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PRODUCTION NOTE

University of Illinois at
Urbana-Champaign Library
Large-scale Digitization Project, 2007.

Index Check Copy

MARCH, 1977
VOLUME 30
NUMBER 7

THE UNIVERSITY
OF CHICAGO
GRADUATE
LIBRARY
SCHOOL

**BULLETIN
OF THE
CENTER FOR
CHILDREN'S
BOOKS**

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS

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.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: 1 year, \$10.00; \$7.20 per year for each additional subscription to the same address; \$7.20, student rate. Single copy rate: from vol. 25, \$1.25; vols. 17 through 24, 50¢. Complete back volume (11 issues): vols. 17-22, \$4.00; vols. 23-24, \$5.00. Reprinted volumes 1-16 (1947-1963) available from Kraus Reprint Co., Route 100, Millwood, New York 10546. Volumes available in microfilm from University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106. Complete volumes available in microfiche from Johnson Associates, P.O. Box 1017, Greenwich, Conn. 06830. Checks should be made payable to The University of Chicago Press. All notices of change of address should provide *both* the old and the new address.

SUBSCRIPTION CORRESPONDENCE. Address all inquiries about subscriptions to the The University of Chicago Press, 5801 Ellis Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60637.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE. Review copies and all correspondence about reviews should be sent to Mrs. Zena Sutherland, 1100 East 57th Street, Chicago, Illinois 60637.

Second-class postage paid at Chicago, Illinois.

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Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO • GRADUATE LIBRARY SCHOOL

Volume 30

MARCH 1977

Number 7

New Titles for Children and Young People

Alexander, Martha. *I Sure Am Glad to See You, Blackboard Bear*; story and pictures by Martha Alexander. Dial, 1976. 76-2280. 30p. Trade ed. \$4.95; Library ed. \$4.58 net.

R
3-6
yrs. The small boy who had sweet, if imaginary, revenge in *Blackboard Bear* again uses the daydream of a teddy bear grown huge to gain solace. Teased by two children, bullied by another, already miffed because his friend has been selfish about sharing toys, the boy conjures up the bear that steps off a blackboard to put his friends in their place, cowering and envious. This hasn't quite the substance of the earlier book, but the familiar situation, the natural dialogue, and the appealing, small scale figures should beguile the read-aloud audience.

Batterberry, Ariane (Ruskin). *The Pantheon Story of American Art for Young People*; by Ariane and Michael Batterberry. Pantheon Books, 1976. 75-22249. 159p. illus. \$14.95.

R
6- The Batterberrys begin with "The Art of the North American Indian" and consider the representative work of such regions as the southwest or the plains, then examine the art of white settlers of different nationalities, and continue chronologically throughout the volume. A large book, profusely illustrated, this is limited in accessibility to the contents by the lack of an index; it occasionally includes a conjectural statement such as, "His painting . . . must have been a perfect likeness . . ." and it gives short shrift to some subjects, such as 20th century architecture, which is covered in two pages. Nevertheless, the book is impressive: the authors are knowledgeable, they write smoothly, and they incorporate into their discussion not only artistic commentary but also comments on cultural matrixes and cross-influences in art history.

Bendick, Jeanne. *The Mystery of the Loch Ness Monster*. McGraw-Hill, 1976. 76-18083. 128p. illus. Trade ed. \$5.95; Library ed. \$5.72 net.

R
6-8 Less personal than the Cookes' *The Great Monster Hunt*, and more objective, this is also less formal in writing style. Bendick provides the same information about early sightings, the stirring of wide belief and of scientific investigations that began in the 1930's, and the apparent corroboration by computer-sharpened photographs, experiments with sonar and echo-sounding equipment, and underwater television cameras of *some* kind of creature living in the cold waters of the loch. She concludes with a run-down of the kinds of creatures that may have been observed, and the discrepant evidence or conflict in theory about each. A bibliography and an index are appended.

Bierhorst, John, ed. *Black Rainbow; Legends of the Incas and Myths of Ancient Peru*; ed. and tr. by John Bierhorst. Farrar, 1976. 76-19092. 131p. \$7.95.

This is what every such collection of traditional literature for older readers should be: it is prefaced by an erudite and informative introduction; it is chronologically

R
8-
* arranged insofar as possible; it is followed by notes on sources, a reading list, a glossary of terms, and a guide to pronunciation. Above all, it consists of stories that are selected with discrimination and retold with skill. The tales are grouped into "Legends of the Incas," "Myths of Ancient Peru," "Myths That Have Survived," and "Modern Fables and Animal Tales," and they give a vivid picture of both the cultural and historical milieu from which they came and of the style and humor of Andean storytelling.

✓
Bunin, Catherine. *Is That Your Sister? A True Story of Adoption*; by Catherine and Sherry Bunin. Pantheon Books, 1976. 76-60. 45p. illus. \$4.95.

R
K-3 Catherine, six, chatters amicably about the adoption of herself and her younger sister Carla (both black, but different shades of black) into a white family with two boys. She is candid about her feelings: bothered when people say she doesn't look like her sister or her mother, wondering about her natural mother, slightly annoyed by how little most people understand about adoption, and baffled by the fact that they can't understand that her *real* parents are her adoptive parents, that they and their four children are a family who—like any family—bicker a bit and love each other very much. Candid and appealing, the book includes many informal photographs of all the Bunins.

✓
Burstein, Chaya M. *Rifka Grows Up*; written and illus. by Chaya M. Burstein. Hebrew Pub. Co., 1976. 76-41412. 184p. \$5.95.

R
5-7 A sequel to *Rifka Bangs the Teakettle* takes place in the small Russian village where Rifka, now twelve and still anxious for a good education, is diligently studying with a tutor so that she can pass the exam that will permit her to go to high school. She is warned that there is a quota for Jews, but she is not prepared for the fact that—after answering all the questions easily—she fails. Why? Political reasons. Not only is she Jewish, but she has faced a board of examiners who are hostile because of the rumbles of revolutionary activity. The constitution announced by the Czar seems at first to bring a bond between Jew and peasant, but after a pogrom against the village Jews, Rifka's parents decide that they will go to America, as the older son who is working in New York has pleaded with them to do. The characters are roundly drawn, the writing style has vitality, and the book gives a convincing picture both of the Jewish community in rural Russia and of the early activists as seen from that community's viewpoint.

✓
Calhoun, Mary (Huiskamp). *Medicine Show; Conning People and Making Them Like It*. Harper, 1976. 75-25417. 136p. illus. Trade ed. \$6.95; Library ed. \$6.79 net.

