

ISSN 2577-0527



WOW REVIEW

READING ACROSS CULTURES
VOLUME XII, ISSUE 2

Winter 2019

Jane Addam's Children's Book Award Winners

Worlds
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College
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WOW Review: Volume XII Issue 2

Winter 2019

Jane Addams Children's Book Award Winners

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Volume XII Issue 2: Jane Addams Children's Book Award Winners

Introduction and Editor's Note

In this issue we welcome guest editors Chloe Hughes and Heather Palmer, who, with members of the 2018 and 2019 Jane Addams Children's Book Award committee, profile books that won this award. The organization of the titles in this issue is therefore chronological rather than alphabetical.

Significant books are often considered for multiple awards and show up on personal lists of recommended books. So this issue profiles several titles that have already been reviewed. As editors we try to avoid duplicate reviews because there are so many wonderful books that need reviewing! However, in this case, we welcomed the opportunity to hear an additional perspective for two titles previously reviewed, *The Day the War Came* (Davies, 2018) and *The Night Diary* (Hiranandani, 2018).

The Spring 2020 issue of *WOW Review* is open-themed and we invite readers to submit reviews of recent children's and young adult books that highlight intercultural and global perspectives. Submission deadline: March 15, 2020.

Co-Editors, Susan Corapi and Prisca Martens



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A Showcasing of the 2018 and 2019 Jane Addams Children's Book Award

Sponsored by the Jane Addams Peace Association, the Jane Addams Children's Book Award has been presented annually since 1953 to remember and sustain the extraordinary legacy of Jane Addams (1860 -1935) – a feminist, social reformer, pacifist and peace activist. Addams co-founded one of the first American settlements, Hull House, with her friend Ellen Gates Starr in 1889. The house, located in Chicago, provided services to recent immigrants who worked long hours but lived in abject poverty in over-crowded, disease-ridden tenements. Over time, the settlement expanded into a campus with more than 10 buildings that provided a public kitchen, bathing facilities, childcare, educational courses, recreation, a library, an art gallery, and social programs for European immigrant women and children. Addams served on several influential education boards and investigated social ills -- poor housing and working conditions, child labor, domestic violence, sanitation issues -- becoming a prominent spokesperson for societal reform. Unabashedly political, Addams was the first International President of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom in 1915. She also served on the executive board of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), campaigned for women's suffrage, and actively opposed American involvement in the First World War. The Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) even kept a file documenting her controversial political activities and determined that she was "the most dangerous woman in America." But in 1931, for her commitment to finding an end to war, Addams was awarded a Nobel Peace Prize.

Addams passionately held the conviction that peace is dependent on guaranteeing justice for all. As she articulated in her essay, "The Subjective Necessity of Social Settlements," republished in *Philanthropy and Social Progress* in 1893, "The good we secure for ourselves is precarious and uncertain ... until it is secured for all of us and incorporated into our common life" (p. 7). More important than her beliefs was her ability to transform them into actions, which were distinctly unpopular in the early part of the twentieth century. Courageous, tenacious and political, Addams used her imagination and creativity as a means to disrupt commonplace injustices. She considered her work not only as her responsibility, but also as a life-transforming opportunity -- a belief she sought to instill far and wide.

Addams' advocacy and action are the central tenet of the Jane Addams Children's Book Award, which recognizes outstanding children's literature that inspires young people to contemplate the meanings of peace, social justice, equity, and global community. The winning books are selected by a national committee of members who are social justice activists with expertise in children's literature (librarians, parents, teachers, teacher-educators, child advocates, anti-bias professionals) and who represent diverse perspectives within the United States. In order to be eligible for selection, a book "should be suitable for children ages five through fourteen, may be of any length, genre or format, and must be published in the United States or Canada in the calendar year preceding the Award year." According to Award criteria, Winner and Honor books must exemplify literary, visual and aesthetic excellence and invite dialogue, passionate response, purposeful reflection, and deep questioning related to one or more of the following:

- How can people work with compassion, empathy, and activism to advance Jane Addams' conviction that achieving true peace means more than ending war, it means ensuring justice for all people?
- How can people of all racial identities, gender identities, religions, abilities, classes, and cultures live and work together equitably and peaceably?
- How can people, especially young people, break cycles of fear? How can they respond creatively, nonviolently and humanely to injustice and conflict?
- How can people work together to address problems and oppression caused by prejudice, war, violence, social injustice, racism, sexism, heteronormativity, ageism, classism, ableism and all hierarchies of power and opportunity?
- How can people build respect and understanding for differences and for the worth and importance of all individuals and groups?
- How can people work for power and equality for women throughout the world?

Since 1993, one Winner has been selected in two categories: Books for Younger Children and Books for Older Children. Up to four Honor books are also awarded each year. In this Special Issue of the *WOW Review*, the selection committee Chair and several of its members who served from 2017- 2019 are delighted to celebrate the Winner and Honor books in 2018 and 2019.

We believe these books go beyond acting as windows and mirrors in our complex and diverse world, developing readers' critical consciousness of societal realities and providing an opportunity to reflect on difficult ethical situations. They help us question grave imbalances of power and model resistance and activism in creative and nonviolent ways. Eschewing preachy messaging, they inspire righting the wrongs of the world through literary and aesthetic brilliance and provide the tools for readers to become informed doers.

May reading set you free!

Guest Editors:

Chloë Hughes (Committee Member, 2018 and 2019)

Heather Palmer (Committee Member, 2014 and 2015, Committee Chair, 2016-2019)

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Tracy Randolph (Committee Member, 2011-2013; 2018 and 2019)

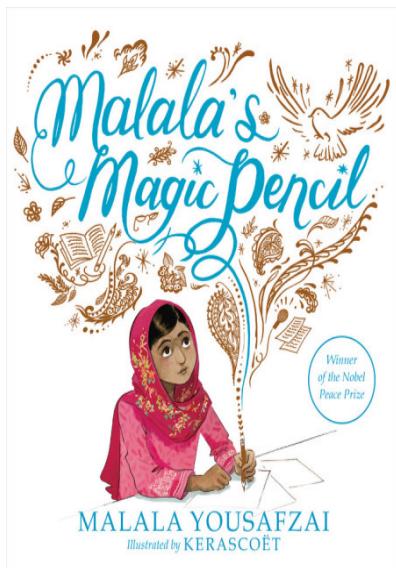
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Malala's Magic Pencil

Written by Malala Yousafzai

Illustrated by Kerascoët

Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2017, 48 pp.

ISBN: 978-0316319577

2018 Jane Addams Children's Book Award Winner, Books for Younger Children

Malala's Magic Pencil is Malala Yousafzai's sensitive retelling of her remarkable story for younger readers. Many people are familiar with Malala Yousafzai's incredible work bringing attention and access to quality education for young girls in her homeland of Pakistan. She began writing for the BBC at age eleven about life under the Taliban, spreading the word about girls who had left school out of fear of the regime in

her war-torn country. Her steadfast courage, even after a brutal Taliban attack on Malala and other girls as they rode the bus home from school, is revealed in *Malala: My Story of Sticking Up for Girls' Rights* (2018) as well as her best-selling memoir *I Am Malala: How One Girl Stood Up for Education and Changed the World* (2016).

One might wonder about anyone's ability to weave such a dark story into a book appropriate for younger readers. Through the magic of her words, Yousafzai does just that. In *Malala's Magic Pencil*, she shares her parents' love and inspiration, her passion for education, and her conviction that the world can be a better place when people work together.

As a young girl in Pakistan, Malala wishes for a magic pencil that can stop time, put a lock on her bedroom door so her brothers won't pester her, draw beautiful dresses for her mother, and make the world a more peaceful place -- ordinary wishes from a seemingly ordinary girl. But Malala is anything but ordinary. As she reveals in the picturebook, "My voice became so powerful that the dangerous men tried to silence me. But they failed." Fierce in asserting the importance of education for girls verbally and in writing, Malala realizes she possesses all the magic she needs -- in her words and in her work. Indeed, Malala's resolve is not weakened by the Taliban. Her story is cherished by people the world over, and in recognition of her courage to champion universal access to education, she became the youngest person to win the Nobel Peace Prize, in 2014, at the age of 17. Malala's story is one of empowerment, equality, and using one's voice to speak out for justice.

Lively, even whimsical, illustrations convey Malala's personal triumph and her continued commitment to peace and justice. Gold ink drawings are interspersed with watercolor to create a sense of magic. Small snapshot-like images of her girlhood dreams, larger close-ups of her with her father, and detailed drawings of her hometown gently bring her story to life for younger readers. Though the dangers she and other girls faced are conveyed in this picturebook, readers are left with a strong sense of inspiration and hope. One can imagine Malala surrounded by children and adults, addressing them directly, just as she does in the

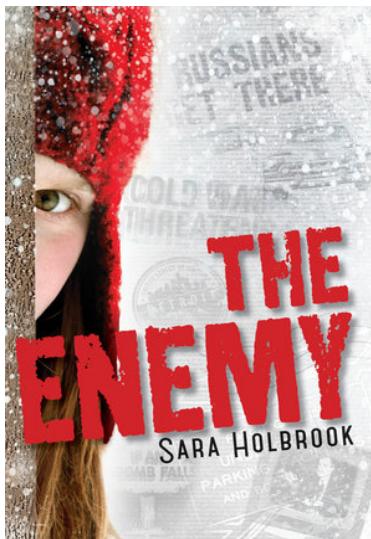
text. Her message is simple: "One child, one teacher, one book and one pen can change the world."

