Teen Historical Fiction

**The Iron River** by Daniel Acosta
1950s California. A river runs through Manny’s life, heart, and imagination, but it isn’t water, it’s iron—the tracks and trains of the Southern Pacific railroad that pass along his tight-knit neighborhood. The iron river is everything to Manny; he watches it and plays by it with his friends every day. But nothing derails the iron river, and nothing stops a cop from trying to pin a man’s murder on Manny and his friends...

**The Weight of Our Sky** by Hanna Alkaf
1969 Malaysia. Melati looks like your typical 1960s teen but unlike most other sixteen-year-olds, Mel also struggles with obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) and anxiety about the potential death of her mother. There are things that Melati can’t protect her mother from, like the racial tensions threatening to boil over in her city of Kuala Lumpur. Will they survive?

**Ziggy, Stardust and Me** by James Brandon
1973 St. Louis. The Watergate hearings are happening, the Vietnam War is still raging, and homosexuality is considered an official mental illness. To cope with these trying times, Jonathan escapes to his imagination, where his hero David Bowie's Ziggy Stardust and dead relatives guide him through the rough terrain of life. He hopes to one day be “normal”-that, until he meets Web.

**Code Talker** by Joseph Bruchac
1940s United States. In World War II, Ned, a sixteen-year-old Navajo boy, becomes a code talker for the U.S. war effort in Japan; follow this fictionalized account of the very real part Navajo code talkers played in the U.S. effort, sending messages back and forth in an unbreakable code that used their native language.

**In the Neighborhood of True** by Susan Kaplan Carlton
In the summer of 1958, Ruth and her family transplant themselves from New York City to Atlanta. Ruth quickly figures out she can be Jewish or she can be popular, but she can’t be both. Eager to fit in, she decides to hide her religion. However, a violent hate crime soon causes her to choose between her new life and standing up for what she believes.

**The Miseducation of Cameron Post** by Emily M. Danforth
1990s Montana. When Cameron’s parents die in a car crash, her first thought is relief. Relief they’ll never know that, hours earlier, she had been kissing a girl. Cameron is soon forced to move in with her old-fashioned aunt and grandmother, and she tries to blend in to their conservative town...until she meets Coley and her world changes.

**Dream Country** by Shannon Gibney
This is the heartbreaking story of five generations of a single African-and-American family, pursuing an elusive dream of freedom. From Liberia to Minnesota and farther, follow the Wright family as they experience heartbreak, pain, and more, all rooted in historical fact.

**The Downstairs Girl** by Stacey Lee
1890s Atlanta. By day, Jo works as a lady’s maid for the cruel daughter of one of the wealthiest men in Atlanta. By night, Jo moonlights as “Miss Sweetie”, the author of a newspaper advice column for the Southern lady. When her column becomes wildly popular, she uses her power to address some of society’s ills, but she’s not prepared for the backlash that follows...
**Blood Water Paint by Joy McCullough**
1610s Rome. When her mother died when she was twelve, suddenly Artemisia had a stark choice to make: a life as a nun or a life grinding pigment for her father's paint. She chose paint and became one of Rome's most talented painters...then in the aftermath of rape she faced another terrible choice: a life of silence or a life of truth, no matter the cost.

**All Out edited by Saundra Mitchell**
Take a journey through time and genres and discover a past where queer figures live, love, and shape the world around them. Seventeen of the best young adult authors across the queer spectrum have come together to create a collection of beautifully written diverse historical fiction.

**Like a Love Story by Abdi Nazemian**
1989 New York City. Reza just moved to NYC, and is terrified everyone will guess his secret: he's gay. But all he knows of gay life are the media's images of men dying of AIDS. He starts dating Judy, a loud and proudly ally, and starts getting to know her best friend Art. Soon Art and Reza start becoming closer and closer, and relationships threaten to crumble...

**Out of Darkness by Ashley Hope Pérez**
East Texas 1937. Naomi Vargas and Wash Fuller know about the segregated lines that dominate their town, and they know the people who enforce them. But sometimes the attraction between two people is so powerful it breaks through even the most entrenched color lines. And the consequences can be explosive.

**Salt to the Sea by Ruta Sepetys**
1945 Baltic Sea. Pick up Salt to the Sea for a fictionalized accounting of the single greatest tragedy in maritime history: the 1945 sinking of the Wilhelm Gustloff, an overcrowded German cruise liner that was supposed to ferry wartime personnel and refugees to safety from the advancing Soviet Army.

**X by Ilyasah Shabazz & Kekla Magoon**
1940s Michigan. “I am Malcolm. I am my father’s son. But to be my father’s son means that they will always come for me. They will always come for me, and I will always succumb.” Follow Malcolm X from his childhood to his imprisonment for theft at age twenty, when he found the faith that would lead him to forge a new path and command a voice that still resonates today.

**Lies We Tell Ourselves by Robin Talley**
1959 Virginia. Sarah is one of the first black students to attend a previously all-white high school. An honors student at her old school, she is put into remedial classes and tormented daily. Linda has been taught all her life that the races should be kept separate, but equal. Forced to work together on project, they must confront harsh truths about race, power and how they really feel about each other.

**Code Name Verity by Elizabeth Wein**
Oct. 11th, 1943: A British spy plane crashes in Nazi-occupied France. Its pilot and passenger are best friends. One of the girls has a chance at survival. The other has lost the game before it’s barely begun.