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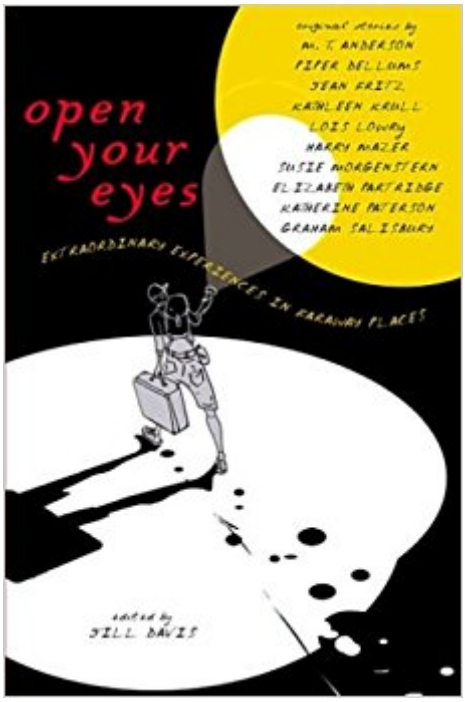
Open Your Eyes: Extraordinary Experiences In Faraway Places



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Synopsis

Living in a new place is very different from visiting one, especially when that place is far away from home. Traveling gives us the rare opportunity to see who we might have been if we had been born someplace else. For some, it's a chance to recreate ourselves. For others, it's a time to realize who we already are. In Open Your Eyes, ten writers will be your guides to the journeys that changed their lives: a boarding school in England; parenthood in France; the most beautiful spots in Italy; China on the Yang-tze; a tiny shop in Tokyo, Japan; and even to Pilzen, Czechoslovakia as World War II is ending. Though each story offers an original viewpoint, all of the stories reflect back on two important themes: where we come from and how we become who we are. Edited by Jill Davis.

Book Information

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Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

Grade 7 Up-Sometimes the most life-altering moments in young people's lives come as a result of being exposed to another culture. Davis seeks to explore these changes by gathering stories and memoirs from noted authors, among them Lois Lowry, Susie Morgenstern, Katherine Paterson, Graham Salisbury, and Jean Fritz. While most of the selections focus on evolved thinking while on foreign sojourns, two of the best are set in the United States. In a story guaranteed to make readers laugh, howl, and then cry, Piper Dellums, the privileged daughter of an African-American congressman, looks forward to making a sister of a South African exchange student. However, the

teen who arrives at her doorstep is white and makes the mistake of thinking that her host family must be the congressman’s servants. In "Looking for America," Elizabeth Partridge spends some time in the South and is astonished to find that a black cook who prepares the food can not drink from the family’s glasses, but must use a mason jar. At his evocative best, Harry Mazer takes readers back to when he was a teenaged GI, bailing out of a flaming World War II bomber and wondering what happened to a friend who never returned. In this time of rising xenophobia, the message of these stories assumes new importance. It is best summed up by Davis’s choice of a Mark Twain quotation: "Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry and narrow-mindedness."-Cindy Darling Codell, Clark Middle School, Winchester, KYCopyright Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Gr. 7-10. This unusual anthology spotlights 10 people whose lives were changed by living or traveling abroad during their youth. Editor Davis introduces the volume with a vivid memoir of her own experiences in France and follows up each of the main selections with a two-page introduction to the writer. The contributors range from Lois Lowry and Elizabeth Partridge to Graham Salisbury and Jean Fritz. The ages of the travelers and the adventures they describe vary greatly: Henry Mazer’s experiences as an 18-year-old gunner shot down over Czechoslovakia during World War II; Lowry’s encounters as an 11-year-old communicating with Japanese neighbors without a common language. Probably the most memorable entry is Piper Dellums’ story of a bigoted South African exchange student who is stunned and distressed to realize that her host family in Washington, D.C., is African American. Though not every piece is excellent, the overall quality is uncommonly high. The best contributions are riveting, and the voices, vivid and distinctive. At least one black-and-white photo accompanies each selection. A fine collection of memoirs to read, savor, and share. Carolyn PhelanCopyright Â© American Library Association. All rights reserved

Not exactly what I thought I’d find in this book. Not sure how the authors were inspired to write because of their experience. But very interesting stories and worth reading.

It was a magnificent book, even for being in the informational section. I loved reading the stories about famous people’s childhoods. I adore Harry Mazer, so when I read his experience in here, I was flabbergasted. I didn’t know that half these people even went through stuff like I do everyday. I loved the fact that it showed the NORMAL stuff as well as the crazy stuff. It was a fun, enlightening book with a moral to it. These people started out as boring kids too, and look at them now, they are

amazing writers. Normal stuff happened to them too, they were kids once, and at heart, still can be. They get to do what they love, and it shows when they wrote these stories. You can tell that they put their whole heart and soul into it to show that even exciting stuff can happen to people that give something everything they have. I generally steer away from the informational section because I love the world of adventure and fantasy. This has shown me that even the informational section doesn't have to be avoided. Thank you Jill Davis for my new-found respect for your book, and the informational section. It was nice to see normal people get the well deserved fame.

I am really enjoying these stories of adventure and hope!

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