

# Ms. Grgas & Roslyn High School Library

## Suggested Books for Historical Fiction - Outside Reading World Lit Honors – Fall 2011

### American Continents



**Allende, Isabel. *Daughter of Fortune*.** 1999. This is a story of family conflict, romance and adventure, in which a young woman from a British colony in Chile, joins the 1849 California Gold Rush in search of a lost love.



**Alvarez, Julia. *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents*.** 1992. Told through the points of view of the four Garcia sisters, this novel tells of a wealthy family exiled from the Dominican Republic after a failed coup, and the how the daughters come of age, weather the cultural and class transitions from privileged Dominicans to New York Hispanic immigrants.



**Alvarez, Julia. *Saving the World: a novel*.** 2007. Latina novelist Alma Huebner begs off joining her husband on a humanitarian mission to the Dominican Republic to work on her next book, and finds herself becoming obsessed with the life of her subject--a woman who hand-picked a group of orphan boys to serve as live carriers of the small pox virus in order to provide Spaniard Francisco Xavier Balmis a ready supply of vaccine with which to inoculate the populations of Spain's American colonies in 1803.



**Borland, Hal. *When the Legends Die*.** 1963. A Ute boy separated from his native culture grows to manhood and success among whites, but he cannot find peace of mind in the non-Indian world.



**Crichton, Michael. *Pirate Latitudes*.** 2009. On Jamaica, a remote Caribbean colony in 1665, Captain Charles Hunter plots to steal Spanish gold from the galleon "El Trinidad," which awaits repairs in a nearby, heavily fortified harbor that is guarded by Cazalla, a bloodthirsty commander.



**Dallas, Sandra. *Tallgrass*.** 2007. Thirteen-year-old Rennie Stroud finds her hometown of Tallgrass, Colorado, changed forever when the government builds a Japanese internment camp in the rural area and the prisoners become the target of the townspeople who believe Japanese-Americans are the enemy.



**Danticat, Edwidge. *The Dew Breaker*.** 1969. A man tries to hide his violent past in Haiti from his new family as he tries to rebuild his life in America.



**Danticat, Edwidge. *The Farming of Bones: a novel*.** 1998. Amabelle, a Haitian woman who has grown up as a servant in the home of Dominicans, falls in love with Sebastien, an itinerant sugarcane cutter, and together they try to weather storms of persecution.



**Ephron, Amy. *White Rose/Una Rosa Blanca*.** 1999. Evangelina, imprisoned for revolutionary activities in Cuba in the 1890s, becomes the focus of a campaign by American newspaper owner William Randolph Hearst who sends his star reporter, Karl Decker, to interview Evangelina and help her escape.



**Garcia y Robertson, Rodrigo. *American Woman*.** 1998. This novel depicts the era of battle of Little Big Horn and Custer's Last Stand, told entirely from the Indian side, through the eyes of an American woman, married to an Indian brave.



**Glancy, Diane. *Pushing the Bear: a novel of the Trail of Tears*.** 1996. A fictional account of the forced march of Cherokees to new territory in 1838-39, that killed thousands.



**Hogan, Linda. *Mean Spirit*.** 1990. This moving historical novel is set in Oklahoma during the 1920's when the discovery of oil brought sudden wealth to the Osage tribe, as well as exploitation by whites and an erosion of tribal cultural values.



**Janus, Christopher G. *Miss 4<sup>th</sup> of July, Goodbye: a Novel Based on the Life of Niki Janus*.** 1986. Touching story of a young girl and her family who emigrated from Greece and took up residence in a Southern town.



**Yep, Laurence. *Dragon's Gate*.** 1993. When he accidentally kills a Manchu, a Chinese boy is sent to America to join his father, and other Chinese working to build transcontinental railroad tunnel through the Sierra Nevada Mountains in 1867.

### Ancient History



**Auel, Jean. *Clan of the Cave Bear*.** 1981. Ayla, clearly a member of the Others, is raised by the Clan of the Cave Bear, a rival race of humanoid creatures living in prehistoric Europe.

