

Black enough : stories of being young & Black in America (#1172JT5)

Best of Titlewave

[6 reviews & awards](#) | [4 full-text reviews](#)

Overview

From Follett

A collection of coming-of-age short stories that reflect on the African American teenage experience in America.

From the Publisher

Edited by National Book Award finalist Ibi Zoboi and featuring some of the most acclaimed, bestselling black authors writing for teens today-Black Enough is an essential collection of captivating stories about what it's like to be young and black in America.

Black is...sisters navigating their relationship at summer camp in Portland, Oregon, as written by Renee Watson.

Black is... three friends walking back from the community pool talking about nothing and everything, in a story by Jason Reynolds.

Black is...Nic Stone's bougie debutante dating a boy her momma would never approve of.

Black is...two girls kissing in Justina Ireland's story set in Maryland.

Black is urban and rural, wealthy and poor, mixed race, immigrants, and more-because there are countless ways to be black enough.

Contributors:Justina IrelandVarian JohnsonRita Williams-GarciaDhonielle ClaytonKekla MagoonLeah HendersonTochi OnyebuchiJason ReynoldsNic StoneLiara TamaniRenee WatsonTracey BaptisteCoe BoothBrandy ColbertJay ColesIbi ZoboiLamar Giles

Reviews & Awards

- **Booklist** starred, 11/01/18
- **Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books**, 12/01/18
- **Horn Book Magazine**, 01/01/19
- **Kirkus Reviews** starred, 11/01/18
- **Publishers Weekly** starred, 10/22/18
- **School Library Journal** starred, 11/01/18

Full-Text Reviews

Booklist starred (November 1, 2018 (Vol. 115, No. 5))

Grades 9-12. What is it like to be young and black, and yet not black enough at the same time? That's the question explored in this poignant collection of stunning short stories by black rock-star authors, including Justina Ireland, Jason Reynolds, Nic Stone, and Brandy Colbert. The stories center on the experience of black teens, while driving home the fact that they are not a monolith; one person's experiences, reality, and personal identity can be completely different from another's. Family, friends, belonging, isolation, classism, and romance are among the topics that take center stage, and the stories' teens come from a diverse array of backgrounds (e.g., economic, neighborhood, country of origin). Readers glimpse the struggles, achievements, heartaches, and joys of a host of black teens who are authentically and lovingly portrayed. From the kid with two black parents to the mixed-race kid with one black parent, all of the characters grapple with the heart-wrenching question most real-life black teens struggle with (and never should need to): Am I black enough? The additional magic of this collection is that it shirks off the literary world's tired obsession with only depicting the struggles of black teens. With this, readers see everyday struggles as well as the ordinary yet remarkable joys of black teens that have nothing to do with the trauma of their history.

Kirkus Reviews starred (November 1, 2018)

A diverse and compelling fiction anthology that taps 17 established, rising star, and new #ownvoices talents. Editor Zoboi (*Pride*, 2018, etc.) lays out the collection's purpose: exploring black interconnectedness, traditions, and identity in terms of how they apply to black teens. Given that scope, that most stories are contemporary realistic fiction makes sense (Rita Williams-Garcia's humorous "Whoa!" which dips into the waters of speculative fiction, is a notable exception). Conversely, the characters are incredibly varied, as are the narrative styles. Standouts include the elegant simplicity of Jason Reynolds' "The Ingredients," about a group of boys walking home from the swimming pool; Leah Henderson's "Warning: Color May Fade," about an artist afraid to express herself; the immediacy of Tracey Baptiste's "Gravity," about a #MeToo moment of self-actualization birthed from violation; Renee Watson's reflection on family in "Half a Moon"; and the collection's namesake, Varian Johnson's "Black Enough," which highlights the paradigm shift that is getting woke. In these stories, black kids are nerds and geeks, gay and lesbian, first gen and immigrants, outdoorsy and artists, conflicted and confused, grieving and succeeding, thriving and surviving—in short, they're fully human. No collection could represent the entire spectrum of blackness, however, the presence of trans, Afro-Latinx, and physically disabled characters is missed: a clarion call for more authentic black-centric collections. A breath of fresh air and a sigh of long overdue relief. Nuanced and necessary. (contributor biographies) (Anthology. 12-18)

Publishers Weekly (October 22, 2018)

This collection of 17 original stories is written by contemporary black authors who explore "teens examining, rebelling against, embracing, or simply existing within their own idea of blackness." The tales offer a wide array of perspectives and thoughtful reflections on black teenagers' experiences, with pervading themes that include black identity (Varian Johnson's "Black Enough"), sexual awakening (Justina Ireland's "Kissing Sarah Smart"), and teenage worries. The stories, all worth savoring, share a celebratory outlook on black teenagers fully and courageously embracing life. Ages 13-up. (Jan.) c Copyright PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved.

School Library Journal (November 1, 2018)

Gr 9 Up-A compilation of short stories that offers unique perspectives on what it means to be young and black in America today. Each entry is deftly woven and full of such complex humanity that teens will identify with and see some of their own struggles in these characters. In Leah Henderson's "Warning: Color May Fade," a prep school girl examines the cost of being and remaining invisible in a world carefully crafted to exclude her. Two girls take the peer pressure of naked selfies and turn it on its head in "Girl, Stop Playing" by Liara Tamani. A group of young black boys dream up food creations heavily influenced by the flavors of other cultures in "The Ingredients" by Jason Reynolds. This collection presents the beauty of black humanity in all its many forms. The teens in these tales are dealing with mental health issues, complicated family dynamics, sexuality and gender constraints, and being part of a marginalized group. The entries offer a rich tableau of the black teen diaspora in an accessible way. VERDICT A great volume for all libraries serving young adults.-Desiree Thomas, Worthington Library, OH © Copyright 2018. Library Journals LLC,

. **Citizen illegal : poems** (#1112NR5)
by [Olivarez, Jose](#)

Overview

From Follett

"Poet Jose Olivarez explores the story, contradictions, joys, and sorrows that embody life in the spaces between Mexico and America. He paints vivid portraits of good kids, bad kids, families clinging to hope, life after the steel mills, and gentrifying barrios"--Provided by publisher.

From the Publisher

"Citizen Illegal is right on time, bringing both empathy and searing critique to the fore as a nation debates the very humanity of the people who built it." --Eve Ewing, author of *Electric Arches*

In this stunning debut, poet Jose Olivarez explores the stories, contradictions, joys, and sorrows that embody life in the spaces between Mexico and America. He paints vivid portraits of good kids, bad kids, families clinging to hope, life after the steel mills, gentrifying barrios, and everything in between. Drawing on the rich traditions of Latinx and Chicago writers like Sandra Cisneros and Gwendolyn Brooks, Olivarez creates a home out of life in the in-between. Combining wry humor with potent emotional force, Olivarez takes on complex issues of race, ethnicity, gender, class, and immigration using an everyday language that invites the reader in. Olivarez has a unique voice that makes him a poet to watch.

Jose Olivarez is the son of Mexican immigrants. He is a co-host of the podcast, *The Poetry Gods*. A winner of fellowships from Poets House, The Bronx Council On The Arts, The Poetry Foundation, and The Conversation Literary Festival, his work has been published in *The BreakBeat Poets* and elsewhere. He is the Marketing Manager at Young Chicago Authors.

Full-Text Reviews

Booklist (September 1, 2018 (Vol. 115, No. 1))

Featured in *The Breakbeat Poets* (2015), Olivarez debuts his first solo poetry project, a high-octane take on the rhythms and contradictions of life as a first-generation child of Mexican parents. Early on, Olivarez differentiates between Chicanos (Mexican Americans), Mexicans (who immigrated to the U.S.), and Mexicanos (still residing in Mexico). For Olivarez, the world is defined by these and other limits, and his poems occupy spaces of liminality between law and crime, English and Spanish, hard work and higher education. In "Hecky Naw," the speaker questions the escape value of a college degree: "isn't that what Harvard / was supposed to buy / where the border ended / in a boardroom." This perpetual transition from borderland to mainstream is revisited in "My Family Never Finished Migrating We Just Stopped," in which the speaker laments the hardships of migrants, "worn thin as guitar strings, / so we can follow the music home." A compelling work that embodies the immediacy of live performance, to be read alongside Chinaka Hodge's *Dated Emcees* (2016) and the anthology *The End of Chiraq* (2018).

Publishers Weekly Annex (October 1, 2018)

Olivarez celebrates his family and Mexican-American identity in his hopeful, waggish, and devastating debut collection. He has a critical eye for how Mexicans and Mexican-Americans are observed, labeled, and categorized, writing that "it's hard for one body to contain two countries,/ the countries go to war & it's hard to remember you are loved by both/ sides or any sides." This concept ignites a paralyzing hyperconsciousness that offers a glimpse into the poet's oftentimes conflicting identities and provides the inventive structure of the eponymous opening poem. "Mexican woman (illegal) and Mexican man (illegal)/ have a Mexican (illegal)-American (citizen)./ is the baby more Mexican or American?" he asks. Olivarez is sharply critical of American media portrayals of Mexican-American culture: "when i watch the news i hear my name, but never see my face. every other commercial is for taco bell." Olivarez shines when he embraces the flaws and the grandeur of his background. His poem "Gentefication" imagines a neighborhood being reclaimed from gentrifiers and a people's commune taking its place: "we trade tortillas for haircuts, nopales for healthcare,/ poems for groceries, & if all you can do/ is eat the food, we ask that you wash your dishes." In the neighborhood of Olivarez's imagination, "the whole block is alive/ & not for sale." (Sept.) © Copyright PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved.

Educated : a memoir (#1261FL3)

by [Westover, Tara](#)

Best of Titlewave

[8 reviews & awards](#) | [6 full-text reviews](#)

Hardcover — Random House, 2018

Price: \$24.28

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

To the Westovers, public education was the quickest way to put yourself on the wrong path. By the time the author, the youngest Westover, had come along, her devout Mormon parents had pulled all of their seven children out of school, preferring to teach just the essentials: a little bit of reading, a lot of scripture, and the importance of family and a hard day's work. Westover's debut memoir details how her isolated upbringing in the mountains of Idaho led to an unexpected outcome: Cambridge, Harvard, and a PhD. Though Westover's entrance into academia is remarkable, at its heart, her memoir is a family history: not just a tale of overcoming but an uncertain elegy to the life that she ultimately rejected. Westover manages both tenderness and a savage honesty that spares no one, not even herself: nowhere is this more powerful than in her relationship with her brother Shawn, her abuser and closest friend. In its keen exploration of family, history, and the narratives we create for ourselves, *Educated* becomes more than just a success.

Kirkus Reviews (December 1, 2017)

A recent Cambridge University doctorate debuts with a wrenching account of her childhood and youth in a strict Mormon family in a remote region of Idaho. It's difficult to imagine a young woman who, in her teens, hadn't heard of the World Trade Center, the Holocaust, and virtually everything having to do with arts and popular culture. But so it was, as Westover chronicles here in fairly chronological fashion. In some ways, the author's father was a classic anti-government paranoiac—when Y2K failed to bring the end of the world, as he'd predicted, he was briefly humbled. Her mother, though supportive at times, remained true to her beliefs about the subordinate roles of women. One brother was horrendously abusive to the author and a sister, but the parents didn't do much about it. Westover didn't go to public school and never received professional medical care or vaccinations. She worked in a junkyard with her father, whose fortunes rose and fell and rose again when his wife struck it rich selling homeopathic remedies. She remained profoundly ignorant about most things, but she liked to read. A brother went to Brigham Young University, and the author eventually did, too. Then, with the encouragement of professors, she ended up at Cambridge and Harvard, where she excelled—though she includes a stark account of her near breakdown while working on her doctoral dissertation. We learn about a third of the way through the book that she kept journals, but she is a bit vague about a few things. How, for example, did her family pay for the professional medical treatment of severe injuries that several of them experienced? And—with some justification—she is quick to praise herself and to quote the praise of others. An astonishing account of deprivation, confusion, survival, and success.

