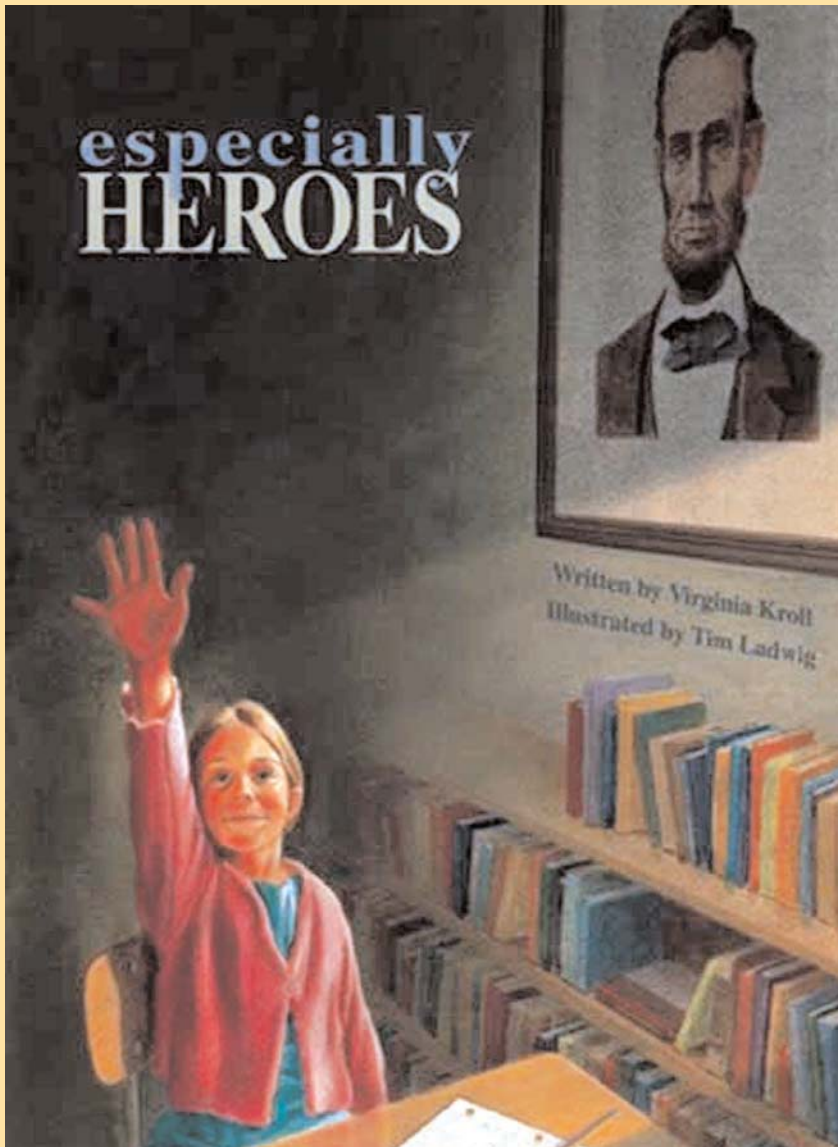


Volume VIII, No.4

August 2003

Christian Library

J O U R N A L



This Issue Features:

- ◆ Sources About Islam
- ◆ Indians of the Southeast
- ◆ Lewis and Clark : 200 Years
- ◆ The Wright Brothers : 100 Years

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The purpose of the *Christian Library Journal* is to provide readers with reviews from a Christian point of view of both Christian and secular library materials for the young reader. About 200 titles 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*.

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Lewis and Clark

by

Karen Schmidt

Two hundred years ago on July 4, Meriwether Lewis launched into preparations for the westward trek he was commissioned to lead through America's West. With the bicentennial of this event, a wagonload of books is being published or re-released about the expedition, its explorers, and their discoveries. Ignite readers' appetite for history and a greater appreciation for the nation God has given by considering these titles.

Dog Tales

The Captain's Dog: My Journey with the Lewis and Clark Tribe, by Roland Smith (Harcourt, 1999, 0-152026967, PB, 287 pages, \$6.00). Rating: 4.

Seaman, the Newfoundland pup adopted by Meriwether Lewis, tells the story from a canine perspective in short entertaining chapters prefaced by true diary entries. The details and youthful viewpoint make it fun reading for home and school use, with accurate historical data to undergird historical lessons for middle elementary grades through high school.

Seaman's Journal on the Trail with Lewis and Clark, by Patricia Reeder Eubank (Ideals Publications, 2002, ISBN 0824954424, jacketed HC, 32 pages, \$15.95). Rating: 3.

The hefty black dog investigates wildlife, Native Americans, and the rigors of the trail as he wanders through the new territory to the Pacific with the Corps of Discovery. This nicely illustrated picture book is brief enough to be read in one sitting either aloud or by a confident child reader.

Seaman, the Dog Who Explored the West with Lewis and Clark, by Gail Langer Karwoski (Peachtree Publishers, 1999, ISBN 1-561452769, jacketed HC, 187 pages, \$14.95). Rating: 4.

Starting in August 1803, this rendition of the Corps of Discovery's expedition is told in the third person with Lewis' dog as the main character. This book would fit the middle elementary through middle school group. Younger readers and families would enjoy it as a read-aloud story. Karwoski adds an interesting author's note about how she researched the book. Two maps and an introduction by the president of the

Oregon chapter of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation are valuable additions.

Children's Books

Meriwether Lewis: Off the Edge of the Map, by Janet and Geoff Benge (Emerald Books, 2001, ISBN 1-88300280X, PB, 231 pages, \$8.99). Rating: 3.

From his teen years forward, this book in the Heroes of History series chronologically describes Lewis' desire to explore and his methodical planning and performance of the assignment from President Jefferson. Lewis is clearly the focus as he meets the Indians, surmounts obstacles and reports back to the president. This middle school level title is informative for homeschool and educational settings and will interest history and exploration buffs.

Don't Know Much About the Pioneers by Kenneth C. Davis, (HarperCollins, 2003, ISBN 060286180; jacketed HC, 48 pages, \$15.99). Rating: 4.

Lewis and Clark's travels find a place among the questions, answers and sidebars in this entertaining and colorful book with its comic-style art. Other topics include the Oregon Trail, A Day on the Trail, Settling the Plains, and the California Gold Rush. First through sixth graders will enjoy the contents and its interesting presentation, as well as the interactive true/false questions, occasional jokes, and simple quizzes.

Into the Wilderness: The Lewis and Clark Expedition, by James J. Holmberg (The University Press of Kentucky, 2003, ISBN 0-813109132, PB, 64 pages, \$5.95). Rating: 3.

This newest title in the New Books for New Readers series from the University Press of Kentucky provides a Kentucky-slanted view of the expedition in an easy reader style suited for elementary children. Interesting details include a chapter on what happened to the men of the expedition, something often not covered in other narratives. Photographs add an element of interest, though the book is text-heavy for many young students who might have the reading skill needed for this level of book.

George Rogers Clark, Boy of the Northwest Frontier, by Katherine E. Wilkie (Patria Press, 2003, ISBN 1-882859-44-8, PB, 112 pages, \$9.95). Rating: 4.

This volume is eighth in the publisher's Young Patriots Series. The interestingly written story details the boyhood through teen years of Clark, older brother of William Clark. Though not specifically focused on the Lewis and Clark expedition, this biographical story augments historical literature of the

time period and will grab the attention of elementary readers, especially boys.

For multi-generational readers

Plants on the Trail with Lewis and Clark, by Dorothy Hinshaw Patent, photographs by William Munoz. (Clarion Books, 2003, ISBN 0618067760, jacketed HC, 104 pages, \$18.00). Rating: The Corp of Discovery's tasks included the substantial job of identifying and recording the natural flora, fauna and peoples of the unexplored land. Hinshaw commendably describes for elementary and middle school students how Lewis and Clark studied and recorded the plants they found. Excellent photographs of the plants, replicas of pages from Lewis' journals, and landscape photos add visual impact to chapters on trees, plants as food, wildflowers, and the results of the expedition's findings. An appendix provides plant listings and the place each was found.

Animals on the Trail with Lewis and Clark, by Dorothy Hinshaw Patent, photographs by William Munoz. (Clarion Books, 2003, ISBN 0395914159, jacketed HC, 118 pages, \$18.00). Rating: 4.

A companion to Hinshaw's book on plants, this volume documents the creatures and their habitats that the expedition encountered. Excellent photography brings the mission into realistic focus for students. The clearly written text makes the book educational as well as interesting. Students from about third grade up will benefit from this book, which makes a worthy reference for any school or home library.

Lewis and Clark on the Trail of Discovery: the Journey that Shaped America, by Rod Gragg (Rutledge Hill Press, 2003, ISBN 1-4016-0075-1, HC, 48 pages, \$29.99). Rating: 5.

The cover description, a museum in a book, is an apt subtitle. Each two-page spread with sidebar showcases an aspect, personality, incident, or season of the Corps of Discovery's trek. Photos, illustrations, and reproduced documents add much flavor and interest to each segment. The sixteen removable replicas of maps, diary pages, letters, etc. add authenticity. Historian Rod Gragg's writing makes lively reading. Upper elementary through adult readers will pore over this volume.

The Young Nation, America 1787-1861 (10 volumes), by David M. Brownstone and Irene M. Franck (Grolier Educational, 2002, [each volume has its own ISBN], HC, no price shown). Rating: 4.

This ten-volume set of encyclopedic texts is well suited to a school library setting for research by older elementary through middle school levels. The Lewis and Clark information takes

only three pages in volume two, *The Early Years*, though the entire series creates the whole picture in which the Corps of Discovery participated.

Adult books

A Name of Her Own, by Jane Kirkpatrick (WaterBrook Press, 2003 ISBN 1-57856-499-9, PB, 388 pages. \$13.99). Rating: 4.

A Native American woman's point of view on the westward expansion fills this first book in Kirkpatrick's *Tender Ties* historical series. Marie Dorion is an Iowa Indian whose husband joins an expedition following Lewis and Clark's. Dorion becomes a friend of Sacagawea and experiences the harshness of the newly opened west. Adult fans of Kirkpatrick, historical fiction, and the west will be engrossed.

Every Fixed Star, by Jane Kirkpatrick (WaterBrook Press, 2003 ISBN 1-57856-500-6, PB, 422 pages. \$13.99). Rating: 4.

Iowa Indian Marie Dorion's experiences in the rugged west continue with repeated hardships, personal struggles, and inner wrestling about faith and purpose. The details, characters, and depth of emotion are characteristic of Kirkpatrick's writing. Women, history lovers, and readers of Pacific Northwest works will all devour this second novel in the series.

The Lewis & Clark Cookbook: Historic Recipes from the Corps of Discovery & Jefferson's America, by Leslie Mansfield (Celestial Arts, 2002, ISBN 1-58761-147-3, PB, 157 pages. \$17.95). Rating: 4.

Not only a compilation of edible recipes for today, this book is also a reference work about the foods, eating habits, and background of the foods common during the Lewis and Clark era. Just a small number of the recipes (bear with red wine, mushroom, and juniper sauce, rose geranium cake) have unusual ingredients. Each recipe is presented with a diary entry related to the food, along with botanical line drawings and color photographic plates. The recipes will largely appeal to adults, as well the text and recipe complexity.

Learning Native American Culture Through Children's Literature : Indians of the Northeast

by Jane Mouttet

Many of the Indians of the Southeastern United States faced relocation in the late 1800's. The Cherokee, Choctaw, and Seminole originally lived further north in the American Southeast, but ended up in Southern Alabama, Mississippi, and Florida, or in Oklahoma when white settlers wanted the land. So, for the sake of this column, the Southeast includes Tennessee and North Carolina south to Florida and west to Oklahoma. My favorites in this column definitely include the Mandi books, written from a Christian perspective. However, not as much native culture is included in them. If you can only purchase one fiction choice from this list, *The Talking Earth* contains the most history and culture of a native tribe.

In *Teaching and Learning about Multicultural Literature*, author and researcher Janice Diessel states, "Multicultural literature is an aspect of multicultural education. If teachers take readers beyond identification with characters, beyond creating characters in their own images, to better understanding of people who seem "other," they are helping to create a society in which people respect one another and, out of respect, listen to one another." (p122) That is my goal with this column—to introduce you to literature that will allow you to introduce your students to Native Americans so that they can learn to understand them.

CHEROKEE

The Cherokee: An Independent Nation, by Anne M. Todd. Capstone Press, 2003, HB 0-7368-1355-1, \$16.95 48p.

Non Fiction, Grade 4-7, Rating: 5.

Author Anne Todd had three consultants in the writing of *The Cherokee*. All three are affiliated with one of the branches of the Cherokee Nation. *The Cherokee: An Independent Nation* is an excellent reference book. The chapters include: "The Cherokee," "Life Among the Cherokee," "Conflicts and Culture," "Life in a Modern World," and "Sharing the Old Ways." Photographs illustrate the text. The book also includes a glossary, index, and a list of other resources. The book is part of the "American Indian Nations" series.

The Cherokee: Native Basket Weavers, by Therese DeAngelis. Capstone Press, 2003. HB 0-7368-1535-X \$16.95 32p.

Non Fiction, Grade 1-4, Rating: 5.

The Cherokee: Native Basket Weavers is part of the "America's First Peoples" series.

Author Therese DeAngelis has done an excellent job of explaining Cherokee history and culture for younger elementary students. The photos and illustrations help the text come alive. The glossary, index, and additional resources make this an excellent book. The book is divided into eight short chapters dealing with basket making, Cherokee history, village life, and the Cherokee today. Hands-on activities help introduce Cherokee culture. Ms. DeAngelis had a Cherokee chief as her consultant.

Itse Selu, by Daniel Pennington, illustrated by Don Stewart. Charlesbridge, 1994. PB 0-88106-850-0 \$6.95 32 p.

Fiction, Grades K-3, Rating: 4.

Itse Selu is the Cherokee harvest festival. In the preface of this book, Professor Charles Hudson gives an historical overview of the Cherokee people. Author Daniel Pennington has written *Itse Selu* from the viewpoint of a young boy who witnesses the ceremony. Mr. Pennington uses Cherokee words throughout the story and defines them at the bottom of each page. The colorful illustrations of Don Stewart are realistic and will help younger

children visualize the text. It appears that extensive research was done in preparation for this book.

The Mandie Series by Lois Gladys Leppard, Bethany House Publishers, PB \$4.99

Book 1 *Mandie and the Secret Tunnel*, 1983, 0-87123-320-7 144 p.

Book 2 *Mandie and the Cherokee Legend*, 1983, 0-87123-321-5 144 p.

Book 3 *Mandie and the Ghost Bandits*, 1984, 0-87123-442-4 128p.

Book 4 *Mandie and the Forbidden Attic*, 1985, 0-87123-822-5 128p.

Book 5 *Mandie and the Trunk's Secret*, 1985, 0-87123-839-X 128p.

Fiction, Grades 5-8, Rating: 4.

The Mandie books by Lois Gladys Leppard are enjoyed by pre-teens. Mandie is one-quarter Cherokee. In *Mandie and the Secret Tunnel*, Mandie's father dies. She learns she is part Cherokee and that her mother is really her step-mother. She finds the uncle she didn't know she had and her birthmother. She also meets many friends who help her

solve the mysteries throughout the series.

In *Mandie and the Cherokee Legend*, Mandie learns more about her Cherokee people. Mandie and her friends find gold which belongs to the Cherokee. Does it bring bad luck to those who find it as a legend claims? The Cherokee entrust the gold to Mandie who determines to use it to build a hospital for the Cherokee people.

In *Mandie and the Ghost Bandits*, Mandie, with her family and friends, take the gold to the bank. Their train is stopped by bandits who kidnap Mandie and her friends.

Mandie and the Forbidden Attic finds Mandie at boarding school. While there she develops a friendship with her grandmother (who separated her parents and told her birthmother she had died). She and her friends solve a mystery which leads to helping a handicapped girl.

Mandie and her friends find an old trunk in *Mandie and the Trunk's Secret*. The trunk contains a mystery, which Mandie and her friends work hard to solve. Unfortunately, the solution hurts someone they care about.

Throughout the more than thirty books in the Mandie series, Mandie and her friends learn valuable lessons. The Christian faith of the characters is evident. The Cherokee culture is shown through the lives of Mandie's Cherokee people. Lois Leppard used stories of her mother's childhood as the basis for many incidents in the series.

CHOCTAW

The Devil's Highway, by Stan Applegate, illustrated by James Watling. Peachtree Publishers, Ltd. 1998, 1-56145-184-3. \$8.95 148p.

Fiction, Grades 5-8, Rating: 4.

Hannah, a Choctaw Indian, is trying to return to her family after escaping from kidnappers. Zeb is searching for his grandfather—he's been told he is dead by some men who want their land. Together they travel the dangerous Natchez Trail from Tennessee to the southern Mississippi River. The year is 1811 and thieves and murderers travel the trail. Author Stan Applegate includes historical details and bits of Choctaw culture in *The Devil's Highway*. The sketches of James Watling illustrate one scene in each chapter. The book has a

sudden, cliffhanger ending which leaves the reader wishing the book would continue—there is a sequel. The book closes with historical notes and photographs which tell more about the actual Natchez Trace.

COPENA

Wolf Dog of the Woodland Indians, by Margaret Zehmer Searcy, illustrated by Hazel Brough. Pelican Publishing, 1998, 0-88289-778-0. \$7.45 112 p.

Fiction, Grades 5-8, Rating: 3.

Cub has a wolf-dog as a pet. A visitor convinces the village that Wolf must go. He is part wolf and could be dangerous. Winter is coming; food supplies are short. There won't be food to feed Wolf (he'd probably end up in the cooking pot). Cub decides to run away with Wolf to save his life. Wolf goes back to the wild and the visitor finds Cub and returns him to his people. The Copena Indians lived in the southeastern United States at the time of Christ. Author Margaret Searcy is a cultural anthropology instructor. She has based *Wolf Dog of the Woodland Indians* on her research of the Woodland Indians. The drawings by Hazel Brough portray the primitiveness of Indian life 2000 years ago.

CREEK (POARCH)

Grandmother Five Baskets, by Lisa Larrabee, illustrated by Lori Sawyer. 1993. Harbinger House, Inc. (0-943173-90-6) PB. \$9.99 60p.

Fiction, Grades 2-6, Rating: 4.

When her daughter asks to learn how to make baskets, Anna recalls the story of when she made her baskets with Grandmother Five Baskets, whose name is the title of the book. Most women in the community had lessons with Grandmother Five Baskets when they were twelve or thirteen, although some were older. In the course of learning to make baskets out of pine straw, the basket weaver learns about herself and about life. Not only is this book about learning to weave baskets and learning about yourself, it is about the importance of family and the passing on of family history and native culture. Lisa Larrabee researched this story well and has spent time with the Poarch Creek people. The illustrator Lori

CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS

The Cherokee: An Independent Nation
Try the recipe for Traditional Baked Apples found in the book.

The Cherokee: Native Basket Weavers
Weave a mat cushion—instructions are found in the book
Make Cherokee Cornmeal Cookies—the recipe is included in the book
Play the game Dish and Pole as described in the book.

The Devil's Highway
Do further research on the Natchez Trace. Write a newspaper with articles describing life and happenings along the trail.
Write a final chapter or sequel to the book telling about Zeb's continued search for his Grandpa and what he learns.

Itse Selu
A Cherokee story is included within the story of this book. Read the story of Tar Baby and help your students compare the two.

The Seminole: The First People of Florida
Make Seminole Honey Oranges; the recipe is included in the book

The Seminole: Patchworkers of the Everglades
Make a patchwork bookmark, instructions are included in the book.
The book contains a recipe for Wild Grape Dumplings you could make with your class.
Play Single Pole Ball Game as described in the book

The Talking Earth
Discuss the environmental message of the book that the earth is precious.
Discuss whether or not Christians can (or should) learn from traditional native teachings.

Sawyer is from the Creek Nation. Her authentic pencil drawings are beautiful.

SEMINOLE

The Seminoles, by Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve, illustrated by Ronald Himler. 1994 Holiday House, 0823411125 HB \$14.95-16.95 32p.

Non Fiction, Grade 3-7, Rating: 4.

Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve is a member of the Rosebud Sioux tribe. She opens the book with a retelling of the creation myth of the Seminoles. She tells the history and culture along with the responsibilities of each member of the tribe. Information about their lives today is also included. A map shows the area where the Seminole live. Ronald Himler has illustrated with drawings of tribal artifacts, scenes which illustrate the text, and portraits of famous tribal members. The Seminoles would be a good reference source for grades 3-7. The book contains accurate information and an index and is part of the "First Americans" series.

Seminole Children and Elders Talk Together, by E. Barrie Kavasch. Illustrated by J.J. Foux. 1999, The Rosen Publishing Group, Inc., (0-8239-5229-0) HB \$19.50 24p.

Non Fiction, Grades 2-4, Rating: 4.

Clans, families, land, celebrations, and food of the Seminole are among the topics covered in *Seminole Children and Elders Talk Together*. Author E. Barrie Kavasch uses children and elders of the Seminole tribe to tell the story. Young students researching Native American tribes will easily understand the information presented in this book, which is part of The Library of Intergenerational Learning. The full color photographs show students scenes and traditional dress they may never see otherwise.

The Seminole: The First People of Florida, by Mary Englar. Capstone Press, 2003, HB 0-7368-1358-6 \$16.95 48p.

Non Fiction, Grade 4-7, Rating: 5.

The Seminole: The First People of Florida is an excellent reference book for upper elementary students. Author Mary Englar has written an informative book. She has

divided the book into five chapters: "Who are the Seminole?" "Traditional Life," "The Seminole Wars," "Modern Seminole," and "Sharing the Traditions." The book includes maps, a recipe, a timeline, glossary, index, and other resources making it a good research choice for older elementary students. *The Seminole: The First People of Florida* is part of the "American Indian Nations" series.

The Seminole: Patchworkers of the Everglades, by Rachel A. Koestler-Grack. Capstone Press, 2003. HB 0-736-81539-2 \$16.95 32p.

Non Fiction, Grades 1-4, Rating: 5.

Seminole history, culture and patchwork is explained for young readers in *The Seminole: Patchworkers of the Everglades*. Author Rachel Koestler-Grack has written an informative book for the age group. Divided into eight chapters, the book explores the history of the Seminole people, the history of their patchwork, the Green Corn Ceremony, and the Seminole today. The book is illustrated with colorful photos. Several activities are included which will give students some hands-on learning. The book closes with a glossary, index, and list of resources, which contribute to its usefulness as a reference book. It is part of the "America's First Peoples" series.

The Talking Earth, by Jean Craighead George. Scholastic, 2000, PB 0-439-18827-X \$5.99 151p.

Fiction, Grade 5, Rating: 5.

The research of author Jean George is evident in the book *The Talking Earth*. She expertly weaves the modern and the traditional/historical together. Billie Wind has been educated on the reservation. Her practical education has caused her to doubt some of the traditional teachings of her people. The Seminole Council sends her into the Everglades alone to stay until she can believe. Billie Wind learns that the animals can "speak" to her if she will just pay attention. She also discovers the importance of preserving and respecting nature and historical artifacts and learns what can be lost if these are not preserved.

STONE AGE PERIOD INDIANS

The Charm of the Bear Claw Necklace, by Margaret Zehmer Searcy, illustrated by Hazel Brough. Pelican Publishing, 1990. HB 0-88289-821-3. \$13.95, 80 p.

Fiction, Grade 5-8, Rating: 3.

Redwolf and Spottedturtle must assume the role of the men in their small band of Indians. Redwolf's father and brother were attacked by a bear, leaving them near dead. Spottedturtle's father and the boys' uncle have gone for the witch woman to help call back the spirits of the wounded. The band has just moved to new territory after the Starving Time. Author Margaret Searcy based the story on archeological evidence from the Stone Age Period. The story is interesting and contains much information on what life may have been like in 5000 B.C. in the southeastern part of what is now the United States. The illustrations by Hazel Brough depict scenes throughout the book.

PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES

Teaching and Learning About Multicultural Literature: Students Reading Outside Their Culture in a Middle School Classroom, by Janice Hartwick Diessel. International Reading Association, 2003. PB 0-87207-457-9 \$22.95, 174p.

Jane Mouttet has been a mission school librarian on the Navajo Reservation since 1985. She lives with her husband and three children near Window Rock, Arizona. You can reach her at Jane@NativeAmericanChildrensLit.com. She'd love to hear your ideas on using these books in the classroom.

ISLAM: HOW SHALL WE LEARN?

by Kelley Westenhoff

Any review of literature since September 11, 2001 shows the world's fascination with the politics of religion. In the Christian media, it is no different. American Christians, deeply wounded by the attacks on our country and the seemingly relentless hatred of us for reasons we do not understand, seek answers. Many recently published books claim to have answers. This is a survey of those books. The books are distributed into categories that seemed logical. Many, however, cross over into more than one category.

Prophecy and Islam

Curiosity about the "end-times" has fueled a mini-industry in prophecy writing. While it is debatable whether any living humans can have a view of current events in relation to scripture with any certainty, the popularity of the topic has fueled many questions by non-believers. These are reviewed alphabetically.

From Iraq to Armageddon: The Final Showdown Approaches, by Keith Intrater. (Destiny Image Publishers, Inc., 2003, 0768421861, PB, \$11.99, 219p.) Not recommended.

Intrater brings a unique perspective to the prophecy genre, as he is a Messianic Jew with a Charismatic passion for end times prophecy. He is bold in proclaiming what he sees as fulfillment of ancient prophecy before our eyes, although his claims are pretty far-reaching for those who prefer a more traditional approach to scripture. His urgency is fueled by his concern for those of all faiths outside the fold.

Iraq: Babylon of the End-Times? by C. Marvin Pate and J. Daniel Hays. (Baker Books, 2003, 0801064791, PB, \$12.99, 144p.) Rating: 5.

This is an excellent refutation of some of the positions taken by the authors of the Left Behind series (LaHaye & Jenkins), and other vocal leaders of the prophecy community. Pate and Hays argue that some of the more dogmatic popular claims in the prophecy community have misled people and are irresponsible. The authors' mission in this book is to encourage believers to go back to scripture instead of relying on popular opinion of what scripture might mean. This is an excellent, well-written book.

Prophecy at Ground Zero, edited by William T. James. (Starburst Publishers, 2002, 1892016737, PB, \$16.99, 326p.) Rating: 5.

This book leads the pack in explaining current thought in prophecy. The author is even-handed in describing the myriad theories people pursue, and sheds light on the terminology tossing about. Referring to specific scripture as often as necessary, another title to this book could be "Prophecy for Dummies." With each chapter written by leaders in the prophecy community (Walvoord, Goodman, Van Impe, Froese, Levitt, Breese, Church), James provides a balanced, informative view of the many positions they hold without imposing

his personal belief on the reader. This is a good volume for a church library that wants to offer its readers a reference source rather than a particular theological position.

The Coming Islamic Invasion of Israel, by Mark Hitchcock. (Multnomah Publishers, Inc., 2002, 1590520483, PB, \$7.99, 108p.) Not recommended.

An expansion of a chapter from one of his earlier books, this small volume explains what Hitchcock believes scripture says about the future invasion of Israel by Russia and the Islamic nations. Certain in his opinions, Hitchcock has a dedicated following who will enjoy this book as well as his others.

The Rise of Babylon: Is Iraq At the Center of the Final Drama? by Charles H. Dyer. (Moody Publishers, 1991, revised 2003, 0802409059, PB, \$12.99, 195p.) Not recommended.

The author focuses on Saddam Hussein's part in the end-times. It is largely superseded by the American invasion of Iraq and the subsequent fall of Saddam Hussein. For those who stay with the book to the end there is a nicely presented altar call in the last chapter.

The Second Coming of Babylon, by Mark Hitchcock. (Multnomah Publishers, Inc, 2003, 1590522516, PB, \$11.99, 184p.) Not recommended.