Malala's Magic Pencil conveys the extraordinary bravery of young activist girls as also seen in *The Youngest Marcher: The Story of Audrey Faye Hendricks, A Young Civil Rights Activist* (Cynthia Levinson and Vanessa Brantley-Newton, 2017) and *Brave Girl: Clara and the Shirtwaist Makers' Strike of 1909* (Michelle Markel and Melissa Sweet, 2013), Addams Award Winner in 2014. Older readers may wish to examine women activists in *Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice* (Phillip Hoose, 2009), a 2010 Addams Award Honor book; and *The Girl from the Tar Paper School: Barbara Rose Johns and the Advent of the Civil Rights Movement* (Teri Kanefield, 2014), Addams Award Winner in 2015. Each of these books examines female activists who fought hate and injustices in peaceful and creative ways. *Steamboat School* (Deborah Hopkinson and Ron Husband, 2016), a 2017 Addams Award Winner; and Caldecott Medal Winner, *Henry's Freedom Box* (Ellen Levine and Kadir Nelson, 2007) feature male activists and complement the story of Yousafzai's unwavering campaign for education and peace.

Tracy Randolph, St. Andrew's-Sewanee School, Sewanee, TN



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The Enemy: Detroit 1954
Written by Sara Holbrook
Calkins Creek, 2017, 224 pp.
ISBN: 978-1629794983

2018 Jane Addams Children's Book Award
Winner, Book for Older Children

Marjorie Campbell, in typical 6th-grade fashion, does her best to obey her parents, fit in at school, and please her best friend. It's the height of McCarthyism, and fear and paranoia are pervasive. Talk about the enemy permeates virtually every aspect of her life, whether it is snowball fighting, reading "un-American" books, banning suspicious neighbors, or simply wearing a red scarf. It's in this unique setting that Marjorie relentlessly questions her family, her friends and herself. Marjorie's veteran father keeps telling her "the war is over, kid," (p. 238) but is it? All Marjorie sees is a growing intolerance -- her once friendly and accepting neighbors now shun newcomers whom they see as foreign and dangerous. Where they see enemies, Marjorie sees only people just like her and her family.

"All the families I know come from somewhere else. Piper's family is Slovak. Mary Virginia's is Irish like Bernadette's, but they haven't been here as long. My family came over on the boat when ships still had sails, but both Piper and Mary Virginia have grandmothers who don't speak English. Being from somewhere else is pretty normal in our neighborhood." (p. 51)

Marjorie is left to wonder who exactly is "the enemy?" Her Mom tells her "she's met the enemy and it's Mrs. Pearson at the library" (p. 93). Frank considers the Nazis to be his enemy. Her "Dad was previously enemies with the Nazis, but now that he's signed a loyalty oath, he's enemies with the commies" (p. 93). Mrs. Ferguson's enemies are the Italians and the Lutherans. For Marjorie's school friends, a new student who recently arrived from Canada, but is clearly German, becomes the enemy.

As Marjorie grapples with the notion of "the enemy," readers contemplate the origins of hatred toward others. How it is that we end up labeling someone as our enemy? Why do we create dangerous stereotypes? What steps need to be taken to move past a label that has been assigned to a person or group? Readers experience a wide range of emotions as they turn pages. There are passages that make readers laugh, wince, and leave them pondering their own actions had they been in Marjorie's shoes. Quite possibly, readers will be left with more questions and concerns than were answered or resolved in the book. Holbrook would say this is just as it should be:

"Books [...] stretch your brain, so there's enough room for lots of ideas: good ideas, bad ideas, ideas different than the ideas you grow up with. From those ideas you can make your own ideas, different ideas. Different is a good way to be. Don't let anyone tell you otherwise." (p. 189)

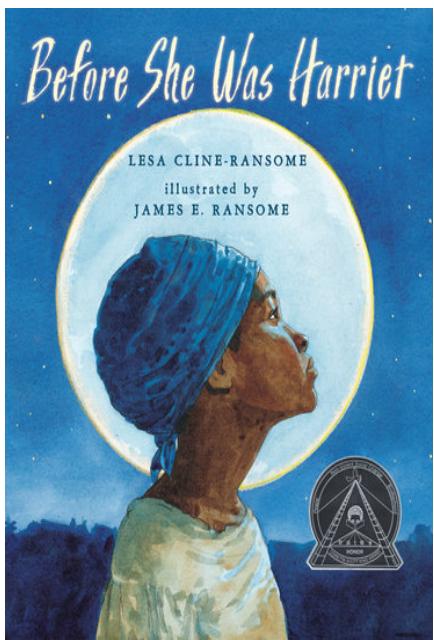
A well-published poet and educator with several books to her name, Holbrook debuted as a middle-grade author with *The Enemy*. On her website (<https://www.saraholbrook.com/blog/>), the author explains that she writes what she "knows and wonders about," and that writing "helps [her] see what's true." *The Enemy* helps readers also see "what's true" by inviting them to experience daily life during the Cold War years -- the loyalty oath, blacklisting, book bans and the constant reminder that "spies are in the midst." *The Enemy: Detroit 1954* was awarded the 2018 Jane Addams Children's Book Award for its genuine portrayal of a resilient girl navigating ethical dilemmas and raising questions that further Jane Addams' conviction that true peace means ensuring justice for all people. It was also named a YALSA 2018 Quick Pick for Reluctant Readers.

Holbrook's novel could be paired with additional texts that throw light on the fears that prevailed during the mid-late Twentieth Century, as found in Deborah Wiles' trilogy of documentary novels -- *Countdown* (2010), *Revolution* (2017), and *Anthem* (2019). For books that present characters who, like Marjorie in *The Enemy: Detroit 1954*, stand strong in the face of injustice and ethical dilemma, along with Addams Award Honor books *Wolf Hollow* by Lauren Wolk (2016), *Fred Korematsu Speaks Up* by Laura Atkins, Stan Yogi, and Yutaka Houlette, (2017) and Supriya Kelkar's 2017 novel, *Ahimsa*.

Heather J. Palmer, Edina Public Schools, Minnesota



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Before She Was Harriet

Written by Lesa Cline-Ransome

Illustrated by James E. Ransome

Holiday House, 2017, 32 pp.

ISBN: 978-0823420476

2018 Jane Addams Children's Book Award Honor Book, Books for Young Children

In their uniquely-crafted biography of Harriet Tubman, the author-illustrator couple Lesa Cline-Ransome and James E. Ransome break with the tradition of documenting a person's life chronologically and prosaically. Cline-Ransome chooses simple, sparse, and deeply affecting verse to invoke the indomitable spirit of Tubman. In the first few pages, readers encounter the fearless activist as an "old woman / tired and worn / her legs stiff / her back achy" waiting for a train, and then accompany her on a journey into the past. Each double-page spread is a meditation on the dangerous roles she assumes and her many, often unconventional, identities.

As a *suffragist*, her thunderous voice calls out injustices against women; as *General Tubman*, she ferries slaves to freedom as the South goes up in flames; as a *Union spy*, she carries secrets across battlefields to soldiers -- soldiers she has tended as a nurse when they lay injured "in the bloodied dirt of / the southern soil." She is also *Aunt Harriet, Moses*, and *Minty* before she is young *Araminta* whose father taught her "to read / the woods / and / the stars / readying / for the day / she'd leave behind / slavery / along with her name / and pick a new one / *Harriet*."

In the concluding pages, Harriet boards a train and sits facing forward in dignified repose. She has fulfilled her dream of living "long enough / to one day be old / stiff and achy / tired and worn and wrinkled / and free." Like the contemplative African American gentleman seated behind her, we owe her an incalculable debt of gratitude. James E. Ransome's luminous watercolor illustrations deftly complement this triumphal anthem, and echo the passage of time. Light snow, late afternoon sunshine, blazing fires, sunsets and moonlight -- and the shadows they cast -- illuminate the power and the vulnerability of Harriet Tubman, evoking powerful emotions.

Before She Was Harriet was honored at the 2018 Jane Addams Children's Book Award ceremony. In her acceptance remarks, Cline-Robinson recalled the life-changing impact the story of Harriet Tubman had on her own life. As a child, who was usually the sole black student in her elementary classes, an uneasy hush descended upon her peers each year when the topic of slavery came up. She could feel their secret stares and knew they believed:

"...that somehow, those inaccurate and incomplete depictions of enslaved persons portrayed my ancestors, and ultimately my legacy as one of victimhood. Of people too afraid, too incapable, too weak to resist. Until one year, we read about Harriet Tubman.

