

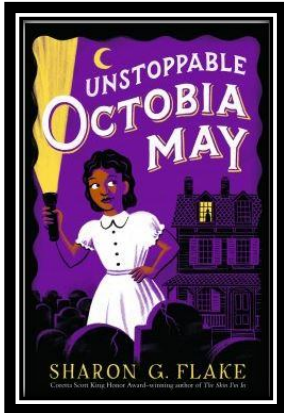


Website: <http://www.sharongflake.com/>

Sharon Flake

Life: Sharon Flake was born on December 24, 1955 in Philadelphia. She has two older sisters, two older brothers and one younger brother. She was shy growing up. Her dad worked for the Philadelphia Gas Co. and her mom work day jobs and cared for the family. The author graduated from the University of Pittsburgh in creative writing. She spent 8 years working with young people in a foster care program. Then she worked for 18 years at the University of Pittsburgh to become the Director of PR for the business school there. During that time she also wrote her first book *The Skin I'm in*. Sharon lives in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She has one daughter, Brittany. See: The Teaching Landscape: Sharon G. Flake on Diversity. (Feb. 9, 2011) *YouTube*. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zsH4S4aNLGo>

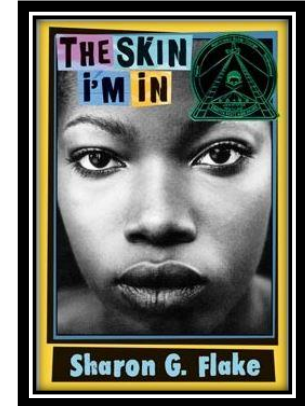
Books



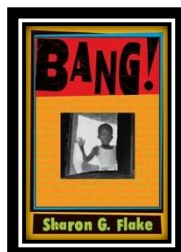
2014 - Gr 4-7--Octobia May is convinced that Mr. Davenport, the new tenant in her Aunt Shuma's boarding house, is a vampire, even though she thinks, "[the man] is colored like me. Now I know the truth; vampires do not discriminate." Octobia must revise her conviction, however, when she sees Mr. Davenport outside in broad daylight (death to a real vampire), but there's still something mysterious about the man. When a series of murders then ensue and a cache of stolen jewels is discovered, Octobia May and her best friend, Jonah, are determined to find the truth at any cost. Set in 1953, Flake's novel is not only a mystery but also an examination of racial discrimination in the pre-civil rights era, and the many corollary constraints on the freedom of black Americans. Octobia May longs to be free herself—free of discrimination, certainly, but also free simply to be her own rambunctious self. Flake has done a fine job of integrating her expository material into a reader-satisfying and page-turning mystery. —Michael Cart. (August 2014). [Review]. *Booklist*. P.78. [Compare to *Dead end in Norvelt* by Jack Gantos]

1998 – Gr. 7-HS. Maleeka Madison is always getting teased about the way she looks ... "They don't say nothing about the fact that I'm a math whiz, and can outdo ninth graders when it comes to figuring numbers. Or that I got a good memory and never forget a single, solitary thing I read. They only see what they see, and they don't seem to like what they see much." Maleeka knows she deserves to be treated better, but there is a huge gap between knowing she deserves more respect and liking herself enough to demand it. A new teacher at her school, Miss Saunders, tries to help Maleeka see how beautiful she is both inside and out, but Maleeka is resistant to her efforts. In her opinion, Miss Saunders is butting into things that aren't her business, in spite of, or perhaps because of, the disfiguring birthmark on the teacher's own face. A stunning and courageous debut novel ... moves swiftly with dialogue finely tuned to the voices of contemporary African American teens as it explores issues of self-respect and self-esteem through the life of a creative and talented young woman who is learning to see herself in new ways.

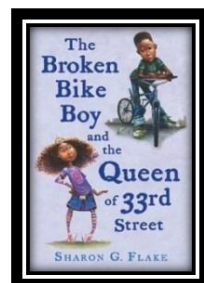
© Cooperative Children's Book Center, Univ. of Wisconsin - Madison, 1998



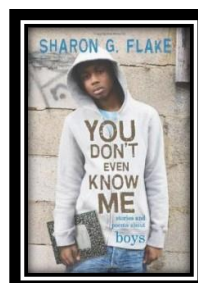
2004
(paperback)



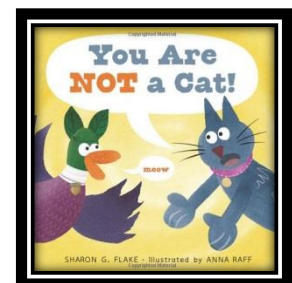
2005



2007



2010



Fall 2016

Most published by Jump at the Sun (Hyperion) or Scholastic.

