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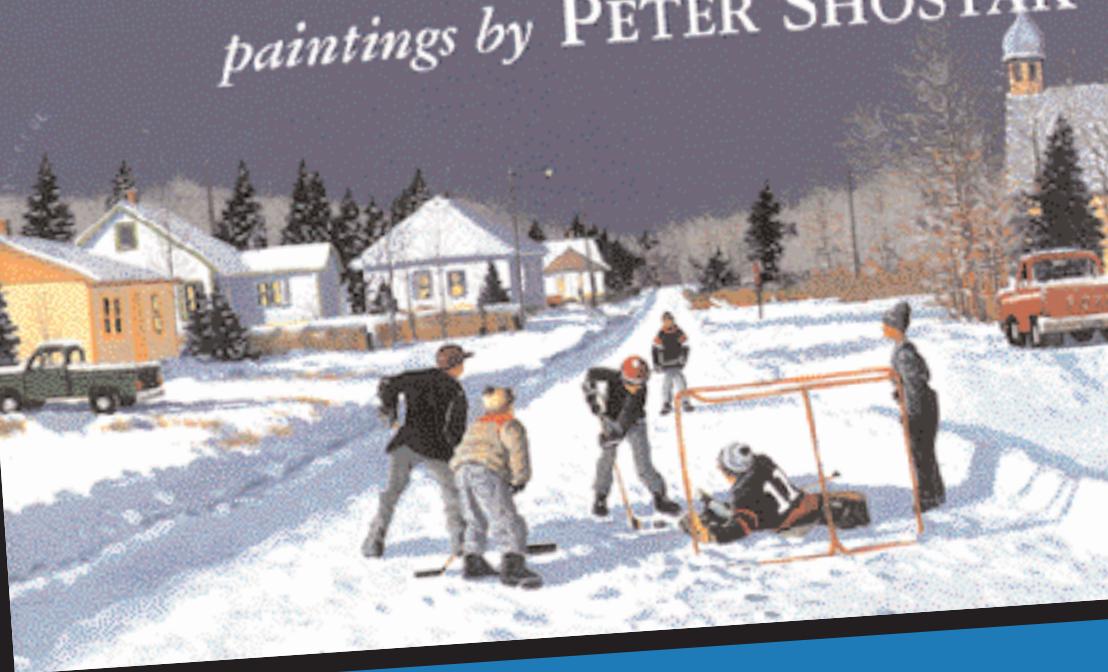
# Christian Library

J O U R N A L

## PRAIRIE *Born*

*poem by* DAVE BOUCHARD

*paintings by* PETER SHOSTAK



### **THIS ISSUE FEATURES:**

- About 500 titles reviewed
- Classics Revisited
- School Librarians' Corner:  
Awards and more
- Book Nook:  
Biographies for Young  
Artists and Musicians
- ECLA Conference



## *A Letter from the Editor*

Dear Readers,

Almost four years ago we began the research and planning that eventually put the *Christian Library Journal* into your hands. It was a family project, hopefully to become a source of income for my daughters and myself after my husband's death. At first we used family funds along with subscription income for planning and promotion, office help, editing, writing, reviewing, graphics, and printing. But as time went on, it became clear that the journal's income did not meet its outgo, so one by one we cut most of these paid services, learned to do more ourselves, and enlisted volunteers to help with the work. As income was always insufficient to meet costs, we subsidized the journal with family monies. After almost three years of publication, it has become clear that *CLJ* is a ministry, not a business. We no longer expect the journal to contribute to our family's income, and we also no longer have the financial resources to continue to subsidize *CLJ*. I am now looking for a professional library position, and will continue to publish the journal at home.

How does this story affect you? First, it means that the journal will only go to press and to the mailing service when we have funds in hand to pay cash for these services. This means that our publication schedule is very irregular. Our goal from the beginning has been to publish five issues a year. Each year so far we have published only four issues, but extended everyone's subscription one issue into the next year, so our subscribers have always received five issues as they were promised. This year you have in your hands a combined March/May issue, with over 500 reviews to meet our commitment to you. Beginning in the fall, we will become a quarterly, with about 300 reviews per issue. We will publish one issue each season of the year.

Our most recent cut in costs means we will no longer pay for columns or articles. We hope and pray that librarians will be willing to share their ideas, expertise, and thoughts with others as part of their professional commitment to the library community, as is done in many professional journals. Our reviewers have been writing reviews as volunteers since the second year of publication, and their work has consistently improved and been of value to our readers.

So we call on you to renew and pay for your subscription promptly, and share your *CLJ* with others so that our subscription base might grow. At current costs, we could add about 1,000 new subscribers without additional cost, as we have must print a minimum of 2,000 copies. We have been sending the extras to interested libraries and those on our prospects list.

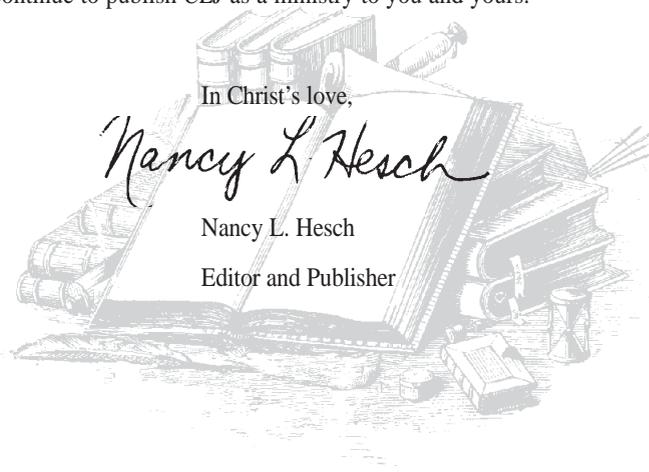
We continue to trust God's provision for *CLJ* as long as the journal meets the needs of librarians. Pray for us as we continue to publish *CLJ* as a ministry to you and yours.

In Christ's love,

*Nancy L. Hesch*

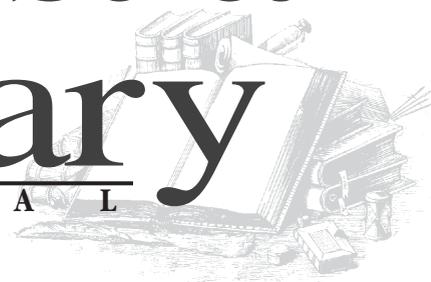
Nancy L. Hesch

Editor and Publisher



# Christian Library

J O U R N A L



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The purpose of the *Christian Library Journal* is to provide readers with reviews of both Christian and secular library materials from a Christian point of view. About 250 books, cassette tapes, and videos from both Christian and secular publishers are reviewed each issue. Materials reviewed may reflect a broad range of Christian doctrinal positions and do not necessarily reflect the views of the staff of the *Christian Library Journal*.

Nancy Hesch **Publisher & Editor**

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Cover illustration from *Prairie Born* by Dave Bouchard, illustrated by Peter Shostak, ©1997. Reprinted by permission of Orca Book Publishers. See the review in this issue.

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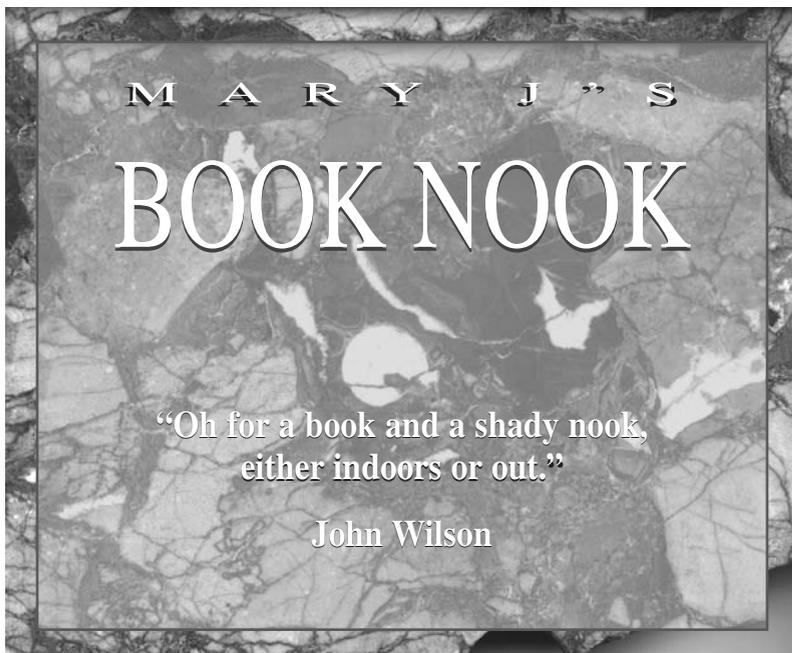
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*By Mary Jarvis*

What is the spark that makes great writers and artists? Is it a gift or talent for expression that shines out above the crowd? Surely we all have the ability to create and make beauty around us in one way or another if we are made in the image of God the great Creator. Why is it that some seem to be directed to develop a talent for expression that others neglect or pass by? We read great literature or view beautiful art and wish we too might have such gifts.

Talent for expression is indeed a gift from God, but studying the lives of great artists, musicians, and writers, one soon comes to the conclusion that encouragement with opportunity for expression and diligent work are essential to the flowering of that talent. As adults working with children, we have such an opportunity to offer encouragement and training, to urge discipline and work.

New biographies for young children on the lives of talented artists and writers may be the tools to help encourage and inspire goals for youngsters. *Author : A True Story* by Helen Lester is a delightful tale for the younger set, first through fourth grade. Children will identify with her first efforts at writing lists and stories when she was three years old that only she could read and understand. Becoming a teacher, she loved to teach writing to her second graders and one day wrote and illustrated a book for children. That first book wasn't accepted for publication, but she leads her young readers through the adventures, hurdles, and work of finally writing children's books that are accepted and published. Young children usually love to write stories and this is a delightful way to introduce them to the idea of writing as a career. The book stands on its own as enjoyable reading, but can be carried further to demonstrate why authors write books. Children will be tickled and challenged to entertain the idea that perhaps one day they might like to write books.

Children love the cadence and rhythm of poetry. Seldom do they know the story behind the poetry that conveys the feelings and struggles of the poet. *Revolutionary Poet* brings to light the life and struggles of a young black poet and the affirmation of friends that made such a difference in the use of her gift. *Revolutionary Poet : A Story About Phillis Wheatley* by Maryann Weidt is the account of a slave girl brought to Boston prior to the Revolutionary War and taken into the

John Wheatley family. The Wheatley daughter educated Phillis and her gift for poetry blossomed. When she was thirteen years old one of her poems was published in a local newspaper and people all over the colonies read it. Recognizing her gift for poetry, Mrs. Wheatley encouraged and promoted Phillis' talent. At nineteen, Phillis traveled to Britain to promote publishing a book of her poetry. Following her trip and publication of her book, Phillis was set free. Marriage and years of struggle during the Revolutionary War ended with her death in December 1784. She is remembered as the first black poet in this country.

Writing can be hard work and demands persistence as well as talent. *Writer of the Plains : A Story about Willa Cather* by Tom Streissguth minces no words in telling of the hard work and stress involved in becoming a writer. An essay Cather wrote while enrolled at the University of Nebraska was published in the local newspaper and was the pivotal turning point for her in deciding to become a writer. Excited by the thought that many readers would be challenged by her writing, she pursued her dream of becoming a writer. A Boston magazine published a story she had written when only eighteen years old. In 1893 the *Nebraska State Journal* invited her to write regular columns. She was still an unknown college student, so her name wasn't printed and she was paid only one dollar for each column. Following college, she struggled to find work that could support her. Newspaper work kept her busy, but didn't allow much energy for real writing and offered little income. Teaching and then working on a magazine also allowed little time for the pursuit of her own talent. Sarah Orne Jewett, a well-known author, advised her to step away from her job at the magazine and earnestly pursue her own writing. Taking time off from work, she wrote her first book and then continued to write stories and books. She learned to write what she knew best, the Nebraska farmland and people of the plains. Despite struggle and discouragement she had persevered and seen her dreams realized. Recent years have seen renewed interest in her books.

In the book *Charlotte Bronte and Jane Eyre*, Stewart Ross traces the remarkable life of Charlotte Bronte from a Yorkshire parsonage to the creation of her greatest work, *Jane Eyre*. She wrote in a time when women were not encouraged and accepted as writers, yet she persisted and wrote one of the great literary classics under the pseudonym of Currer Bell. Artist Robert Van Nutt has captured the life and times of Charlotte Bronte with colorful paintings and pencil drawings that bring understanding to this period of history and life. This book will intrigue and challenge young writers in fifth through eighth grade. It has illustrations and story line that carry the reader to the last page.

*Vincent van Gogh* by Eileen Lucas and *Perugino's Path* by Nancy L. Clouse take a look at the lives of the two artists. Defeats and discouragement are dealt with in realistic ways, while portraying

the drive and talent of these two men. Children with a passion for painting will be captivated by the lives depicted here. All will have their understanding and appreciation expanded.

These are but a handful of current books available to young readers interested in writing or painting. It is hoped that such forays into the arts can encourage and stimulate young minds. The library can sponsor activities for young readers such as creating original student books and inviting authors to read and meet with children. So often writing and art are lonely, difficult careers, but encouragement early on can be the impetus that stirs the creativity which will benefit many. We may never know the importance of our influence on someone else, but it could be just what a young person needs to pursue the path to which God is calling him or her.

**Author : *A True Story*, by Helen Lester. LCCN 96009645. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997. ISBN 0395827442, HBB, \$10.95.**

921 (813.54). Lester, Helen; Authors, American; Women--Biography; Authorship. 32 p.

***Revolutionary Poet : A Story about Phillis Wheatley*, by Maryann N. Weidt; illustrations by Mary O'Keefe Young. (A Carolrhoda Creative Minds Biography.) LCCN 97001566. Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Books, 1997. ISBN 1575050374, HBB, \$14.21.**

921 (811). Wheatley, Phillis, 1753-1784; Poets, American; Slaves; Afro-Americans--Biography; Women--Biography 64 p.

***Writer of the Plains : A Story about Willa Cather*, by Tom Streissguth; illustrations by Karen Ritz. (Carolrhoda On My Own Books.) LCCN 96027244. Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Books, 001997. ISBN 1575050153, HBB, \$13.13.**

921 (813). Women--Biography; Cather, Willa, 1873-1947; Author, American. 64 p.

***Charlotte Brontë and Jane Eyre*, by Stewart Ross; illustrated by Robert Van Nutt. LCCN 97001765. New York: Viking, 1997. ISBN 0670874868, HBB, \$16.95.**

921 (823).. Brontë, Charlotte, 1816-1855; Authors, English; Women--Biography. 46 p.

***Vincent van Gogh*, by Eileen Lucas; illustrations by Rochelle Draper. (Carolrhoda On My Own Books.) LCCN 96027617. Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Books, 001997. ISBN 1575050382, HBB, \$13.13.**

921 (959). Gogh, Vincint van, 1853-1890; Artists; Painting, Dutch; Painting, Modern--19th century--Netherlands; Art appreciation. 48 p.

***Perugino's Path : The Journey of a Renaissance Painter*, Author and illustrator Nancy L. Clouse. LCCN 97024641. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 001997. ISBN 0802838499, HBB, \$16.00.**

921 (759.5). Perugino, ca. 1450-1523; Painters--Italy--Biography. 32 p.

# Classics Revisited



by Sylvia Stopforth

Although publishers are generally preoccupied with the perilous business of introducing new works, they sometimes indulge in a reissue of the tried and true.

Some of these take the form of a simple reprinting, so that an author's work may be made available to a new generation. On occasion, though, a publisher will expend considerable resources in refurbishing a classic, providing illustrations, newly written introductions, or marginal notes that provide a sense of historical context.

In order to make our readers aware of the availability of these reissued classics, the *Christian Library Journal* is adding a new column to its pages. This column will consist of annotated bibliographies of award-winning titles and books that have come to be considered classics.

As the publication and availability of these works is sporadic, this column may not appear in each issue.

*Little Women : or Meg, Jo, Beth and Amy*, by Louisa May Alcott. LCCN 94017444. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1994. ISBN 0316031054, PAP, \$9.95.

F. Family life--Fiction; New England--Fiction. 502 p.

*Little Men : Life at Plumfield with Jo's Boys*, by Louisa May Alcott. LCCN 94017448. Boston: Little, Brown, 1994. ISBN 0316031046, PAP, \$8.95.

F. Boarding schools--Fiction; Schools--Fiction; Family life--Fiction; New England--Fiction. 332 p.

*Jo's Boys and How They Turned Out*, by Louisa May Alcott. LCCN 94017447. Boston: Little, Brown, 1994. ISBN 0316031038, PAP, \$8.95.

F. Boarding schools--Fiction; Schools--Fiction; Family life--Fiction; New England--Fiction. 316 p.

*Under the Lilacs*, by Louisa May Alcott. LCCN 96007646. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1996. ISBN 0316030872, PAP, \$8.95.

F. Runaways--Fiction; Dogs--Fiction; Friendship--Fiction. 262 p.

*An Old-Fashioned Girl*, by Louisa May Alcott. LCCN 96029254. Boston: Little, Brown, 1997. ISBN 0316037753, PAP, \$8.95.

F. Friendship--Fiction; Boston (Mass.)--Fiction. 325 p.

*Eight Cousins*, by Louisa May Alcott. LCCN 95039506. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1996. ISBN 0316030864, PAP, \$8.95.

F. Orphans--Fiction; Cousins--Fiction; Family life--Fiction. 236 p.

*Rose in Bloom*, by Louisa May Alcott. Boston: Little, Brown, 1995. ISBN 0316030899, PAP, \$8.95.

F. Orphans--Fiction; Cousins--Fiction; Family life--Fiction. 302 p.

Alcott's classic tale of the warmhearted March family has been treasured by generations of readers. The charm of *Little Women* can be attributed to the perfect balance of joys and sorrows, with just the right amount of humor and romance thrown in. Through the guidance of their loving mother, the four March sisters learn to navigate life's challenges with grace and wisdom.

The story continues with *Little Men*, which focuses on the boys' home Jo and her husband establish at Plumfield, which was bequeathed to Jo by the cantankerous Aunt March. In *Jo's Boys*, the youngsters are all grown up and making their way in the world.

*Under the Lilacs* is a stand-alone book about Ben Brown and his performing poodle, Sancho. Together, the pair runs away from the circus in search of Ben's father. They are taken in by Mrs. Moss and their daughters, who give Ben a home. In the end, Ben regains his father, and it appears that Mrs. Moss may gain a husband.

In *An Old Fashioned Girl*, Polly Milton visits with the wealthy Shaw family, where she comes to understand the true relationship between wealth and happiness.

*Eight Cousins* and *Rose in Bloom* introduce the newly orphaned Rose, who loses her parents, only to gain eight boisterous cousins and a chorus of aunts with very set notions regarding the raising of young girls. Initially the quiet Rose is overwhelmed, but time - and her loving Uncle Alec - ensure that this flower will bloom beautifully.

Alcott's stories are always sweet, but never cloying. Her excellent grasp of human nature is evident in her well-rounded characters and natural dialogue. While her tales are traditional and old-fashioned when viewed from the 20th century, she always manages to inject them with some revolutionary ideas, particularly in terms of education and women's roles.

Each cover sports a painting by Jane Dyer, and proudly proclaims that these books are all "from the original publisher." There is often a dedication from Alcott in the opening pages, and sometimes a very brief preface apologizing for any "defects" in her "little stories." Apology completely unnecessary, Miss Alcott.

*Little Women*, by Louisa May Alcott; illustrations by James Prunier. (The Whole Story.) LCCN 97060825. New York: Viking, 1997. ISBN 0670877050, HBB, \$23.99.

F. Sisters--Fiction. 287 p.

*The Jungle Book*, by Rudyard Kipling; illustrations by Christian Broutin. (The Whole Story Series.) LCCN 95061730. New York: Viking, 1996. ISBN 0670869198, HBB, \$22.95.

F. Jungle--Fiction; Animals--Fiction. 210 p.

Viking's Whole Story Edition of *Little Women* boasts the complete, unabridged text of Alcott's story as originally published in 1868. It seems that the author famous for her creation of the independent, uncompromising Jo March gave in to pressures to make some minor revisions to her own novel. For example, Jo's colorful language was toned down slightly, and

Mrs. March, who was originally "stout," became stately and "tall."

This handsome edition is generously decorated with color and black and white illustrations, as well as sidebars which serve to remind the reader that Alcott lived and wrote within a particular context. Note that this volume contains only the first part of *Little Women*; the sequel, sometimes called *Little Women Part II* or *Good Wives*, was written later in response to public demand. The Little, Brown and Co. edition, above, contains both parts in one volume.

Kipling's *The Jungle Book* receives the same treatment from Penguin. The captivating tale of Mowgli, raised by wolves in the jungle, is enhanced by new color illustrations as well as maps, black and white reproductions depicting objects and events of the time, and even a number of photographs of animals native to India.

Both books are printed on heavy, glossy paper; the wide margins and clear print make for a reader-friendly format. The sturdy bindings will stand up to many readings.

★

***The Bronze Bow*, by Elizabeth George Speare. LCCN 61010640. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961. ISBN 0395137195, HBB, \$16.00.**

F. Jews--History--Fiction; Israel--History--Fiction; Christians--History--Fiction. 254 p.

When it was first published in 1961, *The Bronze Bow* won a Newbery Medal. It's no wonder, as this riveting tale will capture the imagination of anyone who opens its covers. Speare's meticulous attention to historical accuracy is second only to her ability to draw the reader in.

Daniel is a rebel, living in the hills of Galilee and nursing his hatred of the Romans who killed his parents. He lives only for vengeance. When a friend takes him to hear a new preacher, named Jesus, Daniel's hopes catch fire, and he waits for Jesus to proclaim a new kingdom, here on earth. But he soon learns that the kingdom Jesus speaks of is a kingdom of love and forgiveness, where there is no room for hatred and violence. It is a bitter and difficult lesson, and Daniel struggles to deny it, and to hold fast to his own cause;

but in the end, he realizes that the only true choice is to embrace it.

This hardbound edition belongs in every library.

***Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm*, by Kate Douglas Wiggin; rewritten and re-told for today's reader by Eric Wiggin; illustrated by Joe Boddy. (Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm; 1.) Elkhart, Ind: Bethel Publishing Co, 1994. ISBN 0934998515, PAP, \$6.99.**

F. Orphans--Fiction. 253 p.

***Rebecca of the Brick House*, by Kate Douglas Wiggin; rewritten and re-told for today's reader by Eric Wiggin. (Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm; 2.) Elkhart, Ind.: Bethel Publishing Co, 1994. ISBN 0934998523, PAP, \$6.99.**

F. Orphans--Fiction. 250 p.

***Rebecca Returns to Sunnybrook : A Sequel*, by Eric Wiggin. (Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm; 3.) Elkhart, Ind.: Bethel Publishing Co, 1994. ISBN 0934998531, PAP, \$6.99.**

F. Orphans--Fiction. 239 p.

This boxed set consists of three volumes. The first two are revised editions of Kate Wiggin's classics, "rewritten and re-told for today's reader," while the third is a sequel written almost entirely by Eric Wiggin, although he credits the original author with portions of some chapters.

There is no indication of the extent of the revisions in volumes one and two, but there is no doubt that our engaging heroine has stood the test of time and editing. Rebecca is as unforgettable and irreplaceable as ever, with a flair for the dramatic and a tendency to be generous to a fault. Her occasional flaw or impulsive act only serves to endear her.

Purists may find that the sequel lacks some of the sparkle of the original, but Eric Wiggins does provide a most satisfying conclusion to Rebecca's journey as she continues to seek God's will in her work and also in her relationship with "Mr. Aladdin."

Full-page line drawings break up the text, and the box makes for a lovely presentation, but the binding will not stand up to heavy wear and tear.

***The Birds' Christmas Carol*, by Kate Douglas Wiggin; with illustrations. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1886; 1912. ISBN 0395072050, HBB, \$9.95.**

F. Christmas--Fiction. 69 p.

Born on Christmas morning, the lovely new addition to the Bird family can only be named Carol. But it seems her frail body and angelic nature are poorly suited to this world. Kate Wiggin eloquently describes the grief her parents experience when they find they must accept the fact that their child will never be well again.

Her tenth Christmas is to be Carol's last, and her dearest wish is to give the penniless Ruggles children a Christmas they will never forget. Mrs. Ruggles' valiant efforts to make her brood of nine presentable reveal glimpses of the humor that will burst out in the author's Rebecca novels. Carol has her wish, and leaves the world a better place for her fleeting presence in it.

Good quality paper and a rich red jacket add to the charm of this slim hardbound volume.

***The Dark Frigate*, by Charles Boardman Hawes; decorations by Warren Chappell. LCCN 77117023. Boston: Little, Brown, 1971. ISBN 0316350095, PAP, \$6.95.**

F. Orphans--Fiction; Ships--Fiction; Pirates--Fiction. 246 p.

Originally published in 1923, *The Dark Frigate* won the Newbery Medal for the same year. Tempest-tossed seas, bloodthirsty pirates, and a worthy young protagonist make for a rousing adventure story. But Hawes gives his readers even more, for his characters are true-to-life and his language is rich and robust. He sets his tale in the time of King Charles and Cromwell, so the story unfolds against a fascinating historical backdrop.

Lloyd Alexander provides an informative introduction to this novel, stating that, "Hawes compromised with neither life nor literature. He refused to pretend that either was easy." The sketchy black line drawings at the head of each chapter capture the atmosphere of the book nicely.

***Elsie Dinsmore*, by Martha Finley. (The Elsie Books; 1.) Elkton, Md.: Full Quart Press/Holly Hall Publ., 1997. ISBN 1888306319, PAP, \$5.99.**

F. Family life--Fiction; Fathers and daughters--Fiction. 253 p.

***Elsie's Holidays at Roselands*, by Martha Finley. (The Elsie Books; 2.) Elkton, Md.: Full Quart Press/Holly Hall Publ., 1997. ISBN 1888306327, PAP, \$5.99.**

F. Family life--Fiction; Fathers and daughters--Fiction. 274 p.

***Elsie's Girlhood*, by Martha Finley. (The Elsie Books; 3.) Elkton, Md.: Full Quart Press/Holly Hall Publ., 1997. ISBN 1888306335, PAP, \$5.99.**

F. Family life--Fiction; Fathers and daughters--Fiction. 300 p.

***Elsie's Womanhood*, by Martha Finley. (The Elsie Books; 4.) Elkton, Md.: Full Quart Press/Holly Hall Publ., 1997. ISBN 1888306343, PAP, \$5.99. Set of all four titles: \$23.96.**

F. Fathers and daughters--Fiction; Marriage--Fiction. 287 p.

The Elsie Books, originally published over a century ago, relate the story of Elsie Dinsmore, whose mother died giving birth to her, and whose father has never acknowledged her. Elsie knows that her heavenly Father loves her, but she hopes and prays for the affection of her earthly father as well.

At long last, Horace Dinsmore returns, but he is biased by the spiteful reports of his family regarding his daughter, and treats the gentle Elsie with undue harshness. Through untiring efforts to live up to the teachings of the Bible, as well as to her father's sometimes unrealistic expectations, she finally gains the love she so desperately craves.

In *Elsie's Holidays at Roselands*, a crisis arises when Elsie's desire to obey her father conflicts with her determination to follow the teachings of God's word. She refuses to read a story to her father, who is ill, because it is Sunday, and Elsie believes that reading anything other than the scriptures is not keeping the Sabbath holy. Her father is infuriated by the challenge to his authority, and deprives her of her friends, her freedom, and finally, her beloved mammy. Elsie is at death's door before her father finally relents. In

the end, through her example, he learns to love Jesus as well as she does.

Mr. Dinsmore takes a new wife in *Elsie's Childhood*; this kind, Christian woman loves both her husband and her new daughter, and tempers some of the former's stern manner. Elsie has her first taste of romance, and falls prey to the charms of one Tom Jackson, a deceitful fortune-hunter. Her father discovers the truth, and Elsie's obedient heart is sorely tested as he forbids her to see Tom again. By the closing chapter, however, she finds that true love is sometimes found in a most unexpected place.

In *Elsie's Womanhood*, Elsie marries her father's dearest friend, John Travilla, but their honeymoon nearly ends tragically when Tom Jackson reappears to make an attempt on their lives. Their lives are spared, but soon the Civil War breaks out, and Elsie must experience the loss of dear friends even as she thrills to the first joys of motherhood.

This series is as charming as its heroine, but it does take what some might consider a legalistic approach to the Bible, and it is very much a product of its time. Modern readers may find it difficult to reconcile the emphasis on keeping the Sabbath holy with the unquestioning acceptance of slavery and the sometimes condescending treatment of African Americans. The class system is firmly entrenched, and all characters, including Elsie, take pleasure in the many luxuries their wealth affords them.

***Plain Girl*, by Virginia Sorensen;  
illustrated by Charles Geer.  
LCCN 87046190. San Diego:  
Harcourt Brace & Co., 1988.  
ISBN 0152624376, PAP, \$6.00.**

F. Amish--Fiction; Schools--Fiction;  
Friendship--Fiction. 151 p.

*Plain Girl* is a gentle and eloquent story about tradition and change, about being in the world, but not of it. Esther Lapp is almost ten, and is required by Pennsylvania law to attend school. Her Amish parents have taught her at home until now, for they lost an older son to the world after he started going to the same school Esther is to attend.

With her quick eyes and darting thoughts, Esther is a delightfully engaging character. As she anticipates this exciting change in her life, she realizes that "Only in a crowd of dark dresses exactly alike, and white bonnets and black shoes and white aprons, was she hidden. At the Fair, where hundreds of people wore different styles and colors, she had been absolutely clear and alone among them, like

one black bird against the sky. At school she would show every day, every hour."

In spite of her trepidation, Esther finds a special friend at school. She also finds a way for her brother, who has gained a new appreciation for the old ways, to return home.

Sorensen, a Newbery medal winner, writes with a clarity and simplicity that perfectly complement the Amish way of life. The fluid, informal line drawings of Charles Geer add just the right touch.

***The Basket of Flowers : A Tale for the Young*,  
author unknown. Translated by J. H. St. A.  
Grants Pass, Ore.: SAT Publications, 1996.  
HBB.**

F. Christian life--Fiction; Integrity--Fiction. 177 p.

Little is known of the origins of this charming tale. A cross between an old-fashioned morality tale and a traditional fairy tale, *The Basket of Flowers* tells of a gardener and his beloved young daughter. Every day, James teaches Mary lessons from God's word, as illustrated in his well-tended garden.

Wrongly accused of theft, Mary is banished from her homeland. She and her father are sentenced to a life of poverty and woe. Often, they reach the end of their own endurance, but without fail they turn to God in their distress, to find that solace and deliverance are at hand.

### ECLA Conference

The Evangelical Church Library Association annual fall conference will be held on Saturday, October 24, in Wheaton, Illinois. This school librarians are invited to attend as well as church librarians. (CLJ editor's note: Christian librarians in public libraries and public schools may be welcome as well; contact ECLA for further information.)

For information, call 800-223-0001, or write to Evangelical Church Library Association, P.O. Box 353, Glen Ellyn, Illinois 60138.



# SCHOOL LIBRARIAN'S CORNER

by Debra Stombres

Welcome to the **School Librarian's Corner** of *CLJ*! This is our place to discuss issues particular to school librarians. That doesn't mean other librarians won't enjoy our "corner" of the magazine, but it does mean we can look at problems, projects, etc. that may be unique to school librarians. So get your cup of coffee and let's chat!

**Awards to Note** : For a look at the many awards going to books/authors/illustrators around the country, see <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/subst/lists/awards/awards.html/6280-8660711-507902>

Also check out the Children's Literature Web guide at, <http://www.acs.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown/index.html>

The winners are in for the 1997/98 **Lamplighter and Crown Awards**!! Remember, these are awards given by students in participating Christian Schools across the country. For information, contact Sandra Morrow, 11908 N. Lamar, Austin, TX 78753.

## 1998 CROWN WINNERS

- 1st *Earthquake Terror*, by Peggy Kehret
- 2nd *Poppy*, by Avi
- 3rd *Greyfriar's Bobby*, by Ruth Brown

## 1998 LAMPLIGHTER WINNERS

- 1st *The Bookstore Mouse*, by Peggy Christian
- 2nd *Vulpes the Red Fox*, by Jean Craighead George

## NOMINEES FOR THE 1998/99 CROWN AWARD

- Child of the Wolves*, by Elizabeth Hall.  
*The Christmas Miracle of Jonathan Toomey*, by Susan Wojciechowski.  
*A Different Kind of Courage*, by Ellen Howard.  
*A Drop of Water*, by Walter Wick.  
*Esther's Story*, by Diane Wolkstein.  
*Family Tree*, by Katherine Ayers.  
*Frindle*, by Andrew Clements.  
*Harry the Poisonous Centipede*, by Lynne Reid Banks.  
*Iditarod Dream*, by Ted Wood.  
*The Indian School*, Gloria Whelan.  
*The Inside-Outside book of Libraries*, by Roxie Munro.

- Inventors*, by Martin W. Sandler.  
*The Most Beautiful Roof in the World*, by Kathryn Lasky.  
*On Board the Titanic*, by Shelley Tanaka.  
*Riot*, by Mary Casanova.  
*Spring Break*, by Johanna Hurwitz.  
*The Silver Balloon*, by Susan Bonners.  
*Sweet Memories Still*, by Natalie Kinsey-Warnock.  
*The Tarantula in My Purse*, by Jean Craighead George.  
*Tracks in the Snow*, by Jucy Jane Bledsoe.

## NOMINEES FOR THE 1998/99 LAMPLIGHTER AWARD

- Black Horses For the King*, by Anne McCaffrey.  
*Bring Back Yesterday*, by Harriet Sirof.  
*Even Stephen*, by Johanna Hurwitz.  
*Gideon's People*, by Carolyn Meyer.  
*Growing Up in Coal Country*, by Susan Campbell Bartoletti.  
*The Myth Maker*, by Anne E. Niemark.  
*Sarah With an H*, by Hadley Irwin.  
*Search for the Shadowman*, by Joan Lowry Nixon.  
*Two Mighty Rivers*, by Mari Hanes.  
*Washington City is Burning*, by Harriette Gillem Robinet.

**The Caldecott Medal**, 1938-1998, is "awarded annually to the illustrator of the most distinguished American picture book for children." -- Amazon.com

The official Caldecott web page can be found at, <http://www.ala.org/alsc/caldecott.html>

"The Caldecott Medal was named in honor of nineteenth-century English illustrator Randolph Caldecott. It is awarded annually by the Association for Library Service to Children, a division of the American Library Association, to the artist of the most distinguished American picture book for children." -- web site.

The winner of the **Caldecott Award** for 1998:

- Rapunzel*, by Paul O. Zelinsky  
List price, \$16.99

Reading level, ages 4 - 8  
Hardcover, 48 pages.  
ISBN: 0525456074

## **Three Caldecott Honor books awarded to:**

Christopher Myers for *Harlem*, written by Walter Dan Myers.

David Small for *The Gardener*, written by Sarah Stewart.

Simms Taback for *There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly*

**The Newbery Medal**, 1922-1998, "honors the year's most distinguished contribution to American literature for children. The medal was established in 1922 and is presented annually by the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC), a division of the American Library Association (ALA). The recipient must be a citizen or resident of the United States." -- Amazon.com

The official Newbery Medal page is, <http://www.ala.org/alsc/newbery.html>

"The Newbery Medal was named for eighteenth-century British bookseller John Newbery. It is awarded annually by the Association for Library Service to Children, a division of the American Library Association, to the author of the most distinguished contribution to American literature for children." -- web site.

The winner of the **Newbery Award** for 1998:

- Out of the Dust*, by Karen Hesse.  
List price, \$15.95.  
Reading level, ages 9 - 12.  
Hardcover, 160 pages.  
ISBN: 0590360809

## **Three Newbery Honor Books:**

- Lily's Crossing*, by Patricia Reilly Giff.  
*Ella Enchanted*, by Gail Carson Levine.  
*Wringer*, by Jerry Spinelli

## **TECHNOLOGY IN SCHOOLS :**

The competition in the area of school library, catalog/circulation software is tough! There are a number of companies out there, all doing the same thing. We benefit as quality rises and prices become more competitive. One company that is worth your

## Cooking With Kids

by Michele Howe

1. Natha, Jean. *The Children's Jewish Holiday Kitchen*. Schocken Books, 1987. Historical information and recipes with simple instructions for each major Jewish holiday.
2. Noad, Susan Strand. *Recipes For Science Fun*. Franklin Watts, 1977. Interesting selection of recipes for combining food and science.
3. Cunningham, Marion. *Cooking With Children*. Alfred A. Knopf, 1995. Instructions in kitchen basics for the serious learner age seven and up.
4. D'Amico, Joan. *The Math Chef*. John Wiley and Sons, 1997. Over sixty math activities and recipes for kids to try and enjoy.
5. Pulleyn, Micah. *Kids in the Kitchen*. Sterling/Lark Book, 1997. 100 healthy recipes with colorful photos to entice the imagination and appetite.
6. Beitch, Beverly and Thelma Harris. *Cook and Learn: Pictorial Single Portion Recipes*. Addison-Wesley Publishers, 1981. Flip book with fun pictures depicting the how-to in kitchen creations.
7. Editors. *Holiday Cooking Around the World*. Lerner Publications, 1988. Easy menu planning with ethnic specialties.
8. Walker, Barbara. *The Little House Cookbook*. Harper and Row, 1997. Complete with excerpts from the Little House books and traditional homestead style recipes.
9. Willan, Anne. *Look and Cook Classic Breads*. Dorling Kindersley, 1995. Beautiful color photos help simplify the bread making process into easy-to-do steps.
10. Willan, Anne. *Look and Cook Splendid Soups*. Dorling Kindersley, 1994. Photographs of the entire soup making process makes cooking an easy task.

attention is Book Systems and their products, the Master Library System line of software.

Master Library System, MLS, has its roots in church library software, which is still available. MLS has a four tiered program of compatible software packages for meeting church library needs; from the church that has no on site computer and needs a basic card printing program, to MLS level 4, a networked catalog and circulation system.

Book Systems has greatly increased its product listing and now markets software for school and public libraries. They have continued to improve the quality of their products as they have expanded their market. If you are looking for DOS or Windows based library software at very competitive prices, incorporating current, related technologies, you should consider MLS.

By now, we should all be familiar with the basic essentials of circulation/catalog programs. Any good software package should include integrated circulation and cataloging, easy-to-use menus and icons, MARC record catalog format, support for Boolean logic, networkable capabilities, statistics and report options, label printing, etc.

MLS makes these standards easy for the novice. To quote their web page,

"Master Library System (MLS) is a family of sophisticated library management software products. MLS gives you a fully integrated system: OPAC (On-line Public Access Catalog), Cataloging, and Circulation. And you get software that lets you print catalog cards, labels and reports for about the cost of a single module of many competitive systems.

Feature for feature, MLS makes library automation affordable. Additionally, innovative features within MLS provide flexible options for you. AutoMARC produces USMARC bibliographic records automatically as information is entered in the fields on the cataloger screens, thus eliminating the tedium of memorizing MARC tags, indicators, and subcodes."

On top of the basics, MLS has provided for retrospective conversion, by integrating Precision One CDRoms.

For those of you with Windows95 or Windows NT networks, look at the depth of their newest circ/catalog package

entitled, Concourse.

Book Systems also produces a couple of other library applications that are compatible with MLS and with other vendors circulation/catalog products. They claim to be the only microcomputer library vendor that produces and distributes z39.50 compatible software. EZcat allows you to grab MARC records right off of libraries on the internet. EZhost makes it possible to place your own catalog on the internet for patrons and others to access from their own homes. Webrary is software for adding web sites to your library catalog.

For more information, call:

1-800-219-MLSI (1-800-219-6574)

or, check out their very informative web site for product information and useful automation help tips.

<http://www.booksys.com>

**Next issue**, look for info on the popular reading software, Accelerated Reader!

### INTERVIEW CORNER:

Barbara Robinson is our featured personality this month. A noted author, Barbara was last year's Lamplighter 1997 Award winner. This Christian Award is given by Christian Schools choosing to participate in order to promote quality, moral literature. The nomination criteria for this award include, "To encourage children to read more books of enduring value, to become more discriminating readers and to develop the ability to recognize good and evil. To acquaint teachers and parents with high quality books which promote wholesome values, edifying themes, positive goals, and a minimum of derogatory language. To encourage the publication of high quality books which promote wholesome values."

*The Best School Year Ever*

List: \$14.89  
Reading Level: Ages 9-12  
Library Binding, 117 pages.  
ISBN: 0060230436  
Paperback, List: \$4.95

Barbara's book, *The Best School Year Ever*, took the 1997 Lamplighter title. The HarperCollins web page lists this book as listed in Children's Choices for 1995, 1994 "Pick of the Lists" (ABA) Winner, and the 1996 Colorado Children's Book Award. It was also

nominated for the Rebecca Caudill Award.

Barbara was born October 24, 1927. She is best known for her book *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*, which has been made into a movie and a play. Barbara is a married, mother of two grown daughters and lives in Berwyn, Pennsylvania, where, when she's not writing, she stays busy traveling to schools, promoting reading and libraries. She's a woman after every librarian's own heart.

### QUESTION & ANSWER

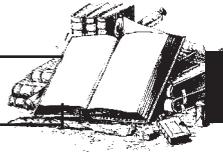
**Q** I want to stretch my book money; are the school book vendors really the best prices?

**A** We all want the best bargain when it comes to book buying. Books can be quite expensive! My best advice is comparative shopping!

School library vendors are convenient, especially if you have a modem and their individual ordering software. Follett Library Resources provides software that will total prices and configure processing for you and then with the click of a mouse, it will send the order in via your modem. They also offer inexpensive processing, cheap MARC records, and sometimes, free shipping. Permabound binds paperbacks into a book that will take a beating and still be cheaper than hard cover. If you want fast and cheap paperbacks and don't care about processing, I recommend <http://www.amazon.com> on the world wide web. Amazon discounts everything to everyone and they can find just about any title you need, even out-of-print titles. CBD, Christian Book Distributors is also a favorite of mine when I want discounted, Christian paperbacks, and I have the time to process the titles on my own. They have a web site for online ordering, <http://www.christianbooks.com>.

Always peruse the overstock titles at bookstores like Border's. I recently bought a hard cover almanac for \$4.98 and a hard cover copy of a popular young adult title for \$1.98. Both were a fraction of the original cost!

*(Editor's note: Most publishers give libraries a good discount. For small orders, check with publishers listed in the back of this issue.)*



*Elizabeth's Beauty*, written by Nancy Markham Alberts; illustrated by Pat Skiles. Harrisburg, Penn.: Morehouse Publishing, 1996. ISBN 0819216771, HBB, \$16.95.

E. Butterflies—Fiction; Grandfathers—Fiction. Unp. PS - Gr. 2.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Finding an injured swallowtail butterfly, Elizabeth shows it to her Grandpa. Seeing her Grandpa's delight over the butterfly, Elizabeth tries to nurse it back to health. Due to a recent stroke, Grandpa is bound to a wheelchair unable to speak. Elizabeth hopes that if he sees the swallowtail fly, somehow he'll be able to talk or walk again.

Pat Skiles has captured the quiet mood of the book perfectly with the illustrations. The text and drawings together make for a soothing, quiet-time story. For families facing a similar situation with older relatives, Elizabeth's Grandpa may help to facilitate discussion. Readers will enjoy the packet of butterfly garden flower seeds tacked to the inside front cover.

A gentle tale that children will enjoy hearing. Its intended audience, however, will miss most of the subtle deeper message of faith and hope. Labeled a children's story, *Elizabeth's Beauty* by Nancy Markham Alberts, may be appreciated more by adults than children. EC

*Saturday at The New You*, by Barbara E. Barber; illustrated by Anna Rich. LCCN 93005165. New York: Lee & Low Books, 1994. ISBN 1880000431, PAP, \$5.95.

E. Afro-Americans—Fiction; Mothers and daughters—Fiction; Beauty shops—Fiction. Unp. PS - Gr. 2.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Shauna's mother owns the beauty salon called The New You. Every Saturday, Shauna helps her mother care for customers. Shauna longs to have the grownup responsibility of caring for the customers' hair but knows that she needs to be her mother's helper by doing small tasks. Shauna satisfies herself with braiding her doll's hair which catches the attention of a fussy little girl. Shauna's mother is able to please her little customer with a beautiful new hairstyle complete with braids. At the end of the long day, Shauna is allowed to brush her mother's hair while her mother praises her for her helpfulness.

The bustling and cheerful atmosphere of this African-American beauty salon is portrayed through Anna Rich's vibrant oil paintings. Readers will feel as if they too are customers in the salon as they read the rich descriptions of the activity and patrons of The New You. *Saturday at The New You* reflects the warmth and beauty of the African-American culture while encouraging children to see the importance of helping their parents. SR

*Dancing with Dziadziu*, by Susan Campbell Bartoletti; illustrated by Annika Nelson. LCCN 95047964. San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1997. ISBN 0152006753, HBB, \$15.00.

E. Grandmothers—Fiction; Dancing—Fiction; Polish Americans—Fiction. Unp. Gr. 1 - 5.

Quality—4 Acceptability—4

*Dancing with Dziadziu* by Susan Campbell Bartoletti is the story of young Gabriella and her special

relationship with her Polish grandmother Babc. Gabriella enjoys dancing for Babc and listening to the special stories she tells over and over again about Poland. Gabriella hears about the washtub in front of the kitchen stove, painting chickens feet blue, and coming from Poland on a ship with five hundred refugees. Babc also reminisces about Dziadziu, the grandfather that died before Gabrielle was born. Now, Babc asks that Easter be moved up, because she will be dancing with Dziadziu before Easter really comes. Gabriella has to deal with the fact that her grandmother has changed. She is no longer round and energetic, but tired and thin and bedridden.

This book, a poignant mixture of funny stories and sad circumstances, will raise questions about older relatives' decline and death. Annika Nelson's illustrations, prints of hand colored linoleum cuts, are unique and impressive. PSM

*Somewhere*, by Jane Baskwill; illustrated by Trish Hill. LCCN 95031866. Greenvale, N.Y.: Mondo Publishing, 1996. ISBN 1572551313, HBB, \$13.95.

E. Nature—Fiction; Stories in rhyme. Unp. PS - Gr. 1.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Trish Hill's unique illustrations using color wash and scraped board bring drama to Jane Baskwill's simple poem, *Somewhere*. The premise, that no matter where you are something special is happening, gives this book a feeling of expectancy. Jane Baskwill recognizes nature's special gifts—a leaf falling, a leaping whale, a raindrop and rainbow, a star shining. Special things are happening everywhere—in darkness, in a forest, in the ocean, in a lonely treetop, or a distant meadow. This book shows a deep regard for the small

R A T I N G S Y S T E M

Quality (Literary)

\* Acceptability (Ethical/Moral Concerns)

5 Excellent - among the very best of this type

5 No questionable elements

4 Good - well written; strong recommendation

4 Slight concerns

3 Average -readers will enjoy

3 Moderate concerns

2 Fair - can recommend, but not as well written

2 Barely acceptable

1 Poor - cannot recommend

1 Too questionable to recommend

★ Outstanding Book of its Genre

\* Acceptability does not refer to doctrinal position, unless the doctrine is anti- or non-Christian.

aspects of nature. The illustrations are different and impressive. PSM

**Back to the Cabin, written and illustrated by Ann Blades. Victoria, B.C.: Orca Book Publishers, 1996. ISBN 1551430495, HBB, \$13.95; ISBN 1551430517, PAP, \$6.95.**

E. Camping—Fiction. Unp. PS - Gr. 1.

Quality—3 Acceptability—5

*Back to the Cabin* tells of two young boys and their fun times at their family's summer cabin in Canada. The boys greet their mother's announcement that they are leaving for the cabin with moans of dismay, complaining that there is nothing to do there with no TV, video games, or soccer field. Their time at the cabin is filled to overflowing with all of the special activities unique to cabin life. They have bonfires, go swimming and fishing in the lake, rebuild the dock, begin a fort and of course run out of time to finish all of the fun they have planned before it's time to return home where, "There's nothing to do!"

The pleasure in reading *Back to the Cabin* is in watching the boys leap into the cabin fun and seeing them come to the opposite opinion as their time there comes to an end. Ann Blades illustrates the book with full page color drawings depicting each of the activities the boys become involved in, it looks like fun! SK

**Franklin's New Friend, written by Paulette Bourgeois; illustrated by Brenda Clark. Toronto: Kids Can Press, 1997. ISBN 1550743619, HBB, \$10.95.**

E. Friendship—Fiction. Unp. PS - Gr. 2.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

*Franklin's New Friend* by Paulette Bourgeois brings us the story of Franklin and Moose. Moose is a new student in Franklin the turtle's classroom and Franklin is intimidated by Moose's size. He is reluctant to befriend him and Moose's shyness is interpreted as unfriendliness by Franklin and his friends. Mr. Owl, the teacher, explains to Franklin that regardless of size, everybody gets scared and that Moose is new and has no friends and is probably worried about fitting in. Franklin befriends him and encourages his friends to also, and they all discover a great new friend in Moose.

Brenda Clark illustrates the variety of animals in *Franklin's New Friends* with attention to depicting their emotions in their facial expressions. The pictures complement the text and together they tell an important message about not judging by appearance and acceptance of others. The story encourages children to go beyond what is familiar and comfortable and reach out to others and reap the rewards. SK

**The Many Hats of Mr. Minches, by Paulette Bourgeois; illustrated by Kathryn Naylor. Toronto: Stoddart, 1994. ISBN 0773728392, HBB, \$12.95.**

E. Hats—Fiction; Imagination—Fiction. Unp. Gr. 1 - 4.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Is the desire to be brave and wild and bold achieved in a single declining act, or in everyday life...or perhaps, both? Paulette Bourgeois, through her serious, shy, and sensible Dotty Rupert in *The Many Hats of Mr.*

*Minches* provides an answer. A foggy day brings Fred and Martha Minches and their mutt Jeff to Dotty's town. Unorthodox in manner and appearance, the Minches draw Dotty into their fantastic life where their hundreds of hats seem to have the power to change the wearer into a different character. Would this transformation affect such a sensible person as Dotty?

The pictures by Kathryn Naylor have many soft blurred edges as if to let the reader know that it's OK to indulge in the fantasy of the story. Naylor uses a wide palette of colors, brave and wild and bold. The pages of text share space with nautical decorations.

Bourgeois employs colorful language in her text; "a fog, thick and salty as her mother's pea soup," is an example. The vocabulary may present a slight challenge to the youngest reader, but contextual clues abound. SAH

**Jonathan James Says, "Christmas Is Coming!," by Crystal Bowman; illustrated by Karen Maizel. (Biblical Values for Kids.) LCCN 97010946. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997. ISBN 0310212103, PAP, \$4.99.**

E. Rabbits—Fiction; Christian life—Fiction; Christmas—Fiction; Gifts—Fiction. 45 p. K - Gr. 2.

**Jonathan James Says, "Happy Birthday to Me!," by Crystal Bowman; illustrated by Karen Maizel. (Biblical Values for Kids.) LCCN 97001201. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997. ISBN 0310212081, PAP, \$4.99.**

E. Rabbits—Fiction; Sharing—Fiction; Christian life—Fiction; Birthdays—Fiction. 45 p. K - Gr. 2.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Jonathan James is a rabbit who ascertains the real meaning of Christmas. Jonathan wants to buy his mother a toy for a Christmas gift, but his father persuades him to choose something befitting her predilection. Jonathan attends a Christmas party at school and is given a pen that he frowns on until his mother demonstrates it is special. On Christmas Eve, Jonathan's family sets out caroling with Jonathan complaining until he sees a manger scene. Desiring to emulate the wise men, Jonathan sings a song dedicated to Jesus.

In the second book, Jonathan James ascertains the real meaning of sharing on his birthday. Jonathan doesn't share his cake or play with any of his friends after opening his presents. Feeling miserable, Jonathan's grandmother persuades him to share his celebration. When his friends lose and muddy his gifts, he no longer wants to share. His mother tells him sharing is virtuous, but not to share cherished gifts. Jonathan's friend, Jason, stays overnight. When Jonathan utters his bedtime prayers, Jason asks how to pray, and Jonathan divulges conversing with Jesus is the same as conversing with a close friend. Jason says a short prayer, and they go to sleep.

Crystal Bowman has created two delightful stories about commemorations with meritorious values blended into them, and Karen Maizel's fanciful illustrations on each page augment the text. A novice reader will need some help, but the reiteration of words make these books valuable tools for strengthening reading skills. DBW

**Cry Baby, by Ruth Brown. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 1997. ISBN 0525459022, HBB, \$14.99.**

E. Behavior—Fiction; Brothers and sisters—Fiction. Unp. PS - Gr. 3.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

As the older sister tells the story of a walk with her two brothers and their little sister, you wonder why the little one cries so much. She carries her blanket and sobs, "Baba! Baba!" when she can't climb the fence, when she can't cross the stream, when she is afraid of the cows, and when she gets stuck in the sticker bush. Just when you are wondering along with the narrator if this child will ever stop wailing, you are stopped short, along with the older children, when you discover the little girl's blanket has been unraveling all along the walk. And no one, not even you, noticed.

Ruth Brown is the author and illustrator of this beautiful book. Her paintings of the children, wandering the English countryside with their dog, are superb. The pictures of the little girl are so perfect that you can hear her crying. This is one of those wonderful read-aloud books that brings as much enjoyment to the adult reader as to the child. CSJ

**The Lost and Found House, by Michael Cadnum; paintings by Steve Johnson and Lou Fancher. LCCN 96037256. New York: Viking, 1997. ISBN 0670848840, HBB, \$15.99.**

E. Moving, Household—Fiction. Unp. PS - Gr. 2.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

The theme of moving is explored in *The Lost and Found House* by Michael Cadnum. However, the language of the book and its truthfulness raise this picture book above others. The child character relays the story including his hopes, reservations, and fears. "Dad's steps echo, and Mom and I check the empty rooms to see the things which are not there," says the boy. The adults' reaction to the move are not overlooked either. The two converse and it is clear that worry has stopped the one from hearing the other.

Cadnum includes beautiful details of sight, sound, and touch. "In the morning I have a scrambled egg mixed with cheese, and toast with warm, soggy butter, and I even eat the parsley," and, "Outside, the garden is all weeds, and a red rubber ball so old it is gray hides under a bush with red berries." These points engage the reader into the main character's situation completely.

Accompanying the poignant text are illustrations by the husband/wife team, Steve Johnson and Lou Fancher. Warm and cool shadows capture the subtle emotions of the story. Page layouts, with paintings tilted one way or another, add to the instability of the characters in change, and reflect excitement for the new house. Each depiction is a study of light masterfully done. The reader stands under the glowing orange Frisbee ready to reach out and catch it.

The collaboration for *The Lost and Found House* is a great success. This book may offer comfort to those facing a move. LAG

**Hey! What's That Sound? by Veronika Martenova Charles. Toronto: Stoddart Kids, 1996. ISBN 0773728414, HBB, \$15.95.**

E. Aunts—Fiction; Sound—Fiction. Unp. PS - Gr. 2.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Writer, illustrator, Veronika Martenova Charles, leads her young readers on a quest for sounds in *Hey! What's that Sound?* The book invites participation and imagination in exploring various ring, splash, crash, crunch, and munch sounds as readers follow Aunt Minnie's special visits. The pictures bright colors depict Aunt Minnie's misadventures.

This is a well done, fun book that will encourage children to each want a special aunt for themselves. She spills honey on the dog, gets thoroughly drenched in the rain, drops a flower pot, and snores during story time. This is the kind of book that easily becomes a young child's favorite. PSM

***The Boy Who Wouldn't Go to Bed*, by Helen Cooper. LCCN 96044425. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 1997. ISBN 0803722532, HBB, \$13.99.**

E. Bedtime—Fiction; Sleep—Fiction; Imagination—Fiction. Unp. PS - Gr. 2.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

"Bedtime!" says the mother. "No!" says the boy, "I'm going to stay up all night." "Oh, no you're not!" says the mother. But the boy drives off as fast as he can in his little car to pass the night away. So begins Helen Cooper's delightful book *The Boy Who Wouldn't Go to Bed*. Determined to stay awake, the boy finds nothing but tiresome discouragement. "Nighttime is for snoring, not roaring," says an oversized tiger. "Nighttime is for dreaming not parading," soldiers tell him. "Nighttime is for resting not racing," the train insists. The musicians will only sing him a lullaby, the birds are silent in the forest, and even his own car falls asleep. The boy climbs a ladder and finds the moon itself is snoozing.

But someone is awake. As the mother bundles the boy off to bed, the reader discovers the characters of the boy's adventures—the tiger, the train, the soldiers—are all but toys in the boy's room.

Every mother will love this book. Cooper's watercolor illustrations have a soft, whimsical, dreamlike quality. And kids will relate to the boy's determination to stay up and, finally, his sweet surrender to sleep. A truly wonderful snuggle up bedtime story. TP

***Agatha's Feather Bed: Not Just Another Wild Goose Story*, story by Carmen Agra Deedy; pictures by Laura L. Seeley. LCCN 90028257. Atlanta: Peachtree Publishers, 1991. ISBN 1561450081, HBB, \$14.95.**

E. Geese—Fiction; Conservation of natural resources—Fiction. 28 p. K - Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Agatha makes cloth and loves to explain to her customers that "everything comes from something" as she shares with them the origins of her cotton, linen and silks. She is caught by her words one night as she sleeps on her brand new feather bed and is interrupted by geese demanding their feathers back. Agatha keeps her bed and makes the geese happy with a delightful surprise. Goose-coats made from Agatha's hair!

Carmen Deedy's storytelling background comes through clearly in this work. An enjoyable silent read-it begs to be told aloud! Laura Seeley's illustrations both enhance the tale and inform readers about product origins.

Collections seeking to enhance picture books, especially read-alouds should include this title. Recommend it to science teachers as an attention-grabbing introduction to lessons on how things are made. It's availability in paperback makes it affordable to smaller budgets, but order two because it will be read and re-read! AED

***Bat in the Dining Room*, by Crescent Dragonwagon; illustrated by S. D. Schindler. LCCN 96054894. New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997. ISBN 0761450076, HBB, \$15.95.**

E. Bats—Fiction; Stories in rhyme. Unp. K - Gr. 4.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

When a bat finds its way into a resort's dining room, everyone panics. All flee...except Melissa, who hides under a table until the time is right. While the adults exiled in the hall complain, conjecture and connive the bat's demise, Melissa calmly creeps to a side door, holds it open, and lures the bat back to freedom.

Written in free verse with just enough rhyme to tantalize the ear, Crescent Dragonwagon draws some stark contrasts. Her poetry opens windows into the mind of characters: the bat-with its fragile fear and longing for the open sky, the adults and their prissy, self-absorbed panic, and Melissa with her solid, quiet act of bravery.

S.D. Schindler captures the serenity of the setting and the absurdity of the situation in finely detailed illustrations. Using colored pencil and watercolor on pastel paper, Schindler conveys the emotions, attitudes, and comedy of the story.

The story has one flashback that young listeners might find confusing and the text may be long for young attention spans. Still, *Bat in the Dining Room* exposes young readers and listeners to a delicate poetry rare to most picture books. TP

***You're Safe Now, Waterdog*, by Richard Edwards; illustrated by Sophy Williams. LCCN 96060979. New York: Viking, 1996. ISBN 0670873853, HBB, \$14.99.**

E. Toys—Fiction. PS - K.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Matt and Watt the dog go everywhere together. The two are best friends and do everything together, including going to school. As Matt grows up he begins to lose interest in Watt and does not always remember to take good care of him.

The young reader will experience sadness when one day Matt leaves Watt at the riverbank and does not return to search for him. After a long night rain begins to fall and the rainfall sweeps Watt down the river. Watt becomes so soggy that only his head is above the water and it appears that he might not survive the current of the river. Then all of a sudden a young girl named Hattie rescues Watt from the water and proudly names him Waterdog. Hattie adores Waterdog and takes him home with her and treats him very well. As she snuggles into bed that night Hattie makes sure that Waterdog is right beside her, warm, safe, and snuggled with lots of love.

*You're Safe Now, Waterdog* told by Richard Edwards, is the sweet portrayal of that timeless childhood experience of growing up and outgrowing once

precious belongings that are discarded or cared for by others. The soft and colorful painting by Sophy Williams add to the tenderness of this story. SKB

***Dear Timothy Tibbitts*, by Judith Ross Enderle and Stephanie Gordon Tessler; illustrated by Carolyn Ewing. LCCN 96047369. New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997. ISBN 0761450092, HBB, \$15.95.**

E. Letters—Fiction; Cousins—Fiction. Unp. PS - Gr. 2.

Quality—3 Acceptability—5

Timothy Tibbitts faithfully greets the mailman, Mr. Sloan, each day in hopes that there will be a letter for him. There are always a dillion or jillion or gazillion letters for the rest of the family, but not for him. He comes to realize with the encouragement of his cousin Emma Kay who is staying with them for the summer, that if he writes a letter then he in fact, may receive a letter in return. He does just that and receives a letter from an unexpected friend.

Carolyn Ewing has illustrated *Dear Timothy Tibbitts* with double-page color paintings that contain an occasional surprise. They are full of detail and life enhancing a subject, letter writing, that is not naturally conducive to illustrations. There is a page at the end of the book illustrating and explaining the format of a friendly letter and how to address an envelope, a useful teaching tool. SK

***Oh No, Anna!* by Vivian French; illustrated by Alex Ayliffe. LCCN 97005350. Atlanta: Peachtree, 1997. ISBN 1561451258, HBB, \$14.95.**

E. Orderliness—Fiction; Color—Fiction; Toy and movable books. Unp. Toddler - PS.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

While her mother is busy unloading groceries, toddler Anna is busy making multi-colored messes. In a book every mother will relate to, *Oh No, Anna* celebrates the discovery spirit of toddlerhood.

From spilling her cat's blue bowl of milk, to unraveling a green ball of yarn, to unloading her mother's brown tote bag, Anna revels in every colorful discovery. When finally her mother discovers her, the clean-up begins. The story ends with warm understanding: "Oh, yes, Anna. Time to clean up."

Vivian French uses an economy of words precise enough to make the story perfect for preschoolers' attention span. International illustrator Alex Ayliffe enlarges this little book with big bright images in vibrant primary colors that seem to leap off the page. Add to that, the added dimension of fold out flaps that reveal Anna's mischief and you have a real winner.

Of all our books, this is the one my four-year-old keeps requesting. Whether he sees himself amid all the messes, or just likes unfolding the flaps, *Oh No, Anna!* is a book we'll enjoy again and again. TP

***The Etcher's Studio*, by Arthur Geisert. LCCN 96035000. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997. ISBN 0395797543, HBB, \$15.95.**

E. Etching—Fiction; Artists—Fiction; Imagination—Fiction; Grandfathers—Fiction. 32 p. K - Gr. 3.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Placed in the setting of an artist's studio a young boy shares how he helps his grandfather, an etcher, prepare

prints for a yearly studio sale. The young boy takes us step by step through the involved process and art of creating a good etching. The young boy's favorite job is adding color to the prints and imagining that he is in each print. In one afternoon he sails around Cape Horn, explores a jungle, rides in a hot air balloon over his neighborhood, and so much more. Then he remembers to concentrate on getting the colors right and his dream ends. The best part is when Grandfather congratulates him on a job well done.

Arthur Geiserts capture the process and art of etching using uncomplicated text and striking illustrations that place the reader in grandfather's studio. The use of vivid colors and great detail add to the reader's understanding of the text. The closing of the book includes a detailed illustrations of an etcher's studio, reviews the process of how an etching is made, and provides the older reader with a brief overview of the art of etching since before the fifteenth century. *The Etcher's Studio* is an excellent introduction for the young reader to gain an understanding of this art form. SKB

***Palampam Day*, by David and Phillis Gershator; illustrated by Enrique O. Sánchez. LCCN 96054899. New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997. ISBN 0761450025, HBB, \$15.95.**

E. West Indies—Fiction. Unp. PS - Gr. 4.

Quality—4 Acceptability—4

How can you eat a talking banana? Or a talking fish? Or keep mangoes from chattering? Turo goes from being fascinated to frustrated to famished as everything finds its voice in *Palampam Day*. First, nutty coconuts, then a parrot that has a mind of its own, then a dog who preaches that "Life is rough, rough!" A French-speaking frog, Dutch-speaking sweet potatoes—everything suddenly has a demand or an opinion.

Turo goes to Papa Tata Wanga for help. The old man explains that Palampam Day comes once in a truly blue moon. Then all things find their voice and say whatever they feel like saying in any language under the Caribbean sun. Papa Tata Wanga gives Turo magic words to make the moon set and the sun rise. Turo follows his advice and awakens the next morning to find life normal again.

David and Phillis Gershator use this imaginary day to celebrate the many languages and contributing cultures of the West Indies. Enrique O. Sanchez's illustrations in acrylic gouache paint complement the text like a tropical breeze goes with the Caribbean sun.

Some Christian parents may have concern about Turo's "magic words" that end Palampam day. But the entire story is such outrageous fantasy that it's hard to take too seriously. TP

***Madelia*, by Jan Spivey Gilchrist. LCCN 96042266. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 1997. ISBN 0803720548, HBB, \$14.99.**

E. Artists—Fiction; Afro-Americans—Fiction; Church attendance—Fiction; Fathers and daughters—Fiction. Unp. PS - Gr. 2.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Pastor Daddy's Bible is full of beautiful pictures. Longing to copy these pictures with her new set of paints, Madelia rebelliously gets ready for church. At

church rebellion changes to joy as Madelia gets a glimpse of heaven and learns that inspiration outshines mimicry.

Afro-American author and artist and recipient of the Coretta Scott King Honor Award, Jan Spivey remembers her Pastor Daddy with deep love. Her warm gouache and pastel illustrations unite with her words to present *Madelia* as a pretty tribute to him. The reader joins Madelia's family as they prepare for church directed by the love and discipline of Mama and Daddy. Viewed through Madelia's eyes, the cadence, joy, and traditions of the Afro-American Church service come alive. We rise with her as, led by her Daddy, she receives a color filled vision of heaven and realizes her God-given talent. Spivey recreates a memory that transcends boundaries. Most imaginative families will recognize both Madelia's rebellion and her talent. DJE

***The Buffalo in the Mall*, written by Molly Levite Griffin; illustrated by Kim Doner. Austin, Tex.: Ekkin Press, 1996. ISBN 1571681183, HBB, \$13.95.**

E. Buffalo—Fiction; Pets—Fiction. Unp. PS - Gr. 3.

Quality—4 Acceptability—4

In *The Buffalo in the Mall*, Molly Griffin compares a pet buffalo to many more normal types of pets—dogs, kittens, rabbits, gerbils, and others. On the last page you find out why a buffalo is the best king of pet—he is stuffed.

Preschoolers and early elementary students will enjoy the rhyming story line. Kim Doner's black and white pictures are well done. While most children will enjoy the book, some adult readers may object to some of the storyline and corresponding pictures. One such page reads "Puppies wet on the carpet. Kittens throw up in the hall." One illustration is a back view of an ostrich with its head in the sand. Guinea pigs are depicted as motorcycle gang members in another. Yet another possibly objectionable page states "Rabbits refuse to stay single. They soon fill a huge condo hutch." While some of these objections do represent things that happen in real life, I question their appropriateness in a book for young children. JM

***Animal Alphabet : On the Land, in Sky or Sea, Meet God's Creatures from A to Z*, by Mary Rice Hopkins and Chuck Ingolia; illustrations by Wendy Francisco. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1997. ISBN 0891079688, KIT, \$12.99.**

E. Alphabet books; Animals. 1 book, unp.; 1 cassette tape. PS - Gr. 1.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Mary Rice Hopkins and Chuck Ingolia have written an ABC book with a Christian twist. Each letter not only has a corresponding animal, but a short Bible verse as well. For example, "A is for anteater, ...all things were created by him and for him. Colossians 1:16." An inventive format forgivably stretched a bit at times, like when "X" is reached.

The color illustrations by Wendy Francisco really shine. Each animal is realistically detailed, but does not have a text book look. In fact, each animal seems to be truly joyful, almost a smile on each face. While the words in *Animal Alphabet* are pleasant, the drawings and design are exceptional. The accompanying cassette tape of the text in music form

(minus the Bible verses) is a lot of fun. Children will enjoy singing along with the author, Mary Rice Hopkins. EC

***What's Alice Up To?* by Harley Jessup. LCCN 97008822. New York: Viking, 1997. ISBN 0670873969, HBB, \$14.99.**

E. Dogs—Fiction; Birthdays—Fiction; Parties—Fiction; Stories in rhyme. Unp. PS - Gr. 1.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Alice is a very busy little girl who seems to have something in mind. Each page shows her doing something, but who knows why? She drags out a chair, a rug, and even the cat. She sits in her room cutting and gluing. Her little dog is the wondering, and sometimes disapproving, narrator. Feeling slighted by her busyness, the dog says, "She's not paying any attention to me." Finally, we see the results of all Alice's work. Her dog is seated in the chair, the guest of honor at his birthday party.

Harley Jessup is the author and illustrator of this charming book. His background in graphic design and experience with visual effects in the film industry are evident in this attractive book. The artwork is done with charcoal pencil drawings and colorful paint on a white background. The book cover background is black, with cutouts showing the artwork from the book. The creative use of design combined with a simple tale of intrigue make this an exceptional book. CSJ

***Lucy Steps Through the Wardrobe*, adapted from *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C.S. Lewis; illustrated by Deborah Maze. (The World of Narnia.) LCCN 96023200. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1997. ISBN 0060274514, HBB, \$12.95.**

***Edmund and the White Witch*, adapted from *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C.S. Lewis; illustrated by Deborah Maze. (The World of Narnia.) LCCN 96023202. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1997. ISBN 0060275170, HBB, \$12.95.**

E. Fantasy. Unp. K - Gr. 4.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

The land of Narnia, created by C.S. Lewis, is introduced in this lavish picture book for young children.

In book one, *Lucy Steps Through the Wardrobe*, four children are sent to the countryside to escape the bombing in London during World War II. One of the children, Lucy, discovers another world through the doorway of an antique wardrobe. She steps from a London summer into a Narnia winter and encounters a "faun" in the forest. The faun (half man, half goat), invites Lucy to have tea with him and they become friends. But the faun is hiding a secret. He is a spy for the White Witch and is required to report to her if he should happen to come across a human being at any time.

In *Edmund and the White Witch*, Lucy returns to Narnia and unknown to her, her brother, Edmund is following. Edmund loses sight of Lucy and the first person he meets in the forest is the White Witch, self-proclaimed ruler of Narnia. The White Witch recognizes Edmund as a "son of Adam" and questions him about his brother and sisters while offering him

enchanted food and drink. Edmund promises her that he will bring the other children back to Narnia but keep his visit with the White Witch a secret. Reunited with Lucy, Edmund feels uneasy about his secret but keeps quiet. The White Witch has promised him more of the Turkish Delight but only if he returns with the other three children.

Adapted from the series by C.S. Lewis, these books portray the classic battle between good and evil. They also include elements from mythology such as the faun and the White Witch. Each book has a moral element to it. In book one, the faun begins by deceiving Lucy but in the end, makes a choice to save his friend and help her get home safely.

The illustrations by Deborah Maze are beautiful and plentiful, filling the pages. The snow scenes in the woods of Narnia are especially lovely. DEB

***You Are Special*, by Max Lucado; illustrations by Sergio Martinez. LCCN 97005387. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1997. ISBN 0891079319, HBB, \$14.99.**

E. Self-esteem—Fiction; Toys—Fiction; Christian life—Fiction. 32 p. PS - Gr. 3.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Living in a little village are the Wemmicks, wooden people all made by the same carver. Each day the Wemmicks hand out either gold star or gray dot stickers. The gold stars go to the most talented, beautiful Wemmicks and the gray dots go to the scratched, clumsy Wemmicks. Punchinello, who is covered with gray dots, meets Lucia who has no stickers, gold or gray; they don't stick to her. Lucia sends Punchinello to the carver. There he learns how special he is and that his worth is not determined by stars or dots, but simply because the carver made him.