*You may select other titles by Jean Auel which provide continuing stories about Ayla and her life.*



**Diamant, Anita. *The Red Tent*.** 1998. The stories of biblical women are told in the voice of Dinah, the daughter of Jacob.



**Galloway, Priscilla. *The Courtesan's Daughter*.** 2002. From humble beginnings, Phano rises to become one of ancient Athens' most powerful citizens through her marriage to Theo, but they both have powerful enemies who don't share their political views.



**Moran, Michelle. *Cleopatra's Daughter*.** 2009. Selene, the daughter of Marc Antony and Cleopatra, is taken with her twin Alexander and younger brother Ptolemy to Rome following the deaths of her parents where she grows up in the household of Octavia, the wife Antony abandoned for Cleopatra, and adjusts to life in the midst of political intrigue.



**Renault, Mary. *The Bull From the Sea*.** 1975. Historical adventure story based on the legend of Theseus.



**Renault, Mary. *The Last of the Wine*.** 1956. Wonderful recreation of life in Athens during the Peloponnesian Wars.

*You may select other books by Mary Renault , who wrote many fictional tales relating to ancient Greece & Rome.*



**Schechter, Vicky Alvear. *Cleopatra's Moon*.** 2011. Selene, having grown up in a palace with her parents, Cleopatra and Mark Antony, is forced by war to build a new life in the household of Roman emperor Octavianus, where she finds herself torn between two young men and two possible destinies.

## Europe – Various Time Periods

### Russia/Soviet Union



**Alexander, Robert. *Rasputin's Daughter*.** 2006. Maria, the young, spirited daughter of Rasputin, spends her father's final days trying to unlock the mystery of her father's involvement in the disappearance of the Russian Royal Family.



**Holland, Travis. *The Archivist's Story*.** 2007. Lubyanka Prison archivist, Pavel Dubrov, is instructed to authenticate and then destroy works by inmates determined to be enemies of the state; however, Dubrov's encounter with Isaac Babel compels him to save the author's last stories whatever the cost.



**Kuznetsov, A.P. *Babi Yar*.** 1967. This novel documents the two year occupation of Kiev by German troops in World War II, and the systematic murder of 200,000 people.



**Malamud, Bernard. *The Fixer*.** 1966. An innocent Jewish handyman is accused of the murder of a Christian boy in Czarist Russia.



**Rand, Ayn. *We the Living*.** 1936. Portrays the impact of the Russian Revolution on three people who tried to shape their own destinies, in a country where the collective is supreme over the individual.



**Solzhenitsyn, Alexander. *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*.** 1978. This work is a documentary novel describing the experiences of a Russian man, imprisoned in a slave labor camp during the Stalin era.

### Middle Ages - Renaissance – 18<sup>th</sup> Century



**Brooks, Geraldine. *Year of Wonder: a Novel of the Plague*.** 2001. This is the story of a small mountain village in England and housemaid Anna Frith as they try to survive the terrible plague year of 1666.



**Dunant, Sarah. *Birth of Venus*.** 2004. Alessandra Cecchi becomes enchanted with a young painter her father has brought back from northern Europe to decorate the chapel walls in the family's Florentine palazzo, but their relationship is interrupted when Alessandra's parents arrange her marriage to a wealthy older man.



**Dunlap, Susanne. *The Musician's Daughter*.** 2009. In eighteenth-century Vienna, Austria, Theresa seeks a way to help her mother and brother financially while investigating the murder of her father, a renowned violinist in Haydn's orchestra at the court of Prince Esterhazy, after his body is found near a gypsy camp.



**Follett, Kenneth. *The Pillars of the Earth*.** 1989. The construction of a cathedral involves a story of betrayal, revenge and love in 12th century England.



**Gregory, Philippa. *The Boleyn Inheritance*.** 2006. After her damning testimony results in the execution of both her husband and her sister-in-law, Anne Boleyn, Jane continues her ruthless scheming as she serves as lady-in-waiting to Anne of Cleves, Henry VIII's reviled Bavarian-born fourth wife, and naive, doomed sixth wife, Catherine Howard.



