Outstanding Books Reviewed in This Issue

*Trombone Shorty* by Troy Andrews and Bill Taylor; illustrated by Bryan Collier.

*Enchanted Air: Two Cultures, Two Wings: A Memoir* by Margarita Engle.

*The Painter's Daughter* by Julie Klassen.

*Plus: Selected 2016 Award Books for Children and Teens*
A Letter from the Publisher

Dear CLJ Readers:

Welcome to another issue of CLJ! This year we are presenting our reviews of selected ALA award-winning titles earlier than in prior years, in hopes of being of assistance to educators in search of quality reading material for the fall. There are some very fine titles receiving honors this year, and we hope that you find several to enjoy and to share.

On a personal note, I want to apologize for the lateness of this combined issue due to a number of health-related and other challenges in my family this year—and I want to praise God for bringing us through it all. He is indeed our healer and our provider, and He is good all the time.

He has been providing for his ministry at CLJ as well. I am happy to announce that we have two new volunteer team members—Rebecca Schriner, Publicist and Marketing Consultant, and Kim Harris, our new Title Selector - Nonfiction for Children and Teens. Thank you and welcome aboard, Becca and Kim!

Happy reading, and God bless you all.

In Christ,
Angela Walsh
Publisher and Editor
editor@christianlibraryj.org.
### TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key to Reviews</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPECIAL FEATURE:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selected 2016 Award Books for Children and Teens</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s Titles</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teen Titles</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Titles</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Publisher, Editor & Title Selector—Adult Nonfiction**
- Angela Walsh

**Mentor & Title Selector—Fiction**
- Nancy Hesch

**Editorial Assistant & Production Manager**
- Justina McBride

**Publicist & Marketing Consultant**
- Rebecca Schriner

**Special Features Writer**
- Valorie Cooper

**Title Selector—Nonfiction for Children and Teens**
- Kim Harris

**Webmaster**
- Shawn Estes

Cover illustration taken from *Enchanted Air* by Margarita Engle.
Copyright © 2015 by Margarita Engle. Used by permission of Atheneum Books for Young Readers.
Review Rating System

*5 Outstanding — a book which impacts someone’s life or thinking
5 Excellent — well written, among the best
4 Very good — definitely worth reading
3 Good — may be a good source for relaxation or to meet needs for information
2 Fair — poor writing or editing; read only if very interested
1 Poor — not much going for this title.

Recommended with caution (may be used with any of the above ratings) — Note reservations within the review.
Not recommended (may be used with any of the above ratings) — Note problems within the review.

Value of the book:
With fiction, the rating includes the quality of plot development/pacing, characterization, sense of time and place, mood, and atmosphere, dialogue, depth of perception, sensitivity of writing, use of humor. Be aware that some books are character driven, so character development is extremely important. Others are plot driven, so character development isn’t as critical; plot is.

With nonfiction, the rating includes quality of the information, accuracy, up to date, stimulates further inquiry, adds to the understanding of the topic, illustrations which are informative and appropriate.

With picture books, first be aware that these are written today for various age groups, so don’t assume little children. The rating includes those above for fiction and nonfiction, and also emphasizes the illustrations.

Commonly used abbreviations in CLJ reviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LCCN</td>
<td>Library of Congress Cataloging Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDR</td>
<td>CD-ROM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DVD</td>
<td>Videodisc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VID</td>
<td>Videocassette</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISBN</td>
<td>International Standard Book Number</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This CLJ issue features reviews of a selection of books that won major awards for books for children and teens in 2016. Some of these awards focus on works that portray a specific type of experience. Others focus on works of literature or illustration that are outstanding or distinguished in a particular genre.

Literary merit aside, some of these books include violence, vulgar language, sexual situations, and potentially offensive (or at least uncomfortable) topics. While only you can judge what is appropriate reading for you or your reader(s), we urge you to consider that these books may be a window into the hurts and needs of our fallen world, and that they could be read prayerfully in a manner that leads to understanding and compassion for those that need the Gospel and the ministry of Christ’s church.

Following are descriptions of the honors and medals won by the books featured in this special section:

The **Pura Belpré Award** “is presented annually to a Latino/Latina writer and illustrator whose work best portrays, affirms, and celebrates the Latino cultural experience in an outstanding work of literature for children and youth” (ALSC Pura Belpre Award home page, [http://www.ala.org/alsc/awardsgrants/bookmedia/belpremedal](http://www.ala.org/alsc/awardsgrants/bookmedia/belpremedal)).

The **Caldecott Medal** “was named in honor of nineteenth-century English illustrator Randolph Caldecott. It is awarded annually by the Association for Library Service to Children, a division of the American Library Association, to the artist of the most distinguished American picture book for children” (ALSC Caldecott Medal home page, [http://www.ala.org/alsc/awardsgrants/bookmedia/caldecottmedal/caldecottmedal](http://www.ala.org/alsc/awardsgrants/bookmedia/caldecottmedal/caldecottmedal)).

The **Robert F. Sibert Informational Book Medal** “is awarded annually to the author(s) and illustrator(s) of the most distinguished informational book published in the United States in English during the preceding year. The award is named in honor of Robert F. Sibert, the long-time President of Bound to Stay Bound Books, Inc. of Jacksonville, Illinois. ALSC administers the award” (ALSC Robert F. Sibert Informational Book Medal home page, [http://www.ala.org/alsc/awardsgrants](http://www.ala.org/alsc/awardsgrants)).
The Newbery Medal “was named for eighteenth-century British bookseller John Newbery. It is awarded annually by the Association for Library Service to Children, a division of the American Library Association, to the author of the most distinguished contribution to American literature for children” (ALSC Newbery Medal home page, http://www.ala.org/alsc/awardsgrants/bookmedia/newberymedal/newberymedal).

The Geisel Award “is given annually to the author(s) and illustrator(s) of the most distinguished American book for beginning readers published in English in the United States during the preceding year” (ALSC (Theodor Seuss) Geisel Award home page, http://www.ala.org/alsc/awardsgrants/bookmedia/geiselaaward).

The Batchelder Award “is given to the most outstanding children’s book originally published in a language other than English in a country other than the United States, and subsequently translated into English for publication in the United States” (ALSC (Mildred L.) Batchelder Award home page, http://www.ala.org/alsc/awardsgrants/bookmedia/batchelderaward).

The Coretta Scott King Book Awards “are given annually to outstanding African American authors and illustrators of books for children and young adults that demonstrate an appreciation of African American culture and universal human values. The award commemorates the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and honors his wife, Mrs. Coretta Scott King, for her courage and determination to continue the work for peace and world brotherhood” (ALA The Coretta Scott King Book Awards home page, http://www.ala.org/emiert/cskbookawards).

Valorie Cooper, CLJ Special Features Writer
PRIMARY FICTION

Don’t throw it to Mo! / by David A. Adler ; illustrated by Sam Ricks. (Penguin Young Readers. Level 2)

32 p. : col. ill. ; 24 cm.  PS-Grade 2
E  Rating: 5
Football--Fiction.  Size--Fiction.

From the legend of Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer to the lessons from David versus Goliath to the legacy of Rocky Balboa, the general public loves a well-told underdog tale. Don’t Throw It to Mo! is another such account that urges the audience to root for the unlikely hero.

Mo Jackson loves football. He literally leaps from his bed with football on his mind. Mo practices hard and even employs his mother and his coach to put him through unorthodox training regimens to improve his skills. Unfortunately, Mo is by far the smallest and youngest player for the Robins, so he finds himself spending lots of time on the bench with Coach Steve. When will he ever get a chance to play?

Author David Adler does an impressive job crafting an enjoyable story using vocabulary appropriate for the progressing reader. Adler mixes varied sentence structure and lengths with simple dialogue to introduce younger readers to a gradually more complex plot development. Plus, the illustrations by Sam Ricks are pleasant to the eye and useful to primary readers for detecting context clues.

Though the conclusion of Don’t Throw It to Mo! isn’t exactly a nail-biter, the lessons learned from this brief yet insightful story are worth multiple reads. Mo Jackson embodies the idea that practice makes perfect and exposes the folly of premature judgment based on surface appearances. Mo proves that success doesn’t happen by accident, but is a result of regular preparation. Don’t Throw It to Mo! teaches children to work hard and always be ready, because one never knows when his or her number will be called.

Schimri Yoyo, CLJ
Award(s): Theodor Seuss Geisel Award

The wonderful fluffy little squishy / Beatrice Alemagna ; translated from the French by Claudia Zoe Bedrick.

LCCN 2015030841 ISBN 9781592701803, hardcover, $18.95.
1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 31 cm.  PS-Grade 2
E  Rating: 3

Five-and-a-half-year-old Eddie feels like everyone in her family is good at something, except herself. Eddie overhears her sister say a few words to their mom about something fuzzy, little, and squishy. She assumes her sister is talking about a wonderful birthday present for their mother. So Eddie sets off to find one too. She asks the adults in her neighborhood if they have anything fluffy or squishy or fuzzy. Each says “no” but gives her some other item instead. Eddie finally spots a bright pink, fluffy creature and uses the items from her friends to get the creature in perfect shape for a birthday gift. In the end, Eddie decides she can do something no one else can: she can find fluffy little squishies.

While this is a charming story, a few elements should be noted. Eddie uses the phrase “darn it all” when things don’t go as she hoped, and she uses the word “stupid” in reference to an adult. As
cheery and even humorous as most of the illustrations are, the scene in the butcher shop might be frightening for some young or sensitive children. When Eddie reluctantly asks for help, the butcher scowls and points his knife at her, a big drop of blood poised to drip right on Eddie’s upturned forehead. This scene also happens to be the only one in the book that folds out into an extra-long spread.

Other scenes are enough to bring forth giggles again and again, and through her surreal journey, Eddie learns a real lesson every child needs to learn—everyone is good at something.

