Advisory Board represents CCBC users on the University of Wisconsin–Madison campus and from libraries and schools throughout Wisconsin. Members of the 2007–2008 Advisory Board are:

Bridget Hill (Chair), Library Media Specialist
Hintgen Elementary School, LaCrosse

Emilie Amundson, Consultant, English/Language Arts
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Roxane Bartelt, Head of Children’s Services
Kenosha Public Library

Patti Becker, Children’s Services Coordinator
Barron Public Library

Kate Bugher, Consultant, School Library Media
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Connie Chandler, Cross-Categorical Teacher
Platteville High School

Lisa Chatman, District Library Media Specialist
Milwaukee Public Schools

Linda Diaz, Fourth Grade Bilingual Teacher
Janes Elementary School, Racine

Stacy Fisher, Library Media Specialist
Waunakee High School, Waunakee

Suzanne Fondrie, Assistant Professor
Curriculum & Instruction, UW–Oshkosh

Loren Glasbrenner, Reading/English/Language Arts Curriculum Coordinator
Patrick Marsh Middle School, Sun Prairie

Wendy Halverson, Library Media Specialist
Rice Lake School District

Dawnene Hassett, Assistant Professor
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
School of Education, UW–Madison

Marilyn Heifner, Educational Consultant, Title I
CESA #11, Turtle Lake

Barbara Huntington, Youth Services/Special Services Consultant
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Jacque Karbon, Consultant, Reading Education
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Kaye Ketterer, Scholarship Counselor
T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Wisconsin

Madge Klais, Assistant Professor
School of Library and Information Studies, UW–Madison

Leah Langby, Library Development & Youth Services Coordinator
Indianhead Federated Library System

Lisa Lind, Library Media Specialist
Pepin Area Schools

Linda Morrissey, Library Media Specialist
Wausau School District

Marni Pingel, Third Grade Teacher
Franklin Elementary School, Oshkosh

Kerry Pinkner, Youth Services Coordinator
Pauline Haass Public Library, Sussex

Karin Silet, Outreach Specialist
Office of Education Outreach, UW–Madison

Sherri Sinniger, Children's Librarian
LaCrosse Public Library

Greg Streuly, Special Education Teacher
Kettle Moraine School District

Susan Tupper, K–12 Library Media Specialist
Rosholt School District

Geraldine M. Wells, Children's Librarian
Tomah Public Library

Kris Adams Wendt, Director
Rhineland District Library

Brian R. Wilhorn, Grade 4 Teacher
Immanuel Lutheran School, Wisconsin Rapids

Staff

In addition to the CCBC librarians, the CCBC staff when *CCBC Choices 2008* was being created included students who helped carry out the daily responsibilities of assisting individuals on campus, in schools, and in libraries who are working in many ways to meet the interests of all young readers.

The student staff during 2007 and early 2008 included Chelsea Couillard, Carling Febry, Jean Funcke, Tracy Jordan (2007), Caroline Langendorfer (2007), Fumiko Osada, Jamey Stanosz, Frances Veit, Betsy Wermuth, and Michelle Wylter.

Public Service Schedule

The CCBC is open for public service 54 hours weekly during the university's Fall and Spring semesters: Monday–Thursday 9 a.m.–7 p.m., Friday 9 a.m.–4 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday 12:30–4 p.m.

During the university Summer Session (mid-June to early August), the CCBC is open weekly Monday–Friday 9 a.m.–4 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday 12:30–4 p.m. During Intersession and University breaks, the CCBC is open Monday–Friday 9 a.m.–4 p.m.

Phone 608–263–3720 to confirm the public service hours and to inquire about the availability of a professional librarian/children's literature specialist at a specified time. Extended public service hours can be arranged to accommodate campus course schedules as well as out-of-town users' arrivals and departures. Requests for extended service must be made more than two weeks in advance and will be accommodated if at all possible according to staff availability.

Appendix II

Obtaining CCBC Publications

CCBC Choices

If you would like an additional copy of *CCBC Choices 2008* and live in Wisconsin, send \$2.75 (made payable to the CCBC) or a self-addressed, stamped manilla envelope with \$2.75 in postage to CCBC Choices, 4290 Helen C. White Hall, 600 N. Park St., Madison, WI 53706-1403 USA. (Wisconsin libraries may request one or more copies be delivered at no cost through the statewide library delivery system.)

If you live outside of Wisconsin, send \$10.00 to the Friends of the CCBC, Inc., P.O. Box 5189, Madison, WI 53705 USA. You may also inquire about the rates for ordering copies of *CCBC Choices 2008* in quantity.

Regardless of where they live, current members of the Friends of the CCBC, Inc., receive a copy of this edition of *CCBC Choices* as one benefit of annual Friends of the CCBC, Inc., membership. To request a membership form, write to the Friends of the CCBC, Inc., at the address noted in the previous paragraph.

Limited quantities of some past editions of *CCBC Choices* are also available. Email ccbcinfo@education.wisc.edu, or call 608-262-9503 to inquire.

Other CCBC Publications

CCBC librarians have created many recommended booklists that focus on a specific subject, genre, or purpose. Current lists are available full-text on the CCBC's web site. Go to www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc/ and click on "CCBC Publications" for a complete listing of available CCBC bibliographies and booklists.

Appendix III

The Compilers of *CCBC Choices 2008*

Kathleen T. Horning is the director of the Cooperative Children's Book Center of the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. For nine years she was also a children's librarian at Madison Public Library. She is the author of *From Cover to Cover: Evaluating and Reviewing Children's Books* (HarperCollins, 1997). With Ginny Moore Kruse, she coauthored *Multicultural Literature for Children and Young Adults, 1980–1990*, and with Ginny Moore Kruse and Megan Schliesman, *Multicultural Literature for Children and Young Adults, 1991–1996*. Kathleen is the immediate past-president of the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) of the American Library Association (ALA), and a past president of the United States Board on Books for Young People (USBBY). She has chaired the Americas Award Committee, under the auspices of The Consortium of Latin American Studies Programs (CLASP), University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee; ALA/ALSC's 1997 Mildred Batchelder Award Committee; and ALA/ALSC's 1995 John Newbery Committee. She has served on ALA/ALSC's Notable Children's Books Committee and an earlier Newbery Award Committee. She also chaired USBBY's Hans Christian Andersen Award Committee, which selected U.S. nominees for the international award in 1992. She served on the NCTE Lee Bennett Hopkins Award Committee and the ALA/SRRT Coretta Scott King Award Committee, and chaired ALA/ALSC's first Committee on Social Issues in Relationship to Materials and Services for Children. Kathleen frequently lectures to librarians on issues in evaluating literature for children and young adults. She has a B.A. in Linguistics and a Master's Degree in Library and Information Studies, both from the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

Merri V. Lindgren is a librarian at the Cooperative Children's Book Center of the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. She coauthored *CCBC Choices* from 1990 through 1993, and since 2002. Merri is a regular contributor to the *Wisconsin State Journal*, writing a monthly column about books for children and young adults. She was the editor of *The Multicolored Mirror: Cultural Substance in Literature for Children and Young Adults* (Highsmith, 1991). Merri was a member of the 2008 Odyssey Award committee. She served on the 2001 Charlotte Zolotow Award committee and chaired the 2002, 2006, and 2007 Charlotte Zolotow Award committees. Merri has worked as a youth services librarian at the Helen M. Plum Memorial Library in Lombard, Illinois, and as an instructor of Adolescent and Young Adult Literature at Edgewood College. She is currently a trustee on the board of the Baraboo (Wisconsin) Public Library. Merri graduated from UW–Madison with a B.A. Degree in Psychology and has a Master's Degree in Library and Information Studies from the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

Megan Schliesman is a librarian at the Cooperative Children's Book Center of the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. With Katy and Ginny Moore Kruse, Megan coauthored *Multicultural Literature for Children and Young Adults, 1991–1996*. She is currently a columnist for *Library Sparks* magazine, and contributes to the CCBC monthly column for the *Wisconsin State Journal*. Megan served on the 2005 Newbery Award Committee. She has also served on the 1998, 1999 and 2002 Charlotte Zolotow Award committees, chaired the 2003 and 2008 Zolotow Award committees. She was a member of the committee that created the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's *Planning Curriculum in English Language Arts* (DPI, 2001) and created the bibliography for DPI's *Teaching Character Education Using Children's Literature* (DPI, 2001). Megan coordinates the CCBC's Intellectual Freedom Information Services and has written about intellectual freedom issues for various publications. Megan is a former member of South Central Library System Board of Trustees in Wisconsin. She is currently a Wisconsin Library Association Intellectual Freedom Roundtable board member. She has a B.A. degree in English from UW–Whitewater and a Master's Degree in Library and Information Studies from the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

Tessa Michaelson began working as a librarian at the Cooperative Children's Book Center in January, 2008. Prior to coming to the CCBC, Tessa worked as a school librarian and technology teacher at Wingra School, a K–8 independent progressive school in Madison, Wisconsin. She specialized in designing integrated media literacy projects for students of all ages and regularly presented creative and thematic library programs. Tessa was also a third and fourth grade classroom teacher at Wingra School before becoming a librarian. In the past, Tessa was a member of the CCBC Advisory Board and served as membership secretary for the Friends of the CCBC Board. She also served on the planning committee for the 2006 Wisconsin Educational Media Association annual conference as publications chair. While a student at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, Tessa worked at the CCBC as a reference assistant and as the Intellectual Freedom Information Services Coordinator. Tessa has a B.S. degree in Elementary Education and a Master's Degree in Library and Information Studies, both from the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

Denise M. Aulik worked as a librarian at the Cooperative Children's Book Center in fall, 2007. Denise is a ten-year veteran of the English Department at Malcolm Shabazz City High School in Madison. She has also worked as a Library Media Specialist for the Madison Metropolitan School District. Denise has a wealth of experience and interest in addressing equity and social justice issues through children's and young adult literature. She has a Master of Arts in Library and Information Studies with School Library Media Specialist Certification from the University of Wisconsin–Madison, and a Bachelor's of Arts in English and Secondary Education Certification in English from the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

Hollis Rudiger was a librarian at the Cooperative Children's Book Center from 2003 to the summer of 2007. A former school librarian, she served as the Lower School Librarian at the National Cathedral School in Washington, D.C., from

1998 to 2003. Hollis served on the 2008 Michael L. Printz Award Committee of the American Library Association, and on the 2006 and 2007 Best Books for Young Adults Committees of the ALA. Known in Wisconsin and nationally for her expertise on graphic novels for children and teens, she has spoken extensively on their roles in libraries and classrooms, and has written about them for *Horn Book Magazine* and other publications. She has worked as a reference librarian at the University of Illinois, and in the public service department of the Schlesinger Library at Radcliffe College. She has taught high school Spanish and English, and middle school technology. She has a B.A. degree in American Literature and Spanish from Middlebury College and a Master of Science in Library Science from Simmons College in Boston, Massachusetts.

