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PRODUCTION NOTE

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Library Large-scale Digitization Project, 2007.
Smuggled out of Nigeria in the 1990s after their mother's murder, 12-year-old Sade and her younger brother are abandoned in London—fearful of their new surroundings and of what may have happened to their journalist father back in Nigeria.

“Through [her] compelling characters, Naidoo has captured and revealed the personal anguish and universality of the refugee experience.” —Starred review / School Library Journal

“While the book honors its political and ethical engagements, it succeeds as a first-rate escape-adventure story as well.” —Starred review / The Horn Book

“This thought-provoking novel offers a gripping, open-eyed exploration of what happens when principles meet practical reality in hand-to-hand combat.” —Starred review / The Bulletin

“This powerful novel . . . humanizes contemporary politics.” —Starred review / ALA Booklist

“Readers [are] likely to find [Sade’s] determination exhilarating.” —Starred review / Publishers Weekly

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THE BULLETIN
OF THE CENTER FOR CHILDREN'S BOOKS
January 2002
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A LOOK INSIDE

163 THE BIG PICTURE

Martin's Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. by Doreen Rappaport; illus. by Bryan Collier

164 NEW BOOKS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Reviewed titles include:

175 • Breaking Through by Francisco Jiménez
180 • Fly! written and illus. by Christopher Myers
182 • The Master Swordsman & The Magic Doorway: Two Legends from Ancient China ad. and illus. by Alice Provensen
188 • Finding H. F. by Julia Watts
189 • Company's Going by Arthur Yorinks; illus. by David Small

190 BULLETIN BLUE RIBBONS 2001
192 SUBJECT AND USE INDEX
EXPLANATION OF CODE SYMBOLS USED WITH REVIEWS

* 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 Bryan Collier from Martin's Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. ©2001. Used by permission of Jump at the Sun/Hyperion Books for Children.
Martin’s Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
by Doreen Rappaport; illus. by Bryan Collier

January 15th. King’s Birthday. School’s off—an honor only conferred upon the memory of our country’s most distinguished movers, shakers, and shapers. While middle- and high-schoolers can appreciate Dr. King’s groundbreaking strategies and accomplishments, primary graders are likely to conflate his national holiday with Veterans’ Day, Labor Day, Presidents’ Day—days that seem to invoke adult solemnity but overlook kid-pleasing rituals involving food and gifts. Unlocking for action-hungry youngsters the significance of a life based on peace, fortitude, and self-control is an undeniable challenge, but Rappaport and Collier have found the key, and it’s “big.”

“Big” is one of the earliest deposits in a child’s word bank. It’s infused with awe. It’s what adults are and kids want to be. It’s everything kids sense to be important, but it’s difficult or impossible to articulate. It’s a blessedly easy word to read. Rappaport uses the concept to forge an empathic connection between King and her audience, introducing him as a little guy who grasped the power of the hymns, Bible readings, and preaching of his minister father and predicted with fumbling and startling insight, “When I grow up, I’m going to get big words, too.” Throughout this title everything about King’s words is, figuratively and literally, big. Each spare box of text offers a few lines of biographical detail or historical background, simply and cogently stated for very young listeners, and concludes with an impassioned King quote dominating the page in oversized type: “White ministers told [the marchers] to stop. Mayors and governors and police chiefs and judges ordered them to stop. . . . ‘Wait! For years I have heard the word ‘Wait!’ We have waited more than three hundred and forty years for our rights’; “Some black Americans wanted to fight back with their fists. Martin convinced them not to. . . . ‘Love is the key to the problems of the world.’”

With King’s words looming larger than life, Collier supplies the concrete visual imagery to connect potent ideas with an unintimidating, flesh-and-blood man. A life-sized portrait of King, wide-mouthed and crinkly-eyed in a hearty laugh, greets children from the wordless cover. Warm-toned, symbol-rich collage (Collier discusses several of his visual metaphors in an opening note) portrays King in a range of emotions—a little boy tense with resentment upon discovering a “Whites Only” drinking fountain, a gentle minister leaning intimately over the pulpit toward his congregation, a mournful victim kneeling before the flames of his burning home, a thundering orator with an outstretched arm signifying the breadth of his famous “dream.” Recurring images of United States flags and stained-
glass windows convey, perhaps more succinctly than words, the political and spiri-
tual energies that powered King's life.

A child-oriented bibliography of books and websites, source notes for
quotations, and a list of important dates in King's life hint that even the very
young might be required to approach Dr. King as a research subject. This title
fairly demands to be read aloud, though, as a bravura solo performance, in tandem
voices for narrative and quotations, or perhaps even in chorus. This is powerful
stuff, big stuff, and children privileged to share Martin's Big Words with class-
mates or family will begin to understand that January 15th isn't just another day
off. (Imprint information appears on p. 183.)

Elizabeth Bush, Reviewer

NEW BOOKS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

ANDERSON, M. T. Handel, Who Knew What He Liked; illus. by Kevin
Hawkes. Candlewick, 2001 40p
ISBN 0-7636-1046-1 $16.99 R Gr. 4-7

Anderson (author of Thirsty, BCCB 4/97, and Burger Wuss, 9/99) turns his irrev-
erent prose here to the life of eighteenth-century composer George Frideric Handel.
Starting with Handel's youthful aptitude for music (which greatly chagrined his
father), the book goes on to describe his studies in Germany and Italy, his trium-
phant years in England, his fall from popularity, and his successful shift to the
oratorio form (typified by the Messiah). Anderson spices this account with eccen-
tric details from Handel's life (such as his duel with a good friend over the con-
ducting of an orchestra) and an amusingly deadpan style ("The characters would
sing arias in Italian, some of the most beautiful music ever heard onstage. Then
they would stab each other"). Though there are a few odd omissions from the
chronicle (Handel's blindness is mentioned only in the appended timeline) and
the factual tidbits in sidebars sometimes seem a bit tacked on, this is a stylish and
entertaining beginner biography that gives readers plenty of reason to be interested
in its subject. Hawkes' smoky acrylics sometimes make an excessively dark back-
ground for the text, but the textured earth tones effectively evoke the rich candlelit
ambience of the eighteenth-century stage. This will be an obvious and welcome
addition to music units and biography shelves. A chronology, a discography, and
suggestions for further reading are appended. DS

BADOE, ADWOA, ad. The Pot of Wisdom: Ananse Stories; illus. by Baba Wagué
Diakité. Groundwood/Douglas & McIntyre, 2001 [64p]
ISBN 0-88899-429-X $18.95 R 5-9 yrs

Ghanaian author Badoe here retells ten tales of Ananse, the West African trickster
figure. Stories include a version of the tar-baby story, a tale involving secrets be-
tween husband and wife, and several entries wherein an embarrassed Ananse suffers when his tricks backfire on him. The retellings (each two to three pages long) are a little stiff, and they may need some adapting to make them successful readalouds, but there's an interesting breadth here. A full-page illustration on polychromed and glazed earthenware tiles opens each story; black-and-white spot-art caricatures of Ananse decorate page numbers and act as borders to the full-page images. The designerly clarity and artistic energy enhance the impact of the text, and libraries will want to use this to expand their collection of trickster stories.


Jessica and her younger brother, Nat, are speechless at their mother’s announcement regarding her new scheme to bring the family much needed income (“I’m going to be a professional witch! Mellandra Haggerthwaite, Professional Witch! Doesn’t that sound good?”). Subsequent discord in the home, including an argument about whether magic or mulch grows better tomatoes, prompts Jessica’s gardener father to move out. In desperation, Jessica embraces her own new profession: she declares herself a “witch dispatcher” and resolves to undermine her embarrassing mother at any given opportunity. Jessica’s schemes backfire, however, since instead of hampering her mother’s new business she brings Mrs. Haggerthwaite positive publicity and paying customers. After a series of mildly amusing mishaps (including a science project that proves the efficacy of both magic and mulch), all ends well: Mr. Haggerthwaite moves back home, Mrs. Haggerthwaite promises to consult the family on any future job plans, and Jessica retires as a witch dispatcher. Though a lighthearted and speedy read, this travels on such an even keel that it never feels as if it’s going anywhere: tension is lacking (there’s never any doubt that the story will end well), and characterizations, while sometimes funny, are mostly bland. Nonetheless, this is a nonthreatening and cheerful story with an enjoyably fanciful touch. Archbold’s black-and-white line drawings feature a scruffy but endearing cast of characters and provide some of the zing missing from the text. JMD

Batten, Mary *Anthropologist: Scientist of the People*; illus. with photographs by A. Magdalena Hurtado and Kim Hill. Houghton, 2001 64p ISBN 0-618-08368-5 $16.00 R Gr. 4-7

Magdalena Hurtado, an anthropologist studying the Aché people of the Paraguayan forest, is the focus for Batten’s photoessay introduction to this field of social science and the experiences (and issues) of field work in anthropology. Batten skillfully integrates methodology—narrowing questions, formulating hypotheses, collecting data through formal techniques such as “focal follow” and “scan sampling”—with powerful human-interest angles involving Hurtado’s initial nonverbal attempts at communication with the Aché, her often stumbling acculturation into Aché life, and her frequent stays among the Aché in the company of her anthropologist husband and their two daughters. Although the potential impact of anthropological study on its subjects is raised, Batten clearly advances Hurtado’s
justification for the enterprise: "For those who argue that anthropologists should leave hunter-gatherers in a pristine environment, Magdalena points out that the moment contact is made [prior to the anthropologists' arrival], there is no longer any pristine environment. When hunter-gatherers make contact, they become part of an international community." Older readers may want to take up the debate, while younger readers can simply ponder a profession that requires its practitioners to dine on insect larvae and armadillo. EB

Trade ed. ISBN 0-679-89485-3  $16.95

Bolden, author of *And Not Afraid to Dare: The Stories of Ten African-American Women* (BCCB 6/98), offers a prose-poem in praise of the black church in America, threading references to African-American achievements, hymns, and historical figures throughout her rhythmic text: "When she was invisible . . . her roof nightsky,/ her flooring Godgrown pastures walled by woods . . . / quiet streams did steal away to her/ preachments and soul-toned singing/ for the grit to go on, the might to keep the faith/ and hold tight to Blessed Assurance that/ Liberation was in holy order . . . / with Gabriel and Nancy Prosser, Nat Turner, Denmark, Harriet, Frederick, and Sojourner among her sons and daughters." The text is somewhat catalogish and the subject overly abstract for much of its audience, but the personification of the church makes the images intimate and immediate. Christie's paintings depict a world on edge, the architecture gone askew in buildings tipping off hillsides and city streets. Churchgoers with elongated limbs and faith-contorted features (sometimes more awkward than stylized) fill pages overflowing with the presence and power of the church and her congregations. Bolden includes historical notes to provide some context for her literary imagery and an author's note telling of her connection to the black church. JMD

BUTCHER, KRISTIN  *The Gramma War*. Orca, 2001 [160p]

Reviewed from galleys

Eleven-year-old Annie is suffering from a life in upheaval: her beloved teacher has taken leave for health reasons and her father is working twelve hours a day on account of a recent promotion, but the worst change is the arrival of Annie's grandmother, who's come to live in Annie's room while Annie bunks in with snooty older sister Claire (and Annie's beloved gerbils are fostered by her friend Joel). Gramma proves to be unhappy and demanding, requiring constant attention and offering little warmth or gratitude in recompense; eventually, Annie's father begins to consider moving his mother to a nursing home rather than further burden his exhausted wife and tense daughters. There's a fair amount of contrivance here, both in the plot (there's no consideration of possibilities between family care and the nursing home, and Gramma dies conveniently before the switch to the nursing home) and in the subplot (Annie's interest in history converts to an interest in family history, which allows her to connect with her grandmother). The familial plight is an all-too-common one in life and a fairly rare one in literature for young people, however, and Butcher doesn't sugarcoat the strain of taking in an elderly family member; the book also acknowledges the complexity of the situation, with
Annie’s sister ferociously devoted to the grandmother whom she’s adored, Annie confused by an old lady she barely knows, and parents unhappy with all the available options. Kids close to their grandparents may want to read this and feel lucky.