*Rachelle Dawson, CLJ*

**Award(s):** Mildred L. Batchelder Award

---

**Last stop on Market Street / words by Matt de la Pena ; pictures by Christian Robinson.**

1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 28 cm. PK-Grade 3
E Rating: 5


In *Last Stop on Market Street,* CJ and his nana ride the bus across town every Sunday through the busy city, sharing the experience of serving others in a soup kitchen. After church, while they ride the bus, CJ begins to ask why they don’t have a car, why they volunteer every week, and why that part of the city is so dirty. Nana patiently answers him. At the last stop, they get off the bus and his nana says, “Sometimes when you’re surrounded by dirt, CJ, you’re a better witness for what’s beautiful.” This sums up the book—CJ is learning to see beauty around him, even when it isn’t obvious.

Christian Robinson illustrates this book with “acrylic paint, collage, and a bit of digital manipulation.” The quality of the illustrations is evident in the nomination of *Last Stop on Market Street* for the 2016 Caldecott award.

Because de la Pena wrote a story celebrating the relationship between a grandson and his grandmother, this book has broad appeal to readers, young and old alike. His story includes people of color (and a variety of colors!), different walks of life, urban settings, abilities and disabilities, from one part of town to another. Even at the soup kitchen, the people are diverse.


*Carol R. Gehringer, CLJ*

**Award(s):** John Newbery Medal, Caldecott Honor Book, Coretta Scott King (Illustrator) Book Award

---

**Grandma lives in a perfume village / Fang Suzhen, Sonja Danowski ; translated by Huang Xiumin**

1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 29 cm. PS-Grade 3
Grandma Lives in a Perfume Village is a beautifully written and illustrated picture book translated from Chinese to English by Huang Xiumin. The book focuses on a little boy named Xiao Le, and the pronunciation and meaning of his name is provided at the beginning of this touching story.

Xiao Le and his mother go on a trip to visit his maternal grandmother. When they arrive, they find out Grandma is sick. Once Xiao Le is over his initial shyness, he shares a few special moments with his grandmother. After Xiao Le and his mother return home, they never see Grandma again because she is in heaven. Xiao Le helps his mother deal with her grief in an unexpected and special way.

The interest of young children will be captured by the simple, straightforward language of the text along with the exquisitely detailed and vibrant illustrations of the Asian family, the interior decor, and the landscape. The author, Fang Suzhen, and the illustrator, Sonja Danowski, have provided young children with a heartfelt and engaging book that not only wonderfully shows the power of family bonds but also superbly and realistically portrays the sensitive subject of loss and grief. The book paints a comforting picture of the death of a beloved family member in a way that a young child can understand.

Dianne Woodman, CLJ

Award(s): Batchelder Honor Books

A pig, a fox, and a box / by Jonathan Fenske. (Penguin young readers. Level 2)
28 p.: col. ill.; 24 cm. K-Grade 3
E Rating: 5

In the style of Mo Willems, Jonathan Fenski’s A Pig, a Fox and a Box tells three funny stories of two friends, Pig and Fox. The comic art and simple language encourage kids to stay with the story. A “Level 2” title, this book is ideal for the reader who can figure out unknown words by using picture and context clues and for the reader who can recognize beginning, middle, and ending sounds and distinguish between fiction and nonfiction. The play on words that rhyme will ease the load for little ones learning to read.

The picture clues help children to use the pictures to tell the story. The three separate stories build on each other, with each having longer sentences and more varied words. The layout is clear and the illustrations reinforce the concepts and plot, enabling children to enjoy the story and look for all of Fox’s tricks. This Theodor Seuss Geisel Honor title is a work the progressing reader will look forward to.

Leroy Hommerding, CLJ

Award(s): Geisel Honor Books

Mango, Abuela, and me / Meg Medina ; illustrated by Angela Dominguez.
1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 28 cm. K-Grade 3
E Rating: 5

A 2016 Pura Belpre Author Award Honor Book
and Pura Belpré Illustrator Award Honor Book, *Mango, Abuela, and Me* offers a story of love that transcends language.

Written by Meg Medina in a blend of Spanish and English words, the book tells of how Mia’s grandmother comes to live with her and her parents in the city. When Mia shares her favorite book with Abuela, she discovers that Abuela can’t read the words. Mia’s español is not good enough to tell Abuela the things a grandmother should know. And Abuela’s English is too poquito to tell Mia all the stories a granddaughter enjoys hearing. So while they cook, Mia helps Abuela learn English and Mia learns some Spanish. A parrot in the pet shop ends up helping both to communicate.

The illustrations by Angela Dominguez are vivid, blending ink, gouache, and marker to create an atmosphere of warmth and meaning. Full-page illustrations are juxtaposed with pages containing both text and smaller illustrations, allowing children to enjoy the pictures very much.

The duo’s efforts create a story that speaks clearly about learning new things, sharing different cultures, and the love that unites family members.

*Leroy Hommerding, CLJ*

**Award(s):** Belpré Illustrator Honor Books, Belpré Author Honor Books

---

**Supertruck / Stephen Savage.**

1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 24 cm. PS-Grade 1  
E Rating: 5  

A great book for early readers, *Supertruck* by Stephen Savage has pictures that tell the story with large font and easy-to-read words—a few on a page with plenty of spacing. Savage’s graphic depiction of the snowy metropolis sets the scene, while his use of color gradients allows children to experience the blizzard. The story incorporates two subjects that appeal to young boys: trucks and superheroes.

At first the reader may be surprised that a truck is described as “just collecting the trash.” In the city there are many brave trucks—ones that fix power lines, put out fires, or tow disabled vehicles. But when a blizzard hits the city, it is the garbage truck that saves the day by plowing the falling snow overnight, bringing home the point about not judging people based on the work they do. What is interesting too is that the truck wears glasses and becomes an appealing hero that echoes another cherished character with a secret identity, Clark Kent.

*Leroy Hommerding, CLJ*

**Award(s):** Geisel Honor Books

---

**Finding Winnie : the true story of the world’s most famous bear / by Lindsay Mattick ; illustrated by Sophie Blackall.**

1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 26 cm. PS-Grade 3  
E Rating: 5  
Winnie-the-Pooh--(Fictitious character)--Fiction.  
Winnipeg (Bear)--Juvenile fiction.  
Bears--Fiction.  
Soldiers--Fiction.

**Winnie : the true story of the bear who inspired Winnie-the-Pooh / Sally M. Walker ; illustrated by Jonathan D. Voss.**

1 v. (unpaged) : ill. (chiefly col.) ; 27 cm.  
PS 3599.78  Rating: 5

Winnie-the-Pooh--(Fictitious character)--History--Juvenile literature.  
Colebourn, Harry--1887-1947--Juvenile literature.  
Canada.  
Canadian Armed Forces--Mascots--Juvenile literature.  
Black bear--Juvenile literature.  
Winnipeg (Bear)--Juvenile literature.

Two recently published books tell the true story of the American black bear named Winnie and Harry Colebourn, a Canadian veterinarian—a story that inspired A. A. Milne’s *Winnie the Pooh* stories.

Veterinarian Harry Colebourn is on his way to England where he will tend to horses during World War I. En route, the captain rescues a bear cub and names her Winnie, after his Canadian hometown of Winnipeg. After traveling with Colebourn and becoming the mascot of his unit, Winnie is left at the London Zoo when Colebourn prepares to serve in Europe. Later Milne and his son Christopher Robin visit the zoo, forming a strong bond with Winnie, which ultimately inspires the Pooh stories.

Lindsay Mattick tells the story of her great-grandfather’s friendship with Winnie in her book, *Finding Winnie*. Mattick shares her family’s connection to Winnie by telling a bedtime story for her son Cole. Interjections from Cole are in italicized text sprinkled throughout the book (perhaps patterned after Christopher Robin’s voice interjected in *Winnie the Pooh*).

Winner of the 2016 Caldecott Award, *Finding Winnie*’s illustrator Sophie Blackall uses muted colors and rosy-cheeked characters to create a cozy book that readers will enjoy. Its back matter resembles a family album of photos and memorabilia with typed captions below each. Sadly there is not bibliography to document the resources consulted. Still, one knows that Mattick had access to the historical and family documents because of her involvement with the original exhibition in the UK.

Sally Walker’s Winnie is illustrated by Jonathan Voss, using watercolor with pen and ink, giving an old-fashioned feel to the book. Walker’s descriptive text provides the essentials of the story. There are photographs on its end pieces, as well as an author’s note with more information about Harry, American black bears, and A. A. Milne. Sources consulted and links to websites and vintage video are also included.

Although both books are written during World War I, neither focuses on Harry’s military life (no combat illustrations). If one looks closely at Blackall’s illustrations (soldiers being shipped out and soldiers returning), one notices the war injuries on some soldiers.

Both are well-written, but the personal connection makes the *Finding Winnie* the stronger book from an historical standpoint. Both books pair together nicely and would be welcome additions to libraries and readers of all ages.

*Carol R. Gehringer, CLJ*

**Award(s) for Finding Winnie:** Randolph Caldecott Medal
Emmanuel’s Dream by Laurie Ann Thompson is a Junior Library Guild Selection and recipient of the Schneider Family Book Award. Mama Comfort gives her baby boy the name Emmanuel (which means “God is with us”) and encourages him to be self-sufficient. Emmanuel challenges the lack of acceptance of children with physical differences in his rural community and is determined to show “that being disabled does not mean being unable” (pg. 22).

The flat, folk-art style of artwork by Sean Qualls adds a dramatic edge to the already compelling story. The muted colors and mixed media illustrations effectively capture the culture of the setting and characters.

With its uplifting message, contemporary relevance, and exemplary true-life characters, Emmanuel’s Dream would be a worthy addition to a school or home library. An author’s note at the conclusion provides additional information about Emmanuel’s achievements and the Emmanuel Educational Foundation and Sports Academy.

