

SOCIAL JUSTICE & FREEDOM READING LIST

Abani, Chris

Song for Night

F ABA:C

Part Inferno and part Paradise Lost, Song for Night is the story of a West African boy soldier's lyrical, terrifying, yet beautiful journey through the nightmare landscape of a brutal war in search of his lost platoon. The reader is led by the voiceless protagonist who, as part of a landmine-clearing platoon, had his vocal chords cut - a move to keep these children from screaming when blown up, and thereby distracting the other minesweepers.

Aldridge, James

The True Story of Spit MacPhee

F ALD:J

Young Spit lives a hand to mouth existence with his eccentric grandfather, Fyfe MacPhee, in an old shanty on the banks of the Murray River. The townspeople think Spit would be better cared for in a Boys' Home - and when old Fyfe dies, a fierce battle to decide Spit's destiny begins.

Alizadeh, Ali

Transactions

F ALI:A

A spoiled Emirati rich girl, an Iranian asylum seeker in Amsterdam, a Liberian refugee seeking aid from a charity, a Ukrainian prostitute, a Danish sex trafficker, a Chinese gamer. Alizadeh's characters live on the edge of what is considered civilised society, often caught between East and West, in the web of global politics. Fresh and adventurous, this absorbing story cycle melds themes of love, exploration, globalisation, war and poverty, offering a provocative and panoramic view of contemporary life.

Bell, William

Forbidden City : a Novel

F BEL:W

17 year old Alex Jackson travels to China with his father, a cameraman for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. He starts keeping a journal of his travels to complete requirements for a high school class. Events, however, become more exciting and horrible as Alex and his father experience the demonstrations in Tian An Men Square.

Bancks, Tristan

Detention

F BAN:T

Sima and her family are pressed to the rough, cold ground among fifty others. They lie next to the tall fence designed to keep them in. When they make their escape, a guard raises the alarm. Shouting, smoke bombs, people tackled to the ground. In the chaos Sima loses her parents. Dad told her to run, so she does, hiding in a school and triggering a lockdown. A boy, Dan, finds her hiding in the toilet block. What should he do? Help her? Dob her in? She's breaking the law, but is it right to lock kids up? And if he helps, should Sima trust him? Or run?

Briley, John

Cry Freedom

F BRI:J

This is the story of Steve Biko's fight with the government of South Africa. It is the story of people who prefer truth to lies. It is the story of all people who cry 'Freedom' and who are not afraid to die.

Bulawayo, NoViolet

We Need New Names

F BUL:N

Darling and her friends live in a shanty called Paradise, which of course is no such thing. There's mischief and adventure, games of finding bin Laden, stealing guavas, singing Lady Gaga at the tops of their voices. They dream of the paradises of America, Dubai, and Europe, where Madonna and Barack Obama and David Beckham live.

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Burgess, Anthony A Clockwork Orange F BUR:A

In this near-future satire the author creates a violence-dominated teenage society where inhabitants speak a language that is a mixture of Russian and Anglo-Saxon slang. Alex, the central character, is a delinquent facing reform treatment, which consists of viewing violence and rape to the point of inducing nausea in the viewer.

Burke, John Muk Muk Bridge of Triangles F BUR:J

Chris Leeton, the son of a white father and aboriginal mother, is tormented by his past when his family moves to a housing commission area in Sydney. He longs to find out more about his aboriginal ancestors and feels like an exile in the poverty and despair of his environment.

Carmody, Isobelle Obernewtyn F CAR:I

A post-apocalypse story, when all new discoveries are outlawed by the all-powerful and ruthless Council. Elspeth is one of a new breed of mind thinkers, and seeks the truth of her strange powers. A search inevitably leads to the sinister and mysterious Obernewtyn.

Collington, Peter The Coming of the Surfman PB COL

The adventures of rival surf gangs The Hammers and The Nails.

Courtney, Bryce The Power of One F COU:B

Also available as an eBook.