Thoughtfully written, *You Are Special* by Max Lucado, may even bring a tear to the adult reader's eye. Color drawings by Sergio Martinez capture the silliness of the Wemmicks, the sadness of Punchinello and the warmth of the carver perfectly. Neither outshines the other; instead the text and illustrations are equally high quality.

While written for children, the story contains a beautifully told lesson for people of all ages. Punchinello discovers that the more time he spends with his maker, the more he'll feel loved and the stickers will fall off. The other Wemmicks won't be able to make the gray dots stick. Learning to please God and not be concerned about what others think is an essential lesson in life. EC

***Boom, Baby, Boom, Boom!* by Margaret Mahy; illustrated by Patricia MacCarthy. LCCN 96060725. New York: Viking, 1996. ISBN 0670873144, HBB, \$15.99.**

E. Babies—Fiction; Animals—Fiction. Unp. PS - Gr. 1.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Don't take this book too seriously. Would you believe that a woman is so engrossed in playing the drums that she doesn't notice a cow munching lettuce in her kitchen? But we are entertained, along with the baby, as the hungry animals edge their way into the house to have an unexpected lunch. *Boom, Baby, Boom, Boom!* by Margaret Mahy tells the story.

The turn of phrase delights. "In trotted the black-faced sheep on her high-heeled hooves." The alternate selection of verbs introduces the small listener to the beauty of the English language: lolloped, scuttled, cantered. The illustrations by Patricia MacCarthy are pleasant, just slight askew, melded with the touch of zaniness in the storyline.

Your pre-schooler will chime in on the refrain mid-way through the first reading: "Boom-biddy-boom-biddy BAA-BAA-BAA!" SAH

***George and Martha: The Complete Stories of Two Best Friends*, by James Marshall; with an introduction by Maurice Sendak. LCCN 96047572. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997. ISBN 0395851580, HBB, \$25.00.**

E. Hippopotamus—Fiction; Friendship—Fiction; Short stories. 340 p. PS - Gr. 2.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Readers of all ages who have long been entertained with the humorous friendship of two portly hippopotamuses will now be delighted to discover all thirty-five episodes created by James Marshall in *George and Martha*.

The 340 page hardbound volume is a keepsake edition that will be treasured by old fans and appreciated by new readers who come to value the profound message hidden behind the simple style.

In one short episode after another Marshall shows that good friends cannot stay angry for very long and that any activity is more enjoyable when there is a friend to share it with. MK

***Something Special*, by Nicola Moon; illustrations by Alex Ayliffe. LCCN 96024127. Atlanta: Peachtree, 1997. ISBN 1561451371, HBB, \$14.95.**

E. Show-and-tell presentations—Fiction; Babies—Fiction; Brothers and sisters—Fiction; Schools—Fiction; Blacks—England—Fiction. Unp. PS - Gr. 1.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Charlie is determined to find something really different to share with his class on "special" day, but his mother is too busy with baby Sally to help. Just when Charlie is at his most cross his Mom asks him to help with Sally and he discovers that having a sister is something special!!

This story presents themes children will easily relate to. Because Charlie's age is not revealed the book could be used in preschool or elementary classes. Nicola Moon tries to have broad appeal by representing several cultures. The storyline also indicates that Charlie's family is a single-parent household. The illustrations by Alex Ayliffe are cheerful cut-paper illustrations which are attractive to children and highlight the multicultural elements.

Smaller libraries may want to start with titles such as Fred Rogers' *New Baby* or Dorothy Corey's *Will There Be A Lap For Me?* Larger collections wanting to include more multicultural materials would welcome the addition of this colorful tale. AED

***Ency Weency Spider*, by Joanne Oppenheim; illustrated by S. D. Schindler. (Bank Street Ready-to-Read.) LCCN 96030698. Milwaukee: Gareth Stevens Publishing, 1997. ISBN 0836816900, HBB, \$17.27.**

E. Spiders—Fiction; Characters in literature—Fiction; Stories in rhyme; Easy reading materials. 32 p.

***She'll Be Coming Around the Mountain*, by Emily Coplon, Doris Orgel, and Ellen Schecter; illustrated by Rowan Barnes-Murphy. (Bank Street Ready-to-Read.) LCCN 96030711. Milwaukee: Gareth Stevens Publishing, 1997. ISBN 0836816897, HBB, \$17.27.**

E. Easy reading materials; Children's songs—Texts; Songs. 32 p.

***The Boy Who Cried "Wolf!"*, retold in rebus by Ellen Schecter; illustrated by Gary Chalk. (Bank Street Ready-to-Read.) LCCN 96030699. Milwaukee: Gareth Stevens Publishing, 1997. ISBN 0836816919, HBB, \$17.27.**

E. Easy reading materials; Rebuses; Fables. 32 p. PS - Gr. 1.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

In *Ency Weency Spider*, Joanne Oppenheim retells the finger play rhyme "Itsy Bitsy Spider." After the spider shinies up a water spout and twirls a web in the branches of a rosebush, it frightens Miss Muffet at play, and she runs away. Humpty Dumpty sees the spider, cringes, and falls off the wall. Little Jackie Horner pulls the spider out of his cherry pie, screams, drops the pie and runs away. Jack beholds the spider and leaps in fright over the candlestick. S.D. Schindler's animated illustrations realistically portray the fright expressed by the Mother Goose characters.

In *She'll Be Coming Around The Mountain*, Emily Coplon, Doris Orgel, and Ellen Schecter retell the lyrics of this well-known childhood song. A family is dreaming about their favorite kissing cousin and all the revelry when she comes to visit. Rowan Barnes-Murphy's comical illustrations add to the fun of the lyrics.

In *The Boy Who Cried "Wolf!"*, Ellen Schecter retells the Aesop fable "The Shepherd Boy And The Wolf" utilizing rebus. A young boy is bored while caring for his master's sheep and decides to play a trick on the people in the village. He convinces the people a wolf is attacking the sheep, and when the people discover it is a lark, they are furious. The boy tricks the people a second time, and the people lose faith in his honesty. A wolf attacks the sheep, and no one heeds the boy's warning, so many sheep are killed, and the boy disappears. This adaptation adheres to the same maxim as the Aesop fable that lying causes one anguish. Gary Chalk's expressive illustrations realistically portray the fable.

These Bank Street Ready-to-Read series are appealing renditions of familiar material to young children. The use of familiar material and reiteration plus rebus in *The Boy Who Cried "Wolf!"* will augment the beginning reader's pleasure in the books. DBW

***At the Hotel Larry*, by Daniel Pinkwater; illustrated by Jill Pinkwater. LCCN 96041671. New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997. ISBN 076145005X, HBB, \$14.95.**

E. Polar bears—Fiction; Hotels—Fiction. Unp. K - Gr. 3.

Quality—3 Acceptability—4

*At the Hotel Larry* is a whimsical picture book about a Polar Bear, Larry, and the family with whom he lives. The unnamed narrator is a girl who explains that Larry saved her father's life. In gratitude her father told Larry he would give him any reward and, since Larry has always wanted to live in a hotel with a swimming pool, that is what he gets. The father buys a hotel into which they all move.

Larry and the girl like to travel about the city incognito. On these outings Larry, wearing trench coat and dark glasses, will assume the personae of the girl's uncle from Milwaukee. One day they visit the zoo and discover Larry's brother with two other polar bears. After asking her parents, the girl is allowed to honor Larry's request to have his brother and the other polar bears visit the Hotel Larry for a swim.

The plot of this story is not especially innovative; there have been numerous picture books that employ the device of a normally bothersome or even dangerous animal such as an alligator or octopus living with a child. Perhaps the appeal of these books is their incongruity to reality or their ability to share a secret with the reader. Still the author, Daniel Pinkwater, has done a creditable job and made Larry an endearing if perhaps slightly menacing character. When asked by the girl Larry admits that some polar bears have been known to eat people, but assuredly only with good reason; he himself would never do such a thing, of course.

The illustrations by Jill Pinkwater, are colorful and vivid with extreme color contrast reminiscent of impressionist painting. Be sure to look for bear claws on almost every page.

And if you stay at the Hotel Larry do not neglect to read the notice by the swimming pool: "Make sure the bear likes you before using the pool." DWR

***Alicia's Tutu*, by Robin Pulver; paintings by Mark Graham. LCCN 96024503. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 1997. ISBN 0803719337, HBB, \$14.99.**

E. Ballet dancing—Fiction; Grandmothers—Fiction. Unp. PS - Gr. 3.  
Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Alicia, a budding ballerina, wants nothing more than a pink, pouffy, sparkly tutu. Her mom reminds her that what they really need is another bed, now that her little brother has become such a climber. Alicia is convinced the gift her grandmother is sending is a tutu, even though her mother says it is a bed. When the bed arrives, along with a dresser, Alicia is disappointed. Then her little brother gets lost, and finding him helps her realize what is truly important. As she puts her clothes into the dresser, she discovers a pink tutu.

Robin Pulver has written an insightful story about a little girl who learns the difference between needs and wants. Even though she gets her tutu, it is obvious she has learned there are at least a few things in life more important than tutus. The illustrations by Mark Graham are beautiful paintings that communicate the warmth of family. *Alicia's Tutu* is visually appealing and conveys a sense of gentleness and caring, making it a great read-aloud book. CSJ

***Emma's Eggs*, by Margriet Ruurs; illustrations by Barbara Spurl. Toronto: Stoddart, 1996. ISBN 0773729720, HBB, \$15.95.**

E. Chickens—Fiction. Unp. PS - Gr. 2.  
Quality - 4 Acceptability - 5

Emma the hen is learning to lay her first eggs. She wants them to be perfect, but she cannot seem to please her people. The farmer's wife scrambled Emma's first egg for breakfast, so Emma decided to scramble the next egg herself to the displeasure of the farmer. Then she saw the farmer's wife boiling eggs so Emma placed her next egg in her water bowl and had to be shooed away by the farmer's children. No matter how Emma tried to satisfy the farmer's family they were unhappy with her attempts. Finally Emma gave up and would not let anyone near her egg which resulted in the biggest surprise of all.

*Emma's Eggs* is a comical story which will amuse its readers, young and old. Barbara Spurl's colorful full page illustrations reflect the warm humor of *Emma's Eggs*. Children of all ages will sympathize with Emma's efforts to please the farm family as they too struggle with doing their best. *Emma's Eggs* will be a favorite to many. SR

***Allison*, by Allen Say. LCCN 97007528. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997. ISBN 039585895X, HBB, \$17.00.**

E. Adoption—Fiction; Dolls—Fiction; Cats—Fiction. 32 p. K - Gr. 3.  
Quality—5 Acceptability—5

*Allison* is a story about a young girl named Allison who realizes that she doesn't look like her parents. She's adopted. We follow Allison through her day at dinner, the next day at daycare, and a climatic evening as she struggles with her feelings of rejection, suspicion, and anger. When she gives milk to a hungry stray cat and asks if she can keep him, Allison realizes her love for the cat is similar to the love her parents have for her.

Allen Say's exquisite watercolor illustrations are superb, reflecting the sensitivity of each of his characters and their feelings. KSG

***I Wish My Brother Was a Dog*, by Carol Diggory Shields; illustrated by Paul Meisel. LCCN 96052712. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 1997. ISBN 0525454640, HBB, \$14.99.**

E. Babies—Fiction; Dogs—Fiction. Unp. PS - Gr. 1.  
Quality—5 Acceptability—5

A little boy wishes his little baby brother, Andy, was a dog. Especially when Andy knocks over his tower of blocks. If Andy were a dog, his brother would teach him tricks, let him eat out of a pet dish on the floor. Andy could be a watchdog and stay home while the boy had his Mom all to himself on an outing. He would put Andy outdoors when he cries. No more stinky diapers. Andy could play in the mud and be washed off with a hose.

If Mom and Dad wanted to take their son someplace alone, Andy could be left in a dog kennel. The boy would enter Andy in a dog show. And even better, maybe someone would want to buy Andy! Boy! It sure would be peaceful. And quiet. Maybe not so much fun. The boy thinks it over.

Illustrator Paul Meisel delights the eye, gives the reader many chuckles over the story author, Carol Diggory Shields weaves. What a charming, precious story! BGT

***Counting Crocodiles*, by Judy Sierra; illustrated by Will Hillenbrand. LCCN 95048787. San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1997. ISBN 0152001921, HBB, \$15.00.**

E. Monkeys—Fiction; Crocodiles—Fiction; Counting; Stories in rhyme. Unp. K - Gr. 3.  
Quality—5 Acceptability—5

*Counting Crocodiles* is a lively story retold from an old Pan-Asian folktale about an animal trickster, in this case a monkey, who persuades crocodiles to form a bridge across water under the pretext of counting them. Author Judy Sierra's rollicking rhythm and two-line rhyme is pure fun to read once you get the pattern down. Read it out loud to yourself and you'll pick it up. It's perfect for reading to children on laps or in a classroom, but teachers should make the book available for children to examine afterwards so they won't miss out on the wonderful details in the pictures. Will Hillenbrand's illustrations are eye-catching and humorous, done with a combination of oil, oil pastel, watercolor, and gouache on vellum. And how many crocodiles are there? "Just enough to make a bridge across the Sillabobble Sea, / but not enough to catch a clever monkey like me!" Pure fun. KSG

***If Only I Were...*, by Carl Sommer; illustrated by Kennon James. LCCN 96024348. Houston: Advance Publishing, 1997. ISBN 1575370514, HBB, \$14.95.**

E. Mice—Fiction; Animals—Fiction; Self-acceptance—Fiction. Unp. PS - Gr. 1.  
Quality—3 Acceptability—5

Missy, a small mouse who lives at the zoo, isn't happy being a mouse. Missy wishes she were bigger and stronger. One night as she dreams, her wish seems to come true. Missy changes from a mouse to a cat then to a tiger and so on. In the end, Missy learns that everyone has problems and that being a mouse is fine.

Carl Sommer's *If Only I Were* is a gentle tale for young children. While pleasant enough, it is a bit bland. Unfortunately, the almost too cute illustrations by Kennon James do not help liven the story up much.

The book's not so subtle message "be happy with yourself, everyone has problems" is certainly a good one for children to learn. Preschoolers and younger would enjoy this book the most. They will get a kick out of seeing what animal Missy wishes to become next. EC

***Cajun Folktales*, by Celia Soper; illustrated by Patrick Soper. LCCN 97016928. Gretna, La.: Pelican Publishing, 1997. ISBN 1565542576, HBB, \$14.95.**

E. Cajuns—Folklore; Folklore—Louisiana. Unp. Gr. 1 - 3.  
Quality—4 Acceptability—4

To promote the tradition of oral folk telling, Celia Soper, stories, and Patrick Soper, drawings, have put together a lively little book, *Cajun Folktales*. The main characters are Lapin, a quick-thinking rabbit, and Bouki, his slow-witted compete. In six brief stories,

the reader becomes acquainted with the neighbors in Atchafalaya Swamp, each with its boldly designed character, each with a lesson to teach or learn. An unexpected turn of events may win the race; greed may do you out of a fine prize.

Once the reader is familiar with the glossary, both silent reading and read-aloud aspects of Cajun Folktales sparkle with enhanced understanding. The illustrations by Patrick Soper are as teasing as the text, animals in overalls are as reasonable as their conversations. Stealth or wits, cruelty or consequences? The adult previewer makes the judgment call. SAH

***Dog and Cat Make a Splash*, by Kate Spohn. LCCN 96036888. New York: Viking, 1997. ISBN 0670871788, HBB, \$11.99.**

E. Dogs—Fiction; Cats—Fiction; Animals—Fiction; Friendship—Fiction. 31 p. PS - Gr. 2.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Friends! Cat and Dog make ordinary tasks a way of sharing and learning together. Enjoy short easy to read stories as Dog teaches Cat to like swimming, Dog and Cat plan a yard sale and put on a pretend magic show, and Cat surprises Dog with the perfect present!

Kate Spohn, in *Dog and Cat Make a Splash*, has written exactly the right book to read with a four or five-year-old or let a six or seven-year-old read alone. It is a high interest book with colorful clear illustrations. PSM

***Carlos and the Skunk*, story by Jan Romero Stevens; illustrated by Jeanne Arnold. LCCN 96043677. Flagstaff, Ariz.: Rising Moon/Northland, 1997. ISBN 0873585917, HBB, \$14.95.**

E. Skunks—Fiction; Farm life—New Mexico—Fiction; New Mexico—Fiction; Spanish language material—Bilingual. Unp. PS - Gr. 3.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Carlos and Gloria are friends living in the Española Valley of northern New Mexico. The two have grown up together and are now young adolescents. Carlos longs to prove to Gloria how intelligent and daring he is. Carlos has heard that if a person picks up a skunk by its tail, it will not spray you. Carlos decides to show Gloria that he is able to accomplish this amazing feat. Instead of conquering the skunk, the skunk overpowers Carlos with his spray. Carlos spends the next few days trying to rid himself of the strong odor without losing his pride.

Jan Romero Stevens has written an endearing story about the need of a young man to prove his worth and the love a family who strives to ease his embarrassment and help him feel like a man. The Spanish translation on each page and Jeanne Arnold's rich illustrations reflect the heritage of this Southwestern family. The warm red and orange colors of the oil paintings symbolize the deep love shared by the family. *Carlos and the Skunk* will be treasured by both children and adults. SR

***Following the Sun*, by Jenny Stow. LCCN 96019359. Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Books, 1997. ISBN 157505048X, HBB, \$14.95.**

E. Counting; Animals. Unp. PS - Gr. 2.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

One by one, everything follows the sun. First beetle, then frog, then lizard, bird, and snake. A new animal joins the journey on every page until ten follow the setting sun to the coming of night.

Author/Illustrator Jenny Stowe uses repetition and a scarcity of verbiage to create a counting book that directs your attention to the visual. In this hot, sunny book, ten African creatures, from a tiny beetle to an enormous elephant, sojourn through lily pads, sand dunes, treetops, high grass, prairie and watering holes.

What makes this book engaging for kids is searching each page for creatures as new ones are added. With illustrations that have a tangy African flavor, *Following the Sun* is a short, easy read that little ones will request again and again. TP

***Milly and Tilly : The Story of a Town Mouse and a Country Mouse*, by Kate Summers; illustrated by Maggie Kneen. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 1997. ISBN 0525458018, HBB, \$14.99.**

E. Mice—Fiction. Unp. PS - Gr. 3.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Kate Summers, in *Milly and Tilly*, has updated an old story in a delightful way. Milly, the city mouse, finds the night too quiet, the morning birds too noisy, and bees and sheep too frightening. Tilly, the sensitive country mouse, is overwhelmed by Milly's beautiful doll (mouse) house, unlimited food (including cheese!), but draws the line at cat and mouse games. Maggie Kneen's colorful, detailed illustrations are a must see! The moral is well done—that friends can be different and still be friends. This is an entertaining book that young children will quickly relate to. PSM

***There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly*, by Simms Taback. LCCN 96061604. New York: Viking, 1997. ISBN 0670869392, HBB, \$14.99.**

E. Humorous stories. Unp. PS - Gr. 2.

Quality—4 Acceptability—4

*There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly*, an American folk-tale illustrated by Simons Taback, has passed the true test of acceptability; young children beg, "Read it again!" The familiarity of the story doesn't diminish participation and Taback's pictures are hilarious, begging to be translated into a theatrical production.

Taback uses a die-cut hole to let the reader view the impossibility that the story tells, culminating in the old woman swallowing a horse. Each ingestion is amplified by a newspaper article or side-bar comments of the by-standers. "The artwork was done using mixed media and collage on Kraft paper." The back of the dust jacket features a "Who's Who" of houseflies. A very funny up-date of an old favorite. SAH

***Do Cowboys Ride Bikes?* by Kathy Tucker; illustrated by Nadine Bernard Westcott. LCCN 95052650. Morton Grove, Ill.: Albert Whitman, 1996. ISBN 0807516937, HBB, \$15.95.**

E. Cowboys—Fiction; Stories in rhyme. Unp. PS - Gr. 2.

Quality—4 Acceptability—4

*Do Cowboys Ride Bikes?* answers fourteen questions young children might ask about cowboys. The

questions are not answered in the way you would expect. The answers are in the form of silly rhymes. Nadine Westcott uses colored illustrations to further show the answers to the question. The questions include: what do cowboys eat? do cowboys ever take their boots off? and twelve others.

The answer to what do cowboys do in town? may cause some concern. "They take a hot bath, slick down their hair, and put on their very best duds. They dance with the gals, play horse shoes and chess, and slug down some root beer with suds." The illustrations on this page include a cowboy bathing in a barrel and a cowboy in boxer shorts in front of a mirror. JM

***Bearsie Bear and the Surprise Sleepover Party*, by Bernard Waber. LCCN 97003946. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1997. ISBN 039586450X, HBB, \$15.00.**

E. Animals—Fiction; Sleepovers—Fiction. 40 p. PS - Gr. 3.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Bearsie Bear is just falling asleep. Suddenly, there's a knock at his door. "Who is it?" asks Bearsie Bear.

"It's me, Moosie Moose," says Moosie Moose.

"Moosie Moose?" asks Bearsie Bear.

"Yes, Moosie Moose," says Moosie Moose.

Bearsie Bear opens the door.

"It's cold outside," says Moosie Moose. "May I sleep over?"

And so begins a successive string of animal friends knocking at Bearsie Bear's door seeking an invitation out of the cold.

Author Bernard Waber, who also penned the popular *Ira Sleeps Over*, continues his success on the subject of sleepovers in this delightful new picture book. Using repetition and predictably silly names, Waber enchants children and adults alike with this cumulative story. Tension builds as readers wonder how this story could possibly end, when Porky Porcupine arrives, delivering some comic relief—along with a subtle message about friendship. The story concludes on a touching, humorous, and satisfying note. Waber's sensitive ink-and-watercolor illustrations are light and colorful, adding depth and humor to the text. Matching dust-jacket is included. Excellent choice for families and schools, for lap-reading fun and read-aloud circle time. KSG

***When I Was Little Like You*, by Jill Paton Walsh; illustrated by Stephen Lambert. New York: Viking, 1997. ISBN 0670876089, HBB, \$13.99.**

E. Grandmothers—Fiction. Unp. PS - K.

Quality—3 Acceptability—5

Jill Paton Walsh's book, *When I Was Little Like You*, relays the conversation of Rosie and her grandmother during their day at the beach. Through repetitive dialog Rosie points out things around her, while Gran responds points out how those things were different when she was Rosie's age. When Rosie points out a train Gran responds, 'When I was little like you,' said Gran, 'a steam engine pulled the cars. It made little homemade clouds as it puffed around the point.' The book comes to a satisfying conclusion as Gran reassures Rosie that world is definitely better now because she is in it!

The beautiful full color illustrations by Stephen Lambert are soft and rich looking, however Rosie looks like a young boy, not a girl, something children would surely point out. *When I Was Little Like You* would be useful as an early reader because of the repetitive pattern of the text and also as an exploration of generational differences. SK

***Very Like a Star*, by Dawn L. Watkins; illustrated by Dana Thompson. LCCN 90004995. Greenville, S.C.: 49 Bob Jones University Press, 1990. ISBN 0890845336, PAP, \$5.00.**

E. Bees--Fiction; Work--Fiction; Reliability--Fiction; Friendship--Fiction. Unp. PS - Gr. 2.  
Quality - 4 Acceptability - 5

Rigal, a very small buzzle bee, is upset that her little wings only whirl, they don't buzz very loudly. Some of the other buzzle bees have made fun of Rigal, causing her to feel even worse. Even so, Rigal continues to work hard at collecting pollen. Noting her sadness, Queen Ambrosia shows Rigal the star in the sky she is named after. The Queen stresses to Rigal how important the stars are because they keep their place and do their work, no matter what. When a hard winter comes early, the bees are caught without enough honey to make it through the cold season. In spring, Rigal is rewarded for her hard work, while those who made fun of her and didn't work as hard are banished from the hive.

*Very Like a Star* by Dawn L. Watkins is at first read a bit confusing. Character names like Marmalade, Keeper of the Pollen, Ambrosia, the Queen of All the Hive, and Fuzzinub combined with places like Bee-balm Hollow and Buzzle Hive perplex even adults. By the end of the book, however, the strength of the story has eliminated much of the confusion. Illustrations by Dana Thompson fit this cute tale, and add to the likability of Rigal.

While God is not mentioned by name in this book, it is clearly written from a Christian perspective. Hard work, persistence, and honesty are just a few of the lessons that can be gleaned from this story. Children will be entertained while they are learning sound virtues. EC

***Bunny Money*, by Rosemary Wells. LCCN 96024570. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 1997. ISBN 0803721471, HBB, \$14.99.**

E. Shopping--Fiction; Money--Fiction; Brothers and sisters--Fiction; Rabbits--Fiction; Grandmothers--Fiction. Unp. K - Gr. 3.  
Quality—5 Acceptability—5

This is the fourteenth picture book in the "Max & Ruby" series by Rosemary Wells, but it's just as fresh as her first. In *Bunny Money*, Max and Ruby Bunny go to the store to buy Grandma a birthday present: a pretty music box with dancing ballerina bunnies on top. During their outing, we watch Max and Ruby's choices as they spend their money, dollar by dollar. Suspense mounts as we wonder if they will have enough to buy the music box. In the end, Ruby chooses something almost as nice that they can afford. However, while Ruby looks for wrapping paper, Max spends their last dollar on a set of glow-in-the-dark vampire teeth, because after all, they were half-price.

Using humor and delightful ink-and-watercolor illustrations, this story introduces children to the

concepts of money, saving, and spending, as well as the deeper issue of making wise choices. Wells thoughtfully illustrated a small wallet on the bottom of the page showing how many "dollars" are left after each purchase, so children can visually see the money being spent. An added bonus is the colorful "bunny money" fly-leaf that parents can photocopy and cut into dollar bills ahead of time so children can pretend to shop with Max and Ruby as this story is read to them. The book comes with a colorful dust jacket. KSG

***Library Lil*, by Suzanne Williams; illustrated by Steven Kellogg. LCCN 95023490. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 1997. ISBN 0803716990, HBB, \$14.99.**

E. Librarians--Fiction; Books and reading--Fiction; Reading--Fiction; Tall tales. Unp. PS—Gr. 3.  
Quality—4 Acceptability—4

Library Lil is not your stereotypical librarian—more interested in maintaining quiet than in encouraging reading. Although of normal stature, she is definitely larger-than-life. Lil loved to read as a kid. When she ran out of children's books in the local library, she checked out a whole set of encyclopedias. While she walked down the street reading one volume, she balanced the rest of the set on the palm of one hand. Lil grew up to become a librarian in a nearby town where people were more interested in watching TV, "the Devil's invention," than in reading books. In this rollicking story, Lil takes advantage of the power outage from a storm to encourage her local townspeople to become readers. Shortly afterward, big Bust-em-up Bill and his motorcycle gang ride into town, and are annoyed to find no "danged TV" in the local tavern because of Lil's influence. When the gang block her bookmobile, she responds to their challenge by tossing their bikes into a pile. Soon even Bill and his gang discover the joys of reading. Bookworm Bill becomes Lil's new assistant and learns to be "a whale of a storyteller."

Librarian Suzanne Williams (*Mommy Doesn't Know My Name*) has written several satisfying stories dealing with the concerns of young children. Here she moves with gusto into the realm of the tall tale. Steven Kellogg's typically exuberant illustrations fit and embellish the story so well that it is sometimes difficult to remember that Williams wrote the text. A prolific author himself, as well as an illustrator, Kellogg has also illustrated several traditional tall tales with humor and delightful detail. These cartoon-like full-color illustrations were prepared using ink and pencil line and watercolor washes. Among the special humorous touches is a page featuring the gang reading three of Kellogg's own books. Some librarians may cringe to see a library book in tatters because the gang were fighting over it; others will appreciate the obvious service orientation portrayed by Lil. DWB

***The Officers' Ball*, by Wong Herbert Yee. LCCN 96013718. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997. ISBN 0395811821, HBB, \$14.95.**

E. Dancing--Fiction; Police--Fiction; Animals--Fiction; Stories in rhyme. Unp. PS - Gr. 1.  
Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Police Sergeant Hippo receives a mandatory invitation to the Officers' Ball. He pales, rushes to take dancing lessons and daydreams about the big party. In the

meantime, he carries on his police work. He directs traffic, catches a burglar, escorts an expectant mother to the hospital and fills out the paperwork.

When the night of the Ball arrives, he dresses up and nervously approaches the ballroom. He finally works up enough nerve to ask a partner to dance. Will he be a complete flop socially or will he shine? Author Wong Herbert Lee's gentle story and accompanying illustrations will entertain little children and fill therewith happiness. BGT

***Mother Goose Math*, selected by Harriet Ziefert; illustrated by Emily Bolam. LCCN 96061796. New York: Viking, 1997. ISBN 0670875694, HBB, \$14.99.**

E. Nursery rhymes; Children's poetry; Math--Poetry. Unp. Toddler - PS.  
Quality—4 Acceptability—5

"One, two, buckle my shoe...." From "Hickety, pickety, my black hen..." to "Five little monkeys...", *Mother Goose Math* is a collection of nursery rhymes that relate to numbers. The dozen rhymes, selected by Harriet Ziefert, also include such favorites as "Sing a song of sixpence" and "As I was going to St. Ives".

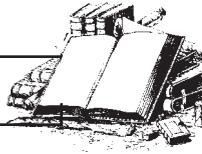
Illustrator Emily Bolam has made sure there is something to count on every page. With energetic colors and cartoonish characters, Bolam brings the old classic rhymes to life. Every page is bordered with bright lively patterns.

As a counting book, this book is about average. The bonus is, with its number emphasis, *Mother Goose Math* is an engaging way to introduce your preschooler to the rhymes that have stood the test of time. TP

***The Gingerbread Boy*, retold by Harriet Ziefert; illustrated by Emily Bolam. (Viking Easy-to-Read Level 2.) LCCN 95019535. New York: Viking, 1995. ISBN 0670860522, HBB, \$11.99.**

E. Easy reading materials; Fairy tales; Folklore. Unp. K - Gr. 3.  
Quality—3 Acceptability—5

*The Gingerbread Boy* retold by Harriet Ziefert and containing simple, colorful illustrations by Emily Bolam uses a familiar story in an easy to read format. When an old couple want a little boy, the wife bakes a gingerbread boy. The gingerbread boy immediately runs away. After being chased by various hungry individuals, he is finally caught by a tricky fox. "Munch" and "Crunch" are a pretty graphic ending. The author has kept the story line fun while reducing the amount of words and using a small vocabulary and brief sentences to aid new readers. PSM



*Cam Jansen and the Triceratops Pops Mystery*, by David A. Adler; illustrated by Susanna Natti. (A Cam Jansen Adventure) LCCN 95004576. New York: Viking, 1995. ISBN 0670860271, HBB, \$12.99.

F. Mystery fiction. 59 p. Gr. 3 - 5.

Quality—4      Acceptability—5

Ten-year-old Jennifer Jansen has a photographic memory. She has the nickname "Cam," short for "The Camera." Cam always says 'Click' when she wants to remember something." And with this explanation, we are on our way to solving another mystery with Cam Jansen and her side-kick Eric Shelton. *Cam Jansen and the Triceratops Pops Mystery* by David Adler presents a series of clues masking as happenstance: a man with two shopping bags, the twin lights to alert a store manager of shoplifting, the back door to Ernie's standing open, a watermelon leaving a wet spot on the floor.

A limited vocabulary is used in *Cam Jansen*. Deductive reasoning plays a huge role in Adler's style, an adding up of clues that turns possibility into probability. The cartoon quality of the black and white illustrations by Susanna Natti mix well with the inhabitants of Hamilton shopping mall where the children are just a little smarter than the adults. This is the 15th book in the Cam Jansen series. SAH

*How Come the Best Clues Are Always in the Garbage?* by Linda Bailey. (A Stevie Diamond Mystery; 1.) LCCN 95043878. Morton Grove, Ill.: Albert Whitman & Co., 1996. ISBN 0807534102, PAP, \$4.50.

F. Recycling (Waste)—Fiction; Mystery fiction. 175 p. Gr. 4 - 6.

Quality—4      Acceptability—3

Garbage Buster's \$1000 is stolen! The police have no leads, but that doesn't keep Stephanie off the case. Since her mother is head of the Garbage Busters, she could be laid off because of the robbery. And that would mean no allowance for Stephanie. Collecting clues, dressing like a detective, and changing her name to Stevie, Stephanie solves the mystery.

Linda Bailey's middle grade novel, *How Come the Best Clues Are Always in the Garbage?* will entertain readers and keep them guessing "who done it?." With a quick pace, Stephanie leaps from one danger to the next in pursuit of the thief. Bailey offers a strong female character who doesn't need to be saved by a boy. But Stephanie and a boy do happen to make a great team. Being an official detective, there are times Stephanie disobeys her mother. She's goes out in the

middle of the night. She secretly searches a van and apartment. When confronted by her mother, Stephanie gives no explanation to her whereabouts. Disobedience is forgotten without correction. LAG

*The Golden Glove*, by Fred Bowen; illustrated by Jim Thorpe. (An AllStar SportStory.) LCCN 96014694. Atlanta: Peachtree, 1996. ISBN 1561451339, PAP, \$4.95.

F. Baseball—Fiction; Conduct of life—Fiction; Lost and found possessions—Fiction; Fathers and sons—Fiction. 110 p. Gr. 2 - 4.

Quality—5      Acceptability—5

Written for younger readers, *The Golden Glove* by Fred Bowen is in the series, AllStar SportStories, and deals with Jamie Bennett, a twelve year old whose baseball skills seem to depend on his perfect glove. But when that glove disappears so does Jamie's confidence and baseball prowess. Of course, the question is whether the glove has any real power or is it in the boy himself. How Jamie deals with the loss of his glove and begins to rely on his own talents, is the real story of *The Golden Glove*.

This simple but well written story will appeal to second through fourth graders and particularly to boys, often reluctant readers. Included is a six page essay written on Gloves, the Real Story, an interesting page of data about the author and a short preview of the next book in the series. These books would be a good addition to the children's collection of any library. CC

*The Kid Coach*, by Fred Bowen; illustrated by Ann Barrow. (An AllStar SportStory.) LCCN 96045923. Atlanta: Peachtree, 1997. ISBN 1561451401, PAP, \$4.95.

F. Baseball—Fiction; Coaching (Athletics)—Fiction. 102 p. Gr. 2 - 4.

Quality—5      Acceptability - 5

His writing similar that of Matt Christopher, Fred Bowen's *The Kid Coach* blends an interesting plot with lots of baseball action and baseball history to come up with a winning combination. Part of the series entitled An AllStar SportStory, this book describes the adventures of the Tigers, an interesting group of early middle schoolers: baseball players and baseball fans both.

Faced with a Little League coach who either is late or a no-show for practices, the Tigers take matters into their own hands and come up with a coach from their own ranks, thus *The Kid Coach!* Written in a way that

appeals to the young male reader particularly, it will be a hit in any library. CC

*Playoff Dreams*, by Fred Bowen; illustrated by Ann Barrow. (An AllStar SportStory.) LCCN 97010447. Atlanta: Peachtree, 1997. ISBN 156145155X, PAP, \$4.95.

F. Baseball—Fiction; Chicago Cubs (Baseball team)—Fiction; Winning and losing—Fiction. 95 p. Gr. 3 - 5.

Quality—3      Acceptability—5

In typical "I dream of being a hero" style, *Playoff Dreams* portrays a young boy who loves playing baseball and is better at it than his teammates. With some good counsel from a special uncle, a visit to Wrigley field to see the Cubs play and a catch in the stands, and some wisdom from Ernie Banks, Brendan Fanning internalizes how important it is to just play his best and support his fellow players.

The book details the many games played during the season and into the playoffs, with scores, plays, and names. This book is really for baseball devotees. Incidentally, Brendan's mother and father do not generally go to watch him play. Several black and white sketches illustrate some of the action in the story. JB

*Captured!* concept created and written by Brian Brown and Andrew Melrose. (The Storykeepers; 8.) Grand Rapids: Zondervan & Focus on the Family, 1997. ISBN 0310206391, VID, \$14.99.

F. Rome—Ancient—Fiction; Persecution—Fiction. 1 videocassette, 30 min., color. Gr. 1 - 6.

Quality—5      Acceptability—5

*Captured!* number eight in the Story Keeper's Series, tells the story of Cyrus who is captured by Flavian the merchant. The year is 64 AD, the place Rome, as the Christians are driven to hide. The orphans have become part of the family of Ben the Baker and his wife Helena, who teach them the stories of Jesus. The orphans risk their lives to help Cyrus escape from a brutal merchant only to learn that Cyrus does not want to leave! His acrobatic skills have made him a special pet. However, circumstances lead him to humble himself and again seek refuge with the other orphans.

This video contains excellent Christian morals with Bible stories intermixed into the adventure. The characters are well-drawn colorful cartoons that keep viewers intent on the message. PSM

**Eagle Song**, by Joseph Bruchac; pictures by Dan Andreassen. LCCN 95052861. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 1997. ISBN 0803719191, HBB, \$14.99.

F. Mohawk Indians—Fiction; Indians of North America—Fiction; Moving, Household—Fiction; Prejudices—Fiction; Schools—Fiction. 80 p. Gr. 3 - 6.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Danny Bigtree was having a hard time at school in Brooklyn. He wished he was still on the Mohawk reservation but he'd been in fourth grade for over two months now. He had no friends and some of the kids teased him, calling him "chief."

Even after his father came to school and told the legend of the great Iroquois hero, Aionwahta and his peace song, it was no better. An unexpected accident disrupts life and Danny learns it takes more courage to make friends than enemies, and that peace is worth working for.

This is a story about being proud of who you are and what your ancestors believed. It's also about doing the right thing even when it is hard.

Full-page black and white drawings illustrate the story. This is a good resource for learning about the culture of the Mohawk Indians and learning about prejudice against people who are different from you. MK

**A Place to Belong**, by Emily Crofford. LCCN 93009289. Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Books, 1993. ISBN 0876148089, HBB, \$15.95.

F. Depressions—1929—Fiction; Arkansas—Fiction. 152 p. Gr. 4 - 8.

Quality—4 Acceptability—3

Talmadge McLinn's family has lost their farm at the height of the Great Depression and must move to Arkansas to find work on another man's plantation. Emily Crofford has created a very real person in Talmadge, a sixth-grader, who desires to be allowed to continue his education.

Talmadge's little sister contracts polio, a disease virtually unknown to today's young readers. As young Missy suffers through the early stages of the disease, the reader will not only empathize with the family, but will gain an education about infantile paralysis. Talmadge and his brother do not get along well and rebellious Dwight runs away from home one night, but is brought back home by Talmadge. His older sister is attending church in order to see an older widowed man. There are references to the fact that things may not be quite right in this relationship. At the end of the story she lets her family know she intends to marry him and that they would have a home with her if the need ever arose. The family is not a very loving family. However, this book can open a reader's eyes to a time in the history of the United States when existing was difficult and children were struggling to find a place to belong. PJP

**Autumn Journey**, by Priscilla Cummings. LCCN 96044305. New York: Cobblehill Books/Dutton, 1997. ISBN 0525652388, HBB, \$14.99.

F. Grandfathers—Fiction; Canada goose—Fiction; Geese—Fiction; Fathers and sons—Fiction; Unemployment—Fiction. 128 p. Gr. 3 - 8.

Quality—3 Acceptability—3

Will's family life is unstable. His father has lost his job and the family has had to move from their house in Baltimore to Grandfather's farm in Pennsylvania. His mother is frightened and speaks impatiently to those she loves. Will is confused and longs to fly free like the Canada Geese he sees overhead that autumn. Priscilla Cummings has interspersed within this story the tale of a young Canada Goose on his first autumn migration. Just before his death, Grandfather likens Will's father to that goose. They both have set off alone and separated themselves from the flock. Although seemingly lost at present, Grandfather is certain that they will both eventually return to their rightful places.

As ten-year old Will seeks to find his place at home and at school, Grandfather sets out to help him. While hunting geese with Will, Grandfather suffers a heart attack. Will shoots, but does not kill, a goose. Grandfather had explained to Will that he had planted a field just for the geese in repayment for the geese he had taken over the years. At the end of the story Will sets his now-healed goose back into the wild to free his own spirit.

This story is full of facts about Canada geese. The story gets its title, *Autumn Journey*, from a painting Will receives from a classmate of a flock of geese flying in formation. The author has developed her characters well as she has delved into their innermost thoughts during some rough times in life. The parallelisms are a little complex for the young reader. The characters in the story use minced oaths as well as the Lord's name in their conversations with each other. Pipe smoking is seen as something special in Will's Grandfather. PJP

**Spaceman**, by Jane Cutler. LCCN 96046224. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 1997. ISBN 0525456368, HBB, \$14.99.

F. Learning disabilities—Fiction; Special education—Fiction; Emotional problems—Fiction; Schools—Fiction. 138 p. Gr. 3 - 6.

Quality—3 Acceptability—3

Gary is way out there and just can't seem to find his way back to the fifth grade. When he is upset or confused, he blanks out and pretends not to hear what is going on around him. Now he is known as the Spaceman, but his actions are really only an attempt to escape from a world that doesn't seem to understand or appreciate him. Dumb, slow, stupid, lazy; these are the words teachers use to describe him, and now he just doesn't care.

That is, until Mrs. Block comes along. Mrs. Block is a special teacher who understands different learning styles. After a round of merciless teasing of Gary by the "normal" boys in his class, he becomes momentarily violent, and soon finds himself in Mrs. Block's care. This is a class for children with severe learning difficulties and behavior problems, so Gary is angry about having to join a class for "dummies," but

he soon adjusts and begins to learn again, only this time, it's at his pace.

In *Spaceman*, Jane Cutler has created more a piece of propaganda about the importance of utilizing individual learning styles in education, than she has an interesting children's story. Although the incidents she depicts will be familiar to all children, the story unfolds in a dry manner. Her characterization of Gary's parents is ultra modern: they are divorced and detached from Gary. Gary is not a likable or sympathetic character, and there is little of that kind of excitement to his story that makes children want to read a book. Cutler's work seems to indicate that a children's book on a serious subject like learning disabilities, doesn't need to be entertaining.

The book's one bright spot is the jacket illustration by Darryl Zudeck. The book's printing is extra large, which may be to accommodate a theory outlined in the book that some children need large print to learn to read. VGS

**The Roald Dahl Treasury**, by Roald Dahl. LCCN 97060691. New York: Viking, 1997. ISBN 0670877697, HBB, \$35.00.

F. Fantasy; Short stories. 444 p. Gr. 4 - 7.

Quality—4 Acceptability—4

Those who are familiar with *James and the Giant Peach* and *Matilda* may not realize the scope of this prolific author. From nonsense rhymes to retold folk and fairy tales, from magical adventures to revolting recipes, *The Roald Dahl Treasury* contains it all. The volume begins with a description of the person, Roald Dahl, and reminiscences of him written by one who may have known him best, his daughter Ophelia Dahl. From her we learn that what we call magic, written by her father, was really his way of life. He was a firm believer in extracting all the adventure and joy from life he could, not just in his writing but in his career as an aviator, and in his life with his own family. The excerpts from his stories are intertwined with historical glimpses of his life which make this the perfect volume for the Dahl-o-phile. From a Christian point of view, some may be wary of his use of magic in his tales and the earthiness of some of his descriptions, but few can resist his ironic sense of humor and the pure fun in such rhymes as:

We have tears in our eyes

As we wave our goodbyes

We so loved being with you, we three.

So do please now and then

Come and see us again,

The Giraffe and the Pelly and me.

All you do is to look

At a page in this book

Because that's where we always will be.

No book ever ends

When it's full of your friends

The Giraffe and the Pelly and me. JD

***Tales from Dust River Gulch*, by Tim Davis. LCCN 96038576. Greenville, S.C.: Bob Jones University Press, 1997. ISBN 0890848963, PAP, \$6.49.**

F. Sheriffs-Fiction; Robbers and outlaws—Fiction; Frontier and pioneer life—West (U.S.)—Fiction; West (U.S.)—Fiction. 93 p. Gr. 4 - 7.

Quality—3 Acceptability—5

Dust River Gulch is a one sheriff town where every character is an animal with a heavy western accent. Six short stories revolve around Sheriff J.D. Saddlesoap, a horse with a blossoming romance with Rosie, the horse from the diner. Chapter one has Sheriff J.D. Saddlesoap in a showdown with outlaw, Gruffe O'Buffalo.

The stories are almost completely narrative with an attempt to capture an old time western accent. This leads to sentences such as "There ain't nothin' more irritatin' than losin' somethin' that ya needs real bad, like yer shoes, or worse yet- yer reputation!" The story line is simple and would be more of an easy reader except the dialogue is difficult for an inexperienced reader to understand. The story line seems too young for the nine to twelve-year-old age that it is directed toward. The illustrations are black and white cartoon-like drawings. JMH

***Yonie Wondernose*, by Marguerite De Angeli. LCCN 97018919. Scottsdale, Penn.: Herald Press, 1997. ISBN 0836190831, PAP, \$10.99.**

F. Farm life—Pennsylvania—Fiction; Amish—Fiction; Pennsylvania Dutch—Fiction; Pennsylvania—Fiction. Unp. Gr. 2 - 5.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

*Yonie Wondernose* was originally published in 1944. This "new" edition only reinforces the fact that a true classic will always look and read as if it were new. Yonie and his little sister Nancy are left at home with Granny while Pop and the rest of the family spend the night in Germantown. Pop reminds Yonie not to be a "wondernose" while he is gone. Pop also reminds Yonie that if anything happens, Yonie should be sure to take care of the big farm animals first.

Yonie is so curious about everything around him that he is easily distracted and is always ready to put his nose where it should not be. But this time, Yonie is not going to be a wondernose because Pop has made a special promise to Yonie. Unfortunately for this curious young man, not everything goes quite right. While driving the cows home, Yonie stops to explore a squirrel hole and the cows scatter.

Yonie accidentally locks Granny in the chicken coop and dinner burns. Then a thunderstorm brings lightning that strikes the barn, and Yonie and Granny must get all the animals out! Although the barn is lost, Yonie acts bravely and puts his curiosity aside when he really needs to be on task. Pop keeps his very special promise to Yonie upon his return, but first Pop hugs Yonie so closely.

Marguerite de Angeli's color and black and white drawings enhance the telling of this tale of a curious young boy and his adventures. As the family is Amish, the clothing appears somewhat old-fashioned, but this offers a unique opportunity to investigate this different

culture. The story moves along with Yonie's curious explorations. The excitement of the fire is quite vivid. Yonie's clear thinking and responsible behavior are proof that he can fulfill the responsibilities of a young man on the farm.

This is a story of family values that holds true across the years. *Yonie Wondernose* is sure to continue to please and amuse readers old and young alike. It is clear that Marguerite de Angeli had a love of the Amish people as well as a great understanding of their family life. BAW

***My Sister Annie*, by Bill Dodds. LCCN 91077599. Honesdale, Pa.: Boyds Mills Press, 1993. ISBN 1563975548, PAP, \$7.95.**

F. Handicapped children—Fiction; Down syndrome—Fiction. 94 p. Gr. 4 - 8.

Quality—3 Acceptability—2

Charlie is an eleven-year-old boy seeking acceptance from his peers. This story by Bill Dodds centers around Charlie's desire to join a school club, his position as pitcher on a ball team, and his desire to find a girl to take to the school dance. Annie, however, is a hindrance to some of his endeavors. She is two years older than he and has Down's Syndrome. Although sometimes embarrassed by Annie, Charlie loves his sister and when he forgets himself he takes time to play with her. Bill Dodds is familiar with the problems learning disabled children have, having a daughter himself with learning disabilities. He has put together a story for young teens that introduces them to the confusing thoughts family members of these special children may have. Much can be learned about these special children through this story as seen through Charlie's eyes.

Annie is undisciplined by her parents and very unruly. This is the cause of some interesting situations. The club Charlie joins is made up of boys who smoke, steal, and are involved in vandalism. Charlie takes part in some of these activities as he seeks to join the group. Charlie's baseball coach takes the time to talk to him about his feelings toward his sister and Charlie comes to accept Annie as she is. Although his thoughts towards her sometimes confuse him, Charlie realizes that he loves his sister just as she is. PJP

***Sarah Anne Hartford, Massachusetts, 1651*, by Kathleen Duey. (American Diaries.) LCCN 95039249. New York: Aladdin Paperbacks, 1996. ISBN 0689803842, PAP, \$3.99.**

F. Puritans—Fiction; New England—Social life and customs—Colonial period, ca. 1600-1776—Fiction; Diaries—Fiction. 142 p. Gr. 3 - 7.

Quality—4 Acceptability—4

Sarah is thirteen years old and struggling to obey the strict rules of the Massachusetts Puritans. She has a strong desire to please her father and the strict God set before her by the church. However, Sarah and her friend break the Sabbath rules by sliding on the ice and laughing out loud. Sarah struggles with her need to confess when her friends are caught and her involvement is still undiscovered.

The author, Kathleen Duey, spends most of the book dealing with Sarah's thoughts and feelings after committing her "crime." Realizing that it will shame her father, Sarah confesses and is punished by being put in stocks with the two other disobedient teens as an example to the town. Her father experiences a change of heart, shedding his careful piety for a brave goodness. He comes back through the snow and cold to release the three young people from a harsh punishment far worse than their crime. This diary of a young teen in Massachusetts in 1651 deals with the decision each must make regarding following rules that will shape lives and hearts forever. PJP

***The DNagers*, by Steve and Terry Englehart. LCCN 96096783. New York: Avon Books, 1997. ISBN 0380784181, PAP, \$3.99.**

F. Science fiction; Time travel—Fiction. 116 p. Gr. 3 - 5.

Quality - 5 Acceptability - 4

Children of a museum curator, twins Jack and Marie study an old book of prayer that their great, great, great, something grandfather, the scribe, has lettered. They compare it with the family book and notice a poem in French. They begin to recite the poem together and find themselves transported back to medieval France. Back to their grandfather's scribe shop, where a mystery is about to unfold.

Someone has stolen the prayer book, in its final days of completion. And their grandfather is kidnapped. Using 20th Century knowledge about science, the twins help uncover a magician who is stealing from the townspeople.

*The DNagers* ends by revealing that the grandfather is a magician who uses his powers to call for his grandchildren in his time of need. The authors, Steve and Terry Englehart, use magic as a mechanism for transporting the twins through time. Setting the book back in medieval France provides good opportunity to share the cultural of that time period. This is done effectively, and the adventure holds the reader's attention. JMH

***Danger in the Desert*, by T. S. Fields. LCCN 96048667. Flagstaff, Ariz.: Rising Moon/Northland Publishing, 1997. ISBN 0873586662, HBB, \$12.95.**

F. Kidnapping—Fiction; Survival—Fiction; Brothers—Fiction; Deserts—Fiction. 126 p. Gr. 4 - 6.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Two brothers Scott and Robbie are fighting in the back seat of a car while their mom goes to pay for a tank of gas. The next thing they know, a strange man gets behind the wheel and steals their mom's car with them in it. They are soon on their way to the desert outside of Phoenix, Arizona on a hot summer afternoon, where they are left to die. Scott, the oldest, has had some scouting. He struggles to remember what he learned about wilderness survival. The boys grow closer together realizing that death is a possibility. They are rescued but not before dehydration and exposure take their toll.

Family is very important throughout the book. Scott and Robbie are all the family their mom has. Their dad died before their move to Phoenix. In spite of their fighting at the beginning of the book, Scott and Robbie put their differences aside and learn to work together to survive.

Older elementary students should enjoy *Danger in the Desert*. The book contains high adventure. Subtle lessons are also taught about desert survival. JM

***The Jaws of the Dragon*, by Alan Gibbons. LCCN 93047126. Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, 1994. ISBN 0822507374, HBB, \$14.95.**

F. Vietnam—Fiction; Family life—Fiction. 153 p. Gr. 4 - 8.

Quality—3 Acceptability—2

Alan Gibbons has created a story of a family living in Vietnam after the war. The story is told from the young son, Tra's viewpoint. Tra is subjected to much taunting in the village because of his father's Chinese background. He is confused about the role his father played in the National Liberation Front during the war. Everyone is disappointed with the post-war government and many are fleeing the country. Tra and his family escape in a boat to Hong Kong. The experiences along the way are not pleasant and their arrival in Hong Kong is not what they expected. The freedom they dreamed of was not to be instantly attained. Tra ends up fighting for his life with an enemy of his father. He realizes that his father fought for what he believed was right during the war, and he must not give up now in this fight for his own freedom.

The author, Alan Gibbons, is an Englishman who was not involved personally in the Vietnam War. He has filled his story with many anti-American feelings being expressed by the Vietnamese characters. Unless the reader has an understanding of the role of the Americans in the Vietnam War, this book could produce confusion and disrespect for those who served our country during this war. PJP

***Starring Rosie*, by Patricia Reilly Giff; illustrated by Julie Durrell. (Ballet Slippers; 3.) LCCN 96030903. New York: Viking, 1997. ISBN 0670869678, HBB, \$13.99.**

F. Ballet dancing—Fiction; Sleeping Beauty (Choreographic work)—Fiction. 72 p. Gr. 3 - 5.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Third in the Ballet Slippers series, *Starring Rosie* is another episode in the life of Rosie O'Meara, a fledgling ballet student who wants to be a ballerina more than she wants "to have a skillion dollars." Because of her enthusiasm for ballet and her desire to please Miss Deirdre her teacher, she gets herself into a terrible predicament.

When Rosie's dance class discusses an upcoming production of *The Sleeping Beauty*, she blurts out that she can provide candles and a castle for the stage, neither of which she knows how to obtain. Also, through a miscommunication with her teacher, Rosie becomes responsible for finding a boy to play the part of the prince.

She eventually is able to come through for Miss Deirdre on all counts with the help of her best friend Tommy Murphy and the neighborhood "bad kids" the Witts. While the conflicts are resolved Rosie is also able to accept herself in a greater way through Miss Deirdre's affirmation.

Many technical ballet terms are included in the text and in the glossary headed "From Rosie's Notebook." Julie Durrell's line drawings appear about every fourth page and perfectly characterize Rosie's dreamy personality and the humorous situations of the plot.

*Starring Rosie* would stand alone by its own merit, but fortunately for young readers it continues a series that most certainly will endure. ASN

***Not-So-Perfect Rosie*, by Patricia Reilly Giff; illustrated by Julie Durrell. (Ballet Slippers; 4.) LCCN 96036985. New York: Viking, 1997. ISBN 0670869686, HBB, \$13.99.**

F. Ballet—Fiction; Cousins—Fiction. 73 p.

***A Glass Slipper for Rosie*, by Patricia Reilly Giff; illustrated by Julie Durrell. (Ballet Slippers; 5.) LCCN 96047720. New York: Viking, 1997. ISBN 0670874698, HBB, \$13.99.**

F. Ballet—Fiction; Grandfathers—Fiction; Birthdays.—Fiction. 73 p. Gr. 3 - 5.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

We have a new heroine. Her name is Rosaleen O'Meara, but we can call her "Rosie." Early on in the series we understand "You don't have to be perfect every two minutes." In *Not-so-Perfect Rosie*, Miss Deirdre, beloved ballet teacher, is leaving for the summer, and cousin Brede is coming from Ireland. A whole new set of circumstances for adventure is presented. Grandpa, a gentle soul who lives with Rosie's family, is omnipresent. Best friend Murphy lives across the street. And the members of the ballet class drift in and out of the story line. Rosie thinks of the perfect way to spend the summer, to put on a ballet. But, her idea is stolen by Julie Evans, the too-perfect dancer from the class. A perfect solution doesn't come easily, but it does come.

Formula series are a staple in literary circles. The Ballet series liberally sprinkles dance terminology to satisfy the young child who dreams of being the next Anna Pavlova. The characters are believable and likable, the personality slowly developing throughout the series. The pictures drawn by Julie Durrell possess a cartoon-like quality, perfect for the fast-paced stories. Giff thoughtfully adds a section "From Rosies' Notebook," explaining ballet terms in layman's language.

*A Glass Slipper for Rosie*, fifth in the series, tells what happens when Grandpa plans to go to Betsy Beneath for a month, including that very special day, his birthday. Will Rosie figure out a way to be a part of the celebration?

To date, there are five titles in this most delightful series, Ballet Slippers. They need not be read in order. SAH

***While the Candles Burn : Eight Stories for Hanukkah*, by Barbara Diamond Goldin; illustrated by Elaine Greenstein. LCCN 95050310. New York: Viking, 1996. ISBN 0670858757, HBB, \$15.99.**

F. Hanukkah—Fiction; Jews—Fiction; Short stories. 60 p. Gr. 3 - 5.

Quality—5 Acceptability—3

*While the Candles Burn* provides eight stories for Hanukkah. Rather than stories about the celebration, Barbara Diamond Goldin has written and adapted works to illustrate the themes of the Jewish celebration. Faith, religious freedom, and individuality are featured. One rewritten story explains that the world spins like a dreidel turned by God's hand. How will man live despite the side the dreidel falls upon? How does a Jew keep the old ways with the new? Goldin illustrates the Jewish people maintaining their identity within other countries. Her stories span from the time of Moses to the present dissent between Arab and Israel.

Accompanying the strong text are Elaine Greenstein's monoprint gouache paintings. The flat style with sketchy white lines compliments the antiquity of many of the stories. The stylized figures and objects contribute to the modern works. The two aspects create a comfortable tone for the entire book.

With an introduction at the book's beginning and chapter introductions, the reader gains a solid history of Hanukkah. Extrabiblical material is noted as such, but one story, by addition, radically alters a specific account from the Bible. With discussion, *While the Candles Burn* can be a great tool, resource, and enjoyment for all races. LAG

***At the Mouth of the Luckiest River*, by Arnold A. Griese; illustrated by Glo Coalson. LCCN 95078286. Honesdale, Penn.: Boyds Mills Press, 1996. ISBN 1563975637, PAP, \$7.95.**

F. Athabaskan Indians—Fiction; Indians of North America—Fiction. 65 p. Gr. 2 - 5.

Quality—5 Acceptability—4

Does Tatlek's crippled foot mean he will never be a true man in his Athabaskan village? Maybe it means the yegas (spirits) have marked him to be their next medicine man. In either case, the villagers know Tatlek shouldn't use the Eskimo way of sled and dogs. The yegas might be angered by the sled team. Besides, aren't the Eskimos coming even now to fight their village? Author Arnold A. Griese answers these questions about Tatlek and his people in the short novel, *At the Mouth of the Luckiest River*. Middle grade readers will be caught up in Tatlek's pursuit to prove himself to the village. They will see the courage the boy has to face the medicine man and his lies. And they will definitely cheer when Tatlek brings harmony to two tribes.

Griese's writing encourages children, whether able or disabled, to seek their own pursuits. The text is illustrated by Glo Coalson's black and white paintings. They contribute a further sense of place and atmosphere for the reader. The accurate renderings spring from Coalson's ten month stay in an Eskimo

village above the Arctic Circle. The spiritism of the Athabaskan's is clearly portrayed. With discretion and discussion, the reader will still be able to enjoy this inspiring adventure of Tatele. LAG

***Nero Corleone : A Cat's Story*, by Elke Heidenreich; translated by Doris Orgel; illustrated by Quint Buchholz. LCCN 97012238. New York: Viking, 1997. ISBN 0670873950, HBB, \$15.99.**

F. Cats—Fiction. 89 p. Gr. 2 - 6.

Quality—4 Acceptability—4

Cat lovers everywhere will fall in love with the fiercely independent Nero Corleone, a black cat who refuses to be dominated by his people, but loves to be loved by them all the same. Elke Heidenreich first published Nero's story in German, a natural since Nero is an Italian cat with close ties to Germany. His story of life on a farm in the Italian countryside and the unexpected way he becomes adopted by a young couple from a German city and adapted to city life will keep young readers entranced. Colorful classical pictures by illustrator Quint Buchholz, also of Germany, add an Old World charm to this warm tale. Some references are made to the elimination habits of cats. While some of the vocabulary may be difficult for the very young reader, this is a great choice for story time reading with a parent or a class. JD

***The Veil of Snows*, by Mark Helprin; illustrated by Christ Van Allsburg. LCCN 96040040. New York: Viking/Ariel, 1997. ISBN 0670874914, HBB, \$24.00.**

F. Fantasy. 121 p. Gr. 4 - 8.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Mark Helprin in partnership with illustrator Chris Van Allsburg spins a tale of adventure and possible allegory in *The Veil of Snows*, a sequel to *A City in Winter* and the completion of their trilogy which began with *Swan Lake*. While it is termed a sequel to *A City in Winter*, it is not necessary for the reader to have read that novel in order to enjoy this one. The tale is told from the point of view of an old soldier, "a singer of tales," who has remained loyal to his queen despite her death and the fall of her kingdom. He looks back over time and tells an enchanting tale of the evil usurper who attacks the kingdom of the good queen. Despite the valiant efforts of the queen's loyal guard, the usurper seems to have accomplished his goal, but wait...through the *Veil of Snows*, is that the young prince and his father coming with the Golden Horde to rescue the kingdom? A classic adventure full of love and war, reminiscent of C.S. Lewis' *Narnia*, this story may challenge some young writers to write their own sequel. JD

***The Parable Series : An Audio-Book for All Seasons*, by Liz Curtis Higgs. Nashville: Tommy Nelson, 1997. ISBN 0849958121, CAS, \$9.99.**

F. Parables—Fiction. 1 audiocassette, 60 min. Gr. 3 - 8.

Quality—2 Acceptability—2

This audio tape features four original seasonal stories told by Liz Curtis Higgs. The autumn story is about a pumpkin and is designed to show children how God can take a seed, make it grow, and then fill it with light. Forgiveness is the theme of the spring parable and centers around an Easter lily. In the summer story Logan desires to grow the biggest thing in the garden and plants sunflower seeds. He learns that God can take the seeds we plant and scatter them farther than ever imagined. There is one pine tree on a Christmas tree farm, in the winter parable, that is not for sale - until a poor family comes along and the farmer's wife decides to lovingly give the tree away.

The stories are read very slowly with long pauses between sentences. Children are likely to lose interest in the stories very quickly. The musical background does not always fit the story and is sometimes rather distracting. There are four original songs by Ken Medema, each one sung after a story is completed. The lyrics have been written to explain the meaning of the stories, but the contemporary sound, movement, and style of the music is not compatible with the message. The vocal technique is poor, with sliding pitches and a breathy quality, which lessens their appeal to the young listener. PJP

***The Purloined Corn Popper*, by E.W. Hildick. (A Felicity Snell Mystery.) LCCN 96051195. New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997. ISBN 0761450106, HBB, \$14.95.**

F. Mystery fiction. 158 p. Gr. 3 - 6.

Quality—4 Acceptability—4

A hippopotamus shaped pop-corn popper containing a large stash of money disappears from the Kowalski's kitchen counter while Tim and his friend Freddie Fisher are upstairs playing video games. Because he left the kitchen door unlocked, Tim's mother tells him he will have to pay for it out of his allowance unless, of course, he can find the guilty party. The finger of suspicion is immediately pointed at Freddie, whose father is a convicted thief, by "Jump-the-Gun"(J.G.) Farrell, who according to Tim is the worst detective in the world. Meanwhile, Freddie thinks J.G. is the crook!

Into this mystery walks Felicity Snell, the new children's librarian at the library. She brings a real sense of mystery to the proceedings since her resume includes a stint with a detective agency! From then on the action takes off and readers are treated to step-by-step clue gathering.

Amateur detectives can follow the clues in the line drawings included in the book. They will also get a dose of logical thinking with explanations from Ms Snell. The story has interesting characters and moves along quickly with peppy dialogue. Lots of fun and a cautionary tale...do not hide money in a hippopotamus shaped popcorn popper, especially if it can be seen from the kitchen window. LGTR

***The Serial Sneak Thief*, by E.W. Hildick. (A Felicity Snell Mystery.) LCCN 97008425. New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997. ISBN 0761450114, HBB, \$14.95.**

F. Contests—Fiction; Libraries—Fiction; Mystery fiction. 157 p. Gr. 3 - 7.

Quality—3 Acceptability—5

Felicity Snell, Junior Librarian at the Ebenezer Twitchpurs Memorial Library in West Milbury, has created a wonderful opportunity for young people to use the library's facilities to solve a mystery. She has faked a murder and used a dummy as the body, and clues are hidden throughout the various departments. She has enlisted the help of the Watchdogs, members of a Junior Mystery Club. Library attendance is up and her supervisor is pleased with the interest shown by children. Though her supervisor has misgivings about the children creating havoc, hiding the clues so no one else can find them, and disruption of regular library services, Felicity has worked out most of these possible glitches.

However, even Felicity has not foreseen every probable problem, because the library has been robbed of various items, and no one knows how the items are being stolen from the building without someone noticing. Since Felicity is an ex-private investigator, she enlists the help of the Watchdogs so that they, too, may look for clues to the real crimes.

Author, E. W. Hildick, has written other Felicity Dell mysteries, and his heroine is lighthearted, likable, and kind to the children. Their enthusiasm and adoration of Ms. Snell is very understandable. The story is peopled with many, many characters, and it is sometimes confusing keeping track of who is who. Even though there is a villain, he is not violent and the story would be a good read-aloud for a classroom or home. BGT

***The Flower of Sheba*, by Doris Orgel and Ellen Schecter; illustrated by Laura Kelly. (Bank Street Ready-to-Read.) LCCN 96033229. Milwaukee: Gareth Stevens Publishing, 1997. ISBN 0836816935, HBB, \$17.27.**

F. Solomon, King of Israel—Legends; Jews—Folklore; Bible—Folklore. 32 p.

***The Monster from the Sea*, by William H. Hooks; illustrated by Angela Trotta Thomas. (Bank Street Ready-to-Read.) LCCN 96033228. Milwaukee: Gareth Stevens Publishing, 1997. ISBN 0836816943, HBB, \$17.27.**

F. Princesses—Fiction. 32 p.

***Sim Chung and the River Dragon : A Folktale from Korea*, retold by Ellen Schecter; illustrated by June Otani. (Bank Street Ready-to-Read.) LCCN 96030692. Milwaukee: Gareth Stevens Publishing, 1997. ISBN 0836816951, HBB, \$17.27.**

F. Folklore—Korea. 48 p.

***The Warrior Maiden : A Hope Legend*, by Ellen Schecter; illustrated by Laura Kelly (Bank Street Ready-to-Read.) LCCN 96033280. Milwaukee: Gareth Stevens Publishing, 1997. ISBN 083681696X, HBB, \$17.27.**

F. Hopi Indians—Folklore; Folklore—Arizona; Indians of North America—Arizona—Folklore. 48 p. Gr. 1 - 3.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5 (4 for Sim Chung)

The Bank Street Ready-to-Read series is a graduated reading program. Selections reviewed here are from levels two and three. Level two books are intended for children beginning to read on their own. Colorful illustrations cover the entire page, leaving space for text. In level three, chapters divide the story line. The vocabulary is more challenging, and the text takes a dominant role.

In *The Flower of Sheba* The Queen of Sheba prepares a riddle to test King Solomon's great wisdom. She is amazed when he enlists the help of a small bee. She discovers the secret of wisdom is to learn, no matter how humble the instructor.

In *The Monster from the Sea* a black monster frightens the people of an isolated island. The princess investigates, and discovers the monster is a lonely scuba diver needing help to repair his sailboat. The scuba diver wins the respect of the king, and the princess as his bride.

Similar to *Beauty and the Beast*, *Sim Chung and the River Dragon*, a Korean folk-tale sends a beautiful, devoted daughter to appease the wrath of a fierce sea dragon. Patience and kindness saves her country and restores her father's sight. Her virtue brings her respect and love.

In *The Warrior Maiden* a Hopi legend recounts the bravery of a young girl whose cunning plan and swift feet save her peaceful village from Apache raiders. MT

***The Violin Man*, by Maureen Brett Hooper; illustrations by Gary Undercuffler. LCCN 91070417. Honesdale, Pa.: Caroline House/Boyd's Mills Press, 1991. ISBN 1878093797, HBB, \$14.95.**

F. Violins—Fiction; Italy—Fiction. 70 p. Gr. 3 - 5.

Quality—3 Acceptability—5

Life seems ordinary to ten-year-old Antonio, who lives in a quiet Italian village back in the 1800's. He keeps his eyes open for the traveling men who pass through his village periodically, wishing he could live such an exciting life. One day a traveling man arrives and changes Antonio's life, and the village forever. The mysterious man comes seeking treasure he believes is hidden in Antonio's village.

Inspired by the real life Luigi Tarisio, who sought out lost Stradivarius violins, the author provides drama, subtle humor and mystery in her debut novel for middle readers, *The Violin Man*. The author points out how music can make life rich, a treasure in itself.

The handful of black and white illustrations by Gary Undercuffler lend appeal to this unpretentious story of a boy who discovers searching for treasure is almost more exciting than finding it. PW

***The Case of the Dognapped Cat*, by Milly Howard; cover and illustrations by Bruce Day. (Crimebusters Inc.; 1.) LCCN 97028148. Greenville, S.C.: Bob Jones University Press, 1998. ISBN 0890849366, PAP, \$6.49.**

F. Cats—Fiction; Mystery fiction. 147 p. Gr. 2 - 4.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

*The Case of the Dognapped Cat* by Milly Howard is a fun, fast-paced mystery written for young readers. While cleaning the loft of Mark's family's garage, Mark and his friends, Corey and Maria Delores come across some remnants from the detective agency, Crime Busters, Mark's dad had when he was a kid and decide to form their own agency. Their first case involves tracking down a missing cat that it turns out, had been accidentally nabbed by dognappers stealing purebred dogs and selling them out of town.

Illustrator Bruce Day contributes a cartoon illustration every two to three chapters, doing a particularly fine job with the cat, Samson, and the dogs. The drawings should appeal to young readers. Milly Howards develops her characters well, adding details that give added insight into their personalities. This is an adventure with a clever cat, bungling burglars and daring but decent detectives. SK

***Treehouse Tales*, by Anne Isaacs; illustrations by Lloyd Bloom. LCCN 96024549. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 1997. ISBN 0525456112, HBB, \$14.99.**

F. Tree houses—Fiction; Brothers and sisters—Fiction; Farm life—Pennsylvania—Fiction; Pennsylvania—Fiction. 85 p. Gr. 3 - 6.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Big Brother Tom, Middle Sister Emily, and Little Brother Natty belong together, yet can be very much apart. Each of these *Treehouse Tales* highlights one of the trio. Tom faces the Civil War as General Ulysses S. Grant while coping with his sister being a 'girl' and his little brother's fear of the dragon in the tree house. Emily wants, oh so much, to be grown up enough to ride a horse, but nobody trusts her, and her dreaming in the tree house keep getting in the way. Little Natty decides that the best way to win some respect is to emulate George Washington and chop down a tree. But his tree smashes the new tree house roof.

Mother and award winning Author Anne Isaacs has first-hand experience with brothers and sisters as well as with tree houses. Families will identify with her sympathetic, humorous style and recognize her happily characterized people. *Treehouse Tales* presents real sibling joys, problems, and solutions wrapped up in an historical package true to the American Frontier era while very similar to ours. Recording the interactions of the family and their friends, each tale aims directly at its birth place child protagonist. Each ends with a satisfying, true to life solution. Everyday words enhance the mostly basic sentence structure. The swinging rhythm of the stories encourage both individual reading and reading aloud to an audience. Recipient of the Globe-Book Honor Award, illustrator Lloyd Bloom loves trees. His black

and white drawings are alive with the personalities of people and foliage. DJE

***Robi Dobi : The Marvelous Adventures of an Indian Elephant*, by Madhur Jaffrey; illustrated by Amanda Hall. LCCN 96028977. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 1997. ISBN 0803721935, HBB, \$14.99.**

F. Elephants—Fiction; Animals—Fiction; India—Fiction. 76 p. Gr. 2 - 5.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

In introducing these tales Madhur Jaffrey, actress and author of several cookbooks, recalls her father telling stories to the family which introduced contemporary elements while combining them with traditional stories from India. Julius Lester did much the same with his recent volumes of Uncle Remus stories.

