

Carter G. Woodson

B O O K A W A R D S

The National Council for the Social Studies established the Carter G. Woodson Book Awards in 1974 as a result of efforts of the Racism and Social Justice Committee (today the Academic Freedom, Equity and Social Justice Committee), which focused on the educational needs of minority students and guided NCSS in all matters related to equity issues.

The purpose of this award is to encourage the writing, publishing, and dissemination of outstanding social science books for young readers at the elementary (K-6), middle (5-8) and secondary (7-12) grade levels that treat topics related to ethnic minorities and relations sensitively and accurately. NCSS gives wide recognition to and directly stimulates authors and publishers by sponsoring the Carter G. Woodson Book Awards.

Dr. Carter G. Woodson founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, and in 1926 originated “Negro History Week,” which was observed every year during the second week in February and later became “Black History Month,” to highlight the achievements of African Americans. He received his Ph.D. in history from Harvard University, and, among many other black history books, he wrote the seminal volume on education titled *Miseducation of the Negro*.

The award is presented every year at the NCSS annual conference. Committee members have written reviews on each of the winning books. Enjoy, and share these books with the students in your classroom.

*Cynthia E. Patton-Johnson,
2006 Carter G. Woodson Awards Committee Chair*

2006 Carter G. Woodson Award Book: Elementary Level

Let Them Play, by Margot Theis Raven, illustrated by Chris Ellison. Chelsea, Mich.: Sleeping Bear Press.
Reviewed by Denise B. Geier, elementary curriculum director, Middletown Township Public Schools, New Jersey.

Elementary students love stories about baseball, and this moving story by Margot Theis Raven offers an excellent entry point for teaching about discrimination and its effects.

Fourteen boys are excited about being selected for the all-black 1955 Cannon Street Little League team from segregated South Carolina. Problems begin when the other 61 South Carolina Little League teams, all composed only of whites, withdraw from the league. Before long, the Cannon Street team is the only Little League team left in the South. As the All-Star team from their state, the boys are invited to Williamsport, Pennsylvania, for the official Little League Baseball World Series. They are allowed to take the field to practice, but never to play since they had never officially won their state’s tournament. Despite the crowd

chants imploring officials to “Let them play,” the boys were not permitted to do so. They returned home disappointed, but hopeful.

An epilogue explains that on August 16, 2002, 14 men, now almost 60 years old, returned to Williamsport, Pennsylvania,



and were presented the South Carolina State Championship Banner. The men are pictured and named on the final page holding the banner. The expressive paint-

ings by Chris Ellison add significantly to the moving text, illustrating the emotions felt by the players and the adults involved.

Let Them Play is an excellent tool for supporting the NCSS strands including **I CULTURE; II TIME, CONTINUITY, AND CHANGE; AND V INDIVIDUALS, GROUPS, AND INSTITUTIONS.**

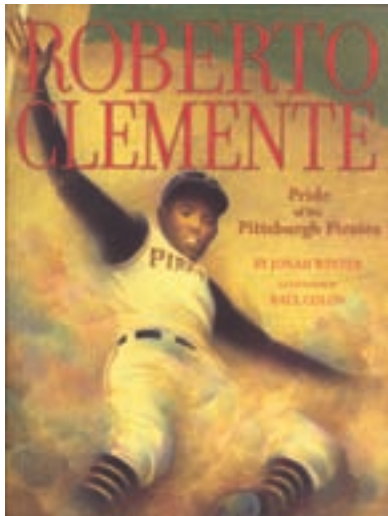
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2006 Carter G. Woodson Honor Book: Elementary Level

Roberto Clemente: Pride of the Pittsburgh Pirates, by Jonah Winter, illustrated by Raúl Colón. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers.
Reviewed by Dena G. Beeghly, West Chester University, Pennsylvania.

Using spare, poetic text, Jonah Winter describes the evolution of baseball great Roberto Clemente. As a young boy in Puerto Rico, Clemente played ball with makeshift equipment on a muddy field. As a man, he played in famous ballparks using state-of-the-art equipment. Despite the discrimination he encountered, he played his heart out in every game. He believed that if a person did not try as

hard as he could, he was wasting his life. Clemente's heart and commitment extended far beyond the baseball diamond. His humanitarian efforts are as legendary as his baseball statistics. He was committed to helping those less



fortunate, and died doing just that. This depiction of one of baseball's greatest is a "home run" of a biography.

