PRODUCTION NOTE

University of Illinois at
Urbana-Champaign Library
"A powerful novel about the plight of a twelve-year-old black boy who becomes a street child in the suburbs of Johannesburg. Sipho soon finds that the life of street children, or malunde, is grim. . . . Naidoo's evident knowledge of her subject and her humane approach allow a rare and moving glimpse into the hidden world of the malunde, and Sipho's eventual rescue from the streets lends a complex note of optimism to an otherwise woeful story." — Publishers Weekly

"[In her] story about a contemporary city child in search of home . . . what Naidoo gets across most powerfully is one child's sense of being caught between two worlds apart. Rooted as the story is in the Johannesburg streets, it is also about children anywhere who are on the edge." — Booklist

Ages 8-12. $14.95TR (0-06-027505-7); $14.89LB (0-06-027506-5)

Beverley Naidoo's earlier South African novels

JOURNEY TO JO'BURG
A South African Story
Pictures by Eric Velasquez
$14.89LB (0-397-32169-4)
$3.95PB (0-06-440237-1)

CHAIN OF FIRE
Pictures by Eric Velasquez
$4.50PB (0-06-440468-4)

HarperCollinsChildren'sBooks
10 East 53rd Street, New York, NY 10022
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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.

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Cover illustration by Betsy Lewin, from No Such Thing ©1997 and used by permission of Boyds Mills Press.
No Such Thing
written by Jackie French Koller; illus. by Betsy Lewin

So little Johnny can’t sleep? He thinks there’s a bogey man hiding in the dark? You think he needs a little bibliotherapeutic reassurance? Well, this sure isn’t it. In fact, Koller’s latest opus delivers the gentle genre of bedtime stories a blow from which it might take a while to recover, but kids will find this new interpretation monstrously entertaining.

Howard has just moved into a big old house with “neat little nooks and crannies” and “funny little closets and cupboards” to explore. But when the lights go out and he’s alone in his big old bed, Howard known there’s something terrifying lurking around. And this time our child hero is right on the money. Not only is there a monster under the bed, but that monster is equally terrified of the boy he known is lying right above him. Both repeatedly summon their skeptical mommies to check out the premises, and of course neither mommy is buying her son’s story. Howard’s mommy demonstrates that the monster’s “tail” is merely a jump rope; monster’s mommy shows him that mysterious “fingers” are no more than his pet tarantula.

Confrontation is inevitable, and it’s gloriously realized in a double spread in which a bug-eyed, ashen, gape-mouthed Howard meets the horrified gaze of a bug-eyed, bilious green, gape-mouthed monster, and they simultaneously erupt in a bold-face “Aagh!” Howard and monster go running, angry mommies haul their sons back to inspect the now-empty bed and floor, but a good night’s sleep is still a long way off. Weeping Howard and “whimpling” monster cautiously check each other out and, in a touching moment of interspecies bonding, realize they are both beset by mommies who don’t take them seriously. In a cliff-hanging finale, they switch places on and under the bed, coyly calling, “Oh, Mommy . . . Mommy, come quick!”

This lusciously seditious comeuppance won’t be lost on the audience, who will be ready, willing, and able to supply an ensuing scenario. Primary teachers who are looking for an open-ended tale for students to complete should, indeed, pounce on this one. Field-tested on ninety-plus first-graders in three storytimes, the story evoked an unsolicited cacophony of responses. There was the histrionic ending: “Howard’s mommy will probably faint.” There was the pragmatic ending: “Howard’s mommy will dial 9-1-1.” There was the pessimistic ending: “Howard’s mommy still won’t believe him and will punish him anyway.” And there was the happy ending: “Howard’s mommy and monster’s mommy will make friends, too.”

No doubt the children’s responses have much to do with their assessment of their own mommies’ probable action under similar pressure. Spookier than the green monster, spookier than Lewin’s heavy black scrawls and subtle shad-
ows, spookier than the throat-ripping "Aagh!" is Koller's all-too-accurate portrayal of exasperated mommyhood, which audience and reader will instantly recognize. Escalating impatience evidently cuts right across species, as monstrous sweet reason transmutes to "There, are you satisfied now?" which finally explodes into "I've had it, Monster. If I have to come in here again, you are going to be twaddled." Sounds awfully familiar, doesn't it?

And so, when Mommy reads little Johnny *No Such Thing* for a good-night giggle and sees herself in the supporting role, guess who's going to have trouble sleeping? (Imprint information appears on p. 251.)

Elizabeth Bush, Reviewer

NEW BOOKS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Ad 4-7 yrs

Rabbit tries to muscle in on the water from a well dug by Lion and Elephant, but she is chased away. She encounters Ostrich and, in a familiar folktale exchange, tricks him out of his share of the juicy berries they have found, managing to convince him that he is the one who ate them. Rabbit proceeds to take advantage of everyone in sight but ultimately gets her comeuppance, and her saga ends with the moralistic Ostrich saying, "A lie may travel far, but the truth will overtake it." The tale itself never quite builds the momentum it needs to be truly involving, and the illustrations have a repetitive, flat quality possibly due to the somewhat muddy tone of the palette. The humans that Rabbit encounters teeter uneasily between caricature and stereotype, with pop-eyed Africans dancing in loincloths or sucking on huge bones. The source note indicates that the trickster figure in this tale was originally male but has undergone a gender switch in Aardema's interpretation. First published in Aardema's *Behind the Back of the Mountain* (BCCB 2/74), this predictable tale is helped along somewhat by Chess's visual characterization of the protagonist as a plump, beskirted (not to mention amoral) little bunny gleefully tricking all she encounters. JMD

**ADLER, C. S.  *More Than a Horse*.  Clarion, 1997  [192p]**  
Reviewed from galleys  
Ad Gr. 5-7

Leeann and her mother, Rose, are uprooting themselves to an Arizona dude ranch; Rose is taking a temporary job as a cook and Leeann is hoping that she will get a chance to ride. Unfortunately, her eagerness leads her to jump the gun—after developing an affection for a difficult horse, she rides him without permission and
is then banned from the barn by the cranky head wrangler. With the help of her new Arizona friends, however, Leeann begins to settle in and to assist with the ranch’s new program for handicapped riders, gradually earning respect from the hands. Though there are a few updated details, the interloping-girl-makes-good-on-ranch plot is quite old-fashioned, the horsey side of the story is fairly unsophisticated, and the characterization ranges from the simple (Leeann and her friends) to the clichéd (the crusty old wrangler). It’s still an enjoyable equestrian yarn, however, with some atmospheric touches of sagebrush and young romance. Kids who enjoyed the author’s That Horse Whiskey! (BCCB 12/94) will want to saddle up for this one. DS


If “Roses are red, violets are blue” simply won’t convey the subtle tonality of a message from the heart, somewhere in this score of poems is just the valentine that will. Feeling arrogant? “Please/ excuse this printed valentine/ but/ I really do like at least ten/ girls in our grade and maybe/ a/ few more.” Yearning? “Can you see/ that/ one/ plus/ one equals/ the/ sum of you/ and who?/ Your Only Correct Answer:/ Only Me.” Cautious? “I love to run/ when it’s hot/ or cold,/ but I always/ run/ a l o n e./ Your Not-Yet Friend:/ Icicle Eyes.” Terrified of the “L” word? “Dear Mom:/ First: Keep momming./ Second: I’m really thanking you./ . . . Fifth: Please kiss/ only/ on/ the/ c h e e k.” Desimini provides a treasure trove of mixed-media images: a photograph of a basketball-headed snowman accompanies a missive from “The Dribbler”; “Your Son With Earplugs” sends his love to an assemblage Mr. Potato Head snoring on the couch; glitter-crowned Ms. Back Row floats above the classroom—an angel in the eyes of “First Seat First Row.” A stunning book design enhances the unique interdependence of visual images and text. When it’s got to be sweet, but it can’t be saccharine, drop one of these on a desktop or into a booktalk and wait for the sparks to fly. EB


Arnosky, who has served as nature guide on myriad armchair expeditions, introduces a very young audience to some rudimentary facts about rabbits’ diet, habitat, and physiology in this gentle account of a vigilant mother, five lively babies, and a passing rainshower. Venturing forth from “under a hedge at the edge of green lawn,” mother and babies graze peacefully on clover blossoms and leaves until raindrops interrupt their idyll. “A rabbit’s fur is not waterproof. Baby rabbits can become soaked, and catch cold. So Mother rabbit hurries her babies back under the hedge,” until, of course, the sun breaks through and the rabbits return to “taste the wet grass, and play rabbit tag in the sun.” Youngsters who can pry their gaze from the babies’ antics will find plenty of details hidden among the sun-splashed watercolor fields and shadowy hedges, where ants march, butterflies take shelter, and heavy raindrops reflect the nearby farmhouse. Preschoolers can hop right into a comfortable chair and start exploring. EB

Among the more challenging entries in the I Can Read series, this tale of the man who defied Puritan leaders to defend religious liberty offers readers an introductory course in colonial political theory as well as an exciting story of escape and survival. Williams’ daughter Mary narrates five brief chapters covering her father’s Massachusetts trial, the warning of his impending deportation, the decision to flee, his survival in the wilderness, and his settlement among the Narragansetts in what would become Providence, Rhode Island. Plentiful dialogue speeds the action along, and even the philosophical issues are cogently presented for young readers in the form of Williams’ interrogation at the trial. Watling’s watercolors have a rough-hewn quality appropriate to the early colonies, and his grave figures are charged with tension. Students will find this a strong choice for beginner history reports, but an ambitious social-studies teacher might also consider converting the conversations and limited settings into a play, bringing everyone into the act. EB


While the subtitle may entice prospective readers (and teachers?) with visions of dramatic productions, opening notes indicate that Bagert’s take on “performance” is fairly circumscribed: “If you want expression in the sound of your voice, all you have to do is put expression on your face.” The nineteen entries that follow *can* certainly be read with expression, but, then, what can’t? Some entries may win favor: “2+2” taps into some all-too-familiar math anxieties, and “The Food Cheer” (“Carnivores! Carnivores! We eat meat!”) is undeniably catchy. Overall, however, a bland and uninventive cuteness, rather than grit and bite, pervades these verses, and Silverstein and Prelutsky have covered much of this territory before and better. Ellis’s watercolor and pencil pictures feature a puckish cast of toothy, squirrel-cheeked urchins in an eye-scorching array of colors that underscore Bagert’s relentlessly cheery sweetness, resulting in what can only be described as overkill. EB


