

WE NEED DIVERSE BOOKS

A Social Cognition Approach

What does diversity mean?



Why do we need diverse books?



Vermont Demographics (census.gov)

<i>Race and Hispanic Origin</i>		
i White alone, percent, July 1, 2014, (V2014) (a)	95.0%	
i White alone, percent, April 1, 2010 (a)	95.3%	
i Black or African American alone, percent, July 1, 2014, (V2014) (a)	1.2%	
i Black or African American alone, percent, April 1, 2010 (a)	1.0%	
i American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent, July 1, 2014, (V2014) (a)	0.4%	
i American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent, April 1, 2010 (a)	0.4%	
i Asian alone, percent, July 1, 2014, (V2014) (a)	1.6%	
i Asian alone, percent, April 1, 2010 (a)	1.3%	
i Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, percent, July 1, 2014, (V2014) (a)	0.0%	
i Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, percent, April 1, 2010 (a)	Z	
i Two or More Races, percent, July 1, 2014, (V2014)	1.8%	
i Two or More Races, percent, April 1, 2010	1.7%	
i Hispanic or Latino, percent, July 1, 2014, (V2014) (b)	1.8%	
i Hispanic or Latino, percent, April 1, 2010 (b)	1.5%	
i White alone, not Hispanic or Latino, percent, July 1, 2014, (V2014)	93.5%	
i White alone, not Hispanic or Latino, percent, April 1, 2010	94.3%	

Discuss

- What are the barriers to exposing children to diverse books?
- Who worries about what the children read?
- Are library collections important?

Windows & Mirrors

- <https://www.psdschools.org/webfm/8559>



Mirrors



\$20

- Kids' neon skeleton costume sizes S-L
- Toddler candy corn witch costume sizes 18-24M, 2-3T and 4-5T

\$20

- Toddler Paw Patrol Skye costume sizes 2-3T and 3-4T
- Disney Frozen Elsa classic costume sizes S and M

\$15

- Kids' polkadot witch costume sizes S-L.