**Gregory, Philippa. *The Constant Princess*.** 2005. This is the story of Katherine of Aragon, daughter of Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand of Spain, who ultimately married Henry VIII of England to become a tragic Queen.



**Gregory, Philippa. *The Other Boleyn Girl*.** 2002. Mary Boleyn comes to the court of King Henry VIII, where she falls for the dashing king, and begins to enjoy her growing role as unofficial queen, however, she soon realizes she is merely a pawn in her family's ambitious plots as the king's interest begins to turn towards her sister, Anne.



**Gregory, Philippa. *The Queen's Fool*.** 2004. Hannah Green, a young Jewish girl, is caught in the rivalry between Queen Mary and her half sister, Elizabeth, after her ability to foresee the future leads her to work for the Queen as a spy.



**Leeds, Constance. *The Silver Cup*.** 2007. In 1096, Anna, a German Catholic girl, and Leah, a German Jewish girl, strike up a remarkable friendship and make surprising discoveries about each other.



**Libby, Alisa. *The King's Rose*.** 2009. Catharine Howard recounts the events in her life that led to her being groomed for marriage at the age of fifteen to King Henry VIII, her failure to produce an heir to the throne, and her quick execution.



**Lopez-Medina, Sylvia. *Siguriya*.** 1997. Three generations of the Cozar family, whose members include Moslems, Jews, and Catholics, struggle to survive the persecution of the Spanish Inquisition in fifteenth-century Spain.



**Maxwell, Robin. *The Secret Diary of Anne Boleyn*.** 1998. When Elizabeth I becomes Queen of England, she is given the secret diary of her mother Anne Boleyn, who was betrayed and beheaded by her husband Henry VIII; Elizabeth determines to heed the lessons of her mother's difficult life.



**Napoli, Donna Jo. *The Smile*.** 2008. A fictionalized biography that describes the life of Elisabetta, the woman who posed for Leonardo da Vinci's famous painting, the Mona Lisa.



**Newman, Sharan. *The Wandering Arm*.** 1995. The theft of an Anglo-Saxon religious relic and the murder of a Jewish merchant threaten to disrupt the peace between Christians and Jews in medieval Paris, and Catherine and her husband, Edgar are desperate to solve the crimes.



**Plaidy, Jean. *Mary, Queen of France*.** 2003. Princess Mary Rose, the youngest sister of Henry VIII, is horrified to learn her brother has pledged her hand in marriage to the elderly King Louis in order to secure the peace with France, and when her husband dies two years later, she takes swift action to marry her true love, the Duke of Suffolk, before she can be made a pawn again.



**Pressler, Mirjam. *Shylock's Daughter*.** 2001. Inspired by Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice, story about Jessica who longs to be free of the restrictions of her father and life in the Jewish ghetto of 16<sup>th</sup> century Venice, falls in love with a Christian aristocrat and must make choices which will affect her whole family.



**Puzo, Mario. *The Family*.** 2001. A fictionalized account of Pope Alexander VI's close relationship with his family that explores how those relationships influenced his role in the Church.



**Reeve, Philip. *Here Lies Arthur*.** 2008. When her village is attacked and burned, Gwyna seeks protection from the bard Myrddin, who uses Gwyna in his plan to transform young Arthur into the heroic King Arthur.



**Stone, Irving. *The Agony and the Ecstasy; a Biographical Novel of Michelangelo*.** 1961. Michelangelo's career as a sculptor, painter, architect, and poet is traced from his promising boyhood apprenticeships through all the years of his genius.



**Stone, Irving. *Lust for life*.** 1934. A fictionalized biography of nineteenth-century Dutch impressionist artist Vincent van Gogh, based on his letters to his brother, Theo.



**Tiffany, Grace. *My Father Had a Daughter: Judith Shakespeare's Tale*.** 2003. A fictionalized account of the life of Judith Shakespeare in which she tries to cope with her famous father's life.