Noble he is indeed, but he’s no Roman—Seneca is the beloved equine companion of the young narrator, who details the pleasures of their daily activities. She describes in gentle detail how she first chose Seneca and how she now greets him after school, cleans out his stall, and grooms him; they go for a ride (the narrator acknowledges she takes the occasional tumble), and then she cools him out, feeds him, and heads for her own home. No, it’s not a lot of plot, but it is a lot of lovely and fragrant horsey specifics. Baker understands completely that it’s the cozy routine that draws the horse crowd, and the litany of horsekeeping tasks is accurate and alluring. The moist, soft-edged watercolors show the big white Seneca con-
tentedly submitting to his young owner’s ministrations; the slanting autumn light and the falling leaves add a picturesque touch, while the equestrienne is, for a pleasant change, decked out in appropriate helmet and footgear. Young dreamers looking for a white charger of their own will find this vastly satisfying, and they’ll get a kick out of seeing the real Seneca’s photo on the back jacket flap. DS

**BIBLE** *Genesis*; illus. by Ed Young. Geringer/HarperCollins, 1997 32p
Library ed. ISBN 0-06-025357-6 $16.89
Trade ed. ISBN 0-06-025356-8 $15.95 R Gr. 4-6

This gently adapted version of the first book of Genesis is distinguished from other more literal Bible storybooks by the artistic interpretation of Ed Young. The familiar text is on the left-hand page, cream against glossy black, while the facing page is a pastel illustration on colored paper. The strongly horizontal compositions comprise sophisticated, abstract images. God’s creations emerge from the void as one star lights the darkness, as the firmament forms from chaos, as life begins. The most successful illustrations suggest shapes and images rather than concrete forms, and Young’s use of light and shadow make those slowly forming images intriguingly amorphous. The less successful illustrations suffer from the lack of detail, however, and make the specifics difficult to imagine. Young’s adaptation of the King James text retains the poetic rhythms of the well-known chapter and verses. From jacket art (line drawings of multitudinous endangered animals) to endpapers (consisting of rows of the cover animals’ names, the extinct ones in faded script) to the body of the work, this is a carefully designed and executed piece of picture-book art. JMD

**BLOOR, EDWARD** *Tangerine*. Harcourt, 1997 [304p]
ISBN 0-15-201246-X $17.00 R Gr. 7-10
Reviewed from galleys

Paul Fisher is a pale nobody compared to his golden older brother, Erik; Erik is a high-school football star, carrier of his father’s hopes for college gridiron glory, while Paul is a middle-school soccer goalie in absurdly thick glasses who knows that his brother’s luster hides a brutal soul. Now the family has moved to Tangerine, Florida, where, after Paul’s original school gets sucked down into a sinkhole, he finds an unlikely home at the rough and ready Tangerine Middle School. Paul’s coed and multicultural soccer team plays well and bonds tightly on the court and off, which leads Paul into trouble when one of the team families clashes with Erik—with tragic results. Older brothers as tarnished idols have been around a lot, literally speaking (see Bowler’s *Midget*, BCCB 11/95, and Randle’s *The Only Alien on the Planet*, 3/95), so Erik’s villainy, while chilling, isn’t particularly original; the story’s measured pace may also deter a few readers. Bloor is superb, however, at presenting Paul’s unexpected knack for easy camaraderie with his unlikely friends, and the characterization is telling from the blossoming “Fisher Man” to the rest of the diverse cast that fills the book. Also excellent is the book’s depiction of the tangerine industry on which the town was founded, whose allure and trials Paul learns from his citrus-growing friends, and whose buried groves lie under the Fishers’ ritzy development. The slightly absurd edge to the comedy and the genuine humor of the banter in no way undercuts the force of the team’s devotion and the bitter results of Erik’s violence. Bloor is a promising new voice, and this is a richly imagined read about an underdog coming into his own. DS
**BROWN, RUTH**  
*Toad;* written and illus. by Ruth Brown. Dutton, 1997  [26p]  
ISBN 0-525-45757-7  \$14.99  
Reviewed from galleys  
R  5-8 yrs

As the book says, this is the tale of a toad, a “toad odorous, foul and filthy, and dripping with venomous fluid.” All this distastefulness has its reason, however, as we soon discover when Toad wanders into the jaws of a “monster” (a large reptilian predator), who at first thinks he’s found an edible morsel but then spits the revolting (and unharmed) dish right back out again. It seems a bit unfair to turn the toad’s natural defenses into such a condemnatory judgment (and an anthropomorphized one at that) about his personal charms, but the story trips along rhythmically nonetheless. Brushstroked textures and splats of spatters combine with a reliance on olive green and a toad’s-eye view to make a primeval world of vegetation and slime vivid yet somehow cozy. Kids will appreciate the neatly turned plot and the effective defense of the smaller against the larger; their older siblings may want to watch their steps. DS

**BRUCHAC, JOSEPH**  
*Eagle Song;* illus. by Dan Andreasen. Dial, 1997  [80p]  
Library ed. ISBN 0-8037-1919-1  \$14.89  
Reviewed from galleys  
Ad  Gr. 3-5

Danny’s mother and father have relocated the family from their Iroquois “rez” to Brooklyn to take up offers of better jobs. But while Richard Bigtree makes good money at dangerous high steel work and wife Salli is settling in well at the American Indian Community House, Danny catches the taunting of his classmates: “Hey, Chief, going home to your teepee?” Dad makes a visit to Danny’s fourth-grade class in the hope that a little pride and education will mitigate the class’s prejudice, but it’s only after Mr. Bigtree is injured at the jobsite that Danny is able to discern just how appropriate his father’s myth about Iroquois peacemaker Aionwahta had been. Bruchac limns a close, loving family that doesn’t take itself too seriously—teasing, cavorting around the living room, and mimicking matinee Indian-speak (“‘You know what it is, Dancing Eagle, my son?’ ‘No, my father, what is it?’ ‘We Iroquois men always listen to women because if we don’t, they will beat us up!’”) The book is heavily message-driven throughout, however, and the parallel between Dad’s story of Aionwahta and Danny’s reconciliation with the class bully is heavily overdrawn, leaving readers with the medicinal aftertaste of a tale that has been good for them. Full-page black-and-white illustrations and a glossary and pronunciation guide are included. EB

**CARTER, ALDEN R.**  
*Bull Catcher.* Scholastic, 1997  [288p]  
ISBN 0-590-50958-6  \$15.95  
Reviewed from galleys  
R  Gr. 6-9

Neil “Bull” Larsen has talked his teacher into allowing him to rework the baseball journal he has meticulously kept for the past four years into a required senior project. Through the flashbacks of this work-in-progress, the reader not only follows Bull’s development as a catcher, but also his passage through adolescence to the threshold of adulthood. His absentee mother’s neglect, his widowed grandpa’s love life, his abused buddy Billy’s tragic death, his best friend Jeff’s struggle for self-discipline on the field, and his own squandered affections are important to Bull largely because they affect his game. And an exciting game it is, as this tight-
knit band of small-town guys pursues a superheated rivalry with top-ranked Caledonia throughout their high-school career and vie for the attention of prestigious college scouts. No matter that Jeff has the stuff to reach the next level while Bull must accept that he's just too slow to play catcher in any first-rate college program; it's enough that Bull carries the memory of a coveted championship and "Jeff and me, impatient even in November for April and the first pitch of a new season." EB

COREN, MICHAEL  
The Man Who Created Narnia: The Story of C. S. Lewis.  
Eerdmans, 1996  
140p  illus. with photographs  
ISBN 0-8028-3822-7  $20.00  
M Gr. 5-8

In this disappointing chronicle of Lewis' complex life, the man who created an entire fantasy world for children is portrayed in page after page of archaic prose and wooden narration ("Lewis seemed on the one hand to be so ordinary and yet, on the other, to be so intelligent and so different from most people"). Although the book's cover and format are not unattractive, a capricious selection and placement of black-and-white photographs coupled with dull, pretentious captions just adds to the stilted, preachy atmosphere of this tome. A photo showing a young, serious Lewis in 1925 visiting Stonehenge is inscribed, "The concerned look may be because he had recently applied for a fellowship at Oxford." (Even Lewis might be posthumously tempted to reply that it was actually his too-tight necktie.) Poor editing abounds: a double-page Outline of Narnian History is awkwardly kerplunked right in the middle of the Narnian chapter, interrupting readers in mid-sentence. While the information on Lewis' life is useful, pretentious generalizations, plodding religious elucidations, and an excessively adulatory and boring text never do justice to a man whose writings have captivated old and young alike. Back matter includes a chronology, bibliography, a vague note on sources, and an index. PM

CREECH, SHARON  
Chasing Redbird.  
HarperCollins, 1997  
[272p]  
Trade ed. ISBN 0-06-026987-1  $14.95  
Reviewed from galleys  
R Gr. 6-9

Zinny (short for Zinnia) is the quiet youngest daughter in a big family; she's always turned to her aunt and uncle, who live next door and whose own daughter died young, for comfort and attention. Now her aunt Jessie has died, and grief-stricken Uncle Nate keeps seeing her, his "Redbird," all over the countryside and up the old Bybanks-Chocton trail that leads away from the family farm. Zinny's also alarmed by the attentions of young Jake Boone: not only has she been burned several times before by boys who play up to her in order to get to her beau-teous sister May, but Jake shows a distressing tendency to shower Zinny with purloined presents. All of this somehow translates for Zinny into a new and deeply felt passion to clear the old trail to Chocton, which seems to lead to family mysteries that Zinny suddenly desperately wants solved. Though this isn't as tightly woven as Walk Two Moons (BCCB 1/95), readers of the earlier book will recognize the themes here (as well as some of the names: indomitable Zinny was Salamanca Hiddle's best friend before Sal left for Ohio); the voice too recalls some of that book's lyricism, tenderness, and wonder. Creech again demonstrates her expertise at evoking physical and emotional landscapes and the connections between the two as Zinny blazes her way down literal and spiritual paths. DS
CYRUS, KURT  *Tangle Town*; written and illus. by Kurt Cyrus. Farrar, 1997  [32p]  
ISBN 0-374-37384-1  $16.00  
Reviewed from galleys  Ad  5-8 yrs

