



# MASSBOOKS OF THE YEAR CHILDREN'S/YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE

*Recommended Reading from the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Massachusetts Book Awards*

*(Books Published in 2008)*

## Picture Books

*As Good as Anybody* by Richard Michelson. (Knopf) Lessons from the parallel upbringings of Martin Luther King and Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel culminate in their 1965 march together against discrimination, from Selma to Montgomery.

*One Hen* by Kate Smith Milway. (Kids Can Press) The true story of Kojo, a young boy from West Africa, who realizes that one small loan will result in a successful venture. An inspirational story about a little help, i.e., a micro-loan, that makes a real difference.

*Planting the Trees of Kenya: The Story of Wangari Maathai* by Claire A Nivola. (Frances Foster/FSG) The story of 2004 Nobel-Peace-Prize-winner Wangari Maathai who launched the Green Belt Movement in Kenya and changed her homeland one seed at a time.

*Priscilla and the Hollyhocks* by Anne Broyles. (Charlesbridge) With a backdrop of the Trail of Tears, the true story of a young slave, Priscilla, separated from her mother, who is sold away, and connected to her past through hollyhock seeds she eventually gains the freedom to plant.

*Sisters of Scituate Light* by Stephen Krensky. (Dutton Children's Books/Penguin) During the War of 1812, two sisters trick the British soldiers into retreating from Scituate Harbor, by playing the flute & drum. Based on a true story.

## Middle Reader

*Greetings from Nowhere* by Barbara O'Connor. (Frances Foster/FSG) An intergenerational cast of characters find their lives intertwining at the up-for-sale Sleepy Time Motel in the Great Smoky Mountains.

*Lost and Found* by Andrew Clements. (Philomel Books/Penguin) Twelve-year-old twins Jay and Ray take advantage of a paperwork error at school and discover what it is like not to be considered as one of a matched pair.

*The Penderwicks on Gardam Street* by Jeanne Birdsall. (Knopf) The Penderwick sisters and their Aunt Claire hatch a Save-Daddy Plan to find their widowed father a new wife.

*The Willoughbys* by Lois Lowry. (Walter Lorraine/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt) An old-fashioned and zany story of a nanny, her badly behaved charges, and a long lost heir.

## Young Adult

*Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing, Traitor to the Nation, Book II: The Kingdom on the Waves* by M.T. Anderson. (Candlewick) Octavian joins a Loyalist navy regiment that has promised freedom to African-American slaves after the Revolutionary War.

*Impossible* by Nancy Werlin (Dial Books for Young Readers/Penguin) Successful crossing of genres, realistic fiction and fantasy, with Lucy Scarborough, a foster teen who must work to perform three impossible tasks to free her from an ancient family curse.

*First Daughter* by Mitali Perkins. (Dutton Children's Books/Penguin) This sequel to *Extreme American Makeover* follows the escapades of Sameera, a 16-year-old Pakistani-American girl living with her adoptive parents in the White House. Being the First Daughter has unique pressures and challenges, and Sameera tries to choose her own political path.

*The Mayflower and the Pilgrims' New World* by Nathaniel Philbrick. (G. P. Putnam's Sons/Penguin) A vivid account of the epic saga of how the Pilgrims and the Native Americans maintained fifty years of peace and of how that peace was shattered by one of the deadliest wars ever fought on American soil.

*My Most Excellent Year: A Novel of Love Mary Poppins, and Fenway Park* by Steve Kluger. (Dial Books for Young Readers/Penguin) Follows two best friends and pseudo-brothers through a whirlwind year in Boston that includes activism, baseball and friendship with the Mexican Ambassador's daughter. An engaging writing style with alternating perspectives and Instant Messaging.

*Other Side of the Island* by Allegra Goodman. (Razorbill/Penguin) In this dystopian novel Honor struggles to fit into the regulated society of her new home, but when her parents disappear, she questions everything.

Judges for the 9<sup>th</sup> MassBooks in Children's/Young Adult Literature: Janet Eckert, Youth Services, Western Massachusetts Regional Library System; Karen Kosko, Haggerty School (Cambridge) Librarian, Suzanne Terry, Children's Librarian, Boston Athenæum  
The Massachusetts Book Awards are a program of the Massachusetts Center for the Book, on the web at [www.massbook.org](http://www.massbook.org).