

## **PAT Diversity Committee Summer Reading List for Parents**

Here are a mix of interesting, often provocative, books that explore race, gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, religion, disability, sexual orientation and family structure. Enjoy!

### **NONFICTION**

Alperson, Myra. *Dim Sum, Bagels, and Grits: A Sourcebook for Multicultural Families*.

The author uses her own experiences and many interviews to examine the international adoption process and explain the importance of celebrating birth cultures. Includes an extensive resource section.

Bernstein, Robert A. *Straight Parents, Gay Children: Inspiring Families to Live Honestly and with Greater Understanding*.

Your child has just come out to you, what now? Separating reality from myth and following your parental conscience are just two of the "healing ingredients" cited in the struggle for your child's equality.

Boyd-Franklin, Nancy and A. J. Franklin. *Boys Into Men: Raising Our African American Teenage Sons*.

Drawing on African American family values and cultural and spiritual strengths, the authors help African American families face the unique challenges of raising their teenage sons. This compassionate and comprehensive handbook can help boys make the difficult transition into men.

Bullard, Sara. *Teaching Tolerance: Raising Open-Minded, Empathetic Children*.

This book helps parents understand how children learn prejudice and how they can be guided toward tolerance. It balances theory and reflection with practical advice and a list of resources.

Chideya, Farai. *The Color of Our Future*.

Offers powerful insights into the complexities of cultural and ethnic diversity as experienced daily by young adults. The young author talks to members of the next generation about how they deal with race in their own lives and how the decisions they make determine America's ethnic future.

Crawford, Susan Hoy. *Beyond Dolls and Guns*.

Presented with a sprinkling of cartoons and quotes, this book offers simple steps to counter sexism in your own home.

Delpit, Lisa. *Other People's Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom*.

Discusses assumptions many teachers make about certain children and suggests ways to educate teachers to better accommodate ethnic and racial diversity in the classroom.

Ehrenreich, Barbara. *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting by in America*.

A fast and profoundly enlightening read about the real deal on life on the minimum wage.

Fine, Michelle, Lois Weis, Linda C. Powell and L. Mun Wong, editors. *Off White: Readings on Race, Power, and Society*.

See especially Chapter 6, "White Out: Multicultural Performances in a Progressive School" for relevant issues about institutionalized racism in schools.

Franklin, Anderson J. *From Brotherhood to Manhood: How Black Men Rescue Their Relationships and Dreams from the Invisibility Syndrome*.

A leading African American psychologist defines the "invisibility syndrome," a source of indignation, disillusionment, anger and depression that stems from coping with lifelong racial tension. This powerful healing guide gives tools black men need to identify and feel comfortable with who they are.

Frazier, Ian. *On the Rez*.

Chronicles the time that the author spent with the Oglala Sioux on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. A good amount of historical perspective is provided while telling an empowering story of being a "wannabe" on the reservation and witnessing the profound difference one young person can make in the lives of an entire community.

Giovanni, Nikki. *Racism 101*.

If you're not sure what the connection might be between *Star Trek* and Malcolm X in shaping a person's view of cultural competency, Nikki Giovanni can enlighten you. This collection of thoughtful, insightful essays covers topics that are far reaching, written in a poetic style that is incredibly moving.

Green, Jesse. *The Velveteen Father: An Unexpected Journey to Parenthood*.

A wonderful book about the experiences of becoming a parent, written by a gay parent.

Hong, Maria, editor. *Growing Up Asian American*.

This collection of nonfiction and fiction essays written by Asian Americans including Amy Tan, Maxine Hong Kingston, and Gus Lee gives a historical perspective on the experiences of Asian Americans in the United States. While a good introductory book for people completely unfamiliar with Asian American cultures, the book does not include commentary from Pacific Islanders or people with roots in Vietnam or the Philippines.

Kivel, Paul. *Boys will be Men: Raising Our Sons for Courage, Caring and Community*.

Addresses the question: How do we prepare boys (and girls!) to take their place in society as caring, responsible adults? Kivel draws on over 20 years of research and personal experience as a father and social activist in this guide to conscientious anti-sexist mentoring.

Kotlowitz, Alex. *There are No Children Here: The Story of Two Boys Growing Up in the Other America*.

A powerful story of two brothers growing up in an urban housing project in Chicago, which the author refers to as “the other America.” It gives names and faces to brave Americans being forgotten and neglected by the social system every day.

Lelyveld, Joseph, introduction. *How Race Is Lived in America: Pulling Together, Pulling Apart*.

This collection of *The New York Times*’ landmark series of articles paints a fascinating and sometimes painful picture of the state of race/ethnic relations in the U.S. today.

Martin, April. *The Lesbian and Gay Parenting Handbook*.

Examines the many issues that face gay and lesbian adults who are considering parenthood. Includes a reading list and other resources.

McBride, James. *The Color of Water: A Black Man’s Tribute to His White Mother*.

This beautifully written memoir is a meditation on race and identity.

McIntosh, Peggy. “White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences Through Work in Women’s Studies” (Wellesley Center for Research on Women, Working Paper No. 189).

This article, which concisely articulates the many ways in which society favors people with white skin to the detriment of people of color, is a must-read for any person in pursuit of a greater understanding of cultural competency.

