



The Hoopster, Revised Edition

By Alan Lawrence Sitomer

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Andre Anderson is an African American teenager with a bright future. He loves to play basketball. He loves to hang out with his friends. He loves to laugh. Andre has skills, brains, and heart. He also has a dream. Then he is viciously attacked. Now everything he ever believed about the world has been called into question. Even his deadly jump shot. How can a man get up when he has been unjustly beaten down? Andre is about to find out. Andre is The Hoopster.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 8 Up—On the neighborhood basketball court, Andre Anderson jockeys for position among his multicultural group of buddies, but, off the court, the African-American teen's writing talent puts him in the spotlight. Given the opportunity to write a feature article on racism for the national magazine where he works as an intern, he addresses his feelings honestly. As a result, he is brutally attacked by a group of racists, hoping to silence his pen by symbolically crushing his hand in a car door. The incident incites a gamut of responses among his friends, his Latina girlfriend, and his family. His cousin, Cedric, collects a group of avengers and invites Andre's best friend, Shawn, to join them. The white teen is torn between loyalty to his pal and his nonviolent sensibilities. Andre's father, also victim of a racial attack as a teen, loses patience with his son's sullen withdrawal from the family and berates him out of frustration. Andre finally regains partial use of his hand, returns to the hoops court and his friends, and is publicly honored. There are a number of contrivances here and since only a few sentences of Andre's article are shown, it is unclear what would have caused him to be so viciously targeted. The dialogue-filled sparring is fresh and accurately portrays the dynamics among urban teens and their families. However, this is not a sports story and readers attracted to the title and cover might be disappointed. This is a revision of a 2003 title (*Milk Mug*).—*Vicki Reutter, Cazenovia High School, NY*

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From [Booklist](#)

Gr. 7-10. Heavy on agenda, angry speeches, and coarse teenage banter, this decidedly unsubtle fiction debut, billed as the first of a trilogy, follows a budding African American writer from triumphs in hoops, love, and literature through a brutal beating by white separatists to a reaffirmation of self and spirit. Sitomer ably captures the lightning speed of mood shifts among adolescents, as 17-year-old Andre fumbles his way into a closer relationship with Gwen, a temperamental Latina, while getting into the faces of friends and family (usually over racial issues), then quickly making up. Assaulted (assailants aren't identified though the author drops heavy hints) in the wake of a published article about resolving his own racial tensions, Andre comes back slowly, and by the end is once again confidently sinking both verbal and basketball shots. Unvarnished it may be, but this will engage unpracticed older readers, and it may prompt them to reexamine some of their own racial attitudes. *John Peters*

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About the Author

Alan Lawrence Sitomer is California's 2007 Teacher of the Year. In addition to being an inner-city high school English teacher and professor in the Graduate School of Education at Loyola Marymount University, Mr. Sitomer is a nationally renowned speaker specializing in engaging reluctant readers, who received the 2004 award for Classroom Excellence from the Southern California Teachers of English and the 2003 Teacher of the Year honor from California Literacy. His young adult trilogy of novels began with *The Hoopster* and *Hip-Hop High School* and concluded with *Homeboyz*. Alan is also the author of *Hip-Hop Poetry* and *The Classics*, a text used in classrooms across the United States to engage disengaged students.

Users Review

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Rodney Schmitt:

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