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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.

CU  Curricular Use.

DV  Developmental Values.

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**BULLETIN OF THE CENTER FOR CHILDREN’S BOOKS** (ISSN 0008-9036) 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, Ellin Greene, Isabel McCaul, Hazel Rochman, and Robert Strang.

**Subscription Rates:** 1 year, $16.00; $12.80 per year for two or more subscriptions to the same address; $12.80, student rate. Single copy rate: from vol. 25, $1.75; vols. 17 through 24, 50¢. 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. Postmaster: Send address changes to **BULLETIN OF THE CENTER FOR CHILDREN’S BOOKS**, 5801 Ellis Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60637.

**Subscription Correspondence.** Address all inquiries about subscriptions to 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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PRINTED IN U.S.A.

Nora, who seems to be about nine or ten, is having a hard time making friends at her new school; she falls into the pattern of sitting with "the blind kid" at lunch. "The blind kid" proves to be a well-adjusted boy, Jerry, who comes to Nora's house to meet a pet rabbit, becomes a friend, and gives her advice about making other friends at school. Nora wins an essay contest, does make friends, has a frank talk with her mother, and learns something about adaptability and taking the initiative—but the story plods through these small events, with little change of pace, humor, drama, or development of character to give it substance.


Based on a BBC television series that has also been seen in the United States, this R is written for the general reader; Attenborough explains in his prefatory notes that he has not used scientific names for plants and animals, or cited the work of individual scientists, or used formal time divisions, for the purpose of clarity. Indeed, he has compressed—in lucid prose that has an easy conversational flow—the history of living things, since life evolved, with remarkable success. The book is profusely illustrated with stunning color photographs from the original film; the text is knowledgeable (the author is a zoologist) and authoritative; appended material includes an index that includes scientific names and a simplified chart showing the emergence and duration of species.


Thirteen-year-old Fayette is the narrator of a story that seems almost more designed to convey a sense of place and time than to explore characters, relationships, or the pattern of events. The time is 1916, the place is the Santa Lucia mountains of California, and the story describes the trip that Fayette and her younger brother take with their widowed mother, who has just graduated from library school, as she travels the mountain trails (by mule) to set up library outposts. There's plenty of action, but the characters have so heavy an overlay of golly-gee-grit that they seem caricatures rather than people.

Like Blumenthal's other book in the series (*Immigrants from the British Isles,* co-authored by Jerome Ozer, reviewed in the March, 1981 issue) this is based on careful research, is fluidly written, and gives excellent background information to help the reader understand the several reasons why men and women left their homes to face the dangers of travel and the uncertainty of life in a new land. They left poverty and prejudice behind them—and they often encountered poverty and prejudice (especially those who were Jewish) in their new country. But prejudice was not a pogrom, and poverty could be surmounted, especially when it was possible to get an education. The text is graphic, given variety by the inclusion of statements or letters by immigrants, and describing with candor the struggles—in jobs, in labor unions, in personal relationships with other Americans, in conflict between generations—of the newcomer. Included in the appended materials are a list of present-day nations of Eastern European populations, chapter notes, an index, a bibliography, a history of immigration laws, and a chart of "Religions of Eastern Europe in the Nineteenth Century."


Although the narrator-protagonist, Chiefie, has some drama in his life, the bland writing style robs the story of impact. The simplicity of the style, however, is admirably suited to the needs of the slow or reluctant older reader, since the story deals with events and emotions that should appeal to adolescents. Chiefie, an orphan who is used as a scapegoat by the superintendent of the residential school where Chiefie stays until he finishes high school, is aware that the superintendent has been cruel and unfair. After he's finished a tour of duty in the Navy, Chiefie comes back to have it out with the man, only to find he's been fired for cruelty to another child. Chiefie also finds the girl who'd been his childhood friend, and the story ends with a promise of romance-to-come.


While this compendium of advice includes some observation-sharpening games and some puzzles to solve, as well as a section on codes and another on secret messages, it does give a good deal of information on what to look for, and what to do about it, in real-life efforts at detection. Butler combines a serious approach (including safety warnings) to the subject and a light writing style, so that his text is both useful and palatable. Tips on disguises, tips on what aspects of a suspect's appearance are important to note, exercises in seeing details of one's surroundings, training in deduction, facts about equipment—all of these may amuse the dilettante and enthrall the neophyte detective.


A capably crafted first novel by a former newspaperwoman is set in St. Louis during World War II; the protagonist, Bob (Barbara Ann), is the narrator; Bob is black, bright, and filled with compassion for the old milk wagon horse that's destined to be sold to the glue factory. Her former enemy, Chuckie, becomes a friend as the two of them plot to steal the horse and are helped in doing so by her other dear friend,
the landlady. There's some conflict with a grandmother to provide a change of pace, and there's a happy ending both for the old horse and for Bob—her father shows up, on leave, on Easter morning. The characterization is variable, from the blandness of the children to the more subtly depicted grandmother to the almost-caricatured nasty nephew who's taking advantage of his uncle the milkman's illness to get cash for the old horse and wagon. The structure is adequate; the style of writing is the strongest aspect of the book, which bodes well for Campbell's future work.

Cavanna, Betty. *Stamp Twice for Murder.* Morrow, 1981. 81-8291. Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-00700-7; Library ed. ISBN 0-688-00701-5. 223p. Trade ed. $8.95; Library ed. $8.59. Sixteen-year-old Jan and her family come to France to spend the summer in a house that Mom has inherited. They are all stunned and disappointed when the inheritance proves to be a run-down cottage. They decide to clean it up and stay there, but are puzzled about why the villagers seem to think them brave—and why someone steals all the bags of trash they throw out. The answer: somebody had been murdered in the house years before, and it is rumored that the murderer was searching for something of great value. Could someone be looking through the trash for that same something? This has plenty of action, a rather contrived plot, and a writing style weakened by florid touches; for example, as the family first views the French countryside on a pleasant, sunny day, Cavanna writes, "The sun shone brightly with no hint of menace..." Jan, as readers will expect, gets involved in adventure and solves the mystery of the treasure.