Nina Ditmar, CLJ
Award(s): Schneider Family Book Award, ages 0-10

Trombone Shorty / by Troy Andrews and Bill Taylor; illustrated by Bryan Collier. Trombone Shorty is an autobiographical picture book by contemporary jazz musician Troy Andrews. This 2016 Caldecott Honor Book and Coretta Scott King award-winner recalls the author’s lifelong pursuit of musical ambition.

Growing up in New Orleans, Troy is surrounded by music and inspired by his trumpet-playing brother. Finding an old broken trombone twice his size earns him the nickname “Trombone Shorty,” and a surprise encounter with famed jazz musician Bo Diddley prompts Troy to start his own band.

This captivating story reminds young readers of the value of determination and purpose. The end pages include photos and an author’s note that offers a fuller description of Troy’s resourcefulness and path to success.

Bryan Collier captures the busyness of a New Orleans kitchen, the excitement of a Mardi Gras parade, and the flavor of a jazz festival, employing watercolor, pen and ink, and collage to create bold, active scenes that complement the tone of the story. The informative illustrator’s note at the end of the book is a touching tribute to the author.
Trombone Shorty is highly recommended for all young readers who dream big!

Nina Ditmar, CLJ

Award(s): Coretta Scott King (Illustrator) Book Award, Caldecott Honor Book

Funny bones: Posada and his Day of the Dead calaveras / Duncan Tonatiuh.

LCCN 2014042319 ISBN 9781419716478, hard cover, $18.95.
40 p. : ill. (mostly col.) ; 29 cm. Grades 1-5
B Rating: 5

Funny Bones is an insightful and fascinating story about Mexican artist Jose Guadalupe Posada, known as Don Lupe Posada, who popularized the use of calaveras in art. Calaveras—clothed skeleton figures performing various activities—are an important part of the Mexican Day of the Dead festival.

From the time Posada was a young child, he loved drawing. He learned the printing techniques of lithography, engraving, and etching, each of which is shown in four-panel layouts. Posada employed these processes to make thousands of drawings. Although only a small number of his drawings are of calaveras, these images are what make Posada famous. Posada used calaveras to reflect both his humorous and serious views on everyday life, politics, social issues, and the Mexican Revolution.

Duncan Tonatiuh is both the author and illustrator of Funny Bones. Tonatiuh’s digital collage and hand drawings are colorful and eye-catching. The skillful blending of Tonatiuh and Posada’s artistic works, along with clear and simple sentences, makes for an appealing book for readers to learn about Posada’s life and his impact on Mexican culture. Some of Posada’s calaveras are open to interpretation, and questions posed by Tonatiuh will encourage readers to draw their own conclusions.

A number of resources at the back of the book are helpful for enriching the reading experience. The author’s note gives in-depth details about the history and traditions surrounding the Day of the Dead celebration. There are also a glossary, bibliography, art credits, a list of places where Posada’s artwork can be seen in the United States, and an index.

Funny Bones is a good choice for school libraries, for reading aloud to early elementary age children, and for third through fifth grade students to read and discuss.

Dianne Woodman, CLJ

Award(s): Robert F. Sibert Informational Book Award, Belpre Illustrator Honor Books

INTERMEDIATE FICTION

The war that saved my life / by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley.

316 p. ; 22 cm. Grades 4-6
Fic Rating: 5
All her life, 10-year-old Ada has been a prisoner, trapped in a lonely apartment due to her mother’s shame over her crippled daughter. Ada’s only connections to the outside world are a small window and her younger brother Jamie’s tales. When threats of German bombs arise in London, parents send their children to live in the country. Ada’s mother sends Jamie but refuses to let Ada go since no family would want a cripple like her. Determined to escape her prison and to stay with her brother, Ada slips away with Jamie, leaving behind her solitary existence. In the country, Ada and Jamie are placed with Susan Smith, a woman who lives alone and knows nothing about children. While threats of German spies and bombs cast a dark shadow of fear, these three misfits form a shared bond; however, forces out of their control threaten to tear them apart.

In *The War that Saved my Life*, a Newbery Honor Book for 2016, Kimberly Brubaker Bradley creates a masterfully moving tale of survival and love, set against the backdrop of World War II. For most, war brings destruction, chaos, fear, and loss; but for the three central characters in this novel, war brings salvation. The characterization in this novel is brilliant, authentic, and complex. The story is told through the young, honest voice of the main character, who has experienced some of the greatest abuse and hardships of life; as such, readers will experience a gamut of emotions, ranging from sorrow, rage, and fear to joy, happiness, and peace. Ada is a blossoming survivor, one who is just beginning to discover her true worth, strength, and courage. Her independence and ability to thrive are balanced by her tendency to withdraw and attack when shown kindness or love. Susan is an eccentric woman, with her strange ways, bouts of depression, and reclusive nature, but underneath is a heart full of love and compassion. The friendship and understanding that develops between Susan and the children testifies to the healing power of love that overcomes hate and fear.

*Justina McBride, CLJ*

**Award(s):** Newbery Honor Book

---

**My tata’s remedies = Los remedios de mi tata** / by Roni Capin Rivera-Ashford ; illustrated by Antonio Castro L.


LCCN 2014032021 ISBN 9781935955917, hard cover, $17.95.

1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 29 cm. Grades 3-6

E Rating: 4


A Pura Belpre Illustrator Honor book for 2016, Roni Capin Rivera-Ashford’s *My Tata’s Remedies* depicts a day in the life of Aaron, a young Latino boy, and his grandfather or “Tata,” who is valued in the neighborhood for his knowledge of herbal remedies and willingness to treat all who show up needing his help.

While Aaron spends the day with his Tata, neighbors drop by and ask for assistance with various complaints—a bee sting, diaper rash, a burn, an eye infection. Tata treats each one with a remedy involving herbs or common household items. Aaron is charged with finding the appropriate items on his grandfather's shelves. The “patients” are grateful and stay for empanadas and hot chocolate, and the story beautifully demonstrates how Tata’s willingness to help brings his community together. It is also a reminder of the value of extended family.
A glossary provides definitions and illustrations of the plants mentioned in the story (with a disclaimer noting that readers should not take the text as medical advice). Antonio Castro’s award-winning watercolor illustrations are cheerful and realistically depict the characters and evoke their culture.

The bilingual text makes this book of interest to those learning either English or Spanish. Comparing the renditions in both languages, however, one finds that the English and Spanish texts both reflect the spirit of the narrative but do not always correspond in an absolutely literal fashion (for example, “santo remedio,” which literally translates as “holy remedy,” is rendered as “magical cure,” and an English reference to a “high five” is not reflected in the Spanish text).

Angela L. Walsh, CLJ

**Award(s):** Belpré Illustrator Honor Books

---

**Gone crazy in Alabama / by Rita Williams-Garcia.**


293 p.; 22 cm. Grades 4-6

Fic Rating: 4


Why would the white sheriff, a Klan member, be calling Delphine’s great-grandmother “Mama”? And why would Uncle Darnell *shake his hand and welcome him into the house*? Delphine, at 56 years of age, is black and proud but grown enough to know to ask later, especially when Big Ma tells Ma Charles to “Stop telling the family business.” Who counts as family is the central question in this third book about the Gaither family.

The reader met the three Gaither sisters in *One Crazy Summer*, flying to Oakland in 1968 to spend a month with Cecile, their estranged poet mother. Their next appearance was in *P.S. Be Eleven*, when they were back home in Brooklyn, welcoming back their changed Uncle Darnell from Vietnam. In *Gone Crazy in Alabama*, Delphine, Vonetta, and Fern travel down home to Alabama, where what they think they know about the family is rearranged.

Ma Charles, their great-grandmother, delights in stirring up the family, especially her half-sister, Aunt Miss Trotter, who lives on the other side of the creek. Vonetta has an ongoing vendetta against Uncle Darnell, as well, and these conflicts drive the plot. When Vonetta is endangered, the Trotters, Johnsons, Gaithers, and Charleses come together to make sense of their dependence on one another.

In addition to asking, What does it mean to be “family”? and What does it mean to be black in 1969?, Williams-Garcia asks, What does it mean to be Christian? Big Ma, especially, reminds her mother and grandchildren of what is and isn’t Christian behavior as often as she reminds them of what is and isn’t Negro behavior. She does not critique her own animosities or fears, however; it is Delphine who does that and reaches an accord with who she wants to be to her family, and eventually, her world, in all their disparate parts. The larger issues of Civil Rights and Vietnam are not central to this tale, but it would be difficult to navigate some of the complexities in the present story without some familiarity with its backstory.

Diane Carver Sekeres, CLJ

**Award(s):** Coretta Scott King (Author) Book Award
MIDDLE SCHOOL FICTION

Roller girl / by Victoria Jamieson.

239 p. : col. ill. ; 21 cm. Grades 5-8
Fic Rating: 5
Friendship—Fiction. Best friends—Fiction.
Graphic novels.

Roller Girl by Victoria Jamieson is a beautifully written and vividly illustrated coming-of-age story set in Portland, Oregon. Through the eyes of the affable protagonist Astrid Vasquez, Jamieson leads readers on an amusing adventure of tween angst and self-discovery.

Although the narrative plays out predominantly in the niche world of the roller derby circuit in the Pacific Northwest, the themes of perseverance, loyalty in friendship, and being true to one’s self are universally appealing and relatable. Roller Girl tackles complex issues like adolescent bullying, pre-pubescent physical and emotional change, and developing an identity and self-worth with skillful compassion and humor that is nuanced and hopeful, rather than being trite, cynical, or preachy.

Astrid’s journey through the crucible of ever-fickle middle school relationships is both inspiring and entertaining. She must balance the external conflict of taunting and rejection from her peers and the internal conflict of self-doubt, all while balancing on a pair of roller skates. With the help of her new friend Zoey and her idol Rainbow Bite, Astrid learns to overcome obstacles and navigate through the awkward maze of pre-teen social interaction.

All the accolades and critical acclaim that Roller Girl has received are well-deserved. This opus by Victoria Jamieson is both a visual and literary work of art.

