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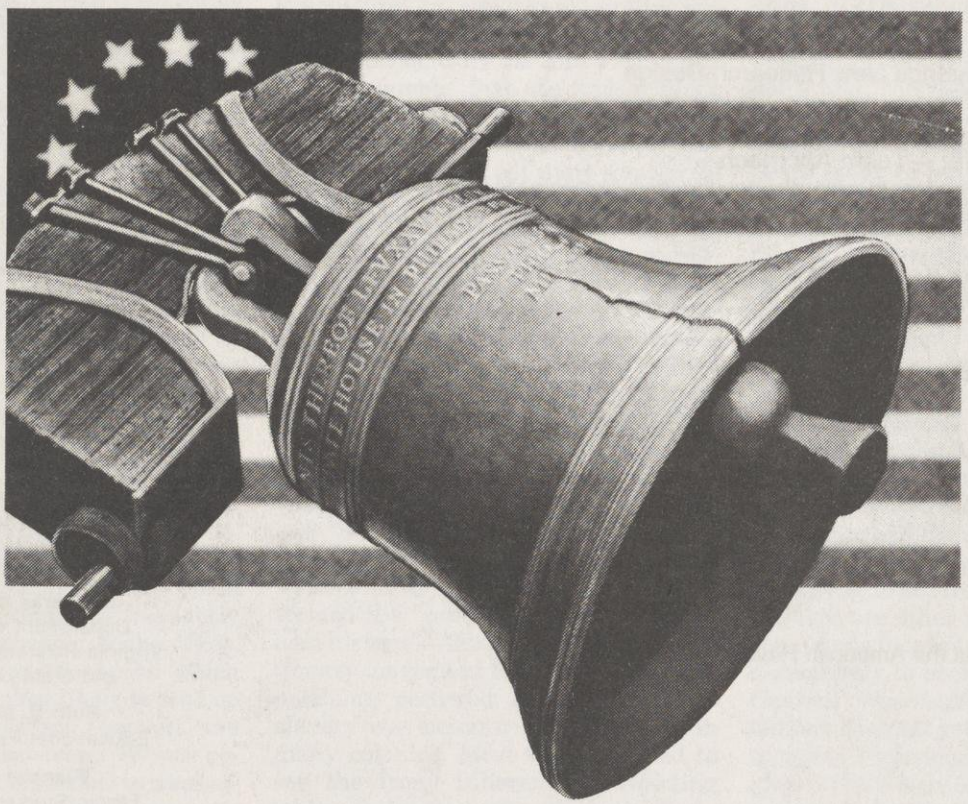

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How Old Biases Influence New Research Design

Liberating Child Care: A Team Approach

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SPECIAL DOUBLE ISSUE: EXPANDED BOOKSHELF DEPARTMENT

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COVER

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ERIC *IRCD*

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An analysis of 32 recommended books reveals a disregard for justice

The American Revolution in Children's Books: Issues of Racism and Classism

By Joel Taxel

The American Revolution is taught in every U.S. school, and the colonists' struggle to attain "liberty and freedom" is impressed upon every child. Given the stress placed upon this aspect of U.S. history, it is instructive to see what other messages children get when they read about the Revolution.

This article examines the messages about race and class that appear in 32 children's novels about the Revolution. It should be noted at the outset that this piece looks only at the portrayal of Blacks, although the books' messages about Native Americans also merit examination. Also deserving of analysis but not covered in this piece is the portrayal of women in these books.

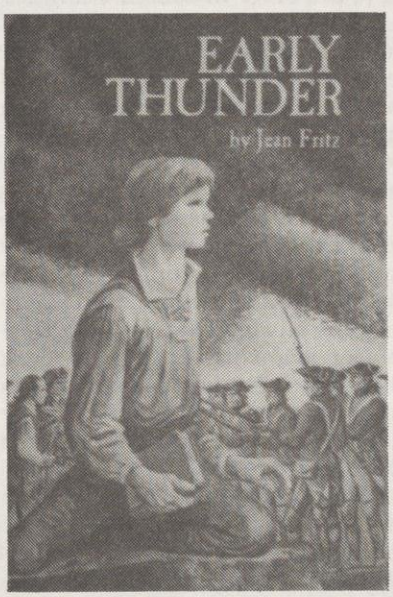
The sample consists of books recommended by selection tools (Wilson's *Children's Catalogue*, Bro-dart's *Elementary School Library Collection*, etc.) which school and public librarians frequently consult before purchasing books. Thus, the sample contains the books which young readers are most likely to read on the subject. In addition, because the books were published over a 77-year period (1899-1976), it is possible to trace attitudinal changes over those years. An understanding of how race and class are treated in this sample is important because of the subject matter—a revolution fought to advance human liberty and freedom. The fact that almost all of the authors exhibit race and class bias even as they repeat the impassioned, ideologically charged language used to justify the Revolution, points up some of the contradictory and still unresolved facets in our national legacy and our social agenda.

The racial stereotyping in the books under scrutiny (see list at end of article) is appalling. In fact, it is not until *When the World's on Fire*, published in 1973 and chronologically the 28th book in this 32-book sample, that one finds a Black character who is not a slave or servant (although there were in fact many free people) or who does not share some or all of the characteristics of the Sambo stereotype. Blacks are described as "bug-eyed," "apish," cowering, and superstitious with "flashing" smiles.[1] While some authors display considerable paternalism towards Blacks (*e.g.*, Perkins and Hawthorne), others seem to take active and conscious delight in derogating Black characters. One reads of "little monkey niggers" (Boyd, pp. 142-145, 176), "little black monkeys" and "little black imps" (Gray, pp. 106, 197), and "Sambo" (Hawthorne, p. 93).

One soon realizes how oblivious most writers have been to what has been termed the "central paradox of American history"—the fact that the Revolutionary movement for liberty and independence occurred at the very time slavery was being institutionalized in many colonies. Most writers failed to see the irony inherent in depicting white characters who are both slaveholders and champions of freedom, liberty and independence. In *Meggy MacIntosh*, for example, Scottish-born Meggy must choose between Scotch Highlanders who remain loyal to King George and those "fighting for freedom and their homes" (p. 261). Meggy, of course, chooses those whose "battle cry is 'liberty or death.'" But she is never shown to consider the compatibility of these goals with the fact that "everybody had a nigger servant[2] just for himself" (p. 72).

Rising Thunder offers a similar situation. A character ill-disposed to submit to "oppression and injustice" waxes eloquently on "the struggle for freedom" and "the right to be a man amid equals" (p. 5), yet he is himself a slaveholder.[3] At one point the author appears ready to confront this contradiction when she notes that many important families were bankrupt due, in part, to the fact that many slaves "had run off to join the British, having been promised freedom as a reward." We then learn that these slaves found "freedom of a sort" when smallpox "swept the Blacks like a great scythe into their graves" (pp. 209-210). This point is discussed no further, and it would appear that divine retribution had been visited on these helpless souls for having had the audacity to covet the very thing their masters were fighting and dying to secure.

There are other instances where authors come face to face with this contradiction only to back down. In *Silver for General Washington*, twelve-year-old Gilbert Emmett returns to his home in occupied Philadelphia hoping to smuggle out the family silver in order to contribute it to the impoverished American army. He is greeted by Ezra, the faithful family slave, who has not only been steadfastly guarding the family house, but has also devised a scheme to remove the silver. Referring to a local innkeeper who will assist them, Ezra notes that he is an "honest man" who is "workin in secret against the pesky Britishers, jes like everybody else who wants to be free" (p. 178). Whether Ezra and his wife Martha are to remain slaves after this freedom is won and the entire question of the status and role of Blacks in the struggle are issues the



author never addresses.

In *Rebel Siege*, Kinross McKenzie meets York, a Black slave, near an army encampment. Asked what it is like to be a slave, York replies that he is well fed, well treated, and grateful he doesn't have to go fight "no Tories, an' get shot like so many white gen'man Is seen ca'ied to this house. But," York wistfully concludes, "I guess it would be nice not to be owned" (p. 205). The sympathetic protagonist, however, never again inquires about York's thought and feelings. This scene suggests the author's discomfort with the issue, but it is by no means certain that he fully appreciates the irony of a slave fighting for whites' liberty. Consider the following statement made by Kin's father only one page before our first glimpse of slaves "toiling in the fields":

> ... *Here the common man has been assessed at what he is worth, an' not at what some accident of birth seems to make him worth.* This is an army o' common men, goin' forth to fight what they know is tyranny (p. 201, emphasis added).

Apparently, it did not occur to the author that race is also an "accident of birth" that should not be considered when assessing an individual's worth.

Liberty is Only for Whites

Battle Lanterns provides the most dramatic case in which the blessings of liberty are seen to apply only to whites. The double standard is made clear by Bill Barlow, the novel's hero, who fights with those who believe that "liberty is the only thing in the world worth fighting for to the death," yet he is able to accept "Negro slavery as a matter of fact" (pp. 10, 81). Bill and a group of slaves, including a Black man named Luke, are taken to a West Indian island where they are all enslaved. Despite protestations that he is "free and white" (p. 69) and can't be made a slave, Bill is forced to labor against his will. Thanks to Luke, Bill survives the ordeal and learns some painful truths about freedom and liberty. He and Luke make a miraculous escape and return to fight with Francis Marion's forces.

The remarkable thing about this episode is the way Luke ultimately attains his freedom. One might have supposed that Luke would have automatically been freed because of his actions, the ideals of the struggle and the function the island ordeal serves in the novel. Instead, there is a complicated, legalistic explanation concluding that Luke can be freed *only* because he has become Bill's property as a result of the fortunes of war. These legalisms are scrupulously observed by men who, at that very moment, had conveniently cast aside the legal authority of the Crown that had governed the colonies for well over a century.

This discussion becomes more readily comprehensible when seen in the context of the author's racial attitudes. Early in the novel, the author laments the fact that the conflict is between "men of one's own race" (p. 5). Later, Francis Marion speaks of "race suicide" and laments "Anglo-Saxons slaughtering each other when they should be standing together against the rest of the world" (p. 24). The author's racial attitudes become quite clear at the conclusion of the book when Luke explains why he has decided to return to Africa: "Dat de place for a black man. De lawd put black folkes in Africa an' white folkes some udder place like yo' plant rice in de water an' cohn on dry lan! Yo' mix em an yo git a crop ob trouble" (p. 258).

The first book in the sample to mention the paradox under discussion is Rebecca Caudill's *Tree of Freedom*, a 1949 book detailing the war's impact on a family settling in Kentucky in the spring of 1780. Stephanie Venable, the novel's protagonist, carries with her the seed of an apple tree, itself the fruit of a tree her Huguenot grandmother, Marguerite de Monchard, had brought from France. This "tree of freedom" symbolizes the continuity between the past and current struggles for freedom since the Huguenots themselves had fled Europe "because they refused to forsake their religion and make slaves of their consciences." Much to Marguerite's dismay, many of the same "liberty loving" Huguenots "began enslaving others as soon as they found a refuge in [the] new world" (p. 87). The de Monchards, however, are so appalled by slavery that they use their entire fortune to buy and free as many slaves as they can. Their money and friends gone, and having made a dent on the institution of slavery "so little a body couldn't see it even with a spy glass trained on it" (p. 89), the de Monchards flee Charleston painfully aware of the bitter, costly fruit Marguerite's tree of freedom had borne.

Tree of Freedom is also the first book in the sample that contains an explicit denunciation of slavery and states the need to guard against making "any deal with slavery of any sort" (p. 142). Earlier books, as we have seen, not only avoid

the issue, but treat Blacks so stereotypically that their exclusion from participation in the great issues of the day seems to be a logical outgrowth of their "obvious inferiority." Furthermore, they seem so contented with their place and appear to be so well treated that, given their limited potential, they really needn't ask for more!

Books Reinforce Racism

The pejorative view of Blacks presented in these early books is consistent with both the societal attitudes of the periods in which they were written and the roles to which Blacks were consigned. Segregation was still in effect and overt discrimination received important ideological support from diverse sectors of society, including historians.[4] For example, U.B. Phillip's view of the "peculiar institution" of slavery as a benign and benevolent institution designed to bring the blessings of civilization to an "inert and backward" people continued to hold sway, although his position was not unchallenged.[5] The point here is that the books were consistent with and served to reinforce the blatantly racist ideology pervading U.S. society.

It is also interesting at this point to note that there was far more consciousness of the questions raised by a growing slave presence at the time of the Revolution than these authors would have us believe. The issue here is not simply one of damning authors who worked in a markedly different social and historical context. The important point is that at the time of the Revolution many whites and certainly most Blacks *were* highly conscious of the paradox posed by slavery and freedom and that the failure of so many of the books in the sample to even mention the issue indicates that these authors reflect their own perspective far more than historical reality.

In one of the landmark studies in the historiography of the Revolution, J. Franklin Jameson asked a series of questions which go to the heart of the issue under consideration:

> How could men who were engaged in a great and inspiring struggle for liberty fail to perceive the inconsistency between their professions and endeavors in that contest and their actions with respect to their bondsmen? How could they fail to see the application of their doctrines respecting the rights of man to the black men who were held among them in bondage far more reprehensible than that to which they indignantly proclaimed themselves to have been subjected by the King of Great Britain?[6]

In answer, Jameson notes that the colonists *did* see the disparity between their rhetoric and their actions in regard to Blacks. Indeed, he points out that "there is no lack of evidence that, in the American world of that time, the analogy between freedom for whites and freedom for Blacks was seen."[7] To illustrate this point, Jameson quotes from a letter by Patrick Henry, whose fiery words on behalf of freedom are among the best remembered of an era noted for its impassioned rhetoric:

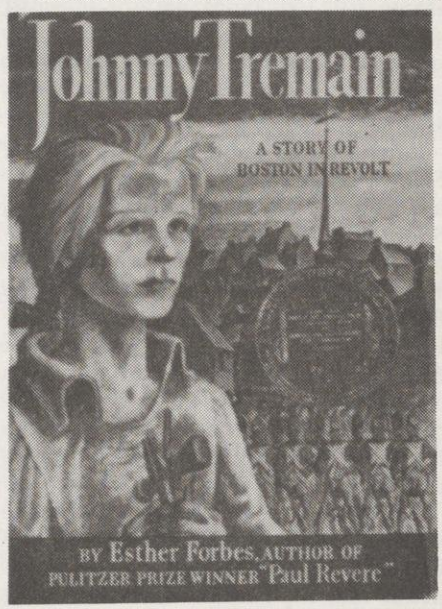
> Is it not amazing that at a time when the rights of humanity are defined and understood with precision, in a country above all fond of liberty, that in such an age and in such a country we find men professing a religion, the most humane, mild, gentle and generous, adopting a principle as repugnant to humanity as it is inconsistent with the Bible and destructive of liberty? . . . Would anyone believe I am a master of slaves of my own purchase. *I am drawn along by the general inconvenience of living without them. I will not, I cannot justify it.* However culpable my conduct, I will so far pay my devoir to virtue, as to own the excellence and rectitude of her percepts, and lament my want of conformity to them (Henry, quoted by Jameson, p. 22; emphasis added).