Her story made me sit taller in my seat. That year, and all the years following, I held my head high. Harriet taught me, and everyone else in that room, what resistance looked like. Here was a woman who looked like me, who outsmarted everyone. She was fearless. She was a fighter. A leader. A hero. I dared to believe she was me."

Sitting tall with her head high in the world of children's literature, the author has garnered much critical acclaim for her biographical picturebooks. *Finding Langston* (2018), her middle-grade novel, received the Coretta Scott King Honor, the Scott O'Dell Award for Historical Fiction, as well as several five starred reviews.

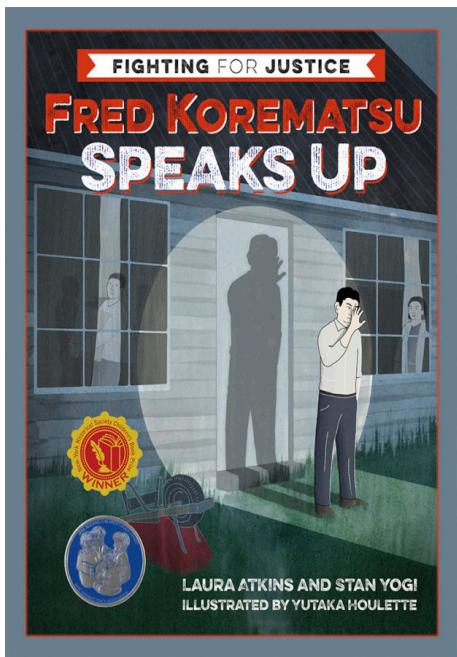
At the ceremony, distinguished illustrator James E. Ransome paid homage to the courage of the woman who raised him, his share-cropper Grandmother, whose life-force was replicated in his portrayals of Harriet Tubman. Ransome has illustrated many works by eminent children's authors, including Jacqueline Woodson, Deborah Hopkinson, and Eve Bunting, and received accolades of the highest order, including the 1999 NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Literary Work in Children's Literature, the 1995 Coretta Scott King Illustrator Award, as well as a Coretta Scott King Illustrator Honor in 1994.

Before She Was Harriet lends itself to a wide variety of book pairings. One could explore the text's unambiguous message -- that social justice and self-actualization are inextricably entwined--in other offerings by Lesa Cline-Ransome and James E. Ransome: *Just A Lucky So and So: The Story of Louis Armstrong* (2016), *Freedom's School* (2015), *Light in the Darkness: A Story About How Slaves Learned in Secret* (2013), and *Words Set Me Free: The Story of Young Frederick Douglass* (2012). One could focus on the ingenuity of individuals who navigated the Underground Railroad in *Moses: When Harriet Tubman Led Her People to Freedom* (Carole Weatherford and Kadir Nelson, 2006), *Henry's Freedom Box: A True Story from the Underground Railroad* (Ellen Levine and Kadir Nelson, 2007), and *Under the Quilt of Night* (Deborah Hopkinson and James E. Ransome, 2005). Collaborative endeavors by author-illustrator couples Andrea Davis Pinkney and Brian Pinkney might also be explored: *Sit-in: How Four Friends Stood Up by Sitting Down* (2010), *Martin & Mahalia: His Words, Her Songs* (2013), and *Martin Rising: Requiem for a King* (2018). These texts, like those crafted by Lesa Cline-Ransome and James E. Ransome, reveal collaboration to be the driving force for change.

Chloë Hughes, Western Oregon University



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Fred Korematsu Speaks Up

Written by Laura Atkins and Stan Yogi

Illustrated by Yutaka Houlette

Heyday, 2017, 103 pp.

ISBN: 978-1597143684

2018 Jane Addams Children's Book Award
Honor Book, Books for Older Children

Part of the "Fighting for Justice" series of biographies published by Heyday, *Fred Korematsu Speaks Up* reveals the depth and scope of anti-immigrant discrimination in a particularly bleak period of U.S. history -- the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II.

Just like many other Americans, Fred Korematsu enjoys hanging out with friends, listening to music, and playing tennis, but restaurants and barbershops refuse to serve him because of his Japanese heritage. After the bombing of Pearl Harbor, the bigotry and intolerance of Japanese-

Americans intensifies. The United States government publishes propaganda posters and pamphlets vilifying Japanese-Americans, sends agents to search their homes and, ultimately, forcibly removes them. Wearing numbered tags and carrying a suitcase or two with their belongings, Japanese-Americans are herded onto crowded buses destined for the distant and stark internment camps. Pretending that he is Spanish-Hawaiian and changing his name, Fred initially evades internment but is soon caught, jailed, and subsequently imprisoned. His family and friends, desperate to demonstrate undying loyalty to the United States, shun convicted Fred who remains unafraid to speak out against injustice. Acting against his family's wishes, he accepts the assistance of an American Civil Liberties Union lawyer, but appeals to clear Fred of criminal wrongdoing take years. In the meantime, Japanese-Americans are released from camps and try to rebuild their lives. Most have lost their homes and jobs, and the Korematsu family, who had owned a thriving nursery in Oakland, returns to shattered greenhouses and their business in ruins.

Fred Korematsu's case makes it all the way to the Supreme Court, where his lawyers seek to convince the judges that the imprisonment of Japanese-Americans is a violation of constitutional rights. But the majority of the Supreme Court justices believe internment has been a "military necessity." Fred loses his appeal and lives with a criminal record that makes resuming his life exceptionally challenging. Decades later, and after he marries and has grown children, his case is reopened. In 1983, the Supreme Court agrees that the United States government had lied about the evidence it had against Japanese-Americans. At the age of 64, Fred wins his case and spends the rest of his life speaking out against injustice.

A unique fusion of free-verse poetry, Japanese-American artwork, and short narratives provide multiple ways to reflect upon the times and the dehumanizing effects of discrimination. Informational text conventions (table of contents, index, sidebar definitions, timelines, maps, labels, captions, resources) make the text easier to navigate. Regular prompts such as, "Why do you think discrimination happens?" and "Have you ever been punished for

something you didn't do?" invite dialogue and deep questioning. Primary sources ensure that the story of Fred Korematsu and his family is told authentically from different perspectives. For example, photographs of Fred and his family in their flower nursery before Pearl Harbor and another where Fred receives the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Clinton in 1998 convey a sense of personhood and worth. In contrast, photos of Japanese-American children tagged with numbers and huge lines of adults waiting to be fingerprinted at Tanforan accentuate their dehumanization during WWII. Propaganda cartoons and pamphlets reveal the mongering of fear and hatred by conflating Japanese nationals with Japanese Americans, referring to them both as "JAPS" who are depicted as evil with captions such as "THIS IS THE ENEMY." The varied documentary sources also highlight Japanese-American horticultural talents and artistic contributions to the United States. The narrative brings to life brave, shy, young Fred as he lives in the internment camps and a no-nonsense, elderly Fred, as he challenges the U.S. government many years later. Anticipating that children recognize injustice and want to help break cycles of hatred and fear, the authors' final touch is a resources section "for young activists."

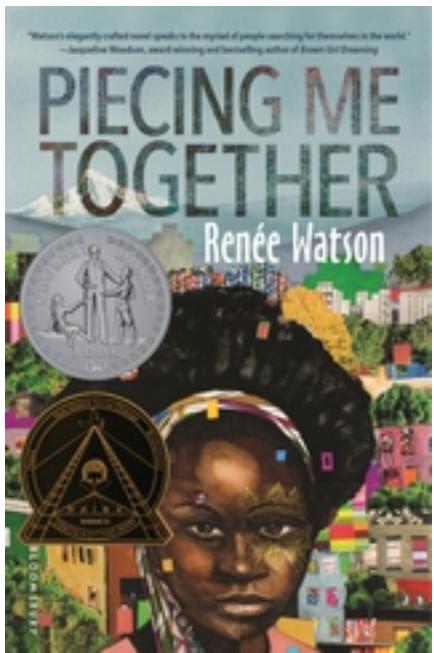
To expand understanding about anti-Japanese sentiment in the United States that started well before the attack on Pearl Harbor and existed well beyond WWII, this meticulously documented biography could be paired with *Sachiko: A Nagasaki Bomb Survivor's Story* by Caren Stelson (2016), which received wide recognition and earned the 2017 Addams Award for Older Children. The biography, based on extensive interviews with Sachiko Yasui and various primary sources, presents the unspeakable truths of a young girl who survived the atomic bomb and her endless quest to fight discrimination and inspire peace. Exploration of the effects of war on innocent civilians, especially after bombing raids, are chronicled in both texts. *Thirty Minutes over Oregon: A Japanese Pilot's World War II Story* by Marc Tyler Nobleman and illustrated by Melissa Iwai (2018) complements both biographies and acts as a springboard for discussions about surviving soldiers who live with the effects of their military actions. Japanese pilot, Nubuo Fujita, dropped bombs on the US mainland, just outside a small town in Oregon. After accepting an invitation to return to the town twenty years later, Nubuo, riddled with guilt over the war, apologized and embarked on a journey to promote peace. All three books advance Jane Addams' conviction that achieving true peace means more than ending war; it requires that people work together to address oppressions and hierarchies of power and opportunity.