Traveling home, Robi Dobi, a likable elephant, hears calls for help. Rescuing Kabbi Wahabbi, a mouse turned orange by Slimy Kimey, from drowning in a river, the two set off to find a magical person who can make Kabbi Wahabbi brown again. Along the way they meet Maya the butterfly, who is invited to come into Robi Dobi's ear and tell her stories, and the beautiful parrot princess, Tara who must be rescued from the Wicked Purple Panthers and their leader who wants to marry her.

These delightful tales give the reader a look into traditional Indian folktales and storytelling yet are very modern. Each section flows into the next as another character is introduced and invited into the safety of Robi Dobi's ear to tell his or her own story. While at times predictable, they are also refreshing, particularly when accompanied by Amanda Hall's black and white and color illustrations which give a feeling of the Indian countryside. LGR

***Calamity at the Circus*, by Jerry Jerman. (The Journeys of Jessie Land; 5.) LCCN 95052429. Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1996. ISBN 1564765512, PAP, \$5.99.**

F. Adventure and adventurers—Fiction; Circus—Fiction. 132 p. Gr. 4 - 7.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Jessie's nine year old cousin, Walter, comes to visit, and she is expected to keep him out of trouble. The year is 1935, and the circus has come to Santa Monica, California. Walter seems bent on causing trouble wherever he goes, and Jessie and Leo have all they can do to keep up with him and try to prevent one disaster after another. Before Walter is done, there is a tiger on the loose and the town is terrified. Walter finally gets enough of a scare to slow him down, at least for a while. Jessie decides maybe she should just try being nice to him.

*Calamity at the Circus* has plenty of action. Children reading the book may find it amazing that in 1935 a child might be able to wander through the lot where circus workers are putting up the big top and preparing for the show. But in spite of incredible events, the action is believable. Jerry Jerman's writing is tight and fast paced. He puts just enough twang into the

language to show the Oklahoma background of the characters. He also creates believable circus folks, giving us a glimpse into their lives and the problems they face. CSJ

***The Invisible Day*, by Marthe Jocelyn; illustrated by Abby Carter. LCCN 97008519. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 1997. ISBN 0525459081, HBB, \$14.99.**

F. Science—Experiments—Fiction; New York (N.Y.)—Fiction.  
135 p. Gr. 3 - 5.

Quality—3 Acceptability—4

Wouldn't it be fun to be invisible? What child hasn't thought about that at one time or another. Wouldn't it be nice to see and hear everything that was going on around you without being seen? Think of the places you could go and the things you could do!

While she didn't wish for this, fifth grader Billie Stone becomes invisible after applying the make-up from a bag she's found while on an outing with her mother and younger sister in New York's Central Park. Then the fun and adventures begin.

Billie's mom is a single parent, the school librarian at the school Billie and her sister, Jane, attend and is very protective of her children. At eleven Billie has begun to want a little more space and the lost backpack offers it. Intrigued by the backpack, Billie first experiments with the make-up inside. Results are becoming

invisible. This presents problems because she is expected to be at school. She can see but not be seen; hear and be heard. To regain her visibility Billie enlists the help of Hubert, a friend, whom she meets in the boy's bathroom to plan strategy. Somehow they manage to retrieve the backpack and eventually finds the owner who helps her become visible again, showing Billie her other inventions along the way: lipstick that tastes like strawberry pie; another lipstick that allows the wearer to speak in rhymes. By the time Billie has become partially visible they are on their way home and discover that the police have been called in. Mrs. Stone learns to let go a bit and Billie learns to appreciate her mother's caring.

A contemporary setting and problem ...independence. Fifth graders everywhere struggle with that in-between age. The story moves along quickly, is implausible except where the relationships are concerned and is fun to read. Younger readers will have even more fun. Outside of the word "pee" and wondering about the strange fixtures in the boy's room this is a pretty lighthearted look at growing up. We're never told why Billie's father is no longer in the home, but it really isn't his story and doesn't figure into this one. LGR

***Mandie and Jonathan's Predicament*, by Lois Gladys Leppard. (A Mandie Book ; 28.) Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1997. ISBN 1556615558, PAP, \$4.99.**

F. Mystery fiction. 176 p. Gr. 3 - 7.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

In Book 28 of the popular "Mandie" series, Mandie and her friend Celia, visit turn-of-the-century New York City, and stay in a mansion as guests of Mandie's friend, Jonathan, and his father.

While exploring the mansion the friends encounter several mysterious events. First, a dog appears in the garden and a girl from the tenements tries to claim him as her own. Next, Mandie overhears the butler carrying out a transaction with a strange man and warning the man to keep it a secret. Finally, Mandie and Jonathan are involved in a chase across the city as they try to discover the truth behind these events.

Lois Leppard writes fascinating mysteries for eight to twelve-year-old girls. The heroine of the series, Mandie, is a strong and adventurous girl, whose faith in God is demonstrated in her actions.

The author does an excellent job of describing the historical settings of her stories without overwhelming the reader with too many details. She includes information on people and events from Mandie's past in each story, enabling new readers to understand what has taken place in earlier books. DEB

***Peach Pit Popularity*, by Nancy Simpson Levene. (Alex; 8.) LCCN 89033900. Elgin, Ill.: Chariot Books, 1989. ISBN 1555135293, PAP, \$4.99.**

Orca Ad, new copy

F. Christian life—Fiction; Conduct of life—Fiction;  
Popularity—Fiction. Gr. 2 - 5.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

A family vacation at a beautiful lake resort should be fun for Alex. But the other girls Alex's age focus on stylish hair and clothing, and Alex just doesn't fit in. They exclude her and laugh at her. Alex and her younger brother, Rudy, manage to do enough dumb things to give them plenty to laugh at, too. When Alex puts rotten fish heads in two of the girls' beds, she knows it is wrong. Some wise parents who see what has been going on put all the girls to work cleaning up the mess, and they become friends.

*Peach Pit Popularity* is a story real kids will understand, because the problem behaviors are typical of children. Alex learns to deal with people who don't like her. The other girls, who have been feeling guilty about their behavior, have an opportunity to be kind to Alex. Nancy Simpson Levene weaves spiritual truths into the story convincingly. The ink drawings by Graph Com Corporation add interest to the book. CSJ

***Big Mouth*, by Wendy Lord. (A Tabitha Sarah Bigbee Book.) LCCN 94001799. Elgin, Ill.: Chariot Books, 1994. ISBN 0781400848, PAP, \$4.99.**

F. Gossip—Fiction; Schools—Fiction; Christian life—Fiction.  
106 p. Gr. 1 - 4.

Quality—3 Acceptability—5

It was a simple slip of the tongue, and now Tabitha Bigbee is in big trouble again! This time she's learning how fast and how far gossip can travel, because Queen Kirsten, the classroom bully, is making up stories about Tabitha and it's ruining her life.

If only she had told the whole truth, things might not be so out of hand, but now everyone thinks she's a liar, a drug pusher, and an addict. Tabitha is losing her ability to concentrate and her two best friends. With the help of an understanding grandmother, loving parents, and a teacher who cares, Tabitha finally figures out that the truth really can set you free.

This fast paced novel for young girls is a breeze to read, but has a wonderful message that will hit home with everyone who has ever felt the humiliation and pain that is caused by unchecked gossip.

While the subject matter is serious, Wendy Lord deals with it in an entertaining and heartwarming fashion. Her spiritual lessons are intermixed with humor, and sprinkled with a dose of hard-hitting reality, which makes *Big Mouth* great devotional material. However, the less than subtle push for missions seems out of place in an otherwise well written story.

While not a classic, *Big Mouth* is sure to be a favorite with the seven- to nine-year-old crowd, who will identify with Tabitha, and who will love the large print format and easy to carry size of this pass along paperback. VGS

***Stay! Keeper's Story*, by Lois Lowry; illustrated by True Kelley. LCCN 97001569. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997. ISBN 0395870488, HBB, \$15.00.**

F. Dogs—Fiction. 128 p. Gr. 3 - 5.

Quality—3 Acceptability—5

Newbery Medal winner Lois Lowry has written a lovable story about a lonesome dog looking for a home. Keeper begins the story as an abandoned puppy looking for love and shelter. His hunt takes him from the simple abode of a homeless man to stardom as an actor in commercials and finally to the loving arms of a little girl.

*Stay! Keeper's Story* is a reminder to its readers that love can come in many forms; even from a homeless man who could only offer scraps and a tin roof for shelter. True Kelley's black and white illustrations reflect this warm and humorous portrayal of the world as viewed through a dog's eyes. Early on Keeper discovers a talent for creating poetry. His poems represent his discoveries and views of the world around him. Readers will appreciate Keeper's first attempts at rhyming words and will want to keep reading to find out if the dog finds a permanent home of his own. *Stay! Keeper's Story* will be a welcome addition to any school or public library with fans of animal stories. SR

***Rome Antics*, by David Macaulay. LCCN 97020941. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997. ISBN 0395822793, HBB, \$18.00.**

F. Rome—Fiction; Homing pigeons—Fiction. 80 p.

Gr. 1 - Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

From its wry play on words in the title to the red line following a carrier pigeon through the countryside and city, *Rome Antics* is a delight for children and adults. The reader follows the winged messenger as it decides to tour the famous city of Rome on its delivery route to the heart of Rome.

One sentence a page is all it takes to carry the story line and focus attention on the wonderful pen and ink drawings of David Macaulay. Macaulay captures the architectural designs on the ancient buildings and at the same time ties them in with present day happenings in Rome. A statue of Caesar holding his stone scroll mixes easily with a young boy throwing a paper airplane reflecting the eye for humor and design that Macaulay so ably mixes in his work. Each building is labeled unobtrusively in a corner, so that as the reader reaches the end of the story, and reads the pigeon's important message, he can then turn to the illustrated map and glossary at the back of the book and read a short paragraph detailing the history of each of the twenty-two buildings and stops the pigeon made. A variety of points of view in the drawings keep the reader guessing as to whether he is looking up from the street or down from the air or perhaps...? JD

***The Five Sisters*, by Margaret Mahy; illustrated by Patricia MacCarthy. New York: Viking, 1996. ISBN 0670870420, HBB, \$14.99.**

F. Fantasy. 80 p. Gr. 2 - Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Don't let the slim size of the text and the simple picture book illustrations of Patricia MacCarthy fool you into thinking this is a young child's story. *The Five Sisters* quickly draws the reader into its fantasy world of dream and adventure and invites the adult to ponder

the stages of life and how we respond to them. Margaret Mahy has done an imaginative job of bringing to life a blank sheet of paper. She is sure to inspire many a young artist and adult grandma to revive the art of paper doll cutting and decoration. A good read aloud story in sixteen short chapters for classroom or family sharing, one that begs to be re-read. JD

***The Cherry Pit Princess*, by Lynn Manuel; paintings by Debbie Edlin. Regina, Sask.: Coteau Books, 1997. ISBN 1550501186, PAP, \$6.95.**

F. Friendship—Fiction. 101 p. Gr. 3 - 4.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Dagny Comfort and Megan Canary visit Aunt Allie, a childhood friend of Dagny's mother, at Waxwing Orchards in Cherryland. Aunt Allie faces selling the orchards if she can't pay the taxes and hopes the girls can help her retain possession of the fruit farm. As Dagny dreams up ideas for raising money, the girls spring into action. But they earn a negligible amount of money.

However, a turnabout in Aunt Allie's financial condition arises, when she hears the girls wish for their own tree for a day and grants their wish. This prompts the girls to suggest Aunt Allie rent trees to people for a day, so she places an ad in the newspaper receiving an overwhelming response. When the cherries are ripe, families arrive at the orchards to pick the cherries from the trees they rented, and enough money is raised to save Waxwing Orchards.

*The Cherry Pit Princess* by Lynn Manuel is a story about the blossoming friendship of two girls with conflicting desires. Megan wants Dagny as her best friend, and Dagny is torn between enjoying Megan's company and missing her best friend who relocated. Megan never wavers in her desire for Dagny as a best friend even though Dagny does not express a reciprocal desire. However, by the end of the story Dagny realizes she can have more than one best friend.

Debbie Edlin's pencil illustrations within the text and a detailed painting of Dagny and Megan on the front cover and, Poor Thing, Aunt Allie's cat on the back cover add to the overall appeal of the book. DBW

***Mission Impossible?* by Janet Holm McHenry; illustrated by Donna Kae Nelson. (The Golden Rule Duo; 5.) Colorado Springs: Chariot Books, 1996. ISBN 0781402557, PAP, \$3.99.**

F. Friendship—Fiction. 48 p.

***Caught in the Act!* by Janet Holm McHenry; illustrated by Donna Kae Nelson. (The Golden Rule Duo; 6.) Colorado Springs: Chariot Books, 1996. ISBN 0781402565, PAP, \$3.99.**

F. Vandalism—Fiction. 48 p. Gr. 2 - 5.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

In *Mission Impossible?* Emily is dumbfounded when Annie Rose becomes defiant and rebellious and seems to reject Emily and her values. Annie Rose dyes her hair blond, smokes in the girl's bathroom, and plans to give the computer a virus. Still, Emily prevails when

she remembers that a "Friend loves at all times." Annie Rose's parents are divorcing and Annie Rose needs a real friend. Disobedience does bring consequences and loyalty and perseverance rewards.

Graffiti! "A.J. Loves P.B." is written on the elementary bathroom walls. Who did it? In *Caught in the Act!* A.J. attempts to find the answer only to find himself unjustly accused. In looking for the answer God reminds A.J. that God took the blame for A.J.'s sin and A.J. can trust God to help him out of any situation.

The Golden Rule Duo series by Janet Holm McHenry is about twins who are learning to "Do to others as you would have them do to you." The series consists of short books, that are easy to read, with high-interest stories that contain morals and consequences for disobedience. Each book is separate. Donna Kae Nelson's black-line drawings creatively capture expressions and ideas. PSM

***Mystery at the Fairgrounds*, by Janet Holm McHenry. (Annie Shepard Mysteries; 1.) Colorado Springs: ChariotVictor Publishing, 1997. ISBN 1564765660, PAP, \$4.99.**

F. Friendship—Fiction; Acceptance—Fiction; Moving household—Fiction. 134 p.

***Secret of the Locked Trunk*, by Janet Holm McHenry. (Annie Shepard Mysteries; 2.) Colorado Springs: ChariotVictor Publishing, 1997. ISBN 1564765679, PAP, \$4.99.**

F. Faith—Fiction; Mystery fiction. 143 p. Gr. 3 - 6.

Quality—3/4 Acceptability—5

Janet Holm McHenry's *Mystery at the Fairgrounds* centers on Annie Shepherd, an eighth grader, and her investigations. Mysterious camp fires occur at the county fairground. Strange cat sounds are heard late at night. Annie, a new arrival to tiny Mountain Center, joins with two new friends to form After School Sleuths. Together, they investigate suspicious classmates, a strange New Age book store, and a grouchy cat seller. Along the way, Annie also begins learning about becoming a Christian and how to trust her Savior. Although the mystery is solved, the reader is left with a feeling of loose ends that need to be resolved.

What was really in the mysterious locked trunk? Why are so many people trying to get their hands on it? Just when the After School Sleuths get a clue, the trunk is stolen! Janet Holm McHenry uses her book, *Secret of the Locked Trunk*, not only to explore an interesting mystery, but also to explore the inner feelings of a typical adolescent, who feels resentful, moody, and misunderstood by her parents. Annie continues her journey as a Christian as she learns more about herself and her Savior. This book contains a better blending of Christian values and ideas than the first book.

The Annie Shepard Mysteries series by Janet Holm McHenry contains believable, typical eighth graders and their unique emotional view of the things around them. Each book in the series leads into the next mystery, but can be read individually, as enough background material is given. The author seems

somewhat inconsistent in developing her main character. The main character's relationship with her family seems to have made a sharp turn from the first book to the second. In the first book Annie is very accepting of her mom and dad, but in the second she is resentful and often at odds with them. PSM

***The Amber Cat*, by Hilary McKay. LCCN 96052923. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997. ISBN 0689813600, HBB, \$15.00.**

F. Friendship—Fiction; Seashore—Fiction; Ghosts—Fiction; England—Fiction. 134 p. Gr. 3 - 6.

Quality—2 Acceptability—3

Robin, Dan, and Sun Dance have caught the chicken pox and must stay home from school. The three boys decide to stay at Robin's house so as to make their confinement more enjoyable. Robin's mother, Kathy Brogan, tells them a story which occurred when she was a girl. Kathy and two friends, Nick and Charley, played on the beach every day one summer. One day they met a girl named Harriet who seemed to appear from nowhere. As the summer progressed, the four children became good friends. Eventually Kathy, Nick, and Charley discovered that Harriet was really a ghost who had died of measles in a boarding school eighty years ago. Even though Kathy is now an adult, she believes Harriet's presence is still being felt and the cause for the mysterious disappearances of objects belonging to the three boys.

Hilary McKay has written a ghost story in which the ghost is not fearful but a likable eleven-year-old. Through Robin and his mother's discussion of Harriet, Robin comes to terms with his father's accidental death. Death is viewed as a part of life with dying not being much different from living. Kathy Brogan also believes that some people have the ability to travel between time zones as Harriet had.

*The Amber Cat* is a warm story about friendship. The language has a British flavor which will intrigue readers. Children will be curious about who Harriet really is as her true identity is not discovered until the end of the book. SR

***Lillian's Fish*, by James Menk; illustrated by Louisa Bauer. LCCN 97012331. Atlanta: Peachtree, 1997. ISBN 1561451584, HBB, \$14.95.**

F. Animals—Fiction; Adventure and adventurers—Fiction. 165 p. Gr. 3 - 5.

Quality—2 Acceptability—3

Lillian has received a fish for her sixth birthday. Each child in the family has received a pet on their sixth birthday. The newest addition joins a collection of assorted animals from a horse and a goat to a turtle and a cat. One day the fish is discovered to be missing. The other animals set out on a long trek to find her, believing that she has swum further upstream. The five day journey leads them along a stream, through a dark forest, past roaring rapids, and into a swampy marsh. They meet other animals such as a hungry bear who tries to eat the turtle, an elegant heron who snubs the bird, and wish-washy frogs in their quest to find the

fish. When they have just lost all hope of ever finding her, a pleasant surprise turns up in a large lake.

James Menk has written a warm story combining adventure and light humor. Children will feel as if they too are traveling with the pets, facing each new danger and thrill. Louisa Bauer's pencil drawings add to the whimsical character of the story. Readers and listeners alike will enjoy the fun and adventures of *Lillian's Fish*. SR

***My Life as a Bigfoot Breath Mint*, by Bill Myers. (Incredible Worlds of Wally McDoogie; 12.) LCCN 96032349. Nashville: Tommy Nelson, 1997. ISBN 0849938767, PAP, \$4.99.**

F. Christian life—Fiction; Humorous stories; Amusement parks—Fiction; Stunt performers—Fiction; Uncles—Fiction. 113 p. Gr. 3 - 5.

Quality—4 Acceptability—4

The incredible World of Wally McDoogie features California Fantasma World in book twelve of the series. Wally successfully blunders his way through a business-vacation with his family as they visit the fantastic and wealthy Uncle Max. Each day of the visit, life becomes more and more glamorous for his Uncle and more and more ordinary and drab for his Dad as Wally begins to compare the two brothers. Then comes the big chance to have a part in one of Uncle Max's shows. Excited, yet fearful, Wally practices his part marching with the band. However, in the unrehearsed rescue from a herd of Bigfeet, Uncle Max fails to appear and Dad becomes the hero of the show. Wally then finally gets his priorities straight and he finds out what it takes to make a real hero.

Two stories run through the book. *My Life as a Bigfoot Breath Mint* is interrupted as Sally pulls out a laptop computer to write more about a super-hero with Harry the Hairball and Floss Man.

The audience for this book is limited by the style of writing, outrageous humor, and hardly believable characters. However, a strong message for solid family values emerges at the end redeeming any previous weaknesses. MK

***The Ghost of KRZY*, by Bill Myers. (Bloodhounds; 1.) LCCN 97021042. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1997. ISBN 1556618905, PAP, \$5.99.**

F. Mystery fiction; Brothers and sisters—Fiction; Christian life—Fiction. 128 p.

***The Mystery of the Invisible Knight*, by Bill Myers. (Bloodhounds; 2.) LCCN 97021043. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1997. ISBN 1556618913, PAP, \$5.99.**

F. Mystery fiction; Brothers and sisters—Fiction; Christian life—Fiction. 124 p. Gr. 2 - 6.

Quality—3 Acceptability—4

When electronic equipment disappears from their father's radio station, Sean and Melissa Hunter open their first detective case, *The Ghost of KRZY*. They set up an overnight stakeout at the station, and then they pursue a dark stranger in a wild chase. At the end, they discover that this mysterious person is a young, deaf

woman scientist called Doc, and they become acquainted with her computer-generated sidekick, Jeremiah. The four of them form Bloodhounds, Incorporated.

In *The Mystery of the Invisible Knight*, the supposed ghost of Sir Richard Falcrest commits several robberies in revenge against certain citizens of Middleton. Sean and Melissa crack the case and reveal that the museum curator, Edgar Jennings, is the culprit. At the same time, they learn to have faith to face the lion of fear.

In the same style of his Wally McDoogie Series, Bill Myers fills these books with action, slapstick comedy, and a touch of fun, preadolescent sarcasm and exaggeration. Readers will enjoy Jeremiah's mixed-up phrases such as "barking up the wrong flagpole." The preteen sleuths' characters are stereotypical but entertaining. In both books, the author continues to expose the seemingly paranormal, teaching kids that ghosts don't exist and that ghostlike activities can be explained.

In *The Ghost of KRZY*, Sean accuses Doc and Jeremiah of stealing equipment from the radio station. Jeremiah explains that they didn't steal but paid for the equipment by leaving silver dollars in the station's teapot. Then he asks the kids to help Doc and him develop better social graces. The issue of stealing is not addressed any further.

The two books can stand alone, as the second book repeats important information presented in the first. LKFN

***French Toast and Dutch Chocolate*, by Karen O'Connor; illustrated by Glen Meyers. (Action Readers; 3.) Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1994. ISBN 0570047714, PAP, \$4.99.**

F. Christian life—Fiction; Laziness—Fiction; Multiculturalism—Fiction. 62 p. Gr. 1 - 3.

Quality—3 Acceptability—4

Number three in the Action Reader series by Karen O'Connor, *French Toast and Dutch Chocolate*, continues the adventures of The Taylor family, Mom, Dad, Luke and Laura. The chapter-long stories take on a multicultural theme, like taking a trip to an orphanage in Mexico and hosting a Foreign Exchange student. Each chapter concludes with a project to further explore the diverse culture in our world.

The series need not be read in order to follow the story line. There is use of some mild slang in the story. SAH

***Junk-Food Finders*, by Karen O'Connor; illustrated by Glen Meyers. (Action Readers; 1.) Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1994. ISBN 0570047692, PAP, \$4.99.**

F. Nutrition—Fiction; Christian life—Fiction. 64 p. Gr. 1 - 3.

Quality—3 Acceptability—4

Attention, All Junior Chef enthusiasts! The "Junk-Food Finders" are coming! Karen O'Connor explores the theme of being healthy, body and soul. The heroes,

first-grader Laura and her brother Luke, three years her senior, discover ways to depend on God. Each chapter is a separate anecdote, introducing the Taylors and how they problem-solve and respect each individual's contribution to the family dynamic.

While the plot at times seems contrived and preachy, the young cook with a Christian background would take the references in stride and thoroughly enjoy the simple recipes at the end of each chapter. SAH

***The Legend of Annie Murphy*, by Frank E. Peretti. (The Cooper Kids Adventure Aeries; 7.) LCCN 96041694. Dallas: Word Kids! 1997. ISBN 0849936454, PAP, \$5.99.**

F. Space and time—Fiction; Ghosts—Fiction; West (U.S.)—Fiction. 151 p. Gr. 4 - 7.

Quality—4 Acceptability—4

Caught between the past and the present, the ghost town of Bodine, Arizona, shares a story of greed and intrigue. Below the craggy, canyon cliffs the old graveyard is the logical place to investigate the scary legend of what had happened more than one hundred years ago.

Dr. Jacob Cooper and his children, Jay and Lila, assist Professor MacPherson in finding what really happened on June 8, 1885. *The Legend of Annie Murphy* reveals a murder and the illegal sale of the Murphy mine. Jay and Lila visit Bodine in 1885 and find all of Annie's clues to the truth simultaneously as Dr. Cooper and Professor Mac see the clues from the present time.

The story is fast moving and believable for the reader who is willing to re-arrange time and space. Justice prevails as all the pieces fall into place in the nick of time. All who are acquainted with the Cooper Kids Adventure Series will enjoy this seventh book in the series. However, the story does not depend on previous events to be enjoyed. MK

***Time Like a River*, by Randy Perrin with Hannah Perrin & Tova Perrin. Oakland, Calif.: RDR Books and Orca Book Publ., 1997. ISBN 157143061X, HBB, \$14.95.**

F. Time travel—Fiction; Death—Fiction. 139 p. Gr. 4 - 6.

Quality—3 Acceptability—5

Time travel, a woman dying from an unknown disease, a young Jewish daughter and a Chinese family of many years ago...these are the elements of an unusual and compelling story written by Randy Perrin and his daughters, Hannah and Tova. Time like a river brings two families, Jewish-American and Chinese-American, together across space and time. A fantasy, yet a believable tale, woven through incidents in Margie's life as she attempts-and succeeds-in finding a cure for her mother's debilitating yet obscure illness.

This book is the accomplishment of Perrin as well as his seven and nine-year-old daughters. Their input lends reality to the language and reactions of the children in the story yet at times the writing seems disjointed and does not flow easily. This does not take away from the overall story line, the thrill of time travel nor the satisfying ending when the loose ends

are tied up together. Adding *Time Like a River* to the young people's collection of a public or school library would be giving enjoyment to many. CC

***Can You Keep a Secret?* by P.J. Petersen; illustrated by Meredith Johnson. LCCN 97006148. New York: Dutton's Children's Books, 1997. ISBN 0525458409, HBB, \$15.99.**

F. Schools—Fiction; Secrets—Fiction. 106 p. Gr. 2 - 6.

Quality—3 Acceptability—4

This is a book about secrets. From the first page to the last page there are little secrets that children like to keep from others. Mike can not keep secrets and everyone knows it. He just bubbles with enthusiasm and excitement and usually lets the secret out. He is one of those children a teacher only needs to look at to know if something is amiss in the classroom. Amy has a very special secret and wants to share it with someone. Her best friend has moved and she is lonely. She looks for someone to share her secret with and decides that Mike will keep it.

Each chapter in this story by P.J. Petersen alternates back and forth between the perspectives of Mike and Amy, each one trying to keep their secrets. At the end of the story the secrets are told, and Mike learns that he can keep a secret. This is a fun book of stories that could happen in any elementary classroom that children can relate to. The line drawing illustrations in each chapter by Meredith Johnson help visualize the exciting things that are happening. PJP

***Baby in a Basket*, by Gloria Rand; illustrated by Ted Rand. LCCN 96033805. New York: Cobblehill Books/Dutton, 1997. ISBN 0525652337, HBB, \$14.99.**

F. Alaska—Fiction; Accidents—Fiction; Babies—Fiction. Unp. K - Gr. 3.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

When Marie Boyer with her two young daughters, three-year-old Betty and baby Ann, start out on a long, cold, sleigh ride from Fairbanks, Alaska to meet a ship for Seattle, they thought their biggest problems would be to stay warm and to entertain themselves on the lonely ten day ride. Little did they know they would become part of a winter disaster and miracle when their sleigh overturns and the young girls are lost on an icy river.

This true story, set in 1917, is filled with fun and suspense and best of all a happy ending. Gloria Rand has combined her storytelling talents with her husband, Ted Rand's artistry to produce a beautiful story that children will want to read again and again. Depicted in the illustrations are sights and creatures of the far north, as well as a taste of what living in the extreme temperatures of an Alaskan winter demanded of those who were willing to brave the frontier in its early days. JD

***Fire in the Sky*, by Candice F. Ransom; illustrations by Shelly O. Haas. LCCN 96005739. Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Books, 1997. ISBN 0876148674, HBB, \$14.96.**

F. Hindenberg (Airship)—Fiction; Family life—Fiction. 72 p. Gr. 3 - 6.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

The year is 1937 and Stenny wants to be like radio hero, Jack Armstrong. What he doesn't want to be is himself, the chubby loser. Because of Stenny's intense fascination with dirigibles, he manages to be present for the Hindenburg's landing. What he witnesses is the dirigible catching fire and exploding. This gives Stenny the opportunity to put others first, and he goes into the smoke to help save survivors and the injured. Stenny is an ordinary hero, and he gains the respect he desired from his classmates.

Candice F. Ransom, author of *Fire in the Sky*, has caught the Hindenburg's destruction from a child's point of view. She reflects life in the thirties, prior to World War II. What about Hitler? Why was he placing those strange impositions on the Jews? These questions, brought forward in the novel, may incite the reader to further study of the time period, the war, and dirigibles.

Shelly O. Haas' illustrations join the text to visually emphasize the catastrophe. The layering of images offers various perspectives and creates distance from the horror. The style, and color are good representations of the period featured.

The book features a tragedy, but the graphic details are included tastefully. Plot strays once when a family dinner is prepared and no one eats it. Also, Stenny's father forbids Stenny from going to the air field. The boy disobeys willingly, and the father makes no mention of the transgression.

The reader lives with Stenny through his struggles and growth. A tragedy of history is felt through *Fire in the Sky*. LAG

***One in a Million*, by Nicholas Read. Vancouver, B.C.: Polestar Book Publishers, 1996. ISBN 1896095224, PAP, \$6.95.**

F. Dogs—Fiction 143 p. Gr. 3 - 6.

Quality—3 Acceptability—4

*One in a Million* is the story of a mixed breed dog named Joey. Abandoned as a puppy at the Humane Society, Joey is adopted out to a young boy and his family. Left to his own devices in the back yard, the dog soon loses favoritism with the family for his puppy antics. Unable to handle the responsibility of the half-grown dog and unwilling to train him, the family returns Joey to the Humane Society.

This story chronicles Joey's life from the viewpoint of the dog. Along the way, a volunteer at the shelter, Marjorie befriends him and attempts to train the young dog. Throughout the story, caring for animals by training and neutering, is stressed heavily by Marjorie and Mr. Nulty, the shelter official. There is general disdain for individuals who do not neuter their pets and expect the shelter to care for the resulting animals.

*One in a Million* is quite simply a propaganda message from the Humane Society and other animal groups who are discouraged and disgusted by irresponsible pet owners. The author, Nicholas Read, does this through the eyes of an unwanted dog named Joey who doesn't understand the human world and just wants people to like him. There is a volunteer teenager who smokes and the subject of euthanizing animals is discussed among the dogs and shelter workers. JMH

***The Red Fury*. Carlsbad, Calif.: Bridgestone Multimedia, 1994. ISBN , VID, \$9.95.**

F. Horses—Fiction 1 videocassette, 105 min., color. Gr. 1 - 6.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

*Red Fury* takes place in the early 1900's. Frankie, a young Indian, falls off a train and ends up on the ranch of lonely rancher John Handley. John Handley befriends the boy. Finding him a natural horse trainer, John turns over Red Fury, a beautiful stallion that seems to be untrainable. Problems arise in the town when the boy goes to school and forces the community to choose between kindness and prejudice. A division between the town's people is ultimately overcome and Frankie finds his life and the people that he cares about changed as they make a stand for righteousness.

Overall, this is a good family film with positive values. Children who love animals will identify with Frankie. The acting is somewhat mediocre and the plot predictable, but children will enjoy and learn from the problems that are overcome. PSM

***Twin Trouble*, by Mary Carpenter Reid. (A Backpack Mystery; 4.) LCCN 97004650. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1997. ISBN 1556617186, PAP, \$3.99.**

F. Christian life—Fiction; Mystery fiction; Cousins—Fiction; Twins—Fiction. 80 p. Gr. 2 - 4.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

In *Twin Trouble*, Steff Larson and her sister Paulie visit their father's twin cousins, Melinda and Belinda, at the Grumlet Giant Trees Resort while their parents fulfill an important family business obligation. Melinda and Belinda manage the Grumlet Giant Trees Store at the resort every summer, providing them with the opportunity to share their belief in Jesus with the vacationers. The twins worry they may lose their store manager positions, because money is disappearing from the store. When a shipment of camping gear is delivered and then stolen, Steff, Paulie, and Chet, a young boy who works in the dining hall, decide to track down the crooks. Steff figures out where the camping gear is hidden. Leaving a signal for Mr. Grumlet and the sheriff, Steff, Paulie, Chet, Melinda, and Belinda follow a trail of red reflectors nailed onto trees to a field with an empty colossal sequoia where they locate the thieves. The signal is discovered and the thieves arrested.

Mary Carpenter Reid has written an entertaining mystery for young readers with black and white drawings and a colorful front cover illustration by Paul Turnbaugh. The story is centered around Colossians 3:23 "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart,

as working for the Lord." Steff thinks about Melinda and Belinda devoting all their energy into ministering to people without complaining even when a child spills juice or food onto a fancy dress. Steff decides to follow their example whenever Vincent is her reading partner at school instead of trying to trade partners because his hands perspire. DBW

***The Twins, the Pirates, and the Battle of New Orleans*, by Harriette Gillem Robinet. LCCN 96022028. New York: Atheneum Bks for Young Readers, 1997. ISBN 0689812086, HBB, \$15.00.**

F. Twins—Fiction; Fugitive slaves—Fiction; Slaves—Fiction; Afro-Americans—Fiction; Pirates—Fiction; New Orleans (La.), Battle of, 1815—Fiction. 138 p. Gr. 4 - 6.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Pierre and Andrew are twelve-year-old twin former slaves. Their father had helped them escape. They are now living in a swamp while their father helps their mother and little sister escape from the auction block. Andrew, the more adventurous twin, decides they need to explore the swamp. Pierre goes along, not because he thinks it is a good idea, but to take care of his brother. They come upon a pirate hide-out and get into mischief like almost any twelve-year-old would.

The brothers had been separated by their master, so they don't know each other that well. As the story progresses, the boys grow closer together, especially after it becomes evident that their father has died. The boys become directly involved in the War of 1812—the Battle of New Orleans.

*The Twins, the Pirates, and the Battle of New Orleans* contains the adventure enjoyed by late elementary students. Students will be exposed to the Battle of New Orleans because the twins help the Yankee side during the battle. The book contains pirate superstitions which seem to bring out the mischievous side of the main characters. The book seems to be well researched, right down to a visit to a swamp to see just how alligators jump. Students who enjoy historical fiction or high adventure books should enjoy *The Twins, the Pirates, and the Battle of New Orleans*. JM

***The Proud Tree*, written by Luane Roche; illustrated by Chris Sharp. Ligouri, Mo.: Ligouri Publications, 1995. ISBN 0892437685, HBB, \$14.95.**

F. Trees—Fiction; Pride—Fiction. 48 p. K - Gr. 4.

Quality—5 Acceptability—4

Rex is the proudest tree in the forest. One day, soldiers cut Rex down and make him into a cross. In the shape of a cross, Rex meets Jesus, and witnesses this gentle man who is treated with such cruelty. As Rex watches Jesus, he realizes his own sinfulness and confesses. While Rex is dying, he remembers an old story. "If a dying tree tells God he is sorry for the bad things he has done, if he wishes he had been better, God will give him new life from one of the tree's own seeds." As Rex dies, he hears beautiful music. Some time later, a sapling grows, symbolizing new life.

Both Luane Roche's writing and Chris Sharp's illustrations convey great feeling. The personification

of the tree who becomes a cross adds whimsy to the very serious story of the crucifixion, and yet remains respectful. In the last few pages of the book, when Rex is dying, I found the theology a bit shaky. Rex dies hearing beautiful music, symbolizing God's acceptance of his penitence. Rex seems to believe his salvation is based on the degree of his penitence. The new life he receives is the sapling that springs from the earth, which could represent a form of reincarnation. In spite of this, it is still a very well written account of Jesus' crucifixion. CSJ

***Panic in the Wild Waters*, by Lee Roddy. (A Ladd Family Adventure; 12.) LCCN 95010951. Colorado Springs: Focus on the Family, 1995. ISBN 1561793922, PAP, \$4.99.**

F. Hawaii—Fiction; Mystery fiction. 150 p. Gr. 3 - 7.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Enchanting beauty and savage danger mingle in the warm Hawaiian water. Josh and Tank are accustomed to seasoning their explorations with wisdom and caution, but Alicia's lust for adventure entangles them with hungry sharks, angry whales, and the neighborhood bully. "Never again," they both decide. Her carelessness seems bound to bring on the harm that turtle poachers have threatened. If they can just keep her out of trouble for a few more days, she will be gone, back to Alaska. But Alicia is drawn to danger like a shark is drawn to blood.

The impending separation of the two close friends is the crisis that knits the story together. Unfortunately, this problem interrupts the action with distracting regularity, while the frustration with Alicia's recklessness becomes repetitious. Despite this handicap, the plot provides a rush of adrenaline. *Panic in the Wild Waters* encourages responsible decision making, courtesy in difficult relationships, and unselfish bravery. Lee Roddy paces the action with descriptive snap-shots of Hawaii's exotic landscape, and laces the dialogue with local terms and slang. A glossary helps with pronunciation and definitions. For readers who have been following the Ladd Family Adventures, this twelfth book links the Hawaiian setting to its new frontier in Alaska. MT

***Whoo Done It?* by Gayle Roper. (The Adventures of Scooter and Jake.) Elgin, Ill.: Chariot Books, 1996. ISBN 0781400791, PAP, \$3.99.**

F. Christian life—Fiction; Goodness—Fiction. 48 p. Gr. 2 - 5.

Quality—3 Acceptability—5

Jake is really Jacqueline and she is eight years old. Scooter is a year younger and his real name is Ryan. They visit their great grandparents and dog, Old Henry. The children stay for the weekend while their parents take a little trip.

Gramma and Grampa love for them to visit and fix their favorite foods and play with them. It's nice to be loved like that. When Gramma's favorite owl is missing, Scooter is sure he can find it. Scooter and Jake find that more and more items have disappeared from their grandparents' home. Gramma and Grampa know some things have mysteriously been lost but

each thinks the other one has misplaced them and just forgot where he or she put them. Who could be taking all the items? Finally, the children decide they have to tell Gramma and Grampa. Grampa is relieved that he didn't just misplace them.

There is wonderful interaction of grandchildren and grandparents, with love and trust and pampering. Author Gayle Roper portrays a warm family, a praying Grampa, and a baking Gramma. BGT

***The Rose Horse*, by Deborah Lee Rose; illustrated by Greg Shed. LCCN 94019629. San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1996. ISBN 0152000682, HBB, \$16.00.**

F. Merry-go-round—Fiction; Wood carving—Fiction; Jews—Fiction; Babies—Fiction; Coney Island (New York, N.Y.)—Fiction. 60 p. Gr. 2 - 5.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

In *The Rose Horse*, Deborah Lee Rose has interwoven fact and fiction to introduce her readers to the historic place of Coney Island, the historic time of the early 1900's, and the historic people who carved the carousel horses for America, as well as some of the famous people who entertained at Coney Island. When young Jewish Lily is taken to Coney Island to live for a time with her Aunt Golda and Uncle Samuel while her mother attends her premature baby sister Rose in the "incubator clinic" at Coney Island, she not only learns about the ancient art of carving from her uncle and father, but also about the exciting life on the boardwalk in Coney Island, and the religious practices of her own family as they count the days in preparation of Shevuos.

Who would have thought that the early "preemie units" of our country were actually a part of the side shows of Coney Island? This and other interesting information on the early days of this century is skillfully incorporated in a charming story which will capture the attention of many a young horse- and carousel-lover. Pencil illustrations by Greg Shed enhance the chapters. A glossary of terms, both Jewish and American, is included. JD

***First Apple*, by Ching Yeung Russell; illustrated by Christopher Zhong-Yuan Zhang. LCCN 93074360. Honesdale, Pa.: Boyds Mills Press, 1994. ISBN 1563972069, HBB, \$13.95.**

F. China—Social conditions—1912-1949—Fiction. 127 p. Gr. 2 - 4.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

*First Apple* by Ching Yeung Russell is the story of a young girl named Ying who is growing up in China. Her Grandmother has raised her in a kind and gentle way and she wanted to give some special joy to her on her birthday. Ying was very curious and really, really wanted to know what an apple tasted like, so she did some chores for her brother so she could share an apple with her Grandmother. The class bully thwarts her first attempt, but she eventually succeeds and revels in her Grandmother's joy.

Written in first person in a simple, sweet, straightforward style, the author is obviously pulling

from her own personal experiences. The respect and love for her Grandmother, and the mischievousness of the child shine throughout the story. The hardback, chapter-book format for this book is a bit incongruent with the easy vocabulary and the age appeal of the text. Some Chinese words are used and explained in the text. A single reference is made to beliefs in a reference to "the god of heaven and the god of earth." *First Apple* is pleasantly illustrated with several black and white watercolor washes. JB

***The Blue Hill Meadows*, by Cynthia Rylant; illustrated by Ellen Beier. LCCN 95052260. San Diego: Harcourt, Brace, 1997. ISBN 0152014047, HBB, \$16.00.**

F. Family life—Fiction; Country life—Fiction. 43 p. PS - Gr. 2.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Each season of the year holds a wonder for the Meadow family: Sullivan, Eva, Willie and Ray. A pregnant stray dog helps them write a primer on dog etiquette, beginning with "the Meadows gave the dog some cool water and warm meat loaf and they petted away her fears." *The Blue Hill Meadows* by Cynthia Rylant, illustrated by Ellen Beier, tells an ordinary story in an extraordinary way. October, the perfect time for a catch-and-release fishing trip, quality time for father and son, a rare blizzard, and a missed school bus afford Willie the opportunity to learn a secret of success: contentment.

Cynthia Rylant uses a diffusion of love and gentleness in the text of *The Blue Hill Meadows*. This is a family who truly cares for each other. The author doesn't shy away from the appropriate difficult word despite the tender age of her audience. Ellen Beier, artist, follows Rylant's lead and illustrates the book with visual vignettes, full of detail and harmonizing color.

Rylant has over sixty books to her credit, including *The Van Gogh Cafe* and *Missing May*. SAH

***Tut, Tut*, by Jon Scieszka; illustrated by Lane Smith. (The Time Warp Trio; 6.) New York: Viking, 1996. ISBN 0670848328, HBB, \$11.99.**

F. Schools—Fiction; Humorous stories. 74 p. Gr. 3 - 5.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

The Trio, Fred, Sam and Joe, have just finished their class projects on ancient Egypt when Joe's little sister, Anna, questions the accuracy of some details. To prove her point, Anna opens The Book and the green fog once again swallows the boys as well as Anna and her cat, Cleo. Each time The Book is opened the Trio once again enters a different time and cannot return until they locate The Book. This trip, the boys and their unexpected fellow travelers, Anna and Cleo, land in a pharaoh's tomb in ancient Egypt. After meeting the evil high priest Hatsnat and the boy king Thutmose III, the boys journey up the Nile, play basketball with Thutmose, tangle with an alligator, surf the Nile and end up at a banquet for Thutmose's mother Hatshepsut. Anna has become one of the Hatshepsut's dancing girls and after a little Trio magic, Anna leaves to retrieve Cleo the Cat and she doesn't return! When the

group searches for Anna and Cleo in the Beautiful House, secret rooms under the palace, they are captured by Hatsnat. Wrapped up like mummies, and left to die in a sealed room, they are saved by Cleo. The boys and Anna are returned to the present day.

Time travel always catches the imagination. *Tut, Tut* is time travel with a history lesson thrown in for good measure that should please student readers and teachers alike.

Interesting facts are mixed with the antics of the travelers. Students will enjoy the word plays and quick action as the mystery unfolds and is then solved. The last page in the book includes a short matching quiz of important terms relating to ancient Egypt. Jon Scieszka's writing style is mock serious, with definite comic overtones. Lane Smith captures this same atmosphere with pictures that exaggerate as well as illustrate our Trio of time travelers.

This is the sixth Time Warp Trio book for these two collaborators. Readers will certainly clamor for more. BAW

***Cabbages and Kings, A Story*, by Elizabeth Seabrook; paintings by Jamie Wyeth. LCCN 96052795. New York: Viking, 1997. ISBN 0670874620, HBB, \$15.99.**

F. Asparagus—Fiction; Cabbage—Fiction; Gardens—Fiction. Unp. PS - Gr. 1.

Quality—4      Acceptability—4

An Asparagus named Albert and a cabbage named Herman forge a friendship in the picture book, *Cabbages and Kings*. After name-calling and arguing, the two begin to look out for each other. Albert teaches Herman about garden dangers, like rabbits. He tells him about the fair, and the two hope Herman will be chosen as an entry. When winter comes at the book's close, Albert is looking forward to meeting more cabbages like Herman in the spring.

*Cabbages and Kings* offers a nice example of friendship. Good models of how to stop a fight, and how to say good-bye are provided. The reader sees how friends look out for one another.

Fine artist Jamie Wyeth is the book's illustrator. Sharp complimentary colors add intensity to the paintings. Yellow accents and large yellow areas are brilliant. Color shapes and sensitive lines make dynamic compositions. The first spread does not completely illustrate the story. Children may search for Albert through the long text and be disappointed in not finding him. They might enjoy seeing the vegetable faces on other pages since they are not included on the cover.

*Cabbages and Kings* makes a contribution to books featuring duos. Albert and Herman will not be forgotten. LAG

***Rescue on the Rapids and Other Stories*, by Billie Touchstone Signer. (Wind Star Series.) Boston: Pauline Books & Media, 1995. ISBN 0819864544, PAP, \$5.95.**

F. Mothers and sons—Fiction; Short stories. 126 p. Gr. 3 - 6.

Quality—4      Acceptability—5

*Rescue on the Rapids and Other Stories* contains eight exciting adventures from rural America of the past century. The stories are short and complete, thus appropriate for reading when the time is limited.

1. Rescue on the Rapids features a near-fatal float trip on the Buffalo River.

2. Hunting in a Louisiana bayou for an alligator, to be delivered for making a movie in New Orleans, proved that fourteen-year old Gus was Old Enough.

3. How much trouble can one Nubian goat cause? Clay found it was so much that there was no answer, until in the back of an unexplored cave, Napoleon's Discovery surprisingly solved everyone's problems.

4. For almost-blind Mark, Christmas Trappings came with rescue from a trapping accident, loving family and friends, and the Christmas snow he had wished for.

5. Ole Big Mouth provided one exciting day of fishing with a surprise ending Jerry and David had not anticipated.

6. After great disappointment, the excitement of The Hunt during Patches' second year, completely redeemed Oscar's pet hunting dog for a lifetime of "free room and board."

7. A camping adventure on the Night of the Fox resulted in Toby and his dad bagging bigger game than they had anticipated, as an escaped prisoner tangles with a rabid fox.

8. How can Jeff keep his bird dog after the cotton crop fails and Mr. King the banker offers a good price for him? Three-in-one confirms that God has three answers for a problem when Jeff trusts in Him. MK

***The Secret of Sentinel Rock*, by Judith Silverthorne. Regina, Sask.: Coteau Books, 1996. ISBN 1550501038, PAP, \$6.95.**

F. Prairie Provinces (Canada)—History—Fiction. 162 p. Gr. 3 - 6.

Quality—3      Acceptability—3

The magic of time travel takes Emily from 1996 to 1899. Sentinel Rock is Emily's favorite place on her Grandmother's farm in Saskatchewan, Canada. Now that Grandmother has died, Emily's mother Kate and her aunts are putting the place up for sale. Emily is heart broken.

Despite the many jobs Kate gives Emily to do in sorting through Grandmother's possessions, Emily finds time to slip away to the rock. Climbing to its top, Emily is startled to discover someone else is there before her. A kindred spirit from the past, Emma Elliott, helps Emily come to terms with losing her Grandmother and the farm. Emily uses the knowledge she gained from Grandmother, about the healing properties of herbs and plants, to save Emma's family from a flu epidemic.

Sentinel Rock serves as the time portal and a magic stone allows Emily to slip back and forth between the two worlds. Slipping into Emma's world is so interesting to Emily she repeatedly sneaks out of the house to go to the rock. Those times she does receive

permission from Kate to go she stays so long she misses her mother's deadline for returning.

The constant tension between Emily and her mother is not satisfactorily explained. The cause seems to exist before the adventure begins. Emily's deceptions and disobedience, of course, add to the problem.

The book gives an interesting look at Pioneer life in the late 1800's on the Saskatchewan prairie. MPC

***Kayla O'Brian and the Dangerous Journey*, by Hilda Stahl. (Kayla O'Brian Adventures; 1.) LCCN 90080618. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1990. ISBN 0891075771, PAP, \$4.99.**

F. Orphans—Fiction; Orphan trains—Fiction. 126 p.

***Kayla O'Brian : Trouble at Bitter Creek Ranch*, by Hilda Stahl. (Kayla O'Brian Adventures; 2.) Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1991. ISBN 0891076115, PAP, \$4.99.**

F. Orphans—Fiction; Nebraska—Fiction. 128 p.

***Kayla O'Brian and the Runaway Orphans*, by Hilda Stahl. (Kayla O'Brian Adventures; 3.) Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1991. ISBN 089107631X, PAP, \$4.99.**

F. Orphans—Fiction. 122 p. Gr. 4 - 7.

Quality—4      Acceptability—5

Perhaps best known for her earlier Prairie Family Adventure series, author Hilda Stahl continues spinning stories about early America. Fourteen-year-old Kayla and her younger brother Timothy are newly orphaned; their parents died during a voyage across the Atlantic, having left their home in Ireland for new employment in America at Briarwood Farms in Maryland. Instead, the two arrive in America without their parents, all hopes and dreams crushed.

In *Kayla O'Brian and the Dangerous Journey*, Kayla and Timothy first stay in New York with their father's friend and his large family. They soon realize that his pregnant wife resents them, overburdened with already caring for several children of their own. Mr. Murphy promises the two he will find a way for them to reach Maryland, where they hope to train horses like their father had planned to do. Conflicts with Mrs. Murphy escalate and the two strike out on their own. The story seems to unravel at this point and meanders for several chapters until late in the book, when Kayla and Timothy (and the reader) finally realize that they will never make it to Briarwood Farms—and that this is not the "dangerous journey" alluded to by the book's title. The story regains its focus in the final thirty pages, however, and the reader is left with a satisfying ending.

*Trouble at Bitter Creek Ranch* picks up where the first book leaves off, showing us Kayla and Timothy with their new adoptive family in Nebraska. Stahl sprinkles this sequel with humor and interesting characters, depicting prairie life while showing us a family transformed by prayer and courage. Adding a slight romantic interest to the story is Boon Russell, a handsome young man Kayla meets in chapter five.

In the third book, *Kayla O'Brian and the Runaway Orphans*, Kayla and Timothy teach their new family how to celebrate the true meaning of Christmas.

Timothy also helps some orphans escape from an abusive merchant in town and Kayla hopes their adoptive parents will understand. Boon Russell is back on the scene, causing grief for Kayla.

Over all, Stahl is perhaps best at detailing life in early America from a fresh angle. I especially liked learning about the Children's Aid Society in the first book (CAS helped homeless New York street children find homes in the Midwest between the years 1854 and 1904), but the story could have, and should have, included more information than just the basics. However, Stahl is skilled at creating interesting, multi-dimensional characters, and readers will like the occasional hint of Irish brogue: "Don't be shoutin' now, Timothy. It's not a thing to do, you know." These books provide light adventure while introducing interesting topics for further study and discussion. KSG

***Sendi Lee Mason and the Big Mistake*, by Hilda Stahl. (A Growing Up Adventure; 3.) LCCN 90023026. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1991. ISBN 0891076131, PAP, \$4.99.**

F. Conduct of life—Fiction; Fathers and daughters—Fiction; Christian life—Fiction. 124 p. Gr. 2 - 5.

Quality—4 Acceptability—4

Sendi Lee Mason has a lot going on her in her young life. She is having troubles with her friends and with multiplication. Her single Mom, Janice, receives a letter from the man who fathered Sendi and wants to visit them. She uses her mother's calculator to solve the math problems she should have been doing in longhand. She sees a class bully beating up on a younger boy who threatens her if she tells.

Her best friend, Gwen, in whom she confides everything, is mad at her because Sendi copied off her math paper during a test. She doesn't know who to turn to and doesn't want to cause her poor overworked mother any more trouble, as she struggles to support them.

Author Hilda Stahl is very skillful at describing how hard it is for a child to live in a fatherless home and how once cheating starts, it takes several other lies to cover up the deed. Sendi learns the joy of having her father near and taking an interest in her, but is ashamed to be having trouble with math, when she discovers he is a math teacher in another town. When he leaves again after his vacation, she is sad, but her friends remind her that God is with her always. BGT

***Grandfather's Day*, by Ingrid Tomez; illustrated by Robert A. McKay. LCCN 91077605. Honesdale, Pa.: Boyds Mills Press, 1992. ISBN 1563970228, HBB, \$12.95.**

F. Grandfathers—Fiction. 61 p. Gr. 2 - 6.

Quality—3 Acceptability—3

Raydeen's Grandfather has just come to live with her. Her Grandmother, known only to her as a box of candy arriving in the mail every year, has just died and Grandfather has withdrawn in grief. Raydeen is disappointed when he will not come to Grandfather's Day at school, a day Raydeen created just to introduce

her Grandfather to her classmates. She thinks he is mean and rude until her mother explains that he has a broken heart.

Ten-year-old Raydeen comes up with a solution: she will just have to take her Grandmother's place. Raydeen continues in her free-spirited, chipper way to try to draw her Grandfather out of his grief. Success comes during a thunderstorm when Grandfather comes to rescue his young granddaughter who reminds him of his wife of forty-nine years. Secure on his lap in the darkened house, Raydeen listens to her Grandfather open up and share his grief.

In her story, Ingrid Tomez has attempted to view an older person's grief as seen by a young child. The explanations given to young Raydeen can help the young reader understand part of this grieving process.

The book includes line drawings by Robert A. McKay, including those of a grandfather which was not the one described in the text. Raydeen is an interesting character with wild outfits, loose behavior, and language that includes minced oaths. JJP

***Pavlova's Gift*, by Maxine Trottier; illustrations by Victoria Berdichevsky. Toronto: Stoddart, 1996. ISBN 0773729690, HBB, \$14.95.**

F. Pavlova, Anna, 1881-1931—Fiction; Nicholas II, Emperor of Russia, 1868-1918—Fiction; Dancing—Fiction. Unp. K - Gr. 2.

Quality—4 Acceptability—4

Anna Pavlova no longer dances publicly. She feels her future is gone, and she only dances alone. That is until the Czar requests her to dance for his ill son. Anna cannot refuse, but on the way she meets a group of gypsies. One woman dances with the youth and intensity Anna used to possess. The gypsy yearns to perform as Pavlova. Giving the gift of dance, Anna allows the woman to take her place in the sleigh and dance for the royalty. All through the night Anna dances with the gypsies and feels youthful herself.

Author Maxine Trottier has written a fictional account of historical characters. With beautiful writing she speculates as to how the Czars' lives possibly intersected with Anna Pavlova. Also she presents a glimpse of the gypsy life. She does include an older gypsy woman who foretells the future. Victoria Berdichevsky's full spread paintings fill the large picture book. It is simple for the reader to slip into a Russia of the past. However, Berdichevsky's characters never seem to engage each other. They always stare into space with mournful eyes. Young listeners/readers will enjoy the step back in time, the secret switching of places between the gypsy and Anna, and the snowy winter setting. The time period and historical characters will come alive. LAG

***Amanda Pig, Schoolgirl*, by Jean Van Leeuwen; pictures by Ann Schweninger. (Dial Easy-to-Read.) LCCN 95053962. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 1997. ISBN 0803719817, HBB, \$12.99.**

F. First day of school—Fiction; Schools—Fiction; Pigs—Fiction. 48 p. K - Gr. 2.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Every child can relate to his or her first day of school. For some it is a day that is frightening and scary. For others it is an exciting day they have waited for all their lives. This is how it was for Amanda pig. Amanda was awake before the sun on the first day of school. She was dressed and ready while everyone else was still sleeping. The bus ride was even better than she had hoped for. Her brother, Oliver already knew so many people. Amanda said hi to a girl sitting by her licking a lollipop. But she did not answer. Amanda knew she was scared and took her to class and played with her and made her feel at ease. By the end of the day, Amanda and Emily, were ready to ride the bus home together after a great first day of school.

This is a charming little story that children will relate to. Whether they are shy like Emily, or very outgoing, like Amanda this is a story for everyone. Jean Van Leeuwen has created characters that are true to life. Amanda is uninhibited, yet kind and thoughtful. Emily really wants to be a part but just needs a little encouragement. Ann Schweninger pictures illustrate the perfect little classroom complete with books, tables, a reading corner and happy, smiling faces. The girls even have little bows on their ears.

This hardcover, easy-to-read book is divided into four small chapters for a total of forty-eight pages. It is the type of beginning reader that children can't put down like Frog and Toad and Little Bear. MS

***Sparrows in the Scullery*, by Barbara Brooks Wallace. LCCN 96050916. New York: Atheneum Bks. for Young Readers, 1997. ISBN 0689815859, HBB, \$15.00.**

F. Orphans—Fiction; Kidnapping—Fiction; Friendship—Fiction. 152 p. Gr. 3 - 7.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

In the dead of night, cruel hands rip Colley Trevelyan from his bed and his pampered Victorian life. Now the piercing eyes of Obadiah and Quintilla Crawler oversee his care and education at the Broggin Home for Boys. Along with the other twenty-four boys, his lessons consist of grueling labor in the blasting fumes of the glass factory. Colley's only hope of escape is to survive until his ransom can be paid. But if a ransom is required, why are they trying to kill him? An amazing chain of coincidences reveals surprising loyalty in those whom he fears, and deadly ambitions in those most trusted.

*Sparrows in the Scullery* is a fictional glimpse into the dark corners of nineteenth century history where children were exploited to fuel the industrial revolution. The reader who enjoys classics such as *Oliver Twist* will feel quite at home with this story by Barbara Brooks Wallace. Her language is light, and descriptions concise, avoiding the tediousness sometimes found in Victorian style stories. MT

***The Mystery at the Alamo*, created by Gertrude Chandler Warner; illustrated by Charles Tang. (A Boxcar Children Mystery; 58.) Morton Grove, Ill.: Albert Whitman & Co., 1997. ISBN 0807554367, HBB, \$13.95.**

F. Mystery fiction; The Alamo (Tex.)—Fiction. 121 p. Gr. 3 - 6.

Quality—3 Acceptability—5

If you're like me, you grew up reading the Boxcar Children's mysteries. Now a whole new generation of readers are enjoying the series. While Miss Warner died almost 20 years ago, new books continue to be written using the characters she created. These books are popular with upper elementary students.

In *The Mystery at the Alamo*, Henry, Jessie, Violet, and Bennie (now ages fourteen to six) visit the Alamo with Grandfather. They get to serve as extras in an educational movie being filmed about the Alamo. As you would expect, a mystery develops on the movie set and the four children are able to solve it. There are really no surprises to the adult reader, but the older elementary reader will be comfortable with the predictability of the plot. JM

***The Mystery of the Secret Message*, created by Gertrude Chandler Warner; illustrated by Charles Tang. (Boxcar Children Mysteries.) Morton Grove, Ill.: Albert Whitman, 1997. ISBN 0807554294, HBB, \$13.95.**

F. Mystery fiction. 121 p. Gr. 1 - 4.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

The Boxcar Children continue their mystery solving pursuits in *The Mystery of the Secret Message*. As their hometown, Greenfield, prepares for The Winter Festival, the four children, Henry, Jessie, Violet and Benny are involved in helping Grandfather ready the town square for the event. The Minuteman statue in the square, a mysterious photograph and vandalism of the statue and Festival decorations add up to a mystery with several suspects being scrutinized by the children.

Charles Tang has given the Boxcar Children a pleasantly updated look in the pencil drawings throughout the book. The children are unerringly well mannered and supportive of one another. Their housekeeper, Mrs. McGregor, makes delicious food, this is a world where I would like to live. The story is well-paced and each chapter ends just when you want to know more, keeping the reader involved and longing to continue. Each of the suspects, remains a suspect, keeping the suspense alive until the conclusion. SK

***The Niagara Falls Mystery*, created by Gertrude Chandler Warner; illustrated by Charles Tang. (Boxcar Children Mysteries.) LCCN 96050218. Morton Grove, Ill.: Albert Whitman, 1997. ISBN 0807556025, HBB, \$13.95.**

F. Mystery fiction; Niagara Falls—Fiction. 121 p. Gr. 3 - 5.

Quality—3 Acceptability—5

The Boxcar Children Series continues with the release of *The Niagara Falls Mystery*. The Alden children find themselves combining sightseeing in Niagara Falls with solving problems arising in a friend's souvenir shop. Who is the mysterious blond man who keeps stealing the shop's brochures? Are the newlyweds hired to tend the shop hiding something? And why did Angus, the town's trusted eccentric,

disappear at the same time a valuable antique curiosity was discovered missing? The Boxcar Children are kept busy trying to answer these and other parts of *The Niagara Falls Mystery*.

What keeps the Boxcar Children series so popular really is no mystery. The mixture of ages and personalities attract both boys and girls, beginning and accomplished readers. The books appeal to those who love a mystery, and even though the clues seem obvious, the conclusion often surprises the reader. The occasional black and white illustrations adds interest to the story, and create an "intermission" for the eyes of beginning readers.

Warner's original intent was to create a story that was both easy and fun to read, something she continues to achieve nearly ten years after her death. PW

***The Outer Space Mystery*, created by Gertrude Chandler Warner; illustrated by Charles Tang. (A Boxcar Children Mystery; 59.) Morton Grove, Ill.: Albert Whitman & Co., 1997. ISBN 0807562874, PAP, \$3.95.**

F. Mystery fiction; Space travel—Fiction. 121 p. Gr. 3 - 4.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

In *The Outer Space Mystery*, a Boxcar Children Mystery, Violet, Henry, Jessie, and Benny Alden visit Mountvale College with their grandfather while he chairs a symposium for young scientists. The children delight in accompanying their grandfather on peregrinations and clearing up any mysteries that arise.

On the night of a cookout, there is an intruder in the boys' room. A short time later, Rachel, one of the students, disappears along with the jottings of a finding by Mark, an astronomy student. Mark needs his jottings to prepare his presentation for the symposium attendees. Mark has a second set of jottings hidden in the observatory that are stolen at a meteor shower. The children surmise that Eugene, Mark's competitor, was the intruder in the boy's room and after noticing Eugene hide food in his clothes they follow him to a cabin where he meets Rachel. After Eugene leaves, the children surprise Rachel, and she admits complicity with Eugene in pirating Mark's jottings. The children convince Rachel to admit her wrongdoing to the symposium attendees, and Mark presents his finding of a new asteroid, the Alden Asteroid. The children's grandfather promises to exert his influence and provide Rachel with the opportunity for a fresh start at another college.

This is an entertaining mystery that includes side adventures while the children attempt to unravel interrelated mini mysteries. Charles Tang's pencil illustrations sprinkled throughout the book and a full color hard cover add to the divertissement of the mystery for young readers. DBW

***The Treasure Keeper*, by Anita Williams; illustrated by Lynn Elam-Jones; edited by Dawn L. Watkins. LCCN 95032151. Greenville, S.C.: Bob Jones University Press, 1995. ISBN 0890848351, PAP, \$4.99.**

F. Brazil—Fiction; Goats—Fiction. 89 p. K - Gr. 2.

Quality—3 Acceptability—5

*The Treasure Keeper* by Anita Williams earns a place of honor as a bed-time story for young children. We are gradually introduced to Marcos and his older sister Marcia and their family. Marcos is on a mission, discovering the secret of growing big. Everyone he meets gives him ideas, Grandmamma, the Rock Man, the Flower Lady. The young hero gains knowledge, that using your mind to solve problems turns you into a giant, that the value may not be in immediacy but increase with longevity. Marcia falls ill, and Marcos learns the true secret of growing big.

The illustrations by Lynn Elam-Jones are pleasant and idyllic.

While the book itself deals with character-building, the story tries too hard; instead of letting the reader discover the delights of everyday life, the author takes on the role of tour-guide. SAH

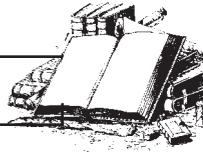
***Right-hand Man*, by Connie Williams; illustrated by Timothy N. Davis. LCCN 92019158. Greenville, S.C.: Bob Jones University Press, 1992. ISBN 0890846383, PAP, \$6.49.**

F. Orphans—Fiction; Stepfamilies—Fiction; Christian life—Fiction. 100 p. Gr. 4 - 6.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Twelve year old Sam is Mom-Jo's Right-Hand Man. Taking his job seriously, he decides she needs a husband. When he introduces the subject to the Lord, Sam asks for Mr. Right, handsome, rich and kind. Instead, along comes Mr. Wrong, tall, gawky, not rich, widowed, and raising four children. Has the Lord made a mistake? Now what can Sam do? Life gets really complicated as Sam copes with the little ones' explanations of why Mom-Jo (actually their Aunt) is not married but has four children, toad jumping contests, and Mr. Wrong's idea that Sam should give him permission to marry Mom-Jo.

Aimed directly at the modern problems Christian single parents and their families face, *Right-Hand Man* scores a bulls-eye. Drawing from her background as mother and teacher Author Connie Williams presents a believable, insightful, hilarious story through the eyes of a boy learning to be a man. The characters live, breathe, make the same mistakes, have the same successes as the people we meet in our community. With simple, concise words, and convincingly portrayed problems settled through Christian understanding, *Right-Hand Man* is a family book for all ages. Timothy Davis' black and white, cartoon type illustrations enhance Williams' story. The characters respond to each other in every action filled illustration. DJE



***The Inside-outside Book of Libraries*, text by Julie Cummins; paintings by Roxie Munro. LCCN 96012111. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 1996. ISBN 0525456082, HBB, \$15.99.**

027.073. Libraries. Unp. Gr. 2 - 6.

Quality—4      Acceptability—5

*The Inside-Outside Book of Libraries* presents facts about eleven libraries. The libraries are of different types and sizes. Each spread of pages depicts first the outside of the building, followed by a spread depicting the inside of the library. Each library has a unique design and purpose. Some are used by many people while some are only used by the person who developed the collection.

Cummins points out that we can each have our own library in our own room in any arrangement (or not) that we wish.

Munro's paintings are excellent. The continuity her work brings will be comforting to readers. She presents the Library of Congress in this title as well as in *The Inside-Outside Book of Washington, D.C.* Readers will recognize the building and the interior. The text presentation in this title departs from the established style of previous titles in the Inside-Outside Book series. This layout presents the text alongside the paintings. The smaller print may be daunting. CMJ



***Look Into the Bible : A Young Person's Guide*, Fort Washington, Pa.: Christian Literature Crusade, 1993. ISBN 0875087140, HBB, \$15.95.**

220. Bible—Handbooks, manuals, etc. 143 p. Gr. 4 - 9.

Quality—5      Acceptability—5

*Look Into the Bible* begins with a brief overview of what the Bible is. It tells who wrote it, when it took place, and where it happened. The next 121 pages go through the Bible, giving information about each book, sometimes grouping books together. Included are summaries, excerpts, commentaries, background information, and modern parallels. The writers employ many creative writing touches. For example, some stories are told as if they were news articles. Every page is packed with colorful illustrations, photographs, charts, and maps.

Most of the information is simply factual telling of what the Bible says.

When commentary is included, it is sound and avoids controversy. In a discussion of the various ways the book of Revelation is interpreted, the author says, "Arguments about these ideas have divided the church unnecessarily. They can stop us serving and loving Jesus." Although the book would generally be used as a reference, it could be a very good textbook for a

survey of the Bible class. Best of all, the book is very appealing and interesting to read. CSJ

***The Children's Illustrated Bible*, stories retold by Selina Hastings; illustrated by Eric Thomas and Amy Burch. LCCN 93030814. Green Forest, Ark.: New Leaf Press, 1994. ISBN 0892213329, HBB, \$22.95**

220.9. Bible stories. 320 p. PS - Gr. 3.

Quality—5      Acceptability—5

*The Children's Illustrated Bible* is a fresh approach to the traditional children's story Bible. This edition combines the story line of the Bible, Genesis to Revelation with maps, illustrations, photographs of real places, explanations of words and events, and verses with references.

This one volume is a combined story Bible in easy language, Bible atlas, handbook, and dictionary with all the information right on the page where it is needed. Added to the information on each page are the complete table of contents and illustrated introduction to the Bible at the front of the book. Who's Who in the Bible Stories and the index at the back also have useful information.

Small children will enjoy the illustrations and hearing the story read while older children will enjoy reading it themselves. It is a valuable resource for students, teachers, or anyone needing quick information about stories in the Bible. Consider this edition for a special gift for children or for an inspiration to the whole family. MK

***Let There Be Light : Bible Stories*, illustrated by Jane Ray. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 1997. ISBN 0525459251, HBB, \$19.99.**

220.9. Bible stories; Creation; Noah's Ark; Christmas. Unp. PS - Adult.

Quality—5      Acceptability—5

Jane Ray has combined three of her wonderful Bible stories for children into one volume in *Let There Be Light*. Included on the elaborately illustrated edition are The Story of the Creation, Noah's Ark, and the Story of Christmas. The text for all three stories is taken from the King James Version of the Bible, which may make it difficult for young readers to read on their own, but which lends itself beautifully to sharing as a family or classroom with an adult reader.

The illustrations are the central focus with folk-style paintings richly colored and illuminated with gold. Fine detailing in the borders of the illustrations adds a scientific teaching dimension to the text with the use of such ideas as the stages of development of seeds, various sea life, architectural plans for an ark, seasons of the year, and more. Children and adults will spend

many hours discovering new details and symbols on each page and interpreting their meaning. JD

***Joseph and His Coat of Many Colors*, by Sue Kassirer; illustrated by Danuta Jarecka. (Starting to Read.) LCCN 96020807. New York: Simon & Schuster Bks for Young R, 1997. ISBN 0689812272, HBB, \$15.00.**

222. Joseph (Son of Jacob); Bible stories—O. T. Unp. K - Gr. 1.

Quality—4      Acceptability—5

Kids love the story of Joseph. It tells how Joseph's brothers were jealous of him and sold him into slavery. Yet Joseph pleased God in all he did, even while in prison. Joseph also learned to forgive his brothers and do good to them. God blessed Joseph and allowed him to spare his family in the end.

This is a delightful little hard cover book. The pages are covered with bright, vibrant colors that remind you of the colors on Joseph's beautiful coat. Danuta Jarecka has a very unique type of illustration that brings to life the various characters of the story. Joseph's brothers and made bigger than life, almost like statues, to show their rage and hatred for Joseph. The illustrations really are captivating. This familiar bible story is retold by Sue Kassirer with vocabulary and style that suit a young, beginning reader. It is a level 1 from the Ready-to-Read series with one simple sentence per page. Sue has taken the high points of the story and brought them down to a level where the kids can understand and read them for themselves.

This is a hardcover, slim line type book. Easy for kids to pack around without harming the book. It should stand up to some hard use. This is a great book for kids to learn about forgiveness and living in a way that pleases God despite their circumstances. MS

***Moses in Egypt*, written by Brad Kessler; illustrated by Phil Huling. LCCN 95012493. New York: Rabbit Ears Books, 1996. ISBN 0689802269, HBB, \$22.00.**

222. Moses (Biblical leader); Exodus, The; Plagues of Egypt; Bible stories—O.T. Unp. book; 1 CD-ROM Gr. 1 - 5.

Quality—5      Acceptability—5

This retelling of Moses' life comes with a CD-ROM for listening. While a nice addition, this volume scarcely needs it. The text reads well and illustrations, from endpapers through the story itself, are beautifully rendered with a grainy, sandy texture that makes them highly suitable for a story set in the desert areas of Egypt and its surrounding area. Illustrations alone supply much detail about life in Ancient Egypt from architecture and clothing to the flora and fauna. Particularly striking is the illustration of Moses receiving the call to lead Israel out of Egypt at the

burning bush. The illustrations will help bring this story to life for younger readers as they listen to the CD, while older students will read the text themselves. A worthwhile purchase. LGR

**Joseph, by Brian Wildsmith.** LCCN 97014083. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1997. ISBN 0802851614, HBB, \$20.00.