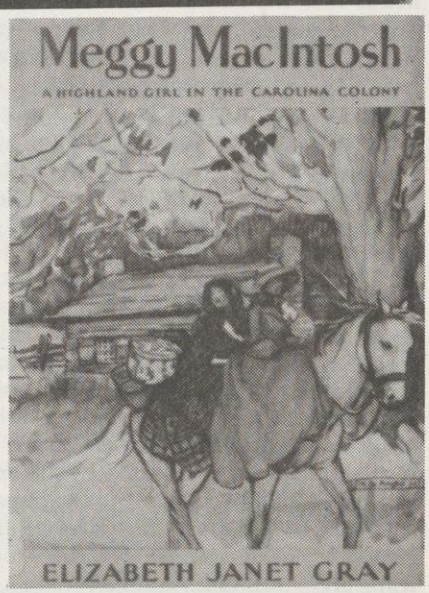
Colonies Supported Abolition

In fact, although Jefferson's attempt to include a passage denouncing slavery in the Declaration of Independence was defeated, there was significant support for abolition in the colonies. Nevertheless, an overwhelming majority of books in this sample ignore this, making it seem as though the issue of freedom for Blacks and the questions it raised were never entertained either by the white majority or Blacks themselves. The latter point is especially important because these novels also leave the reader with the distinct impression that Blacks were unconcerned and did little to advance their own freedom.[8] Such a belief has, in fact, provided important ideological support for the paternalistic white belief that Blacks are, and have been, incapable of thinking and fending for themselves; it constitutes an important component of the stereotype of the carefree, indolent Black.

If those writing prior to the publication of *Tree of Freedom* were part of a society dominated by the ideologies of white supremacy and Black inferiority, later authors wrote during an era when

Books included in the survey are shown on pages four and five; note that two books have won Newberry citations.





these ideas came under assault. This is especially true of the sixties and the seventies, when the civil rights movement dominated public consciousness. Given this, it is surprising how little influence the movement had on the books in the sample.

Of the books published after *Tree of Freedom*, those written by Beers, Cavanna, Fast, Fritz, Lawson, Savery, Snow and Wibberly contain not a single Black character. Several books—*Who Comes to King Mountain?, My Brother Sam Is Dead* and two titles by Finlayson—do contain minor Black characters fighting for the American cause, but the authors never give any indication of why they chose to do so given the whites' at best ambiguous attitude about slavery.

While more recent books are free of the vicious stereotyping characteristic of earlier titles, the absence of Black characters and the lack of discussion of the "Black issue" suggest that the authors were still unable or unwilling to deal with the contradictions posed by the Black presence. No longer able to simply dismiss Blacks because of their "inferiority," recent authors instead avoid the issue, either by eliminating Black characters altogether or by casting them in secondary roles. This dismissal of the Black issue can be explained, in large part, by the conception which the authors have of the Revolution, one which sees it as being almost exclusively concerned with the issue of independence from Britain. As I have demonstrated elsewhere,[9] this focus on the issue of "home rule" fails to consider the internal aspects of the Revolution and the impact it had on the status of "outsider" groups such as Blacks, women, Native Americans and lower-class whites.

The only book in the sample that demonstrates concern with such outsiders and confronts the myth of Black apathy is Sally Edwards' *When the World's on Fire*. This is also the only book with a Black protagonist. Edwards paints a poignant picture of the tragic situation so many Blacks confronted during the Revolution. Could they trust either the British or the Americans, both of whom understood the vital role Black soldiers could play and who, therefore, made promises they either couldn't or wouldn't keep? Recognizing this dilemma, the unforgettable Maum Kate angrily states that:

> The Americans promise freedom, if only we will ride and fight with them in the swamps. The Americans babble about liberty—yet it is only their own liberty they dream of, not ours. And the British, the most civilized of men, promise freedom only to enslave the slaves. We lose either way (p. 101).[10]

Maum Kate's greatest rage is, however, voiced as she speaks of the Declaration of Independence:

> What beautiful words the white men write—life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Four men from Charleston signed that declaration. Yet their slaves are still slaves, serving at tables, toiling in the fields (p. 101).

Although Maum Kate "does not blame all white people for slavery" (p. 102), there is little notice given to those whites who saw the tragedy and paradox posed by the Black dilemma and struggled to attain liberty and justice for all. Edwards' narrative is instead directed at showing Blacks engaged in bold and successful action on behalf of their own freedom. Again, it is the fiery Maum Kate who gets to the heart of the matter when she delivers the most decisive—in fact, the only—affirmation of Black humanity and strength to be found in all of these books:

> We are too easily fooled by so much talk of liberty. Yet we have our own strength, our own spirit. And someday this spirit will shine so brightly the sun will seem a feeble candle (p. 102).

Despite having something refreshingly "new" to say about the Revolution, *When the World's on Fire* was permitted to go out of print after only two printings, a fact that might lead one to infer that the novel was simply too iconoclastic, too "out of sync" with the commonly held conception of the Revolution to remain in print.

Later authors, who *must* have been aware of the paradox, chose to avoid the issue. Blacks, however, are not the only group shown to be excluded from the promises of the Revolution.[11] This is also true of those who constituted the faceless mob or "rabble" that is often mentioned but rarely discussed in these novels.

Social Class and the Revolution

Because authors rarely speak explicitly in terms of class, it is far more difficult to analyze the role played by social class in these novels than is the case with race. Thus, information about social class must be inferred from dress, manner of speech, overall living conditions, etc., rather than from direct attribution. Nevertheless, it is possible to arrive at some fairly explicit conclusions that reinforce the belief that cultural artifacts tend to reflect the dominant group's perspective.

Such a thesis is borne out most strikingly by the extent to which the novels' protagonists are drawn from the middle and especially the upper classes of society. Many of these upper-class champions of liberty are rarely shown to be sympathetic to those less fortunate than

they, and they often disparage those below them on the social scale. Furthermore, those lower-class characters we do meet are often depicted as being uncouth, overly zealous and prone to violence! See, for example, the way Beers, Boyd, Crownfield, Collier and Collier, Finlayson, Ford and Fritz depict certain groups, including the "Liberty Boys."

Books Dominated by Wealthy

The earlier books in the sample are especially dominated by characters who come from wealthy families owning large estates and slaves. Squire Meredith in *Janice Meredith*, for example, owns a 20,000-acre estate and is a man of great power and prominence in his community. Likewise, John Fraser in *Drums* is "above the common rank," holds several key positions in his community, owns several slaves, and wants his son to be a gentleman of learning as well as birth (p. 3). The Abbotts in *Continental Dollar* are a family of considerable means and have many "dependent servants," while the Priestlys in *American Twins of the Revolution* have a large estate with barns and "servants'" quarters one-half mile from the spacious family residence. Reba Stanhope in *Freedom's Daughter* lives among the "prosperous and influential class" in Philadelphia (p. 3), as do the Emmetts in *Silver for General Washington*, who have two slaves, a fashionable house and enough silver to make a dent in the mounting debt being incurred by the Continental army. The Jouetts in *Rising Thunder* own a prosperous tavern, race horses and fields worked by slaves. Even the impoverished Johnny Tremain in *Johnny Tremain* is an heir to the considerable fortune of the Lyte family. Meggy MacIntosh in *Meggy MacIntosh*, though orphaned and without means of support, is from an upper-class family that was ruined when her father sided with Prince Charles in the Scottish Revolution. Despite her precarious position, Meggy owns jewelry and uses it to purchase an indentured servant. In a similar vein, *Battle Lanterns'* Bill Barlow, though penniless throughout the novel, searches and eventually finds a buried treasure bequeathed to him by his merchant father.

This pattern also holds for later books in the sample. If we exclude books set in the frontier settlements where class was less important, more ambiguous and difficult to define, we have only two protagonists—Harry Warrilow in *Redcoat in Boston* and Annie McGee in *When the World's on Fire*—who are from the poor, propertyless, dispossessed classes of society. Annie, the protagonist, is a slave, while Harry is a British soldier who enlisted in England after being orphaned and near starvation. Thus, there is not a single leading character in the sample who is an American-born, lower-class white. There are some secondary characters who fit this description; but, in contrast to the protagonists, they are often depicted as being shoddy, untrustworthy and, at times, even worse. Other characters, like the blacksmith Isaac Huntoon in *Freedom's Daughter*, are seen as good and well meaning if somewhat lacking in intelligence and judgment. When Sargeant Jasper, in *Battle Lanterns*, turns down a sword of honor and a commission in reward for his heroism, he is lauded as a "hero and a sensible man." Jasper had reasoned that he passed "well enough with the boys, but effen I had a c'mission I'd have to keep higher company" (pp. 32-33).

The crucial point here is that the leading characters—those readers invariably identify with—are drawn almost exclusively from the dominant classes. Furthermore, where lower-class characters are depicted, they are usually seen in a less than positive light if they are white and vilified if they are Black.

Interestingly, the few times when the issue of class is explicitly discussed, it is in a context designed to illustrate either the difference in American attitudes toward class or, more precisely that class in the European sense of the term is not really relevant to life in the colonies. Differences between British and American attitudes toward class are rather clearly illustrated by Johnny Tremain's friendship with Lieutenant Strange of the British army. This friendship provides Johnny with puzzling encounters with British class consciousness. While the young officer is "proud and class-conscious enough when they met indoors," once they are both in the saddle for their riding lessons, "they were equals" (p. 201). Johnny becomes quite attached to the Lieutenant but is disturbed by the officer's attitudes: "Indoors he was rigidly a British soldier and a 'gentleman' and Johnny an inferior. This shifting about puzzled Johnny. It did not seem to puzzle the British officer at all" (p. 203).

Rebecca Ransome in *Rebecca's War* is similarly bewildered when Fitch, a servant, refuses to sit down and join her for a cup of tea because "it is not suitable that we should eat at the same table." Thinking that he means that such an action would constitute "consorting with the enemy," Rebecca is surprised to learn that Fitch's refusal actually stems from a conviction that it would be improper if she, "the young lady of the house," should share a table with a servant. "Rebecca, who had been eating at the same table with Ursula [an indentured servant] and her predecessors for fourteen years, couldn't make head or tail of that. The English did have some curious ideas about things" (p. 92).

The irrelevance of the European idea of inherited class position is suggested in several other books. Early in the *Green Cockade*, the author notes that Squire Stonebridge and his wife had "little financial wealth" but were "rich in imagination, health and courage." In "Old England they would have been middle

The Function of Stereotypes

Stereotyped portrayals of Blacks as inferior, affable and child-like individuals have long served important ideological functions in society. Perkins has suggested that they legitimize and confirm the limited access oppressed groups have to social goods and rewards. It is, however, important to recognize that stereotypes of major structural groups, such as Blacks, are usually "structurally supported" by laws, traditions, institutions and, as we have seen, in novels such as those analyzed in the accompanying article. Stereotypes are then more than insidious cultural images whose extinction would usher in an age of racial understanding and equality. Perkins offers the following explanation of social functions of the Black stereotype:

> The [Black] stereotype is then closely related to the [Black's] structural position and is constantly reinforced by that situation. But it is not a straight-forward "reflection" of that position, but rather an interpretation of it. At the same time it defines for the [Black] the acceptable definition of himself — that is, the definition and explanation which will be accepted by others, a definition which excludes him from competition for social rewards (p. 151).[1]

[1] T.E. Perkins, "Rethinking Stereotypes" in N. Barrett, P. Corrigan, A. Kuhnm, J. Wolff, eds., *Ideology and Cultural Production* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979).

The books surveyed also stereotype Native Americans. The illustration above (detail) from Mr. Revere and I *shows Paul Revere preparing for the Boston Tea Party. "He hastily smeared his face with grease and then with soot. He added a few stripes of red and yellow paint, slipped on the weird garments and the headdress and snatched up a hatchet."*

class by inheritance." However, in the forests of New England, "class was established by brain and muscle," and the Squire "looked up to no one" (p. 14). The subsequent discussion serves to point out that while the colonists considered themselves loyal subjects of the King, the traditions the King represented meant much less to them than it had to their ancestors. Indeed, central to the author's concept of the Revolution is the belief that men and women who "of their own initiative . . . fought and worked for their homes" should not be subject to the rule of those thousands of miles away. This discussion makes clear the importance that contrasting visions of society played in leading men like Squire Stonebridge to believe that "they could manage their affairs if, for some reason, all monarchs went out of business" (pp. 13-14). This position does, however, conflict with the Squire's later insistence that his wife ride a horse with a pillion, as "befitted one of her station" (p. 59).

The absence of a clearly defined hereditary class is also alluded to in *Redcoat in Boston*. On a "deserted patrol" outside of Boston, the British soldier Harry Warrilow overhears a lieutenant's comment that he'd seen nothing all day that could be called "a gentleman's seat." Harry mumbles to himself that "he'd not seen anything that could be called a hovel, either" (p. 65), a reference to the sharp contrast in the living conditions of English peasants and lords. This point is made even more strongly later in the novel when Harry considers "buying out" of the army and heading West. Once again, Harry contrasts conditions in the colonies to those in England:

> England was full of men who had farmed all their lives and couldn't point to an acre of soil that belonged to them. But here, with all the wilderness to fill, even a Northampton sweep could search out a choice bit, build a cabin [and] clear some ground (p. 229).

Despite a paucity of specific information provided about social class, it is clear that the books present the Revolution from the perspective of the dominant classes in colonial society. Although several books point out that colonial America provided unprecedented opportunity for personal advancement, they stop short of explicitly pointing out that this greater freedom was restricted to whites, and even then, not to all whites. And, of course, none mention that this "advancement" was achieved at the expense of Native peoples who were either killed or dispossessed.

The books also ignore the existence of growing unemployment and urban unrest among those classes who ultimately provided so much of the support for the colonial cause. Many books like *Freedom's Daughter*, *Crystal Cornerstone*, *Early Thunder* and *Redcoat in Boston* negatively portray the often violent actions of the urban "mobs" without placing these actions in any context. *John Treegate's Musket* is, in fact, the only book to provide an explanation for the mob's discontent and behavior (pp. 86, 183). There is, however, no major character from this group, so the discussion of their plight (*e.g.*, persistent and rising unemployment in Boston) tends to form the background of this book rather than its substance. By always presenting an upper- and middle-class perspective, these books tend to imply a universality for these particular experiences, when, in fact, other groups had markedly different perceptions of and involvement with the issues.

Conclusion

In an essay that attempts to see the Revolution "from the bottom up," Jesse Lemisch notes that social scientists have persisted in drawing conclusions about entire societies "on the basis of examinations of the minority on the top." He points out that such an approach has "distorted our view and, sometimes, cut us off from past reality." Therefore, Lemisch notes, we tend to view "our earliest history . . . as a period of consensus and classlessness in part because our historians have chosen to see it that way."[12] By focusing almost exclusively on the perspectives of those who dominated colonial America and by ignoring the life conditions and roles played by those both white and Black on the bottom of society in fermenting the Revolution, the books in the sample serve to reinforce the image of America as a classless society free of deeply rooted conflict. Furthermore, what conflict we do see is usually depicted as stemming from a lack of judgment and restraint on the part of those possessing an insufficient regard for the rights, feelings and property of others.

While it is undoubtedly true that Revolutionary America promised freedom, it is also true that significant segments of society were excluded from this promise.[13] Because the experiences of this significant segment are either derogated, minimized or eliminated altogether, these books tend to give a rather distorted and biased view of the Revolution—and of colonial society.

The books also present some ambiguous and contradictory messages. The most significant of these is the identification and legitimation of hierarchical relations in the formal structure of the novel, which is then denied at the level of content when the Revolution is explained as an historical event (*i.e.*, as a struggle for freedom and liberty for all). The extent to which young readers become aware of this contradiction needs investigation beyond the scope of this paper. Nevertheless, it does seem likely that such a contradiction is seen by only the most mature readers, and the fact that the novels repeat the perspective of middle- to upper-class whites may lead readers to conclude that such experiences were far more common than they, in fact, were. The books may be said to contribute to the acceptance of what has been termed "the legend of equality of opportunity and the idea of [the U.S. as] a classless society."[14] These myths provide crucial ideological support to a social system which can hardly be said to provide equal opportunities to all of its members.