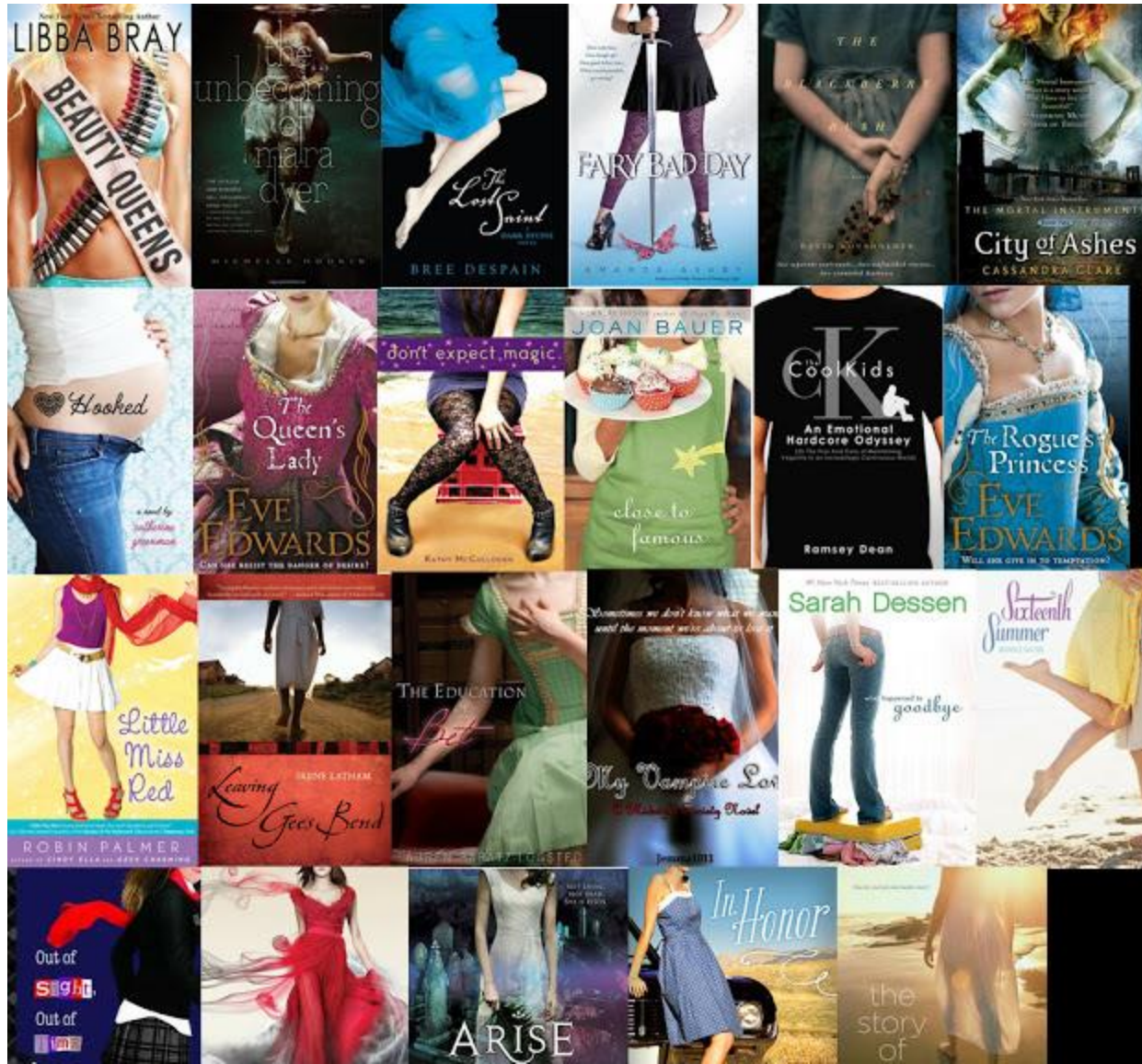
cartv

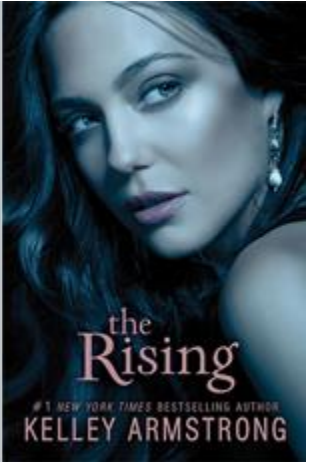
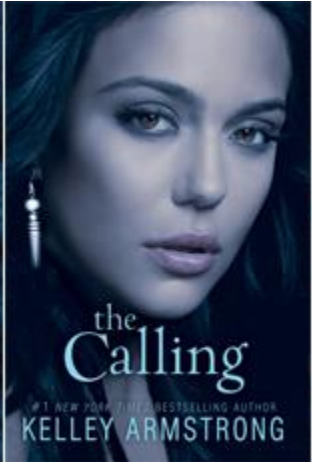
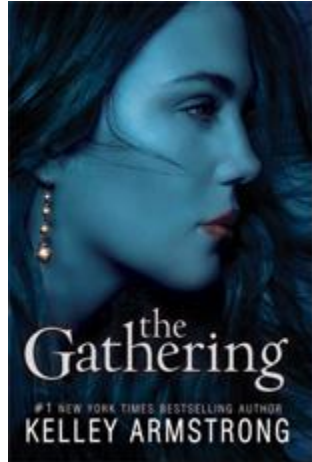
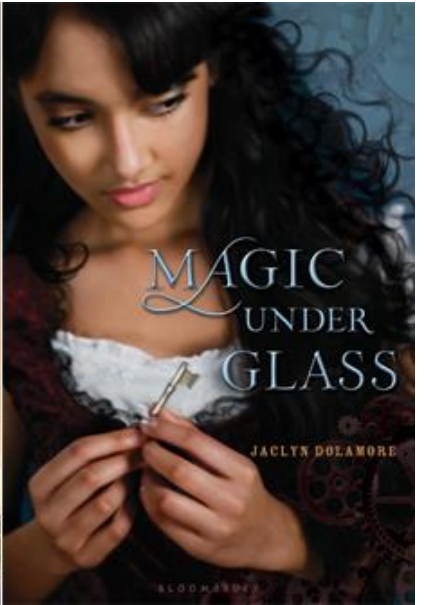
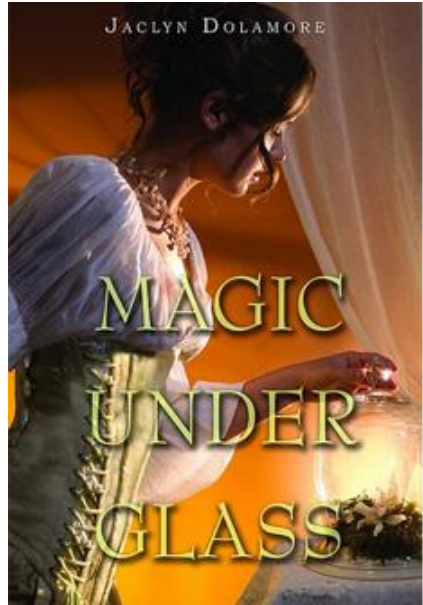