Tana Elias, who created the index for *CCBC Choices 2008*, is a librarian and Web Resources Designer at Madison Public Library, and a freelance indexer. Tana previously created the index for *Multicultural Literature for Children and Young Adults, Volume Two: 1991–1996*, and for the annual editions of *CCBC Choices* since 1995. While a student reference assistant at the CCBC, Tana compiled *Children's Books by Wisconsin Authors and Illustrators* and *Children's Books about Wisconsin: An Identification Record of Titles Published in 1992* (CCBC, 1993). Tana was a member of the 2000 Charlotte Zolotow Award Committee and chaired the 2001 Charlotte Zolotow Award Committee. She was the editor of the Friends of the CCBC newsletter from 1996–2000, and has reviewed books for *School Library Journal*. Tana has a B.A. in History from Hamline University and a Master's Degree in Library and Information Studies from the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

Appendix IV

The Friends of the CCBC, Inc.

This membership organization sponsors programs to develop public appreciation for children's and young adult literature and supports special projects at the CCBC. Members of the 2007–2008 Friends of the CCBC, Inc., Board of Directors are President Mary Klehr, Vice-President Andrea Schmitz, Recording Secretary Jill Maidenberg, Membership Secretary Susan Herr-Hoyman, Treasurer Steve Powers, and Directors-at-Large Angie Sparks and Bridget Zinn.

In addition to the board volunteers, the Friends book sale coordinator is Angie Sparks. Susan Herr-Hoyman manages the Friends member database. The Friends Newsletter is edited by Janet Piehl and Bridget Zinn.

Friends members receive invitations to events open only to the membership. Members receive a quarterly newsletter with children's and young adult literature information as well as advance announcements about CCBC publications and services.

The Friends provide volunteer assistance at the CCBC and hospitality for CCBC Advisory Board meetings and other special events. Friends provide other volunteer services on behalf of the CCBC, such as promotion and distribution of selected CCBC and Friends' publications and special editions of original notecards. The Friends provide funding for public lectures on the UW–Madison campus.

Annual membership benefits include a copy of *CCBC Choices*, a limited edition publication of the annual Charlotte Zolotow Lecture, and announcement of CCBC news and events through the Friends listserv. Membership is open to all.

The membership year runs from January through December. Dues paid after October 1st each year apply to membership for the next year. Membership dues are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. Individual membership categories are: Student—\$9; Personal—\$20; Sustaining—\$30; Supporting—\$50; and Patron—\$100. Group membership categories are: Honor (2–5 individuals)—\$75; Award (6–10 individuals)—\$150; and Distinguished (11–15 individuals)—\$250. (A printable membership form is available at <http://www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc/friends/membershipform.asp>)

To join the Friends, send a check payable in U.S. funds to Friends of the CCBC, Inc., to: Treasurer, Friends of the CCBC, Inc., Box 5189, Madison, WI 53705, USA.

Indexes

Author/Title/Name Index

The author/title/name index includes all of the titles and book creators in this edition of *CCBC Choices*. It also includes names of individuals, literary works, and additional book titles cited in the annotations, introduction, and end matter.

Book titles appear in CAPITAL LETTERS.

Page numbers in **bold print** refer to the page on which an annotation appears.

101 WAYS TO DANCE, **117**
 145TH STREET, **111**
 7 DAYS AT THE HOT CORNER, **119**

A

ABSOLUTELY TRUE DIARY OF A PART-
 TIME INDIAN, 12, 13, 15, **97**

Adkins, Jan, **32**
 Adler, David, **48**
 AESOP'S FABLES, 11
 Agee, James, 36
 Ahlberg, Allan, **61**
 Alexander, Elizabeth, 44
 Alexie, Sherman, 12, 13, 14, **97**
 ALL-I'LL-EVER-WANT CHRISTMAS
 DOLL, 9, **25**
 Allen, Jonathan, **49**
 Ambush, Peter, **31**
 AMERICAN GIRL'S HANDY BOOK, 11
 Ancona, George, **37**
 Anderson, Laurie Halse, **97**
 Andreasen, Dan, **39**
 ANIMAL POEMS, **47**
 ANNIE ON MY MIND, 11
 ANOTHER BOOK ABOUT DESIGN, **42**
 ANOTHER DAY IN THE MILKY WAY,
70
 Applegate, Katherine, **80**
 ARMANDO AND THE BLUE TARP
 SCHOOL, **37**
 Arnosky, Jim, **18**
 Arrasmith, Patrick, **83**
 ARRIVAL, 12, 13, **117**
 ARTIST TO ARTIST, **42**
 AT GLEASON'S GYM, **69**
 AT NIGHT, 9, **49**
 Aulik, Denise M., 132
 Ayres, Katherine, **48**

B

BABIES IN THE BAYOU, **18**
 BABY'S DAY, **50**

BABYMOUSE: SKATER GIRL, **87**
 BADGER'S FANCY MEAL, **55**
 Bae, Hyun-Joo, **22**
 Baker, Sharon Reiss, **61**
 Bang, Molly, **21**
 Banks, Kate, **49**
 Banyai, Istvan, **45**
 Barakat, Ibtisam, 14, **32**
 Bates, Amy June, **41**
 Bauer, Marion Dane, **77**
 Bausum, Ann, 12, **28**
 Bean, Jonathan, 9, **49, 79**
 Bedrick, Claudia Zoe, **73**
 BEETLE BOP, **19**
 BEIGE, **99**
 Bell, Anthea, **86**
 Bernier-Grand, Carmen T., 12, 13, **42**
 Bertozzi, Nick, **35**
 Best, Cari, **62**
 BIRMINGHAM, 1963, 13, **46**
 Bishop, Nic, **18**
 Blackall, Sophie, **62**
 Blackwood, Freya, **53**
 Blake, Michel, **50**
 BLUE GIRL, 101
 Boelts, Maribeth, 9, **39**
 Bogacki, Tomek, **23**
 Bolden, Tonya, 13, **33**
 Bond, Rebecca, **74**
 BOOK OF A THOUSAND DAYS, 12, **103**
 Borden, Louise, **77**
 Bowen, Anne, **23**
 BOX FULL OF KITTENS, 15, **56**
 BOY CRAFTSMAN, 11
 BOY TOY, 10, **108**
 BOYS BOOK, 11
 BOYS ONLY, 11
 Brande, Robin, 10
 BRAVE STORY, **91**
 Breen, Steve, **62**
 BRENDAN BUCKLEY'S UNIVERSE
 AND EVERYTHING IN IT, 14
 BRONZEVILLE BOYS AND GIRLS, **44**
 Brooks, Gwendolyn, **44**

Brooks, Martha, **98**
 Bruchac, Joseph, **14, 98**
 Bryan, Ashley, **14, 42, 44**
 BULLFINCH'S MYTHOLOGY, **84**
 Burleigh, Robert, **33**
 BURNING BRIDGE, **86**
 Burningham, John, **62**
 Burns, Loree Griffin, **12, 18**
 Byrd, Robert, **31**

C

CALENDAR, **24**
 Caletti, Deb, **98**
 Cameron, Peter, **10, 99**
 CAMP BABYMOUSE, **87**
 Caple, Kathy, **75**
 CAPOEIRA, **37**
 Carey, Mike, **80**
 Carroll, Lewis, **11, 13**
 Carson, Mary Kay, **19**
 Casanova, Mary, **50**
 CASE OF THE LEFT-HANDED LADY, **93**
 CASE OF THE MISSING MARQUESS, **94**
 Castellucci, Cecil, **12, 99, 100**
 Castillo, Lauren, **9, 54**
 CASTLE CORONA, **82**
 Cate, Annette LeBlanc, **50**
 Cecil, Randy, **63**
 Chaconas, Dori, **63, 76**
 Charlton, James, **28**
 Chayka, Doug, **74**
 CHEESE, **70**
 Chen, Pauline, **81**
 CHICKEN-CHASING QUEEN OF
 LAMAR COUNTY, **9, 67**
 Child, Lauren, **89**
 CHILDREN'S BOOKS BY WISCONSIN
 AUTHORS AND ILLUSTRATORS
 AND CHILDREN'S BOOKS ABOUT
 WISCONSIN, **133**
 Chodos-Irvine, Margaret, **9, 51**
 Choi, Yangsook, **38**
 Choldenko, Gennifer, **63**
 Christie, R. Gregory, **9, 60**
 CHRISTMAS IS COMING, **23**
 CLANCY THE COURAGEOUS COW, **68**
 CLARA & SEÑOR FROG, **65**
 CLARABELLE, **37**
 Clarke, Judith, **100**
 Clement, Gary, **64**
 Clements, Andrew, **81**
 Cocca-Leffler, Maryann, **64**
 Cochran, Bill, **39**
 Cohn, Rachel, **101**
 Cole, Brock, **64**
 Collins, Suzanne, **82**
 Compestine, Ying Chang, **13, 82**

