

**GREAT BOOKS FOR TEENS
ANNOTATED LIST
2005**

AA - African American Interest

AS - Asian Interest

DO - Diversity (Other issues besides ethnicity)

HISP - Hispanic Interest

MC - Multicultural-several or many ethnic groups

The annotations below are collected from the following professional journals: Booklist, BCCB, Children's Literature, Horn Book, Kirkus, Publisher's Weekly, and School Library Journal.

Anderson, Jodi Lynn **Peaches**

During a summer at the Darlington Peach Orchard in Georgia, Murphy, Leeda, and Birdie discover the true meaning of friendship despite their differences. As the summer progresses, the girls bond and realize that you cannot judge someone by her financial or family situation.

Blackman, Malorie **Naughts & Crosses**

A Romeo & Juliet story: Callum is a Naught, a second-class citizen, in a world run by the ruling Crosses. Sephy is a Cross, daughter of the man slated to become prime minister. In their world, white Naughts and black Crosses simply don't mix.

Castellucci, Cecil **Boy Proof**

Feeling alienated from everyone around her, Los Angeles high school senior and cinephile Victoria Denton hides behind the identity of a favorite movie character until an interesting new boy arrives at school and helps her realize that there is more to life than just the movies.

Cirrone, Dorian **Dancing in Red Shoes Will Kill You**

Kayla Callaway has been studying ballet since she learned to walk and her heart is set on a future in the dance world. She's sure she'll get a solo part in Cinderella, the spring ballet at her high school. But when the parts are finally posted, Kayla is shocked that she's only landed a role as a stepsister. The brutal truth: Ballet and big boobs don't mix. Suddenly Kayla's dream for the future has become a real-life fractured fairy tale.

Cooney, Caroline B. **Code Orange**

While conducting research for a school paper on smallpox, Mitty finds an envelope containing 100-year-old smallpox scabs and he fears that he has infected himself and all of New York City.

Deuker, Carl **Runner**

Living with his alcoholic father on a broken-down sailboat on Puget Sound has been hard on seventeen-year-old Chance Taylor, but when his love of running leads to a high-paying job, he quickly learns that the money is not worth the risk.

Elliot, Jessie **Girls Dinner Club**

Junie, Celia, and Danielle, three ethnically diverse Brooklyn high-school students, form a friendship while cooking dinners together and helping one another sort through their romantic entanglements.

Feinstein, John

Last Shot

Steven Thomas and Susan Carol Anderson are two lucky winners of the U.S. Basketball Writer's Association's contest for aspiring journalists. Their prize is a trip to New Orleans and coveted press passes for the Final Four. But the games going on behind the scenes between the coaches, the players, the media, the money-men, and the fans turn out to be even more fiercely competitive than those on the court.

Flinn, Alex

Fade to Black

An HIV-positive high school student hospitalized after being attacked, the bigot accused of the crime and the only witness (a classmate with Down syndrome) reveal how the assault has changed their lives as they tell of its aftermath. DO, HISP

Frank, E.R

Wrecked

After a car accident seriously injures her best friend and kills her brother's girlfriend, sixteen-year-old Anna, one of the drivers, tries to cope with her guilt and grief, while learning some truths about her family and herself.

Galloway, Gregory

As Simple As Snow

When the enigmatic Anastasia shows up in the halls of Hamilton High, our narrator finds his life fundamentally changed. Together the couple probes through enchanted woods, the Internet, and everything in between, until one winter evening Anastasia disappears, leaving only a dress on a frozen pond and a string of unanswered questions. Suddenly alone, the narrator is hit with the weight of the mystery of what actually happened to his missing love.

Garfinkle, Debra

Storky: How I Lost My Nickname and Won the Girl

Fourteen-year-old high school student Michael "Storky" Pomerantz's journal describes his freshman year, from dealing with his mother dating his dentist to attempting to win the heart of the girl he loves.

Green, John

Looking for Alaska

Sixteen-year-old Miles' first year at Culver Creek Preparatory School in Alabama includes good friends and great pranks, but is defined by the search for answers about life and death after a fatal car crash.

Griffin, Adele

Where I Want To Be

Two teenaged sisters, separated by one's death but still connected, work through their feelings of loss over the closeness they shared as children that was later destroyed by one's mental illness.

Hartinger, Brent

The Order of the Poison Oak

After coming out at school, sixteen-year-old Russel decides to take a counselor job at a camp for burn victims to get away from the antagonism of his classmates, but finds ten-year-old boys have just as many problems as he does. DO

Hautman, Pete

Invisible

Lots of people think Doug Hanson is a freak - he gets beat up after school, and the girl of his dreams calls him a worm. Doug's only refuge is building elaborate model trains in his basement and hanging out with his best friend, Andy Morrow. Andy is nothing like Doug, but they can talk about anything - except what happened at the Tuttle place a few years back.

