



BOOKS ON PARTNERSHIP

Partnership Narratives for Children and Young Adults

Books for Children

CPS has compiled a list of stories for children that foster peace. (Thank you to The Blue Bunny in Dedham, MA for the children's books annotated list).

The Warmest Place of All

By Licia Rando. Illustrated by Anne Jewett.

"The Warmest Place of All is a wonderful book, beautifully written and illustrated, entertaining yet profound, conveying the most important message of all: that what matters most is love. This is a lovely story for both children and parents alike. I hope many will have the chance to read and enjoy it". ~ Riane Eisler, author of *The Chalice and The Blade* and *The Real Wealth of Nations*.

The Warmest Place of All speaks the words in a child's heart. All children want their parents to know that the warmest place of all is with the people who love and care for you.

Teachers can use *The Warmest Place of All* to teach simile to young children and excite them to write their own.

Licia Rando used the latest research in interpersonal neurobiology to write both *The Warmest Place of All* and *Caring and Connected Parenting: A Guide to Raising Connected Children*. She believes that world peace begins with family peace and works to help build these connections. Licia has a Master of Education degree and volunteers her time with children in a homeless shelter and a domestic violence shelter.

For Every Child

By Caroline Castle (Adapter), John Burningham (Illustrator), Desmond M Tutu (Foreword)

From School Library Journal / PreK-Grade 3

NOTE: the reviews say the letter by Desmond Tutu is a little disturbing and children will need to be older, so maybe this part is more for the adult about the atrocities committed against children.

Fourteen of the rights that were formally laid out by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child are highlighted. The book begins with an introduction by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who asks readers to help make a difference. One double-page spread is devoted to each featured tenet, which is illustrated by a different artist. Some of the pictures are bold and dramatic, while others are quiet and subdued. Some are whimsical and others are serious. All bring home the point. Each illustration covers almost the entire spread, with the text on a small strip of white at the bottom. The artists include John Burningham, Shirley Hughes, Rachel Isadora, Satoshi Kitamura, and Jerry Pinkney. The book concludes with biographical sketches of the artists and additional details about the rights.

Kathleen Simonetta, Indian Trails Public Library District, Wheeling, IL
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The Peace Book By Todd Parr

From School Library Journal
Kindergarten-Grade 2

For children, the concept of peace can be a difficult one to understand, and Parr makes an admirable attempt to explain it. He relates the notion to making new friends, listening to different kinds of music, and helping your neighbor. Where he stretches it a bit is with sentiments such as, "Peace is wishing on a star" or "...watching it snow," even if the images are tranquil. Bright primary colors and bold black outlines define cartoon-like characters (animal and human) with smiling features. A helpful and engaging book that's sure to spark discussion.

Blair Christolon, Prince William Public Library System, Manassas, VA
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The Family Book – By Todd Parr

From School Library Journal
PreSchool-Grade 2

Interspersed with the differences among families are the ways they are alike: all like to hug each other, are sad when they lose someone they love, enjoy celebrating special days together, and can help each other to be strong.

As he did in *The Mommy Book* and *The Daddy Book* (both Little, Brown, 2002), Parr introduces children to an array of families. Whimsical illustrations featuring neon colors and figures outlined in black show big ones and small ones, and families that look alike and relatives who look just like their pets. The art features both human and animal figures; thus, pigs depict both a family that likes to be clean, and one that likes to be messy. Some families include stepmoms, stepdads, stepsisters, or step brothers; some adopt children. Other families have two moms or two dads, while some children have only one parent. Interspersed with the differences among families are the ways they are alike: all like to hug each other, are sad when they lose someone they love, enjoy celebrating special days together, and can help each other to be strong. This concept book celebrating the diversity of family groups is distinguished by its sense of fun.

Marilyn Taniguchi, Beverly Hills Public Library, CA

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Whoever You Are

By Mem Fox. Illustrated by Leslie Staub.

Kindergarten-Grade 3.

Fox has composed a simple refrain to celebrate human connections in this lovely picture book. "Little one, whoever you are," she explains, there are children all over the world who may look different, live in different homes and different climates, go to different schools, and speak in different tongues but all children love, smile, laugh, and cry. Their joys, pain, and blood are the same, "whoever they are, wherever they are, all over the world." Staub's oil paintings complement the simple text. She uses bright matte colors for the landscapes and portraits, placing them in gold borders, set with jewels and molded from plaster and wood. These frames enclose the single- and double-page images and echo the rhythm of the written phrases. Within the covers of the book, the artist has created an art gallery that represents in color, shape, and texture, the full range of human experience.