Set in South Africa in the 1940's, a young boy struggles to realise his individuality in a society divided by racial hatred and conflict. It is a story of cruelty, sadness, love and faith, filled with unforgettable characters and told with great compassion and humour.

Dark Dreams : Australian Refugee Stories by Young Writers Aged 11-20 Years F DAR

An anthology written by children and young adults aged 11-20 years. These young writers relate or imaginatively recreate the story of someone who came to Australia as a refugee. The stories are the finest of hundreds collected through an unprecedented nationwide schools competition.

Dickens, Charles Oliver Twist F DIC:C

Dickens re-creates the London of the early nineteenth century with its underworld of pimps, thieves and prostitutes. The characters are brilliantly drawn, especially those of Fagin, Bill Sykes, Nancy and the Artful Dodger and Oliver himself. Dickens combines vivid realism with and fairy-tale brilliance in this study of innocence betrayed and then triumphant.

Dickens, Charles Hard Times F DIC:C

Dickens's withering portrait of a Lancashire mill town in the 1840s. In the characters of Gradgrind and Bounderby he stigmatized the philosophy of Utilitarianism which allowed human beings to be enslaved to machines and reduced to numbers.

Draper, Sharon M. Copper Sun F DRA:S

Stolen from her village, sold to the highest bidder, fifteen-year-old Amari has only one thing left of her own -- hope. But when slave traders invade her village and brutally murder her entire family, Amari finds herself dragged away to a slave ship headed to the Carolinas, where she is bought by a plantation owner and given to his son as a birthday present. Survival seems all that Amari can hope for.

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Gwynne Philip **Deadly Unna?** **F GWY:P**
'Deadly, unna?' He was always saying that. Dumby Red and Blacky don't have a lot in common. Dumby's the star of the footy team, he's got a killer smile and the knack with girls, and he's a Nunga. Blacky's a gutless wonder, needs braces, never knows what to say, and he's white. But they're friends... and it could be deadly, unna?

Haley, Alex **Roots** **F HAL:A**
This is the extraordinary account of Alex Haley's own twelve year search for his family's origins. Tracing his ancestry through six generations to Africa, he discovered a 16 year- old youth, Kunta Kinte. It was this young man who had been torn from his homeland and brought as a slave to the New World.

Hardy, Frank **Power Without Glory** **F HAR:F**
A compelling and forceful story which has intrigued all Australians since its release. It explores the social structure from the period of time from World War II until the Depression, and is concerned with one man, John West. It traces the journey of this ruthless man from the middle working class in a Melbourne suburb to a position of influence, power, and wealth.

Hawke, Rosanne **Mountain Wolf** **F HAW:R**
Razaq Nadeem lives in the tribal area of Kala Dhaka, known as Black Mountain, in Pakistan. When an earthquake strikes the area, and his family is lost, Razaq is told by his dying father to flee to Rawalpindi, where his uncle Kamil lives. In the aftermath of the quake, all is chaos.

Kerr, Judith **When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit** **F KER:J**
When nine -year- old Anna and her family successfully escape from Nazi Germany to England in 1933, Anna does not realise what the life of a refugee will be like.

Kelleher, Victor **Parkland** **F KEL:V**
Parkland is a haven: a shelter for all who live there. Or so it would seem. For Cassie and her beloved friends Boxer and Ralph, it is the only home they know. It is a place where they are free to think of themselves as one people, despite what others might say. Why, then, should they rebel?

Keyes, Daniel **Flowers for Algernon** **F KEY:D**
Charlie Gordon, who desperately wants to be able to read and write, undergoes a brain operation which dramatically increases his intelligence. But can his emotional development keep pace with the intellectual? Can Charlie develop normal relationships with women? And how do the psychologists and psychiatrists view Charlie - as a man or as the subject of an experiment like the mouse Algernon?