Hitchcock argues that the deposing of Saddam Hussein furthers God's plan for the End-times, rather than retarding it. He holds to the theory that the current showdown in Iraq is just a dress rehearsal for the not too distant real showdown of the End-times. Like his other book reviewed above, in this volume Hitchcock again asserts his beliefs as fact. The redeeming quality of this book is that it offers a well-written invitation to the reader to accept Christ so as to be ready whether or not the end is near.

Understanding Islam/Witnessing to Muslims

Within this heading are two basic groups of books. The first group takes the position that Islam is fundamentally opposed to Christianity and Judaism and that faithful Muslims must be hostile towards infidels. The resulting conclusion is that there will be no peaceful way to live together until all become Christians or Christ returns. The second group presents books written by those who believe that even in the Middle East, the adherents of all three major religions can live together peacefully if they choose to honor each other's faith and culture. The outgrowth of this position is that the best witness for Christ is in how Christians behave toward others. Both groups of books are rich with love for unsaved brothers and sisters. They are reviewed alphabetically.

Answering Islam: The Crescent in Light of the Cross, by Norman L. Geisler and Abdul Saleeb. (Baker Books, 2002, 0801064309, PB, \$16.99, 366 p.) *Rating: 5.

Originally published in 1993 and updated in 2002, this book is the definitive apologetic for Christianity in light of Islam. Geisler and Saleeb (a former Muslim) open by explaining the basic doctrines of orthodox Islam. Next, using the same texts Muslim clerics use, they examine and highlight inconsistencies and points of conflict within Islam. Finally, using the Bible, the authors give a scriptural defense of the Bible, the deity of Christ, the Trinity, and salvation through Christ, each an area with which Muslims find difficulty in Christianity. This is done in a format that will help a believer give clear witness to Muslims. The appendices address some of the accusations and arguments advanced by people hostile to Christianity since September 11, 2001. The glossary, bibliography, and indices are excellent.

Daughters of Islam: Building Bridges with Muslim Women, by Miriam Adeney. (Inter-Varsity Press, 2002, 083082345X, PB, \$14.00, 224p.) *Rating: 5.

In pure readability, this is the best of all the books reviewed. The joy the author feels in the love of Christ is palpable, as is the love and respect she feels for the Muslim women she writes about. Many of them have become believers in the face of seemingly impossible conditions for faith in Christ to flourish. A true testament of triumph for Him.

Is the Father of Jesus the God of Muhammed? by Timothy George. (Zondervan, 2002, 0310247489, PB, \$12.99, 159p.) Rating: 4.

This author highlights the three fundamental Christian beliefs Islam rejects (the Trinity, the Incarnation, and redemption by divine grace through the cross of Jesus Christ) and explains how Muslims see those beliefs. He also describes some of the shared values and religious positions between the two faiths. Finally, he offers a loving plan of patience and witness through actions to help your Muslim brothers become brothers in Christ.

Islam at the Crossroads: Understanding Its Beliefs, History and Conflicts, by Paul Marshall, Roberta Green and Lela Gilbert. (Baker Press, 2002, 0801064163, PB, \$11.99, 121p.) Not recommended.

This is a cursory overview of Islam's history, current world position, and probable future. In light of more in-depth books available, this has limited appeal.

Islam: Its Prophet, Peoples, Politics and Power, by George W. Braswell, Jr. (Broadman & Holman, 1996, 0805411690, PB, \$24.99, 338p.) Rating: 4.

Similar to Geisler's book, this volume gives a history of Islam and Muhammad, Islam's theology and required practices, Muslim morals and manners and Islamic answers to contemporary issues. Additionally, and perhaps most interesting, is a chapter on Islamic Institutions, Religious Authority and Sectarianism. Braswell lived and taught in Iran for a number of years before the Iranian revolution so his direct experience with these institutions provides a good background for this work.

Islam: What Non-Muslims Should Know, by John Kaltner. (Fortress Press, 2003, 0800635833, PB, \$6.00, 136p.) Rating: 3.

This is a small volume with the bare essentials Kaltner feels non-Muslims need to know in order to understand Muslims. There is no comparison with Christianity or any other religion, just an explanation of the tenets of Islam. Useful for a study group because of its price; more curious readers can get much more depth from some of the other books reviewed.

Malay Muslims: The History and Challenge of Resurgent Islam in Southeast Asia, by Robert Day McAmis. (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2002, 0802849458, PB, \$20.00, 173p.) Rating: 4.

This is a survey of the largest Muslim community in the world, largely ignored by Western media because it is outside the Middle East. The book sheds light on the challenges that cultural differences combined with religious hegemony cause in this part of the world.

Secrets of the Koran, by Don Richardson. (Regal Books, 2003, 0830731245, HBB, \$17.99, 260p.) Not recommended.

This book is similar to the Caners' (*Islam Unveiled*) in that it takes the position that Islam is not just different, but actually hostile to anything non-Muslim. In contrast to the Caners, Don Richardson does not have the experience of growing up Muslim or Arab. Because of this, the book has a different tone—more strident and less understanding.

The Prophet and the Messiah: An Arab Christian's Perspective on Islam & Christianity, by Chawkat Moucarry. (Intervarsity Press, 2001, 0830823158, PB, \$13.00, 327p.) Rating: 4.

Moucarry, a Christian Arab, offers an outsider's insider view in this book about the differences and similarities between Christianity and Islam. He wrote this book so Christians and Muslims might enter into a dialogue rather than hide behind suspicion and hostility. Outlining the most common objections Muslims raise to Christianity, Moucarry also provides answers. He concludes with a brief foray into the contemporary issue of Israel and Palestine with a deft hand. Taking a position contrary to most American evangelical writers, Moucarry argues that the political state of Israel has no theological significance. His reasoning for this provocative claim could have been the thesis for an entire book, and is worth reading and thinking about.

Understanding Muslim Teachings and Traditions: A Guide for Christians, by Phil Parshall. (Baker Books, 1994, 2002, 08106418X, PB, \$14.99, 240p.) Rating: 5.

This book focuses not on the Koran, but on the Hadith, or the teachings of Muhammed. These are the traditions that guide a Muslim's daily life. Parshall does a great service in exploring these teachings, as these are the strictures that would get a non-Muslim in trouble when trying to witness to a Muslim. Thus, he provides another reference source for those wanting to embrace their Muslim brothers.

Unveiling Islam: An Insider's Look at Muslim Life and Beliefs, by

Ergun Mehmet Caner and Emir Fethi Caner. (Kregel Publications, 2002, 0825424003, PB, \$11.99, 256p.) Rating: 4.

In this volume, the Caners use their background and training in the Koran to show the areas in which Islam is inherently hostile to Christianity. Their story is remarkable as are the experiences they relate. The book provides a useful framework to help Christians to witness to Muslims, particularly in the Western countries.

Waging Peace on Islam, by Christine A. Mallouhi. (Intervarsity Press, 2000, 0830823042, PB, \$15.00, 348p.) Rating: 5.

This is an interesting volume written by a non-Arab Christian married to an Arab Christian. Mallouhi writes with passion for the people of the Middle East—Christian, Jew and Muslim. In describing the events of the last fifty years in that area of the world, the author weaves her own experiences into the narrative. What comes through is a love shown to her and her husband, regardless of their religious affiliation, by Muslim neighbors. In fact, the picture portrayed is completely opposite anything the Western media shows. More expansive than dry facts detailing the Ottoman Empire and current terrorism statistics, this is a heart-wrenching portrayal of the Christian and Muslim Arabs of Palestine and their plight.

What You Need to Know About Islam & Muslims, by George W. Braswell, Jr. (Broadman & Holman, 2000, 0805418296, PB, \$9.99, 183p.) Rating: 5.

Rather than reviewing the antagonistic or historical aspects of Islam, Braswell gets to the heart of ministering to and evangelizing your Muslim friends and neighbors. Covering everything from strictly religious issues (who Muslims believe Christ is vs. Christians' belief) to the day to day (why women are veiled), this book provides real answers that a Christian might want to know. This book is a cultural guide—if a country of "Islam" existed, you'd want to read this before going there so you'd understand the local customs.

Witnessing for Peace: In Jerusalem and the World, by Munib Younan. (Augsburg Fortress, 2003, 0800635981, PB, \$16.00, 169p.) Rating: 4.

Written by the Lutheran Bishop of Jerusalem, this book gives yet another different perspective to the situation in Israel and the surrounding areas. Bishop Younan was born and raised in the old city and was the son of parents made refugees by the establishment of Israel. His testimony is one of love for all of his brothers and sisters of all faiths and origins. Similar to the Moucarray book reviewed elsewhere, a thought provoking read.

Political/Historical

The books in this section provide political and historical backdrops to the books in the prior sections. Some are particular to a certain religious or ethnic community. Others try to cover more territory. All are worth reading if you have a specific interest area. They are reviewed alphabetically.

Fast Facts on the Middle East Conflict, by Randall Price. (Harvest House Publishers, 2003, 0736911421, PB, \$10.99, 198p.) Rating: 4.

This is the equivalent of a Congressional Research Service survey of a particular region or conflict. The handy topical and chronological guide contains fast facts, fast quotes and maps. A good quick resource.

Holy War for the Promised Land: Israel at the Crossroads, by David Dolan. (Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2003, 080542718X, PB, \$9.99, 280p.) Rating: 3.

Dolan was a journalist in the Middle East for twenty years. A committed Catholic, he nevertheless forged relationships in the Jewish, Muslim and Orthodox communities. These relationships enabled him to research and write on the conflicts between the groups as they have waxed and waned over the years. This is his prayer for Israel to make morally correct decisions as it moves forward, as well as his best guess on how unfolding events fulfill prophecy.

How Long O Lord?: Christian, Jewish, and Muslim Voices from the Ground and Visions for the Future in Israel-Palestine, edited by Maurine and Robert Tobin. (Cowley Publications, 2002, 1561012149, \$16.95, 291p.) Rating: 4.

Essays ranging from dry political restatements of facts with an opinion thrown in at the end, to poignant calls for peace wrenched from personal experiences. This is a nice collection of differing voices. In this one book the variety of perspectives represented by many separate books blend together for a song of hope.

In the Name of God, by Timothy J. Demy and Gary P. Stewart. (Harvest House Publishers, 2002, 0736910220, PB, \$9.99, 206p.) Rating: 5.

The subtitle of this book is: Understanding the Mindset of Terrorism, and it is exactly what the authors help the reader accomplish. Demy and Stewart go beyond the Muslim vs. everyone else arena and provide an insightful education on the tools terrorists use to humiliate victims. They cover technology, chemical, biological and radiological weapons, and tactics. The book is sobering as it clearly paints the fight against terrorism as a long term one, but because the authors are Christians, one ultimately won by the Savior.

Is Religion Killing Us? by Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer. (Trinity Press International, 2003, 1563384086, HBB, \$24.00, 109p.) Rating: 3.

This author researches the tradition of the violence of God he believes is at the heart of the Torah, the Bible, and the Koran. Society's acceptance of that tradition, he argues, is what prevents us from moving forward to peace and prosperity as a planet. Clearly a pacifist, Nelson-Pallmeyer calls for people of faith to re-examine how they interpret the ancient stories of God's violence. He urges that we should modify or set the stories aside, and emerge in the new day as a clean, just society. Well written.

So What's the Difference? by Fritz Ridenour. (Regal Books, 2001,

0830718982, PB, \$12.99, 256p.) Rating: 3.

This book is a comparative religion drive-through. Highlighting the major areas of difference between the twenty worldviews, faiths, and religions and comparing them to Christianity is a fast ride, but useful if you don't have much time to prepare. Not for the serious student of comparative religion, this is nonetheless a good resource to keep on the shelf for those questions that arise from time to time.

The Wrath of Jonah, by Rosemary R. Ruether and Herman J. Ruether. (Fortress Press, 2002, 0060668377, PB, \$18.00, 296p. Rating: 3.)

A well-titled book, the authors lament the predicament of Israel's people who do not agree with the Israeli government position regarding settlements, Palestinians, and peace. The authors work from the position of frustration and impatience with what they see as the Israeli official position that Palestinians of all religions are at best, second-class citizens. They sadly assert that this limitation of vision hurts all residents of Israel as the continuing violence prevents the country, and even the region from thriving politically, economically and spiritually.

Unholy War, by Randall Price. (Harvest House Publishers, 2001, 0736908234, PB, \$11.99, 446p.) Rating: 4.

A thorough discussion of the problem of America, Israel and Radical Islam. With 446 pages of information and statistics, this is a thoughtfully executed book of facts. Price tries to get behind the headlines and show the truth – but as it is seen from each side. Putting all of the questions asked by other volumes into this one book gives the reader a summary of the situation, but not as much depth as books from each separate viewpoint. With many photos and maps, this is a good reference source for getting started.

Who Are the Christians in the Middle East? by Betty Jane Bailey & J. Martin Bailey. (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2003, 0802810209, PB, \$20.00, 215p.) Rating: 3.

This is a fascinating survey of Middle Eastern Orthodox congregations, beliefs, differences, and traditions. Clearly a respectful work of research, this book gives bare bones facts about each of the many schisms. It is a glimpse into a world of which many Western Christians are ignorant.

Dated but Worthwhile

Although we limited our request to publishers for books published recently, these arrived as well. All of them were worth reading despite their older publication date. While some of the political situations described in them happened quite a while ago, they sound as fresh as today's headlines because very little has changed in the Middle East. They are reviewed alphabetically.

Building Bridges: Christianity and Islam, by Fouad Elias Accad. (NavPress, 1997, 0891097953, PB, \$12.00, 158p.) Rating: 5.

Pastor Accad grew up in Lebanon in the Greek Orthodox Church and dedicated his life to bringing Christ to Muslims. This book, although

older, is still the nuts and bolts plan of how to talk to Muslims about Christ. It ranges from the very basic principle number one: God has a purpose for our lives, through the more sophisticated principles six and seven: Making God ours, and what to expect when we become His. Accad, who went home to the Lord in 1994, in this work used compassion, love and frames of reference that will resonate with Muslims who are seeking Truth.

Ishmael Instructs Isaac: An Introduction to the Qur'an for Bible Readers, by John Kaltner. (Liturgical Press, 1999, 0814658822, PB, \$24.95, 308p.) Rating: 4.

This presents an examination of six major stories or characters as portrayed in the Koran as well as the Bible. The six are Adam and Creation, Noah and the Flood, Abraham, Moses, Mary and Jesus. Although well written, and very interesting, this book serves more as a companion book rather than a main reference book. For a library with a healthy budget, this would be a nice complement to your collection.

Islam Revealed: A Christian Arab's View of Islam, by Anis A. Shorosh. (Thomas Nelson, 1988, 0785264647, PB, \$14.99, 316p.) Rating: 4.

Although this book was published in 1988 and much of the information about the politics of the region is dated, the value in this book is that Dr. Shorosh's text shows words of the Koran in Arabic and English. An outgrowth of his famous debates with various Muslim clerics, passages from both holy books are dissected and explained. In this, Shorosh refutes most of the points Muslims raise in their misunderstanding of Christianity. Because of his clarity and the Arabic, this book could be an excellent reference in talking with Muslims about the differences between Christianity and Islam.

Notes From Ramallah, 1939, by Nancy Parker McDowell. (Friends United Press, 2002, 0944350593, PB, \$18.00, 116p.) Rating: 4.

"Notes" is a simple journal kept by the author when she was a young teacher in the Ramallah Friends' School in 1939. Israel was not yet a nation, the British were trying to keep a lid on the hostility, and many Muslim Arabs sent their children to a Christian school. A glimpse of how life used to be and still is in some ways.

A former trial lawyer, Kelley Westenhoff is now mom to Lindy and John and wife to Charles. In her free time, she serves as librarian for Dominion Christian School, a classical Christian school in Oakton, Virginia.

INTEREST “HIGH AS THE SKY” IN ORVILLE AND WILBUR WRIGHT

by Helen Hunter

Many cities and towns across the nation celebrated the 100th anniversary of Orville and Wilbur Wright’s first flight.

In Cedar Rapids, Iowa, the art community used the Wright Brothers as a theme for their art-in-the city exhibit, “Fly Wright—Just Plane Art.” The Renaissance Group, Inc. and the Cedar Rapids Convention and Visitors Bureau sponsored an exhibit that opened on June 6 and continues through September 29 in downtown Cedar Rapids.

Artists could choose between an old-fashioned biplane model (much like the Wright Brothers’ plane), or a modern single-wing plane. With free rein to decorate, add to, or take away from their planes, artists created clever and unusual flying machines. One artist, for example, cut out designs all over his plane making it look like a piece of lace and named it “Lighter Than Air.” “WOOD You, Could You, On a Plane” refers to Cedar Rapids famous artist Grant Wood and provides a collage of several of Wood’s paintings on the body and the wings.

Interested persons may view some of the planes at www.fly-wright.com. Click on the propeller and you’ll hear the airplane engine firing up.

Not far from Cedar Rapids, near Chicago, Illinois, in the suburb of Glen Ellyn, Mark Miller, Co-President with Ted Craft of The Wright Redux Association (and brother of my son-in-law) participated in building a successful working replica of the Wright Brothers’ 1903 aircraft. Many others have tried and not been successful.

The replica was built at Miller Woodworking in Glen Ellyn. The group worked primarily from information in the Wright Brothers’ journals, original photographs, and information from the National Air and Space Museum. The plane, built from Sitka spruce and ash, just as the Wright Brothers’ aircraft was, includes an exact copy of their 13 horsepower engine.

The replica, called “Spirit of Glen Ellyn,” successfully went airborne on April 28, 2003, at Clow International Airport in Bolingbrook, Illinois, flying 136 feet from the end of the launch rail. “It’s hard to describe what yesterday’s flight means to this group,” said Miller in an interview posted by Aero-News.net. “All the work and all the planning came down to one moment. It just came together unbelievably well.” Miller further stated that he continues to be awed by what Orville and Wilbur Wright accomplished 100 years ago.

The “Spirit of Glen Ellyn” next appeared on August 16-17 at the Chicago Air and Water Show at North Avenue Beach in Chicago. Then on September 20-21, 2003 the replica was one of the highlights of the Centennial of Flight in the City of Chicago when it flew again. Following those two flights, the plane was donated and will be on display at the Museum of Science and Industry as part of the museum’s permanent aviation collection.

When asked if the “Spirit of Glen Ellyn” would fly on the 100th anniversary date of December 17, Miller replied, “We would like that, but the weather conditions are so uncertain in December in Illinois. We want to be remembered for a successful flight.”

According to a May 1, 2003 article in Aero-News.net, May 1, 2003, the History Channel planned to “video tape the effort to fly the “Spirit of Glen Ellyn” for inclusion in a documentary on the centennial of flight.” The History Channel plans to run it later this fall.

Anyone interested in learning more about the Wright Redux Association may visit their website at www.wrightredux.org or on a trip to Chicago visit “Spirit of Glen Ellyn” exhibit at the Museum of Science and Industry.

WRIGHT BROTHERS BOOKS-A-PLENTY

Inventors! Creators! American Heros! Brothers! All these words and more describe Orville and Wilbur Wright and their twentieth-century achievement of being the first men to make a controlled, powered flight—a pivotal event in American history.

One thing is sure, children who read these books should see what could happen when families cooperate and work together.

Each of the following titles tells “the whole story”—from the Wright brothers’ youth through their successful flight. Yet each title remains unique because of presentation, viewpoint, addition of photographs, use of color, illustrations, and length. The two that stand out, in my opinion, are *My Brothers’ Flying Machine* and *One Fine Day*. You may want to consider one, two, or several of the following titles about the Wright Brothers and their lives for your library collection.

Children’s Books – Ages 8-12

THE WRIGHT BROTHERS: A Flying Start by Elizabeth MacLeod (Kids Can Press, 2002, ISBN 1-55074-935-8. (Paperback.), ISBN 1-55074-933-1. (HB), 32 pages, \$14.95) Rating: 4.

This history of the Wright Brothers is done in 13 two-page chapters. Each chapter takes the reader through another phase of Orville and Wilbur’s lives—from who they are and where they grew up, to how they developed an interest in flying machines; from their first experiment with flying to their successful flight at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. The author includes chapters on the tests and trials they went through, as well as a chapter on the space program that has evolved out of that first brave flight. Each chapter invites you in with interesting page layouts, photographs of the Wrights

and their family, maps, copies of correspondence and telegrams, and photographs of their airplanes. Diagrams show children what different aeronautical terms mean, such as pitch, roll, and yaw. Cartoon figures of Orville and Wilbur speak in bubbles above their heads to clarify the text. A history of flight, Wilbur and Orville's lives at a glance, and a comprehensive index are included at the end of the book.

INTO THE AIR: The Story of the Wright Brothers' First Flight, by Robert Burleigh (Silver Whistle, Harcourt, Inc., 2002, ISBN 0-15-202492-1. HB, 48 pages, \$16.00) Rating: 3.

For children who enjoy reading comic books, this story of Orville and Wilbur Wright is done in cartoon format and written in first person. Conversation bubbles impart the information. Rectangular boxes provide other data important to keep the story moving and to change time and place.

THE WRIGHT BROTHERS, by Sheila Wyborny (Kidhaven Press, 2003, ISBN 0-7377-1369-0. HB, 48 pages, \$23.70) Rating: 3.

This four-chapter biography will inform and inspire young inventors. Written in the third person, it makes use of color photographs of paintings as well as photograph reproductions. Each chapter is from seven to ten pages long. An introduction, a glossary, and an annotated bibliography enhance the book. Of the 48 pages, photographs are included on 22 of them. This book is part of The Inventors and Creators Series. Other inventors and creators included in the series are Alexander Graham Bell, Albert Einstein, and Steven Spielberg.

MY BROTHERS' FLYING MACHINE: Wilbur, Orville, and Me, by Jane Yolen (Little Brown, 2003, ISBN 0-316-97159-6. HB, 32 pages, \$16.95) Rating: 5.

This delightful picture story is told from the viewpoint of Orville and Wilbur's only sister, Katharine, "three years younger than Orv, to the very day." This book gives you the history of the Wright brothers through the eyes of a proud and close family member. When Katharine expresses her concern for her brothers' safety, Will replies, "If you're looking for perfect safety, sit on the fence and watch the birds." Katharine helped to make her brothers successful by reminding them when their suits needed to be pressed or when their socks didn't match. The story is exceptionally believable told from the sister's viewpoint.

TO FLY: The Story of the Wright Brothers, by Wendie C. Old (Clarion Books, 2002, ISBN 0-618-13347-X. HB, 48 pages, \$16.00) Rating: 5.

This picture book biography is divided into fifteen chapters—most of which include one page of text and one full-page four-color illustration. The personable chapters trace the work that the two Wright brothers did together to develop the first machine-powered aircraft. The crude watercolor sketches enhance the text. This book includes A Flight Timeline at the end.

ONE FINE DAY: A Radio Play, by Elizabeth Van Steenwyk (Eerdman's Books for Young Readers, 2003, ISBN 0-8028-5234-3.

HB, 32 pages, \$16.00) Rating: 5.

Though published in picture book format to be read through from beginning to end for information, what makes this book unusual and fun is that Van Steenwyk has written an authentic, believable account of the Wright Brothers story to be performed as a radio broadcast. The opening pages detail how to make your own sound effects for wind, fire, a door opening, and an airplane motor. There are places for "music up" and "music out" and reading parts for four people: two narrators, Orville Wright, and Wilbur Wright. What fun for a home school group or a classroom to produce where children not only learn about the Wright brothers, but they also learn about producing a radio drama! The sepia toned illustrations add to the "old-fashioned" appeal of the story, as well as the radio theme.

Children's Books, Ages 8-14

THE WRIGHT BROTHERS, by George Sullivan (Scholastic, 2002, ISBN 0-439-26320-4. PB, 127 pages, \$4.50) Rating: 3.

Each of the 15 chapters in this story of Orville and Wilbur Wright includes at least one black and white photograph or sketch. Included are excerpts from the Wright Brothers own diaries, letters, and notebooks. The book also includes a Chronology, Bibliography, and suggestions for Further Reading. This is part of Scholastic's "In Their Own Words" Series.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE WRIGHT BROTHERS, by Michael J. Martin (Lucent Books, Thomson Learning, Inc. 2003, ISBN 1-56006-847-7, HB, 128 pages, \$27.45) Rating: 3.

This textbook is part of "The Lucent Importance Of" biography series that prides itself on its frequent use of quotations from a wide variety of primary and secondary sources. This book has nine chapters with catchy titles such as "The Bird Men of 1908." The author makes use of subtitles, boxes, and many black and white photographs. "The Importance of the Wright Brothers" would be most useful in middle school libraries.

Adult Books

FIRST IN FLIGHT: The Wright Brothers in North Carolina, by Stephen Kirk (John F. Blair Publisher, 1995, ISBN 0-89587-127-0, PB, 341 pages, \$16.95) (Grades 11-12). Rating: 3.

Kirk is strictly interested in the Wright Brothers' contribution and effect on the once-desolate region of the Outer Banks in North Carolina, perhaps giving it a regional audience. The author admits that "this is the kind of book Orville Wright wouldn't have liked" because it involves the personality of the inventors rather than only the technical explanations which Orville preferred. The lively, often humorous narrative, describes the full range of the Wright brothers' experiences on the Outer Banks including their leisure-time pursuits, the friendships with the locals, as well as their experiments. It is written in a very friendly, easy-to-read manner.

FIRST FLIGHT: The Wright Brothers and the Invention of the Airplane, by T. A. Heppenheimer (John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2003, ISBN 0-471-40124-2, HB, 394 pages, \$30.00) Rating: 4.

Heppenheimer, an acclaimed aviation writer, writes a compelling biography/technological history of the Wright brothers that traces their interest in mechanics, engineering, mathematics, and flight to their earliest childhood, when they “lived together, played together, worked together, and, in fact, thought together.” It is a fully detailed chronicle of the brothers’ three-year struggle to accomplish flight. He debunks the theory that Orville and Wilbur Wright were amateurs whose success was merely the result of persistence or serendipity and proves that they were geniuses whose feat equaled those of Thomas Edison, Alexander Graham Bell, and other inventors of the age. Aviation buffs, as well as history and biography readers, will enjoy this tale of real people.

THE FLYERS: In Search of Wilbur & Orville Wright, by Noah Adams (Crown Publishing Group, 2003, ISBN 1-4000-4912-1, HB, 212 pages, \$22.00) Rating: 4.

Unlike some of the other books about the Wright brothers, this book explores the family relationships, including the deep, complicated, and fascinating relationship between Orville and his sister Katharine. Author, Noah Adams is the longtime host of *All Things Considered* and a national correspondent for National Public Radio.

AVIATION: THE FIRST 100 YEARS, by Bill Gunston (Barrons, 2002, ISBN 0-7641-5423-0, HB, 192 pages, \$29.95) (Grades 11-12). Rating: 4.

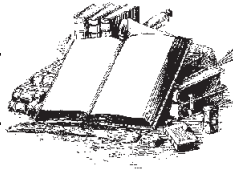
As the title implies, this book covers the history of the airplane from before the Wright Brothers successful flight in 1903 to today’s joint strike fighter planes, and everything in between. It chronicles flying longer, faster, and higher and finally breaching outer space. Bill Gunston is a leading authority on aviation. Page after page of over 650 photographs—from sepia and black and white to four-color—make for compelling page turning. This is a coffee table book that you can pick up, open, and read several pages, learning something new about aviation each time.

TAKING FLIGHT: Inventing the Aerial Age From Antiquity Through the First World War, by Richard P. Hallion (Oxford University Press, 2003, ISBN 0-19-516035-5, HB, 531 pages, \$35.00) Rating: 4.

