

<p>A Wish after Midnight by Zetta Elliot Amazon Encore, 2010, 258 pp., \$7.99</p> <p>Fifteen-year-old Genna Colon makes a lot of wishes in a fountain at her neighborhood botanical garden—to move to a bigger apartment, to become a psychiatrist, to be with her boyfriend, to understand why her mom hates white people. When one wish sends her back to pre-Civil War Brooklyn, she awakes to find herself badly beaten and arrested as a runaway slave. After recovering, Genna is employed as a nanny by a white doctor with a bad-tempered wife; she befriends their cook, an Irish scullery maid, and the biracial son of a merchant. They all find themselves involved with brutal acts of racism, and Genna begins to learn about history in a personal way.</p> <p>Elliot explores life today and 1863 Brooklyn, depicting inequities found in both periods as a complex series of relationships and actions. Written for eighth grade and higher, a sequel is planned for this charismatic character.</p> <p>Jacqueline Bach Shreveport, LA</p>	<p>After by Amy Efiaw Viking, 2009, 356 pp., \$17.99</p> <p>Teen Pregnancy/Moral Dilemmas/Justice ISBN: 978-0-670-01183-4</p> <p>Fifteen-year-old Devon is the last person anyone would expect to be in trouble. A role model for others, she makes good grades and is a soccer star. But Devon has kept her pregnancy a secret from everyone, even herself. Alone in her Tacoma apartment, she gives birth, stuffs the child in a garbage bag, and throws it—along with the trash in the place—in a dumpster. The police quickly arrest her for attempted murder, and she is sent to a juvenile detention facility while her fate is determined. Her attorney Dom, who wants her charged as a juvenile, not an adult, encourages Devon to peel off the protective layers to get to the truth. Told through a series of effective graphic flashbacks in which Devon distances herself by thinking of the newborn babe as IT, this book prompts much thought about guilt and conscience and our assumptions about others.</p> <p>Barbara A. Ward Tallahah, LA</p>
<p>Anxious Hearts by Tucker Shaw Amulet Books, 2010, 272 pp., \$16.95</p> <p>Romance/Classic Literature Connection ISBN: 978-0-8109-8718-0</p> <p>Shaw modernizes the epic Longfellow poem “Evangeline” in this tale of two different eras. The first time frame is present-day Maine, where Eva Bell and Gabe Lejeune grow up together. Social standing eventually separates them, until Gabe decides to disregard his father’s wishes, and their understanding of one another blossoms into a binding love. However, Gabe’s life is fraught with trouble, and after the illness and death of his brother, he cannot stay . . . even for Eva.</p> <p>Their alternate story is told in the same locale, but 100 years earlier, through the writings of Gabriel Lajeunesse about his betrothed Evangeline Bellefontaine. Just as Eva narrates the modern reality of coping with the absence of her lost love, Gabriel writes of his continuing pursuit of his beloved Evangeline.</p> <p>Shaw’s creative telling of these dual sagas will keep the reader turning pages to discover how and when the lives of these characters will converge.</p> <p>Julee Phillips Nashville, TN</p>	<p>Attack of the Fluffy Bunnies by Andrea Beaty Illustrated by Dan Santat Amulet Books, 2010, 192 pp., \$12.95</p> <p>Science Fiction/Humor/Multigenre ISBN: 978-0-8109-8416-5</p> <p>Twins Kevin and Jules Rockman come to Camp Whatsitooya armed for more than just an average summer camp experience. These young heroes use their curiosity and a lot of nerve, along with their knowledge of human nature, scary movies, and canned meat, to bravely face the fearsome Fluffs. Despite their gentle names, these giant and very hungry space invaders mean business, and world domination is at the top of their priority list. When the adult camp counselors start to disappear, it’s up to the kids to save the world from giant rabbit fangs, fiery burps . . . and mind-numbing middle school musical movies.</p> <p>Santat’s amusing and descriptive illustrations (sometimes in comic book format) tell a good portion of this tale. Although intended (and appropriate) for ages 8–12, Beaty’s witty sarcasm, delivered in the form of an unseen narrator, provides a quick and very enjoyable read for an older audience as well.</p> <p>Julee Phillips Nashville, TN</p>

