Notable Social Studies
Trade Books for Young People
2006
About the List and Criteria for Selection

The books that appear in this annotated list were evaluated and selected by a Book Review Committee appointed by National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) and assembled in cooperation with the Children’s Book Council (CBC). NCSS and CBC have cooperated on this annual bibliography since 1972. Books selected for this bibliography were published in 2005 and were written for children in grades K-12. The Book Review Committee looks for books that emphasize human relations, represent a diversity of groups and are sensitive to a broad range of cultural experiences, present an original theme or a fresh slant on a traditional topic, are easily readable and of high literary quality, have a pleasing format, and, where appropriate, include illustrations that enrich the text. Each book is read by several reviewers, and books are included on the list by committee assent; the annotations do not necessarily reflect the judgment of the entire committee.

Publishers’ addresses are available in standard reference works such as Children's Books in Print (R.R. Bowker) and Literary Market Place (R.R. Bowker), and from CBC. CBC’s Members List may be downloaded at www.cbcbooks.org. Credits for permission to reproduce the cover art included in this supplement are printed on page 16.

Titles are arranged by broad subject categories. Although many are appropriate for more than one category, they have been placed where their usefulness in social studies education appears greatest. Annotators have also indicated the thematic strands (shown below) from Expectations of Excellence: Curriculum Standards for Social Studies, to which the book relates.

Thematic Strands of the NCSS Curriculum Standards for Social Studies

1. CULTURE
2. TIME, CONTINUITY, AND CHANGE
3. PEOPLE, PLACES, AND ENVIRONMENTS
4. INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT AND IDENTITY
5. INDIVIDUALS, GROUPS, AND INSTITUTIONS
6. POWER, AUTHORITY, AND GOVERNANCE
7. SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND SOCIETY
8. GLOBAL CONNECTIONS
9. CIVIC IDEALS AND PRACTICES

Parts of a Notable Listing

1. The titles marked with the rainbow icon are Selectors’ Choices—books that individual committee members responded to with particular enthusiasm. 2. Title: Subtitle 3. Author(s) 4. Illustrator 5. Publisher. 6. Number of pages 7. International Standard Book Numbers (ISBNs) are included for all available editions (trade, library, and paperback). The symbol "F" indicates that a paperback edition is forthcoming. A publisher’s name in parentheses indicates that a different publisher will issue the paperback edition. 8. Price as of January 2006 9. Reading levels: P: Primary (K-2), I: Intermediate (3-5), M: Middle (6-8), H: High (9-12). They are intended as guidelines and are not meant to limit the potential use of titles. 10. Brief descriptive annotation, plus notations of the presence of additional textual materials, if any. 11. Initials indicating the reviewer responsible for the annotation (see list at right). 12. Thematic strands of the curriculum standards for social studies in order of relevancy (see list above).

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2006 Book Review Committee Members

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Karen Holland Wilkins, Youth Connections coordinator, Adams Middle School, Tampa, FL (KHW)
Biography


Amelia to Zora: Twenty-Six Women Who Changed the World. Cynthia Chin-Lee. Illustrated by Megan Halsey and Sean Addy. Charlesbridge Publishing. 32pp. Trade ISBN 1-57091-522-9, $15.95. F (Charlesbridge). (I) This is a wonderful introduction to the range of contemporary women’s struggles and accomplishments. An international woman is highlighted for each letter of the alphabet. Author’s Note, Bibliography. (BAG) III, V


Back to Year Zero (WorldScapes: Cambodia). Frances Bacon. Illustrated by Xiangyi Mo and Jingwen Wang. ETA/Cuisenaire. 24pp. Paperback ISBN 0-7406-3805-X, $41.95/6 Pk. (I) Photojournalist Dith Pran documented Cambodia’s “killing fields” and life under the Khmer Rouge. This story about courage and loyalty serves as an exemplar of a life committed to social and political justice. Index. (JRG) III, VI, X


Good Brother, Bad Brother: The Story of Edwin Booth and John Wilkes Booth. James Cross Giblin. Illustrated with prints and photographs. Clarion Books. 256pp. Trade ISBN 0-618-09642-6, $22.00. (M) This is the dramatic story of two very different brothers, and how their upbringing led one to become a revered actor and the other to become Abraham Lincoln’s reviled assassin. Bibliography and Source Notes, Index, Primary Documents. (MWW) IV, VI


