

Karley Furtado

Dr. Warner

ENGL 112B

12 May 2015

Genre: History and Famous Historical Figures

"In 1938, near the end of a decade of monumental turmoil, the year's number-one newsmaker was not Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Hitler, or Mussolini. It wasn't Pope Pius XI, nor was it Lou Gehrig, Howard Hughes, or Clark Gable. The subject of the most newspaper column inches in 1938 wasn't even a person. It was an undersized, crooked-leg racehorse named Seabiscuit," (Hillenbrand).

For my centerpiece of this annotated bibliography, I have chosen the book *Seabiscuit* by Laura Hillenbrand. Hillenbrand writes the beautiful novel about the amazing Seabiscuit during the Great Depression. This story is very unique and interesting because it is an underdog story. In the beginning, Seabiscuit was not a successful racehorse. He nearly lost every race and was much smaller with crooked legs compared to the better, more prestigious racehorses. He had a rough start—bounced from owner to owner and had a feisty personality, one that very few trainers or owners would want to work with. The same was for his jockey, Red Pollard. He grew up with money—his dad would read literature to him and his siblings every night and his parents even bought him a horse when he was younger. However, Red's family nearly lost everything when the stock market crashed in 1938 that sparked the Depression. Ultimately, his father knew he could no longer support his eldest son, so he left him with his neighbor who owned a racehorse track where he thought Red could at least be around the one thing he loved most—horses.

Charles Howard, Seabiscuit's owner had a very interesting life as well. He was the first man in America to own the Buick dealership. He started putting together bikes until one day he figured out how to make the engine of a Buick. He made his millions by selling these Buicks. Despite all his success, his son was killed in a car accident one day on their property. Due to familial tension and hardship, his wife left him. Alone and depressed, Charles Howard was looking to buy a horse. One afternoon at a ranch with his trainer he was looking at horses and first spotted Red and Biscuit. He instantly felt a connection with the two, bought Seabiscuit, and hired Red as his jockey.

Seabiscuit become the most famous racehorse of all time. He broke and set new records, beat the other best racehorse, War Admiral, from the East Coast, and made America instantly fall in love him and his underdog story. *Seabiscuit* also highlights the struggle of the Great Depression, financially, economically, and socially during this late 1930s and early 1940s, which is why I choose *Seabiscuit* as the canonical work to represent the genre of history. I think the genre of history bores young adults and that they have a hard time getting into the history of our country. I know that history was not my favorite subject in elementary school or high school, and that it is a subject you don't fully appreciate until you are older. However, I think books like Seabiscuit, interesting true stories that captivate the soul, can have a great influence on people studying the genre of history. Studying this book and books like the story of Seabiscuit would interest young adults around the world.

Annotated Bibliography

Books

***Bud, Not Buddy* by Christopher Paul Curtis.**

Curtis, Paul Christopher. *Bud, Not Buddy*. New York: Thorndine Press. Print. 2003. Ten-year-old Bud, a motherless boy living in Flint, Michigan, during the Great Depression, escapes a bad foster home and sets out in search of the man he believes to be his father--the renowned bandleader, H.E. Calloway of Grand Rapids. This book is a great source to use in order to represent the historical genre. It provides accurate and lengthy insight of the Great Depression, as well as shedding light on the African American culture during the hardships of this time period.

***Under the Blood Red Sun* by Salisbury Graham**

Graham, Salisbury. *Under the Blood Red Sun*. New York: Random House Children's Books. 2008. Print.

This story follows the life of young Tomikazu Nakaji's with his Japanese family in Hawaii as his life drastically changes after the bombing of Pearl Harbor in December 1941. This book is a great portrayal of the genre of history because it informs the reader about Pearl Harbor. Additionally, it also informs the audience about the experience of Pearl Harbor for America and the Japanese- Americans living in America at the time that Pearl Harbor occurred.

***Esperanza Rising* by Pam Nuno Ryan**

Ryan, Pam Nuno. *Esperanza Rising*. New York: Scholastic Inc. 2002. Print.

In this book, the main character Esperanza and her mother are forced to leave their life of wealth and privilege in Mexico to go work in the labor camps of Southern California. Here, they must adapt to the harsh circumstances facing Mexican farm workers on the eve of the Great Depression. This story is a good representation of the Great Depression as well. Also, it highlights the life of the Mexican-American cultures as they faced the Great Depression as well.