Clapp, Patricia. *Witches' Children: A Story of Salem.* Lothrop, 1982. 81-13678. ISBN 0-688-00890-9. 160p. $9.00. As she did in *Constance,* Clapp uses a first-person account to give immediacy to events in colonial New England. This time the tale is told by Mary Warren, a young girl who is bound to service in a Salem household. Like the other restless adolescent girls who are her friends, Mary is at first only curious about Tituba's fortune-telling, aware that it is sly Abigail Williams who is pushing the slave to further titillation. There is nothing new in the story of the mass hysteria and witch-hunting in Salem; what Clapp does is make the role of the participants more comprehensible in a vivid and convincing narrative.

Clifton, Lucille. *Sonora Beautiful;* illus. by Michael Garland. Dutton, 1981. 81-2094. ISBN 0-525-39680-2. 23p. $8.25. Hating her name (her parents had met at the edge of the Sonora Desert) and embarrassed by her father's occupation (poet) and uncomfortable because their home isn't like those of other people, Sonora needs—and gets—repeated reassurance from her mother. "You are beautiful," she says, or "Poets are beautiful." The soliloquy ends with Sonora describing an early morning walk with her parents—and this time it is she who says, "We're a family and it's beautiful. Beautiful," and—repeating her catch phrase, "I'm not joking." The illustrations are soft, realistic black and white drawings, not as deft as Symeon Shimin's work but quite reminiscent of it. The text is gentle, warm, lyrical, but static. Given the lack of action, the narrow scope and the illustrations, this seems suitable for readers younger than those who are the usual audience for this very good high interest/low vocabulary series.

Cohen, Daniel. *Ghostly Terrors;* illus. with photographs and drawings. Dodd, 1981. 81-43232. ISBN 0-396-07996-2. 126p. $6.95. A collection of ghost stories are linked, at times, by the compiler's comments on similar stories or on facts that give some background for the tales, since these are all
R purportedly "true" stories. The genre is popular, the tales are competently told, and
the book is made accessible to a larger number of readers than many such collections
because of the simplicity of the writing, the wide margins, and the size of the type,
indicating appeal to the slow or reluctant reader.

Colombo, Federica. Animal Migrations; ad. by Paul-Henry Plantain; tr. from the French by R.
00791-5. 94p. illus with photographs. $12.95.

In an oversize book profusely illustrated with color photographs, the pages have
two columns of type plus a wide margin that is often used for pictures and captions;
on some pages the pictures break the pattern of the columns of print. The text,
smoothly translated and written in a straightforward style, is logically organized;
although no information about the author is provided, the text is written in a crisply
authoritative tone. Colombo discusses migration as a phenomenon and then de-
scribes, separately, the migrations of land, air, and water creatures—in some cases
devoting separate chapters to individual species. Some of the scientific experiments
in the field of migration are described, and distinctions are carefully drawn between
fact and theory. An index is included.

Crane, Walter. An Alphabet of Old Friends and the Absurd A B C; written and illus. by Walter

The strong use of line and color, the vigor, and the humor that made Crane one of
the first great illustrators of children’s books are reproduced here in the reprinting of
two alphabet books first published in 1874. In the first set, familiar nursery rhymes
are faced by a page of pictures (with one double-page spread) in which large black
letters are shown in gold circles. Here the only association between verse and letter is
that the first letter of the verse ("A carrion ... Ba,ba ... Cock ... Dickery ..." etc.)
is related. In the second, "absurd" ABC, the relationship is stated: "A for the apple .
... B is the baby ... C for the cat that played on the fiddle, When cows jumped higher
than 'Heigh Diddle Diddle'!" The last (C) is an example of the rhyme that’s been
based on a nursery rhyme, but is shorter, funnier, easier to remember, and better as
an associative device for children learning the alphabet. However, it’s the pictures
that appeal, with their vigor and humor. Although this is graded here for the usual age
for alphabet books, it will also be of great interest to students of children’s literature,
particularly because of the informative preface by Bryan Holme, who has written
excellent art books for children.

$9.50; Library ed. $8.89.

Zoe’s story is told as a flashback; she’s a miserable eleven-year-old ballet student
who has just brought home a sympathetic, perceptive talking dog she’s named
"Joker," and he pries out of her the reason she’s so unhappy. It was to have been a
great day in which she met the ballerina Anna Pavlova—but it turned out to be the
day that the star gave her ballet shoes, as a token of favor, to another student, Tavia.
Later Zoe threw the shoes out of the window and then she was horrified at what she’d
done. Eventually she confessed to Pavlova and was thrilled when the great dancer
gave her a pair of slippers for herself as well as the pair that had been tossed out of the
window—and retrieved by the dog, who had directed Zoe to open the window. The
writing style is adequate, and those readers who are ballet buffs may enjoy the book,
but it’s a contrived text at best, and the inclusion of a chatty dog weakens it further.

Crews again, doing what he does best: presenting one aspect of transportation in poster-simple drawings with clean lines, and blocks of clear, bright colors. Here he shows the many different kinds of boats and ships in a busy harbor, with all the docks, piers, wharves, and warehouses. The minimal text is descriptive, and although the text on a single page may say, "... fast police boats, and slow-moving lighters crowd the water," or, "Liners, tankers, tugboats, barges, and freighters move in and out," without distinguishing one from the other, that's taken care of by a page at the end of the book, with small, labelled black and white pictures of "Ship Shapes."


Again, as she did in *Flight of the Sparrow*, Cunningham sets her story on the Paris streets, although her circle of homeless waifs intersects another group of people, the personnel of a school of miming. Here the orphaned mute, Auguste, is the protagonist; found by Astair and her gang in a state of collapse, Auguste is taken in and revived. Eventually he finds his way to the household of Monsieur Bernard, a teacher of mime. By sheer coincidence, Auguste had had training with another great mime; indeed, his one precious possession is the medal his dear teacher had left him. One of Bernard's pupils, a nasty youth coddled by his mother, becomes jealous of Auguste's talent and persecutes him. Auguste pinch-hits for the other boy in a performance, his genius as a budding mime is recognized, the other boy's petty persecution is unmasked, and all the sympathetically drawn characters are—presumably—happy. They also seem overdramatic and theatrical in their behavior; the plot, too, is more melodramatic than dramatic.