Schimri Yoyo, CLJ
Award(s): Newberry Honor Book

MIDDLE SCHOOL NONFICTION

Voice of freedom: Fannie Lou Hamer, spirit of the civil rights movement / Carole Boston Weatherford ; illustrated by Ekua Holmes.

34 p. : ill. ; 27 x 29 cm. Grades 5-8
B Rating: 5

Award-winning author Carole Boston Weatherford pens a biographical picture book comprising a collection of poems that celebrate the life of Fannie Lou Hamer, called the “number
one freedom-fighting woman” by Malcolm X (inside book jacket).

In 1917, Fannie Lou was born in Sunflower Country, Mississippi. She was the youngest of twenty children. At age six, Fannie Lou starts working in the fields, eventually dropping out of school in sixth grade. She grows up and marries Pap Hamer. They adopt two little girls when they couldn’t have children due to a sterilization operation.

Fannie Lou begins singing at rallies, endures a beating, stands trial, and receives death threats. In 1964 Fannie Lou joins the Mississippi Democratic Freedom Party, visits Africa with singer Harry Belafonte, marches with Dr. King, works for Stokely Carmichael, starts a HeadStart program, loses a bid for the state senate in 1971, and receives a lifelong service award in 1976.

Voice of Freedom includes direct quotations from Fannie Lou Hamer (in italicized text within the poems). Ekua Holmes’ illustrations were done in collage on paper. Weatherford’s poetry brings to life an unsung heroine of a turbulent era.

A bibliography as well as a timeline of her life and significant events in the Civil Rights Movement are also included. Sources for the direct quotations are noted. While the book is a little text-dense, it is an excellent read for older students who will learn how a poor, uneducated black woman had a powerful impact on our nation’s history.

Voice of Freedom won the 2016 Coretta Scott King / John Steptoe New Talent Illustrator Award. It is also a 2016 Robert F. Sibert Honor Book and a 2016 Caldecott Honor Book.

Recommended for public and school libraries.

Carol R. Gehringer, CLJ

Award(s): Caldecott Honor Book, Coretta Scott King/John Steptoe New Talent Illustrator Award, Sibert Honor Books

HIGH SCHOOL FICTION

The smoking mirror / by David Bowles. (Garza twins; 1)

[Place of publication not identified]: IFWG Publishing, 2015.
217 p.; 23 cm. Grades 7-12
Fic Rating: 3

A Pura Belpré Author Honor book for 2016, David Bowles’ The Smoking Mirror incorporates Aztec and Mayan mythology into a modern fantasy about 12-year-old twins, Johnny and Carol Garza.

Johnny and Carol Garza are trying to come to terms with the recent loss of their mother, whose abrupt disappearance remains a mystery, as well as their father who is becoming increasingly distant as he likewise struggles to cope with his loss. As a result of these issues, the twins are sent to live with their mother’s family in Mexico. There, they find out about the special powers that are their heritage, and ultimately embark on a quest into the Aztec underworld in search of their mother.

The story provides an informative glimpse into Mexican culture and its Mesoamerican mythology and folklore. The plot moves quickly—once in the Underworld, the twins are thrust from one danger into another. Through their adventures, Johnny
and Carol learn about their own strengths and grow closer as they come to rely on each other. With a large cast of gods and monsters, the book has invited comparison to Rick Riordan’s Percy Jackson series and will likely appeal to a similar audience, although Bowles’ writing is less polished and character development is lacking.

There is mild violence, shape-shifting, and one scene involving human sacrifice. The characters believe in the Aztec and Mayan deities and mysticism, and seem to treat their Catholic religion on a par with these beliefs. Despite some darker themes, the story is handled with a light touch. The book’s ending sets the scene for more to come in the series.

Angela L. Walsh, CLJ

Award(s): Belpré Author Honor Books

All American boys / Jason Reynolds, Brendan Kiely.

316 p.; 22 cm. Grades 8-12
Fic Rating: 5

With the recent focus on unrest between police and some community members, authors Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely have taken a storyline that is familiar and shown in All American Boys that things don’t change until we do. Rashad, a young black man, is in the hospital with severe injuries for no apparent reason. Quinn, a young white man, does not know who Rashad is, but his role model, a cop, is the one who beat Rashad. Quinn doesn’t know whose side to be on and that indecision activates the plot for the entire novel. The parallels between fiction and reality help Reynolds and Kiely capture their audience. The force of this book lies in the simplicity—two boys, two views, one incident—while dealing with complex issues of race, stereotypes, assumptions, and others. The story, told in alternating chapters by Rashad and Quinn, stays true to the teen voice and inner struggle of trying to understand incidents that don’t make sense, wanting to change but not knowing how, and how all of this affects relationships with family and friends.

The interaction between Rashad and Quinn explores community and family interactions. The well-executed story offers a strong plot and is neither sentimental nor preachy. The partnership between Reynolds, a black writer, and Kiely, a white writer, adds authenticity to voice.

Leroy Hommerding, CLJ

Award(s): King Author Honor Books

The boy in the black suit / Jason Reynolds.

255 p.; 22 cm. Grades 8-12
Fic Rating: 5

Having received the 2016 Coretta Scott King Author Honor book award, The Boy in the Black Suit by Jason Reynolds has a lot going for it.
Seventeen-year-old Matt thinks he can’t handle any more bad news after the death of his mother, but the people in his life prompt him to open up and expand his horizons.

Matt wears a black suit because of his work at the local funeral home, but the ways in which families deal with loss and death help him work through some of the questions in his own grieving process. His father spends a lot of time in bars escaping and that means Matt must reach out to him. Mr. Ray at the funeral parlor has both a listening ear and becomes more than just his boss. His mother left him a notebook titled “The Secret to Getting Girls for Matty” that includes some of her recipes and provides a wonderful way for the novel to raise important questions while moving forward.

This title warrants a place in public library collections as well as church and teen ones. It’s a fast read and the different relationships, including the girl Lovely that Matt meets and with whom he develops a romance, offer an interesting and enjoyable read that can hold a young male teen’s attention. Although it’s a book about a teen dealing with grief, it’s full of hope. 

Leroy Hommerding, CLJ

Award(s): King Author Honor Books

**Echo** by Pam Munoz Ryan begins with a fairy tale and ends with a fairy tale—and in between are three interweaving stories filled with historical details. The stories are set during the mid-20th century and revolve around three main characters: Friedrich in Nazi Germany, who desires to become a conductor and, because of a disfiguring facial birthmark, is threatened by a Nazi law requiring sterilization of those with deformities; Mike, an orphaned boy during the Great Depression who fears being separated from his younger brother and loves playing the piano; and Ivy in California, a young Mexican-American girl whose family’s fortune changes after a Japanese family is sent to an internment camp. The three stories all revolve around a magical harmonica. Ryan’s masterful tale, told from the perspective of the daughter of a Mexican migrant worker, brings careful research, emotional impact, and development of character to entice the reader. Its length at 592 pages may be off-putting to some youth, but the font is large with generous spacing between words and, when laughter and tears are experienced, the story will come together.

The unifying fairy-tale theme lets both history speak and contemporary social issues be probed. One can easily describe the story as fantasy, fairy tale, historical fiction, or multicultural story, blurring the lines between genres and literary forms. But magic prevails in the power of music in a beautifully written work. Through the harmonious use of music and lyrical language, Ryan weaves together a tale rich in family bonding, bravery, racial tolerance, and kindness to all. Each of the three protagonists face daunting challenges: rescuing a father, protecting a brother, and holding a family together.

Winner of a 2016 Newbery Honor and Kirkus Prize for Young Readers’ Literature (2015), *Echo* presents three compelling stories about inspiring beauty in a world seemingly overrun with fear.
and intolerance. This is a book well worth the time to read.

Leroy Hommerding, CLJ

Award(s): Newberry Honor Book

The ghosts of heaven / Marcus Sedgwick.

359 p. ; 22 cm. Grades 7-12
Fic Rating: 0
Space and time--Fiction. Science fiction.

Printz Award winner Marcus Sedgwick offers an introduction to his The Ghosts of Heaven which sets forth a brief history of the universe, from its cosmological beginning 4,600 million years ago until the evolution of mankind 4,598 million years later. This is followed by four episodes that can be read in any order but are connected by the image of spirals. Each of the four stories—"Whispers in the Dark," "The Witch in the Water," "The Easiest Room in Hell," and "The Song of Destiny"—has a character that embarks on a journey of discovery and survival. The first story ("Quarter One") takes place in the era of cave people in prehistory. "Quarter Two" takes place in the 17th century where the reader meets Anna, whom people call a witch. "Quarter Three" is set in a Long Island hospital in the 1920s, where a mad poet watches the oceans and knows its horrors. Finally, "Quarter Four" takes the reader into the future where an astronaut is on a spaceship sent from earth to colonize another world.

Each science and historical fiction story is thought-provoking and provides imagery and writing that makes the reading a pleasure. By tying all four stories tougher with the symbol of the spiral—e.g. found in the shells of snails, the patterns of birds in flight, the seeds in a sunflower, or the strands of the double helix of DNA, the reader is invited to check out both order and mystery. At times it is a challenge to figure out which is which for the spiral means something different to each of the story protagonists. There are situations involving violence, death, and sex (nothing explicit), as well as mild language and an overall sense of darkness.

Leroy Hommerding, CLJ

Award(s): Printz Honor Books

X : a novel / Ilyasah Shabazz with Kekla Magoon.

348 p. : 1 ill. ; 22 cm. Grades 9-12
Fic Rating: 0

Winner of the 2016 NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Literary Work for Youth/Teens and a 2016 Coretta Scott King Author Honor Book, X: A Novel is historical fiction written with such clarity and realism that it’s difficult to separate fact from fiction. The novel opens with the departure of Malcolm X (born Malcolm Little) from Michigan as a teen and follows him through his time in Boston and Harlem, culminating with his conversion to Islam and his decision to change his name while in prison in 1948.