The authors of these materials have consistently omitted—and often slandered—the points of view of social groups whose history, not coincidentally, has been marked by powerlessness and oppression. A basic claim made here is that the treatment of Blacks, women and low-

er-class groups in curricular materials not only reflects this powerlessness but may also encourage ideologies and attitudes that provide important support to, and justification of, racism, sexism and the inequitable distribution of social and economic power and resources. Clearly, writing, incorporating and transmitting the history of *all* people must be seen as one of the great challenges confronting us today. □

Books Examined in This Study

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FOOTNOTES

[1]For a discussion of how Charles Waddell Chesnutt, a militant nineteenth century Black author, dealt with the Sambo stereotype, see my article entitled "Charles Waddell Chesnutt's Sambo: Myth and Reality" in *Negro American Literature Forum*, 1975, *9*, pp. 105-108.

[2]"Servant" is a commonly used euphemism for slave in the books.

[3]When Jack prepares to return to active duty, he remarks matter-of-factly to his father that he'll have little trouble managing without him as the "crops are doing fine and the niggers are all in good condition" (p. 186).

[4]J. W. Blassingame, while noting efforts of young scholars in the 1960's to find a "usable Black past," referred to this movement as "a dramatic shift from the conspiracy of silence, vituperation and misrepresentation of historians bent on preserving white supremacy." See "The Afro-Americans: From Mythology to Reality" in *The Reinterpretation of American History and Culture* (Washington, D.C.: NCSS, 1973).

[5]See, for example, H. Aptheker's *American Negro Slave Revolts* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943) and K. Stampp's *The Peculiar Institution: Slavery in the Ante-Bellum South* (New York: Knopf, 1956).

[6]J. F. Jameson, *The American Revolution Considered as a Social Movement* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1940), pg. 21.

[7]Ibid.

[8]This is precisely the point made by *Rifles for Washington* when one of the characters is said to be "moved . . . to perpetual amusement" by the numbers and appearance of the slaves left alone at work in the fields. "The cage door's open," Andy says, "again and again" (pg. 298). Andy's amusement stems from the fact these slaves do not flee.

In *Battle Lanterns*, the hero, Bill Barlow, is reunited with the Black slave, Luke, on a remote section of the island where they are both held in bondage. Although Luke is older and physically stronger than Bill, he sees Bill's arrival as a sign from God. Luke, seemingly incapable of fending for himself, says "he gwine fotch us outen of Egyp' yet" (pg. 187).

In *The American Revolution: Explorations in the History of American Radicalism* (DeKalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 1976), A. F. Young notes that of the approximately 500,000 Blacks in the colonies, "a very small minority took up arms for, or aided the patriot cause, a much larger group . . . aided the British and the largest number of all voted with their feet against either side, that is, they fled to freedom under whatever circumstances they could" (pg. 452).

[9]J. Taxel, The Depiction of the American Revolution in Children's Fiction: A Study in the Sociology of School Knowledge (Doctoral dissertation, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1980).

[10]In the epilogue, the author notes that in the year 1783, the year of the final British defeat, English merchants received 1,700,000 pounds of sterling for the sale of American slaves. She also points out that despite promises of freedom made to Blacks by the Americans, "with few exceptions, the Patriot slaves were returned, voluntarily and otherwise, to their former masters" (pp. 123-124).

[11]A similar case could be made for the way in which Native Americans and women are treated in the novels. See, for example, F. Jennings, "The Indian's Revolution" in A. Young, ed., *The American Revolution: Explorations in the History of American Radicalism* (DeKalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 1976) and J. H. Wilson, "The Illusion of Change: Women in the American Revolution" in the same work.

[12]J. Lemisch, "The American Revolution Seen from the Bottom Up" in B. Bernstein, ed., *Towards a New Past: Dissenting Essays in American History* (New York: Vintage Books, 1969), pg. 5.

[13]Lemisch (see above), for example, notes that "increasingly colonial Boston was less a place of equality and opportunity, more a place of social stratification. Throughout American property qualifications excluded more and more people from voting until a Jacksonian Revolution was necessary to overthrow what had become a very limited middle-class 'democracy' indeed" (pg. 8). Property qualifications to vote are not mentioned in any book in the sample.

[14] R. Thursfeld, "Developing the Ability to Think" in the seventeenth *NCSS Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: NCSS, 1947).

An expanded version of this article appears concurrently in *Interchange*, a quarterly published by Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 252 Bloor St. West, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5S IV6, $5.

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Third in a series of articles on race and sex bias in educational research

How Old Biases Influence New Research Design

By Patricia B. Campbell

Most people read just two parts of a research study—first, the beginning (the introduction), to determine what's been studied and second, the end (the results and conclusions), to determine what's been found and what it means. The middle of the study (what's been done and how) is rarely read and even less often understood and evaluated.

Too often it is assumed that if a study has been published, the design and methodology must be appropriate—and unbiased. Alas, this is frequently not the case. Publication, or even acclaim, are no guarantees of quality or even accuracy. The design of the study, the group being studied and the tests used are as important as what is studied, and they are even more crucial to the accuracy of the results.

Bias In Design

The design of a study is the overall plan. It posits how the research questions will be tested and, hopefully, answered. If bias enters into the design, there is no way that the results can be correct. Bias influences research design in four principal areas: 1. sensitivity to prior research, 2. selection of variables, 3. sources of error and 4. analysis of data.

1. *Sensitivity to prior research.* As noted in Part II of this series (Vol. 12, No. 6), research on racism and sexism is extremely limited. This is in itself a product of societal bias. Moreover, research that is done usually gets published outside the mainstream of research, in "special-interest" journals. These journals are often difficult to find, and they go unread by most research workers. Even when research data on sexism and racism are available, bias often keeps researchers from seeing the relevance of the findings to their own studies. To take just one example, the finding that girls score lower on tests if boys are being tested in the same room and higher if girls are tested by themselves could have a great influence on all studies, but it is not taken into account.[1]

2. *Selection of variables.* How bias occurs in the selection of the variables to be studied is nicely illustrated by comparative studies of women and men that use socio-economic status as one of the variables. Now, the socio-economic status of women is commonly based on the status of fathers or husbands.[2] Thus the comparisons being made are not between men and women but rather between men and the husbands or fathers of women. Unless the bias in this categorization is removed, what chance does research data on the comparative socio-economic status of men and women have of being accurate? A great deal of research neglects to take just such variables into account. Ignorance of relevant research can result in all kinds of variables being overlooked in similar ways.

Biased definitions also apply to race and result in skewed research. Distinctions are rarely made between social and biological race. For example, children of Black and non-Black parents are usually classified and studied as Black.[3] Therefore studies of race differences such as Jensen's are based not on racial or genetic background but on appearance.

3. *Control of possible sources of error.* If one is unaware of, or insensitive to, possible threats to validity, it is hardly possible to account for them. In studies of racial differences, for example, how can results be bias-free when the research fails to build in controls that recognize the effects of the socio-economic status of the group studied? This failure characterized early racial-difference studies, when the socio-economic status of the non-Black groups was higher than that of the Black groups to which they were compared.[4] Group differences ascribed to race can just as easily be attributed to class differences. Differences in educational level are also frequently ignored in cross-race studies. Even when variables in education are taken into account, differences in the quality of education are usually ignored, yet this is a factor of decided importance considering the reality of dual school systems for Blacks and non-Blacks. Again, what are labelled immutable "racial differences" may actually be due to factors that can be changed.

4. *Analysis of data.* Researchers often ignore data that do not fit biased expectations. This occurred in the famous studies of sex roles in chimpanzees conducted by R. M. Yerkes, author of the book *Chimpanzees.* Yerkes simply discounted data that were in his eyes "statistically disappointing." He excluded information on two female chimps because, in his words, "they were highly dominant." In other words, Yerkes considered as significant any data supporting feminine passivity and masculine dominance and threw out the rest. Yet Yerkes' research is often hailed as proof of the genetic basis of sex roles.

On the other hand, because of bias, female/male similarities and differences frequently go unstudied. In the early 70's it was found that anywhere from 39 to 65 per cent of the studies generalized their results to all people without checking to see if females and males were different.[5]

It has been suggested that differences

between females and males should be analyzed and reported in all studies. While some excellent reasons exist for doing this—not the least of which is the possibility of finding new and valuable information—there are also problems. Just looking for female/male differences without a knowledge of bias in research methods can lead to wrong answers.

Racial Differences Ignored

A similar pattern exists with the testing of racial similarities and differences. Racial differences are frequently neither analyzed nor mentioned. R. C. Wylie's survey of the literature of research on self-concept mentioned not a single study which considered race as a factor. Moreover, when racial differences *are* examined, the work is often so biased that it would have been better not to attempt it. Ignorance about racial groups, the subjective nature of definitions of race, and the frequency of racial comparisons based on dissimilar groups have led to all kinds of inaccurate conclusions, particularly about Black self-concept and the Black family.[6] Inaccurate information has been so prevalent that some researchers have called for a moratorium on the analysis of mixed-race samples for race differences.[7]

Information that is known about race and sex differences is usually ignored when studies are designed. For example, it has been found that the presence of an adult investigator causes boys to become more anti-social. A study of anti-social behavior that dismisses this information can lead to inaccurate conclusions about differences between girls and boys and reinforce stereotypes about boys' behavior. Similarly, it has been found that children are more apt to play with toys considered appropriate to the opposite sex when they are alone. Thus, studies of play behavior carried out with others in the room are more apt to find typical "little girl" and "little boy" behavior.

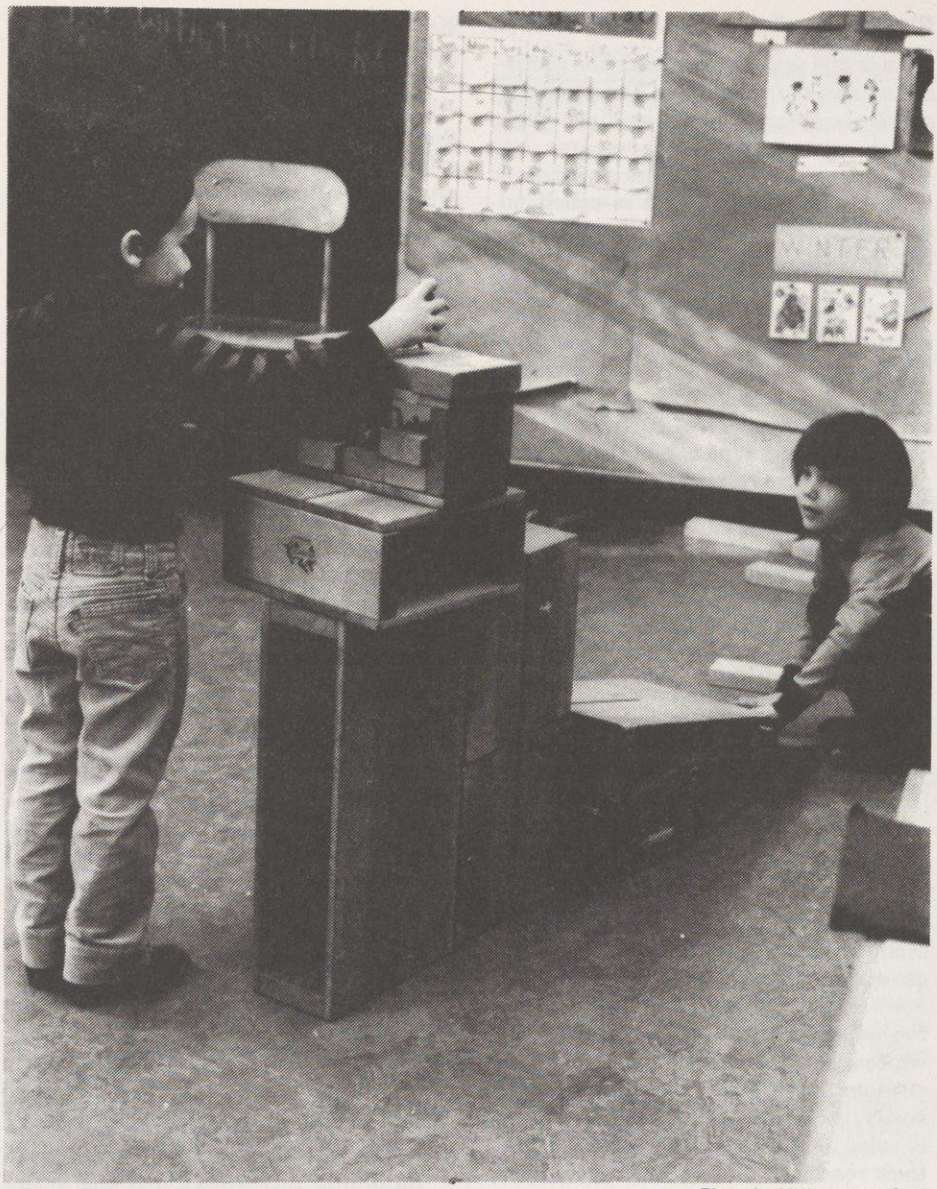

Photo by Michael Schulman

Information about race and sex differences is usually ignored when studies are designed. It has been found, for instance, that children are more apt to play with toys considered "appropriate" to their sex if an observer is present, yet this information is not taken into account when play behavior is studied.

Sex Differences Also Ignored

In an extensive review of the literature, Maccoby and Jacklin reported a number of findings that could affect studies of female/male differences. They found, for example, that college men performed better when observed by peers, but college women's performance remained constant. They also found that boys persisted longer in a task if another boy was watching than if an adult was watching, although the age and sex of an observer had little effect on girls. A variety of situations were found to affect boys' and girls' activity levels and speed of work differently.[8]

Research is in trouble when its design ignores the data that *is* known about race and female/male differences. In fact, some investigators now feel that the design of a study may play a more significant role in research on female/male differences than do the actual differences.

Not surprisingly, studies designed with an eye toward controlling subtle sources of error produce different results than studies without such controls. For example, work in child development has shown that middle-class white mothers tend to interact with their children in ways child development "experts" considered "positive," while lower-class Black mothers were found to interact with their children in ways labeled "inadequate." Yet research shows that when middle-class white mothers are not aware that their behavior is being observed, they behave much like the lower-class Black mothers.[9]

Bias in design is not only unfair and unjust, it is foolish, for its major result is to cause research to be wrong.

Bias in Sampling

Race and sex bias influence the composition of research samples. Traditionally, social scientists have studied white males, except when the research has dealt specifically with non-whites or with "pathologies" such as so-called cultural deprivation, delinquency and discrimination.

An analysis of over 500 studies found that 26 per cent were based on males only, while 14.6 per cent studied only females. In addition, over 90 per cent of the results of male-only research were generalized to include women, while on the average 75 per cent of the female samples were generalized to include men. Generalizing from single sex samples to females and males is inaccurate regardless of the sex of the sample.[10]

A somewhat different pattern seems to emerge for people of color. Many studies focus on "the Black experience" or "the problems of Blacks in society," but Blacks are rarely found in the sample of studies of "human behavior." The presence of other people of color such as Hispanics and Asian Americans in samples is even rarer.[11]

Single Sex/Race Samples Common

A number of widely known research studies have used single sex and/or single race samples. For example, Bettelheim and Janowitz's *Social Change and Prejudice* was based on an all-male, all-white sample. Although this study's conclusions have been generalized extensively, the study itself included no people of color as subjects. The authors give as their reason for the exclusion: "to simplify the findings."