Hallion, an international authority on aviation, draws on journals, diaries, and memoirs of aviation pioneers in a book that he has divided into what he calls “seven distinct phases to the invention of flight.” A scholarly tome, it includes one chapter on the Wright brothers (Chapter Ten “Enter the Wrights”). He points out at the beginning of his book that the story of the Wright brothers’ famous Kitty Hawk flight has been told many times before. “Forests have already fallen before the pens, typewriters, and word processors of authors extolling the heroic era of early aviation,” he writes. In this book he claims to expose the popular myth of the Wright brothers as untutored and working in isolation, single-handedly inventing the airplane, and making possible every other plane that has flown to this day. He argues that there were many others in America and abroad

whose work was depended upon for that first successful, controlled flight in 1903.

Helen Hunter, freelance writer in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, is a graduate of Mount Mercy College, the author of three books, two of which may be seen at www.hunterhousepublications.com



Alaska's 12 days of summer / by Pat Chamberlin-Calamar; illustrated by Shannon Cartwright. LCCN 2002191139. Seattle, Sasquatch Books, 2003. Hardcover, 1570613419, \$16.95.

E. Counting; Tundra animals; Alaska. unip.
 Grades K-4 (5) / Rating: 3

The text of *Alaska's 12 Days of Summer* will immediately be familiar to most children: the book is a takeoff on the song "The 12 Days of Christmas," but uses twelve of Alaska's native animals instead of the partridges and maids a-milking of the Christmas tune. Pat Chamberlin-Calamar's words nicely fit the original tune, beginning with "On the first day of summer, Alaska showed to me a black bear in a spruce tree." While there's a slight chance a line or two may seem bumpy to children keeping the words

to the Christmas song in their heads, they should enjoy the novelty of Chamberlin-Calamar's version. A bonus: in smaller type at the bottom of each two-page spread is information on the animal featured: where and how they live; what they eat; what they look like; etc. This factual information on the animals is clearly written and interesting, and easily slips a few painless lessons to the kid readers.

Shannon Cartwright's full color illustrations are gently cartoon-like while remaining detailed and realistic. They start out showing just the black bear in the spruce tree, but as each group of animals joins in, leaping, a-dancing, and splashing, the final illustrations get amusingly crowded. Child readers carefully observing the

antics of all these animals, especially those cavorting in the background, will be delighted.

The music and lyrics to the song are included on the book's final page. *Alaska's 12 Days of Summer* is a book children will return to again and again. A nice choice for all collections.

Rosemarie DiCristo

All in one hour / by Susan Stevens Crummel; illustrations by Dorothy Donohue. LCCN 2002006784. New York, Marshall Cavendish, 2003. Hardcover, 0761451293, \$16.96.

E. Night--Fiction; Stories in rhyme. unip.
 Grades K-4 (5) / Rating: 5

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

5 Excellent

4 Very good

3 Good

Recommended with caution: Note cautions in the review text

Not recommended: Note reasons in review text

* Outstanding Book

Commonly Used Abbreviations in CLJ Reviews

LCCN Library of Congress cataloging number
 C Canadian Library cataloging number
 ISBN International Standard Book Number

HBB Hardbound book
 PAP Paperbound book
 LIB Library edition
 LGP Large print book
 CAS Audiocassette

CDR CD-ROM
 VID Videocassette
 LLB Loose-leaf binding

All in One Hour, written by Susan Stevens Crummel and conceived by illustrator Dorothy Donohue, tells the story of a wild and crazy chase through city streets early one morning. Taking place "all in one hour," it begins innocently enough when a cat chases a mouse. Then a dog chases the cat, a dog catcher chases the dog, a bank robber chases the dog catcher (his loot accidentally falls into her net), a policeman chases the robber... until it all comes to a crashing halt.

Using very simple language (just a sentence or two per page), regular repetition, and occasional rhyme, Crummel tells a simple story—the chase is the only plot element—yet it's a complete story, sure to satisfy its age group. The simplicity makes the book a delight to read aloud and ensures that it will appeal to children beginning to read on their own.

Visually, the book is also a delight. Its boldly-colored pages are royal blue, not white. The frantic images of the animals and people involved in the chase are not drawn but instead are collages that artist Donohue cuts from different textured papers, then layers to create a 3-D effect. They are expressive and hilarious, truly enhancing the action, and range from merely clever (digital clock images of the passing time appear on each two-page spread) to slightly wicked (the policeman is first seen eating a doughnut). There's so much going on in the background of each illustration that children will love poring over every page, and will surely return to *All in One Hour* again and again.

The urban setting is a plus as city settings are not used too often. The story's slapstick humor is sure to produce giggles. And there's a hint, at book's end, that the chase is about to begin all over again. Recommended.

Rosemarie DiCristo

***Bath time* / written by Eileen Spinelli; illustrated by Janet Pedersen. LCCN 2002015196. New York, Marshall Cavendish, 2003. Hardcover, 076145117X, \$14.95.**

E. Baths—Fiction; Toys—Fiction; Stories in rhyme. 32 p.

Grades PS-3 / Rating: 3

What's taking a bath without a few favorite toys? And the more toys the more fun. At least that's what one young penguin thinks as he gets ready for his nightly bath. Eileen Spinelli, author of many picture books, adds to her collection of verse and whimsy with this fun new book, *Bath Time*. The scene is a snug little igloo where a momma penguin gets her little penguin ready for his bath. As momma starts the water running the little penguin begins running for all his favorite toys, from the sublime to the silly. As the bath fills up with water so the tub fills up with toys! In bouncy

verse we watch the little penguin add his plastic porpoise, rubber snake, toy whale, his squirting pistol, and even his fishing pole to his bath, until there are more toys than little penguin!

Spinelli takes a familiar night time routine and turns it into a fun, amusing escapade. Janet Pedersen adds a quaint twist portraying the child as a penguin in comfy igloo. The watercolor and charcoal drawn illustrations are as whimsical and bright as the author's rhymed verse, ensuring this to be a book as a "read it again!" Even though the ending is predictable it is done in such a way both children and adults will smile at how everything all works out.

Pam Webb

***Before I was your mother* / written by Kathryn Lasky; illustrated by LeUyen Pham. LCCN 2001007544. San Diego, Harcourt, 2003. Hardcover, 0152014640, \$16.**

E. Mothers and daughters—Fiction; Mothers—Fiction. unip.

Grades PS-2 / Rating: 5

It's hard for little girls to imagine that their mothers were ever young, ever got into mischief, played with toys, were noisy, got scolded, or were ever anything but a grown-up. In *Before I Was Your Mother*, Kathryn Lasky does a great job of bringing that idea down to a child's level, wonderfully assisted by LeUyen Pham's watercolor, pen and ink, and collage illustrations. Lasky contrasts the mother as she is today: one who runs around with a to-do list wearing sensible shoes; with the child she used to be: a girl who put on a circus in the back yard with her best friend and her dog, and wore her favorite cowboy boots to her cousin's wedding.

She then tells her daughter about the doll, the teddy bear, the fuzzy duck, and the velvet seal she had as a little girl. They were all named Katie and she loved telling them stories. The mother ends by telling her daughter that she is now the Katie she reads to, her only Katie. The storyline extends onto each flyleaf, where more illustrations show snapshots of some of the moments mentioned in the book, such as the author as a little girl in cowboy boots, being hugged by a woman in a wedding dress.

Betty Winslow

***Bravemole* / Lynne Jonell. New York, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2002. Hardcover, 0399239626, \$15.99.**

E. Moles (Animals)—Fiction; Courage—Fiction. unip.

Grades 1-4 / Rating: 5

Mole lives in an ordinary house with an ordinary family and works an ordinary job. He is awed by the Smartmoles, Bigmoles, and Starmoles who have a lot to say and do in the world. He wishes he wasn't so ordinary. His mole wife

says he is strong, brave and steady. One morning, Mole leaves for work and looks up to thank Overmole for his family. Tragically, Dragons come and attack the mountains. Moles are crying for their families. Some are trapped from the fire and explosions. Mole cries out to Overmole. He hopes his family is safe. He then knows what he must do—dig. He digs to find the moles trapped by the rubble. He digs until his paws are raw. He digs until he is worn out. The Smartmoles, Bigmoles, and Starmoles have nothing to say that will help what people are feeling. Then they all begin to cheer for Mole, who has done what he could to help. They call him Bravemole. Mole doesn't feel brave. He feels tired, sad, and helpless. When they ask Bravemole what they can do, he replies, "Be brave, be strong, be steady."

Lynne Jonell writes and illustrates a moving fable based on the events of 9/11. The water-soluble crayon illustrations are warm and bright. The story helps children face their feelings and find hope. It accurately portrays the rescue workers as they poured out their lives for their neighbors. Bravemole teaches what we can do to make a difference, even if we think we are ordinary.

Jeanne Doyon

***The bravest mouse* / by Maria Barbero; translated by Sibylle Kazeroid. LCCN 2002001430. New York, North-South Books/Chronicle Books, 2002. Hardcover, 0735817081, \$15.95.**

E. Self-perception—Fiction; Mice—Fiction; Heroes—Fiction; Cats—Fiction. unip.

Grades PS-2 / Rating: 4

The Bravest Mouse by Maria Barbero is a delightfully encouraging story about how outward appearance has nothing to do with inner qualities. Her bold illustrations enhance the story visually for young and old with rich blues, yellows, and greens.

Sasha the mouse notices his reflection one morning and thinks he looks hideous when he sees a black circle around his eye. He begins to question why his mother would think him handsome when no one else's eye looks like his. He tries to cover it up by dusting his face with white flour, but it washes off when he takes his bath.

One day something happens to make Sasha forget all about his looks. He hears the other mice panicking as they babble to one another; something is terribly wrong. His mother explains the awful cat, Barnabas, a very skilled hunter is back. Everyone is terrified. A meeting is called and they decide someone must try to get a bell around Barnabas' neck so they can hear him and have time to hide. When no one comes forward, Sasha bravely volunteers to try. Sasha comes up with an ingenious plan and becomes the hero for belling the cat. All of the

young mice want to be like their hero and paint a black circle around their eye to be like Sasha.

The story is reminiscent of David and Goliath. The strong qualities of bravery and loyalty make you want to cheer when Sasha accomplishes the nearly impossible task. It also shows us that our appearance is often something we see as an obstacle but has nothing to do with our value and worth.

Jeanne Doyon

Captain's purr / Madeleine Floyd. LCCN 2002155323. Orlando, Harcourt, 2003. Hardcover, 0152049398, \$16.

E. Cats—Fiction. unip.

Grades PS / Not recommended

Madeleine Floyd tells us of her cat Captain. He does the normal things that cats do—sleeping, washing, and eating. And then Captain goes out at night. The author imagines Captain rowing a boat across the river to his sweetheart's house. These sweetheart cats spend the evening holding paws in the moonlight. Then Captain rows his boat home and, happy after his night's wooing, he purrs.

The illustrations by the author are impressionistic watercolors and aside from the boat rowing and wooing sequence, are quite realistic and lovely. The first picture of Captain shows a realistic cat with natural looking eyes, but when he is pictured in the row boat with his sweetheart, both cats have anthropomorphized faces and his eyes are round and cartoonish. This contrast is most likely because Captain's rendezvous is imaginary.

As a cat lover I enjoy this book, but realize that there is not much substance here for the average reader. Young children may enjoy Captain's tame feats, but older children will have little interest.

Karla J. Castle

Christopher Bear's first Christmas / Stephanie Jeffs; illustrated by Jacqui Thomas. LCCN 2002022976. Minneapolis, Augsburg Books/Augsburg Fortress, 2002. Hardcover, 0806643498, \$5.99.

E. Teddy bears—Fiction; Jesus Christ—Nativity—Fiction; Schools—Fiction; Christmas—Fiction. 29 p.

Grades PS-2 / Rating: 5

Joe takes Christopher Bear everywhere he goes. One day, they go to preschool and discover twinkling lights. Miss Rosie tells them that it's nearly Christmas. Miss Rosie helps the class to make big, glittery stars. Christopher Bear watches and smiles. Joe gets a pair of wings out of the dress up box. Then Miss Rosie outfits two other students to play the part of Joseph and Mary.

Christopher Bear's First Christmas by Stephanie Jeffs is a simple retelling of long-ago events in Bethlehem that will delight very young readers. Simple watercolors by Jacqui Thomas perfectly illustrate the written words and will engage preschoolers as they listen to the story about the birth of God's Son.

Laurie Woolery

Hannah Mae O'Hannigan's Wild West Show / written and illustrated by Lisa Campbell Ernst. LCCN 2002026912. New York, Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2003. Library Binding, 068985191X, \$16.95.

E. Cowgirls—Fiction; Hamsters—Fiction; West (U.S.)—Fiction. unip.

Grades K-3 (PS) / Rating: 4

On the day Hannah Mae O'Hannigan was born her cowboy Uncle Coot sent her a cowgirl hat. From that moment on Hannah wanted to be a cowgirl. Her parents listen to her and then, along with Uncle Coot, become her partners in reaching her ambition. Working with her trusty cow pony, Sassafra, as well as a herd of wild hamsters who threaten the ranch, Hannah Mae O'Hannigan aims to set up a Wild West Show.

A Junior Library Guild Selection, *Hannah Mae O'Hannigan* will appeal to everybody: those who read it for themselves, those who listen, those who read it to others. Author Lisa Ernst, a wanna-be cowgirl when a child, welds words and pictures into a whole intriguing, delightfully imaginative story. The cartoon style illustrations, rendered in pastel ink and pencil, glow with light and depth.

Hannah Mae O'Hannigan is a delightful story, yet having to take its place beside other delightful stories. It will be useful in all libraries and schools as well as making a welcome gift.

Donna Eggett

How I became a pirate / written by Melinda Long ; illustrated by David Shannon. LCCN 2002006308. San Diego, Harcourt, 2003. Hardcover, 0152018484, \$16.00.

E. Pirates—Fiction. unip.

Grades PS-3 / Rating: 4.

Jeremy Jacob is at the beach with his family when he meets Braid Beard and his motley crew. Jeremy has been building a sand castle. The pirates recognize him as a digger and that is just what they need, a digger to help them bury their treasure. That is how Jeremy becomes a pirate. He loves the pirate life—no one makes him eat his vegetables (because there aren't any). But there are some things he misses when it is bedtime and there is no one to tuck him in or read to him, and a good night kiss is out of the question.

The pirates' plans to bury their treasure on a remote desert island are foiled when they are caught in a storm and their mast is split in half. Jeremy solves their problem by offering his own backyard. The pirates leave Jeremy as guard over their treasure and promise to return if ever he needs them. Jeremy returns to his normal life and soccer practice wholeheartedly.

The illustrations by David Shannon are acrylic on illustration board. Much detail and action make them a delight, enhancing the story. This is not Shannon's first pirate book. He also illustrated *The Ballad of the Pirate Queens*, written by Jane Yolen. He is the illustrator of *No, David!*, a 1999 Caldecott Honor Book.

Anyone who has dreamed of being a pirate will love this book by Melinda Long. It definitely has a place on my shelf. It is a fun read aloud with opportunity for character voices and sound effects.

Karla J. Castle

It's not fair / by Carl Sommer; illustrated by Greg Budwine. (Another Sommer-time story.) LCCN 2002026167. Houston, Tex., Advance, 2003. Library Binding, 1575370700, \$16.95.

E. Bumblebees—Fiction; Cooperativeness—Fiction. unip.

Grades K-4 / Rating: 3

When Buzzie, a worker bee, gets temporarily trapped inside the home of Danny and Mary, two human children, she's insulted by Danny's jeering comments that worker bees are "foolish" because they do all the work. Once Buzzie escapes, she thinks a little too much on Danny's words, until she convinces herself he's right: it's not fair that the worker bees do everything. Buzzie promptly convinces her fellow bees to rebel against the queen bee and start their own hive. Unfortunately, without a leader, the bees can't agree on anything and argue constantly, so no work gets done.

It's Not Fair is one of the newest entries in Carl Sommer's Another Sommer-Time Story series (picture books written to gently teach values to children). Its message on the benefits of obedience and teamwork is delivered painlessly enough to be entertaining rather than preachy. The language used is simple and direct.

Greg Budwine's bold, brightly-colored illustrations, heavy on browns, oranges, greens, and purples, complement the action and vividly bring Buzzie and her friends to life. A bonus: the words and music to the "Working Together" song the bees sing is included on the book's final page.

Some minor concerns: young children may be disturbed when Tilly, a worker bee, dies after stinging a mouse who was trying to enter the hive. Also, although the rebel bees are initially

bitterly antagonistic to the rest of the hive, they repent instantly just because Buzzie tells them she was wrong to dislike being a worker bee. However, this is a minor point; overall the story is well done, believable, and suitable for its age group.

Rosemarie DiCristo

***Little Buggy runs away* / Kevin O'Malley. LCCN 2002014377. San Diego, Gulliver Books/Harcourt, 2003. Hardcover, 0152165509, \$16.00.**

E. Insects—Fiction; Runaways—Fiction. unip.
Grades 1-2 / Rating: 4.

Little Buggy is running away from home. He is assisted by two meddling ants named Henry and Louie. The ants help him find a new home in a pen cap, they bring him a hunk of old stinky cheese to eat, a cough drop in case he gets sick, and a comic book to read at bedtime. The ants leave him alone once they have him tucked into his new home. Lightning Bug guides Little Buggy back to be reunited with Big Buggy and home again.

Author/illustrator Kevin O'Malley creates pen and ink drawings colored by computer. They are colorful and interesting. The characters convey emotions and facial expressions without being overly anthropomorphized.

The story is carried by the supporting characters: Louie, Henry, Lightning Bug, and Big Buggy, who do all the talking. Little Buggy doesn't say a word, but his face says it all. He's angry, then surprised, then disgruntled, then scared, then sad and, finally, happy to be home. This is a sweet story and any child who has contemplated running away from home will identify with Little Buggy. Big Buggy's love for Little Buggy is clearly and tenderly expressed. *Little Buggy Runs Away* is recommended as a fun read aloud.

Karla J. Castle

***Time remote* / by Carl Sommer; illustrated by Greg Budwine. (Another Sommer-Time story.) LCCN 99016375. Houston, Tex., Advance, 2000.**

E. Conduct of life—Fiction; Time travel—Fiction. unip.

Grades K-2 (3-4) / Rating: 4

***Mayor for a day* / by Carl Sommer; illustrated by Dick Westbrook. (Another Sommer-Time story.) LCCN 99035276. Houston, Tex., Advance, 2000.**

E. City and town life—Fiction; Behavior—Fiction; Conduct of life—Fiction. unip.

Grades K-2 (3-4) / Rating: 4

***The ugly caterpillar* / by Carl Sommer; illustrated by Greg Budwine. (Another Sommer-Time story.) LCCN 99035282. Houston, Tex., Advance, 2000.**

E. Conduct of life—Fiction; Beauty, Personal—Fiction; Insects—Fiction. unip.

Hardcover \$9.95, Library ed., \$16.95, Hardcover w/Cassette or CD, \$16.95.

Grades K-2 (3-4) / Rating: 4

Advance Publishing is reissuing its Another Sommer-Time Stories as read-along books paired with CDs. They are narrated by author Carl Sommer, whose friendly, upbeat voice nicely suits the tales. (Sommer also does all the dialog). Sound effects, while simple (applause, whooshes, cheers, etc.), are appropriate. Background music often includes classical music. Each CD also includes a light-rock song that emphasizes that book's lesson.

Time Remote tells of Christopher, a lazy dreamer hoping to coast through life. When a scientist neighbor invents a device that speeds up time, Christopher uses it to avoid all responsibilities. Unfortunately the more Christopher skips through life, the more his problems grow. The story is nicely told and Christopher is likeable and believable. His desire to avoid "bad" things will resonate with children, who'll also clearly see how his desire to avoid anything bad causes his problems.

In *Mayor for a Day*, Davy wins that position in a contest. His only proclamation, to eliminate all rules, results in chaos and Davy quickly learns that some rules and responsibilities are necessary. In *The Ugly Caterpillar*, Katy, ridiculed by the other animals for being ugly, gains their respect when she becomes a butterfly. It's a plot twist that's been done before, but it's nicely done, with a good lesson that "things like love and kindness, honesty and goodness — those are the important things that make someone beautiful." (Note: both these books were reviewed in *CLJ*, Spring/Summer 2002.

Mayor for a Day is illustrated by Dick Westbrook. *The Ugly Caterpillar* and *Time Remote* are illustrated by Greg Budwine. All books contain bright, appealing illustrations that deftly highlight the action. (One quibble: Katy is supposed to be ugly, but she's the cutest-looking animal in her book).

The books, enjoyable as plain-old picture books, are nicely enhanced by these well-done and highly entertaining CDs. Children will find it easy and fun to read along.

Rosemarie DiCristo

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***My dad's job* / story by Peter Glassman; pictures by Timothy Bush. LCCN 2001020132. New York, Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2003. Library Binding, 068982890X, \$15.95.**

E. Work—Fiction; Fathers—Fiction. unip.

Grades K-3 (PS) / * Rating: 5

My Dad's Job is a "read-it-again book", whether by children in grades two and three reading it for themselves, or for three year olds through first graders listening to it.

This saga of a child's curiosity about his Dad's work fantasizes through a whole week of questions. Does working for a team mean Dad is a star athlete? Are flaming arrows and boiling oil part of a hostile takeover? The older members of the family try to explain what each phrase means but they may not know what they are talking about. Finally on Friday this enterprising youngster goes to work with Dad to find out the truth. And Dad and son explode into a wonderfully creative business office. *My Dad's Job* ends with a thorough glossary explaining what these business terms actually mean.

A Children's Book-of-the-Month Club featured selection, *My Dad's Job* is a great marriage between Timothy Bush's color filled, reality based, cartoon watercolors and Peter Glassman's simple, wildly imaginative narrative. A busy, bright, two page fold out presents Dad's office to the audience. By combining legendary figures with the modern office this book becomes an attention grabbing teaching aid for introducing the business world. It also happily celebrates fathers and families. All families, schools and libraries will appreciate *My Dad's Job*. Fun to read repeatedly, with useful information in an uncommon format.

Donna Eggett

***Noise! Noise! Noise!* / Carl Sommer; illustrated by Kennon James. (Another Sommer-time story.) LCCN 2002026261. Houston, Tex., Advance, 2003. Hardcover, 1575370697, \$16.95.**

E. Mice—Fiction; Animals—Fiction; Contentment—Fiction. unip.

Grades K-4 / Rating: 3

"Even though Marcus and Marcella had a beautiful home in the forest, they were always miserable." So begins *Noise! Noise! Noise!*, a new entry in Carl Sommer's Another Sommer-Time Story series, twenty picture books written to teach values to children. Marcus and Marcella are two mice who hate their noisy forest neighbors, and who really hate having to work hard to find food. One day a chipmunk tells them that life on a nearby farm is ideal: there's lots of good food, lots of quiet, and no work. Marcus and Marcella quickly move there, not realizing that the farm has a farmer and his wife, who do not want mice in their house.

Noise! Noise! Noise! is a simple story, simply told. Its message on appreciating what you have is clear enough to be understood by all ages yet it doesn't seem preachy. The repetition of the language and its sing-song quality make the story especially nice for reading aloud. In

addition, the book's large size and large print will make it appealing for children beginning to read on their own.

Kennon James' boldly colored, cartoon-like illustrations nicely highlight the action. The animals, especially Marcus and Marcella, are expressively drawn and are charming without being cutesy.

Rosemarie DiCristo

***Serious trouble* / Arthur Howard. LCCN 2002014123. San Diego, Harcourt, 2003. Hardcover, 0152026649, \$16.00.**

E. Dragons—Fiction; Fools and jesters—Fiction; Fairy tales. unsp.
Grades PS-2 / Rating: 4

Serious Trouble is a wonderfully silly book. Prince Ernest is not like his serious, serious parents, King Olaf and Queen Olive. He doesn't want to be a serious prince. He wants to be a jester. His father points out that this is no time for humor, there is a three-headed dragon hanging about. Ernest inadvertently encounters the dragon, which has three heads and three distinct personalities. Through the use of humor, Ernest convinces the dragon to promise to stop gobbling people up. The book then offers three possible endings, you decide which you like best.

The illustrations by the author appear to be charcoal drawings and watercolor. They are brightly colored, wild and silly. They contain amusing extras that expand on the text, such as the fact that the queen is so serious that she is reading *Extra Grimm Fairy Tales*.

Arthur Howard has given us a book about being different, being an unlikely hero, and the value of having a little levity in life. A fun read that young children will enjoy.

Karla J. Castle

***Suki's kimono* / written by Chieri Uegaki ; illustrated by Stéphane Jorisch. Toronto, KidsCan, 2003. Hardcover, 1553370848, \$15.95.**

E. Japanese Americans—Fiction; First day of school—Fiction; Schools—Fiction. 32 p.
Grades K-2 (3-4) / Rating: 5

The first day of school is approaching, a day for wearing your favorite clothes. Suki decides she is going to wear the kimono her obachan (grandmother) gave her during the summer. Suki's older sisters point out that the other children will laugh and pretend they don't know her, but Suki marches to her own drummer. Thank goodness she does as she dances her way into first grade with a flair all her own. When a boy makes fun of her Suki imitates her grandmother's reserve. When Suki gets up to tell about her summer, someone snickers. But as Suki remembers and describes her time with

her obachan, the room falls still as everyone is blessed by Suki's wonderful memories.

Chieri Uegaki's first book promises great things to come for this writer. The credit page has a short list of the Japanese words along with pronunciation and definitions. The pride Suki has in her ancestry and the love she feels for her grandmother is evident. Even without the enchanting illustrations by Stéphane Jorisch, *Suki's Kimono* would be an excellent book. With the addition of the lively watercolors, this book is in a class by itself. Showing Suki's understanding mother, her exasperated sisters, her curious classmates, and her delighted teacher, the text and illustrations in this book clearly convey the mood and story on each page. An excellent read-aloud book, this story will appeal to every child who has a song and dance in his heart. Every teacher should be so lucky as to have a Suki in her class!

Kelley Westenhoff

***Toestomper and the bad butterflies* / [written and illustrated by] Sharleen Collicott. LCCN 2002000475. Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 2003. Hardcover, 0619140921, \$15.00.**

F. Caterpillars—Fiction; Butterflies—Fiction; Pets—Fiction; Behavior—Fiction; Daredevils—Fiction. unsp.
Grades K-3 (PK) / Rating: 4

Fuzzy, mouse sized Toestomper of Littletown shares his home with a herd of blue caterpillars. He copes well, even while chasing menacing iguanas, until those lazy caterpillars all spin blankets, go to sleep, and wake up butterflies. Then the reader finds out why this book is titled *Toestomper and the Bad Butterflies*. Managing a band of complaining, headstrong, little winged menaces taxes Toestomper's patience, ingenuity, and self control. Those butterflies zoom the iguanas; annoy Littletown; but, when Bigtooth smashes into Littletown, somehow those bumbling butterflies become town heroes.

Writer/illustrator Sharleen Collicott continues her story of Toestomper and his unusual family in this sequel to *Toestomper and the Caterpillars* (Houghton Mifflin, 1999). The colorful, pretty, evocative gouache illustrations immediately catch the audience's eye. The funny, imaginative words amply tell the story. Toestomper is little, yet successfully faces the responsibilities of friendship, commitment, and adoptive parenthood. *Toestomper and the Bad Butterflies* lends itself to group reading, being large enough for all to see and opening flat for easy reading while holding it up for the group to enjoy the illustrations. Preschoolers will love to hear this story read over and over. *Toestomper...* will encourage reading skills in first and second graders.

Donna Eggett

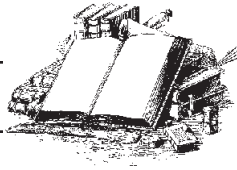
***Trouble in the Barkers' class* / written and illustrated by Tomie dePaola. LCCN 2003001280. New York, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2003. Hardcover, 0399241647, \$14.99.**

E. Twins—Fiction; Schools—Fiction; Behavior—Fiction; Bullies—Fiction. 30 p.
Grades K-2 / Rating: 5

The Barker twins' class is excited about the new student who will join them soon. The children eagerly discuss all the welcoming gestures they'll make. When Carole Anne arrives, however, she is awful! She pushes, shoves, and grabs. Her particular target of anger is Morgie, who is bewildered at the mean things Carole Anne does to him. The class decides to freeze the new girl out by ignoring her. Things come to a head when Ms. Shepherd notices how they are all treating Carole Anne and has everyone sit down to talk. Carole Anne denies everything and Ms. Shepherd charges them to think about it over the weekend. On Saturday morning, something unexpected happens, and on Monday, all the children are astonished to see Morgie and Carole Anne working together as friends.

