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EXPERIENCING
AMERICA'S STORY
THROUGH FICTION



Historical Novels for Grades 7-12

HILARY SUSAN CREW



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Introduction

The objective of this annotated bibliography is to provide a guide for school librarians, history teachers, and public librarians working with youth to historical novels about the United States from the colonial period to the era of the Iraq War, published between 2000 and 2013, that are appropriate for seventh to twelfth graders. The book also includes adult fiction titles for senior high school students. A concern about the lack of historical knowledge of American students is reflected in the 2010 Nation's Report Card on US History.¹ A study by the Southern Poverty Law Center found major failings across the states in teaching about the civil rights movement.² There is much debate over the use of historical novels to supplement the history curriculum over and above reading historical novels for pleasure, with discussions focusing on issues of accuracy, authentication, and the definition of historical fiction.³ The novels included in this guide do, however, address important issues and topics addressed by the National Standards for History and in national testing. Examples include federal and state policies toward Native Americans, civil rights, child labor, immigration, and the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II.

Many states' recent adoption of the Common Core State Standards has further spurred the use of texts other than standard history textbooks for the teaching of history and social studies.⁴ Well-researched and well-written historical novels can arguably contribute to the evaluation and comparison of different points of view on historical events and issues. M. T. Anderson's *The Pox Party* (volume 1 of *The Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing, Traitor to the Nation*; Candlewick, 2006) and Edward P. Jones's *The Known World* (Amistad, 2003), for example, contribute to new ways of understanding the landscape of slavery. Historical novels offer readers opportunities to ask and debate questions regarding authors' interpretations and ideological standpoints in choosing how to tell their stories. The inclusion of historical novels that offer an alternative history of events,

such as Philip Roth's *The Plot Against America* (Houghton Mifflin, 2004), can also raise important issues about fiction, imagination, and authenticity. Amy Huftalin and Louis Ferroli point out that historical novels "help teachers make history interesting and meaningful to students, while increasing students' pleasure in the reading of this genre," and provide charts aligning historical novels with other texts for the American Revolution, the Civil War, and the civil rights movement.⁵ As one teacher who uses historical fiction stated, the "connection between informational texts with similar topics can be powerful as one genre can elegantly support and enhance learning from the other."⁶

There has been a move toward a more inclusive understanding of American history as more historical novels are published from the perspectives of voices representing different cultures, races, and ethnicities. Noticeable, too, is the wide range of topics covered by historical novels, ranging from discoveries in astronomy and medicine to the history of baseball. Recent novels contribute to different perspectives on the past, such as the effect of the Cold War on an Iñupiaq family in Debby Edwardson's *Blessing's Bead* and the Vietnam War seen through the lens of a female photographer in Tatjana Soli's *The Lotus Eaters*. An increasing number of novels are written in diverse narrative forms. Myra Zarnowski points out, for example, that Jen Bryant's multiple-voiced verse novel on the Scopes trial, raises "social issues from different perspectives."⁷ The 1920s come to life in memorabilia, vintage postcards, and advertisements in Caroline Preston's *The Scrapbook of Frankie Pratt* (Ecco, 2011), and the Great Depression is experienced in arresting graphics in James Vance and Dan Burr's *Kings in Disguise* (W. W. Norton, 2006).

Writers explore the relationship between history as story and historical fiction. Allan Wolf writes that he has "allowed fantasy to play within the confines of fact. When it comes to historical fiction, history is the birdcage; fiction is the bird."⁸ Wolf and many other writers of historical fiction are providing endnotes to their stories to strengthen their birdcages, including historical facts; distinctions between fact and fiction; and information about context, sources, and suggested readings. Authors often insert documentary material into the text of their novels. Jeff Shaara, for example, notes in *No Less Than Victory* (Ballantine Books, 2009) that the voices of his participants are based on primary sources such as memoirs,

