

# Delve Deeper into "The Boys of Baraka"

A film by Heidi Ewing and Rachel Grady

This multi-media resource list, compiled by Rebecca Federman of the New York Public Library in partnership with the American Library Association, provides a range of perspectives on the issues raised by the upcoming P.O.V. documentary "The Boys of Baraka" that premieres on September 12, 2006 at 10 p.m. on PBS (check local listings at [www.pbs.org/pov/](http://www.pbs.org/pov/)).

African American boys have a very high chance of being incarcerated or killed before they reach adulthood. In Baltimore, one of the country's most poverty-stricken cities for inner-city residents, the Baraka School project was founded to break the cycle of violence through an innovative education program that literally removed young boys from low-performing public schools and unstable home environments. "The Boys of Baraka" follows four boys as they travel with their classmates to rural Kenya in East Africa, where a teacher-student ratio of one to five, a strict disciplinary program and a comprehensive curriculum form the core of an extraordinary new journey in their transformation to men. Winner of awards at the Newport, Chicago, Woodstock and Silverdocs Film Festivals. A co-presentation with the Independent Television Service (ITVS). Produced in association with P.O.V./American Documentary.

## ADULT NONFICTION

**Baum, Howell S. *Community Action for School Reform*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2003.** How Baltimore community activists took action to improve the Baltimore city schools and the enormous challenges they faced, both within the community and with the school district.

**Boyd-Franklin, Nancy. *Boys into Men: Raising Our African American Teenage Sons*. New York: Dutton, 2000.** Boyd-Franklin looks at the difficulties in raising African American men and offers solutions.

**Brown, Drew T. *You Gotta Believe: Education Plus Hard Work Minus Drugs Equals the***

***American Dream*. New York: William Morrow, 1991.**

Autobiography of an African American Jew who succumbs to drug abuse and violence. With family support and a sense of self-worth, Brown overcomes his obstacles and succeeds.

**Connor, Marlene K. *What is Cool? Black Manhood in America*. New York: Crown Publishers, 1995.** An examination of what the word "cool" means in the various contexts of African American male environments. From "street cool" to "electronic cool," Connor attempts to define these usages.

**Davis, Anthony C. Yo, *Little Brother: Basic Rules of Survival for Young African American Males*. Chicago, IL: African American Images, 1998.** A special education teacher from Philadelphia brings up issues of survival and prosperity among African American males.

**Dunbar, Christopher. *Alternative Schooling for African American Youth: Does Anyone Know We're Here?* New York: P. Lang, 2001.** A group of middle school students are taken out of their school and put into an alternative learning environment in order to prevent expulsion.

**Entwisle, Doris R. *Children, Schools, and Inequality*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997.** A focus on middle school children and their social development.

**Gibson, Camille. *Being Real: The Student-Teacher Relationship and African American Male Delinquency*. New York: LFB Scholarly Publications, 2002.** A look at how teachers' behavior in classroom environments can affect the progress of male students.

**Golden, Marita. *Saving Our Sons: Raising Black Children in a Turbulent World*. New York: Doubleday, 1995.** A largely autobiographical look at what it means to parent a young African American man in today's society. **Jabari, Mahiri. *Shooting for Excellence: African American and Youth Culture in New Century Schools*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of**

**English, 1998.** By looking at two areas of effective learning — the classroom and the basketball court — Jabari explores the issues in education today.

**Koetzsch, Ronald E. *The Parents' Guide to Alternatives in Education*. Boston, MA: Shambhala, 1997.** A guide for parents choosing an alternative form of education for their children, including multi-cultural education.

**Leder, Drew. *The Soul Knows No Bars: Inmates Reflect on Life, Death and Hope* Lanham, MD: Roman & Littlefield, 2000.** Interviews with inmates at the Maryland State Penitentiary about their lives, philosophies and the deep moral questions they wrestle with everyday in prison.

**Martin, Bruce. *Wayside Attractions: The Negotiation of Aspirations and Careers Among African American Adolescent Males in an Urban Alternative School*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, 2003.** An ethnographic study of six African American boys who enroll in an alternative education program.

**McDougall, Harold A. *Black Baltimore: A New Theory of Community*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1993.** A look at how urban Baltimore is relying more on its own support systems via the church and community rather than on private foundations or public subsidies.

**McNair, Chris. *Young Lions: Christian Rites of Passage for African American Young Men*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2001.** Guide to mentoring and helping African American men in church congregations.

**Mincy, Ronald B., ed. *Black Males Left Behind*. Washington, D.C: Urban Institute Press, 2006.** Explores issues plaguing African American men in the United States. Subjects include welfare -to-work programs, the lack of blue-collar employment and issues with child support.

**Mincy, Ronald B., *Nurturing Young Black Males: Challenges to Agencies, Programs, and Social Policy*. Washington, DC: Urban Institute Press, 1994.**

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A guide to programs established to help African American teens. Describes the methods used and the difficulties encountered by these programs.