DS


While today’s younger readers may be more familiar with David Copperfield than Harry Houdini, this biography will give them a sense of the history of the craft of magic and illusion. Cox presents Houdini in the context of his time, describing how his subject’s early poverty, family life, and close connection to his mother influenced his ambitions and choices. A man of strong passions, Houdini was loyal to his friends, devoted to his wife and mother, and brutal towards those he believed betrayed him; he also strove to meet his own impossible standards and to attain the success that forever eluded his father. In his later years, he became first a devotee and then an enemy of Spiritualism, exposing those who claimed contact with the spirit world. While the text occasionally verges on a list-like chronology of events, Cox compresses a tremendous amount of living into the narrative. His take on Houdini, while unsentimental and unsparing of the man’s weaknesses, still shows a tremendous admiration for his stamina, determination, and courage. Black-and-white photos provide period atmosphere; a brief bibliography is included.

JMD

Cox, Judy  *Butterfly Buddies*; illus. by Blanche Sims. Holiday House, 2001 86p ISBN 0-8234-1654-2 $15.95 R Gr. 2-4

Third grade has taken a scary turn for Robin, since her friend Ashley has moved away and her old teacher has taken maternity leave (“No best friend, and a new teacher to worry about”). Things look promising when cool new girl Zoey joins the class and cool Miss Wing arrives to teach, but Robin’s afraid that neither of them like her, since she keeps doing things wrong. This is fairly predictably prescriptive, but it’s also a solid school story that taps into real grade-school anxieties (readers will ache in sympathy for both Zoey and Robin when Robin accidentally pantses Zoey in front of the whole class) and annoyances (Robin is perpetually beset by obstreperous classmate Hippo) with Clearyesque authenticity. The subplot about the class’s caterpillar-to-butterfly science project blends unobtrusively into the main plot, providing a focus for the school story rather than a distraction from it. A generous helping of Sims’ bristly and informal line drawings provides a visual invitation to uncertain readers, and an afterword on caring for butterflies is included.

DS


Now largely vilified for its ecological abuses, whaling was once, of course, a respectable trade that promised—and quite often delivered—upward mobility and a comfortable income until its practitioners killed their own cash cow through over-harvesting. This evenhanded introduction evaluates the trade squarely within a
nineteenth-century context, where the rigors, loneliness, and perils of maritime life were entailed by the insatiable demand for commodities only the whale could provide. Currie is somewhat selective in his introduction and employment of whaling terminology (the glamorous "Nantucket sleigh ride," for instance, is defined and described, while the workaday "flensing," which one might say gets at the meat of the issue, never appears). He turns a blind eye to sailors' sexual activity, even as it relates to discussions of shore leave and the practice of shipboard medicine, and his sketchy coverage of black whalers requires McKissacks' *Black Hands, White Sails* (BCCB 11/99) as supplement. The information is neatly packaged for middle-school consumption, though, with brief chapters, plenty of period photos and engravings, and a list for further reading that zeros right in on those books readily available for interested readers at this grade level. Hand this to kids looking for a unique report topic and wish them "greasy luck." EB

**Daly, Niki**  *What's Cooking, Jamela?*; written and illus. by Niki Daly. Farrar, 2001 31p ISBN 0-374-35602-5 $16.00 R 4-7 yrs

Jamela (from *Jamela's Dress*, BCCB 6/99) is back, and this time she's helping Mama and Gogo (grandmother) plan Christmas dinner. The menu calls for rice, marogo stew, and roast chicken, and Jamela gets to pick out the chicken they will fatten up for the feast. She names it Christmas, and those familiar with children's holiday stories will see the subsequent developments developing from a mile away. Jamela enjoys the usual Christmas revels (class plays, holiday crafts, etc.) and grows fonder and fonder of Christmas, the Christmas dinner. She is very aware that her mother and grandmother are planning to cook the chicken, but she is also one smart cookie—when told to go see how the stew is coming (so her mother can get the chicken into the pot), Jamela takes Christmas with her, but Christmas escapes, resulting in a riotous chase through downtown, into the ladies' hair salon, and, finally, to capture under a basket. Eventually a fine Christmas dinner is had by Jamela and her family, but there is no chicken on the menu, because Mama has given her to Jamela as a Christmas present. Daly gives this hackneyed old plot some new dressing, and the result is a joyful literary banquet. His storytelling is quick and funny, with enough tension to keep the plot from being dull; his watercolors quiver with vibrant earth tones energized with yellow, and holiday glee radiates from the faces of his characters. Put this alongside Cowley's *Gracias: The Thanksgiving Turkey* (BCCB 11/96) to spice up your holiday shelves. A glossary of Xhosa, Afrikaans, and other African words used in the text is included. JMD

**DeBear, Kirsten**  *Be Quiet, Marina!;* illus. with photographs by Laura Dwight. Star Bright, 2001 32p ISBN 1-887734-79-1 $16.95 Ad 3-6 yrs

Marina and Moira have a lot in common—they're both four years old, they both like to dance, play ball, and dress up, and they both go to the same school—but they haven't always been happy playmates. Marina is loud, bossy, and bouncy where Moira is quiet, and Marina's screeching used to scare Moira away from her schoolmate. Moira's anti-screaming request seems to have worked—most of the time—and the two girls (helped by their teacher and by Moira's new willingness to shout, "Be quiet, Marina!") now play together successfully. The text sometimes slips from simplicity into chirpiness, and the layout—thinnily bordered black-and-
white photographs set against pale colors or balanced by text in smeary colored boxes—is stodgy and old-fashioned. It's a straightforward and well-focused story, however, dealing with a situation familiar to many youngsters. The pictures reveal that quiet Moira has Down syndrome (never mentioned in the main text), and alert viewers may also detect the physical difficulties that accompany Marina's cerebral palsy; more importantly, the pair are photogenic as all get out and natural to boot. The unaffected and unstated featuring of kids with disabilities makes this book refreshing and useful both for general audiences and special education groups. An explanatory note and list of resources in several countries are appended. DS

DENENBERG, BARRY  
*All Shook Up: The Life and Death of Elvis Presley.*  
Scholastic, 2001  176p illus. with photographs  
ISBN 0-439-09504-2 $16.95 M Gr. 7-10

This biography attempts to bring the life and influences of the King of Rock 'n' Roll to light for contemporary youngsters. Denenberg's determination to find the personal Presley is clear, and he provides a fair summary of the singer's early life—his relationships with his mother, his ne'er-do-well dad, and his warring selves (rebellious individualist vs. Southern gentleman) are clearly delineated. Unfortunately, the book seems to assume previous knowledge on the part of readers, never really conveying the impact that led John Lennon to say, "Before Elvis, there was nothing." While the author does discuss some of Elvis' musical influences, his exploration of Presley's African-American predecessors and models is cursory and shallow. He writes in a chatty, opinionated, informal tone that unfortunately falls flat: the prose is choppy, full of short sentences and incomplete thoughts, and the breathy, E!-exposé style often understates rather than underscores the seriousness of the star's private and public situation. Ultimately, this is an incomplete portrait that provides little indication of what made Elvis Presley great, thereby failing to convey the tragedy of both his life and death. Chapters open with song lyrics of varying degrees of relevance from a variety of musicians, and black-and-white photographs appear throughout; a chronology of events, a bibliography, a videography, a discography, and a filmography are included. JMD

DICKINSON, PETER  
*The Ropemaker.*  
Delacorte, 2001  376p  
ISBN 0-385-72921-9 $15.95 Ad Gr. 7-10

Tilja is heartbroken when she discovers she cannot hear the cedars whisper; her lack of ability means that the beloved family farm will pass to her younger sister, Anja, and Tilja will have to seek her fortune elsewhere. Before this can happen, however, Tilja and her grandmother discover that the magic that made the cedars whisper, that kept the valley safe from marauders for generations, is dying. Tilja and her grandmother join forces with Tahl and his grandfather (who can hear voices in bodies of water) and set out on a quest to find Faheel, the sorcerer who can renew the ancient protective magic. Their quest takes them from the safety of the valley to a dangerous journey through the Empire, a land ruled by a wicked emperor/sorcerer who intimidates his people through brute force and brute magic. Dickinson creates a solidly complex and believable world, wherein magic is part of the available but finite natural resources and it is strictly controlled by the emperor (at least as much as he is able). The history and mythology set up at the beginning of the novel provide a background of great depth against which the action is played. Tilja's dilemma is clearly presented, and the solution is foreshadowed by the sto-
ries of the past told by her grandmother. Unfortunately, despite the quest plot there is little tension and the momentum drags, especially in the final half of the book. The setting is colorful, but the characterizations are a bit pat and the action sometimes seems merely convenient. Still, fantasy lovers who appreciate a well-constructed universe may admire Dickinson’s artistry. JMD