R
6-9 A conversational, breezy, but well-researched survey of the quacks and confidence men—and some women—who toured the United States from the mid-19th century to the 1940's. Much of Calhoun's story is based on the reminiscences of her son's father-in-law, Cliff Mann, who was part of a touring family from the age of eight. This is both a history of the medicine show and some of its most illustrious or infamous stars, and an explanation of the way in which the confidence man operates; it is rife with color, with the jargon of the trade, and with dramatic and humorous anecdotes about the "doctors," the fake royalty, and the musicians and other performers who amused the crowds until the serious business of the pitch came along. A divided bibliography, a glossary of terms, and an index are appended.

✓
Clymer, Eleanor (Lowenton). *Horatio's Birthday*; illus. by Robert Quackenbush. Atheneum, 1976. 76-89. 60p. \$6.95.

Another tale about Horatio, who had suffered in his time because his kindly mistress had taken in so many other animals that he never had any peace and quiet.

R
4-6
yrs. Now all the others are gone except the dog, who has become sedate. Horatio is bored. He gets into the cellar, finds egress to the outdoors via a mousehole, and has a lively night with a band of prowling cats. The most friendly comes home with him, and so when Mrs. Casey calls her Horatio for his quite elaborate birthday party, he appears with his new friend, shares his presents with her, and is contented by the fact that Mrs. Casey quickly decides to keep the newcomer. Whatever he thinks, Horatio always behaves in feline fashion, and the extent and tenor of his adventures are nicely gauged for the read-aloud audience.

✓
Cole, Joanna. *A Chick Hatches*; photographs by Jerome Wexler. Morrow, 1976. 76-29017. 47p. Trade ed. \$6.95; Library ed. \$5.94 net.

R
K-3 A simply written account of the development from egg to embryo to fetus to chick is made more meaningful by the accompanying photographs, some in color and almost all enlarged. The writing is matter-of-fact, but the pictures of the developing fetus make the recurrent miracle of reproduction vividly clear. The coverage and tone are much like those of Selsam's *Egg to Chick*, which is designed for the beginning independent reader.

✓
Collins, Michael. *Flying to the Moon and Other Strange Places*. Farrar, 1976. 76-25496. 159p. illus. \$6.95.

R
7-10 Based in part on the author's adult book, *Carrying the Fire*, this is an articulate and exciting account of journeys on the Gemini 10 and Apollo 11 missions despite occasional "cute" remarks that talk down to the audience. "On earth I weigh 165 pounds, but on the moon I would weigh only 27 pounds. Imagine a grown man weighing 27 pounds!" Or, "Scientists, who love to give long names to things, call this process photosynthesis." The book adds a new dimension to what was seen on television or reported in the press: Collins describes his pre-training experience; the training for the two flights, with each trainee assigned a special area of study; the operation that kept him from being one of the original moon shot team. What is most vivid is the complexity of details on the mission: the small problems (and some not so small) and procedures that make the worry, the work, the horseplay, and the awe seem real. Collins concludes by discussing space flight in the future: shuttles, residential colonies using solar energy and self-contained water systems, and the probability of a landing on Mars.

✓
Cullum, Albert. *You Think Just Because You're Big You're Right*. Harlin Quist, 1976. 76-21406. 61p. illus. \$5.95.

NR
3-4 A dozen artists illustrate a book in which children speak with dolor or rancor about adult behavior, usually behavior specifically addressed to the young. The publisher's note calls the series of comments "poems," and some examples follow. "My momma was real happy that I was invited this year, and she even bought me a new party dress. But I don't think Patricia's momma liked my dress. She didn't remember inviting me, and she kept forgetting my name." The picture shows an unhappy black child standing apart from the white girls at a party. "They said we're bad. They said we did a dirty thing. They said we couldn't ever play together again. Ever! We weren't doing anything bad. We just want to see." The picture shows the feet and legs of a boy and girl who have dropped their pants and stand facing each other. Another begins, "You hit me for lying but you tell your office you're sick when you're not," and another, "That librarian's got to be kidding! You should see the stupid books she reads to us . . ." Some of the illustrations are striking in composition or effective in capturing mood, some are clever in design but sterile. The comments range from wistfulness to defensiveness or anger, covering such topics as mas-

turbation, swooping relatives, quarreling parents, mothers who complain that their children are a burden, sex roles, overprotectiveness, or unpleasant teachers. This is too sophisticated for young children; while it is clearly intended as a candid exploration of children's suffering from adult behavior, it may be depressing as a whole, although for most children, some pages will evoke sympathetic recognition. Yet the whole is somber, there is nothing to alleviate the sense of hopeless hostility, as though all children are victimized all of the time.

Dossenbach, Monique. *Animal Babies of East Africa*; written and illus. by Monique and Hans D. Dossenbach; tr. by Fred Sawyer. Putnam, 1976. 76-23450, 40p. \$5.95.

M
2-4 Like the Thiede book reviewed below, this is written as a photojournalistic essay; it is less successful because it covers so much ground that it gives little information about each creature. A "glossary" at the back of the book gives, in exceedingly small print, some general information about each animal. Treatment is uneven: there are four pages devoted to the giraffe, two to the ostrich, with only a fourth of one page carrying text.

Drury, Roger W. *The Champion of Merrimack County*; illus. by Fritz Wegner. Little, 1976. 76-6453. 199p. \$6.95.

Ad
4-6 Janet Berryfield and her mother are both enchanted when they see O Crispin, appalled when he has an accident while bicycling, and afraid that Mr. Berryfield will disapprove of O Crispin's riding and the damage he has done to the course. For O Crispin is a mouse, he's been training for bicycle races by riding in Mr. B's new bathtub, and his crash has not only ruined a wheel but damaged the tub enamel. There ensues a frantic afternoon in which Janet visits a dentist, a blacksmith, and others with the damaged, tiny wheel while her mother takes O Crispin to the hospital and is herself taken for the patient. It's all very slapstick, and not quite as convincing as Drury's *The Finches' Fabulous Furnace*; yet it is funny, with plenty of action, a satisfying conclusion, and a lively writing style.

Duncan, Jane. *Janet Reachfar and the Kelpie*; pictures by Mairi Hedderwick. Seabury, 1976. 75-44166. 31p. \$7.50.

R
4-5 Softly colored wash pictures show the beauty of the Scottish hills in another story about small Janet, who lives on a farm called "Reachfar" and depends for companionship on two of the farm hands. Tom and George, on a Sunday walk, have told Janet tales of dread creatures in bogs and caves and wells; she is enjoyably frightened by the first two, but just doesn't believe the story of the kelpie in the well. She looks and is terrified; there is a huge watery face with horns, just as Tom and George had said. When Janet has a nightmare, Granny (a stern disciplinarian) insists that Janet look into the well again while everybody watches. And a trembling Janet finally realizes that she had seen her own face, that the "horns" were her pigtails. A lightly structured tale, this, yet the graceful style, the sturdy characterization, and the explicit details of the setting give substance to a book that deals with the universal theme of a child's fears.