Cook, Sally, **28**
 Cooper, Floyd, **44**
 CORK & FUZZ, **76**
 Couch, Greg, **36**
 COWBOY & OCTOPUS, **72**
 COWGIRL KATE AND COCOA, **76**
 Creech, Sharon, **82**
Crisis magazine, **79, 111**
 Cruise, Robin, **9, 51**
 CURIOUS BOYS' BOOK OF
 ADVENTURE, **11**
 Curtis, Christopher Paul, **13, 14, 83**

D

DADBLAMED UNION ARMY COW, **65**
 DAIRY QUEEN, **111**
 Dale, Penny, **78**
 DANGEROUS BOOK FOR BOYS, **11**
 DANGEROUSLY ALICE, **10**
 DARING BOOK FOR GIRLS, **11**
 Davenier, Christine, **56**
 David, Laurie, **38**
 Davies, Nicola, **19**
 de Lint, Charles, **101**
 de Monfreid, Dorothée, **51**
 Declaration of Independence, **78**
 Delaney, Joseph, **83**
 DELICIOUS, **43**
 Deming, Sarah, **11, 84**
 Denton, Kady MacDonald, **48**
 DeSaix, Deborah Durland, **28**
 DeVita, James, **10, 10**
 DIARY OF A WIMPY KID, **12, 88**
 Díaz, David, **82**
 DiCamillo, Kate, **23**
 DIMITY DUMPTY, **66**
 DO UNTO OTTERS, **11**
 DOG AND BEAR, **58**
 DOGS AND CATS, **20**
 Donnio, Sylviane, **51**
 Donovan, John, **11**
 Douglass, Frederick, **83**
 DOWN-TO-EARTH GUIDE TO
 GLOBAL WARMING, **38**
 DRAGON DANCING, **9, 15, 58**
 DRAGON'S EGG, **94**
 DREAMHUNTER, **106**
 DREAMQUAKE, **106**
 Dronzek, Laura, **27**
 Dubois, Claude K., **41**
 DUCK & COMPANY, **75**
 Dunbar, Polly, **47, 51**
 DUSSIE, **11**
 Dyssegaard, Elisabeth Kallick, **69**

E

Ebbesmeyer, Curtis, Dr., 18
 EDUARDO, 62
 Ehlert, Lois, 52
 ELIJAH OF BUXTON, 13, 83
 Elliott, Mark, 81
 Ellis, Carson, 94
 Ellis, Deborah, 84
 EMI AND THE RHINO SCIENTIST, 19
 EMILY'S MAGIC WORDS, 11
 Emmett, Jonathan, 52
 Escher, M. C., 43, 75
 EVERY SEASON, 26
 EVOLUTION, ME, AND OTHER
 FREAKS OF NATURE, 10

F

FABLED FOURTH GRADERS OF
 AESOP ELEMENTARY SCHOOL,
 11, 85
 Fadden, David Kanietakeron, 25
 Fagan, Cary, 64
 FAITH AND DOUBT, 46
 Falconer, Ian, 23
 Fancher, Lou, 70
 "Farmer in the Dell," 70
 Farmer, Nancy, 85
 FATHER LIKE THAT, 15, 75
 FEATHERS, 95
 Felin, M. Sindy, 10, 13, 14, 102
 Fine, Anne, 78
 Fine, Edith Hope, 37
 FIRST THE EGG, 12, 48
 Fisher, Valorie, 86
 FIVE NICE MICE, 59
 Flanagan, John, 85
 Fleming, Candace, 11, 85
 Fleming, Denise, 19
 Fletcher, Susan, 65
 Foley, Greg, 9, 12, 14, 52
 Foreman, Michael, 19
 FOREVER DOG, 39
 Forney, Ellen, 97
 FOUR FEET, TWO SANDALS, 74
 FOX, 49
 FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT, 32
 Frazier, Sundee T., 14
 FREAK, 113
 FREAK SHOW, 10, 116
 FRED STAYS WITH ME!, 39
 Freedman, Russell, 12, 29
 FRIDA, 12, 13, 42
 FRIENDSHIP FOR TODAY, 90
 FROM COVER TO COVER, 131
 FULL HOUSE, 104

G

GAI SEE, 38
 Gant, Trish, 50
 Garden, Nancy, 10, 103
 Gardner, Lyn, 86
 Garrison, Barbara, 67
 GATOR, 63
 Geeslin, Campbell, 65
 GEOGRAPHY CLUB, 104
 Gerstein, Mordicai, 65
 Ghandi, 115
 Giblin, James Cross, 12, 34
 Gifford, Peggy, 86
 Gilchrist, Jan Spivey, 44
 GINGER AND PETUNIA, 71
 GIRLS BOOK, 11
 Gleeson, Libby, 53
 GLOBAL BABIES, 53
 Global Fund for Children, 53
 Godon, Ingrid, 57
 Goffelt, Nancy, 39
 Gold, Glen David, 35
 GOLDEN RULE, 11
 Gonyea, Mark, 42
 GOOD AS LILY, 105
 GOOD DAY, 9, 54
 GOOD ENOUGH TO EAT, 64
 GOOD MASTERS! SWEET LADIES!, 31
 Gorbachev, Valeri, 53, 76
 Gordon, Cambria, 38
 Gore, Al, 11, 38
 Gore, Leonid, 77
 Gosciny, René, 86
 Graham, Bob, 9, 66
 GRANDDAD'S FISHING BUDDY, 9, 72
 Gravett, Emily, 12, 53
 GREAT JOY, 23
 GREGOR AND THE CODE OF CLAW,
 82
 GREGOR AND THE MARKS OF
 SECRET, 82
 Gregory, Nan, 67
 Grete, Peter, 19
 Grey, Mini, 86
 Grimm, Brothers, 103
 GRL2GRL, 10, 113
 Grogan, John, 11
 Gustavson, Adam, 24, 77

H

HAIR DANCE!, 40
 HAIR FOR MAMA, 14, 41
 Hale, Shannon, 12, 103
 HALF A WORLD AWAY, 53
 Hallensleben, Georg, 49
 Hamm, Jesse, 105

Hamm, Mia, 69
 Hancock, John, 78
 HARLEM SUMMER, 111
 HARMLESS, 10
 Harper, Jamie, 54
 Harrington, Janice, 9, 67
 HARRY POTTER AND THE DEATHLY
 HALLOWS, 92
 Harry, Rebecca, 52
 Harshman, Marc, 67
 Hartinger, Brent, 104
 HAS ANYONE SEEN MY EMILY
 GREENE?, 56
 Hatkoff, Craig, 19
 Hatkoff, Isabella, 19
 Hautman, Pete, 104
 Heap, Sue, 55
 HEAR US OUT!, 10, 103
 HELEN KELLER, 36
 Hempel, Marc, 80
 Hemphill, Stephanie, 34
 Henkes, Kevin, 9, 54
 HENRY'S FREEDOM BOX, 13, 30
 HERE'S A LITTLE POEM, 47
 HERO, 10, 109
 "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands,"
 42
 Hesse, Karen, 36
 Hest, Amy, 87
 HEY BATTA BATTA SWING, 28
 HIDDEN ON THE MOUNTAIN, 28
 Hillenbrand, Will, 24
 Hills, Tad, 59
 Hinton, S. E., 11
 Hitler, Adolf, 102
 Hogan, Jamie, 79
 Holm, Jennifer L., 12, 87
 Holm, Matthew, 87
 Holmes, Sherlock, 94
 HOME OF THE BRAVE, 15, 80
Horn Book Magazine, 133
 Horning, Kathleen T., 131, 132
 Horse, Harry, 24
 HOUDINI, 35
 HOW MANY SEEDS IN A PUMPKIN?,
 69
 HOW TO BE A BABY—BY ME, THE BIG
 SISTER, 55
 HOW TO STEAL A DOG, 91
 Hoyt, Ard, 50
 Hughes, Langston, 111
 Hume, Lachie, 68
 Hurst, Carol Otis, 68
 Hurston, Zora Neale, 79
 Hutchins, Hazel, 48

I

I'D REALLY LIKE TO EAT A CHILD, 51
 ICEBOUND LAND, 85
 I'LL GET THERE, 11
 "I'M NOT SCARED!", 49
 I'M THE BIGGEST THING IN THE
 OCEAN, 59
 IN THE NAME OF GOD, 14
 INCONVENIENT TRUTH, 11, 38
 Ingman, Bruce, 61
 INTO THE WOODS, 86
 INVENTION OF HUGO CABRET, 12,
 93
 IRIS, MESSENGER, 11, 84
 Issa, Kobayashi, 45
 Iwai, Melissa, 57

J

JABBERWOCKY, 11, 13
 JACK'S TALENT, 64
 Jackson, Shelley, 9, 67
 Jaeggi, Yoshiko, 73
 James, Gordon C., 79
 JAMIE AND ANGUS STORIES, 78
 JAMIE AND ANGUS TOGETHER, 78
 JAZZ BABY, 9, 15, 60
 Jenkins, A. M., 104
 Jenkins, Emily, 9, 54
 Jenkins, Steve, 20, 21, 47
 JOHN HANCOCK CLUB, 77
 Johnson, Dinah, 40
 Johnson, Kelly, 40
 Johnson, Steve, 70
 Jolin, Paula, 14
 Jones, Noah Z., 9, 39
 Jorisch, Stéphane, 9, 72
 Josephson, Judith Pinkerton, 37
 Judge, Lita, 29

K

Kahumbu, Paula, Dr., 19
 Karas, G. Brian, 45, 69
 Kasza, Keiko, 55
 Katz, Susan, 25
 KEEPING CORNER, 13, 115
 Kent, Rose, 88
 Kephart, Beth, 105
 Kim, Derek Kirk, 105
 KIMCHI & CALAMARI, 88
 King, Stephen Michael, 60
 Kinney, Jeff, 12, 88
 Kirkpatrick, Katherine, 35
 Knox, Elizabeth, 106
 KNUFFLE BUNNY, 60
 KNUFFLE BUNNY TOO, 60

