

American Documentary

READING LIST

The Rescue List Delver Deeper Reading List Adult Nonfiction

[THE RESCUE LIST](#)

In a rehabilitation shelter in Ghana, two children are recovering from enslavement to fishermen. But their story takes an unexpected turn when their rescuer embarks on another mission and asks the children for help. Charting the unfolding drama, *The Rescue List* tells a moving story of friendship and courage—transcending tropes of victimhood and illustrating what it means to love and survive.

Bales, Kevin. *Disposable People: New Slavery in the Global Economy*. University of California Press, 2012.

Slavery is illegal throughout the world, yet more than twenty-seven million history's oldest social institutions. Kevin Bales's disturbing story of slavery

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Pakistan and brothels in Thailand to the offices of multinational corporations. His investigation of conditions in Mauritania, Brazil, Thailand, Pakistan, and India reveals the tragic emergence of a "new slavery," one intricately linked to the global economy. The new slaves are not a long-term investment as was true with older forms of slavery, explains Bales. Instead, they are cheap, require little care, and are disposable.

Konadu, Kwasi and Clifford C. Campbell. *The Ghana Reader: History, Culture, Politics*. Duke University Press, 2016.

Covering 500 years of Ghana's history, *The Ghana Reader* provides a multitude of historical, political, and cultural perspectives on this iconic African nation. Whether discussing the Asante kingdom and the Gold Coast's importance to European commerce and transatlantic slaving, Ghana's brief period under British colonial rule, or the emergence of its modern democracy, the volume's eighty selections emphasize Ghana's enormous symbolic and pragmatic value to global relations. They also demonstrate that the path to fully understanding Ghana requires acknowledging its ethnic and cultural diversity and listening to its population's varied voices.

Lawrance, Benjamin N. and Richard L. Roberts. *Trafficking in Slavery's Wake: Law and the Experience of Women and Children in Africa*. Ohio University Press, 2012.

This important collection examines the ways trafficking in women and children has changed from the aftermath of the "end of slavery" in Africa from the late nineteenth century to the present.

The formal abolition of the slave trade and slavery did not end the demand for servile women and children. Contemporary forms of human trafficking are deeply interwoven with their historical precursors, and scholars and activists need to be informed about the long history of trafficking in order to better assess and confront its contemporary forms.

Okeowo, Alexis. *A Moonless, Starless Sky: Ordinary Women and Men Fighting Extremism in Africa*. Hachette Books, 2017.

In *A Moonless, Starless Sky* Okeowo weaves together four narratives that form a powerful tapestry of modern Africa: a young couple, kidnap victims of Joseph Kony's LRA; a Mauritanian waging a lonely campaign against modern-day slavery; a women's basketball team flourishing amid war-torn Somalia; and a vigilante who takes up arms against the extremist group Boko Haram. This debut book by one of America's most acclaimed young journalists illuminates the inner lives of ordinary people doing the extraordinary--lives that are too often hidden, underreported, or ignored by the rest of the world.

Polman, Linda. *The Crisis Caravan: What's Wrong With Humanitarian Aid?* Picador, 2011.

In her controversial, no-holds-barred exposé Linda Polman shows how a vast industry has grown up around humanitarian aid. *The Crisis Caravan* takes us to war zones around the globe, showing how aid operations and the humanitarian world have become a feature of military strategy. Impassioned, gripping, and even darkly absurd, journalist Linda Polman "gives some powerful examples of unconscionable Hi! How can we help you? have become enablers of the atrocities they seek to relieve" (The Boston Glo...

Attah, Ayesha Harruna. *The Hundred Wells of Salaga*. Other Press, 2019.

Based on true events, a story of courage, forgiveness, love, and freedom in precolonial Ghana, told through the eyes of two women born to vastly different fates.

Aminah lives an idyllic life until she is brutally separated from her home and forced on a journey that transforms her from a daydreamer into a resilient woman. Wurche, the willful daughter of a chief, is desperate to play an important role in her father's court. These two women's lives converge as infighting among Wurche's people threatens the region, during the height of the slave trade at the end of the nineteenth century.

Donkor, Michael. *Housegirl*. Picador, 2018.

A moving and unexpectedly funny exploration of friendship and family, shame and forgiveness, Michael Donkor's debut novel follows three adolescent girls grappling with a shared experience: the joys and sorrows of growing up.

Emecheta, Buchi. *The Slave Girl: A Novel*. George Braziller Inc., 1980.

The Slave Girl follows the fortunes of Ogbanje Ojebeta, a Nigerian woman who is sold into slavery in her own land after disease and tragedy leave her orphaned as a child. In her fellow slaves, she finds a surrogate family that clings together under the unbending will of their master. As Ogbanje Ojebeta becomes a woman and discovers her need for home and family, and for freedom and identity, she realizes that she must ultimately choose her own destiny.

Gyasi, Yaa. *Homegoing*. Alfred A. Knopf Inc, 2016.

The unforgettable New York Times best seller begins with the story of two half-sisters, separated by forces beyond their control: one sold into slavery, the other married to a British slaver. Written with tremendous sweep and power, *Homegoing* traces the generations of family who follow, as their destinies lead them through two continents and three hundred years of history, each life indelibly drawn, as the legacy of slavery is fully revealed in light of the present day.

John, Elnathan. *Born on a Tuesday*. Black Cat, 2016.

In far northwestern Nigeria, Dantala lives among a gang of street boys who sleep under a kuka tree. During the election, the boys are paid by the Small Party to cause trouble. When their attempt to burn down the opposition's local headquarters ends in disaster, Dantala must run for his life, leaving his best friend behind. He makes his way to a mosque that provides him with food, shelter, and guidance. With his quick aptitude and modest nature, Dantala becomes a favored apprentice to the mosque's sheikh.