Lahiri, Jhumpa **The Lowland** **F LAH:J**
From Subhash's earliest memories, at every point, his brother was there. In the suburban streets of Calcutta where they wandered before dusk and in the hyacinth-strewn ponds where they played for hours on end, Udayan was always in his older brother's sight. So close in age, they were inseparable in childhood and yet, as the years pass - as U.S tanks roll into Vietnam and riots sweep across India - their brotherly bond can do nothing to forestall the tragedy that will upend their lives.

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Lee, Harper **Go Set a Watchman** **F LEE:H**
Go Set A Watchman is set during the mid-1950s and features many of the characters from To Kill A Mockingbird some twenty years later. Scout has returned to Maycomb from New York to visit her father Atticus. She is forced to grapple with issues both personal and political as she tries to understand both her father's attitude toward society, and her own feelings about the place where she was born and spent her childhood.

Lee, Harper **To Kill a Mockingbird** **F LEE:H**
Also available as an eBook.
Scout and Jem Finch painfully lose their innocence when their lawyer father defends a negro charged with the rape of a white girl. This is an unforgivable crime in the deeply violent, prejudiced American South in the 1930s.

Levithan, David **Two Boys Kissing** **F LEV:D**
Seventeen-year-olds Craig and Harry are trying to set a new Guinness World Record for kissing. Around them, Ryan and Avery are falling in love, Neil and Peter are falling out of love, and Cooper might be somewhere, but he is also, dangerously, nowhere.

Lewitt, Maria **Come Spring: an Autobiographical Novel** **F LEW:M**
The Second World War in Warsaw, Poland engulfs a young Jewish girl and her family. Outside the concentration camps and outside the ghetto, she and her family survive on false papers and hide four of their close relatives in the cellar.

Lowry, Lois **Number the Stars** **F LOW:L**
When Ellen Rosen's family is threatened with 'relocation' in occupied Denmark during WWII, she is taken in by the Johansen family who pretend that she is one of their own children. The Danish Resistance later helps the entire Rosen family to safety in Sweden.

Marsden, John **Tomorrow When the War Began** **F MAR:J**
Also available as an eBook.
Seven teenagers take a weekend trip to Hell, an isolated valley. Upon their return they find their families have disappeared and their small country community has been invaded by a foreign army.

Masson, Sophie **Emilio** **F MAS:S**
For high-school student Emilio Garcia Lopez, it's an ordinary school day. But that evening the knock on the door announcing the arrival of his police-officer cousin Juanita, flanked by a tall man in the uniform of the Federal Police, will turn his ordinary day into the beginning of a long nightmare.

Mattingley, Christobel **No Gun for Asmir** **F MAT:C**
War has come to Asmir's home in Sarajevo. Asmir has seen his friends wounded in the park where they used to play. He hears bombs exploding and guns firing. Then one day he is torn from his father, his home and everything he has known and becomes a refugee.

McVeity, Jan **Where are the Billabongs?** **F MCV:J**
A group of city kids with few survival skills and an inability to trust or understand anyone who is different are stranded in the Australian Alps. With no food or shelter, they must struggle to learn enough about the land and each other to survive.

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Mitchell, Jane **A Dangerous Crossing** **F MIT:J**
Ghalib doesn't want to leave his home. But Syria has become too dangerous, and his family has no choice but to flee. Together they start out on a terrible journey that leads them through dark and dangerous places.

Moloney, James **Dougy** **F MAL:J**
"Aborigines get special treatment," some of the angry white people say when Dougy's sister Gracey is picked for the state athletics championships. The championships change everything for Gracey and trigger dramatic events in the town too: black and white relations reach explosion.

Morgan, Michelle **Racing the Moon** **F MOR:M**
Joe Riley has to be a little creative to make pocket money in his rough and tumble neighbourhood of Glebe. He has watched his dad keep ahead of the law and he's sure that he can too, gambling on billy-cart races and selling farm-fresh eggs from his uncle's chook farm. But when his parents send him off to St Bartholomew's - a Catholic boarding school, his carefree existence is a thing of the past. Homesick and lonely, he meets the darker side of human nature and finds himself at odds with the school, especially Brother Felix.