Young Thomas Edison. Written and illustrated by Michael Dooling. Holiday House. 40pp. Trade ISBN 0-8234-1868-5, $16.95. F (Holiday House), (P, I) After Thomas Edison had lost some hearing due to scarlet fever, and was labeled a troublemaker at school, his mother decided to keep him home. The former schoolteacher taught Edison herself, while nurturing his love for learning, laboratories, and inventions. This true story demystifies the origins of genius. Author’s Note, Bibliography, Suggested Websites. (JRG) IV, VIII
Contemporary Concerns


Americans Who Tell the Truth. Written and illustrated by Robert Shetterly. Dutton Children’s Books. 48pp. Trade ISBN 0-525-47429-3, $18.99. (M, H) Thought-provoking quotes are paired with portraits of 50 Americans—such as Muhammad Ali, Emma Goldman, and Paul Robeson—who have spoken out and challenged the status quo. This book is sure to inspire debate and further research. Author’s Note. (JMS) X, V

And Tango Makes Three. Justin Richardson and Peter Parnell. Illustrated by Henry Cole. Simon and Schuster Books for Young Readers. 32pp. Trade ISBN 0-689-87845-1, $14.95. (P) Roy and Silo, two male penguins at the Central Park Zoo, fall in love. When they are given an egg from a female penguin who can’t care for it, baby Tango joins their family. Author’s Note. (JMS) IV


Helicopter Man. Elizabeth Fensham. Bloomsbury Children’s Books. 165pp. Trade ISBN 1-58234-981-9, $15.95. F (Bloomsbury). (M) This contemporary story about schizophrenia is told through Pete’s diary. Pete struggles to understand his father’s bizarre behaviors, why he and his father are homeless, and why his mother left them. (AHC) IV


The Librarian of Basra: A True Story from Iraq. Written and illustrated by Jeanette Winter. Harcourt Children’s Books. 32pp. Trade ISBN 0-15-205445-6, $16.00. (I) This is a true story about one woman’s love of books and literacy. Alia Muhammad Baker hides 30,000 books in restaurants and private homes to save them from destruction during the Iraq War. Author’s Note. (KHW) III, II

Peace One Day: The Making of World Peace Day. Jeremy Gilley. Illustrated by Karen Blesson. G. P. Putnam’s Sons. 48pp. Trade ISBN 0-399-24330-5, $16.99. (I) This inspiring story depicts the efforts of actor Jeremy Gilley to create a world peace day. This story shows that one person can make a difference through determination and perseverance. (MWW) IX, X, II

Notable Social Studies Trade Books for Young People 2006


Environment/Energy/Ecology


Folktales


Geography, Peoples, & Places

Are We There Yet? A Journey around Australia.
Written and illustrated by Alison Lester. Kane/Miller Book Publishers. 32pp. Trade ISBN 1-929132-73-5, $15.95. (P, I) This often-asked question (Are We There Yet?) captures the words of three children, as they travel with their parents throughout Australia, encountering the various terrains, people, and locations of the country. (DMM) III, IX


Going to School in India. Lisa Heydlauff. Illustrated with photographs by Nitin Upadhye and graphic illustrations by B.M. Kamath. Charlesbridge Publishing. 98pp. Trade ISBN 1-57091-666-7, $21.95. (I) Vibrant photographs, artwork, and stories capture the diversity of India and provide a picture of the daily lives of children, along with the challenges many must overcome to attend school. Foreword, Glossary, Index. (PLS) III, V, I


**Tsunami: Helping Each Other.** Ann Morris and Heidi Larson. Illustrated with photographs by Heidi Larson and others. Millbrook Press/Lerner Publishing Group. 48pp. Trade ISBN 0-7613-9501-6, $15.95. (I) Text and photographs describe the impact of the 2004 tsunami in Asia on the lives of two young Thai brothers. Author’s Note. (JMS) III, IX


**History, Life, & Culture in the Americas**


**Built to Last: Building America’s Amazing Bridges, Dams, Tunnels, and Skyscrapers.** George Sullivan. Illustrated with photographs. Scholastic Nonfiction. 128pp. Trade ISBN 0-439-51737-0, $18.99. F (Scholastic Nonfiction). (M) This well-researched book explains how America’s most famous structures were designed and built. Outstanding photographs and primary documents provide further information about individual structures. Further Reading, Websites, Index. (AHC) III, VIII

**Catch a Tiger by the Toe.** Ellen Levine. Viking Children’s Books. 208pp. Trade ISBN 0-670-88461-8, $15.99. (M) When anti-communist hysteria and the McCarthy hearings affect 13-year-old Jamie and her family, Jamie struggles to understand why her family continues to be vocal about political freedom and the right to dissent. Author’s Note, Suggested Reading. (JMS) IV, VI, X