<p><i>Choppy Socky Blues</i> by Ed Briant Flux, 2010, 264 pp., \$9.96</p> <p>Realistic Fiction ISBN: 978-0-7387-1897-2</p> <p>After fantasizing about girls he finds in his brother's magazine collection, 14-year-old Jay is smitten by a real girl for the first time—so much so, that he decides to turn to his father, whom he hasn't spoken to in two years, for help. You see, Tinga is going up for her blue belt in 21 days and has invited Jay, a green belt, to spar with her. The trouble is, Jay hasn't practiced in two years, hence the decision to get in touch with his father. And, to make matters worse, Jay finds out that Tinga and Malcolm, his friend, have been dating.</p> <p>With occasional frank discussions about sex, Briant's novel is a sort of Judy Blume meets Louise Rennison (it's set in Southern England) for boys. It's a humorous, touching book told from the point of view of a likeable male who is discovering the complexities of relationships for the first time.</p> <p>Jacqueline Bach Shreveport, LA</p>	<p><i>Breathless</i> by Lurlene McDaniel Delacorte Books for Young Readers, 2009, 176 pp., \$7.99 ISBN: 978-0-385-73459-2</p> <p><i>Breathless</i> looks into the lives of four teenagers living in southern Alabama: Cooper Kulan, a half-Korean, half-Hawaiian misfit; Travis Morrison, champion diver of his high school; Emily Morrison, Travis's younger sister; and Darla Gibson, Travis's girlfriend. Cooper lived with his alcoholic mother until he was taken in by Travis's family years ago. Both Cooper and Emily have feelings for one another but never express them. Darla lives with her abusive father.</p> <p>The novel begins on the first day of summer vacation when the four take Travis's boat out on the lake. Travis decides to dive off the edge of a cliff into the lake and ends up in the hospital. He finds out he has bone cancer. Each chapter takes the first-person perspective of one of the four main characters.</p> <p>Angelica Braaten Shreveport, LA</p>
<p><i>By the Time You Read This, I'll Be Dead</i> by Julie Anne Peters Hyperion, 2010, 198 pp., \$16.99</p> <p>Suicide/Bullying/Identity ISBN: 978-1-4231-1618-9</p> <p>Daelyn is a deeply troubled teen, attending a private Catholic girls' school in her parents' misguided attempts to salvage her by constantly switching schools. Daelyn cannot speak due to another thwarted suicide attempt, yet she writes her own painful story. This powerful, disturbing novel covers her ongoing efforts to kill herself as she follows the guidelines of Through-the-Light.com until she goes into the light.</p> <p>Daelyn is one of the lost souls who have been victimized by taunting classmates, originally because she was fat. Will she carry out her path of self-destruction despite hopeful alliances with Santana, the boy who battles Hodgkin's lymphoma, or Emily, a fellow classmate whose size is setting her up for bullying? Peters writes important, challenging fiction for young adults, and this novel's examination of bullycide offers uncomfortable insights into the world of those who feel like losers from birth and trust no one.</p> <p>Judith A. Hayn Little Rock, AR</p>	<p><i>Clone Codes</i> by Patricia C. McKissack, Frederick L. McKissack, and John McKissack Scholastic, 2010, 192 pp., \$16.99</p> <p>Science Fiction/Historical Fiction/Identity ISBN 978-0-439-92983-7</p> <p>History repeats itself in this science fiction tour de force set in the United States in 2071. Leanna Deberry keeps a virtual diary to chronicle her dawning awareness of her status in a post-Cyborg-War world. Mixing history with fiction, the McKissacks (parents and son) document how humanity becomes its own worst enemy.</p> <p>At 13, Leanna discovers she is a dreaded under-being, a clone Her mother and mentor are jailed as dissidents for participating in the Liberty Bell Foundation, whose goal is to change the Cyborg slaveocracy system. The indomitable heroine uses her knowledge of the African slave trade; the Fugitive Slave Act; the Underground Railroad; the 13th Amendment; and proponents of freedom in her quest to save her loved ones. In a riveting tale, Leanna also discovers herself as a "sentient" biological being who has the same rights as everyone else, even though she is a clone.</p> <p>Judith A. Hayn Little Rock, AR</p>