Laura Atkins has worked in the children's publishing industry for over 25 years as a editor and author. Currently based in Berkeley, California, she spent years working as a lecturer and editor for the National Centre for Research in Children's Literature (NCRCL) at Roehampton University in London. She has co-authored (with Arisa White) a second title in the Fighting for Justice Series, *Biddy Mason Speaks Up* (2019) about the Los Angeles philanthropist, healer, and midwife. Stan Yogi is a Los Angeles-based author who, for 14 years, managed development programs for the ACLU of Northern California. He co-authored (with Elaine Elinson) *Wherever There's a Fight: How Runaway Slaves, Suffragists, Immigrants, Strikers, and Poets Shaped Civil Liberties in California* (2009). Yutak Houlette is a web designer and occasional illustrator who enjoys writing code to make interactive art. He is based in Oakland California where he works as a frontend engineer for Dropbox,

Chloë Hughes, Western Oregon University



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Piecing Me Together

Written by Renée Watson

Bloomsbury Children's Books, 2017, 264 pp.

ISBN: 978-1681191058

2018 Jane Addams Children's Books Award Honor Book, Books for Older Children

Readers meet astute, artistic, and authentic Jade as she traverses the multiple milieux of her teenage life. Living in a black, low-income neighborhood in Portland, Oregon, she buses across town to St. Francis, an exclusive and predominantly white, private prep school. There, as a scholarship recipient, Jade navigates the "opportunities" others have chosen to bestow upon her, and the slippery intersections of her racial, class, gender, and corporeal identities. As she laments, "girls like me, with coal skin and hula-hoop hips, whose mommas barely make enough money to keep food in the house, have to take opportunities every chance we get" (p. 6-7). Jade experiences alienation to the point of personal annihilation:

"Sometimes it feels like I leave home a whole person, sent off with kisses from Mom, who is hanging her every hope on my future. By the time I get home I feel like my soul has been shattered into a million pieces..."

And this makes me wonder if a black girl's life is only about being stitched together and coming undone, being stitched together and coming undone. I wonder if there's ever a way for a girl like me to feel whole." (pp.85-86)

Despite intense experiences of fragmentation, Jade proves herself as a maker of art and relationships. It is within the context of her varied relationships that readers experience the complexity of the threads that bind us and likewise pull us apart. Jade befriends Sam, a white girl also attending St. Francis on a scholarship, who lives in a working-poor neighborhood on Jade's bus route. Sam is viscerally aware of economic hegemony but fails to acknowledge the small and large ways Jade faces racial oppression. Maxine, a well-healed African American St. Francis alum who is paired with Jade through the "Woman to Woman" mentorship program for "at risk" girls, understands racism but is oblivious to her own class condescension.

Jade is compelled to confront the forces of the fragmentation she and others experience that are engendered by inequitable opportunities at school, racial profiling, body-shaming, and charity that seeks to fix the needy. She also passionately fights injustice and strives to bring torn communities together. After Natasha Ramsey, a teen from a nearby suburb, is brutally beaten by the police, it is Jade who organizes an open-mic art benefit to pay her medical bills and to help the disparate neighborhood heal. Ultimately, Jade models how to interact with imperfect people and demonstrates how to transform oneself into someone who can build bridges in a world divided by racism and classism.

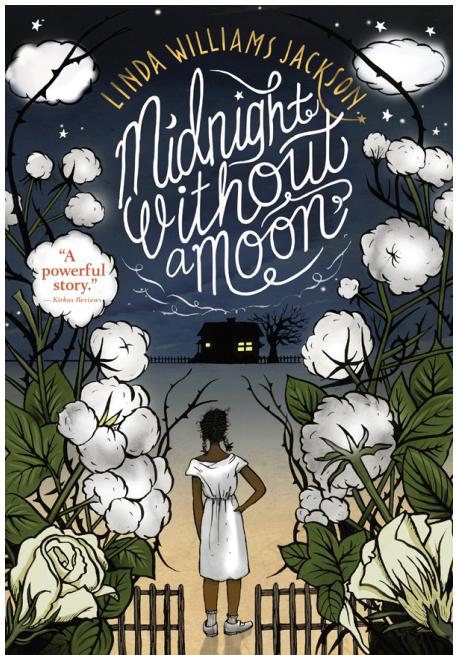
Renée Watson grew up in Portland and, as a reviewer who lives in Oregon, I can vouch for her authentic depiction of the city. Its reputation as a progressive place to live ignores both the legacy of racist housing policies and current displacement associated with recent gentrification. Nonetheless, Watson's bold realism is tempered with hope in *Piecing Me Together*. Deservedly, her startling novel received honor citations from the Jane Addams and the Newbery Committees, as well as a 2018 Author Award from the Coretta Scott King Committee. An acclaimed writer, Watson is also an educator, member of the Council of Writers for the National Writing Project and We Need Diverse Books, and an advocate for the publication of other writers who enrich literature for young people through their diverse voices.

This contemporary and realistic novel will kindle extensive dialogue about the criteria for the Jane Addams Children's Book Award. Other books that complement *Piecing Me Together* include Angie Thomas' *The Hate U Give* (2017) and Karen English's *It All Comes Down to This* (2017). An author study of Renée Watson would inspire writers in the secondary grades. In *Watch Us Rise* (2019), Watson and co-author Ellen Hagen sharpen the focus on advancing power and equality for women, and this seems a very timely pairing in the age of the #MeToo movement. In the story, high school juniors Chelsea and Jasmine use art to take a stand against gender inequality in their blog, "Write Like a Girl." Featuring provocative poetry, prose and video clips, essays on culture, as well as articles on feminists and female artists, the blog goes viral. Not all the attention is positive, however. The young women writers are targeted by trolls and the school principal decides to shut the blog down; but Chelsea and Jasmine won't be silenced! In her recent publication, *Some Places More Than Others* (2019), Watson illustrates for middle grade readers that understanding "self" and knowing one's history are cornerstones to building one's future. Her biographical article, "Black Like Me" (published in *Rethinking Schools* in 2014), a reflection on personal experiences from her youth, would powerfully complement each text. Together or separately, they invite purposeful reflection on oppressions caused by prejudice, racism and social injustice.

Chloë Hughes, Western Oregon University



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Midnight Without A Moon

Written by Linda Williams Jackson

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017, 312 pp. ISBN: 978-0544785106

Jane Addams Children's Book Award
Honor Book, Books for Older Children

In the summer of 1955, in sweltering Stillwater, Mississippi, thirteen-year-old Rosa Lee toils away at her home and in the cotton fields, doing more than her share of the work within her African-American sharecropper family. She thrives in school, where she feels valued and inspired, and even secretly entertains the idea that maybe, just maybe, she'll someday leave Mississippi and its oppression behind. She dreams of moving to Chicago to reunite with her mother and stepfather, who had joined the Great Migration north, abandoning Rosa Lee and her brother Fred to the care of their grandparents.

Rosa Lee lives in the long shadow of her grandmother, Ma Pearl, a hard woman who spares her no kindness. The abuse that Ma Pearl subjects dark-skinned Rosa Lee to is intense, and her demands seem to be endless. Her cruelty is in stark contrast to the affection that Ma Pearl lavishes on her other granddaughter, Queen, who is light-skinned and allowed to spend her days with her face in the Sears and Roebuck catalog. For Ma Pearl, skin-tone determines who will get an education and who will know freedom. At the end of summer, Ma Pearl says to Rosa Lee that it is a waste for "a strong gal like you goin' to school" 'stead o' work'n like you should be," (p. 116), dashing her hope for an education and an escape. The fairer Queen will be allowed to return to school despite her idleness and her lack of ambition.

Fortunately, Rosa Lee's best friend, Hallelujah Jenkins, a preacher's son, visits her often and infuses her with his own love for learning. Hallelujah also keeps up with the swelling Civil Rights movement and shares the news with a somewhat skeptical Rosa Lee. Ma Pearl, however, believes in knowing one's place and calls her daughter (Rosa Lee's Aunt Belle) a "dirn fool" (p.108) for working with the NAACP to help African Americans register to vote. Like Mississippi in the Jim Crow south, Ma Pearl forces her family to follow her rules, and those who dare to question her suffer harsh consequences. She embodies the ever-present prejudices and systemic discrimination that white society forced on the African-American community. Her voice is an echo of the white folks she hears while working as a maid for the Robinsons who own the land the family farms. But lest we be quick to judge, Ma Pearl's brutal and extremely disconcerting enforcement of racist positions provides the family some measure of physical and economic security.

