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EXPLANATION OF CODE SYMBOLS USED WITH ANNOTATIONS

* Asterisks denote books of special distinction.
R Recommended
Ad Additional book of acceptable quality for collections needing more material in the area.
M Marginal book that is so slight in content or has so many weaknesses in style or format that it should be given careful consideration before purchase.
NR Not recommended.
SpC Subject matter or treatment will tend to limit the book to specialized collections.
SpR A book that will have appeal for the unusual reader only. Recommended for the special few who will read it.

Except for pre-school years, reading range is given for grade rather than for age of child.

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BULLETIN OF THE CENTER FOR CHILDREN'S BOOKS is published monthly except August by The University of Chicago Press for The University of Chicago, Graduate Library School. Mrs. Zena Sutherland, Editor. An advisory committee meets weekly to discuss books and reviews, which are written by the editor. The members are Yolanda Federici, Sara Fenwick, Isabel McCaul, Charlemae Rollins, Robert Strang and Peggy Sullivan.

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New Titles for Children and Young People


Adkins' meticulously drawn pictures are finely detailed drawings of a random selection of objects ranging from an apple and a pencil to the Queen Elizabeth and a city street, all in cutaway diagrams. Most of the text accompanying these separate topics is descriptive; the page of text for the street, for example, describes the waterlines, subway tunnels, sewers, etc. that are shown in the cross-section. But in the introduction and periodically throughout the book Adkins writes of the "third eye," or "Seeing Eye," which puts sense and sight together and gives the human being vision. The book gives information, the illustrations are precisely informative—but the random arrangement and the combination of factual material and reiterated statements about vision don't quite mesh. There is neither index nor table of contents to give access to topics.

Barkin, Carol. *Sometimes I Hate School*; by Carol Barkin and Elizabeth James; photographs by Heinz Kluetmeier. Raintree, 1975. 75-20143. 32p. Trade ed. $6.60; Library ed. $4.95 net.

Full-color photographs of good quality face each page of text; the amount of print on each page is minimal, with plenty of white space and large type. This is one of a series of books in similar format, books intended to help the young child bridge the gap between the home and school environments. The book accentuates the positive, but the child who is the protagonist doesn't like a substitute teacher and he sulks (the text is in first person) and his friend says he hates school. But the new teacher, a man, turns out to be fun (nothing sexist here, he teaches the class to make cranberry sauce) and by the time the popular Ms. Kimball (uh-huh, "Ms.") comes back, everybody—although glad to see her—realizes they're going to miss Mr. Coleman, too.


In a book intended to stress personal relationships, each page of text (large print, well-spaced, with 4–7 lines of type per page) is faced by a color photograph. In each set, a different child (shown in the picture) speaks. Sample: "Miss Hill is my teacher. We play games together. Sometimes I help her after school. She is the best teacher I ever had. Why do you like your teacher?" The children represent many ethnic backgrounds, the pictures show familiar, everyday activities, and the text emphasizes a positive attitude toward family, friends, baby-sitters, teachers, and animals. Useful as a launching pad for discussion, the book is a bit too purposive and repetitive (chiefly reasons for liking friends) to reflect a realistic assessment of relationships.

An examination of the effects that diseases carried by three insects have had in decimating populations and affecting history, particularly in the outcomes of military campaigns. Blassingame describes the flea, louse, and mosquito, explaining how each acts as a carrier of disease; he also describes the medical research that has contributed to prevention of diseases and epidemics. The material is interesting, the writing style competent, the organization of the text not always logical or sequential. A final, brief (two-page) chapter discusses some of the insect-borne diseases that still plague human beings. An index is appended.

Bova, Benjamin. *Through Eyes of Wonder; Science Fiction and Science*. Addison-Wesley, 1975. 74-13893. 127p. illus. Trade ed. $5.75; Library ed. $4.32 net.

An eminent writer of science fiction and science books describes the influence of science fiction in his life, defends the genre with conviction and a degree of passion, and discusses the parallels between science fiction writing and scientific developments. Although there is in the text a degree of repetition and rambling, it is interesting both for what it sets out to do and for the information it gives about the early days of science fiction publishing and the changes in attitude toward the genre in the literary world.


Photographs of desert creatures make it clear that, although the book is cast in narrative form, the emphasis is on informative aspects of the story rather than on the fictional vehicle that carries them. Pip goes to Arizona for the summer to visit his sister, who is working as a botanist at a research station. Already curious about lizards, he spends a happy summer observing and recording not only the lizards but their ecosystem. Brenner combines Pip's adventures and conversations with facts about the desert and its creatures so smoothly that the book is truly a coup, a completely successful mesh of fiction and fact.

Brown, Joseph E. *The Sea's Harvest; The Story of Aquaculture*; illus. with photographs and drawings. Dodd, 1975. 75-9646. 96p. $4.95.

A survey of the various projects and research that have been going on in many parts of the world is, although written in a dry style, well-organized and quite comprehensive. The author discusses aquaculture in relation to dwindling food resources and growing populations, noting that high production costs are the chief problem and pollution a serious concern. In separate chapters, he describes the farming of fish, crustaceans, mollusks, marine plants, and other useful creatures such as krill and other plankton forms, octopus, and squid. The techniques of aquaculture that encourage growth (making artificial reefs, heating water in winter, etc.) are discussed throughout the book, and a final chapter describes some possibilities for deep sea farming. An index is appended.