Haworth-Attard, Barbara **Theories of Relativity**

Dylan is living on the streets, but not through any choice of his own. He's been cut loose by his unstable mother, and has lost most contact with his two younger brothers. He has nothing but his backpack stuffed with a few precious belongings and the homeless kids he meets. At least he has his theories. No one can take those away from him.

Hemphill, Stephanie **Things Left Unsaid**

After a lifetime of conforming to the image of what her parents and high school friends want her to be, Sarah must come to terms with her own identity when her destructive best friend tries to commit suicide. Told in the form of free-verse poems.

Hearn, Julie **The Minister's Daughter**

In 1645 England, the daughters of the town minister successfully accuse a local healer and her granddaughter of witchcraft to conceal an out-of-wedlock pregnancy, but years later during the 1692 Salem trials their lie has unexpected repercussions.

Hiaasen, Carl **Flush**

With their father jailed for sinking a river boat, Noah Underwood and his younger sister, Abbey, must gather evidence that the owner of this floating casino is emptying his bilge tanks into the protected waters around their Florida Keys home.

Hoffman, Alice **The Foretelling**

While growing up the daughter of an Amazon queen who shuns her, Rain rebels against the ways of her tribe through her sister-like relationship with Io and her feelings for a boy from a tribe of wanderers.

Jacobson, Jennifer **Stained**

In Weaver Falls, New Hampshire, in 1975, seventeen-year-old Jocelyn looks for answers when her lifelong neighbor and friend, Gabe, turns up missing and she learns that, while her boyfriend has been telling everything to a priest, Gabe has been keeping terrible secrets.

Johnson, Maureen **13 Little Blue Envelopes**

When seventeen-year-old Ginny receives a packet of mysterious envelopes from her favorite aunt, she leaves New Jersey to criss-cross Europe on a scavenger hunt that transforms her life.

Klass, David **Dark Angel**

Seventeen-year-old Jeff thought he would never again have to deal with his older brother, a convicted murderer serving a life sentence. But after six years, Troy's sentence has been overturned on a technicality and he is released from prison. Troy's return makes a mess of Jeff's life, at home, at school, and with his girlfriend.

LaRochelle, David **Absolutely, Positively Not**

Steve is definitely, positively *not* gay. This story chronicles his humorous but futile attempts to change his image and fit in at his Minnesota high school by becoming a macho, girl-loving, pinup-displaying heterosexual. DO

Lester, Julius **Day of Tears**

In a dramatic program of monologues and conversations, we watch what happened on March 3, 1859, and realize what could have been going on in the minds of fictional slaves and owners on a Georgia plantation on the concluding day of the largest slave auction in American history. AA

Levitin, Sonia **The Goodness Gene**

As son of the Compassionate Director of the Dominion of the Americas, Will, along with his twin brother Berk, has been groomed for leadership in a society that values genetic fitness, but he encounters information which causes him to question that society as well as his own identity.

Lion, Melissa **Upstream**

Marty's small town in Alaska is the most beautiful place in the world. She and her beloved boyfriend, Steven, can walk through fields of fireweed, explore the wild, and tie pink floozy fishing lures to catch the salmon that swim upstream. But when she starts her senior year, Marty must return to school by herself. Only Marty knows what really happened, and it's something she must never, ever tell.

Lockhart, E. **The Boyfriend List**

A Seattle fifteen-year-old humorously explains some of the reasons for her recent panic attacks, including breaking up with her boyfriend, losing all her girlfriends, tensions between her performance-artist mother and father, and more.

Lubar, David **Sleeping Freshmen Never Lie**

While navigating his first year of high school and awaiting the birth of his new baby brother, Scott loses old friends and gains some unlikely new ones as he hones his skills as a writer.

Martino, Alfred C. **Pinned**

Ivan Korske and Bobby Zane couldn't be more different—they come from different backgrounds, different lifestyles, and they have very different values and ways of looking at the world and dealing with people. Yet they both have the drive, determination, commitment, and self-sacrifice necessary to become the New Jersey State wrestling champion.

McGhee, Alison **All Rivers Flow to the Sea**

After a car accident in the Adirondacks leaves her older sister Ivy brain-dead, seventeen-year-old Rose struggles with her grief and guilt. In an effort to feel something, anything else, she takes to meeting a series of boys at the gorge while her mind drifts away like a hovering bird, watching her actions below.

McKernan, Victoria **Shackleton's Stowaway**

On October 26, 1914, Ernest Shackleton's Endurance set sail from Buenos Aires in pursuit of the last unclaimed prize in exploration: the crossing of the Antarctic continent. In this survival novel based on fact, eighteen-year-old Perce Blackborow hid below in a locker. Within months, the Endurance, trapped and crushed by ice, sank. And even Perce, the youngest member of the stranded crew, knew there was no hope of rescue. If the men were to survive in the most hostile place on earth, they would have to do it on their own.

