Amelia Bloomer Project 2012 List

Introduction

“One of my favorite phobias is that girls, especially those whose tastes aren't routine, often don't get a fair break... It has come down through the generations, an inheritance of age-old customs which produced the corollary that women are bred to timidity." – Amelia Earhart

As we come to the end of a year emphasizing the intersection of feminism and social activism in the world around us, the defiance shown by the women featured in books on this list hold particular relevance. From a female Jesus to Victoria Donda, the youngest member of the Argentine Congress, these women and girls reflect the complexities of the female experience and the increased awareness of strong women and girls throughout history and around the world. Courageous choices include those made by women committed to insane asylums for excessive book reading, women using their bodies as art to express their rage, saving lives and standing up to institutional injustice, and trying on new identities under challenging circumstances.

Women claim their voices through the confluence of revolutionary politics and artistic expression. Loud and self-possessed, they would not be silenced.

Sometimes whimsical yet always substantive fictional characters and real-life heroines inspire us to consider new ideas. Even those bred to timidity refuse to accept limitations.

The Amelia Bloomer Project is part of the Feminist Task Force of the American Library Association’s Social Responsibility Round Table. The Amelia Bloomer Project committee members are Maureen McCoy (co-chair), Beth Olshewsky (co-chair), Jennie Law, Lalitha Nataraj, Linda Parsons, Kelly Rottmund, Angela Semifero, April Witteveen, and Joy Worland. For more information, please visit the Amelia Bloomer Project blog http://ameliabloomer.wordpress.com/

The Amelia Bloomer Project committee is proud to share this list to inform, entertain, and inspire:

Recommended Titles 2012

Young Readers

Fiction


Agnes plays rearguard for Stanford University women’s basketball team. Join her for the game against Berkeley in 1896 that sets in motion the future of women’s basketball.

Young Jane Goodall, brave and determined, dreams of living in Africa and helping the animals she loves... until the day her dream comes true.

Bad Bart and Mean Mo - two fierce pirate captains - compete to claim the title of “biggest, burliest, maddest, mightiest pirate in the world.”

Nonfiction

This uplifting picture book recounts Amelia Earhart’s sky-breaking solo trip across the Atlantic in 1932.

In spite of the challenges of a life divided between two-cultures, Red Bird persevered to become an accomplished musician and vocal activist for women’s and Native American rights.

Ida Lewis loved the sea since she was a girl. She worked hard at her family's lighthouse in Rhode Island and eventually became the courageous lighthouse keeper, saving many people from terrible fates.

After Susan B. Anthony visits for a suffrage tea, young Bessie, her family, and friends are inspired to campaign for an upcoming referendum in California. Will their efforts be enough to gain the vote?

Using disguises, falsified documents, and a network of courageous friends and trusted helpers, a young Polish social worker named Irena Sendler risks her life to help rescue thousands of Jewish children from World War II’s Warsaw Ghetto.

Emma Lazarus, whose best-known poem was engraved on the base of the Statue of Liberty, defied societal expectations for women in her day to become an accomplished poet and social justice activist.

Abby and Julia Smith fight against unfair property taxes on single women who could not vote in order to keep their cows and land.


Tillie Anderson dreams of riding a bicycle - but not like a lady! Tillie's dreams of the "speedy, scorchy, racy kind of riding" inspire her to create her own aerodynamic cycling clothes and to compete in the first women's cycling races.


Eliza Scidmore had grand adventures traveling around the world. She worked for 20 years to bring beautiful Japanese cherry trees to Washington DC, fighting every obstacle that men put across her path.

### Middle Readers

**Fiction**


Forced to flee Odessa to Shanghai on the cusp of World War II, Anya copes with family expectations and cultural restraints on girls.


With her father away to strike it rich in the California Gold Rush, Addie must cope with the aftermath of the illness and deaths of her “Mama” Emmaline and little brother, Jack. She finds hidden strengths within herself along with a fierce desire for independence.