Worried about an exam, Jinnie becomes ill and is sent to her grandmother's for a rest. Gran's town, Coalgate, is a mining community in northern England; the time is the 1920's; a background issue is the imminent General Strike. Jinnie's father is strict, conservative, and out of sympathy with the miners, so she is unprepared for
the sentiment she encounters at Coalgate. She’s also unprepared for her Aunt Polly, who is clearly having an affair although she is married, and who is just as clearly flaunting it and making her son Will miserable. Jinnie is allowed by her beloved Gran to do all sorts of things her Dad would disapprove of, even to go to a dance, and there she sees a flapper doing the Charleston. Awful! Delightful! There are light moments and there is social commentary in the story; there’s some high drama, although the book is on the whole rather sedate, a period piece given vitality by the sharp characterization and the color of the local speech patterns. The print is wretchedly small.

Clark, Mavis Thorpe. *If the Earth Falls In*. Seabury, 1975. 75-4781. 165p. $6.95.

First published in Australia under the title *New Golden Mountain*, this is a rather stark and intense story set in a depressed mining town where three young people are trapped by falling debris in an old mine. Louise, the protagonist, had hidden and damaged the only valuable object—a Chinese painting—owned by the spinster aunt who had given up her own life to bring the girl up after her parents died; Louise’s object was to sell the painting and get money to get away from Aunt Eva and the town. Johnathan, a new friend, has promised to help her, and he has been chivvied by Bruce, the third victim of the debris. Bruce is spoiled, selfish, and malicious. But their salvation lies in working together to escape from the mine; they do, they are saved; and each of them appreciates the others more—as well as the anxious families searching for them. The writing style is smooth, the characters convincing and the changes in them believable, but the book may be somewhat limited in appeal because it moves rather slowly until the final episode, and that—for all its drama and suspense—is much like other accounts of being trapped below ground.


Carrie Wasserman describes the complexity of her freshman year at high school when, working on the school paper, she takes on a personal advice column at the editor’s suggestion. (She has a crush on the editor.) Carrie is worried because her father, principal of the school, doesn’t approve—and she can’t let him know that she is the mythical “Lovey Hart.” For a time her column is enthusiastically received, but eventually some of those to whom she gave advice are vocal and hostile about the effects of their following it. When the truth comes out, Carrie’s friends and family are hurt, and she finally makes a public apology in her last column. The story is written in lively style, convincing as the writing of a young person, but frequently a bit on the cute side, as when Carrie repeatedly uses “Quarterback or cornerback” to show her ignorance of football. The book is also weak in structure, with a single situation extended to considerable length.


Roger Tearle, Boy Detective, again solves a baffling case with the help of his sister Shirley and his friend Thumbs. Roger’s help is solicited by a singer who works with an evangelist, Buddy Joe Billings, since she realizes that some member of Billings’ staff must be responsible for the fact that money is missing from each night’s “blessing box,” the take from the congregation. The three children help count the money each night, follow suspects (they suspect each member of the team in turn), mark the bills, and finally discover that the box has a false bottom, and that the culprit is . . . well, the culprit is unexpected. The pace is slow, so that the story seems stretched; the characters are believable but are drawn with no depth. The setting is unusual, the writing style adequate.

A scholarly exploration of women's roles and their participation in business, their duties at home, their efforts as civilians or soldiers in the war effort (on both sides) and of the lives of black and native American women has reference use, gives many facts, and is given variety by the inclusion of primary source quotations. It is, however, written in a rather ponderous style and may be limited in appeal to some readers because each chapter is so packed with details and—often—names. A bibliography, divided by chapters, and an index are appended.


His father warns Gilly, when he goes off to look for his first job, not to lose his temper. In the traditional three-tries pattern, Gilly loses his temper twice and on the third job uses his sense of humor instead to make a joke about how badly he's treated. The first time he'd been overworked, the second time he'd been offered only hay for a bed; the third time he made a quip about being underfed and won sympathy. The story's impact would be stronger if Gilly had been fired the first two times, whereas on both occasions he lost his temper and quit. The writing style is adequate, and the illustrations are uncluttered, large-scale pictures that combine clear, light blue and green with heavily-outlined black and white.


An unusual setting for a story that points to the evils of superstition and prejudice: an isolated German village in the 16th century. Strongly believing in witchcraft, the villagers were convinced that cats were agents of the devil and had eradicated them. So it was that Agnes, who had toddled alone out of the woods and been adopted by a childless couple, was suspect because she had found and nursed to health an injured kitten. Agnes was odd anyway—she didn't talk, she didn't mingle with others, she didn't respond to affection. Perhaps she was a witch? The village is in a ferment of hostile fear until some refugees from another, burnt-out village, bring matters to a climax; Agnes' background is revealed and so is the foolishness of the villagers. The story is slow-moving, written in a deliberate and—at times—heavy style; there is pathos in the depiction of the mute, stoic child awakened to love by the kitten and of the passionate maternal love of the foster mother who defends Agnes even though the child does not respond to her, but the slow pace and the rather turgid last sequences may limit the book's appeal to readers.


Meticulously organized, written with clarity, and authoritative, this is a forceful yet objective introduction to the subject of behavior modification. Hall describes the work of psychologists in studies of positive, negative, and intermittent reinforcement; she discusses the differences of opinion—even controversy—about the effectiveness or the justification for shaping human behavior. The research projects described are fascinating, and the book may, especially because of the examples it gives of modifying one's own behavior, prove to be benignly provocative. A glossary and a relative index are appended.