Library Journal (September 15, 2017)

Raised in the Idaho mountains by survivalist parents who eschewed schooling and doctors, Westover hungered so powerfully for education that she taught herself, getting to Brigham Young University and eventually Cambridge University for a PhD. One of the publisher's big books of the season. © Copyright 2017. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

Library Journal (February 1, 2018)

Raised on a secluded family compound in Idaho, Westover was seven before realizing the biggest difference between her family and others was not their remote home, or their Mormon religion—but that "we don't go to school." Westover helped the family maintain a minimalist existence through construction, scrapping, and midwifery, no matter how many injuries she sustained. But when the author's wounds go untreated, leaving her mother mentally compromised and herself an object of abuse, cracks in her upbringing began to appear. Westover's brother Tyler is the first to leave home for college, later encouraging her to do the same. "There's a world out there, Tara...it will look a lot different once Dad is no longer whispering his view of it in your ear." Starting her academic career at Brigham Young University, Westover continued to earn academic achievements, including a PhD in history from Cambridge

University. VERDICT Explicit descriptions of abuse can make for difficult reading, but for a student who started from a point of near illiteracy, Westover's writing is lyrical and literary in style. With no real comparison memoir, this joins the small number of Mormon exposés of recent years. [See "Editors' Spring Picks," p. 29.-Ed.]-Jessica Bushore, Xenia, OH © Copyright 2018. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

Publishers Weekly (December 11, 2017)

A girl claws her way out of a claustrophobic, violent fundamentalist family into an elite academic career in this searing debut memoir. Westover recounts her upbringing with six siblings on an Idaho farm dominated by her father Gene (a pseudonym), a devout Mormon with a paranoid streak who tried to live off the grid, kept four children (including the author) out of school, refused to countenance doctors (Westover's mother, Faye, was an unlicensed midwife who sold homeopathic medicines), and stockpiled supplies and guns for the end-time. Westover was forced to work from the age of 11 in Gene's scrap and construction businesses under incredibly dangerous conditions; the grisly narrative includes lost fingers, several cases of severe brain trauma, and two horrible burns that Faye treated with herbal remedies. Thickening the dysfunction was the author's bullying brother, who physically brutalized her for wearing makeup and other immodest behaviors. When she finally escaped the toxic atmosphere of dogma, suspicion, and patriarchy to attend college and then grad school at Cambridge, her identity crisis precipitated a heartbreaking rupture. Westover's vivid prose makes this saga of the pressures of conformity and self-assertion that warp a family seem both terrifying and ordinary. (Feb.) © Copyright PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved.

School Library Journal (May 1, 2018)

Raised in an alternative Mormon home in rural Idaho, Westover worked as an assistant midwife to her mother and labored in her father's junkyard. Formal schooling wasn't a priority, because her parents believed that public education was government indoctrination and that Westover's future role would be to support her husband. But her older brother's violence and their family's refusal to acknowledge problems at home resulted in the teen contemplating escape through education. Admittance to Brigham Young University was difficult. Westover taught herself enough to receive a decent score on the ACT, but because of her upbringing, she didn't understand rudimentary concepts of sanitation and etiquette, and her learning curve was steep. However, she eventually thrived, earning scholarships to Harvard and Cambridge-though she grappled with whether to include her toxic family in her new life. Born in 1986, Westover interviewed family members to help her write the first half. Her well-crafted account of her early years will intrigue teens, but the memoir's second part, covering her undergraduate and graduate experiences in the "real world," will stun them. VERDICT A gripping, intimate, sometimes shocking, yet ultimately inspiring work. Perfect for fans of memoirs about overcoming traumatic childhoods or escaping from fundamentalist religious communities, such as Jeannette Walls's *The Glass Castle* and Ruth Wariner's *The Sound of Gravel*.-Sarah Hill, Lake Land College, Mattoon, IL © Copyright 2018. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source,

Everything sad is untrue : (a true story) (#1728FC5)

by [Nayeri, Daniel](#)

Overview

From Follett

"At the front of a middle school classroom in Oklahoma, a boy named Khosrou (whom everyone calls 'Daniel') stands, trying to tell a story. His story. But no one believes a word he says. To them he is a dark-skinned, hairy-armed boy with a big butt whose lunch smells funny; wo makes things up and talks about poop too much. But Khosrou's stories, stretching back years, and decades, and centuries, are beautiful, and terrifying, from the moment he, his mother, and sister fled Iran in the middle of the night, stretching all the way back to family tales set in the jasmine-scented city of Isfahan, the palaces of semi-ancient kings, and even the land of stories"--Jacket flap.

"A patchwork story is the shame of the refugee," Nayeri writes early in the novel. In an Oklahoman middle school, Khosrou (whom everyone calls Daniel) stands in front of a skeptical audience of classmates, telling the tales of his family's history, stretching back years, decades, and centuries. At the core is Daniel's story of how they became refugees--starting with his mother's vocal embrace of Christianity in a country that made such a thing a capital offense, and continuing through their midnight flight from the secret police, bribing their way onto a plane-to-anywhere. Anywhere becomes the sad, cement refugee camps of Italy, and then finally asylum in the U.S. Implementing a distinct literary style and challenging western narrative structures, Nayeri deftly weaves through stories of the long and beautiful history of his family in Iran, adding a richness of ancient tales and Persian folklore.

Reviews & Awards

- **Booklist** starred, 07/01/20
- **Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books** starred, 07/01/20
- **Horn Book Magazine**, 11/01/20
- **Kirkus Reviews** starred, 05/15/20
- **Michael L. Printz Award**, 2021
- **Publishers Weekly** starred, 06/15/20
- **School Library Journal** starred, 07/01/20

Booklist starred (July 2020 (Vol. 116, No. 21))

Grades 7-12. "A patchwork story is the shame of a refugee." It's with this refrain that 12-year-old Khosrou, known as Daniel to his skeptical Oklahoman classmates, tells "a version" of his life story. In the tradition of 1,001 Nights' Scheherazade, he gathers up the loose strands of his memory, weaving short personal vignettes into the Persian histories, myths, and legends that are his ancestry. The result is a winding series of digressions that takes the reader on a journey as intimate as it is epic, knitting together a tale of Daniel's youth in Iran, the perilous flight from home with his sister and mother, and their oppressive new beginning as refugees in Oklahoma. It's a story heavy with loss (of home, of his left-behind father, of innocence), light with humor and love (for his mother, the "unstoppable force"), rich in culture and language (and, somehow, never sentimental). Walking the line between fiction and non-, this is a kind of meta-memoir, a story about the stories that define us. It's a novel, narrated conversationally—and poetically—by a boy reaching for the truth in his fading youth. Nayeri challenges outright what young readers can handle, in form and content, but who can deny him when it's his own experience on display? He demands much of readers, but in return he gives them everything. A remarkable work that raises the literary bar in children's lit.

Horn Book Magazine (November/December, 2020)

Framed loosely as his twelve-year-old self's responses to a series of school assignments, Nayeri's fictionalized memoir swirls through his own memories as well as stories from his family history, circling around major events and pausing to include his Oklahoma classmates' reactions to his tales of early childhood in Iran. This structure means the story takes some time to pick up speed -- which it does once it goes into more focused detail about Nayeri's family's journey: their quick escape from Iran after his mother's life was threatened because she had converted to Christianity; his father's decision to stay behind. The buildup comprises tangent upon tangent -- Nayeri alludes frequently to Scheherazade's

stringing together of stories in the 1,001 Nights -- but those tangents are absorbing and full of universalizing detail and humor (there's more than one poop anecdote). This tale is constantly focused on its telling, with references to an imagined audience and reminders of who characters are. The actual audience is a bit of a puzzle, as the twelve-year-old narrator's tale spans a wide range of ages in his life and those of his family members, and the overall sensibility seems more adult than not. An author's note acknowledges the fallibility of memory as well as some deliberate alterations; it is, as Nayeri puts it, "both fiction and nonfiction at the same time." Shoshana Flax November/December 2020 p.107

Kirkus Reviews starred (May 15, 2020)

"Every story is the sound of a storyteller begging to stay alive." Khosrou, the child, stands before his class in Oklahoma and tells stories of Iran, lifetimes' worth of experiences compressed into writing prompts. Daniel, the adult, pieces together his "patchwork" past to stitch a quilt of memory in a free-wheeling, layered manner more reminiscent of a conversation than a text. At its most basic level, Nayeri's offering is a fictionalized refugee's memoir, an adult looking back at his childhood and the forced adoption of a new and infinitely more difficult life. Yet somehow "memoir" fails to do justice to the scope of the narrative, the self-proclaimed antithesis of just another " 'poor me' tale of immigrant woe." Like Scheherazade, Nayeri spins 1,001 tales: In under 400 pages he recounts Persian myth and history, leads readers through days banal and outstanding, waxes philosophical on the nature of life and love, and more. Not "beholden" to the linear conventions of Western storytelling, the story might come across as disjointed, but the various anecdotes are underscored by a painful coherence as they work to illuminate not only a larger story, but a life. And there is beauty amid the pain as well as laughter. The soul-sapping hopelessness of a refugee camp is treated with the same dramatic import as the struggle to eliminate on Western toilets. The language is evocative: simple yet precise, rife with the idiosyncratic and abjectly honest imagery characteristic of a child's imagination. (This review has been updated to clarify that the book is a work of fiction.) A modern epic. (author's note, acknowledgments) (Historical fiction. 10-18)

Publishers Weekly (June 15, 2020)

Marked by a distinctive voice—a straightforward mix of confiding, slyly humorous, and unsentimentally sorrowful—Nayeri's (Straw House, Wood House, Brick House, Blow) impressive autobiographical novel is narrated by 12-year-old Khosrou, known as Daniel, who models himself after the legendary Scheherazade. The chapterless "patchwork story" follows Daniel through his dreamlike early childhood in Iran, a year in an Italian refugee camp with his sister and "unstoppable" mother (but without his larger-than-life father, who chose to stay behind), and their eventual asylum in Oklahoma. The text moves nimbly back and forth in time, depicting with equal vividness ancient Persian tales (a jasmine-scented village with saffron fields, courtyards, and fountains), family history (a legendary ancestral doctor), and the challenges of navigating life as an outsider in "a land of concrete and weathermen." Interspersed with his experiences is the narrator's accumulated wisdom on a broad range of subjects—cultural differences in bathroom habits, the creation of Persian rugs, the roots of today's conflicts between Shiites and Sunnis—which help establish Daniel's identity as a knowledgeable, thoughtful storyteller. Mesmerizing and hard-hitting at once, this work of personal mythology is a rare treasure of a book. Ages 10-up. Agent: Joanna Volpe, New Leaf Literary. (Aug.) © Copyright PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved.

School Library Journal starred (July 1, 2020)

Gr 4-8- Nayeri weaves stories within stories in this fictionalized account of his formative years. He shares layers of rich information about life in Iran, refugee camps, and his experiences as an immigrant in the United States during the late 20th century. The themes of family, love, and truth are as strong as those of faith, endurance, memory, and storytelling as Khosrou (also known as Daniel) tries to tell the tales of his beautiful, complicated life and family. Nayeri provides clues about other characters without overexplaining them. Tough issues are discussed, particularly domestic violence, bullying, and life as a refugee and an immigrant, but there is levity, too. Khosrou's thoughts on Manwich sloppy joe sauce, using toilets in the U.S., and his father's overindulgence in Twinkies all lighten this tale. Without being didactic, the text communicates the universality of the human experience and the lack of empathy shown by some, not all, of those he encounters in the U.S. and in the refugee environments. The strongest developed characters are Daniel and his mother; however, readers experience varying levels of complexities of other characters like Daniel's father, stepfather, sister, teacher, and his friends (and enemies). VERDICT At once beautiful and painful, this timely story is highly recommended for middle grade readers.—Hilary Writt, formerly at Sullivan Univ., Lexington, KY © Copyright 2020. Library Journals LLC

Gutter Child (#8DSZX39)

by [Richardson, Jael](#)

About the Book

NATIONAL BESTSELLER

A fierce and illuminating debut from FOLD founder Jael Richardson about a young woman who must find the courage to determine her own future and secure her freedom

Set in an imagined world in which the most vulnerable are forced to buy their freedom by working off their debt to society, *Gutter Child* uncovers a nation divided into the privileged Mainland and the policed Gutter. In this world, Elimina Dubois is one of only 100 babies taken from the Gutter and raised in the land of opportunity as part of a social experiment led by the Mainland government.

But when her Mainland mother dies, Elimina finds herself all alone, a teenager forced into an unfamiliar life of servitude, unsure of who she is and where she belongs. Elimina is sent to an academy with new rules and expectations where she befriends Gutter children who are making their own way through the Gutter System in whatever ways they know how. When Elimina's life takes another unexpected turn, she will discover that what she needs more than anything may not be the freedom she longs for after all.

Richardson's *Gutter Child* reveals one young woman's journey through a fractured world of heartbreaking disadvantages and shocking injustices. Elimina is a modern heroine in an altered but all too recognizable reality who must find the strength within herself to forge her future and defy a system that tries to shape her destiny.

Educator and Librarian Resources



- [I'm a Teacher/Librarian](#)

Critical Praise

“A fierce and astounding debut novel from a crucial voice. Jael Richardson has skillfully crafted a dystopian realm that draws from the brutal realities of colonial history and the sinister injustices of the present. A heartfelt, intimate portrayal of a young protagonist's gutsy determination to overcome the rule of a hostile regime fixed on oppressing her and her peers. . . . *Gutter Child* is a coming-of-age story like no other. A powerful homage to the resilience of survivors.” - Waubgeshig Rice, author of *Moon of the Crusted Snow*

“It is near impossible to write a novel that is both propulsive and intricate in its knife-sharp unpicking of our social systems, but Jael Richardson has done it. And along the way she tells the story of the bonds people make under terrible conditions—the ones that make them human,

even when everything around them conspires to say they are not. Gutting and lovely.” - Thea Lim, author of *An Ocean of Minutes*

“A haunting and heartbreaking book. With devastating accuracy, Jael Richardson charts the life of a girl born into a cold, stratified world, one in which the basic human desire to survive becomes an act of rebellion. This is a story about the commodification of a life, the way injustice can rob someone of both a future and a past, render them a stranger even to themselves. There is a current of pain that runs through this novel, but also one of unquenchable hope, a sense that the best of our innate humanity cannot be so easily vanquished.”