Morrison, Rob **The Secret Sandwich** **F MOR:R**
This is a moving and dramatic story of a young boy's friendship with an outsider – a man who has shunned convention and 'taken the robe' as a Buddhist monk. The bigotry and confusion felt by the people of the small country town lead to tragedy, but the boy's constant loyalty and friendship prevail.

Mulligan, Andy **Trash** **F MUL:A**
Also available as an eBook.
In an unnamed country three dumpsite boys make a living picking through the mountains of garbage on the outskirts of a large city. One unlucky-lucky day, Raphael finds something very special and very mysterious. So mysterious that he decides to keep it, even when the city police offer a handsome reward for its return. That decision brings with it terrifying consequences.

Naidoo, Beverley **The Other Side of Truth** **F NAI:B**
A tragedy – and a terrible loss for Sade and her younger brother, Femi, children of an outspoken Nigerian journalist, means they have to leave their country immediately. Everything must be done in secret. But what will happen when they reach England?

Newth, Mette **The Abduction** **F NEW:M**
Norwegian traders in the 16th century arrive on the shores of Greenland and abduct 16 year-old Osuqo and her fiancé and force them into a world of humiliation and degradation.

Nicholson, William **The Wind Singer** **F NIC:W**
In the city state of Aramanth, exams are everything. When Kestrel dares to rebel, the Chief Examiner humiliates her father and sentences the whole family to the harshest punishment. Desperate to save them, Kestrel learns the secret of the wind singer and she and her twin brother, Bowman, set out on a terrifying journey to the source of the evil that grips Aramanth.

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Obioma, Chigozie An Orchestra of Minorities F OBI:C

In this contemporary twist on Homer's Odyssey, in the mythic style of the Igbo literary tradition, Chigozie Obioma weaves a heart-wrenching epic about the tension between destiny and determination.

Orwell, George Nineteen Eighty-Four F ORW:G

Also available as an eBook.

Thought Police. Big Brother. Orwellian. These words have entered our vocabulary because of George Orwell's classic dystopian novel. The story of one man's nightmare odyssey as he pursues a forbidden love affair through a world ruled by warring states and a power structure that controls not only information but also individual thought and memory.

Paton, Alan Ah, But Your Land is Beautiful F PAR:A

Set in South Africa in the 1950's this novel illustrates the discrimination and racial prejudice suffered by non-whites in the apartheid era.

Phipson, Joan Hit and Run F PHI:J

A spoiled youth drives a Ferrari at breakneck speed through the town and hits a baby carriage. On the run, he meets up with Constable Sutton with whom he forms an ambivalent relationship which changes the course of his life.

Pittaway, Kal Falling Into Place F PIT:K

Austin is a teenage boy who has gained a bad reputation for rebellious acts against the law. He goes to a farm for rehabilitation. The man in charge of this new experimental establishment at the farm, Mr Bolt, leaves much to be desired. Austin has to come to terms with himself and look forward to the rest of his life.

Reaching Out : Messages of Hope 303.372 REA

An anthology of short stories, extracts, artwork and poems donated by some of Mariah Kennedy's greatest role models, who felt similarly in their wish to highlight social injustice throughout the world.

Reid Banks, Lynne Broken Bridge F REI:L

Now grown-up, Lesley has two children of her own – 16 year old Nimrod and 14 year old Nili. They are involved in a murder when two men jump out of a door and stab one of the teenagers while they are walking through the Occupied Territories. The other is spared but must face horrendous choices and consequences.

Roy, Thomas A. The Vengeance of the Dolphin F ROY: T

Jimmy, the son of the station owner, discovers a hidden Aboriginal message among his grandfather's papers. When he shows it to his mother, he unwittingly cuts across Aboriginal taboos and almost causes her death. With his friend, Tajuria, he undergoes a magic ceremony to finalise an old mystery in his own family to pay back for an old crime.