collections of letters, and interviews but that the book is a novel because there are always “everyday conversations that are not recorded for posterity.” He emphasizes the importance of authenticity when he dares to “put words in the mouths of any of the historical figures” in his books.⁹ Diane Glancy chooses to define her novel *Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears* (University of Oklahoma Press, 2009) as “fictional, historical nonfiction.”¹⁰ But in writing about known facts, she also “wanted to know—the spirit, the emotional journey, the heartbeat during the march.”¹¹ By reimagining the past through the lives and relationships of their protagonists, historical novels offer readers the opportunity to think about how events and issues affect individuals and their families. Several writers draw on their own experiences or the history of their family members to bring the past to life. As Ellen Klages reminds us, “History isn’t just dates and facts and places. It’s people and their lives and stories.”¹²

Selection of Novels

The books annotated here are for seventh grade and up. To include a wide range of reading levels, books are featured that are suggested for grades 5 through 7 and for grades 5 through 8. Adult fiction titles for senior high school students are also included. Most books included here have publication dates between the years 2000 and 2013. Exceptions include four award-winning books published in the 1990s that were not included in *America as Story: Historical Fiction for Middle and Secondary Schools* (American Library Association, 1997).¹³ Novels were selected for their literary merit and for their strength as historical novels. Many of the novels selected for this book are recipients of one or more awards or have been listed on various notable lists. Others were selected from among starred reviews in various journals.

Awards for books for seventh to twelfth grade include major American Library Association awards for youth literature: Newbery Medal, Coretta Scott King, Pura Belpré, and Printz awards. Other awards include the American Indian Youth Literature Award, the National Book Award for Young People’s Literature, the Américas Book Award for Children’s and Young Adult Literature, the Sydney Taylor Book Award, and the Western Writers of America’s Spur Award. Awards recognizing a book’s value as

a historical novel include the Scott O'Dell Award for Historical Fiction, Notable Social Studies Trade Books for Young People, the Jane Addams Children's Book Award, and *Booklist's* Top 10 Historical Fiction for Youth. Lists include ALA Notable Children's Books and YALSA's Best Books and Best Fiction lists (or Young Adult Lists).

Awards for adult novels include the National Book Award, the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction, and the Western Writers of America's Spur Award. Major awards for excellence in American historical fiction include the American Book Awards, the David J. Langum Sr. Prize, the Michael Shaara Prize for Excellence in Civil War Fiction, and the James Fenimore Cooper Prize. Also noted is a novel's inclusion on *Booklist's* Top 10 Historical Novels. Awards for adult novels for teens include the Alex Award, Outstanding Books for the College Bound, and *School Library Journal's* Best Adult Books for High School Students (which in 2010 was replaced by the web-based *SLJ* Best Adult Books 4 Teens).

Reviewing journals included *Booklist*, *Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books*, *Horn Book Magazine*, *Library Journal*, *Multicultural Review*, *School Library Journal*, *VOYA*, *History Teacher*, *Journal of American History*, *Social Studies*, and *Social Education*.

Abbreviations Used in Annotations for Prizes and Lists

American Library Association Notable Children's Book = ALA Notable

Américas Book Award for Children's and Young Adult Literature = Américas

Booklist Top 10 Historical Fiction for Youth = *Booklist* Top 10 HF

Booklist Top 10 Historical Novels = *Booklist* Top 10 HN

Coretta Scott King Book Award = King

David J. Langum Sr. Prize = Langum

James Fenimore Cooper Prize = Cooper

Jane Addams Children's Book Award = Addams

Michael L. Printz Awards = Printz

Michael Shaara Prize for Excellence in Civil War Fiction = Shaara

National Book Award = NBA

National Book Award for Young People's Literature = NBA (Y)