Set in Salem in 1785, the first-person story told by Amanda Barlowe revolves around the mysterious happenings in an empty house to which she's been sent on an
errand. Tables tilt by themselves, a ghostly hand moves a sugar bowl, etc. The mystery is resolved when Amanda’s fiancé confesses that he had once lived in the house and had amused himself by contriving odd devices for supposed ghosts. “April” ghosts, because his mother said October ghosts were ordinary. The writing style is adequate, characterization is superficial, and the plot heavily dependent on contrivance. The fiancé’s brother is not only a culprit who appears in the house, but he’s also the former beloved of Amanda’s stepmother, who also has a mysterious past, divulged little by little. There are minor plot threads that simply die off, a bit of historical background about Salem and the period of witchcraft hysteria, and the whole is quite laboriously concocted. Plenty of action, however, and of possible interest because of the Bicentennial Year.

Hoban, Tana. *Dig, Drill, Dump, Fill*. Greenwillow, 1975. 75-11987. 29p. illus. Trade ed. $4.95; Library ed. $4.59 net.

Large, clear photographs of various kinds of heavy machinery are presented without text or captions, although reduced pictures at the back of the book identify the machines and succinct descriptions are given. The pictures fill the page, so that the double-page spreads seem crowded, and the book is less appealing than it might be if the pictures were sequential or were grouped in any way.


A most intriguing book because of the subject matter, this is given additional appeal by the informality and vigor of the writing style. Horwitz discusses folk art in an excellent introductory chapter, describing its popularity and those imitators who deliberately abandon perspective and accuracy to achieve (or attempt to achieve) the spontaneity and intensity, even the awkwardness of the real thing. The rest of the book describes the work of individual folk artists in this country, with the text divided into painting, carving, and the work of “Total Environmentalists” like Simon Rodia, the creator of Watts Towers. Amply illustrated by photographs of the works discussed, the book concludes with a list of suggestions for further reading, a list of American museums with outstanding folk art collections, and an index.


Varying slightly from the text as first told by Hutchinson in 1925 (in *Chimney Corner Stories*) an old nursery favorite has its perennial appeals of refrain and cumulation, and of the nonsensical behavior of a silly chicken. Lured by Henny Penny, a parade of creatures are en route to inform the King that the sky is falling and all of them are captured by the wily Foxy Loxy. Lubin has drawn illustrations that might serve for a Sheridan play: not only exquisitely detailed, elaborate costumes but rural landscapes and formal colonnades that have the stiff dignity of a backdrop. The architectural and costume details are elegant, examples of superb draughtsmanship, but it is a moot point as to whether the preschool set will appreciate them.


A useful book for the prospective bird owner, with enough discussion of care and feeding to be equally valuable to those who already have pet birds. The author describes symptoms of illness and what to do about them, foods for different kinds of cage birds, training talking birds, letting pets out of the cage for free flight, diet, and the choice of birds and cages. The text is permeated with an attitude of respect for pets, and it is logically arranged: first by subjects (taming, training, etc.) and then by

[ 125 ]
types of birds, so that special advice for feeding and breeding finches, for example, is in one place. A glossary, a brief bibliography, and an index are appended.


An oversize book, profusely illustrated with lively, irreverent drawings and by clear diagrams, all in full color. The text is printed in two wide columns, with the print occasionally broken by an illustration. Captions are in italics, so that they cannot be confused with the text. The latter covers many aspects of human physiology, morphology, behavior, and health care; it is comprehensive and informative; it is not indexed, but the table of contents is detailed and specific.


Written in a direct and simple style for the young independent reader, this story of a shy child who finds friends deviates from the single-daring-act pattern in that Fiona gets attention and makes new friends almost by chance. Having rescued a drowning bee, Fiona stands rigidly still when the bee climbs from her hand up to her shoulder. It stays. She stays. Finally, desperately, she decides to move slowly to the park, where the bee will—she hopes—fly off to investigate a flower. Other children see her, assume the bee is a pet, and talk to her admiringly. In fact, they all walk her home and make future engagements before they leave. The book has the appeals of a wish granted and of overcoming a fear; it is logical and satisfying, and it’s laced with an understated humor: “If anything got that bee excited, he might be mad enough to sting the nearest thing. The nearest thing was her wrist.”


Girl Groundhog Makes Good. Always sleepy, little Jody is surprised when she is invited by the animals of Distant Field to come and be their groundhog who wakes them in the spring. A family farewell party nets twenty-seven alarm clocks, and Jody finds—on February 2—that they all work. It’s a sunny day, however, and she goes back to sleep without resetting the clocks; she’s wakened by dripping snow and goes above ground to spread the good news that spring has come, the sun is shining, the grass and flowers are up. Scientific inaccuracy notwithstanding, this is a sunny little story, nicely told and illustrated. It captures both the delight in having a responsibility and the apprehension, it has a poignant note in Jody’s sudden qualms about leaving her family, and it echoes the ebullience a child feels (well . . . people feel) at being outdoors on the first balmy day.

Klein, Norma. What It’s All About. Dial, 1975. 75-10015. 146p. $5.95.

Not to be confused with the same title by Frolov, this is also a story in which a child must adjust to parental-marital shifts. Here eleven-year-old Bernie (Bernadette) also must adjust to the Vietnamese orphan her mother and stepfather adopt, especially to the way little Suzu devotedly clings to her. Then her father announces he is getting married again to an already pregnant woman, the stepfather decamps, Bernie goes out to California with her mother to visit Dad and his wife, then they come back to find the stepfather has returned, but he’s rejected. Meanwhile Grandma has confided to Bernie that she’s remarried but not to tell her daughter (Bernie’s mother) and it all ends with a party to which ex-stepfather and his girlfriend come. The people are believable, there’s no single part of the story that’s far-fetched, and Klein always
writes competently, but this story of a Jewish-Japanese child lacks direction or focus, and there's just a little too much going on.


