### Bowery Girl by Kim Taylor

**Viking, 2006, 192 pp., $16.99**

Historical Fiction/Friendship

Inspired by Jacob Riis’s study of tenement life in late 19th century New York, *How the Other Half Lives*, Taylor creates a fascinating story of friendship between two young women. The naïve, youthful pickpocket Mollie Flynn and her protector, the flamboyant, indomitable prostitute Annabelle Lee, survive through their wits, courage, and cunning on the streets of 1883 Manhattan.

Thegrimness, poverty, and hardship of life without a permanent home are graphically vivid, while descriptions of their lives are realistically harsh as Mollie and Annabelle struggle with gang violence, rat pit fights, robbery, and harassment from many sources. Their chance encounter with Emmeline DuPre, who has just opened the Cherry Street Settlement House, offers opportunity and hope. The lure of the street, however, always tempts as both seek their dream of a new life waiting just over the newly constructed Brooklyn Bridge. Mollie and Annabelle could be two homeless young women anywhere in the world today, but their story from more than a century ago informs and inspires.

**Judith A. Hayn**

Skokie, IL

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### Chill Wind by Janet McDonald

**Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006, 134 pp., $6.95**

Family/Identity

Nineteen-year-old Aisha Ingram tries to recall “chillin’” with her boyfriend at Coney Island and skipping school, but these are just distant memories. Now, with two young children, sixty days until the termination of welfare, and no job because she dropped out of school, Aisha is in trouble. Also, Aisha is forced to live with her alcoholic mother because she receives no help from the children’s father. The only thing this single mother from the projects knows is that workfare is not for her. While trying to avoid working one of the jobs welfare suggests, Aisha answers an ad for BIGMODELS. She thinks she is pretty enough and has the “big” part down. Aisha has high hopes that she deserves the chance to find a real job and turn her life around.

This Coretta Scott King winner is an enjoyable read. There isn’t a detail missed, including the language used and the daily situations that occur in the projects of Brooklyn.

**Hanna Morrill**

Kansas City, MO

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### Copper Sun by Sharon Draper

**Atheneum, 2006, 302 pp., $16.95**

Historical Fiction/Survival/Slavery

ISBN: 0130502437572

Some stories need to be told. Fifteen-year-old Amari’s story of slavery is told through Sharon Draper’s powerful new novel, *Copper Sun*.

Amari’s tale begins in an African village, where she lives with her family. Foreign visitors are given a warm welcome before a blood bath ensues as the visitors kill many villagers or put them in shackles. The slaves’ journey to America is brutal, but Amari survives. She is later sold to a plantation owner, who buys her as a gift to his son for his 16th birthday. Life on the plantation is harsh, but Polly (an indentured white servant) helps Amari and later befriends her. After witnessing a brutal murder by the plantation owner, Amari, Polly, and Tidbit (a slave’s son) escape captivity and become runaways.

Draper masterfully portrays the inhumane realities of slaves’ lives in America in this compelling read. Unimaginable horrors are graphically portrayed; there are scenes of rape and bloodshed, including a scene where slave owners use Tidbit as gator bait. These visions allow audiences to not only hear the story, but they enable us to feel the rage and injustices as well.

**Jill Adams**

Denver, CO

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### Dear Miss Breed: Stories of the Japanese American Incarceration During World War II and a Librarian Who Made a Difference by Joanne Oppenheim

**Scholastic, 2006, 287 pp., $22.99**

First World War II/Relocation Camps


Americans with Japanese ancestry were rounded up and sent to Relocation Camps from March through October of 1942. The United States government said it was for their protection. Later, they were sent from the relocation camps to internment camps; in reality, these camps were “concentration camps.” The book contains letters San Diego teens incarcerated during the war wrote to Miss Breed, a librarian in San Diego. Miss Breed, who kept in touch with her “children” by writing letters, sending books and packages to those interned, kept all of the letters she received. Those letters were reprinted in the book with the original spelling and grammar as the teens wrote to her.

Use *Dear Miss Breed* with World War II units about life in the United States during World War II or as part of a racial discrimination unit. While middle school students will understand what happened during World War II, this title will be of more interest to high school students.