<p><u>Contested Will: Who Wrote Shakespeare?</u> by James Shapiro Simon & Schuster, 2010, 339 pp., \$26.00</p> <p>James Shapiro's <i>Contested Will: Who Wrote Shakespeare?</i> takes a fascinating tour through the facts and legends surrounding the authorship of Shakespeare's plays and sonnets. In addition to examining the texts, original documents, and writings that surround the "mystery" of Shakespeare's authorship, Shapiro looks at the questions of when and why people question the works. He works to clarify the nature of the debate around what exactly is being contested. The book raises questions about literary genius, art, and expectations.</p> <p>This readable book would work well for students who are interested in the debate around who wrote Shakespeare's plays. It provides a framework for understanding the nature of the debate, as well as a way to understand the primary sources used to defend the particular authors to whom the plays have been attributed over the years. The argument and text are complex but manageable for high school students.</p> <p>Melanie Hundley Nashville, TN</p>	<p><u>Cursing Columbus</u> by Eve Tal Cinco Puntos Press, 248 pp., 2009, \$12.99</p> <p>This follow-up to <i>Double Crossing</i> reunites the Altmans three years after Raizel and Papa's arrival. Eve Tal paints the realities of immigrant life in the early twentieth century in sharp contrast to the mirage that drew countless immigrants to the US. As the mirage dissolved, those once-hopeful newcomers began to curse Columbus for discovering the land that, as Tal puts it, "promised so much and brought them so little."</p> <p>This well-crafted novel does not, however, condemn false American ideals; instead, the double-voiced story explores the complex dynamics of a family forced to reimagine religious tradition, family loyalty, gender roles, and ethical codes in order to align with the expectations of a world that does provide opportunities—even if they are less than once imagined. Tal manages to resolve this tale of cultural, personal, and ethical dissonance in an uplifting and honest ending that honors both the struggles of the main characters and the real experiences of the immigrants whose memory it seeks to preserve.</p> <p>Nicole Barrick Renner Nashville, TN</p>
<p><u>Food, Girls, and Other Things I Can't Have</u> by Allen Zadoff Egmont, 2009, 320 pp., \$16.99</p> <p>Like flipping through your old high school yearbook, Allen Zadoff's novel is an awkward, yet refreshing journey back to the times of adolescent angst and forbidden pleasures. As a sophomore, Andrew Zansky simply wants to go through school without being noticed, which can be hard with his 306.4-pound frame. But when Andy meets love at first sight in the form of the new girl, April, his plans change. We soon find out that girls are just one of the many problems this "funny, fat kid" has. And in order to change his world, Andy must turn for help in the unlikelyst of places—the legendary quarterback and the guy who is everything Andy isn't.</p> <p>Whether you were the geeky bookworm, the cheerleader, the drama club leader, or the all-state athlete in your high school, you'll laugh and you'll cry as you pass Andy in the halls.</p> <p>Justin Garwood Nashville, TN</p>	<p><u>Green Witch</u> by Alice Hoffman Scholastic, 2010, 144 pp., \$17.99</p> <p>A horrific explosion has destroyed Green's city, and she is left an orphan, depressed and grieving for what she misses. Her idyllic world is destroyed, but she gradually begins to employ her gardening skills to create lush surroundings for her solitary hut. Green feels the pain of total bereavement; family and friends have disappeared, along with the young man she loved. Her belief in the future is challenged at every turn.</p> <p>Green undertakes a quest to tell the stories of the Enchanted, witches who live outside her village. She seeks those who are imprisoned on a lonely island and finds strength during the journey in magical assistance, charms, and advice from the witches. The power of women who persevere is foremost in this lyrical novel of a brave teen battling evil. This haunting fable will appeal to mature teens with a bent for soul-searching.</p> <p>Judith A. Hayn Little Rock, AR</p>