The book is co-written by Ilyasah Shabazz, the daughter of Malcolm X, and Kekla Magoon, award-winning author of books for children and teens, who are able to generate an articulate story of a reckless young man finding himself.
The story does include some situations involving violence (including lynching), use of the term “n_gger,” non-graphic sex, drug and alcohol abuse, and criminal behavior.

*Leroy Hommerding, CLJ*

**Award(s):** King Author Honor Books

---

**The unlikely hero of room 13 B / Teresa Toten.**


289 p. ; 22 cm. Grades 8-12

Fic Rating: 5


Winner of the Governor General’s Literary Award in Canada, *The Unlikely Hero of Room 79B* approaches mental illness in a way that is both respectful and illuminating. The story centers around Adam, a 15-year-old with OCD (Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder). He lives with his mother who has her own challenges—receiving threatening anonymous notes and having a tendency to hoard. He receives help from his champion therapist, his dad and step-family, his best friend, and a kindly neighbor.

Author Teresa Toten has also won the Ruth & Sylvia Schwartz Children’s Book Award, the CBC Bookie Award and was nominated for the 2015 TD Canadian Children’s Literature Award. She enables the reader to grasp what Adam is struggling with as he lies, abuses his meds, and obsessively counts and taps while dealing with his mother’s shortcomings and his step-brother’s perfectionist tendencies. While offering an insightful door into what Adam and his support group friends are dealing with, Toten mixes humorous and serious moments, giving the novel a realistic feel and one most readers can relate to. Adam’s falling in love with one of the other teens, Robyn, in the OCD support group adds another interesting dimension (and entails moderate descriptions of teen physical attraction).

Teens will find it easy to stay with the story and, along the way, address first love, making friends and struggling with yourself.

*Leroy Hommerding, CLJ*

**Award(s):** Schneider Family Book Award, ages 13-18

---

**HIGH SCHOOL NONFICTION**

**Turning 15 on the road to freedom : my story of the 1965 Selma Voting Rights March / by Lynda Blackmon Lowery ; as told to Elspeth Leacock and Susan Buckley ; illustrated by PJ Loughran.**


127 p. : ill. (some col.); 24 cm. Grades 7-12

323.11 Rating: 4


Told in a straightforward, first-person manner, *Turning 15 on the Road to Freedom* is a memoir...
that describes 15 year-old Lynda Blackmon Lowery’s participation in civil rights activities in 1965. The primary source text with primary source photographs and cartoon-like illustrations aid to explain why and how she got involved—first as a helper for older children and then, with the wary permission of her parents, as an active walker in the marches.

The book includes many intricate details, such as what the marchers ate and where they slept, that will keep youth reading. Turning 15 on the Road to Freedom’s wide margins, large font, and visuals for comprehension make this an ideal title for developing readers. From the first sentence (“By the time I was fifteen years old, I had been in jail nine times”) to the last one (“Who has the right to vote is still being decided today”), the appealing narrative is compelling.

Leroy Hommerding, CLJ

Award(s): Sibert Honor Books

The boys who challenged Hitler : Knud Pedersen and the Churchill Club / Phillip Hoose.

vi, 198 p.: ill., maps ; 24 cm.  Grades 9-12  
940.53  Rating: 5

Pedersen, Knud--1925-2014--Juvenile literature.  
Churchill-klubben (Alborg, Denmark)--History--Juvenile literature.  
Sabotage--Denmark--History--20th century--Juvenile literature.  
Heroes--Denmark--Biography--Juvenile literature.  
Middle school students--Political activity--Denmark--Biography--Juvenile literature.  
Boys--Political activity--Denmark--Biography--Juvenile literature.  
World War, 1939-1945--Underground movements--

Recipient of multiple awards such as School Library Journal Best Book of the Year, Robert F. Sibert Informational Honor Book, Kirkus Reviews Best Book of the Year and Best Teen Book of the Year, just to mention a few, The Boys Who Challenged Hitler is an inspiring and riveting story of young resistance heroes. The story focuses on 15-year-old Knud Pederson who, with his brother and a handful of school buddies, resolved to take action against German occupation when Danish adults would not.

Author Phillip Hoose serves here as Pedersen’s interviewer and editor (25 hours of interviews with Pedersen and 1,000 e-mail exchanges plus many black-and-white period photographs), and includes segues and insets that allow Pedersen’s voice to direct the narrative. This account of a little-known resistance movement is an outstanding addition to the WWII canon. Sidebars, detailed maps, and period photos enable the reader to learn a lot about Denmark, the war, the boys’ families and lives, and the young heroes’ motives and bravery.

The details of the teen resistance group’s actions, along with the realistic inclusion of differences of opinion among group members, Pedersen’s crush on a neighbor girl, and reactions of classmates and teachers upon learning of the boys’ arrest, add to the story’s authenticity and appeal for teens. The writing is expressive and gives the reader a feel for what the boys are feeling/thinking.

Leroy Hommerding, CLJ

Award(s): Sibert Honor Books
**Enchanted air: two cultures, two wings: a memoir** / Margarita Engle.


192 p. : ill. ; 22 cm. Grades 6-10

B Rating *5


Margarita is a girl torn between two cultures and two countries, unsure of who she is and where she belongs. When she first visits her Mami’s birth home of Cuba as a little girl, she falls in love with the island’s beauty and discovers the magic of dancing trees. Back home in California, city life is much different. Trees do not dance, and teachers are quick to correct her about such fancies. There Margarita feels as if she is someone else altogether—a shy, misfit, rather than the brave island girl. Though California is her home for most of the year, she longs for summer visits to her island home where she hopes to reunite with her other self once more. When the Cuban Revolution erupts, Margarita worries about her island family. Tension and conflict increases between her two countries, further adding to her own inner battle of loyalty. Through words and poetry, Margarita discovers a sense of peace and belonging that helps her resolve her inner struggle to unite her two heritages.

In *Enchanted Air*, author Margarita Engle shares her story of growing up a Cuban-American during the Cold War. Using free verse, Engle provides a rare, heartfelt look into the emotions and thoughts of a bicultural child, making this book well deserving of the Pura Belpré Author Award of 2016. The confusion of torn loyalties and the feelings of never fully belonging are so eloquently expressed through original metaphors that readers will find themselves sharing this young girl’s inner conflict. The novel is made up of short vignettes or memories recounted from the author’s first 14 years of life; there is natural flow and years are given, dividing events and putting things into historical perspective. There is a brief reference to girls using specific drugs, having sex, and becoming pregnant.

A recurring theme in this book is finding wings to soar; Margarita finds her wings in the power of words and the promise of hope. This book is a testimony that words and hope have the ability to unite both within and without.

*Justina McBride, CLJ*

**Award(s):** Pura Belpré (Author) Award
PRIMARY FICTION

Just like I wanted / by Elinoar Keller and Naama Peleg Segal ; illustrated by Aya Gordon-Noy.

1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 26 x 22 cm. K-Grade 2

In Just Like I Wanted by Elinoar Keller and Naama Peleg Segal, a girl tries to create the perfect picture but somehow manages to keep drawing outside the lines. Rather than give up, the girl seeks to turn the picture into something more. Her imagination and continued efforts make this an adventure.

The illustrations are a mixture of collages and hand-drawn images. The combination of varied drawings conveys realistically what a child would likely do. The illustrations may be more appealing than the narrative poem itself, as the latter was translated so that some phrases and ideas are less clear upon a first reading and require extra effort. The story gives parents the opportunity to discuss how we all make mistakes at times.

Those familiar with The Girl Who Never Made Mistakes by Mark Pett and Barry Rubinstein or Beautiful Oops! By Barney Saltzberg will notice the work of imagination as the story progresses from blunder to wonder.

Leroy Hommerding, CLJ

The knight and the firefly : a boy, a bug, and a lesson in bravery / Tara McClary Reeves & Amanda Jenkins ; illustrations by Daniel Fernandez.

1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 21 cm. PS-Grade 3

The pirate and the firefly : a boy, a bug, and a lesson in wisdom / Tara McClary Reeves.

1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 22 cm. PS-Grade 3

The Knight and the Firefly and The Pirate and the Firefly compose the Firefly Chronicle series, adventure tales that incorporate Scripture into everyday lessons for children. The stories revolve around Oliver and his wise firefly friend, Phineas. The earnest and imaginative Ollie faces his everyday fears and problems with reassurances from his mother and Phineas that God is always loving and present.

In The Knight and the Firefly, “Oliver the Brave” plays wholeheartedly at being a mighty knight... until nighttime comes and his fear of the dark prevents him from getting to sleep. Phineas introduces Psalm 91 to show Oliver that God will protect and shelter him.

In The Pirate and the Firefly, Oliver wants to play pirate with the other kids...until their game involves actual stealing and bullying. Phineas uses Psalm 1 to remind Oliver that he can never go wrong if he has God as his leader and His Word as...
a treasure map.

The Firefly Chronicle books present situations and biblical messages that are easily relatable to young children. Oliver turns to his mom and faithful friend who are quickly able to offer God’s truths to help him navigate his troubles. The stories are charmingly illustrated by Daniel Fernandez with lots of action and expressive detail. The costumes, props, and intricately drawn outdoor scenes that are part of Oliver’s playacting enhance the clever tone and feel of the text.

Each book concludes with a Parent Connection page offering tips (“remember, read, think, and do”), which reinforce the lessons and offer a simple related craft.

Nina Ditmar, CLJ

Roger is reading a book / Koen Van Biesen ; translated by Laura Watkinson.

LCCN 2014031302 ISBN 9780802854421, hardcover, $16.
1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 26 cm. K-Grade 2
E Rating: 5

A grown man, Roger is settling down in his apartment to enjoy a book in peace and quiet. His anticipated joy is interrupted by Emily, an active youngster next door who sings, drums, juggles, and boxes with loud noise. As Roger’s irritation grows, he brings Emily a gift—a book of her own. When Roger’s dog demands attention, both Roger and Emily take the dog for a walk, and suddenly they have much to share in their reading.