**Crooked River**. Shelley Pearsall. Knopf Books for Young Readers/Random House Children’s Books. 256pp. Trade ISBN 0-375-82389-1, $15.95; Library ISBN 0-375-92389-6, $17.99. (I) It is the early 1800s, and a Chippewa brave is accused of murdering a white trapper. While awaiting trial, he is held shackled in the loft of a frontier cabin. Vengeance, prejudice, and fear combine to create a powerful story. Author’s Note, Bibliography, Museum Sources. (LKG) I

**Dad, Jackie, and Me**. Myron Uhlberg. Illustrated by Colin Bootman. Peachtree Publishers. 32pp. Trade ISBN 1-56145-329-3, $16.95. (P, I) A deaf father and his son bond over baseball in the summer of 1947, as Jackie Robinson becomes the first black man to play major league baseball for their favorite team, the Brooklyn Dodgers. Author’s Note. (AEF) I, III

**Day of Tears: A Novel in Dialogue**. Julius Lester. Jump at the Sun/Hyperion Books for Children. 178pp. Trade ISBN 0-7868-0490-4, $15.99. (H) Two families are pulled apart by slavery, gambling debts, and greed. This story traces the lives of a plantation owner’s family as well as that of his slaves—as the events of the largest slave auction unfold. Author’s Note. (KHW) II

**Dzání Yázhí Naazbaa’: Little Woman Warrior Who Came Home**. Evangeline Parsons Yazzie. Illustrated by Irving Toddy. Salina Bookshelf. 32pp. Trade ISBN 1-893354-55-5, $17.95. (I) This is an amazing story told from the view of a young Navajo girl who is abducted by soldiers, taken to Fort Sumner, and forced to walk to Bosque Redondo, nearly 450 miles from her home. Author’s Note, Written in Navajo as well as English. (FMC) I, III, IV


**Freedom on the Menu: The Greensboro Sit-Ins**. Carole Boston Weatherford. Illustrated by Jerome Lagarrigue. Dial Books for Young Readers. 32pp. Trade ISBN 0-8037-2860-3, $16.99. (P, I) Through the eyes of eight-year-old Connie, the reader learns about civil rights in the 1960s, the message of Martin Luther King, Jr., protesting through non-violent means, and earning the right to sit at a lunch counter. Author’s Note. (AHC) V, III, II

**The Journey of the One and Only Declaration of Independence**. Judith St. George. Illustrated by Will Hillenbrand. Philomel Books. 48pp. Trade ISBN 0-399-23738-0, $16.99. (P) Take a delightful romp through history as our country’s most important document is whisked from place to place by a variety of conveyances, keeping it safe for more than 200 years. Wonderful illustrations. Bibliography. (LKG) II, X


New Boy. Julian Houston. Houghton Mifflin Company. 288pp. Trade ISBN 0-618-43253-1, $16.00. (H) In the late 1950s, Rob Garrett, an African American, enrolls at a Connecticut boarding school. While he is studying in New England, the civil rights movement is gaining momentum. Rob must decide whether to continue his education or return to the segregated South to support his friends and work for change. (KHW) X, II


Smiler’s Bones. Peter Lerangis. Scholastic Press. 192pp. Trade ISBN 0-439-34485-9, $16.95. F (Scholastic). (M) This novel is based on the actual account of six Eskimos taken by explorer Robert Peary to the American Museum of Natural History in New York City to be exhibited. The author recreates the tale through the eyes of Minik, the lone survivor. Author’s Note, Bibliography. (KON) III, IV, V

A Sweet Smell of Roses. Angela Johnson. Illustrated by Eric Velasquez. Simon and Schuster Books for Young Readers. 32pp. Trade ISBN 0-689-83252-4, $16.95. (P, I) This story describes the civil rights movement through the eyes of two young sisters who witness a march for equality organized by Martin Luther King, Jr. Exquisite black and white drawings embellished with a touch of red. About the Book, From the Artist. (AHC) VI, IV, II


Under a Standstill Moon. Ann Howard Creel. Brown Barn Books. 192pp. Paperback ISBN 0-97464818-3, $8.95. (M, H) In a 900 CE Anasazi village, Echo and her family confront sudden changes to their way of life. This story tackles some of the questions about why the Anasazi may have suddenly disappeared from the American Southwest. Author’s Note. (AEF) I, II, III, IV


A Wreath for Emmett Till. Marilyn Nelson. Illustrated by Philippe Lardy. Houghton Mifflin Company. 48pp. Trade ISBN 0-618-39752-3, $17.00. (M) A young boy’s lynching in 1955 is described in the form of a sonnet, illustrating how the integration of history, art, and prose can provide a powerful account of a significant historical event. Author’s Note, Artist’s Note, Sonnet Notes. (PLS) II, VI, V