<p><i>Hannah's Touch</i> by Laura Langston Orca Books, 2009, 132pp., \$9.95</p> <p>Drama/Identity/Paranormal/Death ISBN: 978-1-55469-149-4</p> <p>Hannah is a 16-year-old still coping with the death of her boyfriend. Her average day consists of work, school, home, and thoughts of Logan. Everything is normal in Hannah's life until the day she is stung by a bee. The near-death experience gives Hannah the one thing she has been hoping for since Logan died—a chance to see him again. But that chance comes with a price: Hannah is given the unique power to physically heal people. It is a power that Hannah cannot take lightly. With the help of Logan's spirit, Hannah must choose whether or not she is going to use her power to heal the one person responsible for causing Logan's death.</p> <p><i>Hannah's Touch</i> is an emotional tale of forgiveness and learning to let go of one who has passed. Although the novel is a short and easy read, Langston realistically conveys the guilt and anger over losing someone special.</p> <p>Kim Coyle Nashville, TN</p>	<p><i>Heist Society</i> by Ally Carter Disney Hyperion Books, 2010, 304 pp., \$16.99</p> <p>Mystery/Suspense/Relationships ISBN: 978-1-4231-1639-4</p> <p>Katarina Bishop, born into a family of art thieves, wants to have a normal life, so she forges the documents necessary to get into a prestigious New England boarding school. She can't escape her past, however, and soon finds herself leading a team of young thieves. In this one caper, she will attempt to prove her father's innocence, return the property of a dangerous billionaire, and pull off the world's most impossible art theft. Katarina has been a part of some pretty intense family scams; however, pulling off this one will take all of her considerable talents.</p> <p>Betrayals, art history, and European cities provide a lush backdrop for this tale of family and thievery. Katarina worries about her father, deals with family members and family history, and juggles relationships with boys—all while planning complex heists. From the author of the Gallagher Girls series, this exciting story is a winner.</p> <p>Melanie Hundley Nashville, TN</p>
<p><i>How to Survive Modern Art</i> by Susie Hodge Tate Publishing, 2009, 126 pp., \$19.95</p> <p>Art/Contemporary NonFiction ISBN: 978-1-85437-749-4</p> <p><i>How to Survive Modern Art</i> acts as an indispensable guide to contemporary art and architecture, complete with glossary, timelines, guides to looking at modern art, contextual information, and quotes from artists. This book intends to introduce the reader to the world of modern, unique, thought-provoking, and truly bizarre pieces of art by carefully introducing and explaining each one in context with other similar works.</p> <p>This informational book displays full-color artwork alongside descriptions of the piece, its context, its artist, and various techniques used in the work. The "Art in Context" box on each page describes something unique or useful about the piece, such as references to historical events.</p> <p>Experts and novices alike will appreciate this useful overview of modern art, with its color pictures and easy-to-read format. By grouping pieces of art, digital art, and architecture in an organized format, Hodge makes the confusing subject of modern art accessible to everyone.</p> <p>Stephanie Mills Nashville, TN</p>	<p><i>Hidden Voices</i> by Pat Lowery Collins Candlewick Press, 2009, 345 pp., \$17.99</p> <p>Historical Romance/Identity/Music/Friendship ISBN: 978-0-7636-3917-4</p> <p>The orphans at the Ospedale della Pietà in Venice know only two things, Music and Prayer. The Ospedale is known for its extraordinary musical performances, provided by Antonio Vivaldi. But the three special young women in this story cannot find what they seek within the scores, the instruments, or the church. The expression and passion that they learn from the music initiates a yearning for love. However, with love comes dangers and heartbreak. Each chapter is narrated by one of the three girls, capturing the thoughts, emotions, and situations from the three perspectives. Like many of Vivaldi's scores, the novel is a little slow to start, but then builds into a grand tale of lust, disappointment, pain, and eventually acceptance. <i>Hidden Voices</i> is a rare insight into the life and works of Vivaldi and the many girls he helped become some of the best musicians in Italy.</p> <p>Kim Coyle Nashville, TN</p>