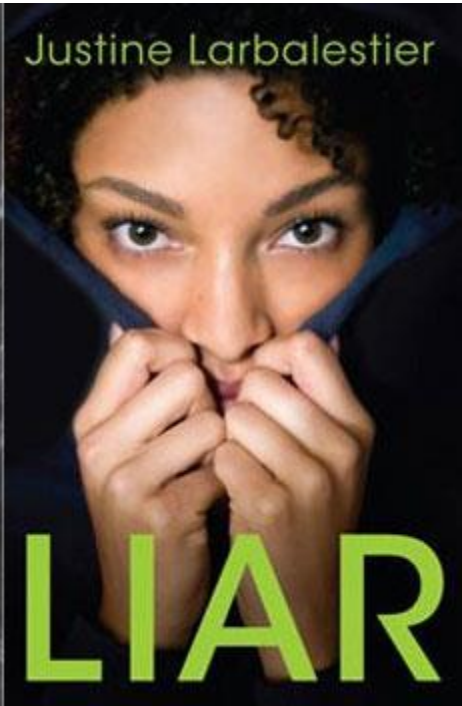
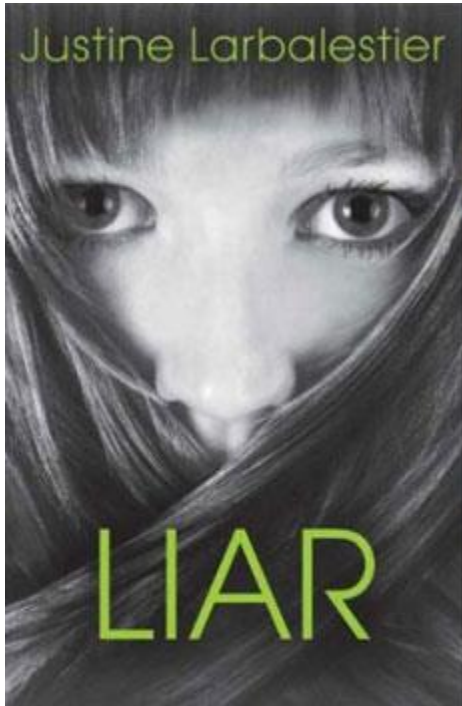
save up to 40% on se

Do you see yourself in books?
What about the kids in your library?



Do kids see themselves in book covers?



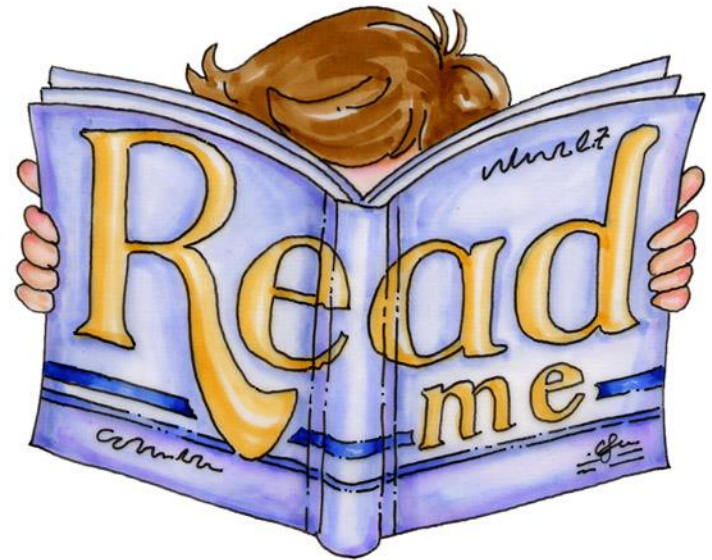


Windows



Why do we read?