When the mayor of Tangle Town gets trapped in his own office (pushing the door marked “Pull”), the tangled reports of the situation lead to mass panic in the community (“The Mayor got blistered!”—“Plastered!”—“Blasted to bits by twenty twisters!”—“Big, big disaster!”). Meanwhile, sensible farm girl Roxy Toppler sets out after her loose cow, Mosey, and trails her down to Tangle Town, where Roxy cuts an orderly swath through all the hysteria and where Mosey obligingly if unintentionally releases the noodlehead mayor from his captivity. The twists are pretty limp, and the story lacks the self-propelling momentum of *The Stupids Step Out* and other tales of cluelessness. The chaotic silliness will appeal to tangle-happy young listeners, however, who will enjoy the game of Telephone played on a municipal scale. Smudgy charcoal accents give the watercolor figures a sturdy solidity that provides the mess with an absurd sense of purpose; kids will enjoy hunting for recurring images (the adventurous dachshund, the ensnaring fire hose) as the story progresses and the situation deteriorates. Try this one if you want to weave a tangled picture-book web. DS

DARLING, KATHY  *Seashore Babies*; illus. with photographs by Tara Darling. Walker, 1997  [32p]  
Trade ed. ISBN 0-8027-8476-3  $15.95  
Reviewed from galleys  R  Gr. 2-5

“Ooo, aren’t they cute.” Well, maybe not the vulture or the horseshoe crab, but most of the entries featured in these volumes will elicit a gushing response. Each animal rates a double-page spread with a few paragraphs highlighting its special tricks or traits, a sidebar of ready reference information, a small inset photo of an adult member of the species, a habitat code, and finally, a full-page close-up of the youngster itself. Although Darling occasionally gets carried away with the cuteness of her concept (“Come to Daddy!” calls the father emu when the weather is very hot), the warmth and intimacy of the text suggests leisurely sharing between adults and non-readers, just as the researchable format suggests more studious perusal by beginning report-writers. *Desert Babies* kicks off with a world map indicating the featured climatic region, *Seashore Babies* begins with a diagram of habitat zones along the ocean’s shoreline, and both conclude with a page of notes about the environment. EB

ISBN 1-56397-247-6  $17.95  
Reviewed from galleys  Ad  Gr. 3-6

Our macabre fascination with rattlers is milked by the skillful Dewey, who knows...
how to sink her fangs into a reader. The author opens with an autobiographical tale of her own fight to survive after a run-in with a prairie rattle at age nine; her story of searing pain, lapses into unconsciousness, severe nausea, and, ultimately, skin grafts will have readers deliciously paralyzed with terror. Unfortunately, the following two sections, “Hopi Snake Ceremonies” (a description of a rain dance in which men carry live snakes in their mouths) and “The Rattlesnake Dance” (male rattlers vying for mating dominance in a territory) don’t pack the same wallop and leave the reader nostalgic for the great first act. The oversized book is designed so the author’s narrative with her accompanying color drawings garner center stage, with info-packed panels in the wings—the sides, tops, and bottoms of pages. Ironically, the real drama unfolds in those offstage sidebars, where we learn some great teacher stumpers, such as the fact that drinking snake venom is probably harmless, and it’s actually used in some heart medications; a snake could die from an injection of human saliva; more people die from being struck by lightning than from snakebite. The colored-pencil illustrations are frequently fuzzy, the humans often awkwardly proportioned; on the other hand, the line drawings of the snakes themselves are balanced and realistic. There is a map (unfortunately confusingly captioned) of the continental U.S. pointing out which of the seventeen species of rattlers live in which states, with Arizona having the most and Maine none at all. Count ‘em up and plan your travels accordingly. SSV

Dexter, Catherine  I Dream of Murder. Morrow, 1997 [160p]  
ISBN 0-688-13182-4  $15.00  
Reviewed from galleys  
Ad Gr. 4-7

Jere is a fairly ordinary fourteen-year-old until one day at the zoo he sees something—or, more accurately, someone—who awakens frightening memories within him. It soon becomes clear that the strange man who works at the birdhouse is the man who appears in Jere’s dream as the murderer of a young woman. As Jere and his friend Avery begin to unravel the mystery, they realize that Jere’s dream is based on his real recollection of witnessing a crime, and that the criminal is now trying to save himself at any cost. The child-witness theme isn’t original, but it’s a nice twist in the story. Unfortunately, the characterization here is pallid and uncompelling, and the villain is a stock lunatic (“Suddenly, Watkins’ crying noises stopped, and his face changed from being twisted up to blank. ‘Now it’s going to be a secret again’”). The net result is superficial but mildly entertaining; young readers who want a quick thriller to page through without thinking too hard might find this adequate, if not the book of their dreams. DS

Dickinson, Peter  The Lion Tamer’s Daughter and Other Stories. Delacorte, 1997 [256p]  
ISBN 0-385-32327-1  $15.95  
Reviewed from galleys  
R Gr. 6-9

Kids who crave the creeps should find plenty to satisfy their appetite in this quartet of tales about encounters with “the other side.” Lead-off tale “The Spring,” the briefest and flashiest entry, tackles the idea of what life would be like if one had never been born. Following his mysterious twin brother down into a bubbly spring, Derek realizes that his family would, in fact, manage quite well without either of them. In “Touch and Go” an aging bookseller recalls how, during his World War II childhood, he saved the desperate spirit of a little girl from 1897 and, as an adult, became her beneficiary. Dave, a teenager held for ransom by Italian thugs
in "Checkers," evokes the ghost of another prisoner held in times past, who gallantly "dies" again to save Dave's life. The title story puts a fresh spin on the stock plot of babies separated at birth, as Melly and Melanie discover they are one and the same person, victimized by a jealous father and a corrupt circus conjurer. In the final three novella-length stories Dickinson patiently lets the tension simmer and steam while developing a host of dramatis personae, worldly and other-worldly, in which the reader can make the requisite emotional investment. Despite its spring release date, this is the perfect read for a cold winter's night. EB


Sarah Zoltanne's widowed mother, Rosemary, has abandoned her home and career in Ventura, California to be near her lover, Ted—a homely, domineering English teacher from a small town in Missouri. Sarah's misery over her mother's character change and the hostility of clannish high school classmates are matched by the misery of Ted's teenage daughter, Kyra, who openly considers Rosemary and Sarah to be home wreckers. Capitalizing on Kyra's unhappiness and Sarah's mysterious (by Pine Crest, Missouri standards) background, class Adonis Eric Garrett convinces Sarah to hold sham fortune-telling sessions for schoolmates, in which she "sees" information about their future, based on gossip and scandal Kyra digs up through her mother's church connections. When some of these "predictions" come true, Sarah becomes the victim of a real-life witch hunt, and her one friend in town, Charlie, convinces her that they and their classmates were once participants and victims of the Salem witch trials, reassembled now in Pine Crest to undo the wrongs of the past. Sarah's loneliness and vulnerability in the face of small-town prejudice is convincingly drawn, and her classmates' escalating campaign of terror is as creepy as most thriller fans could wish. But the big finish, in which Charlie hypnotizes the high-school lynch mob and rescues Sarah's neck from the noose, is downright silly: "It's not hard to trigger mass hypnosis in a setting like that. ... I think they were karmically ready for it." While this may not be Duncan's finest outing, it's still good for some shudders. EB


Robin's beloved older brother, Tom, lies comatose in the hospital after being hit by a car, and Robin gratefully escapes the grim atmosphere at home to stay with her brisk and no-nonsense grandmother at Culaloe, the old family house on the Scottish coast. There she discovers family secrets (an old rift and a cousin she never knew of) and a family ghost: little Milly, who drowned in 1914 at the age of ten, and whose sobs and singing can be heard in the house. Soon Robin and her cousin John become aware that Milly's presence is not as benign as family legends suggest, and the two cousins start to unravel the mystery of Milly's death in the face of her ghost's increasingly dangerous hostility. There's a whiff of the Bad Seed about dear little Milly from the very beginning, and Dunlop has a deft hand with the accumulating menace. The ending gets a bit overexplanatory, but it's satisfying to see several generations of loose ends tied up and our young heroes, including a newly recovered Tom, victorious in a happy ending. There are plenty of young readers who can't get enough of atmospheric tales of malevolent ghosts; this will keep them in happy trepidation. DS
Sixteen-year-old Cristina goes to a ritzy and exclusive private school in Manhattan, and the press has a field day when one of her schoolmates is murdered after attending a party with Cristina and her friends. Soon the police's suspicions lead them to Gordon, boyfriend of Cristina's flamboyant best friend, Francesca, and Cristina finds her loyalty tested as Francesca demands more and more from her in the aid of a boy of whose innocence Cristina is not entirely convinced. The story hasn't got the pace or focus of a thriller, but it's not clear what else it might be: the extraneous subplots (Cristina's family's appearance in a newsmagazine segment, her dating a boy her own age and a man ten years her senior) don't have any particular interest or implications for the story. For all the talk about Cristina's family's solidarity, they—and she—seem no less superficial than any of the other characters or than their detractors accuse them of being, so there's little moral to be drawn from the story. Teens attracted by tales of murder among the young and privileged may feel the glitzy atmosphere here compensates for the lack of content.