Konigsburg, E. L., **106**
 Kruse, Ginny Moore, 131, 132
 Kuhn, Dwight, **22**

L

Laminack, Lester L., **24**
 Lamstein, Sarah Marwil, **26**
 Lanagan, Margo, **107**
 LAND OF THE SILVER APPLES, **85**
 Landy, Derek, **88**
 Larbalestier, Justine, **107**
 LEAVES, **59**
 LEAVING THE NET, **65**
 Lechner, John, **78**
 Lee, Suzy, **55**
 Lehman, Barbara, **68**
 Lester, Julius, **108**
 LET IT SHINE, **42**
 "Let It Shine," **42**
McClure's magazine, **28**
 "LET'S GET A PUP!" SAID KATE, **66**
 LET'S PLAY, **50**
 LETTER ON THE WIND, **26**
 Levine, Ellen, **30**
 Levithan, David, **101**
 Lewin, Betsy, **76**
 Lewin, Ted, **63, 69**
 Lewis, John Frederick, **43**
Library Sparks, 132
 Liew, Sonny, **80**
 LIGHTNING THIEF, **92**
 Lin, Grace, **89**
 Lindenbaum, Pija, **69**
 Lindgren, Astrid, **89**
 Lindgren, Merri V., 131
 Lipsyte, Robert, **108**
 LITTLE (GRRR) LOST, **101**
 LITTLE NIGHT, **57**
 LITTLE RABBIT'S CHRISTMAS, **24**
 LITTLE RED FISH, 14, **75**
 "Little Red Hen," **27**
 LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD, **27**
 LIVING COLOR, **20**
 Livingston, Myra Cohn, **24**
 Lloyd-Jones, Sally, **55**
 Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth, 34
 LOOK!, **43**
 LOUDER, LILI, **63**
 Low, William, **30**
 Lundquist, David R., **37**
 Lutes, Jason, **35**
 Lyga, Barry, 10, **108**
 Lyons, Kelly Starling, **31**

M

M.L.K., 13, **33**
 MacDonald, Ross, **28**
 MAGIC LESSONS, 107
 MAGIC OR MADNESS, 107
 MAGIC RABBIT, **50**
 MAGIC'S CHILD, **107**
 "Maid Maleen," 103
 Maione, Heather, **87**
 MAMA'S MILK, **21**
 MANY RIDES OF PAUL REVERE, 12, **34**
 Manzano, Sonia, **56**
 Marcus, Eric, **40**
 MARLEY, 11
 Martin, Leslie, **51**
 Mathers, Petra, 9, **70**
 Matthews, Tina, **27**
 MAX COUNTS HIS CHICKENS, **26**
 MAYBELLE IN THE SOUP, **76**
 Mazer, Norma Fox, **56**
 McCaughrean, Geraldine, **109**
 McCue, Lisa, **76**
 McKissack, Patricia C., 9, 14, 15, **25, 79, 90**
 McNamara, Margaret, **69**
 Melanson, Luc, **67**
 Méliès, Georges, 93
 MEMOIRS OF A TEENAGE AMNESIAC,
121
 Merz, Jennifer J., **56**
 Messinger, Carla, 14, **25**
 Metropolitan Museum of Art, 61
 Michaelson, Tessa, 132
 Miles, Victoria, **21**
 Milgrim, David, **70**
 Miller, Edward, **48**
 Miller, Kate, **45**
 Miller, Sarah, **90**
 MILLICENT MIN: GIRL GENIUS, 96
 MINI MIA AND HER DARLING
 UNCLE, **69**
 MISS CRANDALL'S SCHOOL FOR
 YOUNG LADIES & LITTLE MISSES
 OF COLOR, **44**
 MISS SPITFIRE, **90**
 MISTIK LAKE, **98**
 Miyabe, Miyuki, **91**
 Mohammed, Khadra, **74**
 MOKIE & BIK, **79**
 Moore, Perry, 10, **109**
 Morales, Yuyi, **57**
 Moranville, Sharelle Byars, **110**
 Morgan, Pierr, 9, **58**
 Mortensen, Denise Dowling, **57**
 Moser, Lisa, **76**
 MOUSE GUARD, **92**

MOXY MAXWELL DOES NOT LOVE
STUART LITTLE, **86**

MR. RABBIT AND THE LOVELY
PRESENT, **8**

MUCKRAKERS, **12, 28**

MULTICOLORED MIRROR, **131**

MULTICULTURAL LITERATURE FOR
CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS,
1980–1990, **131**

MULTICULTURAL LITERATURE FOR
CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS,
1991–1996, **131, 132**

Murdock, Catherine Gilbert, **110**

MY AMERICA, **44**

MY DADIMA WEARS A SARI, **15, 73**

MY FRIEND IS SAD, **77**

MY MOMMY IS MAGIC, **57**

MY MOTHER THE CHEERLEADER,
115

MY WAY, **58**

Myers, Christopher, **11, 14**

Myers, Walter Dean, **14, 111**

MYSTERIOUS BENEDICT SOCIETY, **94**

MYSTERIOUS EDGE OF THE HEROIC
WORLD, **106**

N

NAOMI AND ELY'S NO KISS LIST, **101**

NATURE OF JADE, **98**

Nau, Thomas, **35**

Naylor, Phyllis Reynolds, **10**

"Negro Looks at Rivers," **111**

Nelson, Kadir, **13, 30**

Nelson, Marilyn, **44**

NEW CLOTHES FOR NEW YEAR'S
DAY, **22**

NEW GENERATION, **11, 36**

NEW POLICEMAN, **117**

NICHOLAS, **86**

NICHOLAS AND THE GANG, **86**

NICKEL, A TROLLEY, A TREASURE
HOUSE, **61**

NIGHT NIGHT, BABY BUNDT, **54**

NIGHT OF THE SOUL STEALER, **83**

NO TALKING, **81**

Norac, Carl, **57**

NOTHING BUT TROUBLE, **36**

Nunnally, Tiina, **89**

O

O'Connor, Barbara, **91**

O'Connor, Patricia T., **11**

Oates, Lawrence "Titus," **109**

OFF SEASON, **110**

Okorafor-Mbachu, Nnedi, **112**

OLD MOTHER BEAR, **21**

OLD PENN STATION, **30**

Oliver, Narelle, **21**

OLIVIA HELPS WITH CHRISTMAS, **23**

145TH STREET, **111**

101 WAYS TO DANCE, **117**

ONE MILLION MEN AND ME, **31**

ONE THOUSAND TRACINGS, **29**

ONE WHOLE AND PERFECT DAY, **100**

Onishi, Satoru, **12, 57**

ONLY ONE NEIGHBORHOOD, **67**

ONLY YOU, **9, 51**

ORANGE PEAR APPLE BEAR, **12, 53**

ORIGINS, **118**

Orr, Wendy, **79**

OUT OF THE DUST, **36**

OUT OF THE EGG, **27**

OUTCASTS OF 19 SCHUYLER PLACE,
107

OUTSIDERS, **11**

OWEN & MZEE, **19**

OWEN & MZEE (2006), **20**

OYE, CELIA!, **43**

P

Palatini, Margie, **70**

PAPA AND THE PIONEER QUILT, **74**

Park, Linda Sue, **45**

PARROT FISH, **10, 120**

Peck, Beth, **61**

Peet, Mal, **112**

PEILING AND THE CHICKEN-FRIED
CHRISTMAS, **15, 81**

PENGUIN, **51**

PENNIES IN A JAR, **63**

Pennypacker, Sara, **9, 70**

People magazine, **111**

Perkins, Lynne Rae, **9, 12, 71**

Perkins, Mitali, **79**

Peters, Andrew Fusek, **47**

Peters, Julie Anne, **10, 113**

Petersen, David, **92**

Peterson, Cris, **37**

Pham, LeUyen, **75**

Phelan, Matt, **56, 94**

Pickering, Jimmy, **24**

PICTURES FROM OUR VACATION, **9,**
12, 71

PIERRE IN LOVE, **9, 70**

PIGLET AND PAPA, **60**

PINK, **67**

Pinkney, Jerry, **9, 25, 27**

PIPPY LONGSTOCKING, **89**

Pixley, Marcella, **113**

PLAIN JANES, **12, 100**

PLANNING CURRICULUM IN
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS, **132**

PLAYGROUND DAY!, **56**

POEMS IN BLACK & WHITE, **45**
 Polacco, Patricia, **71**
 PREVIOUSLY, **61**
Prince and the Pauper, **81**
 PSSST!, **72**
 PURPLE BALLOON, **40**

Q

Quigley, Mary, **9, 72**

R

RABBIT'S GIFT, **27**
 RAINSTORM, **68**
 Raschka, Chris, **40**
 Rátz de Táyos, Paul, **76**
 RE-GIFTERS, **80**
 RED GLASS, **114**
 RED MOON AT SHARPSBURG, **119**
 RED RED RED, **53**
 RED SPIKES, **107**
 Reinhardt, Dana, **10**
 Reiser, Lynn, **58**
 REMEMBERING MRS. ROSSI, **87**
 REPOSSESSED, **104**
 Resau, Laura, **114**
 REVOLUTION IS NOT A DINNER
 PARTY, **13, 82**
 REX ZERO AND THE END OF THE
 WORLD, **96**
 Rex, Adam, **72**
 RICKSHAW GIRL, **79**
 Ringgold, Faith, **44**
 Riordan, Rick, **11, 92**
 Rivera, Diego, **42, 65**
 Rodriguez, Edel, **43**
 Root, Kimberly Bulcken, **65**
 Ross, Michael Elsohn, **21**
 Roth, Terri, **18**
 Rotner, Shelley, **26**
 Rowling, J. K., **10, 92**
 Rubin, Susan Goldman, **43**
 Rudiger, Hollis, **132**
 Ruelle, Karen Gray, **28**
 Ryan, P. E., **114**