McClelland's work on achievement motivation also used only male subjects. There is some indication that McClelland and his co-workers were aware that female/male differences probably affected achievement motivations but they neither pursued this nor expanded their samples to include females. Neither did they specify that their conclusions applied only to men. Our knowledge of achievement motivation in women and girls has been spotty and inaccurate, and it is only in the past ten years that there has been any research at all done in this area. Yet McClelland himself recently concluded that sex role socialization is one of the most important determinants of human behavior.[12]

Another problem, particularly for Blacks, is the tendency to generalize from biased samples. For example, Kardner and Oversey's *The Mark of Oppression* is presented as a study of the effects of prejudice and discrimination on Blacks, but it was based on a sample of 25 people who were either in therapy or who wished to enter therapy. The famous study of discrimination—Grier and Cobbs' *Black Rage*—was based on data drawn from a sample of psychiatric patients and generalized to the Black community as a whole.

While in general men are more apt to be studied than women, the sex of the sample depends, to some extent, on the topic. If research is done on an interpersonal area, researchers are more apt to include women. Women are also more apt to be included if the topic is considered "feminine"—for example, on questions dealing with children, child-rearing and work around the house.[13]

Studies about family economic and social status have relied almost totally on male samples, with the male "head of household" the basic unit for data collection. If, for instance, the husband is a bricklayer, then the family is categorized as blue collar, regardless of whether the wife is a teacher, a waitress or unemployed.[14] The U.S. Census, source of much of the data on families, has encouraged the use of male-only samples. In 1850, the Census dealt exclusively with "male persons over fifteen." By 1970, the Census had changed considerably, but "for ease of tabulation," the male was still considered head (and representative) of the household.*

Bias Influences Samples

Sampling procedures are also influenced by bias. The Gallup Poll gathers information from 1500 "representative" subjects; however, interviews of male subjects begin at 6 P.M., of female subjects, at 4 P.M. Since most of the female interviews are conducted between 4 and 6 P.M., professional "working women" are in essence excluded from the poll.[15]

As Long Laws has observed, social science assumes that the "human" we seek to understand is a heterosexual white male. If white males are taken as the norm, then general research can be based on white male samples.[16] The results can then either be generalized to other groups or the other groups can be studied in terms of how they deviate from the norm. People of color and women thus become something to be studied separately rather than as part of a sample related to some general phenomena.

Nowhere is the effect of bias on sampling more evident than in the growing field of life cycles or stages. Beginning with Erikson's work on the "Eight Stages of Man" through Levinson's *Seasons of a Man's Life*, the research has focused on males. When women are examined, it is in terms of how they fit or don't fit the male model. Without empirical verification, women are said to go through the same cycles as men — or they are said to go through cycles that are antithetical to men's. After surveying the literature on life cycles, Sanguilano concluded that "Mostly we (researchers) persist in seeing her (women) in the reflected light of men."[17] The samples studied are overwhelmingly white as well, and racial differences are rarely even theorized.

Bias and Measurement

While researchers are generally unaware of the effects of race and sex bias on design and sampling, the controversy about race and ability testing has sensitized many to the existence of race bias in this particular area. Most people who prepare and administer tests today recognize the bias in materials developed by middle-class whites and standardized and normed on primarily white middle-class students and then used to make decisions about the abilities of children of color and children who are poor. There is considerably less recognition that sexism also affects ability testing.

One of the major areas of testing for research and evaluation purposes is in achievement and aptitude. "Non-Biased Tests Can Change the Score" (Vol. 11, No. 6) concluded that "sex differences can be created or eliminated through the selection of items in a test. A test can be slanted toward either sex or balanced to assure sex equity through format (multiple choice, fill in the blank, essay) or item content (stereotypically masculine, stereotypically feminine or neutral)."

Racism in tests, however, occurs primarily because tests are products of the dominant white culture. Their language, content, illustrations and even scoring procedures are all drawn from a culture that is foreign or at least less familiar to children of the non-dominant cultures.

*The 1980 Census asks respondents to indicate which household member was "head of household." Years of assuming that the head of household was male and that female head of household indicated male absence may yield results contrary to reality.

Cultural background, geographic isolation and low socio-economic status all combine to provide children of color with a frame of reference that can be very different from those envisioned and expected by test developers. Measurement experts have concluded that "unless the material used for [testing] is equally familiar to all cultural groups, differences in performance are uninterpretable. The difficulties of achieving 'equal familiarity' in this sense are so formidable as to make the idea of culture-fair tests appear unrealizable and perhaps unreasonable."[18] Many researchers dismiss this advice and continue to generate biased conclusions about racial achievement and aptitude.

Bias and Personality Tests

Bias also plays havoc with personality tests. For example, social value scales are based on common — that is, dominant — social values. A correct answer is the common social value, and an incorrect answer is assumed to be due to ignorance. Answers based on opposition to common or dominant social values — or to differences in situations — are considered incorrect and are undifferentiated from answers based on ignorance.

Bias influences observations as well. Commenting on the work of R.M. Yerkes (whose research on chimpanzees was discussed earlier) J. Silveria noted that "his bias determined his 'observations' and his observations were used to support his bias."[19]

Attitudes Determine Observations

Silveria's conclusion holds for a number of other researchers as well. For instance, ratings may reflect not reality, but rather what the observer considers appropriate for females and males. Studies have been made in which one group of observers has been told that an infant subject is female and another group believes that the same subject is male; each group reported different observations. Now, obviously, cues to sex identity should be eliminated in infant studies, and observer bias recognized in studies where a subject's sex cannot be hidden, yet the fact that researchers still do not consider this a problem indicates the magnitude of the task facing those who strive for research that is free of bias.[20]

A similar phenomenon probably occurs in observational studies involving race. As biased expectations influence the ways females and males are observed and rated, they no doubt also affect the ways that subjects from different cultural and racial backgrounds are observed and rated.

Almost any measure can be influenced by bias and thus generate inaccurate results. As has been shown, biased design, sampling and measurement can all lead to bad research, research that is not only wrong, but can also be used to perpetuate stereotypes and justify discrimination. In a society that professes educational equity as a goal, this can not be done. Non-biased research methods are a simple matter of justice—and a matter of *good* research. □

FOOTNOTES

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Reardon and Prescott, op. cit.

[11]Thomas and Sillen, op. cit.

P. Stivers and D. Leckie, *NIE/AREA Planning Conference to Increase the Participation of Women and Minorities in Educational Research and Development* (Washington, D.C.: NIE,1976).

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[13]J. Condrey and S. Condrey, "Sex Differences: A Study of the Eye of the Beholder," *Child Development*, 1976, 45, pp. 812-19.

Steinmetz, op. cit.

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[15]C. Shakeshaft, personal communication, November, 1980.

[16]J. Long Laws, "Feminism and Patriarchy: Competing Ways of Doing Social Science," ERIC Document ED166081, 1978.

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About the Author

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Racism and sexism awareness trainers describe their strategies for achieving multicultural education

Liberating Child Care: A Team Approach

By Sheli Wortis, Val Hinderlie and Patricia Simmons

One day after work, we were talking to a friend who teaches in a day-care center. "You have such great articles and books at your office, but I don't have the time or energy to come up and read them. Can't you just *tell* me what I should do to help get rid of discrimination in my center?" We looked at each other and groaned. The request was familiar and very understandable. Day-care workers already put in extra hours—unpaid—for staff meetings, parent meetings and parent conferences, and they attend training courses after work as well. But there is no simple solution to her dilemma, and we said so.

"But," she said, "there are a couple of white children in our center who keep intimidating the other children. And now they're trying to keep the Black children from playing where they play. The staff has been dealing with them, but we don't know whether we're saying the right things." This is a common story: we hear something like this from almost every group we work with. Again, there is no simple solution. To "deal with" a child really means investigating what's going on at home, talking to the child's parents, and finding out about the child's friends and associates and what messages he or she is getting from them. It means staff discussions at the center to see if people are attempting to be consistent when talking to children about behavior that excludes and discriminates against others. It also means setting guidelines to help staff work together with parents and children to eliminate discrimination.*

Our friend asked that the Multicultural Project for Communication and Education (MPCE) meet with her center's staff. Since the center had some money allotted for staff training, we planned a series of meetings. We devoted one entire meeting to discussing the teachers' experiences—actions they took and what they said when they observed children discriminating against, or excluding, other children. The teachers were able to compare their actions and to evaluate their effectiveness. They shared information from parent conferences which provided some explanation of the history or context of the children's behavior. Finally, they agreed to devote a portion of their center's bi-monthly parent meeting to discussing ways in which parents could support the staff in their efforts to counteract discrimination.

When MPCE staff visited the center a month later, there were visible changes. Some parents and staff had organized a parents' bulletin board with an area for exchanging information about the strengths and weaknesses of different books and toys. One parent had put up a notice about a book she felt was offensive to Asian and Asian American children. The walls of the classrooms were decorated with photographs of children and their families, with posters contributed by parents and with material assembled by the children based on a walk they took around the center's neighborhood. Since the center had only one phonograph and a few records, one classroom had an inexpensive portable radio tuned to a local radio station which played both folk and soft rock music.

Combatting discrimination is a process, not an event or an activity. To us, it means creating a total environment in a child-care program—an environment that encompasses parent involvement, staff diversity, classroom materials familiar to children from different cultural backgrounds, books and records that convey positive messages. Above all, it means developing self-esteem in every child. To do all of this, a program has to have a vision of what it wants to be. It has to have goals that are communicated to staff and parents, a program for achieving the goals and a commitment to making the program work.

In our work with day-care centers, the MPCE emphasizes the positive goals that centers can work toward to provide a stimulating multicultural environment. But, since the term "multicultural education" does not reflect the full meaning of the quality of education we advocate, we instead use the phrase "liberating child care." As we said in one of our pamphlets:

> In our view, a liberating program is a program which: (1) supports children's and adults' learning to accept and respect each other's differences; (2) teaches the true history of people's different cultures; (3) reflects the needs, lifestyles, languages and cultural patterns of the community it is serving; (4) respects the work that women do in society and encourages equal status for women; (5) shows respect for working-class people; (6) encourages taking immediate action to interrupt our own and others' discriminatory behavior; and (7) emphasizes traditions and values of group cooperation and sharing rather than individualistic behavior.*

Our experience in working with day-care centers and human service organizations has proven that raising consciousness through training and affirmative goal-setting is only a beginning. To develop a liberating child-care program requires long, often difficult, meetings and, *for all staff*, the development of

* See "Handling Racist Incidents: A Case History" by Patricia Simmons, Vol. 11, Nos. 3 & 4.

* "Caring for Children in a Social Context: Eliminating Racism, Sexism and Other Patterns of Discrimination" by Val Hinderlie, Mary McCullough, Marie Schachter, Patricia Simmons and Sheli Wortis. Copies of this pamphlet are available from The Multicultural Project for Communication and Education, 678 Massachusetts Ave., P.O. Box 125, Cambridge, Mass. 02139 for $2.50.

a sincere willingness to learn from those who are oppressed by discriminatory practices that permeate our society. Such commitment is difficult and time consuming. It demands innovation and patience. It requires giving up familiar ways of behaving and making sacrifices of time and energy.

When day-care centers and human service organizations call upon MPCE for assistance, they are usually asking for two primary things: information and support. Many people are looking for information on such resources as curriculum materials, bibliographies, guidelines for evaluating materials and children's books, and museums and resource centers providing information about people from many cultural backgrounds. In addition, people frequently need support in making the next step after some initial efforts within their programs. For example, a program may have formulated some objectives but needs help putting them into practice. Or parents and staff may have had some meetings but have trouble keeping up the momentum that could make the difference between success and failure.

MPCE usually meets with staff from each program to which we give assistance, and together we plan a course. Sometimes a program will request one workshop; sometimes we will work out a series. A workshop may focus on staff members sharing information about their own cultural backgrounds as a means of doing some initial consciousness raising and becoming aware of one another as potential resources. Or, a workshop may focus on exercises designed to help staff work together on common problems and concerns. When possible, and if staff desire it, MPCE makes classroom observations and meets with staff to share our observations and to recommend improvements or changes in curriculum, use of materials or use of staff in planning activities. MPCE believes that parent involvement, on whatever level possible, is extremely important, and we often spend a great deal of time talking with staff about ways to encourage and enhance parent involvement in program development, curriculum planning and improving classroom space.

Now an independent, non-profit organization situated in Central Square, Cambridge, Mass., MPCE began as a project within the area's Child Care Resource Center. Four years ago, in response to requests from local child-care programs and social service agencies for help in confronting racism among staff, parents and children, we started developing exercises and formats for cultural awareness workshops. We conducted several such workshops, began gathering resources we could share with others and interviewed day-care workers and public school teachers who had, to varying degrees, created classroom environments that were liberating. Out of our discussions and research we wrote "Caring for Children in a Social Context." (We also began reviewing children's books for the CIBC *Bulletin*!)

"Caring for Children in a Social Context" has proved to be an important way to help people help themselves. It begins with a section on how to recognize patterns of discrimination. Then it suggests some steps that will help child-care providers articulate goals and develop among themselves the kinds of social relations that will support a liberating child-care program. The final section, which suggests things to do in the classroom, grew out of our experience with preschool classrooms, but many of its ideas can be elaborated and developed for elementary grades.

When the Title XX Task Force of the Cambridge Day Care Alliance asked us to provide training workshops for day-care staff on the history, child-rearing values and problems expressed by parents from different cultural backgrounds who live and work in the Boston area, we put together a series of training workshops on Portuguese, Hispanic, Haitian and African American peoples, and on sexism. Panels of parents and local community activists from each cultural group provided the child-care workers with an account of their people's history, traditions, attitudes about child-rearing and education, and problems encountered living in the U.S. today.

As a result of the success of these workshops, day-care centers and local cultural organizations asked us to coordinate and conduct workshops to help parents become stronger advocates for their children. Through these workshops, parents learned about the institutional difference between early childhood programs and the public schools and heard how parent participation can strengthen the ability of parents to work for changes in day-care centers and public schools to better serve both parents and their children. During 1980 we coordinated and led workshops for Haitian and Portuguese parents, coordinated a workshop for parents of Black children (led by CIBC Advisory Board member

Geraldine L. Wilson) and organized a day-long workshop for child-care workers and parents on "Multiculturalism: Meeting Whose Needs?" These workshops were supported by a grant from the Haymarket People's Fund.

The MPCE staff is three women with long histories of dedication to the field of early education and human services, and with strong commitments to counteracting discrimination. Two are experienced day-care teachers, the other is a developmental psychologist. All are involved in community child-care organizations, and two are parents who have utilized day care and been involved in parents' organizations.

MPCE is partially supported by fees, based on a sliding scale, paid by the programs using our services. We are also heavily dependent on private donations and grants. Advice and assistance with fund-raising is always appreciated. To contact us with, or for, information, resources or assistance, write The Multicultural Project for Communication and Education, 678 Massachusetts Ave., P.O. Box 125, Cambridge, Mass. 02139 or telephone (617) 492-1063. □

Another version of this article appeared in BAEYC *Reports*, a publication of the Boston Association for the Education of Young Children, Vol. XXII, No. 2, March, 1981.

About the Authors

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A quiz on women in the work force focuses on societal inequities

EQUAL PAY

Test Your Knowledge of Working Women

By Paula Kassell

Here is a chance to freshen up your picture of women in the work force. Fill in the blanks in the quiz (guess, if you're not sure) and then see the answers below to fill in the blanks in your knowledge.

(1) Only _____ per cent of the married-couple households in the U.S. consist of the father as the only wage earner, the mother as a full-time home-maker and at least one child at home.