DS

GILMAN, PHOEBE  
The Gypsy Princess; written and illus. by Phoebe Gilman. Scholastic, 1997 [32p] 
ISBN 0-590-86543-9  $15.95

Reviewed from galleys  
Ad 6-9 yrs

Cinnamon is a gypsy girl with a strong case of princess envy—why can't she while away the evenings elegantly dancing with a prince at the palace instead of hoofing it with a lumbering bruin around a campfire? After a real princess visits to have her fortune told and sees Cinnamon dancing with Babalatzi, her bear, the gypsy girl ignores the warning of her old auntie that "even a princess can be unhappy" and accepts an invitation to live at the palace. Though it's admittedly entrancing at first—bejeweled gowns, handsome princes, pheasant-egg omelets—we never doubt that our heroine will reject the royal life for a return to her gypsy roots. Even though the outcome is a done deal, Gilman manages to inject the traditional elements with enough suspense to hold young listeners' attention. Though the artwork is gaudy and the execution faulty (the bear looks like a big wet dog in one picture, a dancing cartoon in others), Gilman extends characterization through her use of facial expressions—the maid-in-waiting who turns up her nose at Cinnamon's original garb is priceless. While cultural nuance is frankly absent, this is a costume fantasy, and it will appeal to those little girls who like to play dress-up. SSV

GLENN, MEL  

Reviewed from galleys  
M Gr. 5-8

Gimmickry outguns content in this overdrawn compilation. The action begins at the opening of a June school day, as seniors with their minds on graduation shuffle through a slow-moving yearbook line and muse (in a poem apiece) on their current states of ennui and on life beyond Tower High School. But it's gonna be a
bad day—veteran history teacher Mr. Wiedermeyer has finally snapped, and he holds his first-period class at gunpoint while he slips notes under the door that provide clues to the large and small personal tragedies that have brought him to this pass. Between the takeover and the all-too-easy, relatively bloodless rescue, Glenn plods through some one hundred pages of poems (five for each hostage) retracing each student's Tower career. And what a carefully balanced bunch of stereotypical students they are. Tramps, nerds, immigrants, underachievers, womanizers, jocks—they're all accounted for, elevating teen banality and egocentrism to new heights ("Let me outta here./ Man, am I gonna party tonight"). Occasionally an image will flash and grip, tantalizing the reader with the possibilities of Glenn's premise ("Private tortures/ Ending in public spectacle./ Serpentine demons/ strangling common sense"). The bulk of the verse, though, is flat prose broken into lines ("I feel restless/ And horny/ Pretty much all of the time./ ... I think I'll take a shower, a cold one./ Then maybe I'll do a little math homework"). Hi-lo patrons with more patience than reading skill might have a go at this, but give readers in search of a real nail-biter Cormier's After the First Death. EB


Without a doubt, kids'll crowd the court to watch Greenfield and Gilchrist's opening scenes of M.J. as he "forgets to obey/ the law of gravity/ jumps not up and down/ but up and up/ and up, then stops/ stands right there/ on a little piece of air." Number Twenty-three is captured here in all his glory—characteristically intent or joyously airborne. But there's a sermon waiting just around the bend, and the scene shifts abruptly to a pair of children eerily dressed in white and posed before a looming eagle's head: "For the love of the game/ of life/ I rise from my bed/ and greet the world/ I am here!" The child-narrator muses on how "naysayers" and "doomsayers" will throw obstacles in life's path, while loving people reassure that "if you fall you will rise again." Eagles soar and faces appear in trees in dreamy, earth-toned scenes, and suddenly the children encounter their hero, whereupon they declaim, "For the love of the game/ of my life/ I live." Muddled metaphors undermine this earnest exhortation, the children's connection to Jordan remains tenuous at best, and poor book design adds to the confusion. Subtlety? Well, on that score it's more Rodman than Jordan. A well-meaning adult might read this to a captive audience, but it's a safe bet that, left on their own, independent readers won't venture far beyond the first half-dozen spreads. EB


LaTasha spends a day each week in Paradise—the Paradise Baptist Church—and fourteen poems in the little girl's sprightly voice celebrate the highlights of one typical Sabbath. From Mommy's tender wake-up call and the morning toilette ("If only she didn't weave the braids so tight") until the church is finally cleared in the evening ("The deacons begin gathering fans from each pew,/ then check underneath, where they find one or two"), Grimes/LaTasha cites just the details children find fascinating about Sunday rituals. "Blue-Haired Ladies," "Ladies' Hats," and "White Gloves" address the important issues of fashion ("And I especially love
the way/ Mommy’s chocolatey-brown skin peeks through/ the white-lace gloves
she likes to wear”). “Jubilation,” “Esther,” and “At the Altar” offer a sensitive look
at a child’s spirituality (“For once, I’d like to watch God’s blessing/ fly in for a
landing, ’cause that would be/ a miracle to see all by itself”). Even the embarrass-
ing collection plate has its moment in the spotlight. The warmly expressive images
reflect the spirited yet intimate text through scenes washed in light and peopled by
a spiritual community dressed in their Sunday best. The impressionistic watercolors
spread the joy, focusing on LaTasha’s experience but surrounding her with a
loving, ebullient gathering of worshippers. EB

HARLEY, BILL  Sarah’s Story; illus. by Eve Aldridge. Tricycle, 1996 32p
ISBN 1-883672-20-1 $15.95  Ad 6-9 yrs

“Sarah, everybody knows a story,’ her teacher said. ‘Not me,’ grumbled Sarah.”
Sure enough, the next day Sarah stands at the bus stop, story-less, until something
catches her attention: “‘Hey, Sarah! Hey! Down here!’ There, on the sidewalk,
was an ant.” Sarah, a scruffy-haired spark of a heroine, steps out of her hightops
and socks and with Alice-like aplomb plunges into the local anthole with a “FWOP!”
She then makes a trip to a beehive (“FWUMP!”) for the Queen Ant (“I need your
help. I want to lay eggs and have babies, but I need to have some honey bread”)
and finally arrives at school with, well, a story. Sarah’s retelling to her class actually
works better than the original adventure, which never creates enough kid-appeal-
ing tension, but the illustrations compensate for the shaggy-dog pacing of the plot.
From the opening double-page spread of Sarah’s personality-plus classmates (who
look oddly similar to some of the Little Rascals), the book is peppered with visual
humor: a box of chocolate-covered ants sitting on the desk of a student who is
writing “I will not eat bugs in class” on the chalkboard; ants knitting little baby
ant-booties and toting “Dr. Spock”; Sarah’s mother’s chair being carted away by
the ants. Aldridge gives her cartoonish watercolors a comic buoyancy, lavishing
them with splotches of brilliant orange and yellow and sweeps of royal blue and
bright green. Visually, this is one energetic escapade with a text that doesn’t quite
keep up. PM

HARRIS, PETER  Mouse Creeps; illus. by Reg Cartwright. Dial, 1997 [26p]
ISBN 0-8037-2183-8 $14.99  Reviewed from galleys  Ad 4-7 yrs

As baby sleeps in its cradle by the hearth, “Dog sleeps. Mouse creeps,” thereby
setting off a chain of events that will bring the tranquil countryside back from the
brink of war. A farmyard animal chase sets the ducks flying; hunters shooting at
the ducks shake acorns loose from the tree in the center of a field where two armies
are arrayed for battle. Pigs run amok among the acorns, the generals stumble on
the pigs, and the soldiers roar and head home. “Father at door. Soldier no more,”
and the red-coated drummer is greeted by wife and baby, who is promptly cradled
in its father’s arms. An odd anti-war message this, in which the cessation of hos-
tilities rests upon pure chance rather than compelling reason. In fact, it seems
rather a shame to interrupt such a cheery war, with its stalwart, smiley soldiers and
jolly little generals gamboiling in the sunshine of a fantastical countryside. Still,
Harris’s spare text and Cartwright’s naïve paintings manage to convey to the young-
est listeners that war, if not evil, is at least outrageously silly. EB

In this fictionalized biography, Jacobs tells the story of James Printer, a Nipmuc Indian, who, in seventeenth-century Cambridge, was master apprentice to printer and bookmaker Samuel Green. Set against the backdrop of colonial New England and the strife between colonists and local tribes, the story is given a personal point of view by the narrator, young Bartholomew Green, a printer’s devil in his father’s shop and a friend and student of James Printer. The events of the day are seen through the innocent eyes of Bartholomew as strife erupts into war and racism into the seeds of genocide. Jacobs’ characterizations are sharp, and they give a distinct picture of both main and peripheral players, as James Printer, a “praying Indian” educated and raised by the English, struggles with his personal loyalties and racial identity. Forced into exile by the colonists’ escalating reprisals against even “friendly” Indians, James joins with King Philip, the Pokanoket leader, and becomes instrumental in the comfort and release of English prisoners. Bartholomew, confronted with the brutalities of war, is horrified by the atrocities perpetrated by both sides in the conflict. This action-packed piece of historical fiction is richly layered, its complex themes of individual freedom, personal loyalty, and political expediency not easily summarized or dismissed. JMD


After a move with Mom to a new house in an English city, and with Dad away in the army, the only friend Leon has is the imaginary Bob (“He always walked to school with Bob. He always had Bob to talk to”). Leon wants to meet the new boy who has moved in next door. Bob apparently doesn’t (heading over to the new boy’s house, Leon “was about halfway when suddenly he realized Bob wasn’t there anymore”). Leon bravely overcomes his imaginary friend’s absence and rings the new boy’s doorbell (“H-hello,” said Leon. “Would you like to go to the park?”). The engaging, albeit slightly predictable, conclusion feels just right . . . you bet he’d like to go to the park, and his name? Bob, of course. James renders this watercolor-and-pen offering in lots of gray and tan, with little patches of color here and there, as he takes a reassuring look at friendship. Subdued shades are just right for complementing this gentle story, and James effectively uses white space combined with lots of towering vertical lines to create that solitary feel of loneliness without mucking it up with a sentimental text. This has strong similarities to Kevin Henkes’ *Jessica* (BCCB 2/89), but with more subdued visuals and an understated, touchingly effective text. PM


Antarctica—the final frontier of planet Earth, where working women are determinedly staking out their share of the ice. Here we encounter some pretty rugged
women; many are scientists, while others work as carpenters, pilots, heavy equipment operators. Judy the helicopter pilot, Sarah the camp outfitter, Rae the carpenter, Cheryl the computer cartographer, Jules the bulldozer operator, and Eileen the doctor share with the author their stories of adventure and enthusiasm for living on the edge. Most only visit the ice continent during the brief Antarctic summer, but others "winter over." Before long the reader is feeling decidedly restless and eager to join up, despite dire warnings of snow blindness, blizzards, and endlessly bitter cold. Johnson has done an excellent job of incorporating a wealth of information (sea ice can form at the rate of twenty-two square miles a minute; there are living organisms within the glacial ice) into a readable narrative; moreover, she lucidly interprets the research being done and explains its importance. The book is generously illustrated with dozens of sharp color photographs, and it sensibly has a map, suggestions for further reading, and an index. Hand this one to the girls who love to question the rules and aren't afraid to compete with the boys—they have nothing to lose but the feeling in their fingers and toes. SSV

