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**CANADIAN-JEWISH BOOKS**

**FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**

**BY**

**ANNE DUBLIN AND STEVEN BERGSON**

**2015**

**CRITERIA**

* Published 2000 – 2014
* Contains both Jewish and Canadian content
* Exemplifies literary and artistic merit

**NOTE**

We have indicated the awards a book received. However, we have not indicated if the book was a finalist or was shortlisted for an award.

**PICTURE BOOKS**

Fagan, Cary. *The Market Wedding*. Illus. by Regolo Ricci. Toronto: Tundra, 2000.

The fishmonger has fallen in love with the milliner, whose cart is across the street from his. But how is he to give his bride the elegant home she deserves? He has a brilliant plan: he will make their wedding so fine that surely their friends will shower them with the best of everything. His plan backfires, of course, but like all good love stories, this is a tale that ends in a happy—if surprising—fashion. Cary Fagan’s evocation of turn-of-the-century Kensington Market in Toronto is perfectly brought to life by Ricci’s lively, affectionate paintings.

* + Isaac Frischwasser Memorial Award for Children’s Literature (2002)
	+ Storytelling World Award for Adult Listeners (2001)

Fagan, Cary. *Ten Old Men and a Mouse*. Illus. by Gary Clement. Toronto: Tundra, 2007.

The synagogue was once a busy, bustling place, but now only ten old men come to tend it and pray each day. Then one day, a little scritch-scratch betrays the first new member in years: a tiny mouse who has taken up residence among the holy books. Full of gentle humor and witty truisms. Illustrations by Gary Clement heighten the fun. Although the city isn’t mentioned in the text, Clement used an old synagogue in downtown Toronto as his inspiration.

Waxman, Sydell. *My Mannequins.* Toronto: Dundurn, 2000.

Dora's father owns a dressmaking shop in the bustling garment district of Toronto in the 1940s. Every day after school, ten-year-old Dora runs to help her father in the shop. As she works, she dreams of being a designer herself and dressing the soberly attired mannequins in her own beautiful creations.

**CHILDREN – FICTION**

Dublin, Anne. *Written on the Wind*. Vancouver: HodgePog, 2001.

Drawn from historical material of the 1950s in Toronto, *Written on the Wind*—featuring a young Jewish immigrant heroine—portrays the destruction caused by Hurricane Hazel.

Freedman, Zelda. *Rosie’s Dream Cape*. Vancouver: Ronsdale, 2005.

A Jewish girl with a wonderful dream finds herself working in a Toronto garment factory after fleeing from Russia in the 1920s, and trying to make a new life. Based on a true story.

Kacer, Kathy. *Margit: Home Free*. (Our Canadian Girl).Toronto: Penguin, 2003.

Margit is eleven years old. She and her mother have escaped the Nazi terror in war-torn Czechoslovakia for safe haven in Canada, and in Toronto's Kensington Market. Margit is overwhelmed by the freedom and the kindness of family. Yet her past continues to haunt her. Some people don't think she belongs here. And there is no news of her father who was taken away by the Nazis back home.

Kacer, Kathy. *Margit: A Bit of Love and a Bit of Luck*. (Our Canadian Girl).Toronto: Penguin, 2005.

The war has ended and Margit is thrilled that her father has returned to his family. But he cannot find work in this new country, and Margit starts to fail at school, something she hides from her parents. How can she disappoint them after all they have been through?

Kacer, Kathy. *Margit: Open Your Doors*. (Our Canadian Girl).Toronto: Penguin, 2006.

It is 1947 and Canada has opened its borders to one thousand Jewish war orphans. Margit is determined to have a Jewish child who was orphaned during the war come and live with her family. How can she convince her parents that they have the space, money, and time for another child?

Kacer, Kathy. *Margit: A Friend in Need*. (Our Canadian Girl).Toronto: Penguin: 2007.

