

during the long, dangerous voyage. These memories are juxtaposed with flashes of the dangers and trauma the family faced. While the dangers were significant, Pham’s memories center on the security provided by his parents and their continued reassurance that everything would be okay.

Food and family are continuing themes as Pham recounts his family’s life in a refugee camp. He recalls both sweet and savory memories growing up, such as the salty goodness of a potato chip shared during a street game and the sweetness of strawberries after his parents spent hours working in the fields. Food also serves as a metaphor for identity. When in the camp, his mother purchases a Bánh Cuốn (Vietnamese rice rolls) stall to

provide for the family. Pham describes the process of making the rolls and how his mother labored to create the food that she said “tastes like home.”

Later, after immigrating to America, the family purchases a bakery and learns to make croissants, moving away from Vietnamese food. Pham wrestles with his identity, including discovering Dairy Queen Blizzards, and wondering if he was still “Vietnamese enough.” The memoir ends with Pham, now an adult, deciding to earn his citizenship. *Family Style* is a graphic memoir that can appeal to any young adult reader. While many students have not experienced being a refugee, they can identify with the themes of family and identity formation, and of course food.

**Social Studies Themes:** ❶ CULTURE; ❷ TIME, CONTINUITY, AND CHANGE; ❸ INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT AND IDENTITY; ❹ INDIVIDUALS, GROUPS, AND INSTITUTIONS; ❺ CIVIC IDEALS AND PRACTICES.

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# Septima P. Clark Women in Literature Book Award, 2024

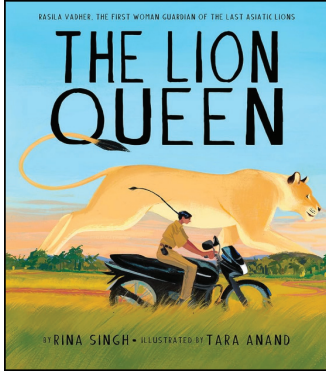


The Septima Clark Women in Literature Award, established in 2019, is named in honor of Septima Poinsette Clark, whose contributions to education and the civil rights movement left an indelible mark. The award is dedicated to recognizing outstanding nonfiction or informational trade books tailored for elementary, middle, and high school-aged readers that highlight the stories, perspectives, and accomplishments of women. Each year, the award committee selects high-quality books that embody originality and are well-crafted, untold stories.

Celebrating the diversity of experience, this year’s selected books illuminate women who overcame challenges, were trailblazers, and contributed to the broader narrative of social justice. The winning books came from different geographical locations, cultures, and historical time periods.

–Sydney G. Beauchamp, Chair  
Septima Clark Women in Literature  
BookAward Committee

## Elementary Winner



*The Lion Queen: Rasila Vadher, the First Woman Guardian of the Last Asiatic Lions*, by Rina Singh, illustrated by Tara Anand. Harry N. Abrams. Reviewed by Ann Adkins, Fifth Grade Teacher, St. Pius X/St. Leo School, Omaha, Nebraska.

What would it be like to meet an Asiatic lion face to face? Rasila Vadher knows! Author Rina Singh describes the strength of character that spurred Rasila Vadher to become the first Lion Queen employed by the Gir National Park in India. As a child, Rasila witnessed her mother defy family pressure after becoming a widow by ensuring that her daughters continued with school. When their mother sends Rasila's brother to apply for a job with Gir National Park, Rasila accompanies him. Sensing her brother's fear, Rasila asks the men if she can apply in his stead. Despite their laughter, she passes all the requirements and is hired. At first relegated to office work, Rasila eventually moves into the field to do work previously done only by men, proving that women are as capable as men in dealing with the challenges of being a forest guard.

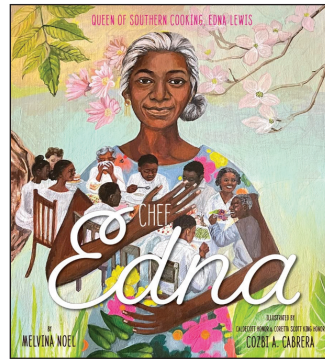
Rina Singh has crafted a meaningful story that is vibrantly illustrated by Tara Anand. This book provides readers with an understanding of the successful conservation work carried out to protect the Asiatic lions in Gir National Park and will inspire girls to do whatever it takes to reach their goals.