222. Joseph (Son of Jacob); Bible stories—O. T. 40 p. Gr. 2 - 6.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Brian Wildsmith has retold the Biblical story of Joseph with detailed illustrations using lavish detail, framed in gold in a manner similar to the banding used for *The Easter Story* (Knopf, 1993). Winner of the Kate Greenaway Medal, Great Britain's highest honor for picture books, Wildsmith captures the desert locale perfectly through the use of warm colors, even to the endpapers with their muted sunset tones and the hieroglyphics for Joseph's name, while showing the beauty of Ancient Egypt as it must have been not with the artwork worn away from the centuries.

The opulence and greenery of Egypt is dramatically contrasted with the tent dwellings of Jacob, the desert, and the clothing of Joseph's family and is very apparent in the scene where Jacob's sons return to Canaan after buying grain: within the walls the city is colorful with green plants while outside the walls—the desert. This illustration also shows an Egyptian chariot carrying Joseph's servant chasing after the brother's caravan. A thought that until now had not entered my mind.

The narrative is the Biblical story of Joseph and will provide a good visual to the telling of the Bible lesson. A gem. LGR

**Jonah and the Two Great Fish, by Mordicai Gerstein.** LCCN 96031971. New York: Simon & Schuster Bks. for Y.R.'s, 1997. ISBN 0689813732, HBB, \$16.00.

224. Jonah (Biblical prophet); Bible stories—O.T. Unp. PS - Gr. 2.

Quality—4 Acceptability—3

If this title gives you a moment's pause, it should, since here Jonah gets swallowed by not one big fish, as in the Biblical account, but by two big fish. Until that point and after the author returns to the Biblical account.

Readers follow Jonah from his call to preach repentance in Nineveh, to his refusal and flight from the Lord, the storm at sea, being swallowed by the great fish (where the text departs from the book of Jonah. This "great fish" is too cushy for Jonah to ponder his sin of defiance, so to allow Jonah time for reflection, a second larger fish swallows Jonah. Though that is inaccurate, the illustration is delightful: Jonah floats from one fish's mouth into the waiting jaws of a larger, more fearsome fish. Inside the second fish Jonah has time to think, repent, and conclude that he will follow God's command. Jonah's effective preaching causes many inhabitants to repent which results in his disappointment and anger when the Lord forgives Nineveh and shows mercy by not destroying them. The story concludes with the lesson of the fig tree.

This is a beautifully illustrated, well-told account of the reluctant prophet, and except for the two fish could be recommended wholeheartedly. Illustrations capture the architecture of the Middle East while color tones vary with each illustration. The book design uses a variety of page layouts from double page spread to one illustration per page with some smaller illustrations set off by frames and arranged two-by-two at the upper portion of the page. These illustrations provide much detail and understanding of the Middle East. The illustration of Jonah fleeing the hand of God shows him against a night sky where the clouds form God's hand and a crescent moon and star his eye. God's arm and hand is mirrored by Jonah's posture when running with his own arm and hand outstretched.

There is much to like in this volume. The catch is, of course, the two fish. The illustrations are worth the purchase price and you could discuss differences between the story and the Biblical account. Peter Spier's *The Book of Jonah* is more Scripturally accurate, though for a slightly younger audience. LGR



**Stories from the New Testament : With Masterwork Paintings Inspired by the Stories,** LCCN 96046558. New York: Simon & Schuster Bks. for Y.R.'s, 1997. ISBN 0689812973, HBB, \$18.00.

225.5. Bible stories—N.T. 45 p. K - Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

*Stories from the New Testament* with script from the King James Version of the Bible is coupled with "masterwork paintings inspired by the stories." There is nothing extraneous, just the Bible and incredibly beautiful visuals by the Masters.

The table of contents lists the stories in the book. A small reproduction of each drawing and a brief biography of each artist are in the index of paintings.

A superb addition to anyone's book collection. SAH

**The Miracles of Jesus and Other Bible Stories, retold by Selina Hastings.** Nashville: Tommy Nelson, 1994. ISBN 0849940303, PAP, \$6.99.

232.9. Miracles—Christianity; Bible stories. 64 p. Gr. 4 - 8.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Twenty eight stories from the Bible are retold by Selina Hastings. The first ten are stories of Jesus' miracles. The next eleven stories take the reader through events leading up to and including the crucifixion, the resurrection and ascension. The last seven tell the story of the early church, beginning with Pentecost and ending with Paul's journeys.

Colorful drawings help the reader understand the text. In addition, the book is filled with photographs of places in the stories and objects commonly used in Jesus' time. There are also several maps. This is an attractively formatted book. It is visually engaging, with pictures that capture the reader's imagination. Although the stories are told simply and intended for children, there is nothing childish about the presentation, so it may appeal to teens and adults as well. Printed in full color on quality paper, this book is an exceptional value. CSJ

**Precious Time : Children Living with Muscular Dystrophy, by Thomas Bergman.** (Don't Turn Away.) LCCN 96005726. Milwaukee: Gareth Stevens Publishing, 1996. ISBN 0836815971, HBB, \$7.20.

362.1. Duchenne muscular dystrophy; Diseases. 48 p. Gr. 2 - 4.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

A photographic journey of young Stefan's life awaits readers in *Precious Time*, the story of a child living with muscular dystrophy and attempting to experience a full life as he races against time, he and his family hoping that a cure will be found for this disabling disease. As in other books of the Don't Turn Away series, author Bergman exposes his audience to children like themselves except that these children have diseases or disabilities that intrude on their normal lives. Stefan and his story in *Precious Time* are inspiring as is his sense of humor and strength.

Each book in this series contains a glossary and index as well as a list of organizations and other helpful resources such as book and videos. The question-answer section and list of projects also help readers better understand the lives of these afflicted children. This is a valuable addition to any library. CC

**Writing with Style, by Sue Young.** (Scholastic Guides.) LCCN 96008772. New York: Scholastic, 1997. ISBN 0590509772, HBB, \$12.95.

372.6. English language—Composition and exercises; Creative writing. 143 p. Gr. 4 - 9.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

*Writing With Style* takes the writer through four steps; planning, producing, polishing, and presenting. Throughout the text, writing samples by real kids keep the book relevant. The section on polishing includes clear, practical guidance on common difficulties such as verb agreement and word usage. The language is up-to-date, as is the information. For example, the section on bibliographies shows how to list information obtained on the Internet.

Sue Young has written a well-organized book with so much information that a student will refer to it again and again. The complete Table of Contents, Index, and use of two colors of ink throughout make it easy to find information quickly. Most important, the book is inspiring. My twelve-year-old read it and said, "I hope we get a big writing assignment so I can use what I learned in this book." CSJ

**Submarines & Ships, by Richard Humble.** (See Through History.) LCCN 96061760. New York: Viking, 1997. ISBN 0670867780, HBB, \$17.99.

387.2. Submarines; Ships. 48 p.

**Houses & Homes, by Tim Wood.** (See Through History.) LCCN 96061761. New York: Viking, 1997. ISBN 0670867772, HBB, \$17.99.

643. Houses 48 p. Gr. 1 - Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

From the rafts and reed boats of the Sumerians to the aircraft carriers and submarines of our modern world, *Submarines and Ships* provides an encyclopedia of water travel throughout the ages. Colored illustrations, drawings, and photographs enhance the informative text by Richard Humble to keep the reader seeking. As with others in this series, four ships are featured with

acrylic panels which allow the reader to see inside a Roman Merchant Ship, a Chinese Junk, Bushnell's Turtle (a one-man submarine) and Civil War "Davids" (submarines), and France's Normandie luxury liner. Instruments used by mariners as well as crew members and customs are covered in the text.

Tim Wood explores *Houses & Homes* from Eskimo igloos and Romany caravans to skyscrapers and biospheres. Illustrations and text not only depict houses and homes around the world, but also examine how people in different societies have learned to live together in community. Cut away illustrations allow the reader to view inside homes of early Egyptians to see how they were heated, did their cooking, and stored their foods. Four see through pages show Sargon's Palace in Assyria, a peasant home of the Mayan civilization, the Chambord castle of the Loire Valley, and early weaver's cottages of the Western world. Each book contains a table of contents, time line of key dates, short glossary and index. JD

***Necklace of Stars*, by Veronika Martenova Charles. Toronto: Stoddart, 1996. ISBN 0773729674, HBB, \$17.95.**

398.2. Peru—Folklore. Unp. PS - Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—4

High in the clouds on an Andes mountainside lives little boy Miguel with his mother and father. The others have moved to the distant cities. Now Miguel must make his Necklace of Stars and decide for himself where his heart abides.

Author and artist (as well as singer and songwriter), Veronika Charles went to the Andes to research *Necklace of Stars*. Combining her love of the Andes and their people, mythology, and history, Charles presents this intimate, dreamy tale about the deep realities of heart and home. The reproduction of her illustrations encourages us to touch and experience their deep textures, truthful colors, story telling qualities. Her verbal reproduction of the myth, the history that inspired it, and the growth of Miguel's intimate love for his home draws the reader inside the story. The word magic is not mentioned, but some magical things happen as Miguel enters the myth. This book tells the story of an unique people and their unique choices yet addresses the culture shock problems of today's denizens. Simply told, each word is chosen as carefully as Miguel chooses the stars for his necklace. DJE

***Fairy Tales of the Brothers Grimm*, retold and introduced by Neil Philip; illustrated by Isabelle Brent. LCCN 97060082. New York: Viking, 1997. ISBN 0670872903, HBB, \$19.99.**

398.2. Fairy tales. 140 p. Gr. 1 - Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—4

Beautifully illustrated and bordered in blue with gilt edges by Isabelle Brent, this most recent compilation of *The Fairy Tales of the Brothers Grimm* by Neil Philip carries the look and feel of a gift book to treasure. A four page introduction at the beginning gives the adult reader an insight into the pioneering work of the Grimm brothers. "This new selection of stories contains some of their best-known tales, such as 'The Frog Prince,' 'Rumpelstiltskin,' and 'Snow White,' as well as some of their short comic stories,

chosen to counter the widespread impression that all their tales are Grimm by name and grim by nature. There is cruelty and darkness in Grimm, but there is comedy and light as well." The volume contains twenty tales from the Grimm collection sure to please the collector of folk and fairy tales. JD

***The Mean Hyena : A Folktale from Malawi*, retold by Judy Sierra; illustrated by Michael Bryant. LCCN 96000349. New York: Lodestar Books/Dutton, 1997. ISBN 0525675108, HBB, \$15.99.**

398.2. Folklore—Malawi; Animals—Folklore. Unp. K - Gr. 3.

Quality—3 Acceptability—3

Like the Native American people, the Africans have a grand tradition in storytelling. Like Jesus parables these stories are used to help those who hear learn a lessons that they can remember for years to come. This is the folk tale of a very mean hyena. One day Fisi, the hyena, decided to play one of his mean tricks on Kamba the tortoise. To make the best of a bad situation, Kamba tells the animals to come and get "Coats, beautiful new coats." Kamba gives the zebra his stripes and the leopard his spots. Soon Fisi is so jealous of the other animals new coats he goes back to Kamba. After the hyena puts the tortoise back on the ground, the tortoise proceeds to give the hyena a new coat with spots of sticky tree gum. But it began to itch and as Fisi rolled on the ground his coat became dirty and matted. Then he began to chew on it. To this day the hyena laughs at his coat and you will too. The moral of the story is "don't play a trick on someone unless you want an even bigger trick played on you."

Judy Sierra set the scene for the book with a group of children sitting in a circle listening to a story. Then as the story proceeds you see that Kamba the tortoise, although a victim, carries on the best he can without complaining or grumbling. Michael Bryant with a sketch style has splashed watercolor over the entire page. His illustrations draw you into the story and help to set the scene for the story. They make a very nice complimentary team. Fisi, the hyena truly looks scheming and wicked when he laughs.

This is a beautiful hardcover book. Folk tales are a wonderful teaching tool. This story doesn't not have the most inspiring moral at the end of the story, but it does still have value for the children to understand that being mean and playing tricks will have its consequences. MS

***The Two Brothers : A Legend of Jerusalem*, retold and illustrated by Neil Waldman. LCCN 96000731. New York: Atheneum Bks. for Young Readers, 1997. ISBN 0689319363, HBB, \$17.00.**

398.2. Solomon, King of Israel—Legends; Jews—Folklore. Unp. Gr. 2 - 5.

Quality—5 Acceptability—4

If you think of this as legend, it is cataloged 398.2, this story will explain how Solomon came to build the Temple in Jerusalem. But be forewarned, it is not the biblical account, rather from Judaic traditions.

The story tells of two brothers, owners of adjacent fields. Each sees a need to help the other and under cover of darkness they do, unaware that King Solomon has come from his palace and sits watching. This is a story of love, concern, and helping where a need is

seen as well as how the Temple came to be built. Solomon is impressed with the brothers' love for one another and decides to build his Temple on the very spot where they literally ran into one another while trying to help the other out.

Illustrations show characters that are Jewish, not European, which is a strength. The story is well-written and the illustrations attractive. LGR

***The Cow in the House*, retold by Harriet Ziefert; illustrated by Emily Bolam. (A Viking Easy-to-Read Classic.) LCCN 96040057. New York: Viking, 1997. ISBN 0670867799, HBB, \$11.99.**

398.2. Jews—Folklore; Folklore. Unp.

***The Ugly Duckling*, retold by Harriet Ziefert; illustrated by Emily Bolam. (A Viking Easy-to-Read Classic.) LCCN 96040056. New York: Viking, 1997. ISBN 0670867802, HBB, \$11.99.**

398.2. Fairy tales. Unp. K - Gr. 1.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

There was a man who had such a noisy house who couldn't sleep. The bed creaked, the chair squeaked, and the roof leaked. So one day he went to a wise man for advice. The wise man told him to get a cow. The man thought it was silly but he did what the man said. Pretty soon he also had a donkey, a sheep, a dog, and a cat. Then the wise man said to throw all the animals out. The man did this and now he could sleep he had such a quiet house. The is a fun predictable, repetitive story for kids.

The story of the ugly duckling is a familiar story to most readers. Eight ducklings hatch and seven are beautiful and yellow. One, however, looks strange and rather ugly. The poor duckling is teased and feels ugly and out-of-place until one day he meets some swans. He finds out that he is not an ugly duckling at all—but a beautiful swan.

These books are part of the Viking Easy-to-Read Program Level 1. Harriet Ziefert has taken these familiar stories and recreated them into short, simple sentences with word repetition to help children who are just beginning to read. Children will enjoy being able to read this familiar story for themselves. Emily Bolam has used simple, yet bold, illustrations. The illustrations also help the reader to be able to follow the story. They have created a good combination of words and pictures that will help each child be a success as they learn to read. These books are a nice, convenient size in hardback form that will stand up to the heavy use they will receive. MS

***Science*, by David Rubel. (Scholastic Kid's Encyclopedia.) LCCN 94046529. New York: Scholastic Reference, 1995. ISBN 0590493671, HBB, \$18.95.**

500. Science—Encyclopedias. 192 p. Gr. 1 - 6.

Quality—3 Acceptability—2

Dive in and take a swim into the wonderful world of Science with David Rubel's science encyclopedia. From astronomy to physics and chemistry, this elementary encyclopedia covers most topics that might be of interest to the young scientist.

Carefully chosen variations on bright colors are used throughout the book in drawings, charts and graphs, and are intermixed with color and black and white photos. This illustration technique makes every

subject seem exciting and new, and will make kids want to study science.

Topics are covered briefly, in a clear, concise form, and alphabetized like a dictionary for easy reference. This makes the book easy to use as a tool for finding a topic for further research, but if you are looking for detail, you won't find it here.

The encyclopedia has an entire section devoted to presenting the theory of evolution as fact; many of the other sections are also based on this theory.

The encyclopedia contains a section on human reproduction, which is illustrated with a drawing of a woman's reproductive organs.

The quality of the book's binding is disappointing. After only a few times of flipping through the it, its pages were bubbling and coming loose. VGS

***How Spiders Make Their Webs*, by Jill Bailey. (Nature's Mysteries.) LCCN 96019941. New York: Benchmark Books, 1997. ISBN 0761404562, HBB, \$14.95.**

595.4. Spiders; Spider webs. 32 p. Gr. 1 - 5.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

In a 32 page, library bound book Jim Bailey tells how spiders make their webs. Colorful photographs accompany the text on each page as a spider completes its web and catches its prey. This Benchmark Book is from the Nature's Mysteries series. Other titles in the series include *How Bats "See" in the Dark*, *How Bees Make Honey*, *How Birds Fly*, *How Fish Swim*, and *How Plants Grow*.

With a table of contents, index, glossary, and bibliography for further reading, the information about spiders is very usable for reports, sharing, or just for satisfying the desire to want to know.

The durable binding makes this a good choice for the non-fiction section of any library. The beginning reader and advanced reader both will benefit from this well-organized book. MK

***Bedbugs in Our House : True Tales of Insect, Bug, and Spider Discovery*, written and illustrated by Jennifer Owings Dewey. LCCN 97012787. New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997. ISBN 0761450068, HBB, \$14.95.**

595.7. Insects. 64 p. Gr. 3 - 6.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Award winning author Jennifer Owings Dewey interlaces scientific facts of arthropods with her own childhood encounters with these unique animals. Stories of bedbug bites, a science teacher ingesting an earthworm, scintillating fireflies, yearning for transmogrification of her baby brother, learning by trial and error what tadpoles eat, a cousin's black widow bite, and a horde of locusts will appeal to a reader's inquisitive nature while learning about insects, bugs, and spiders.

The pencil diagrams throughout *Bedbugs In Our House* provide children with the arthropods' names, both nonscientific and scientific, and the author identifies the color sketches on the dust jacket. The boldface words in the text comprise the glossary, and a

useful reference tool of the index is the illustrations' boldface page numbers.

The book is appropriate for eight- to eleven-year-olds, but children will need help with pronouncing the scientific names of the animals as the phonetics are not supplied. Classes of Insects, preceding the introduction, is an excellent source of information utilized best after reading the book. A great choice for a unit study on arthropods. DBW

***One Day at a Time : Children Living with Leukemia*, by Thomas Bergman. (Don't Turn Away.) LCCN 88042972. Milwaukee: Gareth Stevens Children's Books, 1988. ISBN 1555329136, HBB, \$11.07.**

618.92. Leukemia; Diseases. 56 p. Gr. 2 - 5.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Captured in photographs, *One Day at a Time* takes us into the world of Hanna and Frederick and their families, their health care, their lives. These young children are leukemia patients and Thomas Bergman conveys their positive attitude toward life and their fighting spirits to regain good health. Though often touching, the photos are not melancholy and give children and adults a realistic view into the life of a young leukemia patient.

Also included in this informative book, part of the Don't Turn Away series for young people, is a glossary, an index, lists of books and organizations that deal with leukemia specifically and cancer in general, and a question-answer section with suggested projects. This book shows the young reader that illness should not cause fear, separation and embarrassment but rather it can bring out the best in each of us and cause us to share our lives. This book would be a positive children's selection in any school or public library. CC

***Man on the Moon*, by Anastasia Suen; illustrated by Benrei Huang. LCCN 97002628. New York: Viking, 1997. ISBN 0670873934, HBB, \$17.99.**

629.45. Project Apollo (U.S.); Apollo II (Spacecraft); Space flight to the moon. Unp. PS - Gr. 3.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

As the United States prepares to commemorate thirty years since the landing of the astronauts on the moon, Anastasia Suen describes in simplified text the mission for the very young reader. The simplification loses nothing in the telling as the terms Mission Control, Houston, Eagle, Apollo, and Saturn are all there, as are the famous words upon landing on the moon and those uttered by Armstrong as he stepped upon this satellite of earth.

For the very young child interested in rockets and space the colorful illustrations by Benrei Huang will be a great introduction to the world of space travel. The author's note at the end of the story tells what she was doing the day the astronauts landed on the moon and an interesting fact about their now famous quotation. She has also included an illustration of the plaque left on the moon. JD

***Harvest Year*, by Cris Peterson; photographs by Alvis Uptis. LCCN 95080775. Honesdale, Penn.: Boyds Mills Press, 1996. ISBN 1563975718, HBB, \$14.95.**

633. Agriculture—United States; Food crops—United States. Unp. K - Gr. 2.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Harvest takes place all through the year in the United States. Every month food is produced in all our fifty states. Harvest is a year-round season in America. There are carrots and pineapples in January, strawberries and salmon in April, watermelon and peas in July and shrimp and pecans in December. Each month produces a new food in a new part of the country.

Chris Peterson has created very clear and concise text. Each month has a map to accompany the text that show the area of the United States each new food comes from. Children will learn about the foods they eat and also learn the geography of our country. Each month also has brilliant, colorful photos by Alvis Uptis. Many of the photos contain children sampling the delicious foods. Also included in the photos are fields and orchards of each crop and many times the equipment used to harvest.

This is a beautiful hardcover picture book that has great value in teaching about foods. Children can learn where their food comes from before it gets to the grocery store. They can also learn about harvest, technology and seasons. Children and adults alike, will love this book! MS

***I Want To Be a Veterinarian*, by Stephanie Maze and Catherine O'Neill Grace. (I Want To Be...Book Series.) LCCN 96000215. San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1997. ISBN 0152012966, HBB, \$16.00.**

636.089. Occupations; Vocational guidance; Veterinarians. 48 p.

***I Want To Be an Astronaut*, by Stephanie Maze and Catherine O'Neill Grace. (I Want To Be...Book Series.) LCCN 96017481. San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1997. ISBN 0152013008, HBB, \$16.00.**

629.45. Astronautics—Vocational guidance; Astronauts; Occupations; Vocational guidance. 48 p.

***I Want To Be an Engineer*, by Stephanie Maze and Catherine O'Neill Grace. (I Want To Be...Book Series.) LCCN 96026982. San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1997. ISBN 0152012982, HBB, \$16.00.**

620. Occupations; Vocational guidance; Engineering—Vocational guidance; Engineers. 48 p. Gr. 4 - 6.

Quality—3 Acceptability—5

The *I Want To Be...series* published by Harcourt Brace & Company consists of the three titles above, plus *I Want To Be a Dancer*.

All three of the reviewed titles follow a common format. They all are profusely illustrated, mostly in color, with some historical illustrations in black and white. The illustrations are well chosen, up-to-date, and are nicely integrated with the forty-six pages of text.

Each title shows actual professionals at work; each title shows students of various ages engaging in activities which might lead to careers in the profession; each title details the history of the profession and highlights the career of some of that professions foremost practitioners. Dr. James Herriot is listed among the famous veterinarians along with Dr. Daniel E. Salmon, the discoverer of Salmonella.

These titles make a point of showing a diverse group of professionals including representatives of various

racers, nationalities and both sexes. Veterinarians are shown working in traditional venues such as with pets or in zoos as well as in some venues that are more unusual. For instance, a holistic vet is shown who uses acupuncture and diet therapy; vets are pictured working with wild animals such as koalas, pandas, alligators, and macaws.

The layout and formatting of each title is attractive and imaginative; the writing is engaging and accessible. Every title offers a "Did you know?" section of amazing facts. Did you know, for example, that dogs with crooked teeth can be fitted with braces? Unfamiliar terminology is either explained in the text—for example, the reader is told cardiology means the treating the heart—or explained in a separate vocabulary section. Each title features a useful list of sources for further information. Photography credits are appended.

The *I Want to Be an Astronaut* title appears to be less about the profession—obviously quite limited and difficult to enter—than about space flight in general.

It was intriguing to see an animatronic engineer engaged in making of the lions for the movie *Jumanji* in the *I Want to Be an Engineer* title. Also, we meet an engineer who gets to work with Legos.

Unfortunately, none of the titles had either an index or a table of contents. They seem to take on the flavor of a media production rather than a book: the illustrations pop out of canted frames and are often whimsical. The photographs and design effects almost overpower the text.

What seems to be lacking among the team responsible for these titles is a good editor. I found several errors of fact which should not have reached print. The *I Want to Be an Astronaut* title states that the dark blue channels between the islands (Bahamas islands as seen from space) plunge "one to two thousand miles deep." This should be feet not miles; the ocean is not thousands of miles deep. Also, there is a photograph in the *I Want to Be an Engineer* title which is improperly labeled. It shows an aircraft carrier with 1980's and 1990's vintage aircraft but it is captioned 1958. It is shown among a gallery of photographs of engineering firsts such as the Empire State building, 1931, or the aqua-lung, 1943. Since aircraft carriers date from the era prior to World War II, the date of 1958 is inexplicable; it is neither a "first," nor is a 1950's era ship being depicted.

Overall, this series would make an engaging and current addition to a collection of career exploration materials, but note the reservations listed above. DWR

***Object Lessons with Origami*, by Geneva Cobb Iijima; art by Dale Rohr. Cincinnati: Standard Publishing, 1990. ISBN 0874036399, PAP, \$7.00.**

736. Origami; Object lessons—Christianity. 48 p. PS - Gr. 3.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Biblical principles are combined with the Japanese art of paper folding in *Object Lessons with Origami* by Geneva Cobb Iijima. Each of the twenty simple stories illustrate a Bible verse and fall into either the category of Christian character, sermon on the mount or the Christian life. The accompanying origami instructions literally bring each story to life. For example, one scripture verse is Ephesians 6:17, "Accept God's

salvation to be your helmet". Making a wearable paper helmet is then the origami project for the story.

Origami instructions are clear and illustrations invaluable. Helpful information about paper type and a glossary of terms will insure that even those with all thumbs can succeed. Each story has a materials list with suggestions for even paper color. Short entertaining stories will capture the attention of even preschool children, although they will need help with the paper folding. Older elementary age children will delight in seeing their creation emerge from the square of paper. EC

***Draw Cars*, by Doug DuBosque. LCCN 97025458. Columbus, N.C.: Peel Productions, 1997. ISBN 0939217295, PAP, \$8.95.**

743. Drawing—Technique; Automobiles in art. 63 p.

***Draw Sports Figures*, by Damon Reinagle. LCCN 97025457. Columbus, N.C.: Peel Productions, 1997. ISBN 0939217325, PAP, \$8.95.**

743. Drawing—Technique; Athletes in art. 63 p. Gr. 1 - 9.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Drawing is a skill anyone can use, and it is one that can be learned. Sometimes, however, teaching methods are not geared toward personal interests. That's what makes a drawing series by Peel Productions, which includes *Draw Sports Figures*, by Damon Reinagle, and *Draw Cars* by Doug DuBosque, such a perfect tool to motivate young people to try their hand at art.

*Draw Sports Figures* presents a large cross section of sports in an easy to follow figure drawing manual. The uncomplicated sketches and clear directions makes the process of drawing athletes seem simple, and there are fun sports facts and trivia questions included to make the book even more interactive.

This same format is used in *Draw Cars*, which includes a gallery of "weird" cars that have been manufactured. Also included is an informative section on tools and tricks that can be used to achieve more professional results.

These books are not only fun to look at and read, they make learning to draw seem like an accessible achievement even for the most inexperienced artist.

One drawback to this type of drawing manual is that individual creativity is limited; however, basic drawing skills are taught which can be applied to any drawing situation.

Listed on the last page are more books in the series, as well as an address to write for a catalogue, and an Internet address where more titles can be found. VGS

***Draw! Desert Animals*, by Doug DuBosque. LCCN 95051693. Columbus, N.C.: Peel Productions, 1996. ISBN 0939217260, PAP, \$7.95.**

743. Drawing—Technique; Desert animals in art. 63 p.

***Draw! Grassland Animals*, by Doug DuBosque. LCCN 95051692. Columbus, N.C.: Peel Productions, 1996. ISBN 0939217252, PAP, \$7.95.**

743.. Drawing—Technique; Grassland animals in art. 63 p. Gr. 2 - Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

DuBosque has assembled drawings of twenty-eight desert animals. There are elements which are scary:

spiders, scorpions, snakes. There are also more traditional desert creatures: owl, camels, cats, lizards. Each page contains hints and tips about completing the drawing. Along with instructions and tips for each step in the drawing, there is a brief descriptive paragraph about the animal. At the end of the book, DuBosque includes instructions for a portfolio to use for storing the newly created masterpiece.

This collection of thirty-one grassland animals will excite readers/artists. Featured in the title are many animals which interest children. The warthog, meerkat, hyena, wildebeest, and others are often requested. Each page contains hints and tips for the drawing. Along with instructions and tips for each step in the drawing, there is a brief descriptive paragraph about the animal and its habits. There is practical advice which will help young artists. He recommends washing your hands, so graphite from your fingertips will not smear and ruin the work. At the end of the book, DuBosque includes instructions for a portfolio to use for storing the newly created masterpiece.

Throughout the Draw! series, DuBosque encourages the reader/artist. He includes many tips for comparing one step to the previous step of illustrations. The areas he points out will make the drawing process much smoother and enjoyable. For those with even minimal skill, this helps make the experience rewarding. I was able to complete the Desert Cottontail on pp. 18-19 quite to my own amazement. In the collection of included animals, something should appeal to all drawers. CMH

***Butterfly Kisses*, by Bob Carlisle; text adapted by Cindy Sterling; illustrated by Sally Huss. LCCN 97039757. Nashville: Tommy Nelson, 1997. ISBN 0849958229, HBB, \$12.99.**

782.. Children's songs; Fathers and daughters—Songs and music; Songs. Unp. PS - Gr. 2.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

The story behind the popular song "Butterfly Kisses" by Bob Carlisle and Randy Thomas is told in this book. A father describes his daughter's growing-up years from her first "butterfly kiss," a fluttering her eyelashes against his cheek, to a first pony ride, a part in the school pageant, braces on her teeth and sliding into home plate during "the big game." Through it all her daddy thanks God for her and for all the love that goes with those "butterfly kisses."

Sally Huss's light and colorful illustrations, plus a handwritten text, enhance the personal tone of this story. Although it's the story of one father and daughter, any parent can enjoy reading it with his or her child. It may be used to start a conversation on the things parents remember and appreciate in their own children. The lyrics to the song, "Butterfly Kisses," are included in the book. DEB

***Jump the World : Stories, Poems, and Things to Make and Do from Around the World*, by Sarah Pooley. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 1997. ISBN 0525457984, HBB, \$17.99.**

808. Short stories; American poetry; Children's poetry; Handicrafts; Cookery. 76 p. Gr. 2 - 6.

Quality—5 Acceptability—4

Artist Sarah Pooley gathered stories and poems from around the world and compiled them in an attractive

book. She added colorful illustrations, recipes, activities, and craft projects. A map of the world inside the front and back covers makes it easy to point out what part of the world the story comes from.

*Jump the World* is a light-hearted sampling of other cultures. Like most legends and fairy tales, these contain some trickery and magic. One story in this collection has a sea serpent who likes to smoke Indian tobacco. CSJ



**Prairie Born, poem by Dave Bouchard ; paintings by Peter Shostak. LCCN 97067365. Victoria, B.C.: Orca, 1997. ISBN 1551430924, HBB, \$16.95.**

811. Prairie Provinces—Canada; Prairie Provinces in art. 25 p. Gr. 1 - Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

*Prairie Born* is a beautiful book about the enduring relationship between man and the land. It will evoke wonderful memories in those born and raised on the prairie, and will introduce those new to prairie landscapes to a place where earth and sky seem to go on forever. The book is all about patterns and cycles—day and night, summer and fall, sowing and reaping—which are always the same, and yet ever-changing.

The full-page, color illustrations by Peter Shostak are like windows opening onto vast vistas of space. Shostak favors natural shades and earth tones, blending all together with a wonderful sense of light and texture. Human figures provide a focal point, but are often dwarfed by their surroundings. -

Bouchard's poetic narrative takes the form of a stream of memories; the writer uses the past tense throughout, with the exception of one repeating section in present tense which acts as a sort of chorus. The resulting sing-song rhythm will appeal to young listeners, and will make *Prairie Born* a great read-aloud favorite. SS

**Rebus Riot, by Bonnie Christensen. LCCN 96007470. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 1997. ISBN 0803720009, HBB, \$14.99.**

811. American poetry; Rebus. Unp. PS - Gr. 3.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

*Rebus Riot* contains a collection of verses that uses pictures in place of some of the words. Perfect for parents to read with small children or older readers to enjoy on their own, the rhyme puzzles are sure to please. Excellent illustrations add to the fun as well as the small picture keys with words to be matched with the picture in each rhyme.

This is definitely a book to be read aloud to enjoy the sounds as well as the sights. The word solutions are given at the back of the book. Perfect pals, Crazy Daisy, Fishy Business, Heebie-Jeebies, The Tail End, and others; fifteen rebus with picture clues to be solved by you. MK

**Twinkle, Twinkle : An Animal Lover's Mother Goose, painted and photographed by Bobbi Fabian. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 1996. ISBN 0525459065, HBB, \$14.99.**

811. Nursery rhyme.s 31 p. PS - Gr. 2.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

There was an old woman who lived in a shoe and her children were six winsome puppies. How about the wonderful yellow ducklings who sail off as rub-a-dub-dub three men in a tub? Jack be nimble, Jack be quick and Joey Kangaroo jumps over a candlestick.

From Mother Hubbard's Old English Sheep Puppy to Little Bo Peep's Lamb (including his tail), *Twinkle, Twinkle* presents sixteen Mother Goose verses illustrated with happy animal babies. Photographer, painter, animal lover and Mother Goose devotee, Australian magazine illustrator Bobbi Fabian combines her talents and loves to present this delightful version of a family classic.

Fabian painted each background, added the live animal and waited for a propitious moment to photograph the winsome result. The words dance the individual pattern of the rhyme: rock-a-bye baby rocks across the page; goosey, goosey, gander wanders around. This is a book that begs for group reading. The pages are strong - the binding holds together through various handlings. It is big enough to hold up in front of a group or spread across two laps. Children will enjoy drawing their own versions of the well defined animal subjects. DJE

**In the Swim, poems and paintings by Douglas Florian. LCCN 95052616. San Diego: Harcourt, Brace, 1997. ISBN 0152013075, HBB, \$15.00.**

811. Marine animals—Poetry; Humorous poetry; American poetry. 47 p. PS - Gr. 3.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

*In the Swim*, a collection of twenty-one humorous poems, introduces the reader, through sight and sound, to an aquarium of delightful adventures. The variety is unlimited as Douglas Florian, with watercolor and picturesque words, portrays an unmannerly piranhas; flatish, mattish flounder; ugly blenny; crammed crab; rainbow trout and many other sea creatures.

Experience this under-sea trip by swimming with the expressive words and flowing colors from page to page. This ideal read-aloud book, with its light hearted humor, must be savored over and over again.

As an added benefit to the enjoyment will be the information about the habits and characteristics of the many under-water creatures. MK

**Nathaniel Talking, by Eloise Greenfield; illustrated by Jan Spivey Gilchrist. LCCN 88051011. New York: Black Butterfly Children's Books, 1988. ISBN 0863162010, PAP, \$6.95.**

811. Children's poetry; Afro-Americans—Poetry. Unp. Gr. 2 - 7.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

"It's Nathaniel talking / and Nathaniel's me / I'm talking about / my philosophy..." are the opening words of this compilation of poems expressed from the point of view of Nathaniel, a young African-American boy. He reveals how he feels about being nine, making friends, and missing his mother after she died.

Using various poetic forms such as rap, blues, and free verse, author Eloise Greenfield captures a nine-year-old boy's sensitivity and self-awareness for us to share. Especially touching are the verses about character and love being more important than material possessions. The illustrations are realistically styled in pencil and

charcoal. The full-color cover is nice, but the paper binding may not hold up to repeated use. This book won the Literature and Responsibility Award (1993), Coretta Scott King Award (1990), and American Library Association Notable Children's Book (1989). KSG

**Jumpety-Bumpety Hop : A Parade of Animal Poems, selected and illustrated by Kay Choroa. LCCN 97010959. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 1997. ISBN 0525458255, HBB, \$16.99.**

811.008. American poetry—Collections; English poetry—Collections. 40 p. PS - Gr. 3.

Quality—5 Acceptability—4

*Jumpety-Bumpety Hop: A Parade of Animals* is an anthology of old and new poems to delight children of all ages.

Familiar authors such as Mary Mapes Dodge and Ogden Nash, as well as virtual unknowns make their contributions. The verses are meant to be read aloud. "Call alligator raggedy-mouth. Call alligator humpy-bum. Call alligator all dem rude word, but better wait till you cross river." (Don't Call Alligator Long-Mouth till You Cross River, John Agard, p. 23)

Artist Kay Sproat Choroa illustrates the poetry with an eye on the sound of the words, carefully crafting the drawings to maintain the integrity of fancy. She uses headers of gaily-painted characters to announce each separate animal, the topic emblazoned in blue or red or green. The table of contents and index are available to guide the reader. SAH



**Home on the Range : Cowboy Poetry, selected by Paul B. Janeczko; pictures by Bernie Fuchs. LCCN 96043111. New York: Dial Books, 1997. ISBN 0803719116, HBB, \$15.99.**

811.008. Cowboys—Poetry; Ranch life—Poetry; American poetry—Collections. 40 p. Gr. 2 - Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Nostalgic poetry combined with breath-taking drawings make *Home on the Range*, selected by Paul B. Janeczko and illustrated by Bernie Fuchs, an excellent reference book on Americana for the home and library. The life of the cowboy is explored in this autobiographic collection. The book encompasses a wide timeframe from the taming of the Wild West to present day ranching.

A variety of poetic styles are represented in *Home on the Range*: free verse, ballad, and iambic pentameter, to mention just a few.

The drawings of award-winning Fuchs give the visual magic to complement the mental image of the words. The detailed sketches are warmed with just a splash of color.

*Home on the Range* has value beyond being an above-average anthology. It contains information on the life of the cowboy, the farmer, the farmhand. Its use could be extended to community gatherings and socials at retirement centers. SAH

*Once Upon Ice and Other Frozen Poems*, selected by Jane Yolen; photographs by Jason Stemple. LCCN 96084165. Honesdale, Penn.: WordSong/Boyd's Mills Press, 1997. ISBN 1563974088, HBB, \$17.95.

811.008. Ice—Poetry; Poetry collections. 40 p. Gr. 2 - 6.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

In *Once Upon Ice*, frozen water creates illusions across a wintry landscape, and those illusions invite the viewer to move beyond the known world into the world of imagination. Ordinary ice becomes an iceosaur, a trapped leaf becomes a button for a cold cape, and jagged ice becomes a river's necklace, but that's only the beginning!

Photographs by Jason Stemple were the inspiration for twenty-two new poems by Jane Yolen and other selected authors. Writers were invited to view Stemple's photos and create a poem about what they saw, and the result is delightful! The poems are as varied in style as they are in meaning, and yet are short and sweet: just the way children like them.

While the photographs themselves are simple and uncluttered, the words they inspired are penetrating. These poems are a tribute to the intricacy and complexity of the human mind, which never fails to reveal its creative powers when faced with a challenge.

*Once Upon Ice* is exciting to read, but the editing choices for the photographs makes them seem flat and washed out in comparison. It is difficult to tell what the original photographs may have looked like, so some of the book's potential charm is lost. Still, *Once Upon Ice* should inspire many creative endeavors among budding poets of all ages. VGS

*It's Raining Laughter*, poems by Nikki Grimes; photographs by Myles C. Pinkney. LCCN 96009631. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 1997. ISBN 0803720041, HBB, \$14.99.

811.54. Growth—Poetry; Afro-Americans—Poetry; Children—Poetry; American poetry. Unp. Gr. 1 - 4.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

In a delightful book of poems, *It's Raining Laughter*, Nikki Grimes presents us with infectious joy. She takes emotional characteristics that could be a "minus" and, with broad strokes, reverses them into a definite plus.

First person voice is used, encouraging instant identification with the reading audience. The photos by Myles C. Pinkney show ordinary children doing ordinary things, running, giggling with a friend, looking through a fence...ordinary, yet quite extraordinary in composition and clarity.

The book is a good read for children of all races, although Mr. Pinkney shows us just people of color. SAH

*Chickie Riddles*, by Katy Hall and Lisa Eisenberg; pictures by Thor Wickstrom. (Dial Easy-to-Read.) LCCN 94033170. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 1997. ISBN 0803717792, HBB, \$12.99.

818. Chickens—Wit and humor; Riddles; Jokes. 48 p. Gr. 1 - 3.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

*Chickie Riddles* by Katy Hall and Lisa Eisenberg contains forty pages of puns and riddles about chickens. If you have always wanted to know which side of a chicken has the most feathers, where chickens go to dance, or why chickens lay eggs, this is the book for you! *Chickie Riddles* is full of funny misinformation—the kind that delights young readers and motivates them to read to any available listener. Each riddle is accompanied by a silly, colorful picture drawn by Thor Wickstrom. PSM

*William Shakespeare's Macbeth*, retold by Bruce Coville; pictures by Gary Kelley. LCCN 97007582. New York: Dial Books, 1997. ISBN 0803719000, HBB, \$16.99.

822.3. Shakespeare, William, 1564-1616—Adaptations; Macbeth, King of Scotland, 11th century. Unp. Gr. 2 - 6 (7 - 10 reluctant reader).

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

*William Shakespeare's MacBeth* as retold by Bruce Colville is the time-honored tale of intrigue: MacBeth and Lady MacBeth and their ambitions for the throne of Scotland, the elimination of those who stood in their way, the terrible price exacted for such folly. This version takes a little different slant on the classic drama. The author employs prose rather than poetry, while keeping the famous quotations intact and in familiar surroundings.

The narrative leaps from mountain peak to mountain peak, hardly pausing for a breath. The characters wear either black or white hats; one has no problem sorting out the villain, the victim, the victor.

Gary Kelley's illustrations are filled with portent, awash with somber tones as if mourning the predicted and actual disaster. Colville's offering is an ideal introduction to the Bard, high interest with a vocabulary comfortable for the older "limited" reader. SAH

*Geography Wizardry for Kids*, by Margaret Kenda and Phyllis S. Williams; illustrations by Tim Robinson. LCCN 96026505. Hauppauge, N.Y.: Barron's, 1997. ISBN 0812097181, PAP, \$14.95.

912. Maps; Geography. 332 p. Gr. 3 - 6.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

*Geography Wizardry for Kids* by Margaret Kenda and Phyllis S. Williams is a compendium of projects, games, crafts and experiments calculated to entertain and teach geography at the same time. Within its 332 pages kids will find out how to make a flat map of a round world, concoct a "fountain of youth drink", and see how Eratosthenes measured the earth in 283 B.C. They will also learn why Gerardus Mercator was originally named Gerhard Kremer, and they can have lunch with Captain Cook (or take a whipping).

Most activities are described in about one to three pages. Each one give some narrative background information, a list of supplies, and a numbered sequence of instructions. Activities are grouped in chapters such as "Find the Crossroads and Addresses of the World" or "Design Your Own Creative Maps". Some of the activities are relatively simple; some are quite ambitious. Any time adult supervision is required it is noted in the text with a different colored typeface. Some planning ahead will be necessary as supplies such as disposable aluminum baking pans,

plastic overlays, and plaster of Paris may not be readily on hand.

The book is a softcover with a "perfect" binding and large blue typeface Headers and illustrations are found on every page and are printed in dark red. All the illustrations are drawings. Strangely, for a book about geography there are no real maps.

There is an index and glossary at the end of the book. It might have been helpful to categorize the index so that crafts, experiments, recipes, games, etc. were separately accessible. Upon reading the front cover blurb, which alluded to projects, games, crafts, and experiments, to my six year old, he immediately wanted to do a craft. It was not easy to pick one out using the index.

The material appears to be quite up to date; there is a section which mentions recent geographic name changes due to politics and newer forms of transliteration. For example, Eskimos are referred to as Inuit and Kiev is now Kiyev. Included in a list of suggestions to parents at the beginning of the book is the injunction to use the Internet and a web address for the *Hong Kong Standard* newspaper is provided. DWR

*From East to West with Lewis and Clark*, by Deborah Hedstrom ; illustrations by Sergio Martinez. (My American Journey; 1.) Sisters, Ore.: Questar, 1996. ISBN 1576730662, KIT, \$19.99.

917.804. Lewis and Clark Expedition (1804-1806)—Fiction; Lewis, Meriwether, 1774-1809—Fiction; Clark, William, 1770-1838—Fiction; Explorers—Fiction; Endurance (Character quality)—Fiction. 1 vol., 45 p., activity book , character book, map, misc.

*From Colonies to Country with George Washington*, by Deborah Hedstrom; illustrations by Sergio Martinez. (My American Journey; 2.) Sisters, Ore.: Questar, 1997. ISBN 1576731553, KIT, \$19.99.

973.3. United States—History—Revolution, 1775-1783—Fiction; Washington, George, 1732-1799—Fiction; Leadership (Character quality)—Fiction. 1 vol., 45 p., activity book , character book, map, misc. Gr. 3 - 6.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

My American Journey is a package deal that home schoolers will find especially helpful. *From East to West with Lewis and Clark* is the first in this new series. Five kits are complete and author, Deborah Hedstrom and the publishers plan to have fifteen kits in all. The kit contains a hardback book with a full color two-page-spread picture on the end papers. More full-page art, depicting Lewis and Clark's journey, is used throughout the book. The book is true to life with the addition of one fictional character from whose point of view the story is told.

An Activity Book includes such topics as Tracking, by identifying animal foot prints, Map Making, Checking Plants, Using Weapons, and Avoiding Danger. Another workbook emphasizes character building. The theme for this kit is Endurance. Each chapter is reviewed and then Scripture verses are quoted reinforcing what the Bible has to say about endurance.

Four other additions complete the kit: A map of Lewis and Clark's journey, a journal with actual entries from the trip, two facsimiles of the paper money used in 1806 and 1807, and four collectors cards. The cards for this kit are Thomas Jefferson, a Grizzly Bear, Sacajawea, and Lewis and Clark..

*From Colonies to Country* with George Washington is told from the viewpoint of fictional Ben Johnston, a lad of sixteen, hired as an assistant to Washington. This book also has full-page art.

There is an activity book and the character building book deals with leadership. The four complements to the kit are: a Manual Exercise of the foot guards (a reproduction of an 18th century book of drilling exercises), a parchment copy of the Declaration of Independence, a Masked letter (coded message sent from British Commander, General Henry Clinton to General Burgoyne) and the collectors cards.

Each set comes in a sturdy box, labeled, My American Journey an exciting new interactive adventure in history. MPC

**No Time Out : The Life-Story of George and Dorothy Thomas**, by Betty M. Hockett. (A Life-Story from Missions.) LCCN 91072897. Newberg, Ore.: George Fox Press, 1991. ISBN 0943701198, PAPER, \$4.95.

921 (266). Missionaries—Biography; Thomas, George; Thomas, Dorothy. 76 p. K - Adult

Quality—3 Acceptability—5

As young children both Dorothy (nee Hughes) and George Thomas were spared from life-threatening accidents. Clearly, God had big plans for their lives. Before they even met, both had decided to be missionaries to Africa. Meeting through correspondence, they married soon after they met in person. As missionaries in Burundi, Africa, George and Dorothy built missionary homes, schools and churches. Their lives were filled with excitement and blessings. Never taking time out, each trip back to the United States ended up being another mission.

*No Time Out* by Betty M. Hockett is ninth in a series of real-life missionary biographies. Readers and listeners of all ages will enjoy this easy reading book. Only seventy-six pages with ten chapters, even small children could sit still for a chapter a day. Maps and drawings by Jannelle Loewen and a few photographs will help maintain interest.

A good reminder for Christians of all ages, especially children, that God does have a plan for each of our lives. By following God's plan, George and Dorothy lived an exciting life, were kept safe, and led many to Christ. EC

**The Mississippi**, by Michael Pollard. (Great Rivers.) LCCN 97017018. New York: Benchmark Books, 1998. ISBN 076140502X, HBB, \$14.95.

977. Mississippi River. 45 p.

**The Ganges**, by Michael Pollard. (Great Rivers.) LCCN 97017017. New York: Benchmark Books, 1998. ISBN 0761405046, HBB, \$14.95.

954. Ganges River (India and Bangladesh). 45 p.

**The Yangtze**, by Michael Pollard. (Great Rivers.) LCCN 97003539. New York: Benchmark Books, 1998. ISBN 0761405054, HBB, \$14.95.

951. Yangtze River. 45 p.

**The Nile**, by Michael Pollard. (Great Rivers.) LCCN 97017019. New York: Benchmark Books, 1998. ISBN 0761405038, HBB, \$14.95.

962. Nile River. 45 p.

**The Rhine**, by Michael Pollard. (Great Rivers.) LCCN 97003541. New York: Benchmark Books, 1997. ISBN 0761405003, HBB, \$14.95.

943. Rhine River. 45 p.

**The Amazon**, by Michael Pollard. (Great Rivers.) LCCN 97016546. New York: Benchmark Books, 1998. ISBN 0761405011, HBB, \$14.95.

981. Amazon River. 45 p. Gr. 1 - 8.

Quality—5 Acceptability—4

From the early Native American tribes of the northern reaches of the Mississippi to the floods of 1993 on the river plain, everything you've ever wanted to know about the Mississippi River is at least touched upon in this eye catching volume. Informative illustrations and striking photographs help tell the story of the Mississippi, its people, industry, history, animal life, problems, and future. Formatted in wide, two-column style with short easily noted and read text, and richly illustrated, the volume invites browsing and research. It includes a one page glossary of terms followed by an index.

Each title in this series is of similar style and scope. Volumes are bound in sturdy cloth library bindings. An excellent choice for the elementary library. JD

**From Here to There and Back Again : The Life-Story of Charles Edward DeVol**, by Betty M. Hockett. (A Life-Story from Missions.) LCCN 84081034. Newberg, Ore.: George Fox Press, 1984. ISBN 0943701090, PAPER, \$4.95.

921 (266). DeVol, Charles E.; Missionaries—China—Biography. 75 p.

**What Will Tomorrow Bring? The Life-Story of Ralph and Esther Choate**, by Betty M. Hockett. (A Life-Story from Missions.) LCCN 85070504. Newberg, Ore.: George Fox Press, 1985. ISBN 0913342491, PAPER, \$4.95.

921 (266). Choate, Ralph; Choate, Esther; Missionaries—Burundi—Biography. 75 p.

**Down a Winding Road**, by Betty M. Hockett. (A Life-Story from Missions.) : . . ISBN , \$4.95.

921 (266). Knight, Roscoe; Knight, Tina; Missionaries—Bolivia—Biography; Missionaries—Peru—Biography; Missionaries—Mexico—Biography. Gr. 3 - 7.

Quality—3 Acceptability—5

Son of two physician missionaries, Charles DeVol grew up among the Chinese people. *From Here to There and Back Again* tells his story as he returns to China as an adult to minister to the Chinese.

Ralph and Esther Choate are the subjects of the book *What Will Tomorrow Bring?* Missionaries to Burundi, Africa, the Choates share stories of serving God in the jungle.

*Down a Winding Road* is the story of South American missionaries, Roscoe and Tina Knight. Dodging political unrest and native uprisings, the Knights operate a farm and help start a Bible school while holding tent meetings for the native community.

Author, Betty M. Hockett has developed a series of biographies called A Life Story from Missions, featuring missionaries from China, Africa, South America, India, and beyond. Some of the books are in their second or third printing.

The information seems accurate but the writing is somewhat flat, telling, not showing, the reader.

Examples include, 'he felt sad,' 'he felt happy,' 'he felt afraid,' 'they felt blessed.' Yet, the message is important and the Life Story Series provides information otherwise unavailable to children.

Maps, illustrations, and photographs are scattered throughout the books. These visual aids are bright spots in the books. Betty M. Hockett writes Christian education curriculum and children's stories. JMH

**Happiness Under the Indian Trees : The Life-Story of Catherine Cattell**, by Betty M. Hockett. (A Life-Story from Missions.) LCCN 86081349. Newberg, Ore.: George Fox Press, 1986. ISBN 0943701120, PAPER, \$4.95.

921 (266). Cattell, Catherine DeVol; Missionaries—India—Biography; Missionaries—China—Biography; Missionaries—India—Biography; Missionaries—Taiwan—Biography. 75 p. Gr. 3 - 6.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

*Happiness Under the Indian Trees* is the life story of Catherine DeVol, daughter of Dr. Isabella and Dr. George DeVol, missionaries to China. Catherine was born in China and at age six went to the Kuling Boarding School.

By the time Catherine is thirteen her father has died and her mother becomes very ill. Because of the illness, Catherine, her two brothers, and mother return to the States. Catherine's plans to return to China someday as a doctor end when she begins having eye trouble in college. With her dreams of returning to China shattered, Catherine marries and settles in the U.S. But God has other plans for her, and her husband, Everett. Reliance on God, is the theme and deciding "What does God want me to do?" propels the story.

Betty Hockett is the author of A Life-Story from Missions series, telling about missionaries and their work in foreign fields. Although written on a child's level, the story content may be of more interest to adults. The majority of the book tells of Catherine's life after she is an adult. A few black and white photos are included from Catherine's mission work in India. MPC

**Keeping Them in Stitches : The Life-Story of Geraldine Custer**, by Betty M. Hockett. (A Life-Story from Missions.) LCCN 90082354. Newberg, Ore.: George Fox Press, 1990. ISBN 094370118X, PAPER, \$4.95.

921 (266). Missionaries—Burundi—Biography; Custer, Geraldine. 76 p. K - Adult.

Quality—3 Acceptability—5

Geraldine Custer, thirty-five year missionary to Burundi, Africa, begins her life very simply in Colorado Springs, Colorado. When she is thirteen, a missionary visits her small church and Gerry decides that is what she will be. Nothing deters Gerry from her goal, and after years of school and training she is finally in Africa. Loving and serving the people of Kibimba, Gerry's life is filled with adventure and laughter.

Eighth in a series of real life missionary biographies by Betty M. Hockett, simply written, this relatively short book makes for an easy read. Chapters are short enough that an adult could read *Keeping Them All In Stitches* to a child over the course of several days. A gentle, pleasant story that will hold most children's

attention. The few photos and maps included in the book will help maintain interest.

Determined to follow God's plan for her life, Geraldine Custer serves as a role model for Christians of all ages. Especially young adults on the brink of making life-long career choices. Gerry served the Lord with her whole heart and as a result led an adventurous, fulfilled life. EC

***Mud on Their Wheels : The Life-Story of Vern and Lois Ellis*, by Betty M. Hockett. (A Life-Story from Missions.) LCCN 88081703. Newberg, Ore.: George Fox Press, 1988. ISBN 0943701147, PAP, \$4.95.**

921 (266). Missionaries—Biography; Ellis, Vern; Ellis, Lois. 76 p. Gr. 3 - Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

In 1955, Vern and Lois Ellis were called by the Friends Mission board to work with the Navajos at Rough Rock, Arizona. *Mud on Their Wheels* tells how Vern, Lois, and their five children moved from Nebraska and began a thirty year mission with the Navajo. This is a story of love and dedication shown through service.

During the rainy season dirt roads became quagmires of mud and dry washes were deadly traps where flash floods swept away anything in their path. Under these conditions they traveled thirty-five miles to the clinic and seventy miles to the nearest hospital. During one year they racked up 7,770 miles just driving people to the doctor.

*Mud on Their Wheels* is part of the Life-Story Mission series. The book contains several black and white photos showing the Mission, the Ellis family, and some of the Navajo they ministered to.

The book's seventy-six pages cover thirty years of ministry. The ten chapters are each broken into four to five parts, giving brief glimpses into life on the reservation. MPC

***Whistling Bombs and Bumpy Trains : The Life-Story of Anna Nixon*, by Betty M. Hockett. (A Life-Story from Missions.) LCCN 89084572. Newberg, Ore.: George Fox Press, 1989. ISBN 0943701155, PAP, \$4.95.**

921 (266). Missionaries—India—Biography; Nixon, Anna. 76 p. K - Adult.

Quality—3 Acceptability—5

Seventh in a series, *Whistling Bombs and Bumpy Trains*, is the life story of missionary to India Anna Nixon. As a teenager, Anna felt the Lord calling her to be a missionary and began to do all she could to reach that end. On her way to India in 1941, Anna is detained in Manila as a prisoner of war for nearly four years. Never wavering from her goal, Anna uses this hardship as an opportunity to share Christ's love. Finally arriving in India, Anna works tirelessly at whatever task is assigned her, touching many lives.

Author Betty M. Hockett has written another pleasant biography of a real life missionary. With few difficult words and only seventy-six large print pages, a quick and easy read for adults. The short chapters would work well for reading aloud to children. Not weighed down with a lot of details, the author has included just the most pertinent facts about India to enhance the story. A few maps and pictures help add interest.

A lesson in obedience for Christians of all ages. Anna Nixon tried to do what she felt the Lord was calling her to do. As a result, Anna was protected in dangerous situations and a blessing to many. EC

***One Man Show*, by Frank Asch; photographs by Jan Asch. (Meet the Author.) LCCN 97007626. Katonah, N.Y.: Richard C. Owen Publishers, 1997. ISBN 1572740957, HBB, \$13.95.**

921 (813). Asch, Frank; Authors, American; Illustrators. 32 p.

***Can You Imagine?* by Patricia McKissack; photographs by Myles Pinkney. (Meet the Author.) LCCN 96037892. Katonah, N.Y.: R.C. Owen Publishers, 1997. ISBN 1878450611, HBB, \$13.95.**

921 (813). Authors, American; McKissack, Pat, 1944-; Afro-Americans—Biography; Women—Biography. 32 p.

***Nature! Wild and Wonderful*, by Laurence Pringle; photographs by Tim Holmstrom. (Meet the Author.) LCCN 96053268. Katonah, N.Y.: R.C. Owen Publishers, 1997. ISBN 157274071X, HBB, \$13.95.**

921 (813). Authors, American; Pringle, Laurence P.; Natural history—Authorship; Authors, American—20th century—Biography; Children's literature—Authorship. 32 p. Gr. 1 - 5.

Quality—3 Acceptability—5

For the student, future author, or teacher who wants to know more about their favorite authors, the Meet the Author Series is a great way to begin. Each book is written by the author presented and tells events of their lives which led them into authoring and illustrating books, how they go about finding and developing their ideas, and what they like to do in their "real" lives. Illustrations and color photographs of the author's work as well as of the author in action, keep the reader's attention focused on the personality of the author. The easy to read text and short paragraph format will appeal to the young or immature reader without detracting from the "meat" of the text. Each book contains a bibliography of other books by the author and also a color photograph and biographic paragraph about the illustrator for the book. This series will be invaluable for teachers of writing who want to inspire their students to go beyond writing a story for a class assignment to pursuing a career in writing. JD

*Young Adult Fiction Reviews, cont. from p.52.*

unicorn. Jane Yolen even brings a historical element into her work, with Richard bearing a curious resemblance to Richard the Second of England, who had "an overbearing uncle and a flag with a white deer on it."

Yolen's language is simple, yet lyrical. Her characters are brought to life with a few deft strokes of her pen. Plot tension builds nicely, ensuring that the reader will stay glued to his or her seat until the last page is turned. The end result is a story that attests to the power of friendship, and of belief.

There is one disturbing scene in which the animal spears a hunting dog with its rack. There are also some unanswered questions about the children falling asleep together in the forest. SS

***Twelve Impossible Things Before Breakfast*, by Jane Yolan. LCCN 97000667. San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1997. ISBN 0152015248, HBB, \$17.00.**

F. Short stories 175 p. Gr. 8 - Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—4

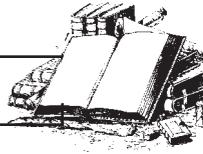
In *Alice in Wonderland*, the Red Queen boasts of her ability to believe as many as six impossible things before breakfast. Jane Yolan must have high expectations of her readers, for her collection of short stories challenges them to believe no less than *Twelve Impossible Things Before Breakfast*. It is a demanding request, but Yolan makes it all surprisingly easy. The author's mastery of words is such that even her introduction makes for an engaging read.

Three of 'these tales are new; the balance have published before, between 1989 and 1996, so the interested reader can observe and appreciate the development of Yolen's skills.

Because the stories are quite brief, character and atmosphere must be quickly established. Yolen almost always succeeds in this. The collection opens with a return to Alice's Wonderland, during which Carroll's disorienting style and language are emulated to a remarkable degree. All our old friends are here, but this tale turns out to be a lesson in courage for Alice, who must confront the dreaded Jabberwock. The second story is a rather touching (yes, touching) look at the birth-and death-of a vampire. As the rest of the collection unfolds, a young man confronts a terrifying sea monster, a lonely bridge longs for a troll of its own, and something unnatural grows in the compost heap. These tales take place in modern suburbia, in old Scottish sea towns, in someone's backyard, and in the future. The wide-ranging variety of subjects, settings, and moods speaks to the generous imagination of the writer. Each tale is complete in itself, thus *Twelve Impossible Things* will appeal both to the lover of fantasy, and to the reluctant reader who may feel overwhelmed by a lengthy novel. SS

## PUBLICATION CHANGE

Beginning with the next issue, the *Christian Library Journal* will become a quarterly publication, one issue per season, with more than 300 reviews per issue, or the same annual number of reviews as in the past. Subscription rates will remain unchanged.



*Going Through the Gate*, by Janet S. Anderson. LCCN 97015227. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 1997. ISBN 0525458360, HBB, \$15.99.

F. Teachers—Fiction; Identity—Fiction; Animals—Fiction; Supernatural—Fiction. 134 p. Gr. 6 - 9.

Quality—4 Acceptability—4

This fantasy is a coming-of-age story told with a twist. It would seem that the entire town has gone through the gate when graduating from grade school. "Going through the gate" is a rite of passage, and no adult seems to want to discuss it in depth, making only guarded statements about it when asked. The parents of this year's graduates have the utmost trust in the teacher, Miss Clough, who has been there forever.

The children are introduced chapter by chapter on the morning of the day when they, too, will be "going through the gate." Some are fearful, some very desirous of going, while others are skeptical; but all choose which bird or animal they want to become and all meet at school where their aged teacher gives them final instructions about the experience and reminds them they should leave something of themselves behind so that they can return. She will wait for them, and if they have difficulty returning, she will help them. This will be her last group, and the reader senses more than the children that because of the teacher's age there may be problems. And there are.

The children's thoughts on this milestone event, the teacher's story of coming to the town, and the changes that happen to people who have successfully gone through the gate unfold with this well-written story, but questions linger after one finishes it. Why were the parents so ready to let their children experience a dangerous "morphing" when they all knew what had happened years ago? Though the children change and grow through this experience, why did they have to take on the shape of other creatures? How were other people changed by this, as only hints are given? Not a very satisfying read even though well-written by author Janet Anderson. LGR

*How Can I Be a Detective If I Have to Babysit?* by Linda Bailey. (A Stevie Diamond Mystery; 2.) LCCN 95039545. Morton Grove, Ill.: Albert Whitman & Co., 1996. ISBN 0807534056, PAP, \$4.50.

F. Mystery fiction; Camps—Fiction; Wilderness areas—Fiction; Babysitters—Fiction. 157 p. Gr. 4 - 7.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Stevie Diamond and her pal Jesse Kulniki are twelve-year-old detectives. A week at a tree-planting camp where Stevie's dad is in charge sounds like great fun

until they realize five-year-old Alexander expects to tag along with them. Upon learning a smuggler is in the camp, they throw themselves into solving the case. Thinking they have nabbed their man by locking him in an outhouse, they discover they have made a dangerous mistake. The real criminal reveals himself, informing them that the man locked in the outhouse is an undercover cop.

*How Can I Be a Detective If I Have to Babysit?* is a great whodunit-type mystery. The young detectives make a list of the suspects and search for clues that will tell them which tree planter is really Rubberface Ragnall in disguise. The book has action, but no violence. Linda Bailey creates believable situations and characters, putting it all together for an enjoyable mystery. CSJ

*The Mystery of the Vanishing Cave*, by John Bibee. (The Home School Detectives; 5.) LCCN 96016142. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1996. ISBN 0830819150, PAP, \$4.99.

F. Christian fiction; Mystery fiction; Caves—Fiction; Indians of North America—Fiction; Camping—Fiction. 126 p.

*The Mystery of the Broken Bridge*, by John Bibee. (The Home School Detectives; 6.) LCCN 96037894. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1997. ISBN 0830819169, PAP, \$4.99.

F. Christian fiction; Mystery Fiction; Stealing—Fiction; Inner cities—Fiction. 128 p. Gr. 3 - 8.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Camp Friendly Waters will never be quite the same after Rebecca, Julie, and Emily discover the hidden Indian cave. While racing back to camp to beat their rival tent; the girls spot a hole and begin to investigate. By digging around the hole, they reveal a large cavern underneath; letting their curiosity get the better of them, all three girls fall into the cave as the ground breaks loose. Finding themselves underground with no way to escape brings panic to all three; suddenly a voice is heard above, and a rope is lowered to pull them to freedom. Mary Littlelove, whose family owns the camp, explains more about the cave, only to disappear suddenly along with all the evidence the Home School Detectives had of their adventure in the cave.

No one believes the girls' story about the cave because when they return to show it to their camp leaders, the hole is gone. The question is: who would do this and why? Before the girls have the opportunity to solve the Mystery of the Vanishing Cave, bad things start happening to the campers. Rebecca becomes the target of racial slurs and is branded a liar. The girls realize

the answers they seek lie with the elusive Mary Littlelove.

*The Mystery at the Broken Bridge* begins with an act of good will. Josh and his friends are helping to clean up a run-down neighborhood tenement. While they are cleaning, Josh's new basketball is stolen, along with a tenant's purse. Josh is accused of the theft when the woman's purse is found in his van. Embarrassed by the event, he decides to find out who stole the purse and to unravel the other puzzling occurrences at the apartment building. Learning painful lessons of not jumping to conclusions, Josh feels all the more inclined to locate the thief and clear his own name. The Home School Detectives take off to a wooded area to meet with an unknown person, rescue a friend from a burning building, and discover the real plot behind the strange events.

The Home School Detectives series mixes fun and learning with adventure. Kids will enjoy learning about friendship and experiencing the growing pains the characters in each story go through. Author John Bibee tells each story with a realistic edge and the narrative rings true as the boys and girls hash out their feelings and thoughts with one another and God. MH

*A Different Kind of Hero*, by Ann R. Blakeslee. LCCN 96032786. New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997. ISBN 0761450009, HBB, \$14.95.

F. Frontier and pioneer life—West (U.S.)—Fiction; West (U.S.)—Fiction; Chinese Americans—Fiction; Fathers and sons—Fiction. 143 p. Gr. 4 - 8.

Quality—4 Acceptability—4

Renny is the son of an Irish miner who lives in Miner's Chance in the Rocky Mountains. Instead of being outgoing and tough like his father, who is always ready for a fight, Renny would rather have peace. He feels deeply his dad's disappointment in not having a son more like himself, yet his nature is such that he would rather help than hurt someone.

To complicate matters, a Chinese family moves into their camp and Renny finds himself befriendng Wong Gum Zi. The rest of the miners are determined to run the Chinese family out of their camp by any means possible, and Renny finds himself in a race to protect Wong's family. Renny is torn in two directions—he knows how his father feels, and does not want to stir up more wrath upon his own head, and yet he is not able to sit still and see no one stand up for the Chinese family. He finds an unexpected friend in the priest who is even willing to go to jail to protect Wong's family. Things come to a climax when the class bully sets fire to the Chinese family's stable, endangering the entire camp. Renny's father realizes that prejudice is

## Young Adult Fiction Editor: Sylvia Stopforth



### Teen Advisory Councils

Young people are often in the news these days, and the stories are seldom positive. It seems that one of the hallmarks of youth is a profound intensity, coupled with boundless energy; if not properly channeled, this combination can become destructive.

At the same time, we have librarians bemoaning the fact that the resources and services provided for this user group are often unappreciated and under-utilized. Enter the teen advisory council.

According to Gisela Konopka, author of *The Adolescent Girl in Conflict*, a number of conditions are necessary for the "healthy development of young people . . . they require the opportunity:

- to participate . . . as responsible members of society
- to gain experience in decision-making
- to interact with peers and acquire a sense of belonging
- to discuss conflicting values and formulate their own value system . . ."

A well-organized teen council is an ideal setting for the presentation and realization of these opportunities.

Although the teen council is generally regarded as a public library concept, it can easily be adapted for the school or church library. The basic objective is to involve youth in planning (and perhaps implementing) services, programs, and collection development geared to the needs and interests of their age group. The council should be granted as much autonomy as possible, but should also be furnished with the guidance and assistance of a youth services librarian or other interested adults.

Teen councils run the gamut; some groups meet only a few times each year to publish a modest newsletter, set up displays, or provide input regarding the library's YA collection. Others are more active.

Barbara Williams, manager of the Youth Services Division at the Central Library of

the Queens Borough Public Library, found that "young adults often do not use the library for its intended purpose."<sup>2</sup> Determined to provide opportunities for growth for this group, Williams devised the "Tapping Teen Talent" program, designed to teach young people to plan, implement, and evaluate programs for their peers and younger children. She hoped that this program would encourage teens to "explore the library as a life resource in building self-esteem, and the development of talents." The program was a great success. Williams found that participants had a genuine desire and ability - to make a valuable contribution.

The fact that libraries and youth are a winning combination is also evident on the Internet. Several teen councils post their newsletters and book reviews on their own Web sites.

The Young Adult Advisory Board of the Boulder Public Library can be found at <http://128.138.129.27/library/bpl/yaab/>. A healthy sense of humor is flourishing here, as is a generous application of youthful energy to the library's programs and services. One member puts it this way: "Our purposes are to promote usage and understanding of the library, to prove to adults and teens alike that teens are capable of changing the world, and to have fun while doing it."

An informative newsletter, published by the teen advisory council of the Sparta Free Library is posted at <http://host/lp.centuryinter.net/spartalib/newsltr.htm>

This council sponsors a book group, previews new YA titles, and in December, got together to make Christmas gifts for a local nursing home.

A newsletter featuring book reviews and recipes from the teen advisory council of the St. Petersburg Public Library is available at <http://snoopy.tbcl.lib.fl.us/sppl/tac1195.html>

At the Chicago Public Library, a new Teen Study Center opened recently. Information about this, and about the resident teen advisory council, can be found at

<http://www.chipublib.org/003cpl/news/951106teenstudy.html>

The homepage of Richmond Public Library's teen council provides links to "teen resources" and information about this library's award-winning writing contest for young people. <http://www.rpl.richmond.bc.ca/teen/voice/council/>

A teen council serves as a forum for an important user group, allows librarians to have a positive impact on tomorrow's leaders, and brings library resources to the attention of some who might not always see the great potential residing on our shelves. At the same time, it provides young people with opportunities to develop talents and skills that will serve them well into the future. And, as one teen council member noted, "It looks great on a resume!"

### Works Cited

- 1 As quoted in: Amey, Larry and Stephen Elliott. "Serving the Cyberteen: Library Service for the 21st Century Adolescent." *VOYA*, vol. 20 (April 1 997). p 14-20.
- 2 Williams, Barbara Osborne. "Tapping Teen Talent in Queens." *VOYA*, vol 19 (August 1996). p 143-147.

blinded by hatred, and comes to understand that his son is someone to be proud of even though they have different temperaments.

*A Different Kind of Hero* is written in the third person; Ann Blakeslee keeps the story moving along to a satisfying conclusion. The jacket cover will catch the eye of the junior reader while the easy-to-read print will encourage the slow reader. This book is adept in conveying how prejudice feels to the outsider and will encourage the reader to look beyond skin color or a different race to see the individual instead. DAW

***Nick's Mission*, by Claire Blatchford. LCCN 95000856. Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, 1995. ISBN 0822507404, HBB, \$14.95.**

F. Deaf—Fiction; Physically handicapped—Fiction; Dogs—Fiction; Mothers and sons—Fiction. 148 p. Gr. 5 - 7.

Quality—4 Acceptability—4

Leaving the sixth grade behind, Nick snatches up his snorkel and flippers and drops his hearing aid in the kitchen drawer. As he reaches for the doorknob, his mother grabs his arm. Her lips form one word: "therapy." Nick shuts his eyes. It is not fair. His mother taps his arm. Nick swings out at her blindly with the flippers. No, he is not going. But before he can escape, she has bent him over, tripped him up, and has pinned him to the floor. She tickles him until his sides ache and he opens his eyes. "I'm sorry, Nick," she speaks slowly, "but you have to go to speech therapy. Come back to this world. Put your hearing aid back on."