- Information
- Entertainment
- Social Simulation
- Emotional Experience



Theory of Mind



Reading is a social experience

- Reading simulates social experiences. It requires active participation from the reader (Mar & Oatley, 2008).
- Readers who are emotionally transported into a story are more likely to empathize with the characters (Bal & Veltkamp, 2013; Djikic et al, 2013; Johnson, 2012)
- Children as young as 5 prefer socially complex stories (Barnes & Bloom, 2014).
- Lifelong fiction readers tend to have better social skills than nonfiction readers (Bal & Veltkamp, 2013; Mar et al, 2006).

Narratives are a safe space to explore

- Direct experience can produce anxiety but reading (indirect exposure) can reduce that anxiety (Bal & Veltkamp, 2013; Johnson et al, 2013; Mar & Oatley, 2008).
- Literature allows the reader to experience and observe social interaction. This experience is more persuasive than pure instruction (Mar & Oatley, 2008).



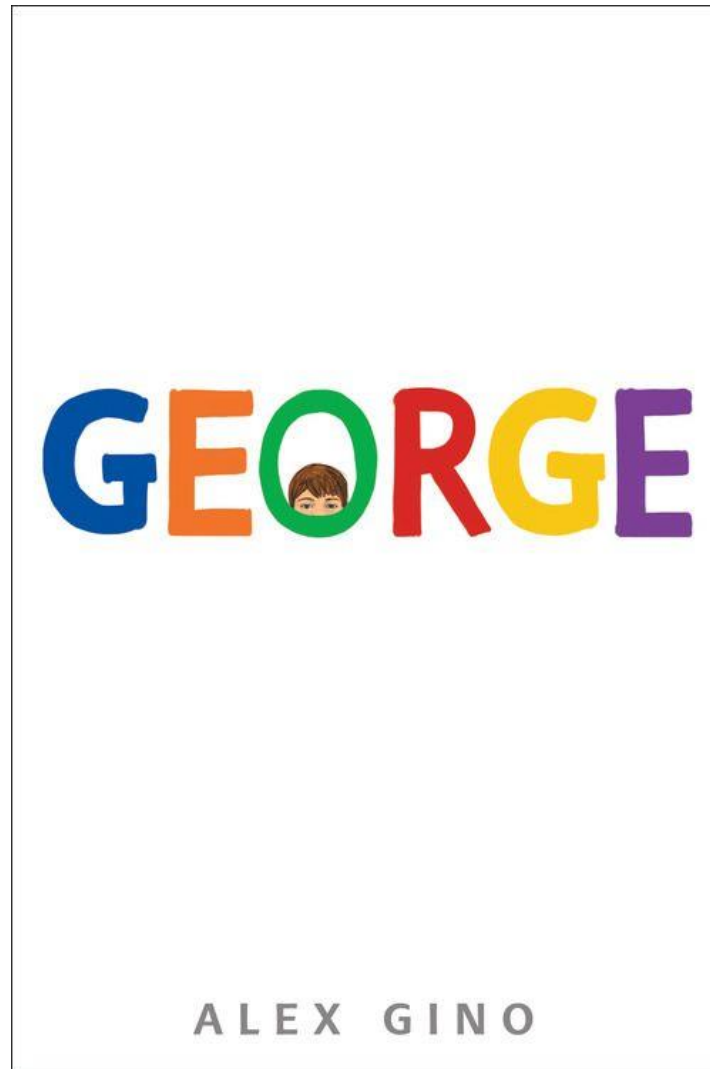
Fiction increases empathy

- Narratives are more likely to change beliefs than nonfiction (Bal & Veltkamp, 2013; Djikic & Oatley, 2014; Mazzocco et al, 2010;).
- There is a loss of self and increased adoption of a new perspective (Bal & Veltkamp, 2013; Djikic et al, 2013; Johnson et al, 2014).
- Increased empathy means increased prosocial behavior (Djikic et al, 2013; Johnson, 2012).