Heart Avamir has no memory of her life before old Simon found her wrapped in a blanket covered with embroidered unicorns, and she has been the greedy man’s servant ever since, doing his chores and taking any odd job to earn a penny. One evening she discovers an old mare, skinny and wretched, forehead badly scarred, at the edge of a field. Simon tells her to fatten it for the knackers, but Heart feeds the mare out of love. Helped by healer Ruth Oakes, Heart cares for the mare, who soon gives birth to a disfigured foal. Forced by circumstances to flee with her charges, Heart takes to the woods. The first volume of this projected quartet leaves Heart with new discoveries: the foal is actually a unicorn, and mare, foal and girl are all in terrible danger. Duey constructs a gentle fantasy, using motifs and archetypes even the youngest fantasy readers will recognize: a semi-medieval setting, a worthy foundling, an evil lord, a gentle healer. She then steps easily into a beloved genre—the story of a girl and her horse (or, in this case, a girl and her unicorn). The subject alone will draw young readers, and the cliffhanger ending will certainly hold them. Though the black-and-white illustrations are somewhat dark and grainy, there’s a Rackhamesque old-world flavor to them that’s well suited to the story. JMD


Inspired by her father’s experiences in World War II, Elliott tells the story of nineteen-year-old Henry Forester, pilot in the U.S Air Force. Shot down over enemy territory, Henry finds himself in Alsace, where an elderly schoolteacher risks his life to take Henry to a Swiss hospital. On the way to an internment camp for Allied soldiers (Switzerland was neutral, and so any soldiers found within her borders were interned for the duration of the war), Henry escapes and begins to make his way back to England with the help of the underground. His journey is rife with adventure: he is betrayed to and taken prisoner by the Nazis, he escapes to join the resistance fighters, he is recaptured by the retreating Germans, and he’s freed due to the conscience of an old German soldier. Ultimately Henry arrives home on Thanksgiving Day, to the great joy of his mom, his dad, and his girl. The elements of this complex plot are not always gracefully handled, and the exposition is sometimes clumsy. The action scenes keep the pages turning, though, and Henry’s travels across war-torn Europe have a momentum that gives the novel a cinematic quality. Some introspection regarding the meaning of life, the horrors of war, and the longing for home adds emotional substrata to the action that keep this from being a gung-ho war story. Henry’s internal dialogues with his father are an
Effective means of keeping the homefront present, even though the reader never goes there until the predictable but satisfying end. JMD

FLOWERS, PAM  *Alone across the Arctic: One Woman’s Epic Journey by Dog Team;* by Pam Flowers with Ann Dixon; illus. with photographs by Pam Flowers. Alaska Northwest, 2001 [120p]
Trade ed. ISBN 0-88240-547-0 $22.95
Reviewed from galleys R Gr. 5-12

In 1993-94, Flowers went on the adventure of her lifetime, traveling the 2500 miles of the North American arctic coast by dogsled, following in the footsteps of a 1923 expedition that included one of the first female Arctic explorers. This chronicle of her trip cuts right to the chase, as it were, describing her day-by-day travails as she dealt with obstacles ranging from wayward dogs to the odd bear, bitter cold to freakishly warm weather. The book’s flat, matter-of-fact style is somewhat dry, but it’s a bracing counterpoint to the more emotion-laden narrations of Gary Paulsen. The dogs are foremost here, with much of the story’s drama coming from canine action ranging from the disappearance of the reliable leader dog, Douggie (who fortunately is eventually recovered), to the blossoming of young Anna into Douggie’s equal and successor. Flowers’ dedication to her team and willingness to learn from them (“When a team goes on strike, it’s time for their leader to take a cold, hard look in the mirror”) consistently inform her account, as does her gratitude to the people in the small Arctic villages who provided her with generous assistance and hospitality throughout her trip. The pace is swift, and the pages are broken up with sidebars (offering deeper focus into technical details) and photographs (unfortunately too small to convey the landscape’s grandeur, but sufficient to give faces to the dogs) that help make the layout inviting. Fans of outdoor adventure will find this a satisfying armchair jaunt. A map of the expedition opens the proceedings; end matter includes Flowers’ supply list, a glossary, and an index. DS

GARLAND, SHERRY  *In the Shadow of the Alamo.* Gulliver/Harcourt, 2001 282p
ISBN 0-15-201744-5 $17.00 R Gr. 5-8

Lorenzo Bonifacio, a tall and sturdy fifteen-year-old mestizo farmer, is pulled from the fields by recruiters raiding villages for cannon fodder for Santa Anna’s campaign in Texas. Esteban Esquivel, son of a well-to-do hacienda owner, is enlisting with an eye toward rapid promotion, and upon his false testimony that Lorenzo is of legal age for conscription, the two young men are signed into the ranks. Many villagers join the northward march as camp followers, among them goatherd Catalina, whose crush on Lorenzo is a constant source of embarrassment for him. There are also perils more dangerous than unwelcome love, as the punishing trek takes its toll on the soldiers through weariness, hunger, and exposure to the elements. By the time the troops face the tiny rebel force at San Antonio, Santa Anna’s competence and even his sanity are called into question by his highest-ranking generals and his lowliest foot soldiers. The bloody routs at the Alamo and Goliad undermine any remaining respect for Santa Anna, who gives no quarter even to the unarmed enemy and sacrifices an unconscionable number of his own men in ill-timed attacks. Garland clutters her story with some underdeveloped...
plot lines: Lorenzo pokes around to find his missing father among the ranks, while a sergeant falls for Lorenzo's aunt and virtuous Catalina nearly falls from grace with an abusive officer. In these cases, though, underdevelopment is a blessing, as it allows Garland to concentrate on the march and the battles, which rousingly and convincingly constitute the main event. Readers who followed the rebel camp in Wisler's *All for Texas* (BCCB 7/00) can now consider the view from the other end of the rifle barrel. EB


In the beginning, the Great Spirit told his helper, Napi, to look after the needs of Man and Woman. Napi knew Man and Woman would need shelter from Storm Maker in winter; inspired by the shape of the cottonwood leaf, he taught them how to make a tipi and to pitch it “so that the first rays of the rising sun will shine through the door to warm your hearts.” This introductory segment concludes with detailed instructions on how to mount a real tipi. The text then segues into the story of Sacred Otter, a hunter caught in a storm while out buffalo hunting. In a dream, Sacred Otter visits the tipi of Storm Maker, who tells him how to decorate/paint his tipi in order to keep its occupants safe from rough weather. The ensuing instructions on how to make a toy-paper tipi smack of cheery rainy-day craft tips, lessening the impact of the reteller’s otherwise careful work. Nonetheless, Goble’s succinct but never dry text is as capable as always. His illustrations depict sweeping vistas of dizzying scope, whether it be a plain teeming with buffalo or the forbidding backdrop of the mountains under a leaden sky. In contrast, the neatly stylized scenes of humans fill the pages with pattern, accenting the big-sky hues with frequent injections of red. This is an effective retelling of a tale unknown to most youngsters and absent from most libraries. A concise source note is included. JMD

GOODMAN, JOAN ELIZABETH *Despite All Obstacles: La Salle and the Conquest of the Mississippi*; illus. by Tom McNeely. Mikaya, 2001 47p (Great Explorers) ISBN 1-931414-01-7 $19.95 Ad Gr. 4-7

At home both in the opulent attire of French nobility and in the tanned hides of wilderness explorers, Sieur de La Salle pursued his single-minded goal of opening up the Mississippi basin for European (well, French) colonization at court, in canoes, at Native American tribal gatherings, anywhere he could raise funds or strike alliances to achieve his ends. That Louis XIV undervalued his accomplishment (“I am persuaded that the Sieur de La Salle’s discovery is quite useless”) and France later sold off their treasure trove are poignant ironies that Goodman is quick to develop as she traces La Salle’s travels from the first tenuous probe of the river system, to his jubilant claim at the river’s mouth, to his tragic death at the hands of his own men. This isn’t quite up to the mark of the author’s *A Long and Uncertain Journey: The 27,000-Mile Voyage of Vasco Da Gama* (BCCB 12/01): there’s often a breathless, adulatory tone to the text (“La Salle’s plan was the desperate scheme of a desperate man... This was his last chance to establish a fort on the Mississippi and to rise from the ashes”), and many of the grimmer (and thus kid-pleasing) details of his abortive final expedition rate little more than a mention. Still, there’s enough inherent drama to carry the day, and while the illustrations have
the bland predictability of waxworks, they've also got color and sweep enough to keep the pages turning. Maps, inset quotes from contemporary accounts, and an index are included. EB

GREENFELD, HOWARD  *After the Holocaust*. Greenwillow, 2001  146p illus. with photographs
Library ed. ISBN 0-06-029420-5  $18.89
Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-17752-2  $18.95  Ad  Gr. 6-9

Greenfeld, author of *The Hidden Children* (BCCB 1/94), here turns his eye to the lives of Holocaust survivors post-World War II. Using personal interviews collected over a period of two years, the book lays out the pre-World War II lives of eight Jewish children from a range of cultures (Poland, Romania, Germany, Latvia, etc.) and follows them from their incarceration by the Nazis to their liberation, and then some. Greenfeld states in his prologue that his intent is to show that the hardships suffered by these individuals did not end with the conclusion of the war but continued as they desperately tried to achieve some sort of normalcy in lives forever torn asunder. It is nearly impossible to tell stories of the Holocaust and aftermath without the stories themselves overwhelming thoughts of form and style, and the horror of the events and the scope of the tragedy makes these stories inately compelling. The difficulty is that overall the storytelling is disjointed, since the life stories of the featured individuals appear chopply in brief segments of interviews, making the narrative sometimes difficult to follow; the bureaucratic snafus that added insult to grievous injury are not the stuff of riveting prose. Still, this is useful material for emphasizing the continued life and struggle of survivors and the absence of any simple resolution to their problems. Black-and-white photographs and historical sidebars punctuate the text; a bibliography and an index are included. JMD


