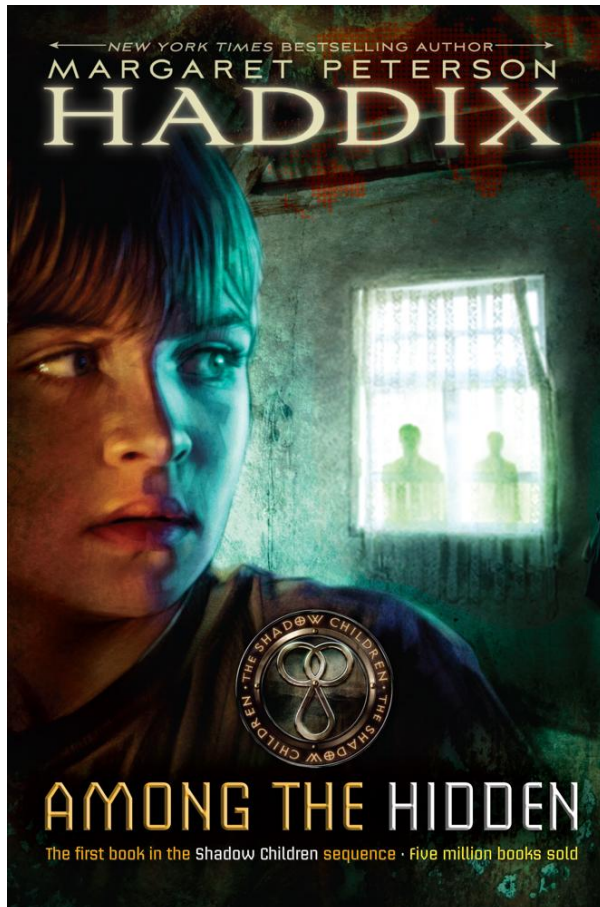


About the book...



Luke's mother is already pregnant with him when the government issues an edict that each family can have only two children. Luke is child number three, but his parents opt to give birth to him, though never again do they want to run afoul of the government. At first Luke can play outside as long as he stays close to his home, but when his parents have to sell their surrounding woods for a housing development, Luke spends his days in a hidden attic room. Peering through the vent, he spots a girl's face in the window of the nearest house. Investigating, he meets Jen, who introduces him to a whole world of thirds who are found in a chat room on the Internet. Luke suddenly realizes there could be more to his life than just an attic, though he's not brave enough to join Jen in her planned rally to make thirds legal. When Jen is killed, Luke must decide whether or not to use a fake ID to become part of the outside world.

-Books & Authors

About the Author...



As a kid, I longed for a career that I didn't actually believe real people got to do. The far-out, only-in-your-dreams career I wanted was to be an author. All the grown-ups I knew were farmers (like my dad) or nurses (like my mom), teachers or dentists, housewives or grocery store clerks, etc., etc. The only authors I'd ever heard of were, well, just in books.

I grew up on a farm about halfway between two small towns: Washington Court House, Ohio, and Sabina, Ohio. I come from both a long line of farmers, and a long line of bookworms. When we went on family vacations, my parents were always saying things like, "Would you guys stop reading for a minute and look out the window? That's the Grand

Canyon we're driving past!"

The people I met in books always seemed very real to me: as a kid, I counted among my friends the whip-smart New York kids of E.L. Konigsburg books, [Harriet the Spy](#), [Anne of Green Gables](#), Louisa May Alcott's [Little Women](#), [Anne Frank](#), [Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm](#), [The Little Princess](#), Sara Crewe, L.M. Montgomery's Emily Byrd Starr, Beanie Malone, and many, many others. To me, it didn't seem to be much of a step to go from loving books to wanting to create books of my own.

But because I also read more practical information as well—my local newspaper, Time magazine, accounts of the Great Depression—I knew that I couldn't be completely impractical about my career choice. So I hedged my bets a bit when I went off to college. I did major in creative writing, but I also majored in journalism (and history, just for fun).