With a slit through each double-layered page, a piece of thin ribbon with three elephants stamped on it stretches from cover to cover of a small book. The covers are heavy board, the pages slide past the ribbon, and the whole is a toy that carries the thinnest of stories. Lula, Bula, and Yo Yo take a walk and see other animals; typical of the flat writing and lack of action are such bits of text (from double-page spreads that show other animals) as "The lions and the spotted leopard roared their hello's" or, " 'There's Mr. and Mrs. Hippopotamus,' said Bula." Then the three little elephants go home just in time for dinner. A fragile trifle despite the sturdy pages.


Another gimmick, in the same sort of book as the one above. Here there is a hole in each page, and a piece of green yarn simulates the worm's body, his head being drawn, button-eyed, in the same shade of green. Willie Worm leads some friends into delicious apples and pears, and they play follow-the-leader, and they all escape a predatory bird in the nick of time. He tells his mother he had a big adventure and is glad to be home. The pages of this book have, as do those of the book above, some nice drawing, but this is really much ado about nothing but a few inches of yarn.

In an oversize book designed and produced in England, the section of maps is preceded by over forty pages of other material designed to help the user read maps and understand some facts about the structure of Earth and the forces that affect that structure. There are maps of a classroom, a neighborhood, a country, and so on—maps of increasing complexity—that show how symbols represent objects or places or information, how maps are made, what map projections are, and so on. This is followed by information about how the world was formed, about weather and climate, about crops, seasons, rocks, etc. The maps themselves, alas, are crowded; at times the statistics and photographs and inclusive maps of several countries (four in eastern Europe; seven in southern Africa) are included so that all of the material on such pages is crowded. It is difficult, for example, to tell which flag belongs to which country in southern Africa. In other words, the chief purpose of an atlas being to give information via maps, this seems to vitiate that purpose by overcrowding—and this lack of individual maps is at the expense of including such extraneous material as a recipe here (gazpacho) or a project there (making a hat) or instructions on how to play a game. An index is included.


Realistic, minutely detailed, and dramatic, the black and white drawings show both the beauty and the violence of the wild life at Nairobi State Park, illustrating a text that goes through a year in the life of a family of silver-backed jackals, *Canis mesomelas*. Dinneen gives names to individual animals, but there is no anthropomorphism here: the adult jackals nurture their four pups and teach them how to detect danger and find food; the year passes and the pups are ready to mate and start their own cycle of the year as adults. What emerge distinctly from this colorfully written book are the constant struggle for food and the just as constant struggle to maintain a position in the hierarchy of domination in the wild.


Designed and produced in London, this is an adequate history of the dance, with emphasis on ballet; the text also included chapters on modern dance and on popular dance forms (with brief mention of ice dancing and pairs figure skating) and four chapters that focus on individual dancers: Anthony Dowell, Ken Rinker, Patti Hammond, and Patrick Hinson. A final section, “Who’s Who in Dance,” gives brief facts about many dancers, but has some surprising omissions: no Baryshnikov, no Plisetskaya, no Fokine, no Tharp. This has more up-to-date information than *The Wonderful World of Dance*, by Arnold Haskell, but for balanced coverage and smooth writing style the older book is still preferable. There is no index to give access to the facts in the text.


Seventeen brief mystery stories, graded for three levels of intricacy, are presented for the reader to solve; answers are given at the back of the book. The stories are told at a brisk pace, the settings vary, and the solutions are plausible; this isn’t great fiction, but it is great fun for puzzle fans.

While there are many facts to be gleaned from this almanac, the book cannot serve the purpose for which most such books can be used: the information is too inconsistent, too poorly arranged, and too often interrupted by irrelevant material that serves no function save, perhaps, entertainment, such as the results of a survey that asked children such questions as what they would do if they had a million dollars, or such as the inclusion of National Pig Day in a list of “Special Days.” At times the readers are given advice, such as “How to Ask for a Raise in Your Allowance.” “Tips for Improvement” are given for some sports but are not provided for others; there are separate entries for roller skating, skateboarding, and figure skating, but not for speed skating, although the index lists ice (speed) skating for the pages that are headed “Figure Skating.” In sum, a browsing book rather than a reference book, this has variable quality and limited usefulness.


Framed, simply—almost naively—drawn, the blue/green/yellow pictures have a soft technique and contribute to the evocation, with the text, of a quiet night mood. Although the jacket copy states, “A story within a story,” there is no inner narrative structure: the text simply goes on to describe what is happening at that hour: the cat and the owl are prowling but the sheep and cows are asleep, stars twinkle, and the “moon man” smiles. “The story’s done and you get a kiss . . .” but will small listeners feel that the child in the book has been told what they think of as a story? Pleasant enough, possibly soporific, certainly static.


Cindy wakes to find herself in a hospital, unable to remember what has happened, and upset because the doctor will tell her nothing but persists in questioning her. In retrospect, the text leads through events to the tragic climax, and readers learn that the year is 1988, that Cindy had joined her parents at the United States embassy in Saudi Arabia where her father was ambassador. There is, as always, political ferment, and this is exacerbated at the embassy by the jealousy of a young Arab who admires Cindy and resents an American admirer. There is a revolution and the embassy residents are taken hostage. Settlement seems close, but one personal catastrophe—in a startling dramatic ending—precipitates a third world war. Taut, vivid, sadly believable, this compelling story reaffirms the interest in the plight of young people caught in political problems and the hatred of war that are evident in so many of Forman’s earlier books.


By far the largest section of the book is devoted to the Mexican contingent in the United States, and to the historical events that led to the absorption of some (“Outcasts in their own land,” the authors call these residents who lived in the north of Mexico before that region became part of the United States) and the immigration of others. Candid, objective, and explicit, the book is—like others in this excellent
series—carefully organized, well written, and thoroughly documented. The sections on Cuba and Puerto Rico give less historical background than does the first (Mexican) section, but they are equally frank in discussing the problems of adjustment, poverty, and discrimination encountered by these Hispanic newcomers. Chapter notes, an extensive divided bibliography, a brief history of U.S. immigration laws, and an index are appended.