Hampton, author of *Kennedy Assassinated!: The World Mourns: A Reporter's Story* (BCCB 10/97) turns out to have been the reporter-on-the-spot for another big story, that of the U.S.'s biggest nuclear disaster. Starting with a brief overview of the pre-1979 nuclear age, he then switches to his personal experience of being suddenly plunged into a confusing and ominous story of nuclear physics, human error, and public confusion when "this Three Mile Island thing" started looking like a serious matter. He manages to convey the relevant information on the accident while also conveying his professional and sometimes personal bewilderment as the reporters struggled to understand what the scientists were struggling to unravel. This doesn't have quite the stature of Hampton's Kennedy experience—the personal touches are sometimes a bit more obtrusive, and there are a few questions left unanswered (though there's a section on Chernobyl, there's little discussion of the aftermath at Three Mile Island—have twenty years revealed any medical impact, for instance?)—but it's a vivid narrative nonetheless. Its interest goes beyond the technical to the social and political, as it's a revealing chronicle of people in various positions attempting to respond to a situation they know they don't fully understand, and there's suspense aplenty to keep kids turning the pages. A glossary, list of resources, and index are included. DS
Jim is sick in the hospital, afraid of the operation that might make him well, because “if the doctors put me to sleep they might send me somewhere that I can’t get back from.” Bami, the nurse, tells him he has a secret finder animal who can “bring you back from wherever the doctors send you” and gives him a special “don’t-run stone” to help him face his fear. In his dreams, the sick boy encounters a lion, who gives him the strength to undergo the surgery and thereby make it home for Christmas to his loving parents. Hoban writes with a grave specificity that gives the text a respectful rather than saccharine tone, but it’s not enough to lift the book out of the well-meaning murk. The text is long and wordy, the ready-made cross-cultural mysticism (Bami comes from Africa and “had tribal scars on her cheeks”) has more convenience than sense, and some important questions are left unanswered (did the operation actually make Jim better? For that matter, what was wrong with him?). The illustrations unfortunately lavish the story with all the sentimentality Hoban resists: Jim is a frail blue-eyed angel with a trembling lower lip, and the gauzy pencil-touched pastels give a dreamy haze to all scenes, imagined and actual alike, that softens and prettifies Jim’s fear. Ultimately, the acknowledgment of a child’s real and understandable fear is bogged down in the trappings, and fearful youngsters will be better off with a bracing dose of Hoban’s inimitable Frances. DS

Everybody had something to do with Senwosret’s pyramid, so everybody is claiming responsibility, from the pharaoh’s chief minister to the skilled and unskilled laborers to Senwosret’s son and successor, who saw his father interred in the structure; appropriately enough, the last word goes to Sasobek, the tomb robber (“I don’t care who built the pyramid. ... I knew how to get in”). This catalogue of contribution is a rather offbeat approach to pyramid construction that will make kids consider construction differently, and it has an effective narrative rhythm. The book then shifts to a more straightforward nonfiction text, detailing the building of the pyramids in multicolumned pages; this peters out abruptly and beckons to quite a different audience than the first part of the book, but the information, diagrams, and contemporary photographs make a lively overview. While the mixed approach is a bit confusing, kids will revel in the picture-book pleasures of the first part, with its strongly lined stylized drawings in the sun-drenched colors of ancient frescos, and enjoy poring over the fine print of the second section. You might also try Part One as a readaloud hook, leaving listeners to discover the nonfiction material and relevant additional texts on their own. An index is provided. DS

Twelve-year-old Bobby isn’t what you’d call popular, having endured insults for years on account of his weight, but he’s close to his three friends—bossy, idealistic Addie, campy Joe, and tough Skeezie—with whom he meets periodically “to discuss important issues and to eat ice cream.” Addie’s important issue of late is the school system’s restrictions of her rights, especially with the upcoming student
election; she therefore decides to challenge those restrictions by putting together a third-party ticket, with Bobby as treasurer. The effort only really takes off, however, when the group finds their identity and their platform; they're the No-Name party, and they're campaigning against the hurtful names they and other kids have endured over the years. Howe touches on some interesting issues here, especially in his underlying emphasis on understanding other people ("This business of really knowing people, deep down, including your own self; it is not something you can learn in school or from a book"), which expresses itself particularly in the subplots about Bobby's relationship with his father and with his boss at work. Unfortunately, Bobby's narration is sometimes slow going, and there's a lot of contrivance to the book, from the crudely functional characterizations to the popularity of the No-Name Party's campaign to the extraordinarily convenient way the kids' relationships work out (the girl Bobby likes reciprocates, the boy Joe likes comes out and reciprocates, and even prickly Addie is happy with the boy who likes her). Still, this is a topic that's near to many kids' hearts, and they may be bolstered by the possibility of resolution. DS


Before late-night TV hawked jazz-master boxed sets and library shelves drooped with the weight of current jazz picture books, Isadora pretty much claimed the children's jazz-book field for her own with the elegant Caldecott honoree Ben's Trumpet. Here again viewers are transported to the gritty urban milieu of the 1930s, where jazz spills hot and cool from club doors onto moon-shadowed sidewalks, and neighborhood children imbibe the rhythm. Rather than the specific focus of Ben's Trumpet, however, Isadora turns now to a picture of a milieu, finding children engaged in plotless groovin' under spotlights and lamplights, on stages and on fantasy keyboards along with various jazz luminaries, while the text thrums pedestrian couplets ("Trumpet a song,/ Groove the night long"; "Bring on the beat,/ Watch her two feet"). Smearly black-and-white oils evince a certain nocturnal glamour and suppressed excitement, but the jarring Klee-like techno-hued amoeboids that float across the backgrounds are merely distracting rather than evocative of music. The concluding admonition—"When you rap and you rhyme,/ Remember that time—/ When cats played the beat,/ It was jazz on the street"—unfortunately patronizes even as it offers a connection to contemporary youth. Instead, pass the Trumpet or join Burleigh in Looking for Bird in the Big City (BCCB 7/01). EB

JIMÉNEZ, FRANCISCO Breaking Through. Houghton, 2001 200p ISBN 0-618-01173-0 $15.00 R Gr. 6-10

The author of The Circuit continues his autobiographical journey with this aptly titled work. Jiménez, second eldest son in a family of Mexican migrant workers, opens with a heartbreaking scene recalling the day he and his older brother Roberto were pulled from school by immigration officials. Unwilling to break up the family, his father (who had entered the United States legally), his mother, and his four siblings (born in the United States and thus citizens) go to Nogales, Mexico, and apply for the visas that will allow them to return to the United States. The papers come through, but money is so tight the rest of the family stays in Mexico while
high-schoolers Roberto and Francisco return to earn enough money to bring the whole family back to the United States. Jiménez views his life with a clear, unsentimental eye, but that doesn’t detract from the emotional impact of the many poignant incidents he recalls. Life isn’t all darkness, though: struggles with school work are leavened by learning to dance; backbreaking work in the fields is lightened by rotten-strawberry fights; encounters with racism are balanced by generous teachers and employers who point him toward college and scholarships and show him how he can break through and change his life. The writing is simple and evocative, and the storytelling is effectively succinct without abbreviating or overmanipulating events. A short afterword by the author explains whatever license he has taken with his own life; black-and-white photos are included. JMD

JOHNSON, ANGELA  Running Back to Ludie; illus. by Angelo. Orchard, 2001  48p ISBN 0-439-29316-2  $15.95 Ad Gr. 5-10

In a series of accessible free-verse poems, a young African-American girl describes growing up in the absence of her mother, Ludie (aka Elaine), and her anticipation of their upcoming reunion. Reflections on her motherlessness—and the awkwardness of being re-mothered—dominate the speaker’s “silent heart life.” This poignant narrative thread pulls the reader from the speaker’s earliest memories of “the way/ the sidewalk looked when/ I was being pushed/ over/ it/ quickly” in a stroller, to her reaction to being perceived as “Elaine’s daughter” by her mother’s friends, to “the days after Ludie”; in between are poems about family, friends, and neighborhood. Not all readers will be able to fill in the narrative blanks between these poetic snapshots of the speaker’s thoughts and feelings, however, and the poems are sometimes flat and prosy. While the situation has intriguingly idiosyncratic aspects (Ludie, for example, lives in a cabin in the woods), neither setting nor character is evoked through sensory detail, so the reader’s experience remains largely intellectualized and vicarious. Still, there is ample material here for readers willing to read between the lines and look below the surface. Angelo’s strongly literal black-and-white illustrations miss a chance to impart some nuance to the book, but by bringing the narrator into visual focus they enhance the impact of her words. FK


The friendship between two good buddies is a mainstay of the easy-reader genre, from George and Martha to Iris and Walter. Though not quite up to the gold standard of Marshall’s or Guest’s creations, Johnston’s friendly Possum and fish-out-of-water Alien are endearing nonetheless in this set of three stories. The stories (which describe the pair’s initial meeting and developing friendship, the nocturnal raiding of a trash can for snacks, and the reading of a bedtime story) are somewhat slight, but the duo’s dialogue (“‘Trash is something delicious,’ said Possum. ‘Like high voltage?’ asked Alien”) and Alien’s quirky actions (it assaults a trash can that fails to respond to its greeting and eats Possum’s bedtime book) are clever and humorous. DiTerlizzi’s warm illustrations (executed in colored pencil and watercolor) have a soft-edged substance and depth not often seen in easy-reader art. His Possum is a pink-nosed and pointy-toothed little critter (who alternately sports a bowler derby and a blue-and-white striped nightshirt) with personality to spare,
while Alien is an inquisitive tentacle-eyed creature in a hook-handed, red and gold spacesuit that has seen better days. Large type, generously spaced lines of text, simple language, and easily understood situations provide enough structure for primary-grade readers to tackle this with ease. JMH


Older sister Ellery knows a great alone-on-a-rainy-night read when she sees one, and she regales younger brother Max with the spookiest bits from a pirate book she borrowed from the library. Max attempts to diffuse his mounting fears with innocuous asides and suppositions, but Ellery simply counters with dark explanations of her own: “He buries his treasure in...” “Treasure chests,” guessed Max. ‘Coffins,’ said Ellery.” Even dauntless Ellery is eventually undone by her own wild imaginings; as she cringes in terror of the flashes and rumbles and clatters of their parentless house in the stormy dark, Max gets the last laugh by grabbing her arm with a pirate’s hook—well, an umbrella handle, anyway. Schuett cleverly blends home and fantasized pirate milieu into a seamless whole of shadowy mud browns and indigos and teals, and the pirates themselves are as deliciously evil as the siblings are bug-eyed innocent. Just as Gay’s Stella (Stella, Star of the Sea, BCCB 5/99) gently initiates her skeptical little brother into the intimidating world of big kid-dom, Ellery introduces Max to the delights of self-induced shivers, and Max surely and satisfyingly lands on his feet. EB


Rufus doesn’t want to be a witch like his mother, grandmother, and aunt, but it doesn’t look as if he has much choice, since he can already cast the three basic spells (mind-reading, propelling, and scrying) without even trying. Desperate to deny the destiny that marks him as different from his classmates, he keeps his powers secret from his parents; as he lacks important knowledge about controlling his abilities, his magic starts spilling out and overwhelming his good sense, resulting in incidents involving the school bully, athletic team tryouts, and a runaway baseball. Helped by his father (and a cautionary tale about an uncle with similar powers whose magic ruined his life), Rufus finally comes to terms with his abilities. Levinson’s easy intro to boy-wizardry isn’t going to knock Harry off the top shelf, but her book has an easy flow that will attract less sophisticated readers. Characterization is shallow, the plot is a typical school story with a little Bewitched and a lot of messages about difference thrown in, and the feel-good conclusion—and sequel potential—is never in doubt. Put this predictable but useful transitional title where reluctant readers can reach it. JMD