Newbery Medal = Newbery

Notable Social Studies Trade Books for Young People = NSSTB

Pulitzer Prize for Fiction = Pulitzer

Pura Belpré Award = Belpré

School Library Journal Best Adult Book 4 Teens = *SLJ* BAB4T

School Library Journal Best Adult Book for High School Students = *SLJ*
BABHS

Scott O'Dell Award for Historical Fiction = O'Dell

Sydney Taylor Book Award = Taylor

Western Writers of America Spur Award = Spur

YALSA Alex Award = Alex

YALSA Best Books for Young Adults = YALSA BB

YALSA Best Fiction for Young Adults = YALSA BF

YALSA Outstanding Books for the College Bound = YALSA OB

Arrangement of Chapters

The arrangement of chapters is based with modifications on eras 2–10 of the US History Content Standards for Grades 5–12. I have omitted era 1, as the content is not addressed by historical novels chosen for this book. Historical novels do not always fit neatly into designated eras; I therefore have adjusted era headings and dates to better accommodate the historical time frame covered by the novels. Subheadings are used for specific topics where appropriate. Within headings, books appropriate for seventh grade and up are arranged alphabetically by the author's last name, and are then followed by a separate listing of adult novels appropriate for young people. For novels I provide brief bibliographic details, suggested grade levels, and relevant awards. Annotations provide a guide to historical context and themes. Each novel has one or more suggestions for discussion, with links to relevant resources when appropriate. Furthermore, a select bibliography

with resources on historical fiction as well as the teaching and use of historical fiction in the classroom is included.

Notes

1. National Assessment of Educational Progress, The Nation's Report Card, "Summary of Findings," http://nationsreportcard.gov/ushistory_2010/summary.asp.
2. Southern Poverty Law Center, *Teaching the Movement*, September 2011, www.splcenter.org/get-informed/publications/teaching-the-movement.
3. Eric Groce and Robin Groce, "Authenticating Historical Fiction: Rationale and Process," *Education Research and Perspectives* 32, no. 1 (2005): 99–120.
4. Common Core State Standards Initiative, www.corestandards.org.
5. Amy Huftalin and Louis Ferrolli, "Literature That Increases Social Studies Knowledge and Skill in Text Reading," *Illinois Reading Council Journal* 41, no. 1 (2012–13): 11.
6. Allison L. Baer, "Pairing Books for Learning: The Union of Informational and Fiction," *History Teacher* 45, no. 2 (2012): 283.
7. Myra Zarnowski, "Historical Novels in Verse: A Fusion Genre," *Journal of Children's Literature* 36, no. 1 (2010): 37.
8. Allan Wolf, *The Watch That Ends the Night: Voices from the Titanic* (New York: Candlewick, 2011), 435.
9. Jeff Shaara, *No Less Than Victory: A Novel of World War II* (New York: Ballantine, 2009), ix–x.
10. Diane Glancy, *Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009), 188.
11. *Ibid.*, 189.
12. Hazel Rochman, "Talking with Ellen Klages," *Book Links* 17, no. 2 (2007): 26.
13. Rosemary K. Coffey and Elizabeth F. Howard, *America as Story: Historical Fiction for Middle and Secondary Schools* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1997).



Colonization and Settlement

(1585–1759)

Early Colonization

Carbone, Elisa Lynn. *Blood on the River: James Town 1607*. Viking, 2006. 237 pp. Grades 5–8. NSSTB, 2007.

Carbone integrates the writings of early settlers into her novel about the settlement of James Town, Virginia. Her main characters are based on real people, including the young narrator, Sam Collier, who describes in detail the voyage from London, his arrival in Virginia in 1607, and his experiences among the settlers until 1610. Sam, a page to Captain John Smith, tells readers how the site of James Town was chosen, the disagreements among the knowledgeable Smith and inexperienced “gentlemen,” the difficulties settlers encountered in regard to governance and supporting themselves, and how the settlers’ numbers diminished as they were killed and beset by disease and famine. The novel makes clear the relationship between the settlers and the different native tribes, including relations with Chief Powhatan. Sam’s narrative incorporates a consciousness that it is they, the colonists, who are the encroachers on land that is already owned and has been named. Sent by Smith to live with the Warroskoyack tribe, Sam acquires hunting skills and knowledge of their culture, and he learns Algonquian. Quotations at the beginning of each chapter are taken from primary sources. In an afterword, Carbone extends Sam’s narrative by summarizing the history of the settlement to 1644, including James Town’s

“Starving Time,” during the winter of 1609–10. She also explains how she uses her resources and provides suggestions for further reading.