(2) More than _____ per cent of mothers with children under six years of age and _____ per cent of mothers with school-age children are in the paid labor force.

(3) By the third quarter of 1980, _____ per cent of women 18 to 64 years old were in the work force.

(4) The median income of working women with four years of college is (a) greater than, (b) the same as, or (c) less than [that of] men who completed eight years of elementary school.

(5) In 1955, women earned, on the average, 64 cents for every dollar earned by their male counterparts. The 1979 average was _____ cents for women against the male dollar.

(6) Professional women earned, on the average, $ _____ per year, while the average for men was $ _____ .

(7) Women are _____ per cent of registered nurses, but only _____ per cent of physicians.

(8) Women totaled _____ per cent of the 400,000 employees transferred during 1979 by the top 1,200 companies in the U.S.

(9) _____ per cent of all male workers have earnings of $15,000 and over, compared to _____ per cent of female workers.

(10) The median income of married-couple families in 1979 was $21,521. The comparable figure for families maintained by women was $ _____ , and the comparable figure for families maintained by men was $ _____ .

(11) Although 23 per cent of all managers are women, they fill _____ per cent of the middle-level and _____ per cent of the top-level positions in business.

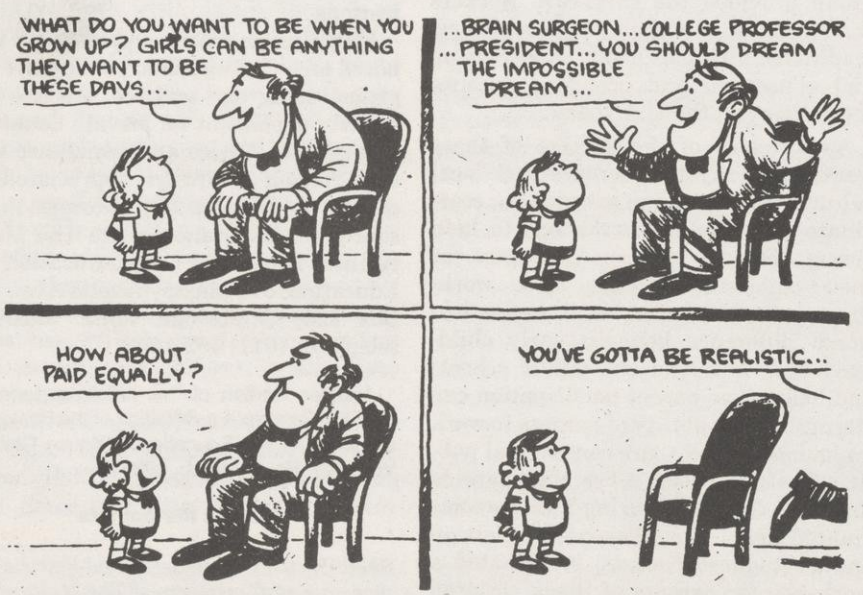
(12) Male employees spend about _____ per cent of their time on coffee breaks, relaxation, socializing and lunch breaks (beyond the normal period). Women spend _____ per cent of their time in these activities.

(13) Out of 91 judges on the federal circuit Court of Appeals (the system just below the U.S. Supreme Court), _____ were women in June 1979.

(14) _____ per cent of women in private industry retire with no pension.

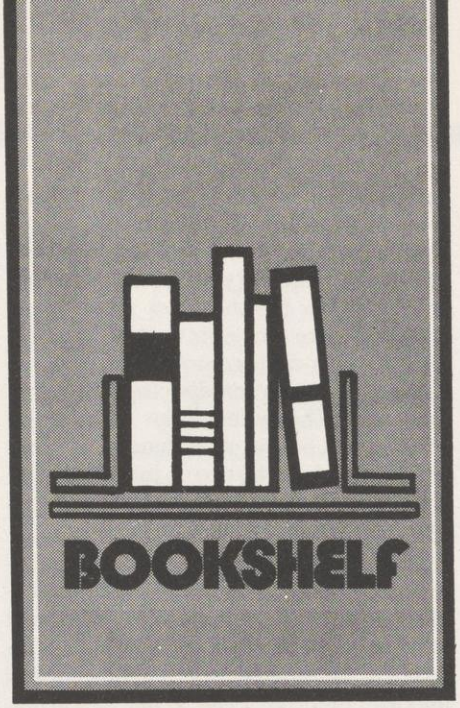
ANSWERS

(1) 14 per cent (2) 46 per cent, 56 per cent (3) 61 per cent (4) (c) (5) 59 cents (6) $13,700, $21,312 (7) 97 per cent, 11 per cent (8) 6 per cent (9) 45 per cent, 9 per cent (10) $9,933, $16,888 (11) 6 per cent, 1 per cent (12) 11 per cent, 8 per cent (13) 8 women (14) 90 per cent. Source for answers is published and unpublished data from Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, except (8) Merrill Lynch Relocation Management (interview) (11) Business & Professional Women's Foundation (12) *Working Women Magazine* (13) raw data submitted by the courts to the House Committee on the Judiciary (14) Working Women, National Association of Office Workers (letter).



Courtesy of Etta Hulme, Fort Worth Star-Telegram, NEA

In the BOOKSHELF, a regular *Bulletin* feature, all books that relate to minority themes are evaluated by members of the minority group depicted.—Editors.



Mrs. Fish, Ape, and Me, the Dump Queen

by Norma Fox Mazer.
Dutton, 1980,
$8.95, 138 pages, grades 5-up

Steadfastly maintaining self-respect in spite of their derogation by others, the three protagonists—Joyce, "Ole Dad" and Mrs. Fish—have a great deal to teach readers of any age.

Joyce, the central character who tells the story, lives with her uncle, Ole Dad, in a garbage dump, of which he is the caretaker. Together, they recycle old garbage into useful forms, critically eyeing the materialism and wastefulness of others. Ole Dad is a positive, nurturing single male parent, still a rarity in children's books.

Each of the three central characters must face the challenge of enduring the age-old sport of name-calling, and children who have experienced this indignity for any reason will find new strength from this story. Due to his short frame, large head and long arms, Ole Dad is tauntingly referred to as "Ape Man" by town residents. Joyce herself is rejected and harassed by classmates for living in a dump. Other children call her "Dump Queen" and "Cootie Queen"; chants are created about her, and at one point, students stuff vile-smelling garbage into her desk. She also loses a new friend who has just moved to the school when this friend discovers where Joyce lives.

What is remarkable about Joyce is her ability to remain proud and uncompromised, in spite of her loneliness. This loneliness is eased, however, with the arrival of Mrs. Fish, a temporary custodial worker at the school. This large, loving, somewhat eccentric woman creates a shelter for Joyce in her small basement office, and offers her both strength and humor.

Like the other two protagonists, Fish is stigmatized by classist and bigoted attitudes, enduring the shouts of "Crazy Fish!" as she wheels her cleaning cart through the halls. Her response to name-calling is a consistent one: "Tush on them all!" Joyce responds to her with great admiration, seeing her as "big, fat, strong and beautiful."

Ultimately, Mrs. Fish meets Ole Dad, who is initially belligerent and suspicious of strangers and seems jealous of Joyce's undisguised love for her new surrogate parent. When he has a stroke, however, he is forced to spend time with Mrs. Fish, who begins to spend weekends at the dump, helping Joyce to maintain and sort the garbage. The relationship that eventually develops between Ole Dad and Mrs. Fish constitutes a moving subplot; the struggle Ole Dad has in overcoming his insecurities and lack of trust in order to experience a growing love is especially touching.

The heart of the story lies in the process of these three individuals beginning to work as a unit, drawing deeply on each other's goodness and individuality, with the mutual understanding that their relationships are far more important than validation from an unsympathetic outer world. As Joyce describes them, they are "like three people who had bumped into each other and didn't know how to get untangled." The author tackles the problem of being different with tremendous success, and gives her characters the ego-strength and values to be invulnerable to others' judgements. The differences, in this case, are of appearance and class, but any child who has known what it is to be "different" will learn from this book a new possibility of pride and a sense of encouragement that being "different" does not necessarily mean "alone." [Leonore Gordon]

Accident

by Hila Coleman.
Morrow, 1980,
$7.95, 154 pages, grades 7-9

Overly simplistic both in style and content, *Accident* reinforces handicapism, sexism and materialism. Jenny Merlino, a bright, active fifteen-year-old who lives on the "wrong side of the tracks," has a crush on wealthy Adam DeWitt and is delighted when he asks her out for a ride on his motorcycle. Through a freak accident, Jenny is thrown from the motorcycle and becomes paralyzed on one side of her body. Jenny's disability remains shrouded in mystery—its causes and treatment unexplained. Adam's all-too-normal guilt is soothed by his prize-winning photo of pre-accident Jenny roller skating. Through the photo, Jenny learns that she is still Jenny, despite her disability.

Trite, yes; clichéd, yes; awful—yes! Jenny is little more than a sassy kid who is often a victim of her own stereotypical thinking. Her brother's chip on his shoulder adds nothing new, nor does Jenny's brave but struggling-to-make-ends-meet mother. Adam's parents are victims of elitism, suffering from the delusion that their money will make everything "right." So does Adam, with his new motorcycle, fancy camera—and token Jewish friend. In the end, Jenny does learn to walk but at the expense of perpetuating stereotypes detrimental to all minority groups, disabled and non-disabled alike. *Accident* is quite simply a waste of paper, time and energy. [Emily Strauss Watson]

Home for a Stranger

by Joan Talmage Weiss.
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1980,
$7.95, 109 pages, grades 4-7

Had this story of a young girl in a Mexican orphanage appeared 40 or 50 years ago, it might have been understandable; that it appears now is an outrage. According to the book jacket, the author has spent time in both Mexico and Ecuador; it is clear from the story that the experience has not penetrated her consciousness in any but the most superficial way.

Mixing together strains of Horatio Alger, the great American dream and the melting pot, the author serves up a true blend of assimilation, U.S.-style. The book is about Juana, a Mexican girl who is brought to the States through the benevolence of a U.S. doctor to be operated on for what is thought to be a harelip. When the doctors discover that it is not a harelip but a scar from an auto accident, the first piece of the puzzle is in place. The rest of the story revolves around finding out who Juana really is. Juana spends time first with the family of the doctor who brought her to the U.S. and later with an Ecuadorian pharmacist, his wife and their eight children. Finally, the tale ends on an exuberant note when Juana, who discovers she is half "American," is reunited with her Mexican mother in Arizona.

From beginning to end, this is a string of stereotypes, distortions and just plain U.S. chauvinism. All the North Americans are kindly, slightly paternalistic and beautiful, from the doctors who venture into Mexico every so often to treat children at the orphanage, to Juana's alter-ego, Lady Baltimore, a blond doll who speaks English. Everything North American is valued, from language (Mr. Rodriguez, the Ecuadorian pharmacist in whose home she stays, tells Juana solemnly, "I will teach you, Juana, just as I was taught. It won't be easy. The first thing is that we never speak Spanish. We are all North Americans.") to looks (Juana changes her huaraches to tight-fitting "American" shoes, saying, "I wanted to look North American now."). Even food does not escape the author's particular touch: not only does Juana hate tortillas and frijoles, but in a curious twist on the theme of the "ugly American," the doctors treat the orphans not to chocolate bars or chewing gum, but to a more modern U.S. goodie which all the children love — white bread!

Throughout, U.S. society's peculiar obsession with antiseptic cleanliness is present. Not only is the reader constantly reminded of the supposed cleanliness of North Americans, but also of the apparent dirt and smells of the Mexicans, as well as the poverty of the country. Predictably, a bath and de-licing are Juana's first experiences in the U.S. And when leaving, she says, "I turned around to look back at the United States and all its clean California grass and houses and flowers. Then I looked ahead and saw all the dirt, so many poor people!"

Nobody in this book is immune to the onslaught of stereotypes, including women. They are for the most part housewives who are almost invisible. The wife of the white doctor, mother of two, engages in typically middle-class suburban activities. The wife of the Ecuadorian pharmacist, on the other hand, has eight children and all she can do to simply tend house. Mexican women are portrayed as both avaricious and uncaring.

Disabilities also are treated in a demeaning way. Señora Perez, the Mexican woman who took Juana in after her accident, is both evil—and disabled! Juana's scar becomes almost a symbol of her Mexican identity. Prior to her operation, Juana constantly refers to herself as "a mess," "a nobody." In a miraculous transformation, Juana becomes a beautiful young woman after the operation, but she is no longer Mexican. "How beautiful you are. You look like a gringa," exclaims one of the orphans when Juana returns. By the end of the book, all vestiges of her Mexican self, real or those imagined by the author, have been obliterated. Juana is not only clean and beautiful, but English-speaking and "American" as well. In addition, all of Juana's happiest moments, the highlights of her young life, reflect a loss of one or another aspect of her Mexican identity: eating white bread; being called Joanne for the first time; receiving her blond doll as a present; dreaming in English for the first time; and finally, discovering she is a U.S. citizen. To top it all off, the book's first person narration results in awkward constructions and poor writing.

This book offers absolutely nothing for Chicano children: the supposed inferiority of their culture, their language and their country permeates every page. For that matter, this book offers nothing to white children either, for the "white man's burden" rears its head once again, albeit in a pint-sized version. "We have done what we set out to do. We have fixed her mouth and even civilized her a little," says one of the U.S. doctors of Juana. Racism is alive and well in this tale of cultural imperialism and self-hatred. This book deserves to be read only as an example of what is done to kill the hearts and poison the minds of Third World children. [Sonia Nieto]

Nobody's Perfect, Not Even My Mother

by Norma Simon,
illustrated by Dora Leder.
Albert Whitman, 1981,
$6.95, unpaged, grades p.s.-2

Often, Simon and Leder are pretty close to perfect (see, for example, *I'm Busy, Too,* reviewed in Vol. 11, No. 7). The message here is, "You're good at some things. I'm good at some things. Everyone's good at some things, but nobody's perfect." Well, "perfect" would have included a disabled child. But close to perfect does include anti-sexist, anti-ageist role models and a nicely drawn multicultural cast.

The book is fun, too—and useful for lively discussion. [Lyla Hoffman]

Don't Explain: A Song of Billie Holiday

by Alexis DeVeaux.
Harper & Row, 1980,
$7.95, 160 pages, grades 7-up

People's recollections of Billie Holiday are still vivid, so anyone who writes about her has to be prepared for some controversy. After all, each person wants Billie's life re-created according to his/her recollections (and fantasies).

Don't Explain is finely-crafted, a story-poem rooted in the oral literary tradition. It draws upon the African tradition of praise, and it moves, sounds, swings in the Black music tradition, making good use of call and response patterns, repetition, improvisation and, on occasion, rhyme. DeVeaux makes clear the artistic, psychological, familial, emotional and political ties that Billie maintained with her community. Those ties influenced her throughout her life. The author conveys that (a) Billie never left us —she dragged us into new art forms, (b) she was no stranger to the great stress of continual oppression and regular loss through early death of loved ones that is suffered by Black people, (c) she was involved in family struggles with the men she loved, and not last or least, (d) she identified with and sang about the struggles of her people. In this sense, DeVeaux's work is important history for young readers.

This poetic biography is sparked by strong images that are dramatic and visual: Lady Day's voice is "patterns of dark embroidered textures. Gaberdine and silk"; when she sings, "her lips puckered between gracious folds of stories." And of course, Billie *cooked* (meaning she was excellent at what she did when she did it), but DeVeaux conveys that with some marvelous alliteration: Billie could "sauté, sizzle, steam." And she could.