Nine-year-old Lilly has arrived to live with Margit and her family. Margit dreams that Lilly will become a new sister to her. But Lilly doesn't speak English and is distant and unhappy. Margit and her family are feeling the strain. Even Margit's cherished friendship with her best friend, Alice, is at a breaking point. Will Margit ever be able to break through to this troubled young girl? Will Alice ever speak to her again?

Matas, Carol. *Pieces of the Past: The Holocaust Diary of Rose* Rabinowitz. (Dear Canada). Toronto: Scholastic, 2013.

As Rose begins her diary, she is in her third home since coming to Winnipeg. Traumatized by her experiences in the Holocaust, she struggles to connect with others, and above all, to trust again. When her new guardian, Saul, tries to get Rose to deal with what happened to her during the war, she begins writing in her diary about how she survived the murder of the Jews in Poland by going into hiding. As she delves deeper into her past, she is haunted by the most terrifying memory of all. Will she find the courage to bear witness to her mother's ultimate sacrifice?

* + Helen and Stan Vine Canadian Jewish Book Award for Youth (2014)

Matas, Carol. *Sparks Fly Upward*. New York: Clarion Books, 2002.

In 1910, when a family of Russian Jews moves from Saskatchewan to Winnipeg, Canada, twelve-year-old Rebecca must live with Christians temporarily and struggles with anti-Semitism, confusion about God, and changing relationships with family and friends.

Matas, Carol. *Turned Away: The World War II Diary of Devorah Bernstein*. (Dear Canada). Toronto: Scholastic, 2005.

Devorah desperately tries to help her cousin emigrate from Paris—by lobbying the Canadian government—before the Nazis deport the Jews to concentration camps during World War II.

* + Frances and Samuel Stein Memorial Award in Children’s/Youth Literature (2007)

Nodelman, Perry. *Not a Nickel to Spare: The Great Depression Diary of Sally* Cohen. (Dear Canada). Toronto: Scholastic, 2007.

Coping with being poor during the Depression is hard enough, but Sally also has to contend with anti-Jewish sentiment when she ventures outside her familiar neighborhood near Toronto's Kensington Market. A historical note gives readers the background of the Depression, which hit Canada harder than most other countries. It also describes the way Jews were treated in Canada. A map, photographs and documents provide a visual context for the story.

Paperny, Myra. *The Greenies*. Toronto: HarperTrophy, 2005.

The Greenies is an inspiring novel based on real-life experiences of those "green" newcomers, a group of over one thousand orphaned Jewish children who, with the help of the Canadian Jewish Congress, immigrated to Canada after World War II.

Redhill, Michael. *Saving Houdini*. Toronto: HarperCollins, 2014.

Dashiel Woolf is ecstatic when famous magician Bloom the Beguiler brings him onstage during a special performance to mark the eighty-fifth anniversary of Harry Houdini's death. But a century-old trick invented by Bloom's grandfather goes inexplicably wrong—sending Dash back to 1926. Wandering the historic streets of Toronto, he barely recognizes his city but with the help of his new friend, Walt, he hatches a plan to invent the trick that will transport him home. In doing so, they just might prevent the Great Houdini from taking part in the event that ended his life, possibly changing history forever.

Schwartz, Ellen. *Jesse’s Star*. Victoria: Orca, 2000.

Young Jesse discovers a battered travel case full of pictures and a Star of David. At first it looks plain and unimportant, but as he holds it in his hand, the star begins to glow and soon Jesse is transported back to the 1880s and the Russian boyhood village of his great-great grandfather. Watched over by soldiers who hate the Jewish community, the villagers prays for the opportunity to slip away from their Russian keepers and escape to Canada. Yossi has a plan and, if it works, he will set the whole village free.

Schwartz, Ellen. *Yossi’s Goal*. Victoria: Orca, 2006.

Yossi Mendelsohn works hard to help his family survive after they flee Russia to find a better life in Montreal. He sells newspapers and carries bundles from the garment factory. Yossi longs to play "le hockey" with the French boys, but he has no skates. When his father falls ill and his sister and her fiancé organize a walkout at the factory, Yossi's dream of lacing on skates seems farther away than ever.