**Ruth Prescott**

Manhattan, KS
Clip & File: A Book Reviews

Endgame
by Nancy Garden
Harcourt Children's Books, 2006, 304 pp., $17.00


When fifteen-year-old Gray Wilton enters the halls of Greenford High School with his father’s gun, his world is forever changed. He is convicted of murder and given a life sentence without parole. Sitting in the detention center, Gray reflects on the months that went wrong. Trouble began with a bully, bringing a knife to school, and then moving to a new city. Gray turns to his music, one love that he feels may save him from the turmoil. Things at the new school don’t improve but take a devastating turn for the worse. Gray ends up making a decision that changes his life forever.

Endgame takes a serious look at the issues of bullying and school violence. This book is appropriate for ages 14 and up and is strongly recommended to all educators.

Michelle Sherer
Independence, MO

Grooves: A Kind of Mystery
by Kevin Brockmeier

ISBN: 978-0-06-073692-7

Kevin Brockmeier has brilliantly incorporated the adventure all adolescents desire with his critique of "The Man." Dwayne Ruggles is a seventh grader who, after taking a science experiment to a new level, discovers a secret plea for help in some blue jeans and potato chips. This leads Dwayne and his friends on a mission to discover the truth about a headstrong businessman named Ward Thigpen.

Grooves allows the young reader to identify with the main characters and become a part of the fantastic adventure that lies within its pages. The protagonists are not extraordinary kids, and that is what makes the novel so unique. The adventurous reader can follow the main character's journey, and the novel explores the importance of friendship and loyalty. Grooves is a perfect read for middle school students who enjoy adventure stories with a touch of mystery.

Christopher Sullivan
Marquette, MI

Gossamer
by Lois Lowry
Houghton Mifflin Company, 2006, 140 pp., $16.00


Lois Lowry’s newest novel explores a fantasy world where angelic beings visit sleeping humans to bestow dreams. The short novel weaves together the stories of a novice dream giver, a lonely woman, and a troubled foster child. Our dream giver, Littlest One, learns to take bits and fragments from everyday life and use them to create dreams capable of helping the woman and the boy through the challenges they face in their waking lives.

Gossamer is rich in archetypal characters and imagery, reading something like one of the pleasant dreams bestowed by its central character. Although the book will be of interest to young people who are fans of the author’s previous works, it is also an excellent read for those who enjoy the adventure and rich narratives, its message of gathering strength for the future is applicable to readers of all ages.

F. Todd Goodson
Manhattan, KS

Hazing Meri Sugarman
by M. Apostolina
Simon Pulse, 2006, 266 pp., $8.99


Cindy Bixby dreams of escaping her high school loser image when she begins college. Following in her mother’s footsteps, Cindy pledges Alpha Beta Delta, hoping to find acceptance and popularity. Cindy, however, causes her to make many compromises to gain her approval. When Cindy realizes the consequences of her actions, she begins to re-evaluate her priorities.

Cindy’s dreams of escaping her high school loser image when she begins college have no choice but to destroy the girl and turn her into a social outcast. Cindy becomes a target of a group of girls who torment her by spreading rumors and isolating her from her friends. Cindy’s only defense is to stand up for herself and to show that she is capable of handling any challenge.

This story is cleverly revealed through daily diary entries. Middle school girls will find the exaggerated dramatic events appealing as it unfolds much like a modern day high school chick flick where the unpopular misfit finds the courage to confront the bully. Some cliché, but the interspersing of family dynamics and the uncertainty of how to stop Meri will keep the reader interested until the end.

Susan Gapp
Vermillion, SD
| **Hip-Hop High School** by Alan Lawrence Sitomer | Urban Youth/Self-Reliance |

Alan Sitomer first introduced the Anderson family in *The Hoopster*, a novel that traced Andre Anderson’s battle with racist teens. Now, we learn more about Andre’s younger sister, Theresa (Tee-Ay), as she struggles in the shadow of her respected older brother. The novel begins the first day of her sophomore year, detailing her struggles with the hard reality of her urban high school and her secret desires to make it to USC upon high school graduation. With hip-hop and its messages ever present, Tee-Ay uses her love of music to help understand her friends’ struggles with violence, poverty and teen pregnancy, all the while secretly practicing her SAT vocabulary in hopes of escaping these realities.

Told in the language of urban youth, this novel provides an honest look into what it is like to try to survive in an inner-city school. Rather than settling for despair, however, Tee-Ay learns how to make something of herself through her budding friendship with Devon, the class valedictorian, and her ambivalent relationship with her teacher Mr. Wandin.