Hurt, loss, personal powerlessness and abandonment are crystallized, and Billie's pain literally shimmers on the page! DeVeaux's handling of Holiday's drug problem is unforgettable. The monkey on Billie's back is real, frightening—walking, loping across the pages like a living, breathing monkey-monster that hangs with one arm on your exhaled breath, threatening you, too.

White exploitation of Black artists is portrayed with appropriate starkness. Holiday is reduced to tearful fury—imprisoned by a racist contract—as she smears dark cosmetic wax on her face, deemed "too light" by the Detroit theater management.

Young people who are presently experiencing joblessness can identify with being excluded from work as Billie was. What do you do if you can't work? Billie suffered. She kept getting up. Persevered. She got betrayed, and in some instances, she betrayed herself.

One image that didn't quite work for me was the "black hole" Billie experiences on the night her mother died. Given this society's racist use of the colors black and white (black is tainted, bad; white, pure, good), DeVeaux might have chosen another image, one that did not give "black" a negative connotation. Also, the economy of the author's style may make some of the transitions from one period of time to another confusing for young readers. On the other hand, so much has been made "simple" for children that one welcomes a work like this one.

Let's hope DeVeaux does another biography for children. How 'bout Sister Ida B. Wells or Mammy Pleasant? [Geraldine L. Wilson]

The People Therein

by Mildred Lee.
Houghton Mifflin/Clarion Books, 1980,
$10.95, 269 pages, grades 10-up

Set in the Great Smoky Mountains at the turn of the century, this novel describes the customs and traditions of southern Appalachia—but only by reinforcing negative stereotypes of women, Native Americans, elderly people and people with disabilities. While the character development and attention to detail and locale are commendable, the author makes no attempt to remind readers of the fact that the setting is of an earlier time, a time when such stereotypes were the acceptable norm. In addition, because both main characters are disabled (she physically handicapped; he an ex-alcoholic), *The People Therein* does a particular disservice to the rising consciousness and positive self-image of people with disabilities.

Born with one leg shorter than the other, Lanthy Farr has always known herself to be different from others. The object of superstitious stereotypes and cures, Lanthy sees herself as unattractive to men—and as someone who must prove herself by working "as hard as a man." When Drew Thorndike, a stranger from Boston, arrives at Dewfall Gap, Lanthy finds a person with whom she can talk. Talk and mutual interests soon lead to more, and in typical melodramatic fashion, Lanthy finds herself bedded by a repentant, contrite Drew. He professes his love and desire to wed Lanthy, but by the time Lanthy discovers that she is carrying Drew's child, Drew has suddenly left the Gap to attend his ailing sister in Boston. Lanthy, super-crip that she is, braves the anger and scorn of her family and friends and revels in the thought that "Now she was whole like other women." Finally, almost two years later, Drew returns and the two are united in marriage—but only after Lanthy has fallen on an upturned rake during a struggle to prevent her enraged father from harming Drew.

The values that the author has chosen to portray reinforce the image of the disabled person as unattractive, asexual and the object of pity. Lanthy, though strong in her attempts to flaunt societal attitudes by carrying Drew's child, is ultimately punished by falling on a rake. Her mother and sisters are portrayed as complaining and shallow; their sole value lies in giving birth to children, especially male children. The only elderly character, Gran, is described as dearly loved but incapable and senile. Silent Mary, a "mute" Native American, appears to be thrown in without attention to the culture and pride of her people. In short, while *The People Therein* may represent an accurate portrait of the people of southern Appalachia of the period, it does little to enhance the positive images of the people therein. (It should unfortunately be noted that this book has been cited as a "best book" by several reviewing organizations!) [Emily Strauss Watson]

Head Over Wheels

by Lee Kingman.
Dell, 1981 (© 1978),
$1.75 paperback, 222 pages, grades 5-up

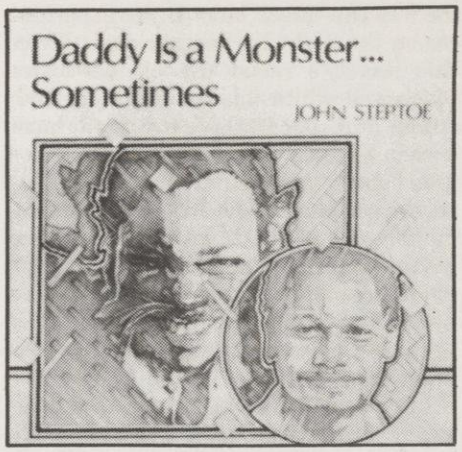
Well written with generally good detail and character development, *Head Over Wheels* reveals in realistic, unsentimental terms the impact of sudden disability on a "typical, all-American" family. Terry and Kerry are identical seventeen-year-old twins — identical until Terry becomes paralyzed as a result of an auto accident. Kerry cannot escape the image of his twin before the accident nor the special guilt of knowing that he, the "whole" twin, will never again be mistaken for Terry. Each twin must develop

his own individual personality and life style, an already difficult process now complicated by the psychological, social, physical and financial effects of Terry's disability. Once sports-oriented "jocks," each must now make independent decisions as to what direction his life will take. Terry finds he must mature faster and evaluate people differently, and his relationships with girls become more complex. For Kerry, "losing" his girl friend to Terry becomes even more threatening. No easy answers are offered.

But the twins are not alone in discovering the impact of sudden disability. Their parents, younger brother and sister and friends must all deal with the changes brought about by Terry's disability. Once a comfortable middle-class family, they are now faced with the catastrophic costs of disability. The father discovers that his once adequate medical insurance will not cover even a third of Terry's estimated $75,000 medical expenses, not to mention the on-going costs of disability. When the twins' car needs to be replaced, Kerry is shocked to learn that Terry's wheelchair costs as much as the fifth-hand VW he was thinking of buying — and there is the difficulty of trying to cram Terry and his wheelchair into a "bug." The family's Victorian home becomes an architectural white elephant requiring major structural changes.

The family as a whole also cannot escape the psychological impact of Terry's disability. The mother, despite all her best intentions, finds her once comfortable relationship with Terry has deteriorated to over-protection and "pet-freak" feelings she must learn to overcome. Ingrid and Dill, the twins' younger siblings, are forced to assume additional responsibilities and fight off their parents' overprotective backlash.

Head Over Wheels is by and large an acceptable book on disability but several significant flaws must be noted. There is a token disabled role model (a doctor on Terry's rehab team) but he remains uni-dimensional—a successful oddity among his non-disabled peers. The author must also be chided for her lack of research about sex and quadriplegia. Yes, persons with this disability can date, marry and even have sex! To assume otherwise is handicapist. [Emily Strauss Watson]



Daddy Is a Monster . . . Sometimes

written and illustrated
by John Steptoe.
J.B. Lippincott, 1980,
$8.95, unpaged, grades p.s.-2

Daddy Is a Monster . . . Sometimes is about two Black children, Bweela and Javaka, and their father, who happens to be the author and illustrator of this book.

Bweela and her brother Javaka remember and discuss all of the monstrous things their daddy has done to them. They picture daddy when he gets angry, growing long teeth, whiskers and pointed ears. He does horrible things then —laughing when Bweela trips and drops her ice cream cone, threatening to give Javaka a spanking when they are eating at a restaurant and ROARING sometimes at bedtime.

Unknown to Bweela and Javaka, there are two other monsters in their home. When these monsters grow long teeth, whiskers and pointed ears, they break things playing ball in the house. One of them paints a door with red paint and another eats a whole box of cookies. These monsters are not angry, but they are very busy.

The humor in the children's being unaware of their sometimes monstrous behavior is made even more appealing when you learn that their father does not think of himself as a monster either. At the end of the story, Bweela and Javaka ask their father why he is a monster sometimes. He at first does not understand what they are talking about. When he does understand, he says "Well, I'm probably a monster daddy when I got monster kids." Since Bweela and Javaka know there are not any monster children in the house, they just laugh and say, "Daddy, you crazy."

This story is a must for children's enjoyment. The pictures are wonderfully colorful and the more you look at them, the more you see in them.

Also, this book will certainly be thought-provoking for adults. It's a reminder of how creative children are in understanding and expressing their perceptions of people they interact with. In addition, it depicts a parent who does many of the things parents/guardians do without a second thought. We enforce children's bedtime, make sure children have enough of the foods they need to stay healthy, teach children not to be destructive and we try to make children aware of other people's needs. These are a part of taking care of children, right? Well, have you thought of how children may perceive *you* in some of these situations?

The title of this book may put some people off. Don't let it. [The Multicultural Project for Communication and Education]

Fairytales of Gold

by Alan Garner,
illustrated by Michael Foreman.
Putnam, 1980,
$15.95, 200 pages, grades p.s.-up

The old adage, "You can't tell a book by its cover" (or its illustrations) is an appropriate warning for this book. Although the text is highlighted by beautiful watercolors, this collection of four modern fairytales is always sexist and often violent, with plots tedious to follow.

Each story has a golden aspect to it—a gold fish, a golden head, bags of gold. In all stories, males are active characters in control of their lives. All male characters are positive and sensitive, with the exception of a jealous (but reasonable) king and a mean cobbler. In contrast, the females are nagging wives, witches, cruel mothers and passive daughters. The one exception is the king's daughter in "The Three Golden Heads of the Well." She is gentle and kind, though the queen's daughter in this story is mean and ugly.

There are numerous other examples of

sexism. In "The Golden Brothers," the husband is responsible for catching a golden fish which brings his family good fortune. The wife's role is to bother the husband until he catches the fish again.

Even when women are in great danger, they remain passive. In two stories, females are trapped and escape only through the aid of magic, and not by their own planned actions. In two instances, kings choose their daughters' husbands, and then "give" the daughters to their spouses.

It is interesting to note how child-bearing is depicted. In one tale, a wife bears two sons by eating two pieces of a golden fish. Another woman has two children instantly, because her husband tells her to do so as he leaves town!

Incidents of violence are also common. Child abuse, wife-beating and murder are all treated matter-of-factly, and thus condoned. In "The Girl of the Golden Gate," a mother dislikes her daughter so she "made her do all the hard work in the house, and she beat her and sent her to bed hungry each night." The girl eventually solves her problem by floating across deep water on a golden ball and leaving her mother to drown! In two stories, animals are killed to assure human good fortune. And, in "The Three Heads of the Golden Well," the queen's daughter is so unkind that she "was married to the old cobbler, and he leathered her with a strap every day. And that's all." That's plenty!

The stories tend to ramble and wander, as fates change unexpectedly. They are often simplistic, with "love at first sight" and happily-ever-after endings.

The book is particularly dangerous because of the captivating illustrations. Perhaps fortunately, the price alone may discourage most people from buying this book. [Jan M. Goodman]

Finding Your First Job

by Sue Alexander,
photographs by George Ancona.
Dutton, 1980,
$2.50 paperback, 73 pages, grades 6-12

Simply written for high school students (or drop-outs or graduates) who do not read at grade level, this "how-to" book presents a lot of basic information in clear and useful style. Starting with how to fill out a social security form, what to wear and say at interviews, the book continues on to how to behave at work.

Sure, the text is quite sexist in its assumptions about who does what work. Sure, the book tells youngsters that "Some employers prefer to hire boys." Sure, the book neglects to mention anti-discrimination laws or employers who might want to exploit youngsters. (Of course, it does tell them about their responsibilities to their employers.) Sure, the photographs are not up to Ancona's best work.

Nevertheless, if you are counseling nervous, unsophisticated young people needing step-by-step guidance on how to face the work world, this book will be helpful. [Lyla Hoffman]

First Woman in Congress: Jeannette Rankin

by Florence Meiman White,
illustrated with photographs.
Messner, 1980,
$7.79, 95 pages, grades 4-6

Described by John F. Kennedy as one of the most fearless women in American history, Jeannette Rankin lived a long, active life committed to social reform. From her early work in women's suffrage to her efforts againt the war in Vietnam when she was in her late eighties, Rankin fought for those things that she believed in.

This biography tells about a woman with the courage and determination to run for Congress—and win—at a time when most women in the U.S. were not allowed to vote. (In 1908, women were enfranchised in four states.) We learn how Rankin gave up her chance for re-election when she obeyed her conscience instead of political expediency and voted against U.S. entry into World War I. Elected to Congress for a second time 24 years later, pacifist Rankin cast the only vote against the country's entry into World War II. (It is interesting to note that although Rankin was vilified for voting against U.S. involvement in World War II, she was one of the few who recognized Hitler's evil and tried to get this country to stop selling him armaments in the 1930's.)

While Rankin is best known for being the first woman in Congress, this is not the major emphasis of the book. Instead, the author focuses on the feminism and pacifism that were the keystones of Rankin's life. After a cursory look at Rankin's childhood (the weakest part of the book), the author goes on to detail her efforts for woman's suffrage. This section, complete with excellent pictures, gives young readers an opportunity to learn about the last years of women's struggle to get the vote. Rankin's work as a lobbyist for peace is also discussed.

The book does have some negative aspects. Its style sometimes leaves a bit to be desired, as does the author's perspective. For example, Rankin's father is portrayed as being "wise" *even though* he had not had "much schooling." I also question White's comment that in 1908, poverty "did not yet exist in the new West."

In spite of these flaws, the book has many good points. It portrays an exciting woman who was active and involved until her death, never retiring from any fight. It also tells the story of a rare person, one who chose repeatedly to go with her conscience regardless of the consequences. Children need to learn of the existence and work of people like Jeannette Rankin, and this book makes the task a little easier. [Patricia B. Campbell]

The Kissimmee Kid

by Vera and Bill Cleaver.
Lothrop, Lee and Shepard, 1981,
$8.95, 159 pages, grades 7-up

The Kissimmee Kid is far from a "fast-paced adventure" as its jacket claims. It is a rambling, remote story of twelve-year-old Evelyn's trip to the Kissimmee Prairie lands in Florida and her gradual recognition that her brother-in-law Cam is involved in a cattle-rustling scheme.

Evelyn is a shallow, crabby, judgmental, impatient, unlikeable character, whose negative attitude doesn't change significantly throughout the book. Her younger brother, who is with her, is a typically excitable, curious, idealistic child who continually gets on Evelyn's nerves. Evelyn had previously respected Cam, and her disillusionment with him is startling to her. However, when Evelyn returns home, she somehow inexplicably decides that "everything is going to be fine."

That's about it. The text is boring, choppy, overly-descriptive and wordy, with unclear images and long sentences. It has little relevance to an urban child, and gives few insights into rural life, except that it's corrupt.

The Cleavers' other works have received critical and popular acclaim, but this book is not as good. An eleven-year-old friend, an ardent reader who devours books and finishes almost every one she reads, fell asleep in the middle of this one! [Jan M. Goodman]

We Are Mesquakie, We Are One

by Hadley Irwin.
The Feminist Press, 1980,
$7.95, 115 pages, grades 4-7

We Are Mesquakie, We Are One begins with an admirable premise—to examine the maturation of a Mesquakie girl from a feminist perspective. Unfortunately the book is plodding and suffers from a major weakness: it attempts to present a Mesquakie perspective without understanding it. As Mary Gloyne Byler aptly puts it: "Being Indian is growing up Indian: it is a way of life, a way of thinking and being. . . . [N]on-Indians lack the feelings and insights essential to a valid representation of what it means to be an American Indian." This book reflects the common non-Indian assumption that one can become Indian by putting on feathers and beads.

The book's language reveals the problems of such an approach. The characters speak the usual stereotypic, stilted, broken-English dialogue commonly attributed to Indian people in children's books: "I know no treaty," "We starve. . . I bring you their food," "We move." The names given to the characters—Hidden Doe, Black Crow, etc.—seem to come straight from Hollywood. They bear no resemblance to beautiful Mesquakie names. In addition, the Native people seem interchangeable because character development is nearly non-existent.