Koen Van Biesen’s illustrations incorporate collage and line drawings that make it easy to linger in the reading. The visual effects in Roger Is

Reading a Book add a great deal to the story. There are, for example, clever changes in typography to signal soft or loud volume, and Roger’s dog is pictured often enough to create attention and delight in the variation, offering illustrations that bring both a smile and keep the story moving ahead.

Leroy Hommerding, CLJ

PRIMAR Y NONFICTION

The original cowgirl : the wild adventures of Lucille Mulhall / Heather Lang ; illustrated by Suzanne Beaky.

32 unnumbered p. : col. ill., col. map ; 26 cm. K-Grade 3
B Rating: 5

Lucille Mulhall defies convention in The Original Cowgirl: The Wild Adventures of Lucille Mulhall. Refusing to be limited to caring for home and family as most other girls in the 1890s and early 1900s, Lucille develops her passion for tending and riding horses, roping steer, and all things “cowboy.” A conversation with Teddy Roosevelt reinforces the trajectory of her life. Lucille’s amazing accomplishments can serve as an inspiration to all.
Heather Lang’s fun writing style opens Lucille’s world to modern readers. Facing the challenges of overcoming societal roles, Lucille’s character develops into a cowgirl who can do anything a man can do. With a few brief descriptions, Lang paints Lucille’s personality through words while illustrations by Suzanne Beaky capture the emotions of Lucille, her friends, and family through artwork. This biography moves quickly, flowing like a work of fiction. May we all develop the gifts and tasks God has given us with the single-minded determination that Lucille Mulhall shows in this delightful book.

Kristina Wolcott, CLJ

**INTERMEDIATE FICTION**

**The Island of Dr. Libris / Chris Grabenstein.**

242 p.; 22 cm. Grades 3-6
Fic Rating: 3

Agatha Award winner Chris Grabenstein, author of several middle school books, pens another humorous novel combining the elements of an adventure and a mystery.

In The Island of Dr. Libris, 12-year-old Billy Gillfoyle’s dad drops him off for a 10-week stay on a private island his mother rented. Billy is unaware that he is actually participating in a field test for Dr. Xiang Libris. When Billy drops his iPhone and is without other forms of electronic entertainment, he is forced to turn to books for his entertainment.

Billy finds the key to a locked bookcase. When he opens one of the books in Dr. Libris’ library, strange things begin to happen. Billy begins interacting with the characters in the text. His adventures take place with Hercules, Robin Hood, Pinocchio, The Three Musketeers, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, Pollyanna, Jack and the Beanstalk, Alice in Wonderland, and more.

As most of the characters originate from classic “boy” stories, this book might not appeal to girls as much as Grabenstein’s Lemoncello books do. While this book is imaginative and humorous, it doesn’t hold the reader’s attention as much as his other books do. The author references over classic books—but readers don’t need to be familiar with these titles to appreciate this book. It is an enjoyable read, especially for fans of Inkheart (Cornelia Funke).

Recommended for school and public libraries for older elementary and middle school students.

Carol R. Gehringer, CLJ

**Andrea Carter’s tales from the Circle C Ranch / Susan K. Marlow; illustrations by Leslie Gammelgaard and Melissa McConnell.**

151 p.; ill.; 22 cm. Grades 4-8
Fic Rating: 4

Andrea Carter lives with her family on a ranch in
Central California in the late 1800s. She is an adventurous girl who often jumps into situations without thinking through the consequences of her actions. Although this gets her into trouble, Andrea ends up learning valuable life lessons. Some of her adventures include competing in a horse race, giving a riding lesson to a friend, and dealing with a snake hiding in her school desk. Black and white sketches that wonderfully tie into Andrea’s adventures are included in the book.

Andrea Carter’s Tales from the Circle C Ranch is comprised of eleven short stories, set in the time frame from the years 1873 to 1881, that range from humorous to serious. The longer stories are split into chapters. Four of the stories take place during Andrea’s childhood, and seven stories take place when Andrea is a young teenager.

Susan K. Marlow’s inspiration for this book comes from questions asked by fans of the Circle C book series. At the beginning of each chapter is a brief note that tells readers where the stories fit into the timelines of the Circle C Adventures series and the Circle C Beginnings series. There are references in some of the stories to incidents outside of this book, so readers who want the complete picture about the incidents will need to read earlier books in the Circle C series.

Dianne Woodman, CLJ

INTERMEDIATE NONFICTION

The queen’s shadow : a story about how animals see / Cybèle Young.
ISBN 9781894786607, hardcover, $16.95.

The Queen’s Shadow: A Story About How Animals See incorporates interesting and informative facts about animal sight into an entertaining whodunit story.

On the night of the Queen’s Ball, the Queen’s shadow mysteriously disappears. Mantis Shrimp, the royal detective, takes charge of the investigation and questions each one of the animal guests to ascertain their guilt or innocence. Both marine animals and land animals are included in the story. Young readers will learn brief, enlightening facts, provided in sidebars, about how vision works for the animals when the detective questions them.

The illustrations accompanying the text are a mixture of bright and muted colors and grey tones. The combination of text and artwork not only enhances the understanding of the factual information presented in the book but also adds to the overall enjoyment of the story. A detailed explanation of the structure and function of human vision is provided in an endnote, and there is also an endnote with more in-depth facts about the animals. A glossary is provided to aid in young readers’ understanding of some terminology used in the book.

The Queen’s Shadow uniquely combines science and mystery in a way that will appeal to young readers. Cybele Young is the author and illustrator of this creative and educational book.

Dianne Woodman, CLJ
MIDDLE SCHOOL FICTION

Blue ribbon trail ride / Miralee Ferrell; [edited by] Don Pape, Ramona Tucker, Caitlyn Carlson. (Horses and friends; 4)
185 p.; 19 cm. Grades 3-7
Fic Rating: 4
Treasure hunt (Game)--Fiction. Horses--Fiction.

Miralee Ferrell, adult historical fiction author, presents the fourth book in her series especially for horse-loving preteens.

In Blue Ribbon Trail Ride, 13-year-old Kate wants to help her brother and others attend a summer camp. Her fundraising idea is to hold a scavenger hunt using horseback riders and their property. Katie and her friends ask local businesses to donate and sponsor prizes. It seems her efforts to help her autistic brother are paying off.

Then her mother’s antique jewelry box disappears—the one that held the entry fees for the hunt. They try their hand at solving the mystery of the missing money, but will they find it before the Blue Ribbon Trail Ride?

Miralee Ferrell’s love for horses is evident in her stories. More character-driven than plot-driven, Ferrell’s books focus on Kate and the challenges she faces every day. Kate is a normal teen who struggles with her attitude and prays for God to help her. The spiritual tone of the books is light, not preachy.

Told from Kate’s perspective but mostly in the third-person, the story will appeal to parents looking for a positive role model for their tween reader. Kate’s friends include a homeschooled boy who is just a friend and a Latina girl who is her best friend. Ferrell’s book has Kate’s reflections to help the reader learn from her experiences.

Recommended for school and public libraries, especially for fans of Dandi Daley Mackall.

Carol R. Gehringer, CLJ

HIGH SCHOOL FICTION

A time to speak / Nadine Brandes. (Out of time series; 2)
458 p.; map; 22 cm. Adult
Fic Rating: 4

Nadine Brandes continues her award-winning dystopian series where individuals have a personal clock counting down to the time of their death. This personal clock determines how much medical assistance one gets. But what happens when people outlive their clocks? Or when “new and improved clocks” are wrong?

In A Time to Speak, Parvin Blackwater returns to her former world to teach other Radicals how to survive on the other side of the Wall, or at least that is her intention. Her reception by her fellow villagers is cold; even her family is hostile. No one wants to accept her leadership.

Meanwhile, the Council is packing those who cannot afford the “new and improved” clocks onto cargo ships headed south. It is a new life “beyond
the wall.” Why are people dying before the new clocks zero out? How does God want her to be a spokesperson as she faces her own execution? What message will she convey?

Brandes creates a future world where new technology and government control are all too real and possible. Her books are imaginative with realistic characters and suspenseful plot twists. The writing gets intense, but the violence is appropriate for the story. Military control and conspiracy are part of the plot twists. Parvin struggles in her Christian faith, making her journey both a spiritual and physical one.

A Time to Speak is followed by A Time to Rise, coming in fall 2016. Recommended for fans of dystopian fiction and speculative fiction, especially readers of Krista McGee’s Anomaly series, Lisa Bergren’s Remnant series, Bonnie Calhoun’s Stone Braide Chronicles series, and Jill Williamson’s Safe Lands series.

Carol R. Gehringer, worthy2read.wordpress.com

The First Principle / Marissa Shrock.

237 p.; 22 cm. Grades 9-12
Fic Rating: 4

Marissa Schrock makes her debut with this dystopian novel about a 16-year-old who has second thoughts as she faces the government-ordered mandatory termination of her unplanned pregnancy.

In The First Principle, Vivica Wilkins is the governor’s daughter who speaks in defense of a pregnant student’s treatment by the Population Management Office, unaware that she will soon find herself in a similar situation. When Vivica’s pregnancy is discovered, it complicates her mother’s presidential nomination which is already surrounded by a conspiracy and intrigue.

Then the baby’s father–Ben–tries to convince her not to terminate the pregnancy. Vivica doesn’t know that Ben is a Christian and part of an underground movement to restore former freedoms. Ben tells her that, based on his beliefs, it would be wrong to terminate the pregnancy. As she reads Ben’s old Bible, Vivica struggles against what she has heard all her life about Christianity. Will she join the rebellion and save the life growing inside her? Can she turn away from her mother for this new faith? How will the conspiracy affect her?

The characters and plot are generally believable. Ben wants Vivica to continue the pregnancy but doesn’t really offer her alternatives. The cover is visually unappealing, but the premise of the book is interesting by presenting the situation: what if abortions were mandatory? Both viewpoints are presented as well as some plot twists.

