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Review of Hearing All the Voices: Multicultural Books for Adolescents

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HEARING ALL THE VOICES: MULTICULTURAL BOOKS FOR ADOLESCENTS

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HEARING ALL THE VOICES: MULTICULTURAL BOOKS FOR ADOLESCENTS. Mary Ann Darby and Miki Pryne. *Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2002, 254 pp., ISBN 0-8108-4058-8.*

Multiculturalism is currently a popular concept in education circles. Although several bibliographies of multicultural literature have been published, this one is unique for several reasons. It uses a different definition for multiculturalism that includes more than the usual multiethnic literature. The authors have expanded the definition to include "cultures" that deal with nontraditional families, with major illnesses, and with other physical and mental challenges.

Another difference is that the books included in *Hearing All the Voices* are for a very narrow population—eleven to fifteen year-olds. This is a group that can identify with the problems-based literature that has been included. In fact, the book grew out of the authors' experience in trying to find books that these students would enjoy reading.

This book is written with teachers in mind as much as for librarians. It includes information on using "literary circles" (sometimes called literature circles) in the classroom. It also includes ideas for individual and group projects to include in a portfolio of information about the book that the student would complete.

After discussing how to choose and use books with students, the authors provide annotations for about 500 books. The annotations are brief and tell a little of the story, often with a thought-provoking question. Reading levels and interest levels are included. The books are listed in alphabetical order by title; the problem with this arrangement is that books by the same author are not near each other, and there is no note that another book by the author is included.

The appendixes are a helpful addition. They give lists of books for literary circles, read-alouds, story collections, and reading across the curriculum. A list of science fiction and fantasy

books is also included. The Author Index gives access to all of the books by an author, and the Culture Index lists the books according to the ethnic group or problem that the book describes.

This is more a book of "favorites" or "good reads" for this age group than a book of multicultural titles. By expanding the definition of multicultural, the authors have tried to do too many things. A better and more complete list of current multicultural books can be found in *Many Peoples, One Land* (Greenwood, 2001). Although *Hearing All the Voices* is still a useful source for problem literature for adolescents and the indexes and appendixes are helpful, calling it a book of multicultural titles is a stretch.

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