Behind each familiar white flap-topped carton there’s a whole team of personnel bustling for hours to deliver, clean, chop, boil, steam, fry, package, and ring up an
extensive menu of exotic delicacies, and here a young narrator helping at his father's
carry-out restaurant calls the plays. The audience hears the sizzling meats and the
ringing phones, watches the vegetables tossing and flipping in the woks, senses the
orderly frenzy of chefs in a constant blur of motion to fill a small order for the
"pinky parlor" lady next door and mammoth orders for a birthday party and the
entire fire department of Company 119. The little boy does his bit, too, folding
menus, stuffing plastic utensils and fortune cookies in to-go bags, calling out or-
ders for the regulars, and at the day's end he finally enjoys his favorite take-out
meal—"PIZZA!" It's a great punch line and it should be the snappy ending, but
Lewin unfortunately deflates it with a gratuitous scene of a man—presumably
Lewin himself—chowing down on Kum Kau fare: "I like pizza but my favorite
dish is Buddha's Delight." If kids are understandably indifferent to the author's
culinary preferences, they're bound to be engaged by his photorealistic depiction
of the colorful world of knives and noise and flame just behind the counter. Make
mine "L21, Chicken w. Garlic Sauce." EB

Macy, Sue Bull's-Eye: A Photobiography of Annie Oakley. National Geographic, 2001 64p illus. with photographs ISBN 0-7922-7008-8 $17.95 R Gr. 4-8

Although Macy does her darndest and largely succeeds in separating Oakley's life
from Oakley's legend, it's only too easy to see how "Little Sure Shot" was fairly
destined to become a media darling whose image must necessarily continue to
loom larger than life. Even a blunt outline of Oakley's life seems the stuff of fairy
tales—childhood years away from her family, abusive guardians, the nurturing of
a prodigious talent, a showbiz romance and til-death-do-them-part marriage to
the handsome Frank Butler, a long and stellar career, the philanthropic impulses
of a true heroine. Macy does a fine job of ferreting out as much solid information
as can be gleaned from extant masses of press hype and Oakley's own biographical
commentary that seems so obviously directed to her adoring fans; even available
photographs, which grace every spread of this volume, are largely publicity re-
leases. Still, readers glimpse another side of this fantasy life, in which newspaper
misprints result in lawsuits, and injuries and old age take their inevitable toll. An
author's note tackles discrepancies in Oakley source material and the ways a re-
searcher can attempt to resolve them. A chronology, index, and list of sources are
 appended. EB

Manushkin, Fran, ad. Daughters of Fire: Heroines of the Bible; illus. by Uri

In ten entries Manushkin tells the stories of more than a dozen women of the
Hebrew Bible, beginning with Eve and concluding with Esther. Each chapter
opens with a quote, biblical or literary, that refers in some way to the theme of its
tale. The retellings are, for the most part, traditional, although Manushkin does,
in the spirit of midrash, insert some of her own interpretations of biblical events.
While the writing is not particularly stylish, the stories themselves are cleanly con-
structed and the text lends itself to reading aloud. The media in Shulevitz' illustra-
tions appears mixed indeed, with blurry and indistinct forms oddly juxtaposed
with sharp black lines and accents. The characters' faces are awkwardly drafted,
their expressions often disappointingly inarticulate; the landscape is a generic Bible

After an encounter with an impressive bumblebee, a little squeegy bug goes in search of wings so he can be a bumblebee, too. After saving the little squeegy bug from a storm, a kind old caterpillar named Creepy takes LSB to visit Haunchy the Spider, who “lives in a castle of webs at the end of the cattail leaf.” Haunchy spins the little squeegy bug a pair of silver wings, then reaches into the sky, pulls down a star, and hangs it on the bug’s tail, telling him, “With your light you can help people. You can light the way through the night for everyone in the world. You shall be called Squeegy the Firefly, the Lamplighter of the Sky.” The story itself, a revised edition of Martin's first story (written over fifty years ago), is a homage to old-fashioned didacticism—the journey itself is without tension, and the conclusion is more convenient than logical. Corrigan’s computer-enhanced illustrations make this one bright and shiny (if not necessarily involving) package, however, and the airbrushed style and lavish use of spot lamination enhance the slickness of the graphics. The visual polish and the art's geometric playfulness may be enough to attract if not hold young viewers. JMD

The Shark God; illus. by David Shannon. Levine/Scholastic, 2001 32p ISBN 0-590-39500-9 $15.95 R 5-8 yrs

A brother and sister, unable to obtain adult assistance, by themselves free a shark tangled in ropes. On the way home, they touch the forbidden drum belonging to their king and, despite the pleas of their desperate parents, they are sentenced to death. The parents plead for assistance from the fearsome (and hungry) Shark God, who helpfully causes a great flood that allows the children to escape; guided by an enormous shark, they rejoin their parents for a journey to a faraway island with a just king. Shannon’s illustrations feature rounded human figures and a monumental air appropriate to this dramatic tale. The palette is hot, the ocean is an ever-present force, and the shark images (especially the awe-inducing Shark God) are both chilling and seductive. It’s hard to go wrong with a good shark story, and there’s excitement aplenty here. Unfortunately, the tale’s logic isn’t always clear: why do the children want to help the shark, a natural enemy, in the first place? Does the shark king know about the children’s saving of the shark, or is he moved only by the injustice of their sentence? Still, the story and images are sensational enough that even restless listeners will be drawn into the adventure. JMD


In this imagined narrative, early twentieth century pilot Harriet Quimby tells of her love-at-first-sight affair with aviation and her daring flight from England to
France, guided only by a compass, intuition, and intense determination to be the first woman to complete the journey. Opening pages focus on Quimby's mastery of the "rattletrap, gum-and-spit contraption" and on her defiance of social norms to earn the license and backing to become a professional aviatrix. Her channel crossing is, of course, the signal event here, and although the journey is relatively brief, it packs its share of adventure: "The plane was tilting sharply, and the steep pitch caused the engine to misfire. The motor began to sputter. There was no time to think, only time to act." Obviously her mission ends in success, but the triumph she hoped for never materialized, because "it was April 16, 1912, and for that day—and for days afterward—there was other news that eclipsed mine." In the penultimate spread, a newsboy hawks the London Times whose headline blares "TITANIC DISASTER." Whether the often dreamy tone of this fictionalized Quimby accurately reflects the pilot's real expression is impossible to ascertain from the appended notes, and with the narrow focus on Quimby's Channel flight, exciting details of her barnstorming career and tragic death never emerge. The mixed-media art is sometimes too earthbound, but there's enough dramatic use of sweeping perspective and swooping aircraft to evoke sympathy for Quimby's fascination with the air. Children who'd prefer wings to feet will delight in the story, and teachers planning a unit on flight can encourage comparisons with Blériot's crossing in Provensen's The Glorious Flight. EB


Jawanza isn't allowed to play out on the street, so he spends most of his free time looking out the window of his family's upper-floor apartment, watching the clouds of pigeons that soar through the city sky. When he hollers "What do you mean, you know-nothing birds?" out his window, "a voice like grits and gravy rains through the window and all over my case. 'Maybe you ain't supposed to know, because you too loud and too young, and you ain't listening.'" A slightly sheepish Jawanza ventures up to the roof and meets old Roderick Jackson Montgomery the Three, keeper of the pigeons. Mr. Three introduces Jawanza to his birds and explains that he and his birds "don't have to flap our lips to communicate." Instead, the man and the birds dance together on the rooftop: "Mr. Montgomery the Three throws his wings open wide as the city, wide as the sky. He is flying, swooping, soaring. He and the birds are talking, communicating in their own language." Here and there the text is more pedestrian than poetic, but overall the body of Myers' plot is as gracefully loose-limbed as his elongated images of Jawanza and Mr. Montgomery, and the dialogue between the young boy and the old man flows with an ease that makes it both believable and magical. The occasional awkward drafting of the boy's figure can be jarring and the compositions of birds and sky become repetitive, but the vision is a compelling one: against dark cobalt window frames and walls, the young narrator glows in his yellow shirt, red pants, and gold skin; the birds, their wings extended, swim against a blue and green watery sky; the El-Greco-like extensions of the old man's arms and legs punctuate the rooftop horizon like a human exclamation point. Instead of dwelling in cold urban grays and concrete browns, the sunny Caribbean palette (enlivened by scarlet stairways, wine-colored doorways, even crimson and gold endpapers) adds to the overall impression of an urban world burning with passion and color. Myers does love his city, and he makes sure viewers know why. JMD
NATHAN, AMY  
*Yankee Doodle Gals: Women Pilots of World War II.*  
National Geographic, 2001  89p illus. with photographs  
ISBN 0-7922-8216-7  $21.00  
R  Gr. 5-8

While bureaucratic resistance limited the existence of the women's flight unit to two years (and they weren't officially part of the military even then), the flying women of World War II made an indelible impression on those who worked with them. Nathan chronicles the program from its early days as two separate endeavors (one under the control of famous pilot Jackie Cochran and another under Nancy Love) through its integration into the WASP squadron, which provided pilots for ferrying aircraft, flying targets for the training of ground troops, and test-flying damaged aircraft for readiness to return to duty, among other services. Drawing on a multitude of interviews as well as research in public and private print materials, the author effectively conveys both the glee of the program's many successes (“Here I was a girl of 22 given a million-dollar airplane and told, ‘Go fly!’”) and the sadness of the tragedies made all the more poignant by the women’s non-military status, which meant no military honors, pensions, or assistance with funeral expenses. The book also covers a multitude of details ranging from the occasional struggle to convince air-traffic control that the female voice on the radio was indeed coming from the big military aircraft to the issue of racial inclusion (though a few Asian-American women and an American Indian woman were WASPs, no African-American woman was ever admitted to the program). Though the double-columned format is occasionally confusing, lively sidebars and fleets of photographs give readers plenty to look at while they're navigating their way. A chronology, a list of resources, and an index are included.  

DS

NOGUCHI, RICK  
*Flowers from Mariko;* by Rick Noguchi and Deneen Jenks; illus. by Michelle Reiko Kumata.  
Lee & Low, 2001  32p  
ISBN 1-58430-032-9  $16.95  
Ad  6-9 yrs

After three long years in an internment camp, Mariko and her Japanese-American family are finally free to leave and reconstruct their lives back home in California. With her father’s gardening business in ruins (their landlord sold Mariko’s father’s gardening truck and then left town), they move into a trailer park that’s not all that much different from Camp. While her increasingly despondent father struggles to find a way to financial solvency, Mariko attempts to lift his spirits by seeding a small plot of the flowers he grew in Camp during the war. Noguchi’s narration is somewhat drawn out and bland, and the family’s renewed fortunes proceed with a steady pace more often found in picture books than in life; Kumata’s rigid figures, heavily outlined in black, are poised like paper dolls against the spare backdrops of Camp and trailer park. Mariko’s tale lacks the child-engaging focus of Mochizuki’s *Baseball Saved Us* (BCCB 5/93), but it supplements that view of the Japanese-American experience with a broader range of detail concerning the challenges of postwar resettlement. A concluding note explains the U.S. “relocation” policy of World War II and the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 that acknowledged Constitutional violations and “included an official apology.”  

