

In *Christian Librarian*, No. 27, 2003, the members of LCF's *Working Party on Children's Literature* provided "a personal - though not entirely unanimous - selection of novels for teenage readers, and for those whose teenage years are approaching". This list is still available on LCF's web site at <http://www.librarianscf.org.uk/about/workparties/stillreading.pdf> Five years on, KAREN HANS provides an update to the original list

STILL READING BOOKS -2-



As Ngaio Malcolm observed over twenty years years ago (her article *A Great Gulf Fixed: Christian and humanist values in children's books* is still available on the Web at <http://www.amen.org.uk/home-ed/ChildrensBooks.pdf>), it is hard to find well crafted books for children and teens that are not permeated by humanism and atheism. Those listed below are not necessarily free of those attitudes, partly because they have become ever more pervasive; also because their effects (the dulling of conscience and morals) have led to the breakdown of family life, etc., being seen as entirely normal in our society, thus they are the realistic backdrop to much of the fiction of today. I hope, however, that they are a useful starting point for those who seek to guide or balance the reading of children in their care or sphere of influence.

On the other hand, of course, most of the 'classics' (rather than 'modern classics') were written within a Christian moral framework

(whether or not the author or the events portrayed were specifically Christian). As such, their content is generally suitable for teenage readers, though the style or language may alienate some. I apologise for the shortness of my list of new titles, this is in part because I do not find anywhere near enough time to read these days (working mum with young children...), but also because quite a few titles / authors that I first thought I would include, on closer reading I felt unable to recommend on a list such as this.

*The following authors or titles have gone **out of print** since the original list though some titles may be available secondhand eg. via Amazon, or other titles by the same authors may still be in print):*

ALMEDINGEN, E. M

BANKS, Lynne Reid

- The dungeon

BONHAM, Frank

BURTON, Hester

- In spite of all terror
- Time of trial

GODDEN, Rumer

- Greengage summer

HAMORI, Laszio

- Dangerous journey

O'BRIEN, Robert C.

- **Z for Zechariah**

PATERSON, Katherine

- Rebels of the heavenly kingdom
- Jacob I have loved

RAY, Mary

REISS, Johanna

SMITH, Rukshana

WATSON, James

WATSON, Sally

WHITE, Robb

WUORIO, Eva-Lis

New additions to the list:

BLACKMAN, Malorie

- **Cloud Busting**, Corgi, 2005, 978-0440866152, £4.99
- **Unheard Voices: An Anthology of Stories and Poems to Commemorate the Bicentenary Anniversary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade**, Corgi, 2007, 978-0552556002, £5.99

CROSS, Gillian

Of "The demon headmaster" fame, very prolific author and worth investing in.

CROSS, Vince

The A Club The Blogs of Abi Goodenough, Lion Hudson 2006, 978-0745960197, £5.99

DAVIES, Eleanor

- **In the spotlight**, SU, 2000, 978-1859994405, £3.99
- **Designer Label** – *currently unavailable*

ELLIS, Deborah

- **Parvana's journey**, OUP, 2004, 978-0192753489, £5.99
- **Mud City**, OUP, 2004, 978-0192753762, £4.99

HOLLOWAY, Adrian

- **The Shock of Your Life**, Kingsway, 2007, 978-1842913468, £6.99
- **After shock**, Kingsway, 2004, 978-1842911761, £6.99

After shock is the sequel and is better written: Daniel comes back from a 'death' experience and tries to convince friends and family of the need to become Christians.

HOOPER, Mary

At the sign of the sugared plum, Bloomsbury, 2003, 978-0747561248, £5.99

The main character is advised to enjoy a kiss from her sweetheart before she contracts plague.

LAIRD, Elizabeth; MCCAUGHREAN, Geraldine; and MORPURGO, Michael have all written many more novels recently.

LAWRENCE, Caroline

The thieves of Ostia, Orion, 2002, 978-1842550205, £6.99

The first in the popular 'Roman Mysteries' series, which have a Christian as a main character.

LEE, Kathy

Phoebe's fortune, Scripture Union, 2003, 978-1859997000, £3.99

The rest of the 'Phoebe' series are out of print, but very popular with 10-12 year old girls.

NAIDOO, Beverley

Web of Lies, Puffin, 2004, 978-0141314662, £5.99

The following are American (USA), but we don't really have anything similar in the UK and I find they are enjoyed by teenage Christian girls:

Today's girls.com series by Nelson

GUNN, Robin Jones

Christy Miller series by Bethany House

JOHNSON, Lisa Halls

Brio girls series by Bethany House

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