## 19<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries



**Baer, Edith. *Walk the Dark Street*.** 1998. The story of Eva, a young Jewish girl living in Nazi Germany where she and her parents experience increasing tensions in daily life while considering possibilities of escape.



**Bagdasarian, Adam. *Forgotten Fire*.** 2000. Based on a true story, 12 year-old Vahan Kenderian, the son of an influential Armenian family in Turkey, struggles to survive alone after witnessing the deaths of many of his family and friends during the Armenian massacres of the early twentieth century.



**Barth-Grözinger, Inge. *Something Remains*.** 2006. In 1933, as Hitler becomes Chancellor, Erich and his family, who are Jewish, find they need to make changes in their everyday lives as hatred of the Jews grows.



**Benchley, Nathaniel. *Bright Candles: a Novel of the Danish Resistance*.** 1974. The experiences of 16-year-old Danish boy during the German occupation of his country in World War II.



**Benioff, David. *City of Thieves*.** 2008. Seventeen-year-old Lev Beniov, having been arrested for looting the corpse of a German paratrooper, is given the opportunity to be released from jail if he, along with a soldier imprisoned for desertion, can secure twelve eggs to be used in the colonel's daughter's wedding cake by traversing the dangerous streets of Leningrad.



**Boulle, Pierre.** *Bridge Over the River Kwai.* 1954. World War II epic novel about the futility and insanity of war.



**Charlesworth, Monique.** *The Children's War.* 2005. Ilse learns to rely on herself for survival after her mother Lore, terrified the Nazis will discover the girl is half-Jewish, sends her out of Germany, while in Germany, one of the privileged children Lore cares for in her job as a nursemaid, confesses his growing discomfort with his role in the Hitler Youth.



**Cronin, A. J.** *The Citadel.* 1937. An idealistic doctor in Great Britain must battle with the establishment.



**Dowswell, Paul.** *The Auslander.* 2011. Peter, an orphan in Warsaw, is adopted by German professor Kaltenbach and his wife who believe the boy to be a fine specimen of Hitler Youth, but Peter begins to develop his own ideas in opposition to the Nazis, which is not a popular position in Berlin in 1943.



**Greif, Jean-Jacques.** *The Fighter.* 2006. Moshe Wisniak, a poor Polish Jew, uses his physical strength and cleverness, plus luck, to help him survive the horrors he is subjected to in the concentration camps of World War II.



**Hasler, Eveline.** *Flying With Wings of Wax: the Story of Emily Kempin-Spyri.* 1994. Biographical novel about the niece of the author of Heidi, and first woman Doctor of Law; this pioneering feminist died in an insane asylum



**Levi, Primo.** *If Not Now, When?* 1985. Based on a true story, follows a band of Jewish partisans in the closing days of World War II, as they battle the retreating German army.



**MacColl, Michaela.** *Prisoners in the Palace: how Victoria became Queen with the help of her maid, a reporter and a scoundrel.* 2010. Liza becomes a lady's maid to Princess Victoria and finds that the gossipy world of the palace servants gives her the chance to determine her own fate and help Victoria become queen.



**Moran, Thomas.** *The Man in the Box.* 1997. The Lukasser's family secret, that they are hiding a Jewish doctor in a box in the barn to escape from the Nazis, weighs on them, and the care of Dr. Weiss falls to the teenaged son and his friend.



**Paton Walsh, Jill.** *Grace.* 1992. After helping her father rescue the survivors of a shipwreck on the coast of England in 1838, Grace finds her quiet life crumbling around her as she is unwillingly fashioned into a national hero.



**Pausewang, Gudrun.** *Traitor.* 2006. During the closing months of World War II, a fifteen-year-old German girl must decide whether or not to help an escaped Russian prisoner of war, despite the serious consequences if she does so.



**Polak, Monique.** *What World is Left.* 2008. Many of the events in the novel were taken from stories that Polak's mother, who had spent over two years in Theresienstadt concentration camp, related to her, including the family's means of survival; Polak's grandfather, a Dutch artist, created propaganda drawings for the Nazis, thereby securing their safety while in the camp.



