The 2000 Young Adults’ Choices list is the 14th that U.S. teenagers (Grades 7–12) have helped create. This project began in 1986, funded by a special grant given to the International Reading Association (IRA) and supervised by the Association’s Literature for Adolescents Committee.

The goals of the project are to encourage young people to read; to make teens, teachers, librarians, and parents aware of new literature for young adults; and to provide middle and secondary school students with an opportunity to voice their opinions about books being written for them.

The 30 books on this year’s list are the result of voting by students in five different regions of the United States. Trade books (books other than textbooks) published in 1998 were submitted by more than 50 publishers. Each book had to have at least two positive reviews from recognized sources such as The Horn Book, School Library Journal, Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, Booklist, Language Arts, or Voice of Youth Advocates (VOYA). Submitted books were read by students in Grades 7–12 between September 1999 and February 2000 in selected school districts throughout the U.S. More than 11,000 ballots were counted for the books submitted for this year’s project. Students marked, “I liked the book,” “It was okay,” or “I didn’t like the book.” The results were announced in May at the 2000 Annual Convention of the International Reading Association in Indianapolis, Indiana, USA.
Publishers sent books to the five team leaders in different regions in the U.S. The team leaders’ responsibilities included selecting the school districts and schools in which the project would take place, making sure the books were distributed to the schools, and working with the teachers, librarians, supervisors, and principals to implement the program. They were also responsible for collecting the students’ ballots and mailing them to the International Reading Association headquarters for the final tally.

The following schools participated in the 2000 project:

Team 1: Deborah Young (team leader): Tamuning, Guam; Mangilao, Guam; Yigo, Guam; Ordot/Chalan Pago, Guam; and Agat, Guam; 3 high schools, 2 middle schools; 1 urban; 2 rural, 2 suburban.

Team 2: Eugenie Stahl (team leader): Brooklyn, New York; 1 high school and 1 junior high school; 2 urban.

Team 3: Joy Frerichs (team leader): Whitfield County, Georgia; 4 middle schools and 2 high schools; 6 rural.

Team 4: Cynthia Selden and Dale Vande Haar (team leaders): Des Moines, Iowa; West Des Moines, Iowa; 3 high schools, 3 middle schools, and 3 junior high schools; 4 urban, 4 suburban, 1 rural.

Team 5: Eva McGuire (team leader): Bluefield, West Virginia; Mercer County, West Virginia; 4 high schools, 6 middle schools, and 1 junior high school; 4 urban, 1 suburban, 6 rural.

The participating schools represented various types of students, economic levels, cultural groups, and geographic regions. The team leaders were enthusiastic and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to participate in this worthwhile and exciting project.

The committee wishes to thank Alida von Krogh Cutts and Mary Cash of the International Reading Association staff for helping to coordinate the project. Thanks are also extended to Natalie Babbitt for her logo design and to the International Reading Association for its continued support of the project. Gratitude and appreciation go to all of the students, teachers, librarians, school district administrators, and team leaders who participated in the project and made it a success.

The members of the Literature for Adolescents Committee, chaired by Elizabeth A. Poe, and the team leaders have written annotations for each title. Annotations written by individual committee members are indicated by their initials. Reviewers include Deborah Young, Eugenie Stahl, Joy Frerichs, Dale Vande Haar, Linda Graves, Carol Reinhard, Stan Steiner, Beth Eller, Sharron Regan, Margaret Inman, and Nina Little.

Bibliographic data are supplied for each title including ISBN (International Standard Book Number), number of pages, and price. If a publisher has both a library and trade edition, the ISBN for the library edition is included. The letter F indicates that a paperback edition of the book is forthcoming, but not yet available. Publishers...
furnished information in May 2000, but prices are subject to change.