Barbara Kiefer, Teachers College, Columbia University, NY

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On Our Way Home- By Sebastian Braun

This warm celebration of the relationship between parent and child is perfect for reading at bedtime.

Daddy Bear and Baby Bear walk home through the forest. On the way, they see many wonderful things - the golden leaves falling from the trees, the big yellow sun going down and the beautiful stars twinkling overhead. When they get home, Daddy tucks his sleepy Baby Bear up in bed. This warm celebration of the relationship between parent and child is perfect for reading at bedtime.

My Nana and Me

By Irene Small. Illustrated by Cathy Ann Johnson.

From Booklist / PreS-K.

A young African American girl describes a special day with Nana.

Lucky is a child with a loving grandmother, as this picture-book valentine demonstrates. A young African American girl describes a special day with Nana. They have a tea party, play hide-and-seek and dress-up, comb and plait Nana's hair, play pat-a-cake, and, after a bath, read stories before bedtime. Johnson's softly colored, warmhearted illustrations bring out the feelings of the loving relationship, which Smalls describes in her spare, rhythmic text. Sunny yellow hues backlight the child and her grandmother, reflecting their pleasure in doing simple things together. Asides printed in curly and wavy script express the girl's thoughts as Nana calls her "her sweetening girl." Endpapers provide space "to place a photo of you and your Nana here" indicating a push toward the gift market, but this is a gentle, tender selection that is suitable for libraries, too.

Julie Cummins.

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Thank You, World

By Alice McGinty. Illustrated by Wendy Halperin.

Ages 4-8

Eight very different kids, from eight different continents, all go about their day and experience the same moments of happiness. Thank you, breeze, for lifting up my kite wings past treetops tall and proud. Thank you, trees. Your branches are my playhouse. I'm climbing to the clouds! Eight very different kids, from eight different continents, all go about their day and experience the same moments of happiness: greeting the sun in the morning, swinging on a swing, flying a kite, being tucked in by Mommy at bedtime.

Uplifting and visually rich, this book reminds us that the world isn't as large as it seems, and that life's greatest pleasures are the simple ones.

All the World

By Liz Garton Scanlon. Illustrated by Marla Frazee.

From *School Library Journal*

Starred Review. Kindergarten-Grade 2

The folks in this small, diverse community experience what a summer day has to offer, including sun, wind, storm, and a sense of contentment and well-being

Charming illustrations and lyrical rhyming couplets speak volumes in celebration of the world and humankind, combining to create a lovely book that will be appreciated by a wide audience. The pictures, made with black Prismacolor pencil and watercolors, primarily follow a multicultural family from a summer morning on the beach through a busy day and night. A boy, his younger sister, and their parents experience a farmer's market, a lakeside pavilion, a soaking rain, a warm meal in a cozy café, a gathering of musical kin, and a quiet night at home. The hand-lettered text in dark gray is large and mobile as it moves readers along through the captivating vignettes. Other families are also depicted, and readers can follow many of their activities as they overlap and connect with the main characters. The folks in this small, diverse community experience what a summer day has to offer, including sun, wind, storm, and a sense of contentment and well-being. A double-page moon- and starlit illustration shows an overview of all the featured locales highlighted in this small slice of the world. Perfection.

Maryann H. Owen, Racine Public Library, WI.

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Books for Young Adults

Stories for young adults feature partnership narratives, stories that reveal the hidden side of history, and futuristic science fiction. Everything is a story, from dates on a calendar to the way we eat. And every story is based on a set of assumptions about what it means to be human and what is important. The stories we feed ourselves and our children create the future since we tend to act out what we believe to be true. (Thank you to Ruth Kantor Lopez for compiling these stories for young adults).

Stories that Reveal the Hidden Side of History

The story of wars won and lost dominate our history books. The study of history has come to be a study of how power changed hands, and how it was best maintained. There is another side of history that is often untold. It is the story of how caring and compassion has shaped human cultures from the very earliest of times.

The Deeper Song by Patricia Curtis Pfitsch, 1998

This fictional story is based on the real life evidence for the possibility that the oldest version of the bible (the book of J) was written by a woman. Judith is a strong female character who worships the Goddess in secret because she could be killed for doing so. She is young and rebellious and doesn't want to support her father's religion, but her cousin Samuel has a plan for her. Samuel is a priest who appreciates the Goddess and he encourages Judith to use her talent as a storyteller to write down the stories of powerful Jewish women. Although few teens will have any knowledge of the historical conflict between Judaism and Goddess religions, they will easily grasp Judith's predicament.