Nick's mission is to spend the summer analyzing the lake and studying the wildlife. His mother's mission is to improve his verbal skills. Without speech therapy, he will have to attend a school for the deaf in the fall. Nick doesn't care. He much prefers the company of animals, and he can communicate with them just fine. However, a handful of scarlet feathers changes his perspective. Smugglers are using his lake as a base to breed scarlet macaws. His only chance of escaping depends on communicating with a Mexican emigrant who speaks Spanish. The lives of the rare birds depend on his getting help quickly. His love for animals teaches him to appreciate his connection with people.

Claire Blatchford draws on personal experience to portray her protagonist's frustrations. She also is deaf. This unique perspective strengthens the realism of her characters' motives and actions. Nonverbal communication and intuition play an important role in a mystery that pits a single mother and deaf child against dangerous international criminals. *Nick's Mission* encourages inter-dependent relationships and environmental responsibility. Some crude slang is occasionally used by the characters. MT

***I'm Off to Montana for to Throw the Hoolihan*, by Stephen A. Bly. (Code of the West; 6.) LCCN 97017736. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1997. ISBN 089107953X, PAP, \$8.99.**

F. Western fiction. 188 p. Gr. 9 - Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

This novel, *I'm Off to Montana for the Throw the Hoolihan*, is the sixth in The Code of the West Series. Tapadera (Tap) Andrews and his pregnant wife, Pepper, travel to their new ranch in Montana. Accompanying them is their young charge, Angelita, whose mother is dead. Both Tap and Pepper have lived unsavory lives in the past but are deeply in love and looking forward to a new future and a family.

Adventure seems to follow Tap wherever he goes, and settling on his new ranch is not as easy as it seems. To add to Tap's difficult adjustment, he is trying to apply his newfound Christianity to his dealings with coworkers and enemies. For example, he tries to remember to ask God's guidance in dealing with unscrupulous and murderous neighbors who try to run him off his ranch.

Stephen Bly's western is peopled with a variety of interesting characters, such as his loyal ranch hands, a neighboring Mormon family, bank robbers, and friendly Indians. It is a sweet story about a family very fond of each other, having to make moral decisions in a sometimes immoral and rough wild West. Laced with humor and affectionate interaction between family members, this is a gentle, fast-paced tale, which should be appealing to most readers. BGT

***War Dog : A Novel*, by Martin Booth. LCCN 96052570. New York: Margaret K. McElderry Bks., 1997. ISBN 0689813805, HBB, \$15.00.**

F. World War, 1939-1945—Fiction; Dogs—War use—Fiction. 133 p. Gr. 7 - 12.

Quality—4 Acceptability—4

Jet is a black Labrador Retriever who is first owned by Fred Parry. Jet is well-trained in the art of poaching until Fred is caught and sent off to the penitentiary. This takes place during the first outbreak of World War II. England's army is collecting anything that might be useful in winning the war. As no one in the local community agrees to take Jet, the army claims him. They soon find Jet to be a well-behaved, intelligent dog who responds easily to commands. Jet is trained to be a handler, tracking down the enemy. His first owner is Turpin, who calls Jet Bess; they work together on French soil in combat duty. While there, both Jet and Turpin are wounded and sent back to England. After resting for six months, Jet is given to Hogan, another handler in the army.

Because of a misunderstanding, Jet is now called Jess. Together they rescue wounded British soldiers and Jet finds and rescues his former owner, Fred. Thus Martin Booth provides a happy twist at the end of his novel.

*War Dog* is written in the third person and is a fast-paced story full of action. Within the story, many facts are provided relating to World War II from the English point of view. This book will appeal especially to boys and dog lovers. *War Dog* is a heart-warming story that will remain with the reader and prove to be a great resource for a study of World War II. It may also be used in an adult education class for those learning to read, as the words used are fairly simple in context. DAW

***Chief Honor*, by Sigmund Brouwer. (Lightning on Ice; 6.) LCCN 96048592. Dallas: Word Kids! 1997. ISBN 0849939844, PAP, \$5.99.**

F. Hockey—Fiction; Steroids—Fiction. 116 p. Gr. 5 - 9.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

A girl playing professional hockey—who ever heard of such a thing? Lauren Cross tries out for the Spokane Chiefs; her position is goal tender. Joseph Larken has been the Chief's goal tender for several seasons. Because his preacher father put church before family and was in jail for embezzling, Joseph has built a wall of anger around himself. Can Joseph tear down that wall, at least enough to help Lauren, who was framed in a steroid use scandal and kicked off the team? Lauren helps Joseph by sharing with him what her mother, a psychologist, has discovered—that Jesus can help those in pain. While neither Lauren or Joseph makes a commitment to Christ, the book ends with Joseph contemplating reconciliation with his father.

The book opens with a helpful diagram of the playing field and a list of hockey terms. The reader does not have to be a hockey fan in order to enjoy *Chief Honor*. Sigmund Brouwer's book is a well-written mystery that will interest sports fans of all ages, but especially those in the middle school age group. JM

***Willie and the Rattlesnake King*, by Clara Gillow Clark. LCCN 96080400. Honesdale, Pa.: Boyds Mills Press, 1997. ISBN 1563976544, HBB, \$14.95.**

F. Adolescence—Fiction; Runaway teenagers—Fiction. 167 p. Gr. 6 - Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—4

Thirteen-year-old Willie Bishop has it better than he knows. Life is pretty great living with his sister Nellie and her husband Jeff, but the couple's obvious love for each other leaves Willie feeling left out and angry. Still, he can't fault either of them. Both Jeff and Nellie do their best to give him a loving, safe haven. But Willie wants more. He sets out on his own to become part of a traveling side show and meets up with a lying, conniving man named Doc Granger.

Willie quickly sees that the traveling life is more work and less excitement than he once imagined. Willie befriends Blanche, the owner's daughter, and another young man from the show. Together they learn about growing up and being loyal to their friends. Willie continues to search for something he excels at to prove he is a man. When his chance comes to impress a bar full of men with his courage, he can't resist. Thus, Willie catches the eye of Abe, the show's rattlesnake handler, and they eventually work together. Willie's travels take him far from home only to lead him back again, hopefully wiser and more mature.

Author Clara Clark makes *Willie and the Rattlesnake King* come to life with her vivid representations of the little things in life. She paints the picture of the seedy life of traveling shows by describing the barroom brawls, the unwelcome sexual attention from coarse onlookers, and the overt lying and thievery amongst the showmen themselves. Hopefully, young readers can read this book without glamorizing Willie's obvious mistakes and can learn from his poor choices. It is a good historical novel complete with the good,

bad, and the ugly. At one point, the word 'damn' is used by Abe, the rattlesnake handler. MH

*Mattie's Whisper*, by Alice DeLaCroix; illustrated by John Dyess. LCCN 91073885. Honesdale, Pa.: Caroline House/Boyd's Mills Press, 1992. ISBN 1563970368, HBB, \$14.95.

F. Horses—Fiction; Physically handicapped—Fiction. 124 p. Gr. 6 - 8.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Mattie loves horses. In fact her whole world is wrapped up in competing in horse shows. Her dream is to one day own a horse of her own. Then tragedy strikes in a freak automobile accident that leaves Mattie with a fractured leg. After six weeks of being in traction, Mattie thinks that the worst is over only to discover that her one foot won't move due to some paralysis. She masters getting around on crutches so she can be released to go home. Then her doctor breaks the news. Mattie will need continued therapy three times a week because the nerves are affected. She is scared. Will her nerves ever heal up where she can walk without help?

Mattie goes home but soon realizes that things are different from before. The kids at school don't seem to understand what Mattie faces. She even fights with her best friend. All her exercising still doesn't bring the desired results. The final word from the doctor is no riding for at least a year. Mattie feels like her world has caved in on her. She takes down everything in her room that reminds her of horses and refuses to go back to the riding stable. When school is out for the summer, Mattie mopes around feeling lost. At last she gives in and goes to a horse show. She is back in the world of horses again and jumps at a chance to become a stable hand. Then Mattie finds out about a racing horse that is about to be sold to an auction because it has a crippling disease. When Mattie sees Whisper she falls in love with the mare and becomes determined to save her. Her parents agree to buy Whisper if Mattie will be willing to take care of her. Mattie ends up at the livestock auction to save Whisper from certain death. She has the vet check Whisper over and carefully follows his instructions although he is not too optimistic. Reading an article about horse's navicular disease, Mattie talks her vet into trying a new drug on Whisper. She continues working at the stable to help pay for all the medicine. The medicine makes a new horse out of Whisper and the vet says that she can be ridden. Mattie is determined to be the one to ride and exercise Whisper and saddles her up for a trial run. All her exercising pays off. Mattie is back in her world of horse riding.

*Mattie's Whisper* is a heart-warming story told in the third person about a girl who doesn't let adversary get her down. Mattie's feelings are realistically portrayed as she struggles to become again the girl she was before the accident. Mattie emerges a stronger person for all that she goes through. This book had special meaning for my son who went through knee surgery recently that didn't turn out as expected. It is something all youngsters can identify with as they face life with or without physical difficulties. A good resource for a youngster facing hard times. DAW

*The Secret of the Viking Dagger*, by Scarlett Ryan Foster. LCCN 96051184. San Antonio, Tex.: Langmarc Publishing, 1997. ISBN 1880292564, LIB, \$15.95.

F. Vikings—Fiction; Time travel—Fiction; Brothers—Fiction. 131 p. Gr. 5 - 8.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

When Ben and David, two brothers exploring the woods near their Michigan home, come across an ancient Viking dagger, they suddenly find themselves mysteriously transported back in time to tenth century Norway. From there, they find themselves caught up in a Viking quest to avenge an enemy attack and rescue kidnapped family members. The adventure carries them across the North Sea to Scotland, and then southward through Gibraltar to the Mediterranean Sea and Africa.

Scarlett Foster, a fifth grade teacher, uses her interest in medieval history to weave a fast-paced adventure story meant to capture the interest of young scholars and introduce them to historical accounts. In this book, one learns much about the Viking culture, as well as about castles and keeps of old Britain, and the busy multi-cultural world of ancient Cairo where Europeans, Moors, and Arabs come together.

*The Secret of the Viking Dagger*, though exciting, seems a little juvenile for upper middle-grade readers. The language and the vocabulary are advanced for young readers, but the tone and the characters seem more immature in their description and development. The book might be more of a read-aloud text for younger readers.

The book's main strength is its adventure and its wonderful wealth of historical knowledge, written simply for elementary and middle school learners. It contains a glossary for the terms and times set in the story, a bibliography for further study, and a list of suggested activities that a teacher or a parent could use to enhance a study of the Vikings. GCH

*Vatsana's Lucky New Year*, by Sara Gogol. Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, 1992. ISBN 082250734X, HBB, \$14.95.

F. Laotian Americans—Fiction; Prejudices—Fiction; Schools—Fiction; Cousins—Fiction. 156 p. Gr. 5 - 9.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Vatsana, who was born of Laotian parents in the United States, feels American. Her parents want their three children to acknowledge and retain their former country's language and customs. When Vatsana's cousin and aunt come to Portland to live with her family, she sees how much she is needed by her cousin to interpret, to share her bedroom, and to introduce her to her friends. Though she is courteous and kind to her cousin, she is also resentful at times.

To add to Vatsana's troubles, there is a brutal, prejudiced boy in one of her classes who calls her names and harasses her. Vatsana is an excellent student and the boy scoffingly calls her "Teacher's Pet" and "Chink."

Author Sara Gogol is well-qualified to write on the subject, as she lives in Portland and has taught English as a Second Language to students from many different countries.

*Vatsana's Lucky New Year* teaches how harmful, hurtful, and unreasonable prejudice is. Another lesson gleaned from the tale of Vatsana is that ignoring a problem can only be effective for so long. Sometimes anger can act as a catalyst to force one to confront one's tormentor with the insensitivity of their actions and words. This loving, supportive family is the basis for sensible, well-adjusted children. The importance of allowing children to make their own decisions is another good feature in this story. BGT

*The Way of Our People*, by Arnold A. Griese. LCCN 74023086. Honesdale, Pa.: Boyd's Mills Press, 1997. ISBN 156397648X, PAP, \$7.95.

F. Alaska—Fiction; Indians of North America—Fiction. 84 p. Gr. 6 - 10.

Quality—5 Acceptability—4

In *The Way of Our People*, by Arnold A. Griese, Kano, a young Athabaskan Indian boy, has a secret. He is afraid of all the things a great hunter must face. Somehow he must conquer his fear of being lost in the forest, of bears, and of the Nakani, or spirits who live in the forest and take the forms of men and women, and become a great hunter so he won't disgrace his family. With help from sister Maya, his grandmother, and the Old One, Kano comes home to his village confident that his fears are gone—until he joins a hunt and becomes lost. As a result, his father decides to take him to the white man's village of St. Michael.

Living with his father's disappointment and feeling that he can no longer bear it, Kano leaves the village to travel to the home of "Auntie" their grandmother's sister. While staying at there Kano encounters his first white man, Ivan, a Russian trader. The news Ivan has brought is troubling: the Eskimo of a village to the south are becoming sick with smallpox, the "white man's" disease. The Athabaskins will also become sick and die unless they take the medicine he has brought along. Kano sees a chance to help his people and redeem himself. He is vaccinated and tries to convince the village elders that they too, must be vaccinated. They refuse. When Auntie dies of smallpox, Kano heads for the village where Ivan is staying, determined to bring the vaccine back so his sisters and grandmother will not die. Traveling alone through the forest, Kano faces the fears that overwhelmed him earlier and conquers them. Upon his return, the villagers are finally vaccinated, but not without a few interesting twists.

A conflict between Kano and Napak, a village boy, is hinted at early in the story but never really takes shape, leaving readers wondering until the final pages. A satisfying read for middle to upper graders. LGR

*Rainy Season*, by Adele Griffin. LCCN 96000121. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1996. ISBN 0395811813, HBB, \$14.95.

F. Death—Fiction; Military bases—Fiction; Canal Zone—Fiction; Panama—Fiction. 200 p. Gr. 7 - Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—4

Twelve-year-old Lane lives on an army base in the Panama Canal Zone. She is a worrier, while her younger brother, Charlie, seems almost self-destructive. When she is upset, Lane writes in the journal that Emily gave her back when they lived on Rhode Island. The entire book takes place on one day of Lane's life, starting with breakfast. Lane and Charlie are building a fort with their friends, and planning a "war" against another fort. After a sudden rain damages their fort, Charlie, who thinks the other kids caused the damage, plans to retaliate. His late-night fall from a tree results in a harrowing ride to an emergency room. The hospital reminds Lane and Charlie of their stay in a Rhode Island hospital after their entire family was in a car crash.

The conversations in *Rainy Season* are laced with insults. The parents seem detached and too busy with their own lives to see that things are not quite right with their children. It is not until the end of the book that one discovers that the girl named Emily, who Lane remembers from Rhode Island, was her older sister, and that she was killed in a tragic car crash.

Each family member has been suffering alone, expressing his or her grief in different ways. The end of the novel provides hope that they will begin to find solace, and healing for their memories, in one another. Readers will be reminded that peoples' strange behavior often has motivating factors that they don't know about. Adele Griffin's book may confuse or disturb younger readers. There are a couple of references to meditation methods Lane has been taught by her therapist. DSJ

***Don't You Dare Read This, Mrs. Dunphrey*, by Margaret Peterson Haddix. LCCN 95043200. New York: Aladdin Paperbacks, 1996. ISBN 0689800975, PAP, \$3.99.**

F. Child abuse—Fiction; Fathers and daughters—Fiction; Diaries—Fiction. 125 p. Gr. 7 - 10.

Quality—5 Acceptability—4

In *Don't You Dare Read This, Mrs. Dunphrey*, author Margaret Peterson Haddix presents a poignant account of a teenager who is emotionally drowning, yet is reluctant to reach out for help. Using a first-person journal approach, Haddix has fifteen-year-old Tish Bonner chronicle the downward spiral of her home life. As her life unravels Tish manages to maintain a stoic, tough countenance, but her journal entries make it increasingly clear that she is ready to crumble. Her cries for help in her journal go unheeded because Tish's teacher respects her students' privacy and will not read their journal entries unless invited to. Tish needs to confide in someone, and soon. Unfortunately there are few she can trust. Is her teacher the only one she can possibly reach out to?

Relying on her experience as a reporter and English teacher, the author provides a startlingly realistic and moving story of a teen who hides her problems so well it nearly becomes her undoing. No one suspects the extent of Tish's dysfunctional home life, until it is

almost too late. The book addresses the issue of how complicated a teacher's role is. This ALA Best Book For Young Adults is a reminder that teaching often has to involve reaching. There is open talk about sexual encounters, and a couple of violent domestic scenes. These instances are interwoven into the story, and showcase how Tish struggles with overcoming her circumstances by not allowing her circumstances to overcome her. For mature readers, this book shows how harsh circumstances can be without the hope and intercession of Christ. PW

***Leaving Fishers*, by Margaret Peterson Haddix. LCCN 96047857. New York: Simon & Schuster Bks. for Y. R.'s, 1997. ISBN 068981125X, PAP, \$17.00.**

F. Cults—Fiction; Fanaticism—Fiction; Christian life—Fiction. 211 p. Gr. 9 - Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Dorry has moved with her parents to Indiana from Ohio. Not only has she had to change schools in her junior year of high school, but she also has to adjust to living in a large city. For three weeks she has been trying to make friends with someone at her new school. Nothing is working out the way Dorry has hoped which makes her feel even more insecure. Then out of the blue one of the in- group of girls invites her to eat lunch with her and her friends. Because they are friendly and act concerned about her, Dorry starts attending their social gatherings and church services. This seems to be what she has always looked for and under pressure she joins the group called the Fishers.

Because the Fishers are a religious group, Dorry thinks that she has made the right choice. It isn't long until Dorry begins to have questions. She is expected to open up to Angela, her spiritual mentor, but becomes uneasy at the way Angela pries into her life. Not only is Angela pointing out all her flaws, which she backs up with scripture, but she jumps on any weakness that Dorry has. Dorry is now expected to pray for so many hours a day, plus witness and recruit others to join the Fishers. Soon Dorry is frantically scrambling to keep up in her school work and is never able to stay at home as there is always some meeting she is required to attend.

No matter how hard she tries, Dorry is never able to make Angela happy or get rid of a sense of guilt. Suddenly she finds herself going in circles with no way out. When she thinks of trying to get out, the sense of doom of being forever lost haunts her. She signs over all the money in her savings account to the group and is pushed to get a baby sitting job in order to earn more money for the Fishers. Then to add further to Dorry's distress she begins to notice inconsistencies within the Fishers themselves that she is told don't matter, and more pressure is put on her. Dorry's grades drop and her own family doesn't know how to take her religion. They become concerned about her health as she is pressured to do penance by not eating.

The final straw is when she is pushed to witness and tries to talk to the kids she baby sits for. They become scared and start screaming and Dorry gets fired. Although Angela is pleased with Dorry, she cannot get

away from what she has done. Dorry breaks off from the group and begins to get harassed by other members trying to get her to rejoin. When that attempt fails they act as if she doesn't exist anymore. Dorry clears her conscience with the kids she scared and meets another former Fisher member who helps her see how the group manipulated her.

*Leaving Fishers* is a gripping story told in the third person. It clearly shows how different cult groups work and how they are able to recruit unsuspecting people into their fold. It gives clear insights how they brainwash others until they can no longer think for themselves. *Leaving Fishers* also shows the double standard used while making money to help the cult grow. This book is a valuable educational tool for teens to enlighten them about cults, as well as a great resource for a church library. DAW

***Arby Jenkins, Ready to Roll*, by Sharon Hambrick; illustrated by Mike McDermott. (Arby Jenkins; 3.) LCCN 97036083. Greenville, S.C.: Bob Jones University Press, 1998. ISBN 0890849587, PAP, \$6.49.**

F. Schools—Fiction; Christian life—Fiction. 150 p. Gr. 4 - 7.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Sharon Hambrick has a special ability to create a character that is both believable and fun. Arby Jenkins, a twelve-year-old boy just entering seventh grade, is a character with which all junior high readers can identify. Arby faces the same fears and challenges that face young teens everywhere. His reactions will cause readers to examine how they respond to similar situations.

Arby wants to make a good first day impression in his Christian junior high school. However, just before school opens, he falls and breaks his front teeth. This is the first of an interesting set of challenges he must face. His homeroom teacher, Mr. Hogan, tells the class about the "dragons" they will fight throughout the weeks and months ahead. This theme is well-developed throughout the book as the dragons of Selfishness, Fear, and Pride prey upon Arby. He learns to identify these sins in his life, and learns to slay them by using the Word of God.

Arby is being watched in his attempt at dragon slaying by Stuart. Arby witnesses to Stuart and, although he is not ready to make a commitment, Arby is able to plant seeds in Stuart's life. A new character, who will challenge readers to be leaders with character, is introduced at the end of the story. Rex comes to Arby after a humiliating situation and offers his support and friendship. His kind and caring attitude is helpful in molding Arby to be the person God wants him to be. PJJ

***A Better Tomorrow?* by Dorothy Lilja Harrison. (Chronicles of Courage.) Colorado Springs: ChariotVictor Publishing, 1997. ISBN 0781402433, PAP, \$6.99.**

F. Depressions—1929—Fiction; Contentment—Fiction. 128 p.

**Operation Morningstar**, by Dorothy Lilja Harrison. (Chronicles of Courage.) Colorado Springs: ChariotVictor Publishing, 1997. ISBN 0781402425, PAP, \$6.99.

F. Refugees—Fiction; Germany—Fiction; Courage—Fiction . 120 p.

**Gold in the Garden**, by Dorothy Lilja Harrison. (Chronicles of Courage.) Colorado Springs: ChariotVictor Publishing, 1997. ISBN 0781403022, PAP, \$6.99.

F. Poliomyelitis—Fiction; Death—Fiction; Faith—Fiction . 119 p. Gr. 5 - 9.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Adjustment! Change! *A Better Tomorrow*, by Dorothy Lilje Harrison, contains glimpses of Depression hardship. Janet, a fifth grader of Swedish descent, finds that the Depression of 1934 forces her family to adjust to new circumstances. Because her father is out of work, her family can no longer afford their own house. Instead, they share a house with an elderly lady who gives them lots of rules designed to keep children quiet at all times. Janet has to watch her younger siblings, make new friends in a Polish neighborhood, attend a new school, and cope with the growing realization that her family is "poor."

*Operation Morningstar* is based on a true story. The year is 1945. The place is war-torn Germany. Five children, aged nine to fourteen, embark on a journey of over 400 kilometers in order to find their father and younger sisters. The journey is dangerous, and often seems impossible. If they don't reach Waldeck in time, their family will be gone; but God's intervention brings unexpected help and hope.

Polio! No one knew what caused it. Rumors and hysteria brought fear in 1952. Children were kept from crowds and swimming pools were closed early in hopes of eliminating the threat. Now Susan's best friend has died and Susan's guilt is overwhelming. If only she hadn't ... *Gold in the Garden* traces a special friendship as it teaches how God forgives and heals a hurting heart.

The Chronicles of Courage series by Dorothy Lilja Harrison contains well-drawn, believable characters, who are challenged by circumstances arising in different historical time periods. Each book introduces a new set of characters and stands completely alone. The books also contain a short real-life history of the era studied as well as suggestions for further reading. This is a series that provides positive values and godly answers in the context of overcoming problems. PSM

**Smoke Screen Secret**, by Marianne Hering. (Lights, Camera, Action Mysteries; 2.) Colorado Springs: ChariotVictor Publishing, 1997. ISBN 1564765644, PAP, \$4.99.

F. Motion pictures—Production and direction—Fiction; Actors and actresses—Fiction; Christian life—Fiction 159 p. Gr. 5 - 8.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Twin sisters McKenna and Jade James are thrust into the light in more ways than one. These two spunky sisters find themselves with a new agent, the mother of McKenna's ex-boyfriend. While trying out for a new

part in an action movie, the girls meet a rival actress. Ashley becomes a thorn in their side as she gets the coveted part and then is injured in a fire in her dressing room. The James twins are given the chance to take over where Ashley left off. But on her first day on the set, Jade is injured when a second fire breaks out, sending her to the hospital with bad burns.

McKenna takes over and begins acting in the movie. It doesn't take long for McKenna to begin to investigate the mysterious fires. As McKenna looks for clues, Jade becomes fascinated with the power of a crystal necklace given her by the production company. McKenna's interests are torn between convincing her sister of the dangers of the necklace and her escalating interest in the mystery at the set. As Jade recuperates, both twins get involved on the movie set and find themselves surrounded by danger and a play for power. They learn to trust each other's instincts and discover that God is indeed a powerful protector.

*Smoke Screen Secret* is a lively account of the movie industry. Author Marianne Hering does a fine job of creating an interest in this unfamiliar world of acting. Her book is made more interesting by the accurate phraseology and acting terms she uses. The introduction of the crystal and the erroneous beliefs that surround the New Age movement provides young readers with food for thought in a non-threatening way. Hering has a way of slowly allowing the truth of Scripture to reveal itself throughout the course of everyday events. This is a fun read. MH

**Littlejim's Dreams**, by Gloria Houston; illustrated by Thomas B. Allen. LCCN 96046338. San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1997. ISBN 0152015094, HBB, \$16.00.

F. Fathers and sons—Fiction; Mountain life—North Carolina—Fiction; North Carolina—Fiction. 231 p. Gr. 6 - 9.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Littlejim (as opposed to Bigjim, his father) is a young teen growing up with dreams of his own in the early 1920's. Littlejim is the eldest son, and his parents depend upon his efforts on their farm in the Appalachian mountains. When his mother becomes ill and is taken to her bed, Littlejim's dream of going away to a school seems to die. His family takes in Myron, a boy from the city, for the summer, and despite a rocky beginning the two become fast friends as they discover a common love of reading. Times are changing quickly in this small village, and Littlejim is challenged to grow and change as well.

His winning essay is published in a national publication, but then his father must take his mother to a hospital for an operation, and unscrupulous miners come looking for people to cheat and timber to steal. Throughout this long summer, Littlejim works out his feelings, turns over his loyalties in his mind and decides to do what is best for his family. Eventually Myron returns to the city, leaving an empty void for Littlejim. Still, he presses on and continues to work and dream of a future as a writer.

Events take a turn, and the wrongs get righted, and Littlejim discovers a father who truly loves him, a

community that stands behind him, and just possibly a future with fulfilled dreams.

*Littlejim's Dreams* is a terrific book filled with the wonderings of a young boy's heart. Gloria Houston's Appalachian dialogue makes the reading intriguing. While not an overtly Christian text, the time period lends itself more easily to people speaking of God and turning to Him during their times of trouble. As readers peruse the pages of this book, they will find themselves carried away to a small mountain village filled with people who are often maligned and misunderstood. The gentle heart of Littlejim and his struggles will engender a deeper concern for those whom we view as "different." MH

**A Dark Horn Blowing**, by Dahlov Ipcar. LCCN 96048661. San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1978, 1997. ISBN 015201201X, PAP, \$6.00.

F. Fantasy. 258 p. Gr. 8 - Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—4

The Erl Queen is dying, and Nora is summoned from her bed in the dead of night to serve as nurse to the infant prince. In order to ensure that Nora remains in the magical realm of Erland, the wicked Erl King robs her of her memory, and her voice. By the time the memories of her former life with her husband and newborn babe return, Nora has come to love her frail charge. Torn between two lives, and two loves, she makes the difficult decision to stay until Prince Elver learns to walk of his own accord.

Dahlov Ipcar uses the voices of several characters to spin his tale, including Nora, the prince, Nora's husband, Eben, and their son, Owen. This shifting perspective allows each character to emerge clearly, and pulls the reader into the story.

In Nora's absence, the grief-stricken Eben is an easy target for Bab Magga, a malicious witch who takes over the household and finally drives Owen to run away. As Prince Elver begins to come into his magical powers, he finds a way into his beloved Nana's world. He comes to understand what Nora has left behind, and then finds that there are grave dangers facing her in his world. This knowledge gives him the strength to let her go, and to find his own true calling.

*A Dark Horn Blowing* is a gripping and original blend of English, Scottish, and Norse mythology, all brought together with the author's own vision. The atmosphere is muted and dream-like, almost nightmarish at times, as the forces of evil threaten to overwhelm the protagonists. The novel is dark, but very effective, and in the end, redemption is found. There is one attempted rape, and Bab Magga is not above casting the occasional evil spell. SS

**The Fate of the Yellow Woodbee**, by Dave & Neta Jackson; illustrated by Julian Jackson (Trailblazer Books.) Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1997. ISBN 1556617437, PAP, \$5.99.

F. Elliot, Jim—Fiction; Missionaries—Ecuador—Fiction; Saint, Nate—Fiction. xxxp p. Gr. 4 - 8.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

How would you describe a yellow airplane if you had never seen one before? As a giant wooden bee perhaps? Would it scare you? How would you respond to seeing a human—a white man—"in its belly"? What would you think of it delivering "gifts"? What would you do when you think it might have landed near your house?

Most of us with any interest in missions know of Nate Saint, Jim Elliot, and the others who were martyred in Ecuador in 1956. In *The Fate of the Yellow Woodbee*, Dave and Neta Jackson do a great job of getting behind and beyond the familiar story to understand the natives, as seen through the eyes of a young Auca boy named Niwa.

Niwa is fascinated by the giant yellow "woodbee" and the white men in it, yet he is confused by the reaction of his tribesmen. He is thoroughly indoctrinated in the beliefs of his people—that life is insignificant, and fighting and killing are common place. And he wonders what any of this might have to do with his older sister, Dayuma, who disappeared several years ago and is believed to be living among white people. Have they eaten her? Everyone knows that white people are cannibals!

*The Fate of the Yellow Woodbee* is interesting juvenile fiction based on documented, historical facts. Illustrations scattered throughout the book help the reader better understand the characters and their lifestyle.

The reader will see how God used the deaths of five men to further His kingdom in ways that perhaps their lives never could. The book vividly portrays how the wives and children of these martyrs impacted the Auca's lives for future generations and eternity. BB

***Traitor in the Tower*, by Dave & Neta Jackson; illustrated by Julian Jackson (Trailblazer Books.) LCCN 96045854. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1996. ISBN 1556617410, PAP, \$5.99.**

F. Christian life—Fiction; Bunyan, John, 1628-1688—Fiction; Puritans—Fiction; Great Britain—History—Charles II, 1660-1685—Fiction. 144 p. Gr. 3-6.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

From the pages of history comes another story by Dave and Neta Jackson in the Trailblazer series. In 1660 Richard Winslow's father is arrested for treason because of his association with Cromwell before King Charles returned to rule England. Seeing that the winds of politics have changed, and that the amnesty given Cromwell's followers might be revoked, Richard's mother and sisters flee London. Richard is sent to live with his Uncle John White where he might have an opportunity to get back to London to help his father. Uncle John is a jailer, and among his prisoners is John Bunyan. As Richard helps his Uncle about the jail, he comes to know Bunyan. Through this connection he is able to eventually help his father.

The story is interspersed with tales told by Bunyan to entertain his daughter, Richard, and fellow prisoners. These tales are adaptations of his allegorical *Pilgrim's Progress*. Each tale carries a lesson that helps Richard in his efforts to get his father released from prison.

Young readers will be able to apply these lessons to their own situations. An example is the story of Pilgrim and Hopeful being locked in a dungeon; it seems there is no way out. Even in this plight, Hopeful says, "As long as there is life, there is hope."

*Traitor in the Tower* ends with a few pages entitled "More About John Bunyan." These pages contain historical data. Charming black and white drawings help show the clothing and setting of the period. MPC

***The Swindler's Treasure*, by Lois Walfrid Johnson. (The Riverboat Adventures; 4.) LCCN 97004670. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1997. ISBN 1556613547, PAP, \$5.99.**

F. Underground railroad—Fiction; Fugitive slaves—Fiction; Slavery—Fiction; Afro-Americans—Fiction; Steamboats—Fiction; Mississippi River—Fiction. 191 p. Gr. 5-8.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Libby and Caleb Norstad, along with their friend Jordan, return in *The Swindler's Treasure*, the fourth book in Lois Johnson's Riverboat Adventures. The series is set in the 1850's. While they are traveling the upper Mississippi River on their father's riverboat, a swindler robs them of the money they need to keep their boat and business afloat. Libby and Caleb want to try and retrieve the lost money, while Jordan wants to see his family reunited again.

His mother and siblings have just recently made it to freedom via the Underground Railroad, but his father is still a slave in the south. Before the family can complete its journey to safety in Canada, Jordan wants to rescue his father, also. His church entrusts him with a considerable amount of money to take back with him to help some friends in need. This money ends up lost, and in an effort to retrieve it, while clearing his name and freeing his father, Jordan becomes embroiled in an adventure of intrigue and suspense. The three friends find that both quests lead to the same swindler.

*The Swindler's Treasure* is an exciting tale that weaves faith, friendship, and trust together solidly. Family loyalty and responsibility are the bedrock of the children's direction and focus.

Also woven into the story is a measure of mid-nineteenth century United States history, particularly focusing on the slaves' plight and their quest for freedom. It's an exciting and good read for middle school age children, which will enhance their study of our country's heritage. GCH

***Frankie*, by J. Sydney Jones. LCCN 97019197. New York: Lodestar Books/Dutton, 1997. ISBN 0525675744, HBB, \$16.99.**

F. Coal Strike, Colo., 1913-1914—Fiction; Strikes and lockouts—Fiction; Runaways—Fiction; Interpersonal relations—Fiction. 167 p. Gr. 6-9.

Quality—4 Acceptability—4

Mr. Jones was inspired to write *Frankie* when he read a re-telling of the Ludlow Massacre. He uses a little known event in Colorado coal mining history as the setting for his story.

Frankie escaped a life of abuse in Denver and is taken in by Luke's family. Beth, the youngest of the family thinks she is the only one not taken in by Frankie's unbelievable stories about her past. Having someone to care for brings Luke's mother to life for the first time since Luke's brother was killed in the mines. Beth is sent to temporarily live with an aunt in Denver because she is making life so miserable for everyone due to her attitude toward Frankie. Luke and Frankie make friends at the striking miners' camp. They become increasingly involved in the events leading up to the Ludlow Massacre.

*Frankie* is well written and offers the adventure which is enjoyed by upper elementary and junior high students. However, there are several expletives and some profanity. Those interested in Colorado or mining history will want to consider adding Frankie to their library. JM

***Searching for Candlestick Park*, by Peg Kehret. LCCN 97011222. New York: Cobblehill Books/Dutton, 1997. ISBN 0525652566, HBB, \$14.99.**

F. Runaways—Fiction; Cats—Fiction; Fathers and sons—Fiction. 149 p. Gr. 6-8.

Quality—4 Acceptability—4

Twelve-year-old Spencer decides to run away from his mom when conditions force them to move from their rented apartment to go live with his Aunt May and her two children. The worst thing for Spencer is that he is told that he must get rid of his cat, Foxey. Foxey is Spencer's best friend, and realizing that he must make a choice, he decides to run away and find his dad. The last that Spencer heard from his father was a post card mailed from San Francisco telling Spencer that he was at the baseball stadium at Candlestick Park, home of the Giants. Spencer soon finds out that life on the road, especially for a minor, is no picnic, and he has to resort to desperate measures to keep going. Just when things look like failure, an older man, Hank, takes Spencer under his wing and helps him make the right choices.

Spencer finally reaches the baseball park and finds his dad, only to realize that in real life things don't always have a happy ending. Spencer is sent back home, but soon takes things into his own hands again. Ultimately, Spencer realizes that home is the best place, even under difficult circumstances.

Told in the first person, Peg Kehret's novel is a heart-warming story of a boy who faces difficult choices. Even though Spencer doesn't always do the right thing, he holds to the basic principles of right and wrong. *Searching for Candlestick Park* is realistic about the trauma kids face when living with separated parents. It also is factual about what happens when one decides to run away, and it concludes with a strong emphasis on the importance of uniting parent and child, even in less than ideal situations. DAW

*As Long as There Are Mountains*, by Natalie Kinsey-Warnock. LCCN 96048531. New York: Cobblehill Books/Dutton, 1997. ISBN 0525652361, HBB, \$14.99.

F. Farm life—Vermont—Fiction; Family life—Fiction; Conduct of life—Fiction. 139 p. Gr. 5 - 9.

Quality—3 Acceptability—3

Natalie Kinsey-Warnock has created an appealing story of a young girl's love for the land her family lived on for hundreds of years. Thirteen year old Iris lives on the family farm in northern Vermont in 1956. However, the year holds many trials for her family as the barn burns down and her father loses his leg in a logging accident. Iris finds out that her cousin is part of a group that was responsible for the fire and blames him for her father's accident. Times are hard and her father feels that he cannot run the farm anymore and decides to sell the farm. Iris knows that "as long as there are mountains, and rivers, and stars in the sky" that she will miss the family farm. The story ends on a happy note as her uncle comes to the rescue and saves the farm. Iris learns many lessons during this trying year about herself, her family, and others around her.

Iris' father uses profanity and several unnecessary references to bodily functions are made within the story. Iris questions God's love for her and wonders if all the family problems are a punishment for her. She has questions for which no answers are given. PJP

*Sweet Memories Still*, by Natalie Kinsey-Warnock; illustrated by Laurie Harden. LCCN 96007750. New York: Cobblehill Books/Dutton, 1997. ISBN 0525652302, HBB, \$14.99.

F. Grandmothers—Fiction; Self-confidence—Fiction. 76 p. Gr. 5 - 8.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

*Sweet Memories Still*, by Natalie Kinsey-Warnock, is a small book that makes a big point. A person locked in selfishness can learn to see things from another perspective. Shelby is a preteen girl consumed by her own plans for her birthday party and sleep-over with her friends. Her grandmother's sickness and an unexpected out-of-town trip ruin those plans and cause Shelby to resent her mother and grandmother. The seemingly inappropriate gift of an old camera from her grandmother makes the situation almost unbearable.

During the weekend stay at her grandmother's home Shelby learns many surprising things about her family; she comes to appreciate the old camera when she understands the memories that her grandmother associates with it. During a Sunday morning church service Shelby hears her grandmother sing "Amazing Grace" and is deeply affected.

She is further pressed into a relationship with her grandmother when a fire destroys the old family home and her grandmother comes to live with Shelby and her parents.

Shelby recaptures the lost pictures destroyed in the fire through her careful drawings of scenes she remembered from the old photographs. She gains strength of character and the ability to go beyond her

own fears from her grandmother's courage in overcoming the house fire.

Laurie Harden's life-like pencil drawings appear throughout the book. She has captured the characters and the emotions in each of her illustrations. ASN

*To Capture the Wind*, by Sheila MacGill-Callahan. LCCN 93045966. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 1997. ISBN 0803715420, HBB, \$14.99.

E. Riddles—Fiction; Pirates—Fiction; Sailing—Fiction; Inventions—Fiction. Unp. Gr. 4 - 8.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Oonagh is a happy farmer maiden until the day her betrothed, the famous weaver Conal, falls into the hands of the Pirate Malcolm. Immediately she lays all aside and goes to rescue Conal from the Pirate's island fastness. Malcolm, riding a wave of arrogant ambition, has captured many artisans. He even holds Aidan, his own son, prisoner until a maiden can win his hand by answering four riddles. To free her beloved Conal and his fellow slaves, and reunite Aidan and his love, Oonagh risks her own freedom and accepts the trial by riddle, including how to capture the wind and escape across the sea.

Using Celtic themes, award winning author Sheila MacGill-Calahan draws on her own Celtic background to expertly weave this poetic saga of love, ingenuity, partnership, and forgiveness. Her heroine capably handles her problems with a combination of grit, wisdom, cunning and selfless devotion. Even as in Tolkien's *Hobbit*, *To Capture the Wind* uses the ancient and honorable riddle game as an intrinsic part, reminding the reader that life often needs its tricky riddles answered correctly. Employing an interest grabbing, contemporary version of the classic Celtic style, *To Capture the Wind* evokes the aura of Irish heroic tales. Like this tales' heroine, noted illustrator Gregory Manchess is self taught and very successful in his chosen field. Illumined with Irish light, Manchess' unique oil paintings vividly present the action and fellowship portrayed by this story. DJE

*One of Fannin's Men : A Survivor at Goliad*, by Isabel R. Marvin. LCCN 97011719. Dallas: Hendrick-Long Publishing Co, 1997. ISBN 1885777191, PAP, \$8.95.

F. Fannin, James Walker, 1804?-1836—Fiction; Goliad Massacre, Goliad, Tex., 1836—Fiction. 93 p. Gr. 4 - 6.

Quality—3 Acceptability—5

"History! I hate it," he thought, "especially Texas history!" So says Benny at the start of the novel *One of Fannin's Men*. But when Benny reluctantly goes on a field trip to La Bahia, he is transported back in time to live through the Texan massacre. He meets his distant grandfather, and the two secretly help save a wounded man escape from General Antonio Lopez of Santa Ana.

Author Isabel R. Marvin has handled the violent history in a careful way. She relays the story so the main character, Benny, does not witness the slayings of the 342 Texans, or the burning of their bodies. She

does provide a setting to arouse reader interest and sympathy for these occurrences.

A conglomeration of photos and paintings illustrate the text. Some are better quality than others. A typo can be noticed and improper time sequence is included. Benny tells his mother he has gone to La Bahia today when the trip occurred the day prior. Readers may be disappointed when a fearful encounter with the Mexican soldiers is foreshadowed repeatedly, but the situation never occurs.

Despite the above, readers will gain an appreciation for Texas history. The time period will be real for them because of Marvin's writing. LAG

*After the War*, by Carol Matas. LCCN 95043613. New York: Aladdin Paperbacks, 1996. ISBN 0689803508, PAP, \$4.50.

F. Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)—Fiction; Jews—Europe, Eastern—Fiction. 133 p. Gr. 8 - 10.

Quality—5 Acceptability—3

Fifteen-year-old Ruth Mendenberg cannot locate any surviving family members in Poland at the cessation of World War II. Feeling completely isolated, she reluctantly agrees to assist the underground organization, Brichah, to smuggle twenty orphans, aged six to fifteen, to Palestine. At the Czechoslovakian border, the children are nearly thwarted in the early part of their mission. Before they cross the border into Italy, violence erupts between the French soldiers and the Jews. Suffering minor bruises, they are released and travel to a children's camp in Northern Italy, where Ruth takes the first step in coping with her torment.

The children leave the camp and embark on a voyage to Palestine. It is a difficult journey with one thousand refugees crammed together. The Orthodox Jews on the ship pray three times a day. Everyone celebrates when Ruth spies her brother, Simon, on board. After the refugees reach Palestine, many are arrested and sent to a camp in Cyprus. Ruth and two of her friends escape.

Carol Matas writes about a fifteen-year-old girl who is emotionally dead until she is drawn out by her compatriots. By the end of the story, Ruth has coped with her pain and awakened emotionally.

The hand-drawn map at the beginning of the book is a valuable tool for delineating the orphans' itinerary. *After The War* is based on episodes from the Holocaust, and parents should be aware that there are some graphic descriptions of Jews being killed. DBW

*Catch Me Once, Catch Me Twice*, by Janet McNaughton. Toronto, Ont.: Stoddart Publishing, 1996. ISBN 0773611819, PAP, \$4.95.

F. St. John's (Newfoundland)—History—Fiction; World War, 1939-1945—Canada—Fiction. 213 p. Gr. 6 - 12.

Quality—5 Acceptability—4

Twelve-year-old Evelyn is angry. Her father has gone to fight in World War II, so Evelyn and her mother have moved in with his parents in St. Johns, Newfoundland. After feeling like a misfit in her new

school, Evelyn makes friends with fourteen-year-old Peter. She learns of the folklore many of the islanders believe. When her curiosity and the sound of sweet, high music draw her into an old spring house, she encounters a fairy. Later, she returns, hoping that she will find the fairy and he will grant her a favor. When the fairy fails to appear, she is partially relieved, as it might have meant choosing between a wish for her father, who is now missing in action, and for her mother, who is in the midst of a difficult childbirth.

The complex plot of *Catch Me Once, Catch Me Twice* flows well. There are quite a few characters, each with their own set of problems, and the interaction between them is believable. The book is exciting without seeming contrived. Janet McNaughton writes well, showing attention to detail. In the context of a historically accurate story, the encounter with the fairy is treated as fact, not fantasy. The book has one instance of a mild profanity. CSJ

***Home Wars*, by Dorothy Reynolds Miller. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 1997. ISBN 0689814119, \$15.00.**

F. Divorce—Fiction. Gr. 7-10.

Quality—4 Acceptability—2

*Home Wars* is about a young girl and her family who are torn up by a second divorce. A minister and a deacon come to the house to try and talk to Halley's parents when they are on the verge of breaking up. Both are portrayed as inept and bumbling. Halley goes to a Christian counselor who makes no difference, has no positive influence on Halley. Not recommended. DAW

***The Tender Years*, by Janette Oke. (A Prairie Legacy; 1.) LCCN 97021037. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1997. ISBN 1556619529, HBB, \$15.99.**

F. Christian life—Fiction. 270 p. Gr. 6-Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Virginia, born third in a family of five children, just doesn't seem to know her place. At least, that's how she feels. Her family consists of a father who is a lawyer, a mother who was a nurse, and four assorted siblings. As Virginia yearns for the acceptance of her peers, she accepts the unlikely friendship of Jenny, a true rebel at heart. Jenny becomes the instigator of many trials for Virginia. Eventually troubled by her disloyalty to her family and her new-found faith, Virginia accepts the challenge set her by her wise mother. She must try to love Jenny and accept her without becoming like her. Can she do it?

After a tragic accident, this task becomes simpler in some ways and more difficult in others. Jenny's weakened condition gives Virginia the opportunity to invite her to the church youth group where Jenny sets her sights on Virginia's friend, Jamison. Virginia's reluctance to admit her own feelings for Jamison adds another thread to the already complicated pattern of their friendship. Over time, Virginia grows in her faith and in her love for Jenny. As she learns to listen to her

heart and watch for God's plan, Virginia begins to settle into becoming a woman with grace.

Author Janette Oke spins a powerful story in *The Tender Years*. Her subtle "drawing out" of common teenage fears and struggles is superb. The yo-yo pattern which many pre-teens and teens experience is told in a loving, generous spirit. Uncertain pain and self-discovery are balanced with the joys of new feelings and thrills. Reading this text was like re-experiencing some emotions from years past. This book is one to read together and share with the whole family. The many peer pressure issues will spur hearty discussion on the part of everyone. MH

***With Wings as Eagles*, by Patsy Baker O'Leary. LCCN 95001666. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997. ISBN 0395705576, HBB, \$15.00.**

F. Fathers and sons—Fiction; Family life—Fiction; Race relations—Fiction; North Carolina—Fiction. 262 p. Gr. 6-Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

This historical novel opens with twelve-year-old Bubba Harkins and his six-year-old brother Scooter eagerly awaiting the return of their father, Jed. For six long years, Jed Harkins has been in prison, wrongfully accused of making moonshine on his property. Throughout those years, Bubba has taken on the position of man of the house, helping his mother farm and make do.

*With Wings as Eagles* is set in the late 1930's. Bubba has more adversity than being the son of an former prisoner; his best friend and neighbor, Israel, is a black man. Bubba doesn't stand for negative remarks about either of the men in his life, and the boy pays dearly for defending himself and his brother. The local schoolmaster has it in for the Harkins family, and only through perseverance and a quiet, natural calling out to God will Bubba's heart heal from the pain. As events unravel, the truth begins to reveal itself and the entire community learns a valuable lesson about judgment and forgiveness.

The author, Patsy O'Leary, is a former native of North Carolina and returned there to write this novel. She writes this fictional piece with the flavorful words spoken in that time period. Many of Bubba's phrases and expressions, such as "wont," were common in that era. Reading this book, we walk with Bubba as he learns to work through his feelings and emotions. After a time, it seems we can let go of his hand as he has grown into a boy who knows his way, with the help of God. MH

***A Perilous Bargain*, by Jane Peart. (Edgecliffe Manor Mysteries.) LCCN 96029629. Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 1997. ISBN 0800756266, PAP, \$10.99.**

F. Mystery fiction; Ireland—Fiction. 238 p. Gr. 10-Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Oriel Banning, the heroine of *Web of Deception* and *Shadow of Fear*, returns in book three of the Edgecliffe Manor Mysteries series. Aboard an ocean liner en route from America to England in 1895, Oriel meets

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Morgan Drummond, young, rich, handsome, and engaged. She pays him little mind, as she is consumed by what her future holds. Oriel has spent two years grooming Berenice McPhail for her debut into society. Berenice is on her way to London to marry an English aristocrat, and so Oriel will soon be unnecessary.

After the wedding, Oriel assumes Berenice's mother will pay her passage back to America. She is shocked to find that this is not so, and is stranded in London, friendless and jobless. Seeking domestic work, she finds she is competing with too many native Englishwomen and is too attractive as well! She encounters Morgan Drummond by chance, who informs her that he has inherited a castle in Ireland from his grandfather, something which displeases him as he has no desire to live in Ireland. After this meeting, she eventually finds work in a garment factory sewing buttonholes. After a week of draining work, the plant manager makes a pass at her when she tries to collect her pay. She manages to get away with her honor intact, but with no paycheck.

In this desperate situation, Oriel is surprised by a letter from Drummond, asking for a meeting at his lawyers' offices. Once there, she learns that his fiancée has broken off the engagement because a requirement of his grandfather's will was that he live in the castle in Ireland with his bride for a full year or receive nothing from the estate. He proposes a one-year marriage that will not be consummated. After the year, they will obtain an annulment, Oriel will receive a large payment, and they will go their ways. With few options, Oriel eventually agrees.

She falls in love with Ireland, its people, and the sea. She makes friends with a poet named Bryan and other neighbors as well. As the year progresses, she also finds herself struggling with a marriage of convenience that has become very inconvenient. To further complicate her life, several "accidents" convince Ariel that someone wants her gone from the castle. Pearl resolves all of these issues in a satisfying manner. Though this is a moral book, there is little of an explicitly Christian element. KDB

***Keeper of the Light*, by Patricia Curtis Pfitsch. LCCN 96039745. New York: Simon & Schuster Bks. for Y.R.'s, 1997. ISBN 0689814925, HBB, \$16.00.**

F. Lighthouses—Fiction; Sex role—Fiction; Michigan—Fiction. 137 p. Gr. 7 - Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—4

Readers who are drawn to strong heroines will want to read *Keeper of the Light*, by Patricia Curtis Pfitsch. The story takes place in the late 1800's on Lake Superior. Faith Sutton is a teenager who finds herself in the midst of change. She has grown up being the lighthouse keeper's daughter, and has learned how to tend the lighthouse from her father. She promises her father she will keep the beacon burning, but when Faith's father is drowned at sea everything changes. Faith's mother moves Faith and her brother into town, and extracts a reluctant promise from Faith to become a young lady. However, Faith finds herself continually drawn back to the lighthouse, concerned with whether

the new young keeper can live up to the challenges of his job.

As much as she desires to keep her father's promise she realizes she must also keep the promise she made to her mother. When an unexpected storm on the lake threatens to take the life of her mother, Faith must make a decision. Will she be a passive lady, or a keeper of the light?

Debut novelist Pfitsch provides an enthralling plot with strong, vibrant characters. The author provides readers with a tender and passionate story of a girl emerging into womanhood, who stands well in the company of Jo March of *Little Women* and *Anne of Green Gables*. Pfitsch promises to be a writer who provides memorable characters and themes to ponder upon.

There are a couple of instances of light profanity, in context, to which the character responds with remorse. PW

***Thunderbird Gold*, by Nat Reed; illustrations by Patrick Kelley. LCCN 96045496. Greenville, S.C.: Bob Jones University Press, 1997. ISBN 0890849196, PAP, \$6.49.**

F. Ojibwa Indians—Fiction; Indians of North America—Canada—Fiction; Canada—Fiction; Cousins—Fiction; Christian life—Fiction; Mystery fiction. 154 p. Gr. 5 - 8.

Quality—3 Acceptability—5

Calvin and Eric are looking forward to spending the summer together. They plan to work at the family lodge, until they are thrown into a mystery involving hidden treasure, kidnapping, truth serum, and murder. Intertwined with Canadian Ojibwa legend, the answers, which will benefit the modern day Ojibwa people, are hidden until Calvin and Eric find them.

Author Nat Reed's mystery, *Thunderbird Gold*, is written for middle graders. A resident of Ontario, Reed has provided an authentic setting in northern Canada. The plot flows quickly, but the writing is weakened by superficial character reaction to incredible circumstances. The boys recover rapidly after witnessing an exploding truck and discovering a friend has been kidnapped. Eric's father is mentioned as being in the hospital as the story opens, but isn't referred to again. The book begins with one point of view, then switches to another for the remainder. Background history is given in alternating chapters.

Decisional regeneration is clearly written. Calvin participates in "the sinner's prayer."

Guns are used in the book; a main character is shot and dies. *Thunderbird Gold* may challenge the reader to see if he is ready to face death without fear, or death without Christ. LAG

***The Rebel*, by Nancy Rue. (Christian Heritage Series; 7.) LCCN 96008549. Colorado Springs: Focus on the Family Publishing, 1996. ISBN 1561794783, PAP, \$4.99.**

F. Christian life—Fiction; Fathers and sons—Fiction; United States—History—Revolution, 1775-1783—Fiction. 188 p.

***The Thief*, by Nancy Rue. (Christian Heritage Series; 8.) LCCN 96008551. Colorado Springs: Focus on the Family Publishing, 1996. ISBN 1561794791, PAP, \$4.99.**

F. Christian life—Fiction; United States—History—Revolution, 1775-1783—Fiction. 188 p. Gr. 4 - 8.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Thomas Hutchinson, at nearly eleven years of age, is the youngest of the three boys in his family in Colonial Williamsburg. In *The Rebel*, he strives to understand the Revolutionary War on a personal level, confronting such issues as right and wrong, and what is expected of him. As he struggles with his clumsy, stubborn, volatile self, he matures. He seeks God's help and saves the life of his boss in the pharmacy, as well as those of his Tory friends.

Thomas' adventures continue in *The Thief*. He helps an indentured servant, his new friend, uncover a horse thievery ring and its plot to chase the Loyalists out of town. Thomas discovers that God does have a plan for people who do what is right.

These two works of historical fiction delve deeper into inner thoughts, feelings, and motivations than many series books. They portray a couple with a deep faith in God and strong convictions about doing right, and their efforts to raise their sons in a godly way. The books paint a clear picture of what colonial life was like during the Revolutionary War. Nancy Rue does not moralize or settle for pat answers to the hard questions of the times. In some scenes the behavior of the main character is a bit stereotypical; for the most part, the reader is easily hooked into the stories. One's understanding of some of the underlying attitudes might be clearer if these are read in order, but they can be enjoyed separately. JB

***Sacred Shadows*, by Maxine Rose Schur. New York: Dial Books, 1997. ISBN 0803722958, HBB, \$14.99.**

F. World War, 1939-1945—Poland—Fiction. Gr. 9 - Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—3

*Scared Shadows* is the story of Lena, a young teenager caught in World War II. Germany is taken under Polish rule and Lena is a Jew. The Jews begin to feel discrimination on a larger scale until it will affect their very livelihood. Lena is not ashamed that she is a Jew, but also feels like she is a legal Polish citizen, as her father died in the army of Germany with honor. With the rise of Hitler in Berlin, several Jews begin to move to other nations for protection. Lena and her mom, who runs a shoe shop, feel that the rumors will die down. As their store gets discriminated against, Lena begins to realize that the threat of Hitler is real, but she feels that the Zionist movement that is strong among the youth is too far out and she would rather make peace within her own country instead of fleeing to Israel. Lena falls in love with Janusz who is a Zionist leader. A struggle begins as Lena tries to remain a faithful Polish citizen and yet follow her heart. Not until the last chapter is the reader given a hint of what Lena's final decision will be.

Told in the first person the reader will easily identify with Lena and her struggles. This book is a historical

novel; the Jewish faith is not a prominent part of the book. There is some questionable language. DAW

***Under the Pear Tree*, by Brenda Seabrooks; illustrated by Roger Essley. LCCN 96007461. New York: Cobblehill Books/Dutton, 1997. ISBN 0525652132, HBB, \$13.99.**

F. American poetry. 93 p. Gr. 5 - 7.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

This slim book of narrative poems will get lost in the poetry section. Put it on the regular fiction shelves. Brenda Seabrooke has written about coming of age in rural Georgia during the 1950's with these autobiographical poems which evoke a simpler, more innocent period of time and life.

The poems describe three girlfriends, two eleven and one twelve years of age, spending the summer learning about life and the world as a city cousin, a boy, comes to stay in their small rural town. As the summer unfolds, a local war-hero gets his life back together, and worldly Vivian Malone (call me Viv) comes to town with her Flame Kiss lipstick, immediately causing all the girls to be intrigued and all the mothers to be skeptical. Delightful! Many pages beg to be read aloud and shared with other readers in peer and multi-generational groups.

The black and white illustrations are soft and muted—exactly right for these gentle poems.

Students who are serious readers will enjoy *Under the Pear Tree*, once pointed toward it by a guiding hand. A worthwhile addition to the school or church library. LGR

***Melitte*, by Fatima Shaik. LCCN 96029533. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 1997. ISBN 0803721064, HBB, \$15.99.**

F. Slavery—Fiction; Afro-Americans—Fiction; Louisiana—History—To 1803—Fiction; Sisters—Fiction. 147 p. Gr. 5 - 8.

Quality—4 Acceptability—3

Melitte is a young mulatto slave girl in Louisiana in the late 1700's. She does not know who her parents are or why she is unloved and unappreciated by Madame and Monsieur Duroux. At the age of six she is introduced to the word "slave" and makes up a definition based on her life. Hopelessness and hatred fill her heart. However, with the coming of Baby Marie, Melitte learns to love and to receive love in return.

When the Spanish take over Louisiana, Melitte's world expands and she is allowed to go to a plantation to worship on Sundays. No true worship takes place, however, as the slaves are only using this as a guise for talking of escape to freedom. Melitte is taught to sew and earns money with which to buy her freedom. But her money is stolen by the family, and she is bound at night to prevent her escape. Meanwhile, Marie is being trained in the "big house" to hate the blacks, but is unable to hate Melitte, whom she has found out is her half sister. The two girls attempt to run to freedom and are captured by Indians. Melitte is allowed to continue on but Marie must return back home.

Fatima Shaik has used this work to explore racial differences through the eyes of a child. The French people in the story are seen as unloving, hateful, lying, and ill-tempered although they claim to be "Christians." Melitte's life is very difficult as she seeks to gain an identity and the courage to escape. PJP

***How Do You Spell Abducted?* by Cherylyn Stacey. Red Deer, Alb.: Red Deer College Press, 1996. ISBN 0889951489, PAP, \$8.95.**

F. Fathers—Fiction; Kidnapping—Fiction. 135 p. Gr. 6 - 8.

Quality—3 Acceptability—3

In *How Do You Spell Abducted?* by Cherylyn Stacey, twelve-year-old Deb is not looking forward to the upcoming holiday with Dad. As the oldest of three children, she has a clearer picture of how things had been before the divorce, and a more mature perspective on how things are now. She doesn't totally understand her mother's fears when their dad visits them, but she senses them all the same. Now she and her nine-year-old sister, Paige, and five-year-old brother, Cory, are going to spend two weeks with him.

Paige and Cory can still laugh and giggle at their "Tarzan-Teddy Bear" father, but Deb is not so comfortable. What's more, his animosity toward her is obvious. Deb's fears are confirmed shortly after their trip begins when she learns that Dad has no intention of bringing them home again. He sneaks them across the border into the United States; somewhere in Wyoming the children make a desperate bid for freedom, and so begins the long and dangerous journey home.

*How Do You Spell Abducted?* is an exciting book; it is hard to put down, and provides some good reading in regard to contemporary issues. It speaks to the need for cooperation between siblings as they work to solve a serious problem. The children do mature throughout the story. They learn to work together, and each begins to see things from other perspectives.

But there are also some major concerns. The father, as an immature and selfish adult, is somewhat critical to the plot of the story, but his character, attitude, and actions are often disturbing. Mom, who could be more of a role model to balance Dad, is not a significant part of the story, and when she is present, she comes across as being tired, frustrated, and somewhat weak. The book is very realistic in terms of issues, but not entirely satisfying. Language is also an issue; profanity and disrespectful innuendoes are sprinkled throughout. GCH

***Darcy*, by Joni Eareckson Tada. (Darcy Series; 1.) LCCN 87035712. Elgin, Ill.: Chariot Books, 1988. ISBN 0781415098, PAP, \$5.99.**

F. Physically handicapped—Fiction. 127 p. Gr. 5 - 8.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Wheelchair-bound Darcy DeAngelis is about to enter a whole new world. Just after graduation from her local elementary school, Darcy begins contemplating the unknowns of the junior high school where she'll be

attending next fall. She asks herself if the bathroom mirrors will be low enough for her to see into? Will the desk rows be wide enough for her wheelchair to fit through? Will she even see her friends from elementary school anymore? All these questions and doubts loom in Darcy's mind as she writes to her "Box," her version of a diary.

As the summer begins Darcy tries to forget how her disabled legs have made her different. Looking forward to camp is the one consolation she has—until she learns that even there she'll be set apart. Darcy's disappointment with her physical limitations cause her to ask God for answers and encouragement. God's answer comes in a most unusual way, and he continues to remind her that he has a special plan for her life, a life filled with special people.

Author Joni Eareckson Tada writes from personal, heart-felt experience as she tells Darcy's story. Given that Joni herself is wheelchair-bound, she provides practical insights into the struggles disabled boys and girls face every day. Darcy's own emotional mindset helps readers empathize more fully with kids who are different. This book is filled with fun, excitement, and little doses of sobering reality. It is enough to cause readers to think twice before making assumptions about those who lives are physically challenged. At the end of the book, Joni lists simple, practical ideas for helping the disabled around us. MH

***Three Against Time*, by Margaret Taylor. Victoria, B.C.: Orca Book Publishers, 1997. ISBN 1551430673, PAP, \$6.95.**

F. Barkerville (B.C.)—Fiction; Cariboo (B.C.: Regional district)—Gold discoveries—Fiction. 137 p. Gr. 4 - 8.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Three brothers on a camping trip in British Columbia with their parents discover a dilapidated old prospector's cabin. When the boys venture inside, they are whisked back in time to 1868. Their adventures include encountering a grizzly bear and witnessing the Barkerville fire. They learn how to prospect and help catch a claim jumper. When they finally return to the present, they rescue the prospector's great-great-great-granddaughter from the old mine.

*Three Against Time* has an adventure-filled plot. Through the eyes of the boys, author Margaret Taylor depicts the life of a gold miner and the changes that have taken place since the 1880's. The reader will learn a bit of British Columbia history while enjoying a good story. Several ink drawings by Ljuba Levstek augment the text. CSJ

***A Flight of Angels*, by Geoffrey Trease. LCCN 89013121. Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, 1989. ISBN 0822507315, HBB, \$14.95.**

F. Caves—Fiction; Mystery fiction; England—Fiction. 115 p. Gr. 5 - 7.

Quality—3 Acceptability—4

In *A Flight of Angels*, by Geoffrey Trease, Sheila and her classmates turn an ordinary school assignment into an adventure by solving a centuries-old mystery. Set

in modern day England, the story introduces Sheila and her classmates, who decide they will study the underground caves that run through their city. As the small group of students, along with an interested reference librarian, painstakingly uncover clues, they reach the conclusion that one of the caves hides an ancient treasure. Excavating the treasure proves to be a race against time since the building above it might soon be sold and leveled.

Seasoned author Trease may be unfamiliar to many American readers, but this novel might be a welcome change of pace as characterization and dialog reflect her British background. Even though there is one instance of an adult using profanity, the book is a worthwhile selection as it touches on the persecution of the Church and describes the fact that countless Church-related works of art had to be placed in hiding. One of the characters relates the story of Joshua to the other students, many of whom come from other religious backgrounds; she also shows strength in her faith by singing hymns to calm herself when suddenly thrust into a frightening situation. PW

***A Hidden Magic*, by Vivian Vande Velde ; illustrated by Trina Schart Hyman. LCCN 96042014. San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1985. ISBN 0152012001, PAP, \$5.00.**

F. Fairy tales; Princes and princesses—Fiction. 176 p. Gr. 6 - 10.

Quality—4 Acceptability—4

Friendship, loyalty, and laughter...therein lie the best and truest kinds of magic. This is certainly the case with Vivian Vande Velde's *A Hidden Magic*. In many ways, her story is a parody of the traditional fairy tale. Jennifer is a princess, but she is on the plain side, and rather shy, and her father's kingdom is modest, to say the least. In fact, when the prince makes his entrance, it is laundry day, and Jennifer is down at the river pitting in with the servants.

Prince Alexander is everything a young princess' heart could desire—that is, until he opens his mouth. Then it quickly becomes obvious that he is arrogant, selfish, and often downright rude. In fact, it is his idea to explore the enchanted forest, in spite of Jennifer's repeated warnings, and so, when he falls victim to an enchanted sleep, it is entirely his own fault. But, being the kind-hearted sort, Jennifer sets off in search of help.

Her quest forces her to confront an irritable witch, a gullible giant, and a petulant, shape-changing sorcerer named Norman who wants to be left alone. But Jennifer is nothing if not persistent, and Norman never really stands a chance. With his help, Jennifer does get her happy ending, but only after several surprising twists.

The author's effortless writing style makes this novel an easy read. Vande Velde obviously enjoys playing with stereotypes and turning traditions on their heads, but she never lets this get in the way of the story. Readers will quickly become attached to her likable characters, and will be delighted to find that the plot is never quite predictable. SS

***Virtual World*, by Chris Westwood. LCCN 97009388. New York: Viking, 1997. ISBN 0670875465, HBB, \$15.99.**

F. Virtual reality—Fiction; Computers—Fiction; Science fiction. 217 p. Gr. 7 - 9.

Quality—4 Acceptability—3

Jack North acquires a pirated copy of Silicon Sphere, the ultimate virtual reality game for teenagers. After Jack plays the game, he is mystified upon discovering sand from the game in his bedroom. When Jack plays the game again, he sees the signature of Greg Sharp, a boy who inexplicably disappeared from the Internet, in the hotel guest book. Then Jack's friend, Kyle, has a key ring that belongs inside the game.

Next, Kate, a school friend, asks Jack to play Silicon Sphere with her when an e-mail friend disappears, the latest in a group of students worldwide to disappear. While playing the game, Kate vanishes. Jack chances upon a group of teenagers, and they are captured and "reformatted" with a nanochip inside their brains. Jack returns home, plugs himself into the computer and transfers data onto a tape to the mystification of family and friends.

*Virtual World* by Chris Westwood is an engrossing science fiction story that will appeal to young teenage readers that especially like playing computer games. A reclusive society totally controlled by the information superhighway and the game, Silicon Sphere, gradually changing the world from a real to a computer generated state is a thought-provoking plot. The only problematic element in the book is the profanity. DBW

***The Lesson of the Ancient Bones*, by Eric Wiggin. (Hannah's Island Series; 4.) Lynnwood, Wash.: Emerald Books, 1996. ISBN 1883002273, PAP, \$5.99.**

F. Christian life—Fiction; Archaeology—Fiction. 144 p. Gr. 4 - 7.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Hannah and her friend Mell discover a large clay pot, unearthed by Hanna's dog, Hunter. Examining the pot, they find human bones and broken pottery. Their discovery brings a professor of archaeology, a group of his students, and Chief Littledeer to visit Hannah's home on Beaver Island. While the students are studying the site, Hannah becomes friends with Lucy LaVerdiere. Like Hannah, Lucy is a Christian. Lucy also has great respect for the beliefs of her Native American ancestors. Hannah is overjoyed when Chief Littledeer decides to become a Christian.

*The Lesson of the Ancient Bones* has a unique blend of uncompromising Christian teaching and sensitivity to non-Christian cultures. This quality makes the book an outstanding contribution to Christian fiction. Eric Wiggin weaves plenty of information into the story, sometimes sounding a bit like a history lesson. Although the plot drags in places, this book will appeal to the sort of reader who will envy Hannah's hideaway in the hayloft, where she keeps her stash of books and

letters. Hannah, the central character of this series, is likable and believable. CSJ

***Mustang Flats*, by G. Clifton Wisler. LCCN 96029899. New York: Lodestar Books/Dutton, 1997. ISBN 0525675442, HBB, \$14.99.**

F. Family life—Fiction; United States—History—Civil War, 1861-1865—Fiction; Horses—Fiction; Fathers and sons—Fiction. 110 p. Gr. 5 - 8.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Set in the post-Civil War western frontier, *Mustang Flats*, by Clifton Wisler, is quality historical fiction. The results of the war, in political, social, and emotional terms, are experienced at a personal level through the first-person narration of fourteen-year-old Alby Draper.

Alby's father fights in the war, leaving Alby at ten years of age to care for the family and farm. At the war's end both Alby and his father are greatly changed and their relationship is strained; this is primarily due to Mr. Draper's emotional turmoil, the result of battle trauma. The situation is made worse by the presence of Nebo Hill, a young man who returns from the war with Mr. Draper. They have shared horrible experiences and Alby naturally feels left out and rejected.

When the family suffers a severe financial crisis and fears the loss of the farm, Alby, Mr. Draper, Nebo, and several other men camp out on the Mustang Flats for several months, capturing wild mustangs to sell. The money to save the farm is earned, but that is secondary to the father-son relationship that is saved during the time they spend together on the Flats. Both characters come to a new understanding of each other as mistrust is replaced by forgiveness. ASN

***The Transfigured Hart*, by Jane Yolen. LCCN 97005765. San Diego: Harcourt, Brace, 1997. ISBN 0152011951, PAP, \$5.00.**

F. Fantasy; Unicorns—Fiction. 110 p. Gr. 5 - Adult.

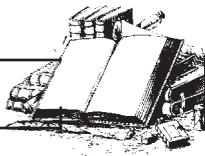
Quality—5 Acceptability—4

*The Transfigured Hart* is a beautiful story rife with symbolism. Richard Plante is a solemn, solitary orphan, who lives an austere life with his aunt and uncle. Heather Fielding, on the other hand, has an abundant family life which revolves around horses, hunting, and church. Each child independently happens upon a shimmering pool in the heart of Five Mile Wood. This pool is frequented by an unusual white beast, which Richard believes to be a unicorn.

With great reluctance, the children agree to share their secret, and a cautious friendship blooms between them. But Heather lets their secret slip on the evening before Opening Day, and together they must find a way to save their animal from the guns of the hunters.

This story resonates on many levels. On a human level, it speaks of the connections forged between very different people. On a mythical level, it taps into the rich vein of legend and symbolism associated with the

[Continued on p.40.](#)



*Homeschool Guide to the Online World : Everything You Need to Know to Start Making Great Connections!* by Mark & Wendy Dinsmore; foreword by Mary Pride. Elkton, Md.: Homeschool Press, 1996. ISBN 1888306165, PAP, \$12.99.

004.6. Internet (Computer network); Home schooling—United States. 126 p.

*Homeschool Guide to the Internet : Your Onramp to the Information Superhighway*, by Mark & Wendy Dinsmore; foreword by Kathy Ridpath. Elkton, Md.: Homeschool Press, 1996. ISBN 1888306203, PAP, \$14.99

004.6. Internet (Computer network); Home schooling—United States. 175 p. Gr. 6 - Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Many people interested in getting onto the information highway have only heard about e-mail [electronic mail] and the World Wide Web. *The Homeschool Guide to the Online World* is an introductory work written specifically for Christian parents and homeschooling families. It begins with a chapter on some basic questions and answers about the Internet: What it is; what equipment is needed to access it; and what about possible drawbacks in an uncensored environment? The authors recommend that beginners take advantage of the free introductory trial periods provided by one or more of the commercial online services to learn which service gives them the most useful guidance and special features. The second chapter briefly describes and compares the major online services, calling attention to special features relevant to homeschoolers. The chapter on "Exploring the World Wide Web" lists more than 150 websites, and takes up most of the book.