Rhue, Morton The Wave F RHU:M

Nazi-style system sweeps through an American high school when a classroom experiment goes too far.

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Scutt, Craig **Mary Bryant : the Impossible Escape** **364.15 BRY**
At 20 years old, Mary Bryant was sentenced to death for highway robbery, and left to rot in prison. Eventually she was transported to the wilderness of New South Wales. When the first Fleet arrived at Sydney Cove in 1788, a life of misery and servitude awaited her. Three years later Mary escaped.

Silvera, Adam **More Happy Than Not** **F SIL:A**
After enduring his father's suicide, his own suicide attempt, broken friendships, and more in the Bronx projects, Aaron Soto, sixteen, is already considering the Leteo Institute's memory-alteration procedure when his new friendship with Thomas turns to unrequited love.

Spinelli, Jerry **Maniac Magee** **F SPI:J**
This is the story of a boy who can outrun dogs, run off the best pitcher in the neighbourhood and tie knots no one can undo. "Kid's gotta be a maniac" folks say. It's also the story of how this boy, "Maniac" Magee confronts racism in a small town, tries to find a home where there is none and attempts to soothe tensions between rival factors on the tough side of town.

Solzhenitsyn, Aleksandr **One day in the life of Ivan Denisovich** **F SOL:A**
This brilliant novel describes a single prisoner's day in a remote Siberian labour camp. The depravation and hardship is hard to comprehend.

Stork, Francisco **Marcelo in the Real World** **F STO:F**
Marcelo Sandoval hears music no one else can hear--part of the autism-like impairment no doctor has been able to identify. But the summer after his junior year, his father demands that Marcelo work in his law firm's mailroom in order to experience "the real world." It's a picture he finds in a file -- a picture of a girl with half a face -- that truly connects him with the real world: its suffering, its injustice, and what he can do to fight.

Stowe, Harriet Beecher **Uncle Tom's Cabin or, Life Among the Lowly** **F STO:H**
Written in 1852 this story of slavery and redemption in the deep south of America brought the Abolitionists' message to the White House and beyond. No woman before or since Harriet Beecher Stowe has so successfully written a novel designed to motivate America to act on a major issue of the day.

Sunderland, Alan **Refugee : the Diary of Ali Ismail : Woomera, 2001-2002** **F SUN:A**
Ali Ismail is a refugee. In Afghanistan, the Taliban have murdered his father, and so Ali's uncle smuggles him out of the country to safety - to Australia. But instead of finding freedom, Ali is taken to a detention centre in the outback.

Swindells, Robert **Smash** **F SWI:R**
Ashraf and Steve are friends. But as new development plans for the town bring out underlying currents of racism, the boys are gradually forced to take opposing sides. As racial tensions finally explode, Steve and Ash are swept along on a tide of increasing violence.

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Watson, James **No Surrender: a Story of Angola** **F WAT:J**
Set in Angola at the time of free elections in Namibia, it brings together the stories of two young people: Malenga Nakale, the daughter of a local political figure, and Hamish, a white South African deserter. Both are captured by a band of guerrillas and grow in understanding of each other under the threat of death.

Watson, James **Talking in Whispers** **F WAT:J**
Set in Chile, depicts the realities of military dictatorship and pays homage to the courage of those who continue to struggle for human rights. Sixteen-year-old Andres becomes a wanted man, but finds friends who chance their lives to help him.

Yousafzai, Malala **I am Malala : the Girl Who Stood Up For Education and Was Shot By the Taliban** **920 YOU:L**
When the Taliban took control of the Swat Valley, one girl spoke out. Malala Yousafzai refused to be silenced and fought for her right to an education. On Tuesday October 9, 2012, she almost paid the ultimate price.