S

SACRED LEAF, **84**
 SAINTS OF AUGUSTINE, **114**
 Sanchez, Ryan, **65**
 Sayre, April Pulley, **21**
 Schaefer, Carole Lexa, **9, 58**
 Schindler, S. D., **63, 68**
 Schliesman, Megan, **131, 132**
 Schlitz, Laura Amy, **31**
 Scholl, Hans, **102**

Scholl, Sophie, **102**
School Library Journal, **133**
 Schwartz, Amy, **72**
 Schwartz, David M., **22**
 Schy, Yael, **22**
 Scieszka, Jon, **72**
 Sciurba, Katie, **43**
 SEA OF MONSTERS, **92**
 SEA OF TROLLS, **85**
 SECOND IS A HICCUP, **48**
 SECRET OF THE PAINTED HOUSE, **77**
 Seeger, Laura Vaccaro, **12, 48, 58**
 Selznick, Brian, **12, 93**
 Sempé, Jean-Jacques, **86**
 7 DAYS AT THE HOT CORNER, **119**
 SHADOW SPEAKER, **112**
 Shannon, George, **27**
 Sharenow, Robert, **115**
 Sharratt, Nick, **73**
 Sherry, Kevin, **59**
 Sheth, Kashmira, **13, 73, 115**
 Shusterman, Neal, **10, 116**
 Sidman, Joyce, **46**
 SILENCED, **10, 102**
 Silverman, Erica, **76**
 Siméon, Jean-Pierre, **73**
 Sís, Peter, **12, 31**
 SKELLY THE SKELETON GIRL, **24**
 SKULLDUGGERY PLEASANT, **88**
 Smith, Alexander O., **91**
 Smith, James Noel, **103**
 Smith, Lane, **72**
 SNOW BABY, **35**
 SNOW DAY!, **24**
 SNOWS, **110**
 SO TOTALLY EMILY EBERS, **96**
 SOME DOG!, **50**
 SOMEDAY THIS PAIN WILL BE
 USEFUL TO YOU, **10, 99**
 SOMEONE NAMED EVA, **95**
 SONG FOR HARLEM, **15, 79**
 Sosa, Hernán, **37**
 Speck, Katie, **76**
 SPIDERS, **18**
 Spinelli, Eileen, **94**
 Spitz, Bob, **11**
 SPLIT SCREEN, **104**
 Springer, Nancy, **11, 93**
 SQUIRREL'S WORLD, **76**
 St. James, James, **10, 116**
 STANFORD WONG FLUNKS BIG-
 TIME, **96**
 STARRING MISS DARLENE, **72**
 Stauffacher, Sue, **36**
 STEALING HOME, **33**
 Stein, David Ezra, **59**
 Stevens, April, **59**
 Stewart, Trenton Lee, **94**
 STICK, **62**

STICKY BURR, **78**
 STILL MY GRANDMA, **41**
 Stinson, Kathy, **117**
 STORY OF A GIRL, **10, 120**
 Sullivan, George, **36**

T

TALE OF PALE MALE, **22**
 Tallec, Olivier, **73**
 TAMAR, **112**
 Tan, Shaun, **12, 13, 117**
 TAP DANCING ON THE ROOF, **45**
 Tashiro, Chisato, **59**
 TASTING THE SKY, **14, 32**
 Taylor, Sean, **73**
 TEACHING CHARACTER EDUCATION
 USING CHILDREN'S LITERATURE,
 132
 TEEN MANNERS, **11**
 TEN OLD MEN AND A MOUSE, **64**
 TERRIBLE STORM, **68**
 THANK YOU BEAR, **9, 12, 14, 52**
 THERE IS A BIRD ON YOUR HEAD!, **77**
 THIS IS A POEM THAT HEALS FISH, **73**
 THIS IS JUST TO SAY, **46**
 "This Is Just to Say," **46**
 THIS STRANGE NEW FEELING, **108**
 THIS WAY, RUBY!, **52**
 Thompson, Holly, **74**
 Thompson, Kate, **117, 118**
 Thompson, Keller Johnson, **36**
 Thomson, Sarah L., **94**
 Thong, Roseanne, **38**
 THOSE SHOES, **9, 39**
Three Worlds, **43**
 THROWING SHADOWS, **107**
 Tinkham, Kelly A., **14, 41**
 TITAN'S CURSE, **11, 92**
 TODAY AND TODAY, **45**
 TOUCHING SNOW, **10, 13, 102**
 TRACKING TRASH, **12, 18**
 "TROUBLE WITH DOGS..." SAID DAD,
 9, **66**
 Trueman, Terry, **119**
 Tusa, Tricia, **39**
 TWILIGHT HUNT, **21**
 TWISTED, **97**

U

Uchida, Sayako, **59**
 Uhlman, Tom, **19**
 UNDERCOVER, **105**
 UNWIND, **10, 116**
 UP, DOWN, AND AROUND, **48**

V

Van den Abeele, Véronique, **41**
 Van Leeuwen, Jean, **74**
 Vecchione, Patrice, **46**
 VULTURE VIEW, **21**

W

WAG A TAIL, **52**
 WAKAME GATHERERS, **15, 74**
 WAKE UP ENGINES, **57**
 WAKING UP WENDELL, **59**
 Waldman, Neil, **26**
 WALKER EVANS, **35**
 Walker, A'Lelia, **79**
 Walker, Buddy, **36**
 Walker, Madame C. J., **79**
 WALL, **12, 31**
 Waller, Fats, **111**
 WAY, **15, 98**
 Weatherford, Carole Boston, **13, 46**
 Wells, Rosemary, **26, 119**
 Westcott, Nadine Bernard, **48**
 Westerlund, Kate, **59**
 WHAT HAPPENS ON WEDNESDAYS,
 9, **54**
 WHAT IF SOMEONE I KNOW IS GAY?,
 40
 WHAT THEY FOUND, **111**
 WHAT'S SO BAD ABOUT BEING AN
 ONLY CHILD?, **62**
 Wheeler, Lisa, **9, 60**
 WHEN A MONSTER IS BORN, **73**
 "When the Saints Go Marching In," **42**
 WHEN THE SHADBUSH BLOOMS,
 14, **25**
 WHERE I LIVE, **94**
 WHERE IN THE WILD?, **22**
 WHITE DARKNESS, **109**
 WHITE OWL, BARN OWL, **19**
 WHO LIKES RAIN?, **61**
 WHO WAS FIRST?, **12, 29**
 WHO'S HIDING?, **12, 57**
 Wild, Margaret, **12, 60, 120**
 Wilds, Kazumi, **74**
 Willems, Mo, **60, 77**
 WILLIAM'S DOLL, **8**
 Williams, Karen Lynn, **74**
 Williams, William Carlos, **46**
 Wimmer, Mike, **33**
 Winter, Jeanette, **22**
Wisconsin State Journal, **131, 132**
 Wittlinger, Ellen, **10, 120**
 WOE IS I JR, **11**
 Wolf, Joan M., **95**
 Wolfe, Gillian, **43**
 Wolff, Ashley, **21**

Woodhull, Anne Love, **26**
Woodson, Jacqueline, 14, **95**
WOOLVS IN THE SITEE, 12, **120**
WORKING WITH FRACTIONS, **48**
Worth, Valerie, **47**
Wynne-Jones, Tim, **96**

Y

YEAH, YEAH, YEAH, 11
YEAR OF THE DOG, 89
YEAR OF THE RAT, 15, **89**
Yee, Lisa, **96**
Yee, Wong Herbert, **61**
YELLOW FLAG, **108**
Yolen, Jane, **47**
Yoo, Taeun, 14, **75**
YOUR OWN, SYLVIA, **34**

Z

Zagarenski, Pamela, **46**
Zarr, Sara, 10, **120**
Zevin, Gabrielle, **121**
Zolotow, Charlotte, **75**
ZOO, **55**

Subject Index

This subject index provides access to the titles in *CCBC Choices* as well as to information about the CCBC and publishing in 2007 mentioned in the introduction and end matter. While the index is not comprehensive, themes and subjects were chosen with story time, classroom use, and reader's advisory in mind. In keeping with the CCBC's interest in providing access to multicultural literature, the index also includes the ethnic backgrounds of the persons, fictional and real, portrayed in this year's *CCBC Choices* selections. Subject entries are as specific as possible, and include cross-references to point the reader to other subjects of interest. For example, "Africans and African Americans" includes a cross-reference to "Haitian Americans" and other culturally specific sub-groups.