Two teams of high school students are sent by their teacher (Morelli) to Washington, telling them to watch out for dragons. Bicycling through the Pennsylvania hills, Jerry (the protagonist) realizes that a menacing motorcycle gang are his "dragons," and that the runaway Mimi, who has attached herself to the team, is less of a liability than he had thought, since she knows the terrain. Although this has good writing and characterization as well as some taut moments in the action, the purpose is so diffuse and the development so little illuminating that the positive aspects of the story lose their impact.


An excellent survey of the development and proliferation of an architectural phenomenon is illustrated with well-placed photographs of good quality. This does not focus on the way in which a skyscraper is constructed, although the author includes descriptions of structural innovations as they occurred historically and as they influenced design; the book emphasizes the major skyscrapers in the United States as it gives a history of skyscrapers and their architects. A smooth and straightforward fusion of highlights in the history of tall office buildings, this concludes with a list of "fabulous facts," a glossary of some architectural terms, a bibliography, and an index.


Because Julie, just starting high school, tells her own story, this has an immediacy that makes her worries and fears about her physical condition the more vivid and poignant. Happy in her friendships and her family life, excited about being in school theatricals, Julie is upset because—periodically—she does something strange, she's told, and can't remember it. Like getting up during a meal and walking around the table. What can be wrong? Epilepsy. And so Julie, and Julie's family, have to adjust to her physical limitations, to the need for controlling medication, and—worst of all—the bias she encounters when her condition becomes known. Told in retrospect on the night of high school graduation, this is a moving and perceptive story that is candid in dealing with the resentment, despair, and anger that Julie must overcome if she is to adjust (as she does) and take a positive attitude toward her liability and her future.


Casey Branigan, fifteen, can't stand his stepfather or his young stepsister; about the only thing he really loves is his dog Denver—in fact, whenever other people speak to him, Branigan usually addresses his answer, obliquely, to Denver. Unhappy, he goes off to see his father and learns that there is no place for him in his
father's life, and that his father is an alcoholic. Casey's beloved dog is suddenly, accidentally poisoned and in his despair and confusion he starts a wastebasket fire that almost destroys the family home to which he's just returned. Sent to a state camp after he is deemed to have set the fire "willfully and maliciously," Casey finally responds to counseling and makes peace with himself and his family. The device of having Casey speak to his dog is never quite convincing, since it is an indication of maladjustment hardly borne out by other aspects of the story; the narrative is broken periodically by italicized interpolations that are Casey's daydreams, usually of a romantic or sexual nature. Despite these devices, the story has strength; Grace creates strong characters, occasionally almost overdrawn, who interact in a way that furthers and is furthered by the plot.


Although this follows the usual pattern of sports biographies (childhood devotion to sport, emphasis on career, inclusion of professional achievements) it's rather better written than most. The authors give credit to King for improving the status of women's tennis; they give minimal attention to her personal life as an adult, with no mention of the suit that brought King notoriety, and they are candid about the occasional hostility toward King expressed by other players. Most of the writing has a matter-of-fact tone; only at the end of the book does the text have an adulatory living-legend note.


It all started as a project for the three boys in a communications class: they would pick an unknown, and they would get her so much publicity that she'd become a celebrity. What girl? Well, they chose Belinda Belinsky by her picture. Nice, but not gorgeous. Belinda was indeed nice, and she was willing to go along with the project; over an intercom her name came across as "Linda Bell," and that was when Belinda began to love the limelight, to think of herself as a beauty queen. The book ends, in fact, with Belinda winning third place in a beauty contest in which there are far prettier girls, her personality having won over the judges just as it had won over the boys. The characterization and style are adequate, the plot slow-moving, so that the story sags in places.


First published by Cambridge University Press, this is one of the series "A Cambridge Topic Book" that includes titles by a range of authors on a range of topics: Gandhi and the struggle for independence in India, St. Paul's cathedral and its designer, life in a medieval village, etc. All are in the same format and of the same quality as this very useful and detailed book on Roman engineering; they are profusely illustrated with photographs and diagrams that have fully explanatory captions, they are printed in two columns, and they are written in a serious, straightforward style. Here the text describes tools, materials, construction methods, and architectural or engineering principles for roads, bridges, aqueducts, and buildings. A glossary and an index give the book reference use.

A time-slip story begins as though it were realistic fiction, with a newspaper clipping about Isabelle, age nine, who had been pronounced dead after an accident, was declared to be alive when brought in a hospital, and was suffering only a loss of memory. But Isabelle talks as though the language were foreign to her: "When Paul come home? That is many hours." In her mind, she is fluent, but her fluency is that of another time, another place, other people. What has happened is that Mai, a girl of prehistory, has moved into Isabelle's body; she has almost come to accept the fact that she is Isabelle when she meets a messenger from her own time, a messenger that is a snake. One of her brothers goes back with her to the Stone Age—and then Mai-Isabelle must choose. Although there are times when the story falters, the conflict the protagonist—torn between two cultures, two families—feels is pictured with a communicated compassion and sensitivity. This may not be wholly convincing as a fantasy, but it is both convincing and moving as the story of a child who feels herself an alien, trapped and isolated.


Soft pencil drawings, adequate but repetitive, illustrate a text written by a woman who for several years assisted her husband at his work in Kenya, at the Gilgil Baboon Project. The animals observed by the scientists were given names; Harding uses the names, focusing on one small baboon who attaches herself to an adult male for protection after her mother dies. Through this description, the author provides facts about diet, habits, and relationships among members of the tribe. This is detailed, accurate, low-keyed in style and simply written. The appended index has some entries that seem superfluous, references that are brief and tangential, but it serves adequately to give access to the contents.


From that great team that gave you *They Came from Aargh!* (reviewed in the January, 1982 issue) here's another engaging story about children's imaginative play; this time it's about a deep-sea diver and a desert king (one in a striped-towel burunoose and gym shoes, the other with a wooden sword and improvised scuba gear) whose entente cordiale is broken by a third adventurer (the baby, pedalling a little cart) who eats all the store of gumdrops. The king of the desert and the diver both sob in the mermaid queen's comforting arms, then relent and cuddle the baby. "He isn't so bad, really," the diver says, and joins the others for supper. The story is blandly matter-of-fact, with the bright (slightly raffish) pictures providing humorous contrast.