The text refers to Indian males as "braves," although it is noted that "uncivilized," "Papoose," and "squaw" are not "pretty" words. And then there is: "Sioux attack in packs like wolves."

This tale of the Mesquakies' efforts to regain their Iowa homelands and to maintain their culture in the 1800's has other problems. First, there is the implication that the Mesquakie are somewhat responsible for their victimization. Only by working hard, speaking English and having a few friendly whites around do they manage to regain some of their land. Second, there is an assumption that the Mesquakie are better off than other Native groups because they managed to get a piece of the pie. Although the Mesquakies are portrayed as struggling to maintain their culture, their actions will not inspire readers to act against injustice by working in cooperation with others. At times the book prefers to ignore racial injustice to concentrate on female bonding. Even when the Mesquakie are driven off their lands no deep bitterness or hatred is expressed. When the protagonist comes across a white settlement family, they become the best of friends (she even gives the white woman an "Indian" name).

This book offers nothing new or creative, nor does it offer an interesting variation on old themes. Instead, the plot is predictable: Indian/white cultural contact; smallpox (only here the whites are seen trying to help the Native people by vaccinating them, instead of spreading disease by introducing infected blankets, as was often the case); relocation; drunken Indian males passed out in corn fields, etc. There is even a variation of the common "blood brother" theme, with girls becoming sisters using vows and burning splinters.

Finally, the book is objectionable because it purports to represent fact, noting that only the characters are fictional. This is misleading and inaccurate. The entire story is a fictionalized version of the authors' (two women writing under a single name) own interpretation of events. [Combined review by Paulette Fairbanks Molin and Diane M. Burns]

Everybody Knows That!

by Susan Pearson,
illustrated by Diane Paterson.
Dial, 1978,
$6.95, unpaged, grades p.s.-1

We missed this nice anti-sexist book when it came out, but luckily a day-care friend brought it to our attention. And, even better, the book is still in print and available.

A boy and girl—best friends—start kindergarten together. Their classmates —and their teacher—attempt to pressure them to conform to traditional, sexist girl or boy roles. The boy succumbs, the girl gives him his comeuppance, and a lesson is taught with deft humor. A terrific book for every pre-school and kindergarten class. [Lyla Hoffman]

Tortillitas para Mama and Other Nursery Rhymes in Spanish and English

selected and translated by
Margot C. Griego, Betsy L. Bucks,
Sharon S. Gilbert and
Laurel H. Kimball,
illustrated by Barbara Cooney.
Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1981,
$9.95, unpaged, grades p.s.-3

This is the kind of book that should have been written long ago, for its purpose is to preserve a unique aspect of Hispanic culture which deserves to be passed down to all children. Because there are a number of problems with this artfully packaged book, however, it can be recommended only with hesitation.

The 13 rhymes chosen for the book are clearly of Hispanic origin. Some are, however, the most sexist kind of nursery rhyme in our culture. An example:

Tortillitas para Mamá,
Tortillitas para Papá,
Las quemaditas para Mamá,
Las bonitas para Papá.

Little tortillas for Mamá,
Little tortillas for Papá,
The burned ones for Mamá,
The good ones for Papá.

Surely other nursery rhymes not demeaning to girls or women could have been used instead. Another example contains a sexist definition of "girl":

Soy chiquita, soy bonita.
Soy la perla de mamá.
Si me ensucio el vestido,
Garrotazos me dará.

I am small, I am pretty.
I am my mother's pearl.
If I soil my dress,
She will beat me.

And how's that for fueling the flames of child abuse in our culture?

The translations present another problem. In almost every case, they are literal, stilted, graceless and just plain silly. Had more free-form translations been done, the book might have succeeded in demonstrating the charm, wit and rhythm of our nursery rhymes. There are also a couple of mistakes in the Spanish versions of the rhymes, something which is surprising given the purpose of the book.

The illustrations are strikingly beautiful, capturing the rich color and texture of some parts of South America. Yet there are problems here, too, for although the rhymes are supposedly from different—and diverse—countries in Latin America, the illustrations seem to reflect only life in rural, romanticized Mexico. This is clear in both the scenery and the people. This homogenized view of Latin Americans can easily lead to the perpetuation of some familiar stereotypes.

Particularly disconcerting is the fact that in almost all cases the women depicted are obese, and the children are skinny and generally barefoot. In a nice touch, the few men who appear are shown in nurturing roles; yet women predominate and are usually portrayed in only domestic or nurturing roles, generally taking care of children or cooking, while girls help or look on passively. Boys, although they are sometimes shown helping their mothers, are generally shown with the more active rhymes, not as object but rather as subject. The illustrations do indeed reflect some aspects of life as it really is in Latin America, but they fail to provide other non-stereotyped activities which also take place.

In the last analysis, a slim volume of 13 rhymes with the price tag of $9.95, beautiful though it may look, is simply not accessible to most families. Given its other problems, the book's value is questionable. [Sonia Nieto]

Let's Be Friends

All About Me

by Jackie Weissman,
photographs by David L. Giveans.
Acropolis Books, Ltd. (available from D. L. Giveans, 187 Caselli Ave., San Francisco, Cal. 94114), 1981,
$3 each (paperback), unpaged,
grades p.s.-k,
45 rpm record for both books also available for $1.50

Very short and very simple books for young children, these "picture song" books feature multicultural photos and disabled and non-disabled youngsters at play. The lyrics can be sung, since music is provided, or just read. The appealing black and white photos can also be used to trigger conversations on disabilities, on interracial friendships, and on boy/girl friendships. Day-care centers should find these books popular and useful. [Lyla Hoffman]

Button Eye's Orange

by Jan Wahl,
illustrated by Wendy Watson.
Frederick Warne, 1980,
$8.95, 44 pages, grades p.s.-2

Button Eye is young Bonzer's favorite stuffed animal. Button Eye has one leg sewn on backwards; Bonzer wears a brace. Bonzer has a dream in which he ask for an orange and Button Eye decides to get it for his master. When Button Eye sets out on his errand, he is scooped up along with some other stuffed animals and taken to the market to be sold. At the market, Button Eye spies an orange and is determined to bring his treasure home, but he soon finds himself in the midst of several exciting adventures and close escapes. Ultimately, Button Eye is reunited with Bonzer, orange and all.

The jacket states that the book uses the boy's dream as "a poetic interpretation of Love," but the tale carries several disturbing, subtle messages. It is handicapistic insensitivity that Button Eye is seen as independent only in Bonzer's dream and that all pictures of Bonzer show him in a passive situation or supported by his mother. At one point, Button Eye is described as shuffling "as best [he] could." No helpful information is given as to why Bonzer, once ablebodied, now uses a brace. Children's fantasies can be beautiful, fragile things that need to be carefully nurtured, but *Button Eye's Orange* adds little positive nurturance to such fantasies. [Emily Strauss Watson]

Sesame Street Sign Language Fun with Linda Bove

by Tom Cooke.
Random House/Children's Television Workshop, 1980,
$5.95, 44 pages, grades p.s.-k

This is a pleasant, easy-to-read book that aims to introduce children and adults to the signs for a variety of action words and feelings common to the daily experiences of children. The book does not aim to teach about deafness and/or deaf people, nor is it a sign language text. Instead, the reader is shown the signs for a variety of English words related to school, home, family, people, etc.

The main assets of the book are the graphics and visual arrangements, although sometimes the photographs of Linda Bove demonstrating the signs are too small. These undersized photos make it difficult to observe her facial expressions and the location of the hand movements. The larger photos, such as those demonstrating "how people get around," offer a better balance between the demonstrations of the signs and the graphics used as illustrations.

On the whole, the book will probably be most useful with very young children. [Glenn Anderson]

Jemmy

by Jon Hassler.
Atheneum, 1980,
$7.95, 175 pages, grades 7-up

Impressive and enjoyable, *Jemmy* has much going for it. It concerns a young Chippewa woman whose dad is white and, in an interesting reversal, a drunk (her mother is dead). The family lives a bleak existence just off-reservation, and Jemmy seems resigned to a life of alienation and despair.

Rescue comes in the form of Otis and Ann Chapman, white folks from the big city, when a blizzard lands Jemmy at the Chapmans' door. Even more improbably, Jemmy turns out to be perfect for the part of "Maiden of Eagle Rock," the central figure in a huge mural Otis Chapman has been commissioned to paint for a mall in downtown Minneapolis. Jemmy's chance encounter with the Chapmans becomes her window and ticket to the outside world, and through them she discovers her talent as an artist and can for the first time see her situation from another vantage point.

The Chapmans have their own problems, which gives the book the depth that would otherwise make it an advertisement for VISTA. Jemmy realizes that her relationship with Otis and Ann is fraught with contradictions, and her face staring down on thousands of people in Minneapolis is no life solution either.

What also saves the plot is author Hassler's first-hand knowledge of Indians in white schools, small off-reservation towns and artiste types like the Chapmans. His ability to zero in on the details of how the school's institutionalized racism functions, for example, and the way in which he captures the cool distance Jemmy keeps from the outside world give the novel strength and eloquence.

It's unfortunate that a novel so much better than most has one serious flaw. The reader is left to wonder what would have become of Jemmy without the help of the gentry from Minneapolis. The problem is compounded by the negative portrayal of the novel's other Indian characters. It would be a mistake to call Hassler's brilliantly drawn sketches of the opportunist Indian teacher or Jemmy's two-faced supposed "best friend" racist, but the lack of strong positive Indian characters casts a shadow on an otherwise excellent novel. [Paul Smith]

Rainbow Jordan

by Alice Childress.
Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1981,
$8.95, 142 pages, grades 6-up

Not all Black women write about Black women, and if they do, it's not always in quite the same consistent fashion as Childress. She grapples with, holds up to the light, peels away like onion layers the important subtleties, nuances, feelings and thoughts of our women. With an unusual combination of love, understanding, honesty, life experiences and wisdom, she shows us accurate, yet positive, images of our range and variety. Reading Childress, we are not unnecessarily arrogant about our revealed strengths, nor diminished or made dysfunctional when confronted by our weakness.

In *Rainbow Jordan*, Childress examines the relationships among three women—Rainbow, a teenage child becoming a woman, her errant mother Kathie and Josephine, the foster mother who provides an anchor for Rainbow when Kathie can't or won't keep her stuff together. The reader also gets a few glimpses of Mayola, the Black social worker who works conscientiously on Rainbow's behalf.

The book is well-constructed, unfolding from the point-of-view of each of the three women whom we come to know through their internal monologues, the ways in which they share their perceptions of each other and their conversations with each other. This is a tale with three storytellers. We see the poignancy of a middle-aged single woman who provides care for foster children and faces up to what she feels is ultimate loneliness without the man she loves; the repeated disappointment—almost betrayal—of a teenager who needs her mother's concern but does not get it; and the frustration and anxiety of a woman on her own with a teenage daughter who wants her support. (The mother, who was a teenager when Rainbow was born, has few skills for getting and holding a job and few emotional resources.)

The idea of portraying three women, across three generations, using foster care and what is probably parental neglect as themes, is an ambitious project. The themes are painful, but Childress handles them well, resolving the difficult conflicts in realistic, sensitive, direct fashion and in ways that seem consistent with the characters.

Using the African-based language forms characteristic of the Black community, Childress energizes her characters; the language has intensity, pith, rhythm, volume, stillness. In places it sparkles. The author is adept at conveying warmth and other emotions, and she makes it possible for us to see African American language as a *literary* language. Each woman speaks in her form of language—with rhythmic pathos, humor, wryness, in rhyme, proverb, image and metaphor—about just how *she* sees and feels about the events that make up the story line of the book, and about her loss. For the book is most certainly about loss and alternatives for coping with it.

Comments not to be missed are those on Cinderella and Sleeping Beauty, sex education classes and Rainbow and her

3,000-year-old Egyptian sister. Feelings to be experienced—sorrow, suspense, fun, joy, resignation, understanding.

Bravo, too, to Childress for having Rainbow consider a number of well-thought-out and responsible birth-control alternatives, including abstinence as an important choice. But why does Rainbow ultimately decide to handle her boyfriend Eljay's consistent pressure to "give it up" in the way that she does? Rainbow's motives are not clear, and her apparent failure to make any decision about birth-control—even though she does not sleep with Eljay—might confuse readers, particularly those who need a positive model in weak moments.

The rainbow has had a particular cultural meaning to Black folks. Having nothing to do with the pot of gold, it has meant hope, faith, a better day. There is a sho-nuff *rainbow round* Alice Childress' *shoulder*. She has crafted a touching, powerful book. And the cover illustration of Rainbow by the able Jerry Pinkney is well done. [Geraldine L. Wilson]

Buffalo Bill

by Mary R. Davidson,
illustrated by Sam Savitt.
Dell (Yearling), 1962, reissued 1980,
$1.25, 80 pages, grades k-6

Written 20 years ago, this book has been reissued as part of Dell's Yearling series, which includes books on Amelia Earhart, Frederick Douglass and Malcolm X. It would seem that the publisher's intentions are good, so how to explain the inclusion of the most famous Indian-killer of them all?

This was a bad book in 1962, and it is inexcusable in 1981. Buffalo Bill starts killing Indians when he's eleven years old and keeps on doing it through the whole book. Davidson graciously concedes there were "good" Indians as well as "bad" Indians, but in practice all Indians in this book seem like another variety of elk or buffalo. Some gratuitous sexism is also thrown in via women who are scared of all the wild animals and Indians.

Charles F. Reasoner, Professor of Elementary Education at New York University, is given the "credit" for selecting the Yearling books. [Paul Smith]

This Song Remembers: Self Portraits of Native Americans in the Arts

edited by Jane B. Katz.
Houghton Mifflin, 1980,
$8.95, 207 pages, grades 7-up

This collection of autobiographical sketches includes Native American artists from the visual arts, the performing arts and literature. In addition, the artists represent a range of tribes and experiences.

The book depends on the artists' stories for its strength. Fortunately, many of them are both interesting and powerful. Indian people are still telling and retelling their experiences to non-Indian chroniclers of Indian life. They continue to share their life experiences, stories, truths and talents, and their generosity continues despite abuses or distorted interpretations of their stories. This sharing, and taking a risk on the chronicler's integrity, is in itself telling.

Each artist's voice is presented in his or her own words, and the artists breathe life into the words on the page. Some of them present negative as well as positive aspects of their lives. They are not afraid to mention alcoholism, foolishness, mixed heritage backgrounds, urban upbringings, etc. In short, they are human and help clarify our own humanity. I would have liked longer selections, better photographs and more artists! [Paulette Molin]

Growing Up Masai

by Tom Shachtman,
illustrated by Donn Renn.
Macmillan, 1981,
$8.95, 56 pages, grades 4-6

This is about life for children among the Maasai (the preferred spelling) of Tanzania and Kenya. The book outlines some of the everyday experiences of two Maasai children at work and play, emphasizing some of the learning stages that precede adulthood. In doing so, the author draws attention to a number of important elements of Maasai society: the elders as guardians of the society and repositories of its history; division of labor by sex and age; oral literature as an educational medium; and honesty, friendship, togetherness and physical fitness as some of the esteemed values.

Unfortunately, the author, like many others, stereotypes the Maasai. His depiction of a "world of warriors," a society "rich in superstition," and an environment where "wild animals roam free," to cite a few examples, only serves to reinforce derogatory notions commonly held of the Maasai. And when the author is not emphasizing the bizarre, he seeks the exotic, as though the Maasai themselves consider their lifestyle as exotic. The book's illustrations, mostly of animals, have no captions and often do not match the narrative.