As Rosa Lee struggles to accept her immediate future without school, a young African-American boy from Chicago visits his cousin in a nearby town and disappears. His name is Emmett Till. The gruesome facts of his murder come to light, and after the swift acquittal of the three men responsible, Rosa Lee begins to question if leaving Mississippi is truly a

choice she can make. Should she leave her family and others to fight for a different Mississippi, the way her own mother left her and Fred behind? Or should she stay? Rosa Lee needs to know if she can "shine in the darkness" (p. 308) and face her choice with courage, determination, and a loving heart.

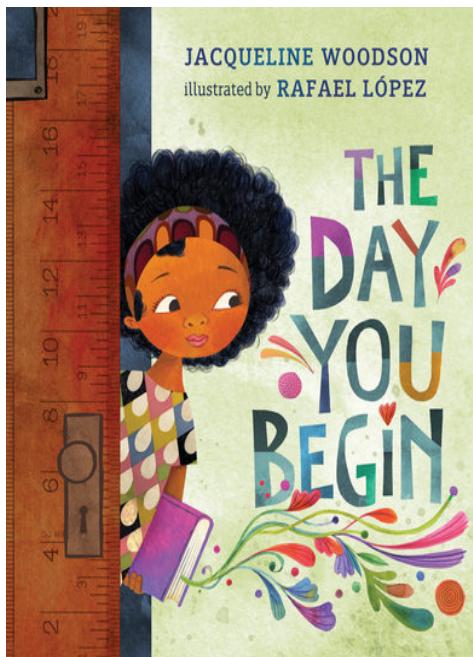
Born and raised in the Mississippi Delta, Linda Williams Jackson crafts powerful stories about everyday people in the rural south. Like Rosa Lee Carter, Jackson came of age in what she described as a "sharecropper's shack" in her remarks at the 2018 Jane Addams Children's Book Award ceremony. In *Midnight Without a Moon*, Jackson successfully conjures up a strong sense of place and illuminates the complexities of living under the forces of oppression. The subjugated, like Ma Pearl, can be co-opted and learn to accept and enforce a punishing ideology to procure a modicum of safety. Resisting such psychological colonization takes a strength only a few possess. Those who do, are like the stars that guide us on a dark night. Jackson's novel illustrates Jane Addams' conviction that achieving true peace means ensuring justice for people of all racial identities, gender identities, religions, abilities, classes, and cultures.

Midnight Without a Moon and its sequel, *A Sky Full of Stars* (2018), would complement a variety of books also set in the Jim Crow south. These include the 1977 Newbery Medal Winner, *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* (1976) by Mildred Taylor; the Newbery Honor and Coretta Scott King Honor book, *The Watson's Go to Birmingham* (1995) by Christopher Paul Curtis; and Sharon Draper's New York Times bestselling and award-winning novel, *Stella by Starlight* (2015). For nonfiction pairings, consider the YALSA Award Winner for Excellence in Nonfiction for Young Adults in 2011, *They Called Themselves the KKK: The Birth of an American Terror Group* (2010) by Susan Campbell Bartoletti; and the Coretta Scott King and Printz Honor book, *A Wreath for Emmett Till* (2009) by Marilyn Nelson.

Tracy Randolph, St. Andrew's-Sewanee School, Sewanee, TN



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The Day You Begin

Written by Jacqueline Woodson

Illustrated by Rafael López

Nancy Paulsen Books, 2018, 32 pp.

ISBN: 978-0399246531

Jane Addams Children's Book Award
Winner, Books for Younger Children

Is there anyone who can't recall a personal story that begins "I was the only one who (insert lonely experience here) and it felt awful?" Whether because of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, size, or any number of reasons, most people have felt like the "other" at times. In the opening scene of *The Day You Begin*, Jacqueline Woodson counsels a shy, young girl as she pokes her head around a new classroom door: "There will be times when you walk into a room and no one there is quite like you." She acknowledges and validates those existential feelings of loneliness and fear

that come from the ordinary childhood experiences which make so many children feel different -- it may be "your skin, your clothes, or the curl of your hair," or "the beautiful language of the country you left behind," or perhaps that special lunch your mother made for you "is too strange or unfamiliar for others." Perhaps you didn't go on a family vacation over the summer or get picked for the team and are now on the sidelines of a conversation or the playground. In her lilting, lyrical text, Woodson makes these slights real, and, more importantly, she gives voice to the feelings that accompany them.

Rafael López's vibrant, imaginative, organic illustrations depict scenes in the classroom, the cafeteria, the playground, and at home. One of the recurring visuals that López includes is a ruler -- on the classroom door, trunk of a tree and across the top of a table -- depicting a child's feelings of not measuring up or being too different to belong.

Woodson's narrative also gives voice to hope. The turning point in her story is that day, that moment, when a child takes a risk and opens up, sharing a story without guarantee that anyone will listen. But someone does, and as Woodson writes, "the world opens itself up a little wider to make some space for you." Through that courageous step, a child learns just how much she has in common with others while, at the same time, realizing she is "fabulously" not like anyone else.

For her significant contributions to the world of children's literature, Woodson was selected as the 2018-2019 National Ambassador for Young People's Literature, an honor that is presented biennially by the Library of Congress. *The Day You Begin* was inspired by a poem in her New York Times best-selling memoir, *Brown Girl Dreaming* (2014), which earned many prestigious awards. In *Brown Girl Dreaming*, Woodson weaves the story of her childhood first in South Carolina, then later in New York, never feeling totally at home in either place. Experiencing a state of emotional limbo and caught between the vestiges of the Jim Crow era and the developing Civil Rights movement, she found her voice and happiness through

written composition. Woodson knows what it is like to be the outsider, the courage it takes to climb out of a pit of loneliness and reach out to others, and the joy "when the world opens itself up a little wider to make some space for you."

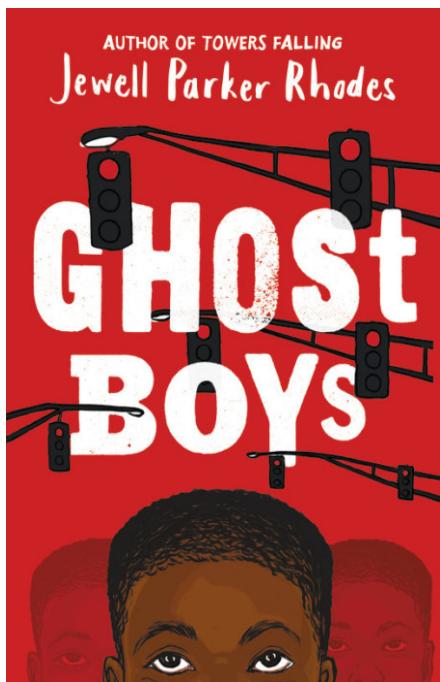
Rafael López grew up in Mexico City, the child of architects who spent weekends in flea markets looking for books that others had cast aside. Early in life Lopez was introduced to drawing and images coming from many countries. He has illustrated many award-winning books, but also led his San Diego community in creating murals to add color reflecting a Mexican heritage.

Many books with themes of empathy and friendship pair well with *The Day You Begin*, including the 2016 Addams Award Winner, *New Shoes*, by Susan Lynn Meyer and Eric Velásquez (2015); *The Hundred Dresses* by Eleanor Estes and Louis Slobodkin (originally published in 1944); as well as the Addams Award Winner, *Each Kindness* by Jacqueline Woodson and E. B. Lewis (2012). New beginnings and the powerful feelings that newness bring could also be examined in a text set that includes *All are Welcome* by Alexandra Penfold and Suzanne Kaufman (2018); *School's First Day of School* by Adam Rex and Christian Robinson (2016); *The Name Jar* by Yangsook Choi (2001); *My Name is Yoon* by Helen Recorvits and Gabi Swiatkowska (2003); and *Dreamers* by Yuyi Morales (2018). Together, these selections provide wonderful opportunities for exploring the importance of respect and understanding differences, and building a solid foundation for compassionate and empathetic communities.

Tracy Randolph, St. Andrew's-Sewanee School, Sewanee, TN



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Ghost Boys

Written by Jewell Parker Rhodes

Little, Brown and Company, 2018, 214 pp.

ISBN: 978-0316262286

2019 Jane Addams Children's Book Award
Winner, Books for Older Children

Ghost Boys is a haunting tale with an all-too familiar tragedy at its core -- the fatal shooting of an African-American youth by a white police officer who mistook the boy's toy gun for a real one.

Often the target of bullying at school, Jerome doesn't have a close friend, but that changes when he meets Carlos, whose family has just moved to Chicago from Texas. To evade the class bullies, who have also targeted Carlos, Jerome and his new friend eat their lunches in the bathroom, squatting in stalls on top of the toilets to avoid being detected. Despite these coping methods, the bullies

find and threaten Carlos and Jerome, but Carlos is able to send them running when he brandishes his toy gun. The bullies -- as well as Jerome--are terrified by Carlos's weapon, and only after the bullies leave does Carlos reveal to Jerome that his gun is actually a toy. Jerome accepts Carlos's offer to take the toy home and play with it, which ultimately leads to Jerome's death at the hands of the officer.