A quiet, graceful story is set in England during the reign of Charles Stuart —although the nameless foundling who is the protagonist is unaware of kings and thrones. The boy knows only that he had been born in the village of Swinfield and, the master to whom he had been apprenticed having died, he has come there because he belongs nowhere. Caught by the beauty of the stonework when he comes to the village church, named Thomas by the poorhouse overseer, the boy asks to be apprenticed to a stone mason. As his skill grows, Thomas feels increasingly secure; he learns to print and then to inscribe stone, and he puts his name down for all to see: "Thomas Mason." Then, knowing he belongs, Thomas at last feels he can play with other children. The delicately detailed illustrations correspond nicely to the chiseled subtlety of Lively's style, grave and direct, and the story has a timeless quality in its perception of a child's emotional needs.


McClung describes the structure of a starfish, its eating habits, its reproductive pattern, and the way it can turn over or regenerate a lost arm. Without anthropomorphizing, he follows one starfish through its yearly cycle. Since there is really little more to say about this simple creature for the primary grades audience, the text is stretched by discussions of the creatures that are in the food chain of which the starfish is a part; it concludes with a brief description of other echinoderms. Large print and plenty of white space make the book visually appropriate for the young independent reader.

McFall, Christie. *Underwater Continent*; The Continental Shelves; with illustrations by the author. Dodd, 1975. 75-11851. 120p. $5.50.

An examination of the continental shelves includes a description of their formation, structure, and composition as well as the various uses made by man for fishing, mariculture, mining, and marine archeology. This covers much the same material as does Waters' *The Continental Shelves*, but adds discussion of defense projects and legal jurisdiction (and disputes) so that the book has a slightly different emphasis, also reflected in the many diagrams and in the bibliography, which is laden with government reports and bulletins. The writing style is dry but not difficult; material is logically arranged. An index is appended. This is not quite as readable as the Waters book, but it is competently written, good in coverage, and reflects the author's special interest as a member of the staff of the Naval Photographic Center.


Based on a questionnaire in which adolescents were asked what aspects of use of money most interested them, this practical guide discusses jobs and allowances, shopping and credit, savings and checking accounts, legal rights, all of the pitfalls in advertising claims, and tips for wise shopping. The text, written in brisk, informal style, neither talks down to readers nor preaches to them. This covers the same material as does *Smart Shopping and Consumerism* by Rubie Saunders (reviewed in the December, 1973 issue) but adds the very useful chapter, "It's the Law." An index is appended.

James Jamison is more sure of his position and his future than most boys of sixteen. An only child of well-to-do lawyers, James has had every advantage; he knows that when he is through law school he will become a partner in the family firm. But along comes a Scottish lass whose family has just moved to San Francisco, and James finds he cares more about being with Caitlin, doing the things she does, than conforming. Her family—all folksingers—are keeping an antique store going for a relative, and James, although he deplores the way the McIvers are ruining the business, is fascinated by the whole crew. Eventually he makes a last-minute decision to give up a European trip so that he can go on a performing tour with the McIvers. They go back to Scotland, but lovelorn James will clearly never be as stuffy and superior again as he once had been. The Jamison parents are nicely drawn, conservative snobs who don’t want their life-style changed or disturbed. The McIvers, on the other hand, are almost stereotypes, especially feisty, Micawberish Mr. McIver. The writing style is competent, but the characterization is uneven, and the folksinging of the family is used rather heavily as a device to give information about the art and about Scottish folkways.


Cited on the jacket-front as “a guide to puberty,” this oversized book has the appearance of a picture book, with full-color illustrations in a raffish style reminiscent of the work of Susan Perl and two charts that show outward evidence of bodily changes (one female, one male) between the ages of eight and eighteen. The text gives the usual facts about such subjects as nocturnal emission, masturbation, and menstruation. It unfortunately contains repeated references to “nature,” such as “Nature changes you,” “She begins the process sometime during the years between ten and thirteen,” or “So nature has created her own solution.” The text is slight, continuous, and jocular in tone; the book has neither a table of contents nor an index. It has one strength: a reiterated assurance that differences (in size of breasts or penis) are normal, as are differences in rapidity of development, and that masturbation and nocturnal emission are nothing to be ashamed of. Otherwise—there’s little here that isn’t in any sex education book for the adolescent and preadolescent, and the treatment is not very extensive.

Monjo, Ferdinand N. *Letters to Horseface; Being the Story of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart’s Journey to Italy 1769-1770 When He was a Boy of Fourteen;* illus. and designed by Don Bolognese and Elaine Raphael. Viking, 1975. 74-23766. 91p. $7.95.

The versatile Mr. Monjo moves to a new form with great success in this collection of putative letters from the young Mozart to his sister; it is based on actual letters written by Mozart and his father while making a triumphal tour of Italian cities. The letters are ebullient, teasing, and boyish when they are about personal matters; they are amusing and informative, but to some readers their greatest appeal will surely be in Mozart’s calm acceptance of his own musical ability. He is aware, when he writes Horseface (his older sister Maria Anna) that “. . . Papa is up to his old tricks! It’s not enough for me to be a good musician . . . I must still do tricks and improvisations to surprise the donkey’s ears, in the audience,” that he’s being shown off, but he takes it quite for granted that he should conduct his own symphony, improvise a harpsichord sonata, compose a fugue and variations on a theme given on the spot, and improvise on the violin his own part in a string trio—all in one concert. Fascinat-
ing for students of music history and Mozart lovers, this is lively enough to attract
other readers as well, and the illustrations (crayon pencil / pen and ink) are meticu-
lously accurate in architectural and costume details. Notes on the Mozart family,
sources for the research that is so smoothly incorporated, and a bibliography are
appended.