**Kindl, Patrice**  *The Woman in the Wall*. Houghton, 1997 [192p]
ISBN 0-395-83014-1 $14.95
Reviewed from galleys R* Gr. 7-10

Little Anna takes agoraphobia to a new depth: when she's seven years old, she's so alarmed by the prospect of going to school she retreats into her secret room inside the walls of her beloved house. The ultimate wallflower, she spends years immured, gradually including more and more of the old Victorian's interior in her realm, wailing it off from her mother and her two sisters, who only know Anna still lives when they periodically discover she's tidied the house, repaired a broken appliance, or left them the products of her capable sewing. When she turns fourteen, however, she begins to find love notes secreted about the house and begins a romantic correspondence that threatens—or promises—to lure her out of her secure architectural isolation. As she did in *Owl in Love* (BCCB 10/93), Kindl creates an original world with authority and complete credibility. Her austere yet insistent, grave but humorous style is perfect for the narrative voice of the detached Anna, who, in some inverted version of Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper," must step forward out of her safe walls in order to pass into womanhood. (Anna's interior world is so fascinating that it is, frankly, a bit of a let-down when she joins the mainstream, but such is the tendency of transformation tales.) The symbolism adds richness to the story without hitting readers over the head (Anna finally leaves her walled cocoon at a costume party, where she appears as a stunning yet ethereal Luna moth), and the notion of appearing suddenly after adolescence as a person unfamiliar to one's family will be an understandable one to many. Readers drawn to the conceits of science fiction but not the hardware will enjoy the ideas here, as will those who simply want something very different done very well. DS

**Koller, Jackie French**  *No Such Thing*; illus. by Betsy Lewin. Boyds Mills, 1997 [32p]
ISBN 1-56397-490-8 $14.95
Reviewed from galleys R 4-7 yrs

See this month's Big Picture, p. 237, for review.
Collecting used newspapers is both a test of patriotism and classroom status for Nim and her archrival, Garland Stephenson. The two children are so determined to outdo each other that Garland steals new papers from a vendor's stand and Nim risks the censure of her strict grandfather by collecting papers outside of Chinatown without permission. On Nob Hill she hits the motherlode: a doorman offers her a storage room full of bound papers, and she naively enlists the help of the local police in carting them to school (“When Officer Kearny came to our school, he said if we ever needed help we should call the police”). When she arrives home late, her grandfather sentences her to meditate on the disgrace her disobedience has caused, but finally relents when she insists her actions were intended to honor the family (“Garland said an American would win the contest, and he was right . . . I am the American who won”). Laced throughout this World War II period piece is a wealth of detail about Chinese-American culture at mid-century. Grandmother “teetered on her small, bound feet,” the eldest child ritually invites his elders to eat, and Grandfather, the enlightened but dominating patriarch, proudly wears a Chinese and American flag lapel pin so he “would not be mistaken for the enemy.” Slightly stylized paintings in burnished earth tones glow with warmth, while reminding viewers of wartime austerity. Although independent readers will want to tackle it alone, this title is rife with possibilities for classroom discussion—from social studies to ecology to interpersonal rivalry. EB

Letters dated from September 1991, when a Bosnian ten-year-old named Nadja becomes pen pals with her American cousin Alex, to November 1995 describe the destruction wreaked on the citizens of Sarajevo, besieged by the Serb/Yugoslavian armies and splintered into Bosnian Muslims, Orthodox Christian Bosnian Serbs, and Catholic Bosnian Croatians. The litany of hunger, thirst, unsanitary conditions, boredom, bombing, frigid cold, and constant artillery fire echoes that found in Zlata's Diary by Zlata Filipovic (BCCB 5/94). As fiction, however, this is more tightly crafted to eliminate some of the repetition of a diary. It is at once more contrived and more accessible, with brevity, an easy reading level, and the suspense of constant danger that can draw younger readers. An introduction, a note on the author's involvement in researching the war, an afterword on historical background, a glossary and pronunciation guide, and suggestions for sending letters or care packages all add to the documentary tone. If not always involving through depth of characterization, this is informative by virtue of the dramatic situation. BH

Myers’ free verse paean to Harlem acts as a unifying thread for the powerfully
evocative multimedia collages of his son Christopher Myers. Strong compositions and a masterful use of color depict the New York City setting with energy and beauty, reflecting an urban aesthetic echoed in the seductively involving text: “A huddle of horns and a tinkle of glass, a note/ Handed down from Marcus to Malcolm to a brother/ Too bad and too cool to give his name./ Sometimes despair makes/ The stoops shudder/ Sometimes there are endless depths of pain/ Singing a capella on street corners/ And sometimes not.” This is one of those rare pairings of words and images in which each gains from the other, resulting in a fine, balanced collaboration. JMD

**NAPOLI, DONNA JO**  *Trouble on the Tracks.* Scholastic, 1997  [208p]  
ISBN 0-590-13447-7  $14.95  
Reviewed from galleys Ad Gr. 5-8

Thirteen-year-old Zach finds his chatterbox younger sister, Eve, incredibly annoying, and she’s been even more so on the family’s trip to Australia, what with her newfound obsession with ornithology that leads her to strike up conversations with strangers and perform birdcalls at the most awkward of moments. Now the siblings are traveling sans Mom on The Legendary Ghan, the famous old train from Alice Springs to Adelaide, and they get into deep trouble when they happen onto the illegal smuggling of a rare bird—and some violently protective smugglers. This is a traditionally unlikely middle-grades adventure, with unsupervised kids trouncing villains in an appealing setting. The contrivances start to mount up, and the ornithology and ecology intrude beyond their necessary places in the plot. Napoli strikes a fresher chord, however, in Zach and Eve’s relationship: the sibling dialogue is authentic and the characterization (Eve really is annoying) credible. There’s also more genuine threat here than usual for this level of mystery, so readers who want some real danger but not a really thick book may be on the right track with this one. DS

**NIVOLA, CLAIRE A.**  *Elisabeth;* written and illus. by Claire A. Nivola. Foster/ Farrar, 1997  [32p]  
ISBN 0-374-32085-3  $16.00  
Reviewed from galleys R  5-7 yrs

Sparely told and illustrated, this is the story of the author/artist’s mother, who, as a Jewish child in Nazi Germany, had to leave behind a beloved doll named Elisabeth when the family fled their home to escape arrest (“‘Carry nothing,’ [her parents] warned. ‘We must not arouse suspicion’”). The plot is well-paced with scenes that establish the doll’s importance in the child’s life, the subsequent feeling of loss, and the euphoria of discovering the doll in a U.S. antique shop long afterwards—one of those miracles that seems credible when told with such particularized fidelity of detail. There is one gap in the historical background that will have to be explained to young listeners: “Then everything changed,” but we’re not told why or even what, outside of the facts that she’s called “Jew” in school and a soldier patrols her door to make sure that only Jewish patients enter her father’s clinic. This may convey a child’s incomprehension to an adult, but it’s likely to perpetuate incomprehension among children hearing the story. Nevertheless, the consistently authentic tone is moving, and the clean, precisely painted compositions are appropriately melancholy yet without self-pity. In fact, their still-life quality, emphasized by spacious white frames, provides the distance needed for this tale of
Biodiversity is a relatively new concept based on established biological facts—there are millions of species, all of them different, yet each and every one is somehow connected to the others. That connection, no matter how insignificant, affects all life on earth and is designated as biodiversity. Because our own species has knowingly destroyed countless others, understanding and appreciating the concept of biodiversity is imperative to future efforts at conservation. At least that's the argument put forth by biologist Patent, and a convincing one it is, too. Using both North America and Costa Rica as models, Patent shows the interdependence of various life forms, including so-called "keystone" species—those species whose extinction would have damaging effects for multiple species. Practical reasons are given for preserving all life (even those species as yet unidentified), such as the huge number of modern medicines (about one-third) that are derived from nature. The author effortlessly touches on natural selection, evolution, and sustainable development, all the while using clear, jargon-free prose. Mufioz's color photos are crisp and inviting and serve to amplify the point at hand. Diversify your own collection by adding this one to the shelf. Glossary, index, and author/photographer biographies are included.

Patent leaps into her topic straight off, captivating readers with such delicious factoids on rain forest frogs as these: some have enough poison in their skin to kill one hundred people; their poison applied to an arrow tip can last up to one year; some can "fly"; they are becoming extinct at an alarming rate. Pretty edutaining stuff, and it's sure to pull in those primary-schoolers with a taste for the gruesome. Unfortunately, Patent's admirably cogent text outshines the overly busy illustrations. Jubb's hyperkinetic artwork may convincingly convey the confusingly overlaid world of the rain forest, but the compositions are sometimes awkward. It's also often hard to make out the individual components, which is a real shame because there are authentic treasures to be found here. Nevertheless, kids will enthusiastically pick out the critters from their camouflage, and this should fill a niche in the early grades as a kick-off to a unit on the rain forest and/or extinction. An index and endpaper maps are included.

Young Annie is a fan of purple, and after much wheedling she finally obtains a purple hat to go with her coat and shoes. Unfortunately, on her very first day of
wearing it to school the hat disappears off of Annie's head, and she doesn't notice until she gets home. She is devastated and distraught, and her family, her schoolmates, and the townsfolk hunt for the hat but with no success. Just as Annie begins to think that she might be able to settle for a replacement from somewhere in the parade of alternative hats that's been offered, the original chapeau shows up. The end's pretty predictable, but Annie's near-palpable grief for the loss of a loved object is authentic and recognizable. The humorous touches in the illustration (Annie's family attempting to coax and serenade her out of her tree refuge, the madhouse of millinery that the town becomes in an effort to supply a substitute) keep the loss from being too personally bitter for young listeners. The sharp-eyed among them will particularly enjoy spotting Annie's hat in the spread where it first parts from Annie's unknowing head, which adds a touch of suspense to the enterprise (though one wishes that the hat's lavenderish purple would stand out a bit more amid the other pale pastel tones of the watercolor). The cautionary aspect of the tale may go over kids' heads, but they'll want to cover them with hats anyway.