Rhodes has twelve-year-old Jerome tell his story, alternating between his own two points of view of "dead" and "alive." Her effective use of this narrative device gives readers unique insight by weaving in magical realism when Jerome's spirit interacts with the ghosts of other African-American youth who were murdered by white adults, in particular, Emmett Till. In addition, Rhodes connects injustices of the past with those of today.

The story opens with Jerome observing his slain body moments after the officer fired the two fatal shots. Lying face down on the pavement in an abandoned lot he observes his own blood puddling and quickly staining his new sneakers. Soon, Jerome describes the wails of his mother as she is held back by police while sirens scream in the background. In the "alive" sections of the story, Jerome describes his daily life, hopes, and dreams as a twelve-year-old. Readers understand Jerome's deep love and loyalty to his parents, his younger sister, and his grandmother. Reflecting the reality of so many African-American families, Jerome's parents and grandmother remind him every day to come straight home from school to avoid neighborhood dangers and that nothing is more important than his education. Jerome listens and heeds their words, until the day he is shot while imaginatively chasing "bad guys" (p. 195) with Carlos's toy gun.

After his death, Jerome agonizes as he watches his family mourn his loss and grieve the injustice when the officer is not charged with a crime. When Jerome first encounters Emmett Till, he is unfamiliar with Till's story, and Till decides to wait a while before sharing it. Jerome gradually learns why the "ghost boys" are accompanying him. Even more startling, Je-

rome soon finds himself visible to Sarah, the daughter of the officer who killed him. Jerome, at first dismissive of Sarah as a privileged, uncaring white girl, soon learns that she is deeply troubled by her father's actions and doubtful about his claim that he was in fear for his life when he shot Jerome. Sarah's character is a powerful symbol of the responsibility that society must take against this injustice. After the court decides that her father will not be charged with a crime, Sarah continues to research his testimony and the media coverage, and she questions her father about his actions. Her response is to seek truth and understanding. And as Jerome continues to interact with Till and the other ghost boys, learning Emmett Till's story in full, he realizes why he is able to communicate with Sarah and the ghost boys. It is, as Till tells him, to "Bear witness . . . Everyone needs their story heard" (p. 161).

Much like Rhodes' other middle-grade novels, including Addams Award Honor book, *Ninth Ward* (2010), *Bayou Magic* (2013), and Addams Award Winner and Coretta Scott King Honor book, *Sugar* (2013), *Ghost Boys* provides readers a window into one of our society's most pressing social justice issues. She weaves the horrors of prejudice and oppression into beautiful tales of self-actualization, survival, and community. This compelling story pairs well with *It All Comes Down to This* by Karen English (2017), the story of an African-American girl in 1960s Los Angeles during the Watts riots as the backdrop to the narrative. Another complementary book is the graphic novel *Yummy: The Last Days of a Southside Shorty*, by G. Neri and Randi Duberke (2010) based on the true story of events that occurred in Chicago in 1994. Finally, *Midnight Without a Moon* by Linda Williams Jackson (2017), an Addams Award Honor book, is the story of a young girl in Mississippi at the time of the Emmett Till murder. Grounded in history and with strong connections to current events, these books show the importance of people of all identities finding ways to work together equitably and peaceably, and also model how young people can be moved to look inward, search for truth, and take action in the midst of conflict.

Born in Pittsburgh where her grandmother would sit on the stoop and tell stories of her Louisiana childhood, Jewell Parker Rhodes seeks to take what she learned from her grandmother and write stories that inspire social justice, equality and environmental stewardship.

Tracy Randolph, St. Andrew's-Sewanee School, Sewanee, TN



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The Day War Came
Written by Nicola Davies
Illustrated by Rebecca Cobb
Candlewick, 2018, 32 pp.
ISBN: 978-1536201734

2019 Jane Addams Children's Book Award
Honor Book, Books for Younger Children

The Day War Came chronicles the ravages of the war and the refugee crisis through the voice of a young, unnamed girl in an unidentified country. She begins her story with what many readers will find ordinary -- her loving family at the breakfast table, a kiss then a walk to school where she learns about volcanoes, sings about tadpoles turning into frogs, and draws birds -- until "just after lunch, the war came." In the frantic aftermath that turns her home, school, and life into rubble and ash, readers see the young girl on her knees as

she discloses,

"I can't say the words that tell you about
the blackened hole that had
been my home.
All I can say is this:
War took everything.
War took everyone.
I was ragged, bloody, all alone." (unpaged)

Losing her family, she flees with other refugees on an overloaded, leaky boat. Yearning for sanctuary, they reach land at last, disembark and wade through the surf. Nearing the shore, our young narrator observes two tiny, red shoes drifting apart and empty, embodying the tragic loss of innocent life. Alone in a land she does not know, she huddles in an abandoned hut with nothing but a dirty blanket, that cannot shield against the conflict that has penetrated her being:

"But war had followed me.
It was underneath my skin,
behind my eyes,
and in my dreams.
It had taken possession of my heart." (unpaged)

Our young narrator walks and walks searching for help, but doors close and people turn away. Finally reaching a school, she looks in a window to see children -- just like her -- enjoying volcano lessons, tadpole songs, and drawing. Hoping to find safety, she pushes the classroom door open, only to be met by a grim-faced teacher who declares that there is no room, no chair for her, sending her away. Forlorn, the young refugee retreats to the bleak hut and crawls under the blanket. Just as she is starting to believe "that war had taken all the

world and all the people in it," a boy from the school shows up. With compassion and knowing, he holds out a chair to her so she can attend class and perhaps find belonging, and a sliver of hope.

Welsh children's author, poet, and naturalist, Nicola Davies, originally published *The Day the War Came* as a poem in The Guardian newspaper in 2016 in response to the British government's refusal to grant sanctuary to 3,000 unaccompanied child refugees from Syria. In the backmatter, Davies provides brief information about the number of child refugees. She provides references to the groups Help Refugees (<http://www.helprrefugees.org>) and #Chooselove (https://us.choose.love/?gclid=EAIAIQobChMIt8SCspLg5QIVgsBkChOy-QD_EAAYAiAAEgLB7vD_BwE), as well as her #3000chairs campaign (<http://theguardian.com/world/gallery/2016/may/11/your-3000-chairs-for-child-refugees-in-pictures>), which called upon authors, illustrators, and children to paint, draw or sketch an empty chair to express their outrage about the lack of action to help refugees. These welcoming chairs were exhibited in an online gallery, while the original artwork was auctioned off to raise money for refugees. Readers can visit Davies' blog (<https://nicoladavies.com/blog/>) to view a chair she created herself.

Davies' simple, yet deeply affecting text offers chairs as a metaphor for belonging, stability, and our human right to sit at the table of learning. British illustrator, Nicola Cobb, extends this metaphor in her haunting, child-like pencil and watercolor illustrations. Double-page spreads along with the use of panels communicate the movement and displacement of the unidentified child refugee. Cobb masterfully contrasts hues, values, and perspectives to convey the child's despair and hope.

The understated narrative provides an opportunity for readers to reflect on the plight of children in the refugee crisis without being terrorized. It is striking that an empathetic child, not an adult, reaches out to give practical help to the abandoned girl. His symbolic act demonstrates to adults -- not simply children -- that we must work together to address the problems caused by war. *The Day War Came* will undoubtedly ignite conversations about inclusivity, justice, and peace, emboldening readers of all ages to "push back the war with every step." (unpaged). The following texts can foster further dialogue on how war changes everything: *Lost and Found Cat: The True Story of Kunkush's Incredible Journey* by Amy Shrodes and Doug Kuntz, illustrated by Sue Cornelison (2017); *Where Will I Live?* by Rosemary McCarney (2017); and *Stepping Stones: A Refugee's Family's Journey* (Margriet Ruurs and Nizar Ali Badr 2016). To support conversations of a philosophical nature with young readers, pair this book with *Shooting at the Stars: The Christmas Truce of 1914* by John Hendrix (2014) and *The Enemy: A Book About Peace*, by Davide Calì and Serge Bloch (2009). Both texts help readers ponder fixed notions about war and "the enemy."

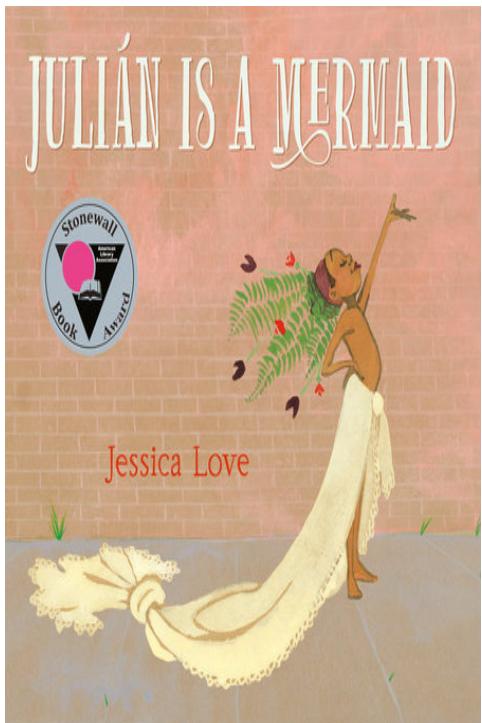
British illustrator Rebecca Cobb is no stranger to the concept of loss. The first picture book she wrote and illustrated deals with grief from a child's point of view (*Missing Mummy*, 2012). Rebecca lives in England but hails from Cornwall.