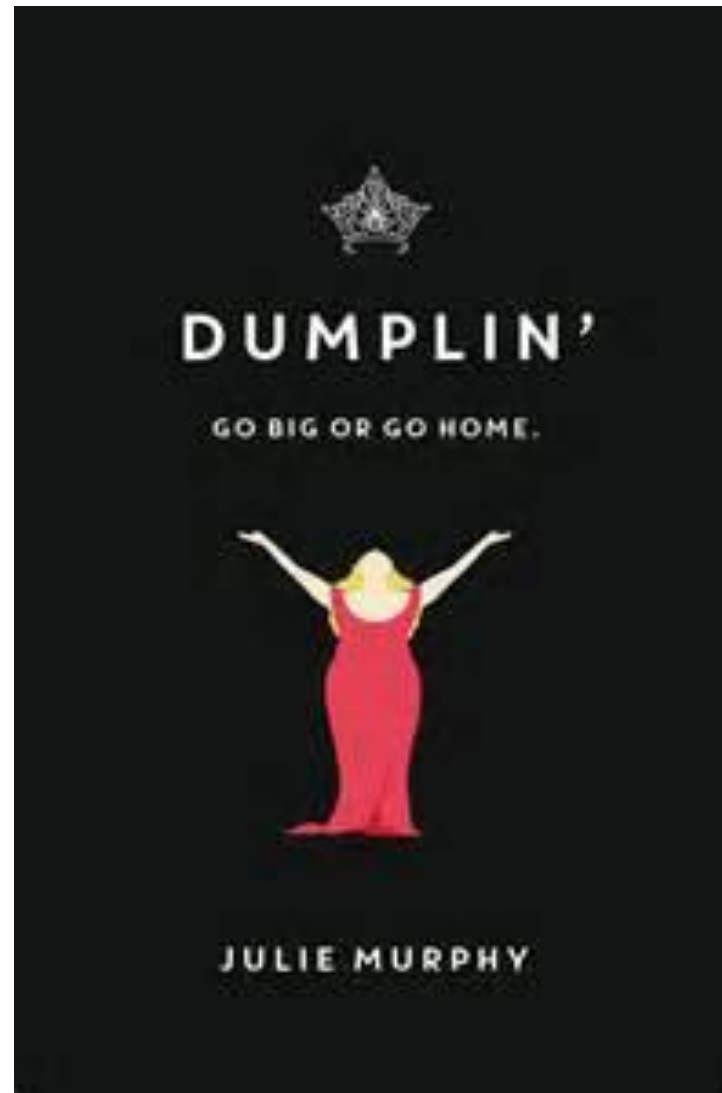
Brown Girl Dreaming



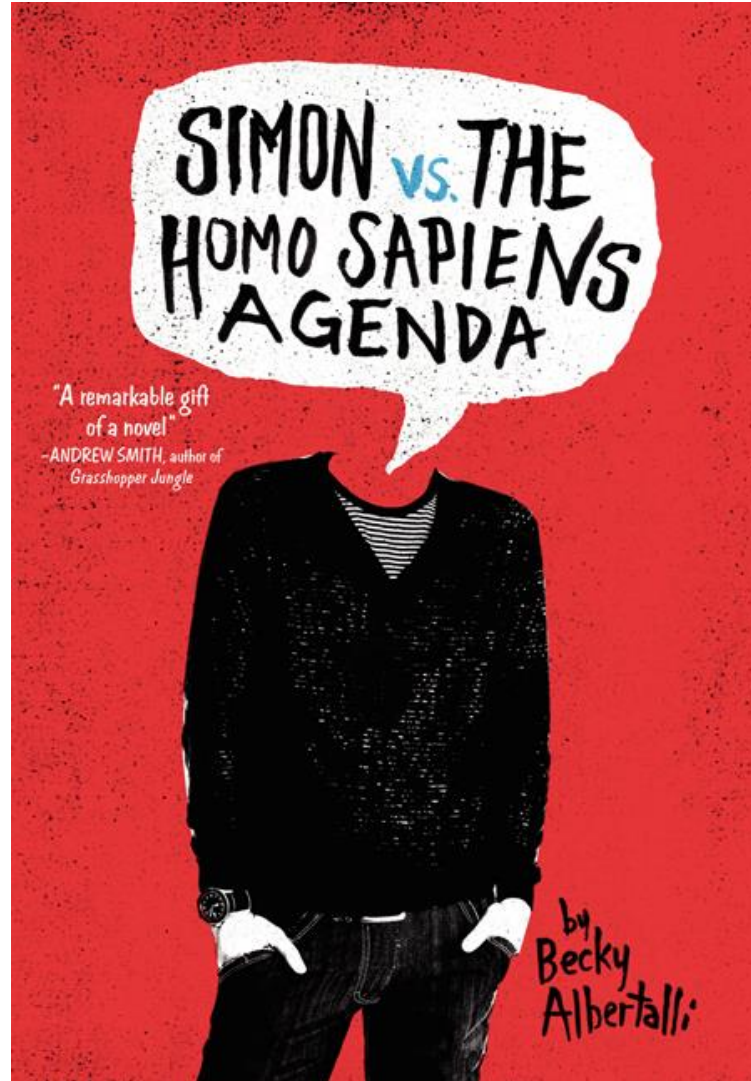
A young transgender protagonist!