As always, Houston vividly evokes, in pictures and story, the icy desolation and danger of the Arctic scene. Here, in a dramatic survival story, an Eskimo brother and sister go off on a trek, hoping to find the caribou that their grandfather had buried when hunting. Their father is dead, grandfather is not strong enough to carry the meat alone, and the family is near starvation. Pitohok and Upik escape from a grizzly, cope with an ice fog, resourcefully find a way to get the meat home although they have lost the use of their sled. Taut with suspense, this is an exciting adventure story.

Once Alice had lived with her family, but after her mother died, Daddy had put her into a home for the retarded. Now Alice is eighteen, ready to go into the world, or so the social worker says. Alice doesn’t feel ready. She is given a room and a job at a nursing home, and there she meets Jim, a gentle, deaf, and affectionate physical therapist, and has a first romance. She’s slow, but Alice is tender and patient, so that she often gets in trouble for helping residents even though it means breaking a rule. She’s not too slow to be observant, so that she comes up with an important clue that leads to the solving of a robbery and to the firing of the inept manager of the home. This gives a sympathetic picture of Alice and may help readers understand that the retarded person needs love, respect, and responsibility to feel self-pride; it is weakened, however, by having so many problems and relationships and characters: Alice’s feud and, later, friendship with a black girl on the staff, her relationships with her social worker and father and stepmother and several patients, some of the latter having roles large enough so that their stories serve as sub-plots. The writing style is adequate, but not outstanding; this is true, also, of the characterization.


Like the two earlier books in the publisher’s series of autobiographies of artists, this is brief, candid, informal, and profusely illustrated by the author/artist’s work. Hyman’s sense of humor is as evident in her writing as in her drawing as she describes her childhood, her marriage while an art student, the year she and her husband spent in Sweden, where she had her first commission: illustrating a children’s book at the behest of editor Astrid Lindgren. Hyman returned to the United States where she had a daughter, moved from Boston to New York, was divorced, and moved to the New Hampshire countryside where she still lives. Interspersed throughout the personal material are facts about books and other assignments on which Trina Hyman worked. A lively and informative book, this should interest fans of all ages.


Fourteen-year-old Deedie is the narrator, and her style is casual, rambling, a little too cute. She reminisces about various problems she’s had through her childhood, one of the major ones being that her mother, since the death of Deedie’s older brother when Deedie was seven, has been overprotective. Deedie gets her first kiss (at a party) and her first crush (the new English teacher, Mr. Zachary) and improves her relationship with her mother and, one by one, crosses off the items on her worry list and exchanges some enthusiastic kisses with the boy who has traditionally been her dearest enemy. Light, palatable, mildly humorous, this has some perception, some substance, no plot line and a slight theme.


A splendid selection of modern poetry has been chosen with discrimination and arranged in an innovatory and sensible pattern, for Janeczko has grouped the poems so that they flow from one subject to another. Almost every major contemporary poet is represented, and most of the poems are brief, lyric, quiet, and strong. A lovely book to read alone or aloud.

In this useful collection of favorite plays, seven are for adult performers and the other seven meant for children to perform. Those in the first group are longer, and each is preceded by information on where to get scripts and pay royalties, information also provided for the second set of plays. Production notes are provided. The second portion of the book begins with a long introduction to an improvisational approach to staging, which more or less serves as a substitute for individual production notes; the plays in the second group tend to be both shorter and simpler than those in the first. Among the plays are “The Sleeping Beauty,” “Tom Sawyer,” “Punch and Judy,” “Winnie-the-Pooh,” “Jack and the Beanstalk,” and “Androcles and the Lion.”


Kimako, age seven, is the narrator in a story that focuses on her environment, a New York City neighborhood that is busy, friendly, and heterogeneous. Kimako, who is black, chatters on, with an occasional bit of dialogue included, about her dog, her reactions to her mother’s going to work, and some of the people she sees; she also includes some “Poem Puzzles,” poems that have blanks that the reader can fill in. This gives a picture of a bright child and of her enthusiasm and curiosity; it may be limited in appeal because it does not really tell a story that has structure and development.


Unfortunately, the very small print may discourage some readers of this how-to-do-it book that focuses on objects made of potholders, bottle caps, place mats, and other easy-to-get supplies. Scissors, needle, thread, and glue are used almost exclusively; the objects include bags, belts, headgear, tops (one vest, one camisole), jewelry (made of ribbons, buttons, seeds, bottle caps, etc.) and footwear. The instructions are usually clear, but do not always show each step of a procedure; the illustrations are adequate if not full, with good drawings of objects and awkward handling of the human face and figure.


An affectionate Great Dane puppy responds with joy when his owner buys a kitten to keep him company; unfortunately the kitten, Rose, will not only have nothing to do with Pinkerton, she intimidates him. She usurps his bone; he timidly eats out of her little dish. They all go back to the pet show where Rose was purchased, the owner planning to straighten things out. Rose acts silly, however, and Pinkerton acts like a hero, after which Rose adoringly purrs appreciation at Pinkerton’s feet—but not before making a shambles of a poodle parade. Kellogg uses light, bright colors to sustain the mood of the story, puts imagined events into comic-strip style balloons, and offers visual contrast by providing both cozy scenes at home and larger canvases, filled with slightly caricatured pets and people, at the pet show.

In a well-organized and crisply written text, Knight describes what is known about viruses and what research resulted in that knowledge. He discusses the several kinds of viruses, explaining clearly how they infect their hosts and by what mechanisms they spread, reproduce, and destroy the tissues of the living plants, animals, or bacteria they infest; he cites some of the viral diseases, pointing out that there is increasing evidence of the link between viruses and cancer. A final chapter discusses current research in the field, including vaccines and interferon as well as studies that contribute to scientists' knowledge of immunology. A list of important events in the development of a body of knowledge in the field, a glossary, and an index are appended.