Chloë Hughes, Western Oregon University
Heather Palmer, Edina Public Schools, Minnesota

[Editor's Note: This book has been previously reviewed in WOW Review Issue XI Issue 2 (<https://wowlit.org/on-line-publications/review/volume-xi-issue-2/7/>).]



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Julián Is a Mermaid

Written and illustrated by Jessica Love

Candlewick Press, 2018, 40 pp.

ISBN: 978-0763690458

2019 Jane Addams Children's Book Award

Honor Book, Books for Young Children

Julián and Abuela visit an indoor pool where mature women fearlessly reveal the splendor and strength of body diversity in their eye-catching swimming suits. Riding the subway back, Julián dives into a picture book, his imagination choreographing a new story line inspired by the pool and three elegant "mermaids" who have boarded the train, resplendent in their piscine gowns and elaborate hair-dos. Julián imagines joining a school of sea creatures and rejoices in the wisdom and freedom of the water.

After leaving the subway, Julián asks Abuela whether she has also noticed the mermaids. Though she has,

she continues walking resolutely toward the threshold of their home. Showing her the picture book, Julián declares, "I am also a mermaid" and, with uneasy knowing, Abuela unlocks the front door. Announcing that she's going to take a bath, she cautions Julián to "be good." When she reappears draped in fluffy white towels, she finds her grandchild adorned in the lace window curtain, fronds from a potted fern, flowers from a bouquet on her vanity and even some of her lipstick. Abuela frowns and, like the anxious-looking mer-child, we hold our breath as she exits the room to get dressed. But upon her return, she gently utters "Come here, mijo," offering-up her pink beads. Hand in hand, Abuela leads Julián outside and into the open where they sashay down steps into a flower-filled garden. Neither we, nor Julián, know what will happen next, until a few pages later, when they join a magnificent mer-person parade on the beach. They happily swim across the boardwalk behind the three mermaids Julián had admired.

Jessica Love's flowing minimalist text is expanded through her exquisite illustrations in watercolor, gouache and ink that masterfully tell Julián's story. Jewel-like splashes of color offset a muted peach and aqua backdrop, transmitting and inspiring delight in gender creativity. In pictures and in words, readers embark on a journey that is not only physical, but also imaginative and emotional--from Julián's nervous wonderment, curiosity, and daring, to confidence and openness in communicating identity. Matriarchal Abuela makes her own journey, as well from weary guardian who may not want to see what Julián sees, to discomfort, acceptance, and finally celebration. Water as metaphor for transparency, fluidity, as a profound means of inner transportation, and as a life source flows through the story. Love's decision to leave the occasional Spanish expression unitalicized may also suggest bilingual validation. In sum, *Julián Is a Mermaid* tenderly distills a profound human truth that we each need to be seen and appreciated for who we are.

With a BA in studio art and a drama degree from Juilliard, it is unsurprising that Love applies imagination, make-up and costume to carry the narrative in her debut picture book that has won the hearts of many reviewers. Some, however, noting that Love is a white, cis-gender author-illustrator, have questioned the picturebook's accuracy and authenticity. Does Julián's mermaidization risk mythologizing gender nonconformity? Is Abuela's journey toward acceptance so swift that it trivializes the lived oppressions of gender-creative individuals? Why is the pronoun "he" used for a child exploring a transgender identity? The Jane Addams Children's Book Award Selection Committee, which included individuals of color, members with biracial families as well as those with adult children who are gay or trans identities -- pondered these questions during the review process.

We noted that Love's inspiration for the text was derived from a personal friend who had to wait much longer to transition to a man than he had wanted. Julián's mermaidization is deeply symbolic of individuals who have to dive into their inner being and struggle against the tide. We noticed that Abuela's attitude shifted well after the half-way point in the picturebook, allowing the narrative to speak to the realities of marginalized individuals and communities, as well as depict and catalyze a more hopeful future where minority voices can be the pioneers of societal progress. Further, we observed that applause for Julián not only reverberated within book award selection committees generally, but also from those dedicated to promoting authentic LGBTQIA content—earning the 2019 Stonewall Book Award and selected for the 2019 Rainbow List. We recognize that much of what commercial publishers deem "marketable" has been and continues to be a barrier for authors and illustrators of color who identify as queer. Yet *Julián is a Mermaid* is a striking story that breaks cycles of fear and illustrates a courageous young child responding creatively to bias and discrimination. From its core, we felt this text radiates acceptance, compassion, and affection.

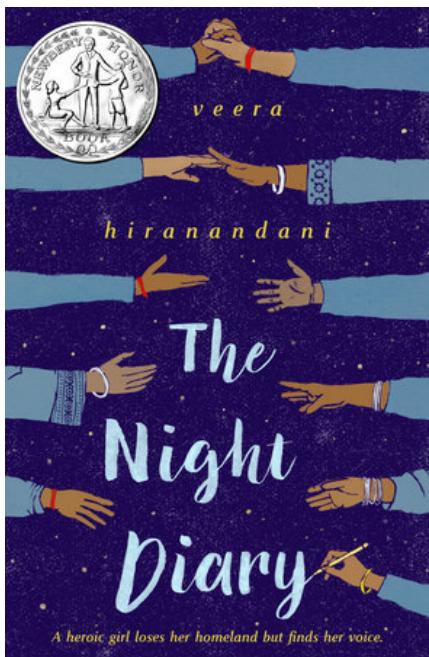
This Day in June by Gayle E. Pitman and Kristyna Litten (2014), winner of the 2015 Stonewall Book Award and also chosen for the 2016 Rainbow List, complements Julián. With a simple, interactive text and bold depictions of an exuberant Pride parade, it also includes informational backmatter on LGBTQ culture and history, as well as a guide for adults to support conversations on sexual and gender identity. For slightly older children, Pitman's recent picturebook, *Sewing the Rainbow: The True Story of Gilbert Baker and the Rainbow Flag*, illustrated by Holly Clifton Brown (2018), also pairs nicely with Julián. Gilbert was made to conform until, in 1972 in his early twenties, he moved to San Francisco where he began to sew glamorous costumes for himself, drag performers and also banners for protests and rallies. A close friend of Harvey Milk, Gilbert conceived of and created the first rainbow flags. Informative reader's notes on the beginnings of the gay rights movement extend this biography, which has been included on the 2019 ALA GLBT Round Table Rainbow Book List.

Chloë Hughes, Western Oregon University



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The Night Diary

Written by Veera Hiranandani

Kokila, 2018, 272 pp.

ISBN: 978-0735228511

2019 Jane Addams Children's Book Award

Honor Book, Books for Older Children

The Night Diary intimately reveals the impact of India's partition into two countries in 1947 as the political events and increasing religious sectarianism in one country become personal. Twelve-year-old Nisha finds solace and a place to express her innermost thoughts -- the ones she seems unable to put into spoken words--in the diary that Kazi, the family cook, has given her on her birthday. Although she has no memory of her mother, who died when she and her twin brother, Amil, were born, Nisha writes lovingly to her. The twins' mother was Muslim, but their father, a doctor in Mirpur Khas, is Hindu, and their mixed marriage contravened social and cultural mores at the

time. Now, living in the region that has become Pakistan, religious tensions have escalated into violence. No longer safe, the family has little choice but to move to Jodhpur, India.

Escaping on foot, they face unremitting danger on their journey, including threats from other travelers and extreme heat and dehydration. Understandably, Nisha and Amil occasionally misstep and their small errors almost end in calamity. After Amil accidentally spills the precious water he is carrying, the family almost dies in the desert. While the family is in hiding at an uncle's house, the desperately lonely Nisha pursues a proscribed friendship with Hafa, a Muslim girl who lives in a neighboring house. When the girls are caught, Nisha's family is forced to continue their inexorable journey.

The young siblings, who both have some personal challenges, share a powerful emotional bond. Nisha is a selective mute who communicates deftly through writing, while Amil is a talker who struggles with the written word, owing to a learning disability. Nisha notes, "I felt the things he couldn't feel and he said the things I couldn't say, except to him. That's how it worked" (108-109). Nisha gains strength and wisdom from her writing. In her diary, she shrewdly critiques the "insane" (p. 28) partition and the impending turmoil.

"So as of today, the ground I'm standing on is not India anymore. And Kazi is supposed to live in one place and we're supposed to leave and find a new home. Is there a Muslim girl sitting in her house right now who has to leave her home and go to a new country that's not even called India? Does she feel confused and scared, too?" (p. 90)

She asks philosophical questions, "Is it the brain that makes people love and hate? Or is it the heart?" (p. 88) and astutely reflects on the humanity of those caught up in the cruel chaos; she observes the fear in their eyes and she is awakened to the fact that they have much

in common. In fits and starts, Nisha finds her voice, tentatively stepping toward a future in a world that is nothing like her beloved homeland.