Topics covered include homeschooling, education, Christian resources, children, parents and family, reference, and a number of specific school subject areas. Appendices include information on selecting new computer systems and web browsers, online "netiquette," special terms and expressions. Wide outside margins, allowing room for users to add "Notes & Tips," occasionally feature significant information or hints in sidebars.

Cartoon-like black-and-white drawings introduce each major section; sample web pages, illustrating the variety and quality in web page design, appear on most pages in the chapter on resources.

*The Homeschool Guide to the Internet* is an intermediate level sequel designed to be used along with the first book, with very little duplicated information. The chapter that applies e-mail to mailing lists is followed by chapters explaining "Gopher," "ftp," and "Usenet" resources available on

the Internet. All of these types of resources, plus more from the World Wide Web, are intermingled in the long chapter listing homeschool resources. More than 250 addresses are grouped again according to topics, including computer topics. For ease in identification, special icons in front of each listing in the resource directory indicate the type of resource listed. One of the appendices discusses screening software.

In a time when informed "netizens" may refer to the "radioactive half-life of websites," Mark and Wendy Dinsmore have undertaken a daunting task in providing these two guides to the Internet. In the first book they emphasize that "Web pages are not set in stone! Pages sometimes move or change unexpectedly." In fact, this reviewer found that more than 1/3 of the WWW URL's [Uniform Resource Locators] in the first book were not current. A good number of the changed sites set up automatic forwarding links from the obsolete URL's to the current sites. Several other "not found" sites were located by the reviewer and updated using a good search engine-but some other sites seem definitely to be closed out.

In the second book the authors note that "many older Gopher sites are being rapidly transformed into Web sites." At this time most of the listed Gopher sites have been incorporated into WWW sites. Of the few Gopher sites still operating, much of the information has not been kept up-to-date. Others are not to be found. It's a similar story for "FTP" sites. The Usenet Christian homeschool newsgroup listed as "moderated" seems to have been abandoned by the moderator and left open for postings incompatible with the Christian purpose.

The generous white space in the format provides room for users to pencil in updated information on sites of interest. The resources listed originate from a wide variety of sources, including those with Islamic and Unitarian as well as frankly secular perspectives. Many of the listings have annotations, but a good number have none. The topical arrangement does not give the information that indexes by URL or source would provide. Typos were few-one URL was case sensitive, prompting a "not found" message because two words should not have been capitalized! Some might want to look further to get answers to certain questions and would appreciate a short bibliography. But these books provide a unique and useful resource for homeschoolers, and for Christian school faculty and students as well. DWB

*Goalposts : Devotions for Girls*, by Bill Sanders. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Fleming H. Revell, 1990. ISBN 0800753534, PAP, \$7.99.

242.. Devotional literature. 159 p. Gr. 9 - 12.

Quality—3 Acceptability—5

*Goalposts : Devotions for Girls* is directed toward teens who are ready and willing to develop a deeper spiritual life. Although written in easy to understand language, with short chapters, it is not a light and easy guide or so-called "spiritual fast food." Author Bill Sanders shows teens how to develop Biblical standards and values in their lives. He encourages a relationship of love and trust in God that will help them get through difficult times.

The book covers about 40 different issues facing teens including: fears, depression, dating, the "New Age," and abortion. He includes scripture from the Old and New Testaments and illustrates with events from his own experience, whether its teaching his young children how to water-ski or getting his fruit trees to produce healthy and appealing fruit.

In a section entitled "The New Age Cage" the author describes the New Age movement, listing its specific practices and dangers. He quotes I Thess 5:21-23: "Test everything that is said to be to be sure it is true..." and helps the reader learn how to discern the truth from a lie. Each chapter asks pertinent questions and directs the reader to God's Word for the answers. DEB

*How to Get a Life...No Strings Attached*, by Lorraine Peterson. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1997. ISBN 1556619499, PAP, \$7.99.

248.4. Christian life. 123 p. Gr. 9 - 12.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Lorraine Peterson has produced a quick paced, fast reading book that will appeal to teens and their parents. Its subject is God's wonderful provision of grace and the author illustrates this with the written word and dozens of cartoons that get right to the heart of the matter. One of Peterson's foremost concepts is that since this wonderful grace is available to teens in all circumstances, being ignorant is a terrible price to pay. This is a lesson also needed in the lives of parents.

How to get a life...no strings attached will be enjoyed by teens in their own personal reading and could also be used for a group discussion or Sunday School Class. It would be an asset to any church library. CC

*When Your Parents Pull Apart*, by Angela Elwell Hunt. LCCN 94011147. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers, 1995. ISBN 0842351043, PAP, \$6.99.

248.8. Divorce; Christian life; Prayer books and devotions. 122 p. Gr. 6 - 12.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Angela Elwell Hunt has written a practical, readable and biblical guidebook for teenagers experiencing the divorce of their parents. Each chapter begins with a journal entry by Kelsey Davis, a fictitious thirteen-year-old. Kelsey begins her freshman year believing that all is fine with her family, her twin brother Kenyon frequently "bosses her around" because he's six minutes older than she. But her world caves in when she discovers that her father is having an affair and that her mother is going to divorce him. As the book progresses Kelsey has to deal with the situations and feelings brought on by divorce.

Following each journal entry the author discusses the feelings teens have over a divorce in the family and how they can cope. She includes quotes and experiences from others who have been through their own parent's divorce. At the end of each chapter applicable Bible verses are included.

Although the book discusses many painful issues for teens, it is a valuable tool for helping them to deal with things that they don't completely understand. The author helps them face not only their own feelings but also recognize what may be happening with their parents, siblings or extended family.

The reactions of Kenyon, Kelsey's brother, to his father's betrayal and family troubles may encourage boys to read this book as well, even though the general format is a girl's journal. The discussion portions apply to any young person going through this struggle. DEB

*Excuse Me! I'll Take My Piece of the Planet Now*, by Joey O'Connor. LCCN 96040857. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1997. ISBN 0801011329, HBB, \$9.99.

248.8. Young adults—Conduct of life; Young adults—Christian life; High school graduates—Christian life. 93 p. Gr. 10 - 12.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

This "guidebook" is designed to help teens navigate through the choices to come after graduating from high school. Author Joey O'Connor writes that "taking a piece of the planet" refers not only to carving out your place in this life but in "being all God has designed you to be here on earth while keeping your eyes on heaven." The short chapters cover topics such as: loneliness on a college campus, credit card debt, being "strangled by stuff" and freedom over fear. Each chapter is divided into three parts. "The scene" tells a story from the authors experience of that of another graduating senior. "The slice" talks about possible ways of working through problems and hanging onto the Christian faith. "The stand" is a brief challenge for the reader to put his faith into action in a specific way.

The author talks to "generation x-ers" about the things that concern them while offering a mature viewpoint based on experience and God's principles. DEB

*Warriors*, by Tom Sirotnak and Ken Walker. LCCN 95011875. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1995. ISBN 0805462627, PAP, \$9.99.

248.8. Spiritual warfare; Young men—Religious life; Young men—Conduct of life. 176 p. Gr. 9 - College.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Does Tom Sirotnak, author of *Warriors*, know young men? Definitely! From page one Sirotnak hits the nail on the head when it comes to "the guys." Using realistic high school and college scenarios and stories of celebrities, mostly athletes he knows personally, Sirotnak relates well to youth. A member of the Power Team, he also spends time visiting high school and college campuses asking young men everywhere "what makes a real man?"

The first chapter in *Warriors* is Sirotnak's testimony—a before-Christ lifestyle idolized by many teens—the emptiness he felt then and the fullness he now knows Sirotnak is no twinkie, his fifty-four inch chest and twenty inch biceps will impress most anyone and the pictures prove it. But his words are even more impressive: honest, bold, and practical.

By addressing Generation X, (those under thirty) a generation searching for itself, *Warriors* tackles the Xers head on about destiny. Sirotnak challenges young men to find God's destiny for them and then live it wholeheartedly. "Youth is not a time to waste your life with foolish experiments, whether with drugs, alcohol, or sex. You don't have time for that. Pursue God, He has a purpose for your life. Then, throw yourself into it with all your heart." The point: their destiny will fulfill them.

With only 177 pages and containing "gut check" questions at the end of each short chapter, *Warriors* is the new macho manual for spiritually-minded young men. GM

*We Have Marched Together : The Working Children's Crusade*, by Stephen Currie. LCCN 95047686. Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, 1997. ISBN 0822517337, HBB, \$14.96.

331.3. Children—Employment—History; Jones, Mother, 1843?-1930. 88 p. Gr. 6 - 8.

Quality—3 Acceptability—5

*We Have Marched Together: the Working Children's Crusade* by Stephen Currie seems to be a book which doesn't know where it is going. By turns it appears to be a book about national child labor law reform, Mother Jones, who was a rather colorful early labor activist, the Philadelphia textile workers, their strike of 1903, and their subsequent march from Philadelphia to New York City. In addition to its lack of focus, the subject(s) of this slight (eighty-eight pages) volume appear to be rather specialized and narrow for its intended audience of younger readers. It would, perhaps, be of more interest to an undergraduate or graduate level audience. This volume is one in a series entitled Lerner's People's History.

Mr. Currie writes evocatively of the plight of the workers and particularly of the dismal prospects faced by the children. Labor history may be susceptible to

bias and more emotion than other fields, but the author has written an evenhanded account. The central figure of the narrative, Mother Jones, comes in for some criticism regarding her judgment as well as whether or not she fabricated a story of being spied upon by the U.S. Secret Service.

Forty-six pages are devoted to the story of the march from Philadelphia to New York. This march was intended by Mother Jones to engender support for the strike both monetarily and politically and to gain sympathy for the cause of child labor reform. Overall, the march seems to have been a fairly pleasant and peaceful event: the striking children had a chance to get out in the sunshine, play, swim, and often camp out. Mr. Currie records that the march even garnered support from some businessmen and the marchers were treated to meals at several upscale hotels and restaurants. This is hardly the stuff of high drama. The march was significant in that it contributed to the legislative amelioration of the worst practices of child labor, although the strike itself failed.

Mr. Currie focuses on Mother Jones but curiously provides little biographical background on her, not even to the extent of mentioning her real name—Mary Harris—nor telling the reader where she was born—Ireland. Mr. Currie also admits we do not really know how many children worked in the Philadelphia textile mills, what their real ages were, or how many made the march.

Forty-five sepia tone illustrations tell a story perhaps more poignantly than the text itself. Numerous views of obviously very young boys and girls doing repetitive tasks in dark, dingy, dirty, and dangerous surroundings arouses sympathy and indignation.

This book seems to be adequately indexed. Each illustration is captioned and photographic acknowledgments are given at the back of the book. A selected bibliography of twenty-one references is included; however most of these date no later than the 1980's with the preponderance of items dated from the 1970's, the 1960's or earlier; also, the references for the most part seem to be graduate level materials. DWR

*A Field Guide to Warblers of North America*, by Jon L. Dunn and Kimball L. Garrett. (Peterson Field Guide Series; 49). Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997. ISBN 0395783216, PAP, \$20.00. ISBN 0395389712, HBB, \$30.00.

*Warblers of the Americas : an Identification Guide*, by Jon Curson, David Quinn, and David Beadle. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1994. ISBN 0395709989, HBB, \$40.00.

*Watching Warblers*, by Michael Male and Judy Fieth. Ho-Ho-Kus, NJ: Blue Earth Films, 1996. VHS, 60 min., stereo. \$34.95 (home use), \$85.00 (public performance).

**Wood Warblers of North America.** (YardBirds : electronic guide to birds of U.S. and Canada). Dover, NH: Ramphastos, 1997. 1 CD-ROM, or, 10-3 1/2 in. disks. \$34.95. Requirements: 4MB RAM, soundboard, speakers, 256-color system and mouse. PC: 386 or higher. Mac: System 7 or higher.

598.2. Birds. Gr. 6 - Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

*Warblers of the Americas* is a comprehensive guide to all the 116 species of wood warblers found in North, Central and South America. Thirty-six color plates, black and white illustrations and color range maps supplement the written species accounts. Curson does a good job of summarizing the current knowledge on the distribution, habits, breeding biology, moult and voice of each species. Quinn and Beadle's illustrations are well executed and clearly display the age, sex and subspecies variations for all species. Each species account covers the identification, description, geographical variation, voice, habits, breeding status, distribution, migration and moults of each wood warbler. In the introduction there is a useful explanation of the terminology used in describing the various plumages warblers go through in their lifespan. The authors also take special care to address the conservation needs of these birds, many of whom winter in South and Central America while breeding in North America. As part of the Helms series of identification guides to the world's bird families, *Warblers of the Americas* provides a high level of research at an understandable level. The one drawback to this volume is its cost; a paperback printing would be highly recommended.

*A Field Guide to the Warblers of North America* has a somewhat more limited focus. Using thirty-two color paintings, 141 color photographs and 60 color maps, Dunn and Garrett have put together a comprehensive guide to the sixty North American species of warblers. As the latest addition to the Peterson series they continue to utilize the "Peterson Identification system" which uses arrows to emphasize key field marks in the identification of a particular species. Unlike previous Peterson guides, which only included paintings, this volume provides the user with many photographs, which emphasize sexual and geographic variations. Dunn and Garrett's book goes a long way towards demystifying these birds. Of additional assistance are two introductory chapters, which precede the species accounts. The first, "The Natural History of Warblers" displays the vast amount of research behind the writing of this volume. The second, "How to Identify Warblers" provides concise background tips for facing the various problems encountered when watching these birds.

*Watching Warblers* explores the lives of the thirty-nine warbler species, which nest in eastern North America. This video, ten years in the making, supplements traditional print field guides. Male and Fieth have created a visual masterpiece, which portrays aspects of the warblers' lives, that can only be captured on film. *Watching Warblers* does more than help identify members of this family of birds. With breathtaking photography and high-quality sound, the feeding, nesting and breeding behavior of wood warblers is also presented. This husband and wife team of award-

winning filmmakers presents the thirty-nine species one by one, highlighting the unique aspects of each. *Watching Warblers* is an hour of celebrating the beauty of God's creation, and, a challenge to go out and see these birds for yourself.

*Wood Warblers of North America* is the second product of Ramphastos, a software company in New Hampshire. The principal members of the organization began quantifying the results of ornithological research in South America in the late 1980s, and over several years developed the search engine behind the present product. *Wood Warblers* is in essence an "electronic field guide," with fifty-two species of warblers being described. It is one "chapter" in what will eventually become a computer-based guide to all the bird species of North America. The software, which I tested, was at the beta stage of development, and will be available for public distribution shortly. The program opens with a random slideshow of images and songs. One of the unique features of this product is the "rollover" bird schematic, which is part of the field marks index. This interactive schematic allows the user to move their mouse over various parts of the warbler's anatomy. Choosing a number of specific aspects can lead to focusing a search on a particular bird. For those wanting to use this computer program effectively I would suggest a high-speed 486 PC with Windows 95, as the minimum operating system.

Each of the items listed above should be part of a growing library collection. With the emphasis placed on varying learning styles, more than printed sources, they enhance the learning process for students at all levels. The identification tools reviewed here encourage us to step out into the various natural habitats in which we find ourselves and look, listen and enjoy. TG

**The Ultimate Baby-Sitter's Survival Guide,** by Mary Guleserian and Therese Furey. LCCN 96022915. Colorado Springs: Focus on the Family Publishing, 1996. ISBN 1561794767, PAP, \$8.99.

649. Baby-sitting—Handbooks, manuals, etc. 99 p. Gr. 6 - 12.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Mary Guleserian and Therese Furey, two sisters, team up to prepare baby-sitters for the challenge and responsibility of watching over children in *The Ultimate Baby-Sitter's Survival Guide*. The book is divided into three categories encompassing advice, games, and trouble.

The first category comprises advice on subjects such as rates, arrival and nineteen questions to ask, ten "don'ts," discipline, caring for infants, toddlers, and older children three and up, meals, bath time, bedtime, and collecting pay. The second category is an accumulation of indoor and outdoor games and activities, thinking games, and science experiments. The third category concentrates on unexpected occurrences describing first aid for a myriad of ailments such as burns, choking, cuts and scrapes, drowning, poisoning, fevers, stomach aches, CPR and obstructed airway instructions for infants and children through age eight, plus how to cope with household

emergencies and natural disasters. The book ends with a list of fifty ways to encourage children.

The layout of the book is well-done with step-by-step instructions, listings of required materials for activities and experiments, and relevant pencil drawings by Shara Braithwaite, the primary illustrator, and BC Studios. The book is a valuable source of reading for a first-time baby-sitter and a handy reference for any sitter. DBW

**Job Sleuthing : A Student's Guide to Résumé Finesse,** by Suze Marie Kroeker. LCCN 95094940. Manchester, Wash: Manchester House Publishing, 1996. ISBN 096479232X, SRL, \$8.95.

650.14. Resume writing. 41 p.

**Power Penning : A Student's Guide to Letter Writing Success,** by Suze Marie Kroeker. LCCN 95094938. Manchester, Wash: Manchester House Publishing, 1996. ISBN 0964792303, SRL, \$12.95.

651.7. Letter writing. 70 p. Gr. 5 - Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Both of these books are must titles for any library. The content of each is separate and yet related. While one title focuses on job hunting and one focuses on letter writing, there is value in having the how-to's of both skills at the fingertips. Both volumes are spiral-bound and designed for individualized instruction. Content is outlined and each part of the outline clearly numbered and itemized. Simple explanations are followed by suggested activities and worksheets. Samples support complicated data making it easy to work in each volume for long or short time periods. Materials in each volume supplement the other. Job hunting requires well written letters, and good letter writing skills enhance job application. The volumes are short enough that patrons in their teens and hunting for first jobs will easily slide through from start to finish. Adults with limited experience in letter writing or job application will find the information helpful rather than degrading. Although the data covered in each volume is basic to success in any job seeking/letter writing situation, emphasis is more on entry level. Someone seeking a long-term career or writing a complex formal letter may want a similar type book with the details required.

Because so much of this book is samples and worksheet, a review of chapter highlights really details the contents. *Job Sleuthing* is divided into five chapters and begins with a quick background look at first jobs, career paths, applications and labor laws. Chapter two covers resumes of refinement guaranteed to catch the eye of future employers. Chapter three discusses captivating cover letters to give the presentation edge that opens doors to interviews. Chapter four provides samples of brochures and the means for marketing skills locally. Chapter five ends by outlining the ABC's of polished interviews that will help achieve getting the job.

*Power Penning* is divided into three basic sections: Business letters including consumer and request letters, Press Releases, and Letters to the Editor, Quizzes are given along the route as a review of data covered and a test for memory. Each section utilizes

the skill it is teaching. For example, if dynamic language is required in the letter, dynamic vocabulary is used in describing how to accomplish this. The format is lively and brisk, showing no connection to the dull letter writing books of the past except for the quality of the simple data included. PBB

**Fundamental Baseball**, by Don Geng; photographs by Andy King. (Fundamental Sports.) LCCN 95002017. Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, 1995. ISBN 082253455X, HBB, \$19.95.

796.357. Baseball. 80 p.

**Fundamental Basketball**, by Jim Klinzing and Mike Klinzing; photographs by David Kyle and Andy King. (Fundamental Sports.) LCCN 95044817. Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, 1996. ISBN 0822534584, HBB, \$19.95.

796.323. Basketball. 72 p.

**Fundamental Gymnastics**, by Linda Wallenberg Bragg; photographs by Andy King. (Fundamental Sports.) LCCN 94040770. Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, 1995. ISBN 0822534533, HBB, \$19.95.

796.44. Gymnastics. 80 p.

**Fundamental Hockey**, by Mike Foley; photographs by Andy King. (Fundamental Sports.) LCCN 95007077. Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, 1995. ISBN 0822534568, HBB, \$19.95.

796.962. Hockey. 80 p.

**Fundamental Snowboarding**, by Jon Lurie; photographs by Jimmy Clarke. (Fundamental Sports.) LCCN 95011721. Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, 1996. ISBN 0822534576, HBB, \$19.95.

796.9. Snowboarding. 64 p.

**Fundamental Softball**, by Kristin Wolden Nitz; photographs by Andy King. Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, 1996. ISBN 0822534606, HBB, \$19.95.

796.357. Softball. 64 p. Gr. 5 - 9.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

*Fundamental Baseball* begins with a brief history of the game, basics of the game in terms of equipment, organization of the field, rules and positions are lightly covered. Fielding, throwing, hitting, and base running are more fully described in separate short chapters.

*Fundamental Basketball* starts with a brief history of the game followed by a chapter of basics in terms of equipment and field. The play and practice chapter overviews strategies for a better game while the Razzle Dazzle chapter provides hints for polishing the game after mastery of the basic skills.

*Fundamental Gymnastics* contains a brief history followed by a long chapter review of basics focusing on each type of equipment and its related exercises. One chapter is devoted to preparing for the actual showtime and a Razzle Dazzle chapter identifies various ways to polish a program from performing an exercise to winning the event.

*Fundamental Hockey* (ice hockey is the main example) begins with a brief history of the sport followed by an extensive chapter of basics in terms of equipment, rules and terminology. Unique rules are further defined by examples in a separate chapter. The razzle dazzle chapter allows perfection of style, and a short chapter at the end describes other hockey games with similar rules and moves.

*Fundamental Snowboarding*, a relatively new sport, describes briefly how the sport began. The basics chapter begins with the ability to know the snow, equipment, clothing, and proper safety before beginning trial basic moves. Chapters progress to more advanced maneuvers, competitive areas and their judging, ways of practicing when not on the slopes, and fancy stunts.

*Fundamental Softball* covers many of the same elements as the baseball volume but transfers them into everyday use in amateur sandlot and playground games. In this volume the basics are truly rudimentary and the photographs could be neighbors or teammates. Basics regarding rules, equipment, and skills are covered.

As a series, the simple beginning concepts information is clear, and the photographs apply to the item being discussed. The photographs are clear, colorful and enticing. The diagrams and drawings included are simple and clear. The format of each volume is basically the same including a glossary, and index. Each sport is presented as if any reader could succeed. The professional aspects of the game take a back seat to the amateur participation although in some of the sports professionals are shown in action. While all sports have an element of injury, the volume on snowboarding, a popular new individual sport, seems to provide the how-to for more potential danger than the others. PBB

**California**, by Linda Jacobs Altman. (Celebrate the States.) LCCN 96011537. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark Books, 1997. ISBN 0761401113, HBB, \$22.95.

917.94. California. 144 p.

**Illinois**, by Marlene Targ Brill. (Celebrate the States.) LCCN 96001879. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark Books, 1997. ISBN 076140113X, HBB, \$22.95.

917.73. Illinois. 144 p.

**New York**, by Virginia Schomp. (Celebrate the States.) LCCN 96001878. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark Books, 1997. ISBN 0761401083, HBB, \$22.95.

917.47. New York. 144 p.

**Texas**, by Carmen Bredeson. (Celebrate the States.) LCCN 96011538. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark Books, 1997. ISBN 0761401091, HBB, \$22.95.

917.64. Texas. 144 p.

**Virginia**, by Tracy Barrett. (Celebrate the States.) LCCN 96012972. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark Books, 1997. ISBN 0761401105, HBB, \$22.95.

917.75. Virginia. 144 p. Gr. 5 - 8.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Benchmark Books, a division of Marshall Cavendish, has produced a set of states books suitable for upper elementary/middle school level readers. The format is somewhat larger with an easily readable typeface. Each volume contains a complete index, several maps (road, places to see, landforms, products), and multiple color and black and white pictures as well as illustrative charts. Each volume is set up in an identical manner, a reassuring aspect for children using information from more than one volume.

The introduction of each book consists of famous quotations about the state. Other sections include history, geography, government and economy, people, achievements, landmarks, state survey and an extensive bibliography of further resources. An interesting feature of the state survey section is the inclusion of a state song and mini-biographies of famous residents of the state.

Each of the five reviewed volumes is a high quality hard cover book with library bindings, and presents an excellent overview of the state in its title. (One exception is the reversal in California of the road and landform maps.) With copyright dates of 1997, the reader can be sure of reasonably accurate and up to date information for any state-related research project. There is a strong environmental strain throughout each book. The Celebrate the States series has tastefully included this current topic within the context of the changes that have occurred over time.

Using any of the Celebrate the States volumes will provide students with a good overview of each individual state. The approach is straightforward, almost conversational which makes a somewhat easier read than many other fact packed volumes. This style encourages the reader to investigate further both in this series and in other sources. The format, readability, and layout of text and pictures provide an excellent early research resource. BAW

**Dear Friend : Thomas Garrett & William Still, Collaborators on the Underground Railroad**, by Judith Bentley; illustrated with photographs & old prints. LCCN 96027989. New York: Cobblehill Books/Dutton, 1997. ISBN 052565156X, HBB, \$15.99.

920 (973.7). Underground railroad; Abolitionists; Garrett, Thomas, 1789-1871; Still, William, 1821-1902; Afro-Americans—Biography. 119 p. Gr. 7 - 10.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Thomas Garrett and William Still, the subjects of *Dear Friend*, are rather unlikely compatriots, yet through the years of their correspondence and alliance, they helped hundreds of slaves travel the Underground Railroad to freedom. Garrett, a white Quaker from Delaware, and William Still, a free black of Philadelphia joined as "friends of humanity" in the common cause of aiding the oppressed. This book chronicles their friendship, their correspondence and their collaboration to free the oppressed. Also covered are many stories of the slaves themselves and their fight for freedom.

This biography for young people is well written, quickly read and includes many photos and sketches

that bring the story to life. Middle schoolers and those older will find in this book the subject of the Underground Railroad told from an unusual slant and in an appealing way. It will be a good addition to the non-fiction collection of a school or public library. CC

**Dennis Banks : Native American Activist, by Kae Cheatham. (Native American Biographies.) LCCN 96039560. Springfield, N.J.: Enslow Publishers, 1997. ISBN 0894908693, HBB, \$18.95.**

921 (305.897). Indians of North America—Biography; Banks, Dennis; Ojibwa Indians—Biography; American Indian Movement. 112 p.

Quality—2 Acceptability—2

Kae Cheatham presents only the Native American side of stories and not all the facts in her book *Dennis Banks*. According to a quote of Banks in the book, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) has done more to hurt Native American communities than to help them. No reference is made to all that the BIA provides for many Native American communities—roads, utilities, police, hospitals, and schools. Mr. Banks statement is accurate if Native people want to do without these services and live the way life was 150 years ago.

The book reports that Mr. Banks was in trouble with the law often in the late sixties and early seventies and not always because of peaceful demonstrations. According to the book, Mr. Banks and the American Indian Movement took the law into their own hands on several occasions in order to force the U.S. government to abide by the old treaties and to listen to what Native Americans had to say. Many incidents ended in violence. Native Americans are often portrayed as innocent victims, yet by reading between the lines, you can see that possible verbal abuse on the part of Native Americans may have provoked some of the violence that is portrayed as undeserved. Dennis Banks represents an organization whose actions show that they have no problem with using violence to get what they think they deserve. JM

**Antoni van Leeuwenhoek : First to See Microscopic Life, by Lisa Yount. (Great Minds of Science.) LCCN 96006057. Springfield, N.J.: Enslow Publishers, 1996. ISBN 0894906801, HBB, \$18.95.**

921 (578). Leeuwenhoek, Antoni van, 1632-1723; Biologists—Netherlands—Biography; Microscopes; Microscopy; Biologists. 128 p. Gr. 5 - 12.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

One of the Great Minds of Science series, the book *Antoni Van Leeuwenhoek, First to See Microscopic Life* is attractive and inviting from cover to cover. The artistic, colorful, library-bound cover will draw the attention of students young and old. The large print and wide margins make the book very inviting and enjoyable to read. Black and white photographs, maps, drawings, and diagrams spread throughout the book greatly enhance the text.

Because of the well-done presentation, this book by Lisa Yount would be interesting and informative for both elementary and middle school students. It covers the personal information on the life of Van

Leeuwenhoek and facts about his discoveries with the microscope.

A chronology on the life of Van Leeuwenhoek, chapter notes, a glossary, a list for further reading, and an index located at the end of the book are helpful to those interested in further information. EK

**The Importance of James Baldwin, by James Tackach. (The Importance of...Series.) LCCN 96014185. San Diego: Lucent Books, 1997. ISBN 1560060700, HBB, \$16.95.**

921 (818). Baldwin, James, 1924-1987; Authors, American; Civil rights workers; Afro-Americans—Biography. 95 p.

**The Importance of Jane Goodall, by Paula Bryant Pratt. (The Importance of...Series.) LCCN 96015596. San Diego: Lucent Books, 1997. ISBN 1560060824, HBB, \$16.95.**

921 (591). Goodall, Jane, 1934-; Chimpanzees; Zoologists; Women—Biography. 112 p.

**The Importance of Jim Henson, by Deanne Durrett. (The Importance of...Series.) LCCN 93038681. San Diego, CA: Lucent Books, 1994. ISBN 1560060484, HBB, \$16.95.**

921 (791.5). Henson, Jim; Puppets; Television producers and directors; Muppet show (Television program). 112 p.

**The Importance of Julius Caesar, by Don Nardo. (The Importance of...Series.) LCCN 96014186. San Diego: Lucent Books, 1997. ISBN 1560060832, HBB, \$16.95.**

921 (937). Caesar, Julius; Heads of state; Generals; Rome—History—Republic, 265-30 B.C. 112 p.

**The Importance of Joe Louis, by Jim Campbell. (The Importance of...Series.) LCCN 96047849. San Diego: Lucent Books, 1997. ISBN 1560060859, HBB, \$16.95.**

921 (796.8). Louis, Joe, 1914-1981; Boxers (Sports); Afro-Americans—Biography. 128 p.

**The Importance of Norman Rockwell, by Deanne Durrett. (The Importance of...Series.) LCCN 96003956. San Diego: Lucent Books, 1997. ISBN 1560060808, HBB, \$16.95.**

921 (759.13). Goodall, Jane, 1934-; Chimpanzees; Zoologists; Women—Biography. 95 p.

**The Importance of Charlemagne, by Timothy Levi Biel. (The Importance of...Series.) LCCN 96045625. San Diego: Lucent Books, 1997. ISBN 1560060743, HBB, \$16.95.**

921 (944). Charlemagne, Emperor, 742-814; Kings, queens, rulers, etc.; France—History—To 987. 127 p.

**The Importance of Tecumseh, by Myra H. and William H. Immell. (The Importance of...Series.) LCCN 96051518. San Diego: Lucent Books, 1997. ISBN 1560060875, HBB, \$16.95.**

921 (973). Tecumseh, Shawnee Chief, 1768-1813; Shawnee Indians—Biography; Indians of North America—Biography. 112 p.

**The Importance of Thurgood Marshall, by Deborah Hitzeroth and Sharon Leon. (The Importance of...Series.) LCCN 96040129. San Diego: Lucent Books, 1997. ISBN 1560060611, HBB, \$16.95.**

921 (347.73). Marshall, Thurgood, 1908-1993; Lawyers; Judges; Afro-Americans—Biography. 112 p. Gr. 6 - 10.

The Importance of Series, written by a variety of authors, is an excellent, informative collection of a wide variety of subjects. The colorful, library-bound books are attractive, interesting, and easy to read. Each book begins with a page of important dates in the life of the individual being showcased. Nearly each double page spread contains at least one photograph. Highlighted boxes with quotations and interesting information are spread liberally throughout. The conclusion of each book contains a list of notes by chapter, a bibliography for further reading, a list of works consulted, an index, picture credits, and notes about the author.

For the most part, the books are written very objectively, but conclusions are sometimes drawn which are not necessarily from a Christian viewpoint. A comment in the foreword of each book about the writing of the book on Columbus that states, "Today the broader impact of Columbus's voyages is being critically scrutinized" is a warning that some books might have a revisionist slant.

James Baldwin, a contemporary of Martin Luther King, Jr., became one of the foremost civil rights writers and activists. While it shows the discrimination against black Americans, it is written with a liberal bias. The reference to Baldwin's homosexual lifestyle may be objectionable even though merely mentioned. Quality—4 Acceptability—3

Jane Goodall's work observing chimpanzees was mostly informative, but it was written from an evolutionary bias. Quality—4 Acceptability—3

Jim Henson became famous for his creation of the Muppets, a cross between puppets and marionettes. What began as a project to work his way through school became his lifework. Henson's humanistic philosophy mentioned on page 45, "People are basically good. That's the message I would like to express through the Muppets", goes contrary to the Christian philosophy. Quality—4 Acceptability—4

This book gives very thorough coverage of the life of Julius Caesar with many quotes of historical significance. Quality—4 Acceptability—4

The rise of Joe Louis's fame as world champion boxer is paralleled with the events on World War II. The book brings in his greatness as an athlete while honestly showing the weakness of character that brought about his sad end. Quality—4 Acceptability—4

This fascinating book contains numerous pictures of Rockwell's art and relates their content and themes with what is happening in our country. His work ethic will be an inspiration to anyone who reads the book. Quality—4 Acceptability—5

The story of Charlemagne contains a clear picture of the upheaval and settling of Europe and England during the Middle Ages including numerous historical characters and events. Quality—4 Acceptability—4

The story of Tecumseh describes many important people and events from the birth of Tecumseh in 1768 to his death in 1813. It is strongly biased in favor of the Indians. Quality—4 Acceptability—4

The story of Thurgood Marshall graphically pictures the discrimination faced by black Americans. It is written from the liberal perspective and several quotes by Marshall include profanity. Quality—4 Acceptability—4 EK

**Maria Tallchief: Native American Ballerina**, by Paul Lang. (Native American Biographies.) LCCN 96052555. Springfield, N.J.: Enslow Publishers, 1997. ISBN 0894908669, HBB, \$18.95.

921 (792.8). Indians of North America—Biography; Tallchief, Maria; Ballet dancers; Osage Indians—Biography; Women—Biography. 128 p.

**Sitting Bull: Sioux Leader**, by Elizabeth Schleichert. (Native American Biographies.) LCCN 96025592. Springfield, N.J.: Enslow Publishers, 1997. ISBN 0894908685, HBB, \$18.95.

921 (978). Sitting Bull, 1834?-1890; Dakota Indians—Biography; Hunkpapa Indians—Biography; Indians of North America—Great Plains—Biography. 112 p.

**Sacagawea: Westward with Lewis and Clark**, by Alana J. White. (Native American Biographies.) LCCN 96022359. Springfield, N.J.: Enslow Publishers, 1997. ISBN 0894908677, HBB, \$18.95.

921 (978). Indians of North America—Biography; Sacagawea, 1786-1884; Shoshoni Indians—Biography; Women—Biography; Lewis and Clark Expedition (1804-1806). 128 p.

**Jim Thorpe: Legendary Athlete**, by Barbara Long. (Native American Biographies.) LCCN 96009226. Springfield, N.J.: Enslow Publishers, 1997. ISBN 0894908650, HBB, \$18.95.

921 (796). Thorpe, Jim, 1887-1953; Athletes; Indians of North America—Biography. 128 p. Gr. 5 - 10.  
Quality—3 Acceptability—3

In telling the life story of Maria Tallchief, the author includes quite a bit of history of the Osage people. Maria's life story is covered quite well, from her birth and early training, her experiences with ballet, her three marriages, to her "retirement" spent training new dancers.

*Sitting Bull* tells the story of the struggles between the Sioux Indians and the white man from the perspective of the Sioux Indians. At times the story is told in such a way that the anger of some Native Americans toward the white man could be intensified. *Sitting Bull* was a religious man and his reliance on the gods of his tribe is very evident.

The first seven chapters of *Sacagawea* tell the story of the Lewis and Clark expedition and Sacagawea's involvement. The book ends with a chapter which tells what happened to Lewis and Clark after the expedition. The last chapter also includes two different stories of what happened to Sacagawea after the expedition.

A portion of *Jim Thorpe* reads like a sports page—a lot of statistics. The author is very interested in facts; if she found a myth to be untrue, she will tell you so. Outside of sports, Thorpe's life included two divorces, a variety of short term jobs, a bout with lip cancer, and three heart attacks, the final one being fatal.

The authors of this series seem to have done their research before writing the books. Several comments

in their introduction on myths about the person which were found to be false in their research. The books are for the most part written from the Native American perspective, at times making the white man look bad, perhaps worse than it really was. These books would help non-Native Americans get a feel for what is like to be a Native American in a white man's world. They may also give the student a different perspective on history. Each of the books in this series end with a chronology, chapter notes, glossary, bibliography, and index. JM

**Jim Thorpe: The Legend Remembered**, by Rosemary K. Updyke. LCCN 96041488. Gretna, La.: Pelican Publishing Co., 1997. ISBN 1565542126, HBB, \$14.95.

921 (796). Thorpe, Jim, 1887-1953; Athletes; Indians of North America—Biography. 96 p. Gr. 5 - 8.  
Quality—3 Acceptability—4

Jim Thorpe was an athlete who became famous for his great speed in the 1912 Olympics in Stockholm, Sweden. He was an American Indian who very much loved the outdoors and had trouble settling in school. His father valued education enough to persist in keeping Jim involved. Eventually he found athletic success because of his great speed at Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania, coached by the great Pop Warner. After the Olympics, his medals were taken from him because he had innocently played baseball on a minor league team one summer. His records were reinstated and duplicate medals were presented to his family after his death.

The narrative of Jim Thorpe's early life is a bit confusing and drops some details. As the book progresses through his life, the mention of his excessive drinking and divorces seem almost casual. However, the text went into quite a bit of detail about the town of "Jim Thorpe," even though the place does not really have much to do with him personally, except that his body is buried there.

The book is illustrated by several black and white photos. Included also is a poem of several pages written by his daughter and a present day picture of her. At the end of the book is a bibliography of further suggested reading. JB

**Agatha Christie: Writer of Mystery**, by Carol Dommermuth-Costa. (Lerner Biography Series.) LCCN 96034435. Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, 1997. ISBN 0822549549, HBB, \$17.21.

921 (823). Christie, Agatha, 1890-1976; Authors, English; Women—Biography; Mystery fiction—Authorship. 111 p. Gr. 7 - Adult.  
Quality—5 Acceptability—4

Carol Dommermuth-Costa's biography relates the life story of Agatha Christie, one of the world's most popular mystery writers. An influential figure in Agatha's decision to become an author was Clara, her mother, who told bedtime stories of conundrum and peril, arousing Agatha's inquisitiveness regarding the unfamiliar. At the age of seventeen, Clara

recommended Agatha attempt to write a story, marking the beginning of Agatha's lifework. During Agatha's marriage to Archie Christie, she wrote books so Clara would not have to sell Ashfield, her childhood home, in England. Agatha's first mystery novel launched Hercule Poirot. In *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*, Agatha modified her story design, leading to unprecedented fame. When Archie asked for a divorce, Agatha disappeared for ten days, never divulging her reasons. The Christie's divorced, and Agatha used her writing as a catalyst for recovery.

On a visit to an archaeological excavation in Ur, Agatha met her second husband, Max Mallowan, an archaeologist. She assisted Max on a handful of archeological excursions, utilizing some of the experiences as a springboard for her writings. Though Agatha authored an immense number of writings, she considered writing a hobby.

The book is excellently compiled, with a reinforced binding, superior quality paper, and black and white pencil drawings and photographs throughout the text. Well-authenticated, the book includes a list of sources, a bibliography, an index, and photo acknowledgments. The book's hard cover and dust jacket is attractively illustrated with Agatha's photo and a colorful rendition of the Orient Express, a train featured in one of her stories. DBW

**Andrew Jackson**, by Karen Judson. (United States Presidents.) LCCN 97009051. Springfield, N.J.: Enslow Publishers, 1997. ISBN 0894908316, HBB, \$18.95.

921 (973.5). Presidents; Jackson, Andrew, 1767-1845. 128 p.

**James Madison**, by Mary Malone. (United States Presidents.) LCCN 96039133. Springfield, N.J.: Enslow Publishers, 1997. ISBN 0894908340, HBB, \$18.95.

921 (973.5). Presidents; Madison, James, 1751-1836. 128 p.

**Theodore Roosevelt**, by Michael A. Schuman. (United States Presidents.) LCCN 97007272. Springfield, N.J.: Enslow Publishers, 1997. ISBN 0894908367, HBB, \$18.95.

973.91. Presidents; Roosevelt, Theodore, 1858-1919. 128 p.

**Harry S. Truman**, by Michael A. Schuman. (United States Presidents.) LCCN 96042437. Springfield, N.J.: Enslow Publishers, 1997. ISBN 0894908332, HBB, \$18.95.

921 (973.918). Presidents; Truman, Harry S., 1884-1972. 128 p.

**Ronald Reagan**, by Karen Judson. (United States Presidents.) LCCN 96036482. Springfield, N.J.: Enslow Publishers, 1997. ISBN 0894908359, HBB, \$18.95.

921 (973.927). Presidents; Reagan, Ronald; Actors and actresses; Governors—California—Biography; United States—Politics and government—1981-1989. 128 p. Gr. 4 - 10.

Quality—4 Acceptability—4

The United States Presidents series published by Enslow provide readers with a brief, yet solid study of these chosen leaders of our country. Each portrayal provides readers with varied and colorful highlights, giving dimension to each president.

The books are balanced in the biographical material; they have enough details to make the subject come alive, yet they do not provide so much that the reader will have to wade through irrelevant details. The uncomplicated vocabulary and sentence structure make the series one that younger elementary students will be able to comprehend, and older readers able to absorb readily.

By studying the presidents one realizes that no matter if a person is rich or poor, highly educated or self-made, a leader on the battle field or a leader on the court floors, the main qualifier for presidency is determination. The books highlight how each of the presidents had some sort of obstacle to overcome in order to become elected; and while some weren't overwhelmingly popular while they served in office, history and time has proven them to be leaders.

Each book is slightly over a hundred pages long, and has an index, chapter notes, and further reading suggestions. There are also several internet addresses listed for each president.

Each president had to face social issues relevant to their times be it slavery, racial prejudice or using bombs. These issues are part of history and each author deals appropriately with each instance so even middle readers can comprehend and reflect on the decisions that had to be made. PW

***To See with the Heart : The Life of Sitting Bull*, by Judith St. George. LCCN 95000458. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1996. ISBN 0399229302, HBB, \$17.95.**

921 (978). Sitting Bull, 1834?-1890; Dakota Indians; Hunkpapa Indians—Biography. 182 p. Gr 5 - 9.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Certain Indian chiefs remain "household words" forever identified with the wars of the Great Plains following the Civil War. This is the biography of one, a member of the Sioux Hunkpapa tribe, Slow, (thinking time not speed). Slow at the age of fourteen earned the warrior name Sitting Bull, following a raid upon the Crows. Each chapter chronicles the general life and career of this great man by defining a particular leadership trait, or a growth change in his life which influenced his role as Hunkpapa chief, until his betrayal following the Ghost Dance uprising. St. George describes a spiraling life of a warrior who tried to lead his people in the established traditions of nomadic plains Indian life. The changing frontier and its infringements on that life forced him as chief to participate in a war he did not wish but felt he could not avoid with the whites.

St. George describes a caring man, through his family relationships, his tribal image, his spiritual feelings, his humane actions and his warring activity. Songs and poems are incorporated throughout the book. Each chapter begins with one, and several are included because they were a natural part of his daily life. The picture calendar of the Hunkpapa is often interpreted in the action of the chapter as well. In this way St. George presents the Indian perception of a beloved chief forever part of this nation's history. An extensive bibliography and detailed index make this a valuable

research tool and validate the information presented here. St. George admits in the forward she spent time traveling in the footsteps of Sitting Bull, hoping to tie the vastness of his land with the spirit of the man. This caring on the part of the author is evident in her presentation of the person. PBB

***The Ancient African Kingdom of Kush*, by Pamela F. Service. (Cultures of the Past.) LCCN 96034608. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark/Marshall Cavendish, 1997. ISBN 0761402721, HBB, \$19.95.**

939. Nubia; Sudan. 80 p.

***The Incas*, by Kathryn Hinds. (Cultures of the Past.) LCCN 96030799. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark/Marshall Cavendish, 1997. ISBN 0761402705, HBB, \$19.95.**

939. Incas—History; Incas—Antiquities; Indians of South America. 80 p.

***The Vikings*, by Kathryn Hinds. (Cultures of the Past.) LCCN 96031067. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark/Marshall Cavendish, 1997. ISBN 0761402713, HBB, \$19.95.**

948. Vikings; Northmen. 80 p.

***The Golden Age of Islam*, by Linda S. George. (Cultures of the Past.) LCCN 96023806. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark/Marshall Cavendish, 1997. ISBN 076140273X, HBB, \$19.95.**

909. Civilization, Islamic; Islamic Empire—History. 80 p. Gr 7 - 12.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

From its historical antecedents to the present geography, daily life, history, culture, and religions, short readable chapters illustrated with photographs, drawings, and maps provide young readers with connections to the present day Africa, in *The Ancient Kingdom of Kush*. For example, on page twenty-three the photograph of a modern Sudanese village appear opposite a description of a paragraph describing Kushite homes as "rectangular brick." The photograph could have been taken of an ancient village and allows the reader to visually compare the two. Later the author discusses how modern Africans helped the archeology team understand how homes were arranged because their own homes were still arranged in that manner. Connections are also made with the arts by pointing out that Verdi's Aida was a Kushite princess.

This series provides an overview, history, and geography, modern day information and a "If you were a boy/girl" page to let the reader see what his life would be like if he lived there. Highly readable with balanced descriptions and information and photographs will make this volume useful for teaching Ancient History and Bible History as well as about Africa today. A time line, glossary, bibliography, and index are included; however paintings do not always carry a citation of artist or the painting's name.

Other titles in the series follow the same format. Bibliography and For Further reading include titles on both the student's and teacher's levels. These should be made available in a well-stocked public library. The bindings should allow the books to see much use.

*The Golden Age of Islam* explains what followers of Mohammed believe and will be helpful in explaining the religious practices of those people in areas where there is a large Muslim population.

In *The Vikings* and *The Incas* readers find descriptions of the cultural heritage left by those peoples in the areas where they lived, and in the case of the Vikings, where they sailed and pillaged. Readers of *The Incas* will find a good discussion of reasons for the decline of the Inca civilization and a description of life for their descendants in today's Peru. LGR

***Medieval Knights*, by David Nicolle. (See Through History.) LCCN 96061599. New York: Viking, 1997. ISBN 0670874639, HBB, \$17.99.**

940.1. Knights and knighthood. 48 p.

***Ancient Wonders*, by Tim Wood. (See Through History.) LCCN 96061598. New York: Viking, 1997. ISBN 067087468X, HBB, \$17.99.**

913. Ancient architecture; Ancient civilization. 48 p. Gr. 7 - 12.

Quality—5 Acceptability—4

The somewhat oversized format of these books' pages allows for print and many illustrations within. While not cartoonish, illustrations are not quite realistic either, but captions which are in rather small print give information about what readers see. Photographs of places and objects as well as maps pack much information into the volumes with overlays younger readers will enjoy. Similar in format to Dorling Kindersley publications with small bites of information and a lot of visuals.

*Medieval Knights* describes knighthood and life during Medieval times while providing an insight into the history and demise of the knights. The time is somewhere around the 15th century when gunpowder was invented and any man could become a professional soldier, or mercenary, wanting and expecting pay for services, not land, as had been the practice with knights. Readers will be able to identify parts of a knight's clothing, go inside a manor house, Ain Habis, a cave fortress, and a ship. Short bites of text, quotations from people living during the time, drawings and pictures from the period are used to convey what life was like when knighthood was in flower. Includes a time line and index.

*Ancient Wonders* uses the same format and arrangement. It includes the pyramids of Egypt, temples of Petra, Carthage, a Minoan palace, Stonehenge, Chichen Itza, and others. This volume gives a brief look at these places and how they were constructed. For more information, other sources will need to be consulted. Many of the places shown are religious centers in other parts of the ancient and modern world. This volume should help modern readers understand what Buddhist temples and places of worship in Celtic Britain were like and provide enough information for a good overview and to tie into social studies and history classes. Readers will go back to these again and again. LGR

*Hostage to War : A True Story*, by Tatjana Wassiljewa; translation by Anna Trenter. LCCN 96025750. New York: Scholastic Press, 1997. ISBN 0590134469, HBB, \$15.95.

940.54. World War, 1939-1945—Personal narrative, Russian  
188. xxxxp. Gr. 6 - 9.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Tatjana Wassiljewa began her diary in April, 1941, writing "In this diary I have written everything I can remember about myself and my family since I was five, and I have decided to record every good thing that ever happens to me." Ironically, within a few months she was recording major events whether or not they were happy. Tatjana was living in Wyrizta, Russia, in June, 1941, when Nazi Germany invaded. After nearly starving to death at home, at fourteen she was taken, as one of the 7,000,000 prisoners to labor in Germany first on a farm and then in the city factories. Simple survival became her goal until freedom was again bestowed at the end of the war. Then at eighteen, alone in a foreign country, passport-less, and basically penniless, Tatjana had to find her way back home to Russia seeking any family members who also might have survived. Former German labor prisoners were treated by postwar, suspicious Soviet officials as traitors and spies because of their "contacts" in the West. However Tatjana was able to overcome each obstacle as it arose ultimately achieving her lifetime dream of becoming a teacher.

The book is simply written in diary format and reminiscent of Anne Frank. Although it seems as if the reading level should be lower because of the simplicity of the translation from the Russian, the content centers on man's inhumanity to man and requires a more mature mind to process the enormity of personal suffering encountered here. Little has been written for this age group about the Russian civilian prisoners removed from their country to work in German cities. Tatjana's courage and faith in other people are reflected in the positive acceptance of each event and her determination to survive and return home. This book leaves the reader marveling at the resilience of the individual and reflecting on man's treatment of other humans. PBB

*The Byzantine Empire*, by James A. Corrick (World History Series.) LCCN 96034600. San Diego, Calif.: Lucent Books, 1997. ISBN 1560063076, HBB, \$16.95.

949.5. Byzantine Empire—Civilization. 112 p.

*The Cuban Missile Crisis*, by Catherine Hester Gow. (World History Series.) LCCN 96029639. San Diego, Calif.: Lucent Books, 1997. ISBN 1560062894, HBB, \$16.95.

973.922. Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962; United States—Foreign relations—Soviet Union; Soviet Union—Foreign relations—United States. 112 p.

*Twentieth Century Science*, by Harry Henderson and Lisa Yount. (World History Series.) LCCN 96049420. San Diego, Calif.: Lucent Books, 1997. ISBN 1560063041, HBB, \$16.95.

509. Science—History. 112 p.

*The Conquest of Mexico*, by Stephen R. Lilley (World History Series.) LCCN 96021506. San Diego, Calif.: Lucent Books, 1997. ISBN 1560062983, HBB, \$16.95.

972. Mexico—History—Conquest, 1519-1540. 112 p.

*The Age of Augustus*, by Don Nardo. (World History Series.) LCCN 96014183. San Diego, Calif.: Lucent Books, 1997. ISBN 1560063068, HBB, \$16.95.

937. Rome—History—Augustus, 30 B.C.-14 A.D. 112 p.

*The Chinese Cultural Revolution*, by Pietrusza, David. (World History Series.) LCCN 96016442. San Diego, Calif.: Lucent Books, 1997. ISBN 156006305X, HBB, \$16.95.

951.05. China—History—Cultural Revolution, 1966-1969; China—History—1949-1976. 96 p. Gr. 6 - 12.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

These books in the World History Series give a thorough coverage of the subject with an enlightening view, and an eye toward showing the motivation of the participants. Each title begins with the same forward that explains why we should study history and how this series meets those needs. Each book follows a similar format. This includes references to primary and secondary sources, often inserted in boxes within the text, and footnoted at the end. Before the overview given in the introduction is a time line featuring major events. Each volume ends with a bibliography, a glossary, pictures credits, an index, and information about the author. Illustrations are black and white photographs. For the more ancient times, these are of art work and drawings, in the more current times these are mainly news pictures. Maps are interspersed where appropriate.

*The Byzantine Empire* by James A. Corrick covers a time period of 1400 years, an incredible effort in 99 pages of text. This was a people with a history of exerting power, participating in wars, and conquering territory. It was a culture with a deep love for learning, with the Christian Church at its center. Controversies between the Eastern and Western Catholic Churches were presented. The inserts in this volume seemed more forced than the other in the series.

The basic format for this series does not fit *The Cuban Missile Crisis* by Catherine Hester Gow as well as the other books. While this was certainly an important historical event and the material given here is informative and insightful, the scope of it cannot compare with other major passages in history. In some places the narrative was redundant, like there was almost too much book for this level of information. The report is told from different points of view with some assumed significance for those quoted. The look forward after the crises deals with problems and hopes for Cuba, but does not mention Castro's current treatment of political prisoners.

To look at modern science as a whole historically is a very interesting idea. *Twentieth Century Science* by Harry Henderson and Lisa Yount is a fascinating book. Subjects included are atoms, space, DNA, medicine, replacement of body parts, and computers. Even difficult concepts are explained simply and clearly. The heritage of some terminology is explained in the

text. When talking of the universe, the authors claim that most astronomers consider the Big Bang Theory to be correct. Some information about DNA was given as proof for evolution.

Stephen R. Lilley, in *The Conquest of Mexico*, captures the adventuring spirit of Cortez in a story-telling style. He attempts to defend and promote both the Spanish and Aztec points of view. The Spanish were driven by the strange combination of a zeal for spreading the church and personal greed. They succeeded with significant help from peoples previously mistreated by the Aztecs. The Aztecs believed the Spanish were gods and were partially defeated by their own fears.

The period of the most outstanding achievements of the Ancient Romans is covered in *The Age of Augustus* by Don Nardo. Augustus Caesar believed that he had a divine destiny to rule. He was a capable, fair, and shrewd leader. He believed deeply in the practice of religion, the dignity of women and of marriage, and the value of the arts. The author states that Augustus was quiet humane in comparison with the leaders that followed him. Because a couple of accounts briefly mention sexual matters, this book may be too mature for those below sixth grade level.

In *The Chinese Cultural Revolution*, David Pietrusza bases his presentation on Chinese culture and history, so the reader can understand the effect of the promises and political corruptness of Communism, and Mao's vast impact on that society. Because Mao operated generally throughout his life from a lust for power and a personal revolutionary zeal, he manipulated the masses and destroyed his enemies. Numerous mention is made of the use of public humiliation and ridicule of those who were being brought down out of power. No mention is made of the persecution of Christians during this time, except in the broad sense that the Red Guard destroyed anything that came from the West. JB

*Vietnam : Still Struggling, Still Spirited*, by Olivia Skelton. (Exploring Cultures of the World.) LCCN 97008802. New York: Benchmark Books, 1998. ISBN 0761403957, LIB, \$17.95.

959.7. Vietnam. 64 p.

*Spain : Bridge Between Continents*, by Stephen Chicoine. (Exploring Cultures of the World.) LCCN 96045498. New York: Benchmark Books, 1997. ISBN 0761401431, LIB, \$17.95.

946. Spain. 64 p.

*Egypt : Ancient Traditions, Modern Hopes*, by David C. King. (Exploring Cultures of the World.) LCCN 96049588. New York: Benchmark Books, 1997. ISBN 0761401423, LIB, \$17.95.

932. Egypt. 64 p.

*Kenya : Let's All Pull Together!* by David C. King. (Exploring Cultures of the World.) LCCN 97014448. New York: Benchmark Books, 1998. ISBN 0761403930, LIB, \$17.95.

967.62. Kenya. 64 p.

*Italy : Gem of the Mediterranean*, by David C. King. (Exploring Cultures of the World.) LCCN 97006452. New York: Benchmark Books, 1998. ISBN 0761403949, LIB, \$17.95.

945. Italy. 64 p. Gr. 1 - 8.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Olivia Skelton chooses to introduce Vietnam to her young readers with a Vietnamese folk tale, *Spirits of Mountain and Sea*, which sets the stage for an elementary understanding of the complex country of Vietnam. For the present day elementary student who has no recollection of the Vietnam War, the folk tale serves as an interesting starting point for learning about this country where struggle has been the norm. Using clear text and beautiful photographs of Vietnam today, she sketches an overview of five areas of Vietnam: Geography and History, People, Family Life, Festivals, and Food, School and Recreation, and The Arts. Easily read maps, headings in bold print, and the added bonus of short vignettes of customs, together with table of contents, glossary, bibliography, country facts, and index make this a wonderful tool for the social studies teacher, as well as the student needing to write that annual country report!

Each book in the series covers the same general chapters and shares similar structure including library binding. Included is a short biographical paragraph on the author. JD

*George Washington*, by Wendie C. Old. (United States Presidents.) LCCN 96043571. Springfield, N.J.: Enslow Publishers, 1997. ISBN 0894908324, HBB, \$18.95.

973.4. Washington, George, 1732-1799; Presidents. 128 p. Gr. 5 - 12.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

This colorful, library bound book in the United States Presidents Series is an informative, interesting volume on the life of George Washington. Black and white pictures and copies of official documents are sprinkled liberally throughout the book. While information is given on Washington's early life and also his retirement, the majority of the book covers his public life.

Interesting facts about precedents set by Washington that are still followed today make the information interesting to both young students and adults. Included at the conclusion of the book is a chronology of Washington's life, a list of chapter notes with sources quoted, sources for further reading, internet addresses, and an index. EK

*The Underground Railroad in American History*, by Kem Knapp Sawyer. (In American History.) LCCN 96030901.. Springfield, N.J.: Enslow Publishers, 1997. ISBN 0894908855, HBB, \$18.95.

973.7. Underground railroad. 128 p.

*The Transcontinental Railroad in American History*, by R. Conrad Stein. (In American History.) LCCN 96045525.. Springfield, N.J.: Enslow Publishers, 1997. ISBN 0894908820, HBB, \$18.95.

385. Pacific railroads; Railroads—History. 128 p.

*The California Gold Rush in American History*, by Linda Jacobs Altman. (In American History.) LCCN 96054262.. Springfield, N.J.: Enslow Publishers, 1997. ISBN 0894908782, HBB, \$18.95.

979.4. California—Gold discoveries; California—History—1846-1850. 128 p.

*The Great Depression in American History*, by David K. Fremon. (In American History.) LCCN 96034289.. Springfield, N.J.: Enslow Publishers, 1997. ISBN 0894908812, HBB, \$18.95.

338.5. Depressions—1929; New Deal, 1933-1939; United States—Economic conditions—1918-1948; Roosevelt, Franklin D. (Franklin D.). 128 p. Gr. 5 - 10.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

These volumes, including *The Underground Railroad in American History*, are part of a series dealing with topics in American history. There are four other volumes in the series not reviewed here.

The story of the Underground Railroad is clearly told from its beginning to the time when it was no longer used. Here the reader will find the cast of characters, the "conductors" or guides on the perilous journey to freedom; the "stations" houses where the fleeing slaves could rest and gain strength to continue their flight north to freedom in relative safety. The author also includes a description of a slave in the South before the War Between the States. Much of this is amplified by the use of first person accounts which describe the individual's life.

One interesting fact given was that in 1820 there were 1,519,017 people in bondage and that by 1860 that number had risen to almost 4 million while the white population was over 8 million, a fourth of which owned slaves. That rise in the numbers of people in slavery and the relatively small numbers of whites owning slaves reflects the economic impact of the large plantations where many slaves were employed.

Another, often overlooked fact, is that there was slavery in the North but because it was not profitable for Northerners it soon was abolished. Yet the prejudice and hostility against the Blacks remained. But it was in the North that the anti-slavery sentiment grew and flourished and it was to the North that the runaway slaves came.

Several incidents retold in the volume have been used as the basis for children's and young adult stories, i.e. Harriet Jacobs and William and Ellen Craft, which Florence B. Freedman used as the basis of her story *Two Tickets to Freedom*. Many of the titles listed in "Further Reading" are available in libraries and school library media centers.

Each volume is well-organized with time line, chapter notes, suggestions for further reading and an index. The readable text is set off by black and white illustrations of some of the people mentioned in the text, period drawings and photographs. Also a reproduction of posters and some maps are included. While more complete biographies of the people involved in the Underground Railroad and the Anti-slavery movement exist, this volume, and the others in the series, will be useful for class projects and research. LGR

*Australia : The Land Down Under*, by Jacqueline Drobis Meisel. (Exploring Cultures of the World.) LCCN 96050163. New York: Benchmark Books, 1997. ISBN 0761401393, LIB, \$17.95.

994. Australia. 64 p.

*Colombia : The Gateway to South America*, by Lois Markham. (Exploring Cultures of the World.) LCCN 96050580. New York: Benchmark Books, 1997. ISBN 0761401407, LIB, \$17.95.

986.1. Colombia. 64 p.

*Hungary : Crossroads of Europe*, by Richard Steins. (Exploring Cultures of the World.) LCCN 96051582. New York: Benchmark Books, 1997. ISBN 0761401415, LIB, \$17.95.

943.9. Hungary. 64 p.

*Peru : Lost Cities, Found Hopes*, by David C. King. (Exploring Cultures of the World.) LCCN 97002722. New York: Benchmark Books, 1997. ISBN 0761403965, LIB, \$17.95.

985. Peru. 64 p.

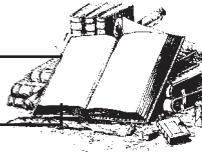
*Turkey : Between East and West*, by Louise R. Miller. (Exploring Cultures of the World.) LCCN 97011536. New York: Benchmark Books, 1998. ISBN 0761403973, LIB, \$17.95.

956.1. Turkey. 64 p. Gr. 6 - 8.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Australia, Columbia, Hungary, Peru, and Turkey are part of a series that explores the world one country at a time. A common format unifies the facts presented by the different authors. Opening with a legend or fascinating historical figure, each book traces the origin of the country's early civilization, sometimes as far back as 40,000 years. Geography is a defining element of each culture, as is religion and government. These factors are described in general detail appropriate for sixth to eighth grade readers. Special attention is given to elements with which students will identify, such as family structure, recreation, festivals, and education. Simple recipes for ethnic cuisine invite students to explore with their sense of taste and smell. National Geographic style photographs add excellent visual impact.

This series introduces the student to the fascinating diversity of the earth. The personal portrayal of the cultures reveals individuals dealing with the past and shaping the future. Over all, the tone is positive and welcoming. Each sixty-four-page volume includes an index for easy reference. The glossary explains terms unique to the country. Data such as elevation, population, products, and language is tabled together under Country Facts, along with a map, and a picture of the national flag. A list for further reading suggests titles for more in-depth study. The hardbound books will be a durable addition to a well-used library. MT



*Israel, My Beloved, A Novel* by Kay Arthur. LCCN 95030366. Eugene, Ore.: Harvest House Publishers, 1995. ISBN 1565076249, PAP, \$12.99.

F. Israel—History—Fiction; Second Advent—Fiction. 444 p. Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

*Israel, My Beloved*, by Kay Arthur, tells the story of Israel's history, mostly from a political perspective. The time period extends from the time of Jeremiah the prophet, just before Israel's captivity, to the future and the battle of Armageddon. Sarah, a Jewish woman, is the main figure in the story, and the plot centers around her relationships with family and close friends. Written as an allegory, Sarah's covenant relationship to an absent husband is compared to the nation's relationship to God.

The work's greatest strength is the excellent use of research in a well written historical narrative. Colorful description keeps the reader involved in the story, and does not slow the pace with too many details. Characters are well developed, considering many of them appear only briefly in a few chapters. A major weakness in the book is the long time frame. Sarah's presence through all the periods of history detracts

from the credibility of the research. The religious history of Israel is only portrayed through Sarah's relationships; how religion affects the people around her is not addressed. Adult situations and graphic language may also offend some readers.

*Israel, My Beloved*, takes the reader through Israel's history, while at the same time challenging the reader to consider the type of relationship God desires with his chosen people. TW

*The Kill Fee of Cindy LaCoste*, by Stephen Bly. (The Austin Stoner Files; 3.) LCCN 97018925. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1997. ISBN 0891079548, PAP, \$11.99.

F. Western fiction; Rodeos—Fiction; Mystery fiction. 361 p. Gr. 11 - Adult.

Quality—3 Acceptability—5

Lydia Austin and Brady Stoner are engaged to be married. They say that "opposites attract", and it is certainly true in this instance. Lydia is a New York book editor and Brady is a professional rodeo champion cowboy from the West. With the wedding only two weeks away, Lydia and Brady find

themselves traversing the Western States in search of their mutual friend, Cindy LaCoste. Cindy, also a rodeo rider, was raped by a motorcycle gang and it appears that she is trailing the gang—set on revenge. Lydia is quickly thrown into the impetuous and dangerous life of Brady Stoner. She is also becoming acquainted with the "rodeo family" in which Brady is such a large part. As they pursue Cindy from state to state, Lydia begins to wonder if they will make it to Wyoming in time for the wedding and after encountering the motorcycle gang, will they make it alive?

*The Kill Fee of Cindy LaCoste* is adventurous, romantic, and sweet. The style of writing is geared toward a younger audience. A more mature reader tires quickly of Brady's "cowboy lingo and Lydia's numerous references to perfume choices. There are continuous references to Brady and Lydia's relationship to Jesus and it is made clear that they are relying on God to guide them and protect them during their adventure.

*The Kill Fee* is book three of Stephen Bly's series. It is somewhat difficult to catch on to what is happening with Cindy, since all of the events of her rape, etc.

**A Note from the Editor: by Mary McKinney**



*"There are three things that last forever; faith, hope, and love, but the greatest of them all is love."*

1 Corinthians 13

Love is that great universal theme underlying almost

every type of written piece, movie or video. Wherever one turns you come face to face with the reality of love's presence, or the lack of it. Unfortunately, in the 90's there is much less unselfish, giving love than the "do your own thing, whatever feels good," type of self indulgence. And so comes the flood of books covering every aspect of "love" imaginable.

Critics of such popularized "romance" fiction are as abundant as the reading material itself. I have even heard fair warning to women to beware of being "hooked" on romance novels, as they are as much an addiction as anything else. But as always, a general statement can never truly

represent the whole, and though it is good to consider our actions, I believe that with a little forethought and care we can find uplifting and encouraging tales. Such well-written, thoughtful stories can spur us on to desire a better relationship with our marriage partner and help us graciously to give preference to others.

"There is no fear in love; but love casts out fear." (1 John 4:18.) With such wisdom and admonition from the greatest source, God's Word, let us discover together some possibilities of fine reading, or at least good and wholesome entertainment that may leave the reader with fruitful inspiration!

Some notable authors in the "romance" field are Michael Phillips and Judith Pella. They have co-authored several series that are outstanding examples of fine entertainment mixed with a much appreciated godliness. The Stonewyck Series, and The Russians are excellent examples of all that is fine and wholesome in well-written romance novels. As well as an interesting read, the reader can expect to find spiritual insight into God's perspective on love and His divine leading and purpose in relationships as well.

Other fine authors in the "romance" arena include Linda Chaikin with her Heart of India Series, as well as, The Royal Pavilions and The Great Northwest Series. In my opinion, Boede Thoene (pronounced Tay'nee) has an outstanding series, The Shiloh Legacy, mixing romance, adventure, and of course, historical accuracy in her presentation. Lori Wick has many popular books out as well, a favorite of mine being The Kensington Chronicles. Several of her novels have dominated the best seller list.

New books are being added daily to this popular genre. There's a lot to say about romance novels, but especially that they speak to that most moving emotion of all—love. A noted doctor listed several emotions which produced disease in human beings: fear, frustration, rage, resentment, hatred, envy, and jealousy. He then noted that the one and only antidote that can save people from being destroyed by these powerful forces is—you guessed it—love!

happened earlier in the series. Numerous other characters are also carried through, but the story is still complete in itself. TW

***Endangered*, by Linda Chaikin. (Portraits.) LCCN 97004708. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1997. ISBN 1556619774, PAP, \$9.99.**

F. Kenya—Fiction; Archaeology—Africa—Fiction. 255 p. Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Linda Chaikin weaves a tale of exotic adventure, mystery and love in *Endangered*. Sable Dunsmoor has lived in East Africa her entire life. Her family has managed a wildlife reserve and game viewing lodge for two generations. Sable's mother, recently deceased, was a medical missionary. Sable's sister, Kate, is following in her footsteps. Since her teens, Sable's heart has been consumed with the endangered species of Africa, and, one man...Kash Hallet. But two years before, Kash walked out of her life and Sable has spent that time in Toronto nursing her terminally ill mother. Now, Sable has returned to Africa "almost" engaged, ready to assist her father in working with the elephants, determined to share the Jesus film with the natives, and sure that she has left all feelings of Kash far behind. Then, she sees him once more.

*Endangered* contains inspiring themes of enduring love, family devotions, and the importance of reaching the lost for Jesus. The heroine is passionate and devoted—not only to the animal population, but to her family and loved ones. The aspects of mystery and surprise keep your attention, as well as the characterization and setting. TW

***Lions of the Desert*, by Linda Chaikin. LCCN 97027848. Sisters, Ore.: Alabaster Books, Multnomah, 1997. ISBN 1576731146, PAP, \$11.99**

F. Christian fiction; World War, 1914-1919—Egypt—Fiction; World War, 1914-1919—Iraq—Fiction; Nurses—Fiction. 458 p. HS-Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

A major in the British Intelligence, Bret Holden lives with loneliness, cynicism, and frustration. Secret fears, buried beneath his hard demeanor, do little to remedy the trials of warfare and espionage for Bret in 1914. He won't allow himself to commit to anyone.

Nurse Allison Wescott, also British, serves wounded soldiers in a military compound close to Basra. She longs for news of Bret's whereabouts, not hearing from him for a year. Unimaginable difficulties face Allison, her co-workers Marra, Emily and Wade as they minister to wounded men on the Arabian desert overrun by German troops. Bret unexpectedly appears and rescues Allison, making arrangements for her evacuation to safety in Egypt with family.

During her respite, she meets her mother's cousin, Sir Edgar, the new Cairo chief of police, and is thrown into danger searching for an unnamed treasure at the home of a socialite friend, Sarah Blaine. Allison discovers Bret is involved in an investigation involving the new police chief and together they resolve the mystery of a priceless Egyptian treasure.

Linda Chaikin's sequel to *Arabian Winds*, *Lions of the Desert* follows her pattern of riveting suspense. Allison, a committed Christian, permeates the story with her mature view of God, probably because of her background, having sat under the tutelage of Oswald Chambers. She learns not only patience as she waits for God's will regarding her relationship with Bret, but courage as she comes against the fears of a world steeped in lies and selfishness. Bret and Allison learn to trust God in an uncertain world during the "war to end all wars." CLH

***Winds of Allegiance*, by Linda Chaikin. (The Great Northwest; 2.) LCCN 95045788. Minneapolis: Alabaster Books, 1996. ISBN 155661442X, PAP, \$9.99**

F. Pacific Northwest—History—Fiction 298 p. Gr. 10 - Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

*Winds of Allegiance* is the second book in the Great Northwest Series by Linda Chaikin. Both stories stand alone. Ms. Chaikin uses the historical events of the mid 1800's in what was then called Oregon Country to tell a story of love, intrigue, vengeance, and faith. Three countries—the United States, England, and Russia—all lay claim to this vast wilderness rich with resources. Sir Douglas from England desires to be the next governor of the British Northwest; Baron Sarakof seeks to clinch a deal for the Czar of Russia; Captain Trace Wilder, whose ship sails the Pacific Ocean, proudly claims the land for the United States. Savannah Rezanov Mackenzie, the beautiful niece of Sir Douglas, finds herself the pawn of all three men, each one seeking her allegiance to help him carry out his own separate mission.

Savannah wrestles with her loyalty to King George or to God; she desires to find her lost father and learn about her Russian roots, inherited from the mother she never knew, both of which the Baron offers to solve for her. Everything becomes complicated by the American, Trace Wilder, who believes the Baron is dangerous, and declares himself Savannah's protector. Who will win the love of Savannah? Will her allegiance be to England, Russia, or America? Can she keep her faith amidst the temptations of power, greed, prestige, and political intrigue? Whom can she trust when everyone seems to be spying on someone else?