Norton, Mary. *Are All the Giants Dead?* illus. by Brian Froud. Harcourt, 1975. 75-10133.
123p. $6.50.

No, a giant is alive and well in the faerie land to which Mildred (a sort of fairy-
godmother-cum-guide) takes James. Also there are princesses like Princess Dul-
cibel, daughter of Boofy and Beau (Beauty and the Beast) and various other charac-
ters from folk and fairy lore. James, needless to say, does battle against the last giant,
with the assistance of Jack-the-Giant-Killer and Jack-of-the-Beanstalk. The story
ends with a happy wedding for Dulcibel and a return to real life and modern times for
James. The tone is light, and Norton has deftly drawn in familiar characters to this
almost-spoof; there are, however, some points at which the story line sags (James' introduction to the cast at the fairy palace, Jack-the-Giant-Killer's preoccupation
with a pair of intrusive, dancing red slippers). This will, of course, be most appealing
to those readers who are already fairytale buffs and will pick up the many references.


There had been friendship in the past between the members of the kibbutz and
their Arab neighbors; now, in the spring of 1967, the proposal for a work-study
project in which some of the young Arabs would live in the kibbutz had met support
from some and opposition from others on both sides. Through most of the book the
chapters are set alternately from the viewpoints of the Israeli and of the Arab charac-
ters. The writing style has vitality and the story gives a convincing picture of the
intricacies of divided loyalties, but the book suffers from a plethora of characters and
sub-plots as it moves toward and through the six-day war of June. The light Zenith
type face seems to crowd the pages.

75-12857. 134p. $5.95.

Six children ages five to eight slip through the floor of a cave into another time,
where they meet a Potawatomi tribe of the seventeenth century. They—and all the
events of their visit—have been foreseen in a vision, so nobody is surprised; the
children also find that they can communicate perfectly with the Potawatomi. Most of
the story centers on the hostility between the latter and marauding Mohawks. The
story is set in Michigan, and the details of Potawatomi culture are accurate, but the
story is marred by contemporary speech patterns ("Boy, I'm glad I didn't lose it. I'm
running low," says one Potawatomi lad, and by the author's intrusion on the story
("... Michigan, where the six children of our story live...") Too, the details of the
vision-dream are too specific to be believable; the dreamer had foreseen not only the
six children but the appearance of their world and even such words as "factory,
airplane, pollution, steel, concrete, expressway." The illustrations are pleasant
watercolors, the type is large but inadequately leaded. The six children's dialogue
seems precocious for their ages, and their ages may inhibit interest on the part of
children old enough to read the book.

74-22854. 83p. $5.95.

A fantasy based on the Scottish legends of the selchies, the seal people, is illus-
trated with soft, misty, romantic black and white drawings. Edward and Ursilla Sinclare, fisherfolk who live on the North Sea coast, are apprehensive about their lovely daughter Marian, who seems bewitched by a white whale. Ursilla's fear is enhanced by the knowledge that there are selchies in her ancestry. The family efforts fail; although they throw the magical sealskin belt into the sea, the whale retrieves it, and Marian goes eagerly to her love, wearing the belt that has transformed her into a mermaid. The style is lyric, the tone grave, and the story moves at a deliberate pace.

Ormondroyd, Edward. *All in Good Time*; drawings by Ruth Robbins. Parnassus, 1975. 75-1688. 206p. Trade ed. $5.95; Library ed. $5.88 net.

In a sequel to *Time at the Top* (reviewed in the October, 1963 issue) in which Susan had taken an elevator that took her back to the 1880's, Ormondroyd uses the ingenious device of having a narrator who—directed by a peculiar telephone call—discovers Susan's diary. The Walker family she has met in her venture into the past is in trouble, and Susan has convinced her father, on returning home, to go back with her to 1881. Susan loves the period and she hopes her father will wed the lovely, widowed Mrs. Walker. In a lively and convincing fantasy, Susan and the Walker children (who also hope for a merger) thwart a villain, outmaneuver a domineering aunt, and achieve their goal. There's a nice double time-twist at the end, too. A satisfying story, written with pace and humor.


A selection of poems, many of which are to be found in other anthologies, is illustrated with pictures that are alternately in black and white and in rather dulled colors, and that have a curiously old-fashioned effect. The choices are excellent, with almost every major children's poet represented; the poems are brief. Useful for a home or nursery school collection.


Although recommended by the publisher for ages 4-8, this story in picture book format seems to demand more depth of understanding than most very young children have. The setting is a motherless household; there is no explanation. It is Lydia's tenth birthday, and her younger sister Monnie has helped dad bake a cake and plan a surprise party. Monnie has trouble all day with Lydia's surly behavior toward her: showing no appreciation for a present, scoffing at Monnie's efforts to show her participation, patronizing her in the presence of guests. Daddy (a strong character) is sympathetic but won't interfere. Goaded, Monnie finally drapes the cake over her sister's face. Result: Lydia says it's a good cake and they all laugh and eat it. The message may be "Assert yourself" but Lydia's reaction seems inconsistent with her previous behavior, and the ending is weak. As a picture of an abrasive sibling, however, the book is strong, and Monnie is a sympathetic character.