**CHILDREN – NON-FICTION**

Welldon, Christine. *Pier 21: Listen to My Story*. Halifax: Nimbus Publishing, 2012.

With over forty photos, a glossary, timeline, and sidebar features on the pier itself and the home countries of those who passed through it, *Pier 21: Listen to My Story* provides a good introduction for children to this key landmark in Canada's immigration history. For Jewish content, see “The Jewish Orphans”, p. 28–34.

**YOUNG ADULT – FICTION**

Lieberman, Leanne. *Gravity*. Victoria: Orca, 2008.

Ellie Gold is an Orthodox Jewish teenager living in Toronto in the late eighties. Ellie has no doubts about her strict religious upbringing until she falls in love with another girl at her grandmother's cottage. Aware that homosexuality clashes with Jewish observance, Ellie feels forced to either alter her sexuality or leave her community. Meanwhile, Ellie's mother, Chana, becomes convinced she has a messianic role to play, and her sister, Neshama, chafes against the restrictions of her faith. Ellie is afraid there is no way to be both gay and Jewish, but her mother and sister offer alternative concepts of God that help Ellie find a place for herself as a queer Jew.

Lieberman, Leanne. *Lauren Yanofsky Hates the Holocaust*. Victoria: Orca, 2013.

Lauren, a Jewish teen living in Vancouver, is tired of hearing about the Holocaust but must make a tough choice when some friends play Nazi war games.

Lieberman, Leanne. *The Book of Trees*. Victoria: Orca, 2010.

When Mia, a Jewish teenager from Toronto, goes to Jerusalem to spend the summer studying at a yeshiva, or seminary, she expects to connect with the land and deepen her understanding of Judaism. Instead she gets a crash course in both the politics of the Middle East and the intricacies of the human heart, and discovers a whole new way of looking at the world.

McKay, Sharon. E. *Esther*. Toronto: Penguin, 2004.

The first Jew to enter New France (the French colonies in North America, in what is now Canada) in 1738 is the subject of this suspenseful historical novel. Not much is known about Esther Brandeau, but the author has fashioned a fascinating fictional account of her adventures during a few years of her life.

Poulsen, David A. *Numbers*. Toronto: Key Porter Books, 2008.

Fifteen-year-old Andy Crockett lives somewhere in small-town Canada. He’s in Mr. Retzlaff’s grade ten Social class that covers World War II, Hitler, and the Holocaust. Mr. R. stresses that pictures can be deceiving and encourages his students not to believe everything they hear. Andy wants to ace this class—if only to make Mr. R. proud. Before long, though, Andy starts to realize that Mr. R's version of history doesn't quite match everyone else's, and that acing this particular class may cost more than he's willing to pay.

Wiseman, Eva. *Kanada*. Toronto: Tundra, 2006.

Jutka, a young Jewish-Hungarian girl, was put to work in Kanada, the storehouse at Auschwitz where the possessions—clothing and jewelry—stripped from the victims were deposited. When the war ended, for Jutka there was only one dream left her—the dream of a country full of hope, where she would no longer have to live in fear.

* + Geoffrey Bilson Award for Historical Fiction for Young People (2007)

Wiseman, Eva. *No One Must Know*. Toronto: Tundra, 2004.

It is 1957 and Alexandra’s immigrant family is living the North American dream. Her father is a respected doctor, and she has a warm circle of good friends from church, from girl guides, and from school. Perhaps her mother is nervous and a bit odd – she seems incapable of leaving the house alone – and there is never any talk of the life they left behind in Hungary, but every family has its quirks. Alexandra discovers a secret that her parents have kept. They are not Catholic, as Alexandra believes. They are Jewish. Alexandra’s view of her parents, of her friends, and of the society in which she lives is turned upside down by her discovery. Who is she and where does she really belong?