DS

Platt, Randall Beth Honor Bright. Delacorte, 1997 [224p]
Reviewed from galleys R Gr. 7-10

Teddy—Theadora—is fourteen years old, tomboyish and refractory; she "despised her mother, barely tolerated her brother and hadn't a true friend in the world." Shipped off to their grandmother's for the summer of 1944, she and Howie (her twin) undergo a summer of changes: they get to know their grandmother, Teddy makes a friend of a popular local boy, their mother remarries, and the truth about some family secrets, including the terrible accident in which the twins' father lost his life, finally comes out. The book's start may initially mislead readers about its tone and the protagonist's ages, but Teddy's foulmouthed toughness is well depicted, as is her gradual understanding of some important family dynamics. Characterization is quick but original, with peripheral players such as the twins' new stepfather and Teddy's buddy Steve particularly strong and uncliquéd. Kids who want a family story with some edge (and who enjoyed Hahn's Following My Own Footsteps, BCCB 10/96) will appreciate the story of Teddy's hard-won maturation.

DS

Rahaman, Vashanti Read for Me, Mama; illus. by Lori McElrath-Eslick. Boyds Mills, 1997 [32p]
ISBN 1-56397-313-8 $14.95
Reviewed from galleys R 6-9 yrs

Joseph loves books. He loves the way the school librarian, Mrs. Ricardo, reads to his class and he loves Thursdays because "on Thursdays, Joseph got to take two books home. 'One easy book for reading by yourself,' said Mrs. Ricardo, 'and one harder book that someone else can read to you.'" Young Joseph, who is African-American, lives with his Mama, "the best storyteller in the world." But what Joseph doesn't know is that Mama can't read. Slowly the clues begin to pile up: Mama doesn't have time to read, is too tired to read, even arrives home very late from work because of a change in her schedule which she couldn't read. Deep and muddy-hued oils, in a double-page spread format, aptly convey the struggle of this woman who declares in a Sunday-evening church service, "I have to learn to read. . . . My boy needs a mama who can read." Mama then begins attending
night classes to learn how. This avoids preachiness and is instead a compelling and realistic tribute to the power of literacy. The renderings of mother and son are especially effective in portraying the warm bond they share, and the unsentimental yet moving narration progresses at just the right pace. Listeners will feel a quiet cheer coming on when Mama reads to Joseph for the first time.

RINALDI, ANN  *The Second Bend in the River*. Scholastic, 1997  [288p]
ISBN 0-590-74258-2  $15.95
Reviewed from galleys  Ad  Gr. 5-8

From the time she was a lisping child of seven, Rebecca Galloway had felt herself drawn to the taciturn but kindly Indian Tecumseh, who occasionally visited her father at their farm. Over the fifteen-year span of Rebecca’s narration, we see her feelings grow from fascination, to affection, to love, while her father and neighbors, most of whom are Revolutionary War veterans, struggle to lay aside past hostilities and come to terms with their Indian neighbors. The tale is rich in detail of the Ohio frontier in the early days of the Republic, and Tecumseh’s growing influence as a diplomat among whites and far-flung native tribes is skillfully conveyed. However, Rebecca’s romance with Tecumseh (which, Rinaldi concedes, is speculative) is the focus here and it unfortunately falls short of convincing. Readers may accept and even empathize with Rebecca’s adoration of a self-assured, older man (“I wished, for the hundredth time, that I was not smitten with Tecumseh. He had ruined my notions of men for all time”), but exactly why this twice-married statesman should be taken with her (“You have pulled out my soul”) remains uncertain. Tecumseh’s knowledge of and sensitivity to the white settlers’ mores, as portrayed by Rinaldi, would surely have prepared him for Rebecca’s refusal to live permanently among the Indians as he wished her to do. Historical-fiction buffs may be able to brush aside these concerns, however, and enjoy this simply as a pioneer family saga. EB

Library ed. ISBN 0-06-024874-2  $15.89
Trade ed. ISBN 0-06-024873-4  $15.95
Reviewed from galleys  R  Gr. 7-12

A brief introduction fine-tunes the theme which unites this collection: “Everyone eventually goes on a journey. You leave home and undergo trials and rites; you come back from the journey transformed.” Each of the sixteen prose and poetry selections offered here poignantly recreates such a journey, from a little girl’s walk across town with her illiterate mother to enroll in kindergarten (Edward P. Jones’ “The First Day”) to an anguished Vietnam War draftee’s flight toward the Canadian border (Tim O’Brien’s “On the Rainy River”). Whether the protagonist is a young man leaving his father’s arid farm in Zimbabwe, an adolescent refugee landing in Little Saigon, or a migrant farm worker abandoning his dreams of trumpet lessons to follow the crop, the common experience of pulling up roots and redefining home cuts across cultures. Even readers for whom leaving the family nest is no more than a distant wish will discover a visceral connection with voices such as Sandra Cisneros’, pining for “A house all my own. . . . Only a house quiet as snow, a space for myself to go, clean as paper before the poem.” Most of the works included here are readily available in other formats or compilations, but drawn
together in one volume, they offer combined insight into the comforts and challenges of home and leavetaking. EB

ROSSITER, NAN PARSON  
*Rugby & Rosie*; written and illus. by Nan Parson Rossiter. Dutton, 1997 32p  
Ad 5-8 yrs

Rugby is a big chocolate Labrador Retriever and Rosie is the yellow Lab puppy who rooks his secure world; this isn’t the usual new-puppy story, however, since Rosie is merely being fostered for a year before she starts training as a guide dog. Rugby’s young owner narrates, telling of the year wherein Rugby gradually becomes attached to the new dog and Rosie begins to learn some of the skills she will need “professionally,” until finally Rosie proceeds to training and successfully graduates and another puppy prospect comes home with Rugby and his master. There are better books about guide-dog puppy socialization (Arnold’s *A Guide Dog Grows Up*, BCCB 3/91), and the approach here diffuses the impact a little. On the other hand, youngsters will probably empathize with Rugby more quickly than with his owner and will end up with a different and perhaps clearer slant on the ambivalence felt by those raising a puppy to let it go. Rossiter’s figures are stiff and the golden glow over the scenes gets sentimental, but there are plenty of dog-romping scenes to envy or relate to, depending on the viewer’s current fortune. If you’re looking for a dog story with a difference, this might well do the trick. DS

SCHNEIDER, MICAL  
*Between the Dragon and the Eagle.* Carolrhoda, 1997 151p  
Ad Gr. 4-6

As Schneider explains in her introduction, it was silk rather than silk merchants that made the entire journey from Asia to Europe along the route now called Silk Road. Here she follows a length of blue silk as it makes its way from Changan, China to Rome in a.d. 100, passing through the hands of various merchants and traders. Han Tau, disowned by his family for becoming a trader and consorting with “barbarians,” raises his status by organizing his own caravan to Merv (in what is now Turkmenistan). There the Parthian trader Vardanes picks up the merchandise and teaches his son Pacorus how to barter. Caravan guide Rabel Dushara takes the silk as far as Petra, where Firmus Octavius Parro, who has visions of expanding his business into Rome itself, carries the fabric on the final leg of its journey. Although each character experiences a fleeting adventure along the way—a mudslide, a suspicious border guard, a sandstorm, etc.—the trek is singularly unexciting, and life-threatening perils and slight inconveniences are treated with equal insouciance. This will make the grade as supplementary reading for a social-studies class, but exotic adventure seekers might prefer to sign on with nonfiction about Marco Polo. EB

SPINELLI, JERRY  
*The Library Card.* Scholastic, 1997 [160p]  
ISBN 0-590-46731-X $15.95  
Reviewed from galleys R Gr. 4-6

In four short stories Spinelli shows the impact of library cards on four individual children: Mongoose, a boy teetering on the edge of trouble but pulled back by books; Brenda, a certified television junkie who finds the story of her TV-abridged life on a library shelf; Sonseray, homeless and motherless, who discovers his past in storytime; and April, a New York City transplant to a Pennsylvania mushroom...
farm who takes a surreal ride on a hijacked bookmobile. While Mongoose's story is the most predictable, all four tales have an emotional "hook" that leads the reader into an easy suspension of disbelief, whether confronting a magically appearing library card or life events that simply stop when the television is turned on. Spinelli has a knack for creating appealing characters readers can care about, and his text has enough humor to keep those characters from drowning in sentiment. Accessible language and an easy style make this a good bet even for reluctant readers. JMD


Stefoff's examination of a dozen ruins, discovered (or, more properly, rediscovered or reintroduced) during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, traces the development of modern archaeology as a scientific discipline. For each site, readers are offered background on its original "discovery," an interpretation of its history and significance, and a summary of current excavation, conservation, and research. Arrangement of sites by chronological order of discovery allows the audience to follow the archaeologists' progress toward modern technique, as they learn and apply such principles as stratigraphy and dendrochronology, and experiment with preservation methods. While squarely facing the substantial problems of site contamination by early visitors, Stefoff carefully and equitably distinguishes the frequently inept efforts of scholar/explorers from rapacious looting by fortune hunters. With plentiful photos, chronology, bibliography, and index, this should be a choice site for report writers excavating information. EB

STOEHR, SHELLEY  Wannabe. Delacorte, 1997  [192p]
ISBN 0-385-32223-2  $15.95
Reviewed from galleys  M Gr. 9-12

Seventeen-year-old Cat is aching to break out of her restrictive life; the only daughter in a troubled Italian-American family, she's excited to be secretly working at one of New York's Italian social clubs. This gives her a look into the seamier side of life, the glamour and danger of which she finds alluring, though she's convinced that her beloved older brother, Mickey, can't handle it the way she can. Soon she's scoring coke in the school bathrooms, helping dealers weigh out for a piece of the goods, and longing for a relationship with the ultimate cool mobster, Joey Valentino: Mickey, meanwhile, is doing errands for Mafia wannabes and discovering the thrills of smoking crack. It all blows up in a faceoff with the cops that leaves Mickey shot in the leg and Cat stunned by the realization that her beloved Joey is an undercover policeman. Cat doesn't plummet as far as the characters in Stoehr's previous books (she's into drugs but not sex, for one thing), so her last-minute redemption isn't as absurd as theirs, though it's still tacked on abruptly with no fictional logic for it. Her bossy and confused affection for her brother is the most compelling thing in the book: aside from that, she's not really interesting enough to generate empathy, so her fate is less intriguing than her sins, which have an inherent thrill. Joey the caring narc seems straight out of an old episode of Baretta, and Mickey's occasional narration of chapters is merely a device to provide information outside of Cat's knowledge. The nostalgie de la boue that Stoehr's fans apparently relish is
here, as is the shallowness and lack of craftsmanship that her detractors deplore.