**Newman, Robert E. *Building Urban Little Schools: Where Every Child Succeeds with Dignity*. Cambridge, MA: Brookline Books, 2000.**

Newman outlines a plan for developing small, multi-generational, neighborhood schools. From a director of an experimental school in Syracuse, NY.

**Orr, Marion. *Black Social Capital: The Politics of School Reform in Baltimore, 1986-1998*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1999.** Explores why school reform has been so difficult to achieve in Baltimore and what can be done to change it. Includes case studies of reform initiatives and the theory of social capital.

**Peltak, Jennifer. *The History of African American Colleges and Universities*. Philadelphia, PA: Chelsea House, 2003.** A thorough look at historically African American colleges and universities from their origins until now.

**Robinson, Jo Ann. *Education as My Agenda: Gertrude Williams, Race, and the Baltimore Public Schools*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.** After working 49 years in the Baltimore public school system, Williams identifies the essential elements of a sound education, describes her own education and examines the highs and lows of urban public education since World War II in this memoir.

**Rossi, Robert J., ed. *Schools and Students at Risk: Context and Framework for Positive Change*. New York: Teachers College Press, 1994.** Rossi presents the challenges and tasks necessary in successfully teaching at-risk students with limited educational opportunities.

**Suskind, Ron. *A Hope in the Unseen: An American Odyssey from the Inner City to the Ivy League*. New York: Broadway Books, 1998.** Suskin follows Cedric Jennings from the inner city of Washington, D.C. to Brown University. Help from his single

mother, the Pentecostal Church and his love of music and math keep him out of gangs and get him into college.

**Welch, Olga M. and Carolyn R. Hodges. *Standing Outside on the Inside: Black Adolescents and the Construction of Academic Identity*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1997.** A look at the issues that plague African American students in institutions of higher learning. The book is the result of a longitudinal study on academic achievement of African Americans.

**Williams, Heather Andrea. *Self-Taught: African American Education in Slavery and Freedom*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2005.** Learning how to read and write was illegal for southern African Americans in the early to mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Williams explores the ways in which they defied those laws and educated themselves.

**Winbush, Raymond A. *The Warrior Method: A Program for Rearing Healthy Black Boys*. New York: Armistad Press, 2001.** An Afro-centric approach to raising young men, using rituals from West African Poro Society. Examples include meeting with an elder of the community once a week, wearing kente cloth and reading a certain number of books a year.

**Wright, Jerome Dyson. *Poor, Black and in Real Trouble*. Baltimore, MD: Community Residence Center, 1976.** An edgy account of Baltimore's infamous Pennsylvania Avenue.

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## ADULT FICTION

**Apollo. *Concrete Candy*. New York: Anchor, 1996.** Written when the author was only 15, *Concrete Candy* follows three young men in and around Oakland, California.

**Long, Thomas. *A Thug's Life*. Dix Hills, NY: Urban Books, 2004.** Two friends get caught in a drug ring in West Baltimore.

**Patterson, Raymond R. *Twenty-Six Ways of Looking at a Black Man and Other Poems*. New York: Award Books, 1969.** A

book of poetry reflecting African American life in the 1960s.

**Perry, Steve. *The Window Pain*. Middletown, CT: Renegade Books, 1997.** The story and experiences of two young African American boys on the road to manhood in 1980s Philadelphia.

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## FICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS

**Dans, Peter E. *Perry's Baltimore Adventure*. Centreville, MD: Cornell Maritime Press, 2003.** Kindergarten - 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Follows the adventures of two falcons and their adventures in Baltimore.

**Fuqua, Jonathan Scott. *The Reappearance of Sam Webber*. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press, 2001.** Sam and his mother move to urban Baltimore, and Sam must learn how to adjust to his new life.

**Haynes, David. *Right By My Side*. Minneapolis, MN: New Rivers Press, 1993.** The trials and tribulations of a teen from a housing project in St. Louis who learns how to deal with his anger and sadness by becoming a storyteller.

**Mowry, Jess. *Six Out Seven*. New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1993.** An African American boy from the South comes of age in a gang. Set in Oakland, California.

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## VIDEOS/DOCUMENTARIES

**"Lost Boys of Sudan." A film by Megan Mylan and Jon Shenk. Actual Films, 2003. (87 min.)** Follows two young refugees from the Dinka tribe in Sudan, Peter and Santino, through their first year in America. [www.pbs.org/pov/pov2004/lostboys/ofsudan/](http://www.pbs.org/pov/pov2004/lostboys/ofsudan/)

**"Jambo Kenya." A film by Lalita Krishna. In Sync Video, 2005. (58 min.)** Follows 11 Canadian teens on a transformative three-week trip to Kenya to build a school and teach English.