In 1896, Clara and her suffragist mother accept a challenge to walk across the United States to win $10,000 and save their family farm. Their endurance and fortitude change perceptions of women’s abilities and fashion.


Raisa voyages to America to find her sister, embracing independence and newfound possibilities in spite of the trials and tragedies she encounters, including the monumental Triangle Factory fire.


When Ferris arrives in town, Delly gets an unexpected “surpresent,” RB uncovers a beautiful “hummin bin,” and Brud Kinney learns to play basketball “like nothin’ nobody’s ever seen.” This unlikely trio must navigate Ferris’ sadness, silence, and wild nature to discover what they have to offer each other.

Zita leaps into space and new territory for a female superhero when she travels to a doomed planet to save her friend Joseph from an alien abductor.

**Howe, James.** *Addie on the Inside.* 2011. 224p. Atheneum Books, $16.99 (978-1-4169-1384-9). Gr.5-8. Outspoken Addie struggles to define herself according to her own terms. She fights against bullying and oppression, and takes time to look inside herself to discover what it means to be a girl who’s a little bit different.


**Neumeier, Rachel.** *The Floating Islands.* 2011. 388p. Alfred A. Knopf, $16.99 (978-0-375-84705-9). Gr.5-10. Trei and Araené dream of unconventional futures that defy cultural expectations. They call upon their unique abilities and unite forces when the floating islands are attacked by a powerful rival country.


**Reedy, Trent.** *Words in the Dust.* 2011. 264p. Arthur A. Levine, $17.99 (978-0-545-26125-8). Gr.4-8. In a society that vilifies education for girls, Zulaika finds solace in the ancient poetry her mother loved. A developing friendship with her mother’s mentor and medical assistants from the American military combine with her growing knowledge to bring her new options and an expanded world view.


**Venkatraman, Padma.** *Island’s End.* 2011. 228p. G.P. Putnam’s Sons/ Penguin, $16.99 (978-0-399-25099-6). Gr. 4-up. Uido trains hard to become her tribe’s first female spiritual leader in generations. She learns ways to heal her people and saves them from a natural disaster, even when they doubt and ridicule her abilities because she’s a girl.

**Whelan, Gloria.** *Small Acts of Amazing Courage.* 2011. 224p. Simon & Schuster, $15.99 (978-1-442-40931-6). Gr. 4-7. Rosalind was raised in a British colony in India. Her curiosity evolves into a social conscience which she can no longer ignore.
Nonfiction

**Adams, Carly.** Queens of the Ice: They were Fast, They were Fierce, They were Teenage Girls. 2011. 131p. James Lorimer and Company, $9.95 (978-1-552-77720-6). Gr.5-8.
These hockey queens hip-check sexism in this fast paced profile of the Preston Rivulettes.

Meet courageous women and girls who risked their lives to help defeat the Nazis.

This vivid presentation features the changes in women's lives during this era.

Daringly dressed in the same clothes worn by male Pharaohs, Hatshepsut increased Egypt’s influence and wealth, established new trade routes, and left a lasting legacy of progress.

Strong and independent, Queen Isabella forged an equal marriage with Ferdinand and led Spain to become a world power.

**Bryant, Jill.** Dazzling Women Designers. 2010. Second Story Press, $10.95 (978-1-897187-82-1). Gr.5-up.
In a field traditionally dominated by men, these women designers have pioneered techniques and pursued artistic visions in many areas including: urban planning, interior design, automotive design, landscape architecture, and robotics.

This intriguing biography highlights feminist icon Amelia Earhart’s contribution to aviation history. Readers will discover interesting details about this adventurous spirit’s life and about the events surrounding her disappearance over the Pacific in 1937.

Throughout this time period, feminists raised awareness of injustices and inequities historically experienced by women.

Through vintage cartoons, photographs, and songs, women pedal toward equal rights.