- Omar El Akkad, author of *American War*

“Both familiar and fantastical, like the best books are, *Gutter Child* is a story told by a writer brilliant in her craft and keenly attuned to her readers. This is a book you can’t just read; you feel it, you hear it, you carry it with you. You can’t meet Elimina Dubois without loving her and once you do, you’ll follow her to the very last line.”

- Cherie Dimaline, author of *Empire of Wild* and *The Marrow Thieves*

“So meticulous it reads as effortless. With elegance and conviction, Jael Richardson immerses us in the world of the novel with one detail at a time, striking a delicious balance between assured, unhurried prose and an urgent, poignant plot. It is a literary novel to be sure, though with a cinematic quality that brings the characters, story, and setting to life with particular vividness and intensity. An absolute must-read.” - Zalika Reid-Benta, author of *Frying Plantain*

"A deep, unflinching yet loving look at injustice and power." - Chatelaine

"An outstanding and fearless story that follows a young woman's journey of self-discovery and strength as she forges her own way in a ruthless society. . . . Richardson expertly details the small beauties, hardships, and hopes that accompany such an arduous life, which makes *Gutter Child* a powerful and unforgettable novel. - *Quill and Quire* (starred review)

"Tense and suspenseful, Richardson's novel ultimately left us with a sense of hope." - Apple Books

"A gripping tale of rebellion and perseverance, but it's also about the psychological wounds of existing in a world where you are not wanted." - *Zoomer* magazine

"A harrowing novel about divisions of class and the struggle to maintain hope." - *Hamilton Spectator*

"Jael Richardson's debut novel, *Gutter Child*, is a forceful one that shines a spotlight on racism, colonization and the struggle to get out from under an imposed debt that only death will bring freedom from. It is a work of creative fiction that strongly resonates in the age of Black Lives Matter and other Black activist issues. . . . An astonishingly good read." - *Miramichi Reader*

"A soul-searching, beautifully detailed journey, finding the truth of her father's life along with her own." - Linda Spalding, author of *The Purchase* on *The Stone Thrower*

"Cinematic and triumphant, a book for anyone who has ever felt on the outside looking in and longed to understand why." - Tanis Rideout, author of *Above All Things* on *The Stone Thrower*

His hideous heart : thirteen of Edgar Allan Poe's most unsettling tales reimagined

Guilt. Regret. Love. Loss. Self-loathing. Terror. Vengeance. Edgar Allan Poe may be a hundred and fifty years beyond this world, but the themes of his beloved works have much in common with modern young adult fiction. Whether the stories are familiar to readers or discovered for the first time, readers will revel in Edgar Allan Poe's classic tales, and how they've been brought to life in thirteen unique and unforgettable ways. Contributors include Dahlia Adler (reimagining "Ligeia"), Kendare Blake ("Metzengerstein"), Rin Chupeco ("The Murders in the Rue Morgue"), Lamar Giles ("The Oval Portrait"), Tessa Gratton ("Annabel Lee"), Tiffany D. Jackson ("The Cask of Amontillado"), Stephanie Kuehn ("The Tell-Tale Heart"), Emily Lloyd-Jones ("The Purloined Letter"), Hillary Monahan ("The Masque of the Red Death"), Marieke Nijkamp ("Hop-Frog"), Caleb Roehrig ("The Pit and the Pendulum"), and Fran Wilde ("The Fall of the House of Usher").

Reviews & Awards

- **Booklist**, 08/01/19
- **Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books**, 09/01/19
- **Kirkus Reviews** starred, 08/01/19
- **Library Journal**, 09/01/19
- **New York Times**, 10/27/19
- **Publishers Weekly** starred, 07/15/19
- **School Library Connection** starred, 11/01/19
- **Voice of Youth Advocates (VOYA)**, 10/01/19

Full-Text Reviews

Booklist (August 2019 (Vol. 115, No. 22))

Grades 9-12. In Adler's inclusive anthology, 13 YA authors honor Edgar Allan Poe's pioneering work in mystery, horror, and science fiction with retellings that emphasize diverse characters, settings, and genres. The most effective stories keep the spirit and themes of Poe's originals while doing something entirely unique. Tessa Gratton, in "Night-Tide," keeps the dreamy anguish of "Annabelle Lee" but reimagines the romance as between two girls summering at a seaside resort. Two authors retell Poe's C. Auguste Dupin mysteries with vastly different styles: Emily Lloyd-Jones sets her take on "The Purloined Letter" in a technologically advanced future in which the titular letter is an implanted ID, while Rin Chupeco's urban fantasy rendition of "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" is peppered with Filipinx LGBTQ+ slang. Tiffany Jackson's "It's Carnival!" ("The Cask of Amontillado") and Stephanie Kuehn's "Happy Days, Sweetheart" ("The Tell-Tale Heart") are straightforward but satisfying female-centered revenge stories. Several popular authors have stand-out stories in this anthology, and Poe's original tales are reprinted at the back. Poe fans new and old will find stories to appreciate here.

Kirkus Reviews starred (August 1, 2019)

A genre-bending collection of 13 twists on Edgar Allan Poe's works. Editor Adler (contributor: *It's a Whole Spiel*, 2019, etc.) does Poe proud with this creepy and atmospheric set of stories inspired by a handful of his most well-known works. All are well worth reading, but there are quite a few standouts, including Rin Chupeco's (contributor: *Hungry Hearts*, 2019, etc.) ebullient "The Murders in the Rue Apartelle, Boracay," in which an effervescent Filipina trans woman joins up with her dashing new half-French, half-Filipino boyfriend to solve the baffling murders of two American tourists on the island of Boracay. Lamar Giles' (*The Last Last-Day-of-Summer*, 2019, etc.) unsettling "The Oval Filter" features African American football star Tariq, whose dead girlfriend's distorted images appear on his phone—and they seem to be trying to tell him something. "The Fall of the Bank of Usher" by Fran Wilde (*The Fire Opal Mechanism*, 2019, etc.) is an adrenaline rush of a tale about assumed white orphans Rik and Mad, brother and sister twins, who must hack their way out of an intimidating Scottish bank for a life-changing prize—a challenge many

before them have failed. Strong feminist themes appear throughout, and genres run the gamut from futuristic to gothic and lots in between. Diversity in race, gender identity, and sexuality is well represented. As a bonus, all of the original stories and poems are included. Poe's ghost happily haunts this fresh, delightfully dark collection. (author bios) (Anthology. 14-adult)

Library Journal (September 1, 2019)

Thirteen of Edgar Allan Poe's most famous works are reimagined by YA authors in this compilation of delightfully shivery tales with strong adult crossover appeal. Tessa Gratton's "Night-Tide" reworks "Annabel Lee" in a story about family obligations and a lost love between two teen girls. Kendare Blake's "She Rode a Horse of Fire" recounts an act of dark vengeance enacted by a ghostly woman to a callous young man. "Happy Days, Sweetheart," by Stephanie Kuehn is a retelling of "The Tell-Tale Heart," with a jealous high-school student as the guilty killer of her rival. In "The Oval Filter," by Lamar Giles, a high school football player seeks the answer to who killed his crush, a social media influencer. This collection shines in getting readers to view Poe's work in a new light, featuring characters from diverse ethnic backgrounds, queer protagonists, and other perspectives not represented in the earlier texts. Packaged in the book are the original stories, making comparisons between the old and the new works easy for readers. VERDICT A solid collection of thoroughly modernized Poe classics, recommended for YA shelves and classrooms or for die-hard Poe scholars.-Jennifer Mills, Shorewood-Troy Lib., IL © Copyright 2019. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

Publishers Weekly (July 15, 2019)

Presenting 13 reinterpretations of Poe's works alongside the originals, this enticing anthology offers an accessible, multifaceted reading experience for fans old and new. Some stories-such as Kendare Blake's "She Rode a Horse of Fire" and Tiffany D. Jackson's "It's Carnival!"-serve updated wrappings of Poe's classic plotlines. Others deconstruct Poe's pieces in novel ways, such as Tessa Gratton's lyrical "Night-Tide," which poignantly delves into themes of queer identity, familial responsibility, and anxiety over the bones of Poe's famous elegy, "Annabel Lee." Diverse genres abound-Marieke Nijkamp situates "Changeling," her fae rendition of Poe's "Hop-Frog," in a historical fantasy world that powerfully engages with disability, while Lamar Giles reframes "The Oval Portrait" in "The Oval Filter" through the lens of a football star haunted by the inexplicable death of his almost-girlfriend, an Instagram influencer. And Rin Chupeco's "The Murders in the Rue Apartelle, Boracay" is the most comedic entry, juxtaposing the mystery of "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" with Filipino mythology, LGBTQ slang, Lovecraftian references, and romance. A refreshing assortment of diverse voices and contemporary themes ensures there's something for everyone in this delightful compilation. Ages: 12-up. Agent: Victoria Marini, Irene Goodman Literary. (Sept.) © Copyright PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved.

In the time of the butterflies (#0552YE5)

by [Alvarez, Julia](#)

Reviews & Awards

- **ALA Notable Children's Books**, 1995
- **Booklist**, 08/01/97
- **Kirkus Reviews**
- **Library Journal**
- **New York Public Library Books for the Teen Age**, 2001
- **New York Times**
- **Teacher Librarian**
- **Wilson's Senior High School**, 11/01/02

Full-Text Reviews

Booklist (Vol. 90, No. 21 (July 1994))

Alvarez follows her charming first novel, *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents* (1991), with a broader, deeper, and even more affecting second one. It's a true story drawn from the history of her native Dominican Republic, about the Mirabel sisters, who, along with their husbands, were instrumental in the formation of an underground resistance movement against the dictatorship of Rafael Leonidas Trujillo. What Alvarez achieves so effortlessly and splendidly, with controlled emotion and resonant details is a novel with a beautifully balanced sense of domestic as well as political drama. She portrays the sisters as they grow from girls into women and follows their paths from school, boys, marriage, and children to even greater life-and-death concerns. Her novel is a statement about politics and history told in very human terms and, as importantly, told not with outrage, but with self-possession. Certain to be a hit.

Kirkus Reviews starred (1994)

Brimming with warmth and vitality, this new novel by the author of *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents* (1991) is a paean to the power of female courage. The butterflies are four smart and lovely Dominican sisters growing up during Trujillo's despotic regime. While her parents try desperately to cling to their imagined island of security in a swelling sea of fear and intimidation, Minerva Mirabal -- the sharpest and boldest of the daughters, born with a fierce will to fight injustice -- jumps headfirst into the revolutionary tide. Her sisters come upon their courage more gradually, through a passionate, protective love of family or through the sheer impossibility of closing their eyes to the horrors around them. Together, their bravery and determination meld into a seemingly insurmountable force, making Trujillo, for all his power, appear a puny adversary. Alvarez writes beautifully, whether creating the ten-year-old Maria Teresa's charming diary entries or describing Minerva's trip home after her first unsettling confrontation with Trujillo: "As the road darkened, the beams of our headlights filled with hundreds of blinded moths. Where they hit the windshield, they left blurry marks, until it seemed like I was looking at the world through a curtain of tears." If the Mirabal sisters are iron-winged butterflies, their men -- father and husbands -- often resemble those blinded moths, feeble and fallible. Still, the women view them with kind, forgiving eyes, and though there's no question of which sex is being celebrated here, a sweet and accepting spirit toward frailty, if not human cruelty, prevails. This is not Garcia Márquez or Allende territory (no green hair or floating bodies); Alvarez's voice is her own, grounded in realism yet alive with the magic of everyday human beings who summon extraordinary courage and determination to fight for their beliefs. As mesmerizing as the Mirabal sisters themselves.

Library Journal (August 1, 1994)

Alvarez's award-winning first novel (*How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents*, LJ 5/1/91) is more than matched by her second. *Butterflies* is based on the lives of the four Mirabel sisters (code name: "Mariposas," that is, butterflies), three of whom were martyred in 1960 during the liberation of the Dominican Republic from the dictator Trujillo. Through the surviving sister, Dede, as well as memories of Minerva, Patria, and Maria Teresa, we discover the compelling forces behind each sister's role in the struggle for freedom. As Alvarez says "A novel is not, after all, a historical document, but a way to travel through the human heart." Though murder, torture, and imprisonment are ever-present, she wisely chooses to focus on the personal lives of these young wives and mothers, full of love, beauty, and,

especially, hope. Highly recommended for its luminescence and relevance.-Rebecca S. Kelm, Northern Kentucky Univ. Lib., Highland Heights

Publishers Weekly (July 11, 1994)

During the last days of the Trujillo dictatorship in the Dominican Republic, three young women, members of a conservative, pious Catholic family, who had become committed to the revolutionary overthrow of the regime, were ambushed and assassinated as they drove back from visiting their jailed husbands. Thus martyred, the Mirabal sisters have become mythical figures in their country, where they are known as las mariposas (the butterflies), from their underground code names. Herself a native of the Dominican Republic, Alvarez (*How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents*) has fictionalized their story in a narrative that starts slowly but builds to a gripping intensity. Each of the girls--Patria, Minerva and Maria Terese (Mate) Mirabal--speaks in her own voice, beginning in their girlhood in the 1940s; their surviving sister, Dede, frames the narrative with her own tale of suffering and dedication to their memory. To differentiate their personalities and the ways they came to acquire revolutionary fervor, Alvarez takes the risk of describing their early lives in leisurely detail, somewhat slowing the narrative momentum. In particular, the giddy, childish diary entries of Mate, the youngest, may seem irritatingly mundane at first, but in time Mate's heroism becomes the most moving of all, as the sisters endure the arrests of their husbands, their own imprisonment and the inexorable progress of Trujillo's revenge. Alvarez captures the terrorized atmosphere of a police state, in which people live under the sword of terrible fear and atrocities cannot be acknowledged. As the sisters' energetic fervor turns to anguish, Alvarez conveys their courage and their desperation, and the full import of their tragedy. 40,000 first printing; \$40,000 ad/promo; reprint rights to NAL; 20-city author tour. (Sept.)