NCSS strand: **IV INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT AND IDENTITY**

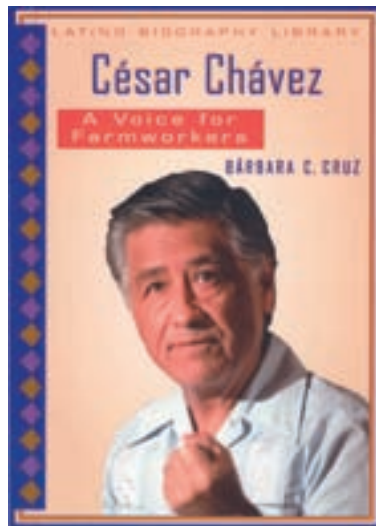
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2006 Carter G. Woodson Award Book: Middle Level

César Chávez: A Voice for Farmworkers, by Bárbara C. Cruz. Berkeley Heights, N.J.: Enslow Publisher's, Inc.

Reviewed by Patrick Westcott, assistant professor, Rowan University, Glassboro, New Jersey.

This book recounts César Chávez's tireless life of human rights advocacy and is a must for any school library. Chávez was born into a middleclass Mexican American household in Arizona, but his family's fortunes soured during the Great Depression, prompting a move to California. There they were treated like second-class citizens and endured appalling working conditions. A stint in the U.S. Navy provided no escape from racism. Chávez was arrested for sitting in the whites-only section of a segregated movie theater. After military service, he married and settled in a San Jose slum, where he met Father McDonnell, who

influenced his political activism. He joined a Latino civil rights group, called Community Service Organization, and worked on citizenship issues and to get Mexican Americans out to vote. Although Chávez became the executive director, he grew frustrated with the organization's opposition to the unionization of farm workers. Using his life savings, he formed



the National Farmworkers Association (NFWA). In the sixties, the NFWA joined thousands of Filipino farm workers in a strike that lasted five years. Chávez then led strikers on a long protest march to Sacramento, drawing national attention to the farm workers' plight. This led to the first union contract between growers and farm workers. Chávez was honored with the Martin Luther King, Jr., Nonviolent Peace Prize and the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

NCSS strand: **V INDIVIDUALS, GROUPS, AND INSTITUTIONS.**

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2006 Carter G. Woodson Honor Book: Middle Level

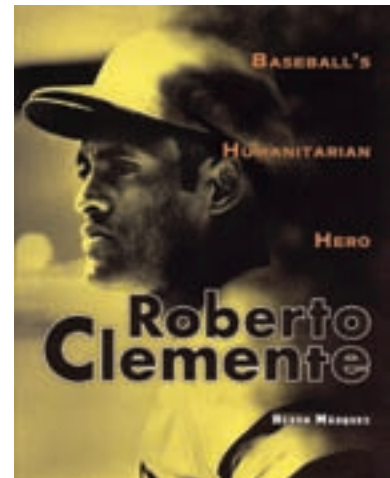
Roberto Clemente: Baseball's Humanitarian Hero, by Herón Márquez. Minneapolis, Minn.: Carolrhoda Books.

Reviewed by Kathryn Clark, classroom teacher, Varnum School, Lowell Public Schools, Massachusetts.

This trailblazer biography follows the life and death of Roberto Clemente, a

phenomenal baseball player and a passionate humanitarian. Clemente's amazing athletic ability and dedication helped him overcome obstacles to achieve his dream of playing baseball.

As a child, Clemente's parents knew that if he was not in school, he was playing baseball, using balled up rags and tree branches for equipment. Eventually, the



young Clemente went to work with his father in the sugarcane fields of Puerto Rico, but he could never forget baseball. Whenever he got the chance, he played. By the time Clemente was 16, several local teams were pursuing him. Over the years, Clemente moved quickly up through the ranks in baseball. Tragically, after a career spanning two decades, his life ended abruptly in 1972 when a plane he had chartered to bring supplies to earthquake victims in Nicaragua crashed into the ocean on New Year's Eve.

NCSS strand: **IV INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT AND IDENTITY**

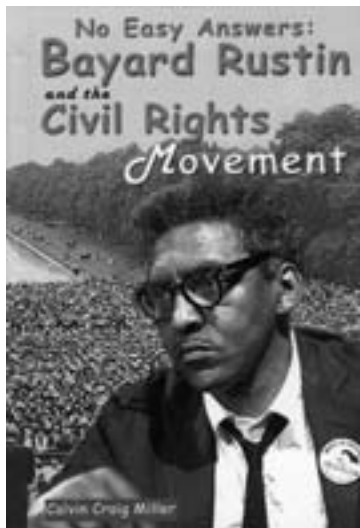
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2006 Carter G. Woodson Award Book: Secondary Level

No Easy Answers: Bayard Rustin and the Civil Rights Movement, by Calvin Craig Miller. Greensboro, N.C.: Morgan Reynolds Publishing, Inc.