Copies of this annotated 2000 Young Adults’ Choices may be downloaded as a PDF file at www.reading.org/choices/. Single copies of off-prints are also available for US$1.00 for postage and handling and a self-addressed 9" × 12" envelope from the International Reading Association, Department EG, 800 Barksdale Road, PO Box 8139, Newark, DE 19714-8139, USA, Attention YA Choices. To order bulk copies by phone with a credit card, call (in the U.S. and Canada only) 1-800-336-READ, ext. 266, or send order to Order Department, 800 Barksdale Road, PO Box 8139, Newark, DE 19714-8139, USA. Bulk copies may also be purchased in lots of 10 at bookstore.reading.org.

**Angels Turn Their Backs.** Margaret Buffie.

The often-ignored topic of mental illness is confronted in this novel. Fifteen-year-old Addy develops agoraphobia and finds her haven in the family apartment. Coping with the breakup of her parents’ marriage and her own illness, Addy becomes involved in the lives of her neighbors and is drawn into the mystery of the death of a former resident. A chatty parrot and a ghost also add to the dramatic plot. Overall, this is a fine read with a strong message. DVH.


**Art of the Far North: Inuit Sculpture, Drawing, and Printmaking.** Carol Finley.

As traditional ways have changed drastically over the past 50 years, Inuit artists have arisen whose work captures the customs, beliefs, and legends of their people. With fascinating photographs and clear prose, Carol Finley explains the relationship between Inuit culture and its art. EAP. Lerner. 56 pp. ISBN 0-8225-2075-3. US$29.93.

**Bad.** Jean Ferris.

This is the story of 16-year-old Dallas, who ends up in a girls’ rehabilitation center after her father decides that he can no longer cope with her behavior. Based on a series of interviews with girls who were placed in a detention facility in California, this novel shares heartbreaking lessons about family, the street, and the lives of troubled children. This book lends itself to the discussion of themes such as conflict resolution, values, and friendship. ES.


**Beauty Queen.** Linda Glovach.

This diary account tells the devastating story of one girl’s harrowing slide into heroin addiction. Nineteen-year-old Samantha is stuck in a dead-end job at a fast-food restaurant and harbors vague ambitions about becoming an actress. Feeling trapped living with her alcoholic mother and her abusive boyfriend, Samantha wants to be on her own. The easy money to be made from dancing topless is at first tempting, but Samantha soon finds it is only possible to feel good about herself and her choices with the help of heroin. By the book’s end, she can’t even complete an entry in her beloved journal without shooting up. BE.

**Bloomability.** Sharon Creech.

Domenica Santolina Doone, known as Dinnie, has always felt like a stranger; her family has moved 13 times in her 12 years. Under duress, Dinnie leaves her wandering family to stay with an aunt and uncle at an international school in Switzerland. At first she can’t see this as an opportunity, but during the course of the year, she learns to speak Italian and to ski, and makes a diverse group of friends. Dinnie develops confidence and learns how to truly make the most of life’s opportunities. BE.


**Choosing Up Sides.** John H. Ritter.

Being the son of a Baptist preacher in 1921 meant there were certain things you couldn’t do, like defy adults, play baseball, or be left-handed in a world meant for right handers. These were considered ways of the devil. This powerful coming-of-age story challenges dogmatism with truth.


**The Dark Light.** Mette Newth. Translated by Faith Ingwersen.

Set in early 19th-century Norway, this is the story of 13-year-old Tora, who contracts leprosy and is banished to a leper hospital in Bergen. Curious as to what the Bible says about leprosy, she befriends an angry young woman who teaches her to read. The world of books enables Tora to escape some of the misery of the hospital while she reconciles her spiritual concerns.


**A Door Near Here.** Heather Quarles.

Fifteen-year old Katherine and her two younger siblings attempt to keep their family, including 8-year-old half-sister Alisa, together in spite of their mother’s descent into alcoholism. Katherine’s desperation to keep their circumstances a secret stems from her belief that social services will separate the family. Alisa wants to escape through “a door near here,” like the one found in Narnia. In an attempt to save the family, Katherine almost destroys the career of a helpful teacher.


**Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone.** J.K. Rowling.

At age 11, Harry Potter learns he is not a Muggle and begins his training in the “art” of wizardry. At the Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, Quidditch, Nimbus Two Thousands, and Every Flavor Beans become part of his life. Harry’s adventures in his destined vocation make for page-turning reading.

The Haunting. Joan Lowery Nixon.
Lia comes from a long line of extraordinarily strong-minded, brave women. When her mother inherits a haunted plantation, Lia shows courage when she seeks to release the spirits and solve a mystery. This intriguing ghost story keeps the reader guessing. SR.

Holes. Louis Sachar.
Punished for a crime he didn’t commit, Stanley Yelnats is sent to a juvenile detention camp in the Texas desert. This story of fate is saturated with unique humor and ironic twists that will make you cheer for friendship, endurance, and the underdog. SR.

It’s My Life. Michael Harrison.
Martin is kidnaped by his mother’s boyfriend, and his own mother has helped plan the crime. His life will never be the same, but he does gain a friend in Hannah, the kidnapper’s daughter, and a more satisfying relationship with his father. Set in England, this book addresses the topics of divorce and parent/child relationships within the context of a suspenseful story. EAP.

The Journal of William Thomas Emerson: A Revolutionary War Patriot (My Name Is America). Barry Denenberg.
By focusing on the ordinary, everyday life of an 18th-century adolescent rather than the great historical events, people, and places of Revolutionary-era America, the author hooks the reader and provides a quick-paced read using journal format. Young Will Emerson works in a Boston tavern run by Mrs. Thompson; it happens to be the gathering place of Revolutionary War patriots. His daring acts of courage will draw in YA readers, as will the historical maps, notes, and engravings. DVH.

The Killer’s Cousin. Nancy Werlin.
David Yaffe, acquitted of accidentally killing his girlfriend, is sent to his uncle’s home to complete his final year of high school. David encounters paranormal and psychological problems as he tries to interact with new friends and his cousin, aunt, and uncle. His relatives, a dysfunctional family, are dealing with their own loss of an older daughter who died tragically. Cousin Lily’s problems parallel David’s and lead to a dramatic resolution of this thriller that will enthrall older readers. JF.

Lives of Our Own. Lorri Hewett.
Shawna, an African American girl, moves from a protected environment to the southern U.S. after her parents divorce. She is faced with the ingrained prejudices of the Old South. Through the school newspaper, Shawna questions the stigma against interracial dating and segregated community functions. JF.

The woodland animals march to protect Redwall Abbey from the vicious rats. Tamello De Fformelo Tussock and other medieval warriors save Redwall from evil and add to the author’s swashbuckling style. Tamello, who was told he was too young to defend the abbey, discovers what life, honor, and death really mean. This is Jacques’s 10th book in the Redwall series. His books are appealing not only to children but to adults as well. LG.

Two Chicago kids spend each summer from 1929 to 1935 in a small town with their Grandma Dowd. In chapters devoted to each summer, Depression life is accurately, but humorously, portrayed through the eyes of the now-grown grandson. MI.
The Moonstones. Jean Thesman.

Tiger Ann Parker realized her mother was different when she first started school. Folks said she was retarded. When Tiger learns the truth about her mother after Grandmother dies, she is faced with life-changing decisions. This heartfelt story helps readers understand the mentally challenged and the power of family love. SS. Henry Holt. 212 pp. ISBN 0-8050-5251-8. US$16.95 CAN$25.50. Paper ed., F.

North By Night: A Story of the Underground Railroad. Katherine Ayres
This well-researched, lively, and touching historical novel will help social studies students better understand the abolition movement as well as the bravery and sacrifices it took to be a “rescuer” on the Underground Railroad. Through daily journal entries and letters written over a 2-month period, 16-year-old Lucinda Spencer conveys her love for her family, her dilemma in selecting between two suitors, her feelings about slavery, and her experience helping to hide and care for a group of fugitive slaves fleeing to Canada. SS. Henry Holt. 212 pp. ISBN 0-385-32564-9. US$15.95. CAN$21.95. Paper ed., Yearling. ISBN 0-440-22747-X. US$4.50. CAN$6.99.