Dunne, Mary Collins. *The Secret of Captives' Cave*. Putnam, 1976. 76-25228. 159p. \$5.95.

Ad
6-8 Dennis has just moved to a southern town with his sister and mother; they've inherited the remaining wing of the mansion that had belonged to his father's family. His father had died (heart attack) while jailed for a hit-and-run death, and Dennis feared the gossip would spring up in their new home. The sub-plots have to do with the old cave where the original owner of the property had held the slaves he captured: Dennis discovers from an old black man that the maligned owner had actually

been rescuing slaves but hadn't wanted it known; and with the problems Dennis' mother has when she shares her studio with a black dancing teacher. The book is minimal in characterization, adequate in writing style, realistic in presentation of problems, but topheavy with plot threads and characters who contribute little to the furtherance of action.

✓ Duvoisin, Roger Antoine. *Periwinkle*. Knopf, 1976. 76-8665. 28p. illus. Trade ed. \$5.95; Library ed. \$5.99 net.

Ad 3-5 yrs. Periwinkle the giraffe spoke only English, which she had learned in a zoo, and she was lonely because other animals bleated or grunted. Then she met Lotus the frog, who had learned English in an aquarium, and they were both delighted. First they quarreled because, in their anxiety, they interrupted each other and then they quarreled because each was trying to be so polite that neither would talk. After a few incidental mishaps, they learned how to have a conversation in which each took part. Lotus wove (wove? a frog?) a nest between Periwinkle's horns, and they were never lonely again. The softly colored pictures, paint and collage, are attractive if repetitive, but the text is a bit forced. There is no explanation of how Periwinkle has achieved her freedom; there's a slight message about give and take in communication, and some humor in the communications failure, but the plot is not very substantial.

✓ Efron, Marshall. *Bible Stories You Can't Forget No Matter How Hard You Try*; by Marshall Efron and Alfa-Betty Olsen; illus. by Ron Barrett. Dutton, 1976. 76-9853. 79p. \$6.95.

Ad 5-7 Eight stories from the Old and New Testaments are given flippant treatment in text and illustrations, although the authors adhere to the basic facts of the Bible. Their deviation is more in style than in events; they use some standard gags like waxing roth (Joseph's brothers) and "Later Roth came in and waxed them," but most of the humor is in the incongruity of contemporary language and Biblical setting. Joseph's brother Reuben is named after the sandwich, Nimrod vaunts the newly-invented brick with "Look, no moving parts! Small, handy, portable . . . Let me show you in this demonstration." Noah, cleaning up some soda pop bottles and crumpled beer cans, says "Every litter bit hurts," while Herod calls Salome "Salami" because he has a rye sense of humor. The amusing illustrations also use anachronism to achieve humor. Some readers may find the flippant treatment offensive; others may find it heavy-handed, but it is funny and it may indeed fulfill the promise of the title. It is, for example, difficult to forget the doting Jacob, the brothers agreeing jealously that Joseph is a schmo, and the illustrator's depiction of Joseph as tall, handsome, and brawny, trying on his gorgeous coat (42 long, dry clean only) purchased at Bedouin Boutique, while a tubby, bespectacled father clasps his hands in pleasure at how handsome his boy is.

✓ Erdoes, Richard, ed. *The Sound of Flutes and other Indian Legends*; pictures by Paul Goble. Pantheon Books, 1976. 76-8660. 132p. \$5.95.

R 5-7 * For a quarter of a century, Erdoes has been listening to Indian tales; the collection here is from storytellers of Plains Indian tribes, some tales remembered and some transcribed from tapes by Erdoes. Goble's illustrations, stylized and handsome in color or in black and white, are used both as full-page pictures and as marginal ornamentation, and the stories have variety and vitality. They include historical material (the death of Sitting Bull), dignified legends, brief humorous tales, *pourquoi* tales, and stories of creation. A fine collection.

Evslin, Bernard. *Greeks Bearing Gifts; The Epics of Achilles and Ulysses*; illus. by Lucy Martin Bitzer. Four Winds, 1976. 76-16039. 324p. \$9.95.

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8-
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As he did in *The Green Hero*, Evslin gives fresh life to old legends, for his version of the epic deeds and of the Greek pantheon combines a fluent, witty style that can be as delightfully irreverent as it is sonorous. His men and gods, women and goddesses, have distinct personalities; his battlecries are stirring. Just let the reader be lulled by the cadence of poetic prose, and Evslin tweaks the ear with such surprises as, "Screaming like Harpies, Athena and Hera flew back to Olympus, flung themselves before Zeus, and tried to get Aphrodite disqualified for illegal use of hands," or, "It is a true auspice, oh King, and must be obeyed. You know me well enough to realize I would never allow myself to appear in any dream that was not of the utmost authenticity." The book, first published as two stories in paperback, can bring clarification to readers who have hitherto been confused by the names and events of the epics, and it's also extremely diverting.

Freedman, Russell. *Animal Games*; illus. by St. Tamara. Holiday House, 1976. 76-10975. 28p. \$4.95.

Ad
3-4

A continuous text is illustrated with adequate black and white drawings of the animals described. Freedman discusses the young of sixteen animals, pointing out that the way they play prepares them for the skills they will need in order to survive. Much of the text, however, is simply descriptive; the double-page spread on elephants, for example, describes the mud-rolling, climbing, and spraying that a herd of elephants does when at a river, and there is no comment about how this prepares the young for a task. There is, of course, some repetition: wolf pups and bobcat kittens pounce and tumble in similar fashion. The book is factual but only minimally informative.

Fujikawa, Gyo. *Gyo Fujikawa's Oh, What a Busy Day!* Grosset, 1976. 76-4259. 68p. illus. \$4.95.

Ad
3-5
yrs.

An oversize book, profusely illustrated in color and in black and white, follows a group of children through the day from early morning to bedtime, but the settings show different times of the year. While many of the activities are familiar, the settings are seldom those with which a child can identify; for example, the breakfast scene is a long table, out of doors, where a dozen small children of various ethnic origins eat together. The pictures are lively and deft, saved from greeting-card sweetness by their humor; the text is a jumble of captions, jingles, and rhymes; the pictures show both winter and summer scenes. There's a lot to look at but no discernible arrangement, the layout is often confusing, and the morning-to-night progression is completely forgotten at times.

Gaeddert, LouAnn. *All-in-All; A Biography of George Eliot*. Dutton, 1976. 76-14791. 160p. \$7.95.