146 dead! - Find out what led up to the Triangle Factory Fire, as well as meeting some truly dynamic women like Rose Schneiderman, Triangle Factory worker, union activist, and community organizer, and Francis Perkins, future Secretary of Labor, who conducts groundbreaking investigations for factory worker health and safety.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg provides steadfast support of women’s rights through the Women’s Rights Project and her work to provide justice for all on the Supreme Court.

Escaping an arranged marriage, Sarah Emma Edmonds, disguised as a man, supported herself by working as a Civil War nurse, soldier, spy, and postman. After revealing her secret, Edmonds was the first and only woman recognized as a veteran of the Civil War.

Stunning photographs and exciting new information about elephant behavior document the groundbreaking work of the “mother of all elephants,” smart, strong, and courageous Caitlin O’Connell.

At a time when women had not made an impact on the art world, O’Keeffe was the first woman to have a solo exhibition at New York’s Museum of Art. Her innovative life and work exemplify her determination and vision regarding the magic of art and existence.

Suffrage. Abolition. Temperance. These movements gave women access to public forums to advocate for their interests and demand equal treatment under the law.

Meet the women who dared to fight for better working conditions, voting rights, the right to own property, and to wear practical clothing in the years leading up to the Civil War.

Sonia Sotomayor charted her own course to fulfill her dream of becoming an investigative lawyer. Later, she overcame prejudice regarding her sex and race to become a justice on the Supreme Court.

From Trude Ederly's landmark swim across the English Channel in 1926 to Danica Patrick's 2008 win of an Indy Racing League series, this book tells the stories of pioneering women who broke down barriers to compete on equal ground.
Young Adult

Fiction

Reluctant debutante Agnes stumbles upon an ancient Egyptian mystery that may provide the opportunity for her to prove herself and create a different future.

What happens when the Miss Teen Dream contestants are stranded on a desert island? They subvert their beauty queen skills to survive and thwart an evil corporate plot.

Young Gittel’s close-knit ultra-Orthodox community seems comforting until she witnesses a horrific act of violence against her best friend Devory. Can she find the courage to speak up for her friend? More importantly, will her traditional community listen?

A mysterious outbreak of typhoid fever is sweeping New York. Could the city’s salvation rest with its most unlikely scientist, 16-year-old Prudence Galveski?

While Andi struggles with the impact of her brother’s death, she uncovers a surprising personal connection to history through Alex’s French Revolution Era diary. Both girls find liberation through the power of music.

Excessive book reading, nursing an ambition to be a doctor, and self-assertiveness in the face of male authority land seventeen-year-old Louisa in an insane asylum. Through sheer will power and small kindnesses, she maintains her sanity and reclaims her life.

Esme Rockett and her all-girl hip-hop posse are out to shake up their suburban Minneapolis neighborhood. Taking their cue from hip-hop through the ages, including their favorite female MCs, they use their music to confront sexism, homophobia, and racism, daring anyone in their path to doubt their skills.

Evie leaves homeschooling and agitates for social justice and free speech in her new public high school. When things get out of hand and everyone turns on her, Evie perseveres to right the wrongs she set in motion and stands firm in her convictions.

Hannah Payne awakens in a cell with chemically altered red skin, stigmatizing her choice to have an
abortion. She struggles to cope with her new reality and her increasing alienation from the world she previously inhabited.


**Levine, Ellen.** In Trouble. 2011. 200p. Carolrhoda Lab, $17.95 (978-0-761-36558-7). Gr.8-up. Jamie and Elaine are best friends, juniors in high school, and “in trouble,” a chilling account of a time (not so long ago) when pregnant teens were ostracized and unable to obtain reliable medical care.


**Okorafor, Nnedi.** Akata Witch. 2011. Viking/ Penguin. $17.99 (978-0-670-01196-4). Gr.7-up. Sunny seeks to discover herself and uncover her mystical connection to the mysterious Nigerian Leopard community. As her power grows, so does her ability to stand with her friends against an ancient and terrifying evil.

