

2010 Summit Book List

Fiction Books

- *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*
- *The House of the Scorpion*
- *Empire Falls*

Non Fiction Books About Globalization

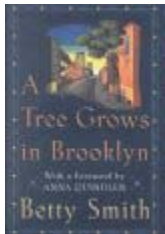
- *Banker to the Poor* ~Yunus, Muhammad
- *Globalization, Spirituality, and Justice* ~Groody, Daniel G.
- *Globalization at What Price* ~Brubaker, Pamela
- *Rediscovering Values: On Wall Stree, Main Street and Your Street* ~Wallis, Jim

Nonfiction books that discuss first-hand experiences with poverty

- *The Glass Castle*
- *Angela's Ashes*
- *Rachel and Her Children: Homeless Families in America*
- *Mountains Beyond Mountains: The Quest of Dr. Paul Farmer, a Man Who Would Cure the World*
- *Amazing Grace: The Lives of Children and the Conscience of a Nation*

Fiction Books

Title: *A tree grows in Brooklyn*



Author: Betty Smith

A young girl in a shabby neighborhood lives with dreams in an innocent time before the war. New York: Harper Collins Publishers c2001. xi, 493 p.; 25 cm. Notes: Originally published: New York : Harper, 1943. Reading Level: Adults
Lexile: 810

Subject Headings:

[Girls](#) -- [Brooklyn, New York City](#)

[Poor families](#) -- [Brooklyn, New York City](#)

[Children of alcoholic fathers](#) -- [Brooklyn, New York City](#)

[Family relationships](#)

[Brooklyn, New York City](#)

[Coming-of-age stories](#)

[Domestic fiction](#)

Kirkus Reviews

/* Starred Review */ This is a repeat for a novel we reported last March (see P. 125). We liked it then; we like it still. Literary Guild choice for September, it should go farther than the usual first novel. "A first novel of unusual quality and understanding, written with strong realism and compassion, sometimes bald, always human, this rightfully ranks with the Farrell genre, though, to my thinking, there is better balance and more sympathy. The slums of Brooklyn, and the Irish Catholics, form the setting for the story of Francie Nolan and her family:- Johnny, her father, handsome and shiftless; Katie, her mother, hardening under years of poverty and improvidence; Neeley, Katie's favorite child; Aunt Sissy, a good "bad woman", and chiefly Francie herself, gentle, shy, imaginative. The reader shares her humiliations at school, loss of face and pride her real sorrow when her father drinks himself to death; her ambition for a college education, thwarted when she must go to work at 14; her first love affair and disillusionment. Lusty -- sometimes funny -- consistently moving, this is a book for a discriminating public, not too tender skinned. But not for some Public Library open shelves (though some of the crudities of the original script have been ironed out). Betty Smith is more than a "promising young author". A Harper "Find". (Kirkus Reviews, June 15, 1943)

This below one is recommended by: Loyola Academy's librarian (Vicki Siegelman). She says: Altho sci-fi, it deals with Mexico-U.S. relations, opium crop, making humans zombies in order to enslave them to farm the crop. Well-liked by students and I believe it was an "ABE" book (our high school book award voted by students

Title: *The house of the scorpion*

By: Nancy Farmer

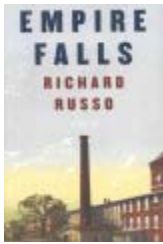
In a future where humans despise clones, Matt enjoys special status as *the* young clone *of* El Patron, *the* 142-year-old leader *of* a corrupt drug empire nestled between Mexico and *the* United States.

New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers c2002. 380 p.;

School Library Journal Review:

—In a possible near future, *the* United States and Mexico have dealt with their continuing border troubles by forming a third country called Opium. It is run by drug lords who control opium production using *the* labor *of* humanoid "eejits" with computer chips in their brains. Matt has spent *the* first six years *of* his life in isolation until *the* day he is discovered by three children and taken to *the* big *house*. *The* adults treat *the* boy like an animal, but with superficial deference once they realize he is a clone *of* El Patrón, *the* supreme ruler *of* Opium. Scientific advances have made it possible for *the* man to live to be 142, via transplanted organs harvested from clones, most *of* whom have their brains stunted at birth. Matt was spared this fate and is educated as a conceit *of* El Patrón. At 14, with *the* death *of the* old man, he is able to flee from Opium. He is caught and detained in a work camp/orphanage, but with *the* help *of* his new friends, he escapes and returns to Opium to try to right *the* wrongs *of the* past. *The* novel's well-described, exotic setting is a background for imaginative science fiction that looks at *the* social implications *of* technological advances. *The* multilayered story raises many issues, and doesn't always resolve them in obvious ways. Fans *of* Farmer's work will seek out this title. Some readers may be put off by its length, but those who dive in will find it worth *the* effort.—Susan L.