R
7-10

The title is taken from a comment made by John Cross, the man George Eliot married when she was sixty and he forty, that all her life she had needed someone to whom she would be all-in-all and who would be all-in-all to her. The father that Mary Ann Evans loved so dearly disapproved of her when their religious views differed; the brother she adored spurned her because for most of her adult life she lived with a married man. Most of society shunned her, even when the truth about her authorship of much-admired novels, articles, and poems became known. Gaeddert is as objective about Eliot as a person as she is about her as a writer; the biography flows smoothly, based on solid research and relies heavily, the biographer acknowledges, on *The George Eliot Letters* edited by Gordon Haight.

Goffstein, M. B. *My Crazy Sister*; stories and pictures by M. B. Goffstein. Dial, 1976. 76-2286. 32p. Trade ed. \$5.95; Library ed. \$5.47 net.

Ad K-2 Goffstein's bare-essential drawings, framed and tiny, illustrate three episodes in a slight book that has action, affection, and humor. Yet it may be limited in appeal because each incident is a gag, presented but not developed. A woman is delighted when her sister comes to live with her. On the first day she suddenly remembers that she had a baby with her; the baby is propped on the mantelpiece. The hostess suggests her sister buy the baby a train for a birthday gift; she buys a real train. One day she comes home with an airplane; at night the pilot takes the plane away. Readers-aloud may lift eyebrows at forgetting the baby or putting him in a dangerous place, but the story is warm and often funny.

Gwynne, Fred. *A Chocolate Moose for Dinner*; written and illus. by Fred Gwynne. Dutton, 1976. 76-4811. 44p. Trade ed. \$6.95; Paper ed. \$2.95.

Ad K-3 This is not a story but a series of double-page spreads with cartoon-style illustrations. Each picture illustrates (and helps, to some extent, in comprehending) a play on words. The large chocolate-color moose at the dining table may have to be explained to children who've never heard of "mousse," but many of the jokes will be clear to most children: a "man held up a bank" shows a one-handed hoisting; Daddy playing the piano by ear or having trees for his shoes are literally interpreted; "Mommy says there are airplane hangers" shows a row of planes hooked over a closet clothes rod. Light-weight, but amusing.

Haynes, Betsy. *The Against Taffy Sinclair Club*. Nelson, 1976. 76-22667. 125p. \$5.95.

Ad 4-5 Jana and her best friends had already organized the club in fourth grade, but it seemed to call for fresh retaliation when their new fifth grade teacher proved to be a handsome man and Taffy proved to have developed breasts during the summer. The club baked brownies to earn money for a Milo Venus Bustline Developer, and began doing exercises. Jana, who had heard from her father only four times since she was three and her parents were divorced, was also unhappy because her father had invited her to go on a vacation with him but never taken her; she wrote an essay that described a lively vacation (as a report of summer activities) and then, when her teacher put it in the school paper, was horrified at her lie being made public. While the concerns Jana has are real enough, the episodes in which she is involved have little direction. Taffy's mother learns of the club and confronts Jana and her mother, which clears the air between Taffy and Jana and results in a heart-to-heart talk between mother and daughter, but this could just as well have occurred in the first or second chapter. The writing style is adequate, characterization is also adequate but not very deep, and the viewpoint of sex roles is traditional. What may appeal most to readers is the believable relationships and hostilities among the group of fifth-graders.

Hickman, Janet. *The Stones*; illus. by Richard Cuffari. Macmillan, 1976. 76-11037. 116p. \$6.95.

R 4-6 In a story set during World War II, a group of boys in a Midwestern town decide that an elderly and eccentric German-American is an enemy. They had already been teasing old Jack Tramp, but when Garrett, the protagonist, learns that Jack's real name is Adolph Schilling, he and his friends really persecute the man. Chasing the boys, old Jack stumbles and his gun goes off, killing a dog that had followed one of the boys. Garrett is indignant along with the others, but he is uncomfortably conscious of the fact that Jack was justifiably provoked: they had been taking cans from his storage shed. Garrett's family invites Jack to dinner, and Garrett sees that the old

man is odd but harmless. When Jack and Garrett rescue the latter's small sister, trapped in swirling waters on a stone ledge, Jack goes to a hospital and is destined for the County Farm. And Garrett knows, in his pity for old Jack, that his own actions were reprehensible; he has learned something about prejudice and he has lost a measure of the innocence of childhood. Hickman's characters are strongly delineated, her plot believable, and her message about human relationships and bias convincing and clear without being pushed.

Johnston, Norma. *A Striving After Wind*. Atheneum, 1976. 76-4473. 250p. \$8.95.

Ad 7-9 In a sequel to *Of Time and of Seasons*, Bridget continues the story of her family (artist father, journalist mother writing under a masculine pseudonym, retarded sister, deserter brother, and other children) in the Civil War period. The Vandever family, as depicted by Bridget, is creative, liberal and candid, ahead of their time in many of their ideas—but Bridget wonders if all their efforts have any real meaning, and she finally concludes that “the journey was all. That, and using one's talents.” Meanwhile, she has fallen out with her swain and had an intense relationship with an older man; she has grieved because her retarded sister (who had been raped) is cast out of church because she will not divulge the name of her child's father; she has been concerned about her parents' roles and her brothers', under the pressure put on them by those whose wartime patriotism is feverish. Johnston has assembled an interesting cast, but the book has too many characters, too many problems, and too much emotion to be wholly successful despite an excellent writing style.

Key, Alexander. *Jagger, the Dog from Elsewhere*. Westminster, 1976. 76-12626. 126p. \$6.95.

Ad 5-7 Jagger is a large white dog who has come, as a result of a time-shifting disaster, from another planet where there is peace, harmony, and telepathic communication. Finding himself in the Alabama countryside and able to “speak” to only one person, Nan, Jagger assumes the role he plays in his own world, a guardian. Nan and her brother, whose mother is dead and whose father has disappeared, are victimized by the woman who takes care of them, Aunt Tess. Jagger, sought as a “banshee” by the local hunters, works with a Native American (the only sympathetic adult character) and the children's horse to save them from a murder attempt by Tess; he evades the hunters in several chase scenes; he kills the dreadful beast that has appeared from yet a third source. Key uses the book as a vehicle for disapproval of the violence in our society, but he does it quite openly, so that it does not become a burden to the plot. There is plenty of action—almost a surfeit, in fact—and the noble Jagger is an appealing protagonist. The two weaknesses of the book are in the way characters other than Nan repeatedly guess what Jagger is trying to communicate, and in the all-ends-tied conclusion: the awful beast kills Tess, her husband confesses the murder plot, the hunters understand that Jagger is not evil, the children's long-lost father appears, and Jagger is delighted when someone from his own world comes to take him home.

Leigh, Frances. *The Lost Boy*. Dutton, 1976. 76-23445. 112p. \$5.95.