Like most writers, I went through an agonizing phase of submitting my work and collecting nothing but rejection letters for quite a while. For me, this phase lasted long enough that, by the time I sold my first two books (both at once, actually) our daughter, Meredith, was a year and a half old, and I was pregnant with our second child, Connor. Talk about feeling multiply blessed! Still, it was a little challenging to be a newly published author at the same time that I was becoming a new mother. For those first few years, I wrote only during my kids' naptime, when I probably should have been napping myself. So I developed strict criteria for everything I wrote: it had to be exciting enough to keep me awake.

Since then, my life has changed quite a bit. My husband and kids and I moved from Illinois to Clarks Summit, Pennsylvania, to Columbus, Ohio. My kids are now teenagers, and I no longer have to worry that the sound of me typing at the computer might wake them up. But my criteria for what I write hasn't changed that much. I know I have to write a story when the story keeps me awake at night, teases at the back of my brain all day, just won't let me go. And that's why I became a writer.

For more information visit: <http://www.haddixbooks.com/home.html>

Writings

- [Among the Impostors](#) (*Shadow Children #2*), 2001.
- [Among the Betrayed](#) (*Shadow Children #3*), 2002.
- *Among the Barons* (*Shadow Children #4*), 2003
- [Among the Brave](#) (*Shadow Children #5*), 2004
- [Among the Enemy](#) (*Shadow Children #6*), 2005
- [Among the Free](#) (*Shadow Children #7*), 2006
- *The Missing Series*: [Found](#); [Sent](#); [Sabotaged](#); [Torn](#); [Caught](#)
- [Double Identity](#), Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers (NY) 2005.
- [Just Ella](#), Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers (NY) 1999.
- [Palace of Mirrors](#), Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers (NY) 2008.
- [Running Out of Time](#), Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers (NY) 1995.

Awards

- American Library Association Best Book for Young Adults for “Running Out of Time” and “Just Ella”

Reviews

Publishers Weekly

Haddix chillingly imagines a dystopia in this futuristic novel. Born into a totalitarian state that brutally enforces a two-children-only policy, 12-year-old Luke Garner, an "illegal" third child, has spent his entire life hiding from anyone outside his immediate family. His troubles multiply when the government makes his dirt-poor parents sell the woods surrounding their farm in order to build a housing development for "Barons" (the privileged elite), and it therefore becomes too dangerous for Luke to go outside. Next, the Garners are hit with a crippling tax bill and ordered to sell their hogs, so Mom has to get a factory job. Luke spends every day alone, hidden in his attic room, until he meets Jen, a "shadow child" secreted in the Baron house next door. She turns his whole world upside-down, introducing him to her secret Internet chat room and giving him literature analyzing the government's repressive policies. After Jen's foolhardy rally of shadow children ends in bloodshed, Luke is faced with a decision that will irrevocably determine his fate. The plot development is sometimes implausible and the characterizations are a bit brittle, but the unsettling, thought-provoking premise should suffice to keep readers hooked.

School Library Journal

This first title in Margaret Peterson Haddix's Shadow Children series introduces readers to a time in the not-so-distant future when having more than two children is illegal. Luke Garner is a third child, a shadow child, whose existence is punishable by death. Luke has spent his whole life hiding until one day he catches a glimpse of another third child in a new house near his home. Luke discovers Jen, a bold girl who makes him dream of freedom.

Kirkus Reviews

In a chilling and intelligent novel, Haddix envisions a near future where a totalitarian US limits families to only two children. Luke, 12, the third boy in his farming family, has been hidden since birth, mostly in the attic, safe for the time being from the Population Police, who eradicate such 'shadow children'. Although he is protected, Luke is unhappy in his radical isolation, rereading a few books for entertainment and eating in a stairwell so he won't be seen through the windows. When Luke spies a child's face in the window of a newly constructed home, he realizes that he's found a comrade. Risking discovery, Luke sneaks over to the house and meets Jen, a spirited girl devoted to bringing the shadow children's plight center-stage, through a march on the White House. Luke is afraid to join her and later learns from Jen's father, a mole within the Population Police, that Jen and her compatriots were shot and killed, and that their murder was covered up. Jen's father also gets a fake identity card and a new life for Luke, who finally believes himself capable of acting to change the world. Haddix offers much for discussion here, by presenting a world not too different from America right now. The seizing of farmlands, untenable food regulations, and other scenarios that

have come to fruition in these pages will give readers a new appreciation for their own world after a visit to Luke's.