An oversize book is crammed with all kinds of word play that should prove a source of enjoyment to puzzle lovers and that can be used by teachers to stimulate interest, awareness, and understanding in students who are less than enraptured with the English language. The material is divided into such areas as "Playing with Parts of Speech," "Codes and Ciphers," "Pictographic Writing" (in which the word hieroglyphics is repeatedly used incorrectly), "Riddles, Proverbs, and Fables," and "Phrase and Sentence Variations." A fascinating compilation concludes with a list of other sources for word games, an extensive section of advice to teachers on using this kind of material and an index.


Two centuries ago, this might have carried such a subtitle as "The Humanization of a Snobbish Boy, as He Meets a Variety of People on His Travels and Learns to Appreciate Them." The story is told by Maximilian, whose mother, remarried, has gone on her honeymoon and sent Max to stay with his father. Insistent on wearing the wool blazer with his private school's crest in the sweltering heat of the Southwest, Max feels superior to his father, his father's way of life (Woody travels with a camel from fair to convention to shopping centers, offering rides) and his father's trailer, to say nothing of his father's odd friends. However, prig though he is (and this is revealed by Max, who is the narrator) Max is also very bright and perceptive. By the time he's ready to go home, he's learned a lot about making allowances for other people, a lot about loving Woody, and perhaps most of all about himself. The title refers to Max's eagerness to keep in touch with a girl he's met (he's a young adolescent, she's a pre-teen, and they are an enchanting pair) whose mother works for catalog firms at a toll-free number. Konigsburg has a remarkable flair for including off-beat characters who are eccentric but believable, and the story has her usual combination of originality of conception, felicity of style, and suffusion of wit.


Reproductions of family photographs will, for Judy Blume's many fans, add appeal to this biography, which emphasizes her childhood and the years in which she gained fame as a writer of children's books; although there are few details about Blume's personal life as an adult, her two marriages and her relationship with her children are
discussed. This isn’t a lavishly adulatory biography, but it is weakened by the pedestrian quality of the writing style.


Brief descriptions, written in a casual conversational style that often includes humor, are arranged alphabetically in an oversize book that is handsomely and lavishly illustrated by beautifully detailed, colorful, and imaginative paintings. The compilation includes many terms and represents the imaginary creatures of many cultures, and if it omits an occasional favorite (the spriggans, tomtens) that’s understandable. A minor weakness is the index, which does not always have an entry for material contained in the book; there is none for “ghosts,” for example, although a full column (two columns per page) is devoted to that subject.


Scott, thirteen, was less optimistic than his younger sister Melinda about the Money Room, the place where their great-grandfather had supposedly hidden a fortune. They had just moved, with their mother, to the Oregon farm she’d inherited, and when they learned that an unctuous neighbor, Mr. Suggs, was anxious to buy the farm, they were both even more suspicious. McGraw deftly structures the story so that there is real suspense about whether or not there is a treasure, as well as whether or not Mr. Suggs will gain possession of it. The plot is nicely merged with the small problems that the two children and their mother have in adjusting to a new home and, for mother, to a new career. Characterization is not deep but it is definite and consistent; structure and style are strong.


Although the protagonist of the story, set during World War II and first published in England, is a small boy, the book should appeal to readers old enough to appreciate the nuances and difficulties of the writing style and the implications of the situation. Willie, pale and frightened, is one of many London children sent to a small village for safety. He is deposited on old Tom’s doorstep; a crusty loner, Tom really doesn’t want this burden. He silently notes the boy’s bruises and gradually learns that his emotions have been equally abused by a termagant mother who is a religious fanatic. Just as Willie is beginning to feel secure and make friends, a telegram comes from London, saying his mother is ill and wants him back. By this time the old man and the boy love and need each other, and when he doesn’t hear from Willie, Tom goes to London. The ending is tense, dramatic, believable, and satisfying, a happy ending to a touching story of love. Magorian uses dialogue and dialect well, giving local color as well as using them to establish character. Save for the reflection of the current interest in the problems of child abuse, this is an old-fashioned story with timeless appeal.


Unlike the Radlauer book below, this title from the same publisher gives a more complete picture of the cowboy’s life and work, and it is written in a straightforward style, limited somewhat by its stiffness, and somewhat by the occasional grammatical
solecism, as in the caption "Saddling up the horses." The text, in large print on spacious pages, faces one or two color photographs, and it describes the year's cycle of work on the ranch and on the range, and—occasionally—at a rodeo.


Ms. Henrietta Mouse is a famous architect and decorator; although she prefers to live simply, she is a genius at designing homes to suit her clients. And that's the book: a series of drawings (very nicely precise, varied, and imaginative) of homes for animals, all furnished as though they were homes for people. No story in this slight book, just some pleasant picture and possibly an assumption that young children will enjoy looking at architectural and interior details if little animal figures are dotted about on the pages.


Rosie stayed with Mrs. Lopez while Mama was at work, and on the morning of Mama's birthday she moped because her older siblings, Carlos and Maria and Manuel, all had presents to give Mama that night. Rosie, five, had nothing. A friendly and generous child, Rosie chatted with the mailman and the garbage collectors and other familiar neighborhood figures that day. She found a shiny button early in the day, and she made a trade with each person she saw (for example, the cab driver needed just the flashlight she'd acquired in a trade with the policeman) and by dinner time Rosie had a pretty pin for Mama. Nicely textured line drawings illustrate a story that is told with adequate simplicity of style and structure but that is flawed by the repeated use of coincidence.


Humorously distorted watercolor paintings take up most of the pages but leave ample space for a large red capital letter and, in boldface black, a column that says, for example, "Alvin/Alligator sits in/An/Armchair eating/An/Apple," the vertical line of A's ramifying the concept. Some of the words may be unfamiliar to children, but most of those are made clear by the context.


Large pages have big, brightly colored animals that are slightly grotesque and rather comic; one shaggy sheepdog, two colorful cats, three three-toed tree toads sitting in a tree, etc. Each page, or double-page, has boldface black print and a big red digit. The numbers proceed from one to ten, and then there are some random additions: three and two make a quintet, four quarts fill a gallon jug, two hens lay twelve eggs. The last few pages seem simply padding to what is an acceptable albeit conventional counting book.


