2015 Amelia Bloomer List

Since 2002, the Amelia Bloomer Project has created an annual booklist of the best feminist books for young readers, ages birth through 18. We are part of the Feminist Task Force (/srrt/feminist-task-force) of the Social Responsibilities Round Table of the American Library Association.

Introduction

"Because I Am a Girl"

Plan Canada's Manifesto “Because I Am a Girl...” offers a glimpse at the diverse experiences of girls and women globally. Similarly, each of the selections on this year’s Amelia Bloomer Project List engages readers wherever they are on their own feminist journey. These books offer guidance and inspiration for individual and collective progress.

The world’s young feminists understand that Every Day is Malala Day. Words and photographs in this title capture the joy and determination of their generation’s most famous feminist, Malala Yousafzai. In A Pair of Twins, a girl in an Indian royal court challenges the long-held tradition of elephant trainers being male and with the queen’s assistance, proves she is the best person for the exalted position of Chief Mahout.

In Hidden, older readers will meet Alfhilde, an Irish princess who escapes enslavement and through intelligence and cunning reclaims her life and the ability to determine her future. Readers will find this story not only exciting but also useful for finding their own authentic voice. A Woman in the House (and Senate) celebrates America’s female politicians who have brought their powerful voices to the forefront of American politics.

Axie, the protagonist of My Notorious Life, experiences a childhood marked by abandonment and grinding poverty. Rather than being beaten down by these challenges, she uses them to shape her adult life. She champions women’s reproductive rights while endeavoring to make a safer future for her daughter. Through eerie yet expressive poems, Poisoned Apples deconstructs familiar Western fairy tales, subverting them into a sometimes nightmarish but ultimately truthful and empowering narrative for young women.

As girls determine their own futures, they can look to this list for examples of women across a spectrum of professions including the arts, politics, and business. Leontyne Price stood on the shoulders of Marian Anderson, and in turn paved the way for future opera singers such as Kathleen Battle and Jessye Norman. Dolly Parton made her name through music yet is also a fierce advocate for social justice and a sophisticated businesswoman. Reshma Saujani provides a guide for young women who will be our future leaders, with special attention paid toward politics, technology, and business. That her roadmap includes mentoring and women working together leads us back to Plan Canada’s Manifesto that “Because I am a Girl...I Can Change the World.” (McCarney, Rosemary. With Jen Albaugh and Plan International. Because I Am A Girl: I Can Change the World. 2014.)

Committee

The Amelia Bloomer Project is part of the Feminist Task Force of the American Library Association’s Social Responsibility Round Table. The 2015 Amelia Bloomer Project Committee Members are: Linda Parsons, co-chair, The Ohio State University, Marion (OH); Joy Worland, co-chair, Kellogg-Hubbard Library (VT); Ann Bever, Dallas Public Library (TX); Katelyn Browne, Capital City Public Charter School (D.C.); Katie Bruce, Princeton Public Library (NJ); Emily Fear, Sewickley Public Library (PA); Katie Mitchell, Saline District Library (MI); Lalitha Nataraj, Escondido Public Library (CA); Gesse Stark-Smith, Multnomah County Library (OR).
* An asterisk denotes a Top Ten title.

**Early Readers**

**Fiction**


Born minutes apart, a young girl and her beloved elephant break gender roles in India by becoming the first female elephant trainer and lead elephant.

**Nonfiction**


Born with saltwater in her veins in the early 19th century, Ellen grows up to be a ship’s navigator, using her skills to travel the world and set speed records.


Dolly Parton’s talent, perseverance, and good business sense have led her to become a successful singer, actress, and philanthropist.


Girls from around the world interpret Malala Yousafzai’s work and express their own ideas about equality, independence, and opportunity.


Many famous and less-well-known women helped shape the early days of the United States with their industry, creativity and bravery.


In a world dominated by men, Melba Liston became a renowned jazz trombonist.


Leontyne Price overcame racism and hate to become a famed international opera star. Her legacy served as inspiration for African-American female vocalists such as Jessye Norman and Grace Bumbry.


Malala and Iqbal’s stories show younger readers that women’s and children’s rights are global issues.

**Middle Grade**

**Fiction**


In this Victorian farce, seven misfit girls conceal the murder of their headmistress in order to live life as sisters
in a feminine utopia.


**Nonfiction**


*Yousafzai, Malala. With Patricia McCormick. I Am Malala: How One Girl Stood Up for Education and...*
Malala Yousafzai, an international advocate for human rights and girls’ education, retells the story of her own education, activism, and attempted murder.

### Young Adult

### Fiction


Although Fatima’s life choices have been limited by her status and family, she strives for more than an arranged marriage.


Escaping a life of farm work, Alice finds purpose in advocating for female worker’s rights at the Lowell cotton mill.


After Ava is cast out of her deep-space patriarchal society, she discovers a world where women have freedoms she never dreamed possible.


Farrin and Sadira fall in love but post-revolutionary Iran’s draconian laws declare homosexuality deviant and punishable by death. The girls soon find they can trust no one but themselves.


After graduating from their high school’s special education program, Quincy and Biddy learn to trust each other as they navigate an often dangerous world.


Willow risks her life to pursue freedom from slavery and an arranged marriage.


This collection of poems twists and shatters the fairy tale image of women, girls, beauty, love, gender and body.


Glory, haunted by her mother’s suicide, is profoundly uncertain about life after graduation—until she starts having startling visions of a future where women’s rights are lost.


After growing up in poverty, Axie becomes a medical practitioner and businesswoman who insists on providing 19th century women with reproductive choice.


Fourteen-year-old Johanna Morrigan reinvents herself as music critic Dolly Wilde, gleefully eviscerating bands for a nationally-known music magazine while attempting to navigate the complications love, sex, and family.


With the help of new friends, feminist zines, and the punk scene, tomboy Liz Prince discovers that her...
problem is not who she is, but society’s restrictive gender roles.


During Gabi’s senior year of high school, she navigates her family’s ideas about “good girls” and “bad girls” while figuring out who she wants to be.


Sisters Sohane and Djelila are as different as night and day, but both believe in a woman’s right to live as she chooses.


Maid-of-all-work Sally Heathcote finds a place in the suffrage movement of early 20th century Britain.


A school project forces two girls on opposite sides of segregation to work together and confront their sexuality.


Vicky dreams of being an artist but is told she is destined for marriage and motherhood. Can she find the courage to join the suffragettes and fight for freedom?


Teen Kamala Khan receives the powers of Ms. Marvel. With her neighborhood in danger, she figures out how to reconcile her own cultural identity with a superpowered alter ego.


Olivia dreams of women’s suffrage and obtaining a college education, but her father goes to extreme measures to “cure” her of these ideas.

**Nonfiction**


Women around the world rise up against oppression and brutality to empower themselves and control their future.


While many think of American feminism as only the suffrage movement, the women’s liberation movement, and recent activism, women’s movements have been transforming the nation throughout the last century.


Arrested for their feminist punk performances, members of Pussy Riot shed light on the political corruption and erosion of human rights in Russia.


Originally a symbol of the coming matriarchy, Wonder Woman has been both an icon and a source of

Raised as a boy, Ukmina makes the brave choice to live as a man and later becomes an advocate for the rights of women in Afghanistan.


Despite her unsuccessful bid for a congressional seat, Saujani advocates for increased female political and corporate engagement and encourages women to ignore advice to "wait their turn."


Sally Ride spent her life challenging expectations of what women could and should do, most notably by becoming the first American woman in space.