EB

NOLAN, HAN  
*Born Blue.*  
Harcourt, 2001  277p  
ISBN 0-15-201916-2  $17.00  
R  Gr. 9-12

Caucasian foster child Janie (abandoned by her drug-addict mother) finds her only solace in the kindness of her social worker, Doris, and the friendship of fellow
foster child, Harmon (both of whom are African American) and in the music she hears on Harmon's tapes of famous female R&B singers. As a result, Janie develops an alternative identity as an African American, renaming herself Leshaya, adopting a black dialect, and dreaming of making it as a blues singer herself. Throughout a childhood and adolescence fraught with dramatic events (which include being traded by her mother for heroin and bearing an illegitimate child of her own), Leshaya clings to her musical aspirations, eventually finding some success with the recording of a hit song. Unfortunately, she habitually destroys all positive personal relationships before they can really take root and finally, in desperation, she returns to her mother (now dying of AIDS), grudgingly helping to care for her while the two gradually achieve a degree of reconciliation. After her mother's death, Leshaya sets off to reclaim her own daughter but ultimately realizes that her child will be better off where Leshaya originally left her, with Harmon's warm and well-off family. As in many stories of budding young performers, Leshaya's articulation of her passion for singing is sometimes clichéd and her quick musical success seems unlikely; the numerous tragedies that befall Leshaya, however, effectively reflect the kind of hard living expressed in the blues music she loves. The relentless bridge-burning and unusual racial twist make this riveting reading, but it's Nolan's characterization of Leshaya (with her desperate desire for love, her ultimate rejection of anyone who tries to help her, and her palpable, just-below-the-surface pain) and of the complicated adults in her life that make this story genuinely moving.


Perennial stalwart Provensen here turns to ancient China, presenting two brief tales in this slender volume. In “The Master Swordsman,” Little Chu longs to master the art of swordsmanship in order to protect his poor village from bandits. His apprenticeship with Master Li, “the greatest teacher of the sword in all of China,” consists largely of trying to dodge the missiles pitched in his direction; the day finally comes when Little Chu dodges the sword of his teacher, and Master Li tells Chu that he is so fast he will never need to draw his sword: “No enemy can touch you. Use the sword to chop cabbage.” In “The Magic Doorway,” artist Mu Chi paints a magnificent mural at the emperor's command. Determined that only he should possess such marvelous work, the emperor plans to execute the artist as soon as the painting is finished, but Mu Chi saves himself with his own artistry, walking to freedom through a door in his painting. Provensen's writing style is dignified yet humorous. The first tale is especially funny, as the various objects thrown at the hapless Little Chu call out words of advice, like “Look sharp!” and “Be alert”; it could make a slapsticky and comical flannelboard story. “The Magic Painting” is more subtle, with its appreciation of both art and trickery, and it will appeal to slightly older groups. Provensen's oil on vellum illustrations have a scroll-like detail and linearity with stylistic sensitivity to the stories. For the first, the paint is thinned to near translucency, and multiple framed panels emphasize the story's rhythm; for the second, the approach is a little more formal, the colors richer, the drafting more sophisticated. Although the subtitle calls these stories “Two Legends from Ancient China,” there are no source notes, and they're described as original stories in the CIP information. Either way, both tales clearly
have strong thematic roots in traditional and literary lore (much like Lafcadio Hearn's Japanese stories), and they'll lend themselves very well to telling or reading aloud.


Eleven-year-old Ben Watson is going through the obligatory settling-in motions at his eighth foster home (his social worker assures him that this is a temporary stop on the road to a more permanent placement), but he knows his days of becoming attached are over ("If you care in the system, you're a goner"). He hadn't, however, bargained for the friendly Torgle parents and his fellow foster kids: seven-year-old twins Kate and Jango, yearning for their father's return, and especially one-year-old Grover, who takes a serious (and reciprocated) shine to Ben. Ben's so protective of Grover, in fact, that when the baby returns to the custody of his teenage mother, a desperate Ben grabs the kid ("Someone had to look out for Grover") and hops a bus out of town. While there are some predictable touches (this isn't the first prickly foster kid we've seen finally find a home), the relationship between Ben and Grover, on whom Ben very clearly projects his anxieties and his pain about his own inadequate mother, is warm, humorous, and illuminating. Ben's narration is staunch yet vulnerable as he realizes his own capabilities and softens up, first towards the other kids and then towards the adults; secondary and tertiary characters, ranging from Grover's imperfect but determined mother to Ben's sunny, sharper-than-she-seems social worker, are particularly vividly drawn. The happy ending may be inevitable, but it's no more than Ben deserves, and readers will be glad to see him settled. DS


See this month's Big Picture, p. 163, for review.


The text of this picture book (updated from the 1991 edition) offers fact-hungry readers lucid descriptions of elephantine sociology and physiology (did you know there are 100,000 muscles in an elephant's trunk?) alongside emotional appeals to join the anti-poaching "Elefriends" in protecting the pachyderms, whose "close-knit and caring" family life is "similar to our own." Unfortunately, the tugs at heart- and purse-strings clash both conceptually and visually with the informative tidbits; the dizzying array of intruded quotations (often from celebrities unlikely to be familiar to young readers) and the overdesigned layout make it difficult to keep to the narrative and to identify organizational features like chapter headings on the more overcrowded pages. The photographs (many taken by the author) tend to majestic vistas and sobering images, but they also include some revealing closeups, like those in the chapter on "Tail, Skin, and Feet." In spite of the distracting packaging, thoughtfully focused chapters make this a potentially useful
resource for researchers of fact-driven reports (though material here is unsourced), while the wealth of opinions expressed in the foreword and sidebars will assist those creating position-based arguments. An index is included. FK

Riggs, Stephanie *Never Sell Yourself Short*; illus. with photographs by Bill Youmans. Whitman, 2001 32p ISBN 0-8075-5563-0 $15.95 Ad 7-10 yrs

Josh, an eighth-grade boy with achondroplasia (short stature or dwarfism), tells his own story in this purposive photoessay. Josh talks about adjustments he makes to accomplish daily tasks (pulling down a special rack for his clothes, for example, or wearing a CPAP mask to sleep) and answers those questions that kids most want answered (How do you buy clothes? What do you do when you want something off a top shelf?). This isn’t quite up to the standard of Kuklin’s *Thinking Big: The Story of a Young Dwarf* (BCCB 5/86): the text is obviously messagey and sometimes stiff, and some of the photographs are on the bland side. Overall, however, this is an easily understood introduction to a common but rarely considered condition, and the practical narrative has an upbeat, positive tone that reinforces the smiling images shown in the photographs. A note about dwarfism and contact information for the Little People of America are included. JMD


The popular tale of Cinderella has been collected, retold, spoofed, and revised countless times. The point of this reimagining of the popular tale is not the story so much as the illustrations, since author Lynn Roberts rushes through the fairy godmother’s arrival and Cinderella’s transformation and does little else to place this retelling in its titular era or to make it memorable. It’s illustrator David Roberts who sets the story in the 1930s, which enables him to incorporate Art Deco designs into the fashions and furnishings. This is much tamer than Roberto Innocenti’s similar period reimagining, but fans of Art Deco may enjoy poring over the pages to identify fads and fashions of the day (stained glass windows, chinoiserie, drop-waist dresses, bobbed hair, statuary, etc.) and to find humorous touches (a hung-over, green-faced stepsister at the breakfast table the morning after the ball, runs in the stockings of the sister trying on the glass slipper). Retellings of popular folktales can always find a place on large library shelves; you might wish to add this one to your Cinderella display for an unusual visual take. JMD


Eli is ready and willing to do the mitzva of Bikur Cholim and visit the sick, but that turns out to be harder than it seems. His mother won’t let him visit his friend Tzvi (“I wouldn’t want you to catch his germs”), he’s not allowed into the hospital to visit Mrs. Frankel, and the recuperating rabbi has already filled his quota of visitors for the day; Eli finds phone visiting, sending along a picture to the hospital, and sharing a piece of his father’s mitzva pretty unsatisfying despite their technical fulfillment of the charge. Fortunately for him if unfortunately for her, Eli’s
sister Mindy has a headache that Eli's frustrated bangings are worsening, and Eli
realizes he can do Bikur Cholim right in his own home by sitting next to a napping
Mindy. While this is a book written for an insider audience (you'll have to look
elsewhere for detailed information on the mitzva of Bikur Cholim), the general
concept will be clear to youngsters of all faiths and backgrounds. The language of
the story is simple but effective, largely because Eli's desire and frustration are so
straightforwardly and concretely conveyed; the close focus on Eli's determined
good intentions allows the book to convey its message without resorting to tedious
preaching. The illustrations aren't up to the text, however; while Eli is a boy of
realistic bounce and additional visual details enhance the depiction of his Bikur
Cholim for Mindy (he's eating the fruit he brought for her), the draftsmanship is
stiff and idealized, and the colors relentlessly loud. Nonetheless, this is a soft-
spoken and unaffected little tale, ready to pair with Rael's similarly themed What
Zeezie Saw on Delancey Street (BCCB 12/96) and suited for religious schools of all
stripes and any other venue where there's a call to discuss good deeds. DS

SEEGER, PETE, ad. I Had a Rooster: A Traditional Folk Song; illus. by Laura Vaccaro

Pete Seeger's adaptation of the traditional cumulative folksong gets imaginative
bookmaking treatment at the hands of his stepniece, Laura Vaccaro Seeger, who
was herself inspired by an idea of the late Ruth Crawford Seeger, Pete's stepmother
and Laura's grandmother-in-law. That's a lot of American-music history to bear
(the accompanying CD adds in Peggy and Mike Seeger to boot), but youngsters
uninterested in the august connections will still find plenty to enjoy here. The
song doesn't have much of a story, but the increasing collection of animals feeding
off "the green berry tree" retains its traditional allure, and audience participation
on the beastly noises is requisite. The cumulative structure is ingeniously inter-
preted in progressively shorter spiral-bound pages, each of which adds a new line
and an updated picture to the ever-increasing litany of animals. The illustrations
use thick oils on cutout figures in a naïve folk-art style; the lustrous dark colors and
deliberate stiffness suggest painting on wood, while the shining golden tree (in
which the menagerie ends up drolly perched) balances out the deeper pigments
(kids will also enjoy hunting for the literally unsung character of the mouse, who
scampers through every spread). The art unfortunately limits displays to smaller
groups or one-to-one sharing, but youngsters will get a kick out of turning the
cleverly formatted pages as well as singing along. A note from Pete Seeger and
musical notation is included. DS