1. Discuss the reasons the Virginia Company sent settlers to Virginia. How are the English “gentlemen” settlers represented?
2. Describe and evaluate the relationships among the various Native American tribes and the colonists from 1607 until 1610.
3. Compare Sam’s description of the difficulties encountered by the settlers with accounts in primary sources. See “First-Hand Accounts” at the website Virtual Jamestown (www.virtualjamestown.org/fhaccounts_desc.html#history).

Chibbaro, Julie. *Redemption*. Atheneum, 2004. Electronic text. Grades 9–12. American Book Award, 2005.

Chibbaro bases her novel on stories of early expeditions made a hundred years before the settlement of Jamestown by some who left Europe for religious reasons. Twelve-year-old Lily Applegate’s father was persuaded to leave their village, Myrthyr, in England in the 1500s for the New World by Frere Lanther from the Rhineland, who is loosely modeled on Martin Luther, a leading figure of the Protestant Reformation. Similar to Luther, Lanther prints pamphlets and criticizes the Roman Catholic Church, but he betrays the Applegates by aligning himself with the local baron for the gain of his growing church. Lily describes the daily life, community, and work of a feudal village in England, but when her mother is forced to give up their croft, Lily and her mother sail to the New World with the baron, who hopes to find gold.

Lily is represented as a young Christian girl struggling with her religious beliefs as she endures the privations of the voyage, during which her mother is abused by the baron, and as she experiences the events that befall her when their ship is wrecked on the shores of the New World. Lily has to remind herself that the New World, with its unfamiliar birds, fish, and shells, and bounded by an impenetrable forest, has God’s hand in its making. Through Lily’s eyes readers see vivid scenes of the ship’s wreckage strewn among the rocks, the divisions between the rich and poor survivors as they huddle over their separate fires, and

the discovery of mutilated bodies thought to be those who had sailed before them. When the captain and his sailors take Lily's mother into the forest, Lily goes to search for her—alone with her fears of the devil and the “dogs-head” people, until the baron's son, Ethan, joins her.

Chibbaro's novel is also about Lily's assimilation into the New World, after her father finds her in the forest. At first, she did not recognize the man dressed in furs with strange markings on his face—he had been rescued and adopted by the Nooh people. Her father had learned their language and traditions, and taken a new wife. Lily describes the homes and lifestyle of the Nooh (Chibbaro notes that the tribes in her book are a composite of the “different tribes of Indians which proliferated in America both pre- and, for a short time, post-Columbus” [loc. 3074]). The plot does not gloss over Lily's encounters with violence in the New World, including capture by the Awthas, the cruel wolf clan that has been at war with the Nooh when Lily and her father set out to find her mother. But the Nooh and Awthas join forces in a murderous encounter with the privateers who kill Lily's mother and attack Lily and her father. Later, Lily tells readers about how her faith and perspective change as she is inducted into the Nooh tribe. In her notes, Chibbaro explains that the relationship between the Nooh and Awthas is “loosely based on the relationships between the clans of the Iroquois and Algonquin” (loc. 3074) and that she also based her story on documented cases of white settlers being adopted by Native Americans. Chibbaro briefly sums up the religious and political context of early explorations to the New World and provides information about her sources, including a bibliography.

1. Discuss how Protestantism affects the practice of religion in Myrthyr.
2. Discuss Lily's induction into the Nooh tribe.

Howard, Ellen. *The Crimson Cap*. Holiday House, 2009. 177 pp. Grades 5–7. NSSTB, 2010.