Robyn Seglem
Olathe, KS

| **The Hollow: Mischief** by Christopher Golden and Ford Lyle Gilmore | Friendship/Love |

This novel should appeal to many adolescents looking for a good read. The book is part of a series, so readers should read the series from the beginning to fully understand the complexity and history of all the characters.

The story takes place in a town called Sleepy Hollow; where weird things are a daily occurrence. But, only the young adults are able to really see what the problems are. After previously being haunted by the Headless Horseman, the teens are faced to deal with another type of ghost that comes to disturb the residents. While they are faced with these problems they solve another mystery in *The Hollow*. The book is a quick read at 214 pages, perfect for young teens of 13-16.

Stephanie Linhart
Antioch, IL

| **Ithaka** by Adele Geras | Historical Fiction |

Author Adele Geras continues her version of Odysseus’s epic journey by shifting sites from the battlefields of Troy, wonderfully described in this book’s predecessor *Troy*, to Odysseus’s home island of Ithaka. The intricate story of lust and betrayal is seen through the eyes of Klymere, a handmaiden to the island’s queen. All is not well as the island inhabitants longingly await their king’s return from war. Pressured to select a new husband from the cast of unsavory suitors lolling on the palace’s grounds, Penelope wavers about remaining pure for her husband. But this is also a story about loyalty. Argos, Odysseus’s dog, is the story’s noblest character as the hound patiently waits for his master’s return. Cameo appearances by the Gods, wielding control over the wretched humans, make this historical tale unique. It’s recommended, but not necessary, to have read *Troy* to fully appreciate *Ithaka*.

Rollie Welch
Cleveland, OH

| **Julia’s Kitchen** by Brenda A. Ferber | Family/Survival/Faith |

While Cara Segal is on a sleepover at her best friend Marlee’s, her mother, younger sister, and family cat are killed in a house fire due to an electrical short in a toaster oven. Cara has a relationship with God where He seems to spare her from potential tragedies, so the disaster raises that issue along with others. Why is her father a walking ghost unable to discuss the fire? Why does she feel like such an outcast? Why do the Jewish customs of Shiva and Shabbat bring comfort to others but not to her?

Close to her mother, Cara eventually finds healing by continuing her mother’s catering business, *Julia’s Kitchen*. This is a perfect read for girls ten and over who will appreciate the scrapbooking connections. Cara’s story is an exuberant story of the survival of the youthful human spirit. The author provides a glossary of Hebrew and Yiddish terms for those unfamiliar with Judaism.

Judith A. Hayn
Skokie, IL

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**Clip & File** *YA Book Reviews*
Measle and the Mallockee
by Ian Ogilvy
Fantasy/Family
ISBN: 0-06-058692-3

Measle's nine-month-old sister, Matilda, is a typical baby who loves to jabber and throw food at her brother. However, there is one big difference – she is a mallockee, an extremely powerful wizard who can do many spells at once, while most are limited to one. In this third adventure for the Stubbs children, they find their parents have been imprisoned by an old witch named Griselda the Wicked. They decide to find a way to rescue their parents and find out where the mallockees live. Matilda, with her brother Measle, and his friends, a 10-year-old girl named Quentin and a 9-year-old boy named Toby Jugg, travel to the mysterious Caltrop Castle. Along the way, they encounter a surprising helper, a Rathmonk, a wizard who has been stripped of his magical powers, and Toby Jugg, who recently lost the election for Prime Magus of the Wizards Guild. It seems like an easy task, but the Stubbs children soon discover that not everything, or everyone, is as it seems.

Ogilvy spins a web of twists and turns with his vivid descriptions and unique characters. Middle school students will get swept away in this Potter-esque fantasy adventure.

Jennifer Lee
Independence, MO

The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane
by Kate DiCamillo
Candlewick Press, 2006, 228 pp., $18.99
Friendship/Adventure
ISBN: 0763625892

Edward Tulane is not your ordinary, garden-variety rabbit. He is a china rabbit, made of the finest porcelain. He wears a tuxedo, drives a car, and can read and write. He has been a china rabbit for as long as he can remember, but he longs to be a real rabbit, free to live like the rest of the rabbits in the world. Edward's life changes when he is given to a young girl named Abigale. She loves him dearly, and he is happy to be with her. But one day, while exploring the house, he gets lost and ends up in the wild, where he is discovered by a hobo, a man who has no home and no family. Edward bounces from home to home, from one life to the next, as the book progresses. From lying on the ocean floor to traveling with a hobo to lying in the arms of a sick child, Edward learns about love and loss and why hope is always important to have.