<p>Shadow Grail #1: Legacies by Mercedes Lackey and Rosemary Edgehill Tor Teen, 2010, 320 pp., \$18.99</p> <p>Urban/Fantasy/Supernatural/Mystery ISBN: 978-0-7653-2707-9</p> <p>Fantasy writers Mercedes Lackey and Rosemary Edgehill join forces in the first novel of the Shadow Grail series. Oakhurst Academy, part orphanage and part school in rural Montana, is the home to an interesting mix of students with special and unique gifts. After an accident kills her family, Spirit White is sent to Oakhurst Academy. She discovers that her parents also attended Oakhurst and that she is a legacy. The other students at the school have manifested their magical talents, but Spirit hasn't. The teachers and administrators tell her that she will eventually show what her talent will be, but she isn't sure that she has a gift and, if she does have one, that she cares. As she begins to make friends with the other students, she realizes that something mysterious is going on at Oakhurst. Students are disappearing and no one seems to be stopping it. Melanie Hundley Nashville, TN</p>	<p>Meanwhile by Jason Shiga Amulet Books, 2010, 80 pp., 15.95</p> <p>Alternative Format/Graphic Novel/Adventure ISBN: 978-0-8109-8423-3</p> <p>Chocolate or vanilla? Your answer to this question will set you off on one of 3,856 story possibilities in Jason Shiga's decidedly nonlinear graphic novel adventure. <i>Meanwhile</i> is one part Choose Your Own Adventure, one part video game-code ciphering, and several parts hypertext; it will engage the curiosity, persistence, and imagination of any reader willing to squint and flip pages long enough to get sucked into the twisty world of Jimmy and the mad scientist. After a few minutes of tentative exploration in this slim, multi-tabbed volume, you will find yourself furiously tracing storylines, flipping forward and backward, and crying out in frustration when you reach the disastrous ends of most of the book's paths. You'll try to resist starting over again, but you won't be able to. Share it with a friend and enjoy deep discussions of physics, philosophy, and which ice cream flavor is ultimately best. Nicole Barrick Renner Nashville, TN</p>
<p>Purple Heart by Patricia McCormick HarperCollins, 2009, 202 pp., \$16.99</p> <p>Iraq War/Loss/Street Kids/Self-Discovery ISBN: 978-0-061-7309-0</p> <p>Eighteen-year-old American soldier Matt Duffy is haunted by the memory of a young Iraqi boy killed while he and a buddy were patrolling a city street. The bits and pieces of what may have happened become clearer as he recovers from his traumatic brain injury in a military hospital. As he comes closer to the truth, he is no longer sure whether he can even trust himself, much less his superiors, who seem reluctant to examine the incident too closely. Despite the betrayal he feels, he remains convinced that there is humanity in everyone—even his enemies. The book raises many questions about loyalty, war, and those left behind, as Matt ponders the difference between his own daily existence and need to be constantly on guard versus his high school girlfriend's life, in which the biggest worry is a biology test. Especially effective is the juxtaposition between the soldiers at play and at war. Barbara A. Ward Tallulah, LA</p>	<p>Riot by Walter Dean Myers Egmont, 2009, 164 pp., \$16.99</p> <p>Self-Discovery/Civil War/Historical Fiction/Racism ISBN: 978-1-60684-000-9</p> <p>The announcement of a military draft in July 1863 did not go over well among poor Irish immigrants in New York City. They believed if the Union won the Civil War, freed blacks from the South would rush to compete for jobs. These Irish immigrants were also angry about a provision of the draft that allowed draftees with means to get out of joining the army. The Irish rioted, attacking blacks, rich "swells," and supporters of the war. The New York Draft Riots lasted from July 13—July 16, 1863.</p> <p>Myers portrays the events of that week in July 1863 through a fictional screenplay focusing on a biracial 15-year-old girl, Claire, her friends, and her family. In connecting to this unfamiliar story, I suggest beginning at the end of the book and reading the timeline of events leading to the riots, along with the author's note, historical photographs, map, and illustrations. Nate Phillips Nashville, TN</p>