Internment (#1463YT9)

by [Ahmed, Samira](#)

From Follett

Set in a horrifying near-future United States, seventeen-year-old Layla Amin and her parents are forced into an internment camp for Muslim American citizens. With the help of newly made friends also trapped within the internment camp, her boyfriend on the outside, and an unexpected alliance, Layla begins a journey to fight for freedom, leading a revolution against the camp's Director and his guards.

Heart-racing and emotional, *Internment* challenges readers to fight complicit silence that exists in our society today.

Booklist starred, 02/01/19

Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books, 02/01/19

- **Horn Book Magazine**, 03/01/19
 - **Kirkus Reviews starred**, 01/01/19
 - **New York Times**, 03/10/19
 - **Publishers Weekly starred**, 01/07/19
 - **School Library Connection starred**, 03/01/19
 - **School Library Journal starred**, 03/01/19
 - **Teacher Librarian**, 10/01/19
- Full-Text Reviews***Booklist starred (February 1, 2019 (Vol. 115, No. 11))*

Grades 9-12. Set shortly after the 2016 presidential election, Ahmed's novel presents a chilling depiction of America, in which U.S. citizens allow themselves to be controlled by prejudice and fear and succumb to the hateful rhetoric of a populist leader. Seventeen-year-old Layla Amin and her parents are among the Muslims rounded up and transported to Manzanar, an internment camp for Muslim American citizens. While most people quietly comply, Layla is determined to fight back for the freedom that is rightfully hers. Layla finds allies both inside and outside the camp, and before long, she herself is at the center of a rebellion against the despicable people in charge. This is a poignant, necessary story that paints a very real, very frank picture of hatred and ignorance, while also giving readers and marginalized individuals hope. It emphasizes that the oppressed have a voice and the power to speak up and fight back, while also reminding us that all citizens have the obligation, responsibility, and power to raise their voices and defend their fellow citizens from mistreatment or abuse. Though it might recall dystopian novels of the recent past, this carries so much more weight and is infinitely more terrifying, since its setting—a near-future U.S.—could very well exist today, tomorrow, or only a handful of years from now. This timely, important novel should spark many conversations about contemporary issues.

Horn Book Magazine (March/April, 2019)

Xenophobic fear-mongering, book burnings, terrified families rounded up in the middle of the night to be thrown into internment camps—all painfully familiar elements of America's past and present—descend upon Layla Amin's near-future dystopian world like a drizzle that steadily becomes a torrent. Seventeen-year-old Layla watches as a racist and Islamophobic president emboldens a hateful regime that considers all Muslims to be threats. Ripped from her home and sent to a desert camp, Layla resists the appalling injustice, refusing to accept terror and imprisonment as "normal." And she is not alone: other teens and even a few guards join Layla in plans to expose the camp and attain their freedom. But with fellow Muslims being beaten or disappearing to black-ops sites and a sadistic camp director prepared to destroy the resistance by any means, freedom may come at the cost of lives. The line between speculative fiction and contemporary realism has never been fuzzier, and Ahmed doesn't so much balance on it as erase it, in an emotionally authentic, devastatingly intimate, and startlingly concrete portrait of democratic impotence, governmental oppression, and the mechanics that keep them in place. anastasia m. Collins
March/April 2019 p 74

Kirkus Reviews starred (January 1, 2019)

Layla was a regular American teenager until the new Islamophobic president enacted Exclusion Laws. Muslims are being rounded up, their books burned, and their bodies encoded with identification numbers. Neighbors are divided, and the government is going after resisters. Layla and her family are interned in the California desert along with thousands of other Muslim Americans, but she refuses to accept the circumstances of her detention, plotting to take down the system. She quickly learns that resistance is no joke: Two hijabi girls are beaten and dragged away screaming after standing up to the camp director. There are rumors of people being sent to black-op sites. Some guards seem sympathetic, but can they be trusted? Taking on Islamophobia and racism in a Trump-like America, Ahmed's (*Love, Hate & Other Filters*, 2018) magnetic, gripping narrative, written in a deeply humane and authentic tone, is attentive to the richness and complexity of the social ills at the heart of the book. Layla grows in consciousness as she begins to understand her struggle not as an individual accident of fate, but as part of an experience of oppression she shares with millions. This work asks the question many are too afraid to confront: What will happen if xenophobia and racism are allowed to fester and grow unabated? A reminder that even in a world filled with divisions and right-wing ideology, young people will rise up and demand equality for all. (Realistic fiction. 13-18)

Publishers Weekly (January 7, 2019)

Ahmed (*Love, Hate & Other Filters*) sets her chilling novel in the very near future: two-and-a-half years after an election that brought about a Muslim ban, Exclusion laws, and the internment of Muslims in a disturbing echo of the Japanese internments of the 1940s. Layla Amin, the rebellious 17-year-old Muslim narrator, is enraged by the changes that her small liberal California community accepts: curfews, book burnings, required viewing of the U.S. president's weekly National Security Address. On a personal level, she was suspended from school for kissing her non-Muslim boyfriend in public, and her poet-professor father has lost his job. Still, her family's abrupt nighttime "relocation" to a camp—during which each arrival is branded with ultraviolet identification encoding—is a shock. While her parents shrink into compliance, Layla quickly makes friends and allies who band together to bring public attention to internees' treatment, close down the camps, and put an end to the country's fascism and Islamophobia. Ahmed keeps the tension mounting as Layla faces increasingly violent consequences for her actions; the teenagers' relationships are depicted authentically, and their strength and resistance are inspiring. An unsettling and important book for our times. Ages 12-up. Agent: Eric Smith, P.S. Literary Agency. (Mar.) © Copyright PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved.

School Library Journal (May 1, 2019)

Gr 8 Up—"Exclusion laws" imposed by an Islamophobic president have upended the lives of Muslims across the United States, including Layla's. Removed from school for her own good by her parents, Layla circumvents state-imposed curfews to see her boyfriend, David, who is Jewish. When she and her family and other Muslims are rounded up by the authorities and forced to live in an internment camp in the California desert, Layla learns what it means to survive—and to fight. This cautionary tale for our times draws parallels between the situation Muslim Americans face today and the horrors of the Japanese American internment. © Copyright 2019. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

School Library Journal (March 1, 2019)

Gr 8 Up—In a world disturbingly similar to our own, the president of the United States incites hate, sending Muslim Americans to a prison camp in the California desert, near Manzanar, where those of Japanese descent were incarcerated by the U.S. government during World War II. Seventeen-year-old Layla burns with anger—at the malevolent Director, who runs the camp; at the complicit Muslim American "minders" who work for the camp; and at those who let these injustices happen. Though Layla's parents worry about her, she is compelled to shut down the camp, with the help of fellow prisoners; her boyfriend, David, who's on the outside; and a seemingly sympathetic guard. As in Ahmed's debut, *Love, Hate and Other Filters*, a teen grapples with both typical adolescent concerns and burdens that weigh heavily. Layla wonders if putting her family in danger is worth taking a stand. Though this tense novel brims with action, it also gives Layla, and readers, space to contemplate questions like this. She darkly notes that those who don't know history are doomed to repeat it, yet she also realizes that "forgetting is in the American grain." Teens who finish Ahmed's captivating work won't soon overlook the ugly truths stamped into our nation's history. VERDICT Sensitive and stirring. For all collections.—Mahnaz Dar, *School Library Journal* © Copyright 2019. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source

Jazz owls : a novel of the Zoot Suit Riots (#1030EM2)

by [Engle, Margarita](#); illustrated by [Gutierrez, Rudy](#)
From the Publisher

From the Young People's Poet Laureate Margarita Engle comes a searing novel in verse about the Zoot Suit Riots of 1943.

Thousands of young Navy sailors are pouring into Los Angeles on their way to the front lines of World War II. They are teenagers, scared, longing to feel alive before they have to face the horrors of battle. Hot jazz music spiced with cool salsa rhythms calls them to dance with the local Mexican American girls, who jitterbug all night before working all day in the canneries. Proud to do their part for the war effort, these Jazz Owl girls are happy to dance with the sailors--until the blazing summer night when racial violence leads to murder.

Suddenly the young white sailors are attacking these girls' brothers and boyfriends. The cool, loose zoot suits they wear are supposedly the reason for the violence--when in reality these boys are viciously beaten and arrested simply because of the color of their skin.

In soaring images and powerful poems, this is the breathtaking story of what became known as the Zoot Suit Riots as only Margarita Engle could tell it.

Reviews & Awards

- **Booklist**, 02/01/18
- **Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books**, 05/01/18
- **Horn Book Guide**, 11/01/18
- **Horn Book Magazine**, 05/01/18
- **School Library Connection** starred, 05/01/18
- **School Library Journal** starred, 02/01/18
- **Voice of Youth Advocates (VOYA)** starred, 04/01/18

Full-Text Reviews

Booklist (February 1, 2018 (Vol. 114, No. 11))

Grades 8-11. Two sisters work in a peach cannery by day and are jazz dancers by night. Their older brother, Nicholas, serves in the war, and their younger brother, Ray, chaperones them at dances in his ostentatiously designed zoot suit. This Mexican American family is making ends meet while doing their part for the war effort, boosting sailor morale by dancing and swinging to catchy rhythms all night. Unfortunately, when the news breaks that an alleged Mexican American teenage gang is responsible for murder, the media spins it with lies, blaming these youth and their fashionable zoot suits, because "nothing sells newspapers as quickly as fear." Engle writes a fast-paced narrative about a chain of reactions escalating into a violent mob that took out their anger on children, teens, and anyone they found in this Mexican American area of Los Angeles. Engle pieces together a volatile episode in history, filled with love, loss, and coming-of-age stories within a Mexican American family at a time of racial strife

Horn Book Magazine (May/June, 2018)

In 1942 Los Angeles, after working all day at the canneries, teen sisters Lorena and Marisela can't wait to put on their sharpest swing skirts and high heels for a night of jazz dancing with soon-to-ship-off soldiers at the local USO. After (real-life victim) José Díaz is killed at a party, police round up the neighborhood youth in an act of racial profiling, which the news media further reinforces through biased coverage. This incident and the resulting Sleepy Lagoon trial and conviction of "a bunch / of Mexican kids" spark riots that see gangs of white navy sailors infiltrating and terrorizing Mexican American neighborhoods, beating and publicly stripping zoot suiters (including Lorena and Marisela's younger brother Ray) of their clothes. Police are clearly aware of what's happening but, unsurprisingly, avoid arresting the sailors. Engle's historical novel in verse offers a look at a seldom-represented moment in U.S. history. Told primarily from the viewpoints of the siblings, the story weaves in plenty of voices: Marisela's Afro-Cuban musician boyfriend, sailors, reporters, police officers, other family members. The free verse brings us inside the characters' heads, allowing us to feel Ray's indignation at racial violence and to understand Lorena's politicization as she connects her experiences of injustice to organizing for better working conditions.

Black-and-white illustrations, full of swooping figures that recall dance even as they depict violence, separate the book's sections. lettycia terrones

Kirkus Reviews (March 1, 2018)

Against the backdrop of World War II, a patriotic Mexican-American family proudly contributes to the war effort despite pervasive racism. Every night Marisela, 16, and her sister, Lorena, 14, join other "owls," girls who go out dancing with Navy men at the USO club in LA before they are deployed. Working in a cannery by day and chaperoned by their zoot suit-wearing 12-year-old brother, Ray, by night, the sisters dance their way through the growing racial tensions in the city. Punished for speaking Spanish in school and forbidden from speaking Spanish at work, dancing is a joyous means of self-expression and connection with Latin culture. Everything comes to a head in June 1943 when marauding sailors brutally attack Mexican-Americans in a weeklong series of what are erroneously dubbed "Zoot Suit Riots" by the press. Engle's (Miguel's Brave Knight, 2017, etc.) characteristic free verse is unfortunately not up to tackling the density of the multiple issues and events that led up to this tragedy. In addition, switching between a number of different points of view in the section dedicated to the riots creates an emotional distance between the reader and the unfolding human tragedy. Some of the thoughts put into the mouths of the young people also feel incongruously mature. This worthy effort falls short of creating a riveting narrative. (Novel in verse. 11-18)

School Library Journal (February 1, 2018)

Gr 7 Up-Set during the Zoot Suit riots, this novel in verse tells a fictional account of a dark time in American history. Marisela and Lorena are jazz owls who work all day and dance all night. They also dance during the day as they twist and turn trying to navigate their place in Los Angeles during World War II. They face racism at home for their Latino heritage despite having family members serving overseas. Marisela falls in love with a musician, while Lorena dreams about saving enough money to go to school. Zoot suits-loose suits perfect for dancing to jazz and rumba music that has heavy Afro-Latino influences-are frowned upon. Tensions rise as newspapers print headlines that invoke fear. Sailors start pouring into the streets as they round up young Latino men, beat them, and burn their suits. This becomes a nightmare that repeats too many times, and while the forces that be ultimately end it, the Latino and African American communities are still raw from their physical and emotional abuses. The novel focuses on Marisela and Lorena with occasional verses from her parents, brother, and friends. Engle's approach to a topic that may seem hard for teens to grasp is successful as readers will be cheering for the jazz owls to be able to not only dance, but to overcome racism. VERDICT A quick read perfect for history buffs, dance enthusiasts, poets, and just about anyone looking for a great story. Recommended.-Katie Llera, Bound Brook High School, NJ © Copyright 2018

Lab girl (#0576VZ1)

by [Jahren, Hope](#)

Jahren has built three laboratories in which she's studied trees, flowers, seeds, and soil. She tells about her childhood in rural Minnesota with an uncompromising mother and a father who encouraged hours of play in his classroom's labs; about how she found a sanctuary in science, and the disappointments, triumphs and exhilarating discoveries of scientific work. Yet at the core of this book is the story of a relationship Jahren forged with Bill, who becomes her lab partner and best friend. Their sometimes rogue adventures in science take them over the Atlantic to the ever-light skies of the North Pole and to tropical Hawaii, where she and her lab currently make their home"--OCLC.

