

Jane Addams Peace Association, Inc.

777 United Nations Plaza, 6th floor

New York, NY 10017-3521

Phone: (212) 682-8830 E-mail: japa@igc.org janeaddamspeace.org

Tura Campanella Cook – President

Linda B. Belle – Executive Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JANE ADDAMS CHILDREN'S BOOK AWARDS ANNOUNCED

APRIL 28, 2015... Recipients of the 2015 Jane Addams Children's Book Awards were announced today by the Jane Addams Peace Association.

Separate is Never Equal: Sylvia Mendez and her family's fight for desegregation, written and illustrated by Duncan Tonatiuh and published by Abrams Books for Young Readers is the winner in the Books for Younger Readers Category. ***The Girl From the Tar Paper School: Barbara Rose Johns and the advent of the Civil Rights Movement*** by Teri Kanefield and also published by Abrams Books for Young Readers is the winner in the Books for Older Readers Category. Both books tell true stories of young people's role in ending segregated schools before the Brown vs. School Board decision.

When Sylvia Mendez and her siblings enrolled in a new school system, they were told they must attend an inferior "school for Mexicans" because they were dirty, uneducated, and didn't speak English—despite that all of these things were demonstrably untrue. Sylvia's family worked tirelessly to unite the Latino community and bring an end to the segregation. *Separate is Never Equal* brings the story to life with illustrations done in a style meant to echo Mayan codex figures.

The Girl From the Tar Paper School tells the story of sixteen year old Barbara Rose Johns, a high school student who led a student walk out to protest racial inequality in the school system – the first public protest of its kind, and one of the cases that helped end segregation as part of Brown vs. the Board of Education.

Two Honor Books were named in the Younger Reader Category.

Whispering Town written by Jennifer Elvgren and illustrated by Fabio Santomauro and published by Kar-Ben Publishing tells the story of a young child in a small town in Nazi-occupied Denmark that united to smuggle Jews out of the country. Perfectly balancing the dread of the situation with the heroism of the townspeople, this book is an excellent introduction to the subject matter for young children.

Shooting at the Stars: The Christmas Truce of 1914 by John Hendrix, published by Abrams Books for Young Readers tells the story of the Christmas Truce in the trenches of WWI. The powerful story conveys the futility of war and the powerlessness of individual soldiers who are nonetheless united in eking out a moment of shared humanity amid chaos.

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Two books were named Honor Books in the Books for Older Children category.

Revolution by Deborah Wiles published by Scholastic Press uses a unique format that incorporates primary source documents and song lyrics from the 1960's with more conventional novel narration to tell the story of Freedom Summer through the eyes of young people whose worlds are turning upside down. Primarily told through the voice of Sunny, a young white girl, depth and perspective are added to the narrative through Raymond, a black boy, and a third-person narrator.

Silver People: Voices from the Panama Canal by Margarita Engle published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt is a complex book that uses free verse poetry to give a voice to the many lives touched by the creation of the Panama Canal including the workers from the Caribbean, indigenous people, employees from the U.S., and even the jungle itself, conveying a story of profound injustice and inequality – and a fight for basic human rights.

Since 1953, the Jane Addams Children's Book Award annually acknowledges books published in the U.S. during the previous year. Books commended by the Award address themes or topics that engage children in thinking about peace, justice, world community and/or equality of the sexes and all races. The books also must meet conventional standards of literacy and artistic excellence.

A national committee chooses winners and honor books for younger and older children. Members of the 2015 Jane Addams Children's Book Award Committee are Marianne Baker (VA), Kathryn Bruce (TN), Ann Carpenter (chair, MA), Julie Olsen Edwards (CA), Susan Freiss (WI), Lani Gerson (MA), Jacqui Kolar (IL), Lauren Mayer (WA), Beth McGowan (IL), Mary Napoli (PA), Heather Palmer (MN), Ilza Garcia (TX), Sonja Cherry-Paul (NY). Regional reading and discussion groups of all ages participated with many of the committee members throughout the jury's evaluation and selection process.

The 2015 Jane Addams Children's Book Awards will be presented on Friday, October 16, 2015 in New York City. Details about the award event and about securing winner and honor book seals are available from the Jane Addams Peace Association (JAPA). Contact JAPA Executive Director Linda B. Belle, 777 United Nations Plaza, 6th Floor, NY, NY 10017-3521; by phone 212.682.8830; and by email japa@igc.org.

For additional information about the Jane Addams Children's Book Awards and a complete list of books honored since 1953, as well as a poster and bookmark featuring this year's winners, see janeaddamspeace.org. -End-