A few Achievements and Awards:

(other award descriptions included with individual titles on Sharon's website)

August Wilson Short Story Award (1994) (Luckiest Sister)
Coretta Scott King/John Steptoe Award for new authors (1999) (*The Skin I'm In*)
Coretta Scott King Honor book (2002) (*Money Hungry*)

Cooperative Children's Book Center Choice (CCBC)
CCBC Best of the Best List (*Unstoppable Octobia May*)
2014 Pittsburgh Courier's 50 Women of Excellence Award
Recognitions from ALA, Booklist, Publishers Weekly
YWCA Racial Justice Award Winners

Advice to Readers:

- Rule#1** Say yes to opportunity even if you are shaking in your boots.
Rule#2 Trust your gut, your intuition. It can help you avoid a mountain of trouble.
Rule#3 Ask for what you want.
Rule#4 Speak up. You have a right to be heard.
Rule#5 Feed your imagination. Read. Write. Dream.
Rule#6 Say No! Then say it again and again if you need to.
Rule#7 Do not belittle yourself, or talk down to others.
Rule#8 Accept people who are different from you.
Rule#9 Help others when you can.
Rule#10 Save your money. Life costs.
Rule#11 Set goals. Persevere. Do not let setbacks stop you.
Rule#12 Put your dreams into pictures. Seeing makes it much easier to believe and achieve.
Rule#13 Be Thankful. Grateful. And Happy To Be You.

Rules by: Aunt Shuma and author Sharon G. Flake (All rights reserved) and inspired by *Unstoppable Octobia May* (2014). Scholastic Inc. (From her shrfla9@aol.com)

Books she wish she'd written:

47—Walter Mosley
A Girl Named Disaster—Nancy Farmer
A Hero Ain't Nothing But a Sandwich—Alice Childress
A Tea Cup Full of Roses—Sharon Bell Mathis
Black Books Galore/Great African American Children's Books About Boys
Copper Sun—Sharon Draper
Day of Tears—Julius Lester
Dancing in the Wings—Debbie Allen
Diary of a Wimpy Kid—Jeff Kinney
Grace for President—Kelly DiPucchio
Handbook for Boys; A Novel—Walter Dean Myers
How to Get Your Child To Love Reading—Esme Raji Codell
Jason & Kyra—Dana Davidson
A Single Shard—Linda Sue Park
Letters to a Young Brother: Manifest Your Destiny—Hill Harper

More Advice: As you read my novels, believe that you can do and accomplish more than you know. After all, you have so many gifts, so many talents, so many opportunities to accomplish what you will. You're human, so you'll make mistakes along the way. We all do. But don't you dare give up on you. Forget the haters. Forgive yourself and others. Brush yourself off and start over again if things don't work out the way you planned. I felt scared and little most of my life, so I know what it feels like to push past your fears and learn to see yourself differently. If I can do it, so can you. After all, you are the hope for the future, the promise that everything will be okay if we just don't quit on ourselves or one another. Hope. Dream. Believe. Laugh a little. Work hard (nothing gets accomplished without hard work). And watch what happens: you'll begin to see what many of us have known about you all along—you can do incredible things and have a remarkable life. Just Hope. Dream. Believe. I do. (From her website)

"The inner city is not all about broken glass. There's crystal goblets, too. That's what my books do--put the broken glass and the crystal goblets in the same context." Mendelson, A. *Pop City* [Interview]. *Authors and Artists for Young Adults*, March 1, 2008.

Letters to a Young Sister: Manifest Your Destiny—Hill Harper
Like Sisters on the Homefront—Rita Williams Garcia
Mama's Girl—Veronica Chambers
Mariso and Magdalena—Veronica Chambers
Miracle's Boys—Jaqueline Woodson
Monster—Walter Dean Myers
Moses—Carole Boston Weatherford
Our Aunt Gracie—Jacqueline Woodson
The Pact—Sampson Davis, Jenkins, Hunt and Page
Princess Academy—Shannon Hale
The Road to Paris—Nikki Grimes
The Skin I'm In—Hey, I did write that! :)
Tears of a Tiger (Trilogy)—Sharon Draper
Virgie Goes to School With Us Boys—Elizabeth Fitzgerald Howard
Vive La Paris—Esme Raji Codell
Willimena Rules!—Valerie Wilson Wesley & Maryn Roos

Partial Bibliography:

New York Public Library (2002, July 18). Author chat with Sharon Flake. Retrieved from <http://www.nypl.org/author-chat-sharon-g-flake>
Sharon G. Flake. (2008). In *Authors and Artists for Young Adults v.76*. Detroit: Gale.
"Sharon G. Flake." (2011). *Contemporary Authors Online*. Detroit: Gale.
Sharon G. Flake Biography - Personal, Addresses, Career, Honors Awards, Writings, Adaptations, Sidelights. (201?). Retrieved from <http://biography.jrank.org/pages/1989/Flake-Sharon-G.html>