Like the first book, *Soup* (reviewed in the October, 1974 issue) this is an episodic account of the pranks of the author and his boyhood friend in Vermont, the episodes running from spring to Christmas. The last three chapters, for example, are about stealing a pumpkin and getting punished, chasing a turkey to the discomfort of boys
and bird, and climbing up to ring the courthouse bell and being stranded there. Again, a mixture of humor (of the boys-will-be-boys-and-get-into-trouble variety), small town events, and a dash of sentimentality, with characters tending to be type-cast.

Perera, Gretchen G. *Your Brain Power*; by Gretchen G. and Thomas B. Perera; drawings by Tom Huffman. Coward, 1975. 75-7862. 48p. $4.64.

A continuous text describes the functioning of the nervous system and discusses such topics as automatic reflexes, memory and thinking, specific functioning of areas of the brain, et cetera. While the text is on the whole accurate, there are occasional statements of dubious clarity, and an unfortunate tendency to color the material without being specific. "A nerve cell has a body with long, fingerlike branches," does not make relative size clear. The illustrations, which are seldom drawn to scale and often misleading, tend toward cuteness. The Pereras obviously know the subject, but they have tried to cover too much material in a short book and have therefore not been able to clarify individual aspects of it.


Not a book with a strong storyline, this gives a convincing picture of a young adolescent who gains self-confidence, learns a measure of tolerance for the adults in her splintered family, and becomes aware that frankness makes it easier to communicate. Tina is tall, undeveloped, and particularly self-conscious about the fact that she twitches her nose when nervous. In her twelfth summer she has to adjust to her father's announcement that he's engaged to a woman Tina dislikes, to a fight with her best friends, and to becoming reacquainted with her mother, a nonconformist who has just divorced Tina's father and remarried. Tina reluctantly decides to visit her mother and finds that if they speak openly they are more comfortable, and she becomes very fond of her young stepfather. She also meets a Dutch boy who is obviously smitten and—although he goes home—his admiration gives Tina new confidence. Characterization and dialogue are strong, and the writing style is fluent, convincing as the commentary of a preadolescent and lightened by humor.


First published in England under the title *Make a Mask*, this is more a compilation of photographs and captions than a text. It does not give specific instructions for making masks, but lists materials (some of which are products with British trade names such as Mod-Roc or Evo-stick) and divides chapters on the basis of "Found Objects," "Constructions and Armatures," "Soft Materials," or "Half Masks and Masks on Sticks." Each chapter makes some general suggestions and pictures many examples but does not give step-by-step directions. The appended list of books for further reading includes such titles as *Pre-Columbian Art* and *Introducing Macramé*, books that may provide artistic ideas but are not exactly on the subject. The profusion of ideas is, indeed, the one strong aspect of this book; the print is very, very small.


In this sequel to *Chloris and the Creeps*, in which Chloris' fanatical devotion to her dead father made her hostile to a stepfather, Fidel, the fourteen-year-old girl is even more bitter and antagonistic. The story is told by her sister Jenny, two years younger, and Jenny (who loves Fidel) is horrified at her sister's smug prediction that a divorce is in the offing and Chloris' announcement that her dead father is com-
municating with her. Two other divorces are taking place in Jenny’s circle and she is disturbed and apprehensive. There’s no sweetness and light here. Save for Fidel Mancha, a wise and kind man, all the adult characters are the “freaks” Chloris so contemptuously dubs them. The book has some flaws: an alcoholic teacher talks of his personal life to his class in unconvincing fashion, and the book is oversaturated with Jenny’s preoccupation with astrology. Too bad, because the author writes with incisive candor and clarity, albeit a bitter clarity.


A little bluebird is hopping along, singing; a cat hops behind the bird, eyeing what Ad he hopes is his dinner. Hopping, the cat takes a pratfall; this is repeated with skipping 3-5 and jumping (same result for the cat) and then the bluebird flies off, leaving the cat to yrs. go home for a meal. The perky drawings have grace, vitality, and humor; the story uses repetition and refrain in an appealing way—but it’s slight.

Rice, Eve. Ebbie; story and pictures by Eve Rice. Greenwillow, 1975. 75-11688. 28p. Trade ed. $5.95; Library ed. $5.11 net.

His real name was Edward, but it was hard to say after losing two front teeth, and Ad so he said “Ebbie” and everyone picked it up. When he grew older Edward learned 3-5 to say “Eddie” even without the front teeth, but the others went right on using “Ebbie.” He corrected them. They called him “Ebbie.” One day he disappeared, and everybody called “Ebbie!” and looked for him. They found, spelled out in toothpicks on the kitchen table, “Eddie.” They found “Eddie” written on the bedroom wall; they heard a small voice whisper “Eddie” from under the bed. Message received; mission accomplished. After that, Edward was called Eddie except by his little sister, because it’s hard to say Eddie when you’re missing two front teeth. Slight, mildly amusing, satisfying in a child’s triumph over adult resistance. But, as a young reader pointed out, the tongue hits the roof of the mouth, not the teeth, in saying Eddie.

Ross, Laura. Mask-Making With Pantomime and Stories From American History; drawings by Frank Ross; constructed mask photos by George Haddad. Lothrop, 1975. 75-11960. 112p. Trade ed. $5.95; Library ed. $5.11 net.

As clearly written as her books on puppetry, a new book by Ross gives instructions for making several simple kinds of masks, instructions that can be adapted for plays other than the ones included, each using a narrator as well as a small cast. There are instructions for miming and for miming with masks; there are sections on the history of pantomime and the history of the mask as used in ritual, religious ceremonies, and the theater. A bibliography and an index are appended.