Reviews & Awards

- **Booklist** starred, 02/15/16
- **Kirkus Reviews** starred, 01/15/16
- **Library Journal** starred, 02/15/16
- **New York Times**, 04/10/16
- **Publishers Weekly** starred, 02/15/16
- **Science Books & Films (AAAS)**, 10/01/16

Full-Text Reviews

Booklist starred (February 15, 2016 (Vol. 112, No. 12))

While growing up in a cold place with an undemonstrative mother, Jahren found warmth and happiness in her father's laboratory at a Minnesota community college, thus setting the course for her own groundbreaking scientific quest. An award-winning geochemist and geobiologist with a love of language, self-deprecating humor, and valiant candor, Jahren presents an exceptionally compelling and enlightening memoir. Gracefully meshing her struggles as a woman scientist with the marvels of plants, she aligns the risks a sprouting seed takes in an inhospitable world with her entry into the sexist realm of science, and symbiotic plant-pollinator relationships with her crucial collaboration with Bill, a heroically steadfast and self-sacrificing partner in mischief, hard work, and discovery. Jahren recounts their hilariously barbed repartee and crazy, dangerous adventures transforming decrepit spaces into gleaming, humming labs and undertaking daunting field work. Jahren reveals her bouts with bipolar disorder and discloses the intense creativity and effort required for "curiosity-driven" science, from designing experiments to the infinite patience and dexterity required for lab work to the grueling battle for funding in a system that values products over knowledge. Finally, she matches her findings about how plants thrive and maintain life on Earth with grave concern over our reckless destruction of forests. A botanical variation on Helen Macdonald's best-selling *H Is for Hawk* (2015), Jahren's forthright, beautifully expressed, and galvanizing chronicle deserves the widest possible readership. HIGH-DEMAND BACKSTORY: Jahren's dramatic, funny, eye-opening memoir is generating elevated interest backed by a major national promotional campaign, including author appearances.

Recommended for teens (YA)

Budding teen scientists, especially young women, will find Jahren's vivid and frank memoir profoundly challenging and inspiring*kus Reviews* starred (January 15, 2016)

Award-winning scientist Jahren (Geology and Geophysics/Univ. of Hawaii) delivers a personal memoir and a paean to the natural world. The author's father was a physics and earth science teacher who encouraged her play in the laboratory, and her mother was a student of English literature who nurtured her love of reading. Both of these early influences engrossingly combine in this adroit story of a dedication to science. Jahren's journey from struggling student to struggling scientist has the narrative tension of a novel and characters she imbues with real depth. The heroes in this tale are the plants that the author studies, and throughout, she employs her facility with words to engage her readers. We learn much along the way--e.g., how the willow tree clones itself, the courage of a seed's first root, the symbiotic relationship between trees and fungi, and the airborne signals used by trees in their ongoing war against insects. Trees are of key interest to Jahren, and at times she waxes poetic: "Each beginning is the end of a waiting. We are each given exactly one chance to be. Each of us is both impossible and

inevitable. Every replete tree was first a seed that waited." The author draws many parallels between her subjects and herself. This is her story, after all, and we are engaged beyond expectation as she relates her struggle in building and running laboratory after laboratory at the universities that have employed her. Present throughout is her lab partner, a disaffected genius named Bill, whom she recruited when she was a graduate student at Berkeley and with whom she's worked ever since. The author's tenacity, hope, and gratitude are all evident as she and Bill chase the sweetness of discovery in the face of the harsh economic realities of the research scientist. Jahren transcends both memoir and science writing in this literary fusion of both genres.

Library Journal (February 15, 2016)

Jahren's first book is a refreshing mix of memoir about her journey as a woman scientist and musings about plants, the central focus of her successful scientific endeavors. What's most refreshing is the author's openness about her relationship and collaboration with research partner Bill. Over the course of 20 years their field treks take them to the North Pole, the back roads of Florida, and Ireland's countryside. Meanwhile they build three labs, including their current one at the University of Hawaii. At times funny and at other points poignant, this work expresses Jahren's passion for paleobiology-her subdiscipline within environmental geology-through her insights into plant life and growth. She skillfully ties this knowledge to her own life stories and successfully conveys the dedication required to build and sustain a research agenda and the requisite lab at any major U.S. research institution. VERDICT This title should be required reading for all budding scientists, especially young women. However, being a scientist is not essential in order to savor Jahren's stories and reflections on living as well as fossil plant life. [See Prepub Alert, 10/26/15.]-Faye Chadwell, Oregon State Univ., Corvallis © Copyright 2016. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

Library Journal (November 15, 2015)

Multi-award-winning scientist Jahren talks about plant life but also her life. That rare book getting pushed in venues ranging from Scientific American to Jezebel. © Copyright 2015. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

Publishers Weekly (February 15, 2016)

Jahren, a professor of geobiology at the University of Hawaii, recounts her unfolding journey to discover "what it's like to be a plant" in this darkly humorous, emotionally raw, and exquisitely crafted memoir. In clever prose, Jahren distills what it means to be one of those researchers who "love their calling to excess." She describes the joy of working alone at night, the "multidimensional glory" of a manic episode, scavenging jury-rigged equipment from a retiring colleague, or spontaneously road-tripping with students to a roadside monkey preserve. She likens elements of her scientific career to a plant world driven by need and instinct, comparing the academic grant cycle to the resource management of a deciduous tree and the experience of setting up her first-desperately underfunded-basement lab to ambitious vines that grow quickly wherever they can. But the most extraordinary and delightful element of her narrative is her partnership with Bill, a taciturn student who becomes both her lab partner and her sarcastic, caring best friend. It's a rare portrait of a deep relationship in which the mutual esteem of the participants is unmarred by sexual tension. For Jahren, a life in science yields the gratification of asking, knowing, and telling; for the reader, the joy is in hearing about the process as much as the results. (Apr.) © Copyright PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved.

Obsessed : a memoir of my life with OCD

[Britz, Allison](#)

Until sophomore year of high school, fifteen-year-old Allison Britz lived a comfortable life in an idyllic town. She was a dedicated student with tons of extracurricular activities, friends, and loving parents at home.

But after awakening from a vivid nightmare in which she was diagnosed with brain cancer, she was convinced the dream had been a warning. Allison believed that she must do something to stop the cancer in her dream from becoming a reality.

It started with avoiding sidewalk cracks and quickly grew to counting steps as loudly as possible. Over the following weeks, her brain listed more dangers and fixes. She had to avoid hair dryers, calculators, cell phones, computers, anything green, bananas, oatmeal, and most of her own clothing.

Unable to act "normal," the once-popular Allison became an outcast. Her parents questioned her behavior, leading to explosive fights. When notebook paper, pencils, and most schoolbooks were declared dangerous to her health, her GPA imploded, along with her plans for the future.

Finally, she allowed herself to ask for help and was diagnosed with obsessive-compulsive disorder. This brave memoir tracks Allison's descent and ultimately hopeful climb out of the depths.

Reviews & Awards

- **Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books**, 10/01/17
- **Horn Book Guide**, 11/01/18
- **Kirkus Reviews**, 06/15/17
- **School Library Connection**, 10/01/17
- **School Library Journal**, 08/01/17

Full-Text Reviews

Booklist (October 1, 2017 (Online))

Grades 8-12. For many folks, the term obsessive-compulsive disorder conjures up images of excessive handwashing. In her memoir and author debut, Britz gives a compelling and very different view of the disorder as obsessive thoughts and compulsive rituals begin to take over her sophomore year of high school. It all starts with a dream that she is developing brain cancer. As her brain interprets it as a warning message, it also triggers a long series of irrational consequences. Stepping on a crack causes cancer, but taking a "safe" number of steps can negate it. Believing these thoughts are coming from a "protector," or even God, Britz is able to reconcile her nonsensical actions. But soon her protector denies her everyday items—from pens and computers to cell phones and hairbrushes—to ward off potential cancer. The startling result leaves Britz drained, without friends, and failing in school. Although nonfiction, the memoir reads like a novel and keeps readers wanting to know more about the complexities of OCD. A hopeful ending chronicles her diagnosis and early treatment.

Kirkus Reviews (June 15, 2017)

Can a girl fall off a cliff in s-l-o-w motion? That's how Allison's life seems to plummet during her sophomore year of high school in this fine debut memoir. After awakening from a terrible dream, Allison is abruptly afflicted with obsessive-compulsive disorder—although she doesn't truly understand the reason that she's suddenly associating commonplace objects and activities with brain cancer. First she has to avoid cracks in floors, but this rapidly devolves into restrictions on every aspect of her life—controlling her behavior, relationships, eating, sleeping, and personal hygiene, and completely derailing her ability to do well in school. Within weeks, she goes from being an excellent student positioned socially on the fringe of the popular group to a pariah who may fail her classes. That her obvious distress flies under the radar of her parents and teachers for so long is especially distressing. After her parents finally do intervene, she begins seeing a specialist whose treatment, combined with Allison's brave determination, makes all the difference. Depicted with affecting honesty (and including quite a lot of dialogue), Allison's journey is at

once gripping and agonizing. Allison is white; her trials are a universal experience. Readers willing to share Allison's evident pain and humiliation may gain insight into a troubling disorder, but it's the joy of her slow recovery that they'll savor. (Memoir. 12-18)

School Library Journal (August 1, 2017)

Gr 8 Up-When she was 15, Britz had the ideal life: straight-A's, a spot on the cross country team, loving parents, a core group of friends, and an amazing wardrobe. But a disturbing nightmare, in which she was diagnosed with brain cancer, convinced Britz that she was doomed. In order to escape such a fate, Britz began to avoid cracks, the color green, and pencils. Before long, her list of compulsions grew, and intrusive thoughts and "messages from God" overwhelmed her waking hours. Eventually Britz accepted the help her parents had so desperately wanted to provide. Diagnosed with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), Britz and her doctor worked hard to mitigate her obsessions. A lengthy memoir that reads like a novel, Britz's story starts at a slow pace and gains momentum as the severity of her condition increases. Readers will empathize with Britz, experiencing from her perspective the potential effects of OCD and cheering her along as she steadily improves. An ending note provides encouragement from the author along with a list of resources. VERDICT An important voice in the discussion of OCD, this book is a worthy addition to most teen memoir collections.-Amy Reddy, Lewiston High School, ME © Copyright 2017. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Sour

Sanctuary (#1727KB7)

by [Mendoza, Paola](#)

From Follett

In 2032, when sixteen-year-old Vali's mother is detained by the Deportation Forces, Vali must flee Vermont with her little brother, Ernie, hoping to reach their Tia Luna in the sanctuary state of California.

From the Publisher

Co-founder of the Women's March makes her YA debut in a near future dystopian where a young girl and her brother must escape a xenophobic government to find sanctuary. It's 2032, and in this near-future America, all citizens are chipped and everyone is tracked--from buses to grocery stores. It's almost impossible to survive as an undocumented immigrant, but that's exactly what sixteen-year-old Vali is doing. She and her family have carved out a stable, happy life in small-town Vermont, but when Vali's mother's counterfeit chip starts malfunctioning and the Deportation Forces raid their town, they are forced to flee. Now on the run, Vali and her family are desperately trying to make it to her tía Luna's in California, a sanctuary state that is currently being walled off from the rest of the country. But when Vali's mother is detained before their journey even really begins, Vali must carry on with her younger brother across the country to make it to safety before it's too late. Gripping and urgent, co-authors Paola Mendoza and Abby Sher have crafted a narrative that is as haunting as it is hopeful in envisioning a future where everyone can find sanctuary.