Illustrated with pink-tinted drawings, this is a story that incorporates a few facts about Easter customs and a slight story line. Susan and Mike gossip about the Easter "treasure" a neighbor's said she is bringing home from the bank, and their voluble concern in alerting other neighbors helps the police catch two thieves. The treasure
proves to be a beautiful old hand-painted egg. Not a very mysterious situation, and rather plodding in its development, this has little information about Easter that isn’t easily found elsewhere. It’s timely, and it provides practice for the beginning independent reader.


Most children will understand, and many will sympathize with ten-year-old Oscar’s story of how irritating he found his brother Robert, age seven. It seems unlikely that many of them will find the story convincing, although they may find it amusing. In a breezy first-person text, Oscar describes his detailed plan for getting rid of Robert by convincing their parents that some elderly neighbors need a boy to live with them and also convincing the neighbors that the family is in financial trouble and must get rid of Robert because he eats so much. That Oscar’s lies would be believed—up to a point—is credible; that any normally intelligent child of ten would believe his scheme would work is not credible. It doesn’t work; Oscar is told that he will have to spend the summer with the neighbors at their beach cottage. (That’s punishment?)


An addition to the *Flambards* trilogy should be welcomed by Peyton’s fans, but even to those readers not familiar with the characters and the preceding events, this mature and discerning novel should appeal. Christina, widow of a young World War I flyer, her cousin Will, has bought the Flambards estate from Will’s brother Mark. She knows that Mark will disapprove, as do gentry and villagers, of her marriage to Dick, a former servant to the family. There is abrasion, not only because Christina and Dick are uncomfortable with each other’s friends and because Christina has given up a measure of independence because Dick is running the estate, but also because she has realized that she is deeply in love with Mark, who’s always loved her. The story ends, after some unhappy adjustments, with a note of promise: the law that forbids a woman to marry her husband’s brother is clearly going to be rescinded by Parliament. This gives a clear insight into the British class divisions in a rural society and it has good period flavor. The characters are drawn with depth and perception, and the writing style has a natural flow and momentum.


Adequately written, this romance in the 1980’s style varies but little from the standard romance of the 1960’s; the boy and girl are competitors in sports, and the author has made a conscientious but rather obtrusive effort to be nonsexist—and not quite succeeded. With those exceptions it’s the standard boy meets tomboy (Joanna, the narrator) who suddenly realizes what it’s all about. She rejects to let Rick beat her at tennis just to make him like her. Eventually they fall in love, quarrel, and make up. It’s just like old times, a formula love story with no surprises, no severe weaknesses, but little depth and, save for those tennis buffs who may enjoy Joanna’s role as a member of the “boy’s team,” with little substance.


The authors have taken a popular interest, used action photographs in color (but of poor quality) and put together a book for beginning readers that uses repetition to
NR reinforce vocabulary usage but that is almost nonsensical in the awkward, patronizing style. "Cowboys wear boots and spurs. Cowboys wear boots, spurs, and gloves. Cowboys wear boots, spurs, gloves, and hats. Do horses wear boots, spurs, gloves, or hats?" The book does give a minimal amount of information about cowboys and cowgirls, but it would suggest that rodeos, horseshows, and parades are the sum total of such peoples' lives—no hint is given that a cowboy, for example, might work on a ranch.


A popular and concerned high school history teacher, Ben Ross, is bothered because he can't answer his students' questions as to why the German people permitted or disclaimed the horrors of the concentration camps. He decides to try an experiment in regimentation to show how it is possible to develop blind obedience—and his experiment develops into first a class, then a school, organization that has political and sociological overtones. Only a few students become worried about "The Wave," and its motto, "Strength Through Discipline," and finally—just in time—Ross himself sees that The Wave is becoming a reactionary force with a dangerous potential. The dilemma of the teacher and of those students who oppose the increasingly popular movement are made vividly clear. Although this is based on a true incident, here the speed of the conversion and the way in which almost every student is captivated are not quite convincing. Adequately written, this has good if not profound characterization, and an interesting if not always credibly developed plot.


Little Owl asks if he can have a birthday party the next day: Wise Owl gives him eight different colored notes so that the guests will know what color present to bring. Next day each guest obediently shows up with a gift in the suggested color. The day after that Wise Owl tells Little Owl he can make other colors by combining red, blue, and yellow in certain ways. With all the excellent and often beautiful color books on the market, there seems no reason to give this inferior book to a child; it has eight colors, but so do the others, and among its weaknesses are the poor quality of the illustrations, the idea of foisting a next-day party on a parent, the grossness of making suggestions to guests about gifts of any kind or color, and the small likelihood that a child's guests might bring such presents as a banana on the one hand or a suit on the other.


Martin knows that he's out of the social swim at school, and he can't quite understand why—so he decides he'll run for president of the seventh grade class. When he's put into a ninth grade math class, Marty gets dubbed "Marty-Smarty." Martin knows that he's running against a popular classmate, Norman, but he's even more worried about appearing too smart, so he deliberately puts on a poor performance in class, but his campaign speeches are brilliant. Unfortunately, Martin loses by three votes, but he's cheered by the fact that the school principal takes action on appointing a student representative (Martin), an issue of the campaign. This has a breezy writing style, a realistic picture of family relationships, and some humor; it's weak in characterization and structure.

Cartoon style drawings in black, white and (what else?) red illustrate a lightweight and intermittently amusing book about kissing. On most of the pages, the text consists of a definition of a kind of kiss (Thank You Kisses come after Please Kisses but before You’re Welcome Kisses, a Make-Up Kiss is the best way to end a fight) but there is also a brief history of kisses (an invention followed closely by the development of lips) and there are some record-breaking kisses, animal kisses, obnoxious kid kisses, a glossary of sorts, and two pages of advice, some of which actually makes sense—as contrasted to “Never kiss with an empty stomach (use your lips).” Flip, silly, trivial, but fun.


Tinted with reds and blues, the softly-executed line and wash drawings have a simplicity and neatness that fit the simple style and structure of the text. The story gives just enough details to help the primary grades reader understand some of the reasons immigrants had for leaving their homes and coming to America (in this case, a drought and a crop failure in Sweden) and some of the problems they had en route. The story focuses on Carl Erik, one of the children in the family that responds to a letter from relatives in the United States; Pappa sells the farm and uses the money to buy tickets to New York via Liverpool. It isn’t always easy to make history comprehensible to younger children, and Sandin does a nice job of it.