This fast-paced horror story pits 17-year-old PC McPhee against some terrifying creatures of the sea, as well as some terrifying humans, namely a sadistic geologist who is trying to steal the sacred underwater treasures of a small Aboriginal tribe. Summoned to Australia by his uncle, PC realizes he must unravel the mystery of what happened to Maruul’s brother, who disappeared when he was scuba diving by the reef. It quickly becomes apparent that the seemingly deserted ship anchored nearby has something to do with the boy’s death. PC finds himself in a deadly game of hide-and-seek. BE. HarperCollins. 180 pp. ISBN 0-06-024728-2. US$15.95. CAN$23.50. Paper ed., Hyperion. ISBN 0-7868-1309-1. US$5.99.

This is a hilarious chronicle of the Dry Creek Middle School’s quest to replace a leaky drinking fountain. When the principal writes to Flowing Waters Fountains Etc. for a catalog, he’s surprised to get a response from Flo Waters, an artist, who wants to make a much more splendidorous fountain. A correspondence develops between Flo and Mr. Sam N.’s fifth-grade class. They supply sugges-
tions for a root beer dispenser and room to splash around in, and Flo sends designs from all over the world. Soon there are hints of a behind-the-scenes scandal—Why is the head of the school board so vehemently opposed to replacing the drinking fountain? Why is the creek dry? Illustrated with newspaper clippings, faxes, and memos, and chock-full of puns, this is a novel that will entice even the most reluctant readers. BE.


**Rough Waters**. S.L. Rottman

This is a powerful story of two teenage brothers, Scott and Gregg, coping with the tragic deaths of their parents and learning that they are now penniless. The boys must move from suburban California to a little town in Colorado and live with an uncle they didn’t know they had. Life with Rocky, their uncle who owns a white-water rafting business, is just that: rocky. The realism of the characters and their actions, the family problems, first romances, and thrill of shooting the rapids of the Arkansas River all make this an exciting read.

DVH.


**Second Stringer**. Thomas J. Dygard.

Kevin Taylor has spent most of his high school football career on the bench until the star quarterback, Robert Montgomery, is injured. The season’s biggest surprise may be the friendship that develops when Robert coaches Kevin, helping him become a better player. Sports fans will relish the nonstop football action and will be rooting for both boys to succeed on and off the field. BE.


**Sirena**. Donna Jo Napoli

This compelling love story of the mermaid Sirena, a Greek Siren, blends the mythology of old with the romance of now. When Sirena witnesses the deaths of shipwrecked sailors and one of her sister mermaids, she swims to Lemnos, where she falls in love with Philoctetes, a Greek warrior stranded on the deserted island. The reader learns the myth of the mermaid and how she must mate with a human to gain immortality. Sirena falls in love with Philoctetes, who must find a way off the island so he can fight in the Trojan War. In this great read, Napoli turns mythology into an interesting lesson.


**The Skin I’m In**. Sharon G. Flake.

This novel, which won a Coretta Scott King Book Award for Non-Violent Social Change, presents the extraordinarily authentic voice of a black adolescent girl who, in the process of acquiring self-esteem and upon meeting a gifted teacher, learns about race, friendship, and unconditional acceptance. The author’s uncanny ear for teenage language and the sensibility of the teenage soul

**Soldier's Heart: A Novel of the Civil War.** Gary Paulsen.


**Someone Like You.** Sarah Dessen.


**Special Effects in Film and Television.** Jake Hamilton.

Dorling Kindersley has used its thorough, visually stimulating style to explore how special effects are created for films and television. Complete with a well-developed index and table of contents, the book explores the history of special effects from the early silent pictures to the present. Bold color pictures and diagrams bring to life these elements that moviegoers have come to expect. This captivating work of nonfiction provides an enjoyable and highly enlightening read. DVH. Dorling Kindersley. 64 pp. ISBN 0-7894-2813-X. US $17.95.