R 5-7 An English writer who lived for many years in Malaysia, Leigh incorporates details of the setting into her story with smooth ease. It's a romantic tale, but believable. The three Forrester children had lost their mother and younger brother in a hospital fire; Kate, Don, and Cessy come back to Malaysia to spend Christmas holiday with their father and learn that a blond boy of eight has been found. He had been living with a Chinese foster-mother who had since died. Is he their brother Brian? He's sly, hostile, and deceitful at first; there is no way of proving or disproving his identity; all of the Forresters waver in their feelings about him. The ending is

deft, dramatic but credible, and the author builds suspense nicely in a story that has economical structure and good characterization.

MacKellar, William. *The Kid Who Owned Manhattan Island*; illus. by D. K. Stone. Dodd, 1976. 76-12504. 182p. \$4.95.

M
6-8 Andy, who tells the story, had gone over to his friend Rusty's house to help Rusty's Uncle Chester. A glib but likeable con man, Uncle Chester had been collecting dollar bills in response to a fraudulent ad about mistreated American Indians. There was, Rusty reported after telephoning home, an Indian sitting on Uncle Chester's head. And that's how the whole thing began. The Indian, Jim Douglas, claimed to be the last member of the tribe that had really owned Manhattan; those who sold it hadn't had the right to do so. So Uncle Chester goes into action: Manhattan belongs to Jim, and the irked authorities soon know about it. The Mayor quits and Jim runs the island, and they soon find out all of the headaches; also, the Godfather kidnaps their dog and holds him for ransom. There's lots of action, perhaps too much, and the combination of action, humor, and nonsensical situation will probably appeal to some readers, but the book would be more amusing if it weren't so exaggerated, slangy, and exclamation point ridden. Stock characters, and—even as a fantasy—an unconvincing story.

McKillip, Patricia A. *The Riddle-Master of Hed*. Atheneum, 1976. 76-5492. 228p. \$7.95.

Ad
5-7 McKillip has created an intricate and varied world in this first book of a planned trilogy; the protagonist is Prince of Hed, a small and peaceful island. A former student at the College of Riddle-Masters on the mainland, Morgon has, in a riddle contest, won the hand of a princess, he learns from a harpist called Deth, a man who has lived for centuries. Together they go to claim the princess, but they never reach her father's palace, for Morgon has the mark of three stars on his face, and there are similar marks on an unusual harp and sword. He must fulfill his role but does not want to be the Star-Bearer, who has an important and mysterious destiny, but Morgon finds, in a series of fantastic adventures, that he has friends to protect him and teach him new magic powers, as well as enemies who try several times to kill him on a tortuous journey to the domain of the High One. The fantasy world is nicely conceived, the story has action and color, the plot has suspense, and the characters are varied, but the book is weakened by the complex array of personal and place names and by the quite abrupt ending.

Maestro, Betsy. *In My Boat*; pictures by Giulio Maestro. T. Y. Crowell, 1976. 76-6095. 20p. Trade ed. \$4.50; Library ed. \$5.50 net.

Ad
2-4 yrs. While this boils down to a gag situation and a punch line, the pictures of animals and the mild humor of the fanciful situations may appeal to young children. A small girl is in a boat, and each vehicle that passes her has riders that wave but haven't time to stop (a banana barge full of monkeys, a seaplane full of birds, a hat filled with turtles, etc.) until her father comes by in his rowboat and, in a clipped ending, ". . . he had time to stop!" The pictures have vitality, but the whole is slight.

Manniche, Lise, tr. *How Djadja-Em-Ankh Saved the Day; A Tale from Ancient Egypt*; tr. and illus. by Lise Manniche. T. Y. Crowell, 1977. 16p. Folded form \$5.95; Scroll form \$8.95.

R
4-6 A most intriguing book. Printed in scroll form on paper that resembles that made from the papyrus plant, available in rolled form in a codex-style tube or folded in accordion style and slip-cased, the ancient Egyptian fantasy is on pages that progress from right to left; translated by an Egyptologist from hieratic, the story is also told in

hieroglyphs. On the back of the pages (reading from left to right) are Manniche's comments about the scribes and the writing (hieroglyphs) of ancient Egypt, some facts about beliefs and customs, and a citation for the sources of illustrative detail for the story, written 3,500 years ago. The story itself, a brief tale about how a magician kept his king from boredom (young girls row a boat) and saves the day (he folds back the water to find a lost amulet, since the helmswoman won't row until it is retrieved) is not substantial, but the book itself is handsome, the material unusual, and the information that accompanies the story authoritative.

Merriam, Eve. *Rainbow Writing*. Atheneum, 1976. 76-4468. 51p. \$4.95.

R
4-8 As she often does, Merriam includes some poems that play with words, like "Ego-Tripping," or "By the Shores of Pago-Pago," which use repeat-syllables like pawpaw, dodo, froufrou, and names like Mimi and Bebe. But most of the selections in this new collection are lyric, some direct and some convoluted, or they are tart comments on aspects of our society like "Prodigal Returns," in which the friendly, heterogeneous old neighborhood has given way to the "plastic banners of MacDonald's."

Miller, Edna. *Pebbles, a Pack Rat*; story and pictures by Edna Miller. Prentice-Hall, 1976. 76-8850. 28p. \$5.95.

M
K-2 Softly colored pictures depict the activities of the pack rat, while illustrations in black and white show the farm family and their dog as they discover evidence of the rat's pilfering and give chase. The rat makes his nest inside a scarecrow; hearing noises and seeing movement of the scarecrow, the children become apprehensive. When the dog finally demolishes the scarecrow, the rat flees, and does not again venture past the fence around the field in which the remnants of the scarecrow stand. The story is adequately told, but the plot is overextended and the ending anticlimactic. Endpapers give instructions for making a scarecrow.

Musgrove, Margaret. *Ashanti to Zulu; African Traditions*; pictures by Leo and Diane Dillon. Dial, 1976. 76-6610. 27p. Trade ed. \$8.95; Library ed. \$8.44 net.

R
3-5
* A paragraph of text on each page of an oversize book describes some aspect of the cultures of twenty-six African tribes. The writing is dignified and the material informative, but it is the illustrations that make the book outstanding. Beautifully framed, the mixed-media paintings glow with rich color against the soft greige pages; the pictures are stunning both in details and in composition.

Nichols, Ruth. *Song of the Pearl*. Atheneum, 1976. 76-8851. 158p. \$6.50.

M
7-9 Margaret had died when she was seventeen, raped at fifteen by an uncle whom she desired, to whom she had made her desire clear. And then she pined away. Most of the story takes place in heaven, a story that is an incohesive narrative in which Margaret wines and dines; lives with a Chinese family complete with a matriarch, dancing girls, intrafamilial hostility, et cetera; has dreamy remembrances (or visions) of other incarnations; says farewell to an ex-sister who may be a future daughter (or son), returns to earth nearly half a century later and, the book ends, "In a crib in a room flooded with sun, a little girl opened her eyes on a new day." The theme of reincarnation emerges quite deftly from the welter of turgid incidents, but not quite enough to compensate for them and salvage the plot.