In 1687, ten-year-old Pierre Talon, living in a French settlement on the Gulf Coast, leaves his mother and siblings when he is chosen to accompany René-Robert Cavalier, Sieur de La Salle, on his latest expedition

to search for the Mississippi River. Wearing the knitted crimson hat that belonged to his missing father, Pierre, struggling through swamps and rivers, is accompanying the fated expedition when La Salle and his personal staff are murdered. Pierre is stricken with fever and is cared for in a Hasinai village by the village leader's wife, who names Pierre "Tay'sha" (friend). He stays with the Hasinai for three years, learning their skills and culture, and the bond between them strengthens when he is tattooed as an adopted son. Later, when searching for his family, Pierre finds that the settlement where they were living had been burned and his siblings taken by the Clamcoëhs (Karankawa). Returning to the Hasinai, Pierre is taken prisoner by General de León, who, charged with setting up missions in the villages and locating members of La Salle's expedition, helps Pierre find his siblings.

Howard based her story on the actual person Pierre Talon and provides references to the primary sources that contain information on his life. In her notes, she describes what is known of Talon and his siblings from when they left Texas with the Spaniards to when they arrived in Mexico City in 1690, and through to their later lives. She also explains how her novel fits into the wider context of competition between France and Spain as they explored and made their claims to the New World.

1. Discuss what Pierre learns about the Hasinai culture that challenges the explorers' use of the terms *savages* and *civilization*.
2. Related website: For primary documents with eyewitness accounts by Pierre and his brother, Jean-Baptiste, see American Journeys (www.americanjourneys.org/aj-114/summary/index.asp).

Adult Fiction

Brooks, Geraldine. *Caleb's Crossing*. Viking, 2011. 306 pp. Langum honorable mention, 2011.

Caleb Cheeshahteaumauck, whose father was a leader of a band of the Wôpanâak (Wampanoag), Noepe (today Martha's Vineyard), was the first Native American to graduate from Harvard College in 1665. His story, imaginatively fleshed out from a few facts, is told by the fic-

tional character, Bethia, daughter of Thomas Mayfield, a minister on the island who is engaged in converting the Wampanoag to Christianity. Twelve-year-old Bethia's first-person narrative weaves back and forth from the time she first meets Caleb in 1660 until the close of her life in 1715. Caleb studies with her father, then attends Master Corlett's school in Cambridge, before being admitted to Harvard College, which is bound by its 1650 charter to educate both "English and Indian youth of the country" (302). A brilliant student, he is represented as transcending the prejudice of other students while retaining a loyalty to his beliefs.

Bethia's character illustrates the limited choices available to women. More able than her brother, she is, nonetheless, advised by her father that she must accept her "destiny as a woman" (16). The rich social, cultural, and religious context of the novel is supported by descriptions of Noepe, Cambridge, and Harvard College, with details of the student body, the courses of study, and the fees (often paid in food and other goods). In her afterword to the novel, Brooks provides details of her research; known facts about Caleb; and information about the Mayhew family, whose history provides some of the biographical facts for the fictional Mayfields. The endpapers reproduce the only known document by Caleb, written in Latin.

1. Discuss Caleb's choice to leave his home.
2. Discuss the representations of Anne Bradstreet and Anne Hutchinson and how they add to Bethia's story about the status of women in seventeenth-century Massachusetts. See the related web page "Anne Hutchinson Banished, March 22, 1638," at Mass Moments (www.massmoments.org/moment.cfm?mid=88), and the website Anne Bradstreet (access via www.vcu.edu/search/index.php?).

Kent, Kathleen. *The Wolves of Andover*. Little, Brown, 2010. 300 pp.

