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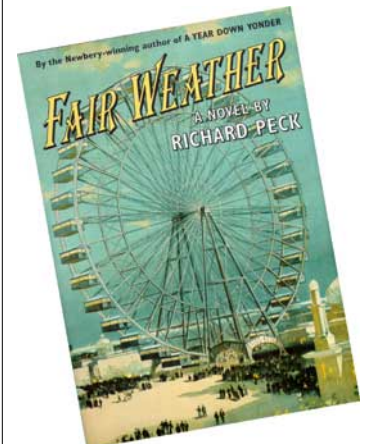
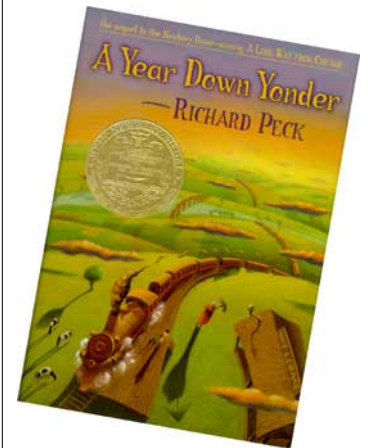
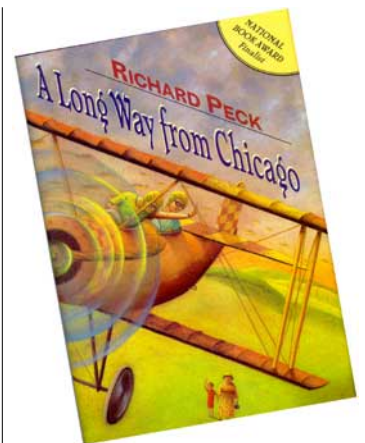
Richard Peck: October 25 speaker has a flair for young adult themes

Richard Peck, one of America's most celebrated authors of literature for young people, is coming to The University of Tennessee in October. A renowned author of over thirty popular books for children and young adults, Peck received the 2001 Newbery Medal for *A Year Down Yonder*, a companion book to *A Long Way from Chicago* which was the recipient of a Newbery Honor and a National Book Award nomination. These funny, nostalgic stories set in Depression-era, rural Illinois feature an eccentric and feisty grandmother who brings lots of excitement into the life of her granddaughter Mary Alice who comes to visit for the summer.

Peck grew up in Decatur, Illinois, a rural setting not unlike those in his most recent works. After a brief stint in the army, Peck graduated from DePauw University and Southern Illinois University, and also attended Exeter University in England. In 1971, Peck left behind a long career of teaching English in New York City private schools to pursue writing. He wanted to create literature that the young people he taught could call their own. He is now credited, along with such distinguished authors as the late Robert Cormier, S.E. Hinton, M.E. Kerr, Harry and Norma Fox Mazer, and Paul Zindel, with pioneering the genre that has come to be known as young adult literature. Peck's books have been read by millions of teenagers over the years and have served as inspiration for new generations of young adult authors. When not writing award-winning books for young people, Peck spends his time traveling 60,000 miles every year to meet his

young readers and discuss his books with them.

Never shy of controversy, Peck has explored many complex subjects and themes in his works: "acquaintance rape" in *Are You in the House Alone?*; the fate of the daughter of a drug-addicted mother in *Strays Like Us*; peers grieving for



A Long Way from Chicago was a Newbery Honor book and a nominee for the National Book Award. *A Year Down Yonder* is the 2001 Newbery Medal winner.

Richard Peck
 will speak
 7 p.m.
Thursday, October 25
UT University Center
Shiloh Room

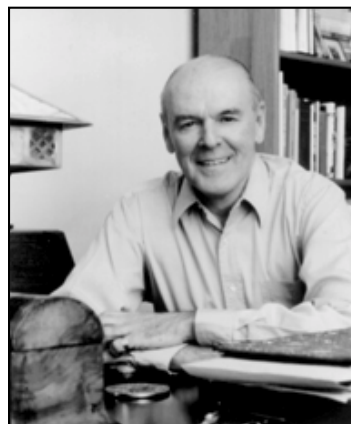


photo by Les Morsillo

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Richard Peck

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Richard Peck wanted to create literature that the young people he taught could call their own.

the death of a friend in *Close Enough to Touch*; school censorship in *The Last Safe Place on Earth*; teenage suicide in *Remembering the Good Times*; and the impact of divorce on a young girl's life in *The Unfinished Portrait of Jessica*. The versatile author also has a wonderful flair for adventure, humor, and the supernatural in novels like the ghost stories, *The Dreadful Future of Blossom Culp* and *Ghosts I have Been*; the time travel mystery, *Voices After Midnight*; and the satirical stabs at adolescent culture, *Bel Air Bambi and the Mall Rats* and *Secrets from the Shopping Mall*. Peck is also the author of many short stories that have appeared in award-winning anthologies, as well as poetry. His poem, "Twenty Minutes a Day," about the importance of reading to children, has been widely anthologized.