McNaughton, Janet **The Secret Under My Skin**

In the year 2368, humanity struggles to recuperate from a technocaust that has left a generation of orphans in its wake. Strict government regulations convince people that technology is dangerous; confusion and fear rule the earth. Blay Raytee is a government work-camp orphan. Her future seems as bleak as that of the world around her. But when she is chosen for a special mission by a guardian of the environment named Marrella, Blay begins to discover that all may not be as it seems.

Peet, Mal **Keeper**

When a reporter starts an exclusive interview with El Gato, the phenomenal goalkeeper who single-handedly brought his team the soccer World Cup, he quickly learns that this will be no ordinary story. Instead, the legendary El Gato quietly narrates a spellbinding tale that begins in a mythic corner of the South American rain forest, where a ghostly but very real mentor, the Keeper, emerges to teach the gangly boy the most thrilling secrets of the game. HISP

Peters, Julie Anne **Far from Xanadu**

In a small Kansas town, sixteen-year-old Mary-Elizabeth "Mike" Szabo tries to come to terms with her father's suicide and her own homosexuality. When an exotic new girl, Xanadu, arrives in the small Kansas town, Mike's world is turned upside down. DO

Richardson, E.E. **Devil's Footsteps**

After the disappearance of his brother Adam, thirteen-year-old Bryan faces a shadowy, centuries-old evil presence known as the Dark Man that, taking the form of its victims' worst fears, stalks the town's children.

Salisbury, Graham **Eyes of the Emperor**

Eddy Okubo lies about his age and joins the army in his hometown of Honolulu only weeks before the Japanese bomb Pearl Harbor. Suddenly Americans see him as the enemy—even the U.S. Army doubts the loyalty of Japanese American soldiers. Then the army sends Eddy and a small band of Japanese American soldiers on a secret mission - Eddy's going to help train attack dogs. He's going to be the bait. AS

Spillebeen, Geert **Kipling's Choice**

In this fictional account of events in 1915, eighteen-year-old John Kipling, son of writer Rudyard Kipling, mortally wounded in Loos, France, remembers his boyhood and the events leading to what is to be his first and last World War I battle.

Staples, Suzanne F. **Under the Persimmon Tree**

During the 2001 Afghan War, the lives of Najmal, a young female refugee from Kunduz, Afghanistan, and Nusrat, an American-Muslim teacher who is awaiting her husband's return from Mazar-i-Sharif, intersect at a school in Peshawar, Pakistan. MC

Stein, Tammar **Light Years**

Maya Laor is running from the violence, guilt, and memories of her past as she leaves her home in Israel to study astronomy at the University of Virginia after the tragic death of her boyfriend in a suicide bombing. MC

Waite, Judy **Trick of the Mind**

The struggles of several young people who confront family problems, emotional problems, unrequited love, mystery, and violence, is told from the viewpoint of Matt, who is known for his unusual behavior and unusual gifts, and Erin, who tries to use her proficiency with magic to attract Matt.

Westerfeld, Scott **Peeps**

In this science fiction, medical thriller, Cal Thompson is a carrier of a parasite that causes vampirism and must hunt down all of the girlfriends he has unknowingly infected.

Whitney, Kim Ablon **The Perfect Distance**

Seventeen-year-old Francie Martinez rides with one of the best equitation trainers in the country, and works as a groom to pay her way. She's dreamed of winning the Maclay finals, and now that it's her last year to compete the pressure is really on. But just when Francie needs to focus more than ever, everything turns upside down, and soon she's not so sure if winning is really all that important, much less the point. HISP

Wynne-Jones, Tim **A Thief in the House of Memory**

The death of an apparent stranger in the Steeple family's old home triggers troubling questions for sixteen-year-old Declan as he tries to make sense of his fragmented dreams, random memories, and unexplained coincidences, hoping to learn the truth about the mother who suddenly left when he was ten.

Zevin, Gabrielle **Elsewhere**

After fifteen-year-old Liz Hall is hit by a taxi and killed, she finds herself in a place that is both like and unlike Earth, where she must adjust to her new status and figure out how to "live." In Elsewhere, she will grow younger each year, reversing from fifteen to fourteen and so on, until she becomes a baby and is newly born to the world.

Zusak, Markus **I am the Messenger**

Ed Kennedy is an underage cabdriver, pathetic card player, and useless at romance. He lives in a shack with his coffee-addicted dog, the Doorman, and he's hopelessly in love with his best friend, Audrey. His life is one of peaceful routine and incompetence, until he inadvertently stops a bank robbery. That's when the first Ace arrives. That's when Ed becomes the messenger.