In this prequel to *The Heretic's Daughter*, Kent imagines the life of Martha Allen. In 1673, Martha goes to Billerica, Massachusetts, to help her cousin Patience Taylor, who is expecting her third child. There she meets and falls in love with Thomas Carrier, an indentured servant,

suspected of being the executioner of Charles I. The narrative shifts back and forth from Martha's growing fascination with Carrier to plotters who, hired on behalf of Charles II, make arrangements to sail to Boston to capture the regicide. Descriptions of Martha's household duties and seasonal farmwork are contrasted with scenes depicting London's underworld of baiting pits and taverns. While Martha and the Taylor household deal with wolves, grief over Patience's stillborn baby and the death of her young son, and fear of raids by Abenaki Indians, the men hired to find King Charles I's executioner finalize their plans and board the *Swallow*. But those who have no sympathy for Royalists thwart their plans. Through Thomas, who tells how he came to fight for Oliver Cromwell, Kent brings together key events of the English Civil War, the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell, and the Restoration with the history of Massachusetts—home to John Dixwell, a judge who signed the warrant of execution for Charles I. Living under the name of James Davis, Dixwell organizes a ring of spies (including Patience's husband, Daniel Taylor) to protect regicides living in the colonies from Royalists and from informants keen to earn bounty money. Kent distinguishes fact from fiction, explaining that although the factual Thomas Carrier (also known as Thomas Morgan) is documented as having married Martha Allen Carrier, who was later hanged during the Salem witch trials, there is no evidence that he was Charles II's executioner; rather, this was a family myth.

1. Discuss the reasons Daniel Taylor and others were willing to protect regicides.
2. Related website: "John Dixwell, Regicide, c. 1607–89," BCW Project (www.british-civil-wars.co.uk/biog/dixwell.htm).

French and Indian War

Bruchac, Joseph. *The Winter People*. 2002; Penguin, 2004. 176 pp. Grades 7–9. *Booklist* Top 10 HF, 2003; NSSTB, 2003.

In 1759, fourteen-year-old Saxso and others are celebrating the good harvest in the Abenaki "mission village" of St. Francis (Odanak) on

the Alsigontikuk River (the St. Francis River in Quebec) when a Scaticook Indian warns Saxso that the village is being surrounded by Robert Rogers (the “White Devil”), his Rangers, and Stockbridge Indians. When his mother and sisters are taken captive, the wounded Saxso follows them and devises a plan for their rescue.

Bruchac presents a different side to the attack on the village from that recorded in one of Rogers’s dispatches to General Jeffrey Amherst (which is included in Bruchac’s notes) that claimed that more than two hundred Indians were killed in St. Francis. In presenting the Abenaki side of story, Bruchac corrects the historical record, which indicates that Rogers’s attack “wiped out” the Abenaki. He describes the relationship between the Abenaki and the French, deconstructs stereotypical representations of the Abenaki, differentiates Native American peoples and their different loyalties, and provides information on the life of captives. He explains in his notes that most of the characters are “real,” for example, the white chief of St. Francis, Joseph-Louis Gill, son of a captive white man. Through Saxso’s narrative, Bruchac provides readers with an understanding of Abenaki culture and their deep knowledge of and respect for their environment.

1. Discuss Rogers’s raid from the perspectives of Saxso and the Abenaki. Contrast Saxso’s description of the raid and burned village with Rogers’s dispatch in Bruchac’s notes.
2. Discuss the role of religion in the relationship between the Abenaki and the French.
3. Related website: Abenaki Culture and History (www.native-languages.org/abenaki.htm#tribe).

Salem Witch Trials

Duble, Kathleen Benner. *The Sacrifice*. 2005; Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2007. 224 pp. Grades 5–8. *Booklist* Top 10 HF, 2006.

Set in Andover, Massachusetts, in 1692, the story is told of how ten-year-old Abby Faulkner and her family are caught up in the Salem witch trials. When the news spreads that witches had been discovered

in Salem Village, Abby's grandfather, Reverend Dane, warns the family that their father's "fits" could cause him to be considered an "oddity," which could bring danger to the family. When the "afflicted" girls are brought to Andover to identify witches in the community, Abby's family is among those chosen to parade before the girls. On this occasion, they pass the test, but as Reverend Dane continues to speak out against the trials, first Abby's Aunt Elizabeth and then Abby and her older sister, Dorothy, are accused of being witches and taken to Salem Township's jail.

