

Social studies and children's literature: diversity and inclusion through picture books.

Kate Ferguson-Patrick (Media Editor)

In this edition, Debbie Bradbery, a lecturer and PhD student from the University of Newcastle, Australia has reviewed two picture books from the Children's Book Council Notable Social Studies books for young children 2015 list. One of them, *Because They Marched: The People's Campaign For Voting Rights That Changed America* by Russell Freedman, links nicely to a reasonably movie *Selma*, reviewed below.

Selma review

This film Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (David Oyelowo) and others set out on an epic march from Selma to Montgomery, which resulted in President Lyndon Johnson signing the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Although the Civil Rights Act of 1964 legally desegregated the South, it had made very little difference in certain areas including Alabama city where discrimination was still rampant making it very difficult for blacks to register to vote. In 1965, the city became the battleground in the fight for suffrage.

The rising British star David Oyelowo makes an outstanding performance and watching the harrowing film on a recent trip to a conference I couldn't help but think how important it is for all history teachers to show this film. I was also disappointed to hear that despite it being nominated for an Oscar it didn't win (except for the original song in the movie 'Glory'). In December 2014, "Selma" received a [Freedom of Expression Award from the National Board of Review](#).

Two books have been selected for review from the Children's Book Council Notable Social Studies books for young children 2015 list. *The selection committee looks for books that emphasize human relations, represent a diversity of groups and are sensitive to a broad range of cultural experiences, present an original theme or a fresh slant on a traditional topic, are easily readable and of high literary quality, and have a pleasing format and, when appropriate, illustrations that enrich the text.*

<http://www.cbcbooks.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Notable-Social-Studies-Trade-Books-for-Young-People-2015-Preview.pdf>

Both books, *Migrant* and *Because they marched: the peoples campaign for voting rights that changed America*, both from the third to fifth grade selections, are commendable additions to this list and have been reviewed expertly by Debbie Bradbery, a lecturer in Primary Education at the University of Newcastle, who teaches in the children's literacy and literature area and who is also completing a PhD to clarify key issues encountered by teachers when integrating literacy and Global Education for sustainable futures in the early years of teaching. For more information on Debbie's work go to <http://global-education.net/debbie-bradbery/>

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The 2016 list is also available at: <http://www.cbcbooks.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Notable-Social-Studies-Trade-Books-for-Young-People-2016-Preview3.pdf>

All lists have books suitable from Kindergarten to 12th grade.

The following link also provides a great list of Australian picture books for use by teachers in the social studies area. <http://www.australia.gov.au/about-australia/australian-story/austn-childrens-books> and Australia also has a list of shortlisted books which has some great titles which can be linked to social studies. *Established in 1945, the Children's Book Council of Australia (CBCA) is a not for profit, volunteer run, organisation which aims to engage the community with literature for young Australians. The CBCA presents annual awards to books of literary merit, for outstanding contribution to Australian children's literature.*

<http://cbca.org.au/ShortList-2015.htm>

<https://cbca.org.au/shortlist-2016> and also <https://cbca.org.au/notables-2017>