Adults may find this a nostalgia trip, but children are more likely to be amused (as well as intrigued) by the toys and games of the past. The book is divided into such areas as dolls, costumes and uniforms, things with wheels, sports and games, et cetera. In each section there are pages from the F.A.O. Schwarz catalogue, chronologically arranged from 1911 to 1971, although there are not pages for every year. This may be primarily for entertainment, but it also may serve as ancillary material for social studies, with the introductory page for each section giving some interesting background information.
As is evident from his earlier books, *Loggerhead Turtle* and *That Wonderful Pelican*, Scott has both a profound knowledge of the animal world and a writing style that is both spontaneous and fluent. The admiration he feels for wild creatures is never excessive; his views on conservation or respect for animals never become didactic. Here he examines, in separate chapters, some of the creatures that have flourished in a time when so many species have become endangered or extinct; in the descriptions of the twelve survivors (chipmunk, cottontail, coyote, crow, white-tailed deer, gull, opossum, porcupine, raccoon, short-tailed shrew, skunk, and woodchuck) the reasons that they have been successful emerge. A full-page black and white drawing, realistic and handsome, precedes each chapter.

In a sequel to *Getting Something on Maggie Marmelstein*, Maggie decides to run for president of the sixth grade class when her friend Thad rejects her offer to be his campaign manager. The campaign assumes the air of a feud, with spies from the enemy camp, attempts to win over enemy partisans, etc. The election is almost farcical, and the humor that buoyed up Sharmat’s writing is strained here. Solution to the hostility: a third person wins and an entente cordiale is established between Thad and Maggie.

Eleven-year-old Lani takes a dim view of her mother’s friend Beast, the professor who’s always hanging around the house and trying to be nice to her. She’s also disenchanted with the laxity of their household. Life had been quite different before her parents were divorced: elegant, orderly, and conforming. Lani goes through the usual preteen tribulations of squabbling with her friends, and she suffers a more serious blow when, discovering that her father is in a nearby city, she goes to visit him and learns that he doesn’t really want her to come live with him. Her mother goes to the hospital, and Lani learns to cope with housekeeping and to appreciate Beast, but the announcement that he and her mother are going to be married sends her into a tantrum. She’s smoothed and pleased by hearing from Beast’s son that he actually wants her for a stepsister and has himself adjusted happily to the idea of the marriage. While the writing style is competent, dialogue adequate, and characterization of adults quite strong, the book follows a patterned adjustment-to-stepparent plot, and the author’s use of masked language (don’t be an ash—you mustard!—Thank Maud—Good Maud) seems a bit coy.

After a brief discussion of the problems of survival for wild creatures, the author describes the ways in which they struggle against predators, fight for food, or battle for a mate or for territorial rights. The text is divided into chapters based on physical attributes that help wild creatures survive, such as antlers, horns, teeth, claws, the ability to wound by such devices as quills or poison, or emitting a bad smell. Accurate as the material is, there is little here that isn’t covered in texts about individual species; the writing is clear but rather monotonous in tone. Shuttlesworth stresses the fact that most animals fight only for reasons of survival; unlike man, she points out, they do not have “wars.” An index is appended.
An affectionate and nostalgic look at the life history of one Model T Ford is illustrated with marvelously detailed drawings with Spier’s exuberant humor visible in almost every picture. The text describes vehicles of 1909, when the horse reigned supreme and those who “knew” scoffed at the idea that the horseless carriage would go on being popular. Our particular tin lizzie is bought from a small-town dealer and affords a great deal of pleasure to its family for eleven years; then it is sold to a young couple who use it for touring (pictures of mountains, buttes, desert, etc.) and then, after the third owner has used the car for farm work, Tin Lizzie is left in a field to rust. Happy ending: an antique car buff buys and repairs the old car, and it’s much admired by one and all. The story is told in pleasant, jocund style; it is marred slightly by the fact that the car suddenly becomes “she” well along in the text, and there are such statements as “... Lizzie saw parts of the world she did not even know existed...” Nevertheless, the book has charm, it can be used for an attractive supplement to social studies, and it will be especially enjoyed by avid young fans of motoring history. The endpapers show diagrams of the Model T.


The title is a caption for a boy’s painting; John has dyslexia (and impaired hearing) and is in a class for handicapped children. So is Dee-Dee, who has apraxia and hyperkinesia. They and the other eight in their class are excited and expectant at the prospect of a rare field trip, a boat ride to see a pod of migrating whales. The trip is fraught with problems: rough weather, the unexpected appearance of another sixth grade group, normal children who tease the “specials,” fight with them, throw their bag lunches into the ocean. John falls overboard, a boy from the other group goes after him, and the teacher uses the occasion to gain sympathy and understanding for her brood. Everybody becomes friendly; later, Dee-Dee and John get telephone calls from their new acquaintances—and the book ends with the revelation that the telephone calls, so cherished by the special children, were arranged by the teacher of the normal group. While this has plenty of action, gives a sympathetic portrayal of neurologically damaged children, and is focused on a fascinating natural phenomenon, it has two weaknesses: one is the use of dialogue to expound, and the other is that—although the children (like John and Dee-Dee) have normal intelligence they don’t always sound like normal twelve-year-olds. Dee-Dee, for example, calls John and suggests they get married—live on their allowances—“grow up together.”

Tapio, Pat Decker. The Lady Who Saw the Good Side of Everything; illus. by Paul Galdone. Seabury, 1975. 75-4610. 30p. $6.95.