This is a brilliant story about the importance and challenges of true love and friendship. Newbery-Award winning author Kate DiCamillo presents a riveting plot that is wonderfully complemented by illustrator Bagram Ibatoulline's exquisite illustrations.

Jennifer Stevens
Louisville, KY

Playing the Field
by Phil Bildner
Simon and Schuster, 2006, 181 pp., $15.95
Homosexuality
ISBN: 0-689-84413-8

Darcy Miller wants to play baseball, but her high school principal says she can't because she's a girl. But when Principal Bassett thinks that Darcy's a lesbian, he changes his mind. So Darcy pretends to be gay to play baseball, but her problem worsens when he thinks that she's an even more extreme case of being gay. Darcy experiences prejudice at school and ridicule in the community. Her family is supportive, but they're a bit nervous about their nine-year-old daughter coming out. Problems abound for the Porter family. Plenty experiences prejudice at school and at home. Waller wants to play baseball, but he's being skipped over in favor of his P.E. teacher, who includes him in all of the family's dinners and outings. However, Edward has a heart made of that same, cold china; he is conceited and selfish and doesn't seem to understand what love is. That is, until he is lost, having been thrown away from his family by a cruel old woman. Edward experiences prejudice at school and at home. Waller wants to play baseball, but he's being skipped over in favor of his P.E. teacher, who includes him in all of the family's dinners and outings. However, Edward has a heart made of that same, cold china; he is conceited and selfish and doesn't seem to understand what love is. That is, until he is lost, having been thrown away from his family by a cruel old woman. Edward bounces from home to home, from one life to the next, as the book progresses. From lying on the ocean floor to traveling with a hobo to lying in the arms of a sick child, Edward learns about love and loss and why hope is always important to have.

Shawn O'Neil
Marquette, MI

Plenty Porter
by Brandon Noonan
Amulet Books, 2006, 221 pp., $16.95
Fiction/Family
ISBN: 0-8109-5996-8

As the youngest of eleven children, Plenty Porter feels that she is the one-too-many child in her family. Her family survives as share-croppers in Illinois during the Korean War. Problems abound for the Porter family. Plenty experiences prejudice at school and at home. Waller wants to play baseball, but he's being skipped over in favor of his P.E. teacher, who includes him in all of the family's dinners and outings. However, Edward has a heart made of that same, cold china; he is conceited and selfish and doesn't seem to understand what love is. That is, until he is lost, having been thrown away from his family by a cruel old woman. Edward bounces from home to home, from one life to the next, as the book progresses. From lying on the ocean floor to traveling with a hobo to lying in the arms of a sick child, Edward learns about love and loss and why hope is always important to have. Use Plenty Porter with high school units about the 1950s.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Rash</strong> by Pete Hautman</th>
<th><strong>Rewind</strong> by Laura Dower</th>
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<tr>
<td>Science Fiction/Humor</td>
<td>Relationships/Romance</td>
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Bo Marsten lives in a future society where anything that has the remotest potential to harm humans has been outlawed. In order to run track for his high school, Bo has to wear multiple layers of protective gear and runs on a track that behaves like a giant pillow. Football and other contact sports have been banned for years.

It is also a lot easier to become a criminal in this future society, as the slightest infraction sends individuals off to prison work farms necessary to support the government and the economic system. When Bo is sentenced to McDonalds Plant #387 for saying hurtful things to one of his classmates, he discovers a very different world, one in which the head of the prison and the head of a nearby prison (Coca-Cola C-82) field highly illegal football teams that play one another in a particularly brutal version of the sport.

The characters are well-developed, and the future society provides insights into our contemporary culture. Hautman’s novel should appeal to young adults who appreciate social satire and speculative fiction.