**"Rize." A film by David LaChapelle. David LaChapelle Studios, 2005. (86 min.)** Explores crunking and clowning, two similar

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dance movements in South Central Los Angeles.

**"Straight Up Rappin."** A film by Freke Vuijst and Tana Ross. Green Room Productions, 1991. (29 min.) Amateur New York City rappers express their feelings about the world.  
[www.filmakers.com/indivs/StraightRappin.htm](http://www.filmakers.com/indivs/StraightRappin.htm)

**"Tell Them Who We Are."** A film by Alexandria Levitt. New Day Films, 1993. (29 min.) The story of the Laquienian Drill Team and Drum Squad from South Central Los Angeles.  
[www.newday.com/films/Tell\\_Them\\_Who\\_We\\_Are.html](http://www.newday.com/films/Tell_Them_Who_We_Are.html)

**"The Wire."** A television series created by David Simon. Home Box Office, 2002. (60 min.) HBO series about drug culture in Baltimore as seen through the eyes of dealers, narcotics agents and kingpins.

**"Hoop Dreams."** A film by Steve James. Kartemquin Films, 1994. (170 min.) Follows the lives of two African American boys who struggle to become professional basketball players.

**"Dangerous Minds."** A film by John N. Smith. Hollywood Pictures, 1995. (99 min.) An ex-Marine teacher strives to connect with her disobedient students in an inner city school.

**"Clockers."** A film by Spike Lee. Universal Pictures, 1995. (128 min.) Strike, a young city drug dealer, and his drug-lord Rodney Little are suspected of killing a night worker at a fast food restaurant.

**"Boyz N The Hood."** A film by John Singleton. Columbia Pictures, 1991. (107 min.) The story of three childhood friends struggling to escape the violence, drugs and crime of a Los Angeles ghetto.

## WEB SITES

P.O.V.'s "The Boys of Baraka"  
[www.pbs.org/pov/pov2006/boysofbaraka](http://www.pbs.org/pov/pov2006/boysofbaraka)

Includes an interview with the filmmakers, resources, special features and more.

**School: The Story of American Public Education**  
[www.pbs.org/kcet/publicschool/](http://www.pbs.org/kcet/publicschool/)

The Web site of the PBS special on the history of America's public school system. Includes information on leaders in the education movements as well as how the classroom and education, in general, have evolved.

**Maryland Business Roundtable for Education**  
[www.mbrt.org/](http://www.mbrt.org/)

An initiative to provide a quality education for all of Maryland's elementary and secondary school students.

**Association of Independent Maryland Schools**  
[www.aimsmd.org/](http://www.aimsmd.org/)

Includes over 100 of Maryland's private, alternative and prep schools.

**Special Education Law**  
[www.wrightslaw.com/](http://www.wrightslaw.com/)

Site provides information for parents and educators on special education laws for students with disabilities. Provides resources and articles on special education topics.

**Education Week Newsletter**  
[www.edweek.org/](http://www.edweek.org/)

Access to *Education Week* and *Teacher Magazine* articles and issues dealing with K-12 education.

**Back to School: America's Changing Classroom**  
[www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2004/back.to.school/](http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2004/back.to.school/)

A look at the way traditional education has changed. Explores home schooling, charter schools, online classrooms and other alternative methods of learning.

**Teens: The Forgotten Face of Black History**  
[www.teenwire.com/infocus/2005/if-20050201p092-rights.php](http://www.teenwire.com/infocus/2005/if-20050201p092-rights.php)

Explores the important role teens played in African American history and civil rights.

**The Jackson Davis Collection of African American Educational Photographs from the University of Virginia Library**  
[www.lib.virginia.edu/small/collections/jdavis/](http://www.lib.virginia.edu/small/collections/jdavis/)

Collection of photographs from educational reformer and photographer Jackson Davis. Photos

taken from schools throughout the Southeastern U.S. Includes several counties in Maryland.

**Status and Trends in the Education of Blacks**  
<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2003034>

National Center for Education Statistics Web site that presents data culled from a variety of reports on African American education. From 2003.

**National Park Service/U.S. Department of the Interior**  
[www.cr.nps.gov/crdi/colleges/blk.htm](http://www.cr.nps.gov/crdi/colleges/blk.htm)

List of historically Black colleges and universities in the United States.

**United Negro College Fund**  
[www.uncf.org/](http://www.uncf.org/)

The Web site of the oldest and largest minority higher education assistance program. Provides information on fellowships, internships and tuition assistance for African American students.

**African Americans in the Sciences**  
<http://webfiles.uci.edu/mcbrown/display/faces.html>

Profiles of African American men and women who have contributed to the world of science. Broken down by area of scientific expertise.

**Center for the Education of Students Placed At Risk**  
[www.csos.jhu.edu/crespar/](http://www.csos.jhu.edu/crespar/)

Collaboration between Johns Hopkins and Howard University to conduct research and find strategies and applicable programs for students who qualify as "at risk."