Veera Hiranandani's exquisite writing brims with vivid imagery: "The sun sank into the horizon and exploded in hot oranges and blues" (p. 154). The author's references to cooking give the novel a rich, cultural texture and a sense of mood. Nisha never forgets Kazi's maxim, "Making food always brings people together" (p. 95), and takes her cooking seriously. She frequently uses food metaphors to express emotion: "I needed all the feelings to stop boiling like a pot of dal and be cool enough for me to taste them" (p.36). Food becomes especially symbolic on the family's interminable trek:

"The dirt felt hard underfoot and the sun beamed hotly on our bodies drying them out even more. I thought of Kazi and the dried apricots, mangoes, and tomatoes he used to make by hanging thin slices in the sun. I loved the chewiness of the dried fruit, their taste pure and sun-filled, no water to interrupt the flavor. Amil never liked to eat dried fruit. He said it reminded him of the skin of very old people. I thought of us shriveling up like pieces of sliced mangoes." (p.136)

The author chronicles what is likely to be (at least for young readers in the United States) a lesser-known chapter in world history, and she offers the perspectives of being caught in the middle of violence and pushed and pulled by conflicting forces. By drawing on experiences from her paternal family's exodus from Pakistan and relaying events in diary-form, the author adds authenticity and a personal dimension to her interpretation of partition era events. As readers pore over confidences shared in Nisha's letters, we are made aware of the suffering caused by forced migrations, and find it impossible not to make connections to the plight of refugees today.

In 2018, *The Night Diary* received the Malka Penn Award for Human Rights in Children's Literature and was named as "Best Book of the Year" by a variety of entities, including *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *School Library Journal*, and *NPR*. In 2019, the novel was not only selected as an Addams Award Honor book, but also received Honors from the Newbery Award and Walter Dean Myers Award selection committees.

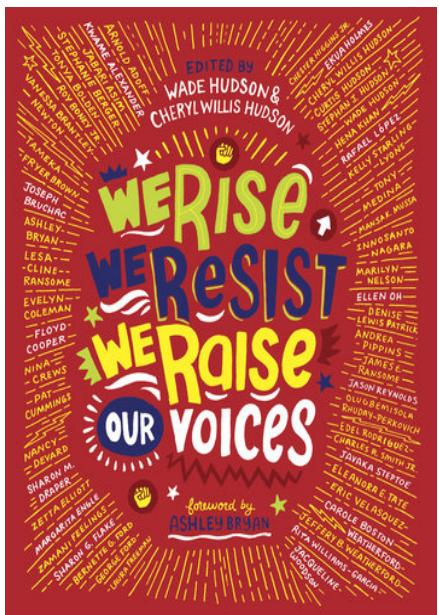
Although readers may know what a refuge is, it is unlikely that they will know what it feels like to be one. Although Hiranandani focuses on the partition era in India, her story is easily relatable to the many populations today that are forced to leave happy homes for reasons of safety. The theme of forced migrations can be extended by pairing this novel with *A Land of Permanent Goodbyes* by Atia Abawi (2018) and *Escape from Aleppo* by N.H. Senzai (2018). Like *The Night Diary*, the 2017 novel by Supriya Kelkar, *Ahimsa*, prompts readers to consider how all people can live and work together harmoniously. Unfolding in the years that lead up to India's partition, the novel chronicles increasing tensions and divisions under colonial rule and the practice of "ahimsa," non-violent resistance to the British government.

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[Editor's Note: This book has been previously been reviewed in WOW Review Volume XI Issue 3. (<https://wowlit.org/on-line-publications/review/xi-3/8/>)]



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We Rise, We Resist, We Raise Our Voices
 Edited by Wade Hudson and Cheryl Willis Hudson
 Crown Books for Young Readers, 2018, 96 pp.
 ISBN: 978-0525580423
 2019 Jane Addams Children's Book Award
 Honor Book, Books for Older Children

Have you ever found yourself searching for a glimmer of hope in what feels like an impossibly dark moment? Have you sought comfort or assurance when facing a seemingly incomprehensible situation? Have you found yourself wondering just what it is that our future has in store? When the world's complexities trigger fear and despair, words of reassurance and hope may fail us. Wade Hudson and Cheryl Willis Hudson, the editors of *We Rise, We Resist, We Raise Our Voices*, were summoned into action by a deep anguish that gripped their great-niece, Jordyn. The

seven-year-old girl had understood all too well the brazen message of hate and divisiveness from the 2016 presidential campaign, and worried about what it would mean for herself and her friends, under this newly-elected leader.

With thirty years of experience at their independent publishing company, Just Us Books (<https://justusbooks.com>), which focuses on Black-interest and multicultural literature, the Hudsons recognized that young people, like Jordyn, need assurance that they "are part of a community that loves [them] and can give [them] the tools to help navigate the present and the future." In *We Rise, We Resist, We Raise Our Voices*, the couple weaves together texts and artwork from 52 individuals, who have personally experienced discrimination and fully comprehend the enormous courage it takes to push back, in an anthology designed as a "resource for rescue" (Ashley Bryan in Forward).

The treasury is as brilliant on the inside as the bright cover promises, featuring artists of written and illustrative work by and about a wide variety of perspectives and underrepresented voices. Written contributions, many portraying personal struggles related to social justice themes, include poems, essays, stories, memoirs and letters. Reflecting a universal portrait of humanity, they are intensified by the unique artwork of twenty-two artists. The illustrations, ranging from paintings to photographs to digital art, celebrate diversity and shine a light on life's daily complexities. Encouraging resilience when "the world feels upside down" (p. 30), this empowering collection is wisely compiled to show essential connections between the past, the present, and the future. It offers readers reminders of injustices overcome, a truthful representation of "where we are," and the space to imagine a different future.

Bernette G. Ford's piece, "You Can Change the World" describes how her family dealt with fear during the civil rights movement of the 1960s. Along with George Ford's illustrations, her words shine a light on the role youth played in making change, and sends a message of hope that "if we take action to change the world, then we can surely win again" (p. 27). "One Day Papi Drove Me to School," written by Tony Medina and illustrated by Edel Rodriguez (p.

34) invites readers to experience what it might be like to grow up "undocumented" in the United States. Hena Khan's essay, "How to Pass the Test" cautions readers of the dangers of stereotypes. Using the term "Muslim" as an example, she offers a gentle plea to look "beyond headlines in order to find common ground and to understand" that we all share the same values (p. 55).

Sharon G. Flake's letter, "When I Think of You," illustrated by Zamani Feelings, impresses upon readers that "Hard times do not always harden people. Often, they reveal what we're made of -- who we are inside" (p. 45). Rita Williams-Garcia's "We the People" reminds us that "there is no backward time travel, but only the future." Budding social activists looking for inspiration and ways to rise up, resist the status quo, and raise their voices in harmony as they seek to change the world will find plenty of inspiration in *We Rise, We Resist, We Raise Our Voices*.

Unsurprisingly, *We Rise, We Resist, We Raise Our Voices*, has been recognized by multiple organizations. In addition to receiving the 2019 Jane Addams Children's Book Award Honor citation, it was named a Best Book of 2018 by both *Kirkus* and *Publishers Weekly*, and earned starred reviews from *Horn Book*, *Publishers Weekly* and *School Library Journal*. The treasury's backmatter offers a 13-page "About the Contributors" section, as well as a list of photography credits and an index. The informative biographic entry for each of the collection's contributors, accompanied by a photograph, provides easy access to an abundant selection of diverse authors and illustrators from which readers could choose worthy guides to accompany them on the next steps of their journey. An Educators' Guide (https://images.randomhouse.com/promo_image/9780525580423_5320.pdf), prepared by Jewel Davis, Education Librarian and Assistant Professor at Appalachian State University, is available for download on the Random House Children's Books Website. Imaginative and thorough, this guide suggests ways for individuals and entire classrooms to engage the text in big and small ways.

Middle-grade readers who are inspired by the anthology format and would like to broaden their understanding of diverse human experiences that may be different from their own, might consider *Flying Lessons and Other Stories* (2017), edited by Ellen Oh or *The Hero Next Door* (2019), edited by Olugbemisola Rhuday-Perkovich. Those hoping to further explore social issues and activism might consider *Take the Mic: Fictional Stories of Everyday Resistance* (2019), edited by Bethany C. Morrow.

The overarching message for young readers of *We Rise, We Resist, We Raise Our Voices*, is one of celebration, belief and possibility; celebration of all youth; possibility to right wrongs; and, find light in the darkest of places. Whether read in part or as a collection, *We Rise, We Resist, We Raise Our Voices* invites opportunities for rich dialogue, passionate response, purposeful reflection, and deep questioning related to Jane Addams' inspiring vision.

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