



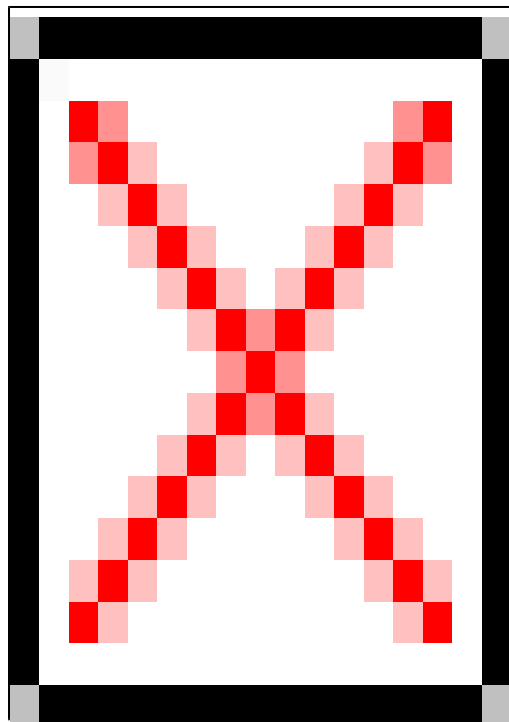
THE 2021 LITTLE REBELS AWARD SHORTLIST

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The shortlist for the **2021 Little Rebels Award** has been revealed and it is the longest in the award's history.

Now in its 9th year, the **Little Rebels Award** celebrates children's fiction which challenges stereotypes, promotes social justice and advocates for a more peaceful and fairer world.



Three debut authors sit alongside established authors in a shortlist tackling a broad range of social justice themes including fake news, homelessness, plastic pollution, body positivity, the challenges and dangers faced by refugees, the ethics of AI, the commodification of the internet and Scottish witch trials.

The **Little Rebels 2021** shortlist in full:

[Agent Asha: Mission Shark Bytes](#) [1] by Sophie Deen, illustrated by Anjan Sarkar (Walker Books)

[Boy Everywhere](#) [2] by AM Dassu (Old Barn Books)

[Brand New Boy](#) [3] by David Almond, illustrated by Marta Altes (Walker Books)

[Fearless Fairy Tales](#) [4] by Konnie Huq & James Kay, illustrated by Rikin Parekh (Bonnier)

[The Goody](#) by Lauren Child (Orchard Books)

[Hope Jones Saves the World](#) [5] by Josh Lacey, illustrated by Beatriz Castro (Andersen Press)

[It Isn't Rude to be Nude](#) [6] by Rosie Haine (Tate Publishing)

[A Kind of Spark](#) [7] by Elle McNicoll (Knights Of)

The Soup Movement by Ben Davis (OUP)

Over the lifespan of the award, the publishing industry has reflected and responded to a rise in political activism, especially amongst young people, resulting in a growth in social-justice-minded books for children. 147 titles were submitted to the award in 2021 by a total of 46 publishers, an overall increase of 120% on the award's inaugural year in 2012.

Catherine Barter Co-Manager of **Housmans Bookshop**, said, "This is the longest shortlist in the history of the prize, and that's reflective of the strength of the submissions" we were really excited and encouraged to see so many radically imaginative books responding to the social issues of our time.

From Rosie Haine's joyful challenge to our repressive, body-shaming culture, to Elle McNicoll's nuanced paralleling of the Scottish Witch trials with societal prejudice against neurodiversity, through to David Almond's meditation on the meaning of life and Konnie Huq and James Kay's riotous bonanza of political satire - the **Little Rebels Award** has never explored such a wide range of subjects. These inspiring and politically engaged stories demonstrate that children's fiction deserves a place at the heart of radical bookselling.

Fen Coles, Co-Director of [Letterbox Library](#) [8], said: "It's wonderful to see both the bigger and smaller industry players represented on this list, in terms of publishing houses and the creators themselves. And after the year we've all had, it has been heartening to see so many artists birthing new young activists - Hope Jones, Addie (**A Kind of Spark**), Asha (**Agent Asha**), Jordan (**The Soup Movement**) and an entire group of classmates in the North East of England (**Brand New Boy**) are fabulous, relatable, literary role models for today's progressive, socially aware and politically astute generation."

The winner will be revealed in July and receives a cheque for £2000, funded by the Marxist Socialist funder, the Barry Amiel and Norman Melburn Trust.

This year's judges are author Patrice Lawrence; Emily Drabble, Head of Children's Book Promotions/Prizes at **BookTrust**; Jim MacSweeney, longstanding manager of LGBT bookshop **Gay's the Word**; Darren Chetty, Teacher, Writer, Researcher; and Shaun Dellenty, Trainer in LGBT+ inclusive education.

Last year's **Little Rebels Award** winner was **The Boy Who Loved Everyone** by Jane Porter, illustrated by Maisie Paradise Shearring (Walker), a picture book celebrating the radical act of spreading love around the world.

Source URL (retrieved on Oct '21): <http://imap.booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/news/the-2021-little-rebels-award-shortlist>

Links:

- [1] <http://imap.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/243/childrens-books/reviews/agent-asha-mission-shark-bytes>
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