DS

STRASSER, TODD  *Hey, Dad, Get a Life!*  Holiday House, 1996  164p
ISBN 0-8234-1278-4  $15.95  R  Gr. 4-7

Kelly, twelve, is still struggling to get over the death of her beloved father; now her little sister, Sasha, is displaying a suspicious interest in ghosts, and some mysterious things are happening. Soon the sisters realize that Dad is coming back to help his daughters in matters large and small: he cleans Sasha’s room and makes her bed, he provides answers for Kelly’s math tests and helps her to soccer victory after soccer victory, and he interferes with Mom’s tentative attempts to start dating again. Finally, however, Kelly—helped by her father’s shade—understands that their dependence on the ghost is not only unfair but unhealthy, and that it’s time to let go. We’ve seen ghost stories about returning relatives before (Constance Greene’s *Nora: Maybe a Ghost Story*, BCCB 10/93; Sharon Creech’s *Pleasing the Ghost*, BCCB 1/96), but this one is both realistically mundane (especially in the sisters’ dialogue and their plebeian requests of the other world) and inventive with its ghostly conceit. Particularly well-handled is the retroactive characterization of Kelly’s dad, with the delicate implication that the family was leaning a little bit too much on him even when he was alive. Touching yet surprisingly cheerful, this is a compassionate and accessible tale of a family’s adjustment to loss. DS

SZEKERES, CYNDY  *I Love My Busy Book: About the Alphabet, Counting, Colors, Opposites, Shapes and Much, Much More!*; written and illus. by Cyndy Szekeres. Scholastic, 1997  [48p]
ISBN 0-590-69195-3  $12.95
Reviewed from galleys  Ad 2-4 yrs

Szekeres tries to assume the Scarry mantle in this playful oversized concept book that packs it all in: shapes, colors, rhymes, manners, opposites, clothing, the alphabet, numbers, emotions, animal sounds, and body parts. The fifteen chapters (only one of which is more than a double-page spread) each treat a different concept with simple text and bright primary-color ink and watercolor illustrations of anthropomorphized bunnies, ducks, kittens, mice, and other familiar animals doing their thematic thing. The illustrations are undistinguished if sweet, but young children will appreciate the humor and detail. Szekeres unfortunately does not develop any one idea particularly well, and many of the chapters confusingly present more than one concept. Young Richard Scarry fans will enjoy poring over the crowded compositions, but Scarry did it better. PMc

TCHANA, KATRIN HYMAN  *Oh, No, Toto!*; by Katrin Hyman Tchana and Louise Tchana Pami; illus. by Colin Bootman. Scholastic, 1997  [32p]
ISBN 0-590-46585-6  $15.95
Reviewed from galleys  Ad 4-7 yrs

Two-year-old Toto Gourmand, so called because he is always hungry, “lives in Cameroon, which is a beautiful country in West Africa.” His grandmother, Big Mami, takes him to market to shop for a special dinner, and in a way that only two-year-olds can, Toto disrupts every vendor while sampling every tasty treat available (“Big Mami didn’t have enough money for Toto to eat everything in the market. . . . It was time to take Toto home”). He is sent to his room in disgrace,
but he is irresistibly drawn to the kitchen by the wonderful smell of egussi soup.
The text is unremarkable, but Toto's gourmandise has a certain cumulative mo-
mentum. Bootman's oil paintings, while a bit flashy and slick, are full of vibrant
textiles and vivid characterizations, bright backgrounds and gleeful expressions.
The final painting of Toto curled up full and asleep next to the empty soup pot is
dearing. An author's note gives cultural context to the tale; a glossary of
Cameroonian foods and a recipe for egussi soup are included. JMD

THOMPSON, JULIAN  *Ghost Story*. Holt, 1997  [224p]
ISBN 0-8050-4870-7  $15.95
Reviewed from galleys M Gr. 6-9

Fourteen-year-old Anna has a new friend—Roxy Cray, resident ghost at Anna's
parents' Vermont inn. Roxy's been haunting the inn for nearly two hundred years,
waiting till "something happens" that will send her on to "forever." In addition to
Roxy, Anna is surrounded by an inn full of potentially interesting characters—
obsessing-but-caring-parents, visiting rock stars, a one-handed basketball "coach," a
ground-breaking feminist, and a photographer with dark designs—who don't come
close to achieving their literary promise. Characterization is flatly stereotypical at
best, and Anna's narrative voice never rings true. The climax has the handsome-
but-slimy photographer plying Anna with pot brownies to get her to star in a
pornographic exercise videotape. Roxy, who has confessed to being seduced by a
portrait painter in the early 1800s (subsequently dying of a botched abortion),
pushes the ne'er-do-well photographer off a cliff, the act that apparently propels
her into "forever." The feminist who witnesses it all mistakes Roxy for Anna, but
she swears she'll never tell, as that no-good "scumbag" got what he deserved.
Contrived and shallow, this novel is less than haunting. JMD

VOJTECH, ANNA, ad. *Marushka and the Month Brothers*; ad. by Anna Vojtech and
Philemon Sturges; illus. by Anna Vojtech. North-South, 1996  32p
Library ed. ISBN 1-55858-629-6  $15.88
Trade ed. ISBN 1-55858-628-8  $15.95 Ad 5-8 yrs

This version of the Czech and Slovak folk tale about the sweet-tempered, hard-
working Marushka, who enlists the help of the twelve Month Brothers and finds
violets, strawberries, and apples in the dead of winter for her demanding step-
mother and stepsister, is written for a younger audience than Marshak's superb
*The Month-Brothers* (BCCB 6/83). The retelling here is somewhat choppy, and it
makes for an awkward readaloud. Vojtech's love for her native land, however, is
apparent in her pencil and watercolor illustrations as the luminous palette ranges
from the gray-brown of dusk in a mountain cottage to the bluish purple light of
winter storms to the sunsplashed loveliness of spring meadows. The compositions
are dramatic and the figures remarkably expressive: the stepmother and stepsister
are studies in greed and envy, and Marushka's slim figure, dressed in red skirt and
blue shawl and leaning into the winter wind, becomes an emblem of brave deter-
mination. In an interesting break from more traditional conclusions, Marushka
does not marry but lives happily and alone in her cottage, surrounded by the bless-
ings of the Month Brothers: violets in spring, strawberries in summer, apples in
fall, and friends in winter who "laugh, sing songs, and tell stories in the warmth of
Marushka's smile—a smile, they say, that could thaw a January day." PMc
WALKER, DAVA *Puzzles*; illus. by Cornelius Van Wright and Ying-Hwa Hu. Carolina Wren, 1996 40p

Paper ed. ISBN 0-914996-29-0 $6.95 R 6-9 yrs

Nine-year-old Cassie has sickle cell anemia, and this is the story of how she copes with the complications of her illness. That this is a utilitarian, "how to explain it to a child" book is a given; that it explains it with so little self-consciousness is a welcome surprise. Walker's text concentrates on Cassie's personal story—how her illness makes her feel, what she's nervous about, what it's like for her in the hospital, how she deals with school assignments, physical limitations, and friendships. Expressive watercolor illustrations show a loving, supportive family in home, school, and hospital environments. An introductory section entitled "To the adult reading this book with a child" contains background information on sickle cell anemia, and two pages of concluding resources provides suggestions for further reading, places to call for help, and an encouragement to search for sites on the Internet. Oddly, no mention is made of the fact that this disease is at worst fatal and at best shortens life expectancy considerably. This is still a useful, surprisingly successful book about an important topic, because the story isn't just about a disease but also about the little girl who has it. JMD

WELLS, ROSEMARY *Bunny Cakes*; written and illus. by Rosemary Wells. Dial, 1997 [26p]


Reviewed from galleys R 3-6 yrs

Max and Ruby have their separate ideas on what would be more suitable for Grandma's birthday: "Max made her an earthworm birthday cake," but Max's I-know-best older sister, Ruby, has decreed, "We are going to make Grandma an angel surprise cake with raspberry-fluff icing." Max's attempt to be helpful leads to a series of culinary disasters in the kitchen, and his plight worsens when he is sent to the store by Ruby and tries to expand the grocery list ("Max wanted Red-Hot Marshmallow Squirters for his earthworm cake. So he wrote 'Red-Hot Marshmallow Squirters' on the list"). In this take on written communication kidstyle, pudgy Max is at his winsome best, creating havoc in the kitchen or looking irresistibly hopeful as he passes the list with his illegible add-on to the perplexed grocer. Ruby is indomitable as only a bossy but capable sister can be. The ink-and-watercolor depictions of Max's messes, Ruby's grocery lists rendered on yellow notebook paper with a black crayon, and most importantly the no-Max-allowed sign (a red circle with a slash over Max's crayoned image) that Ruby leaves on the kitchen door all add up to a perfect sibling back-off fraught with good-natured, bunny-child humor. It ends just right with—you guessed it—two cakes for Grandma, one bedecked with Red-Hot Marshmallow Squirters. PM

WOODRUFF, ELVIRA *The Orphan of Ellis Island: A Time-Travel Adventure*. Scholastic, 1997 [192p]

