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Compiled by Ann Sparanese

“Enemies”: An Annotated Bibliography for a Middle School Social Studies Curriculum

What is an enemy? Who is an enemy? Why is it that people who appear to be enemies sometimes turn out not to be? Who decides who is an enemy and who is not? What happens when a friend or family member becomes an enemy? Are enemies in wars the same as enemies in school?

These are some of the questions young people ask within the context of their daily lives and entry into society. Such questions also arise during discussions in the classroom on topics as diverse as foreign wars and peer mediation, historic events and today's school violence, international affairs and self-discovery.

The following books are recommended for use within any unit of study where the concept of “enemy” plays a major role. The annotations and sequence suggest a line of inquiry for students and teachers.

Enemies in Literature

These novels each portray the various enemies encountered in life – enemies created by the political contingencies of war, enemies created by the continued acceptance of racism within society, and enemies created within and supported by the family. Beginning this unit of study with literary works will help students identify with the characters who struggle with enemies, and will also initiate reflections on the role literature plays in creating or dismantling the stereotypes that inform personal and public opinion.

Dangerous Skies by Suzanne Fisher Staples. New York: Harper Trophy, 1996; 0-06-440683-0; \$4.95. The candid story of two children whose lifelong friendship is destroyed by racism. The narrator, a white thirteen-year-old boy, becomes conscious of the horrors of the racism with which his friend, a black girl, silently lives. An important focus for student exploration is the question asked continually by the narrator: why do adults refuse to see the evil character of one “pillar of society” that is so starkly and clearly evident to the children? Why don't they know this

man is an enemy?

Tangerine by Edward Bloor. New York: Scholastic, 1997; 0-590-43277-X; \$4.99. The narrator of *Tangerine* asks the same question, but within the context of an upper middle-class, white family living in a new subdivision build on ground once occupied by tangerine groves. In this story the enemy is the narrator's older brother, a cruel and duplicitous high school football star whose true nature is ignored by the parents. This is an excellent story to facilitate discussions of hostility, rivalry and cliques at school – something very much on people's minds after the killings in Littleton, Colorado. Also, the developing friendships between the narrator and a Mexican-American farming family provide opportunities to discuss ethnicity, prejudice and community.

Chain of Fire by Beverly Naidoo. New York: HarperTrophy, 1989; 0-06-440468-4; \$4.95. An apartheid-era story about a young girl, her family, friends and community as they resist relocation to a "homeland." The courage of school children to speak out is met with brutal police repression and betrayal, but strength only grows from pain and crisis.

One More River by Lynne Red Banks. New York: Avon Books, 1973; 0-380-72755-2; \$4.50. Here is a story of a young Israeli girl and her "friendship" with an Arab boy. This book should be used to discuss stereotype in literature and how it conveys, shapes and often distorts reality. In this case the girl's character is fully developed and good, while the boy's is one-dimensional and primitive, becoming human only through a brief encounter with the girl.

Enemies of Children

These non-fiction books contain the writings and artwork by children caught in the violence of war, hatred and intolerance. Here in their own words are the stories of children driven from their homes by soldiers, police, poverty, and greed. These materials will ground the student's knowledge of "enemies" within relatively contemporary realities.

Two Dogs of Freedom: Black Children of South Africa Speak Out, from the Open School. New York: Rosset & Company, 1987; 0-8050-0637-0;

\$4.95. This book reproduces the writings and drawings by black children at the Open School in Johannesburg, South Africa. All focus on police repression during the period of apartheid and arise from the personal experience of the children. The book ends with expressions of hope for a new South Africa. This work on non-fiction should be used to add depth to student inquiry into the evils of racism, to begin exploring the history and evolution of "enemies" within society, and to question the political functions of real and manufactured enemies.

One Day We had to Run: Refugee Children Tell Their Stories in Words and Paintings, by Sybella Wilkes, Brookfield CT: Millbrook Press, 1994; 1-56294-844-X; \$8.95. *Caught in the Crossfire: Growing Up in a War Zone*, by Maria Ousseimi, New York: Walker and Company, 1995; 0-8027-8363-5; \$19.95. *Jerusalem Mosaic: Young Voices from the Holy City*, by I. E. Mozeson and Lois Stavsky, New York: Four Winds Press, 1994; 0-02-767651-X; \$15.95. These three books further develop the theme of children caught in the vortex of war and violence. Altogether they present 42 stories and students might select one story as a focus for research projects that would engage students in exploring the history, culture, geography, current events, etc.

Enemies: Made in America

The first two books below provide information, context, and perspective through presentations of two incidents in which political expediency turned ordinary Americans into enemies allowing students the opportunity to grapple with the complexities of the making and unmaking of enemies. The third book is designed to assist young people and the adults who work with them in thinking through psychological conditioning – a key element in the process that defines "the enemy." The last book can be used to initiate student research projects on the topic of enemy making.

The Journey: Japanese Americans, Racism and Renewal, by Sheila Hamanaka, New York: Orchard Books, 1995; 0-531-07060-3; \$8.95; *The Great Red Scare*, by R. Conrad Stein, Parsippany NJ: New Discovery Books, 1998; 0-382-39615-4; \$7.95. These two books offer an introduction to two incidents in U.S. history when people were falsely accused of

BOOK REVIEWS

being enemies of the state. They will allow students to explore the heart of the complex political role played by "the enemy." Students could search for similar incidents in history or in the contemporary world.

Fighting the Invisible Enemy: Understanding the Effects of Conditioning on Young People, by Terrence Webster-Doyle. Middlebury VT: Atrium Society Publications, 1990; 0-942941-18-7; \$12.95. This is a workbook designed to assist students in learning about psychological conditioning.

Dear Oklahoma City, Get Well Soon: America's Children Reach Out to the People of Oklahoma, edited by Jim Ross and Paul Myers. New York: Walker and Company, 1996; 0-8027-8436-4; \$16.95. This book will provide students an opportunity to use what they have learned from this unit of study, and to exercise their critical faculties. The book is a good example of the political innocence or naivete of U.S. children. Questions to ask about it might be: Who did the perpetrator of this horrid act think was his enemy? Why did he think that way? Do any of the writers in *Dear Oklahoma City* say anything about the person who did the bombing? Why or why not? What might a child from South Africa or the West Bank write about a similar incident? What does this bombing say about our country?

Compiled by Elaine Harger

Class Warfare in the Information Age, by Michael Perelman. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998.

Reviewed by Steve LaBash

In *Class Warfare in the Information Age*, economist Michael Perelman takes issue with those who would suggest that the "new" age of information, particularly the use of computers, electronic databases, and instantaneous communication, will necessarily lead to a "liberated" society. Rather, he suggests, we need to look at the issues of control and distribution of these elements of the "information age," particularly the struggle over corporate control of information resources and services. Perelman flatly states that the current "information age" will reinforce existing class structures rather than lead to a utopia of widespread information and direct democracy unless there is a popular movement to ensure such democratic tendencies (p. 4).

Why is this true? For Perelman, it is because the issue is less that of technology and its potential than the way information is used in a capitalist society. In a capitalist society information is geared to providing owners and management with mechanisms for control over production and financial processes. These processes are designed to be outside the control of society as a whole, and more particularly, outside the control of those workers that develop and manipulate these processes.

In the past, information was often held by the worker through learning and experience. Further, such information was often the property of a particular worker, one that was experienced in a particular task or process. This information was not readily transferable to management. For example, skilled workers in a steel mill, through years of experience and tutoring by older workers, were able to recognize by sight when an ingot had reached the appropriate temperature for processing by examining its color. Now, however, through the monitoring of temperature and