Title: *Empire Falls* -- DVD available rated pg-13



Author: Richard Russo Milo Roby tries to hold his family together while working at the *Empire* Grill in the once-successful logging town of *Empire Falls*, Maine, with his partner, Mrs. Whiting, who is the heir to a faded logging and textile legacy. New York: Knopf 2001. 483 p.; 24 cm. Reading Level: Adults

Subject Headings:

[Small town life](#) -- [Maine](#)

[Diners \(Restaurants\)](#) -- [Maine](#)

[Divorce](#) -- [Maine](#)

[Family businesses](#) -- [Maine](#)

[Men](#) -- [Family relationships](#) -- [Maine](#)

[Middle-aged men](#) -- [Maine](#)

[Plant closings](#) -- [Maine](#)

[Restaurateurs](#) -- [Maine](#)

[Working class](#) -- [Maine](#)

[Maine](#)

[Domestic fiction](#)

[Literary fiction](#)

Publishers Weekly Review:

In the small Maine town of *Empire Falls*, replete with long defunct logging and textile mills, the Whiting clan embarks on its inexorable demise. The family has owned the town and controlled its environment, economy and inhabitants for generations. Why and how they bring about their own demise unfolds slowly, character by character, incident by incident, year by year. Listeners move as if by free association back and forth in time, layering the lives of Whitings and Robys, and learning about the families' complex interweaving that shapes all of their members. The *book* begins slowly, but readers are drawn ever deeper into the social saga and closer to the characters' strengths and weaknesses. Protagonist Miles Roby, forced by his mother's early death to abandon his college career, returns home to manage the Whiting family's *Empire* Grill, and meanwhile deals with divorce, devotion and devastation.

McLarty sports a fine reading voice and makes excellent narrative choices. He has only a few special voices (e.g., Miles's profligate father), but it's always clear who is speaking. Free of emphatic attempts at characterization or dramatization, his subtle, unobtrusive narration allows Russo's terrific story to shine.

NON FICTION books that discuss first-hand experiences with poverty

***The Glass Castle* Jeanette Walls-**

Product Details

Paperback: 288 pages

Publisher: Scribner; 1 edition (January 9, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 074324754X

ISBN-13: 978-0743247542

Freelance writer Walls doesn't pull her punches. She opens her memoir by describing looking out the window of her taxi, wondering if she's "overdressed for the evening" and spotting her mother on the sidewalk, "rooting through a Dumpster." Walls's parents—just two of the unforgettable characters in this excellent, unusual book—were a matched pair of eccentrics, and raising four children didn't conventionalize either of them. Her father was a self-taught man, a would-be inventor who could stay longer at a poker table than at most jobs and had "a little bit of a drinking situation," as her mother put it. With a fantastic storytelling knack, Walls describes her artist mom's great gift for rationalizing. Apartment walls so thin they heard all their neighbors? What a bonus—they'd "pick up a little Spanish without even studying." Why feed their pets? They'd be helping them "by not allowing them to become dependent." While Walls's father's version of Christmas presents—walking each child into the Arizona desert at night and letting each one claim a star—was delightful, he wasn't so dear when he stole the kids' hard-earned savings to go on a bender. The Walls children learned to support themselves, eating out of trashcans at school or painting their skin so the holes in their pants didn't show. Buck-toothed Jeannette even tried making her own braces when she heard what orthodontia cost. One by one, each child escaped to New York City. Still, it wasn't long before their parents appeared on their doorsteps. "Why not?" Mom said. "Being homeless is an adventure."

***Angela's Ashes* by Frank McCourt-**

New York: Scribner 1996. 364 p.: ill.; 25 cm.

[McCourt family](#)

[McCourt, Frank, 1931- -- Family](#)

[Growing up -- Limerick, Ireland -- Personal narratives](#)

[Poor families -- Limerick, Ireland -- Personal narratives](#)

[Children of alcoholics -- Limerick, Ireland -- Biography](#)

[Irish-Americans -- Biography](#)

[Irish-Americans in Ireland -- Biography](#)

[Hunger -- Personal narratives](#)

[Childhood -- Limerick, Ireland -- Personal narratives](#)

[Poverty](#)

[Limerick, Ireland](#)

[Autobiographies \(Adult literature\)](#)

Frank McCourt's haunting memoir takes on new life when the author reads from his Pulitzer Prize-winning book. Recounting scenes from his childhood in New York City and Limerick, Ireland, McCourt paints a brutal yet poignant picture of his early days when there was rarely enough food on the table, and boots and coats were a luxury. In a melodic Irish voice that often lends a gentle humor to the unimaginable, the author remembers his wayward yet adoring father who was forever drinking what little money the family had. He recounts the painful loss of his siblings to avoidable sickness and hunger, a proud mother reduced to begging for charity, and the stench of the sewage-strewn streets that ran outside the front door. As McCourt approaches adolescence, he discovers the shame of poverty and the beauty of Shakespeare, the mystery of sex and the unforgiving power of the Irish Catholic Church. This powerful and heart-rending testament to the resiliency and determination of youth is populated with memorable characters and moments, and McCourt's interpretation of the narrative and the voices it contains will leave listeners laughing through their tears.