Norton, Andre. *Red Hart Magic*; illus. by Donna Diamond. T. Y. Crowell, 1976. 76-3539. 179p. \$6.95.

Chris and Nan are staying with his aunt while their newly wed parents (his father and her mother) are in Mexico. They don't like each other—but both are intrigued

Ad 4-6 when they find they have the same dreams, dreams evoked by the model of an old English inn. Each of the dreams is set in the past but takes place in the Red Hart Inn, and a different Chris and Nan have roles in each dream. With this bond and the memories they share of dangers met and conquered with courage, the real Chris and Nan draw closer, so that when Chris is accused of stealing and selling an exam question, Nan is outraged and sympathetic. If not brother and sister, they have become friends. The writing is competent, the contemporary sequences convincing, and the stories-within-the-story, the dreamed adventures, colorful. But the fact that each dream sequence is in a different period and that Nan and Chris play different roles in each makes the story diffuse.

✓ Ogan, Margaret. *Tennis Bum*; by Margaret and George Ogan. Westminster, 1976. 76-8008. 122p. \$6.95.

M 6-9 Seventeen, Chico Gomez is living in hostile estrangement from his mother, an alcoholic abandoned by her husband, who is "somewhere in Mexico." Chico is picked up by the police for borrowing a car; he's put into the custody of the club tennis pro, Ellsworth, at the latter's request. Most of the book is devoted to either detailed accounts of Chico's prowess as—under Ellsworth's stringent training program—he moves into competitive play, or to the plot to discredit Chico's standing, engineered by the biased club president, Benedict. Both Chico and Neil, a black player, are convinced of the prejudice felt toward them by some fans and officials, but they trust Ellsworth and eventually join him when, after Benedict proves vindictive, he starts his own tennis club. The plot is turgid, with a melodramatic reunion with Chico's mother at the close, but there aren't many tennis stories. It seems odd that in a book that has an apparent message about prejudice, a Japanese servant introduces himself with, "Sammy. Number one houseboy," and continues the stereotyping with such remarks as, "You take nap. Not until Monday you be number two houseboy."

✓ Patten, Brian. *Mr. Moon's Last Case*; illus. by Mary Moore. Scribner, 1976. 76-10070. 159p. \$5.95.

Ad 4-6 The fantastic and realistic elements are nicely merged in a story about a dwarfish creature, Nameon, who has shown curiosity and initiative in his own world but who bends all his efforts, once he has come into our world, on evading people and getting back to his own place and time. Nameon is pursued by many people, but most doggedly by Moon, a former police officer. Enough people see Nameon to give wide publicity to his existence; children band together in a protective society, but (echoing the adult world) even in this group there are those who would use the dwarf to gain personal advantage. There are some intriguing incidents in the long chase that is the plot, but the pattern becomes repetitive, and the outcome is anticlimactic. Moon just misses (again) catching Nameon, who disappears as suddenly as he had arrived in England.

✓ Peck, Richard. *Are You in the House Alone?* Viking, 1976. 76-28810. 156p. \$6.95.

R 7-10 Gail, only child of an affluent suburban couple, had a few problems: she didn't like her best friend Alison's boy friend Phil, or his snobbish parents; she didn't like the way her parents acted toward her own boy friend, Steve Pastorini, who wasn't the "right kind"; and she wasn't sure she wanted to continue her affair with Steve. But when she began to get vicious, threatening letters and nasty telephone calls, Gail felt real fear. Babysitting one night, she was surprised to see Phil at the door, and then she recognized the voice of her nightmares. Raped and beaten, she found that she was doubly victimized, for the police shrugged it off with the insinuation that she'd

led Phil on and even her lawyer advised that it would be impossible to fight the most powerful family in town. Peck brings the story to a logical, tragic conclusion (Phil's next victim almost dies) but it isn't *what* happens that gives the story impact, although that is handled with conviction, and although the style, dialogue, and characters are equally impressive—it is the honest and perceptive way that the author treats the problem of rape. For Peck sees clearly both the society's problem and the victim's: the range of attitudes, the awful indignity, the ramifications of fear and shame.

✓
Phipson, Joan. *The Cats*. Atheneum, 1976. 75-43608. 168p. \$5.95.

R
6-9 Jim and his brother Willy had carelessly talked about the lottery money their parents had won, and they were kidnapped by two young toughs and taken into the Australian wilderness. Jim is the older, the resourceful one, but it is Willy whose knowledge of the outdoors and whose almost psychic understanding help save the situation when the four are threatened by a group of feral cats. The writing is solid and serious, but the drama of the situation, the well-maintained suspense, and the vividness of the setting give the story vitality.

✓
Pinkwater, D. Manus. *Lizard Music*; written and illus. by D. Manus Pinkwater. Dodd, 1976. 76-12508. 157p. \$4.95.

R
4-7 Victor tells a fanciful tale of the adventures he has when his parents go off for a fortnight and the older sister who is supposed to supervise him takes off for a two-week camping trip with friends. Watching a late television program, Victor sees a lizard band and enjoys their music. And then he sees lizards everywhere. He also meets an intriguing old man who assumes many names and disguises, and who eventually takes him on a journey to a floating island where there is a lizard society. Although totally unlike Carroll's writing, Pinkwater's has the same kind of illogical logic, a gift for zany developments. What is his own is a zest and humor that pervade the breezy, contemporary treatment.

✓
Prelutsky, Jack. *Nightmares; Poems To Trouble Your Sleep*; illus. by Arnold Lobel. Greenwillow, 1976. 76-4820. 39p. \$6.95.

R
5-9 Deliciously awful, a collection of poems is calculated to evoke icy apprehension, and the poems about wizards, bogeymen, ghouls, ogres (well, one poem apiece to each or to others of their ilk) are exaggerated just enough to bring simultaneous grins and shudders. Prelutsky uses words with relish and his rhyme and rhythm are, as usual, deft. Lobel's illustrations are equally adroit, macabre yet elegant.

✓
Pringle, Laurence. *Listen to the Crows*; illus. by Ted Lewin. T. Y. Crowell, 1976. 75-43535. 33p. \$5.95.

Ad
3-5 While some other facts about crows emerge from this continuous text, naturalist Pringle is primarily concerned with the calls of crows, which are highly differentiated. Some scientists think there are set patterns for differing situations; others are convinced that crow calls vary with the intensity of their emotion or that each crow has a call that identifies it as an individual. Scientists are agreed that crows are among the most clever of birds, and that they can count (a few digits) and use tools. The text, illustrated by the softly realistic and meticulously detailed drawings by Lewin, is somewhat repetitive and not, certainly, conclusive about the research that has been done, but it is authoritative and is written well enough to interest readers. An index is appended.