F. Todd Goodson
Manhattan, KS

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<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>The Road of the Dead</strong> by Kevin Brooks</th>
<th><strong>Rx</strong> by Tracy Lynn</th>
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<td>Suspense/Death/Violence</td>
<td>Teen/Drug Abuse</td>
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Two determined brothers travel from London to an eerie village in the moors on a mission to find their sister’s rapist and murderer after the family becomes impatient with the police investigation. As the unwelcome boys begin to unravel the secrets and dynamics of the community, they experience savage attempts to put a stop to their searching, which is nudging them closer to the truth. The boys compromise their own lives to complete their mission and bring peace to their family.

This suspenseful story encompasses both a violent edge and emotional softness. The brothers’ personalities complement each other, as one is hardened and fearless, while the other is compassionate and sensitive. Feelings of loss, love, and anger run deep throughout the story, allowing for personal connections that keep the reader anxiously awaiting the boys’ safe return home.

Susan Gapp
Vermillion, SD

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The stories of three characters intertwine as the plot unfolds from the night of prom backward to a New Year’s Eve party six months prior. Cady Sanchez, the talented guitarist/composer/singer, has a crush on the handsome, musical, athletic, and mysterious newcomer Lucas Wheeler. Lucas is secretly involved with gorgeous, popular, promiscuous, and manipulative Hope White. Former best friends, Cady and Hope reunite as leads in the school play, *The Children’s Hour*, after years of Hope’s ignoring Cady since a nasty junior high incident over a boy. The reader follows the building tension among all three as the violence at prom reverses through time, and all becomes horribly clear on the night when the seniors first connect at the party. The snappy dialogue, music analysis, and teen behavior will ring true for high school seniors ready to leave the past while still experiencing the present.

Judith A. Hayn
Skokie, IL

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After years of hard work, Thyme Gilcrest has finally worked her way to the academic top of her junior class. Though she has barely broken into The Twenty—her nickname for the hardest working students in school headed to the best colleges—her junior year is set on the path of extra-currics and college applications. With the arduous course load of AP courses, National Honor Society obligations, and SAT prep courses, Thyme begins to run out of time and energy for the study hours necessary for success. The answer to the latter problem comes in the tossed bottle of a friend diagnosed with ADHD—Ritalin.

A frighteningly realistic portrayal of upper class teenagers dealing with extreme pressure and stress, this novel reveals the demands of a seemingly average student who gets in over her head in the dangerous world of a drug dealer. Tracy Lynn gives an entertaining and convincing account of the hidden, yet vast world of illegal prescription drugs in the high school setting. The use of pop culture, sarcasm, and narrative voice make *Rx* a hauntingly amusing read.

Janae Brady
Wichita, KS
**Slide or Die**

by Todd Strasser

Simon Pulse (Simon & Schuster) 2006, 198 pp., $6.99

*Fiction/Adventure*


Seventeen-year-old Kennin is new to Las Vegas; a friend he had made at work invited him to go for a ride in a hot GTO. As they drove out of the city to ward the mountains, Kennin discovered that the driver with a bottle of tequila was an ex-con who had stolen the GTO. Kennin's group meets up with a group of drivers who compete at a very high rate of speed, sliding the back wheels around turns. The stolen GTO has a tracking device, so the police can locate the car. When the police arrive, Kennin is forced to take the GTO down the mountain road against a very experienced driver.

The manga-style drawings will attract reluctant readers and students interested in cars. *Slide or Die* is appropriate for middle schoolers, although the target audience is probably high school.

Ruth Prescott

Manhattan, KS

**Small Steps**

by Louis Sachar

Delacorte Books for Young Readers, 2006, 272 pp., $16.95

*Coming of Age/Friendship*

ISBN: 0385733143

With this book, author Louis Sachar brings back the character Theodore Johnson, a.k.a. Armpit, from his Newbery Award-winning book, *Holes*. Armpit, an African-American teen, is working hard to rebuild his life after returning home from Camp Green Lake. That is hard to do when everyone knows about your criminal record, so Armpit takes small steps to stay in line and make good choices. While trying to finish high school, Armpit is hired by a landscaping company and works doing what he does best: digging holes. He also befriends Giny, a young neighbor with cerebral palsy.

Everything seems to be going well for Armpit until his old Camp Green Lake pal, X-Ray, visits him. X-Ray gets Armpit involved in a get-rich-quick scheme, scalping concert tickets to see the latest teen pop sensation, Kaira DeLeon. But is Armpit ready to throw away everything he's worked so hard for?

