Sibert Medal 2018

**Winner**: Twelve Days in May: Freedom Ride 1961

Author: Larry Dane Brimner

In 1961 on the seventh anniversary of the Brown vs. Board of Education ruling, 13 freedom riders boarded two buses in Washington D.C. bound for New Orleans. The riders were willing to risk their lives to challenge illegal Jim Crow practices on interstate buses and in bus terminals.

**Jim Crow** was the name of the racial caste system which operated primarily, but not exclusively in southern and border states, between 1877 and the mid-1960s. **Jim Crow** was more than a series of rigid anti-black laws. It was a way of life.

“Spare text, bold graphics and arresting photos combine to take young readers on a 12-day journey through the Jim Crow American south of 1961,” said Sibert Medal Committee Chair Tali Balas.

Using a straightforward, present-tense narrative and a diary-style format, Brimner (*The Rain Wizard*) recounts the first freedom ride of the civil rights movement. After opening with a recap of several landmark court cases that affected civil rights for African-Americans, the third-person retrospective begins a day-by-day account of the bus journey in May 1961: “They are men and women, young and old, black and white. They are people with a plan.... They are prepared for the unexpected.” The 13 riders, all promising nonviolence, left Washington, D.C., aboard two buses bound for Louisiana in an effort to integrate interstate travel facilities. The further south they traveled, the more violent local reaction became. Black typeface on white pages alternates with white typeface against black backdrops to stark effect, and words taken from quotations, segregation signs, or slogans from the ride occasionally pop out from the pages. Archival photos depict the ride and violent confrontations, including the firebombing of one bus. This well-researched and accessible account of a precedent-setting protest ends with an epilogue, updates on the 13 riders, a bibliography, source notes, and index

**Honor**

1. Chef Roy Choi and the Street Food Remix

Author: Jacqueline Briggs Martin and June Jo Lee

Part biography, part culinary adventure, this vibrant and energetic book captures the essence of the LA street food scene. Graffiti-inspired art and hip-hop flavored text blend food, community and identity into a delicious feast for the eyes and ears that reflects the melting pot of America.

Chef Roy Choi calls himself a “street cook.”  
He wants outsiders, low-riders,  
kids, teens, shufflers and skateboarders,  
to have food cooked with care, with love,  
with sohn maash.  
  
"Sohn maash" is the flavors in our fingertips. It is the love and cooking talent that Korean mothers and grandmothers mix into their handmade foods. For Chef Roy Choi, food means love. It also means culture, not only of Korea where he was born, but the many cultures that make up the streets of Los Angeles, where he was raised. So remixing food from the streets, just like good music—and serving it up from a truck—is true to L.A. food culture. People smiled and talked as they waited in line.

1. Grand Canyon

Author: Jason Chin

Through magnificent panoramic illustrations, meticulously researched diagrams and lucid text, Jason Chin has created a book as grand as the canyon itself. Readers join a father-daughter pair on an imaginary hike through the canyon’s ecological communities, inviting readers to look at this unique natural wonder.

Rivers wind through earth, cutting down and eroding the soil for millions of years, creating a cavity in the ground 277 miles long, 18 miles wide, and more than a mile deep known as the Grand Canyon.  
  
Home to an astonishing variety of plants and animals that have lived and evolved within its walls for millennia, the Grand Canyon is much more than just a hole in the ground. Follow a father and daughter as they make their way through the cavernous wonder, discovering life both present and past.  
  
Weave in and out of time as perfectly placed die cuts show you that a fossil today was a creature much long ago, perhaps in a completely different environment. Complete with a spectacular double gatefold, an intricate map and extensive back matter

1. Not So Different: What You Really Want to Ask about Having a Disability

Author: Shane Burcaw

In this candid book, award-winning writer Burcaw answers ten frequently asked questions about his life with a disability in a humorous and approachable manner. Carr’s brilliant photos of comically-staged scenes, along with family shots and outsized graphics, add to this book’s tone and liveliness.

Shane Burcaw was born with a rare disease called spinal muscular atrophy, which hinders his muscles' growth. As a result, his body hasn't grown bigger and stronger as he's gotten older--it's gotten smaller and weaker instead. This hasn't stopped him from doing the things he enjoys (like eating pizza and playing sports and video games) with the people he loves, but it does mean that he routinely relies on his friends and family for help with everything from brushing his teeth to rolling over in bed.

1. Sea Otter Heroes: The Predators That Saved an Ecosystem

Author: Patricia Newman

Chemical runoff from California’s farms kills seagrass. But in Monterey Bay’s Elkhorn Slough, the seagrass is thriving. Why? Readers dive into the waters of the slough along with biologist Brent Hughes as he doggedly pursues the answers to this puzzling ecological mystery.

In Elkhorn Slough, an inlet on the California coast, seagrass grows healthy and strong in the shallow water. This healthy seagrass baffled marine biologist Brent Hughes. The scientist expected this estuary to be overrun with algae, causing the seagrass to die. Why was the seagrass thriving?  
  
As Brent investigated, signs pointed to an unexpected player helping to keep the seagrass healthy: sea otters! What do these top predators have to do with an aquatic grass at the opposite end of the food chain? Brent's amazing discovery gave scientists insight into the delicate balance of ecosystems. Follow science in action as Brent conducts the research that led to this major discovery.