**Pierce, Tamora.** Mastiff. 2011. 608p. Random House, $18.99 (978-0-375-81470-9). Gr.8-up. In the course of her Hunt to recover a kidnapped prince, Beka Cooper challenges the belief systems of many in her world, and creates unexpected change that will rock the foundations of her society.

**Resau, Laura and Maria Virginia Farinango.** Queen of Water. 2011. 368p. Delacorte/Random House, $16.99. 978-0-385-73897-2. Gr.7-up. At age seven, Virginia is taken away from her small Ecuadorean village to work for a middle-class couple. She survives years of abuse, living on the hope that one day, she will achieve liberation.

**Roth, Veronica.** Divergent. 2011. 496p. Katherine Tegen Books, $17.99 (978-0-0620-2402-2). Gr.9-12. In this brutal tale set in futuristic Chicago, teens are placed into factions based on their “talents.” Tris chooses to leave the safety of her selfless Abnegation faction to join the Dauntless. Through willpower and strength, she transforms herself and determines her own future.


**Whitney, Daisy.** The Mockingbirds. 2010. 335p. Little, Brown and Company, $16.99 (978-0-3160-9053-7). Gr.10-12. Alex, a student at Themis Academy, is sexually assaulted during a date with a popular boy. When Alex’s plight is ignored by the faculty, she fights to reclaim her self-esteem and her voice through the justice of The Mockingbirds, a secret student society dedicated to righting wrongs.

Wolf, Kristen. The Way. 2011. 361p. Crown Publishers, $25.00 (978-0-307-71769-6). Gr.10-up. Anna lives in a world where a daughter is a disappointment and women are devalued. Forced to present herself as a boy to survive, she embarks on an unexpected journey, discovering the mystical powers of the Great Mother and becoming a prophet(ess) leading many people back to the Way.


Nonfiction


Colman, Penny. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony: A Friendship that Changed the World. 2011. 272p. Henry Holt/Macmillan, $18.99 (978-0-8050-8293-7). Gr.7-up. In 1851, a serendipitous meeting of these two women began a friendship that altered the course of women’s history.

Donda, Victoria. My Name is Victoria: The Extraordinary Story of one Woman’s Struggle to Reclaim Her True Identity. 2011. 272p. Other Press, $15.95 (978-1-590-51404-7). Gr.10-up. Currently the youngest member of the Argentine Congress, Victoria Donda discovered that her biological parents were desaparecidos, political prisoners murdered by the military dictatorship in Argentina. Victoria reclaims her identity and perpetuates their activist legacy.


When the Taliban take control of Kabul, life for the city’s people – especially its women – changes overnight. Enterprising and ingenious, Kamila finds a way for her family to survive and empowers other women to achieve economic independence.

Lloyd uses her own experience and strength to fight fiercely for the rights of sexually exploited girls.

Dismantle sexism! Honor Individualism! Take up Space! The Riot Grrl Movement of the 1990s invited every girl everywhere to realize that she is a radical feminist.

Mire survives genital mutilation with the courage to empower others as an activist to end this devastation around the globe.

Embark on a yearlong journey of care and compassion for yourself and others.

“If the first woman God ever made was strong enough to turn the world upside down all her one lone, all these together ought to be able to turn it right side up again.” This eloquent biography records the life of Sojourner Truth, an escaped slave, who evolved into one of the most influential crusaders for women’s rights, abolition, and racial equality in the 19th century.

This visually arresting look at Ana Mendieta’s life and work confronts attitudes about violence towards women in the academic and art worlds.

How do life changes impact the interpretation of iconic feminist texts? Do college students today respond to them and define feminism differently than their predecessors did? Staal gains insight into these questions when she returns to her alma mater and studies alongside current students.

Without instrumental change in workplace culture and government policy, true gender equality will never exist.