Trouble in the Barkers Class continues Tomie DePaola's series starring his own Welsh terriers. His drawings are charming, and the story is sweet. The resolution of the conflict comes from the children. Carole Anne approaches Morgie, and Morgie forgives and moves on. This is a nice story about what it feels like to be the new kid. It is also a nice learning piece about forgiveness. DePaola's art is, as usual, accessible for children who want to draw.

Kelley Westenhoff



As far as I can see / by Kate McMullan. (My America / Meg's prairie diary; 1.) LCCN 00067026. New York, Scholastic, 2001. Hardcover, 0439425174, \$10.95.

F. Frontier and pioneer life—Kansas—Fiction; Diaries—Fiction; Kansas—History—1854-1861—Fiction. 106 p.

Grades 4-8 / Rating: 5

Margaret Cora Wells, "Meg" for short, lives in St. Louis, Missouri. For her ninth birthday in 1856 Meg receives a diary from her mother and begins recording her daily life in the busy port on the Mississippi River. Life is an easy round of pantalets, parasols, and visits to the ice cream parlor until two events mar her innocent life: the accidental witnessing of the slave market and her mother's bout with cholera. To protect Meg and her brother Preston from the cholera epidemic, her parents send them to wild Neosho, Kansas Territory, where they are to stay with their Uncle Albert and Aunt Margaret.

Life in Kansas is a far cry from what Meg expected. Kansas City is a street, hardly more than a dirt path, and their hotel room turns out to be three cots in the hallway. Meg misses her parents terribly. They arrive at their uncle's home only to find out their father's letter has not arrive to notify the family of the children's coming. Nonetheless, a spot is found for them in the small log cabin and the children begin life as prairie children.

Meg is introduced to a life of new adventures on the prairie as well as new chores to learn. She witnesses the devastation an invasion of grasshoppers has on her uncle's crop, and the "pull up your bootstraps and plow ahead" attitude of the settlers. The family is faced with hiding a runaway slave in their cabin. Finally, Meg's mother and little sister Grace appear at the cabin, full of health and bringing the news that their father is selling his business and the whole family is moving to Kansas. Meg is truly going to become a child of the prairie.

Historical notes at the end of book one in this prairie series explore the slave market of St. Louis and the Underground Railroad, travel by steamboat on the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers, and life in territorial Kansas including outlaws, sod houses, grasshoppers, and farm life in general. Growing up in St. Louis, Missouri has helped Kate McMullan paint a realistic backdrop for *As Far as I Can See*. The excitement and mystery she has woven into this story will be certain to leave her young readers thirsting for the second and third books in the series, *The End of the Earth* and *A Fine Start*.

Judy Driscoll

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Birdie for now / Jean Little. (Orca young reader.) LCCN 2002100303. Victoria, B.C., Orca Book Publishers, 2002. Paperbound, 155143203X, \$4.99.

F. Dogs—Fiction. 154 p.

Grades 3-6 / Rating: 4

It is a time of transitions for Dickon Fielding. He must adjust to a new life alone with his mother—now that his father has walked out on them—and to a new home. It's all a bit scary, and frustrating too. But perhaps there will also be a chance to make new friends in a place where his hyperactive condition is not already common knowledge, and where he might escape some of the teasing that he has come to dread. But what he wants more than anything—even more than he wishes his mother would stop babying him, and calling him Birdie—is a dog.

Imagine his excitement when he finds that the Humane Society runs a center right behind his new home. Through the Society, he comes to befriend a tiny, abused dog that needs him as much as he needs her. But how to convince his mother, who is deathly afraid of dogs, that they should adopt her?

Jean Little, the well-known author of more than thirty books for children, and an individual with severely limited vision, knows firsthand what it feels like not to fit in. Born to medical missionaries in Taiwan, she taught handicapped children until 1962, when her first book was published.

In *Birdie for Now*, which was nominated for several awards, Little provides a book that is tender and quietly insightful, and yet straightforward and unsentimental. The large font-size and soft, sketchy illustrations enhance the book's approachability. Character development is believable, and is often seen through the eyes of other characters, rather than through "tacked on" narrative. The story ends on a positive, but realistic note.

This book will appeal to all children who have, in some way, felt excluded or different, and would make for some interesting classroom discussions.

Sylvia Stopforth

Especially heroes / written by Virginia Kroll ; illustrated by Tim Ladwig. LCCN 2002009003. Grand Rapids, Eerdmans Books for Young Readers, 2003. Hardcover, 0802852211, \$15.00.

F. Racism—Fiction; Heroes—Fiction. unsp.

Grades 4-6 (2-3, 7-8) / Rating: 5

Fourth grader Ginny doesn't think she loves anything enough to risk her life for it. In *Especially Heroes*, author Virginia Kroll takes Ginny through a day of school, Catholic religion class, and a visit with Mrs. Hall, an African American widow and neighbor. Mrs. Hall gives Ginny, her brother, and a friend cookies, cocoa, and authentic friendship.

Ginny's definition of a hero is clarified later that night when her typically gentle father arms himself with a baseball bat to protect Mrs. Hall during a racial attack. As she drifts toward sleep, Ginny realizes that her own father is a hero.

Especially Heroes is fictional, though built on Kroll's own childhood experiences. Kroll is so skillful in her storytelling about a single day in Ginny's life that both children and adults will hold their breath at the climax.

The picture book, with its expressive, from-a-child's-eye-view paintings by Tim Ladwig, will make excellent read-aloud material for ages five and up, or silent reading for middle elementary through middle school students. Both art and story are inclusive, with races and ages happily intermixed. This story adeptly helps readers define one sort of hero, but leaves a gap—from the Christian perspective—by only partially answering the question Ginny ponders: Is there anything I love so much that I'd risk my life for it? However, the book could be a great discussion-starter along those lines.

Karen Schmidt

Hermie : a common caterpillar / Max Lucado. LCCN 2002026439. Nashville, Tommy Nelson, 2002. Hardcover, 1400301173, \$15.99.

F. Caterpillars—Fiction; Self-esteem—Fiction; Christian life—Fiction; Friendship—Fiction; Metamorphosis—Fiction. unsp.

Grades 2-5 / Rating: 3

Based on the bestseller, *Just Like Jesus* (also by Max Lucado), *Hermie: A Common Caterpillar* is about a caterpillar who considers himself too common to be special. He isn't spotted or striped, he doesn't eat anything special, and he can't fly on beautiful wings like the butterflies:

"He had nothing but smooth green skin and a bunch of feet." Wormie, his friend, considers himself common, too, but Hermie and Wormie are uncommon in at least one way—they talk to God. And as they tell God what is on their hearts, He tells them over and over that He has made them special and that He isn't done with them yet; He is giving them each a heart like His. When God finally finishes with Hermie, he isn't common any more, and he encourages Wormie to believe that he is special, too, and that everyone will know it once God is done with him.

GlueWorks Animation illustrations are colorful and fill up the page nicely, but they are a bit flat, which is not too surprising, since they started out as animation for a video by the same name. The video version (also available in DVD) contains a much longer, more detailed account of the story and includes Tim Conway doing the voice of Hermie and Don Knotts doing Wormie. The video's story and animation were condensed to produce the book, which meant that some of the more entertaining bits were left out. As a result, some of the illustrations, such as the one of Hermie in sunglasses, are not in context, which takes away from their fun.

The storyline may be a bit too sweet for older children, but little ones will probably enjoy the pictures, and Lucado fans may want to add it to their collections, no matter what. For the tiniest Hermie fans, there is also a board book that contains an even more condensed version of the story and fewer illustrations.

Betty Winslow

***Ransom's mark* / Wendy Lawton. (Daughters of the faith series ; 4.) LCCN 2003005462. Chicago, Moody, 2003. Paperbound, 0802436382, \$6.99.**

F. Oatman, Olive Ann—Fiction.; Mohave Indians—Fiction.; Indians of North America—Arizona—Fiction.; Indians of North America—California—Fiction.; Christian life—Fiction.. 144 p.

Grades 4-6 (7-8) / Rating: 4

Hostile Yavapai Indians have killed their family and taken twelve-year-old Olive Oatman and her seven-year-old sister Mary Ann captive! Forced by the captors to march hundreds of miles, the girls are sick and weak. Hope dawns when a young Mohave girl, Topeka, rescues them. Eventually understanding the sacrifice involved in the ransom Topeka's tribe paid for the sisters, Olive is humbled. As much as they can, the sisters join the Mohave tribe, even receiving chin tattoos like the rest of the tribe. Olive comes to think of hers as her ransom mark. Sharing the tribe's joys as well as their pains and deprivations, the girls slowly adapt.

Mary Ann, like many of the Mohaves, dies from starvation, prompting Olive to question the existence of a loving God, and to give in to despair. Her unsaved Mohave sister, Topeka, is the one who helps Olive to see that Olive's God

is listening and has ransomed Olive for His purpose.

Part of a series from Moody called Daughters of the Faith, *Ransom's Mark* is loosely based on the true story of Olive and Mary Ann Oatman. Dramatizing from existing written accounts, Wendy Lawton has used the story to teach today's young girls about faith and courage. Although not as true to historical accounts as are many of the Trailblazer books (Bethany House), this is a good work of historical fiction for the targeted age group. For older children, this should be the precursor to reading the original story, as written by Olive's brother after her rescue, as well as a biography of this remarkable survivor, *The Captivity of the Oatman Girls Among the Apache and Mohave Indians* (Dover, 1994.)

Kelley Westenhoff

***Thank God for rocks* / by Esther Bender; illustrated by Mary Anne Lard. LCCN 2002010471. Harrisburg, Penn., Morehouse/Morehouse, 2003. Hardcover, 0819219029, \$14.95.**

E. Rocks—Fiction.; Prayer—Fiction.; Gratitude—Fiction. 32 p.

—Grades 4-6 (2-3) / Rating: 4.

A farmer with a small rickety house and ramshackle barn tries to farm a field full of rocks. The old neighbor woman thinks he is crazy for buying the rockiest farm in the whole county. But it is all he can afford, and he is grateful to God for what he has.

With the help of his sons, he plows up the field and rocks. To encourage his sons, he makes good use of the rocks in building a fence, a barn, and a house. The farmer's wife gets a beautiful home, the sons become healthy and strong, and the farmer thanks God for his abundant life. The elderly neighbor comes to apologize for her criticism and compliments the beauty of his farm.

This story is excellently told and the illustrations are colorful and pleasant. A wonderful book for children and adults, reminding them to be thankful for the unseen blessings in life.

Pam Burns

***The golden wood* / William D. Burt. (The king of the trees; 3.) LCCN 2002104097. Enumclaw, Wash., WinePress, 2002. Paperbound, 1579214665, \$14.95.**

F. Fantasy. 285 p.

Grades 4-6 (7-8) / Rating: 4

Timothy, son of Garth, is an unassuming young lad whose greatest challenge in life is avoiding the town bully. But one day the corrupt King Mardoc arrives, entourage in tow, intent on exacting a crushing tribute from Beechtown's

citizens. Adventure ensues, and Timothy finds himself keeping company with sorcs (griffins), greencloaks, and members of the royal family of Lucambra.

If they are to save the land of Lucambra from King Mardoc's scheming, Timothy and his new companions must find the legendary golden forest, as well as some means of healing the sorcs of a terrible and wasting disease. Their quest takes them through hidden passageways, across open plains, and into mysterious and dangerous tunnels, carved out by massive stoneworms. In the end, they find all they are seeking, and more, as Timothy and Gwynneth, daughter of King Rolin, fall in love.

The Golden Wood is the third in a series of books written by Burt William. This tale is a page-turner; the plot moves along quickly, and William clearly has both a vivid imagination and an inventive touch. Several scenes are reminiscent of stories found in the Old Testament.

According to the book's website, this is intended to be "a new Christian fantasy series written in the time-honored tradition of C.S. Lewis's *Chronicles of Narnia*..."

The book certainly contains all the conventional elements of high fantasy, including maps, "magical" elements, an unlikely hero, cryptic riddles, a glossary, and—most critical—a storyline that turns upon the battle between good and evil.

Character development is minimal, however. "Good" characters are kind and likeable, while "bad" characters are suitably greedy, immoral, and/or stupid. Answers sometimes come too easily, and some of the plot elements are not entirely convincing.

This review is based on a reading of Book 3 only. For reviews of the first two books, please see the Winter/Spring 1999 and Winter 2002 issues of *CLJ*.

Sylvia Stopforth

***The seventh knot* / by Kathleen Karr. LCCN 2002015547. New York, Cavendish Children's Books/Marshall Cavendish, 2003. Hardcover, 0761451358, \$15.95.**

F. Durer, Albrecht, 1471-1528—Fiction.; Brothers—Fiction.; Art—Fiction.; Mystery and detective stories. 149 p.

Grades 4-6 (7-8) / Rating: 4

The year is 1896. Miles and Wick (Chadwick) Forrester have, time and again, exhibited an unparalleled flair for getting into trouble. Miles, at twelve years of age, is bright, and overly fond of scientific experiments involving explosives. Wick, a world-weary fifteen-year-old, is a confirmed delinquent who cares for nothing but his own amusement.

At her wits' end, Mother Forrester decides that drastic measures are necessary. To their horror, the boys are sentenced to spend summer vacation with gouty, impatient Uncle Eustace, who is on a mission to parlay his new American wealth into some of Europe's finest old-world art.

Utterly bored at first, the boys find they are drawn in by the works of Albrecht Durer. Through their uncle's cultured valet, Jose, they learn more about this gifted Renaissance artist, and soon they hatch a scheme to strike out on their own, in search of Durer's missing knot series.

When Jose goes missing, the boys put their plan into action, only to become enmeshed in a conspiracy involving the Durerbund—a secret society whose members all but worship Durer—and a looming European war.

All in all, the young protagonists of *The 7th Knot*, by Kathleen Karr, are a pair of likeable rogues, and the narrative moves along quickly, with plenty of action. Readers will gain some interesting insights into art history, as well as travel in late 19th century Europe.

Some parents may not be amused by accounts of the boys out on their own, drinking wine, smoking cigars, or gambling to raise "mutiny money." Also, Wicks demonstrates the typical fifteen-year-old boy's response—ogling—to the nudes in some of the paintings.

The dialogue is occasionally a little stilted, but is to some degree in keeping with the overall tone of the book, which brings to mind the slightly melodramatic mysteries of bygone days.

Copies of two of Durer's works—both mentioned in the story—adorn the attractive endpapers of this book.

Sylvia Stopforth

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***Treasure island (abridged) / Robert Louis Stevenson ; illustrated by N.C. Wyeth. (Scribner storybook classic.)* LCCN 2002008611. New York, Atheneum Books for Young Readers/Simon & Schuster, 2003. Library Binding, 0689854684, \$18.95.**

F. Buried treasure—Fiction.; Pirates—Fiction.; Adventure and adventurers—Fiction.. 51 p.

Grades 3-5 / Rating: * 5

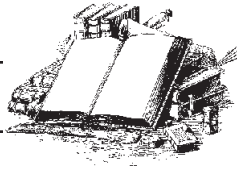
Thrill once again to Stevenson's classic adventure tale, *Treasure Island*. Jim Hawkins, an innkeeper's son, finds a treasure map and, with the help of adult friends, sets sail to locate the treasure. Hawkins must face pirates—including the infamous one-legged Long John Silver—perfidy, and peril. Written over one hundred years ago, *Treasure Island* continues to

delight its readers with daring exploits, danger and suspense.

Born in 1850, when pirates still rampaged, classic author Robert Louis Stevenson is still well known today. In the first half of the twentieth century, Scribner and Sons published an edition of *Treasure Island* illustrated with noted American artist N. C. Wyeth's oil paintings. This new edition presents a carefully abridged version of *Treasure Island* with Wyeth's original illustrations.

The original, interest-catching plot is kept, but characterization is not quite so full. Hawkin's reasoning, trustworthiness, and maturity under duress makes him a worthwhile hero. Because it is abridged, this version makes a good read-aloud book. Wyeth's illustrations add significantly to the suspenseful atmosphere of danger and adventure. This book is a treasure because it contains Wyeth's light filled, emotionally charged paintings. If your library, classroom or family does not already own a *Treasure Island* illustrated by Wyeth, this edition will be well worth procuring. The art class will find it especially interesting.

Donna Eggett



***Kidictionary : memorable words from the Bible and what they mean* / written by Rick Osborne and Kevin Miller. (NirV kid reference library.) LCCN 2003266613. Grand Rapids, ZonderKidz, 2002. Hardcover, 0310700779, \$14.99.**

220.3. Bible--Dictionaries, Juvenile.; Bible--Dictionaries. 121 p.

Grades 1-3 (4-6) / Rating: 3

Osborne and Miller have created a nice resource for children and parents. Using the NIV Bible, the authors have selected and defined a host of words that kids stumble over. Never again will the teacher or parent say, "um, I'm not sure who that was," during devotion time. Reaching for a copy of *Kidictionary* will provide the answer. Listed alphabetically, each entry has a pronunciation guide and a short, complete definition. Many also have scripture in the definition, although that's more common in the New Testament entries. Some of the Old Testament personalities defined lack the reference to the book of the Bible that is the source of the story. A fact book only, this volume has few illustrations and by necessity, the entries are brief. This book will provide one more reference source for thirsty minds.

Kelley Westenhoff

***Kid atlas : important places in the Bible and where to find them* / written by Ruth van der Maas, Marnie Wooding, and Rick Osborne. Grand Rapids, ZonderKidz, 2002. Hardcover, 0310700590, \$14.99.**

220.91. Bible--Geography--Maps--Juvenile literature; Bible--Geography--Maps. 64 p.

Grades 1-3 (4-6) / Rating: 4

The next best thing to taking a child to the Middle East and showing him or her where "it all happened" is to show the child maps and illustrations of the area in language children understand. *Kid Atlas* appears to be written by a Sunday School teacher who really knows how kids think. Story by story the book unfolds God's awesome plan for the world. Deftly handling the more controversial issues (dinosaurs, fossils), authors Ruth van der Maas, Marnie Wooding, and Rick Osborne give each viewpoint within the Christian world and move on. Sprinkled with jokes and fast facts, this book is anything but boring. Zonderkidz has used a combination of photos and artwork to show how biblical forefathers traveled and lived throughout the region. Moving chronologically from creation to today, the authors employ the latest archeological discoveries to lend an air of authenticity to the information.

A break from the march of time forward occurs a couple of times in the book. Rather than having biblical events occur in a vacuum of location and time, the authors provide a sense of what the rest of the world was doing concurrently with God's people. The authors' chronology of time includes the future, since we know he is coming back and a clear invitation concludes the book. An index or table of contents would have made the material more easily accessible. This book will be a nice addition to a geography section dominated by secular references.

Kelley Westenhoff

***The passover seder : touch, turn, open, and learn* / by Emily Sper. New York, Cartwheel Books/Scholastic, 2003. Hardcover, 0439443121, \$9.99.**

296.4. Seder; Passover--Customs and practices; Holidays. unsp.

Grades K-2 (3-4) / Rating: 4

The Passover Seder by Emily Sper is an interactive picture book challenging young children to "touch, turn, open, and learn" as they discover the history and traditions of the Passover supper. Set in large print, this informative book comes with an easy to follow pronunciation key so young students can correctly pronounce the important elements of this festive supper as they learn the significance of each to the Jewish traditional meal. From the Haggadah, which opens from the left as it should, to the final door which opens to reveal the name of Elijah, the young reader is asked to partake in the supper by opening folders, turning wheels to examine the plate and to drip the wine, lifting the matzah cloth, even breaking the middle matzah. Touch pages allow feeling of the herbs—and a soft pillow used for leaning back, a symbol of freedom.

With objects of the Passover meal presented in simplified, bright, bold illustrations printed on heavyweight, glossy paper, *The Passover Seder* is sturdy enough to hold up under the heavy use of the pre-school child and eye-catching enough to hold his attention. The text in places may be too technical for the pre-schooler, but will certainly be easily understood by the primary grade child. This book can be useful for both Jew and Christian alike who want to learn more about Passover traditions.

Judy Driscoll

***Career discovery encyclopedia.* Ferguson Publishing, 2003. Library Binding, 08160569X, \$175.**

331.7. Vocational guidance--Dictionaries--Juvenile literature; Vocational guidance--Dictionaries. 8 v.

Grades 4-6 (7-10) / Rating: * 5

This comprehensive resource helps young people get a realistic overview of interests and aptitudes relating to specific occupations. Each A to Z entry accompanied by a picture of a person in the occupation's setting includes a job description, job outlook, educational and training requirements, potential salary range, and related places to check for more information. The two-page profile for each occupation makes it perfect for middle school students. Cross-referencing of related occupations enables advanced younger students to grasp a wider picture. The comprehensive approach and packed information makes this a set high school students can also consult for quick ideas.

This fifth edition of *Career Discovery Encyclopedia* offers more than 600 new and revised career profiles with 70 new careers added, e.g. animal handlers, brewers, campaign workers, production assistants.

Highly recommended for middle and high school libraries, as well as in public library reference collections where students inquire about jobs. The final volume offers a dictionary of occupational titles index, and a guide for occupational exploration index, e.g. to see what jobs fit with animal specialization under life science. Career guidance areas will find this an indispensable guide.

Leroy Hommerding

***A pioneer Christmas : celebrating in the backwoods in 1841* / written by Barbara Greenwood ; illustrated by Heather Collins. Toronto, KidsCan, 2003. Hardcover, 1550749536, \$14.95.**

394.2663/0971. Christmas--Canada--History--19th century--Juvenile literature; Frontier and pioneer life--Canada--Juvenile literature. 48 p.

Grades 3-5 (1-2, 6) / Rating: 5

Sarah, the middle of the six Robertson children, has a special reason to be excited about Christmas this year. On the cusp between little kids (who receive toys for Christmas) and big kids (who are included in more adult festivities), Sarah fills her days helping her Granny, siblings and mother. This year is special for the family. In addition to celebrating the arrival of the blessed baby Jesus, Sarah's family awaits the

arrival of their uncle, aunt, and possibly newborn cousin. But will the visitors arrive before Christmas? The snow is deep, the distance to travel is great, and the baby is due any day.

Expanding on her earlier book about the daily life of the Robertson family in 1840 Canada, Barbara Greenwood has written a holiday gift for the reader. Her words are so well chosen that one smells the cloves of the pomanders, shivers at the crisp cold snow, and hears the sweet Scottish lullaby. There are several activities perfect for third to fifth graders seamlessly interspersed in the text as the story moves forward. Some of the activities would be ideal in a school setting to help celebrate the season. Heather Collins' lovely pencil illustrations capture the time gone by, as well as the emotions of all the characters. A different color pencil gives clear illustration to the craft instructions. The index is useful for going back to favorite points, such as the music for "Baloo Lammy," a beautiful carol. Highly recommended—for gifts as well as for your library.

Kelley Westenhoff

The giant cabbage : an Alaskan folktale /
by Cherie B. Stihler; illustrated by
Jeremiah Trammell. LCCN 2002191179.
Seattle, Paws IV/Sasquatch Books, 2003.
Paperbound, 1570613575, \$9.95.

398.2/0947. Folklore--Russia. unsp.

Grades K-4 (5) / Rating: 4

The Giant Cabbage : An Alaska Folktale is actually a re-telling of a Russian folktale about a giant turnip. The Alaskan version is set in the Matanuska-Susitna Valley where vegetables grow large because summer days are "very very long."

The story is a simple one: Moose grows a cabbage so big, it is sure to win a prize at the fair. Unfortunately, it's so big it cannot be moved. Only through the combined efforts of Moose's friends and neighbors can he load the cabbage into a truck and bring it to the fair.

Cherie Stihler's prose is straightforward and easy to follow, moving the story along nicely. The repetition of language, especially in the animals' attempts to move the cabbage and in Stihler's description of it ("It was a big cabbage. It was a really big cabbage. It was the biggest cabbage she had ever seen.") will delight children and will make this a fun book to read aloud. Children will also get caught up in wondering if Moose will ever get his cabbage to the fair.

The message of friends helping friends is a nice one. Also the fact that the smallest animal, Little Vole, is the one who gives the others the extra strength needed to move the cabbage. Jeremiah Trammell's artwork deftly highlights the action and gives a quirky sort of warmth to the story.

The book's final page contains a recipe for the soup Moose makes with his prize-winning cabbage. It also includes facts about the real Matanuska-Susitna Valley and the real "largest cabbage" ever grown: for instance, that the 105-pound cabbage weighed as much as "3 second graders, 6 mountain bikes, 29 six-packs of soda, 38 video game systems, or 400 Game Boys."

Rosemarie DiCristo

Piece=part=portion
fractions=decimals=percents /
by Scott Gifford ; photographs by Shmuel Thaler.
LCCN 2003006118. Berkeley, Tricycle
Press, 2003. Hardcover, 1582461023,
\$14.95.

513.2/6. Percentage; Decimal fractions; Fractions; Logic, Symbolic and mathematical--Juvenile literature; Fractions--Juvenile literature. unsp.

Grades 1-2 (3-4) / Rating: 3

Simple fractions, decimals, and percentages are illustrated with photographs of everyday objects. For example, one sixth (.166 or 16.6%) is represented by one can of cola with the plastic rings for a full six-pack still attached. The illustrations, by Shmuel Thaler, are clear and show the piece in relation to the whole. Only the picture for one eighth is inaccurate, showing a piece of pie that is clearly a sixth, rather than an eighth.

Having just witnessed my stepdaughter's delight over *The Math Curse* written by Jon Scieszka and illustrated by Lane Smith, I was glad to see another picture book about math. The comparison, however, leaves *Piece = Part = Portion: Fractions = Decimals = Percents*, by Scott Gifford, seeming very tame and rather dull. The format and appearance of *Piece...* is very basic and seems to be aimed at first or second grade children; however, the concepts of fractions, decimals, and percentages are usually taught in later grades. This book clearly teaches these concepts, but don't expect it to cause excitement about math in older children.

Karla J. Castle

The life and time of the ant /
Charles Micucci. LCCN 2002000478. Boston,
Houghton Mifflin, 2003. Hardcover,
0618005595, \$16.

595.79/6. Ants. 32 p.

Grades K-3 / Rating: 4

What can proportionally lift more weight than an elephant, form living bridges, dig tons of dirt per year? *The Life and Times of the Ant* answers these and many more questions. In this information packed, scientifically correct, interesting introduction to the fascinating world of the ant the reader increases his ant knowledge, learning ant basics from prehistory, through family life and gardening habits, to ant highways and calendars, while meeting along

the way some of the many fascinating types of ants.

Writer-illustrator Charles Micucci continues his *Life and Times* series with this well-researched look at ants. Abundantly illustrated with clear, bright watercolors that vary from cartoons to technical drawings, *The Life and Times of the Ant* catches the reader's curiosity via both words and pictures. This volume contains short references to evolution, and life extending over millions of years. Children ages four through eight will enjoy reading this book. *Ants...* is recommended for all libraries and schools. Homeschoolers as well as classroom students will find it useful for science and book reports.

Donna Eggett

Let's try it out with towers and bridges /
by Seymour Simon and Nicole Fauteux;
illustrated by Doug Cushman. LCCN
2001020802. New York, Simon &
Schuster, 2003. Library Binding,
068982923X, \$14.95.

624.1. Towers--Design and construction; Bridges--Design and construction; Structural engineering; Models and modelmaking. [32] p.