Reviews & Awards

- **Booklist**, 08/01/20
- **Horn Book Magazine**, 01/01/21
- **Kirkus Reviews** starred, 08/01/20
- **Publishers Weekly Annex** starred, 11/02/20
- **School Library Journal** starred, 08/01/20

Full-Text Reviews

Booklist (August 2020 (Vol. 116, No. 22))

Grades 9-12. The all-too-possible future in this suspenseful dystopian novel amplifies the undocumented immigrant experience in the U.S. In 2032, the violent death of a young girl at the Great American Wall near San Diego gives the authoritarian, xenophobic president the right moment to enact a media shutdown and launch the Deportation Force (DF), a brutal extension of ICE that operates outside the law. Eleventh-grader Vali has lived safely with her mami and eight-year-old brother, Ernie, in Vermont since her father was deported back to Colombia. But now the DF is closing in. When Mami's counterfeit wrist identification chip malfunctions, Vali and Ernie must leave her behind to survive. Vali trusts a coyote to drive them to California, which has declared itself a sanctuary. At the halfway mark they are on foot, hunted by drones, and barely escape an attempt to force Vali into prostitution. Death edges closer every hour as hunger, thirst, and injury sap their energy. This intense, realistic novel never lets up, even as Vali flashes back to the love and sacrifices that sustain her.

Horn Book Magazine (January/February, 2021)

In this near-future dystopian novel by Women's March co-founder Mendoza and author/performer Sher, it's 2032 in a U.S. with frightening echoes of the one seen in recent years. The news is full of xenophobic hysteria about immigration, and the government has an armed force to deport undocumented people in the country -- but everything is more extreme, including computer chips in each person's arm to prove their citizenship. In the book's chilling opening scene, Vali and her mother and brother, undocumented immigrants from Colombia who have paid for counterfeit chips and are living relatively peacefully in Vermont, see a broadcast on the government-controlled news that shows a teen girl killed by a landmine while she attempts to cross the border from Mexico into California. Suddenly, everything changes: California secedes from the U.S., Vali's mother witnesses a Deportation Force raid on her farm workplace, and it becomes clear that Vali and her family must leave home to seek sanctuary in the new California. Along the difficult and harrowing trek, Vali and her brother are separated from their mother, and they witness up-close the cruelty of a country ruled by hatred and fear. This fast-paced drama depicts the trauma of Vali's journey in an unflinching, heart-wrenching way that can feel all too real and timely. Christina L. Dobbs January/February 2021 p.110

Kirkus Reviews starred (August 1, 2020)

An immigrant family travels across the country to escape persecution. Valentina González Ramirez, a teenage Colombian immigrant living in Southboro, Vermont, still remembers when the president won his third term and started building the Great American Wall between California and Mexico, implanting ID chips in people, and increasing deportation raids. It was in one of those raids that her father was captured and returned to Colombia, where he was murdered. After years of living in relative calm in Vermont, Vali and her family see a live-feed of a land mine exploding under the feet of a skinny girl in a worn Mickey Mouse T-shirt as she tries to cross the heavily guarded territory between Mexico and the U.S. Soon Vali's world changes forever. Violent raids, increased security measures on ID chips, and California's seceding to become a sanctuary push Vali, her mother, and her 8-year-old brother, Ernie, to embark on a journey to California and freedom. Mendoza and Sher's novel is set in a not-so-distant dystopian future in which the government controls the broadcasting system and censors the media. In their portrayal of Vali's family's quest for safety, the authors beautifully mirror the treacherous, painful, and terrifying treks involving natural and human threats that migrants to the U.S. undertake as they traverse continents and oceans. Gruesome at times and always honest, Vali's journey depicts immigrants' desire for a safe and dignified life. Wrenching and unmissable. (authors' note) (Dystopian. 13-18)

Publishers Weekly starred (November 2, 2020)

An unforgiving landscape punctuates an undocumented teen's arduous journey to escape government persecution and find a safe haven in this searing near-future dystopian novel. For 16-year-old Colombian immigrant Valentina "Vali" González Ramirez, a life of safety and security hinges on a black-market implant "no bigger than a grain of rice." In the year 2032, the U.S.-in the middle of an economic downturn-exerts considerable control over its population through censorship, xenophobic propaganda, and frequent scans of mandatory ID chips. Vali, who lost her father due to cruel deportation policies enacted by ICE, depends on a fake chip to avoid detection. When an incident at the U.S.-Mexico border leads to increased security measures and violence, Vali and her family attempt the dangerous trek from Vermont to a newly seceded California-and freedom. Coauthors Mendoza and Sher do delicate work, using Vali's interior life and a speculative lens to lay bare the trauma and anguish that migrants to the U.S. can experience as well as the human capacity for survival. Though the novel's unflinching honesty and real-world parallels deliver uncomfortable truths, its propulsive narrative and its message of hope and resilience will carry readers through. Ages 12-up. (Sept.) © Copyright PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved.

School Library Journal starred (August 1, 2020)

Gr 7 Up-A stunning work of YA dystopian fiction driven by the ardent voice of a teenage protagonist. The novel captures the United States' currently ominous immigration policies and extends them to violent extremes, making the stress and fear of living as an undocumented person come alive through the foil of a technocratic surveillance state. Vali, a girl of Colombian descent, lives in small-town Vermont with her mother and brother. The family lost their father to a traumatic immigration incident, and Mom supports them by working on a dairy farm. Vali is undocumented but carries a "fake chip" in her wrist that she uses to scan into her public school and various government buildings. When a newly bolstered federal Deportation Force seizes all the laborers at her mother's workplace, the family flees towards California, getting separated along the way. The plot points get the blood pumping, and the familial portrait rendered throughout the fast-paced drama is rich in symbolism. VERDICT This novel is a triumph in its genre and so politically astute that it sears.-Sierra Dickey, Ctr. for New Americans, Northampton, MA © Copyright

The book of unknown Americans (#1153UDX)

by [Henriquez, Cristina](#)

Overview

From Follett

"Moving from Mexico to America when their daughter suffers a near-fatal accident, the Riveras confront cultural barriers, their daughter's difficult recovery and her developing relationship with a Panamanian boy"-OCLC.

Reviews & Awards

- **Booklist** starred, 04/15/14
- **Kirkus Reviews**, 05/01/14
- **Library Journal**, 01/01/14

Full-Text Reviews

Booklist starred (April 15, 2014 (Vol. 110, No. 16))

On a cold, bewildering night, the Riveras, who have just left their happy lives in Mexico, are dropped off at a dilapidated apartment building on the western edge of Delaware. Arturo has given up his thriving construction company to labor in a dark, grimy indoor mushroom farm, while his wife, Alma, lonely and afraid, with no English and little money, worries incessantly about their beautiful 15-year-old daughter, Maribel. She has suffered a traumatic brain injury, and her parents have sacrificed everything to send her to a special school. Their building turns out to be a sanctuary for Central and Latin American immigrants, and as the Riveras' dramatic tale unfolds, Henriquez brings their generous neighbors forward to tell the compelling stories of why and how they left Venezuela, Puerto Rico, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Colombia, Mexico, Panama, and Paraguay. As one man says, "We are the unknown Americans," those who are feared and hated. As Maribel opens up to Mayor, the infatuated boy next-door who is relentlessly bullied by his father and his classmates, terror of the unknown becomes a tragic force. Each scene, voice, misunderstanding, and alliance is beautifully realized and brimming with feeling in the acclaimed Henriquez's (*The World in Half*, 2009) compassionately imagined, gently comedic, and profoundly wrenching novel of big dreams and crushing reality, courageous love and unfathomable heartbreak.

Kirkus Reviews (May 1, 2014)

A family from Mexico settles in Delaware and strives to repair emotional and physical wounds in Henriquez's dramatic page-turner. The author's third book of fiction (*Come Together, Fall Apart*, 2006; *The World in Half*, 2009) opens with the arrival of Arturo and Alma Rivera, who have brought their teenage daughter, Maribel, to the U.S. in the hope of helping her recover from a head injury she sustained in a fall. Their neighbors Rafael and Celia Toro came from Panama years earlier, and their teenage son, Mayor, takes quickly to Maribel. The pair's relationship is prone to gossip and misinterpretation: People think Maribel is dumber than she is and that Mayor is more predatory than he is. In this way, Henriquez suggests, they represent the immigrant experience in miniature. The novel alternates narrators among members of the Rivera and Toro families, as well as other immigrant neighbors, and their stories stress that their individual experiences can't be reduced to types or statistics; the shorter interludes have the realist detail, candor and potency of oral history. Life is a grind for both families: Arturo works at a mushroom farm, Rafael is a short-order cook, and Alma strains to understand the particulars of everyday American life (bus schedules, grocery shopping, Maribel's schooling). But Henriquez emphasizes their positivity in a new country, at least until trouble arrives in the form of a prejudiced local boy. That plot complication shades toward melodrama, giving the closing pages a rush but diminishing what Henriquez is best at: capturing the way immigrant life is often an accrual of small victories in the face of a thousand cuts and how ad hoc support systems form to help new arrivals get by. A smartly observed tale of immigrant life that cannily balances its optimistic tone with straight talk.

Library Journal (January 1, 2014)

In this latest from the author of *The World in Half*, the Mexican Rivera family moves to Delaware so that their brain-damaged daughter, Maribel, can attend a special school. Sharing the same neighborhood is

the Panamanian Toro family, whose younger son, Mayor, becomes enamored of Maribel. As the bulk of the narrative shifts between Alma, Maribel's mother, and Mayor, the story unwinds into a Romeo and Juliet reenactment, with both families opposing the relationship, and tragedy the unexpected result. Henriquez does a spectacular job of creating highly believable characters and poignant scenarios: the guilt that wracks Alma because of the accident that rendered Maribel mentally disabled, the social and educational frustrations of a challenged adolescent, Mayor's budding teenage psyche, the inconsolable grief upon suddenly losing a spouse, and, above all, the experience of adjusting to a new culture and way of life. Regularly inserted is a series of testimonials by other participants, which, though thematically important, interrupts the story's otherwise smooth flow. VERDICT A well-written coming-of-age story set among "unknown Americans," ostensibly Hispanic but in many ways any family involved in similar circumstances regardless of ethnicity.-Lawrence Olszewski, OCLC Lib., Dublin, OH (c) Copyright 2014. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

Publishers Weekly (March 24, 2014)

In Henriquez's latest, Arturo and Alma Rivera move from Patzcuaro, Mexico, to Delaware in hopes of securing a good education for their beautiful teenage daughter, Maribel, who has suffered a traumatic brain injury. Alone, isolated by language and poverty, the Riveras struggle to get by: Arturo works 10 hours a day at a mushroom farm, while Alma worries about predatory men taking advantage of her daughter. In the same apartment building lives Mayor Toro, the misfit son of Panamanian immigrants, who soon falls in love with Maribel. The budding romance, however, threatens to tear their families apart. Meanwhile, Henriquez (*The World in Half*) gives space to the voices of other immigrants-men and women who have fled their South American and Central American homes to make a better life in a country that, as often as not, refuses to acknowledge their existence. Evoking a profound sense of hope, Henriquez delivers a moving account of those who will do anything to build a future for their children-even if it means confronting the fear and alienation lurking behind the American dream. Agent: Julie Barer, Barer Literary. (June) (c) Copyright PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved.

The far away brothers : two teenage immigrants making a life in America

by [Markham, Lauren](#)

Overview

From Follett

"Adapted for young adults.";Adapted from a work of the same title published for adults in 2017 by Crown.;Includes bibliographical references (pages 244-259) and index. "Identical twins Ernesto and Raul Flores, seventeen, must flee El Salvador, make a . . . journey across the Rio Grande and the Texas desert, face capture by immigration authorities, and struggle to navigate life in America"--Provided by publisher.

From the Publisher

The inspiring true story about identical twin teenage brothers who escape El Salvador's violence to build new lives in California as undocumented immigrants, perfect for fans of *Enrique's Journey* and anyone interested in learning about the issues that underlie today's conversations about DACA and immigration reform.

Ernesto and Raul Flores are identical twins, used to being mistaken for each other. As seventeen-year-olds living in rural El Salvador, they think the United States is just a far-off dream--it's too risky, too expensive to start a life there. But when Ernesto ends up on the wrong side of MS-13, one of El Salvador's brutal gangs, he flees the country for his own safety. Raul, fearing that he will be mistaken for his brother, follows close behind.

Running from one danger to the next, the Flores twins make the harrowing journey north, crossing the Rio Grande and the Texas desert only to fall into the hands of immigration authorities. When they finally make it to the custody of their older brother in Oakland, California, the difficulties don't end.

While navigating a new school in a new language, struggling to pay off their mounting coyote debt, and anxiously waiting for their day in immigration court, Raul and Ernesto are also trying to lead normal teenage lives--dealing with girls, social media, and fitting in. With only each other for support, they begin the process of carving out a life for themselves, one full of hope and possibility.

Adapted for young adults from the award-winning adult edition, *The Far Away Brothers* is the inspiring true story of two teens making their way in America, a personal look at U.S. immigration policy, and a powerful account of contemporary immigration.