**Social Studies Themes:** 1 CULTURE; 2 PEOPLE, PLACES, AND ENVIRONMENTS; 3 INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT AND IDENTITY; 6 POWER, AUTHORITY, AND GOVERNANCE; 9 GLOBAL CONNECTIONS; 10 CIVIC IDEALS AND PRACTICES

## Elementary Honor Book

*Chef Edna: Queen of Southern Cooking*, Edna Lewis, by Melvina Noel, illustrated by Cozbi A. Cabrera. Cameron Kids. Reviewed by Sydney Beauchamp, Teaching Professor in Elementary Education, Indiana University South Bend, Indiana. From the very first page, this book threw me into

dreams of my grandmother's kitchen, drinking iced tea and eating her peach pie. I've tried to recreate that taste many times and wonder what that secret ingredient might be. In Melvina Noel's *Chef Edna: Queen of Southern Cooking*, the reader is immersed in ingredients, flavor, and the rich traditions of Southern cooking and comes to understand that the secret to cooking is "simple pure ingredients, plus lots of love, a dash of smile, the taste of home."



Edna Lewis was born in Freetown, Virginia, and moved to New York City at age 15, after her father's death, to help her family financially. With jobs as a seamstress and in clerical work, Edna was missing the large meals shared around

the table back home. She started cooking for groups of people. Soon, word got around about her culinary creations, and she was flooded with requests for her homemade Southern food. With such a successful catering experience, she became co-owner of a restaurant in Manhattan, where even famous people dined.

Caldecott and Coretta Scott King honoree Cozbi A. Cabrera evocatively captures farm kitchen and New York city street settings with her illustrations.

**Social Studies Themes:** 1 CULTURE; 2 PEOPLE, PLACES, AND ENVIRONMENTS; 3 INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT AND IDENTITY

## Elementary Honor Book



*I Dare! I Can! I Will!*, by Linda Ólafsdóttir. Harry N. Abrams. Reviewed by Jenni Gallagher, Associate Professor of Social Studies Education, East Carolina

University, Greenville, North Carolina.

The year was 1975, which the United Nations

*continued on page 165*

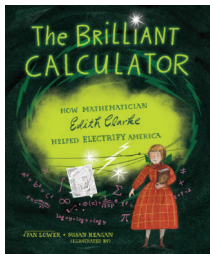
## CLARK AWARDS *from page 164*

declared International Women's Year, and Icelandic women decided to strike. They took the day off from the multiple forms of labor they perform and marched out of their homes, workplaces, and communities to demand equality. On Oct 24th, also called "Long Friday" and "Women's Day Off," some 90% of Icelandic women participated and let their absence from daily work highlight the many facets and impacts of their labor. Many gathered in cities to sing, march, and protest unequal pay.

Recounted from the perspective of a mother who participated as a child, the history is shared to her own child as an event to celebrate and one that had a lasting and far reaching impact for women worldwide. This book provides a glimpse into what that day looked like through the eyes of one child and one family while also detailing the stories of farmworkers, grocers, fisherwomen and others who participated. Protesters chanted, "I dare! I can! I will!" And their example was followed throughout the world. The detailed illustrations, including protest signs with Icelandic language, are substantiated by the backmatter of the book, which includes photographs of the historical events and an Author's Note.

**Social Studies Themes:** ❶ CULTURE; ❸ PEOPLE, PLACES, AND ENVIRONMENTS; ❹ POWER, AUTHORITY, AND GOVERNANCE; ❺ GLOBAL CONNECTIONS; ❻ CIVIC IDEALS AND PRACTICES

## Middle Level Winner



*The Brilliant Calculator How Mathematician Edith Clarke Helped Electrify America*, by Jan Lower, illustrated by Susan Reagan. Calkins Creek. Reviewed by Valencia Abbott, History Teacher, Rockingham Early College High School,

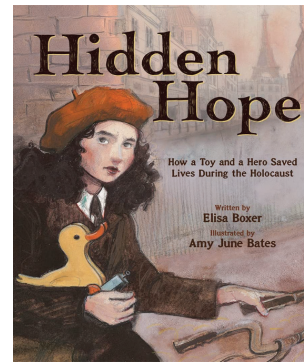
Wentworth, North Carolina

Edith Clarke invented the Clarke Calculator, which solved equations 10 times faster than humans. Why are we just finding out about this? The lives, accomplishments, and missions of women have been historically silenced, and with that, a missing puzzle in our understanding of our history and culture. In 1922, Clarke was hired as

the first female electrical engineer in the United States. Clarke was the first woman to speak at the American Institute of Electrical Engineers conference. In between the pages of this picture book, we learn more about the extraordinary life of Edith Clarke. With the illustrations and primary source quotes, we come to understand why we should know her and the legacy that she leaves. Telling the stories of historically silenced groups is crucial for creating a more inclusive and compassionate society.

**Social Studies Themes:** ❶ CULTURE; ❷ TIME, CONTINUITY, AND CHANGE; ❸ INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT AND IDENTITY; ❹ INDIVIDUALS, GROUPS, AND INSTITUTIONS; ❺ POWER, AUTHORITY, AND GOVERNANCE; ❻ PRODUCTION, DISTRIBUTION, AND CONSUMPTION

## Middle Level Honor Book



*Hidden Hope: How a Toy and a Hero Saved Lives During the Holocaust*, by Elisa Boxer, illustrated by Amy June Bates. Abrams Books for Young Readers. Reviewed by Sarah Segal, Seventh Grade Teacher, Hood River

Middle School, Hood River, Oregon.