Richard, Adrienne. *Into the Road*. Atlantic-Little, Brown, 1976. 76-25911. 206p. \$6.95.

Ad
7-9

Nat, who lives with and works for his aunt and uncle, is ambivalent when his older brother Cy shows up after a six year absence. Uncle Joe and his wife had taken the boys when their parents died, but he and Cy hadn't gotten along well. Now Cy is a "bikie," a drifting motorcycle man, and he convinces Nat to try the open road. They shop around for a used motorcycle, which Cy repairs and Nat pays for, then go off. Nat is alternately fearful and delighted, as they go through a series of meetings with other riders, pick up a girl, attend some races, become involved in a fracas, et cetera. In the end, Nat and the girl decide that they love riding, but not as a way of life. This book has less plot than incident, the incidents tend to become repetitious, and the whole seems a disparate blend of defense of the biking life and an exposé, with lots of tough language and tough action.

Robinet, Harriette. *Jay and the Marigold*; illus. by Trudy Scott. Childrens Press, 1976. 76-8551. 48p. \$4.95.

M
2-3

Eight-year-old Jay had cerebral palsy; he had been ignored or patronized by other children until his new friend Pedro, who understood how people can hurt you, brought him into the other children's activities. Jay, who had watched baseball on television, made a good umpire, the others discovered. When a stray marigold that grew in a crack of the concrete steps bloomed, Jay was so excited that he said a word, just as the therapist had taught him: "boom" for "bloom." He was sure, the story ends, that ". . . one day—in spite of limitations, in spite of handicaps, in his own way, in his own time—he, too, would bloom." While the story, written by the mother of a child with cerebral palsy, makes it clear that such handicapped children are more intelligent than their peers realize, it is written in pedestrian style. The illustrations are often-awkward drawings, some chopped at the edges of pages.

Rosenbloom, Jonathan. *Blue Jeans*; illus. with photographs. Messner, 1976. 76-20739. 63p. \$6.29.

Ad
3-5

Although the text at the beginning of this book discusses the first denim and canvas pants made by Levi Strauss during the California Gold Rush, and the origins of the words "denim" and "dungarees," most of the book could be applied to any kind of manufactured cotton goods. The author describes the machines and the work processes, step by step, from picking cotton to helping customers try on different styles in stores. The treatment of procedures is uneven in coverage: there are two pages devoted to picking cotton, for example, with an imaginary "Elaine" as picker and a discussion of her problems as a part-time worker, her job jeopardized by mechanical pickers and her future limited by her lack of education. Other processes are given short shrift. The writing style is adequate, the information useful. An index is appended.

Schlein, Miriam. *Bobo, the Troublemaker*; illus. by Ray Cruz. Four Winds, 1976. 76-6454. 35p. \$6.95.

R
K-3

Comic, deft illustrations in soft, bright colors are just right for the folktale ambience and humor of Schlein's story about a persuasive liar. Repeatedly, Bobo frightened other villagers with his announcements that the moon would disappear (a monkey told him) or that the river would dry up (a bird told him); when these disasters didn't occur, Bobo simply said that the bird was mistaken and the monkey a liar. One sensible man finally convinced his neighbors that Bobo could be taught such a lesson that he'd never make trouble again—and, in a hoist-by-his-own-petard incident. Bobo learned his lesson. Nicely conceived, nicely enough told to be useful for a storytelling as well as for reading aloud.

Schlein, Miriam. *Giraffe the Silent Giant*; illus. by Betty Fraser. Four Winds, 1976. 76-7922. 58p. \$6.95.

R
3-6 Attractive, realistic drawings are nicely combined with blocks of print in a handsome book that is competently written. While not comprehensive, the text gives most of the pertinent facts about the habits, behavior, and appearance of giraffes; it also gives some developmental history, some anecdotes and theories about giraffes in relation to people of earlier times, and it pleads for the preservation of this unusual animal. An index is appended.

Seuss, Dr. *The Cat's Quizzer*. Random House, 1976. 76-753. 62p. illus. (A Beginner Book). Trade ed. \$3.95; Library ed. \$4.99 net.

M
2-4 Answers are given at the back of the book for a series of questions. Samples: Which end of a bee stings you? Do elephants have uncles? Which goes farther, a ping-pong ball or a bow? There are also some visual puzzles, one being an incorrectly drawn (no exit) maze, and some pages where the details are to be quickly scanned for a memory test. The oversize pages are filled with Seuss drawings, vigorous and scrawly; the book mixes trick questions, nonsense questions, and questions that actually test knowledge—although a query like “How old do you have to be to be a Boy Scout” could not be considered general knowledge. Some fun, but mostly mish-mash.

Sharmat, Marjorie Weinman. *Mooch the Messy*; pictures by Ben Shecter. Harper, 1976. 76-3842. 64p. (I Can Read Books). Trade ed. \$3.95; Library ed. \$3.79 net.

Ad
1-2 Mooch the rat likes to live in a mess: shoes on the table, candy under the bed, clothing draped over every piece of furniture. He is delighted when his father comes to visit, and shows off the glories of his tunnels; his father, however, thinks Mooch's hole is in dreadful condition and does not approve, when they go on a picnic, of his son's practice of leaving jam jars open for the ants to get into. So Mooch tidies his hole and pleases Father; he is sorry to see Father leave but immediately, happily, scatters things about in comfortable chaos. The plot is slight, but it has amusing details that are echoed in the illustrations, and children will probably enjoy a protagonist that prefers a mess to tidiness.

Shecter, Ben. *The Stocking Child*. Harper, 1976. 76-7878. 32p. illus. Trade ed. \$4.95; Library ed. \$5.11 net.

M
4-5 yrs. A child finds a stocking doll with one eye missing, and is startled when the doll speaks. The child is Sam, the doll is called “Epaphroditus stocking child,” and the two go hunting the missing eye, a blue button. They visit several animals, then Sam takes the doll home and they discover that Sam's blue pajama button is a match for the doll's eye; Sam falls asleep and when he wakes, finds a farewell note from the stocking child. The story is insubstantial and rambling, interspersed with fragments of the doll's versifying; the illustrations are pleasant, but the story is just a bit on the cute side.

Shimin, Symeon. *I Wish There Were Two of Me*; story and pictures by Symeon Shimin. Warne, 1976. 75-32636. 27p. \$6.95.