Full-Text Reviews

Booklist (June 1, 2019 (Vol. 115, No. 19))

Grades 7-12. Markham has adapted her own book into a version for teens that loses none of the urgency or timeliness of the original. Skillfully blending her heavy research into raw personal experiences, she tells the story of Raúl and Ernesto Flores, identical twin brothers who escaped the clutches of MS-13 in El Salvador and made a harrowing journey to the U.S. The narrative includes accounts of economic policies that drive farmers into gangs, social policies that create animosity between people, and political policies that fuel anger and enable corporations to profit from vulnerability and loss. We learn how these policies affect real people, casting families into hopeless situations, debt, and separation. While the twins' immigration story is the focal point, Markham adds nuance by including their typical teen troubles with romance and social media, plus the perspectives of their friends and family back home, in addition to that of the person who took responsibility for them in the U.S. Visceral and informative, this is a necessary read for today's youth.

irkus Reviews starred (June 15, 2019)

A young readers' adaptation of the 2017 book of the same name about El Salvadoran twins captured by Border Patrol agents while entering the United States. An exploration of the humanitarian crisis at our southern border, this book takes readers from the violent streets of El Salvador through criminal-controlled zones in Guatemala and Mexico to an illegal crossing of the Rio Grande and the pursuit of the American dream. Ernesto and Raúl Flores were teenagers who would rather have stayed home, but with their lives at risk from a gang, their father hired a smuggler to take them north. The journey was filled with

danger, fear, homesickness, and the burden of knowing it would be their responsibility to pay back the loan for the coyote's fee taken out against the family's farmland. The author, a journalist with expertise in refugee issues, reminds readers how young these brothers were by exposing their immaturity, indulgences, and mistakes—a wise choice, as their humanity shines through in their failures. Never intrusive with her research, she keeps an eye on the family story while weaving in bits of history, geography, and politics. As a result, the fear and displacement the boys felt in California are both touching and educational. The informative afterword offers historical context and suggestions about what might be done to remedy the humanitarian crisis. Gets inside the heads and hearts of immigrants. (author's note, afterword, notes, index) (Nonfiction. 13-18)

School Library Journal (July 1, 2019)

Gr 6-9-This young adult adaptation of Markham's book by the same name tells the story of twin brothers Ernesto and Raúl Flores. When Ernesto ended up on the wrong side of the gang MS-13, he fled El Salvador for America; Raúl quickly joined his identical brother, fearing he would be mistaken for Ernesto. The brothers crossed the border, ultimately falling into the hands of immigration. They navigated the legal process of acquiring papers, learned English, and figured out ways to send money home to their parents in order to repay the mounting debt they incurred to make it to the United States. Markham tells the story honestly and vividly, and while at times the book reads like fiction, she inserts her expertise as well as facts and data on the issue. VERDICT Readers will get a very human glimpse into the lives of two immigrants while also learning more about the larger picture of immigration in the United States. A must for all young adult nonfiction shelves.-Katharine Gatcomb, Portsmouth Public Library,

The Girl with the Louding Voice (#1626MP5)

by [Dare, Abi](#)

Overview

From the Publisher

The unforgettable, inspiring story of a teenage girl growing up in a rural Nigerian village who longs to get an education so that she can find her "louding voice" and speak up for herself, *The Girl with the Louding Voice* is a simultaneously heartbreaking and triumphant tale about the power of fighting for your dreams. Despite the seemingly insurmountable obstacles in her path, Adunni never loses sight of her goal of escaping the life of poverty she was born into so that she can build the future she chooses for herself - and help other girls like her do the same. Her spirited determination to find joy and hope in even the most difficult circumstances imaginable will "break your heart and then put it back together again" (Jenna Bush Hager on *The Today Show*) even as Adunni shows us how one courageous young girl can inspire us all to reach for our dreams...and maybe even change the world.

Reviews & Awards

- [Booklist](#), 01/01/20
- [Kirkus Reviews](#), 11/15/19

Full-Text Reviews

Booklist (January 1, 2020 (Vol. 116, No. 9))

Daré's captivating first novel opens with 14-year-old Adunni hearing the devastating news from her father that, instead of returning to school as she has longed to for three years, she has been sold in marriage to a much-older neighbor in their Nigerian village. Adunni is distraught, as life with a husband, his two other wives, and his unrestrained young children is exactly the fate from which, according to her deceased mother, having an education would spare her. Desperate to improve her life, she flees to the city, where to support herself she accepts employment as a rich family's servant. But why was the position vacant? The reasoning behind her predecessor's departure is just one of the things Adunni seeks to learn while in Lagos. Daré's arresting prose provides a window into the lives of Nigerians of all socioeconomic levels and shows readers the beauty and humor that may be found even in the midst of harrowing experiences. Although the problems and antagonists Adunni faces would challenge even capable adults, she defies almost everyone's expectations and not only survives but thrives.

Recommended for teens (YA)

Teens will appreciate this compelling novel's cross-cultural authenticity and Adunni's engaging voice.

irkus Reviews (November 15, 2019)

A Nigerian teenager determined to get an education escapes an arranged marriage in her village but finds that life in the city is dangerous, too. Adunni, the 14-year-old protagonist of Daré's moving first novel, longs to be educated and dreams of one day becoming a teacher. "I even been teaching the small boys and girls in the village ABC and 123 on market days," she says. "I like the way their eyes be always so bright, their voices so sharp." But in her village, girls are supposed to marry early, have babies, and take care of the men. With her supportive mother dead and a father who doesn't believe daughters need schooling, she is forced into a brutal, unhappy marriage with a much older man who already has two wives. One wife befriends her and tries to ease Adunni's loneliness and suffering. But when tragedy ensues, Adunni flees to the crowded city of Lagos in hopes of finding a better future. Instead, she ends up as an indentured servant in an abusive household, where her hopes for learning are further stifled. Daré, who grew up in Lagos and now lives in the U.K., paints a bleak and vivid portrait of the expectations and sexual dangers for rural Nigerian girls, who are exploited as workers and punished for having "a louding voice" (meaning they dare to want a say in their own future). Adunni's dialect will be unfamiliar to some readers, but the rhythm of her language grows easier to follow the more you read, and her courage and determination to make her own way in life despite terrible setbacks are heartbreaking and inspiring. Daré provides a valuable reminder of all the young women around the world who are struggling to be heard

and how important it is that we listen to them. A moving story of what it means to fight for the right to live the life you choose.

Library Journal (September 1, 2019)

Desperate for an education, which is the only way to get the "louding" voice that will let her speak for herself, 14-year-old Nigerian Adunni is instead sold by her father to a local man looking for a male heir. Running away to the city, she ends up enslaved to a wealthy family but never gives up her dream. From Nigerian-born, UK-based Daré; winner of the Bath Novel Award (for not-yet-published works) and preempted by the publisher after heady buzz at the London Book Fair. © Copyright 2019. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. N

The other Wes Moore : one name, two fates (#0345DA4)

by [Moore, Wes](#)

Overview

From Follett

The author, a Rhodes scholar and combat veteran, analyzes the various sociocultural factors that influenced him as well as another man of the same name and from the same neighborhood who was drawn into a life of drugs and crime and ended up serving life in prison, focusing on the influence of relatives, mentors, and social expectations that could have led either of them on different paths.

Reviews & Awards

- **Booklist starred**, 05/01/10
 - **Kirkus Reviews**, 03/01/10
 - **Library Journal**, 04/15/10
 - **Publishers Weekly starred**, 03/08/10
-

Full-Text Reviews

Booklist starred (May 1, 2010 (Vol. 106, No. 17))

In 2000, Wes Moore had recently been named a Rhodes Scholar in his final year of college at Johns Hopkins University when he read a newspaper article about another Wes Moore who was on his way to prison. It turned out that the two of them had much in common, both young black men raised in inner-city neighborhoods by single mothers. Stunned by the similarities in their names and backgrounds and the differences in their ultimate fates, the author eventually contacted the other Wes Moore and began a long relationship. Moore visited his namesake in prison; he was serving a life sentence, convicted for his role in an armed robbery that resulted in the killing of an off-duty policeman. Growing up, both men were subject to the pitfalls of urban youth: racism, rebellion, violence, drug use, and dealing. The author examines eight years in the lives of both Wes Moores to explore the factors and choices that led one to a Rhodes scholarship, military service, and a White House fellowship, and the other to drug dealing, prison, and eventual conversion to the Muslim faith, with both sharing a gritty sense of realism about their pasts. Moore ends this haunting look at two lives with a call to action and a detailed resource guide.

Kirkus Reviews (March 1, 2010)

A story about two young African-American men who share the same name and grew up on the same inner-city streets, but wound up in vastly different places. Author Wes Moore, a Rhodes Scholar, former Army officer and White House Fellow, works in investment banking. The other Wes Moore, a drug dealer, is imprisoned for life. Both are in their early 30s. Upon reading about the other Wes's 2000 conviction for armed robbery, the author wondered how the lives of two youths growing up in the same time (1990s) and place (Baltimore) could take such divergent paths. Drawing on conversations with the other Wes and interviews, the author creates an absorbing narrative that makes clear the critical roles that choices, family support and luck play in young people's lives. The other Wes never knew his father, had a drug-pusher older brother and began dealing at an early age. His mother's efforts to help were ineffectual. Often arrested--car theft, attempted murder, etc.--the other Wes dropped out of school, fathered four children and tried unsuccessfully to go straight. Then he took part in the store hold-up. The author faced similar challenges, he writes, but had enormous family support and several lucky breaks. He grew up with a devoted mother and two sisters; his father died when the author was very young. In 1984, the family moved to the crack-plagued Bronx to live with his caring grandparents, a minister and a teacher. When the author slipped into the local street life and began receiving poor grades at a private school, his family pooled limited resources and sent him away to a military academy. There he found positive role models, became a cadet commander and star athlete and gained a sense of purpose. Later, with help from several mentors, he earned a bachelor's degree at Johns Hopkins and attended Oxford. "With no intervention--or the wrong intervention--[young boys] can be lost forever," the author warns. A testament

to the importance of youth mentoring; includes an afterword by Tavis Smiley and a guide to more than 200 youth-service groups nationwide.

Library Journal (April 15, 2010)

In this memoir, Moore tells the story of his life as a child of Baltimore and the Bronx, an army officer in Afghanistan, a Rhodes Scholar, and a former White House Fellow. In detailing his journey from troubled adolescence to successful business career, he focuses on the intriguing concept of chronicling not only his life but that of another young man with the same name, from the same city, and roughly about the same age—the other Wes Moore. Drugs, violence, and prison marked the life of the other Wes Moore, now serving a life sentence for the murder of a police officer. The author, after meeting the man who shares his name, gives us a book that details the parallel lives of these two boys, coming of age the hard way in the 1980s and 1990s. The author includes a list of over 200 organizations dedicated to helping American youth. VERDICT With its unique spin on the memoir genre, this engaging and insightful book ultimately asks the reader to consider the ways in which we as a nation alternately support and fail American children. The charismatic author and the publisher's nationwide publicity plans should make this a popular book for general readers interested in memoir, African American studies, or social issues. [See Prepub Alert, LJ 1/10.]—Julie Biando Edwards, Univ. of Montana, Missoula, Lib. Copyright 2010 Reed Business Information.

Publishers Weekly (March 8, 2010)

Two hauntingly similar boys take starkly different paths in this searing tale of the ghetto. Moore, an investment banker, Rhodes scholar, and former aide to Condoleezza Rice, was intrigued when he learned that another Wes Moore, his age and from the same area of Greater Baltimore, was wanted for killing a cop. Meeting his double and delving into his life reveals deeper likenesses: raised in fatherless families and poor black neighborhoods, both felt the lure of the money and status to be gained from dealing drugs. That the author resisted the criminal underworld while the other Wes drifted into it is chalked up less to character than to the influence of relatives, mentors, and expectations that pushed against his own delinquent impulses, to the point of exiling him to military school. Moore writes with subtlety and insight about the plight of ghetto youth, viewing it from inside and out; he probes beneath the pathologies to reveal the pressures—poverty, a lack of prospects, the need to respond to violence with greater violence—that propelled the other Wes to his doom. The result is a moving exploration of roads not taken. (May 4) Copyright 201

There there : a novel

Orange, Tommy

Overview

From Follett

"This is a Borzoi book . . ."--Title page verso. ". . . tells the story of twelve characters, each of whom have private reasons for traveling to the Big Oakland Powwow. Jacquie Red Feather is newly sober and trying to make it back to the family she left behind in shame. Dene Oxendene is pulling his life back together after his uncle's death and has come to work at the powwow to honor his uncle's memory. Opal Viola Victoria Bear Shield has come to watch her nephew Orvil, who has taught himself traditional Indian dance through YouTube videos and has come to the powwow to dance in public for the very first time. There will be glorious communion, and a spectacle of sacred tradition and pageantry. And there will be sacrifice, and heroism, and unspeakable loss"--Dust jacket.