**Preus, Margi.** *The Heart of a Samurai.* 2010. In 1841, rescued by an American whaler after a terrible shipwreck leaves him and his four companions castaways on a remote island, Manjiro, who dreams of becoming a samurai, learns new laws and customs as he becomes the first Japanese person to set foot in the United States.



**Rosnay, Tatiana de.** *Sarah's Key.* 2007. American journalist Julia Jarmond researches the brutal 1942 Nazi roundup in Paris and stumbles upon a connection between her family and one of the victims, which compels Julia to learn more about the girl's life.



**Schroder, Monika.** *My Brother's Shadow.* 2011. In 1918 Berlin, Germany, Moritz struggles to do what is right on his newspaper job, in his relationship with his mother and sister who are outspoken socialists, and with his brother, who returns from the war physically and emotionally scarred.



**Sepetys, Ruta.** *Between Shades of Gray.* 2011. In 1941, Lina, her mother, and brother are pulled from their Lithuanian home by Soviet guards and sent to Siberia, where her father is sentenced to death in a prison camp while she fights for her life, vowing to honor her family and the thousands like hers by burying her story in a jar on Lithuanian soil. Based on the author's family.



**Sharenow, Rob.** *The Berlin Boxing Club.* 2011. In 1936 Berlin, fourteen-year-old Karl Stern, considered Jewish despite a non-religious upbringing, learns to box from the legendary Max Schmeling while struggling with the realities of the Holocaust.



**Skrypuch, Marsha.** *Daughter of War: a novel.* 2008. Marta, a young Armenian refugee, survives the Armenian genocide in Turkey during World War I, and disguises herself as a Muslim in order to locate her betrothed and her sister, who were sold into slavery.



**Taylor, Kate. *A Man in Uniform*.** 2010. A novel, based on the historical Dreyfus affair, that tells the story of a bourgeois lawyer, Francois Dubon, who spends his days dressing in his brother-in-law's military uniform to blend in at a secretive bureau and search for evidence to clear the name of French artillery officer Alfred Dreyfus who was wrongly convicted of espionage.



**Uris, Leon. *Exodus*.** 1958. An adventure novel set in the days of the establishment of the State of Israel.



**Uris, Leon. *Mila 18*.** 1961. Dramatic story involving the Warsaw Ghetto freedom fighters during WW II.



**Uris, Leon. *QB VII*.** 1970. Novel about libel and war crimes in an English court after the Holocaust.



**Uris, Leon. *Trinity*.** 1976. A chronicle of the Irish struggle against British rule during the latter half of the 19th century



**Wiseman, Eva. *Puppet*.** 2009. A fictionalized account of the last-recorded "blood libel" trial in Europe, which describes the experiences of Morris Scharf, a Jewish boy who was forced to testify against his community, including his own father, in support of a stereotype that Jews murder Christian children for their blood.

## Asia, Africa, Middle East



**Amirrezvani, Anita. *The Blood of Flowers*.** 2007. The death of her father leads a teenage girl in 17<sup>th</sup> century Iran to go live with her mother as a servant in the home of her uncle who is a wealthy rug designer in the court of the Shah. She is able to develop her talent for rug design, a skill that becomes vital to her survival after her lack of a dowry forces her into a contract marriage, renewable every three months, with the son of a horse trader.



**Arslan, Antonia. *Skylark Farm*.** 2006. Brothers Sempad and Yerwant Arslanian are joyfully preparing for a reunion after forty years apart when World War I erupts, trapping Yerwant in Italy, and leaving Sempad's Armenian family at the mercy of the genocidal Young Turks.



**Compestine, Ying Chang. *Revolution is Not a Dinner Party*.** 2007. Starting in 1972 when she is nine years old, Ling, the daughter of two doctors, struggles to make sense of the communists' Cultural Revolution, which empties stores of food, homes of appliances deemed "bourgeois," and people of laughter.