9/11. *See* **September 11, 2001**

A

Abenaki Indians

Way, 98

Abortion

Unwind, 116

Abuse

Touching Snow, 102

White Darkness, 109

Abuse, Sexual

Boy Toy, 108

Activism

Helen Keller, 36

M.L.K., 33

Muckrakers, 28

Adoption

Kimchi & Calamari, 88

Memories of a Teenage Amnesiac, 121

Aesop's Fables

Fabled Fourth Graders of Aesop

Elementary School, 85

Afghanis

Four Feet, Two Sandals, 74

African American Themes

Let It Shine, 42

Africans and African Americans. *See also*

Haitian Americans; Sudanese

All-I'll-Ever-Want Christmas Doll, 25

Baby's Day, 50

Birmingham, 1963, 46

Bronzeville Boys and Girls, 44

Chicken-Chasing Queen of Lamar

County, 67

Elijah of Buxton, 83

Father Like That, 75

Feathers, 95

Friendship for Today, 90

Hair Dance!, 40

Hair for Mama, 41

Harlem Summer, 111

Henry's Freedom Box, 30

Jazz Baby, 60

Let It Shine, 42

Little Red Riding Hood, 27

M.L.K., 33

Miss Crandall's School for Young Ladies

& Little Misses of Color, 44

My America, 44

Nothing but Trouble, 36

One Million Men and Me, 31

Song for Harlem, 79

Stealing Home, 33

This Strange New Feeling, 108

Those Shoes, 39

What They Found, 111

Alzheimer's Disease

Still My Grandma, 41

American Indians. *See also* Abenaki

Indians; Lenape Indians; Spokane

Indians

Who Was First?, 29

American Revolution. *See* Revolutionary War

Anger

Twisted, 97

Animals. *See also* Bears; Cats; Cows; Dogs;

Foxes; Hippos; Rhinos; Tortoises

Animal Poems, 47

Mama's Milk, 21

Where in the Wild?, 22

Antarctic

White Darkness, 109

Architecture

Frank Lloyd Wright, 32

Old Penn Station, 30

Arctic

Snow Baby, 35

Art and Artists. *See also Music and Musicians; Poetry and Poets; Photography and Photographers; Writing and Writers; The Arts section*

Another Book about Design, 42
 Artist to Artist, 42
 Clara & Señor Frog, 65
 Delicious, 43
 Frida, 42
 Look!, 43
 Mysterious Edge of the Heroic World, 106
 Nickel, a Trolley, a Treasure House, 61
 Plain Janes, 100
 Wall, 31

Asians and Asian Americans. *See also Bangladeshi; Chinese and Chinese Americans; Indians and Indian Americans; Japanese; Korean Americans*

Let's Play, 50
 Who Likes Rain?, 61

Autumn. *See Halloween; Seasons*

B

Babies, Animal

Babies in the Bayou, 18
 Mama's MILK, 21

Babies, New

Box Full of Kittens, 56
 Global Babies, 53
 How To Be a Baby—by Me, the Big Sister, 55

Bangladeshi

Rickshaw Girl, 79

Barakat, Ibtisam

Tasting the Sky, 32

Barn Owls

White Owl, Barn Owl, 19

Baseball

7 Days at the Hot Corner, 119
 Hey Batta Batta Swing!, 28
 Stealing Home, 33

Bears

Old Mother Bear, 21

Bedtime. *See also Nighttime*

Little Night, 57
 Night Night, Baby Bundt, 54

Beetles

Beetle Bop, 19

Bilingual Books (Spanish/English)

My Way, 58

Biography. *See also Biography and Autobiography section*

Artist to Artist, 42
 Delicious, 43
 Frida, 42

Biracial Friendship. *See also Friendship*

Friendship for Today, 90
 My Way, 58
 Those Shoes, 39
 Touching Snow, 102

Birds. *See Chickens; Hawks; Owls;*

Vultures

Birthdays

Dragon Dancing, 58

Blind Persons

Helen Keller, 36
 Miss Spitfire, 90

Blizzard of 1888

Terrible Storm, 68

Board Books

Baby's Day, 50
 Global Babies, 53
 Let's Play, 50
 Night Night, Baby Bundt, 54

Bolivians

Sacred Leaf, 84

Boxing

At Gleason's Gym, 69

Brazilian Themes

Capoeira, 37

Brothers. *See also Families; Siblings; Sisters*

Feathers, 95
 How To Steal a Dog, 91

Brown, Henry "Box"

Henry's Freedom Box, 30

Bullying

Freak, 113
 Freak Show, 116
 Louder, Lili, 63
 Parrotfish, 120
 Twisted, 97
 Way, 98

C

Camouflage

Twilight Hunt, 21
 Where in the Wild?, 22

Cancer

Hair for Mama, 41

Cantonese Language

Gai See, 38

Cats

Dogs and Cats, 20

CCBC Choices

age recommendations in, 7
 choosing books for, 5
 obtaining, 130
 organization of, 6
 publication information in, 7

CCBC. *See Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC)*

Chanukah

Letter on the Wind, 26

Charlotte Zolotow Award, 8–9**Chickens**

Chicken-Chasing Queen of Lamar
County, 67

Chinese and Chinese Americans

Dragon Dancing, 58
Gai See, 38
One Whole and Perfect Day, 100
Peiling and the Chicken–Fried Christmas,
81
Revolution Is Not a Dinner Party, 82
Who Was First?, 29
Year of the Rat, 89

Chinese Origin

Rabbit's Gift, 27

Christmas

All-I'll-Ever-Want Christmas Doll, 25
Christmas Is Coming, 23
Great Joy, 23
Little Rabbit's Christmas, 24
Olivia Helps with Christmas, 23
Peiling and the Chicken–Fried Christmas,
81

Civil Rights

Birmingham, 1963, 46
Friendship for Today, 90
M.L.K., 33
My Mother the Cheerleader, 115

Cold War

Rex Zero and the End of the World, 96

Colors

Living Color, 20

Columbus, Christopher

Who Was First?, 29

Communication, Animal

Owen & Mzee, 19

Communism

Wall, 31

**Cooperative Children's Book Center
(CCBC)**

Advisory Board, 127–128
collection and services, 126–127
Friends of, 143
governance of, 127–128
hours, 129
Intellectual Freedom Information Service,
125
publications of, 130
purpose, 125–126
staff, 129
vision statement, 124–125
website, 130

Counting Books

How Many Seeds in a Pumpkin?, 69
Max Counts His Chickens, 26

Cows

Clarabelle, 37
Dadblamed Union Army Cow, 65

Cruz, Celia

Oye, Celia!, 43

Crypsis. See Camouflage**Cubans**

Oye, Celia!, 43

D**Dairy Farms**

Clarabelle, 37
Off Season, 110

Dance. See Capoeira**Deaf Persons**

Feathers, 95
Helen Keller, 30
Miss Spitfire, 90

Death

Forever Dog, 39
Mistik Lake, 98
Purple Balloon, 40
Remembering Mrs. Rossi, 87
Tamar, 112

Depression

Book of a Thousand Days, 103
Freak, 113
Someday This Pain Will Be Useful to You,
99
Twisted, 97

**Depression (Economic). See Great
Depression****Design**

Another Book about Design, 42

Disabilities, Developmental

101 Ways To Dance, 117

**Disabilities, Physical. See also Blind
Persons; Deaf Persons**

Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time
Indian, 97

Distopias

Silenced, 102
Unwind, 116
Woolvs in the Sitee, 120

Divorce. See also Separation, Parental

Fred Stays With Me!, 39
So Totally Emily Ebers, 96

Dogs

Dogs and Cats, 20
Forever Dog, 39
Fred Stays With Me!, 39
“Trouble with Dogs...” Said Dad, 66
Wag a Tail, 52

E**Easter**

Max Counts His Chickens, 26

Economic Challenges. *See also Poverty*

Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time

Indian, 97

Nickel, a Trolley, a Treasure House, 61

Pink, 67

Rickshaw Girl, 79

Sacred Leaf, 84

Those Shoes, 39

Education. *See also School Settings;***Teachers**

Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time

Indian, 97

Armando and the Blue Tarp School, 37

Keeping Corner, 115

Miss Crandall's School for Young Ladies
& Little Misses of Color, 44

Red Moon at Sharpsburg, 119

Emotions. *See also Depression; Fear*

Good Day, 54

My Friend Is Sad, 77

Thank You Bear, 52

There Is a Bird on Your Head!, 77

Who's Hiding?, 57

Endangered Species

Emi and the Rhino Scientist, 19

Environment. *See also The Natural World***Section**

Down-to-Earth Guide to Global

Warming, 38

Inconvenient Truth, 38

Tracking Trash, 18

Eriksson, Leif

Who Was First?, 29

Evans, Walker

Walker Evans, 35

Exploration

Who Was First?, 29

Snow Baby, 35

F**Fairy Tales**

Into the Woods, 86

Previously, 61

Faith

Faith and Doubt, 46

Families. *See also Brothers; Fathers;***Grandfathers; Grandmothers;****Grandparents; Mothers; Parents;****Siblings; Sisters; Uncles**

All-I'll-Ever-Want Christmas Doll, 25

Clara & Señor Frog, 65

Elijah of Buxton, 83

Father Like That, 75

Feathers, 95

Fred Stays With Me!, 39

Friendship for Today, 90

Hair for Mama, 41

How To Steal a Dog, 91

Into the Woods, 86

Jamie and Angus Together, 78

Jazz Baby, 60

Keeping Corner, 115

Kimchi & Calamari, 88

Mini Mia and Her Darling Uncle, 69

Mistik Lake, 98

Moxy Maxwell Does Not Love Stuart
Little, 86

My Dadima Wears a Sari, 73

Mysterious Edge of the Heroic World,
106

One Thousand Tracings, 29

One Whole and Perfect Day, 100

Papa and the Pioneer Quilt, 74

Peiling and the Chicken-Fried Christmas,
81

Pictures from Our Vacation, 71

Red Glass, 114

Remembering Mrs. Rossi, 87

Revolution Is Not a Dinner Party, 82

Rickshaw Girl, 79

Snows, 110

Story of a Girl, 120

Today and Today, 45

Touching Snow, 102

"Trouble with Dogs..." Said Dad, 66

Undercover, 105

Wakame Gatherers, 74

What Happens on Wednesdays, 54

What They Found, 111

What's So Bad about Being an Only
Child?, 62

When the Shadbush Blooms, 25

Where I Live, 94

Yellow Flag, 108

Fantasy

Another Day in the Milky Way, 70

Arrival, 117

Book of a Thousand Days, 103

Brave Story, 91

Castle Corona, 82

Dragon's Egg, 94

Dreamquake, 106

Gregor and the Code of Claw, 82

Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, 92

Hero, 109

Icebound Land, 85

Into the Woods, 86

Land of the Silver Apples, 85

Little (Grrl) Lost, 101

Little Red Fish, 75

Magic's Child, 107

Mouse Guard, 92
 Mysterious Benedict Society, 94
 New Policeman, 117
 Night of the Soul Stealer, 83
 Rainstorm, 68
 Red Strikes, 107
 Repossessed, 104
 Shadow Speaker, 112
 Skullduggery Pleasant, 88
 Titan's Curse, 92

Farming

Clarabelle, 37
 Off Season, 110

Fathers. *See also Families; Mothers; Parents*

Beige, 99
 Father Like That, 75
 Has Anyone Seen My Emily Greene?, 56
 Hero, 109
 One Million Men and Me, 31