Set in a futuristic North America where the government has ruled that Christianity is illegal and considered domestic terrorism, The First Principle will appeal to readers of The Hunger Games, Margaret Peterson Haddix, and the Divergent series. The First Principle is filled with fast action, espionage, religious warfare, and political intrigue.

Recommended for young adults and adults.

Carol R. Gehringer, worthy2read.wordpress.com
HIGH SCHOOL NONFICTION

The handy English grammar answer book / Christine A. Hult.
xii, 419 p. : ill. ; 24 cm. Grades 9-12
428.2 Rating: 5
English language--Grammar--Handbooks, manuals, etc.

The Handy English Grammar Answer Book by Christine A. Hult is a guide that aids in making writing memorable, especially in the areas of fundamental principles, grammar rules and punctuation, and ideas on writing for different occasions and audiences. This easy-to-use reference answers nearly 500 questions and offers fun acts on the English language and its usage. Sidebars with fun facts ease younger readers into the text before it shifts to a focus on grammar rules. These answers strike a balance between more complex explanations of grammar and style rules and direct examples of correct and incorrect usage. Sample letters, documents, and examples of how to avoid common mistakes illustrate helpful tips.

Appendices offer helpful resources concerning word phrases, frequently confused word pairs, model papers and sample writing for every occasion, and 20 common grammar “gremlins” and how to fix them. An index adds to the book’s usefulness. The layout is varied, contains plenty of spacing, and offers illustrations and boxes to enable the users to concentrate better. The photos with clever captions and extra notes add humor to the text.

The variety and organization of information included in The Handy English Grammar Answer Book make this reference tool highly useful for both beginners and professionals.

Leroy Hommerding, CLJ

The handy technology answer book / Naomi Balaban and James Bobick.
x, 451 p. ; 24 cm. Adult
600 Rating: 5
Technology--Miscellanea.

The Handy Technology Answer Book is an all-inclusive guide to technology that explores its many aspects: computers, communications, radio and television, automotive, technology and medicine, and more. A detailed yet concise history is given for each form of technology. Pictures depicting technology through the years significantly enhance the book. Statistical tables provide additional insight into how technology has evolved over time. A “Further Reading” section, full of recommendations for each of the topics explored in this answer guide, is included at the end for readers that want to dig into the topics more deeply. There is also a helpful index.

Authors Naomi Balaban and James Bobick manage to explain complicated technological systems in such a way that everyone can understand. They employ a question-and-answer format that will draw readers in and keep them interested as they move from one question to the next in pursuit of knowledge of all things technological. This Handy Answer Book is ideal for anyone wanting to learn about technology and how it has affected our world, and can be used as to spark interest and
lead to further research. Overall, *The Handy Technology Answer Book* is a fantastic tool for high school students and adults who desire to learn about this fascinating subject.

 Dani Seilhamer, CLJ
ADULT FICTION

Not by sight / Kate Breslin.
375 p. ; 22 cm. Adult
Fic Rating: 5
Spy stories. Historical fiction.

Grace Mabry and her friends discover that not all is as it appears in Not by Sight, a historical novel set during WWI. Led by a desire to support British troops—her brother specifically—Grace attends a costume ball with the intention of shaming any able-bodied male in attendance who should be fighting for king and country. When she spies Jack Benningham, Lord Roxwood, Grace presents him with a white flower symbolizing cowardice. The ensuing consequences from her father lead Grace to join the Women’s Forage Corp (WFC) where she joins five other women to work in agriculture. While working at the Stonebrooke estate, Grace experiences a new lifestyle, intrigue, and romance.

Through her excellent characterization, fascinating plot, and well-developed setting, Kate Breslin opens a window into WWI-era England. Though Not by Sight focuses on Grace’s and Jack’s lives, the stories of the WFC women sprinkled throughout the book add interest and historical detail. Part spy novel, part romance—the plot moves quickly. From a ballroom in England to the Stonebrooke estate, and even to prison, the settings provide further insight into the characters, and some wonderful descriptions are presented through clever dialogue. As the novel progresses, the mood of intrigue and blossoming romance is suffused with the hope that Grace naturally plants wherever she goes.

There are several worthy themes throughout. The primary themes focus on the importance of realizing that not all people or situations are as they seem, and the magnitude of trusting God to transform our meager efforts into something beautiful and worthwhile. The characters grow in their faith as expressed in Grace’s response to a question about faith: "We live by it..." (p. 366)

Kristina Wolcott, CLJ

A spy’s devotion / Melanie Dickerson.
(The Regency spies of London; 1)
LCCN ISBN 9781503950511, paperback, $12.95.
314 pages ; 21 cm. Adult
Fic Rating: 5
Great Britain--Politics and government--1811-1820--Fiction.
London (England)--1811-1820--Fiction.
Love--Fiction.

Award-winning author Melanie Dickerson ventures into a new historical era—the Regency period—after penning numerous medieval fairy tale retellings.

In A Spy’s Devotion, wealthy British officer Nicholas Langdon returns home to heal from a war injury. He tries to fulfill a dying soldier’s request to deliver his coded diary to a friend. While at a ball, he meets Julia Grey, who is living with her aunt, uncle, and cousin. Lacking a dowry and knowing her cousin has her sights set on Nicholas, she tries to keep her distance. However, shortly after the ball, the diary is stolen and Julia’s uncle appears to be behind the theft. Nicholas grows more attracted to Julia as he tries to help uncover those behind the theft and those it threatens.
Secret passages, overheard conversations, and coded messages contribute to the intrigue, mystery, and adventure in this story. Can they uncover the plot’s mastermind in time to avert disaster? Can Julia avoid being forced to marry a man of her uncle’s choosing?

A Spy’s Devotion is filled with a clear (but not preachy) faith element, a carefully crafted plot, richly drawn characters, and historical details. As with her earlier works, Dickerson’s stories include well-written narratives and wholesome relationships while still building a strong attraction between the main characters, making this a good choice for teen and adult readers.

Recommended for young adults and adults who are young at heart, and also for fans of Jane Austen’s Northanger Abbey.

Carol R. Gehringer, worthy2read.wordpress.com

Always watching : a novel / Lynette Eason. (Elite guardians; 1)

Grand Rapids, MI: Revell, 2016.
329 p. ; 23 cm. Adult
Fic Rating: 4

Bestselling author Lynette Eason kicks off a new romantic suspense series featuring a female-owned agency of female bodyguards.

In Always Watching, Olivia Edwards, part-owner of the agency, learns one of her employee bodyguards is severely injured in the line of duty. Her employee was protecting Wade Savage, a radio psychiatrist, from a stalker—possibly a rabid fan. Olivia takes over bodyguard duty and tries to discover the stalker’s identity before the violence against Wade turns deadly.

Olivia’s team works around the clock to protect Wade, as the threats to Wade and his family—and even Olivia—increase in intensity. Is the stalker behind everything that is happening to them? Is it more than a crazed fan? Can they stop the mastermind’s ultimate plan?

As always, Eason is a superb storyteller, weaving plot twists with her character development. Her fast-paced action keeps the reader on the edge of their seat with a realistic plot that grabs the reader’s attention until the very end. The romance and faith are present but not overpowering. Violence in the story is appropriate but not too graphic.

Always Watching differs slightly from other romantic suspense novels because it features a woman carrying a gun on its cover. Without Warning (book 6) is coming out in late summer 2016.

Eason’s newest series will interest fans of DiAnn Mills, Dee Henderson, Dani Pettrey, and Irene Hannon. Recommended for adult collections in public libraries.

Carol R. Gehringer, worthy2read.wordpress.com

Undaunted hope / Jody Hedlund. (Beacons of hope; 3)

374 p. ; 22 cm. Adult
Fic Rating: 4

Jody Hedlund pens the third installment in her
historical fiction series set in the coastal villages of Michigan’s Great Lakes during the 1870s. *Hearts Made Whole* and *Love Unexpected*, the first two books in this series, were reviewed by CLJ in Sept./Oct. 2015.

In *Undaunted Hope*, Tessa Taylor arrives to teach the miners’ children, unaware that the town requested a male teacher. Since it is too close to winter and too late to replace her, she is allowed to stay.

Two of her students decide she should marry their widowed father, Michael Bjorklund the lightkeeper. Meanwhile, his brother Alex, the assistant lightkeeper, is also interested in her—she has never had two men interested in her before! But she wants nothing to do with their life—she was raised in a lightkeeper’s family and hated that life. She isn’t bitter, just afraid to be open to loving a lightkeeper.

In this northern town, the mining supervisor runs the town like a tyrant. None of the other mining families want to stand up to him because they fear losing their jobs. As Tessa teaches, she feels someone is watching her every move, laying a trap that will reveal her past mistakes. Which brother will she choose? Will her past overcome her possible future?

Hedlund creates believable, flawed characters, making them easy for the reader to relate to. While this book stands alone, readers might find it helpful to read the earlier books (*Hearts Made Whole* and *Love Unexpected*) in order to understand the significance of the driftwood cross. These books are a blend of romance and mystery with well-researched historical detail. The fourth book in this series, *Forever Safe*, will be published in June 2016.

Recommended for public and church libraries.

*Carol R. Gehringer, CLJ*

---

**The painter’s daughter / Julie Klassen.**


458 p.; 22 cm. Adult (HS)

Fic Rating: 5

Triangles (Interpersonal relations)--Fiction.


Christian fiction.

Award-winning author Julie Klassen pens her newest inspirational Regency novel, filled with love and redemption and family relationships.

In *The Painter’s Daughter*, Sophie Dupont helps her father by painting the backgrounds in his work, unbeknownst to others. When not painting, Sophie wanders the Devon coast where she meets fellow artist Wesley Overtree.

Captain Stephen Overtree, home on leave, is sent to find his brother. He travels to Devonshire and meets Sophie. When he realizes that Wesley has sailed to Italy without knowing Sophie is pregnant, Stephen offers to save her from scandal by marrying her before he returns to his regiment. How will Wesley react to the news that he is the father of Sophie’s child and that she is now married to Stephen? Will Sophie regret her decision?