Discussion Questions (<http://www.multcolib.org/talk/guides-amongthehidden.html>)

1. The author doesn't specify the setting for *Among the Hidden*. Where do you think it takes place? When do you think it takes place?
2. Luke's family is terrified of the government. Why? What are some of the tactics the government employs to make ordinary families like his feel powerless?
3. Explore Luke's relationships with his brothers and his parents. How close are they? How trusting? Does Luke have more in common with Jen than with his own family? Why or why not?
4. How are the "barons" different from families like Luke's?
5. The Internet made it possible for Jen and Luke to connect with other hidden children. It helped them build a community of peers. Do you use the Internet to connect with people who share interests with you?
6. Why did Jen organize the march on the president's house? Do you think she knew she was going to die? Was she being noble? Was she being foolish? Luke decides not to follow her. What would you have done?
7. Jen is a third child, but her stepfather is a member of the Population Police, the brutal organization devoted to discovering people like her and bringing them to a harsh justice. Discuss his character. Is he a hero, a villain, or both?
8. Why do you think Jen's stepfather risks his life to help Luke?
9. The last time Luke saw Jen, he told her, "It's people like you who change history. People like me – we just let things happen to us." What does this mean? Are you a person who makes things happen or are you a person who watches things happen?
10. What would happen to your family if third children and beyond were outlawed? Would you have been born?
11. *Among the Hidden* is fiction, but in China, there is a law that strictly limits family size. Why might a country do this? Do you agree or disagree with the policy?
12. What do you think will happen to Luke after the novel ends?

Activity

You are the chief propaganda officer of the Population Police. Create a bumper sticker, commercial or billboard reminding ordinary citizens that third children are against the law.

Read-Alikes

Madeleine L'Engle, [*A Wrinkle In Time*](#) (1962)

"You were a star once, weren't you?" Charles Wallace asks Mrs. Whatsit and that line alone will give you the sense that this book takes you to a new place. It takes you to a new way of looking at the world, to a new way of living your own life, and to different dimensions in time. Imagine a world where you can travel along a wrinkle in time to reach a different planet or a different galaxy in no time at all. That is the world that Meg and her brother, Charles Wallace, will enter as they set forth in search of their missing father accompanied by a friend, Calvin. The world they find is powered and controlled by IT and run through Central Intelligence. Is this world a better place because everyone is the same? Are our personal differences the source of all discord?

Jeanne DuPrau, [*The City of Ember*](#) (2003)

Many hundreds of years ago, the city of Ember was created by the Builders to contain everything needed for human survival. It worked...but now the storerooms are almost out of food, crops are blighted, corruption is spreading through the city and worst of all—the lights are failing. Soon Ember could be engulfed by darkness....But when two children, Lina and Doon, discover fragments of an ancient parchment, they begin to wonder if there could be a way out of Ember. Can they decipher the words from long ago and find a new future for everyone? Will the people of Ember listen to them?

Philip Reeve, [*Fever Crumb*](#) (2009)

Fever Crumb is a girl who has been adopted and raised by Dr. Crumb, a member of the order of Engineers, where she serves as apprentice. In a time and place where women are not seen as reasonable creatures, Fever is an anomaly, the only female to serve in the order. Soon though, she must say goodbye to Dr. Crumb - nearly the only person she's ever known - to assist archeologist Kit Solent on a top-secret project. As her work begins, Fever is plagued by memories that are not her own and Kit seems to have a particular interest in finding out what they are. Fever has also been singled out by city-dwellers who declare her part Scriven. The Scriveners, not human, ruled the city some years ago but were hunted down and killed in a victorious uprising by the people. If there are any remaining Scriven, they are to be eliminated. All Fever knows is what she's been told: that she is an orphan. Is Fever a Scriven? Whose memories does she hold? Is the mystery of Fever, adopted daughter of Dr. Crumb, the key to the secret that lies at the heart of London? Haunting, arresting, and astonishingly original, *Fever Crumb* will delight and surprise readers at every fast-paced, breathless turn.



Ann Arbor District Library