

Carter G. Woodson

B O O K A W A R D S

2005

For more than 30 years, the National Council for the Social Studies has honored children's books that depict ethnicity and race in United States history with the Carter G. Woodson Book Awards.

Originating with NCSS's Committee on Racism and Social Justice in 1973, the book award was created to honor the distinguished African American writer, scholar, and educator, Carter G. Woodson. Born in Virginia, the son of former slaves, and raised with nine other siblings, Woodson received a bachelor's degree from Berea College, a master's from the University of Chicago, and, in 1912, was the second African American to receive a doctorate from Harvard University. In 1915, he co-founded the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH).

Woodson began "Negro History Week" in 1926, which later evolved into the present-day "Black History Month." In 2006, the National Park Service declared Woodson's Washington, D.C., home—from which he directed ASALH operations—a National Historic Site.

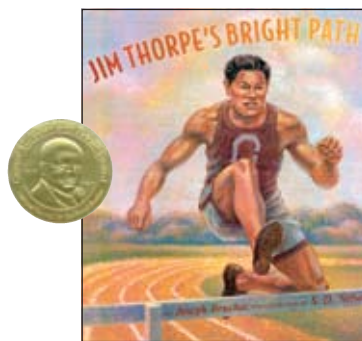
The book award in his name serves to recognize the outstanding efforts of authors and publishers to provide quality social studies books for children that focus on all areas of diversity in the United States. Books are chosen for their sensitivity, accuracy, and quality in dealing with the many issues in United States history.

This year's choices for the Carter G. Woodson Award were announced at an awards ceremony in Missouri during the 2005 NCSS annual conference. The books selected mirror the diversity of the population of the United States and reflect an ever-growing area of children's books. The authors who received the award and an honor distinction for books in the 2005 competition are listed below, along with brief reviews of the works.

Award Book: Elementary Level

Jim Thorpe's Bright Path, by Joseph Bruchac, illustrated by S.D. Nelson.
New York: Lee and Low Books.

Reviewed by Amy Camardese, assistant professor, Department of Education, Westminster College, New Wilmington, Pennsylvania.



Joseph Bruchac's *Jim Thorpe's Bright Path* is a compelling story of family, persistence, and determination. Born as a twin on a reservation in Oklahoma,

young Jim Thorpe was given the name "Wa-tho-huck," or "Bright Path," by his mother; and his name proved to be a prediction of his future. His twin brother and best friend, Charlie, accompanied Jim to The Agency Boarding School, where the brothers were taught that their Native American language and customs were not accepted in the "white" world. Jim preferred to be outdoors, learning the ways of the forests and prairies; he yearned to be home.

When his brother Charlie died of pneumonia, Jim no longer wanted to go away to school, but he was forced to continue. He was miserable, and ran 23 miles to get back home, but his parents were emphatic about his getting a good education and moved Jim to Haskell Institute in Kansas. It was at Haskell that Jim was first exposed to sports. When his father had an accident, Jim ran 300 miles to get home. Jim continued his education at Carlisle Indian School. At school, even after suffering the later losses of his parents, he excelled in sports and became a role model for Native Americans.

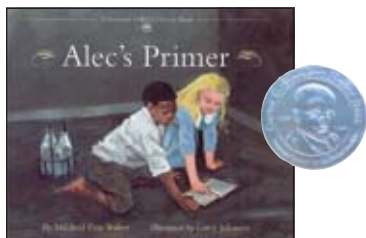
S.D. Nelson's dreamy illustrations create the setting for a story that elementary students will enjoy. An Author's Note and Important Dates in Jim Thorpe's Life and Legacy are included. This story addresses the NCSS thematic strands III (People, Places, and Environments) and IV (Individual Development and Identity).

Honor Book: Elementary Level

Alec's Primer, by Mildred Pitts Walter, illustrated by Larry Johnson.

Middlebury, Vermont: The Vermont Folklife Center.