Grades K-3 (PS) / Rating: * 5

Let's Try It Out With Towers and Bridges introduces structural engineering via entertaining games that are actually in depth building experiments. Whether building bridges, towers, castles, or homes, all projects use easily available material: building blocks, clay, drinking straws, paper, cardboard, plus the students' ingenuity. Although this book will catch the attention of individual children, its main aim is group interaction, with an adult leader facilitating the experiments. A note from the authors to parents and teachers closes this book.

Award-winning science and nature author Seymour Simon collaborates on the *Let's Try It Out* series with his daughter-in-law, Nicole Fauteux, mother and documentary filmmaker. Together they have produced a well-researched, full of fun and ideas, easy to read and assimilate science series, as exemplified by this book, *...Towers and Bridges*. Reuben Award winning illustrator Doug Cushman's colorful ink, watercolor, and gouache paintings of a group of curious, busy children and their cat and dog amply illustrate how the experiments are done as well as adding to the fun. This book captures the imagination, encouraging students to inquire further into structural engineering.

Let's Try It Out with Towers and Bridges is a useful science book which encourages reading, and is lots of fun. Libraries and schools, homeschoolers, families, and children's clubs will be interested in it.

Donna Eggett

The amazing International Space Station / written by the editors of YES Mag ; illustrated by Rose Cowles. Toronto, KidsCan, 2003. Hardcover, 1553373804, \$15.95.

629.44/2. International Space Station--Juvenile literature. 48 p.

Grades 3-5 / Rating: 4

Did you know that space smells a little like burnt toast? Were you aware that fungus was actually eating through the glass portholes of the Russian space station Mir? Can you imagine what it is like to put on a twelve million dollar space suit for a space walk? All of these facts come from Kids Can Press's new book, *The Amazing International Space Station*. With detailed facts about its construction, life on board, its experiments, the dangers, and the station's future, the editors of *YES Magazine* have focused on the many positive attributes of the ISS as well as the questions kids want answered. (They even explain how astronauts go to the bathroom in zero gravity.) The ISS is supplied via the U.S. Space Shuttles so this would be an interesting text to use with older readers to speculate on the impact of the shuttle fleet continuing to suffer tragic accidents.

This book includes experiments, a time line, a chart showing the common acronyms used aboard the ISS, and even a recipe for space soup! Quotes from the astronauts and excerpts from mission logs accompany stunning photographs and illustrations by Rose Cowles. The title of this book says it all. *The International Space Station* is truly amazing.

Kelley Westenhoff

The jumbo book of art / written and illustrated by Irene Luxbacher. Toronto, KidsCan, 2003. Paperbound, 1550747622, \$14.95.

701/.8. Art--Technique--Juvenile literature. 208 p.

Grades 3-8 / Rating: 4

For teachers and parents who have looked for ideas on how to recycle all kinds of refuse into art, this is your new handbook. Don't tell the children, but while they're having a great time creating, they may learn something useful. Principles of basic art masquerade as fun projects and ideas in the *Jumbo Book of Art* by Irene Luxbacher. There are four sections. The sections on drawing and creating with color are full of inspiring ideas but also contain solid techniques interspersed between the idea pages. The sculpture section has several inviting projects using a variety of materials, including plaster. The final section, called *Mixing Up of Your Media*, is a romp through color, texture, and creativity. The best thing about the book is that it gives ideas, but frequently reminds the child that his artwork is all his own. The majority of the projects are accessible to children as young as eight, requiring adult assistance only rarely. It is only available in

paperback. The binding with its thick spine may not survive the artists for long.

Kelley Westenhoff

Basketball / Mark Littleton. (Sports heroes.) Grand Rapids, ZonderKidz, 2002. Paperbound, 0310702968, \$5.99.

796.323/092/2. Basketball players--United States--Biography--Juvenile literature.; Basketball players--United States--Religious life--Juvenile literature.; Basketball players.; Christian life.. 110 p.

Football / Mark Littleton. (Sports heroes.) Grand Rapids, ZonderKidz, 2002. Paperbound, 031070295X, \$5.99.

796.332/092. Football players--United States--Biography--Juvenile literature.; Football players--United States--Religious life--Juvenile literature.; Football coaches--United States--Biography--Juvenile literature.; Football coaches--United States--Religious life--Juvenile literature.; Football players.. 110 p.

Baseball / Mark Littleton. (Sports heroes.) Grand Rapids, ZonderKidz, 2002. Paperbound, 0310702917, \$5.99.

796.357/092/2. Baseball players--United States--Biography--Juvenile literature.; Baseball players--United States--Religious life--Juvenile literature.. 110 p.

Auto racing / Mark Littleton. (Sports heroes.) LCCN 2002284861. Grand Rapids, ZonderKidz, 2002. Paperbound, 0310702925, \$5.99.

796.72/092. Automobile racing drivers--United States--Biography--Juvenile literature.; Automobile racing drivers--Religious life--United States--Juvenile literature.; Automobile racing drivers.; Automobile racing drivers--Religious life.. 110 p.

Extreme sports / Mark Littleton. (Sports heroes.) LCCN 2002511964. Grand Rapids, ZonderKidz, 2002. Paperbound, 0310702933, \$5.99.

796.xxxx. Athletes--United States--Biography--Juvenile literature.; Extreme sports--Juvenile literature.; Athletes--Religious life--United States--Juvenile literature.. 110 p.

Grades 4-6 / Rating: 4

Do the names David Robinson, Kurt Warner, Mike Sweeney, Jeff Gordon, or Jay Haizlip sound familiar to you? They will to some of your students. All are leaders in their chosen sports and in helping others find Christ. For children in need of positive role models and heroes, these books help fill an important niche in any collection. Mark Littleton has packed each of these small paperbacks with facts, statistics, photographs, and truth. Each of the athletes profiled had a desire early on to play their sport and play it well. Some of them were also blessed with Christian families to grow up in. Others had the desire and the talent but no Christian support team. When they reached the "big league," many were overwhelmed by the pressure to win and by the accolades of the public. Each of them, from Christian homes or not, had to decide who they were going to play for, and who deserved all the glory. Once that issue was settled, every one has become a role model for others on and off the playing field.

Be warned—these books do not pull any punches. Some of these athletes were completely broken by fame, drugs, and alcohol before they cried out for the Lord. Yet each story is worth reading. The message these athletes convey is that fame and wealth do not equal happiness and security. Rather, they teach that the only security is in Christ, and the only fame that matters is in serving him.

Each volume has at least six biographies interspersed with additional hall of fame stories or fun facts. On a budget note, this is one of the few times I prefer the paperbacks and I would buy them all. Sports stars fade fast, so at about the time the books wear out physically, they will be getting dated. It would be nice if ZonderKidz updates them every few years to keep up with the current roster of Christian athletes. What a joy to see any profiled at all!

Kelley Westenhoff

Albert Einstein / written by Elizabeth MacLeod. Toronto, KidsCan, 2003. Hardcover, 1553373960, \$14.95.

921 (530/092). Einstein, Albert, 1879-1955; Scientists; Physicists; Physicists--Biography--Juvenile literature. 32 p.

Grades 2-6 / Rating: 5

Albert Einstein is one of the 20th century's most interesting characters. Very early in his life it was evident that Einstein was a different type of student. He wanted to ask the questions, not take instruction. When he took an exam to get into the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, he failed because he didn't bother studying things that did not interest him—like French, chemistry, and biology. Although he finally graduated from the Institute and wanted to teach there, none of the professors would have him, as he had been so rude as a student. This impatience with less able minds made life difficult for Einstein until 1905 when his ideas finally started pouring out onto paper and getting published. From then on, Albert Einstein's name was synonymous with brilliance in thought, although daily details still regularly escaped him.

Facts such as these fill this biography of Albert Einstein. Thorough and engaging, each page of text is opposite a page full of photographs, drawings, maps, and even some of his notes. The sections of the book divide his early life, personal life, and professional career. Although one gets the impression Elizabeth MacLeod enjoyed putting Albert Einstein together, her treatment of her subject is balanced and fair. Her explanation of Einstein's radical thought in physics that distinguished him from all others of his time is clear but simple, leaving the reader to go further in another source if interested. A timeline of Einstein's life, a good index, and a list of just a few locations of where the reader can "find Albert" complete the book. In a

collection that needs new, engaging biographies, this is a highly recommended.

Kelley Westenhoff

Frida Kahlo : the artist who painted herself / written by Margaret Frith ; illustrated by Tomie dePaola. (Smart about art.) LCCN 2003005221. New York, Grosset & Dunlap, 2003. Library Binding, 0448432390, \$14.89.

921 (759.972). Kahlo, Frida--Juvenile literature; Kahlo, Frida; Women--Biography; Artists; Painters--Mexico--Biography--Juvenile literature. 30 p.

Grades 3-5 (1-2) / Rating: 3

The latest in Grosset & Dunlap's series Smart About Art, this is a short biography of Frida Kahlo, written by Margaret Frith and illustrated by Tomie dePaola. Married to Diego Rivera, Kahlo was famous for self-portraits. Like others in the series, this book begins with Ms. Brandt's assignment page, giving three questions her students should answer about the artist they have chosen to research. Frieda Fry chooses Frida Kahlo because their first names are the same. In terms of complete work giving detail of Kahlo's life, samples of her artwork, and commentary about the pictures, the report is very well done. Not to be confused with a format suitable for school reports (for example, there is no bibliography), this is simply a chance to expose children to a variety of artists and art forms. Be cautious though: Kahlo's artwork is an acquired taste, and some of the bizarre details in her paintings might put some children and parents off. An investigation of your own into Kahlo's style will help you decide whether *Frida Kahlo: The Artist Who Painted Herself* would be a suitable addition to your collection.

Kelley Westenhoff

Adventures with the Vikings / written by Linda Bailey ; illustrated by Bill Slavin. (Good Times Travel Agency.) Toronto, KidsCan, 2001. Hardcover, 1550745425, \$14.95.

948/.022. Civilization, Viking--Juvenile literature; Vikings--Juvenile literature. 48 p.

Adventures in ancient China / written by Linda Bailey ; illustrated by Bill Slavin. (Good Times Travel Agency.) Toronto, KidsCan, 2003. Hardcover, 1553374533, \$14.95.

931. China--Civilization--221 B.C.-960 A.D.--Juvenile literature. 48 p.

Grades 3-5 (2, 6) / Rating: 5

The Binkertons are back! Well, actually, they're gone again. In two more adventures by Linda Bailey, the intrepid adventurers are lured into the Good Times Travel Agency. In *Adventures with the Vikings*, the children find themselves living on a Viking farm, traveling to a Thing, going on a raid, and sailing to a new home in Iceland. Being enthralled (thralls were Viking slaves) brings an end to their adventure just in

time! In *Adventures in Ancient China*, Josh and Emma fight hard to stay away from the Travel Agency, but while following the smell of Chinese noodles they are whirled into the Middle Kingdom. The twins are separated from little sister Libby upon arrival. Struggling to catch up with her, Emma and Josh stumble across many of the things that were invented in ancient China. After they get Libby they unintentionally discover the secret of silk making. This means they have to flee for their lives and the only escape is across the Great Wall, straight into the arms of the barbarians!

The team of Linda Bailey/writer and Bill Slavin/illustrator is a formidable combination of talents that makes history lessons anything but boring. Jam packed with facts and information, these cartoon style history books seem like fiction. Yet all of Mr. Pettigrew's guide book facts are true and the last page of each book gives a short overview of the history covered as well as a quick index. As entertaining as the earlier volumes (Greece, Middle Ages, Egyptians), these two books will get a lot of attention in your library. The best way to describe why you need to consider these books is the reaction I get from my nine-year-old when they come into the house for review. She begs me to not add them to the school library collection so she can keep them at home.

Kelley Westenhoff

In a Nordic village / Jaakko Alatalo. (A child's day.) LCCN 2002000207. New York, Benchmark Books, 2003. Library Binding, 0761414118, \$15.95.

948.977. Sami (European people)--Finland--Social life and customs; Lapland--Social life and customs. 32 p.

In a Peruvian city / Sara Andrea Fajardo. (A child's day.) LCCN 2001052442. New York, Benchmark Books, 2003. Library Binding, 0761414088, \$15.95.

985/.2925. Peru--Social life and customs. 32 p.

In a South African city / by Gisele Wulfsohn. (A child's day.) LCCN 2001043943. New York, Benchmark Books, 2003. Library Binding, 076141407X, \$15.95.

968. South Africa--Social life and customs. 32 p.

In an Egyptian city / by Khaled Eldash and Dalia Khattab. (A child's day.) LCCN 2001008746. New York, Benchmark Books, 2003. Library Binding, 0761414061, \$15.95.

962/.16055. Egypt--Social life and customs. 32 p.

Grades 2-5 / Rating: 5

Each of the books from this series (at least, all of those I reviewed) is about a seven-year-old boy or girl from a particular country, and each begins with a map of the country, along with background information such as facts about the region the child's family lives in. Then, the

reader follows the child as he or she goes through an average day, as he or she gets up, eats, does chores, attends school, shops, plays, visits relatives, and finally, goes to bed. All the action is captured in clear and colorful photographs and is thoroughly explained in long adjacent captions.

At the book's end is a section called More About [the country's name], which tells the reader about the land, the people, the history, the religions, and the language. (The Egyptian book does a nice job of covering Islam in concise, easy to follow terms.)

There is also an index, a short list of books which can be used for more information about the country, and a glossary of foreign words that were used in the story. Each book helps the reader imagine what a day in that country might be like and serves as a reminder of how much alike children in all countries are, eating and playing and attending school and being part of a loving family. This series is well done and would be a good addition to a library.

Betty Winslow

Mexico / Sandy Asher. (Discovering cultures.) LCCN 2001007460. Tarrytown, N.Y., Benchmark Books, 2003. Hardcover, 0761411755, \$16.95.

972. Mexico. 48 p.

Grades 4-7 (9-10) / Rating: 4

Mexico by Sandy Asher is part of Benchmark Books' six-volume Discovering Cultures series. The forty-eight page hardbound book contains over thirty color and black and white photos and illustrations and is a simple, clearly-written overview of Mexico and its geography, people, food, and culture.

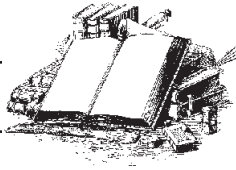
Chapters are entitled Where in the World is Mexico?; What Makes Mexico Mexican?; Living in Mexico; School Days; Just for Fun; and Let's Celebrate! With its many photos and only a few paragraphs of large-font text per page, the book will appeal to both reluctant readers and casual readers, yet it has enough detail on climate, crops, rural life, etc. to make it a good choice for a basic school report.

Fun stuff includes a recipe for Mexican hot chocolate and instructions on making a piñata. Appendices contain information on Mexico's flag and its money, a lesson on how to count in Spanish, and short biographies of famous Mexicans like Benito Juarez. There's also a glossary and a brief bibliography.

A minor quibble: a description of Three Gentle Raps, a children's game much like Hide and Seek, contains some Spanish phrases translated into English, but a side-by-side display of a Mexican song and its English translation isn't a strict translation of the Spanish shown. This may confuse children. Overall, though, Asher's

book is a nice choice for anyone wanting a very quick, no-nonsense look at Mexico.

Rosemarie DiCristo



***Across the years* / Tracie Peterson. (Desert roses; 2.) LCCN 2002015796. Minneapolis, Bethany House, 2003. Paperbound, 0764225189, \$12.99.**

F. Hotels—Employees—Fiction; Widows—Fiction; Arizona—Fiction; Romantic suspense fiction; Christian fiction. 381 p.

Adult (Grades 10-12) / Rating: 3

Ashley Reynolds is disowned by her well-to-do parents for marrying against their wishes and out of her class. She then is widowed at an early age by the heroic death of her young husband, Ethan Reynolds, in WWI. She goes to Los Angeles to live with her grandfather, Russell Whitman, who is also estranged from his family. The two move to Winslow, Arizona where Ashley gives birth to a daughter, Natalie, the only remnant of her short marriage. Ashley supports the family by working as a Harvey Girl waitress in the railroad's Harvey House hotel/restaurant chain. Natalie grows up in the eye of the small town of Winslow and quickly becomes a town favorite. The story is set in the fall of 1929 just weeks away from the Great Crash on Wall Street. Russell Whitman is dying of liver cancer and Ashley takes leave from her job to be with him in his final weeks. This is the setting for *Across the Years*.

Author Tracie Peterson wends her way through a rather predictable Hollywood-ending plot, which sees Russell and Ashley both wrestle with issues of forgiveness. Russell, as a strong Christian, struggles with the need to ask forgiveness of his own daughters for their broken relationships with him, and with wanting to bring Ashley to the Lord before his own death. Ashley wrestles with the question of how to forgive her own parents for their lack of acceptance of her choice of husband, and the ensuing estrangement it has caused in her life. Ashley is distrustful of God in the face of what she has endured with the death of her husband.

When E. J. Carson, a talented architect, comes to town to design the new Harvey House resort, he becomes entangled with the Reynolds/Whitman family when he befriends young Natalie, and later discovers that she is his daughter. Severe war wounds and reconstructive surgery have changed his appearance. Seeking a new life, after learning of the death of his young wife from the terrible flu that wreaked havoc in the United States in 1919, he has changed his name from Ethan Reynolds to E. J. Carson. The remainder of the book is the untangling of the identity and marriage relationship, the too predictable ending of deathbed conversions, forgiveness granted, loss of fortune by Ashley's mother in the Crash of

'29, and the remarriage of Ashley and Ethan. *Across the years* makes good, romantic fiction for a relaxing night at home, but offers little new insight into either the history of the time period in which it is set, or the issues surrounding forgiveness.

Judy Driscoll

***The accused* / Craig Parshall. (Chambers of justice; 3.) LCCN 2003004365. Eugene, Ore., Harvest House Publishers, 2003. Paperbound, 0736911731, \$11.99.**

F. Chambers, Will (Fictitious character)—Fiction.; Christian fiction.; Legal stories.. 370 p.

Adult (Grades 9-12) / Rating: 4

Terrorists have kidnapped the United States Secretary of Commerce, and as he is taken deep in the Mexican jungle he wonders if he will ever see again his family back in Maryland. Meanwhile, attorney Will Chambers and his new bride Fiona are enjoying their honeymoon in idyllic Cancun, aware of the drama of the kidnapping but totally unprepared how the kidnapping will affect their new life together. While special US forces succeed in freeing the Secretary, the mission itself is a failure, because of the civilian loss of a CIA agent and his family. Caleb Marlowe, operations commander, is criminally charged, and Will Chambers is asked to defend him at the military hearing. As Will becomes more involved with the case, it becomes apparent that there is much more than what is being revealed. Will begins to realize his newly found faith in Christ will be put to the test as he must struggle with forgiveness and issues of sacrifice. Is he really able to sacrifice his new marriage, his precious bride to a cause he doesn't really understand?

Third in the Chambers of Justice series by Craig Parshall, this new installment continues its development of character Will Chambers, who has turned from being a liberal ACLU lawyer to a dedicated attorney for the Lord. Readers who missed the first two books will no doubt want to go back and read the beginnings (#1, *The Resurrection File*, Harvest House, 2002; #2, *Custody of the State*, this issue), yet this book does well to stand on its own strength. The characters of Caleb Marlowe who is a soldier for God, as well as for his country is somewhat of an enigma, playing it up to the very limits of commitment to God and country. There are deep questions that play into the plot wonderfully—what is true forgiveness? Where is the fine line of commitment drawn when it comes to loved ones and serving one's country

or the greater good? These issues and others are woven into the suspenseful plot.

For those who are familiar with Dee Henderson, Randy Alcorn, T. Davis Bunn and Terri Blackstock's novels dealing with the law, then add Parshall's *The Accused* to the reading list. Insightful, intriguing, and thought provoking, *The Accused* gives readers something to really think about.

Pam Webb

***Along came Jones* / by Linda Windsor. LCCN 2002154296. Sisters, Ore., Multnomah, 2003. Paperbound, 1590520327, \$11.99.**

F. Christian fiction; Humorous fiction; Love stories. 308 p.

Adult (Grades 9-12) / Rating: 4

Deanna Manetti is on the run both from the mob and the police. Her naivety led her to a situation, which now has her fleeing a ruined life, a broken heart, and a stark realization that she truly is alone. Driving on a Montana back road, she thinks things could not get any worse, when a horse comes out of nowhere, causing her to crash. Rancher Shep Jones arrives and takes Deanna by horse to his spread, which is more like a ghost town. Diana has lost trust in anyone or anything and can't be sure if Shepherd is a kind stranger, an axe murderer, or one of those who might be looking for her. The rescue is just the beginning of their delightful encounters.

Former U.S. Marshal, Shep can tell that Deanna is on the lam, but he takes her in anyway. As Shep and Deanna fall in love, he tries to learn the truth, but she trusts no one after what her ex-lover did to her heart. The criminals and the Feds are closing in on her, and neither side cares what happens to Deanna. When the challenges become too much, Shep considers turning Diana out, but then he remembers how patiently God waited for him to return and he offers the same to her.

Though there are numerous Christian elements included in this story line, *Along Came Jones* is weighted more on the romantic suspense thriller than an inspirational romance. You can't help but love Diana and Shep, who so clearly exhibit the adage "opposites attract." Put them together with a small group of nosy but helpful town folk, and a realistic look at the struggle ordinary folk have with faith, and you have *Along Came Jones*.

Rick Estep

Antonia's choice : a novel / by Nancy Rue.
LCCN 2003001337. Sisters, Ore.,
Multnomah, 2003. Paperbound,
1590520769, \$11.99.

F. Bed and breakfast accommodations—Fiction;
 Adult children of aging parents—Fiction; Single
 women—Fiction; Christian fiction; Mystery fiction.
 300 p.

Adult (Grades 9-12) / Rating: 4

Antonia "Toni" Wells is a focused career woman with an "I-can-handle-it" attitude. She leaves Richmond and her husband Chris due to his neglect and cheating to relocate with their five-year-old son Ben in the Nashville area. Toni seems to finally have life under control—except for her five-year-old son, Ben. At first, Toni figures her marital problems or the move are to blame for Ben's being filled with fear and anger, especially his phobia about being touched. Then Toni receives a call from her mother informing her that her sister and brother-in-law have been arrested for trafficking child pornography. Mom refuses to accept the fact that Bobbi committed any crime, though the house is filled with equipment, pictures and videos, and their oldest teenage daughter Wyndham turned up in them. Ben was left with them once while Toni tried to decide the fate of her marriage. What happened to her son in her sister's household? Toni must choose between her son and her career—and acknowledge her dependence on God—as she begins an agonizing journey.

Nancy Rue tackles a very difficult subject in *Antonia's Choice*. She does a great job at limiting the graphic details about the actual abuse, but paints a vivid picture of the horrors and aftermath that individuals suffer at the hands of sexual abuse.

Rick Estep

Autumn dreams / by Gayle Roper.
(Seaside seasons; 3.) LCCN 2003004145.
Sisters, Ore., Multnomah, 2003.
Paperbound, 1590521277, \$11.99.

F. Single people—Fiction; Baby boom generation—
 Fiction; Parent and adult child—Fiction; Adult
 children of aging parents—Fiction; Christian fiction.
 350 p.

Grades 10-12 / Rating: 5

Cass, single owner of a bed and breakfast, takes care of her aging parents, a mother developing dementia and a father addicted to the sweepstakes. As if this were not enough, Cass has agreed to care for her teen niece and nephew while their parents are working in Saudi Arabia for a year. When her mother runs into the street toward an oncoming car, calling out to a long-dead relative, Cass is sure she is dead. Instead, Cass and her mother meet the driver of the oncoming vehicle, Dan, a retired CEO seeking a refuge from the rat race. Before long, Dan has worked his way into the hearts of all and is even helping out with the chores.

Meanwhile, Cass' housekeeper, Brenna, begins to seem progressively more depressed. She is making mysterious phone calls and hanging up, upset, without saying a word. When Brenna turns out to be a missing heiress who is hiding from the constant torture of her wicked stepbrother, Cass finds herself unwittingly dealing with a maniac. Between a deadly hurricane, a killer, a near date rape, and dementia, Cass is kept so busy that she almost misses falling into the loving arms of Dan.

Autumn Dreams by Gayle Roper is the third installment of the Seaside Season series. Using a practical, rather than esoteric, approach to Christianity, Roper shares her faith, through writing about everyday crises with no easy answers. Writer of over twenty-five books, one of which, *Spring Rain*, was a 2002 Christy Award finalist, Roper deals with the hard, real-life questions facing Christians today, like AIDS, in-laws with different or no faith, and the tragic loss of close family. Gayle Roper fully develops her characters, creating a story that is hard to put down. Discussion questions included. Highly recommended for all collections.

Kim Harris

The ballad of Sir Dinadan / Gerald Morris.
LCCN 2002010818. Boston, Houghton
Mifflin, 2003. Hardcover, 061890996,
\$15.00.

F. Knights and knighthood—Fiction; Minstrels—
 Fiction; Tristan (Legendary character)—Fiction; Iseult
 (Legendary character)—Fiction. 245 p.

Grades 6-8 (5, 9-10) / Rating: 4

Aptly titled, *The Ballad of Sir Dinadan* relates the tale of the minstrel Dinadan, forced into knighthood by his ambitious father. Sir Dinadan, sitting cross legged on his steed, playing his rebec, hiding his marks of knighthood, heads for King Arthur's court. Along the way he joins with Sirs Kai and Bedivere; meets Culloch, the Welsh lad determined to become a knight no matter how idiotic the tasks required; tries to avoid his brother Tristram who, abetted by his married-to-another lover Iseult, is heedlessly shattering moral rules and other people's lives; befriends and learns from the Moorish knight Palomides; strives to help the anything but helpless Lady Brangienne; and receives aid and friendship from the forest sprite, Sylvanus.

The Ballad of Sir Dinadan is the latest in author, pastor, and teacher Gerald Morris' series of retold Arthurian romances. Both old friends and newcomers to this series will enjoy this ironic, hilarious, thought-provoking book. The reader need not know anything about the King Arthur legends; however, those who do will enjoy exploring new twists to these ancient tales. *Dinadan...* points up the absurdity of several facets of knight errantry while highlighting the moral fiber underlying the Arthurian cycle. As

this story progresses, plot strands are drawn into a seamless whole and characters take on full personalities. The plot portrays Judeo/Christian morality, showing the growth of evil when good is ignored, and the strength of integrity. Recommended for grades five through nine, high schoolers and adults interested in King Arthur will also enjoy this book.

Donna Eggett

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Candle in the darkness / Lynn Austin.
(Refiner's fire.) LCCN 2002010129.
Minneapolis, Bethany House, 2002.
Paperbound, 1556614365, \$12.99.

F. Antislavery movements—Fiction; Women
 abolitionists—Fiction; Virginia—History—Civil War,
 1861-1865—Fiction; Historical fiction; Christian
 fiction. 431 p.

Grades 10-12 / Rating: * 5

Caroline is born and raised in Civil War era Richmond, Virginia. Owing slaves is not only a luxury for her family and community, but an integral part of their very existence. As Caroline grows from a gangly tomboy into a beautiful, sensitive young woman, she witnesses the most loving, as well as the harshest interactions between slaves and their owners and comes to the realization that slavery is against God's will. Breaching trust of family and friends, Caroline has been branded a traitor and proceeds to write her story on sheets of wallpaper, during the long sleepless nights she awaits her fate.

Candle in the Darkness by Lynn Austin is an exquisite rendition of this soul-searching, turbulent time in our nation's history. When she introduces her protagonist and the dilemma Caroline faces in choosing God's will over the favor of loved ones, Austin skillfully and immediately draws the reader into a tale that won't let go until the very last word. Main characters become familiar companions. Plot is easy to follow and get involved in. Pace, time, and backdrop are well crafted. Dialogue is realistic. Sensitivity to subject matter is obvious. Highly recommended for both adult and young adult audiences.

Kim Harris

Custody of the state / Craig Parshall.
(Chambers of justice; 2.) LCCN
2002013757. Eugene, Ore., Harvest
House, 2003. Paperbound, 0736910263,
\$11.99.