Reviews & Awards

- **Booklist** starred, 05/01/18
- **Kirkus Reviews** starred, 04/01/18
- **Library Journal** starred, 04/01/18
- **New York Times**, 06/24/18
- **Publishers Weekly** starred, 04/02/18

Full-Text Reviews

Booklist starred (May 1, 2018 (Vol. 114, No. 17))

The at-first disconnected characters from whose perspectives Orange voices his symphonic debut are united by the upcoming Big Oakland Powwow. Some have been working on the event for months; some will sneak in with only good intentions, while others are plotting to steal the sizable cash prizes. Creative interludes from an omniscient narrator describe, for example, the names of First Nations people or what it means to be an Urban Indian: "We ride buses, trains, and cars across, over, and under concrete plains. Being Indian has never been about returning to the land. The land is everywhere or nowhere." Opal recalls occupying Alcatraz as a child with her family; today she raises her sister's grandchildren as her own after their unspeakable loss. With grant support, Dene endeavors to complete the oral-history project his deceased uncle couldn't, recording the stories of Indians living in Oakland. In his thirties, with his white mother's blessing, Edwin reaches out to the Native father he never met. While anticipation of the powwow provides a baseline of suspense, the path Orange lights through these and his novel's many other stories thrills on its own. Engrossing at its most granular, in characters' thoughts and fleeting moments, *There There* introduces an exciting voice.

Kirkus Reviews starred (April 1, 2018)

Orange's debut novel offers a kaleidoscopic look at Native American life in Oakland, California, through the experiences and perspectives of 12 characters. An aspiring documentary filmmaker, a young man who has taught himself traditional dance by watching YouTube, another lost in the bulk of his enormous body—these are just a few of the point-of-view characters in this astonishingly wide-ranging book, which culminates with an event called the Big Oakland Powwow. Orange, who grew up in the East Bay, knows the territory, but this is no work of social anthropology; rather, it is a deep dive into the fractured diaspora of a community that remains, in many ways, invisible to many outside of it. "We made powwows because we needed a place to be together," he writes. "Something intertribal, something old, something to make us money, something we could work toward, for our jewelry, our songs, our dances, our drum." The plot of the book is almost impossible to encapsulate, but that's part of its power. At the same time, the narrative moves forward with propulsive force. The stakes are high: For Jacquie Red Feather, on her way to meet her three grandsons for the first time, there is nothing as conditional as sobriety: "She was sober again," Orange tells us, "and ten days is the same as a year when you want to drink all the time." For Daniel Gonzales, creating plastic guns on a 3-D printer, the only lifeline is his dead brother, Manny, to whom he writes at a ghostly Gmail account. In its portrayal of so-called "Urban Indians," the novel recalls

David Treuer's *The Hiawatha*, but the range, the vision, is all its own. What Orange is saying is that, like all people, Native Americans don't share a single identity; theirs is a multifaceted landscape, made more so by the sins, the weight, of history. That some of these sins belong to the characters alone should go without saying, a point Orange makes explicit in the novel's stunning, brutal denouement. "People are trapped in history and history is trapped in them," James Baldwin wrote in a line Orange borrows as an epigraph to one of the book's sections; this is the inescapable fate of every individual here. In this vivid and moving book, Orange articulates the challenges and complexities not only of Native Americans, but also of America itself.

Library Journal (April 1, 2018)

DEBUT Orange's visceral first novel, set in past and present-day Oakland, weaves more than ten plot lines involving the lives of Native Americans. All intersect in a crescendo of violence at the Oakland Powwow. Tony Loneman starts off the narrative with an honest discussion of his fetal alcohol syndrome, which he calls "the Drome." He also features in the conclusion piloting a drone. Video artist Dene Oxendene records stories while Orvil Red Feather is a dancer. Opal Viola Victoria Bear Shield and her sister -Jacquie Red Feather are most central to the novel. Jacquie and Opal were part of the historic occupation of Alcatraz-where Jacquie became pregnant-eventually giving up her daughter for a blind adoption. A chronicle of domestic violence, alcoholism, addiction, and pain, the book reveals the perseverance and spirit of the characters; from Jacquie as a substance abuse counselor ten days sober to the plight of Blue, the daughter she gave up, escaping from an abusive relationship. -VERDICT This book provides a broad sweep of lives of Native American people in Oakland and beyond. Echoes of Piri Thomas's *Down These Mean Streets* meets the unflinching candor of Sherman Alexie's oeuvre; highly recommended. [See Prepub Alert, 12/11/17.]-Henry -Bankhead, San Rafael P.L., CA © Copyright 2018. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

Library Journal (January 1, 2018)

Drummer Thomas Frank. Sobered-up Jacquie Red Feather. Self-trained dancer Orvil Red Feather (thanks to YouTube) and his aunt Opal Viola Victoria Bear Shield. Edwin Black, looking for his father. And young Tony Loneman, whose aspirations could blow everyone sky high. They've all come to the Big Oakland Powwow in a debut from Oakland-raised Native American Orange that has publishing insiders dancing with -enthusiasm. © Copyright 2018. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

Publishers Weekly (April 2, 2018)

Orange's commanding debut chronicles contemporary Native Americans in Oakland, as their lives collide in the days leading up to the city's inaugural Big Oakland Powwow. Bouncing between voices and points of view, Orange introduces 12 characters, their plotlines hinging on things like 3-D-printed handguns and VR-controlled drones. Tony Loneman and Octavio Gomez see the powwow as an opportunity to pay off drug debts via a brazen robbery. Others, like Edwin Black and Orvil Red Feather, view the gathering as a way to connect with ancestry and, in Edwin's case, to meet his father for the first time. Blue, who was given up for adoption, travels to Oklahoma in an attempt to learn about her family, only to return to Oakland as the powwow's coordinator. Orvil's grandmother, Jacquie, who abandoned her family years earlier, reappears in the city with powwow emcee Harvey, whom she briefly dated when the duo lived on Alcatraz Island as adolescents. Time and again, the city is a magnet for these individuals. The propulsion of both the overall narrative and its players are breathtaking as Orange unpacks how decisions of the past mold the present, resulting in a haunting and gripping story. Agent: Nicole Aragi, Aragi Inc. (June) © Copyright PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved.

They called us enemy

by [Takei, George](#); illustrated by [Becker, Harmony](#)

Overview

From Follett

Actor, author, and activist George Takei recounts his childhood imprisoned within American concentration camps for Japanese Americans during World War II and the impact the experience had on his later life.

Reviews & Awards

- **Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature Award, 2020**
- **Booklist** starred, 07/01/19
- **Horn Book Magazine**, 09/01/19
- **Kirkus Reviews** starred, 12/01/19
- **Library Journal - web only**, 07/26/19
- **Publishers Weekly** starred, 07/08/19
- **School Library Journal Xpress**, 06/28/19
- **Voice of Youth Advocates (VOYA)** starred, 10/01/19

Full-Text Reviews

Booklist starred (July 2019 (Vol. 115, No. 21))

Takei has spoken publicly about his childhood experiences in internment camps during WWII, and this graphic memoir tells that story again with a compelling blend of nostalgia and outrage. He was very young when he and his family were forced out of their California home and sent to Camp Rohwer in Arkansas, so some of his memories of that time are touched with gentle affection, though that fondness is short-lived. As he grows older and they're relocated to a camp with harsher conditions, it seems less like an adventure and more like the atrocity it truly is. Takei, together with Justin Eisinger and Steven Scott, interweaves scenes of his adult realizations and reflections, as well as key speeches and historical events of the period, among the accounts of his childhood, which is very effective at providing context for those memories. Becker's spare, fine-lined, manga-inspired artwork focuses intently on faces and body language, keeping the story centered in the realm of the personal. Ultimately, though Takei is grateful for the official apologies he and other Japanese Americans received, he's careful to note how similar attitudes today mean that other immigrant communities in America are facing discrimination and internment. This approachable, well-wrought graphic memoir is important reading, particularly in today's political climate. Pair with John Lewis' acclaimed March series for a thought-provoking, critical look at the history of racism in American policies and culture.

Horn Book Guide starred (Fall 2019)

The actor/author/activist crafts his childhood memoir about his years spent in America's Japanese internment camps of World War II. Through all the unjust, degrading treatment they suffer, young George and his family maintain their resiliency, dignity, and humanity. Takei seamlessly blends his naive, limited childhood perspective with the wisdom and reflection of adulthood. Becker's emotive black-and-white panel illustrations are effective in their subtle nuances.

Kirkus Reviews starred (August 15, 2019)

A beautifully heart-wrenching graphic-novel adaptation of actor and activist Takei's (Lions and Tigers and Bears, 2013, etc.) childhood experience of incarceration in a World War II camp for Japanese Americans. Takei had not yet started school when he, his parents, and his younger siblings were forced to leave their home and report to the Santa Anita Racetrack for "processing and removal" due to President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066. The creators smoothly and cleverly embed the historical context within which Takei's family's story takes place, allowing readers to simultaneously experience the daily humiliations that they suffered in the camps while providing readers with a broader understanding of the federal legislation, lawsuits, and actions which led to and maintained this injustice. The heroes who fought against this and provided support to and within the Japanese American community, such as Fred Korematsu, the 442nd Regiment, Herbert Nicholson, and the ACLU's Wayne Collins, are also highlighted, but the focus always remains on the many sacrifices that Takei's parents made to ensure the safety and survival of their family while shielding their children from knowing the depths of the hatred they faced and danger they were in. The creators also highlight the dangerous parallels between the hate speech, stereotyping, and legislation used against Japanese Americans and the trajectory of current events.

Delicate grayscale illustrations effectively convey the intense emotions and the stark living conditions. A powerful reminder of a history that is all too timely today. (Graphic memoir. 14-adult)

Library Journal - web only (July 26, 2019)

Takei, social media darling, out-and-proud octogenarian, and member of the original Star Trek cast, spent a part of his early childhood in Japanese internment camps during World War II. This purposefully pointed graphic novel, cocreated with writers Justin Eisinger and Steven Scott and artist Becker (Himawari Share), recalls his family's experience in the camps while providing solid historical context of the incarceration's broader implications. The story is Takei's parents' as much as his own-first-generation Japanese immigrants trying to care for and protect three young American-born children while imprisoned as enemies of the state by virtue of their race. Subtle hints of manga conventions are threaded through straightforward panel comics that serve the narrative at a quick clip. This particular story is expressly crafted for a general audience, with great potential for classroom use, walking a fine line between textbook history and personal anecdote. As the adage suggests, if we forget history, we are doomed to repeat it, and the echoes of internment policies in today's treatment of immigrants are truly chilling. VERDICT Takei is nothing if not savvy about his cultural influence, and here he uses that to share a fully fleshed-out and articulate vilification of America's most xenophobic tendencies.[Previewed in Ingrid Bohnenkamp's Graphic Novel Spotlight, "Mass Appeal," LJ 6/19.]-Emilia Packard, Austin, TX © Copyright 2019. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

Publishers Weekly (July 8, 2019)

Takei, best known for his role on Star Trek, relates the story of his family's internment during WWII in this moving and layered graphic memoir. Japanese-Americans were classified as "Alien Enemy" after Japan attacked Pearl Harbor and were forced to relocate to camps when President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066. Takei, who was five years old, along with his father, mother, and young siblings, was held from 1942 through January 1946, first at Camp Rohwer, Arkansas, and then later at Tule Lake, Calif.. The manga-influenced art by Harmony Becker juxtaposes Takei's childlike wonder over the "adventure" of the train trip with the stress and worry carried by his parents. As much as possible, Takei's parents took pains to ensure their children were shielded from the reality of their situation, though Takei still relates traumas and humiliations (and a few funny stories). It was only years later, during talks with his father, that Takei was given insight into his past. As a teenager, Takei lashes out in anger over the treatment of Japanese-Americans, and his father calmly states that "despite all that we've experienced, our Democracy is still the best in the world." Takei takes that lesson to heart in a stirring speech he delivers at the FDR Library on the 75th anniversary of the Day of Remembrance. Using parallel scenes from Trump's travel ban, in the closing pages, Takei challenges Americans to look to how past humanitarian injustices speak to current political debates. Giving a personal view into difficult history, Takei's work is a testament to hope and tenacity in the face of adversity. (July) © Copyright PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved.

School Library Journal Xpress (June 28, 2019)

Gr 7 Up-In the wake of the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor, 120,000 Japanese Americans were rounded up, incarcerated in camps, and stripped of freedoms in the name of national security. Among them was future television star and political activist Takei, who as a child was imprisoned along with his family by the U.S. government. Takei, joined by writers Eisinger and Scott, tells a powerful, somewhat nonlinear story spanning 80 years of U.S. history, starting right after Executive Order 9066 was enacted in 1942. The Takeis quickly lost everything they couldn't carry with them and were treated as criminals, but they persevered and eventually made it out of the camps. As the narrative draws to a close, the writing team strategically refers to the imprisonment of children at the U.S. southern border, the Supreme Court ruling *Trump v. Hawaii* (which upheld the "Muslim travel ban"), and President Barack Obama's inaugural address, calling upon readers to ensure that history does not repeat itself. Becker's grayscale art makes heavy use of patterned hatching to add focused textural intrigue but also casts the individuals in a shadow that reflects what became of their lives. Japanese, used minimally throughout the text, is presented in italics, with translations denoted by an asterisk, though there is at least one occurrence of untranslated Japanese. There is infrequent cursing and violence. VERDICT This evocative memoir shares stories of the nation's past, draws heartbreaking parallels to the present, and serves as a cautionary tale for the future. For all readers old enough to understand the importance of our collective history.-Alea Perez, Elmhurst Public Library, IL © Copyright 2019. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.