Reviewed by Amy W. Turnbaugh, elementary social studies consultant, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, Raleigh, North Carolina.

From his earliest arrest as a teen for sitting in the "white section" of a local movie

theater to his role in organizing the 1963 March on Washington, Rustin's quest to end racial discrimination is documented in *No Easy Answers: Bayard Rustin and the Civil Rights Movement*.



Mentored by A. Philip Randolph and advisor to Martin Luther King, Jr., Rustin was a critical organizer of numerous civil rights endeavors including the Journey of Reconciliation (bus rides through the South to challenge Jim Crow laws) and the now-famous March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. Rustin not only fought racial discrimination, he was saddled with the stigma of being gay. His sexuality alienated him from many in the civil rights movement and relegated him to “invisible man” status. However, his belief in the cause of freedom forced him to continue the fight for equality.

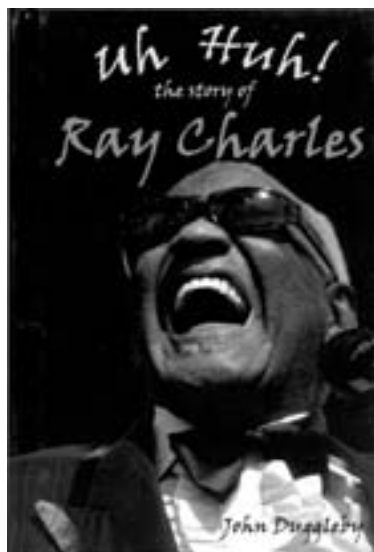
Through civil disobedience, stemming from the Quaker belief in pacifism and Gandhi's teachings on resistance without violence, Rustin played an integral part in championing civil change.

A timeline and list of websites for further study are included, as well as a bibliography and index. NCSS strands include: **III PEOPLE, PLACES, AND ENVIRONMENTS**; **IV INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT AND IDENTITY**; **X CIVIC IDEALS AND PRACTICES**.

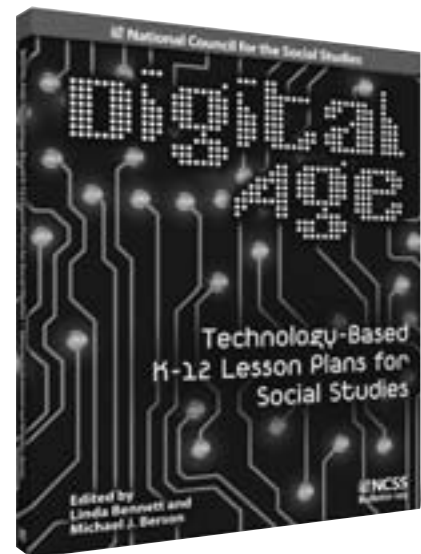
2006 Carter G. Woodson Honor Book: Secondary Level

Uh Huh! The Story of Ray Charles, by John Dugleby. Greensboro, N.C.: Morgan Reynolds Publishing, Inc. Reviewed by Carrie Sorensen, professor, Saginaw Valley State University, Saginaw, Michigan.

Who among us has never heard the soulful sound of a Ray Charles musical arrangement? His phenomenal career spanned 50 years and included a



diversity of musical genres rarely seen from one artist. His path to success is an extraordinary tale, chronicled eloquently in this book by John Dugleby. By the age of 19, through shrewd dealing with record executives, Charles, blind since childhood, was producing his own records and negotiating rights to retain ownership of his own recording masters—something no other artist had done before. Dugleby describes Charles's many lifetime triumphs and tragedies. Students may be personally motivated by this story as they examine the ways Charles overcame physical and social obstacles. Dugleby's book could provide an excellent structure from which to examine the social issues that impacted Charles's life from his childhood through his death in 2004. NCSS strands: **I CULTURE**; **II TIME, CONTINUITY, AND CHANGE**; **IV INDIVIDUALS, GROUPS, AND INSTITUTIONS**.



Digital Age: Technology-Based K-12 Lesson Plans for Social Studies

Linda Bennett and Michael J. Berson, editors
NCSS Bulletin No.105, 200 pp. 2007

Exemplary K-12 social studies lessons that infuse technology are the focus of this bulletin. At least one of the authors is a classroom teacher in the majority of the lessons presented. The lessons are based on the NCSS standards. Each lesson includes links with NETS-S (National Educational Technology Standards) and suggests technology applications appropriate for the grade level. In addition, the bulletin includes a section on tools and techniques concerning classroom management, Internet safety, software, images, and podcasting.

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