F. Custody of children—Fiction; Child abuse—
 Fiction; Chambers, Will (Fictitious character)—
 Fiction; Georgia—Fiction; Christian fiction. 362 p.

Grade 11-Adult / Rating: 4

Joe and Mary Sue Fellows are trying to make a go of their small farm in rural Georgia. Their family life is shredded when government agencies descend on their farm to take their

toddler son, Joshua, into protective custody under suspicion of child abuse. Mary Sue flees the farm with Josh, Joe is arrested for obstruction of justice, and the drama begins. Mary Sue hides with Josh in another state, guests of intriguing Native American Christians she met on the road. While Joe remains in jail, attorney Will Chambers tries to untangle the complex legal issues and help the family. His relationship with his fiancé is endangered as he seeks the truth about the case and delves into a deeper faith. Craig Parshall interweaves a rare medical condition, Southern culture and ungodly forces in *Custody of the State*, the second title of his Chambers of Justice series.

Authentic characters and a believable storyline make *Custody of the State* gripping and even unnerving reading. The reader wants to cheer for the good guys and hiss at the villains while wishing to help bring justice to the innocent family. Sensitive readers could find the "bad guy," Jason Bell Purdy, abhorrent and his sinful lifestyle too uncomfortably vivid. This is a book worth reading if only for a taste of the ugly world out there, and the need for believers to live utterly by faith and stand firm on what is godly.

Karen Schmidt

***Desert Rose* / Linda Chaikin. LCCN 2002155508. Eugene, Ore., Harvest House/Harvest House, 2003. Paperbound, 0736912347, \$10.99.**

F. Silver mines and mining—Fiction; Fathers and daughters—Fiction; Women pioneers—Fiction; Nevada—Fiction; Christian fiction.

Grades 10-12 / Rating: 4

Annalee, defying a bout with tuberculosis, travels to the theater, where her mother, the once famous Lillian O'Day, is working to feed the family. Annalee is anxious to deliver a letter from her long absent father, Jack Halliday. Just as Annalee is about to enter her mother's dressing room, she overhears a conversation between her mother and her father's sinister cousin, Max. Apparently, Jack shot his mining partner in the back, left the mining camp, and is thought to be dead, whether by Indian arrow or exposure to the elements. Lillian and Max leave by stagecoach to Virginia City to discover the truth about Jack, but are met with a terrible accident in which Lillian is killed and Max barely escapes death. That leaves the sickly Annalee and her precocious siblings to track down the truth about their father. With the dubious help of handsome lawman Brett Wilder, who is also looking for Jack, both for legal and personal reasons, the small troop face the entire spectrum of the decadent society of the gold rush days in the Wild West.

Desert Rose by Linda Chaikin is an historical romance that tastefully represents human nature in three-dimension. Chaikin shows that even the kindest of individuals can turn rogue through

twists of fate, and that true faith can be hard to come by and even harder to hold onto. The plethora of characters may, at first confuse the reader, but the storyline is worth sticking with to the satisfying ending, in which love conquers all. Linda Chaikin is involved in compassionate worldwide giving and translates her vision of the need for God's love to shine through us all into her books.

Kim Harris

***Don't take any wooden nickels* / Mindy Starns Clark. (The million dollar mysteries; 2.) LCCN 2002010021. Eugene, Ore., Harvest House, 2003. Paperbound, 0736909931, \$10.99.**

F. Women philanthropists—Fiction; Chesapeake Bay Region (Md. And Va.)—Fiction; Christian fiction; Mystery fiction. 335 p.

Adult (Grades 8-12) / Rating: 4

Callie Webber is a private investigator employed by "Tom," an enigmatic multimillionaire. Her job is to investigate the legality of non-profit organizations that request donations from her boss. At his okay, she delivers checks with many zeros to the favored recipients. Alas, shades of the old television series—*The Millionaire*.

Callie, a young widow, longs to meet the man whose telephone voice resonates virtue and kindness. But just as it is supposed to happen, like each time in the past, Tom receives an emergency call and postpones their arranged meeting. This long distance friendship is poignant and appealing to the hopeless romantic.

When in Osprey Cove, the town where Callie lives, she volunteers at the Advancing Attic. The Attic is a sort of clothing store staffed by people who see potential in donated clothing and coordinate wardrobes for their cliental of indigent women starting new jobs. As Callie helps carry her present client's wardrobe to the car, they open the trunk and find the women's missing boyfriend—dead. The woman is arrested and Callie, of course, is the only person her client trusts to find the real killer.

Don't Take Any Wooden Nickels is a busy story. Callie's investigation turns up dangerous people and an international slave plot. When she gets into heavy-duty trouble with the criminal sect, her lucky breaks seem to get her home safely.

The first book of The Million Dollar series, *A Penny for Your Thoughts*, is Mindy Clark's debut novel. *Don't Take Any Wooden Nickels* could assure her a place among today's writers as she ably crafts a tight suspense plot and a tough mystery. This international thriller will win her many new fans.

Maxine Cambra

***A dime a dozen* / Mindy Starns Clark. (The million dollar mysteries; 3.) LCCN 2003002446. Eugene, Ore., Harvest House, 2003. Paperbound, 0736909958, \$10.99.**

F. Women philanthropists—Fiction; Nonprofit organizations—Fiction; Migrant agricultural laborers—Fiction; Great Smoky Mountains (N.C. and Tenn.)—Fiction; Christian fiction; Mystery fiction. 334 p.

Adult (Grades 9-12) / Rating: 3.

Callie Webber is a private investigator and Director of Research for the J.O.S.H.U.A. Foundation, an organization that donates money to non-profit agencies.

In *A Dime a Dozen*, Callie prepares for a heart-tugging trip to North Carolina to investigate MORE, the Migrant Outreach Resource Enterprises operated by her late husband's parents. Grief filled memories of her husband's tragic death has kept her away from this area but now his parents need her help.

MORE was created by the Webbers to provide clean living quarters for the poor, migrant fruit pickers and their families during the autumn apple harvest. During the investigation a worker disappears. Authorities decide he went back home but his wife insists he would not leave his family. When the man's body is found, Callie's curiosity leads her into extreme danger as she searches for his killer.

While chasing bad guys Mindy Starns Clark's writing excites the reader, but her heavy exposition and back-story soon dulls story. High schoolers will enjoy this book if their love of mystery keeps them turning the pages.

Maxine Cambra

***East* / by Edith Pattou. LCCN 2003002338. Orlando, Harcourt, 2003. Hardcover, 0152045635, \$18.**

F. Bears—Fiction; Fairy tales. 480 p.

Grades 6-9 / Rating: 5

Rose is the youngest child of a Norwegian family. She has an adventurous spirit. Her family falls on hard times and her sister is seriously ill. When a strange, talking white bear comes to her family and offers them health and prosperity if Rose will come with him, Rose chooses to make the sacrifice for her family.

The white bear is actually a boy who was kidnapped by the Troll Queen and is under an enchantment. The bear takes Rose to live with him in a castle carved out of the inside of a mountain. She has everything she might ask for, except freedom. The boy is bear by day, human by night. If Rose lives with him for one year without looking upon his human face, he will be released from his enchantment, but he cannot tell her this. The "white bear" sleeps in the same bed as Rose each night. Due to the enchantment Rose cannot light a candle, touch, or speak to this unknown person in her bed.

Because of her homesickness, Rose asks to go home for a visit with her family and the bear reluctantly grants her one month to do so. The Troll Queen who wants to prevent the white bear from being freed, takes this opportunity to deceive Rose's mother into giving Rose a magical candle which will light, despite the enchantment, knowing that Rose will be tempted to use it to identify who is sleeping in her bed. Rose does so just one month short of the year required to break the enchantment. The white bear becomes human, but is whisked away by the Troll Queen who intends to marry him herself. Rose feels guilt for having betrayed the bear and a duty to set things right for him.

She travels north with great hardship to find the Troll city in the Arctic. The trolls rely on kidnapped humans for servants. Rose infiltrates the city as a human slave. She is able to disrupt the Troll Queen's wedding, free the man who was a bear and several human slaves. They travel south meeting up with Rose's father and brother who were searching for her. The human slaves are returned to their original homes. The man who was a bear has very strong feelings for Rose, but he feels a need to know who he was before the enchantment. He leaves Rose to return to the castle in the mountain to search for clues to his identity. Rose follows him. They declare their love for each other, are married and settle down.

To say that this is just a retelling of "East of the Sun and West of the Moon: would not do it justice. It is much more. Edith Pattou has drawn on those classic stories and created a well written, interesting, and realistic tale that goes beyond the original tales.

Each chapter is written from a different character's perspective—Rose, White Bear, Neddy (Rose's brother), Father, and the Troll Queen. This results in the intimacy of first person narrative with the fullness of multiple points of view. Even though this story contains elements of fantasy, the characters are very realistic and the events are also more realistic than most fairy tales. Rose struggles with the possibility that the White Bear actually loves the Troll Queen and that she should not interfere. It is not a clear cut good and evil, break the spell-live happily ever after, kind of story. Rose decides to free the White Bear from the Troll Queen, not for herself, but for his own sake. The usual abruptness and unfounded "true love" of most romance fairy tales is missing here. Highly recommended.

Karla J. Castle

***Elisabeth of Austria: the princess bride* / by Barry Denenberg. (The royal diaries.) LCCN 2002070818. New York, Scholastic, 2003. Hardcover, 0439266440, \$10.95.**

F. Elisabeth, Empress, consort of Franz Joseph I, Emperor of Austria 1837-1898—Fiction; Princesses—Fiction; Diaries—Fiction; Austria—History—1848-1867—Fiction. 144 p.

Grades 6-8 / Rating: 5

Sixteen-year-old Elisabeth Wittlesbach is visiting Bad Ischl, Austria in 1853 as the younger sister of Nene, the intended bridal choice for the young Emperor of Austria-Hungary in an arranged marriage. When the tables are suddenly turned and Elisabeth herself becomes the Emperor's choice, Elisabeth is thrown into a quandary of love for her intended, Emperor Franz Joseph I, and self-doubt over her ability to be a suitable Empress for the kingdom. But the whirlwind of events leading up to her marriage do not allow for much thinking or training, and Elisabeth stumbles through them all and does indeed become Empress Elisabeth of Austria.

This seeming Cinderella tale of love and marriage ends with a sour note in the accompanying epilogue which details the life of the real Empress Elisabeth through stories of vanity leading to anorexia, and discrimination against her by the Emperor's family, to her final death at the hands of an assassin.

While the short diary (ninety pages) is light-hearted and reads like the story of Cinderella, author Denenberg fails to portray enough depth to Elisabeth's character to present her as anything more than a tragic, vain woman leading a self-centered life. The short diary is accompanied by an eight-page epilogue and an equally long historical account of events in the world during the second half of the 19th century which is intended to show the tumultuous times Elisabeth was living in and how that might have affected the outcome of her life. Perhaps if more of these events had been used as part of the diary rather than as endnotes the reader would be more sympathetic to Elisabeth. As in other royal diaries of this series a family tree is shown along with a glossary of Elisabeth's family. Many portraits and photographs of her family and homes are also included.

Judy Driscoll

***The enemy has a face* / written by Gloria Miklowitz. LCCN 2002009233. Grand Rapids, Eerdmans Books for Young Readers, 2003. Hardcover, 0802852432, \$16.00.**

F. Missing persons—Fiction; Arab-Israeli conflict—Fiction; Palestinian Arabs—Fiction; Jews—United States—Fiction; Los Angeles (Calif.)—Fiction. 139 p.

Grades 7-9 (4-6) / Rating: 5

In America, we're all equal, right? Then, why are Netta and her family convinced that Netta's missing older brother, Adam, has been kidnapped and, possibly, killed by Palestinian terrorists. Why does Netta's Jewish family live in constant fear of repercussions from Arabic hatred? During the investigation into Adam's disappearance, Netta begins to develop a spiky

friendship with Laith, an Arab. As they learn more about each other, the youths realize that discrimination spreads both ways, even in America. When the culprits are caught, and turn out to be just regular high school boys pushing "fun" too far, Netta, Laith, and their families are momentarily forced to see past age-old prejudices.

The Enemy Has a Face by Gloria D. Miklowitz is a fast-paced, modern day story of a heritage of hatred among peoples who have more in common than they know. Written in first person, in Netta's voice, the reader is able to catch glimpses of the life-long cost of bigotry. Miklowitz, having written for teens for nearly thirty years, has written and won prestigious awards for books on a variety of social issues, including the after affects of war (*After the Bomb*, reissue: Scholastic, 1985); rape (*Did You Hear What Happened to Andrea?*, Delacorte Press, 1979); the AIDS virus (*Good-bye Tomorrow*, Delacorte Press, 1987); as well as historical issues (*Secrets in the House of Delgado*, Eerdmans, 2001). Highly recommended.

Kim Harris

***Fallen angels* / Patricia Hickman. LCCN 2003041086. New York, Warner Books, 2003. Paperbound, 0446691011, \$12.95.**

F. Abandoned children—Fiction; Brothers and sisters—Fiction; Depressions—Fiction; Arkansas—Fiction; Christian fiction. 301 p.

Adult (Grades 9-12) / Rating: 4

When Jeb Nubey flees Texas for Arkansas because of a possible murder charge, he picks up the three abandoned Wilbey children as unexpected hitchhikers along the way. The children have been deserted for several years and have faced many obstacles and hardships along the way. When the law stops him, the children pretend to be his family. Jeb takes the children to their adult sibling only to find her home deserted.

After spending a stormy night in the Church in the Dell in Millwood Hollow, they wake up to the beaming faces of the parishioners who mistake them for the widowed Rev. Philemon Gracie and his three children. For Jeb, Angel, Willie, and little Ida May, the misunderstanding is manna from heaven. "They's money to be had, Jeb Nubey, in God's work!" gloats 13-year-old Angel. With her coaching, the illiterate Jeb fakes his way through his new persona. Soon, the generosity of the small-town folks and the attentions of a comely schoolteacher, Fern Coulter, soften Jeb's heart and he yearns to be a better man. But he knows it's only a matter of time until the real Gracie family shows up or someone recognizes him from the circulating "wanted" posters.

This is an entertaining historical fiction that paints a disturbing picture of the Depression via

the treatment of the three Welby children by family and others. There are a few hitches: the early setup and pacing are a bit awkward, and the reader may stumble over the occasional confusion in names (there's a Willie and a Will, for example). The ending, however, is sweetly satisfying.

Rick Estep

***Flabbergasted : a novel* / Ray Blackston. LCCN 2002155312. Grand Rapids, Fleming H. Revell, 2003. Hardcover, 0800718372, \$22.99.**

F. Dating (Social customs)—Fiction; Real estate agents—Fiction; Church membership—Fiction; Christian fiction. 331 p.

Adult (Grades 9-12) / Rating: 5

Flabbergasted, Ray Blackston's debut novel, appears to be a bit of fluff at first glance—a beach ball and a lime-green Cadillac convertible named Sherbet grace the front cover. But readers will discover something far more intriguing inside. If you're tired of the run-of-the-mill "boy meets girl, falls in love, has a crisis, gets over it, and lives happily ever after" stories, this book is for you.

To begin with, it is nice to read a contemporary story featuring a strong male protagonist for a change—written from a distinctly male, first person perspective. New in town, and desperate for a date, Jay decides to frequent the Presbyterian church singles group at the recommendation of his realtor. (Personally, she alternates between the Baptists and the Methodists). On a singles church beach trip Jay has a brief encounter with a poetic, independent-minded young missionary, Allie, which nudges him towards spiritual things. As Jay begins a slow drift toward God, Allie leaves the States and moves to Ecuador. Later, a near-death experience prompts Jay to commit his life to the Lord, which leads him in directions he could never have imagined for himself.

This is a rather cold synopsis of a book that is warm, funny, and written unlike any other in the Christian bookstores today. A mere plot summary does not begin to convey the delights of this book. Blackston's prose is real and fresh; he employs a quick, stream of consciousness writing style that sings with unique turns of phrases and intriguing similes. His characters are irritably endearing; with all their flaws and "humanness," they might easily be your boss, your brother, your best friend. *Flabbergasted* is unpredictable and funny, but plenty of substantive insights may be found alongside the quirky, James Thurber-style humor. The ending is not nice and tidy, but it is wonderfully ambiguous and full of possibilities. Single Christians, in particular, will laugh along with this book and the real dating life experiences it portrays.

Sherri Beeler

***Flames of the tiger* / John Wilson. Toronto, KidsCan, 2003. Hardcover, 1553376188, \$16.95.**

F. World War, 1939-1945—Children-Fiction. 176 p.

Grades 8-12 / Rating: 4

Berlin is in flames, the Russians are advancing, and 16-year-old Dieter is trying to get his younger sister to safety. In the smoldering remains of a tank battle Dieter finds a wounded soldier. Joe, a Canadian tanker, is suffering from a head wound and is babbling in German. Dieter starts talking to him, hoping to find a way to get to the Canadian forces and safety. Recognizing the concussion Joe has sustained, Dieter realizes he must keep Joe awake if the soldier is to survive. Through the long night, Dieter and Joe talk, with Dieter telling Joe what life in Germany has been like for him in the past nine years. Chapter by chapter he reveals the triumphs and darkness of Nazi Germany, as seen through the eyes of a young boy.

In *Flames of the Tiger* the author skillfully explores the existence of children who, like Dieter, grew up hearing and believing the evil lies of the Nazis. Many, like Dieter, embraced the pageantry but had nothing to live for when Hitler fell. Most historical fiction of this period focuses on the popular victims and heroes of the war. John Wilson has opened a different door. He has set aside mainstream categories and given us an appreciation for an overlooked kind of war victim. Unsympathetic subjects, children of the aggressors can reveal authentic experience, but rarely have a voice in post-war literature. This is a rare book. It may make a reader uncomfortable. It should make the reader think. An inspirational book for high school students, this is for collections in need of World War II historical fiction.

Kelley Westenhoff

***The journal of Finn Reardon, newsie* / by Susan Campbell Bartoletti. (My name is America.) LCCN 2002030874. New York, Scholastic, 2003. Hardcover, 0439188946, \$10.95.**

F. Irish Americans—Fiction; Newspaper carriers—Fiction; Diaries—Fiction; New York (N.Y.)—History—1898-1951—Fiction. 176 p.

Grades 5-8 / Rating: 5

Life in New York City in 1899 was not always pretty, and author Susan Bartoletti has attempted to present that life of poverty, sweat, and tears without stripping it of its hopes and dreams. Finn Reardon is a 13-year-old boy, the only son of an Irish family trying to hold itself together. Life in the tenement is a miserable existence, but school for Finn is no better and he longs for the time each day when the doors to his "prison" are shut and he can race to his job as a newsie (newspaper peddler) on the streets of New York. While many of the newsies make up stories to shout out to rid themselves of their papers faster, and some even go so far as to monetarily cheat

their customers, Finn determines that above all else he'll be an honest newsie, and dreams that someday he may even become a newspaper reporter himself.

Finn's daily earnings go into his mother's jam jar for the "someday" home of their dreams, but the someday home seems even farther away as Finn's mother leads a rent strike against their landlord who refuses to fix the essential water system in the tenement. The family suffers eviction and relocation before their father is given a chance to better the family's existence by taking contract work as a house painter. Just after Finn's father thinks they have finally scraped enough money together to make a down payment on their someday house, he is severely injured in a fall resulting from lead poisoning on the job and is incapacitated. Their someday savings now must pay medical bills, and Finn's small wages must also go to help support the family. Despite his teacher's recommendation that Finn go on to college to become a writer, those dreams seem only an unattainable hope.

When Finn exposes the cheating of the newsies by the newspaper dealers he gets his first chance to make the news rather than shout it by befriending a reporter and giving him the first chance at reporting events of the newsies strike. After Finn's fourteenth birthday, he goes to his newspaper friend to get a job with the newspaper, but is told that the most important thing he has to do to get the job is to stay in school, a bitter pill for Finn to swallow.

In the epilogue author Susan Bartoletti assures her young readers that Finn did just that, going on to graduate and becoming a reporter during World War I. Her endnotes explore life for the street kid of 1899 New York and also the rivalry between William Randolph Hearst and Joseph Pulitzer and their newspapers. The reader will finish *The Journal of Finn Reardon* with a new appreciation for the life of the child worker at the turn of the twentieth century.

The Journal of Finn Reardon is not a pretty story to read, but the author has successfully treated it with sensitivity and painted this dark period in America labor with reality without stripping her characters of their dreams for a more golden tomorrow.

Judy Driscoll

***Kristina : the girl king* / by Carolyn Meyer. (The royal diaries.) New York, Scholastic, 2003. Hardcover, 0439249767, \$10.95.**

921 (945/63207/092). Kristina, Queen of Sweden, 1626-1689—Fiction; Queens—Sweden—Biography—Fiction; Sweden—History—Christina, 1632-1654—Fiction. 170 p.

Grades 6-8 / Rating: 5

Some may question the sub-title of *Kristina's* story as a mistake by a careless editor calling *Kristina* a king. However, *Kristina* was indeed raised to become king, not queen, after the death

of her father, King Gustav II Adolf Vasa of Sweden, when she was a child of but six years of age. This was not a decision to be taken lightly, because a queen, in the king's eyes, was merely the wife of the king and held no importance. King Gustav had ordered that this young girl, his only heir, would be raised by the regents to be a strong leader of her people.

Kristina's diary outlines 17 defining months of her life from 1638 to 1639 during which the regents made the decision to remove her from the influence of her mother, the emotionally unstable dowager queen, and concentrate their efforts on educating her both scholastically and in the working of the realm.

Kristina was not averse to this training in that her interests lay closer to mastering the manly arts of swordsmanship and horsemanship than in learning to be a lady in pursuit of fine needlework and a future husband. In fact, it is the insistence on Kristina's marrying that eventually led her to abdicate her throne in favor of her favorite cousin, Karl, after only 22 years of her reign.

Author Carolyn Meyer characterizes Kristina as the strong-willed and strong principled leader she became, as well as showing her tender caring for those who were close to her, especially her aunt and uncle who were her surrogate parents along with their children, her cousins. In addition she traces the development of Kristina's growing awareness of the needs of the downtrodden in her kingdom that have made her beloved in Swedish history and lore.

Meyers manages to balance the historical events of Kristina's story with enough castle intrigue to keep her readers' attention and inspire them to want to learn more about this young woman who became "King of Sweden." Interesting historical notes on Kristina's later life, after her rule, a royal family tree of the Vasa family, and a glossary of characters accompanied with family portraits rounds out this interesting period in Swedish history. The total effect is of a positive role model for young girls to emulate.

Judy Driscoll

***The lost letters of Pergamum* / Bruce W. Longenecker with extracts from Ben Witherington III. LCCN 2002074407. Grand Rapids, Baker Academic/Baker Books, 2003. Paperbound, 0801026075, \$14.99.**

F. Luke, Saint—Fiction; Bible. N.T.—History of Biblical events—Fiction; Church history—Primitive and early church, ca. 30-600—Fiction; Evangelists (Bible)—Fiction; Christian saints—Fiction. 192 p. Adult / Rating: 3

In this intriguing collection of fictional letters, *The Lost Letters of Pergamum*, author Bruce Longenecker draws from a premise taken from a line in Revelation that mentions the death of Antipas in Pergamum. Supposition that he was

a nobleman of some status, drawn into the life and commitments of a Christian fellowship and thus punished by the Romans, builds the story line. Antipas writes to Calpurnius inviting him to attend the gladiatorial games in Pergamum. He elaborates about the nature of the games, justifying the death of the combatants as displays of power and force to keep the barbarians subdued. He also focuses on the need for establishing contacts with men of honor, and status building civic benefaction. Antipas has come to Pergamum to study in the grand libraries there. Calpurnius leads him to an esteemed "doctor and scholar named Luke," and mentions the two volume history he has written about an "intriguing man from Galilee". Over the course of correspondence with Luke, Antipas is encouraged to visit Christian gatherings to evaluate the teachings they follow. Before long Antipas differentiates between the group that truly loves and takes care of each other and the one that worships Jesus along with the plethora of Roman gods. The politics of a society who finds it atheistic not to worship the emperor creates a persecution that reaches all levels of the true Christian community. The last letter is from a friend of Antipas, in whose wealthy home many have found refuge. He relates the skillful oratory and sacrifice of his friend to Luke.

The language is of necessity archaic. Some of the specifics of the culture and laws of the Roman Empire are gross and disturbing by our standards. Descriptions of the death of Antipas are horrifying. Violent losses of status, employment and life were daily potentials if you chose to be a follower of Jesus. The dilemmas facing people in a position to help the persecuted are poignantly portrayed. The reader's imagination is quickly engaged as the concerns and choices made are played out against the reality of immediate and eternal consequences. Examples of depth of friendship, honor and virtue encourage the reader to aspire to higher values. Probably interesting for serious students in upper grades, not easy reading.

Carol Taylor

***Love thy neighbor: the Tory diary of Prudence Emerson* / by Ann Turner. (Dear America.) LCCN 2002073345. New York, Scholastic, 2003. Hardcover, 0439153085, \$10.95.**

F. American loyalists—Fiction; Diaries—Fiction; United States—History—Revolution, 1775-1783—Fiction. 176 p. Grades 6-8 / Rating: 5

Prudence Emerson, a thirteen-year-old girl of Greenmarsh, Massachusetts, who can't seem to live up to her name, is the oldest daughter of a Tory family in a Patriot community in 1774. When Prudence's Aunt "Pinprick" notices what terrible penmanship Prudence has, she gives Prudence an old accounts book of her late Uncle George with the admonition that she is to use it

for practicing her penmanship. Instead, Prudence uses it to record all the questions and thoughts she has about the bitter struggle between the Tories and the Patriots in her small community, as well as the actual events which affect her family's relationship with their neighbors.

As the situation worsens, her father's store is brought to near bankruptcy by the boycotting of his business in the community and the family receives anonymous threats of physical harm. The family, with the exception of the oldest brother, Walter, moves to Boston to live with their Uncle's family. Her brother chooses to stay in Greenmarsh and sign the declaration that he is a Patriot in order to protect his families' land. Prudence isn't sure whether this is that much of a sacrifice for Walter since she has noticed signs that he might actually be sympathetic to the Patriot cause.

Life in the city of Boston is completely strange to Prudence; getting used to the sights and sounds, is both hard and exciting. Seeing the red-coated British soldiers, and even getting to meet them gives Prudence some feeling of security, but the reality of the battle of Bunker Hill, and seeing the war dead, and, in fact, knowing one young soldier, Mr. Spaulding, who died as a result of the battle, soon leads the family to realize that there is no safety in Boston. The Emerson family finally flees to Nantucket Island, where at least they have the healthy ocean breezes and can experience a measure of peace in their lives.

As with other books in the Dear America Series, Ann Turner has packed her pages with historical events as well as glimpses of every day life and customs in the 18th century. Children reading *Love Thy Neighbor* can learn that there are two sides to every issue and that those who choose the opposition side aren't necessarily bad people, just ordinary people with a different view. Historical notes at the back of the book give a brief overview of the political climate in the early 1770's and some details of Tory or Loyalist viewpoint.

Judy Driscoll

***Meet the Malones* / Lenora Mattingly Weber; illustrated by Gertrude Howe. LCCN 00269286. California, Image Cascade, 1999. Paperbound, 0963960733, \$12.95.**

F. Family life—Colorado—Fiction; World War, 1939-1945—Colorado—Fiction; Denver (Colo.)—Fiction. 282 p.

Grades 6-9 (10-11) / Rating: 5

***Beany Malone* / Lenora Mattingly Weber. LCCN 00269285. California, Image Cascade, 1999. Paperbound, 0963960741, \$12.95.**

F. Family life—Colorado—Fiction; World War, 1939-1945—Colorado—Fiction; Denver (Colo.)—Fiction. 221 p.

Grades 6-9 (10-11) / Rating: 5

These books, reprint editions of the first two volumes of Lenora Mattingly Weber's much-loved Beany Malone series, are superbly written stories that should appeal to preteen and teen girls. Brimming with family values and well-rounded characters, the books, set in the 1940s, recount the adventures of the Malone family of Denver, Colorado: Elizabeth, the oldest girl, who's married; Mary Fred, the anchor of the family; Johnny, a not-too-practical boy who wants to be a writer; and Beany, a girl who can be distressingly practical. Mr. Malone, a widower and the editor of a Denver newspaper, is a solid influence on his children.