Duble vividly describes the jail conditions: the stench, minimal food, and rats swimming in flooded cells. The choices set out before suspected witches at their trial are clear, as are the terms under which Abby's mother persuades her daughters to testify against her to gain their freedom. Duble bases her novel on her own family history, explains which of her characters are based on actual personages, and notes any changes of names and facts. The book includes a bibliography.

1. Compare Duble's fictionalized account with transcripts relating to the Faulkner family (click on "Search All Names in the Salem Witchcraft Papers") at the website Salem Witch Trials: Documentary Archive and Transcription Project (<http://salem.lib.virginia.edu/texts/transcripts.html>).
2. Discuss the ethical implications of the choices given to the accused at their trials.

Hemphill, Stephanie. *Wicked Girls: A Novel of the Salem Witch Trials*. Balzer + Bray, 2010. 408 pp. Grades 8–12.

In this verse novel, three girls—seventeen-year-old Mercy Lewis, servant to the Putnam family; seventeen-year-old Margaret Walcott; and twelve-year-old Ann Putnam—testify that they are "afflicted" by witches. Their narratives include familiar elements found in accounts about the Salem witch hunts, but the emphasis here is on the fictional background and lives of the girls, and their interrelationship with one another and with the "afflicted girls" Abigail Williams, Elizabeth Hubbard, and Susannah Sheldon. Hemphill shows how the girls' accusations

bring them power and attention in a culture in which girls endured rigid familial discipline and were subject to sexual abuse. But revealed in the girls' dialogues are the slippages between their accusations and the truth, as well as the cracks that appear in their unified front.

Hemphill provides information about what is known about each of the real-life girls who testified and each of the accused. In an author's note, she includes information about various theories explaining the cause of the girls' affliction, but her main premise is that the "accusers 'faked' their affliction and knew what they were doing" (405). Her interpretation invites readers to think about the role of religion and witchcraft in colonial New England; the social and political structures of Salem; and the vulnerability of young women, no matter their different backgrounds and social class. A list of sources and websites is also provided.

1. Are there examples in the text pointing to the girls' faking their afflictions? Discuss key events that contribute to the ending of the accusations and trials.
2. Compare Hemphill's text with primary documents at the website Salem Witch Trials: Documentary Archive and Transcription Project (<http://salem.lib.virginia.edu/texts/transcripts.html>).
3. Related reading: Marc Aronson's *Witch-Hunt: Mysteries of the Salem Witch Trials* (Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2003).

Adult Fiction

Kent, Kathleen. *The Heretic's Daughter*. Little, Brown, 2008. 331 pp. Langum, 2008; SLJ BABHS, 2008.

In December 1690, nine-year-old Sarah Carrier and her family moved to Andover, Massachusetts, to live with her grandmother. When smallpox breaks out, Sarah leaves to stay with her aunt and uncle, but once home in April 1691, there are accusations of "witchery" against the Carriers. During a time when people feared disease and Indian attacks, they blamed the Carriers for spreading smallpox. Other factors included the hatred of Mercy Williams (fired for lying and stealing), the sharpness of Martha Carrier (Sarah's mother) in disputes, and the fortuitous

change in the wind that saved their fields but burned those of a neighbor. Martha is arrested on May 31, 1692, and two of her brothers the following July—then Sarah and her brother Tom in August. Kent delineates the lack of reason governing their trials and vividly describes the dreadful prison conditions for incarcerated women and children. Also mentioned are those who begin to question the proceedings, including Increase Mather. Martha, proclaiming her innocence and refusing to save herself by confessing to a lie, is hung on August 18, 1692.

Herself a descendant of Martha Carrier, Kent weaves her own family history into a well-researched portrait of seventeenth-century Salem, a society in which belief in witchcraft existed alongside a religion that emphasized repentance from damnation. Martha Carrier's earlier life is imagined in the prequel novel *The Wolves of Andover* (Little, Brown, 2010).