Following a discussion of the language sources that have contributed to contemporary English, the authors describe the origins of individual words (occasionally groups of words or variants of words) within certain categories. Occasionally choices seem arbitrary, as in the case of the assignment of the word “gossip” to the section of “The Family” or the inclusion of the word “boss” under the rubric of “Money.” And why “jury” under “Mystery?” Save for such random arrangement and an occasional generalization, the book is interesting in the information it gives (although other such books exist) and in the author’s encouragement to readers to regard this as only a first step in pursuing etymological interests. A section that discusses (very briefly) suffixes, prefixes, word roots, etc. is appended, as is an index.


A practiced and dependably accurate science writer, Simon makes it clear that scientists don’t know all the answers and that what they know is buttressed by theories. Thus, in this book as in others he is inculcating a scientific attitude as well as a set of facts. The facts here are that there existed, in addition to the huge and better-known dinosaurs, some small species and that some of them may have been the ancestors or relatives of today’s birds. The text describes seven such small dinosaurs, and the illustrations show what they may have been like in drawings that have plants that are appropriate to the period.

In six stories about Adam Joshua, Smith established her protagonist as a boy whose small adventures and firm attitudes should evoke a recognition reflex on the part of most readers. He doesn’t want to move. He is not enthralled when a baby sister arrives, less so when she’s put in his room (just until her own is painted and ready) and substantially less so when she cries at night. Adam Joshua adjusts to the new home, the new baby, the new best friend, a strict babysitter, a loose tooth—all the important aspects of life. The small, realistic drawings have a humor that nicely echoes the humor of Smith’s writing style, which cleverly incorporates repetition so that it becomes a stylistic asset: as a sample, “With Peter, Adam Joshua once collected ants from the back yard and put them in a shoe box to keep in the house. With Peter, Adam Joshua once collected ants from the house, where they got loose, and carried them out to the backyard again.”


Louisa, who tells the story, loves Charlie; Charlie loves Louisa, feels responsible for her, wants to marry her but agrees that they should go on to college before they consider a permanent arrangement. When Louisa realizes that she’s pregnant, she tells Charlie; he is anxious to do whatever she wants, willing to let her make the decision, and eager to be as helpful as he can when she decides she will have an abortion. This is not then, the more usually depicted situation of the deserted adolescent. Louisa goes to an information center for counseling, then to a clinic for the abortion. Charlie’s supportive and loving all along, and both feel that it was the right decision, that it meant a college education for both. While this is clearly a message book, written in retrospect when Louisa is a college freshman and enjoying both the social and academic aspects of her new life, the message doesn’t overwhelm the narrative, which is competently written, thoughtful, and candid.


A young adolescent, Maud, has been taking care of a dying man, Mr. Nelson, in this story of Kansas set in 1870; when Nelson’s fiancée, Belle, arrives the day after he dies, she agrees with Maud that the two of them can carry on alone. Most of the story, which has a thin line but some meaty incidents, is about the various problems Belle and Maud have: one set of unpleasant neighbors, a plague of grasshoppers, the need for a school. Maud worries about Belle going back East, but a romantic interest crops up, as does one for Maud as well; at the end of the story there has been little basic change, but a few developments have led to the prospect that Belle and Maud will become permanent and satisfied settlers. The structure is slight, the characters convincing but not drawn with depth, and the writing style smooth.


Large print, simple vocabulary, short sentences, and ample leading between lines indicate that this is more a book for beginning independent readers than for the preschool audience indicated by the publisher; for that group the textual control is not necessary. The subject should appeal to children, and the coverage is adequate, as is the style. The emergence, over nine hundred years, of a popular entertainment
feature of most fairs from an Arabian game for warriors is described with direct
simplicity.


Although it is clear that it might be augmented in the telling, this Haitian folktale has some inherently weak spots in its structure. A small tiger and a small goat, sheltering in a cave during a thunderstorm, become fast friends. When the tiger finds his family, he doesn’t want to leave the goat, Cabree, all alone, so he brings her a banza, a musical instrument like a small banjo. It will protect her, he says, when placed over her heart. “The banza belongs to the heart, and there is no stronger protection than the heart.” Cabree is later confronted by ten hostile tigers, and plays and sings; in her defiant song she claims to eat tigers raw. This so frightens the tigers that, one by one, they take off—not a convincing ending. However, the tale is nicely told and the bright illustrations are enlivened by comic details.


Carlo, the narrator, first speaks of his older sister Terry, who’s retarded, with resentment: he always has to take her with him when he goes out to play, and the other children laugh at her. On a shopping trip, Terry disappears and Carlo thinks of how loving and gentle she is, and is panic-stricken. He finds her and is happy and relieved, but “I still am not crazy about looking after Terry every day.” This is intended to help children see that retarded children also have likeable—or lovable—qualities, and it does that adequately; however, it begs the question of whether any child should be expected to assume daily responsibility for a sibling, especially since the home situation (a mother and a grandmother at home) indicates no urgent need. The illustrations are adequate commercial art, but do little to extend the story.


While airplane buffs may most enjoy the historical aspects of this oversize and profusely illustrated book, the general reader may be most interested in the very handsome paintings, accurate in detail and almost romantic in the mood evoked by the beauty of Parker’s luminous skies. Basically the broad pages have a three-column format, but this is broken and varied in different ways so that some pages use only one columnar space for text or have one large picture spread across the bottom of a page. This gives variety to the pages, which only occasionally seem overcrowded. The text is comprehensive in scope, covering the subject of manned flight from balloons to supersonic transport; since more than half the book’s page space is given over to illustrations, it cannot provide full coverage of any individual aspects of flight history, but the author—Deputy Director of the National Air and Space Museum—writes with crisp authority. A bibliography and an index are provided.
BIBLIOGRAPHIES

To order any of the items listed below, please write directly to the publisher of the item, not to the BULLETIN of the Center for Children's Books.


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With the June issue, the BULLETIN will add curricular uses and developmental values to reviews of books for which such headings are assigned in the Center.