Meet the Malones, Book #1, is about Mary Fred and her wonderfully insecure junior year. She's a 'mop squeezer' (a girl who volunteers for school committees), not a 'queen' (the girls who rule the school). Her relationships with Dirk, a jock, and Ander, the boy next door, propel the book and provide nice lessons on true love vs. infatuation, and on what it takes to make a successful relationship.

Book #2, *Beany Malone*, is a Beany book (as are all other titles in this series). It describes Beany's infatuation with Norbett, a bitter, cynical boy. It's clear insecurity makes Norbett so prickly; yet, realistically, there's no miracle change at book's end. He becomes softer, but his rough edges still show. Is he the best choice for Beany? That's resolved in later volumes.

Mary Fred's and Beany's behavior can be dubious (they lie, they're proud, etc.) and some classmates are less than admirable, but honesty always prevails, the disreputable classmates are always found out, and lessons are always learned. There's occasionally minor swearing and sometimes the language is a bit stilted for today's readers, but overall these books are a joy.

Every title in the Beany Malone series has been reprinted by Image Cascade, which also reprints books by Rosamund duJardin, Janet Lambert, and Sally Watson. The reprints are on good-quality paper, with original text, cover art, and internal illustrations reproduced. Gertrude Howe's black-and-white illustrations in Book #1 (no artist credit is given for Book #2) nicely capture the period.

Rosemarie DiCristo

***Miss Tippy* / Janet Lambert. Fresno, Calif., Image Cascade, 2000. Paperbound, 1930009186, \$12.95.**

F. Teenage girls—Fiction. 192 p.
Grades 6-9 (5, 10-11) / Rating: 4

***Rainbow after rain* / Janet Lambert. Fresno, Calif., Image Cascade, 2000. Paperbound, 1930009224, \$12.95.**

F. Teenage girls—Fiction. 190 p.
Grades 6-9 (5, 10-11) / Rating: 4

Tippy Parrish, soon to be sixteen, has no goals in life, and no dreams, so she's afraid she'll never amount to anything. Her sister Penny is an actress. Her oldest brother David is a war hero. Her other brother, Bobby, will attend West Point. But Tippy herself is totally unremarkable.

That's the plot of *Miss Tippy*, volume one in Janet Lambert's much-loved Tippy Parrish series. (All of Lambert's teen novels have been reissued by Image Cascade Publishing). *Rainbow After Rain*, book five in the series, is set four years later and recounts Tippy's attempts to find love again after the wartime death of Ken, her fiancé.

The books are set on and around Governor's Island, New York in the early years of World War II. (The Parrishes are an army family). Both are well-written, involving tales filled with realistic characters. Family values are important. The Parrish parents are loving parents who allow their children independence, yet who are always there to give guidance. The children truly care for each other and their parents.

The young Tippy is a giddy, mercurial girl who's always jumping feet first into things, yet despite her impulsiveness she has a kind heart. She's a terrific character, with genuine feelings teen girls will be able to relate to. By book #5, Tippy's grown sadder and wiser, but she still has spunk, and more important, still manages to survive life's crises.

Written primarily for teens, the books contain mature concepts. One character smokes, for instance, and there's occasionally minor profanity. But there's also mention of prayer and the characters' belief in God, and overall the books are clean, problem-free reading.

These books aren't fast-paced adventures. Instead they describe the pain of growing up: does Peter like me or does Ken? Do I like them? How will I bear moving to Germany? Because of this, some modern teens may find the books too slow. Reluctant readers may be turned off by the sometimes dated language and the lengthy descriptions. But these are really timeless books filled with characters whose hopes and aspirations never go out of style. Recommended.

Rosemarie DiCristo

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***Out of time* / Alton Gansky. (J.D. Stanton mysteries; 3.) LCCN 2003010752. Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 2003. Paperbound, 0310249597, \$12.99.**

F. Stanton, J. D. (Fictitious character)—Fiction.;
Naval historians—Fiction.; Retired teachers—Fiction.;
Christian fiction.; Mystery fiction..

Adult (Grades 9-12) / * Rating: 5

JD Stanton, retired Navy captain and naval history expert, has perhaps gotten more than he bargained for when he agrees to take five troubled teens out on a week long sailing trip. Crewed by the affable Richie and capable Tenny, both Annapolis cadets, Stanton nevertheless faces the challenges of both adolescent attitudes and a profound mystery. As the trip progresses it is clear this will be no pleasure cruise, even though the catamaran they sail on is a state of the art craft on loan from Richie's father. As the tension mounts among the teens and crew, the sea throws them up a sudden storm that disables the catamaran completely. When the storm ends almost as quickly as it started they find themselves without power and in a surreal fog. Then it really gets strange. Looming out of the fog the SS Archer appears—a one hundred year old British vessel only rumored to have once existed.

Alton Gansky capably delivers another captivating entry in his JD Stanton Mysteries series. Gansky is indeed a talented storyteller with his ability to take historical facts and weave human drama with paranormal circumstances. This is crossover fiction at its finest. There is a strong storyline with credible characters, plus unpredictable plot twists. The author is also adept at portraying his Christian characters with unwavering testimony throughout the story without having to strong-arm the Gospel message, which is quite refreshing. Adults will savor the good reading, as will young adults since the protagonists are teens and the suspense on the cutting edge of supernatural. While the previous JD Stanton books were enthralling reads, *Out of Time* is a can't-put-it-down-read for sure. Frank Peretti fans will want to make room on their reading lists for this one.

Pam Webb

***Rare beasts* / by Charles Ogden. (Edgar & Ellen ; 1.) LCCN 2003000623. Berkeley, Tricycle Press, 2003. Hardcover, 1582461104, \$12.95.**

F. Humorous stories; Brothers and sisters—Fiction;
Twins—Fiction; Tricks—Fiction; Moneymaking
projects—Fiction. 110 p.

Grades 5-7 / Not recommended.

Edgar and Ellen are twins of unknown age who live in the sleepy little town of Nods Limbs. Their parents are away on an extended vacation, at least that's what the note they left behind said. The twins are left to their own devices in a big ramshackle house on the edge of town. The twins entertain themselves by devising and carrying out dastardly plans. They are bored with playing hide and seek with each other, but the other schemes they think of for playing pranks on the townspeople all involve some sort of monetary investment. So, the twins much first find a way to make some money. A television show about exotic pets gives them an idea. They kidnap all of the pets in town, paint,

decorate and modify them into exotic animals and attempt to sell them back to the townspeople.

The idea of having naughty children as main characters piqued my curiosity, but I find the book rather disappointing. The storyline is predictable. Edgar and Ellen resemble Wednesday and Pugsly Addams, only less civilized. The story is not written in a particularly witty or clever way to offset the negativity, as is the Lemony Snicket Unfortunate Series of Events series or the Eddie Dickens Trilogy by Philip Ardagh. Adults are portrayed as stupid, cowardly or menacing. There are no sympathetic characters that the reader can care about or identify with. There is no profanity, aside from one "gosh darn", but name calling is prevalent. The twins refer to each other and others as idiot, dolt, sourpuss, selfish little snot, and buffoon. There is a clear maliciousness evidenced in the sign over their door—Schadenfreude—which the author explains means "pleasure derived from the misery of others," and the fact that Edgar and Ellen are entertained solely by causing discomfort or pain to others. Even the sibling bond does not protect them from each other. Edgar and Ellen fear only one thing, the mysterious groundskeeper, Heimertz.

Karla J. Castle

***A rush of wings* / Kristen Heitzmann. LCCN 2002152592. Minneapolis, Bethany House, 2003. Paperbound, 0764226061, \$12.00**

F. Women artists—Fiction; Ranch life—Fiction; Betrayal—Fiction; Rocky Mountains—Fiction; Christian fiction. 380 p.

Adult (Grades 9-12) / Rating: 5

Protected all her life by her wealthy, but well-meaning father, Noelle finds herself on the run, away from his control, spurred on by sharp panic caused by some unnamed fear. Desperate to escape this unknown danger she takes bus after bus, finally arriving in a tiny tourist town in the Rocky Mountains, where she finds lodging at a ranch. There, two brothers, both strikingly different, teach her to fully open herself to others—to love and to be loved. As Noelle unravels the tangle of how a childhood kidnapping ties to her present situation, she finds her life partner, and more importantly, finds the God who loves her more than she could even begin to imagine—the God who will give her the strength to "rise up on the wings of the eagle."

A Rush of Wings is an intensely interesting book with well-developed, relatable characters who grapple with substantive spiritual and relational issues. Readers familiar with Kristen Heitzmann's other books will be eager to get their hands on this one, and will be immediately drawn into the mystery surrounding Noelle, who

has gaps in her memory, strange nightmares, and an aversion to being told what to do. Those who enjoy a more "realistic" romance will appreciate the novel as well.

Sherri Beeler

***Sisterchicks on the loose* / by Robin Jones Gunn. LCCN 2003000710. Sisters, Ore., Multnomah, 2003. Paperbound, 1590521986, \$12.99.**

F. Americans—Finland—Fiction; Women—Finland—Fiction; Female friendship—Fiction; Finland—Fiction; Christian fiction.

Adult (Grades 9-12) / Rating: 3

The title and book cover of Robin Jones Gunn's latest book *Sisterchicks on the Loose* suggests a zany story with hysterically funny "laugh aloud" scenes. And while there are some funny scenes in this story, the book unfolds in a more gentle, thoughtful manner, describing the unfolding of a friendship between two women—a friendship that has formed over long years and continues to blossom and change into something ever sweeter and more special. Bold, outspoken, and good with people, Penny surprises Sharon, her steady, thoughtful, "behind the scenes" friend, with tickets for a trip to Finland. Penny's rough early life caused her to leave home at a young age, and her mother died not long after. Penny's desire is to locate her remaining living relatives in Finland, and find out more about who her mother really was.

Just as "iron sharpens iron," Penny and Sharon, both in their forties, gain fresh personal and spiritual insights from each other on this trip. Penny challenges Sharon to drop her bucket "deep down into the well of possibilities" and see what she pulls up. The Finland trip gives Sharon a new perspective on her relationship with her teenage daughter, her difficult mother-in-law, and her own abilities to write, and to minister to other mothers with young children. Penny finds sweet communion with her mother's relatives, and is able to get a better idea of just how much her mother truly loved her. This is a sweet story of friendship that any woman who has had a long-term "best friend" will appreciate.

Sherri Beeler

***Takedown* / W.G. Griffiths. (A Gavin Pierce novel; 2.) LCCN 2003101822. New York, Warner Books/AOL Time Warner, 2003. Paperbound, 0446678929, \$13.95.**

F. Wrestling—Fiction; Suspense fiction; Christian fiction. 368 p.

Adult (Grades 9-12) / Rating: 4

Long Island detective Gavin Pierce and his wife Amy once again make sure that Jeremy, the Galapagos Island tortoise, is still alive at the Bronx Zoo. Because of Reverend Jesse Buchanan, their eyes have been opened to a

nightmarish world of evil they never knew existed.

After two and a half years, the zookeepers are moving the aggressive tortoise to another zoo more suitable for the reptile. In transit an accident occurs. The tortoise dies and the demon, Krogan, escapes. He is free from his exorcism into the tortoise.

Krogan takes over the body of wrestler, Jackhammer Hoban. Four pastors re-enforce Gavin's faith as he battles the evil demon, Krogan.

This story is full of intense suspense. From the very beginning to the end it is scary, captivating, and exciting, a book you just can't put down. It is a riveting story of good versus evil. The characters are believable as is the action packed drama.

Pam Burns

***A treasure deep* / Alton Gansky. Uhrichsville, Ohio, Promise Press/Barbour Publishing, 2003. Paperbound, 1586606735, \$11.99.**

H. Jesus Christ—Burial—Fiction; Suspense fiction. 352 p.

Adult (Grades 9-12) / Rating: 3

Perry Sachs has discovered a treasure that will literally change the history books, if he can maintain the secret long enough to get it safely unearthed from its resting-place in the Tehachapi Mountains. However, an aggressive small-town mayor, an unscrupulous newspaper reporter, and snoopy townspeople prove to be troublesome challenges—not to mention an unexpected sink-hole, an untimely murder, and the kidnapping of two people he holds dear to his heart. Perry's faith in God sees him through all his dangerous adventures, allows him to minister to others around him, and enables him to come to the realization that personal knowledge of Jesus Christ is more important than any ancient item or artifact related to Christ.

Alton Gansky's *A Treasure Deep* is an unusual blend of biblical events and bio-engineering, of endearing characters and bantering humor, and of suspense and Indiana Jones-style adventure. Based on historical debates surrounding ancient cultures making transatlantic or transpacific ocean crossings, Gansky's novel asks the question "what if?" and provides readers with an entertaining, yet thought-provoking story.

Sherri Beeler

***Urgent care* / by Hannah Alexander. (Healing touch; 3.) LCCN 2003000975. Minneapolis, Bethany House/Bethany House, 2003. Paperbound, 0764225308, \$11.99.**

F. Clergy—Fiction; Storms—Fiction; Physicians—Fiction; Medical novels; Christian fiction. 345 p.

Adult (Grades 9-12) / Rating: 3

Hannah Alexander continues its medical drama series *The Healing Touch with Urgent Care*. In this installment *Dogwood Springs* sees stormy times. Not only is there an unexpected tornado that wreaks havoc, there are emotional storms in many of the town's citizens' lives. One of the storm's more devastating consequences is the disappearance of Pastor Archer Pierce. Last seen going out on a mercy call he cannot be located, sending his new wife Jessica and the town into a frantic search for him. Meanwhile Dr. Mitchell Caine struggles with the aftermath of a messy divorce, as well as dealing with the sudden appearance of his estranged daughter. He also must face his growing addiction to prescription drugs, and the haunting suspicion he might be responsible for the pastor's disappearance. Nurse Lauren McCaffery tries to cope with her increased feelings for Dr. Grant Sheldon, undecided between a life with a ready-made family or one of singleness.

Once again the dynamic husband and wife writing team of Hannah Alexander provide a fast moving plot with plenty of medical action, and credible personal drama. Readers looking for technical emergency drama reading, such as Terri Blackstock's 911 series, will be putting this series in this reading basket as well.

Pam Webb

***The wager* / Bill Myers. LCCN 2003014644. Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 2003. Paperbound, 0310248736, \$9.99.**

F. Christian fiction.. 176 p.

Adult (Grades 9-12) / Rating: 3

Michael Steele has got it made. Handsome. Wealthy. Famous. And he is up for an Academy Award. What more could he want? Yet, there is a gnawing dissatisfaction that he is missing something. Obviously, he misses his wife, who just recently decided to move out. But there is a deeper longing—and it is connected to the series of dreams that keep interrupting his sleep. Michael dreams that he has become the object of discussion between God and Satan. God believes anyone can still live the Sermon of the Mount. Satan, of course, believes otherwise. Enter Michael Steele.

Bill Myers uses his trademark humor and storytelling abilities in his newest book, *The Wager*. Yet, this is no ordinary story; it's a Bible study and compelling contemporary fiction rolled all together. A Bible study on the Sermon on the Mount is no new topic, and a Christian struggling with serving God while enjoying worldly offerings is certainly nothing new. However, combining both proves a winning combination. YA readers who are Wally McDoogles fans will be ready to make the jump up to Myers' adult offerings through *The Wager*,

while adults will appreciate the Bible study via the fictionalized presentation.

Pam Webb

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***The wishing jar : a novel* / Penelope J. Stokes. LCCN 2002153134. Nashville, W Publishing, 2002. Hardcover, 0849917077, \$16.99.**

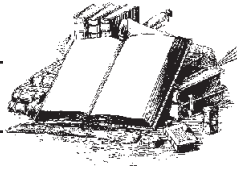
F. Christian fiction. 287 p.

Adult (Grades 9-12) / Rating: * 5

The wishing jar, a small, ivory ceramic urn depicting, in red and gold, a phoenix rising from the ashes, is said to be magic to those who are pure in heart. It represents the mythological tale about a bird that goes down singing in the fire and rises from death in even more glorious song. Through five generations of Quinn women, this emblem of the faithful soul has been a source of mystery, hope, and an exquisite reminder of eternal life in Christ. Now Grandma Edith Quinn, a partially paralyzed stroke victim, Abby, her caring, dependable daughter, and Neal Grace, her belligerent seventeen-year-old granddaughter, struggle to find hope in the face of both collective and personal tragedies. Neither fire, nor teen pregnancy, nor scheming boyfriends can destroy the bond between them, as each emerges victoriously from her respective ashes, and welcomes the precious arrival of yet another generation of 'strong Quinn women.'

The Wishing Jar by Penelope J. Stokes is an evolving tapestry of a family of women who, against and because of all odds, come to a deeper understanding of God's love and care for them. Stokes, known for her Christian fiction novels of drama and romance, uses her native Blue Ridge Mountains as the backdrop to represent peaceful surrender. With tender brush strokes, she breathes life into each character. Teen pregnancy has long been a touchy issue. Stokes, without going into graphics, acknowledges sex before marriage, the choices offered to modern women, and the importance of family support. Stokes uses almost too light a hand to describe major tragedies, but, in so doing, manages to create a tale that leaves the reader with a hopeful outlook and happy ending. Highly recommended.

Kim Harris



***If the tongue's a fire, who needs salsa? : cool advice for hot topics from the Book of James* / Martha Bolton. LCCN 2002008218. Ann Arbor, Mich., Vine Books, 2002. Paperbound, 1569553181, \$10.99.**

242/.63. Bible. N.T. James—Devotional literature.; Christian teenagers—Prayer-books and devotions—English.. 218 p.

Grades 7-9 (10-12) / Rating: 4

In this fast-paced devotional for youth, Martha Bolton shows a keen understanding of and heart for young people. Applying teen terms, including some innocuous usage of slang, to short, snappy sections based on the book of James, Bolton immediately captures the reader's attention with her unique mix of witty humor and serious messages. Catchy chapter headings like "Gnats, Gopherwood, and Grace," "Tongue Depressor," and "Who Wants to Be a Gazillionaire?" combine with light, yet, to-the-point style to clarify pertinent topics such as gossip, accepting all people equally, the pitfalls of anger, or how to pray prayers that get answers.

Bolton has written comedy and lyrics for such earthly greats as Bob Hope, Michael W. Smith, Kathy Troccoli, and Phyllis Diller. She is the "Cafeteria Lady" for Focus on the Family's *Brio Magazine*. Although some of the anecdotal delivery seems a bit hokey, the message is sound and presented in an easy-to-read and -grasp method. Two to three page sections are divided into brief, anecdotal missives; daily thoughts to chew on; catchy summary phrases; verses from the book of James; and a quick prayers to encourage and strengthen the reader to face the daily onslaught. Recommended for teen self and group studies.

Kim Harris

***Did you get what you prayed for?* / Nancy Jo Sullivan and Jane A. G. Kise. LCCN 2002151112. Sisters, Ore., Multnomah, 2003. Paperbound, 1590520343, \$11.99.**

248.3/2. Prayer. 187 p.

Grades 9-12 (7-8) / Rating: 4

So often in life we are told that prayers for ourselves are selfish prayers. We are taught that prayer must be done a certain way, and this raises many questions in our minds about how to pray, when to pray, and what to pray. But Nancy Jo Sullivan and Jane A.G. Kise have realized that prayer is not a formula that you have to work out, so they put their heads together and wrote *Did You Get What You Prayed For?*

Each chapter begins with a letter to a Bible character such as Daniel. The letter questions the character about his/her prayer life, and then three true stories follow reflecting some of the prayer experiences of our contemporaries. The book is filled with nuggets like "God doesn't demand perfection in prayer" or "God speaks if we're willing to listen."

These two ladies have worked hard to show us that prayer works, no matter what form it takes. Stories like "A Cheerios Revelation" and "Those Cherry Macaroons" provide true-to-life reflections on how prayer has been answered in unusual ways. This book not only shows us that there are many ways to pray, but also that there are many ways our prayers are answered.

Amanda Ottaway

***Wild at heart : discovering the secret of a man's soul* / John Eldredge. LCCN 2001270858. Nashville, Thomas Nelson, 2001. Hardcover, 0785268839, \$19.99.**

248.8. Christian men—Religious life; Masculinity—Religious aspects—Christianity. 222 p.

Adult / Rating: 3

The sub-title "Discovering the Secret of a Man's Soul" makes the theme of this book clear. Eldredge's thesis is that this secret has been lost sight of today, and been replaced by the idea that God wants men to be nice. "Nonsense," says Eldredge. He believes that God created men in his image, and that this means they should long for a battle to fight, an adventure to live, and a beauty to rescue. He also submits that women are looking for such a man to marry.

There is in this book much to make every man think about as to what sort of man he is and what God wants him to be. Many men, especially those in church, seem to have become nice, albeit somewhat boring, guys. Eldredge is right in his emphasis that the Christian life should be filled with adventure and battle. The enemy of our souls is real and active. The book realistically portrays the challenges men face today if they would indeed take risks for Christ, and not settle into a false and empty lifestyle. From that point of view, it is a good book, with some great insights.

However, the conclusions listed in the first paragraph of this review are suspect. As is often the case today, God is reduced too much to a human concept in order to see how man is created in his image. For example, it would surely be more accurate to state that God longs for true lasting peace, not for a battle to fight. Battles have to be fought, but there is no craving

for a battle. Likewise the original creation was not wild, at least in any threatening way, but a place of security and peace, for all created beings. A woman is not more in need of rescuing than a man: indeed, both need rescuing by God.

A book then to make you think: a book to wake you up: but not a book to be read without discernment.

Rodney Stent

***Virtual you! : love, beauty, relationships, purity, truth* / Jimmie L. Davis. LCCN 2002007402. Ann Arbor, Vine Books, 2002. Paperbound, 156955305X, \$10.99.**

248.8/33. Teenage girls—Religious life; Christian teenagers—Religious life. 189 p.

Grades 6-9 / Rating: 4

How do I become a Christian? As a new Christian, how do I stay strong? Who do I trust, when my friends and family are unkind to me? What can I do to get guys? These are just some of the questions addressed in *Virtual You!* by Jimmie L. Davis, a 23-year veteran of youth ministries, including enterprise with teen girls, their parents, teachers, and youth workers. She has designed a twelve-week Bible study, especially for teen girls and those who minister to them, that can be used as a self to group analysis. Davis encourages starting with a firm foundation of faith and trust in God; daily Bible reading; staying physically, emotionally, and mentally fit; and continued involvement in relationships that help young girls to develop into healthy, strong, Christian women. Other topics include: maintaining purity; sexually transmitted diseases; inner and outer beauty; sexual abuse and incest; the difference between lust, and true love; commitment; and long range effects of now actions.

Each chapter begins with an Instant Messenger-type chat, to identify the problem being addressed; a section that expands on the topic, allowing readers to relate; a section that suggests a Christ-like solution, backed up by Scripture references; and ends with a question and answer section, to get readers thinking and/or facilitate further discussions. The larger print and short, mildly challenging, chapters are well matched with up-to-date, easy-to-read language. A Leader's Guide section, filled with ideas on how to start up a study, tips on how to run meetings, and suggestions on how to promote discussion topics, is included. Although Davis' Instant Messenger chats are canned, she has a sound, inter-denominational message that clearly

expresses concern for her audience. Recommended as self to group studies for girls 12 to 15 years of age.

Kim Harris

***Come to the quiet : the secrets of solitude and rest* / by Denise George. LCCN 2003000976. Minneapolis, Bethany House, 2003. Paperbound, 0764226584, \$11.99.**

248.8/43. Christian women—Religious life; Rest—Religious aspects—Christianity. 192 p.

Adult / Rating: 3

In this fast-paced modern world, it is common to neglect the importance of peaceful rest in the daily rejuvenation process of our over-worked minds, bodies, and spirits. This neglect can lead to temporary, and even permanent, burnout. Rather than getting us further, the constant stressful pace we set for ourselves can ruin us. Jesus offers a feasible alternative to constant stress, in his Word. His prescription for our daily lives reaps a harvest of joy-filled, fruitful human beings, ready, willing and very able to accomplish the tasks set before us.

Come to the Quiet by Denise George addresses many of the problems and decisions facing women in our nation today. Some examples of issues discussed include:

- 1.) the need to develop a plan on how to balance work, family, and spiritual life in the midst of chaos;
- 2.) finding a place to quiet the mind and untwist the confusion of tangled thoughts and decisions that are constantly required; and
- 3.) suggestions on re-prioritizing our time, in accordance with God's plan for our lives, which He has clearly spelled out in His Word.

Using personal and biblical anecdotes, scripture, and sage advice, gained from personal experience, as well as interaction with other concerned Christians, George unfolds a plan that can be approached from many different lifestyles. Her emphasis is on three main areas: mind rest, whether mountaintop solitude or crowded restaurant cubby; body rest, taking the time to care for our health; and spiritual rest, reconnecting with Jesus on a consistent basis. Denise George is wife, mother, worldwide speaker, and author of over a thousand articles and a dozen books. Study notes for group sharing and useful endnotes included. Recommended as women's self to group Bible study.

Kim Harris

God is in the kitchen too / P.B. Wilson. (Are you looking for God?.) LCCN 2002153425. Eugene, Ore., Harvest House, 2003. Paperbound, 0736907955, \$10.99.

248.8/43. Christian women—Religious life; Cookery—Religious aspects—Christianity. 175 p.

Adult / Rating: 3

Cooking, long thought by many to be a daily drudgery, is, instead, a ministry. When God is in control of kitchen time, through the addition of scripture meditations and prayer, the kitchen becomes a place of refuge, rather than dread. Family, friends, and guests begin to look forward to dining with us, due to atmospheric changes from conflict and confusion, to fellowship and peace. P. B. Wilson points out the importance of taking the time and energy many women spend in professional work environments and translating it into a ministry to our families. She encourages those who are drawn to follow her advice, but may be experiencing resistance from a spouse, to be submissive to the husband, while continuing to pray for the Lord's guidance and help at home. Wilson combines sisterly advice with scripture and wholesome, basic recipes to encourage the reader to prayerfully consider enhancing the home through kitchen ministry. She offers ideas on how to clean and organize kitchens, step-by-step. She states that our ministry, as women, includes time with the Lord; clean, orderly dwelling; daily quality time with husbands, which includes physical intimacy; and daily quality time with children.

God is in the Kitchen Too is a cookbook / Bible study / self-help for new and/or floundering cooks, specifically geared to female readers. Although some may find the section on re-prioritizing career time and submitting to husband's authority mildly offensive, Wilson merely touches on these subjects without sermonizing. The final section includes weekly kitchen meditations, more recipes, a place to add a few of the reader's own favorite recipes, and a recipe index. Recommended as self-help for the spirit-minded cook and newlywed women's Bible study groups.

Kim Harris

Sports stories and the Bible / Stan Nix. LCCN 2002114166. Carlsbad, Calif., Magnus Press, 2003. Paperbound, 0972486909, \$14.95.

248.8/8. Sports—Religious aspects—Christianity; Sports—Biblical teaching. 184 p.

Grades 9-12 / Rating: 4

Sports stories and the Bible is comprised of 47 short chapters, each on a different aspect of a sport or a particular sport itself. Author Stan Nix weaves truths from the Bible in with interesting and in some cases, little known, facts from the sports world that correlate with biblical teaching. It can be quickly read or taken in small

doses but is penned in an enthusiastic and upbeat manner that will appeal and encourage middle school, high school or adult readers.