Middle school and up.

Arrow Over The Door by Joseph Bruchac, 1998

Told in alternating viewpoints of two boys, a Quaker boy and an Abenaki boy, this fictional story is based on the historical meeting of Quakers and Indians during the Revolutionary war. The Indians are so moved by the Quakers' honesty and commitment to peace that they embrace them as friends. Master storyteller Bruchac leaves readers with a new respect for the courage of the Quakers and a deeper understanding of the little known, but strong, friendship between Quakers and Indians.

Middle school.

Circle of Stone by Joan Dahr Lambert, 1998

Circle of Stone follows the story of Zena, an australopithecus human ancestor, and her descendents, also named Zena, hundreds and thousands of years apart. Based on extensive research, this book brings alive on a little known period of prehistory and human evolution as it more likely happened, in which women and compassion play far more important roles than "man the hunter".

High school and up.

Nzingha, Warrior Queen by Patricia McKissack, 2000

Nzingha became Queen of Angola at 41 and did some amazing things that earned her love and legendary status among her people. She managed to keep her people safe from slavery during her long rule of 40 years. She declared Angola a slave free land and any slaves escaping from other areas were free in her land. She sent men from among her people to volunteer to serve in the Portuguese army where they then turned other Africans against the Portuguese, and in this way she infiltrated and defeated the Portuguese many times. She was perhaps the first Black Nationalist uniting several African kingdoms against a common enemy; the Portuguese slave traders.

Unfortunately, McKissack does not take advantage of the abundant documentation of this amazing woman's story, and produces a historically inaccurate account of Nzingha's life as a young woman of 13. Still, her story is worth knowing. Nzingha was a charismatic

and bold character and hopefully someday another author will write a better historical fiction about her.

Middle school.

Moon over Crete by Jyotsna Sreenivasan, 1994

A young girl travels back in time to ancient Minoan Crete and learns that women were valued differently than they are today. She learns what it must have been like to live in a culture where men and women are equals, and that she must return to present time and find a way to teach men and women how to live as equals once again.

Middle school.

The Year The Horses Came by Mary Mackey, 1993

A Neolithic culture for which war is unthinkable faces invasion by a warlike culture arriving on horseback. The heroine in the story falls in love with a young man from the warlike culture, and together they work out their differences. Contrasts partnership relations with dominator relations.

High school to adult.

Stories of Contemporary Partnership Culture

The desire to live in peace, and to create a more egalitarian world, are found in every corner of the world. Caring and compassion continue to shape our modern world, perhaps more than violence and domination, yet these stories are often untold.

The Heart of a Chief by Joseph Bruchac, 1998

I thoroughly enjoyed this story and found it rich with opportunities for discussion with young people. Sixth grader Chris Nicola faces many challenges and conflicts. He lives on an Indian reservation and fears that he will be treated like an outsider at the junior high school comprised of mostly non-Indian kids. His father struggles with alcoholism, and the reservation struggles with decisions about building a casino. But Chris exhibits attitudes and ways of resolving conflicts that attract the attention of both kids and adults. He has the mind and the heart of a future leader. One kid can make a difference!

Middle school.

The Disreputable History of Frankie Landau -Banks by E. Lockhart, 2008

Frankie Landau-Banks transforms from a somewhat geeky girl with an unassuming nature, into a 15-year-old with a curvaceous figure who attends a high school that was once an all-male prep school. Even after it became co-educational, its secret society remained a boys-only club. Frankie's new boyfriend belongs to this secret society and when he refuses to let her join Frankie secretly manipulates the Loyal Order to do her bidding with pranks meant to make political statements about the male-dominated and classist nature of the school. This book was another favorite of our mother-daughter book club because an empowered, gutsy, and imaginative female protagonist like Frankie is hard to find. This book will challenge girls' images of themselves, who they

are in relation to boys and why. The novel leaves you believing that a girl like Frankie could grow up to change the world.

Middle school and up.

The Secret Life of Bees by Sue Monk Kidd, 2002

This remarkable story about divine feminine power is a favorite among the teen girls in my mother-daughter book club. Lily Owens is a 14 year old girl whose life has been shaped by the blurred memory of the afternoon her mother was killed, and by life with her mean spirited father. She runs away and lands at the house of an eccentric trio of black beekeeping women. There she is introduced to the world of beekeeping and the black Madonna. Lily explores the hole that the absence of a mother (real or divine) leaves in women and learns to forgive herself, her mother, and even her father. In the company of the beekeeping women she discovers that she has “more mothers than any eight girls off the street.” Sue Monk Kidd is a fantastic writer and it is not difficult to see why this book is a best seller.