Reference


Social Interactions & Relationships

The Baby on the Way. Karen English. Illustrated by Sean Qualls. Farrar, Straus and Giroux Books for Young Readers. 32pp. Trade ISBN 0-374-37361-2, $16.00. (P) When Jamal asks his grandma if she was ever a little girl, Grandma tells the endearing story of how she was even once “the baby on the way.” Sensitive topic and interesting illustrations engage the reader. (FMC) II, IV, I


**Hewitt Anderson's Great Big Life.** Jerdine Nolen. Illustrated by Kadir Nelson. Paula Wiseman Books/Simon and Schuster Books for Young Readers. 40pp. Trade ISBN 0-689-86866-9, $16.95. (P) Incredible illustrations will draw children into this Jack and the Beanstalk-inspired tale, which weaves a charming story of family love with the message that even small people in a world of big adults can be brave. (BAG) IV


**We Beat the Street: How a Friendship Pact Led to Success.** Dr. Sampson Davis, Dr. George Jenkins, Dr. Rameck Hunt, and Sharon M. Draper. Dutton Children’s Books. 128pp. Trade ISBN 0-525-47407-2, $16.99. F (Puffin). (M, H) A true and inspiring account of the lives of three young men from an inner city Newark neighborhood. Most of their friends turned to crime and drugs. Their pledge to support one another enabled them to reach their goals of becoming doctors. Shout-outs, Website. (LKG) IV, I, III

**Where the Great Hawk Flies.** Liza Ketchum. Clarion Books. 273pp. Trade ISBN 0-618-40085-0, $16.00. (M) The complex social relationships that existed in post-Revolutionary War Vermont are realistically portrayed in this story that deals with identity, prejudice, and differing cultures. Of particular note is the recognition of differences between Native American tribes. Author’s Note, Notes on Pequot History and Language. (BAG) IV, I, III

**World History & Culture**

**Bodies From the Ash: Life and Death in Ancient Pompeii.** James M. Deem. Illustrated with prints and photographs. Houghton Mifflin Company. 48pp. Trade ISBN 0-618-47308-4, $16.00. (M) Riveting photographs and interesting narrative provide an account of life in Pompeii and a comprehensive explanation of the famous volcanic eruption of AD 79, along with insight into the work of archaeologists. Bibliography, Index. (BAG) II, III


I Will Plant You a Lilac Tree: A Memoir of a Schindler’s List Survivor. Laura Hillman. Atheneum Books for Young Readers. 256pp. Trade ISBN 0-689-86980-0, $16.95. (H) The author is separated from her family and sent to eight different labor and concentration camps during World War II. She falls in love with a fellow prisoner and is saved by Oskar Schindler and his Czechoslovakian factory. (KHW) II, III


The Children’s Book Council

The Children’s Book Council is a not-for-profit association encouraging the use and enjoyment of children’s books and related literacy materials. Its members are publishers of trade books for children and producers of book-related materials for young people. CBC is the official sponsor of Children’s Book Week and Young People’s Poetry Week. It cooperates on reading development projects with several national associations including NCSS. To receive a catalog of CBC’s reading encouragement materials, visit www.cdbooks.org or call 1-800-999-2160.

Other bibliographies on which the Children’s Book Council cooperates are:

Outstanding Science Trade Books for Students K-12

Reprinted from the March issues of Science and Children, Science Scope, and The Science Teacher, a joint project of the National Science Teachers Association and CBC. Single copies are available for $2.00 with a self-addressed 6” × 9” envelope with 3 oz. postage; 10-24 copies, $1.50 each; 25 or more copies, $1.00 each. Include $3.95 for postage for bulk orders. Send orders to the Children’s Book Council, attn.: Social Studies, 12 West 37th Street, New York, NY 10018. Payment must accompany order. Make checks payable to “The Children’s Book Council, Inc.”

NCSS developed and published the social studies standards, which are used nationally as a basis for curriculum planning and student performance assessment. The annotations of books in this list include references to the thematic strands of the social studies standards to which the book relates (see page 2).

This list of Notable Social Studies Trade Books for Young People is an NCSS Member benefit, published in the May/June issue of Social Education, which is sent to all members who subscribe to Social Studies and the Young Learner, as well as to the regular subscribers of Social Education. The list is also available online to NCSS Members at members.ncss.org. Prior year lists are available at www.socialstudies.org/resources/notable.

For information on membership and services, write to NCSS, 8555 Sixteenth Street, Suite 500, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910, call 301 588-1800, or visit www.socialstudies.org/member. Visit NCSS online at www.socialstudies.org.

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