McNamara, Barry E. and Francine J. *Keys to Parenting a Child with a Learning Disability*.

Offers a step-by-step approach to help families face the special behavioral and educational challenges of a child with a learning disability.

O'Hearn, Claudine C. *Half and Half*.

18 essays joined by a shared sense of duality, either racial or cultural, that address the difficulties of not fitting in.

Payne, Ruby. *Framework for Understanding Poverty*.

How can we ensure that all students experience academic success? While this book will not provide the reader with a set of strength-based strategies to facilitate learning for children coming to school from economically disadvantaged homes, nor does it address cultural diversity in youth, some positive implications are outlined and due to its popularity with school educators, familiarizing oneself with its content is worthwhile.

Rodriguez, Gloria. *Raising Nuestros Niños: Bringing Up Latino Children in a Biracial World*.

Filled with advice, research and recipes, the book outlines the unique opportunities and challenges facing Latino families and includes a reading list for English and Spanish speakers.

Rush, Sharon E. *Loving Across the Color Line*.

The author, a white civil rights law professor, is the adoptive parent of a black child. She concludes that being color-conscious is more important than being color-blind and practicing "transformative love" is the key to racial harmony.

Stern-LaRosa, Caryl and Ellen Hofheimer Bettmann. *Hate Hurts: How Children Learn and Unlearn Prejudice*.

A practical handbook on confronting prejudice and accepting differences in people. Real events and role-playing scenarios are coupled to promote respectful behaviors from pre-school through high school.

Suskind, Ron. *A Hope in the Unseen: An American Odyssey from the Inner City to the Ivy League*.

A disadvantaged African-American boy from a crime-infested school in Washington, DC, overcomes all the odds and gets accepted to Brown University.

Tatum, Beverly Daniel. *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Lunchroom?: And Other Conversations About Race.*

Discusses the development of racial identity from psychological and social perspectives, with lots of anecdotal evidence.

Walker, Rebecca. *Black, White and Jewish: Autobiography of a Shifting Self.*

A candid autobiography by the daughter of author Alice Walker and white civil rights attorney Mel Leventhal – a “Movement” child - who poetically reveals her struggle for racial and sexual identity.

Whyte, Susan R. and Benedicte Ingstad. *Disability and Culture.*

A collection of essays that reframes disability in terms of social processes and offers a global, multicultural perspective on the subject.

Williams, Lena. *It's the Little Things: Everyday Interactions That Anger, Annoy and Divide the Races.*

A candid exploration of the interactions between blacks and whites—gestures, expressions, body language— that keep us divided.

Wright, Marguerite A. *I'm Chocolate, You're Vanilla: Raising Healthy Black and Biracial Children in a Race-Conscious World.*

Tips for recognizing the four predictable stages of a child's perceptions of race and skin color are outlined in this book.

## **FICTION**

Danticat, Edwidge. *Breath, Eyes, Memory.*

This powerful debut novel of Haitian-born Danticat is set alternately in a poor Haitian village and in New York City's Haitian community.

Diaz, Junot. *Drown.*

Primo short-story collection by a Dominican-American writer.

Fries, Kenny, editor. *Staring Back: An Anthology of Writers with Disabilities.*

This wonderful collection of work by writers of varying disabilities opens the landscape of the disabled experience for exploration and discussion.

Gillan, Maria Mazziotti and Jennifer Gillan, editors. *Unsettling America: An Anthology of Contemporary Multicultural Poetry.*

A powerful and moving collection of poems that stretches across the boundaries of skin color, language, ethnicity and religion.

Holeton, Richard, editor. *Encountering Cultures: Reading and Writing in a Changing World*.

A composition reader that explores issues of language and culture, domestic cultural diversity, and global cultural diversity.

Jen, Gish. *Who's Irish?*

This great short-story collection, written from a Chinese-American perspective, has funny, touching and serious tales of culture clash.

Nam, Vickie, editor. *Yell-Oh Girls!: Emerging Voices Explore Culture, Identity and Growing Up Asian American*.

This collection of essays and poems is authored by 76 Asian American and Pacific Islander young women whose zestful voices energetically express their unique experiences living in the United States.

Poey, Delia and Virgil Suarez. *Iguana Dreams: New Latino Fiction*.

An anthology of 29 contemporary Latino writers that demonstrates the wide range of cultures and experiences that marks the Latino community in the U.S.

Southgate, Martha. *The Fall of Rome*.

This incisive novel (written by a BFS parent!) deals very directly with issues of race and class in a private school.

## **WEBSITE LINKS**

Eastern Educational Resource Collaborative

[www.easted.org](http://www.easted.org)

Friends Academy

[www.fa.org](http://www.fa.org)

A great list of 200 cross-cultural fiction titles suitable for upper schoolers and adults. When you get to the website, click on Library, then at the top of the next page click on Kumar Wang Library. On the left-hand side of the page click on Cross Cultural Bibliography (J.James).

Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network

[www.glsen.org](http://www.glsen.org)

National Association of Independent Schools

[www.nais.org](http://www.nais.org) (see the link to Equity and Justice)

Teaching Tolerance

[www.teachingtolerance.org](http://www.teachingtolerance.org)