



Opening Minds. Challenging Minds.®

## Press Release

### **Anisfield-Wolf Book Awards® Fact Sheet**

- Established in 1935, the Anisfield-Wolf Book Awards recognize outstanding books that contribute to our understanding of racism or appreciation of the rich diversity of human cultures.
- The Anisfield-Wolf Book Awards is the only American literary competition devoted to recognizing books that have made an important contribution to society's understanding of racism and the diversity of cultures. Traditionally, an academic work and a work of fiction, poetry or memoir are selected each year. A Lifetime Achievement award category was established in 1996.
- The 2008 winners are Junot Diaz, *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* and Mohsin Hamid, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. William Melvin Kelley receives the Lifetime Achievement Award.
- Award winners are selected by a panel of nationally recognized jurors, currently chaired by Henry Louis Gates Jr., Alphonse Fletcher University Professor, Harvard University. Other jurors are Rita Dove, Commonwealth Professor of English, University of Virginia; Joyce Carol Oates, Roger S. Berlind '52 Professor in the Humanities, Princeton University; Steven Pinker, Ph.D., Johnstone Family Professor of Psychology, Harvard University; and Simon Schama, Ph.D., University Professor of History and Art History, Columbia University.
- The Fiction and Non-Fiction award categories each carry a \$10,000 monetary gift award from the Anisfield-Wolf Fund. The Cleveland Foundation administers the fund. To be eligible, books must be written in English and published in the preceding year.
- Past Anisfield-Wolf winners include such groundbreaking works as: Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma* (1945); Alan Paton, *Cry, The Beloved Country* (1949); Claude Brown, *Manchild in the Promised Land* (1966); Malcolm X with Alex Haley, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (1966); Robert Coles, *Children of Crisis: A Study of Courage and Fear* (1968); Jonathan Kozol, *Amazing Grace* (1996); James McBride, *The Color of Water* (1977) and David Levering Lewis' *W.E. B. DuBois: The Biography of Race, 1868-1919* (1994) and *W.E.B. DuBois: The Fight for Equality and the American Century, 1919 through 1963* (2001); Vernon E. Jordan Jr., *Vernon Can Read* (2002) and Samantha Power, *A Problem From Hell: America and the Age of Genocide* (2003).
- The awards were founded by Cleveland philanthropist and civic leader Edith Anisfield Wolf, and reflect the passion for issues of social justice that characterized her family. The awards are named in honor of her father and her husband.

- Established in 1914, the Cleveland Foundation is the world's first community foundation and the nation's third-largest today, with assets of \$1.9 billion and 2006 grants surpassing \$85 million. The foundation improves the lives of Greater Clevelanders in perpetuity by building community endowment, addressing needs through grantmaking, and providing leadership on vital issues. Currently the foundation proactively directs two-thirds of its flexible grant dollars to the community's greatest needs: economic transformation (including advanced energy and globalization), public school improvement, early childhood and youth development, neighborhoods and housing, and arts advancement.
- For more information on The Cleveland Foundation, please visit [www.clevelandfoundation.org](http://www.clevelandfoundation.org).