This story gives the reader a personal look at early American history on the Western frontier. The book contains a helpful map to assist the reader in following the geography of the story; and Chaikin concludes the book with a good list of historical notes to put the fictional story in its historical time period. DS

***Encounter the Light*, by Donna Fletcher Crow. LCCN 97005396. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1997. ISBN 0891078762, PAP, \$10.99.**

F. Charge of the Light Brigade—Fiction; Nursing—Fiction. 240 p. Gr. 10 - Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

*Encounter the Light* is an historical novel set in England in the 1850's, during the Crimean War. Lieutenant Richard Grayson is a member of the Light

Brigade. Following that famous "charge," the Lieutenant is left blind. He is attended to at Scutari hospital by Jennifer Neville, a young English volunteer nurse who is serving under Florence Nightingale. Jennifer, daughter of a wealthy Englishman, volunteered at Scutari thinking she was doing her "Christian duty." The reality of the war, the injuries, deaths and conditions of the hospital change Jennifer's life. When she returns to England, the "charitable works" of the wealthy leave a void in her life. Only when she once again encounters Lt.Grayson and discovers God's calling for her life does she find real fulfillment.

The author, Donna Crow, addresses relevant issues that are common to us all. Most can relate to trying to appease ourselves and God through "good works." Also, each individual must search to find their calling and God's will for their lives. *Encounter the Light* is enjoyable and the inclusion of historical characters (i.e. Florence Nightingale, Charles Spurgeon) make it interesting. The style of writing is similar to that of Gilbert Morris. TW

***The Refining Fire*, by W.E. Davis. (Valley of the Peacemaker; 3.) LCCN 96048569. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1997. ISBN 089107936X, PAP, \$10.99.**

F. Frontier and pioneer life—California—Fiction; Young men—California—Fiction; Sheriffs—California—Fiction 335 p. Gr. 10 - Adult.

Quality—3 Acceptability—5

Sheriff Matt Page is actually the acting Sheriff while his predecessor recovers from a gunshot wound. The former Sheriff, John Taylor, and also Matt's wife's father, has indicated that he will probably not run for office again. But he resents Matt taking over his office and duties even though it is necessary. He shows up at the office every day, offers his advice on all matters, and demeans Matt's methods in front of others.

Matt's dear wife, Sarah, feels caught in the middle between her loyalty for her husband and her love for her father, and tries to keep the peace between them. The story takes place in California in the town of Bridgeport, and many are the challenges for keeping the peace: a group of Indians who claim one of their members has been killed and his body decapitated and dumped in the river; a traveling Evangelist who seems suspicious; a mine accident; a stagecoach holdup and robbery.

Matt tries to combine duty with his Christian beliefs, but is often torn about what is right and what is necessary to keep justice in his community. Trouble piles on trouble, Matt and Sarah quarrel over her father's decision to run for office again, the evangelist turns out to be an infamous outlaw, and the Indians threaten the town if the murderer of their friend is not punished.

W. E. Davis, author, has a new adventure in every chapter, and the plot keeps moving. Some of the chase scenes are prolonged and tedious. Descriptions of the beautiful scenery in the Yosemite region are quite picturesque. Western lovers should like this adventure

of some of the early settlers in the West. There are some violence and murder scenes. BGT

**By Love Redeemed**, by DeAnna Julie Dodson. LCCN 97014531. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1997. ISBN 0891079475, PAP, \$11.99.

F. Romance fiction; Middle Ages—Fiction. 272 p. Gr. 9 - Adult.

Quality—2 Acceptability—4

Thomas, King Phillip's brother, awaits the arrival of his wife, Elizabeth. They had been separated for two years, during a war in the kingdom of Lynaleigh. Though he loves her deeply, she dreads returning to him. She would prefer to live in the safety of a monastery. Her mind has been poisoned by her bitter attendant, Ellen. Elizabeth has been told over and over that all men are scoundrels and never faithful to their wives.

Tom is happy they are reunited but is puzzled at Elizabeth's cool and distant reception. He promises to wait until she loves him as he loves here. She endlessly rejects him, suspects his motives in everything he does, and turns from him. He prays for patience and persists in his courtship.

Meanwhile, their kingdom is threatened by scoundrels and one in particular, Taliferros, who wishes to overthrow the king. When Elizabeth turns to him, believing him an ally, her naiveté is savagely destroyed. She feels her chances for forgiveness from her husband are impossible, though she now realizes he is the true love of her life.

Author DeAnna Julie Dodson, weaves a fanciful tale about castles and kings, knights and honor, royalty and slaves. Though predictable, the story paints a picture of times long gone, and romance and treachery. There is one violent rape scene alluded to, and many love scenes. There is also some violence, but no more than one can expect of a violent age. BGT

**Walker's Point**, by Marilee Dunker. (Portraits.) Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1997. ISBN 1556619979, PAP, \$9.99.

F. Romance fiction; Christian life—Fiction. 268 p. Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—4

Walker's Point is the location of Amanda Kelly's family seaside cottage. Amanda spent summers there as a child, and as she grew, assisted her grandparents in their antique shop. It was at Walker's Point, the summer of Amanda's eighteenth year, that she first fell in love. His name was Chris Davis—handsome, a musician, and...not a Christian. But that was long ago. Now, Amanda is in her thirties, married, has two children, and is in New York with her employer to shop for antiques. After spending a carefree day "seeing the sights," as she is entering her hotel, she runs into the entourage of Christopher Davis—famous rock star. Amanda and Chris become reacquainted, the years seem to fade, and Amanda is faced with a choice. Will she remain true to her marriage vows, or return to the arms of the man she fell in love with, so long ago?

Marilee Dunker has written a novel about misunderstandings, first loves, and the commitment of marriage. The characters are interesting and real. The subject of marital unfaithfulness in a Christian novel is risky—especially when little time is devoted to her marriage relationship. The entire story revolves solely around her past and present relationship with Chris. Therefore, one tends to sympathize with Amanda and Chris and with their "lost love." Readers should be cautioned that although there is no content containing adultery, there is content containing unfaithfulness. TW

**The Race for Autumn's Glory**, by Doris Elaine Fell. (Seasons of Intrigue; 6.) LCCN 96053869. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1997. ISBN 0891079262, PAP, \$9.99.

F. Mystery fiction; Bicycle racing—Fiction. 352 p. Gr. 9 - Adult.

Quality—3 Acceptability—3

Ian Kendall is a cyclist who is competing in the Tour de France 2,300 mile race. He convinces Chase, his girl friend, to come along and watch the race. Other eyes are on this race as well, hoping to use Ian as the central figure to teach the world a lesson and bring fear for a large-scale uprising by the IRA. At each point of the race the tension increases in not only the bike race, but the race between good and evil. Drew Gregory from the CIA must figure out exactly who is behind all the sabotaging and bomb threats that follow the race before destruction hits. A tragic accident that was carefully plotted finishes the race for Ian. Carefully hiding the fact that Ian still lives, Drew tries to run down the main force that threatens mass destruction at the finish so that the race can end in glory.

The Race for Autumn's Glory is a fast-paced novel that will keep one on edge until the last page. For those who like mysteries, The Race for Autumn's Glory will be a challenge to the reader to see if they can solve the mystery and tie in all the clues before the book ends. On the other hand, the first hundred pages gives a background for all the characters that are involved and may become frustrating as each chapter deals with another scene and another set of characters. This book is not for the first time mystery reader or one who likes to have the main character easily identified and used exclusively during the story. The novel is 352 pages long and one may become bogged down unless one is a serious reader. DAW

**All the Days Were Summer**, by Robert Funderburk. (A Dylan St. John Novel; 2.) LCCN 97021020. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1997. ISBN 1556616155, PAP, \$9.00.

F. Louisiana—Fiction; Mystery fiction. 205 p. Gr. 11 - Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Set in the quiet, bayou back country of Louisiana, *All the Days Were Summer*, by Robert Funderburk, is the second of the Dylan St. John novels. Dylan, a policeman, and his wife, Susan, have left the dangerous streets of Baton Rouge for a quiet, deputy position in the little delta town of Evangeline. Only

the quiet is quickly disturbed when the town's mayor, and then other small town mayors, is murdered in a rather unique fashion. Motives and leads are scarce, and the search for answers leads Dylan back to the capitol in pursuit of a mysterious beauty who has an interest in medieval weaponry and Camelot.

*All the Days Were Summer* moves quickly and is action packed all through. The Gospel message is carefully woven in, but more important, the themes of integrity, honesty, and fidelity come through strong in Dylan's approach to his job and his relationship with his wife. The Louisiana setting and lifestyle is wonderfully portrayed throughout, and will satisfy those whose love or interest turns to the deep South. I learned a lot about a culture that was as foreign to me as any land across the sea. I could almost taste the crawdads and Cajon food, and smell the sweet moss and magnolias at sundown.

This book will hold the interest of any adventure and action hungry reader, while satisfying the concerns of those who want something that holds values and morals in respect. Because of the nature of the murders and intrigue, though, it might need a more mature audience. GCH

**The Tender Rebel**, by Virginia Gaffney. (Richmond Chronicles; 3.) LCCN 97012381. Eugene, Ore.: Harvest House Publishers, 1997. ISBN 1565076699, PAP, \$9.99.

F. Christian fiction; United States—History—Civil War, 1861-1865—Fiction; Richmond (Va.)—History—Civil War, 1861-1865—Fiction. 445 p. Gr. 9 - Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Carrie Cromwell looks out over the city of Richmond and waits with baited breath. "How long?" she wonders to herself. Will the war end soon? Will the Northern troops take her beloved city? Carrie slowly turns away and tries to dismiss her fears. She treads heavily back to the hospital to put in another long day tending to the wounded troops. After several weeks, Carrie has the opportunity to do some "real" doctoring under the tutelage of Dr. Wild. He finds her work admirable and even desires to learn from her the ways of herbal medicine. Eventually, Carrie is summoned to the only hospital for blacks in Richmond where she encounters danger and prejudice at every turn. With only her work as solace, Carrie awaits the return of her fiancée, Robert. Little does she know, that he is being ministered to by a black family. Her prayers for him and his thoughts of her keep them both alive through the spirit of hope.

The horrors of the Civil War are brought to life in this novel. Heaps upon heaps of mangled corpses, body parts, and disease are daily occurrences as described in this book. Virginian Gaffney takes special care to describe the various battles and the political aspects of each. Her knowledge of the South and their genteel ways is interesting without becoming disdainful. Readers can come away with a deeper understanding as to what motivated both sides in fighting this infamous war. MH

**April Operation**, by Linda Hall. (RCMP Series; 3.) Elkhart, Ind.: Bethel Publishing, 1997. ISBN 0934998701, PAP, \$9.99.

F. Mystery stories; Abortion—Fiction; Kidnapping—Fiction. 268 p. Gr. 9 - Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

*April Operation* is the third book in Linda Hall's mystery series featuring Sergeant Roger Sheppard of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. It is a stand-alone novel dealing with the murder of abortion doctor, Douglas Shanahan, and the abduction of Betsy, the young daughter of one of his employees. The pro-choice and pro-life factions seem to be pitted against one another in this race to save the kidnapping victim, yet the beauty of this book is that some of the Christian characters are able to see the "enemy" as human beings with emotions and pain just as, to be more aptly put, Jesus would view them.

*April Operation* is a quick read with a very believable plot in addition to its moral teaching. This book could be enjoyed by middle school students on up. It deals with the very current issue of abortion and leaves the reader eager for the other books in the series. It would be an excellent addition to most libraries. CC

**Journey**, by Angela Elwell Hunt. (Legacies of the Ancient River; 3.) LCCN 97021116. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1997. ISBN 1556616090, PAP, \$10.99.

F. Egypt—History—Eighteenth dynasty, ca. 1570-1320 B.C.—Fiction; Bible. O.T.—History of Biblical events—Fiction. 384 p. Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

*Journey* is a novel that chronicles the lives of two of the grandsons of Jacob—Manasseh and Ephraim, the sons of Joseph. Manasseh, the eldest, after an extended visit with his father's family at Hebron, declares that God has spoken to him and told him to lead the Hebrews back to Canaan. He is willing to risk everything in order to obey—the chance to win the love of the blind harpist, and his relationship with his father, Joseph. Joseph does not give his blessing to Manasseh, going as far as saying if God wanted them to return to Canaan, God would let him know, not his son.

Ephraim is a "son of Egypt." He feels that his relatives are ignorant shepherders and wants little to do with them. Once Jacob gives his blessing to him instead of to the eldest, Manasseh, Ephraim does not miss an opportunity to lord this over his brother's head. Ephraim believes that the prophecy that he will be greater will be fulfilled through his marriage to the Pharaoh's daughter. A giant rift is formed between the brothers. Will it heal? Will they ever unite as a family again?

Angela Hunt has successfully written an intriguing and powerful story. Her characters are alive and the emotions of their hearts are visible to the readers. Although she has deviated from actual known facts, she gives the reader an opportunity to explore the possibilities and to imagine what might have occurred. The author obviously has knowledge of both Egyptian history and customs as well as those of the Israelites.

*Journey* explores themes of God's direction and power in individual lives, as well as self worth issues. Angela Hunt's ability as a writer is immediately evident—she is an outstanding author of Christian literature. TW

**Tempest at Stonehaven**, by Grace Johnson. (Scottish Shores; 1.) LCCN 97012400. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers, 1997. ISBN 0842362509, PAP, \$9.99.

F. Scotland—History—19th century—Fiction; Wreckers (Plunderers of ships)—History—Fiction. 251 p. Gr. 10 - Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

"The storms of life'll catch up to you, sure as sure. But remember these words of yer ma—the presence of Jesus is with you in yer boat..."

Annie Mackinnon has faced storms—her husband proved himself unfaithful, then he was lost at sea. Now, her only son, Donal, is leaving to join the Merchant Marine. Widowed and alone, Annie remembers her mother's words. In her loneliness, she cries out to God. The next morning, a rigger anchors in the bay of Stonehaven. A passenger named Davy Morrison announces that he and his friend plan to stay "for awhile." Mysterious occurrences begin to happen around the abandoned castle that Annie has always claimed as her "refuge." When she discovers a connection that will forever tie her to Davy, Annie knows that she can only turn to God to withstand the storms ahead.

*The Tempest at Stonehaven* is set in 1882, Scotland. Although the main characters in the story are Annie and Davy, much of the story is devoted to other colorful characters of Stonehaven. There are touching scenes involving the children of the village as well as the lighthouse keeper. The plot incorporates love, mystery, and murder. There are quite a number of deaths in the novel, some seemingly unnecessary. God's power to direct and change lives is manifested throughout and in the lives of many. TW

**Out to Canaan**, by Jan Karon. (The Mitford Years; 4.) New York: Viking, 1997. ISBN 067087485X, HBB, \$23.95.

F. Episcopal clergy—Fiction. 296 p. Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

The sleepy little town of Mitford becomes embroiled in a hot-and-heavy mayoral race that comes down to the wire. Unbelievable charges and counter-charges, steaming debates, and the "war" of billboards and publicity stunts have the residents in an uproar. The upstart candidate, Mack Stroupe, is pushing for unbridled development while promising "improvement, not change." Esther Bollick, Mitford's mayor for fifteen years, vows Stroupe will do that over her dead body.

Lamb's Chapel beloved rector, Father Tim Kavanagh, and his talented wife, Cynthia, are pondering retirement plans. Nevertheless, they find themselves increasingly being pulled in many directions: town politics, a seeming estrangement from Doolie (the young boy Father Tim informally adopted), and a

miriad of other strands carry the reader through several nail-biting episodes.

Karon's sensitive understanding of small town residents, their problems and quirky personalities, rivalries and loves, brings continuity from her three previous books in the series. (See Jannet Hoeffner's review of these in previous issues of *Christian Library Journal*: *At Home in Mitford*, *A Light in the Window*, and *These High, Green Hills*.) Satisfactory resolutions come about in *Out to Canaan*, but Karon leaves wiggle room for future books in the series. RI

**A Gathering of Finches : A Novel**, by Jane Kirkpatrick. LCCN 97027682. Sisters, Ore.: Multnomah Publishers, 1997. ISBN 1576730824, PAP, \$12.99.

F. Oregon—History—Fiction; Coos Bay—Oregon—History—Fiction; Simpson, Cassie Hendricks Stearns—Biography—Fiction. 388 p. Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

*A Gathering of Finches* tells of Cassie Hendrick Stearns Simpson's pursuit to fill her soul with worldly things. Unsatisfied with her life, she leaves her marriage of convenience to Josiah Stearns to live with madcap Louis Simpson. They live together as Mr. and Mrs. Simpson for a few years before marrying. Both live fast, luxurious lives on the Simpson wealth. Cassie makes a selfish choice that affects many: "A man over my child, passion over pragmatics, guilt rather than responsibility." For the rest of her life she pays the price for getting what she wanted. Cassie throws herself into life, but lives with a "vacancy of spirit". She studies Christian Science, but also reads from the Bible the last days of her life. Before her death, Cassie understands herself as never before and finds some worth by giving to others.

Jane Kirkpatrick uses the lives of Cassie and Louis Simpson, a powerful Oregon Coast couple at the turn of the century, to illustrate the emptiness of worldly pursuits. She chooses to recount the life of Cassie Hendrick Stearns Simpson in the manner of fiction, though the story remains true to details she discovered in meticulous research. It rings with the truths of Ecclesiastes: all is vanity and striving after wind. Through Cassie's eyes, readers discover this multifaceted character, both her vivacious, daring public life and the inner torment of her soul from the bad choices she has made. Her guilt echoes that of *Crime and Punishment's* Raskolnikov, and Louis's deception shares similarity to Mr. Rochester's in *Jane Eyre*.

Readers familiar with Hoquiam, Washington, and the North Bend-Coos Bay, Oregon, areas will find it especially interesting. A slow read, yet *A Gathering of Finches*, contains enough action to keep the reader's interest. Kirkpatrick's generous use of similes, though sometimes overdone, also helps as well as the enclosed maps that follow the characters' travels. The book closes with an author's note explaining what was fact and fiction in the story. LKFN, BMH

***A Sweetness to the Soul*, by Jane Kirkpatrick. Sisters, Ore.: Multnomah, 1995. ISBN 0880707658. PAP, \$11.99.**

F. Oregon—Fiction; Frontier and pioneer life—Oregon—Fiction; Sherar, Jane Herbert—Fiction. Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

At age twelve, Jane Herbert watches three siblings die. This tragedy, for which her mother blames her, greatly affects her life. Two years later, in 1863, she marries Joseph Sherar, who is sixteen years her senior. The book's second half describes their first thirty years of marriage: Jane's struggle to have a family; conflict with her mother; friendship with her childhood Indian friend Sumiet and her people; and Joseph's dreams and accomplishments.

Weaving together actual accounts of the Sherars' pioneering experiences in eastern Oregon and her knowledge of history and the land, Jane Kirkpatrick created *A Sweetness to the Soul*. The story, told by Jane Sherar, unfolds as memories occasionally interjected with reflection. The Sherars' faith blends in unobtrusively, emerging naturally, never preaching. The sometimes-flawed responses to life's trials and triumphs of the well-developed main characters add realism to the book.

Over the years, Jane learns to trust God and cope like a coping saw, strong but flexible—with life on the frontier and with her husband's numerous risky building and ranching projects. These caused them to become the center of their community. She gradually learns that "a hard heart has no room for the good things God gives."

The epilogue, which describes the last respects the Indians pay to Jane Sherar and the comfort they offer to Joseph, will deeply move the reader. The author closes the book with notes about how much of the story was based on fact. LKFN

***Love to Water My Soul*, by Jane Kirkpatrick. Sisters, Ore.: Multnomah Publishers, 1996. ISBN 0880709383, PAP, \$11.99.**

F. Oregon—History—Fiction; Paiute Indians—Fiction; Sherar, Jane Herbert—Fiction. xxxx p. Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Sequel to *A Sweetness to the Soul*. Left behind as a small child on the Oregon Trail, Asiam begins her search for belonging. She is found by the Modocs, then traded to the Paiutes where she's welcomed into one family. At age fourteen, she's driven away and learns to live in the white world. Nearly twenty years later, after finding emotional healing in God, Asiam is reunited with her Paiute family and marries her first love, Shard, with whom she finds belonging.

For this novel, Jane Kirkpatrick used the same first-person, narrative style as in *A Sweetness to the Soul* to explore through the eyes of Asiam the human need of belonging. Throughout the book, this lost child finds herself pulled between two worlds: the white one into which she was born and the Indian culture that shaped her, never feeling fully a part of either. Her time with the Sherars, a couple who gently lived out their faith, taught Asiam that she spent all her time in either the

past or the future, never in the present. Only when she put faith in the Lord could she live in the present.

Rich with sensory imagery, well-developed characters, and peppered with native words, the novel brings alive the traditional and transitional lives of the native people of Oregon in the late nineteenth century. The details about the flora, fauna, and tribal traditions bear evidence of meticulous research.

In much of the story, Asiam calls God her Spirit, seeming to mix native spiritism with Christianity. But at the end, it is clear that she and her Paiute family worship the Christian God.

This novel intersects with Kirkpatrick's first novel, *A Sweetness to the Soul*, when Asiam, called Alice M., comes to live with Jane and Joseph Sherar, the main characters of that book. LKFN

***Heaven's Song*, by Marilyn Kok. (Portraits.) Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1997. ISBN 1556619901, PAP, \$9.99.**

F. Mystery fiction; Murder—Fiction; Child abuse—Fiction. 239 p. Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

When Cassie McCormick meets Nick Meyers, she believes that she will never see him again. He was just a stranger that she shared some laughs with to pass the time in a airport. But, after being accepted into Texas A & M University, she discovers that Nick is a doctorate student in the same field that she is studying. Nick and Cassie renew their friendship and Cassie is drawn into Nick's life and that of his small daughter. When Nick discovers a discrepancy in some research from their department, he inadvertently puts both himself and Cassie at risk. When a colleague is found dead, Nick finds that he must do all that is in his power to protect those that he loves.

*Heaven's Song* is a very interesting novel with just enough mystery mixed in with the romance. The characters are believable and one can easily absorb themselves in the story line. As one of many I have read in the Portraits series, this is one of the best, because of the different angle and more complex story line. TW

***The Stain*, by Harry Lee Kraus, Jr. LCCN 97016775. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1997. ISBN 0891079726, PAP, \$12.99.**

F. Cloning—Fiction; Mystery fiction. 431 p. Gr. 11 - Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

In the midst of trying to survive in the medical profession in small town, Deer Falls, Dr. Seth Berringer, in Harry Lee Kraus's gripping book, *The Stain*, is up against the mega health-care provider. He finds he is dictated to concerning how he operates, seemingly at the expense of compassion and the personal touch that makes a family physician a cut above the norm. Seth loves his people and his community, but he wants to hold his job; and the result is a painful struggle against compromise.

The struggle becomes a nightmare when Dr. Berringer puts himself into the middle of a mammoth cover-up that has world-wide scientific and spiritual implications. He comes across the body of a young woman, apparently the victim of a rape. Jumping to some wrong conclusions, and fearing, not only his job, but the consequences for another patient of his, he makes the woman's death appear to be a hit and run. However, the girl wasn't a rape victim. Her death was the result of an abortion gone awry. And the mystery and intrigue behind the creation and death of her very special fetus is what turns this book upside-down and keeps the reader on the edge holding his breath, unable to turn the pages fast enough.

Kraus's book, *The Stain*, is absolutely spell binding. The story was not only positively riveting, it was mind boggling and tremendously thought provoking. I kept asking myself, "How is he going to get out of this mess?" And, "What if this really did happen?" The clone in this provocative work of fiction puts sheep to shame. Doctor Kraus has woven an incredible attention-holding story combining the literary skills of character development and plot intrigue, with his medical background creating a very real, believable work of fiction. The story carries you in suspense right to the last page. In fact, my very favorite part of the whole book was the last two pages.

*The Stain* does require a mature audience, though. The Gospel and the message of Christ is clear, but the setting, particularly in the beginning, is a bit dramatic and uncomfortable. It has to be for the sake of the story. This is a book, though, that could stir the heart of an unbeliever and cement the convictions of any follower of Christ. Wonderful book! GCH

***Leaning on a Spider's Web*, by Jennifer Rees Larcombe. LCCN 92038137. Downer's Grove, Ill.: Intervarsity Press, 1993. ISBN 0830813748, PAP, \$9.99.**

F. Christian fiction. 330 p. Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

*Leaning on a Spider's Web* is the story of people who live on the same cul-de-sac, Laburnum Terrace. They have contrasting belief systems—some are Christian, some New Age, some believe in exercise and a healthy lifestyle. Although they live their own separate lives, their random contacts intertwine. Emmie, an artist, is evicted from her attic room. In desperation, she moves in with an elderly woman who needs a companion. Emmie has no desire to be tied down to Miss Rosedale, and tries to maintain an emotional distance.

Dr. Hazel Tilson's career is her god. As she achieves one goal, she immediately reaches toward another. Her relationship with her husband suffers. She can't wait to move away from Laburnum Terrace to somewhere more fashionable. Alison Grazier is a pillar of her church. Unfortunately, she's more concerned about her image in the eyes of the congregation than who she is in Christ. She takes in a foster child, Clancy, who serves as a temptation to her husband, Gordon. Mrs. Jardine is a widow with a mentally disabled son, Nigel. She worries about what will happen to him when she dies. David and Kim

Patterson have four young children. Kim is overwhelmed with her stay-at-home lifestyle. Claire is exercising her new-found psychic healing powers. Her daughter Jasmine is an obstacle to her concentration. Matt and Ann Coley are in training for a marathon when Ann begins to show symptoms of multiple sclerosis. Then the new vicar, Richard, moves into the neighborhood and touches each of their lives.

This is the first novel for Larcombe, a British author. *Leaning on a Spider's Web* is peppered with British expressions and spellings. It is also plagued by run-on sentences, which will annoy grammarians. Larcombe does an excellent job of characterization, making each of her many characters distinctive and believable. However, the book suffers from under description of the most dramatic events. Much more could be made of the plane crash at the story's climax. ARH

***The Confession*, by Beverly Lewis. (The Heritage of Lancaster County; 2.) LCCN 97021118. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1997. ISBN 1556618670, PAP, \$9.99.**

F. Amish—Fiction; Christian fiction. 286 p. Gr. 9 - Adult.  
Quality—4 Acceptability—5

*The Confession* is the sequel to Beverly Lewis' *The Shunning*, the tale of Katie Lapp, a young Amish girl who has always rebelled against the ways of the Plain Folk. When Katie discovers she is adopted, she leaves behind the life she has always known to seek out her birth mother.

In *The Confession*, Katie finds herself in the home of Laura Mayfield-Bennett in the role of a maid, watching an impostor claim to be Katie herself. The truth of Katie's identity is discovered before the death of Laura but many questions and uncertainties have arisen and Katie seems far from the peace and joy she is seeking. At the same time, her childhood sweetheart, Daniel, long thought drowned, is returning to Hickory Hollow to reestablish a relationship with his family and hopefully with Katie. What lies in store for the love they once had for one another?

Reading *The Shunning* before *The Confession* is a recommendation from this reviewer as some rich details of Katie's family relationships need to be included for the full enjoyment of both books. The story line is interesting and holds the interest of the reader and the openendedness of *The Confession* brings the hope that there will be more volumes in The Heritage of Lancaster County.

This book will be enjoyed by middle school and above, particularly female readers. CC

***Vote of Intolerance*, by Josh McDowell and Ed Stewart. LCCN 97011014. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers, 1997. ISBN 0842339051, HBB, \$19.99.**

F. Politics and government—Fiction; Christian fiction. 404 p. Adult.  
Quality—4 Acceptability—5

This novel, *Vote of Intolerance*, is well-written by a pair of authors, McDowell and Stewart, who each have a number of books to their credit. This is a political novel, a family story of our times, a story that deals with issues of today. Stevie Van Horne, newly divorced, moves her two remaining children—she has lost her oldest to a drug overdose—to a new state, North California, with the promise of a better life. This better life would be without the godless culture rampant in southern California, a culture that she blames, at least in part, for the loss of both her marriage and her son.

Immersing herself in the campaign of Dan Bellardi, conservative candidate for governor of North California, Stevie finds herself devoting more and more time to this endeavor at the cost of time invested in her children. A key relationship in the book is her friendship with Wes Bellardi, son of the governor candidate. A terrorist attack, cult seduction and Wes' disappearance are only a few of the incidents occurring that overall cause Stevie to rethink some of her priorities and endeavor to trust the Lord with her future.

This rather long book (over 400 pages) is nevertheless quite a fast read and is written in an interesting manner that will appeal to men as well as women. It is a good choice for the fiction section of any public or church library. CC

***Montclair*, 97004712, by Sara Mitchell. (Portraits.) LCCN 97004712. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1997. ISBN 1556619634, PAP, \$9.99.**

F. Horse sports—United States—Fiction; Equestrian centers—United States—Fiction. 253 p. Adult.  
Quality—4 Acceptability—5

"I'm afraid ... afraid to ride .. Most of all, I'm afraid because I can't control the fear and that makes me wonder if I've lost my faith in God." These words come from the depths of Sabrina Mayhew's heart. Three years before, Sabrina, a champion horse rider suffered an accident that left her injured, and her horse, Vesuvius, dead. Although she denies it, with all of her being, Sabrina wants to overcome her fear and trust in God again. Hunter Buchanan, owner of Montclair Equestrian Center, offers her that chance. Will Hunter be able to assist Sabrina in overcoming her fear? Will his reliance on God help her restore her faith in Him? Are Hunters expectations too high?

Sara Mitchell writes a heart-felt and compelling novel that explores the subject of fears and panic disorders. This was a refreshing angle in writing a romance as one could sense the struggle of Sabrina and relate to her on some level. It also demonstrates how tragedies in life can affect all aspects of our lives, including our relationship with God. The author shares at the end, her own past struggle with panic disorder. I found it courageous that she would base a novel on a topic that was so near her own experience, and one that must have been painful to relive. TW

***The Balcony*, by Lynn Morris. (Portraits.) LCCN 97021008. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1997. ISBN 1556619812, PAP, \$9.99.**

F. Bahamas—Fiction; Mystery fiction. 251 p. Gr. 10 - Adult.  
Quality—3 Acceptability—5

*The Balcony* is a modern-day novel that takes place on an island in the Caribbean. Johnnie James has been sent by her Atlanta accounting firm to establish the accounting procedures for Taino Castle—an ancient castle that is being refurbished into a hotel by its owner, Esteban Ventura.

Esteban's younger brother, Diego, the business administrator, can rarely be found during business hours. But, he is quite visible in the evening for dining and entertaining. Nuna is a family guest and a young flamenco dancer. She makes it clear to Johnnie that Esteban belongs to her, and Johnnie is not welcome near her territory. When three yachts disappear from the waters surrounding Taino Castle, and the police question Esteban and Diego, Johnnie finds herself doubting Esteban's integrity while fighting her attractions to him.

Lynn Morris has written a romance that has Christian morals but there is no spiritual depth or message in the story. It appeals to readers who enjoy the "wealthy, attractive male" sweeping the "wealthy, attractive female" off her feet-in Christian context. It is light reading, written in the style of a Harlequin Romance. TW

***Threshold*, by Bill Myers. LCCN 97020587. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1997. ISBN 0310201209, PAP, \$12.99.**

F. Christian fiction; Second Advent—Fiction. 331 p. Gr. 10 - Adult.  
Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Bill Myers, in *Threshold*, has written a powerful work of fiction relating to the end times, but with a unique and interesting twist. The story centers around young Brandon Martus, a troubled Generation X young man, struggling to overcome tremendous guilt and anger resulting from the death of his younger sister. Brandon is a typical small, Midwest town post-high schooler caught up in adolescent pranks and slightly rebellious mischief. Only there is something very different about Brandon. He has the mysterious ability to see into the future. It's not a gift he can control or even understand. This ability is for this troubled, pre-Christian young adult, a gift from God setting him apart for a very special calling. He is to become one of Revelation's two witnesses, only he doesn't know it yet.

*Threshold* moves quickly and jumps around a lot. So much, in fact, it took me awhile to get the characters figured out and catch a vision for where Bill Myers was going with the story. He not only develops Brandon's character, he weaves in another young man, a peer of Brandon's, who is a sort of pre-antichrist. And then there is Dr. Reichner who thinks he's on the verge of some tremendous discoveries in the area of science and the paranormal. He risks courting the interest and money of a mysterious guru in remote Nepal to further his studies, not having any idea the

danger he is moving into, bringing young Brandon and Sarah Weintraub, his ambitious neurobiologist associate, with him.

Bill Myers, in *Threshold*, comes a long way from his McGee and Me series of stories. *Threshold* is captivating, challenging, enlightening, even, at times, a bit frightening. It left me shuddering to think what things may very well be taking place right now somewhere in preparation for Christ's return. This work definitely has a bent toward focusing on some of the more insipid, even Satanic, forces that come to play before the end. Meyers creates a very real and plausible setting for the Antichrist to enter the stage. Interest in the paranormal (ESP, predicting the future) fits right in to the New Age movement and man's desire to fill the God-sized vacuum in his life with any number of counterfeit substitutes. Myers makes Revelation real in a very contemporary and explicable way.

*Threshold* most likely would require a mature reading audience. It can stimulate and challenge the thinking of a mature believer; but then can also be the stimulant to arouse curiosity and interest into supernatural phenomena of a counterfeit nature. It's a good book, but it needs to be handled with care. GCH

***A Rift in Time*, by Michael Phillips. LCCN 97024138. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers, 1997. ISBN 084235251, HBB, \$19.99.**

F. Bible—Antiquities-Fiction; Bible—Prophecies—Fiction; Bible and science—Fiction. 604 p. Gr. 11 - Adult.  
Quality—5 Acceptability—5

The prologue of Michael Phillips' latest novel, *A Rift in Time*, puts the reader in the wilderness of Arabia in 1898 as an unnamed explorer vainly attempts to save his life as he seeks to make a discovery that would prove the truth of the creation account in Genesis.

The book abruptly moves to Mt. Ararat and archaeologist Adam Livingstone's on-site documentation of Noah's Ark. However, this is only the beginning of an adventure packed novel that keeps the reader guessing until the end.

Upon his return to his home in England, Livingstone's life is threatened by a conspiracy that is incredibly far reaching. Neither bombings, sabotaged computers, nor break-ins can stop his next top secret expedition to discover the Garden of Eden. His discoveries in Africa's Rift Valley will change the world's view of origins and must be silenced by a secret and deadly order at any cost.

Scientific and geological information, and an overview of God's plan throughout the ages, will leave the reader with much to ponder long after the book is finished. This thought provoking, exciting, and gripping novel is guaranteed to challenge and inspire the reader. EK

***Housekeeping*, by Marilynne Robinson. LCCN 80024061. New York: The Noonday Press, 1981. ISBN 0374173133, PAP, \$11.00.**

F. Sisters—Fiction; Family life—Fiction; Suicide—Fiction. 219 p. Adult.  
Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Robinson has created in *Housekeeping* a family album of beautifully crafted word pictures. Ruth opens the album and introduces us to the family. Pictures of Ruth, her sister Lucille, and their eccentric Aunt Sylvie, occupy most of the album. Other pictures, however, give the background for all that happens before the girls first come under the care of Grandmother, followed by inept, maiden great-aunts, and finally Sylvie.

We see the train in which grandfather Foster rode to his death as it plunged from the bridge into the lake near Fingerbone, the town where the family lives. That lake, which later claims the life of Helen, mother of Ruth and Lucille, shows up effectively in many of the pictures. Toward the end of the story, townspeople conclude the lake has also swallowed Ruth and Sylvie. Of course the reader knows the real story, and at that point Ruth closes the picture album of her girlhood and takes us through the final pages with more exquisite word pictures.

Carefully chosen words keep the reader fascinated with this painful story which became a favorite in its initial publication in hardback. The flimsy and dark cover of this reissue in paperback does not attract, but once inside, the reader cannot resist the strong characters. Robinson brilliantly shows, not tells, the story.

Few spiritual connections enter the story, but Ruth obviously has some understanding of Bible stories. No bad language or violence ruins the story. This book gets to be read at one sitting, though slowly so as not to miss any words. BMH

***The Warrior's Bride*, by Lisa Samson. (The Abbey; 3.) LCCN 97002664. Eugene, Ore.: Harvest House Publishers, 1997. ISBN 1565076362, PAP, \$9.99.**

F. Christian fiction; England—History—Fiction. 360 p. Gr. 9 - Adult.  
Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Lady Johanna Durwin, the young woman with flowing blondish white hair has determined that no man shall have her heart. That is, no man unless he be equal to the stature of the infamous Black Knight. But, Johanna's dream man is now dead. Her tapestry of the knight is what keeps the fire alight in Johanna's heart as she decides there is no one who can fill the late knight's place. Enter in a secret underground swimming cave, a mysterious knight, and two hearts ready for love.

Johanna opens her poetic soul to a mysterious knight in the dark cover of the underground cave where they meet over a period of weeks. Innocent in their affection, the knight knows Johanna would not love him if he reveals his true identity. Still, his love for her forces him to take the risk when he suspects Johanna of contracting leprosy. Pledging his love for Johanna, he takes her to a home in the city for lepers. Once there, the life of ease and comfort are stripped away and Johanna is left to wonder after her knight's love for God and his obvious faithful love for her.

In time, Johanna learns to know God and His ways through her service to others in the colony. Still apart, Johanna and her knight continue to write letters and visit. During the last visit, for Johanna becomes severely disfigured (and she vows to release her knight) a wondrous thing occurs which solidifies her faith in God.

*The Warrior's Bride* could have been just another medieval novel. However, author Lisa Sampson made it so much more with her creative plot and her singular idea of bringing leprosy into the main story. Readers will be drawn into the world of knights and ladies. Samson describes in detail the costumes, food, games, and beliefs of these fascinating people. Her knowledge of leprosy and its disfigurements (both physical and emotional) add more depth to this stirring tale of two lovers whose only hope lies in the power of God. MH

***Terminal Logic*, by Jefferson Scott. LCCN 97017235. Sisters, Ore.: Multnomah Publishers, 1997. ISBN 1576730387, PAP, \$9.99.**

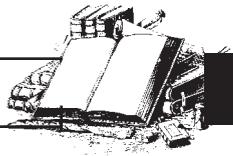
F. Christian fiction; Science fiction. 358 p. Gr. 11 - Adult.  
Quality—4 Acceptability—5

From father and son, to Laveda Pruitt and her first computer, to the Lonely Hearts Virtual Bar, to a scene with an elf, giant, and ranger that turns out differently than it appears—this quick change of sites leads the reader to Ethan Hamilton and his son Jordan, *Terminal Logic* main characters. The fast-paced story takes place in the year 2006, and GlobeNet, the 3D virtual reality-intensive descendent of the Internet, captures the minds of Ethan and Jordan as well as a host of others.

Bots, short for robots programmed with artificial intelligence, run amok throughout the story, raising the question, "can harmless computer games turn deadly in real life?" The bots create havoc with young men's emotions, but did they cause Jerry Wright's death? Can Ethan produce sufficient reason for the FBI to begin an investigation? What part do the unnamed father and son play in all that happens? Did Ethan really see the devil himself on GlobeNet? Suddenly, in the middle of all this uncertainty, the security of the United States becomes at stake. Ethan has less than an hour to prevent disaster. As he searches for the impossible, he cries out, "I'm totally at Your mercy, Lord."

*Terminal Logic* contains more cliff-hangers than a rock-climbers' outing as Scott moves from scene to scene with speed and dexterity. His excellent writing, featuring an equitable balance of narration and good, functional dialogue, creates this can't-put-it-down story. Good word pictures draw the reader into situations of the future when computers could replace most manual tasks. All the characters, human and otherwise, somehow appear believable. Technically challenged readers may get lost in the tech-talk, but the core of the story will keep them reading. Scott shows Ethan's faith and reliance upon God as genuine. BMH

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*Why Christians Can't Trust Psychology*, by Ed Bulkley. Eugene, Ore.: Harvest House, 1993. ISBN 1565070267, PAP, \$10.99.

150. Psychology. 368 pages.

*Only God Can Heal the Wounded Heart*, by Ed Bulkley. Eugene, Ore.: Harvest House, 1995. ISBN 1565073231, PAP, \$10.99.

155.9. Grief. 311 pages. Gr. 10 - Adult.

Quality—5      Acceptability—5

Christians hear the message frequently from the pulpit. "God helps us solve all our problems. The Bible is more than adequate." What encouraging news—that is, until squaring off face to face with trouble, many pastors lament, "I'm not qualified to walk you through this problem." Why is that?

Many Christians and pastors buy the lie that only "professionals" can handle "serious" problems.

Pastors fear they don't have the "training" and the problems may be out of their league. Another lie.

Ed Bulkley, pastor and counselor, encourages readers to gain confidence in God's word and the power of the Holy Spirit to heal lives. Bulkley uncovers the myth that psychology is scientific, effective and motivated by compassion. He discusses the psychological labels, and exposes the myth that psychology heals the past. He includes Christian psychologists in this discussion, convinced that much of their "integrationist" training is in error.

Bulkley realizes that, assuming the pastor, or church layman has an adequate grasp of the Bible, he must take additional steps to acquire counseling skills. He should become acquainted with Christian counseling literature, both theoretical and practical. Bulkley suggests Jay Adams provides foundational biblical counseling material both in theory and in practice.

Bulkley interweaves the story of a pastor, frustrated with feelings of inadequacy as a counselor, with the issue of psychological counseling and its place in the church.

*Only God Can Heal the Wounded Heart* is Bulkley's follow-up story. A pastor's wife is misled into searching her past for deep-seeded, repressed issues that render her depressed. Her husband confronts her Christian counselor, pointing out his non-biblical approach and reasoning in counseling his wife, to no avail. The counselor feels the pastor is simply not "qualified." The wife continues her sessions, leaves her family, and the pastor must resign his church. The entire family, immediate and extended, struggle with her bizarre behavior prompted by her Christian counselor.

Bulkley uses the same technique in both books—continues his narrative and intersperses each chapter

## A Note from the Editor: by Ray Legg

### Reading for Accuracy

Seldom has anything affected me as the Clint Eastwood film *The Outlaw Josey Wales*. I was so moved by the characters and much of its plot that upon going to bed the night after I had seen the film, I dreamed a sequel to it. When I awoke, I felt compelled to jot down my ideas in the hopes of writing the story one day. I even went so far as to venture to a local bookstore to purchase Forrest Carter's *Gone to Texas* from which the movie was adapted. I enjoyed reading the book and have not yet lost my fascination with the characters in it or the film.

Another of Carter's books is presently in the news. This time, controversy surrounds the release of the film adaptation of his story, *The Education of Little Tree*, directed by Kevin Costner. Some Native Americans claim the story is an accurate portrayal of the life and times of their people, while others see it as yet

another erroneous presentation of their past by nonnatives with little cultural sensitivity. Still others take offense at the story in general because of the questionable nature of Carter's past views on race and ethnicity.

After a hiatus of several years, Carter resurfaced in literary circles with a series of novels viewed as deliberate attempts to rectify some of the damage done by views expressed in his earlier work. Additional controversy surrounds the claim by certain critics that Carter plagiarized *Where the Red Fern Grows*. Readers and moviegoers alike are thus being challenged on several levels as they consider Carter's work. Should they read the book, see the film, and make up their own minds about the accuracy of the story? Should they avoid both until the controversies are resolved? Or should they stay away from both to avoid being unfair to writer and producer alike?

It seems to me that resolution of the

conflict may involve several aspects. First, we should read the story of *Little Tree* ourselves and seek to understand both the artistic merit of the story and the underlying source or sources of the conflict it has generated. Second, following our reading of the story, we should read representative criticism from pertinent sources to gain as broad a perspective on the issues raised by the book as possible. Third, we should arm ourselves with the realization that no adaptation of a book will be flawless, and then head to the theater to make up our own minds as to whether or not the negative criticism of the film and of Carter and his novel is warranted. (That is, of course, only if we are so inclined. It is completely possible to judge this story on its literary merits alone without seeing the film at all.) Finally, regarding the similarities which exist between *The Education of Little Tree* and *Where the*

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with documented information exposing today's anti-biblical thinking and counseling techniques. The stories, believable and riveting, reveal false teaching Christians capitulate and follow because the "experts" say it's so.

Each book contains extensive indexes, notes, resources and explanations. A must-read for pastors and laymen, alike. CLH

***Mind Games: Exposing Today's Psychics, Frauds, and False Spiritual Phenomenon*, by Andrew Kole with Jerry MacGregor. Eugene, Ore.: Harvest House, 1998. ISBN 1565078268, PAP, \$9.99**

150. Psychic phenomena. xxx p. Adult.

Quality—3 Acceptability—5

"It's easy for Christians to assume they can't possibly be deceived by such frauds-but that is a dangerous assumption," state Andrew Kole and Jerry MacGregor. *Mind Games* explains why people believe in psychic phenomena and aberrant "Christian" teachings. It exposes psychic abilities as mere illusions easily duplicated by competent magicians and addresses the spiritual issues in light of the Bible. The authors stress the importance of not attributing too much power to Satan and remind the reader that only God can do miracles.

Kole and MacGregor, both professional magicians, draw from their own extensive research on the topic and cite numerous sources to support their case. Thus, *Mind Games* contains a wealth of information, but at times is repetitive. In an easy-to-read style, the authors expose as fraudulent all psychic phenomena and as heresy the human-potential movement that has seeped into the church. Readers will be drawn into the illustrative stories that the authors present and will grasp a better understanding of New Age beliefs that have permeated our culture.

Unlike many books written by two or more authors, where the first person is typically used to tell one author's experience, Kole and MacGregor used the first-person plural and then the third-person singular, which seemed awkward in places. The book contains several pages of notes; however, an index would have been useful. LKFN

***Encyclopedia of Classical Philosophy*, edited by Donald J. Zeyl. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1997. ISBN 0313287759, PAP, \$99.50.**

150. Philosophy. xxx p. Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

This book is one I have wanted to read for a long time. It is an extremely valuable and useful tool for historical study and teaching. A large number of competent philosophers and historians have combined, under the very competent direction of the editors, to create one of the only sources of information I am familiar with on the pre-Socratic philosophers of Greece, as well as excellent articles on Plato, Aristotle, and many other less well known philosophers of ancient times in western philosophy. There is some biographical and historical information here on virtually everyone for

whom anything is known in ancient western philosophy.

The book is organized alphabetically for easy reference; there is a helpful index in the back, as well as a complete list of the contributors to the volume. For anyone who is interested in or teaches philosophy, this is the book to have on the ancients-everything you always wanted to know but didn't know where to look. PAB

***Uneasy Manhood: Finding Balance in a Changing World*, by Robert M. Hicks. LCCN 96024273. Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 1997. ISBN 0800756169, PAP, \$10.99.**

155.6. Men—Psychology; Masculinity—Psychology. 251 p. Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

God created men and women differently. How often we bemoan or deny those differences rather than celebrating them. Originally published by Oliver-Nelson Books in 1991, this book predates the popular *Men are From Mars, Women are From Venus* by John Gray by one year.

At the outset, *Uneasy Manhood* seems to be a gripe-book, with the first chapter complaining how from boyhood, males are constantly being picked on and remolded by females. However, as the book continues and author Hicks explores issues of marriage, friendship, work, singleness, sexuality, fatherhood, and spirituality, he provides much food for thought. He looks at the way males are and how they could be, and calls for the integration of the full range of male characteristics ("masculine" and "feminine").

Hinting at his extensive research and counseling experience, he uses many anecdotal illustrations and scriptural references to support his conclusions. However, his only practical applications are given in a two-page Epilogue. Also included are Hicks' notes and an extensive bibliography. ARH

***When There Are No Words: Finding Your Way to Cope with Loss and Grief*, by Charlie Walton. Pathfinder Publishing of California, 1996. ISBN 0934793573, PAP, \$9.95.**

155.9. Grief. xxx p. Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Charlie Walton's book, *When There Are No Words*, would be helpful to anyone who has lost a loved one or knows someone who has. The book is well written and even the chapter titles contain good advice! From "Let People Do Things" and "People Are Going to Say a Lot of Dumb Things" to "Every Hug Dilutes the Pain" and "Time Doesn't Heal All Wounds", Walton pulls no punches in advising readers how to cope.

Walton speaks with the voice of experience having lost two sons and a friend's son to carbon monoxide poisoning. He writes, "Now...when I go to comfort a friend...having had the experience of being the bereaved one...I know there are no words. No words are necessary. Everything that needs to be said is communicated in the presence, the look, the touch, and

the shared silence. If I am sorry, they are going to know it. If I am something greater than sorry... something for which our language has no terminology...the message will be clearly communicated."

Walton also discusses several related issues from what media attention can do to grieving, dealing with guilt, handling a loved one's effects, grief and marriage, going back to work, to the things grief can teach you, even against your will. "You can be sure that the grief process is about to show you who your real friends are, what you truly believe, and where your real trust lies." he also says, "You can talk confidently about your faith for years, but...when life suddenly drops a sand bag on you...and God doesn't step in to keep it from hitting you...you are about to find out which one of the many forms of God you really believe in."

*When There Are No Words* ends with lists of helpful organization names, addresses, and phone numbers and book titles for further reading. BW

***Opening the Bible*, by Roger Ferlo. Cowley, 1997. ISBN 1561011444, PAP, \$11.95.**

220. Bible. 135 p. Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

*Opening the Bible* is the second volume in the New Church's Teaching Series, a collection written as an introduction to Anglican thought.

*Opening the Bible* is designed primarily for those unfamiliar with Christianity's central writings, although believers familiar with the Bible may benefit as well. Ferlo describes his book as "a practical guide to navigating the Bible page." *Opening the Bible* is thus not an exposition, but quite literally a guide to opening and using a physical Bible.

To this end, Ferlo discusses the importance of reading and how books have developed over the centuries from scroll to codex to modern book; practical matters including the way the Bible is formatted (chapters, verses); types of translations, explanatory notes, and cross-references; and styles of interpretation. He concludes with the communal nature of scripture—that the Bible is not simply printed words on a page, but words that are to be responded to and lived. While *Opening the Bible* has no index, there are lists of resources for further study and questions for group discussion.

*Opening the Bible* is an interesting and easily readable book; it is a basic introduction, not a scholarly study. It should be particularly helpful for people unfamiliar with the Bible, or new to the Christian faith. AMS

***In the Steps of Our Lord*, by F. F. Bruce. LCCN 97007913. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Kregel Publications, 1997. ISBN 082542335X, HBB, \$19.99.**

225.9. Jesus Christ—Biography; Palestine—Pictorial works. 64 p. Gr 9 - Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

F. F. Bruce's beautiful, oversized pictorial tour of the Bible lands would be a welcome addition to any

church or school library. Each page contains several color photographs taken of significant towns and locations where Jesus walked. The places featured include Bethlehem, Nazareth, Galilee, Capernaum, Caesarea Philippi, Sychar, Jericho, Bethany, Jerusalem, and the Temple.

A full color map on each place shows the reader the location being described. Passages from the Bible as well as references to historical events help give a more well-rounded explanation. Photographs for the book were taken by Tim Dowley and Peter Wyart who visited the Holy Land a number of times to best capture pictures to go with the text of the book. EK

***The Anglican Vision*, by James E. Griffiss. Cowley, 1997. ISBN 1561011436, PAP, \$11.95.**

230. Church of England; Theology—Doctrinal. 148 p. Adult.  
Quality—4 Acceptability—5

*The Anglican Vision* is the first volume in the New Church Teaching Series (a further eleven volumes are projected). The series is designed to update prior series published in the 1950's and 1970's, and to provide an overview of Anglicanism—"what Anglicans share with the larger Christian community and what makes them distinctive."

This first volume by series editor James Griffiss covers the development of the Church of England in the years after the Reformation, and then discusses the changes in post-Revolutionary War America that produced the Episcopal Church. Further chapters explore Anglican believing, worship, identity and diversity, and the church as sacrament. The identity of the Anglican Church is seen as being rooted in the Incarnation; Anglicanism has sought to chart a middle course between Roman Catholicism on one hand and the more radical reformers on the other.

*The Anglican Vision* is essentially an overview. Griffiss sticks to main themes and avoids minutiae; he paints with a broad brush. Griffiss has done an excellent job of making the book readable and avoiding theological quagmires. The book contains questions for group study.

*The Anglican Vision* assumes a different readership from previous series—"...adults who are not "cradle Anglicans", but who come from other religious traditions or from no tradition at all, and who want to know what Anglicanism has to offer." *The Anglican Vision* should appeal to both these groups—newcomers to the Episcopal Church who want to understand more of their church's history and outlook, and those outside the Anglican Communion who want a peek inside. AMS

***The Invisible Hand*, by R. C. Sproul. Dallas: Word Publishing, 1996. ISBN 0849912075, HBB, \$18.99.**

231. God (Christian theology); Calvinism. xxx p. Adult.  
Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Theologian R.C. Sproul has fashioned a career from explaining Reformed theology. He has tackled such difficult topics as predestination (Chosen By God), justification by faith (Faith Alone), and the five points

of Calvinism (Grace Unknown). In *The Invisible Hand* he turns his sights on the providence of God.

Providence is a word once in common parlance which seems to have dropped from Christian vocabulary. We no longer speak of "trusting ourselves to Providence." Providence refers to the workings—seen and unseen—of God. We are used to thinking of God being active in the lives of men and women, but how is he active? What form does his activity take? Is God active in the minute details of life or not?

Sproul does his usual workmanlike job of clarifying difficult topics and rendering them comprehensible to the lay reader. In this regard, *The Invisible Hand* is more accessible than *Faith Alone*. Perhaps too, the subject does not have as many difficult to grasp nuances. I confess to a slight feeling of disappointment when I reached the end of the book; but that is perhaps understandable. Who of us can fully understand the workings of God? The Invisible Hand throws welcome light on a neglected facet of God's action and human experience. AMS

***In Defense of Miracles : A Comprehensive Case for God's Action in History*, edited by R. Douglas Geivett and Gary R. Habermas. LCCN 96046653. Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 1997. ISBN 0830815287, PAP, \$17.99.**

231.7. Miracles; Apologetics. 330 p. Adult.  
Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Modern-era objections to God interposing himself in human history (miracles) can be said to have begun with David Hume and his 1748 essay, "On Miracles." One influential exponent of Hume's position in our day has been Antony Flew. In defense of the idea that God does work miracles, this book has been composed. The first section contains the original essay by Hume and an essay written by Flew which summarizes developments of Hume's position since 1748. To respond to the anti-miracles position, essays have been collected in three broad categories.

The first section defends the possibility of miracles. One essay seeks to define miracles, another surveys miracles as viewed by modern minds, while a third describes how to recognize a miracle. Most outstanding in this section is the article by Francis Beckwith which explores the interplay of history and miracles. He convincingly shows that miracles and history are not contradictory.

The next section contains various perspectives of a theistic context for miracles. While all five chapters are very helpful in their specific topics, I would argue the most important chapter in this grouping is W. David Beck's examination of God's existence. For arguments about miracles to matter, there must be a foundation of the bald fact that God exists at all. Beck summarizes the cosmological, teleological, and moral arguments for God's existence in the light of miracles.

The final section presents case studies in Christian miracles. Miracles in other religions receive attention, as well as fulfilled prophecy, the Incarnation, the empty tomb, and the resurrection appearances of Jesus. The most-contested battleground today seems to be

over the empty tomb, and William Lane Craig presents a well-argued (and readable!) description of the arguments that Jesus did rise from the dead.

The chapters contain many endnotes (collected at the back of the book) which point the reader to a wealth of supplementary reading. Especially useful is a chapter-by-chapter of recommended reading which provides ratings of difficulty (1 being introductory, 3 being advanced) for each recommendation. Collections of essays by various authors are always risky, but this book pulls it off as well as any I've read. It demands serious attention, but the reader will be amply rewarded for staying with it. KDB

***Windows on the Cross*, by Tom Smail. Cowley, 1996. ISBN 1561011231, PAP, \$9.95.**

232. Jesus Christ—Crucifixion. 118 p. Adult.  
Quality—5 Acceptability—5

The Cross of Jesus Christ has been viewed in many different ways through the centuries. The interpretation as to what Christ accomplished there has also varied in different times and places. Our century is not alone in seeking the relevance of the Crucifixion.

Using the analogy of a house with many windows that overlooks the Cross, Tom Smail (formerly vice-principal of St. John's College, Nottingham) discusses several different perspectives on the Crucifixion. Some of these perspectives—reconciliation, justice, freedom, and sacrifice—have existed since New Testament times. Others—sharing of suffering and victory over sin—have a more contemporary flavor. These perspectives are not mutually exclusive; rather they illuminate different facets of Christ's saving work.

Smail points out how all of the perspectives, old or new, have relevance for today, and can help us in our understanding of the Cross and draw us into closer fellowship with God. The final chapter deals with glory—how God's glory is revealed through Christ on the Cross.

The chapters, though fairly short and easily readable, deserve repeated readings. Each one contains questions for discussion or further study. Smail has not attempted an exhaustive survey of every possible perspective, but those which have enjoyed the greatest popularity and acceptance throughout history. My only complaint with *Windows on the Cross* is that I wished Smail had written more. AMS

***The Saviour*, by DiCianni, Ron LCCN 95023642. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1995. ISBN 0891078533, HBB, \$14.99.**

232.9. Jesus Christ—Biography—Devotional literature. 45 p. Adult.  
Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Word pictures and original artwork in this forty-five page "gift volume" provide seven different views of the Savior, Jesus Christ. Each chapter explores a facet of Jesus life and character as he interacts with people from scripture.

Beginning with the names and titles of Jesus and ending with the cross and the empty tomb, the reader is invited to put himself/herself into the picture that the author paints, for a personal encounter with Jesus.

Illustrating this rich volume are the original paintings of Ron DiCianni. Each chapter is accompanied by a water color illustration focusing on a person and need met by Christ: blind Bartimaeus, a leper, the disciples, etc. At the close of the book each painting is reproduced in miniature and the artist shares his insights and choices in portraying these events. The color and style of print chosen for the pages give the appearance of aged and water stained parchment.

Overall, *The Saviour* is an attractive and artistic work that draws the reader in and gives him or her a feeling of encountering Jesus, the Savior of the world. DEB

**Heaven : Your Real Home**, by Joni Eareckson Tada. LCCN 95012441. Minneapolis: Grason Zondervan, 1995. ISBN 0310219191, PAP, \$12.99.

236. Heaven—Christianity; Spiritual life—Christianity. 215 p. Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

If you feel "at home" here on earth, if the ground under your feet is your concept of lasting reality, or if what you're doing on earth seems totally satisfying, then you need to read *Heaven : Your Real Home*. Joni Eareckson Tada encourages you to think of heaven from every possible angle. The writings urge you to consider heaven as more of a reality than earth. As the scripture says in James 4:14, "What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes."

The reader is challenged to alter their natural way of thinking. The author also addresses those common questions we think but rarely have the courage to ask: "What are we going to do there? Is all of heaven going to see my past sins at the Judgment seat? What about marriage? I want to stay with my spouse. And, where is heaven, anyway?"

*Heaven : Your Real Home* is inspiring, faith building, and has the ability to be life changing. It is written in a style that makes the reader feel she is talking with Joni E. Tada over coffee in her living room. TW

**The Power of Integrity : Building a Life Without Compromise**, by John F. MacArthur, Jr. LCCN 97007861. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1997. ISBN 0891079424, PAP, \$9.99.

241. Integrity—Religious aspects—Christianity. 190 p. Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Best described as a Bible study on integrity, *The Power of Integrity* lacks practical application. Heavily theological, every page is well documented with Scripture. It takes a thorough look at Old and New Testament passages dealing with living a life uncompromised by today's worldly standards.

MacArthur defines integrity as, "essentially being true to one's ethical standards, in our case, God's standards." With few exceptions, all examples of

integrity are from the Bible. The lives of Daniel from the Old Testament and Paul from the New Testament are used to illustrate MacArthur's points on how a Christian should model a life of integrity. The book is divided into three parts. The first part examines the essentials to developing motivation. The second looks at biblical examples. The third shows how you can manifest a life of integrity. The back of the book contains a short study guide to go with each chapter. MPC

**Be Still and Know : A Study in the Life of Prayer**, by Michael Ramsey. Cowley, 1993. ISBN 1561010839, PAP, \$9.95.

242. Prayer. 108 p. Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—4

Michael Ramsey, formerly Archbishop of Canterbury, wrote his devotional volume *Be Still and Know* in 1982, and it has recently (1993) been reissued by Cowley Publications. The short length indicates that it is, indeed, a devotional study and not an exhaustive treatise on prayer.

Still, Ramsey covers a fair amount of territory. He discusses the prayer of Jesus and how he taught the disciples; teachings of Paul and John on prayer; and prayer as discussed in Hebrews. He moves on to talk about Christian prayer today, contemplation, the way of the mystics, confession, and the communion of saints.

Ramsey's style is direct and easily readable. Since he offers an overview of prayer, examining it from different angles, some aspects are bound to be less familiar than others. I doubt that everyone will agree with all of Ramsey's viewpoints and opinions. Still, this is a minor quarrel, and *Be Still and Know* should appeal to many people interested in improving their prayer life. AMS

**Encouraging One Another**, by Gene A. Getz. (One Another Series.) Colorado Springs: ChariotVictor Publishing, 1981, 1997. ISBN 1564765180, PAP, \$9.99.

248.. Christian life. 174 p.

**Building Up One Another**, by Gene A. Getz. (One Another Series.) Colorado Springs: ChariotVictor Publishing, 1981, 1997. ISBN 1564765172, PAP, \$9.99.

248. Christian life. 192 p.

**Loving One Another**, by Gene A. Getz. (One Another Series.) Colorado Springs: ChariotVictor Publishing, 1981, 1997. ISBN 1564765199, PAP, \$9.99.

248.. Christian life. 152 p. Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Originally published in 1981, the One Another Series has been updated for a new generation of Bible study participants. Author Gene Getz has provided a structured Bible study series designed for small groups.

*Encouraging One Another* begins with the essential basics of how to begin a study group. Getz teaches the importance of the role of Christians to encourage one another. He does this effectively by drawing on the life of Barnabas, a man whose very name means "Son of Encouragement." Broken into eleven short chapters, this study guide ends each chapter with a discussion guide for small groups and opportunities for self-reflection.

*Building Up One Another* answers the questions, "What is a healthy church? What does God expect from all believers? And what makes a church a dynamic witness in the world?" The book guides the reader through the responsibilities of doing for one another. Twelve chapters include subjects such as honoring, accepting, admonishing, and serving one another, and each chapter ends with topics for using the information for study group.

*Loving One Another* is different from the first two books, in that it seems directed at the more mature Christian. Right away, Getz tells the reader that this book teaches evangelism. This book asks the reader to examine the New Testament evangelism and the message of salvation as verified by supernatural methodology compared to our modern day methods of evangelism. Getz then discusses five particular dimensions of evangelism.

*Encouraging One Another* and *Building Up One Another* are study guides that would fit teen and beginning bible study groups. The format is informal and friendly and the books are sprinkled with personal anecdotes from Gene Getz's life as a senior pastor and professor at Dallas Theological Seminary. *Loving One Another* is a more complicated study guide on the philosophy of evangelism that sends the reader directly into the works of Dr. Francis Schaeffer. While intellectually stimulating, this guide could possibly overwhelm the new Christian. A well known speaker, Gene Getz is the author of more than thirty books. He is the senior pastor of Fellowship Bible Church North in Dallas, Texas. JMH

**The Call of a Lifetime**, by Michael Youssef. Chicago: Moody Press, 1996. ISBN 0802441904, PAP, \$9.99.

248.2. Christian life. 148 p. Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

In *The Call of a Lifetime*, Michael Youssef compares the believer's life to working in God's "corporation." Youssef says the mission statement of God's corporation has two parts: " 'As I have loved you, so must you love one another' (John 13:34). . .The other—and more literal—part of the statement comes at the end of Matthew [28:18-20], where Jesus tells His disciples to 'go and make disciples of all nations.'" To Youssef, this is the call of a lifetime—to live that mission statement in whatever circumstances you find yourself. The message is similar to Henry Blackaby's and Claude V. King's *Experiencing God* (LifeWay Press, 1990), except for Youssef's adherence to the business metaphor.

Each of the eleven chapters addresses a different aspect of a long term association with the corporation:

priorities, integrity, success, confrontation, responsibility, aggressiveness, self-knowledge, failure, progress, isolation, and prayer.

Youssef convincingly makes his case to us "executives" (believers). He shows the reader how to respond to God's call, and the consequences of our success or failure at doing so. His inspiring examples from scripture, history, and modern culture illustrate his points well. ARH

***God in My Classroom : Devotions for Christian Teachers*, by Ralph Beikmann. St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1996. ISBN 0570048656, PAP, \$8.99.**

248.4. Teachers—Religious life. 112 p. Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

A veteran Christian school teacher, principal, and counselor of over forty years, Ralph Beikmann took on the challenge of writing this book when encouraged by a friend as he was going through his second bout with cancer.

The two to three page devotions on a variety of topics are drawn from personal experience. Each devotional ends with "God's Words of Encouragement," scriptures that relate to the topic. Chapters include subjects such as "Teacher Baggage" that comes from childhood, "Teacher Shock" which is faced by all new teachers, and "Exercising in the Wait Room" on how God works in the disgruntled teacher.

This inspirational work is the kind of book that could be read year after year to encourage and bless the classroom or Sunday school teacher. EK

***Why I Believe in a Personal God : The Credibility of Faith in a Doubting Culture*, by George Carey. Wheaton, Ill.: Harold Shaw, 1989. ISBN 0877889473, PAP, \$8.99.**

248.4. Trust; Christian life. 145 p. Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—4

It goes without saying that many people in the western world's materialistic, scientific culture find the idea of God—especially the God of the Bible—a difficult concept. "Western culture," writes Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey, "has done us a serious disservice—it has so robbed us of the sense of the transcendent that we are unable to give due attention to the question of God."

Carey himself at one time found it difficult to believe in God. And so he writes as one who has experienced doubts. But now, he says, "my own investigations over a period of many years have given me a quiet assurance that there is a God who has given us sufficient clues... to satisfy the genuine inquirer that he exists, and that he has expressed himself most meaningfully in Jesus Christ."

*Why I Believe in a Personal God* ranges over such topics as the origin of the universe, the meaning of life, the problem of evil, and the nature of experience—topics that sound heavy but which are handled in a straightforward, uncomplicated manner. Carey

concludes that only the God of the Bible is credible, and that a personal response to him is necessary. "To know God is to know him, not as an article in the creed, but as a real person."

*Why I believe in a Personal God* should appeal to doubting believers needing reassurance, as well as being a useful tool for seekers after God. Some may object to Carey's apparent acceptance of an old age for the earth and evolutionary processes, but this is a minor quibble. AMS

***Answering God's Call to Quiet : Finding Strength and Peace for a Pressured Life*, by Neva Coyle. (A Devotional Daybook.) LCCN 97004735. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1997. ISBN 1556619383, PAP, \$7.99.**

248.4. Spiritual life—Christianity; Spiritual exercises; Quietude; Peace—Religious aspects—Christianity; Stress (Psychology)—Religious aspects—Christianity; Time management—Religious aspects—Christianity. 189 p. Adult

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

"Bombarding of our senses," as Coyle calls it, affects all of us. Noise everywhere becomes so commonplace we may not know how to utilize silence. She reminds that for many, "silence has become so uncomfortable it is avoided altogether." In *Answering God's Call to Quiet*, the sixth in her Devotional Daybook series, Coyle offers instruction and ideas about how to find time and place to take advantage of silence, finding strength for daily living.

Coyle divides the book into six sections, each with five short chapters that contain a Scripture and a phrase from that portion to reflect upon, words of wisdom (quotes from others), words of beauty (familiar hymns), and finally several personal questions. Space following the questions makes it easy for the reader to record thoughts accumulated during that reading. *Answering God's Call to Quiet* ends with Leader's Notes and suggestions for using the book with a group. Coyle obviously understands where we live amidst today's clamor. Illustrations from her own life and from other sources, as well, help us identify with all she says. She speaks gently, yet authoritatively as she guides us fearlessly into silence that will provide "strength and peace for a pressured life." An experienced writer, Coyle writes well, making her material interesting. The questions she poses at the end of each chapter require thoughtful answers. Appreciating the busyness her readers face, Coyle chose to make the daily readings short. With serious attention to her invitation to "reestablish God's peace, calm, and quiet assurance deep within your soul," readers can feel spiritually refreshed at the end of the thirty days. BMH

***The Little Book of Christian Character & Manners*, by William & Colleen Dedrick. Elkton, Md.: Full Quart Press/Holly Hall, 1992. ISBN 188830622X, PAP, \$ 8.99.**

248.4. Parenting. 128 p. Adult.

Quality—3 Acceptability—5

*The Little Book of Christian Character and Manners* is a parental guidebook to child-rearing. Topics range from breast-feeding, toilet training, child work ethics, schooling, to teen-age friendships and social activities, and the appropriate times when a child is in need of a spanking.

The authors write, "God clearly states that childish sin is to be corrected with the chastening rod. For a parent to do otherwise is sin . . ." It may seem like a narrow and legalistic approach to dismiss any other form of punishment as sinful, however, the authors urge parents to be involved in every aspect of their children's lives and to instruct them in godly principles and behavior.

For some, William and Colleen Dedrick may seem rigid and critical in the methods presented and in their view of both society and the church. The areas in which they discuss the "false premises" on which church youth groups are founded came across as inflexible and extreme in their observation. The standards of behavior set for infants and toddlers are often unrealistic and rigid as well. Several statements leave little room for disagreement or diversity, such as, "the Biblical family is being revived, via home education..." Although home schooling is a creative and often successful avenue, there is given no room for those who choose other schooling options such as Christian schooling or even public education. Biblical truths and some valid observations are made, but they become lost to the reader because of the repressed style and content of much of the book. TW

***The Power of Prayer and Fasting : 10 Secrets of Spiritual Strength*, by Ronnie W. Floyd; foreword by Bill Bright. LCCN 97014644. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1997. ISBN 0805401644, PAP, \$12.99.**

248.4. Fasting; Prayer—Christianity. 230 p. Adult.

Quality—3 Acceptability—4

In his book, *The Power of Prayer and Fasting*, Ronnie Floyd suggests that "personal sacrifice is when a person accepts the call of God, even when painful, to do what it takes to reconnect with our heavenly father" (49). He very much believes that "it is fervent prayer and fasting that reaches into the heart of God, motivates us to adjust to what God is doing, moves heaven to action, and changes what we see and do on earth" (53). Mr. Floyd presents ten secrets to spiritual strength and seven results from prayer and fasting.

These secrets and results are supported by many personal experiences, and experiences of others. However, in some cases it is difficult to see the relationship between the point being made and the illustration. This is a very personal account, and at times egotistical and self-righteous. Furthermore, many of the basic ideas are repeated several times.

The format of the book is attractive with main ideas highlighted in bold print throughout the book. At the end of the book pages are printed with lines for a prayer and fasting journal, and two pages of Endnotes supports the quotes used in the book. DS

*To Believe Is to Pray : Readings from Michael Ramsey*, edited by James E. Griffiss. Cowley, 1996. ISBN 1561011282, PAP, \$12.95.

248.4. Christian life; Anglican Church. 189 p. Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Michael Ramsey was the one hundredth Archbishop of Canterbury, serving from 1961 to 1974 (he died in 1988). He was, according to James Griffiss, editor of this book of readings, "...not an original or groundbreaking theologian. He was, however, a Christian who struggled to live out his relationship to God in the world of human affairs."

*To Believe Is to Pray* is a series of selections from Michael Ramsey's most important writings, arranged in related sections. The sections carry such titles as: What makes us Anglicans?; The Glory of God; The Resurrection; the Kingdom of God. There are ten sections all together.

Griffiss has provided a brief, six page introduction to Michael Ramsey the man, his perspectives, and writings. This introduction is valuable in order to see Ramsey's contributions to Anglican thought in the context of his life and times. The heart of Ramsey's writings lies in the "theme of the incarnation of God in Christ and the call of human beings through the incarnation into the glory of God."