A Big Beauty Queen!



A funny gay love story!



Library Bill of Rights

- The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.
- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.
- Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.
-
- A history of the Library Bill of Rights is found in the latest edition of the [Intellectual Freedom Manual](#).
- Although the Articles of the Library Bill of Rights are unambiguous statements of basic principles that should govern the service of all libraries, questions do arise concerning application of these principles to specific library practices. See the documents designated by the Intellectual Freedom Committee as [Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights](#).
- <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>

What can librarians and libraries do to promote diverse books?

- BUY diverse books
- READ diverse books
- BOOKTALK diverse books
- DISPLAY diverse books
- What else?

Resources

- [It Matters If You're Black or White: The Racism of YA Book Covers](#)
- [10 Recent Diverse* YA Fantasy and Science Fiction Novels](#)
- ['Where's the African-American Harry Potter or the Mexican Katniss?'](#)
- [Embracing Diversity in YA Lit](#)
- [How to Make Young Adult Fiction More Diverse](#)
- [The Worst Kind Of Groundhog Day: Let's Talk \(Again\) About Diversity In Publishing](#)
- [To Achieve Diversity In Publishing, A Difficult Dialogue Beats Silence](#)
- [We Need Diverse Books](#)

Works Cited

- Bal, P.M. & Veltkamp, M. (2013). How does fiction reading influence empathy? An experimental investigation on the role of emotional transportation. *PLoS ONE* 8(1), e55341.
- Barnes, J.L. & Bloom, P. (2014). Children's preference for social stories. *Developmental Psychology*, 50(2), 498-503.
- Djikic, M. & Oatley, K. (2014). The art in fiction: From indirect communication to changes of the self. *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*, 8(4), 498-505.
- Djikic, M., Oatley, K. & Moldoveanu, M.C. (2013). Reading other minds: Effects of literature on empathy. *Scientific Study of Literature*, 3(1), 28-47.
- Johnson, D.R. (2012). Transportation into a story increases empathy, prosocial behavior, and perceptual bias toward fearful expressions. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 52, 150-155.
- Johnson, D.R., Cushman, G.K., Borden, L.A. & McCune, M.S. (2013). Potentiating empathetic growth: Generating imagery while reading fiction increases empathy and prosocial behavior. *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity and the Arts*, 7(30), 306-312.
- Johnson, D.R., Huffman, B.L. & Jasper, D.M. (2014). Changing race boundary perception by reading narrative fiction. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, 36, 83-90.
- Johnson, D.R., Jasper, D.M., Griffin, S. & Huffman, B.L. (2013). Reading narrative fiction reduces Arab-Muslim prejudice and offers a safe haven from intergroup anxiety. *Social Cognition*, 31(5), 578-598.
- Mar, R. A. & Oatley, K. (2008). The function of fiction is the abstraction and simulation of social experience. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 3(3), 173-192.
- Mar, R.A., Oatley, K., Hirsh, J., dela Paz, J. & Peterson, J.B. (2006). Bookworms versus nerds: Exposure to fiction versus non-fiction, divergent associations with social ability, and the simulation of fictional social worlds. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 40, 694-712.
- Mazzocco, P.J., Green, M.C., Sasota, J.A. & Jones, N.W. (2010). This story is not for everyone: Transportability and narrative persuasion. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 1(4), 361-368.
- Vezzali, L., Stathi, S. & Giovannini, D. (2012). Indirect contact through book reading: Improving adolescent's attitudes and behavioral intentions toward immigrants. *Psychology in the Schools*, 49(2), 148-162.

SHARON COLVIN

sharon.colvin@vermont.gov