Sachar combines a suspenseful plot with likeable characters to tell this story of friendship and of taking "small steps" to accomplish one's goals.

Jennifer Stevens

Louisville, KY

**The Sound of Munich**

by Suzanne Nelson


*Adventure/Family*

ISBN: 0-14-240576-0

Author Suzanne Nelson has created a light-hearted but surprisingly moving tale that proves to be a quick and light read. We first meet Siena Bernstein, self-proclaimed free-spirited Californian, on her way to Munich, Germany. She is about to begin a semester abroad in the city of her ancestor's. While our protagonist may be a bit flighty and carefree, this is not your typical spring break trip; Siena has a secret plan. She is determined to complete her deceased father's "Carpe Diem" list. Her only link to her father is this list, and the last item has yet to be fulfilled. Only in Germany can she complete what he wrote and be forgiven the sins of her family. Siena has a friend in Germany, hotel heiress Lisette, whose family is linked to the Blumen family. Siena's goal is to find out the family connection, and she travels to various places in Germany. Her ultimate goal is to complete her father's list and possibly find a way to put the past behind her and her family.

Stacy Distel Nishioka

Chicago, IL

**Startled by His Furry Shorts: Confessions of Georgia Nicholson**

by Louise Rennison


*Love/Friendship*

In this, the seventh book of the Georgia Nicholson series, Georgia finds herself in "the oven of luurve" once again. At the end of the last book, *Then He Ate My Boy Entrancers*, Georgia had given the Italian Stallion, a.k.a. Masimo, an ultimatum: to be an exclusive couple. Throughout this book, Georgia awaits her answer and has to deal with the devastating idea of having to put up with her little sister, Libby, who is constantly hiding things in her bed, and her psycho cats, Angus and Gordy, who attack at random. This young adult novel is an easy read and, just like the character, is sunny and fun. She is an interesting character, and her kindness, her friendships, and her adventure make this a no-frills read for young adults (girls) with a Meg Cabot-like feel.

Jennifer Stevens

Louisville, KY
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
<th>Pages</th>
<th>Price</th>
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<th>Genre</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The Tenth Power</strong></td>
<td>Kate Constable</td>
<td>Scholastic Press</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>$16.99</td>
<td>0-439-55482-9</td>
<td>Utopia/Harmony</td>
<td>Arthur A. Levine</td>
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<td></td>
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<td><strong>This novel completes the Chanters of Tremaris trilogy which includes The Singers of All Songs and The Waterless Sea. Eighteen-year-old Calwyn, suffering the loss of her magical powers of chanting, returns to her home in Antaris. She had fought the dangerous sorcerer Samis, lost her powers trying to heal a “dry and troubled land,” and in her misery pushed away Darrow, the man she loves. She hopes to find refuge among the priestesses. Instead, she finds her home in the grip of endless winter, the chanters suffering from a plague of snow-sickness. There the dying High Priestess teaches her the secrets of the Goddess and sends her on a quest to find the Wheel, an object of Power, which can heal the world.</strong> Calwyn regains her magical powers when she is willing to sacrifice herself for another, even an enemy. Calwyn shows the people how they can break down barriers and live in harmony. Constable creates a vision of a Utopia where differences are overcome and warfare is broken. This magic can only be created when all the people join in a great dance of healing.</td>
<td>Jeanne M. McGlinn</td>
<td>Asheville, NC</td>
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<td><strong>That Fernhill Summer</strong></td>
<td>Colby Rodowsky</td>
<td>Farrar Straus Giroux</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>$16.00</td>
<td>0-374-37442-2</td>
<td>Family</td>
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<td><strong>Travel with Kiara as she meets the family that she never knew existed. After an unexpected phone call from her Aunt Claire, informing her family that her mother’s mother was ill, Kiara is thrown into a life of new cousins, aunts, uncles, and a grandmother who is anything but kind. While staying at Fernhill, her grandmother’s house, for the summer, Kiara and her cousins Jill and Maddie learn how to make the most out of difficult situations while dealing with their very moody grandmother. The trio becomes very close as they battle the hot weather and boredom at Fernhill. That Fernhill Summer by Colby Rodowsky is a quick read with only 176 pages, yet it is still entertaining and satisfying. While traveling with Kiara, you will feel everything from sadness to happiness and will be left feeling content.</strong></td>
<td>Brenda Carobine</td>
<td>Marquette, MI</td>
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<td><strong>Thicker than Water</strong></td>
<td>Carla Jablonski</td>
<td>Razorbill (Penguin)</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>$16.99</td>
<td>1-59514-023-9</td>
<td>Vampires/Witchcraft</td>
<td>Family</td>
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<td><strong>Thicker than Water, a novel by Carla Jablonski, is the story of seventeen-year-old Kia, who is dealing simultaneously with many of life’s difficulties: a cancer-stricken mother, an absent father, a compulsion for cutting, and a search for identity. Kia investigates witchcraft and magic, first at a Wiccan ceremony, then in the world of hip vampires in the bars of New York City. Along with encouragement from her new co-worker Hecate, Kia becomes captivated with the vampire underground bar scene, especially with one of the deejays, Damon. Kia spends much of the book pursuing a romance with him, despite the concerns of her friends Carol, Aaron, and Virgil. However, in the background are always Kia’s relationships with her ever-changing family. Bar-hopping adventures, underage drinking, and some erotic scenes make Thicker than Water more appropriate for older teens, especially those with an interest in the supernatural.</strong></td>
<td>Kia Jane Richmond</td>
<td>Marquette, MI</td>
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<td><strong>A True and Faithful Narrative</strong></td>
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<td>Farrar Straus Giroux</td>
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<td><strong>In this sequel to At the Sign of the Star, 16-year-old Meg is chafing at the restraints on 1600s women. As a bookseller’s daughter, Meg has had the unique opportunity of reading widely. As a Londoner, her view of life is broader than many, but her desire to be a writer is not a popular one. She realizes that her future depends on her making good decisions. She will have to marry, but she seeks a man who will not be averse to her vocation.</strong> Caught between two young men, she decides to choose the one who offers possibilities. This book is a wonderful story about women’s struggle for equality, and it is relevant today.**</td>
<td>Joy Frerichs</td>
<td>Chatsworth, GA</td>
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The Valley of the Wolves
by Laura Gallego Garcia
Fantasy/Supernatural ISBN: 0-439-58553-8