This volume presents the core of Ramsey's thought in an accessible manner. Ramsey is devotional, insightful, and the issues he addresses are valuable not only for members of the Anglican Communion but for the church in general. *To Believe Is to Pray* could serve both as an introduction to Anglican thought, or as a volume of meditations on the Christian life in its broader aspects. AMS

*On Pilgrimage*, by Douglas C. Vest. Cowley, 1998. ISBN 1561011509, PAP, \$10.95.

248.4. Pilgrims and pilgrimages. 139 p. Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

"The first and basic mark of pilgrimage," says Episcopal priest Douglas Vest, "is the quest for something personally important enough to motivate a committed search." In his book *On Pilgrimage*, Vest takes a look at the concept of pilgrimage.

He does this in the context of several pilgrimages he has undertaken himself—to Iona, to ruined Welsh abbeys, to St. Deiniol's Library in north Wales, to his boyhood home. He examines the urge to pilgrimage, the effect of place, the type of pilgrimage (solitary or group), and the desired effect (increased spirituality, physical healing, a sense of meaning). He contrasts pilgrimage—which has a sacred purpose—with sightseeing or tourism.

Each chapter concludes with questions for individual or group reflection. *On Pilgrimage* ends with a checklist for planning a pilgrimage, focusing on the 'W' questions—who, what, why, where, when, and how.

*On Pilgrimage* is a nice, general introduction to the concept of pilgrimage, and would be valuable for anyone who is contemplating undertaking such a

venture. Reading this book well in advance of pilgrimage should help the pilgrim to prepare, and to obtain the most benefit from a pilgrimage. "...I want to live a holy life," Vest writes, "which begins with my yearning for a whole life, as undivided and integrated as I can help it to be." Many people have found that pilgrimage to sacred places can contribute to the formation of a holy life. AMS

*The Lord and His Prayer*, by N. T. Wright. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1996. ISBN 0802843204, PAP, \$9.00.

248.4. Prayer—Christianity; Lord's Prayer. 89 p. HS - Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—4

Every Christian is familiar with the Lord's Prayer; it is recited privately and in worship services of many denominations. Yet how familiar are we with it, really? Do the words roll too easily off the tongue, made familiar by frequent repetition? Or does the prayer mean more than this? New Testament scholar and Dean of Lichfield Cathedral, N.T. Wright, takes a look at this familiar part of scripture in his book, *The Lord and His Prayer*. Wright's focus is on the Kingdom of God, and he examines the Lord's Prayer in this context. What did the Kingdom of God mean to Jesus; how did Jesus live the Kingdom; what does the Kingdom of God mean for us today?

Wright divides the Prayer into six clauses which he expounds beginning with how the Prayer would have sounded to First Century Jews in Roman-occupied Palestine. He then expands this to include contemporary Christianity. We pray, Wright says, because we want to know the living God and call him Father.

Wright's writing is clear, and he uses a variety of illustrations; those illustrations are not the ones that might be expected, and the result is a fresh insight into the multiple meanings of the Lord's Prayer.

Wright writes from an Anglican perspective, and his comments on liturgy and the Eucharist will be more familiar to those from liturgical traditions. *The Lord & His Prayer* is a scant eighty-nine pages, but those pages are worth reading slowly and pondering. AMS

*Jonathan, You Left Too Soon*, by David B. Biebel ; foreword by Charles Swindoll. Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 1981. ISBN 0800786475, PAP, \$5.99.

248.8. Grief; Christian life. 181 p. Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

David Biebel's son Jonathan died at the age of three after a sudden, brief, and (at first) undiagnosed illness, and in this book, he tells with uncompromising, even brutal, honesty of his emotional and spiritual journey following that tragic event.

The title of Part 1, Through the Waters, is taken from Is. 43:2 and in it, he tells the story of Jonathan's sudden illness and death and the resulting feelings of grief, pain, loneliness, rage, bewilderment, and guilt he and his wife Ann went through. This section includes

a list of ways to support a grieving pastor that alone may be worth the cost of the book.

Part 2, Bitterness (from Zech. 12:10), explores the severity of the pit of depression that Biebel fell into afterwards and how God brought him out, while Part 3, Beauty For Ashes (from the beautiful promises of Is. 61:1-3), includes the chapter, "Hope Makes a Difference", where Biebel says, "When faced with a great loss, everyone grieves. From my perspective, the person who claims that simply because he is a Christian he can, or has, escaped this inevitable process is deluding himself and others. While faith can and certainly does make a difference, sorrow is still a universal experience."

Later, in the chapter, "The Difference Faith Makes", he adds, "...Because He lives within me, He takes my hand and leads me through the dark valley of the shadow of death. It is within the context of that relationship that He, the one who is acquainted with grief, is able to help me with mine."

Overall, in *Jonathan, You Left Too Soon*, Biebel does an excellent job of showing readers that, despite the horrors of the journey, God is sufficient. BW

*If God Is So Good, Why Do I Feel So Bad?* by David Biebel. Grand Rapids: Revell, 1989. ISBN 0800786289, PAP, \$4.99.

248.8. Fathers and sons; Grief; Christian life. Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

David Biebel's book, *Jonathan, You Left Too Soon*, told the story of the death of his first, Jonathan, from an extremely rare metabolic disorder. *If God Is So Good, Why Do I Feel So Bad?* tells the story of his second son, Christopher, after he is diagnosed with the same disorder. He found himself asking, "Jonathan had died. Would Chris die, too?"

Biebel is brutally honest in recounting his emotions and actions during his son's ordeal, an ordeal that ultimately damaged Chris' brain, but spared his life. Dividing the book into three sections, "When Losses Come, They Can Bring...", "When Losses Come, What Do I Know?" and "When Losses Come, Who Do I Know?" he shares in each one what he went through and what God ultimately taught him.

In "Putting the Pieces Back Together", he discusses struggling with grief and loss and says, "Do not pretend. Do not lie. But look your struggle in the eye, whenever you can, with help if you need it. And slowly-as slowly as necessary-come to terms with it. All the while remember that your life is in God's hands, and that He understands your struggle and is far more patient, gracious, and forgiving than you can ever imagine."

The author ends the book with a wonderfully encouraging chapter, "To Kiss the Joy-Celebrating What Is", in which he says, "Instead of asking, 'How can I know when it's over?' let's ask, 'where am I in the process that leads beyond the pain, even to joy?' ..But if you are honestly not ready to move ahead just yet, your Lord understands. Though He longs to heal your broken life, He is patient and kind and willing to

listen to your continuing lament until you can truthfully say, "Enough." BW

***Raising a Modern-Day Knight : A Father's Role in Guiding His Son to Authentic Manhood*, by Robert Lewis. LCCN 96052752. Colorado Springs: Focus on the Family Publishing, 1997. ISBN 1561795348, HBB, \$16.99.**

248.8. Fathers and sons—Religious aspects—Christianity; Child rearing—Religious aspects—Christianity; Knights and knighthood—Miscellanea 168 p. Adult.

Quality—3 Acceptability—5

Be a man my son. But what kind of man! *Raising a Modern-Day Knight* presents an answer for our gender-neutral society's lack of definition of manhood. Using the medieval knight's training and standards of chivalry, Lewis presents his plan for a Dad to raise his son to be a strong Christian man. Illustrated from his own experiences both as a son and as a dad, with examples from other families, based on his interpretation of relevant scriptures, Lewis presents the father as the active leader of his family, the loving, strong director of his son's personality. The need for a modern-day knight is stated first. Then follow Lewis' vision of the knight with ideals for manhood and conduct and a cause to live for. The need for a community of Christian men helping each other through relevant ceremonies, rigorous training, advice and friendship is stated.

Written in a clear, interesting style, *A Modern-Day Knight* uses step-by-step directions for raising a knight for Christ. Each chapter ends with a summary of its contents. Author of several books on marriage and family, Pastor Dr. Robert Lewis aims this book at the upper-middle class Christian father: the large cost of ceremonies is mentioned as necessary; several examples speak of the use of expensive equipment; the father is often presented as a professional man. However, many illustrations and suggestions are broad enough for adaptation by imaginative readers. The ceremonies detailed will catch the interest of ritual minded readers. A small notes section at the end gives a useful bibliography for further reading. DJE

***When God Weeps : Why Our Sufferings Matter to the Almighty*, by Joni Eareckson Tada and Steven Estes. LCCN 97025826. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1997. ISBN 0310211867, HBB, \$19.99.**

248.8. Suffering—Religious aspects—Christianity; Theodicy. 254 p. Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Using the Bible as "road map" (14), *When God Weeps* graphically starts with man's cry, "I'm hurting bad!" (15) Knowing that God wants to communicate in words understandable to each sufferer, Tada and Estes use contemporary language to present a picture of God who empathizes with and answers you: who He is; what He's doing; how He helps us to hang on and triumph.

They answer such questions as: am I being punished? has God decided to hate me? will my suffering ever

end? are God and Satan taking alternate shifts. Acknowledging various Christian positions on this subject, they unashamedly present what they have learned from the Bible: God is in complete control—His plan for your life is being worked out perfectly. Realizing that the sufferer urgently needs to know God intimately, this book closes with three engrossing, scripture-based appendices: God's Hand in our Sufferings; God's Purpose in our Sufferings; God's Experience of Grief.

From the heart of two individuals deeply acquainted with abiding pain comes this love letter to all who agonize in affliction. Author and Founder of JAF Ministries for the disabled, Joni Eareckson Tada has been a quadriplegic since she was injured in a swimming accident which happened in her late teens. Pastor, author, and scholar Steve Estes was sixteen years old when God brought him into Joni's life immediately after her accident. She whined, cried, demanded answers. In desperation he turned to the Bible. In this book, Tada and Erickson share what they have learned from God over three decades since their meeting. They also share insights of Christians through the centuries, from Calvin to John McArthur and suffering Christians everywhere. *When God Weeps* plunges into the maelstrom of human suffering and finds underneath are the everlasting, loving arms of our Creator God. DJE

***Building Your Church Through Counsel and Care : 30 Strategies to Transform Your Ministry*, by Marshall Shelley, General Editor. LCCN 97021029. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1997. ISBN 1556619669, HBB, \$19.99.**

253.. Pastoral theology; Pastoral psychology. 320 p. Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

The twenty-seven authors who contributed to this volume, which is part of Bethany House's larger Library of Leadership Development series, have varied philosophies about the role of counseling therapy in the church. This dialogic tension makes for enjoyable and thoughtful reading. The authors are united in their understanding that psychology and counseling theory have had a major impact on the life of the American church.

Eugene Peterson reminds the reader that the role of "curing souls" is a historic role of the pastor. Pastoring is more than "running a church" to be sure, but Louis McBurney questions the high status that the American church has accorded psychology. Randy Alcorn confesses his personal struggles as a pastor who was weighted down by the care of his growing counseling ministry.

The late Richard Halverson discusses the application of small group principles to his pulpit ministry. Robert J. Morgan has two chapters, one of which contains the story of how his family invested in the life of a drug-abusing alcoholic who was also a good friend. Michael Phillips warns pastors to walk the line between intimacy and improper affection in their counseling relationship and James Dobson provides practical advice on how to grow a family-friendly church. Dobson's emphasis on the pastor's family as

"the most important family" will challenge many pastors.

The final chapters of the book are particularly engaging. They include specific advice about ministering after death and contending with suicide. Contributors also discuss healing for the sexually addicted and for survivors of childhood abuse from a pastoral perspective.

The book is well written and well edited: a difficult task when working with so many authors from diverse backgrounds. It offers the reader thoughtful insight into a topic that is simultaneously practical and controversial. DSB

***The World at Your Door*, by Tom Phillips and Bob Norsworthy with W. Terry Whalin. LCCN 97021028. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1997. ISBN 1556619642, PAP, \$10.00.**

259. Church work with foreign students—United States. 230 p. Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Half a million foreign students attend American colleges and universities. They are the best and the brightest in their native countries, and when they return home, they will be the leaders-in industry, in government, in education, in the arts. If they also take a commitment to Jesus Christ with them, they can impact the world for Him. Sadly, 70% of international students receive their degrees and go home without ever having stepped inside an American home or place of worship.

Not only does *The World at Your Door* convince that ministry to the international student is a prime evangelistic opportunity, it also gives detailed directions. Although the ultimate goal of the ministry is to lead the students to Christ, the authors say that's not the first step. First, we need to extend God's love to the student by meeting his immediate needs-picking him up at the airport and helping him through the bewildering transition from the known and comfortable to the actual American experience, which is likely to be quite different from the student's expectations.

The book is remarkable in its completeness. One chapter cautions Americans to be culturally sensitive; another has suggestions for activities to do with an international student; another suggests topics for conversation; another gives cultural and religious information about the Middle East, China, Japan, and Africa, and strategies for reaching students from those backgrounds.

Appendices include information about International Students, Inc., discussion starters, and an evangelism tool called "Knowing God Personally."

Phillips and Norsworthy are president and vice-president of International Students, Inc., a ministry on 300 U.S. college campuses. Their many years of practical experience make *The World at Your Door* a valuable manual for congregations or individuals who want to be involved in world missions without leaving home. ARH

**Whirled Views : Tracking Today's Culture Storms**, by Marvin Olasky and Joel Belz. LCCN 96051913. Wheaton, Ill: Crossway Books, 1997. ISBN 0891079386, PAP, \$12.99.

261. Christianity and culture; Church and social problems. 224 p. Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

This book is a compilation of brief essays by the authors which originally appeared in *World* magazine. The essays cover a variety of topics, including such subjects as abortion, education, economics, race, foreign affairs, health and welfare, and the media and journalism. The two authors each address essays to the various issues. Both write from a distinctively Christian and politically conservative point of view.

These essays are an attempt to apply biblical thinking to current concerns in an interesting but clearly slanted way. The essays vary in quality; most are quite well done. A few are somewhat frivolous, but most are thoughtful and thought-provoking. The authors are quite well balanced and consistent in their presentations.

Not all conservative Christians will be comfortable with all of the material here. For example, Belz chides some Christian movie makers as too concerned with proper content and message and too little concerned with producing an exciting, attention-grabbing story. The section on economics is quite helpful, especially the article by Belz on the government's power to tax as a legitimate function of government for the protection of its citizens. There is a very encouraging section on some individuals who have escaped poverty by being creative and hard-working in their application of free market principles.

This is not a deep book, but one that is pertinent and engaging and provides a good overview of conservative views on current affairs and issues. PB

**A Strong Delusion**, by Joe Dallas. LCCN 96014509. Eugene, Ore.: Harvest House Publishers, 1996. ISBN 1565074319, PAP, \$10.99.

261.8. Homosexuality—Religious aspects—Christianity—Controversial literature; Homosexuality in the Bible; Homosexuality—Biblical teaching; Dallas, Joe, 1954-. 245 p. Gr. 9 - Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Joe Dallas offers a wake-up call to the conservative Christian church which ignores the problem of homosexuality in the pew. Now facing the "gay Christian" movement, which Dallas defines as "a tendency among Christians who are homosexually tempted to yield to that temptation and then try to justify it," Dallas feels the church must respond by taking a positive stand. *A Strong Delusion* traces the beginnings of the gay rights movement from the first gay denomination to "coming out of the closet," to the "gay mandate," to the American Psychiatric Assoc. removing it from its list of disorders. Dallas also provides details of the seductive gay theology containing major portions of truth born in error which give the Christian counselor biblical answers for responding intelligently, with love and concern to the

challenges raised by the issue of homosexuality in the church. Even with a biblical view of homosexuality, Dallas reminds readers only God can soften the homosexual heart and provide victory over the sin.

An ex-homosexual himself, his once hard-driving, promiscuous lifestyle gives Dallas the understanding to illuminate the background and help the reader understand current trends and thinking on this issue. He exposes the academic elite's blessing on the "gay Christian" movement, cites bogus studies and conclusions snapped up in the media, as well as naming conservative Christians who either support the "gay Christian" movement or condone it with their silence. In response, he not only interprets Scripture, but applies it accurately, understanding that the authority of the Bible is under attack, from not only the homosexuals, but even well-meaning, liberal Christians.

Dallas includes a suggested reading list, and extensive notes documenting his research. This academic offering is easy to read, yet offers sound, helpful direction for those who want accurate understanding. A must for the serious biblical student who seeks to minister to fellow believers, pastors and laymen alike. CLH

**A Woman After God's Own Heart**, by Elizabeth George. Eugene, Ore.: Harvest House, 1997. ISBN 1565075331, PAP, \$9.99.

261.8. Women (Christian theology)—Biblical teaching. xxx p. Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

The Bible describes King David as "a man after God's own heart." Is it possible to become a woman after God's own heart? Elizabeth George, author, Bible teacher, and cofounder of Christian Development Ministries, combines her passion for God and his word with her wisdom and experience to stimulate married and single women in their spiritual walk. Women yearning after God will find rich biblical teaching and practical disciplines to apply.

Part one challenges women to develop a devoted heart that abides in God's word, is committed to prayer, and obeys. George assures women that putting aside business to pursue a deepening relationship with God will result in blessings and fulfillment.

Part two covers discerning God's priorities related to husband, children, home, self, and ministry. The author teaches how to cultivate a heart that serves, submits, and loves, including nine specific actions that communicate "I love you" to husbands. Guiding women to value mothering, she emphasizes, "Your children are "not" interruptions—they are your greatest work and the best investment of your time!" Additional chapters include home management pointers to help women create order and beauty in their homes. Also, emphasized throughout the book is the importance of the role of prayer.

Part three urges women to practice God's priorities by seeking him first and following after his heart. George ranks seven priorities in this order: God, husband, children, home, spiritual growth, ministry activities,

and other activities. Following these priorities day by day will result in "a lifetime of living as a woman after God's own heart!"

This deep, meaty book is saturated with scripture and personal insights. Each chapter ends with a response section to help women open their hearts for God's transformation. Those serious about spiritual growth will benefit from the study guide at the end. There are also ample footnotes for each chapter. LEH

**Good News for Women : A Biblical Picture of Gender Equality**, by Rebecca Merrill Groothuis. LCCN 96045208. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996. ISBN 0801057205, PAP, \$16.99.

261.8. Women in the Bible; Feminist theology; Women (Christian theology)—Biblical teaching. 272 p. Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

*A Biblical Picture of Gender Equality*, states the subtitle for this serious look at an issue that creates an ongoing discussion in many Christian circles. Groothuis has not reached her conclusions in an off-hand manner. Instead, *Good News for Women* comes after careful research into the Scriptures and study of appropriate materials already in print. She presents her arguments in a scholarly manner, using end notes and Scripture references, along with many quotes.

Groothuis urges careful study of Biblical passages in their cultural context as a prelude to understanding the proper place for today's women in homes and churches. She examines the traditionalist proof texts that leave "missing pieces and weak links."

"Despite the fact that we live in a society that puts a strong emphasis on equality and liberty for everyone," Groothuis tells how treatment of women today often belies that claim. She roots a strong case for gender equality rather than gender hierarchy securely in Scripture as well as in common sense logic.

Groothuis writes well and forcefully, although because of the subject matter and the scholarly presentation, Part 1 reads slowly. Part 2 becomes more interesting. She does not use real-life examples with names and places to make the point, nor does she need to do so. Men and women attempting to establish their own attitude toward this debate will do well to thoughtfully balance the result of Groothuis' research against other writings on this subject. BMH

**Then God Created Woman : Finding Fulfillment as the Woman God Intended You to Be**, by Dr. Deborah Newman. Colorado Springs: Focus on the Family Publishing, 1997. ISBN 156179533X, PAP, \$10.99.

261.8. Women and religion; Women in Christianity; Women—Christian theology. 285 p. Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Newman, a long-established counselor and speaker, writes a book to complement her previous works on marriage. The subtitle, "Finding Fulfillment as the Woman God Intended You to Be" describes her intentions for the books content. She wants readers to understand their feminine identities and the obstacles to achieving a healthy feminine identity.

Working from the premise that "our attempts to control our pain keep us from receiving what we need most (p. 174), Newman follows a fictional group of six women who meet together regularly for spiritual growth. They each have a different stereotypical personality. Their backgrounds and ways of viewing their lives typify each of us. In thoughtful "Time for You" questions, we are asked to examine how we came to view ourselves as women.

Emphasizing making God-pleasing choices, she says, "I'm no longer angry when I choose to love" (268). Touching lightly on such things as body image, sexuality and understanding, Newman broadly treats a wide array of subjects close to all women's hearts. AGH

***Have We Really Come a Long Way?* by Ruth Senter. LCCN 96045870. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1997. ISBN 1556618204, PAP, \$9.99.**

261.8. Women—Religious life; Women—United States; Senter, Ruth Hollinger, 1944-. 175 p. Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Senter, author of other books on friendship and love, has written this book on regaining what feminism has stolen from Christian women. She admits there have been many needed gains the past 100 years or so. There have been saddening losses along the way as well.

Written in a reader-friendly, informal conversational style, Senter encourages the use of "directed quiet" to learn God's will and counteract the frantic business of our world. She draws heavily on the examples of her spiritual giant of a mother, a woman she admires greatly and aspires to emulate.

A list of questions at the end of each chapter entitled "For Thought, Journaling, or Discussion," are thought provoking and suitable for group or individual study. Intended for women of any age, the book examines women in general and frequently uses "they" as a manner of address. This creates too much over-generalization because there are always exceptions to any trend and it is difficult to think the same way about every woman you know. This easy-reading book will be helpful to women's ministry leaders, especially those trying to reach women who are lured by today's feminism. AGH

***Someone I Love Is Gay : How Family and Friends Can Respond*, by Anita Worthen and Bob Davies. LCCN 96011252. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1996. ISBN 0830819827, PAP, \$10.99.**

261.8. Homosexuality—Religious aspects—Christianity; Church work with gays. 215 p. Adult

Quality—3 Acceptability—5

The stated purpose of *Someone I Love is Gay* is to offer help to people who deal with the homosexuality of a person close to them. Chapters one-seven cover emotions people experience when responding to someone living in homosexuality or lesbianism. Chapters eight-eleven cover specific situations helpful to parents, spouses and friends. Carefully detailed is also the authors' explanation of the grief

cycle, shock, denial, protest and disorganization by those who feel the deeper the relationship between parents and the homosexual person, the deeper the hurt discovering the homosexuality. Parents and friends often feel like "soldiers in a war zone."

Worthen and Davies present an in-depth look at reasons for homosexuality but don't offer the scapegoat of childhood sexual abuse as the sole shaping factor. They encourage parents and friends to stay balanced, pursue godly counsel and seek the Healer, not the healing.

Anita Worthen, co-author, shares first-hand knowledge of pain and subsequent struggles of having a gay son, and the support and understanding of her husband, a former homosexual.

Co-author Bob Davies also struggled with homosexuality. They combine back grounds to offer this detailed self-help volume. Compassionate descriptions of others living through the homosexual experience add variety for the reader and the easy-to-read style imparts helpful information. An appendix offers more resources for the reader, including support groups.

Worthen and Davies send a mixed message about counseling sources. They seem to favor liberal Biblical counselors who offer drugs as a part of their therapy and use the latest psychological buzz words, such as co-dependency. They plant doubts about qualifications of biblical counselors, yet sprinkle Scripture throughout their advice. CLH

***Neighboring Faiths*, by Winfried Corduan. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1998. ISBN 0830815244, PAP, \$24.99.**

291. Religions; Christianity and other religions. Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

This book is a Christian introduction to world religions. It is divided into eleven chapters, each of which discusses a separate living religion, e.g. Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Native American religion, etc. The opening chapter is a discussion of religion in general. Corduan defines religion as "...a system of beliefs and practices that provides values to give life meaning and coherence by directing a person toward transcendence." He then discusses some theories on the origin of religion; he favors the view that all peoples and cultures began with an original monotheism which later deteriorated into animism and polytheism. Corduan gives a good refutation of the evolutionary theory of religion. He does not include a chapter in this book on Christianity because it was written for a primarily Christian audience and assumes a Christian viewpoint throughout.

Each chapter is devoted to a particular religion or type of religion in a particular culture, e.g. there is a chapter on traditional religion in Africa and a chapter on Chinese popular religion. Each chapter discusses basic beliefs of the religion, as well as important rituals and celebrations in the system. There is also a review of important events and rituals connected with rites of passage, e.g. rituals at birth or at puberty or at death.

There is a very helpful review of the history of each religion and of its founder, if known, including maps of essential places and pilgrimages. At the end of each chapter, there is some practical help for Christians who might be witnessing about Christ to a member of that particular religion. This advice is very timely and even-handed and stresses honesty in the context of love and concern. Following this section, there is a list of questions and subjects the reader should be able to answer or discuss after reading the chapter, and there are some very good suggestions for term paper topics on that particular religion. Then at the very end of each chapter there is a brief bibliography of helpful works on the religion. In addition to all of this, there are some very interesting photographs in each chapter of temples, statues, idols, etc. of particular relevance.

This is a very readable and interesting book. It is clearly written from an evangelical Christian point of view, but Corduan's approach is very balanced and sensitive to other beliefs. He does hold to an exclusivistic view of Christianity, but he presents it in a very inoffensive and compassionate way. It is evident that he has spent a great deal of time in other cultures, and he writes with a great degree of sensitivity born out of experience talking to adherents of these religions. This book would be a great addition to any library interested in furthering understanding of world religions and their relationship to Christianity. PB

***Secrets of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, by Dr. Randall Price. LCCN 96010719. Eugene, Ore.: Harvest House Publishers, 1996. ISBN 1565074548, PAP, \$12.99.**

296.1. Dead Sea scrolls—Criticism, interpretation, etc. 535 p. Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Seen as a definitive work on the most important archaeological discovery of our time, Weston W. Fields, Exec Director of the Dead Sea Scrolls Foundation in Jerusalem, calls the *Secrets of the Dead Sea Scrolls* a primary source of education for the present generation of Christians doing research on the Scrolls.

Author Randall Price discusses a scope of topics before unavailable in one volume. He looks at the drama, story and scandal of the Scrolls in addition to the Scribes, and significance of the Scrolls as they relate to the Old and New Testaments. He examines in detail what the Scrolls teach, and calls for discernment as we study them. In addition, he looks ahead to the political influences which may determine future study of archaeological sites and further scroll discovery.

He includes personal interviews with Muhammed edh-Dhib, who discovered the Scrolls, other leading scholars in the field, and information about the latest archaeological excavations and discoveries related to the Scrolls.

Artistic renderings of the Temple City described in the Temple Scrolls are included; Qumran community and cave photos, along with Scroll photos give the reader good visuals. Detailed maps, illustrations and charts add to the books' usefulness.

Bringing a wealth of educational expertise, Dr. Price is more than qualified to author numerous books on biblical topics. As president of World of the Bible Ministries, Inc., his ministry provides a clearer understanding of the Bible and biblical issues through information on the ancient and modern Middle East; Bible prophecy and historical, cultural, and archaeological studies. He has appeared on the CBS Television special "Ancient Secrets of the Bible." CLH

***Islam : Its Prophet, Peoples, Politics, and Power*, by George W. Braswell, Jr. LCCN 95044451. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1996. ISBN 0805411690, PAP, \$24.99.**

297. Islam; Islam—Relations—Christianity; Christianity and other religions—Islam. 338 p. Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

George Braswell, a former teacher of Islamic Theology at the University of Teheran and a current professor of missions and world religions at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, provides readers an excellent overview of the basic beliefs and cultural implications of Islam in this volume. The author provides readers who are unfamiliar with the basic tenets of Islam an easy to understand and well-organized primer on the fastest-growing religion in America.

The book largely follows a chronological format. After outlining the common stereotypes and several frequently asked questions in chapter one, Braswell presents chapters devoted to a succinct history of the Prophet Muhammad, the Expansion of Islam, and basic Islamic Theology. North American readers will be interested especially in the chapters regarding Islamic institutions (discussing Ayatollahs and Shirquote ites, for instance) and the section on personal, family social, business, and political aspects of Islam.

The writing style of the author is sometimes forced and the course of thought is sometimes disjointed. The book reflects more of an oral style than a written, expository style. Readers interested in learning more about their Muslim neighbors and our relations with Islamic nations will find that this text provides the foundation to enter into discussions with understanding. DSB

***Reclaiming the Culture : How You Can Protect Your Family's Future*, by Focus on the Family; Alan Crippen II, editor; with contributions from Chuck Colson and Bill Bennett. LCCN 96010537. Colorado Springs: Focus on the Family Publishing, 1996. ISBN 1561794406, PAP, \$12.99.**

306. United States—Moral conditions; United States—Social conditions; Social problems—United States; Church and social problems—United States; Social values—United States; Secularism—United States. 256 p. Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

The basic theme of this book is "get involved" and although we may have many good excuses not to, Crippen and his colleagues say it is not an option. We

are called to be dual citizens, Christians and Americans, to work to better our social structure. "As Christian people, we are called to be defenders of faith and family. And this will entail engagement, not isolation" (2).

The book is an excellent cross-section of Christian political theorists, such as Crippen, William J. Bennett, and John Eldredge. They take turns showing why political involvement is necessary and possible for Christians. Some essayists are more scholarly and technical than others but there is something here for every reader interested in carrying out the Great Commission in the political and social arena.

There are many helpful additions to the book such as a fifty-five-page annotated bibliography and appendices which will be helpful for future research and community action. The book also contains short reviews of books on topics such as Church-State Relations, Our Culture and an Essential Quick Study List. Political satirical cartoons are sprinkled throughout the text, and each chapter ends with discussion questions appropriate for individual or group study.

This books helps us answer the all-important question, "How do we live together with our deepest differences, especially when they're religious in nature?" (37) AGH

***When the Honeymoon's Over : Building a Real-Life Marriage*, by Kathy Collard Miller & D. Larry Miller. LCCN 97010278. Wheaton, Ill.: Harold Shaw Publishers, 1997. ISBN 0877885656, PAP, \$9.99.**

306.81. Marriage—United States; Married couples—United States—Psychology; Man-woman relationships—United States. 159 p. Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

*When the Honeymoon's Over* is a couples' guide for a more fulfilled and successful marriage. Written by a husband/wife team, it addresses such issues as personality differences, serving your mate, disillusionment, and sex.

It is unique in that the authors, Kathy and Larry Miller, respond to the different topics separately, and together. This clearly depicts the unique differences of how men and women view things.

The authors' style of writing is both honest and concise. They are "down to earth" and address the subjects head-on—using examples from their own marriage. *When the Honeymoon's Over* is a quick read, but contains a great deal of useful information and answers to questions that couples face. TW

***The Effective Teacher*, by Arthur Nazigian. Whittier, Calif: Assn. of Christian Schools Intl, 1998, c1983. ISBN , PAP, \$6.50.**

370. Teachers; Teaching. 144 p. Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

*The Elective Teacher*, by Arthur Nazigian, is organized in short chapters, each beginning with a statement that completes the phrase "The Effective Teacher..." and

is tied to a Bible verse that backs up the point the chapter is trying to make. For example, in the chapter "...realizes he is to be an example in six vital areas.", Nazigian uses 1 Tim. 4:11-12 to demonstrate the areas in which an effective teacher must be a good example and "...acknowledges the fact that his ability to love depends on his knowledge of God." is backed up by 1 John 4:7.

At times, however, the connection Nazigian tries to make between a given verse and the point he's using it for is a bit tenuous and he repeats himself in several places as well. The ellipses at the beginning of each chapter become annoying by the books' end, too; however, his strongly-held opinions are thought-provoking and his use of the Bible to back them up provides much food for thought.

*The Effective Teacher* would be most useful to a teacher in a Christian setting, but many of the points he makes would be of value to any Christian who teaches, in whatever venue the teaching might occur. It would also make a good addition to a Christian school's teacher reference library, where it could be used both for personal study time as well as a source of devotion ideas and conversation starters at faculty meetings and other teacher gatherings. BW

***Teaching Children : A Curriculum Guide to What Children Need to Know at Each Grade Level Through Grade Six*, by Diane D. Lopez; subject overviews by Elizabeth Wilson. LCCN 87071895. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1988. ISBN 0891074899, PAP, \$12.99.**

371.. Education, Elementary. 299 p. Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

*Teaching Children* is one of three books of the Child-Light Series. Author, Diane Lopez alongside Susan Schaeffer Macaulay wrote this book as a practical guide to the method described in Macaulay's book, *For the Children's Sake*. Based on the educational teachings of Charlotte Mason, a 19th century educator, Lopez and Macaulay have developed a workable method of using fine literature or "living books" to educate children.

"Charlotte Mason believed education to be an atmosphere where there is respect and understanding; a discipline of habits of mind and body; a life that includes intellectual, moral, and physical sustenance, and where the mind feeds on ideas; and a science of relationships where a child has natural relations with a vast number of things and thoughts, and is exposed to living books, nature, science, art, music, drama, physical exercise, and handicrafts." All within a Biblical framework and a Christian worldview.

*Teaching Children* is not complete without the other books in the series; *For the Children's Sake* by Susan Schaeffer Macaulay begins the series with an in-depth look at Charlotte Mason and the Child-Light philosophy of education. The other Child-Light book is *Books Children Love* by Elizabeth Wilson, a guide to choosing "living books". This series is an excellent tool for all parents and schools alike, providing concrete information to help us enrich our children's lives.

Diane Lopez is the principal of Bethany Christian School in Sierra Madre, California. A long time educator, Lopez has written numerous articles on education. JMH

**School-Proof**, by Mary Pride. LCCN 87072953. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1988. ISBN 0891074805, PAP, \$10.99.

371.. Education; Home instruction; Christian education. 204 p. Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

In her blunt yet friendly way, author, Mary Pride tackles the issue of homeschooling. In twelve easy to read chapters, Pride shares her thoughts on everything from learning styles to curriculum planning, wrapping up with the issue of housekeeping. The author holds no punches as she delivers her message. *Schoolproof* is a carefully thought out argument in favor of homeschooling. Footnoted and indexed, this book provides good information for anyone considering homeschooling. Regarded as a homeschooling classic, *Schoolproof* has earned its place alongside such classics as *Teach Your Own* by John Holt, *For the Children's Sake* by Susan Schaeffer Macaulay, and books by Dorothy and Raymond Moore.

Mary Pride is the author of *The NEW Big Book of Home Learning*, *The Next Book of Home Learning*, *The Way Home*, and other books. She and her husband also publish and edit the magazines, *Practical Homeschooling*, *Big Happy Family*, and *Homeschool PC*. JMH

**Classroom Success for the LD and ADHD Child**, rev. ed., by Suzanne H. Stevens. LCCN 96047283. Winston-Salem: John F. Blair, Publisher, 1996. ISBN 0895871599, PAP, \$13.95.

371.92. Learning disabled children; Attention-deficit-disordered children; Slow learning children; Educational change. 342 p. Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Suzanne Stevens' book on LD and ADHD children is one that should be required reading for every classroom teacher. In a very non-threatening way, Stevens tells stories and gives examples to help the classroom teacher understand students with special learning disabilities.

Characteristics of the LD child and patterns of failure are explained as well as techniques for helping the student become successful. Hints on how to deal in conference situations with specialists, students, and parents are shared. Stevens gives helpful suggestions on how to adjust classroom work and homework assignments to meet the needs of individual students.

An index, select bibliography, and addresses including the Internet are found at the end of the book. The numerous practical examples and stories that are shared throughout the book make it a treasure chest of useful information that would make it a great addition to every elementary and high school library. EK

**The Science of God**, by Gerald L. Schroeder. Free Press, 1997. ISBN 0684837366, HBB, \$25.00.

500.2. Science. Faith. Creationism. 226 p. Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—4

The vast majority of Christians today are not Jewish, are unfamiliar with the world of the ancient Hebrews, and have little—if any—familiarity with the Hebrew language. We have to rely on translations of the Old Testament, and unfortunately no translation can fully capture the nuances of the language it is attempting to portray. What makes *The Science of God* unique among recent books on science and the Bible is that the author, MIT-trained physicist Gerald Schroeder, is both Jewish and has been studying the Old Testament scriptures in the original Hebrew for twenty-five years.

Schroeder is not a Christian—he is a theistic Jew—but firmly believes that the Genesis account of Creation is perfectly compatible with the findings of modern science. His perspective is refreshingly different from many books on science and religion which do violence to one side or the other. Schroeder brings out nuances and thoughts from the Hebrew that do not emerge from English translations. A major premise of his book is that the six days of creation should be measured by what he calls 'cosmic time'—a clock based on the wavelength of radiation since the moment of creation.

Those committed to the young-earth interpretation of Genesis as expounded, for example, by the 'Creation Science' movement, will probably not agree with Schroeder's conclusions. Those, on the other hand, who accept the findings of science but dismiss Genesis may have cause to rethink their position. But agree or disagree with Schroeder, *The Science of God* is well worth reading and considering for those interested in the relationship between the Bible and science. AMS

**Playing God**, by Ted Peters. New York: Routledge, 1997. ISBN 0415915228, PAP, \$17.99.

575.1. Genetic engineering; Bioethics. 218 p. Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

'Playing God' is a frequently encountered phrase. But what does it mean, and what kind of response should thinking Christians have? The phrase, as Ted Peters (Professor of Systematic Theology at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary) points out, almost invariably carries a connotation of warning; that fallible humans are trespassing on forbidden ground. Nowhere is this more evident than in the field of human genetic engineering.

Peters defines what it means to 'play God', then calls into question the 'gene myth'—the ideas that our DNA defines 'who we are and who we can be' (p.6), and that once we have determined our genetic makeup we will gain the ability to engineer our own future and destiny. It is an error, Peters says, to equate humanity with its DNA—humans are created with the imago dei. Our future lies not in our DNA but in God's promise of resurrection. He provides interesting discussions of the so-called 'crime gene', genetic determinism, original sin, and the supposed gay gene.

Peters opinion is that, "We should play human in the imago dei sense—that is, we should understand

ourselves as created cocreators and press our scientific and technological creativity into the service of neighbor love, of beneficence' (p.161). He believes that we will modify our genes, but that we should not lose sight of our spiritual nature. Currently, we lack both the knowledge to make significant genetic changes, and possibly the wisdom.

Peters presents his views with theological perspectives and implications. He is concerned that any examination of the ethics of genetic engineering be based upon a correct view of humanity's relationship to God.

*Playing God* is clearly written, intelligible, and well-reasoned, and should appeal to anyone with an interest in the genetic issues confronting us. AMS

**Welcome Home**, by Emilie Barnes with Anne Christian Buchanan. Eugene, Ore.: Harvest House, 1997. ISBN 1565075862, HBB, \$19.99.

643. Homemaking; Interior decoration. 122 p. Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Emilie Barnes, popular author and speaker, expresses her heart for hospitality in *Welcome Home*. This inviting 8 by 9 1/2 inch gift book is full of ideas and inspiration to help you create a welcoming home for family and friends. Color photographs by Mark Lohman take you on a tour of her cozy California home, a converted barn, designed with hospitality in mind. Since first impressions count, Emilie begins with suggestions for creating a warm welcome at doorways and entrances. A bright banner, a welcome sign, or greeting your guests with a beverage at the doorway all tell them they are welcome. She continues with appealing ideas for living rooms, kitchens, bed and bathrooms, guest rooms, child-friendly spaces, work rooms, and the outdoors. Emilie emphasizes the need for comfort, beauty, personal touches, and cleanliness in these areas. She ends each chapter with "Housewarmings," a section of practical, affordable ideas to try. Emilie's love for people and gracious hospitality is evident throughout the book. She enjoys treating family and guests like royalty and encourages celebrations and parties (her favorites are tea parties). People are always more important to her than possessions. "To me, the real treasures of any home are the people of all sizes who are growing, creating, playing, sharing, and learning there. These are the treasures that truly make a house a home."

Written with a nostalgic, descriptive style, some of her secrets remain hidden in the text and may take a second read to discover. Biblical family values underlie her writing. A friendly book full of love, beauty, homey quotes, and inspiration, "Welcome Home" assures women it's worth their time to create a warm and welcoming home. LEH

**The Way Home; Beyond Feminism, Back to Reality**, by Mary Pride. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1985. ISBN 0891073450. PAP, \$12.99.

*All the Way Home : Power for Your Family to Be Its Best*, by Mary Pride. LCCN 87071897. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1989. ISBN 0891074651, PAP, \$13.99.

646.7. Family life; Christian life. 284 p. Adult.  
Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Before she became a Christian, Mary Pride was an ardent feminist who worked as a computer systems engineer. After her conversion, her Bible study, together with her extensive reading of both secular and Christian feminist writers, led her to the position that the results of the feminist movement had been destructive to women, their families, and society at large.

In her early book, *The Way Home* (1985), she takes Titus 2:3-5, with its key term "home-working," as a basis for her description of the role that God intended for women. Citing a number of different sources, she suggests that feminism is actually a religion in which "Woman is the measure of all things." Instead she offers her vision of the fulfillment a woman can experience in her "return" to the home. Beginning with a frank discussion of the marriage relationship, she lays down a theoretical basis for large families with the parents responsible for the character training and education of their children. She demonstrates that home-working is broader than just "housework" using a variety of examples of home-based business, artistic, and Christian ministry activities. In addition to the bibliography, she appends an additional page of recommended resources.

In *All the Way Home* (1989), Pride follows up her more theoretical discussion in the earlier book with an added, more practical, "how-to" approach to many of the same issues. Among topics that receives greater emphasis in this book is midwifery. Another is missionary outreach to international students in this country. The format with side columns is used for special emphasis on key topics or supplementary quotations related to the main text. The resources section at the end of this book includes books, periodicals, training courses, organizations to join, and suppliers of helpful materials. Black-and-white cartoon-type drawings introduce each chapter. Both books are indexed and have generous end notes included with the bibliographical references.

Mary Pride may be more widely known for her *The Big Book of Home Learning*, now in its fourth edition (1997). Many of the helpful suggested resources

included in *All the Way Home* are not found in *The Big Book*, but some listed here are now dated (i.e., unavailable or hard to find). Pride writes in the first person, using an informal, vigorous, and often blunt, style. Many Christians will disagree with some of her biblical exegesis and/or logic, as well as her positions.

Her objections to birth control may not raise as many eyebrows as the questions she raises about foreign missionary activities. She seems to fall into the common statistical fallacy of equating correlation with causation as she relates foreign missions activity to the rise of communist or totalitarian influence in various nations of the world. (More positive changes have taken place in a number of those countries since her book was published in 1989.) However, many of her

*Turbulent Teens of Panicking Parents* is a guide for parents that addresses common difficulties and concerns faced by both the teen and their parents. Jeenie Gordon writes about such topics as communicating with your teen, drug abuse, education, pre-marital sex and pregnancy, and date rape.

Gordon, herself, is a high school counselor and, therefore, the majority of her encounters are drawn from the personal experiences she has had with various teens in a High School setting.

Each chapter end contains exercises for parents to complete to evaluate what areas they may or may not need to address or improve. Gordon is very direct in style and open in sharing many heart-felt experiences. *Turbulent Teens* is also complete with various resources that are available for further exploration. Parents of teens will find that this book promotes introspection and self-evaluation and would prove helpful. TW

*Parenting on Your Own*, by Lydia Hunter. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997. ISBN 0310213096, PAP, \$14.99.

649. Parenting; Single parent. 304 p. Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Single parents face difficult challenges including loneliness, legal battles, and parenting alone. Dr. Lynda Hunter, editor of Focus on the Family's *Single-Parent Family* magazine and a single mother, knows the road of single parenthood is not easy. She offers hope and encouragement in her comprehensive guide, *Parenting On Your Own*. Compassionately written in question answer format and

organized by topics, it addresses real concerns single parents face. Chapters begin with background information called "What You Should Know" and include answers to "Questions You Ask." Her sound answers are rooted in personal experience, single-parent responses, her seminars, other books on the subject, and scripture.

Whether divorced, abandoned, never married, or widowed, single men and women gain help to understand legal issues, emotions, parenting children from infancy through adulthood, safe relationships, and remarriage. Each topic is discussed in depth. For example, the section on emotions deals with handling fear, anger, sadness, joy, grief, guilt, and forgiveness. The parenting portion emphasizes the need to guide, protect, encourage, and teach independence. It provides concrete suggestions for disciplining,

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concerns still merit serious consideration, such as the potential negative effects on children of those who give their ministry outside the home a higher priority than their responsibility to their own children. Some will agree with and conform to all of Pride's positions on the various issues, while others will not. However, Christians in both groups can still respect the others as genuine servants of the Lord. DWB

*Turbulent Teens of Panicking Parents*, by Jeenie Gordon. LCCN 96049108. Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 1997. ISBN 0800756207, PAP, \$10.99.

649. Parent and teenager. 190 p. Adult.  
Quality—4 Acceptability—5

building self-esteem, and preparing children for adulthood.

About one third of the book offers practical help to develop the necessary life-skills of setting goals, finding balance, handling conflict, coping with stress and change, communicating, managing time and money, and more. Although aimed at singles, some of Dr. Hunter's straightforward, sensible advice is applicable to anyone. The book is well-documented with notes and a resource chapter provides further reading on many subjects discussed.

Single parents will find many answers on a broad spectrum of pertinent topics in this resource. They are encouraged to face the reality of what happened, let go of the past, and move on to what lies ahead. LEH

**How to Raise Children of Destiny**, by Dr. Patricia Morgan. Shippensburg, Pa.: Destiny Image Publishers. ISBN 1560431342., PAP, \$9.99.

659. Parenting. Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

Dr. Patricia Morgan, mother of four, college professor, and author of *How to Raise Children of Destiny* offers a new twist to rearing godly children. She mandates personalizing scripture's "seed" to our own children. Further, she says "godly parents need to discover God's particular call for their children if they are to effectively help guide them through childhood to maturity." For, according to Morgan, that is exactly what Mary and Joseph did with Jesus.

Written in methodical order, Morgan proceeds from the battle for the seed (offspring) to generational discipleship. Although wordy and sometimes complicated, the various Parent Checklists and quotes help break up the gray.

Due to a wordiness that can get complicated or tedious, a reader may bog down early in the book. If so, skip to Chapter 8, *Molding the Minds of Leaders*. This chapter is both practical and excellent. Even "Hitler knew the secret of the seed...The Church may be deaf, dumb, and blind but God is not. He has warned us from the beginning about the importance of our children. When we see only young and perhaps headstrong children, He sees mighty leaders doing great exploits in His name."

Some subheadings in Chapter 8 are Parent/School Relationship, Important Lessons for Young Students and Leaders, and Help Your Child Commune with God. Other subheadings are How to Discover God's Specific Intention for your Child and What is My Role as Parent?

*How to Raise Children of Destiny* is at times convicting, and always thought provoking. Digest it one chapter at a time. Pray over it; practice it. Your children are at stake. GM

**A Father for All Seasons**, by Bob Welch. Euguen, Ore.: Harvest House, 1998 ISBN 1565077776, HBB, \$14.99.

649. Parenting; Fathers. xxx p. Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

In *A Father for All Seasons*, author Bob Welch describes the five seasons fathers and sons grow through. Spring represents the start of the relationships and all the firsts. Summer is the time of childhood discovery. Autumn covers the transitional time of the teen years. Winter is the season of letting go and separation. The second spring emerges as fathers and sons play new roles in their relationships.

Welch doesn't offer didactic instruction or psychological analyses of father-and-son relationships; he tells stories. In an honest and often humorous conversational manner, he shares about four generations of men in his family, their successes, foibles, and failures, and gently weaves in insights God has given him from these events.

Welch, a newspaper feature writer, also added stories of friends and people he has met on his beat. Some are painful, such as the ones about a cocaine-dealing son and a man's abusive childhood. These the author handles tenderly.

Though the book is written for men, women will also enjoy the touching stories and insights into how men feel and relate to one another. LKFN

**The Harbrace Anthology of Literature**, 2nd ed., edited by Jon Stott, Raymond Jones, and Rick Bowers. Toronto: Harcourt Brace Canada, 1998. ISBN 0774735511, PAP, \$46.95.

808. College readers; Short stories, English. 1259 p. Gr. 11 - Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—4

In their introduction, the editors of *The Harbrace Anthology of Literature* state that they have "attempted to make their selections as varied and diverse as possible." This claim is borne out by a quick skim through the table of contents. In the poetry section, the reader is presented with selections that range from the traditional Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, and Wordsworth to First Nations voices, and finally to such contemporary, award-winning Canadian authors as Atwood and Ondaatje. In the drama section, the impeccable Oscar Wilde rubs shoulders with a ruffled Woody Allen, while the journey into short fiction section begins with an entry by Nathaniel Hawthorne and ends with an offering by Amy Tan.

The organization of this 1259-page volume is mercifully straightforward. Selections within the three genres—poetry, drama, and the short story—are arranged chronologically. This arrangement allows the reader to observe the patterns that have developed over time, as well as the ways in which later writers were influenced by those who came before. Each of the three sections is preceded by an introduction which defines basic terms and concepts, providing students with the tools required to effectively analyze these works. Examples are taken directly from the anthology itself. The editors have also included a useful chapter on essay writing, which covers everything from overcoming writer's block to a list of the ten most common mistakes. The volume concludes with a glossary of terms and an index combining authors, titles, and first lines of poetry. As with any anthology that attempts to

introduce its readers to the many voices that comprise our literary tradition, this volume does include works that do not reflect the Judeo-Christian viewpoint.

Now in its second edition, the *Harbrace Anthology of Literature* boasts all the strengths of the first, including a rich and diverse selection of poetry, drama, and short fiction, an excellent introduction to each genre, and a concise, informative entry regarding the background, style and major themes of each writer. To these elements, the editors have added more Canadian content and author interviews in each of the three sections. The resulting text will prove an invaluable resource in the field of literature. SS

**The Hound of Heaven**, by Gordon MacDonald. Vital Issues Press, 1997. ISBN 1563841371, HBB, \$12.99.

823. English poetry; Thompson, Francis. 80 p. Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

I suspect many people are like myself, having heard the phrase "the Hound of Heaven," without knowing its origins. The opening words of the poem, too, may strike a chord:

I fled Him, down the nights and down the days;

I fled Him, down the arches of the years;

I fled Him, down the labyrinthine ways of my own mind...

*The Hound of Heaven* was written in 1859 by Francis Thompson, a down and out opium addict. The poem describes Thompson's flight from God, a flight that ends with his own defeat. At long last, Thompson ceases running; he is 'caught' by God, and receives new life. Thompson's drug-ruined life is restored by a God who won't let him go, who 'tracks him down' no matter where he tries to run. It is, in a sense, a modern rendition of Psalm 139 ("where can I flee from your presence?").

This new edition offers Thompson's original poem along with a paraphrase by Gordon MacDonald. Part I is a brief story of Thompson's life; Part II is MacDonald's paraphrase presented alongside Thompson's poem; and Part III is Thompson's poem complete.

*The Hound of Heaven* well deserves its honored place in the ranks of Christian poetry. It deserves reading and re-reading as an always fresh reminder of the "God who will never let us go." AMS

**Footfalls in Memory**, by Terry Waite. LCCN 96050478. New York: Doubleday, 1997. ISBN 0385488629, HBB, \$21.95.

956.92. Waite, Terry—Books and reading. Adult.

Quality— Acceptability—5

*Footfalls in Memory* is the record of a journey made in the company of books, by Englishman Terry Waite while a captive of Lebanese terrorists for five years. After the first year his captors supplied him with a steady stream of reading material. Waite writes, "To be alone with a book was one of the most precious gifts

I received during those long solitary years." To help survive the first year, Waite wrote his autobiography in his mind and endeavored to remember passages from favorite books and from the Bible.

Waite writes, "At times I was afraid not only of the situation in which I found myself but also of the inner journey. I felt that I could be lost and wander into madness as a way of escaping the pain of self-examination. At the same time, I was possessed by a burning desire to find and understand truth and discover my own center." He says, "Death did not cause me to be afraid, but I was fearful of the way in which I might die. I did not want to die in captivity. I did not want my family and friends to have to live with the terrible uncertainty of not knowing how I lived my last days. When I literally "felt like death" I would repeat the Twenty-third Psalm to myself. The way we view death will affect the way we live."

This book brings together selections from some of the volumes he was given and excerpts from others he held in memory, and selections from books he wished he had had during that time. It is a record not only of his delight in books, but also an exploration into the self. He says, "As I trod that perilous path, some of the authors and characters mentioned in these pages walked with me, and I shall always be grateful for their wisdom, humor, and companionship. Solitary confinement taught me anew the delight and value of books."

The human spirit ennobled by faith and courage is proclaimed on these pages. The reader is plunged into his own self-examination and can only be grateful that this man was freed so that he might share this very personal journey. MJ

**Francis & Edith Schaeffer**, by L.G. Parkhurst, Jr. (Women & Men of Faith.) LCCN 96004502. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1996. ISBN 1556618433, PAP, \$4.99.

921 (267). Schaeffer, Francis A. (Francis August); Schaeffer, Edith; L'Abri (Organization)—Biography; Christian biography—United States; Christian biography—Switzerland. 155 p. Gr. 10 - Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

L. G. Parkhurst's biography of Francis and Edith Schaeffer is an inspirational and informative book about two great Christians of our era. One of the Women and Men of Faith series, this small, easy to read volume begins with the family backgrounds of both Francis and Edith and tells how they met and married. The focus of the story is on their ministry years and the beginning of L'Abri Fellowship.

Throughout the book, Parkhurst includes many faith-inspiring stories about the founding of L'Abri and God's continual answers to prayer in the lives of the Schaeffers. This biography is not intimidating because of its small size and shortness in length; therefore, it is inviting even to reluctant readers. It is also very well written and interesting to keep the reader's attention. At the end of the book is a list of notes listed by chapter and a separate bibliography of recommended reading of other titles of and by the Schaeffers. EK

**Ruth, a Portrait : The Story of Ruth Bell Graham**, by Patricia Cornwell. LCCN 96041961. New York: Doubleday, 1997. ISBN 0385488793, HBB, \$21.95.

921 (269). Graham, Ruth Bell; Baptists—Biography; Evangelists' spouses—Biography; Spouses of clergy—Biography; Children of missionaries—Biography; Graham, Billy, 1918-. 294 p. Gr. 9 - Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

The pretty Wheaton College coed knelt beside her bed that snowy winter night and prayed, "God, if you let me serve you with that man, I'd consider it the greatest privilege in my life."

Ruth Belt spoke her prayer minutes after a tall, lanky fellow student named Billy Graham (already smitten with Ruth) had walked her to her door following their first date.

No doubt this was a match made in heaven. Although Ruth had planned to become a single missionary, her intrigue and admiration for the future world evangelist soon turned to love and marriage—and an enduring partnership in ministry and life with him to which she would bring wit and caring, style and strength.

Those who read author Patricia Cornwell's original biography of her friend Ruth Bell Graham, will remember the prayer scene in *A Time for Remembering* published in 1983. It was a book that plucked Ruth out of the background, where she prefers to live and introduced this fascinating woman to a generation of readers.

Now a new generation gets a chance to meet Ruth Graham in *Ruth, A Portrait*, Cornwell's lovingly written update—or perhaps more accurately her enhancement—of her original book.

The new book opens in May 1996 in the Capitol Rotunda in Washington, D.C., where the Grahams are to become the first clergy couple to receive the Congressional Gold Medal. Before she returns us to the original story, Cornwell takes us to the Renaissance Hotel with the Grahams following the ceremony. Here Ruth relaxes with her grandchildren while enjoying a plate of Chinese food ordered from room service. She is seventy-six now and more frail, but as Cornwell puts it, little changed "in a way that counts."

The original book follows, virtually intact, including the same chapter headings and many of the same family photographs. Drawing on numerous interviews with family and friends as well as journals, letters, and diaries, it traces Ruth's story from her first seventeen years in China as the mischievous sensitive daughter of medical missionaries, to her marriage, the birth of her five children and grandchildren, her own quiet ministry, and with Billy on his crusades around the world.

The author brings us back to the present in a touching postscript that reflects the love and admiration she feels for her subject. Patsy, as the Grahams call her, was a lonely, young neighbor in Montreal, North Carolina, when Ruth befriended her. Ruth encouraged her young friend to write, and the original biography, published while Cornwell was a crime reporter on the Charlotte Observer, was her first book. Since, she's won awards and fame as a crime novelist.

Patricia Cornwell again brings Ruth Graham to life, through insightful, often comical, anecdotes, extensive research, and the benefit of a close, personal relationship with this outstanding Christian woman. NBC

**Just as I Am : The Autobiography of Billy Graham**, by Billy Graham. HarperCollins Zondervan, 1997. ISBN 006063387, HBB, \$28.50.

921 (269). Evangelists—Biography; Graham, Billy (William Franklin). 733 p. Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

At long last Billy Graham has written his autobiography and it's a doozy—733 pages of facts and faith covering over fifty years of Graham's life and ministry. Whole chapters are given to crusades; national and international leaders, including three USA presidents; and the development of his myriad ministries. In fact, there are nearly 100 photographs included, along with a comprehensive index listing all the people and places he's worked.

*Just as I Am* is chronological, of course, starting with his childhood and how he met Jesus as a teenager, his spiritual hunger from the get-go, and his calling to evangelism. His purpose was and is "to preach and propagate the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ by any and all means" because "it seemed the whole world was ripe for the gospel."

Some readers may find the first and last two chapters the most interesting—definitely the most personal. Here Graham discloses his love life. When he first met Ruth: "I just could not believe that anyone could be so spiritual and so beautiful at one and the same time." And later his family life. Theirs was a regular family with regular problems.

Graham is candid about his mistakes in his preaching and ministries, likewise, he is candid about his mistakes at home. He regrets having missed so much family time. Ruth raised their five children almost single-handedly. But she never complained to Billy, although journal excerpts reveal her cries to God for help. Graham shows nothing but love, admiration, and respect for his bride of half a century. In fact, judging from the many excerpts he uses, he must have a trunkful of Ruth's letters.

The final chapter reflects his diagnosis of Parkinson's Disease, coping with old age, and his ever-growing faith. Above all, the book ends with hope. "And most of all I look forward to seeing Christ and bowing before Him in praise and gratitude for all He has done for us, and for using me on this earth by His grace—just as I am" *Just as I Am* is a book worth reading. GM RI

**Luis Palau**, by W. Terry Whalin. (Men of Faith.) LCCN 96004446. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1996. ISBN 1556618425, PAP, \$4.99.

921 (269). Palau, Luis, 1934-; Evangelists—Latin America—Biography. 160 p. Gr. 7 - Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

The Men of Faith series shows the power of God to change individual lives, cities, and nations. Luis Palau

has preached to millions through his crusades. His life story with all its struggles is presented by W. Terry Whalin. Born in Buenos Aires, Argentina in 1934, Luis Palau watched his father's bold witness for Christ. But when he was ten his father died of bronchial pneumonia. He rushed home from his boarding school too late to say goodbye. Palau committed his life to Christ at a summer camp. When the initial spiritual fervor died he drifted away from the Lord. His understanding of living the Christian life was based on performance: read the Bible, pray, study, and go to church. But he had no idea how to enjoy the indwelling Christ.

Before Luis was eighteen he had a job at Bank of London in Buenos Aires. He soon felt compelled to join his family in Cordoba, who needed his financial support. Here Luis became involved in the church. The story continues looking into his first evangelistic efforts, his college training, and his move into city-wide evangelistic crusades.

An appendix presents the text of one of Luis's best-known Gospel presentations. He has given the message in crusades and booklet form to many millions of people around the world. MPC

**25 Surprising Marriages : Faith-Building Stories from the Lives of Famous Christians, by William J. Petersen. LCCN 96045565. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1997. ISBN 0801057531, PAP, \$19.99.**

921 (270). Protestants—Biography; Spouses—Biography; Evangelicalism—History; Marriage—Religious aspects—Christianity—Case studies; Spouses—Religious life. 502 p. HS—Adult.

Quality— Acceptability—5

William Petersen offers a birds-eye view of the marriages of twenty-five Christian leaders—past and present. His stories cover missionaries, evangelists, pastors, authors and teachers and many readers will easily recognize names like Dwight Moody, Billy Sunday, Hudson Taylor, Martin Luther, Grace Livingston Hill, Jonathan Edwards, Adoniram Judson, Peter Marshall as well as seventeen more husband and wife teams.

Identifying with the joys and challenges every marriage faces makes this believable book an encouraging experience, not only for the pleasure of reading, but for the wisdom readers gain from the lives of God's servants. According to Peterson, extended spiritual accomplishments of the men and women is not the focus of this work. Instead he emphasizes "family backgrounds, courtship, early adjustments, family relationships and the blending of strong personalities."

Petersen looks at the marriage and the home life. What better place to learn to make life practical. His desire is for readers to receive insight from the lives of these marriages to strengthen their own. Readers cannot help but be inspired, however, by the lessons these famous Christians learned on the front lines of Christian service. Many struggled to maintain a balance with their responsibilities of God's work, personal growth, and family relationships. Often children are alienated

from parents because of intense work in the ministry, and separation is a cross they often bear.

Petersen tells the stories with a sensitivity to the strengths and weakness of his characters. Readers will admire his honesty in the numerous character sketches and his reverence for what God called His servants to do. CLH

***Surprised by God : Experiencing Grace from the God of Second Chances, by Stephen Arterburn. LCCN 96043831. Colorado Springs: Focus on the Family Publishing, 1997. ISBN 1561794651, HBB, \$16.99.***

921 (277.3). Arterburn, Stephen, 1953-; Christian biography—United States; Christian life. 195 p. Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

If you have ever wondered why someone you love walks away from God, this book reveals the seduction of self-sufficiency and sin. In *Surprised by God*, Arterburn candidly reveals his deepest secrets—including coercing his college girl-friend to have an abortion, and his pursuit of pleasure, possessions, and power. The consequences almost destroyed him.

To the casual observer, Arterburn's accomplishments are impressive: a nationally-known speaker and radio host, author of twenty-two books, and a licensed minister, he once worked as senior vice president of a major company hired away at age thirty-two to become chairman of a quarter-of-a-billion-dollar company. Now Arterburn is cofounder of New Life Clinics, the largest provider of Christian counseling in the country. But Arterburn does not discuss his outward successes. Rather, in *Surprised by God* he delves into the deeper question of the condition of one's heart, and a prodigal's drift away from God.

Arterburn writes, "There is one great truth and one great lie. The great truth is that God loves us, and through Him we find ultimate meaning and fulfillment. The great lie says we can control our own destinies and find contentment on our own." He quotes Proverbs 14:12: "There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death."

After Arterburn confesses how his motives affected his choices and how those choices hurt himself and others, he shares how he grew to understand what full obedience to God really means. With a style that is direct yet gentle, he challenges the reader to be brutally honest and pursue the truth found only in the Bible. The strength of *Surprised by God* is that Arterburn addresses tough issues like abortion and homosexuality, but also the subtle sin of living a shallow and insincere life in Christ. KSG

***Saving Graces : The Inspirational Writings of Laura Ingalls Wilder, by Laura Ingalls Wilder; edited by Stephen Hines. LCCN 97011808. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1997. ISBN 0805401482, HBB, \$19.99.***

921 (813). Christian life; Wilder, Laura Ingalls, 1867-1957. 164 p. Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Readers know Laura Ingalls Wilder from her delightful autobiographical stories, *The Little House on the Prairie* series. Now, with the results of Stephen Hines's research deeper into her memoirs, we have the advantage of 163 short inspirational gems from Wilder's writings. Each comes complete with Scripture verses, and Hines also offers hymns from the era in which Mrs. Wilder writes. The selections pinpoint common happenings in Mrs. Wilder's everyday life. She speaks of neighbors, friends, her family, stewardship, responsibility, heaven, home, and many other topics as relevant today as to life in the early 1900s. Hines's introduction gives readers good background information about Mrs. Wilder.

Readers expect good writing from Mrs. Wilder, and these selections do not disappoint. They include dialogue, anecdotes, and good descriptions. The kindly way she states her faith inspires and encourages the same in others. Anyone who has enjoyed the *Little House* books will feel a kinship with these inspiring bits and pieces.

The inside format of the book invites those who may not have time for long, involved readings. The straightforward writing enchants readers without intimidating them, though she presents profound precepts. A well-designed book, *Saving Graces* makes a lovely gift. It's attractiveness places it in the coffee table category. BMH

***Homestead, by Jane Kirkpatrick. Sisters, Ore.: Multnomah Publishers, 1991. ISBN 1576731707, PAP, \$12.99.***

921 (979.5092). Christian life; Ranch life—Oregon. 276 p. Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Her friends thought her crazy when Jane Kirkpatrick and her husband Jerry decided to purchase one hundred and fifty acres of rural land along the John Day River in Eastern Oregon. "It was such a very long way from my manicurist," she wrote, unaware of the personal triumphs and tragedies ahead, events that would transform her—mentally, physically, and spiritually.

*Homestead* reads like letters home. From rattlesnakes to coyotes, road washouts to plane crashes, Kirkpatrick describes the daily adventures that became part of the homesteading life she adopted. She shares her belief God wanted them on the side of the mountain called "Starvation Point," and leaves the readers wondering about God's plan in their own lives.

Divided into three parts, the book is further broken into thirty-two chapters plus a prologue and an epilogue. The approach is a friendly essay format. I was bothered that I did not find God's spectacular plan that she saw in buying the homestead. I found myself wondering if God wasn't saving her from her own selfish intentions.

A clinical social worker by trade, Jane Kirkpatrick has published several novels and essays in magazines and newspapers across the nation. JMH

*Tell Me the Truth : God's Eternal Truths for Families*, by Joni Eareckson Tada with Steve Jensen; illustrations by Ron DiCianni. LCCN 97033498. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1997. ISBN 0891079467, HBB, \$15.99.

646.7. Christian life—Fiction; Children's stories. 49 p. Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

"These days most parents don't have the time or opportunity to craft storytelling into a family tradition," writes author Joni Eareckson Tada. "Still, when Mom or Dad is able to pull up a chair by (a child's) bedside and read a truth-telling tale, powerful things happen." In this book Joni Eareckson Tada delivers seven timeless stories for parents to read to their children.

Each story illustrates a Biblical truth. Following the story is a verse from the Bible and statements designed to help a child understand and respond to what they've heard. Ron DiCianni's illustrations help bring each story to life. His notes in the back of the book give further insight into the thoughts and events that inspired each painting. This book would be a valuable resource in any home or library in which there are young children. DEB

[Adult Fiction Reviews, cont. from p.68.](#)

*Walls of Terror*, by Frank Simon. LCCN 97016923. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1997. ISBN 0891079521, PAP, \$12.99.

F. Iraq—Fiction; Antiquities—Iraq—Fiction; Biological warfare—Fiction; Babylon—Fiction. 363 p. Gr. 9 - Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

Mars and Anne are archaeologists who somehow seem to get involved with international terrorists. Even out of the country and spending their honeymoon in London doesn't keep Mars and Anne out of danger. After arriving back in Jerusalem they accept another assignment on an archaeological dig in Iraq where they stumble onto a chemical warfare laboratory set up right next to them at the dig. When they get word to leave immediately they realize they are in over their heads. Before they can evacuate the dig, the site is surrounded by guards. Their only source of communication is cut off and the time gets closer to the bombing of the laboratory. Anne begins to pray for deliverance while Mars tries to set up an escape route on his own power. The laboratory gets bombed twice and Mars and Anne are called in for questioning. They know that time is running out and so try to escape and are caught and imprisoned in the basement of the guest house. There Mars accepts Jesus into his heart realizing that He is the only one they can depend on. Meanwhile the rescue crew is grounded and hides to avoid detection while trying to figure out a rescue plan. Unknown a second rescue team is sent and after a desert chase and gun fight the archaeological team is finally rescued.

*Walls of Terror* is a fast-paced suspense story told in the third person that is a sequel to *Veiled Threats*. It is a complete story in itself and keeps one turning the pages to see how it all will end. Frank Simon shifts the

scene from the good and bad side using several characters to build up a spellbinding story with Mars and Anne as the central figures. Placed in a current time frame the reader is able to quickly identify with the story. *Walls of Terror* is over 360 pages long and is geared for the more serious reader. DAW

*Prayer Warriors : A Story of Power*, by Celeste Perrino Walker. LCCN 96021113. Boise: Pacific Press Publishing Assn, 1997. ISBN 0816313598, PAP, \$12.99.

F. Prayer—Fiction; Angels—Fiction; Spiritual warfare—Fiction; Missions—Africa—Fiction. 313 p. Adult.

Quality—4 Acceptability—5

The title of Celeste Perrino Walker's novel, *Prayer Warriors*, captivates readers at the outset. Written primarily for adults, the work could be enjoyed by teens as well. *Prayer Warriors* tells the physical and spiritual stories of four or five groups of people. Stories include a man in a coma, and how his condition affects his family, an airplane crash, an unwanted pregnancy, and a mission doctor who cannot forget the ravages of war. Characters each have an angel, and in many cases, a demon, seeking to influence the person either to turn to God or to turn away from Him. Through the prayers of certain characters, God's working in the lives of people is portrayed.

At the outset of *Prayer Warriors* there are at least five story lines. These are successfully combined into two main plots by the conclusion. The reader spends the first third of the book becoming acquainted with a multitude of characters and their relationships to each other. A chart of characters and related spiritual beings is provided at the beginning of the work. This is helpful, although it is still difficult for the reader to keep track of all the people. Characterization is excellent, however, holding the reader's interest to learn more about the characters' stories. The passages from the angels' perspective incorporate a strong theology that does not appear to contradict scripture.

*Prayer Warriors* is inspirational reading, to be read more than once, and then shared with others. TM

*Sophie's Heart*, by Lori Wick. LCCN 95013823. Eugene, Ore.: Harvest House Publishers, 1995. ISBN 1565073118, PAP, \$10.99.

F. Romance—Fiction; Christian life—Fiction. 425 p. Gr. 11 - Adult.

Quality—5 Acceptability—5

The sensitive disposition and loving Christian spirit of Sophie, created by Lori Wick, captures readers' admiration almost instantly. Twenty-eight-year-old Sophie comes to America for a better life, leaving her homeland in Prague, Czechoslovakia and her beloved grandmother, Kasmira, who cared for her. Sophie fears she'll never see her fragile grandmother again. She seeks out Christian fellowship in a ladies Bible study and meets Janet. Realizing she's lonely and frustrated at her job, and seeing the need Sophie has to serve God, Janet arranges a meeting between Sophie and her brother Alec, a recent widower. Janet sees in Sophie someone who will bring joy to his brother's

home again, and at the same time serve as housekeeper.

Even though they wallow deeply in sorrow from their wife and mother's death, Sophie is accepted by Alec's family. Her quiet, unashamed faith, exposes their lack of communication with God and helps them conquer their grief and face each day with joy.

True restoration comes for Alec and Sophie when they fall in love and marry. Sophie grows, too. Highly educated, she learns to accept God's hand in her life as a housekeeper as He begins His healing for Alec.

Lori Wick is a master of dialogue, weaving believable characters into a conclusion readers all want—the happy ending. Sophie's broken English provides occasion for laughter, but Wick uses Sophie's heart of faith to confront Alec and his kids with God's love, enabling them to heal from their bitterness and sorrow. Readers rejoice when self is dethroned, Alec assumes leadership of his family and the children seek God's heart.

Wick uses a surprise ending to culminate this delightful story. CLH

*Ray Legg, cont. from p. 69.*

*Red Fern Grows*, I am not sure I have ever read a story whose plot is 100% original. It seems to me that the more an author reads the more likely it becomes that parts of other stories may find their way into anything he or she produces. Does that make his or her work any less valuable? I think not.

The discussion surrounding Carter's book should challenge those of us involved in reading on a somewhat professional level in at least two areas. First, we can use Carter's work and the issues it raises as a means to steer people toward reading in general. There is no better way to have an informed opinion about a book than to read it - that should go without saying. What better service could we provide for those who come to us with questions about what they are reading? Second, we can challenge those same readers to consider carefully the larger issues engendered by the present controversy - issues such as honesty, integrity, and racism, to name a few - and to decide upon appropriate Christian responses to these issues. Of course, that requires having the issues settled in our own minds. It requires that we, as professionals, be "ready to make a defense for the hope that is within us." And that requires being familiar with materials being printed at a record pace. As daunting as that task may seem it is not an impossible one. I trust *CLJ* can help.

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