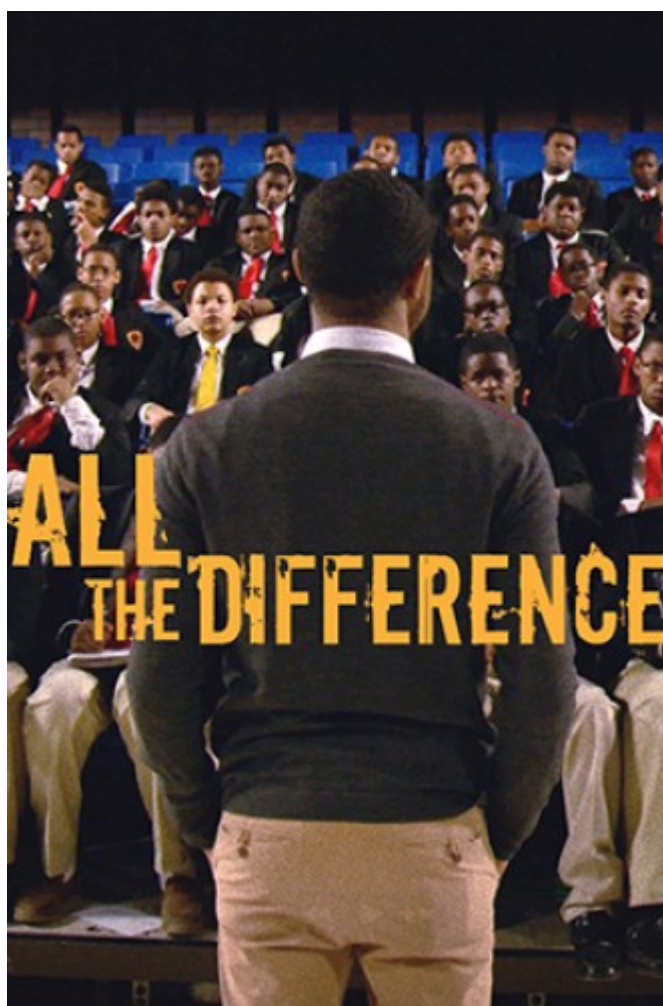


Janet Milkovich's Christmas picks

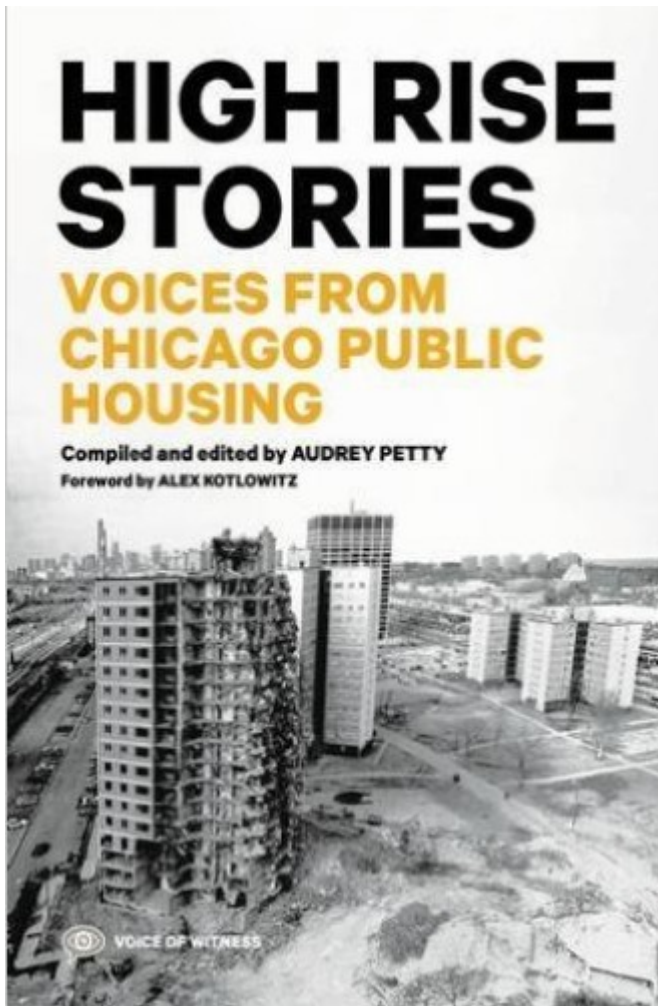
selected by [Janet Milkovich](#) in the [December 7, 2016](#) issue

## In Review



### **All the Difference**

PBS



## High Rise Stories

compiled and edited by Audrey Petty  
McSweeney's

*All the Difference* (PBS) is a documentary that allows us to experience the hardship, failures, determination, and success of two young African-American men from Chicago's impoverished South Side. I rooted for these boys, cried with them, and felt deep gratitude for the adults who invested in their lives.

Robert's mother was murdered. His grandmother, a sharecropper in Mississippi with a fifth-grade education, moved to Chicago to take care of him. Krishaun's mom is a single parent who didn't graduate from high school and raised her two sons in the projects of Englewood. Both boys were heavily influenced by life on the streets. The trajectory of Robert's and Krishaun's lives changed when they attended Urban Prep, an all-male Chicago public high school with a mission to support such students. This

inspiring story illustrates the importance of teachers, coaches, and mentors who can help vulnerable young men believe in themselves and act on that belief.

*High Rise Stories: Voices from Chicago Public Housing* (McSweeney's) dives into the lives of former residents of the Chicago Housing Authority. These stories, compiled and edited by Audrey Petty, show the transformation of a once-vibrant community. As the racial tension of the late '60s bled into Chicago, gangs moved in, violence took root, and the drug trade flourished. When the last of the high rises were demolished in 2011, thousands of people were displaced. Affordable housing projects haven't kept pace with the demolition and the promises.

This book challenges readers to form richer relationships and create fair housing solutions. My church, once a spiritual haven for youth and children from the former Cabrini-Green, is now advocating for responsible land use and development. Creating fair housing for all remains a great challenge.

*Read the other 2016 Christmas picks [here](#).*