Klassen is known for her excellent plot and character development. The faith elements are not heavy-handed. Elements of a gothic novel—family secrets and secret passages—enrich the storyline. Stephen and Sophie are likeable characters, and the secondary characters (like their former nanny) are delightful as well.

Klassen moves beyond the typical plot of a heroine ruined by one brother and saved by another by adding a number of twists to keep the reader’s attention. Her addition of battle scenes captures the danger faced by the soldiers during
the Napoleonic War (Stephen doubts he will return after the war and believes that Sophie will most likely become a widow before Wesley’s return). It is a fascinating read, filled with the mystery and attention to historical details that one comes to expect from the author. Discussion questions are also included.

Recommended for adults and older teens (ages 15+), especially for fans of historical fiction, and Jane Eyre!

Carol R. Gehringer, worthy2read.wordpress.com

The curiosity keeper / Sarah E. Ladd. (A treasures of Surrey novel; 1)  
341 p. ; 22 cm. Adult  
Fic Rating: 4  


In The Curiosity Keeper, Camille Iverness lives with her father James in a London curiosity shop filled with unusual items. Camille becomes frightened when James angers some customers by disappearing for days, and customers tell Camille he has been cheating them.

Meanwhile, Jonathan is the village apothecary, caring for his sister since the passing of their mother. His father lost the family heirloom, the Bevoy—a ruby rumored to bless or curse its possessor. When Jonathan tries to locate the ruby in order to restore the family fortune, he traces it to the curiosity shop and its owner, just as Camille and the shop are being attacked. Jonathan rescues Camille and helps her get away.

Ladd writes descriptive narrative with hints of mystery and suspense woven into the plot. The book starts out slowly, as does the relationship between Camille and Jonathan. The historical details enrich the plot but the novel has a gothic feel to it. Her book is plot-driven with plenty of twists as Jonathan and Camille attempt to find the Bevoy. Who is behind the attack? Is it the curse of the ruby or something more sinister? Does Jonathan really care for her or is she a means to finding the ruby?

Recommended for adult collections in public libraries. The new series will appeal to fans of Regency fiction, Julie Klassen, and Jane Austen. Each book includes discussion questions for reading groups. The second book, Dawn at Emberwilde, will be available in May 2016.

Carol R. Gehringer, CLJ

New York: Center Street, 2015.  
240 p. ; 21 cm. Adult  
Fic Rating: 4  

Matthew "The Rocket" Rising seems to have it all—he married his high school sweetheart, Audrey, and is the top-ranked football player in the country as he transitions from playing college ball to joining the NFL. Then one night changes the script of his whole life.

Twelve years later, Matthew is released from
prison with only one thing on his mind: finding his wife, who has been in hiding since Matthew entered prison. Playing professional football is not even on Matthew’s radar. He just wants his wife back. However, in the process of finding Audrey, Matthew meets Dee, a talented quarterback who just needs some solid coaching. Dee begs Matthew to help him, but doing so would violate his parole. Will he risk life in prison to help Dee and hopefully win Audrey back in the process?

_A Life Intercepted_ is a story of unrelenting hope and selfless forgiveness. The characters overcome difficult relationship obstacles on the way to forgiveness. This inspirational story makes readers question whether they would be able to choose love over hate if they were ever in such a situation. Charles Martin has done a remarkable job crafting an entertaining story that leads readers to examine their own lives. The picture of hope, love, and forgiveness that Martin paints is simply beautiful.

_Dani Seilhamer, CLJ_

_In Cold Shot_, former SWAT team sniper Griffin McCray lives a quiet existence as a park ranger at Gettysburg. When a present-day body is uncovered in the Civil War cemetery, forensic anthropologist Finley Gray is called in. So is Griffin’s childhood friend, FBI agent Declan Grey, reopening a past he thought was over. But someone doesn’t want the body identified and will stop at nothing to end the investigation, putting them all in danger. Can they unravel this mystery before it turns deadly?

As with Pettrey’s Alaskan Courage series, this series features strong flawed personalities (male and female) with real problems that readers will find they can relate to. The developing relationship between Finley and Griffin is clean and well developed; they recognize that in order to face a possible future, each must deal with the past first. The romance element is clean and appropriate for readers in high school. The faith element is very evident; when the main characters pray, their prayers are included in the text, making the faith element more obvious.

The plot is intriguing, filled with twists that will keep the reader up late, until the final page is read. The mastermind behind it all and the motive are unexpected. Suspense, romance, action, and danger—it all adds up to a thrilling read!

Recommended for adult collections in public libraries. Fans of Dee Henderson, DiAnn Mills, and Irene Hannon will enjoy this new series.

_Carol R. Gehringer, worthy2read.wordpress.com_

_Award-winning author Dani Pettrey pens a new romantic suspense series set in coastal Maryland, about four childhood friends who choose careers in law enforcement but drift apart when one friend disappears before graduation._
You're the one that I want / Susan May Warren. (Christiansen family; 6)

304 p. ; 21 cm.  Adult  
Fic  Rating: 4  

Susan May Warren concludes her series set in Deep Haven, Minnesota, featuring the six adult children in the Christiansen family and their relationships. (See reviews of the earlier titles in Christian Library Journal, May/June 2014, September/October 2014, Jan/Feb/Mar/Apr 2015, and November/December 2015.) Each book opens with a letter from their mother, giving insight into the main character. Owen has been the prodigal since the second book in the series, but he is "more than the sum of his mistakes" (back cover).

In You're the One That I Want, Owen Christiansen works on an Alaskan crabbing boat and becomes attracted to the no-nonsense Elisa "Scotty" McFlynn, the captain's daughter and a former police officer. A near-death accident at sea changes their relationship.

His brother Casper arrives in Alaska to bring his brother Owen home, unaware he is wanted for questioning in connection with a murder back in Minnesota. Scotty is hired to escort Casper back to Deep Haven. Prodigal son Owen returns back home, bringing the issues that have been dogging him since his career-ending injury. Will he forgive himself and accept God's forgiveness as he finally faces his past and a possible future with Scotty?

Warren writes character-driven, contemporary books that make readers care about the family. The faith element is evident but not preachy. Warren also does an excellent job of building suspense as the truth of the murder unfolds. More than just romances, these are stories of flawed individuals with very messy lives and life-changing mistakes. God teaches them about forgiveness of others and themselves. Warren uses these imperfect lives to teach the reader about God's gift of grace and the strength it takes to live a life of faith.

Recommended for public libraries and church libraries.

Carol R. Gehringer, CLJ
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adler, David A.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alemanda, Beatrice</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All American boys</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always watching : a novel</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrea Carter's tales from the Circle C Ranch</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrews, Troy</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balaban, Naomi</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beacons of hope; 3</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue ribbon trail ride</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowles, David</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The boy in the black suit</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The boys who challenged Hitler: Knud Pedersen and the Churchill Club</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradley, Kimberly Brubaker</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brandes, Nadine</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breslin, Kate</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chesapeake valor; 1</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christiansen family; 6</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cold shot</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The curiosity keeper</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>de la Pena, Matt</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dickerson, Melanie</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't throw it to Mo!</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eason, Lynette</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Echo : a novel</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elite guardians; 1</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emmanuel's dream : the true story of Emmanuel Ofosu Yeboah</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enchanted air : two cultures, two wings : a memoir</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engle, Margarita</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fang, Suzhen</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fenske, Jonathan</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferrer, Miralee</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding Winnie : the true story of the world's most famous bear</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The first principle</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funny bones : Posada and his Day of the Dead calaveras</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garza twins; 1</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ghosts of heaven</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gone crazy in Alabama</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GordonNoy, Aya</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grabenstein, Chris</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandma lives in a perfume village</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The handy English grammar answer book</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The handy technology answer book</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hedges, Jody</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hult, Christine A.</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Island of Dr. Libris</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamieson, Victoria</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just like I wanted</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Klassen, Julie</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The knight and the firefly : a boy, a bug, and a lesson in bravery</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ladd, Sarah</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lang, Heather</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last stop on Market Street</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A life intercepted : a novel</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowery, Lynda Blackmon</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mango, Abuela, and me</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marlow, Susan K.</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin, Charles</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mattick, Lindsay</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medina, Meg</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My tata's remedies = Los remedios de mi tata</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not by sight</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The original cowgirl : the wild adventures of Lucille Mulhall</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of time series; 2</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The painter's daughter</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penguin Young Readers. Level 2</td>
<td>7, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pettrey, Dani</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A pig, a fox, and a box</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The pirate and the firefly : a boy, a bug, and a lesson in wisdom</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The queen's shadow : a story about how animals see</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reeves, Tara McClary</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reeves, Tara McClary</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Regency spies of London; 1</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reynolds, Jason</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reynolds, Jason</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rivera-Ashford, Roni Capin</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roger is reading a book</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roller girl</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryan, Pam Munoz</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savage, Stephen</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sedgwick, Marcus</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shabazz, Ilyasah</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shrock, Marissa</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The smoking mirror</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A spy's devotion</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supertruck</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thompson, Laurie Ann</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A time to speak</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonatiuh, Duncan</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toten, Teresa</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A treasures of Surrey novel; 1</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trombone shorty</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turning 15 on the road to freedom : my story of the 1965 Selma Voting Rights March</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undaunted hope</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The unlikely hero of room 13 B</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Van Biesen, Koen</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice of freedom : Fannie Lou Hamer, spirit of the civil rights movement</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walker, Sally M.</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The war that saved my life</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warren, Susan May</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weatherford, Carole Boston</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Williams-Garcia, RitaWilliams-Garcia, Rita</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winnie : the true story of the bear who inspired Winnie-the-Pooh</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The wonderful fluffy little squishy</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X : a novel</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young, Cybele</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You're the one that I want</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>