In 1990, Peck's body of work was recognized for excellence when he received the Margaret A. Edwards Award from the Young Adult Services Library Association. He also received that year the ALAN Award from the National Council of Teachers of English for his outstanding contributions to young adult literature. In 1991, Peck received the Medallion from the University of Southern Mississippi for his outstanding contribution to the field of literature. Peck's other honors include two Edgar Awards from the Mystery Writers of America and numerous citations for excellence from the American Library Association.

In addition to writing over thirty novels for young people, Peck is also the author of four novels for adults, the latest of which is *London Holiday*. He published an autobiography, *Anonymously Yours*, in 1991, and a witty and insightful book called *Love and Death at the Mall: Teaching and Writing for the Literate Young*. Peck's latest novel for young people, *Fair Weather*, is a humorous historical novel set during the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago. The acclaimed novel has received starred

reviews in such publications as *Booklist*, *Publisher's Weekly*, and *School Library Journal*.

An outspoken critic of censorship and a passionate advocate for literacy, Richard Peck will never be accused of being dull. On October 25th, you will be treated to one of the most articulate and provocative speakers you will ever hear. If you are an educator, reader, student, writer, or just someone who enjoys seeing a dynamic mind at work, you will not be disappointed. Come, meet, and enjoy this legendary author on Thursday, October 25, 7 p.m., in the Shiloh Room of the University Center. Following the presentation, there will be a book signing and brief reception.

Recent Publications by Our Board Members

Brozo, W.G. *To Be A Boy, To Be A Reader: Using Literature to Promote Active Literacy for Teen and Preteen Boys*. International Reading Association, 2001.

Brozo, W.G., and Simpson, M. *Readers, Teachers, Learners: Expanding Literacy Across the Content Areas*. Merrill/Prentice Hall (4th edition), 2001.

Brozo, W.G., and Young, J.P. "Boys Will Be Boys, Or Will They? Literacy and Masculinities." *Reading Research Quarterly*, v. 36, 2001.

Sullivan, Ed. *The Holocaust in Literature for Youth*. Scarecrow Press, 1999.

Watson, Jinx. "Individual Choice and Family Loyalty: Suzanne Fisher Staples' Protagonists Come of Age." *ALAN Review*, Fall 1999.

Watson, Jinx. "Appreciating Gantos' Jack Henry as an Archetype." *The New Advocate*, Fall 2001.

Gantos Teaches Popular Writing Class

Jack Gantos, 2000 Newbery Honor Winner for *Joey Pigza Loses Control*, taught UT students how to appreciate and write good children's books this past summer. A whirlwind experience, students spent time reading his work before the class began and getting to know their teacher/author a bit.

During the week of class, after listening to Gantos' stories and viewing hundreds of good picture books, students wrote and critiqued their own manuscripts with his guidance. For a week after the class, students polished their writing efforts and submitted their manuscripts to Gantos.

Students wrote about school, animals, children—in and out of trouble—first lies, loves and sorrows, and returning home after adventures. They employed the literary elements they learned to write. They wrote illustrator notes to match their texts.

Students' evaluations gave high praise for the Outreach Department in organizing this innovative class; and they offered praise to Gantos for his good teaching and generosity in spending time with student writing. And, like Joey Pigza, "they were wired" from the experience.

Gantos spoke to nearly 150 people during one of his evening lectures. Students in his class brought their parents, their grandparents and children. The Hodges Library's lounge was packed but the feeling inside was electric as Gantos offered an illustrated talk about his work.

When asked where he wanted to do a "field trip" in East Tennessee on a day of rest, Gantos didn't miss a beat: The Body Farm! UT boasts the only research project in the world for forensic/anthropological study of human body disintegration.

Gantos watched videos and read books to prepare for his visit. He talked to the professors who oversee the



Jack Gantos lectures to his summer writing class

project. Writers are on the lookout for the most remarkable experiences to keep their imaginations perking and Gantos is no exception.

UT will continue creating opportunities for Jack Gantos to return. He seems to have taken a real liking for East Tennessee and the University.

Board Member Wins Award

Judith Neff, board member for the Center for Children's and Young Adult Literature and teacher of fourth and fifth grades at St. Joseph School in Knoxville, was one of eight teachers selected to receive the Award of Recognition for Outstanding Teacher from Humanities Tennessee. The nonprofit group is associated with the National Endowment for the Humanities. The award honors excellence in teaching of the humanities.

It carries a fellowship of \$1500 to use for professional development and a second \$1500 to purchase humanities materials or programs for the school. Judith will use the funds to attend a children's literature conference at The Ohio State University in Columbus and to purchase resource materials on American Indians for St. Joseph School.

THE Center for Children's & Young Adult Literature
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Get on our mailing list! To receive announcements of future events, send your name and address to:

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