Reviewed by Dena G. Beeghly, West Chester University, Pennsylvania

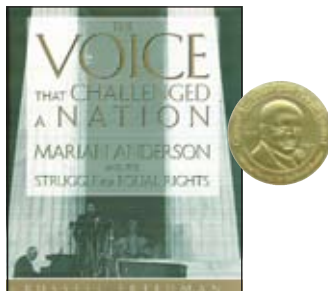


In the poem *Aunt Sue's Stories*, Langston Hughes reminds us that family stories about real people can teach children more about the past than any textbook. *Alec's Primer*, by Mildred Pitts Walter, is such a family story. This book is based on a story told by the Turner family of Vermont. Alec Turner, the family patriarch, was born into slavery in 1845. Even as a small child, he possessed a strong will and an independent spirit. Readers meet Alec Turner at age five, as he is being banished from working in the plantation kitchen for biting the heads off soldier shaped cookies. Later in the story, he secretly learns to read, having been taught by the mistress's granddaughter, Miss Zephie. When the mistress discovers him with a primer, he refuses to give the book up, even though she slashes his face with her riding crop and threatens to send him away. Later, when Alec hears that the Union Army is recruiting slaves to fight, he runs away to fight for his freedom. After the Civil War, he eventually makes his way to Vermont, with the primer still in his possession. Alec Turner's remarkable story is sure to transport young readers back in time and help them understand what their lives might have been like had they been born into slavery.

Award Book: Middle Level

The Voice That Challenged a Nation: Marian Anderson and the Struggle for Equal Rights, by Russell Freedman. New York: Clarion Books.

Reviewed by Eric Groce, assistant professor, Department of Curriculum & Instruction, Appalachian State University, Boone, North Carolina.



Even readers who have studied about prominent leaders within the civil rights era, such as Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, and Jackie Robinson, may be somewhat unfamiliar with America's greatest contralto voice, Marian Anderson. Freedman begins the story of this unsurpassed artist by detailing the events of her 1939 Easter Sunday concert in front of a sprawling crowd of 75,000 at the Lincoln Memorial. Anderson, who had previously performed in the finest performance halls across Europe, was relegated to the spot where King would stand 25 years later to deliver his "I Have A Dream" speech, because the Daughters of the American Revolution refused to rescind their rule against allowing black artists to perform at Constitution Hall.

This rich biography then shifts to Marian's modest beginnings in Philadelphia, where she became active in the junior choir and began performing for 25 cents a song at local benefits. As the story progresses, Marian's support system is chronicled. Her family (as well as her community) recognized the young woman as a prodigy and sacrificed what they could to facilitate her development as an artist. Their investment in Marian paid dividends, as evidenced by her ascension to the pinnacle of her profession, in spite of the social

structures and racial prejudices that permeated society. This well-researched text features black and white photographs documenting Anderson's career against the backdrop of segregated America, as well as a thorough bibliography and discography.

Honor Book: Middle Level

The Power of One: Daisy Bates and the Little Rock Nine, by Judith Bloom Fradin and Dennis Brindell Fradin. New York: Clarion Books.

Reviewed by Cynthia E. Patton-Johnson, assistant principal, Detroit Day School for the Deaf, Detroit Public Schools.



The inspiration for this book was based on an obituary of Daisy Bates, which was carried around in a suitcase for a number of years before the authors, two former teachers, created this fascinating biography. Daisy Bates, who ran a newspaper with her husband, and later became president of the NAACP in her state, served as a mentor for the nine black students who integrated Little Rock's Central High School.

On September 25, 1957, soldiers from the 101st Airborne Division of the U.S. Army escorted the Little Rock Nine to class. Leading up to that day and thereafter, Daisy Bates guided the high school students. All of the Little Rock Nine suffered verbal, physical, and psychological abuse in their efforts to pursue their education. They carried on despite prank phone calls, bomb threats, and other forms of intimidation. Finally, on May 27, 1958, Ernest Green became the first black graduate of Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas, with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., attending Green's graduation. President Bill

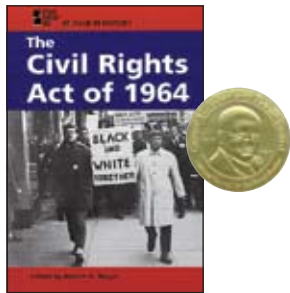
Clinton honored Daisy Bates and the Little Rock Nine in 1997 on the fortieth anniversary of the integration of Central High.