<p><i>The Book of Dreams</i> by O. R. Mellling, Amulet Books, 2009, 696 pp., \$12.95</p> <p>Fantasy/Teen/Romance/Adventure ISBN: 978-0-8109-8418-9</p> <p>As a 13-year-old half-fairy and half-mortal being, Dana has the ability to teleport herself spiritually into Faerie, the land of the fairies, in order to escape life in the “real world” of Canada, where she lives very unhappily with her father and stepmother. In Faerie, Dana’s mother, the fairy queen, gives her the mission of finding the Book of Dreams in order to fulfill her destiny. With her shape-shifting powers, a flying spirit vessel, and her French classmate Jean, Dana embarks on a grand adventure where she encounters mythical creatures like dragons, trolls, and even Sasquatch.</p> <p>With actual maps included in the book, Mellling utilizes her descriptive writing skills to create a world of adventure and thrills for readers.</p> <p>Alfred Chan Boston, MA</p>	<p><i>The FizzyWhiz Kid</i> by Maiya Williams Amulet Books, 2010, 288 pp., \$16.99</p> <p>Humor/Television/Belonging ISBN: 978-0-8109-8347-2</p> <p>It’s hard enough to be the new kid in town. It’s even harder when you’re the new kid in Hollywood, and your family has never owned a television. Surrounded by kids whose parents are actors, screenwriters, and agents, Mitchell Mathis has never even seen “Star Wars.” Trying to understand his classmates a little better, Mitchell auditions at an open casting call and ends up getting cast in a series of popular soft-drink commercials that make him equally popular at school. Author Maiya Williams translates her years of experience in the entertainment industry into this lighthearted story of a kid just trying to fit in. The characters are believable and likeable (you’ll even feel for the “mean boy”).</p> <p>An accessible introduction for kids who are interested in the entertainment industry, the novel offers a range of opportunities for the magic-making business and related alternatives.</p> <p>Catherine McTamany Nashville, TN</p>
<p><i>The Girls</i> by Tucker Shaw Amulet Books, 2010, 224 pp., \$6.99</p> <p>Broadway/Relationships/Gossip ISBN: 978-0-8109-8991-7</p> <p><i>The Girls</i> is a quick and witty retelling of Claire Luce Booth’s 1930 Broadway tale into which Tucker Shaw weaves the story of five young women attending boarding school in Aspen. Peggy and Mary are best friends and roommates at Maroon Bells School for Girls. Peggy is torn between telling Mary about Mary’s cheating boyfriend or letting her find out on her own. At the moment when the gossip is revealed to Mary, a twisted story of love, pain, betrayal, and friendship unfolds. The story unfolds against the backdrop of the city of Aspen, filled with wealthy tourists, mountains to snowboard, and upscale restaurants.</p> <p>Peggy has a penchant for food, and whenever things get tough for her, she begins “cooking in her head.” Punctuated with rich and delicious recipes, readers will devour the gossip just as readily as Peggy’s imagined meals.</p> <p>Caitlin Rowland Nashville, TN</p>	<p><i>The Last Summer of the Death Warriors</i> by Francisco X. Stork Arthur A. Levine, 2010, 352 pp., \$17.99</p> <p>Friendship/Family/Relationships ISBN: 978-0-545-15133-7</p> <p>Pancho arrives at St. Anthony’s orphanage with a singular mission: to avenge the death of his beloved sister Rosa. As he secretly tries to identify the man responsible and plot his revenge, Pancho is enlisted to assist D.Q., an idealistic young man dying of cancer who hopes to use his last days to write the Death Warrior Manifesto and convert Pancho to the gospel of fully embracing life. However, a potential love triangle between D.Q., Pancho, and the beautiful Marisol threatens to disrupt the delicate friendship that grows between the two young men as they meditate on faith, doubt, and the value of ministering to the needs of others. As he did in last year’s <i>Marcelo in the Real World</i>, Stork uses his characters’ deepest pains, joys, and dreams to compose a beautiful psalm in this engaging YA retelling of <i>Don Quixote</i>, as seen through the eyes of Sancho Panza.</p> <p>Sean Kortke Lansing, MI</p>