**Dai Siji. *Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress*.** 2002. Two boys sent to the country for "re-education" as part of Mao's Cultural Revolution, find little to amuse them, but things change when they discover a stash of Western classics in Chinese translation and use the stories of Balzac to capture the attention of the beautiful daughter of the local tailor.



**Diamant, Anita. *Day After Night*.** 2009. Four young women, who survived the Holocaust, are haunted by their pasts while staying in the Atlit internment camp and find comfort in their friendships and shared experiences while struggling with the prospect of recreating themselves in a foreign country.



**Gien, Pamela. *Syringa Tree*.** 2006. Elizabeth Grace, the privileged daughter of a doctor and his wife in South Africa in the 1960's, learns firsthand about the cruelties of apartheid when her beloved Xhosa nanny, Salamina, is forced to carry permission papers to enter white areas, and must hide her newborn baby from authorities.



**Glass, Linzi. *The Year the Gypsies Came*.** 2006. In Johannesburg, South Africa, in the late 1960s, twelve-year-old Emily, who longs for affection from her quarreling parents, finds comfort in the stories of a Zulu servant and in her friendship with a young houseguest who has an equally troubled family.



**Iggulden, Conn. *Genghis: Birth of an Empire*.** 2007. Tartar raids kill the father of Temujin and banishes his family from the land; but when he grows older, he assembles a small army of men and begins raiding Tartar camps and eventually unites all the Mongol tribes together.



**Lord, Bette. *Spring Moon: a Novel of China*.** 1981. Beginning in 1892 when the slave girl of the child Spring Moon takes revenge on the House of Chang, this novel reveals the world of the inner courts in traditional China.



**Mah, Adeline Yen. *Chinese Cinderella and the Secret Dragon Society*.** 2005. During the Japanese occupation of parts of China, twelve-year-old Ye Xian is thrown out of her father's and stepmother's home, joins a martial arts group, and tries to help her aunt and the Americans in their struggle against the Japanese invaders.



**McCunn, Ruthanne. *The Moon Pearl*.** 2000. Tale of three courageous three Chinese girls who struggle against all odds to forge the beginnings of a powerful silk sisterhood in 19th century China.



**Said, Kurban. *Ali and Nino: a Love Story*. 2000.** The love between childhood friends Ali, a Tartar and Muslim, and Nino, a Georgian Christian, survives the turmoil of the First World War, the Russian Revolution, and a prolonged separation.



**Said, Kurban. *The Girl From the Golden Horn*. 2002.** Set in 1928, Asiadeh's marriage to a Christian man, while in exile in Berlin from Turkey, is plagued with affronts to her religious Islamic upbringing.



**See, Lisa. *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan*. 2005.** Friends Snow Flower and Lily find solace in their bond as they face isolation, arranged marriages, loss, and motherhood in nineteenth-century China.



**Sheth, Rashmira. *Keeping Corner*. 2007.** In India in the 1940's, a young girl's happy childhood ends when her husband since age of nine, dies, leaving her a widow whose only hope of happiness could come from Ghandi's social and political reforms.



**Sidhwa, Bapsi. *Cracking India*. 1991.** Eight-year-old Lenny witnesses the turmoil among various religious groups in India during the 1940's.



**Sidhwa, Bapsi. *Water: a Novel*. 2006.** Eight-year-old Chuyia becomes a catalyst for change in India in 1938 after being abandoned at a widow's ashram following the death of her fifty-year-old husband, and coming to the realization that she is expected to live there in celibacy among the other widows for the rest of her life.



**Talarigo, Jeff. *The Pearl Diver*. 2004.** Following World War II, a young, Japanese pearl diver encounters prejudice and isolation when she is forced to live the remainder of her life at a leprosarium on the island of Nagashima even though medication has put her disease in remission.



**Tsukiyama, Gail. *The Samurai's Garden*. 1994.** Set in Japan just before WWII, Tsukiyama's novel tells of a young Chinese man's encounters with four locals while he recuperates from tuberculosis.

*Compiled and prepared by Mrs. Leon, Librarian – 12/2012*