Middle school and up.

Friends and Enemies by Louann Gaeddert, 2000

William is a Methodist boy who befriends Jim, a Menonite boy, at his new high school. When WWII breaks out the question of patriotism versus pacifism causes anger, and threatens William's friendship with Jim. The situation worsens until William is forced to see and feel the consequences of narrow-minded bigotry. Gaeddert expertly handles complex issues as her characters grapple with serious questions. “What does it mean to be a good Christian? What can be done when patriotism comes in conflict with religion? How can harmony exist in a community of people with conflicting beliefs? Is pacifism a viable option when one is confronted with evil? These questions are as relevant today as they were 60 years ago.

Futuristic Stories

A flood of utopian novels graced American bookstores around the turn of the 20th century. Compared to more recent 20th century futuristic novels which describe dystopias rather than utopias, Americans of a century ago were far more willing and capable of believing in a truly better world. Contemporary fictitious futures tend to offer critique on contemporary society but remain unable to alter the continuum of current trends such as in *Brave New World* and *The Handmaid's Tale*. It would seem that America is losing its ability to imagine a better future, much less achieve one.

Looking Backward by Edward Bellamy, 1888

Looking Backward belongs to the tradition of utopian fiction that flourished around turn of the 19th century. Bellamy's ideas for social reform were radical for his readers and this story was a simple vehicle for Bellamy to draw readers to his point of view. It worked. The novel was a popular hit and “Bellamy Clubs” sprang up all over America to discuss the ideas set forth in *Looking Backward*. Julian West, the main character, goes to sleep in 1887 and awakens in the year 2000 where a wider range of personal freedom exists

because of publicly owned capital, not in spite of it. The economy functions far more efficiently in Bellamy's utopian future as a system based on communal cooperation rather than a system that produces wealth in the hands of a privileged few. In spite of his more egalitarian economic and political vision, women are still portrayed as supporters, not leaders, and the separation between the genders remains very much intact. Bellamy's novel inspired over 40 more utopian novels over the next several decades.

Herland by Charlotte Perkins Gilman, 1915

Three men, each with different personalities and preconceived beliefs about the role of women, discover a country with not a male in sight. They insist that there must be men somewhere since it is obviously a civilized country. The care and education of children is of ultimate social and economic importance. The entire society, and egalitarian social structure was based upon mothering the children, and all their decisions about land use, economics, government and so on, are based upon concern for generations yet to come. Herlandians realize that raising a child is the most precious of jobs and not all are suited to handle this. The care of the children is thus placed in whoever is worthy. It is not utopian because there are no men, it is utopian because there are no gendered roles. There is much to be learned from Gilman's utopia and applied to today's society. Many of Gilman's ideas about what might make a better world are still relevant and worthy of consideration today.

The Wonderful Wizard of Oz (and other novels) by L. Frank Baum, 1900

Oz is a socialist utopia in which everyone is equal and there is no poverty or hunger and (almost) everyone lives in peace. If there is trouble (such as the wicked witch) Dorothy and her friends restore peace in the end. There is an interesting element of self-help that speaks to a very American view of utopia. As the characters in Oz search for a heart, brains, courage, and a way home, they discover that they had the ability to acquire these things for themselves all along. They only lacked the faith in themselves as agents of change. Wow!

Star Trek

There are, if you look hard enough, a few contemporary narratives that dare to imagine a truly better world. Wikipedia describes the Star Trek utopian vision as "...a socialist utopia where there is no money, no want, no poverty, no crime, no disease or ignorance in human society; a large corruption-free state/military apparatus that serves society's best interests, and virtually everyone works for the advancement of all humanity as well as the rest of the Federation. The advent and use of the replicator helped in Earth's transformation to a socialist utopia due to its ability to produce mass quantities of any goods at little cost, creating a post-scarcity economy." Replicators and free energy really seal the deal for peace. If the lack of food and energy were eliminated, you'd suddenly have 99% of the population with no reason to fight each other over control of resources. Isn't it interesting how nearly all utopian futuristic visions feature more egalitarian relations at their core?

About Ruth Kantor Lopez

Ruth Kantor Lopez holds a Masters degree in Partnership Education, homeschooled her three daughters, and founded a mother-daughter book club. She has been compiling an annotated list of partnership narratives for young adults and invites readers to contact her at her email.

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