ISBN 0-590-48245-9 $14.95

Reviewed from galleys M Gr. 4-6

Dominic Cantori isn't excited about his fifth-grade class' trip to Ellis Island; orphaned at birth, lonely Dominic has been in the foster-care system all his life and
has no family history to hunt down at the famed New York gateway. Or so he thinks, but the museum sends him back through time literally as well as metaphorically, and he finds himself in 1908 Italy with an impromptu family in the form of the orphaned Candiano brothers, who are waiting for passage to America. After various trials and tribulations, Dominic and the brothers make the crossing together; after realizing that his makeshift brothers are actually his real-time ancestors, Dominic returns to the present from the Ellis Island of the past. Somewhere at the heart of this is a warm story of young immigrants traveling from the Old World to the New, but it's lost in the clunky contrivance of the time-travel framework and in the sentimentally romanticized characters. The shifts of tone between tragic and light-hearted that Woodruff managed capably in *Dear Napoleon, I Know You're Dead, But...* (BCCB 12/92) are jarring here. Nor is the story's end as satisfying as the book seems to think: Dominic's nice-sounding new home is still an unknown, his ancestry is still undetermined, and the fate of his immigrant companions unclear. There's a sweetness to the story, but both time and transatlantic voyages have been better covered elsewhere. End matter includes an author's note on her family history, a map of Italy, a glossary, a pronunciation guide, and a bibliography. DS

**YEP, LAURENCE** *The Khan's Daughter: A Mongolian Folktale;* illus. by Jean and Mou-sien Tseng. Scholastic, 1997 [32p]  
ISBN 0-590-48389-7 $16.95  
Reviewed from galleys  
R Gr. 4-6

This is a satisfying tale of love, destiny, and rueful comeuppance, as a young commoner wins the hand of a great Khan's daughter in spite of her interfering mother. Pursuing his fortune as foretold by his father's prophecy, Môngke presents himself to the Khan as the destined husband of his only daughter, Borte. The Khan has a sense of humor about the whole thing, but not so his wife, who demands that Môngke pass three impossible tests before being found worthy. But "Borte thought he might have possibilities," and with her assistance and some very good luck, Môngke is triumphant and the happy couple's future is assured. Yep's lively language has a slyly mischievous subtext that adds a humorous undertone to this tale of love—and wisdom—found. The watercolor illustrations are just as lively, with a strong sense of composition that is consistently successful. The earthy palette suits the land of sweeping steppes, ornate ornaments and costume, and daring cast of characters. Specific source notes are included. JMD

Veteran storytellers Hamilton and Weiss, a husband-and-wife storytelling team, have produced a storytelling how-to book aimed specifically at children. The first twenty-one pages handily guide readers through the storytelling process from choosing a story to tell, to learning the story (written outlines, story webs, tape recording, etc.), to actual telling (expression, tempo, pauses, facial expressions, etc.). The bulk of the book is devoted to thirty stories for telling, the majority traditional folktales. Each tale is presented in two columns: the column on the left is the tale text, with emphasized words in bold; the right-hand column “coaches” the teller with suggestions for verbal presentation and accompanying physical gestures. A guide for adults on helping children to storytell, a bibliography, source notes, and an index are included. JMD


Accomplished storyteller Joe Hayes takes a less textbook-style approach to teaching children to tell stories than do Hamilton and Weiss, above. While they rely heavily on written directions, Hayes takes a more concrete, visual tack with this “photo-tutorial.” He retells nine accessible, mostly traditional tales from the Southwestern United States. The text of the tales is supplemented with Hayes’ explanations and suggestions in bold type set in gray sidebars on the left, and each double-page spread is replete with black-and-white photographs of the physically expressive Hayes and his participating audience members. Several of the stories are bilingual (English/Spanish), and tips for bilingual storytelling are included. The unique layout, design, and photographs makes this book remarkably involving, and the photographer, Richard Baron, should have had a credit line on the title page. While more specific notes on the stories’ sources and a more extensive bibliography would have enriched this title, it is still an unusually accessible, intimate way of introducing children—and adults—to storytelling. JMD
SUBJECT AND USE INDEX

Keyed to The Bulletin's alphabetical arrangement by author, this index, which appears in each issue, can be used in three ways. Entries in regular type refer to subjects; entries in **bold type** refer to curricular or other uses; entries in **ALL-CAPS** refer to genres and appeals. In the case of subject headings, the subhead "stories" refers to books for the readaloud audience; "fiction," to those books intended for independent reading.

Africa--folklore: Aardema
Africa--stories: Tchana
African Americans--poetry: Greenfield; Grimes; Myers
African Americans--stories: Rahaman; Walker
American Indians--fiction: Bruchac; Jacobs; Rinaldi
ANIMAL STORIES: Aardema
Animals: Darling
Antarctica: Johnson
Ants--stories: Harley
Archaeology: Stefoff
Asia--fiction: Schneider
Aunts and uncles--fiction: Creech
Australia--fiction: Napoli
Baseball--fiction: Carter
Basketball--poetry: Greenfield
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Books and reading--fiction: Spinelli
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Brothers and sisters--fiction: Dunlop; Napoli; Platt
Brothers and sisters--stories: Wells
Bullies--fiction: Bloor; Bruchac
Career guidance: Johnson
Children's literature: Coren
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CONCEPT BOOKS: Szekeres
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Diaries--fiction: Lorbiecki
Dogs--stories: Rossiter
Dolls--stories: Nivola
Dreams--fiction: Dexter
Drugs--fiction: Stoehr
Ecology: Patent Biodiversity;
Patent Flashy
Ethics and values: Avi
FANTASY: Dickinson; Woodruff
Fathers and daughters--fiction: Strasser
FOLKTALES AND FAIRY TALES: Aardema; Vojtech;
Yep
Food--stories: Tchana; Wells
Friendship--fiction: Carter
Friendship--stories: James
Frogs: Patent
Frogs and toads--stories: Brown
GHOST STORIES: Dunlop;
Strasser; Thompson
Growing up--fiction: Kindl
Guide dogs--stories: Rossiter
Gypsies--stories: Gilman
Hats--stories: Pearson
HISTORICAL FICTION: Jacobs;
Platt; Rinaldi; Schneider
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History, world: Lorbiecki;
Schneider; Stefoff
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Home--fiction: Rochman
Horses--fiction: Adler
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Immigration—fiction: Woodruff
Law enforcement—fiction: Stoehr
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Love—poetry: Adoff
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Mothers and daughters—fiction: Adler
Mothers and sons—stories: Rahaman
Moving—fiction: Adler; Bruchac
Murder—fiction: Dexter; Giberga
MYSTERIES: Dexter; Duncan; Giberga; Napoli
Nature study: Arnosky; Darling;
Dewey; Patent Biodiversity;
Patent Flashy
Orphans—fiction: Woodruff
POETRY: Adoff; Bagert;
Greenfield; Grimes
Princesses—stories: Gilman
Rabbits—stories: Arnosky
Rainforests: Patent Flashy
Reading aloud: Bagert

Reading, easy: Avi
Reading, reluctant: Glenn; Spinelli
Reading—stories: Rahaman
Schools—fiction: Glenn
SHORT STORIES: Dickinson; Rochman
Sisters—fiction: Kindl; Strasser
Snakes: Dewey
SPORTS STORIES: Carter
Sports—fiction: Bloor
Storytelling: Aardema; Vojtech; Yep
Storytelling—stories: Harley
Storytime: Brown; Cyrus; James; Pearson
Supernatural—fiction: Dickinson
Time travel—fiction: Woodruff
War—fiction: Lee; Lorbiecki
War—stories: Harris
Witches—fiction: Duncan
Women’s studies: Johnson
World War II—fiction: Lee
World War II—stories: Nivola
Amy A. McClure and Janice V. Kristo, editors

Ever wonder how your favorite children’s authors create just the right plot twist, choose the perfect turn of a phrase, or write authentic dialogue for the characters they bring to life? In this companion volume to Inviting Children’s Responses to Literature, many of today’s best writers—including Avi, Jerry Spinelli, Katherine Paterson, Gary Paulsen, Ashley Bryan, and Jane Yolen—share their thoughts on these and other aspects of the creative process. The nearly forty essays represent many different genres of children’s literature, including historical fiction, fantasy, folklore, nonfiction, picture books, and poetry. In earlier chapters, members of NCTE’s Children’s Literature Assembly look at the many intriguing and unusual ways that authors use language to challenge and entertain their young readers. Individual chapters focus on such topics as literary genres and literary language, responding to the language of Notable Books, and developing an appreciation for language diversity. Classroom teachers and teacher educators will find here a wealth of ideas to use with their students. 335 pp. 1996. Grades K–8. ISBN 0-8141-0370-7 No. 03707-4033...... $19.95 ($14.95)
Warring factions in the United States like to use children as weapons for their political agendas as Americans try to determine the role—if any—of the federal government in the lives of children. But what is the history of child welfare policy in the United States? What can we learn from the efforts to found the U.S. Children's bureau in 1903 and its eventual dismemberment in 1946?

This is the first history of the Children's bureau and the first in-depth examination of federal child welfare policy from the perspective of that agency. Its goal was to promote “a right to childhood,” and Kriste Lindenmeyer unflinchingly examines the successes—and the failures—of the bureau. She analyzes infant and maternal mortality, the promotion of child health care, child labor reform, and the protection of children with “special needs” from the bureau's inception through the Depression, and through all the legislation that impacted on its work for children. The meaningful accomplishments and the demise of the Children's bureau have much to tell parents, politicians, and policymakers everywhere.

Cloth, $49.95; Paper, $21.95
The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books invites you to visit our newly expanded home page at

http://edfu.lis.uiuc.edu/puboff/bccb

New features include:
- **Bulletin Stars**—what we starred this month
- **Bulletin Dozen**—a genre- or theme-based list of titles (this month: Four-Hankie Reads)
- **Quote of the Month**
- **Bulletin Blue Ribbons 1990-1996**
- the Baby Bulletin—a sample collection of recent reviews

Occasional features include:
- **Newcomer to Watch**—an examination of the work of a talented new author or artist
- **True Blue**—reflection on a time-honored talent
- **Dueling Reviews**—a look at the discussion behind the scenes when a book polarizes the editors
- And more . . . updated monthly!