Pennies in a Jar, 63
 Piglet and Papa, 60
 Twisted, 97

Fear. *See also Emotions*

"I'm Not Scared!", 49
 Leaving the Nest, 65
 Nature of Jade, 98
 Pennies in a Jar, 63
 Someday This Pain Will Be Useful to You, 99

Fiction, publishing trends, 10–11**Football**

Off Season, 110

Foxes

Fox, 49

Fractions

Working with Fractions, 48

Friendship

7 Days at the Hot Corner, 119
 Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian, 97
 Cork & Fuzz, 76
 Cowboy & Octopus, 72
 Cowgirl Kate and Cocoa, 76
 Diary of a Wimpy Kid, 88
 Dog and Bear, 58
 Duck & Company, 75
 Feathers, 95
 Four Feet, Two Sandals, 74
 Good as Lily, 105
 Half a World Away, 53
 Home of the Brave, 80
 Jamie and Angus Together, 88
 Kimchi & Calamari, 88
 Little Rabbit's Christmas, 24
 Magic Rabbit, 50
 Memories of a Teenage Amnesiac, 121
 My Friend Is Sad, 77
 My Way, 58

Mysterious Edge of the Heroic World, 106
 Naomi and Ely's No Kiss List, 101
 Nicholas and the Gang, 86
 Plain Janes, 100
 Rex Zero and the End of the World, 96
 Saints of Augustine, 114
 So Totally Emily Ebers, 96
 Song for Harlem, 79
 Split Screen, 104
 Squirrel's World, 76
 Tamar, 112
 There Is a Bird on Your Head!, 77
 Those Shoes, 39
 Where I Live, 94
 Year of the Rat, 89

G**GLBTQ literature.** *See also Gays; Lesbians; Transgendered Persons*

publishing trends, 10–11, 14

Gambling

Full House, 104

Gays. *See also Lesbians; GLBTQ literature*

101 Ways To Dance, 117
 7 Days at the Hot Corner, 119
 Freak Show, 116
 Hear Us Out!, 103
 Hero, 109
 Mini Mia and Her Darling Uncle, 69
 Mysterious Edge of the Heroic World, 106
 Naomi and Ely's No Kiss List, 101
 Saints of Augustine, 114
 Someday This Pain Will Be Useful to You, 99
 Split Screen, 104
 What If Someone I Know Is Gay?, 40

Ghost Stories

Secret of the Painted House, 77

Gleason's Gym

At Gleason's Gym, 69

Global Warming

Down-to-Earth Guide to Global Warming, 38
 Inconvenient Truth, 38

Grandfathers. *See also Grandmothers;***Grandparents**

Granddad's Fishing Buddy, 72
 Tamar, 112
 White Owl, Barn Owl, 19

Grandmothers. *See also Grandfathers; Grandparents*

My Dadima Wears a Sari, 73
 Still My Grandma, 41
 Those Shoes, 39
 Wakame Gatherers, 74

Grandparents. *See also Grandfathers;***Grandmothers**

One Whole and Perfect Day, 100

Graphic Novels

Arrival, 117

Babymouse: Skater Girl, 87

Camp Babymouse, 87

Good As Lily, 105

Houdini, 35

Mouse Guard, 92

Plain Janes, 100

publishing trends, 12

Re-Gifters, 80

Sticky Burr, 78

Great Depression

All-I'll-Ever-Want Christmas Doll, 25

Snows, 110

Walker Evans, 35

Guatemalans

Red Glass, 114

H**Haiku Poetry**

Today and Today, 45

Hairstyles

Hair Dancel, 40

Haitian Americans

Touching Snow, 102

Halloween

Skelly the Skeleton Girl, 24

Hamerstrom, Frances

One Thousand Tracings, 29

Hamerstrom, Frederick

One Thousand Tracings, 29

Harlem Young Writers Workshop

Song for Harlem, 79

Hawks

Tale of Pale Male, 22

Hippos

Owen & Mzee, 19

Historical Fiction

All-I'll-Ever-Want Christmas Doll, 25

Case of the Left-Handed Lady, 93

Dadblamed Union Army Cow, 65

Elijah of Buxton, 83

Feathers, 95

Friendship for Today, 90

Harlem Summer, 111

Hear Us Out!, 103

Invention of Hugo Cabret, 93

Keeping Corner, 115

Miss Spitfire, 90

My Mother the Cheerleader, 115

Nickel, a Trolley, a Treasure House, 61

Papa and the Pioneer Quilt, 74

Pennies in a Jar, 63

Red Moon at Sharpsburg, 119

Revolution Is Not a Dinner Party, 82

Rex Zero and the End of the World, 96

Snows, 110

Someone Named Eva, 95

Song for Harlem, 79

Tamar, 112

Terrible Storm, 68

This Strange New Feeling, 108

Holidays. *See Birthdays; Chanukah;*

Christmas; Easter; Halloween; New Year

Homelessness

Great Joy, 23

How To Steal a Dog, 91

Homosexuals. *See Gays; Lesbians; GLBTQ***Literature****Houdini, Harry**

Houdini, 35

Humor

Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian, 97

Another Day in the Milky Way, 70

Badger's Fancy Meal, 55

Clancy the Courageous Cow, 68

Diary of a Wimpy Kid, 88

Dimity Dumpty, 66

Duck & Company, 75

Edwardo, 62

Fabled Fourth Graders of Aesop

Elementary School, 85

Ginger and Petunia, 71

Good Enough To Eat, 64

I'd Really Like To Eat a Child, 51

I'm the Biggest Thing in the Ocean, 59

Iris, Messenger, 84

Knuffle Bunny Too, 60

Louder, Lili, 63

Maybelle in the Soup, 76

Mokie & Bik, 79

Moxy Maxwell Does Not Love Stuart

Little, 86

My Friend Is Sad, 77

Nicholas and the Gang, 86

Olivia Helps with Christmas, 23

Penguin, 51

Pictures from Our Vacation, 71

Pierre in Love, 70

Pippi Longstocking, 89

Previously, 61

Psst!, 72

Repossessed, 104

Starring Miss Darlene, 72

Stick, 62

Sticky Burr, 78

Ten Old Men and a Mouse, 64

There Is a Bird on Your Head!, 77

When a Monster Is Born, 73

I

Illness. *See* **Alzheimer's Disease; Cancer; Panic Disorders**

Illness, Mental

 Magic's Child, 107
 Your Own, Sylvia, 34

Illness, Terminal

 Purple Balloon, 40

Illustrators. *See* **Artists****Imagination**

 Box Full of Kittens, 56
 Dragon Dancing, 58
 Jamie and Angus Together, 78
 Little Red Fish, 75
 Playground Day!, 56
 Previously, 61
 Pssst!, 72
 Rainstorm, 68
 Zoo, 55

Immigration. *See also* **Refugees**

 Arrival, 117
 Touching Snow, 102

Indians and Indian Americans

 Keeping Corner, 115
 My Dadima Wears a Sari, 73

Insects. *See* **Beetles****J****Japanese**

 Wakame Gatherers, 74

Jazz Music

 Jazz Baby, 60

Jews and Jewish Americans

 Hidden on the Mountain, 28
 Letter on the Wind, 26
 My Mother the Cheerleader, 115
 Ten Old Men and a Mouse, 64

Journalism

 Muckrakers, 28

Journeys

 Brave Story, 91
 Dragon's Egg, 94
 Into the Woods, 86
 Land of the Silver Apples, 85
 Little (Grrl) Lost, 101
 Origins, 118
 Papa and the Pioneer Quilt, 74
 Red Glass, 114
 Shadow Speaker, 112
 Titan's Curse, 92
 Unwind, 116
 White Darkness, 109

K**Kahlo, Frida**

 Frida, 42

Keller, Helen

 Helen Keller, 36
 Miss Spitfire, 90

King, Martin Luther, Jr.

 M.L.K., 33

Korean Origin

 Tap Dancing on the Roof, 45

Koreans and Korean Americans

 Good As Lily, 105
 Kimchi & Calamari, 88
 New Clothes for New Year's Day, 22
 Re-Gifters, 80

L**LGBTQ literature.** *See* **GLBTQ Literature****Laborers**

 Sacred Leaf, 84

Latinos. *See also* **Bolivians; Cubans;**

Guatemalans; Mexicans; Puerto Rican Americans
 Little Night, 57

Lenape Indians

 When the Shadbush Blooms, 25

Lenape Language

 When the Shadbush Blooms, 25

Lesbians. *See also* **Gays; GLBTQ literature**

 101 Ways To Dance, 117
 books about, 10–11, 12
 grl2grl, 113
 Hear Us Out, 103
 Off Season, 110
 Split Screen, 104
 Touching Snow, 102
 What If Someone I Know Is Gay?, 40

Loss

 Half a World Away, 53
 Home of the Brave, 80
 Mistik Lake, 98
 Saints of Augustine, 114
 Today and Today, 45

M**Magicians**

 Clara & Señor Frog, 65
 Houdini, 35

Martial Arts

 Way, 98

Math Concepts

 How Many Seeds in a Pumpkin?, 69
 Working with Fractions, 48

Medieval Europe

 Good Masters! Sweet Ladies!, 31

Mexicans

- Armando and the Blue Tarp School, 37
- Clara & Señor Frog, 65
- Red Glass, 114

Microfinance

- Rickshaw Girl, 79

Middle East

- Four Feet, Two Sandals, 74
- Tasting the Sky, 32

Million Man March

- One Million Men and Me, 31

Months of the Year

- When the Shadbush Blooms, 25

Mothers. *See also Families; Fathers; Parents*

- Hair for Mama, 41
- Mistik Lake, 98
- My Mommy Is Magic, 57
- Remembering Mrs. Rossi, 87