**YOUNG ADULT – NON-FICTION**

Arato, Rona. *The Last Train: A Holocaust Story*. Toronto: Owlkids, 2013.

The Last Train is the harrowing true story about young brothers Paul and Oscar Arato and their mother, Lenke, surviving the Nazi occupation during the final years of World War II. While in Bergen-Belsen, in the spring of 1945, the boys see British planes flying over the camp, and a spark of hope that the war will soon end ignites. But then, they are forced onto a dark, stinking boxcar by the Nazi guards. After four days on the train, the boys are convinced they will be killed, but through a twist of fate, the train is discovered and liberated by a battalion of American soldiers marching through Germany.

* + Norma Fleck Award for Canadian Children’s Non-Fiction (2014)

Dublin, Anne. *Bobbie Rosenfeld: The Olympian Who Could Do Everything*. Toronto: Second Story Press, 2004.

Many sportswriters and broadcasters in this country agree that Bobbie Rosenfeld may be Canada's all-around greatest athlete of the twentieth century. Her love for all sports showed itself early. As a young girl she excelled in track and field, ice hockey, tennis, basketball and softball. At the 1928 Summer Olympics, held in Amsterdam, she won both gold and silver medals. But Bobbie's popularity was due to more than her athletic brilliance or, later, her skills as a sportswriter with the Globe & Mail. She was loved as much as anything for her strength of character—her decency, honesty and sense of fair play. Rich with historical photographs and context, *Bobbie Rosenfeld: The Olympian Who Could Do Everything* will appeal to sports fans of all ages.

* Canadian Jewish Book Award, Children’s Literature (2005)
* IODE Violet Downey Book Award (2005)

Levine, Karen. *Hana’s Suitcase: A True Story*. (Holocaust Remembrance Book for Young Readers). Toronto: Second Story Press, 2002.

In 2000, a suitcase arrived at a children's Holocaust education center in Tokyo, Japan, marked "Hana Brady, May 16, 1931." The center's curator searched for clues to the fate of young Hana and her family, whose happy life in a small Czech town was turned upside down by the invasion of the Nazis. Hana’s brother, George, survived the Holocaust and made his home in Canada. This award-winning book has been translated into forty languages.

* + AJL Sydney Taylor Award for Older Readers (2002)
	+ Canadian Library Association Book of the Year for Children Award (2003)
	+ IODE Violet Downey Book Award (2003)
	+ OLA Silver Birch Award, Non-Fiction (2003)
	+ Prize for Children's Holocaust Literature, Yad Vashem (2006)
	+ U.S. National Jewish Book Award (2002–3)
	+ Vancouver Children’s Literature Roundtable, Information Book Award (2003)

**ANTHOLOGIES**

Boraks-Nemetz, Lillian. “In the Silence of My Heart: The Diary of Miriam Hartfeld.” In *Hoping for Home: Stories of Arrival*, edited by Sandra Bogart Johnston, 128–146. (Dear Canada). Toronto: Scholastic, 2011.

Eleven of Canada's top children's authors contribute stories of immigration, displacement and change, exploring the frustration and uncertainty those changes can bring. Told in first-person narratives, this collection features a diverse cast of boys and girls, each one living at a different point in Canada's vast landscape and history. Lillian Boraks-Nemetz tells the story of Miriam, a Warsaw-ghetto survivor, who has settled with the remnant of her family in Montreal in 1947.

**GRAPHIC**

Hughes, Susan. *No Girls Allowed: Tales of Daring Women Dressed as Men for Love, Freedom and Adventure*. Illus. by Willow Dawson. Toronto: Kids Can Press, 2008. Gr. 4–6.

This graphic anthology contains seven stories, drawn from both history and fiction, of women who felt compelled to defy the sexism which confined them by pretending to be men. One of the historical accounts is that of Esther Brandeau, the first Jew to immigrate to Canada (specifically to New France).

* Ontario Library Association's Best Bet for Junior Non-Fiction (2008)