Riding her bike throughout Paris during World War II, Judith Geller risked her life as a member of the French Resistance. Known by her pseudonym, Jacqueline Gauthier, she posed as a child social worker with a wooden toy duck. Inside the hollowed-out toy, she hid secret documents including forged identity papers, hiding locations, and plans to relocate Jewish children. Simultaneously, to make money, she worked in a Nazi factory, sabotaging machinery when possible. Geller also searched for food for her parents in hiding, and for her brother and friend who were in a Nazi camp. Every moment of her life was dedicated to saving lives.

In *Hidden Hope*, award-winning journalist Elisa Boxer, along with illustrator Amy June Bates, convey to young readers through word-choice and images the fear and dehumanization experienced by Jewish people by the Nazi regime.

A story of resilience and heroism, *Hidden Hope* is based on Boxer's research of French Resistance

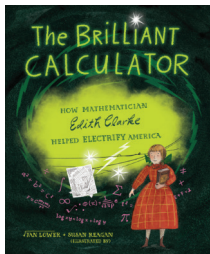
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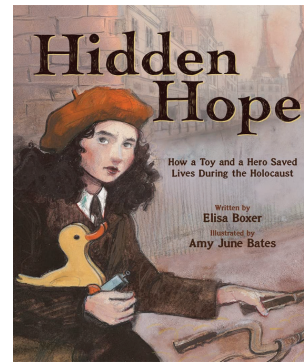
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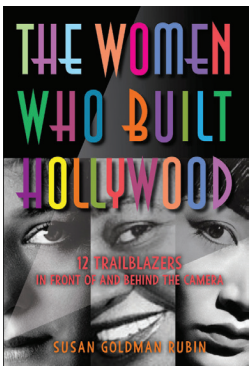
In *Hidden Hope*, award-winning journalist Elisa Boxer, along with illustrator Amy June Bates, convey to young readers through word-choice and images the fear and dehumanization experienced by Jewish people by the Nazi regime.

A story of resilience and heroism, *Hidden Hope* is based on Boxer's research of French Resistance

operations, information from Yad Vashem (the World Holocaust Remembrance Center), and a personal letter Geller wrote to her descendants. The wooden duck is currently housed in the Yad Vashem artifact collection. Additional material includes notes by the author and artist and a bibliography.

**Social Studies Themes:** ② TIME, CONTINUITY, AND CHANGE; ③ PEOPLE, PLACES, AND ENVIRONMENTS; ④ INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT AND IDENTITY; ⑤ INDIVIDUALS, GROUPS, AND INSTITUTIONS; ⑥ POWER, AUTHORITY, AND GOVERNANCE; ⑦ PRODUCTION, DISTRIBUTION, AND CONSUMPTION; ⑩ CIVIC IDEALS AND PRACTICE

### Secondary Winner



*The Women Who Built Hollywood: 12 Trailblazers in Front of and Behind the Camera*, by Susan Goldman Rubin. Calkins Creek, An Imprint of Astra Books for Young Readers. Reviewed by Sydney Beauchamp, Teaching Professor in Elementary Education, Indiana University South Bend, Indiana.

The 12 stories in this book tell of the struggles and courage of women in the film industry in the early to mid 1900s. From Mary Pickford, silent film star, to Hattie McDaniel, the first African American to win an Oscar. These stories teach us about the evolution of power by women who overcame adversity to succeed in Hollywood.

Penniless when she came to Hollywood, Mary Pickford eventually owned her own production company, and became “the most powerful and influential woman that ever worked in the film industry.” Among her accomplishments, Pickford was part of the group, in 1927, who founded the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, which later created the Academy Awards.

Hattie McDaniel’s story is fraught with controversy, political elements, and personal struggle. Even though she was honored with an Oscar for Best Supporting Actress for *Gone With the Wind*, segregation laws in 1940 prevented her from sitting with her co-stars at the ceremony. Despite this injustice, McDaniel referred to her win as “one of the happiest moments in my life.” She told a newspaper that she hoped her award would encourage young Black people to “aim high and work hard.”

Other stories include Helen Holmes, the first stuntwoman; Dorothy Arzner, the first woman film director; and other inspiring women whose success opened the path for recognition and the conversations we are still having 100 years later about equity in opportunity, pay, and awards in the entertainment industry.

**Social Studies Themes:** ① CULTURE; TIME; ② CONTINUITY, AND CHANGE; ④ INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT AND IDENTITY; ⑤ INDIVIDUALS, GROUPS, AND INSTITUTIONS; ⑥ POWER, AUTHORITY, AND GOVERNANCE.



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