SPIEGELMAN, ART, ed. Little Lit: Strange Stories for Strange Kids; ed. by Art
Speigelman and Françoise Mouly. RAW Junior/Cotler/HarperCollins, 2001 64p
illus. ISBN 0-06-028626-1 $19.95 Ad Gr. 3-8

This comic book writ large offers fifteen entries ranging from several-page narra-
tives to seek-and-find puzzles to joke pages. There's quite a range in the talent
represented, too: Maurice Sendak offers a double-spread narrative about a vorac-
cious baby ("Cereal Baby Keller"), Ian Falconer teams up with David Sedaris for a
tale of an ogre suffering from prettiness ("Pretty Ugly"), and comic artist Jacques
de Loustal joins writer Paul Auster for the fanciful tale of "The Day I Disap-
The paneled format and variety of styles make this terrifically appealing from the visual standpoint; the crisp design (down to some very informative and entertaining endpapers, giving some ludicrous yet useful tips on cartooning, by Kaz) pulls the disparate artistic styles together, and several artists make good use of the oversized pages and opportunity for subtler effects. The narratives are quite uneven, however, both in audience and in effectiveness; many seem to be merely tacking story onto the visuals or fluttering hastily through the plot so as not to exceed the allotted space (and while it's nice that the book acknowledges the work of Crockett Johnson, his old "Barnaby" strip is out of place here). Still, this will be an alluring browse, and most kids will find something that tickles or intrigues them within these pages. DS


Narrator Will Samson and Arthur, a Siksika (Blackfoot) Indian, have always been best friends, but they have reached a stage in their adolescence at which, their fellow Alberta townsfolk predict, all such interracial friendships inevitably end. Yellowfly, the Siksika's local World War II hero, is brutally beaten and left for dead, and the white police force is not exactly on fire to apprehend the culprits. In a strip of no-man's-land separating the town and the reservation, Will stumbles upon a clue. Arthur, forced to attend a residential Indian school, is unable to help Will investigate, but to prove his friendship Will carries on alone, pinning the deed at last on some of the town's most influential citizens. Although Stenhouse spins the whodunit with considerable skill, the splintering relationship between the two friends is even more compelling. Will cannot understand Arthur's new militant pride in his heritage, and he's truly hurt when Arthur snubs him around his Indian friends. Arthur, while grateful for Will's efforts on Yellowfly's behalf, has begun to realize and even accept that the steel river of railroad tracks that divides the town will ultimately drive them into separate worlds as well. The 1952 Canadian milieu doesn't seem all that long ago and far away, and the boys' tested loyalties will resonate with any reader who's felt a friendship hit the rocks. EB

Paper ed. ISBN 1-55037-686-1 $14.95  R  Gr. 5-9

Swanson breezily tackles the daunting concept of critical thinking, starting with some background about science good and bad, then going on to explore basic ways of interrogating scientific claims in various locations, assessing media accounts of science and other matters, and understanding and limiting human tendencies towards bias and misperception in evaluation. This is considerably more fun than it sounds, as the book is salted with anecdotes about real and make-believe incidents, peppered with quizzes, checklists, and quotes, and spiced with a lively (if at times oversimplified, with some standard terms surprisingly absent) style. It's also an extremely useful introduction to a subject that is rarely broached effectively, if at all, for pre-adult readers and that has implications for consumer studies, politics, sociology, Internet literacy, and other realms aside from science. The dichromatic design (in green and black) is somewhat dark and stodgy, but there's a pell-mell
cheerfulness to the layout and to the popeyed figures roaming the pages that in-
vites browsing. Credulity is too tough to die this easily, but this title will at least
give some kids the equipment to put up a decent fight against it. A glossary, a
good list of web and print resources, and an index are included. DS

TASHJIAN, JANET  The Gospel according to Larry. Holt, 2001 227p illus. with photographs
ISBN 0-8050-6378-1  $16.95  Ad  Gr. 7-10

Tashjian (author of Tru Confessions, BCCB 1/98) frames this narrative as a genu-
ine manuscript, penned by seventeen-year-old philosopher Josh Swensen, whose
virtual alter-ego, Larry, became a pop-culture sensation. Josh describes his cre-
ation of Larry, Larry's website, and Larry's Thoreau-esque philosophy and chronicles
the ensuing brouhaha when Larry becomes a media darling (resulting in "Larryfest")
and then turns out to be merely the invention of Josh. The media feeding frenzy
proves more than Josh can handle, and he commits "pseudocide" in order to es-
cape the mess that is completely out of his control. Throughout, Josh comments
on media, advertising, commercialism, and the lack of spiritual values in a world
gone mad, but he also discusses his crush on best friend Beth, his stepfather's vapid
new girlfriend, his grief over the death of his activist mother, and his burning
determination to change the world for the better. Despite occasional preachy
moments, the pace is quick and the tone is disarming, almost enough to preclude
sticky questions about convenient but implausible plot turns. Josh tells his story
in journalistic fits and starts, incorporating images of his belongings and footnotes
to his own text that reinforce the self-published air of the text. The charm of the
naïve, freethinking rebel may attract readers, even though those same readers might
wonder how Josh/Larry will ever find his way back into the world from his self-
imposed isolation. JMD

VAN DRANSEN, WENDELIN  Flipped. Knopf, 2001 212p

Ever since second grade, Bryce has found his neighbor Juli to be bumptious, pushy,
annoying, and weird: she hangs out in the top of an old sycamore tree, she's
keeping a flock of chickens, the result of a science-fair project, in her family's
disheveled yard, and she's embarrassingly besotted with Bryce. From her point of
view (presented alternately with Bryce's), Juli has been convinced that her effect
on Bryce is positive and that he cherishes the eggs she gives his family every week
(which he in fact throws away); now in eighth grade, however, she's beginning to
wonder if he's worth it all or if he's merely a pretty face with little behind it—just
as Bryce begins to realize that Juli is something quite special. The unrequited-love
problem is fairly familiar and the writing is occasionally corny, but there's an inter-
esting thematic slant here in the exploration of misguided attachments both youthful
and mature. With the aid of his grandfather, Bryce is beginning to see the limita-
tions of his handsome but shallow father (limitations clearly becoming apparent to
his mother as well); he's teetering on the brink of becoming something more sub-
stantial than his old man just as Juli comes down from the clouds and realizes that
he's been pretty short of substantial up till now. There's therefore an edge to the
boy-girl drama that gives an unusual depth to the narrative, but the story remains
both accessible and concrete. This isn’t likely to change the course of any reader’s true love for just a pretty face, but it may at least provoke contemplation of the possibility. DS

WATTS, JULIA  Finding H. F.  Alyson, 2001  165p  R  Gr. 7-12
Paper ed. ISBN 1-55583-622-4  $12.95

H. F., short for Heavenly Faith, was “pushed out between the legs of a frustrated 15-year-old girl who took one look at me and turned tail and ran the first chance she got”; now fifteen herself, she’s struggling with life not only as an illegitimate kid but also as a likely lesbian in her tiny Kentucky town, where “people can sniff out difference—and it’s a smell they hate.” After falling head-over-heels for new girl Wendy, she’s devastated when Wendy withdraws, and there’s an additional blow when H. F. discovers that her grandmother has been secretly in contact with H. F.’s mother. The fed-up girl coaxes her friend Bo, also struggling with being gay in their intolerant small town, into a road trip to Florida to see H. F.’s mother, a road trip that’s also their first experience with life outside of rural Kentucky. Watts gives her protagonist a winning and distinctive voice—funny yet wide-eyed and questioning, she’s dealing realistically with issues of class (Wendy is a privileged daughter of a professor) as well as family loyalty and sexual identity. The view of small-town life and its denizens is penetrating but tinged with affection (the portrait of H. F.’s beloved Memaw, craft maven and Baptist temperance advocate, is tender and authentic). While the visit with H. F.’s mother is predictably dreadful, the road trip is a delight, with H. F. and Bo queer innocents abroad broadening their horizons (“Now finding out that there’s such a thing as a church for gay people...well, it’s awful to say, but it feels like I just found out that the Ku Klux Klan started accepting black members and working for racial equality”) and seeing new possibilities for their own futures. Readers journeying with H. F. will be traveling in good company. DS

WOOLDRIDGE, CONNIE NORDHEIHM, ad.  The Legend of Strap Buckner: A Texas Tale; illus. by Andrew Glass.  Holiday House, 2001  32p  R  Gr. 3-5
ISBN 0-8234-1536-8  $16.95

Wooldridge reaches into Texas folklore and comes up with Strap Buckner, “a man of genius,” whose genius “was to knock folks down.” Despite this rather disconcerting habit, Buckner is a sweetheart, who always nurses back to health those wounded by the exercise of his genius. After a while people get tired of being knocked down and either lock their doors against him or, in the case of one town, pick up the entire settlement and move it while he sleeps. Buckner finally undoes himself when he challenges the Devil, who “saw pride in Strap’s eyes and heard the echo of it in his boast. There’s nothing that weakens a man who’s facing the Devil more than pride, and nobody knows that more than the Devil himself.” Like Buckner himself, Wooldridge’s language is playful and exaggerated, making this tale suitable for telling and reading aloud as well as reading alone. The accompanying mixed-media illustrations (in watercolor crayons, Caran D’Arche, and pencil with turpenoid on bristol board) enhance the stretched-beyond-belief feeling, making Strap a swaggering redhead with a twinkle the size of Texas in his eye. The backgrounds are spare and sketchy, but it is the characters in this tale that carry the day, and most of that carrying is done by the boasting, blustering, big-framed and big-hearted Buckner. An author’s note gives some background on the historical
Strap Buckner, placing him beside "such colorful Texas characters as Brit Bailey and Roy Bean." A brief bibliography is included. JMD

YORINKS, ARTHUR  *Company's Going*; illus. by David Small. Hyperion, 2001 32p
Trade ed. ISBN 0-7868-0415-7 $15.99 R Gr. 2-4