<p><i>The Middle of Everywhere</i> by Monique Polak Orca Books, 2009, 200 pp., \$12.95</p> <p>Survival/Acceptance/Racism ISBN: 978-1-55469-090-9</p> <p>Noah's life is turned upside-down when his mother insists that he spend the school term with his father in George River, a small town in the far north of Quebec. Noah is trying to reconnect to his father and his roots, but he struggles with the fact that the town has no doctors, malls, or McDonald's. Most of all, Noah is one of a few Qullunaq (strangers) among the Inuit people—a tribe that was badly mistreated by the Canadian government. Noah is slowly falling into the vast whiteness of the arctic tundra . . . that is, until he goes winter camping with some of his classmates. Noah's view of George River changes when he starts to understand the hardships the Inuit people have endured and the lessons they teach about surviving in the wild. Noah's greatest adventure is discovering that the middle of nowhere can be the beginning of something new.</p> <p>Kim Coyle Nashville, TN</p>	<p><i>The Practice Room</i> by Susan Zeidler Wasteland Press, 2009, 250 pp., \$12.95</p> <p>Family Relationships/Music/Fantasy ISBN: 978-1-60047-365-4</p> <p>Life has been pretty good so far for 12-year-old Zoey, except that she has never known her father. She can't shake the feeling that her father is out there somewhere and that fate is waiting to bring her to him. She knows he was an amazing musician who was supposedly killed in a car accident before she was born. With the help of her best friend Tammy, Zoey tries to learn more about her father. But even with a lot of questioning and a little bit of plotting, their sleuthing doesn't provide the answers that Zoey is looking for.</p> <p>Zoey finds herself drawn to a legacy left by her father—her music. She gains more than just theory lessons as she visits some key moments in music history. She finds that music teaches her life lessons, while it bolsters her confidence in her own musicianship and herself.</p> <p>Julee Phillips Nashville, TN</p>
<p><i>The Popularity Papers</i> by Amy Ignatow Amulet Books, 2010, 208 pp., \$15.95</p> <p>Friendship/ Social Cliques/ Family Relationships ISBN: 978-0-8109-8421-9</p> <p>Lydia Goldblatt and Julie Graham-Chang are determined to discover the secrets to becoming popular. They dive headlong into a year of research on what "it" is that the already popular girls have. They record their thoughts and ideas in a joint journal that is meant for their eyes only. Should they consider changing their hair? Liking different boys? Trying out for sports? After close observation of the popular girls, Lydia and Julie apply some of these strategies to their lives in slightly different ways, creating more than slightly different outcomes.</p> <p>Young readers will enjoy this look at what true friendship really is, and what it means to put it at risk. Ignatow has created some very rich and endearing characters. Her illustrations, along with the font and photos used in the formatting of this book, create a visually captivating novel that appears to be the journal of two energetic, funny fifth graders.</p> <p>Julee Phillips Nashville, TN</p>	<p><i>The Strange Case of the Origami Yoda</i> by Tom Angleberger Amulet Books, 2010, 160 pp., \$12.95</p> <p>Mystery/Middle School ISBN: 978-0-8109-8425-7</p> <p>A lot of people wish they could predict the future, but for the kids at McQuarrie Middle School, there's help. Granted, the predictions come from an origami finger puppet and are mouthed by one of the weirdest kids in school, but they still seem to come true. The real question is whether Tommy should take the advice of a folded piece of paper when it comes to asking out one of the nicest girls in his class.</p> <p>Tom Angleberger delivers a creative, eye-catching story through Tommy's case file, with chapters told in each of the characters' voices, as Tommy tries to determine whether the origami Yoda is a fake. The voices are unique and believable, including the quirky (if curiously appealing) Dwight, the creator of the origami Yoda. Reluctant readers will be attracted to the characters' doodles on each page. A fun, light read, recommended for early middle school.</p> <p>Catherine McTamane Nashville, TN</p>