Kourouma, Ahmadou. *Allah is Not Obligated*. Anchor Books, 2007.

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When ten-year-old Birahima's mother dies, he leaves his native village in the Ivory Coast, accompanied by the sorcerer and cook Yacouba, to search for his aunt Mahan. Crossing the border into Liberia, they are seized by rebels and forced into military service. Birahima is given a Kalashnikov, minimal rations of food, a small supply of dope and a tiny wage. Fighting in a chaotic civil war alongside many other boys, Birahima sees death, torture, dismemberment and madness but somehow manages to retain his own sanity.

Bartoletti, Susan Campbell. *Kids on Strike*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1999.

By the early 1900s nearly two million children were in the United States workforce. Their tiny fingers, strong eyesight, and boundless energy made them perfect employees. But after years and years of working long hours every day under harsh and inhumane conditions, children began to organize and make demands in order to protect themselves. They fought for better wages, fairer housing costs, and safer working environments.

Getz, Trevor R. *Abina and the Important Men*. Illustrated by Liz Clarke, Oxford University Press, 2015.

The story of Abina Mansah--a woman "without history" who was wrongfully enslaved, escaped to British-controlled territory, and then took her former master to court--takes place in the complex world of the Gold Coast at the onset of late nineteenth-century colonialism. Slavery becomes a contested ground, as cultural practices collide with an emerging wage economy and British officials turn a blind eye to the presence of underpaid domestic workers in the households of African merchants.

Thompson, Laurie Ann and Sean Qualls. *Emmanuel's Dream: The True Story of Emmanuel Ofosu Yeboah*. Schwartz & Wade Books, 2015.

Born in Ghana, West Africa, with one deformed leg, he was dismissed by most people—but not by his mother, who taught him to reach for his dreams. As a boy, Emmanuel hopped to school more than two miles each way, learned to play soccer, left home at age thirteen to provide for his family, and, eventually, became a cyclist. He rode an astonishing four hundred miles across Ghana in 2001, spreading his powerful message: disability is not inability. Today, Emmanuel continues to work on behalf of the disabled.

Winter, Jeanette. *Malala, a Brave Girl from Pakistan/Iqbal, a Brave Boy from Pakistan*. Beach Lane Books, 2014.

One country: Pakistan. Two children: Iqbal Masih and Malala Yousafzai. Each was unafraid to speak out. He, against inhumane child slavery in the carpet trade. She, for the right of girls to attend school. Both were shot by those who disagreed with them—he in 1995, she in 2012. Iqbal was killed instantly; Malala miraculously survived and continues to speak out around the world. She was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2014 for her work.

The stories of these two courageous children whose bravery transcended time and place, as illustrated by celebrated author Jeanette Winter, are an inspiration to all.

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Alexander, Kwame. *Solo. Blink*, 2017.

From award-winning and bestselling author Kwame Alexander comes *Solo*, the story of seventeen-year-old Blade Morrison who is being crushed between scathing tabloids exposing his former rock-star-father's addictions and a protected secret that threatens his own identity. The answers to his past and future change everything he thought to be true.

D'Adamo, Francesco. *Iqbal*. Translated by Ann Leonori, Atheneum, 2003.

For Fatima and the other unseen children of Hussain Khan's carpet factory, Iqbal Masih's arrival is the end of hope and its beginning. It is Iqbal who tells them that their family's debt will never be cancelled, no matter how many inches of progress they make in their rugs, no matter how neat the knots or perfect the pattern. But it is also Iqbal who is brave enough to talk about the future. "Fatima," he promises, "next spring you and I are going to go and fly a kite. Remember that, whatever happens."

Janu, Tamsin. *Figgy Takes the City*. Omnibus Books, 2017.

Both Nana and Figgy receive scholarships to attend the Hope College in Ghana's big city, Accra. Figgy and Nana will have to leave behind the village and family they love, meet lots of new people and learn new things. Figgy does not want to go, but Grandma Ama says she must. But Nana begins acting strange and he will not tell Figgy what he is doing when he disappears from school on the weekends.

Nwaubani, Adaobi Tricia. *Buried Beneath the Baobab Tree*. Katherine Tegen Books, 2018.

A new pair of shoes, a university degree, a husband—these are the things that a girl dreams of in a Nigerian village. And with a government scholarship right around the corner, everyone can see that these dreams aren't too far out of reach.

But the girl's dreams turn to nightmares when her village is attacked by Boko Haram, a terrorist group, in the middle of the night. Kidnapped, she is taken with other girls and women into the forest where she is forced to follow her captors' radical beliefs and watch as her best friend slowly accepts everything she's been told.

Onuzo, Chibundu. *The Spider King's Daughter*. Faber and Faber, 2013.

Sixteen-year-old Abike lives in a mansion in Lagos. A world away, in the suburbs, lives a young vendor who sells ice cream in the streets. When Abike buys an ice cream from him, an improbable and fragile love story begins that defies the prejudice of Nigerian society. As they grow closer, secrets from the past are revealed that will put their allegiances to a test.

Ørbeck-Nilssen, Constance and Akin Duzakin. *Why Am I Here?* Eerdmans

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In this empathetic book, a young girl wonders what life would be like if she lived somewhere else. What if she lived in a city with millions of people? What would it be like to be a refugee from a war-torn country? Is she meant to be in a different place? Or is she right where she's supposed to be?

Stirring and impactful, this book will cause readers to ponder life's big questions and have a better understanding of their place in the world.

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