In this sequel to *Company's Coming*, the aliens that visited Moe and Shirley are returning home. They're so besotted with Shirley's meatballs, however, that they're determined that Shirley should cater their sister's wedding; to this end, they chauffeur Moe and Shirley back to Nextoo (next to Uranus). While the earthling pair are unfortunately initially mistaken for invading Martians and zapped by a nervous uncle's ray gun, eventually they recover in time to pull off a fancy feast. Though the book loses steam at the end, the text's blend of affectionate homeliness and silliness is effective: Moe and Shirley are so relentlessly earthbound that they're funny right from the spaceship's liftoff, and the echoes of real-life family dialogue ("It's not good to blast off on an empty stomach") are endearing as well as amusing. Small's art treats the situation as domestic comedy, giving the alien world the same homespun charm as Shirley and Moe's milieu (get-well and "Sorry We Shot You" cards greet the couple when they awaken); the humble line-and-watercolor images emphasize warmth rather than special effects, making Moe and Shirley into a visiting aunt and uncle complete with squashy goodbye hug for their little alien nephews. Youngsters more inclined towards E.T. than Buck Rogers will be ready to take off with this. DS

ZEINERT, KAREN  *Those Extraordinary Women of World War I*. Millbrook, 2001 96p illus. with photographs
ISBN 0-7613-1913-1 $27.40 R Gr. 5-8

Zeinert continues her series on women's involvement in war efforts with this volume focusing on the Great War. Decades of women's-suffrage advocacy were drawing toward a climax as hostilities escalated in Europe, and Zeinert emphasizes the broader connections between women's entry into the work force and peripheral military roles, and the postwar passage of the Nineteenth Amendment. There's nothing particularly novel here in content or viewpoint, but the topical organization is tidy, the prose is engaging, and highlighted firsthand testimonies are thoughtfully selected for both inherent interest and balance of experiences. American women's activities dominate the volume, but just enough references are made to European participants to remind readers that the United States held no monopoly on patriotism or heroism. World War I literature generally seems a poor cousin to that of World War II and the Civil War, and this solid offering will be a real boon to history report writers. Period photos, bibliographies, notes, and an index are included. EB
Ah, Blue Ribbons time again. What you don't see is the consideration, pleading, advocacy, rigor, and passion of the collective process that, after weeks of deliberation, produce this list. What you do see is a list of books that have withstood the process, proving themselves resistant to the passing of time, the honing of critical faculties, and the diversity of opinion among our meeting members. These are tough books. We hope you enjoy them; we certainly have.

Deborah Stevenson, Editor

PICTURE BOOKS:

Ahlberg, Allan. *The Adventures of Bert*; illus. by Raymond Briggs. Farrar. 2-5 yrs. (September)

Burleigh, Robert. *Lookin' for Bird in the Big City*; illus. by Marek Los. Silver Whistle/Harcourt. 5-8 yrs. (July/August)

Cooper, Elisha. *Dance!*; written and illus. by Elisha Cooper. Greenwillow. Gr. 3-5. (September)

Fraustino, Lisa Rowe. *The Hickory Chair*; illus. by Benny Andrews. Levine/Scholastic. 4-8 yrs. (March)

Graham, Bob. *"Let's Get a Pup!" Said Kate*; written and illus. by Bob Graham. Candlewick. 5-8 yrs. (September)


Jenkins, Emily. *Five Creatures*; illus. by Tomek Bogacki. Foster/Farrar. 4-7 yrs. (February)

Loomis, Christine. *Astro Bunnies*; illus. by Ora Eitan. Putnam. 3-6 yrs. (February)

Maggi, María Elena, ad. *The Great Canoe: A Kariña Legend*; tr. from the Spanish by Elisa Amado; illus. by Gloria Calderón. Groundwood/Douglas & McIntyre. 5-8 yrs. (December)

Steen, Sandra. *Car Wash*; by Sandra and Susan Steen; illus. by G. Brian Karas. Putnam. 3-7 yrs. (January)

Taylor, Alastair. *Swollebog*; written and illus. by Alastair Taylor. Houghton. 5-8 yrs. (April)

Wells, Rosemary. *Felix Feels Better*; written and illus. by Rosemary Wells. Candlewick. 3-5 yrs. (June)

Willey, Margaret, ad. *Clever Beatrice: An Upper Peninsula Conte*; illus. by Heather Solomon. Atheneum. 4-8 yrs. (October)
FICTION:

Colfer, Eoin. *Artemis Fowl*. Talk Miramax/Hyperion. Gr. 5-8. (July/August)

Haas, Jesse. *Runaway Radish*; illus. by Margot Apple. Greenwillow. Gr. 2-4. (July/August)

Ibbotson, Eva. *Dial-a-Ghost*; illus. by Kevin Hawkes. Dutton. Gr. 4-6. (September)

Jenkins, A. M. *Damage*. HarperCollins. Gr. 9-12. (July/August)

Naidoo, Beverley. *The Other Side of Truth*. HarperCollins. Gr. 7-12. (September)

Salisbury, Graham. *Lord of the Deep*. Delacorte. Gr. 5-8. (July/August)

Schmidt, Gary D. *Straw into Gold*. Clarion. Gr. 6-9. (September)

Taylor, Mildred. *The Land*. Fogelman/Putnam. Gr. 7 up. (October)


Wilson, Jacqueline. *Vicky Angel*. Delacorte. Gr. 4-8. (October)


Wulfsson, Don. *Soldier X*. Viking. Gr. 7-10. (March)

NONFICTION:

Bober, Natalie S. *Countdown to Independence: A Revolution of Ideas in England and Her American Colonies: 1760-1776*. Atheneum. Gr. 9-12. (March)

Cunningham, Julia. *The Stable Rat and Other Christmas Poems*; illus. by Anita Lobel. Greenwillow. Gr. 3-6. (November)


Fradin, Dennis Brindell *My Family Shall Be Free!: The Life of Peter Still*. HarperCollins. Gr. 5-9. (May)


Martin, Jacqueline Briggs. *The Lamp, the Ice, and the Boat Called Fish: Based on a True Story*; illus. by Beth Krommes. Houghton. Gr. 3-5. (February)

Nelson, Marilyn. *Carver: A Life in Poems*. Front Street. Gr. 7 up. (September)

Rappaport, Doreen. *Martin's Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*; illus. by Bryan Collier. Hyperion. 5-8 yrs. (January 2002)
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.

ADVENTURE: Elliott; Flowers
Africa–folklore: Badoe
Africa–stories: Daly
African Americans: Bolden; Rappaport
African Americans–fiction: Myers; Nolan
African Americans–poetry: Johnson
Aliens–fiction: Johnston; Yorinks
American Indians–fiction: Stenhouse
American Indians–folklore: Goble
Animals–songs: Seeger
Anthropology: Batten
Aviation: Moss; Nathan
BIBLE STORIES: Manushkin
BIOGRAPHIES: Anderson; Cox, C.; Denenberg; Goodman; Greenfeld; Jiménez; Macy; Moss; Rappaport
Birds–fiction: Myers
Books and reading–stories: Lamm
Brothers and sisters–stories: Lamm
China–folklore: Provensen
China–stories: Provensen
Chinese Americans–stories: Lewin
Christmas–stories: Daly
Civil rights: Rappaport
COMICS: Spiegelman
Conservation: Redmond
Construction: Hooper
Crime and criminals–fiction: Stenhouse
Critical thinking: Swanson
Disabilities: DeBear; Riggs
Disasters: Hampton
Dogs: Flowers
Dwarfism: Riggs
Ecology: Redmond
Egypt, ancient: Hooper
Elections–fiction: Howe
Elephants: Redmond
Ethics and values: Batten; Butcher; Rappaport; Tashjian
Explorers and exploring: Goodman
Families–fiction: Butcher; Quattlebaum
FANTASY: Dickinson; Duey
Fear–stories: Hoban; Lamm
FOLKTALES AND FAIRY TALES: Badoe; Goble; Martin; Provensen; Roberts; Wooldridge
Food and eating–stories: Daly; Lewin
Foster care–fiction: Nolan; Quattlebaum
Friendship: DeBear
Friendship–fiction: Cox, J.; Howe; Johnston; Stenhouse
FUNNY STORIES: Wooldridge; Yorinks
Gays and lesbians–fiction: Watts
Grandmothers–fiction: Watts
Hawaii–folklore: Martin
HISTORICAL FICTION: Elliott; Garland; Noguchi
History, U.S.: Currie; Hampton; Macy; Nathan; Noguchi
History, world: Goodman; Greenfeld; Zeinert
Holidays: Rappaport
Holocaust, the: Greenfeld
Horses–fiction: Duey
Hospitals—stories: Hoban
Identity—fiction: Nolan; Tashjian
Illness—stories: Hoban; Rosenfeld
Insects—stories: Martin, Jr.
Internet—fiction: Tashjian
Japanese Americans—stories: Noguchi
Jazz—poetry: Isadora
Judaism—stories: Rosenfeld
Latinos: Jiménez
Magic and magicians: Cox, C.
Magic and magicians—fiction: Barnes; Dickinson; Levinson
Mexico—fiction: Garland
Migrant workers: Jiménez
Mothers—fiction: Barnes; Nolan; Quattlebaum; Watts
Mothers—poetry: Johnson
Music and musicians: Anderson; Denenberg
Music and musicians—fiction: Nolan
Music and musicians—poetry: Isadora
MYSTERIES: Stenhouse
Nature study: Redmond
Nuclear energy: Hampton
Opossums—fiction: Johnston
Paraguay: Batten
Pirates—stories: Lamm
POETRY: Bolden; Isadora; Johnson
Racism: Rappaport
Racism—fiction: Stenhouse
Reading aloud: Hooper; Manushkin; Wooldridge; Yorinks
Reading, easy: Cox, J.; Duey; Johnston
Reading, reluctant: Duey; Levinson; Spiegelman
Relationships: Van Draanen; Watts
Religious education: Bolden; Rosenfeld; Manushkin
Restaurants—stories: Lewin
RHYMING BOOKS: Isadora
ROMANCE: Van Draanen
School—fiction: Cox, J.; Howe
Science: Batten; Swanson
Sharks—folklore: Martin
Ships and sailing: Currie
SHORT STORIES: Spiegelman
SONGS: Seeger
Storytelling: Badoe; Provensen; Wooldridge
TALL TALES: Wooldridge
Texas—folklore: Wooldridge
Transportation: Moss
Unicorns—fiction: Duey
Urban life—fiction: Myers
Voyages and travel: Flowers; Goodman
Voyages and travel—fiction: Watts
War: Greenfeld
West, the: Macy
Whaling: Currie
Witches—fiction: Barnes; Levinson
Women's studies: Manushkin; Moss; Nathan; Zeinert
World War I: Zeinert
World War II: Greenfeld; Nathan
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