SpR
K-3 Shimin's softly executed and beautifully tender, realistic pictures on colored pages illustrate a dreamy fragment of a tale that has no plot and little structure but that may, for some children, evoke exactly the sort of elusive, wishful dreaming they do themselves. Missing the friend with whom she often plays, a child muses at bedtime about all of the things she could do if there were two of her (suggesting the ambivalence of

behavior as well as the need for a friend); one could draw while the other plays with a pet, one voice could scream with anger while the other sings with joy. The child wakes: "Was I dreaming? Maybe yes, then again who knows . . . I wish there were two of me," the book ends. Not for every child, but this is a book that could intrigue the child who is introspective or highly imaginative.

✓
Silman, Roberta. *Somebody Else's Child*; illus. by Chris Conover. Warne, 1976. 76-6780. 64p. \$5.95.

R
3-5
Clean, almost photographic black and white drawings illustrate a modest but effective story about an adopted child. Ten-year-old Peter is hurt when his friend Puddin' Paint, the school bus driver, says he doesn't believe in adoption because he never wanted to bring up somebody else's child. Peter and his mother have a long talk about the reasons a natural mother might give up her child and about adoption procedures. Later, talking to Puddin' Paint, he announces he's adopted and the bus driver says he understands how Peter feels. But it isn't until Peter goes with his friend to search for two lost dogs that he knows that Puddin' Paint really does understand, for the animals have been caught in traps and Peter sees the anguished love an adult can have even for animals that have been part of a family since they were tiny. The search sequence is just the touch of dramatic action the book needs to hold a reader's interest, a good balance for the serious but static quality of the first part of the story. ✓ The structure is spare, the writing style deft in its directness.

✓
Simon, Norma. *Why Am I Different?* pictures by Dora Leder. Whitman, 1976. 76-41172. 31p. Trade ed. \$4.25; Library ed. \$3.19 net.

Ad
K-2
A series of children speak about the ways in which they or their families are different, or about the individual aptitudes of other children in their class. A child with red hair wonders why she's the only one in the family with red hair, another child notes that his classmates always ask him what matzos are even though they know, another wishes her parents had a TV set as her friend's parents do, still another notes that he's the biggest child at home but not at school, and so on. The text is useful for suggesting the many kinds of differences that exist, but it presents almost too many kinds of concepts too quickly: differences of size, ethnicity, living patterns, abilities, appearance, etc. The trim pencil drawings (black, white, grey, and yellow) are informative and attractive.

✓
Steig, William. *The Amazing Bone*. Farrar, 1976. 76-26479. 28p. illus. \$7.95.

R
K-2
Steig has come up with the ideal pet: a guardian, a conversationalist, something that you don't have to feed or worry about. Something your parents let you take to bed, and something that can do magic! Of course piglet Pearl doesn't know all this when the bone first speaks to her, but then it frightens off some robbers by making snake and lion noises, and it causes a fox to shrink to mouse size when he threatens to eat Pearl (the bone's last owner had been a witch). Steig's improbably vernal setting makes a nice contrast to the nonsensical story, which is told with sophisticated nonchalance. ✓

✓
Thiede, Jan. *Mamakuu's Family: An Elephant Herd*; written and photographed by Jan Thiede. Coward, 1976. 76-27288. 48p. \$6.95.

Ad
3-5
Excellent pictures of the members of a herd of African elephants illustrate a text that describes the way they live; both text and pictures are informative but rather repetitive. Thiede has given names to individual members of the herd to facilitate her description of individual and group patterns of behavior: Mamakuu is the matriarch, leader of the herd who decides when and where to graze, warns of danger, and guards the other elephants when they doze. The elephant young are given tender care by

older beasts as well as by their mothers, and the text comments also on the role of the male, the protection of injured individuals, and the disciplining of the young.

Wallace, Barbara Brooks. *Palmer Patch*; illus. by Lawrence DiFiori. Follett, 1976. 76-2185. 218p. Trade ed. \$5.95; Library ed. \$5.79 net.

R
4-6 For children who love animal stories, this has a sure appeal, since the author's affection for them permeates the book without ever descending to sentimentality. Palmer is a skunk who, after an operation, is acquired as a pet by the Patch family. He is accepted quickly by the other Patch pets (a duck, a goat, two dogs, a cat) but he neither accepts nor makes overtures to Jonathan Patch and his parents. Overhearing a remark that "They'll have to be farmed out," Palmer instigates a mass departure from the Patch home, and the animals head for the forest. Their adventures strengthen the bonds of affection and loyalty, so that when Palmer is injured the others manage to bring him to the attention of some people who heal him and the story ends with a reunion with the Patch family (the "farming out" had been a plan to have the animals boarded while a move to a new home was made) and Palmer's realization that he could trust and love people. The animals talk to each other; they understand human speech but do not talk to people. The dialogue is brisk and funny, only occasionally verging on the cute.

Wallace, Daisy, ed. *Witch Poems*; illus. by Trina Schart Hyman. Holiday House, 1976. 76-9036. 27p. \$5.95.

R
3-6 Eighteen poems are illustrated in black and white with a marvelous assortment of witches: comic or ominous, black and white, beautiful or gruesome. The poems range from Shakespearian (*Macbeth*, of course) doom and gloom to the lighthearted fun of Lilian Moore's "Witch Goes Shopping," and include some brief incantations. A handsomely designed book.

Windsor, Patricia. *Mad Martin*. Harper, 1976. 76-3837. 119p. Trade ed. \$5.95; Library ed. \$5.79 net.

R
5-6 Set in London, this vigorous and touching story describes the changes in the life of a child who hadn't known how lonely he was until he made a friend, who hadn't known what the warmth of family love was like until he lived with a large family. "Mad Martin," the boys at school called him, because he never spoke and never played with them. Martin lived alone with his grandfather, Mr. Drivic. They had few possessions, little communication, no friends; when grandfather became ill and was hospitalized, Martin was taken in by a neighbor, Mrs. Crimp. From the Crimp family he learned what it was to be clean, how to play, and—most important—how to have and be a friend. And so, when grandfather was well and came home, Martin knew what a home should be like and how they could now talk and laugh. Characters and dialogue are powerful, and the smooth writing style carries a story with less plot than incidents.

Wolde, Gunilla. *Betsy's First Day at Nursery School*; illus. Random House, 1976. 23p. \$1.95.

R
2-4 yrs. First published in Sweden, a soft sell for the young child who is apprehensive about nursery school, this has lively cartoonish drawings and a slight but firm story. Betsy's little brother is immediately delighted by a roomful of children just at his own stage of crawling, but Betsy is uneasy with her age group. The other children stare at her. Then another girl and she begin making faces . . . and laughing . . . and soon Betsy is having a great time, jumping around on a pile of pillows with her new friend. She goes home looking forward to nursery school the next day. The text is direct and simple, the message encouraging.

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