Nix states that he has a three-fold purpose to writing the book. First, "to help spread the Word to others who may have a significant interest in sports." Secondly, "to demonstrate how God loves us so much that He created wholesome recreational events for our pleasure" and last, "to show that many of the principles involved in sports are also basic teachings of the Bible." He does an admirable job of accomplishing these goals and for the sports fan, this should be a popular title.

Ceil Carey

Character witness : how our lives can make a difference in evangelism / Christine Wood. LCCN 2002154306. Downers Grove, Ill., InterVarsity Press, 2003. Paperbound, 0830823786, \$12.

269/.2. Evangelistic work. 229 p.

Adult (Grades 11-12) / Rating: 5

What an excellent approach to evangelism! Christine Wood weaves her story of salvation into her approach to evangelism, believing that our story is an important part of our witness and testimony to others. She maintains that as well as being able to present the truth of Christ, it is just as important to live a life that expresses who Christ really is. If we truly want to offer the love of Jesus to others, our most valuable resource is our own character.

Ms. Wood writes of our personal integrity in evangelism, how to develop qualities that will make us more Christ-like and, most importantly to my mind, how to extend ourselves to non-Christians in ways that express Christ's love. The author's love and compassion for others in her relationships with them may change the way you look at people forever. I know it changed me.

Each chapter begins with a Scripture verse and/or applicable quote about the subject of that particular chapter, and a definition of the subject, i.e. hospitality, insight, etc. Each chapter also ends with discussion questions to be used by an individual or a group studying Character witness. Scripture and references to Scripture are interwoven in the text. This is not a book to be read lightly or quickly. It is filled with wonderful truths that may take time to digest. It is highly recommended.

Ceil Carey

Extreme devotion / The Voice of the Martyrs. LCCN 2002280055. Nashville, W Publishing, 2001. Paperbound, 0849917395, \$19.99.

272/.092/2. Persecution—History—Case studies; Evangelistic work—History—Case studies; Christian martyrs—History—Case studies. 368 p.

Grades 9-12 / Rating: 5

Three hundred and sixty-five heart-stopping stories of Christians devoting themselves to Jesus Christ are included in this daily devotional. *Extreme Devotion* is a compilation of true accounts of martyrdom and persecution, miracles, and strength, from biblical times to modern days. Each chronicle is accompanied by a Bible verse and a short essay on living for God.

Extreme Devotion challenges the reader to examine his own life. Are you ready to pay the extreme price that some believers were willing to pay for Jesus Christ? While torture and brutality are common against believers, there is a strong theme of prayer/love for the enemies and non-violent response in all of the Voice of the Martyrs (VOM) literature.

VOM is an active non-profit Christian organization committed to supporting persecuted Christians throughout the world. Their perspective of seeing the violence perpetrated against Christians for their faith has led them to share the fate of martyred believers with others through literature and books such as *Extreme Devotion*. VOM ministry provides Bibles, medical aid, schools, and basic food/survival supplies to countries hard-hit by violence and persecution.

The book has a torn page, rumpled look to it. Its unusual appearance gives the reader the impression that the message has passed through many hands. It makes the reader curious: What exactly is so important to be read so many times?

Due to the extreme nature (cruelty and violence) of the stories, the book is suited for teens and adults. With discussion, the book can be read to younger children. In our home, it was read aloud by our fifteen-year-old daughter to her eleven and twelve-year-old siblings.

Joanne M. Haffly

***Homeschooler's guide to— / Vicki Caruana.* LCCN 2002154143. Wheaton, Ill., Crossway Books, 2003. Paperbound, 1581343574, \$12.99.**

372.04/2. Home schooling—Handbooks, manuals, etc.. 173 p.

Professional / Rating: 4

Educational consultant Vicki Caruana presents ten aspects of homeschooling that many current books skim over or haven't addressed. In testing and evaluation, Caruana discusses the why, how, and who of standardized testing. Chapters on home based businesses, high school and college entrance, schooling as a military family, music education, and special needs children are written by other women with experience in those areas. Caruana also gives insights into the value of community involvement, working with traditional schools,

pro's and con's of support and co-op groups, and ways to help students cultivate study skills. Appendices list state testing information and inventories for learning styles and spiritual gifts.

With this array of topics, Caruana has given novice and perhaps struggling homeschool parents plentiful, up to date, and inspiring ideas and data. Personal experiences and anecdotes add flavor, while the many resources listed furnish practical help. The chapter on music education by Laurinda Curti is particularly well rounded, thought provoking, and valuable for parents with little or no musical training themselves. One of the biggest pluses is that this book doesn't try to cover every angle of homeschooling. Caruana stays focused and positive, avoiding lingo and biased viewpoints. Most homeschool families and churches that give support to them will find help, ideas, and encouragement in this paperback that seems much more approachable than many homeschooling how-to books.

Karen Schmidt

***The American Heritage student dictionary.* LCCN 2002032949. Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 2003. Hardcover, 0618256199, \$19.95.**

423. English language—Dictionaries, Juvenile; English language—Dictionaries.. 1068 p.

Grades 5-9 / Rating: 5

The new edition of *The American Heritage Student Dictionary* from Houghton Mifflin is a multifaceted reference book meant for middle school students. The 65,000 entries include basic words plus specific terms and names from sports, science, technology, foreign cultures, and American slang. A vowel pronunciation guide is on each two-page spread, with margins that contain color photos, drawings, and diagrams. Sidebar boxes give extra help with word origins, roots, usage, biographies, geography, and other topics. Charts include the periodic table of elements, geologic time, measurement, the solar system, and taxonomy. A few pages give pointers on how to use the dictionary, punctuation and capitalization, and pronunciation.

Plentiful information in readable and eye-pleasing format is the hallmark of *The American Heritage Student Dictionary*. Definitions are brief, with lots of interesting details in the margins, both graphic and written. The breadth of information makes this work somewhat encyclopedic in scope, with the many historical figures, places, and topics mentioned (albeit very briefly). Many entries include the first time the word was written and in what language, adding to the student's knowledge base and perhaps piquing interest. This dictionary is useful for upper elementary grades as well as the middle school level for which it was written. Homeschoolers, private schools and libraries will find it a valuable resource.

Karen Schmidt

***What a great idea! : inventions that changed the world / Stephen M. Tomecek; illustrated by Dan Stuckenschneider.* LCCN 2001020937. New York, Scholastic, 2003. Hardcover, 0590681443, \$18.95.**

609. Inventions—History. 128 p.

Grades 5-12 / Rating: 5

What a Great Idea! by author Stephen M. Tomecek is a compilation of major inventions that changed world history. This fascinating work is divided into five chapters or time periods beginning with The Ancient World (pre 3500 B.C.), followed by The Metal Age, The Age of Discovery, The Age of Electricity and Communication, and finally The Age of the Atom. Each chapter explores between eight and eleven inventions that have had a major impact on the history of the world, making this volume interesting to both scientists and historians. From the ancient hand ax to the modern laser each invention is presented with a short history and description, an explanation of how it works, its impact on culture at that time, and what kinds of inventions it gave rise to. Each invention occupies a two-page format and is illustrated with simple but realistic colored drawings by Dan Stuckenschneider.

While the illustrations are realistic enough that the reader will be able to easily recognize that invention should he see it in another setting, the brief two-page format limits the space available for illustration; therefore detailed drawings of the invention and how it works are lacking. The explanations of the workings of each invention are of necessity simplified and limited in scope. Perhaps the most interesting sections are those detailing the impact of the invention on life in its time and the "children" which have spawned from the invention.

What a Great Idea! could best be used as a springboard for children looking for a research topic in science or history. A short bibliography for further study is included as are websites children may access for further research. Included are two websites for invention contests. Table of Contents and Index are included.

Judy Driscoll

***The cooking of China / Matthew Locricchio; with photos by Jack McConnell. (Superchef.)* LCCN 2001008742. New York, Benchmark Books, 2003. Library Binding, 076141214X, \$19.95.**

641.5951. Cookery, Chinese; Food habits—China. 71 p.

***The cooking of France* / Matthew Locricchio; with photos by Jack McConnell. (Superchef.) LCCN 2001008684. New York, Benchmark Books, 2003. Library Binding, 0761412166, \$19.95.**

641.5944. Cookery, France; Food habits—France. 79 p.

***The cooking of Italy* / Matthew Locricchio; with photos by Jack McConnell. (Superchef.) LCCN 2001008674. New York, Benchmark Books, 2003. Library Binding, 0761412158, \$19.95.**

641.5945. Cookery, Italian; Food habits—Italy. 72 p.

***The cooking of Mexico* / Matthew Locricchio; with photos by Jack McConnell. (Superchef.) LCCN 2002002185. New York, Benchmark Books, 2003. Library Binding, 0761412174, \$19.95.**

641.5971. Cookery, Mexican; Food habits—Mexico. 79 p.

Grades 7-12 / Rating: 5

Matthew Locricchio, a restaurant owner and caterer, has selected several popular and well-known recipes from four countries (China, France, Italy, and Mexico) and adapted them to American kitchens in his Superchef series, a four-volume set of cookbooks geared towards youth in grades seven through twelve. An introductory letter stresses the series' desire to teach teens about the foods and culture of each nation, the sense of accomplishment involved in cooking, and the joy in preparing a meal for family and friends.

The recipes are simply and clearly written, with all steps carefully laid out, so that even children younger than the recommended age group can follow them. Adult supervision is often suggested for the more complicated steps.

The sturdy-looking hardcover books are liberally illustrated with Jack McConnell's lush color photos of the prepared foods. (There are also photos of the cities and marketplaces of the featured countries). Black and white illustrations of cooking techniques—stir frying; how to separate eggs, etc.—are helpful for new cooks.

The first few pages of each book contain information on kitchen safety, food handling, and proper nutrition as well as a glossary of the special cooking terms needed to understand that country's recipes. Appendices contain an illustrated dictionary of kitchen tools, lists of the "essential ingredients" of each country's cooking, and a metric conversion chart.

The recipes range from basic to challenging. There's a strong emphasis on preparing fresh, healthful meals rather than relying on packaged or fast foods; whenever possible, Locricchio suggests using low-sodium soups, free-range chicken, etc. Several recipes, especially the Chinese recipes, use ethnic ingredients that may

not be available in all areas. Substitutions are sometimes given, but not always. Vegetarian substitutions, however, are often given.

Recipes are broken down into categories such as Soups, Salads and Breads; Main Courses and Vegetables; and Desserts. Some sample recipes: Stir-Fried Orange Chicken from *The Cooking of China*, and Cream Puffs with Ice Cream and Chocolate Sauce from *The Cooking of France*. There are also categories unique to each book, for instance, Pizza, Pasta, and Polenta for *The Cooking of Italy*, and A Taco Party! for *The Cooking of Mexico*.

These are wonderful books and would be suitable for those who love to cook as well as for those just learning to cook. They are clearly written, with many interesting recipes. The instructions are simple enough for beginners with very little knowledge of cooking yet won't seem dumbed-down to more experienced cooks. Adults will enjoy these books, too. Highly recommended.

Rosemarie DiCristo

***The world according to dog : poems and teen voices* / Joyce Sidman; with photographs by Doug Mindell. LCCN 2002000476. Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 2003. Hardcover, 0618174974, \$15.**

810.8/03629772. Dogs—Literary collections; Youth's writings. 72 p.

Grades 9-12 / Rating: 5

Full of humor, sympathy, understanding, and happiness, *The World According to Dog* presents a collection of poems, essays and photographs by those who love and have been loved by the canine tribe. Teacher and author Joyce Sidman uses her own well structured poems (engendered by her kindred spirit, Merlin the Gordon Setter) as a web through which she weaves the essays written by her teenage students. Ranging from haiku to a doggy dictionary, both the dog trained and the canine illiterate reader will enjoy this volume.

In dramatic black and white, Doug Mindall's haloed photographs winsomely portray each of Sidman's poems. The students' contributions honor special dogs and are illustrated with high-quality home photos which will intrigue all ages, preschool through adult, making this a useful book for family reading. A successful, interesting cooperative venture, as well as a winning combination of pictures, poetry, and prose, *The World According to Dog* is recommended for all libraries. High school and older middle school English, art, and photography classes will find this book useful. The eye-catching dust cover makes this volume an appealing gift, and coffee table book.

Donna Eggett

***Encyclopedia of British writers, nineteenth and twentieth centuries* / [written and developed by Book Builders LLC]. LCCN 2002033920. New York, Facts on File, 2003. Hardcover, 0816046700, \$150.**

820.0/008/03. English literature—19th century—Biography—Dictionaries.; English literature—20th century—Biography—Dictionaries.; Authors, English—19th century—Biography—Dictionaries.; Authors, English—20th century—Biography—Dictionaries.; English literature—19th century—Dictionaries.. 2 v.,

Grades 9-12 / Rating: 4

The 19th century *British Writers* volume helps students to identify major figures, who are treated in long entries, as well as key schools and genres, and enables high school students to appreciate the scope of literary production in the 19th century. The entries provide biographical information, overviews of the writers' publications, and in some cases, critical analyses of their most important works. Cross references, indicated in small capital letters, lead the student to key influences on writers' careers.

The 20th-century volume exposes students to articles, which tell the reader about the writer's background, parents, education, private life, and the writer's publications. The entries also provide a sampling of critical responses and suggestions for further reading. One finds in this volume rousing diversity—writers include traditional or avant-garde, classicist or extremist, highbrow or lowbrow, writers whose politics are on the left, to right, the center, or beyond the pale.

This concise encyclopedic reference profiles more than 800 British poets, novelists, playwrights, essayists, and other writers of the 19th and 20th centuries. Each volume features an author time line, general bibliography, and entries on key terms and movements of the century.

The A to Z entries are well written and enable most high-school students to grasp the content. A great deal of information is available in a short space. Students will gain a broad enough perspective to offer them some routes for further research. The helpful index helps students locate writers by name or by a work.

Highly recommended for high school libraries seeking a concise tool to give students a self directed pointer to further resources. Public libraries can add this *Encyclopedia of British Writers* where a concise work without long critical analyses is needed.

Dr. Leroy Hommerding

***Outline maps on file, updated ed.* LCCN 2002070852. New York, Facts on File, 2002. Looseleaf, 0816034761, \$185.00.**

912. Outline maps; Atlases. 1 atlas (1 v.) : maps ; 29 cm.

Professional / Rating: 4

Outline Maps on File is a large three ring binder filled with maps for reproduction. With ten dividers, this loose-leaf book contains unlabeled black and white outline maps of each continent and countries within each region. Each page is heavy cardstock and removable for easy photocopying. Aside from being organized by continent, there are also separate sections for regional maps, U.S. state maps, and Canadian Provinces.

The final section contains the index and the teacher's guidelines. The 'answer keys' are smaller versions of each map labeled with the countries, regions, states, bodies of water, major rivers, and cities.

Although pricey for homeschoolers, the book is a valuable resource for any library. *Outline Maps On File* is a great tool for both teachers and students looking for maps to supplement assignments or projects.

Joanne M. Haffly

Historical atlas of the Holy Lands / Karen Farrington. New York, Checkmark, 2003. Hardcover, 0816052190, \$35.

912.5694. Palestine—Historical geography—Maps. 192 p.

Grades 9-12 / Rating: 4

Historical Atlas of the Holy Lands explores life in the Holy Land in biblical times using the layout of atlases with illustrations, maps, and narrative. What sets it apart from others is the inviting language used in the explanations which make ordinary events come alive, and make the conversation seem like that of everyday dialogue.

Through the study of 45 major biblical centers, as well as key social aspects of the various periods, the reader is able to discover what can be learned from this special place. Not only are the classic stories retold, but also the latest archaeological evidence gives the Bible fresh authority.

Map inserts and timelines make it easy to get both an overview and close-up view of the regions, cities, key figures, and places discussed. Pictures of sites today and map illustrations give one a feeling of being there. An index makes it easy to find references to Capernaum or Shechen, Nero or Pontius Pilate, or informative aspects like cuneiform or Zionism.

Public libraries needing a specialized Holy Lands Atlas can add this multi-purpose tool for it can be used by high schoolers for introductory details as well as by adults seeking details or specific areas.

Dr. Leroy Hommerding

And we fly away : living beyond Alzheimer's / Ray Ashford. LCCN 2003004509. Minneapolis, Augsburg Books, 2003. Paperbound, 0806645709, \$8.99.

921 (248.8/66/092). Ashford, Ray.; Ashford, Phyllis Sharpe—Death and burial.; Consolation.; Bereavement—Religious aspects—Christianity.; Alzheimer's disease—Religious aspects—Christianity. 80 p.

Adult (Grades 10-12) / Rating: 5

When Phyllis Ashford was diagnosed with Alzheimer's, her husband, clergyman and author Ray Ashford, began keeping a journal of his feelings, insights, and remembrances of their battle together with the effects of this debilitating disease, and his own time of bereavement following her death. He has turned this journal into a small, inspirational book which can easily be read in a couple of hours, or can be browsed slowly, one thought at a time, savoring the wisdom and insight he has garnered in this trial of faith.

In near-poetic fashion, the author has sprinkled his own thoughts with well-chosen quotes, both sacred and secular, from a wide variety of sources that are included in notes at the end of the book, an excellent resource for those wishing to read more writing of the authors quoted. *And We Fly Away* can be useful as an inspirational tool for caregivers of Alzheimer's patients, both professional and non-professional, and as encouragement for families dealing with the realities of Alzheimer's. Most certainly it belongs on the shelves of libraries in churches, care facilities, and public libraries. It's small size make it an excellent gift book.

Judy Driscoll

The life and death of Adolf Hitler / by James Cross Giblin. LCCN 2001047091. New York, Clarion Books, 2002. Hardcover, 0395903718, \$21.00.

921 (943.086/092). Hitler, Adolf, 1889-1945; Heads of state—Germany—Biography; National socialism; Germany—History—1918-1933; Germany—History—1933-1945. 246 p.

Grades 9-12 / Rating: 5

In this wide-eyed telling of one of the world's cruelest men, James Cross Giblin takes us on a journey through Hitler's life, from childhood to his rise to power. It tells of the reactions he invoked in those close to him and those of the surrounding world. Hitler's actions are in no way excused through this childhood glimpse, yet give us a whole view of the man who brought such terror to the world.

Jews are mentioned in the text but are not the focal point. Instead, we learn more of who this man was that worked so hard to destroy them.

Though the subject is not a desirous one for most, Giblin has been fascinated with Hitler from a young age; the passion and enthusiasm he brings to this book draws the reader in and holds their attention giving fascinating details

one wouldn't learn in everyday school. Peppered throughout the text are dramatic photos and cartoons of the period, which add to the richness of this well done book.

Included in the book is a glossary of German words and terms, source notes, bibliography, and an index; all allowing for a more in-depth study if desired. The book itself is well made with thick sturdy pages.

With a simple, informative and thorough text this book is highly recommended.

Included are a few brief mentions of sex, tastefully done, and brief strong language, quoted from Hitler's own diaries.

Robin Rusk

*

In the presence of my enemies / Gracia Burnham, with Dean Merrill. LCCN 2003002155. Wheaton, Ill., Tyndale House, 2003. Hardcover, 0842381384, \$22.99.

921 (969.904/8/092273). Burnham, Gracia; Burnham, Martin; Abu Sayyaf (Organization); New Tribes Mission—Biography; Hostages—Philippines—Biography. 288 p.

Grades 10-12, Adult / * Rating: 5

From late May 2001 through June 2002 New Tribes missionaries Martin and Gracia Burnham, along with other detainees, lived the nightmare of being held hostage by Filipino Muslim insurgents. Gracia Burnham builds her gripping narrative with open honesty about herself, her fellow detainees, her captors, and deep love and respect for her husband Martin, who was killed during the final rescue. She writes using the faith in her Lord which blossomed from twelve months of hunger, constant running, brutality, and her own human failure. Burnham documents her story as completely as possible, naming people, places, and written evidence.

In the Presence of My Enemies provides a deep look into our own wretched humanity. Not all the whys that arise from this episode are answered. Sorrow and horror take a prominent position. But the growth of faith and trust in God, no matter how hard the position, shines from this book. This is today's book. Reminiscent of *Through Gates of Splendor*, *In the Presence...* encourages the reader to live totally for God. It also adds much to the information we need for supporting other kidnapped missionaries in prayer and deed. A middle section of photographs enhances the narrative.

Because of its contemporary and important content, *In the Presence of My Enemies* is highly recommended.. Those considering a missionary calling should prayerfully read this book.

Donna Eggett

World War II / Dorothy and Carl J. Schneider. (An eyewitness history.) LCCN 2002015268. New York, Facts on File, 2003. Hardcover, 0816044848, \$75.

940.53/73. World War, 1939-1945—United States.; World War, 1939-1945—Personal narratives, American.; World War, 1939-1945—Causes.; United States—History—1933-1945.; United States—Armed Forces—History—World War, 1939-1945.. 472 p.

Grades 9-12 / Rating: 4

Schneiders' work provides students with the materials to understand what it felt like to be American during World War II and the years that immediately preceded and followed it. The hundreds of firsthand accounts—from letters, speeches, and newspaper articles—illustrate how important historical events appeared to those who lived during WW II. To provide a sense of the whole, the authors give readers an introductory essay to each chapter and a chronology of events.

Appendices provide a wealth of information: documents related to the war, biographies of 55 major personalities, 18 maps, glossary, and refugees.

The writing is clear and the many quotes give life to the commentary. About 120 black-and-white photographs and illustrations enable students to follow along with more visual understanding and provide another avenue to enlist interest.

Recommended for libraries trying to provide primary source material to students as they do research and reports.

Donna Eggett

China : a global studies handbook / Robert André LaFleur .. [et al.]. (Global studies, Asia.) LCCN 2003004169. Santa Barbara, Calif., ABC-CLIO, 2003. Hardcover, 157607832, \$55.

951. China—Handbooks, manuals, etc.. 298 p.

Grades 9-12 / Rating: 4

Editor, La Fleur asked each of the four contributors to this volume to keep two audiences in mind—one, a high school student writing a serious report on China about which the student knows little, the other, an adult with no specific knowledge of China who is about to take a trip for business or pleasure. The writing style and discussion is one a serious 9th grader can understand, and one which enables the 12th grader to probe into the issues. The book fills that middle ground between the academic study of China and the array of reports and volumes one might find on a bookstore or library shelf. It is an introduction to China and the Chinese people and offers an admirably clear approach.

The discussion opens with introducing readers to China's history and vast landscapes (arranged chronologically). Chapter 2 looks at the Chinese economy and Chapter 3 at Chinese politics and government—both of these chapters

are particularly vivid in explanation for 9th & 10th graders. The final core chapter provides perspectives on Chinese culture, giving high school seniors a challenge for further research. A reference section details major figures and events in China's history along with reference materials on the Chinese language, organizations for students and travelers, and suggestions for further study.

Recommended as a timely resource for probing contemporary China while also providing a historical overview. Libraries can add where there is demand for material beyond what general magazines or encyclopedias provide.

Dr. Leroy Hommerding

Student almanac of Native American history / Media Projects, Inc. (Middle school reference.) LCCN 2002035215. Westport, Conn., Greenwood Press, 2003. Hardcover, 0313325995, \$80.

970.004/97. Indians of North America—History. 2 v.

Student almanac of African American history / Media Project, Inc. (Middle school reference.) LCCN 2002035332. Westport, Conn., Greenwood Press, 2003. Hardcover, 0313325960, \$80.

973/.0496073. African Americans—History—Miscellanea—Juvenile literature.; African Americans—History—Sources—Juvenile literature.; Almanacs, African—Juvenile literature.; African Americans—History.. 2 v., 144 p. ea.

Grades 9-12 (6-8) / Rating: 4

Volume 1 of *Native American History* discusses how Native Americans came to the Americas, and looks at how European explorers related to the Native Americans. Volume 2 covers the Indian Wars for the West, Native life in the first half of the twentieth century, and closes with the relationship between government and Native Americans.

Volume 1 of *African American History* opens with how slavery came to the Americas, followed by how African Americans fought for their freedom during the American Revolution, with the closing chapter about government compromises regarding slavery. Heroic African Americans are highlighted throughout the volume. Volume 2 starts with 1877 to 1896 Reconstruction, followed by a look at Harlem Renaissance, and closing with the civil rights years.

Attractive layout, an easy going narrative style, and cross indexing make this set one to keep the interest of high school students, and can be digested by good readers in grades six to eight.

An essay offers a quick overview followed by an A to Z listing of key people, events, and terms for each of the three chapters in each volume. Two features, a delight to teachers and librarians, enable students to do research on their own: (1) words appearing in bold letters

have a separate entry in the A to Z section, and (2) unfamiliar words in bold italics can be found in the glossary.

Recommended for school and public library collections needing a comprehensive coverage of Native American or African American history, especially one that can serve a wide range of students. The timeless discussion makes this a resource tool still useful in five years.

Dr. Leroy Hommerding

The 1960s / by Timothy Maga. (An eyewitness history.) LCCN 2002014119. New York, Facts on File, 2003. Hardcover, 0816048096, \$75.

973.923. Nineteen sixties—Juvenile literature.; Nineteen sixties.; United States—History—1961-1969—Juvenile literature.; United States—History—1961-1969—Sources—Juvenile literature.; United States—History—1961-1969—Sources.. 396 p.

Grades 9-12 / Rating: 4

In this present volume Timothy Maga, does a masterful job in gathering firsthand accounts highlighting features that made the 1960s what they were. Each of the seven chapters has an introductory essay that enables high school students to understand the period of the 1960s as well as examine probing questions of the decade.

Appendices provide excerpts from documents of the decade, biographies of 75 major personalities, and seven maps and graphs. The 85 plus black-and-white illustrations break up the reading essays and help to make the chronology of events in each chapter more relevant to youth looking at this earlier time of history.

Recommended for libraries where reference collections need to have an overview and commentary on this decade. The firsthand accounts make this primary source tool a valuable addition as the hundreds of eyewitness accounts enable students to both appreciate and be critical of the testimonies and opinions of those living in the 1960s.

Dr. Leroy Hommerding

The Tlingit / by Raymond Bial. (Lifeways.) LCCN 2001005941. New York, Benchmark Books, 2003. Library Binding, 0761414142, \$22.95.

979.8004/972. Tlingit Indians—History; Tlingit Indians—Social life and customs. 128 p.

The Mandan / by Raymond Bial. (Lifeways.) LCCN 2001008740. New York, Benchmark Books, 2003. Library Binding, 0761414150, \$22.95.

978.004/9752. Mandan Indians; Indians of North America—Great Plains. 128 p.

Grades 5-8 (9) / Rating: 4

The Tlingit and *The Mandan*, two volumes in Raymond Bial's 20-book Lifeways series, nicely depict the history of these Native American nations from their origins to their life in the present day. The books are well-produced, sturdy, hardcover with glossy pages and many lovely color and black-and-white photos.

Bial's text is clearly written and interesting, although the amount of detail given may make the books better suited for school reports than for casual reading. There is much information on clan life, where each tribe migrated from, what foods they ate, their geographic range, the languages spoken, and any features unique to that tribe (the gorgeous wood carvings of the Tlingit, for instance). A section in *The Mandan* describing their role in the Lewis and Clark expedition makes that book particularly timely right now.

The books are written for children aged 12-14, and some of the topics covered would be best understood by the older end of this age group, for instance, a discussion of adolescence among native girls that touches on menstruation. Also, the arrival of the white man and the prejudices and discrimination Native Americans faced are bluntly portrayed.

There are comprehensive sections on the tribes' social customs. Their religious beliefs are also recounted in great detail, with much attention paid to the Christian missionaries who ministered to the Tlingit. The missionaries' actions, however, are described with negative words: they "descended" on the Tlingit, "competed" for their souls, and "imposed" their religious beliefs on them.

Appendices for each book contain a pronunciation guide, glossary, and bibliography as well as a timeline of notable events in each tribe's history, and brief biographies of several of its famous people. Each book also contain recipes (Fish Pie; Corn Balls) and three-page lists of Tlingit and Mandan words and their English counterparts.

Rosemarie DeCristo

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