Ever since Dana was six, her best friend has been a boy named Kai. The only problem is that Dana is the only one who can see him. Everyone in the town knows of Dana's "imaginary friend" and believes she must be crazy and a witch. When a mystical man named Maestro adopts Dana as an apprentice and takes her to Maestro's magic Tower in the Valley of the Wolves, Dana must find out if she really is a witch. With the help of Kai, Dana must survive the Tower and the Valley of the Wolves, while trying to discover what the power of magic is really all about. Written when Garcia was only 20, The Valley of the Wolves is the story of a young girl coming of age and realizing her full potential. Garcia borrows different elements of fantasy and the supernatural to create a truly believable world.

Brandon Schwarz
Lawrence, KS

What Are You Afraid Of?
Edited by Donald R. Gallo
Candlewick Press, 2006, 189 pp., $15.99
Short Stories/Phobias ISBN: 0763626546

Excessive fears, phobias, and phobia-ridden stories haunt teenagers' lives. Descriptions of the mundane and the familiar, the fearsome and the fantastical, the everyday and the bizarre, create different degrees of horror and excitement. What Are You Afraid Of? offers a way to overcome these phobias and fears.結合 The Valley of the Wolves and the supernatural, What Are You Afraid Of? allows readers to overcome their fears and phobias. The collection includes 11 phobia-ridden stories that will leave readers with a taste of fear in their mouths. The stories are written by a variety of authors, including Stephen King, Neil Gaiman, and Michael Chabon. With these stories, readers can learn to overcome their fears and enjoy the world around them.

Carolyn Lott
Missoula, MT

The Wright 3
by Blue Bakkuett
Scholastic Press, 2006, 297 pp., $16.99
Historical Fiction ISBN: 0439693675

The Wright 3 by Blue Bakkuett is an absorbing mystery involving American architect Frank Lloyd Wright's Chicago design, the Robie House. Because of a teacher's concern about damaging works of art, three classmates endeavor to save the house. This book will engage middle school readers with its historical, mathematical, and criminal clues. The Wright 3 is a great read for history buffs and those interested in Black history.

Joy Frerichs
Chatsworth, GA

Clip & File
YA Book Reviews

To submit a review for possible publication or to become a reviewer, contact Lori Goodson at lagoodson@cox.net.