***Unbroken* by Laura Hillenbrand**

Hillenbrand, Laura. *Unbroken*. New York: Random House Publishing Group. 2010. Print.

A WWII story, following the incident of Louis Zamperini when his Army air force bomber crashed into the Pacific Ocean. This story tells the hardship Zamperini went through while he tried to survive the grueling open ocean facing starvation and thirst. His fate, whether triumph or tragedy, would be suspended on the fraying wire of his will. Telling an unforgettable story of a man's journey into extremity, *Unbroken* is a testament to the resilience of the human mind, body, and spirit. This book is a great book to represent WWII and an American soldier who fought in this war.

Seabiscuit* by Laura Hillenbrand

Hillenbrand, Laura. *Seabiscuit*. New York: Random House Publishing Group. 2001. Print.

This book follows the true-life story of jockey Red Pollard as a young boy growing up in the Great Depression. It also tells the historical story of Seabiscuit and the profound effect he had on American culture and the hope and entertainment he provided for people living in the Great Depression. Seabiscuit was a misfit horse—too small for the average racehorse and did not have a good track record, Pollard was a misfit jockey—too tall to really be a successful jockey with no family. The man who eventually bought Seabiscuit, Charles Howard, had lost his son in a car accident and his wife left him. He was also owned the first Buick dealership in the state of California. Despite their differences, they all came together, Howard, Seabiscuit's trainer, and Red Pollard. Competing in the cruelest years of the Depression, the rag-to-riches horse emerged as an American Culture Icon, drawing an immense and fanatical following, and establishing himself as the biggest newsmaker of 1938—receiving more coverage than FDR, Hitler, or any public figure.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Os7yk5rXtY> (Presentation)

***The Secret Life of Bees* by Sue Monk Kidd**

Kidd, Sue Monk. *The Secret Life of Bees*. New York: Viking Press. 2002. Print.

This story is set in 1964 regarding the coming of age of the main character, Lily Melissa Owens. Lily is a white girl who lives with her abusive father. Lily becomes very close with her African American maid Rosaleen and after Rosaleen is arrested for pouring her bottle of 'snuff juice' on a group of white men, Rosaleen and Lily flee town. Lily and Rosaleen end up living with another group of all women, all of which are African Americans. This book represents the harsh racial times of America during the 1960s.

***The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan**

Tan, Amy. *The Joy Luck Club*. New York: Penguin Group. 1989. Print.

This book represents the time period of 1949 and what it was like for Chinese immigrants to be living in America during this time. This book highlights the experience of recent immigration, as well as identifying mother-daughter relationships. I think this is a great book to use regarding the genre of history because it explains the Chinese immigration to San Francisco and what that experience was like. Also, I think the mother-daughter experience is really informative for young adults to read and understand.

***The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck**

Steinbeck, John. *The Grapes of Wrath*. New York: Pearson. 1998. Print.

This is a great book to represent the genre of history. It represents American history by telling the story of what families faced during the Dust Bowl in the 1930s. I think this is a very historical novel that is a great representation of history for the history genre.

Movies

The Boy in the Striped Pajamas

The Boy in the Striped Pajamas. Mark Herman. Mafilm Studio. 2008.

This heart-wrenching movie is based on the story of a boy whose father is a general Nazi. He moves his family to the outskirts of Germany, in close proximity to a concentration camp. There, the young boy sneaks out of his home and meets a young Jewish boy by the gates of the concentration camp. The two boys become very close and still don't comprehend the situation of the concentration camps. This movie gives close insight on the Holocaust—Hitler's manipulative actions, the family's of Nazi soldiers/generals viewpoints and how little they knew what was going on, and exposes the horrific truth of the concentration camps.

Saving Mr. Banks

Saving Mr. Banks. John Lee Hancock Jr. 2013.

This movie tells the story of Walt Disney. The plot revolves around the true creator of the story of Mary Poppins. This story follows the hardships she went through and how she created Mary Poppins. In the movie, Walt spends 20 + years trying to persuade the author, P.L. Travers to buy the story from her and make it into the legend it is today. Additionally, this movie reveals several facts about Walt Disney's life and how he created Disneyland. Walt Disney had a profound effect on our society and the cartoon industry.