1. Discuss the role of confession in the Salem witch trials.
2. Related website: The website Salem Witch Trials: Documentary Archive and Transcription Project (<http://salem.lib.virginia.edu/texts/transcripts.html>)—search under “Carrier” by clicking on “Search All Names in the Salem Witchcraft Papers.”

Slavery in the New World

Draper, Sharon. *Copper Sun*. Atheneum, 2006. 302 pp. Grades 9–12. *Booklist* Top 10 HF, 2006; King, 2007; NSSTB, 2007.

The village of fifteen-year-old Amari welcome the pale-faced strangers with a feast, but celebration changes to scenes of bloodshed as Amari's family and the other villagers are killed. Amari is shackled and marched to the coast, where she is branded. During the sea voyage, she is raped, and in Charles Town, South Carolina, she is sold to a plantation owner as a gift for his sixteen-year-old son, Clay. Fifteen-year-old Polly, an indentured white girl, is instructed to “tame” the “savage” slave girl (90). The girls, assigned to the kitchen under the slave cook Teenie, form an uneasy alliance that strengthens into friendship.

Set in 1738, Draper's story exposes through the girls' alternating perspectives a patriarchal socioeconomic system in which there is disregard for human life and dignity, including sexual abuse, whippings, and life-threatening conditions in the rice fields. When Mr. Derby murders his wife's newborn mixed-race child, the doctor who has been entrusted with reselling Amari and Polly, gives them, along with Teenie's young son, a chance to escape. In contrast to the many slaves who were traveling north, Amari insists that they follow the advice of an old slave and travel south. They make their way to Fort Mose, Florida, a refuge for escaped slaves, indentured servants, and Native Americans. Draper provides information about Fort Mose; St. Augustine; and Francisco Menendez, a former slave who became captain of St. Augustine's black militia. She also provides a list of resources.

1. What does Draper's story convey about the economic benefits of slavery on a rice plantation?
2. Discuss Polly's position as an indentured servant and Amari's position as a slave.
3. Describe examples of passive and overt resistance to slavery.
4. Related reading: Glennette Tilley Turner's *Fort Mose and the Story of the Man Who Built the First Black Settlement in Colonial America* (Abrams, 2010).

Adult Fiction

Morrison, Toni. *A Mercy*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2008. 167 pp. ALA Notable, 2010; *Booklist* Top 10 HN, 2009.

In 1682, Jacob Vaark, an Anglo-Dutch farmer and trader from Milton, Massachusetts, rides to Maryland to collect his debt from a Portuguese plantation owner. He refuses the offer of slaves in recompense, although he covets D'Ortega's house. A slave mother begs Vaark to take her daughter, Florens. Florens joins Lina, a servant woman who Vaark took from her Native American village when it was ravaged by smallpox, and Sorrow, another ill-used orphan who survived a shipwreck and was handed over to Vaark by a man who had abused her. With help from two white indentured laborers, Scully and Willard,

Florens and Lina work on the farm with Jacob's wife, Rebekkah. In a multiple-voiced narrative, the characters tell their different stories and versions of the events that unfold after Jacob's death from smallpox, before he could move into the mansion he had built with profits from the Barbados molasses trade.

Morrison provides a kaleidoscopic view of the different groups that populated America in the 1680s, making visible the different ethnic, racial, and religious divisions in a milieu in which slavery is already extant. At the center of story is Florens—in love with the never-enslaved blacksmith who crafts the mansion's iron gates. But Florens has never come to terms with being separated from her mother, who believed it was “a mercy” to send her away. Her mother tells her about her own bondage with the warning, “To give dominion of yourself to another is a wicked thing” (167).

1. Discuss Morrison's characters and what they convey about the divisions among different groups of peoples in the 1680s.
2. Discuss Jacob Vaark's involvement with slavery despite his criticism of the slave trade.
3. Discuss the significance of the mansion at Milton for Jacob and others.
4. Florens's mother states that there is “no protection” against misuse by men (162). Discuss the ways this applies to all women characters in the book.

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