Rachel and Her Children: Homeless Families in America by Jonathan Kozol

Product Details

Paperback: 303 pages

Publisher: Three Rivers Press (August 15, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0307345890

ISBN-13: 978-0307345899

Product Dimensions: 7.9 x 5.2 x 0.8 inches

- A horrifying, staggering book about the homeless in this country as specifically exemplified by those who are housed in the Martinique Hotel in New York. Through direct, simply stated interviews with several families in the Martinique over a period of time, Kozol systematically strips away the stereotypic litany of what is wrong with welfare recipients (too lazy to work, etc.). He shows repeated case histories of people held captive by a welfare system that would rather pay the private sector \$1,900 a month to house them in squalor than give them perhaps a third of that amount for apartment rent and a chance to gain back their self-respect. There is much about this book that is not only infuriating but also uncomfortable; many of these people have previously been educated, productive citizens who have endured several life crises and lost everything. The true heart of this book, however, rests on two points: the lack of affordable housing for the poor and, most tragically, the children who will become adults with little education, poor health, no marketable skills, and mental and emotional scars from spending a childhood under these conditions. Kozol's writing is clear and reads easily due to his stark, unembellished style. It is always the people who shine through; they are a testament to the human spirit. It is impossible to read this book and remain untouched.

Mountains Beyond Mountains: The Quest of Dr. Paul Farmer, a Man Who Would Cure the World (Random House Reader's Circle) (Paperback) **NOTE: Takes Place in Haiti!**

~ BY: [Tracy Kidder](#)

(Author)

Product Details

Paperback: 352 pages

Publisher: Random House Trade Paperbacks (August 25, 2009)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0812980557

ISBN-13: 978-0812980554

From School Library Journal

Adult/High School-Thought-provoking and profoundly satisfying, this book will inspire feelings of humility, admiration, and disquietude; in some readers, it may sow the seeds of humanitarian activism. As a specialist in infectious diseases, Farmer's goal is nothing less than redressing the "steep gradient of inequality" in medical service to the desperately poor. His work establishing a complex of public health facilities on the central plateau of Haiti forms the keystone to efforts that now encompass initiatives on three continents. Farmer and a trio of friends began in the 1980s by creating a charitable foundation called Partners in Health (PIH, or Zanmi Lasante in Creole), armed with passionate conviction and \$1 million in seed money from a Boston philanthropist. Kidder provides anecdotal evidence that their early approach to acquiring resources for the Haitian project at times involved a Robin Hood type of "redistributive justice" by liberating medical equipment from the "rich" (Harvard) and giving to the "poor" (the PIH clinic). Yet even as PIH has grown in size and sophistication, gaining the ability to influence and collaborate with major international organizations because of the founders' energy, professional credentials, and successful outcomes, their dedicated vision of doctoring to the poor remains unaltered. Farmer's conduct is offered as a "road map to decency," albeit an uncompromising model that nearly defies replication. This story is remarkable, and Kidder's skill in sequencing both dramatic and understated elements into a reflective commentary is unsurpassed.

Lynn Nutwell, Fairfax City Regional Library, VA

Amazing Grace: The Lives of Children and the Conscience of a Nation

BY: [Jonathan Kozol](#) (Author)

Product Details

Paperback: 284 pages

Publisher: Harper Perennial (September 27, 1996)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0060976977

ISBN-13: 978-0060976972

From Library Journal

Alicea and Kozol paint a vivid portrait of life in one of America's most impoverished neighborhoods, New York City's South Bronx. While telling similar stories, each narrative has its own unique flavor and characteristics that reveal the crushing nature of poverty in America and recount the lives of those who rise above it. Kozol (*Savage Inequalities*, LJ 9/15/91) describes a neighborhood ravaged by drugs, violence, hunger, AIDS, and antipathy but also one where children defy all the stereotypes. In the South Bronx, where the median income is \$7600 a year and everything breaks down, Kozol reveals that the one thing that has remained resilient is the children. One of the resident children is 15-year-old Alicea, who saw his mother and sister succumb to AIDS, a father incarcerated in prison, and friends entrapped by drugs or violence. Like that of many children, his story is a life of options or despair. The path they pursue is dependent on government leadership. Both books should be required reading for policymakers and those concerned with the plight of the American poor. ?Michael A. Lutes, Univ. of Notre Dame Lib., Ind.

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