The Power of One reminds us that we all share an obligation to work for “truth and justice for all.”

Award Book: Secondary Level

The Civil Rights Act of 1964,
Edited by Robert H. Mayer
Farmington Hills, Michigan:
Greenhaven Press.

Reviewed by Amy Camardese,
assistant professor, Department of
Education, Westminster College,
New Wilmington, Pennsylvania.



This anthology provides a unique and necessary view of the complications and problems of the civil rights era. The reader is exposed to multiple perspectives in three chapters: (1) Politicians Debate the Civil Rights Act, (2) The American People Debate the Civil Rights Act, and (3) Assessing the Act’s Passage and Legacy.

Great effort has been placed on making available varied opinions for each chapter. For example, Chapter One contains selections from John F. Kennedy, Barry Goldwater, Everett Dirksen, Hubert H. Humphrey and Russell Long. Each essay contains a summary of the author’s main points. The content will stimulate rich classroom discussion on the topic of civil rights and will illustrate to students that historical events often can be interpreted in many ways.

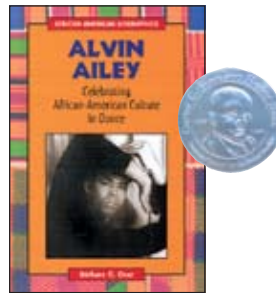
Primary and secondary sources are provided as well as an Appendix: Excerpts from the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Chronology; For Further

Research; and an Index. This book is part of the At Issue in History series. NCSS thematic strands addressed in *The Civil Rights Act of 1964* include: II (Time, Continuity, and Change; and VI (Power, Authority, and Governance).

Honor Book: Secondary Level

Alvin Ailey: Celebrating African-American Culture in Dance
Bárbara C. Cruz.

Berkeley Heights, New Jersey:
Enslow Publishers, Inc.
Reviewed by Sarah Jewett,
assistant professor, School of
Education, University of Delaware,
Newark, Delaware.



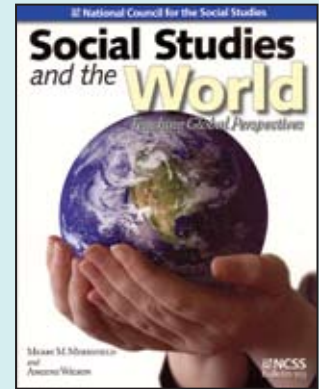
This biography traces the life story of dancer, choreographer, and director Alvin Ailey—his passion for dance, his talent for artistic innovation, and his gift for telling stories through movement.

Ailey also played a crucial role in broadening access to dance for performers, audience members, and youth. He created a multi-ethnic dance company, scheduled performances in marginalized theatres and cities, and organized programs for youth. With quotes from his autobiography and a range of secondary sources, as well as black and white photographs interwoven with the text, Cruz brings Ailey’s triumphs and struggles to life in this inviting biography. The book is organized into ten brief, yet engaging, chapters, and includes a useful chronology of his life, in addition to a short list of recommended books, websites, and videos. 📺

NCSS Publications

**Social Studies and the World:
Teaching Global Perspectives**
Merry M. Merryfield and
Angene Wilson

NCSS, Bulletin No. 103, 141 pp.,
2005



“More than in any previous generation, today’s students will be actors on a global stage,” write Merry M. Merryfield and Angene Wilson. In this book, they recommend ways of developing the skills needed by students to learn about and understand world cultures, world history, global issues and current events, as well as the links between the U.S. and the rest of the world. Useful for educators at all levels, the book is especially valuable for classroom teachers. Its 49 lesson plans cover the range of social studies subjects, showing how global perspectives can enhance the curriculum. The book also recommends and presents literature and other resources likely to stimulate students to make their own voyages of intellectual discovery. This is a vital resource for educators seeking to incorporate world awareness into the social studies curriculum.

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