Multicultural literature

- publishing statistics, 13
- publishing trends, 13–15

Music and Musicians

- Beige, 99
- Five Nice Mice, 59
- Harlem Summer, 111
- Jazz Baby, 60
- Let It Shine, 42
- New Policeman, 117
- Oye, Celia!, 43
- Yellow Flag, 108

Mystery Stories

- Case of the Left-Handed Lady, 93
- Mysterious Benedict Society, 94
- Mysterious Edge of the Heroic World, 106
- Rainstorm, 68
- Tamar, 112
- White Darkness, 109

Mythology

- Iris, Messenger, 84
- Land of Silver Apples, 85
- Titan's Curse, 92

N**NASCAR**

- Yellow Flag, 108

Native Americans. *See American Indians***Nature.** *See Natural World***New Year**

- New Clothes for New Year's Day, 22
- Year of the Rat, 89

Nighttime. *See also Bedtime*

- At Night, 49
- "I'm Not Scared!", 49
- Twilight Hunt, 21

Nonfiction, publishing trends, 11–12**Nursery Rhymes**

- Cheese, 70
- Dimity Dumpty, 66

O**Opposites**

- Up, Down, and Around, 48

Oppression, Political

- Revolution Is Not a Dinner Party, 82
- Silenced, 102
- Wall, 31

Owls

- Twilight Hunt, 21
- White Owl, Barn Owl, 19

P**Pakistan**

- Four Feet, Two Sandals, 74

Palestinians

- Tasting the Sky, 32

Panic Disorders

- Nature of Jade, 98

Parents. *See also Families; Fathers; Mothers*

- 7 Days at the Hot Corner, 119
- Beige, 99
- Boy Toy, 108
- Brave Story, 91
- Fred Stays With Me!, 39
- Memories of a Teenage Amnesiac, 121
- So Totally Emily Ebers, 96
- Undercover, 105

Peary, Marie Ahnighito

- Snow Baby, 35

Peary, Robert E.

- Snow Baby, 35

Photography and Photographers

- Walker Evans, 35

Picture books, publishing trends, 12**Poetry and Poets.** *See also Writers and***Writing; Poetry section**

- Calendar, 24
- Frida, 42
- Gai See, 38
- Good Masters! Sweet Ladies!, 31
- Home of the Brave, 80
- This Is a Poem that Heals Fish, 73
- Undercover, 105
- Where I Live, 94
- Who Likes Rain?, 61
- Your Own, Sylvia, 34

Poker

- Full House, 104

Polio

- Friendship for Today, 90

Poverty. *See also Economic Challenges*
 Armando and the Blue Tarp School, 37
 Case of the Left-Handed Lady, 93
 How To Steal a Dog, 91

Pregnancy
 Snows, 110

Publishing
 books published in 2007, 13
 diversity reflected in, 13–15
 trends in, 10–12

Puerto Rican Americans
 Box Full of Kittens, 56

R

Racism. *See also Slavery*
 Birmingham, 1963, 46
 Elijah of Buxton, 83
 Friendship for Today, 90
 M.L.K., 33
 Miss Crandall's School for Young Ladies
 & Little Misses of Color, 44
 My Mother the Cheerleader, 115
 One Whole and Perfect Day, 100
 Stealing Home, 33
 This Strange New Feeling, 108

Railroads
 Old Penn Station, 30

Red-tailed Hawks
 Tale of Pale Male, 22

Refugees. *See also Immigration*
 Four Feet, Two Sandals, 74
 Home of the Brave, 80

Revere, Paul
 Many Rides of Paul Revere, 34

Revolutionary War
 Many Rides of Paul Revere, 34

Rhinos
 Emi and the Rhino Scientist, 19

Robinson, Jackie
 Stealing Home, 33

Romantic Relationships
 101 Ways To Dance, 117
 Book of a Thousand Days, 103
 grl2grl, 113
 Naomi and Ely's No Kiss List, 101
 Nature of Jade, 98
 Pierre in Love, 70
 Red Glass, 114
 This Strange New Feeling, 108
 Touching Snow, 102
 What They Found, 111

S

Saris
 My Dadima Wears a Sari, 73

School Settings. *See also Education;*
Teachers

Diary of a Wimpy Kid, 88
 Dragon Dancing, 58
 Fabled Fourth Graders of Aesop
 Elementary School, 85
 How Many Seeds in a Pumpkin?, 69
 Jack's Talent, 64
 John Hancock Club, 77
 Knuffle Bunny Too, 60
 Louder, Lili, 63
 No Talking, 81
 Split Screen, 104
 This Is Just to Say, 46

Science Fiction
 Origins, 118
 Shadow Speaker, 112
 Unwind, 116

Scientific Observation
 How Many Seeds in a Pumpkin, 69
 Red Moon at Sharpsburg, 119

Scientists
 Emi and the Rhino Scientist, 19
 Owen & Mzee, 19
 Tracking Trash, 18

Screech Owls
 Twilight Hunt, 21

Seasons. *See also Winter; and Seasons and*
Celebrations section
 Every Season, 26
 Gai See, 38
 Leaves, 59
 Today and Today, 45
 When the Shadbush Blooms, 25

Segregation
 Friendship for Today, 90
 My Mother the Cheerleader, 115
 Stealing Home, 33

Separation, Parental. *See also Divorce*
 Brave Story, 91
 Friendship for Today, 90

September 11, 2001
 Someday This Pain Will Be Useful to You,
 99

Sexuality, books about, 10

Short Stories
 101 Ways to Dance, 117
 Full House, 104
 grl2grl, 113
 Hear Us Out!, 103
 Red Spikes, 107
 What They Found, 111

Siblings. *See also Brothers; Sisters; Families*
 Castle Corona, 82
 Christmas Is Coming, 23

- How To Be a Baby—by Me, the Big Sister, 55
- Into the Woods, 86
- Max Counts His Chickens, 26
- Night Night, Baby Bundt, 54

Sijo

- Tap Dancing on the Roof, 45

Sinclair, Upton

- Muckrakers, 28

Sís, Peter

- Wall, 31

Sisters. *See also* **Brothers; Families; Siblings**

- All-I'll-Ever-Want Christmas Doll, 25
- Freak, 113
- Good as Lily, 105
- Mistik Lake, 98

Six Day War

- Tasting the Sky, 32

Slavery

- Elijah of Buxton, 83
- Henry's Freedom Box, 30
- This Strange New Feeling, 108

Soccer

- Mini Mia and Her Darling Uncle, 69

Spiders

- Spiders, 18

Spokane Indians

- Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian, 97

Sports. *See* **Baseball; Boxing; Capoeira;**

- Football; Martial Arts; NASCAR; Soccer; Tennis**

Spring. *See* **Easter; Seasons****Steffens, Lincoln**

- Muckrakers, 28

Sudanese

- Home of the Brave, 80

Suicide

- Brave Story, 91
- Tamar, 112
- Twisted, 97

Sullivan, Annie

- Miss Spitfire, 90

Survival

- Book of a Thousand Days, 103
- Elijah of Buxton, 83
- Freak, 113
- Freak Show, 116
- Henry's Freedom Box, 30
- Hidden on the Mountain, 28
- Home of the Brave, 80
- Origins, 118
- Revolution Is Not a Dinner Party, 82
- Sacred Leaf, 84
- Silenced, 102
- Tasting the Sky, 32
- Touching Snow, 102
- Twisted, 97

- Unwind, 116
- White Darkness, 109
- Woolvs in the Sitee, 120

T**Tarbell, Ida**

- Muckrakers, 28

Teachers. *See also* **Education; School****Settings**

- Armando and the Blue Tarp School, 37
- Boy Toy, 108
- How Many Seeds in a Pumpkin?, 69
- Jack's Talent, 64
- John Hancock Club, 77
- Miss Crandall's School for Young Ladies & Little Misses of Color, 44
- Miss Spitfire, 90
- Nickel, a Trolley, a Treasure House, 61
- No Talking, 81
- Remembering Mrs. Rossi, 87
- This Is Just to Say, 46

Tennis

- Nothing but Trouble, 36

Thiebaud, Wayne

- Delicious, 43

Time

- Sound Is a Hiccup, 48

Tortoises

- Owen & Mzee, 19

Transgendered Persons. *See also* **LGBTQ****literature**

- grl2grl, 113
- Hear Us Out, 103
- Parrotfish, 120

Trash

- Tracking Trash, 18

Turkey Vultures

- Vulture View, 21

U**U. S. Civil War**

- Dadblamed Union Army Cow, 65
- Red Moon at Sharpsburg, 119

Uncles

- Mini Mia and Her Darling Uncle, 69
- Way, 98

V**Vikings**

- Who Was First?, 29

Violence. *See also* **Abuse; War**

- Birmingham, 1963, 46
- Miss Crandall's School for Young Ladies & Little Misses of Color, 44
- Revolution Is Not a Dinner Party, 82

Silenced, 102

Unwind, 116

Vultures

Vulture View, 21

W

War. *See also* **Revolutionary War; Six Day**

War; U. S. Civil War; World War II

Unwind, 116

White Rose Movement

Silenced, 102

Winter. *See also* **Christmas; New Year;**

Seasons

Snow Day!, 24

Terrible Storm, 68

Women and Girls

Frida, 42

Hair Dance!, 40

Helen Keller, 36

Miss Crandall's School for Young Ladies
& Little Misses of Color, 44

Nothing but Trouble, 36

Oye, Celia!, 43

Rickshaw Girl, 79

World War II

Mysterious Edge of the Heroic World,
106

One Thousand Tracings, 29

Pennies in a Jar, 63

Snows, 110

Someone Named Eva, 95

Tamar, 112

Wakame Gatherers, 74

Wright, Frank Lloyd

Frank Lloyd Wright, 32

Writing and Writers. *See also* **Poetry and**

Poets

Freak, 113

Muckrakers, 28

Song for Harlem, 79

Undercover, 105

Year of the Rat, 89

Z

Zoos

Nature of Jade, 98

Zoo, 55