Always cheerful, the little old lady is pleased, after her house washes away in a flood of rain (she needed a new house anyway) to drift to sea in a log (she’d always wanted to see the ocean) and pleased at how peaceful the trip is (behind her back, a shark’s gaping jaw) and delighted by arriving in China. She’s even pleased when it rains, because it’s good for the rice. The story has a merry inanity—but who worries about days without food in a tall tale? Galdone picks up the story greatly: the lady clings to her umbrella throughout, wears her pancake hat imperturbably, changing in only in the last picture for a coolie hat, and the cat that travels along is used for contrast—woebegone when his mistress is cheerful, terrified when she ignores the shark. Lightweight, but amusing.

An eminent dance critic writes with knowledgeable affection about an old and dear friend, yet he writes with an objectivity that is as impressive as is his candor. Martha Graham's relationship with Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn, who were her first teachers, was a stormy one; Terry is quite objective about Graham's rupture of the relationship: "She was proud, determined, very touchy (her temper grew with her skills) and determined to do exactly what she wanted. Heaven help whoever got in her way." The book not only draws a remarkably vivid picture of Graham as a person and as a dancer, but it gives an authoritative assessment of her repertoire and of the development of contemporary dance. A bibliography and an index are appended; many photographs are included.


Travers has written her own version of the familiar tale, basing it on the Grimms' variant, which she considers the purest of the many versions of the story of the sleeper wakened by the magic of love. The story is followed by an essay—addressed to adults rather than children—on the theme of the sleeper in particular, although there is some general discussion of fairy tales. Following the essay are five other variants of the tale: "Dornroschen," "La Belle au Bois Dormant," "Sole, Luna, e Talia," "The Queen of Tubber Tintye," and "The Petrified Mansion," which are briefly discussed, with sources and chronology cited, in the essay. Few children will read the latter, and probably few will be interested in comparing variants, but the stories are classic, the illustrations handsome, and the essay a bonus for adult students of children's literature.


The oversize format affords the author-artist an opportunity of which he takes full advantage: big double-page spreads that have intriguing details but that are, on most pages, not too crowded because he uses so much white space. In a London scene, for example, the trees are green but there is no indication of grass, so the houses, vehicles, and small (often comic) figures are distinct. Ventura uses a paragraph or two of text for each of six major cities, then moves on to getting around in a city, having fun in a city, working in a city, etc. While this doesn't give the information that is found in the Sasek books on individual cities, it shows some striking differences and quite a few similarities between widely dispersed places and varied cultures.


Legislation and school district rezoning cause consternation among a group of white southern children who learn that they must go to a black junior high. Some cheat; some move; some go to private schools. Mary-Larkin's parents feel strongly that integration is right; in fact, her father wishes that the members of his church would welcome black people. Mary-Larkin is ambivalent, and her first experiences at Wheatley Junior High are discouraging. When she does make a black friend, she brings Vanella into her own church choir and causes a schism amongst her father's parishioners. While there is hostility on the part of many black students at Wheatley
and contempt on the part of many former white classmates, Mary-Larkin eventually finds her niche. The story is believable and the writing style adequate; it is burdened to some extent by the repeated passages of dialogue between Mary-Larkin and her aggressively idealistic parents, passages that at times seem more a vehicle for propounding a philosophy than a conversation.


Fifteen-year-old Joanna and her sister and brothers have been staying with their grandmother while their restless, peripatetic parents are off on a study grant. She gets a great crush on the only son of a neighbor. John is motherless, and his wealthy father drives the boy to become a champion rider. Joanna also learns to ride, spurred in part by a desire to make enough money to take care of an old horse (named "Horse") that she and her younger brothers are sure is being wrongfully taken from an elderly friend. They have hidden Horse, and they need money to care for her. Joanna's job at the stud farm owned by John's father leads to her own proficiency as a rider. The story ends with John, who has run away, home and reconciled with his father—Grandma happily married to the elderly neighbor—Joanna's parents back from Mexico and agreeing to rent Grandma's house—Joanna winning her first prize at a horse show, etc. All too much of an all-ends-tied happy ending, but this should be a most satisfying story for the horse-mad and—despite the overcrowding of the canvas—the plot moves smoothly and the characterization and dialogue are quite deft.


In the fifth and last of a cycle of historical novels that began during the reign of Henry VII, this story of a country manor, Mantlemass, and the Medley family who reside there, ends with the bitter internal conflict of the English Civil War. Two long lost members of the family come, separately, to Mantlemass; Roger Medley takes all but two members of the family back to his home in the New World and young Edmund Medley, converted during his brief stay from a King's man to a supporter of Parliament, dies in the final confrontation in which the great house is destroyed. The author weaves smoothly through the complexities of family relationships, two love affairs, and the vicissitudes of wartime tragedies, but her story never becomes overshadowed by historical details although they permeate the book.

Wolitzer, Hilma. *Introducing Shirley Braverman.* Farrar, 1975. 75-25872. $5.95.

Despite the flow and humor of the writing style and the natural incorporation of period details, this story of a twelve-year-old, set in Brooklyn during World War II, may be limited in appeal to some readers because it lacks a strong story line. Shirley squabbles and makes up with her best friend Mitzi Bloom, she is thrilled when her idol, Mitzi's brother, comes back safely from his military service, she works to win a city-wide spelling contest, and she tries—over and over—to instill courage into her fearful, spindly younger brother.
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Lowes, Ruth. "Do We Teach Reading in the Kindergarten?" *Young Children*, July, 1975.