The Maasai lifestyle—especially its survival techniques and its relationship to the environment—has a lot to offer. Its positive values can stand on their own merit without being seen as romantic or grotesque. [Joseph K. Adjaye]

A Friend of China

by Joyce Milton,
illustrated with photos.
Hastings House, 1980,
$8.95, 126 pages, grades 8-up

This is a biography of Agnes Smedley, author and journalist; Milton deserves credit for realizing that Smedley's life has been a long-neglected subject for biography. Though Smedley's own novel *Daughter of Earth* (an autobiographical story of her early life) is well known as one of the very few descriptions of a working-class woman's life at the beginning of this century, no previous biographer has attempted to present Smedley's entire life. However, this biography of the intrepid traveling journalist, aimed at high school students, exposes many pitfalls future biographers might well avoid.

When writing about an intensely political life, authors must explain the historical period, as well as the particular national and international factions and personalities, for otherwise the protagonists' actions may make no sense. This is a tall order indeed for a book that has only 98 pages (plus photographs, index and bibliography) when the subject's life sto-

ry is deeply involved with political events in the U.S., India, Europe and China. No doubt that is why little of Smedley, as an individual with whom young readers can identify, really emerges. The most interesting sections are short excerpts from Smedley's own writings.

Smedley's deep concerns for poor people, for women and for those who put their lives on the line to bring about change is inspirational. She certainly put her own life on the line many times in order to report aspects of the Chinese Revolution not covered by most of the U.S. or European press.

For serious students, willing to do a bit of heavy reading, there is much material worth delving for in this book. And while this author may not have successfully resolved all the problems of how to make Agnes Smedley come alive once more, let us hope future authors will try again. [Lyla Hoffman]

Breakfast with My Father

by Ron Roy,
illustrated by Troy Howell.
Houghton Mifflin/Clarion Books, 1980,
$7.95, unpaged, grades k-6

Here is another book to add to your collection of children's soap operas. This is about a nuclear family in the process of a marital separation which might, or might not, become permanent.

After Dad moves out, young David is afraid he'll never see his father again. But he *does* see his father again. Every Saturday, father and son engage in a ritual which begins with breakfast together at a local diner. (Are books about divorce and separation subsidized by the restaurant business? Eating out seems to be the thing to do when trying to console youngsters who are feeling the insecurity of a break-up.) At Frank's Diner, located, like David's home, in what appears to be a typical white neighborhood, father and son enjoy a special comradery as Frank smilingly brings their food and says, "Here you are, men." Then "David's father would wink at David over his coffee cup. David would wink back over his juice." After breakfast, David's father drives him home, deposits him on the doorstep and says, "See you next week, sport. Take care of Mommy and the baby." And that's it. Boy, is this father getting off easy! That's the extent of his time alone with his son.

When father doesn't show up one Saturday, David is dejected. But, there's a happy ending. To his complete and utter surprise, David's father is sitting at the breakfast table in the house! Obviously, Mom and Dad are trying for a reconciliation. As the family enjoys their first breakfast together in a long time, father and son wink at each other over juice and coffee. (In case you haven't guessed, mother has done all the cooking and serving.)

Troy Howell's line drawings are very nice. The book's subject matter, however, is not very lively. And why should it be? The story line would have us believe that the household is empty without father, and that David and his mother and "the baby" have nothing else to do but await father's visit or his return. Altogether, a mediocre book about a subject that deserves better treatment. [The Multicultural Project for Communication and Education]

Come Out Smiling

by Elizabeth Levy.
Delacorte Press, 1981,
$8.95, 186 pages, grades 6-up

This extremely disappointing book ambiguously raises the issue of lesbianism and never resolves it positively. Fourteen-year-old Jennifer Mandell is spending her third and last summer at a luxurious overnight camp. She expects it to be her best year, but is jarred and shocked when she realizes that her two favorite counselors, Peggy and Ann, are lesbians.

As the book jacket states, "Jenny's admiration for Peggy changes dramatically," and her "great summer suddenly turns sour." She suddenly questions her own feelings for Peggy: "It might be normal to have crushes, but it was definitely not normal to have a crush on a lesbian. I had to be queer . . . I'd die all alone. . . . My mother would cry. My father would say something vicious. Maybe I would kill myself instead." Images such as these remain uncontradicted by the author, a married woman with evidently little understanding and respect for the lesbian lifestyle.

The characters are bland and lack depth—a curt, insensitive father who makes racist and anti-gay jokes; a complacent mother; a camp full of rich kids who joke about rape and whose main concern is whether the blue or green team will win the color war. The plot, fairly dull, is only relevant to kids who are familiar with traditional overnight camps.

The reader is left with only a nebulous sense of Ann and Peggy's relationship. We learn that they are both strikingly beautiful women and that they apparently are good friends. Jenny sees them kissing one morning. That's all the information provided!

Jenny never confronts Peggy and Ann with her assumptions and questions. On the last night of camp, when the novel ends, Jenny tosses a ceremonial candle into the lake and wishes, "Please . . . don't make me turn out to be a lesbian." She hopes to overcome the summer's disasters and "come out smiling."

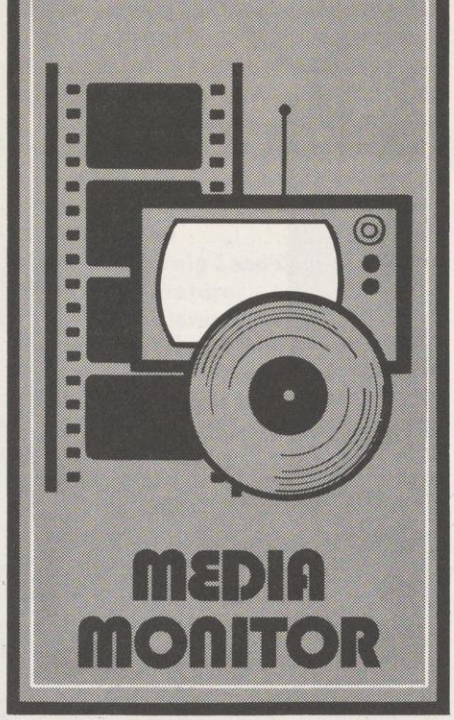
Negative images of lesbianism and male homosexuality abound in the publishing world. There is absolutely no need for such another negative, unsupportive book. [Jay Meryl]

What's the Matter, Sylvie, Can't You Ride?

written and illustrated by
Karen Born Anderson.
Dial, 1981,
$8.95, unpaged, grades p.s.-3

If you want a book about a mean girl with a mean mother, a mean father and mean friends and neighbors, this is it.

Sylvie has a new two-wheeler bike. She doesn't know how to ride, and keeps putting her feet on the ground for safety. Her mother whizzes by, telling her to come along because bike riding is "easy." A friend rides by, saying "Can't you ride? . . . I learned *last* year." Sylvie's father comes outside reading a newspaper and tells her she is doing "great." Eventually, Sylvie starts riding downhill, going too fast to drag her feet, and finds herself able to ride the bike. She races by a smaller boy who is clearly in the learning stage, and taunts him with "Can't you ride?" Nasty stuff. [Lyla Hoffman]



Compete or Cooperate?

The American Way of Competition; two color filmstrips with records or cassettes plus program guide; $55; grades 7-up; Prentice-Hall, 150 White Plains Road, Tarrytown, N.Y. 10591.

An open-ended, values clarification approach to the subject of competition vs. cooperation which is certain to spark classroom discussion. While the section on cooperation relies totally on Margaret Mead's study of the Arapesh (thus making cooperation seem unreal as an alternative in a technological society), an alert teacher can be prepared with many more examples and questions than the script provides. This is not to suggest that the discussion questions provided are useless, only to suggest that they might be broadened. For example, discussion of competition could follow or precede class discussion of "masculinity" or of values in patriarchal societies like our own. The film can also be used to encourage students to speculate upon the type of new society they may wish to help construct.

Work and Disabilities

Working on Working; 16 mm., color, 29 minutes; $198. purchase, $25. rental; General Services Administration, National Archives and Records Service, National Audiovisual Center, Washington, D.C. 20409.

Working on Working is a short film about the value of vocational training for disabled teenagers. It focuses on the reactions to this training by three or four students, their parents and their vocational instructors. There is a consistent sense of surprise at the unexpected abilities that bloom during positive vocational training programs.

One student tells how much better he feels about himself since he has been in his program. Parents of another student tell how they tried to discourage their son's interest in cars because they were afraid he would only be frustrated; his successful training as an automobile mechanic makes them realize that he knew best what he could do. Several instructors describe how their relationships with students raised their awareness as to the potential vocational abilities of disabled people (one instructor says that any student that can find the training center can be trained). There is also an interesting scene showing a counselor in a wheelchair interviewing a student in a wheelchair.

Societal attitudes towards the employment of disabled people in the U.S. is changing slowly as the number of people with disabilities increase. For example, insurance companies are beginning to pay for retraining employees who become disabled so that they again can be productive, self-sufficient and independent members of society. They tend, however, to retrain the employee for considerably lower-level positions than they had before the onset of the disability. And unfortunately, their main objective is to avoid paying their clients disability benefits—rather than providing their clients with opportunities to develop a satisfying lifestyle.

To its credit, the film shows teenagers of different races and disabilities learning various vocational skills. I recommend it to those planning to be vocational instructors and counselors as well as to disabled students and their parents because of its positive approach to training young people with disabilities. [Frieda Zames]

On Nuclear Matters

Acceptable Risk? Living in a Nuclear World; three sound-color filmstrips; produced by NARMIC, a project of the American Friends Service Committee; $62. with cassettes and teacher's guide; distributed by The Learning Seed Company, 145 Brentwood Dr., Palatine, Ill. 60067.

This is a plea to end the arms race and build a non-nuclear civilian economy. The first of the three filmstrips is on nuclear power for generating electricity. It includes an explanation of the process, the present dangers and dangers for future generations. The second filmstrip, on nuclear weapons, starts with the ways in which plutonium produces nuclear weapons, goes on to tell who produces the weapons, and explains how they are tested and where. It also tells about birth defects and other results of testing and the dangers of the arms race with the Soviet Union. The last filmstrip discusses the vast costs of the arms race, its dangers to civilization and alternatives to nuclear power (solar energy and conservation) and to nuclear weapons (disarmament efforts).

The approach is scientific and sober, with no attempt or pretense of presenting the pro-nuke position. There are discussion questions, classroom activities and a bibliography. The films are slow-paced and low-key. Since schools have been flooded with free pro-nuke materials by the utilities that are promoting them, and since everyone in this nation is bombarded with propaganda promoting the needs for an arms race, we urge all who have an audience for these filmstrips to buy them and show them. Please.

Crime and Prisons

Alternatives for a Safer Society: New Responses to Crime and Victims; 25 minute, sound-color filmstrip; by Fay Honey Knopp; produced by Ellie Buckley; $35. with fact sheet and teaching guide; distributed by The Learning Seed Company, 145 Brentwood Dr., Palatine, Ill. 60067.

This well-presented report on the high cost and low usefulness of prisons as deterrents to crime presents a great deal of background information and does a credible job of relating poverty to crime. Its point, however, is to introduce new ideas on how communities can reduce crime while reducing imprisonment. A number of ideas are presented, and spokespeople involved in their implementation show that rehabilitation rates can be dramatically improved at much lower costs than our prison system necessitates. The answers proposed add up to a "caring community."

Since our political climate seems to be encouraging more prisons and less caring, it is vitally important to challenge this direction by presenting alternative priorities. This filmstrip, well-suited to high school, college or adult audiences, is one alternative for a more humane society.

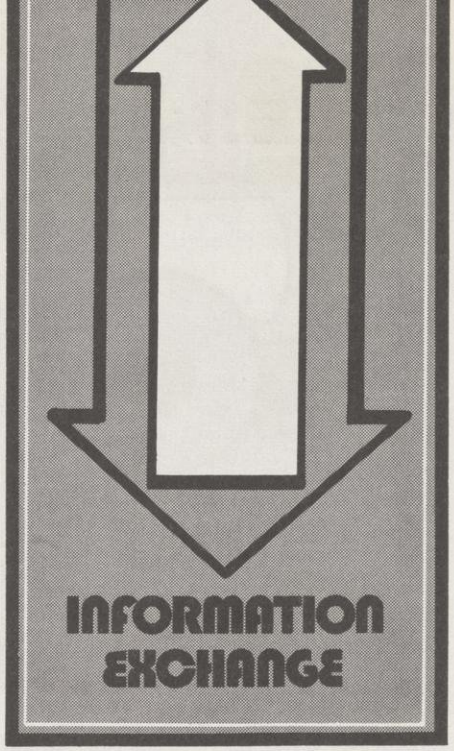
Women administrators are discussed in *Women in Higher Education Administration,* which contains 29 articles on such topics as women college and university presidents, the community college woman administrator, barriers in administrative opportunities, etc. The 184-page book is $8.50 from the National Association of Women Deans, Administrators and Counselors, 1625 I St., NW, Suite 524-A Washington, D.C. 20006.

"Special Programs for **Women in Higher Education**" evaluates the past ten years. Discussed are the current status of continuing education, women's studies, libraries and special collections, research centers, women's centers and publications. The 75-page report is $2. from The Women's Center, Barnard College, Morningside Heights, New York, N.Y. 10027.

Sex Role Socialization and Sex Discrimination: A Synthesis and Critique of the Literature summarizes research published between 1960 and 1978 concerning **sex discrimination and sex stereotyping in education.** Included is information on sex discrimination in primary, secondary and post-secondary education, sex-role socialization and a review of the changes occurring in sex-role stereotypes. The 169-page report is free from Veronica Thomas, Social Processes/ Women's Research Team, National Institute of Education, 1200 19 St., NW, Room 820, Washington, D.C. 20208.

"For the Could-Be Artist: A **Graphic Arts** Manual" is designed to assist teachers and members of church, community and other groups who want to prepare material for commercial printing or reproduce materials inexpensively. (One section describes how to make a silkscreen banner, for example.) A section on resources in the New York area is also included. Single copies are $3. each, six-ten copies are $2.25 each, eleven or more are $1.80; add 10 per cent for postage on all orders. Write ARTWORKS, Box 1407, Cathedral Station, New York, N.Y. 10025.

A summary of a survey about **single parents**, plus advice to parents on bringing about change in their schools' attitudes toward single parents, is available for $3.25 from the National Committee for Citizens in Education, 410 Wilde Lake Village Green, Columbia, Md. 21044.



A list of new resources for **sex equity** prepared under the Women's Educational Equity Act Program (WEEAP) is available from WEEAP Publishing Center, EDC, 55 Chapel St., Newton, Mass. 02160.

The Red School House, an **Indian-oriented** and Indian-controlled alternative school, publishes a variety of materials, including a coloring book series based on *The Mishomis Book* (see the *Bulletin*, Vol. 11, No. 6). For a list of their materials, write their distributor, Indian County Press, 432 University Avenue, St. Paul, Minn. 55103.

"**Day Care & Child Development** Reports" focuses on pertinent national and state legislation and regulations. The bi-weekly newsletter is $127 per year, $60 for a four-month subscription. Write to Plus Publications, 2626 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037.

A "Consultation on White Racism" will take place February 9-17 in San Antonio, Texas. Sponsored by the Racial Justice Working Group of the National Council of Churches, its purpose is to develop anti-racist strategies and a communication network for education and action. As one of several "societal representatives" on the Racial Justice Working Group, CIBC invites its supporters to participate. For registration information, write Alonzo Johnson, Division of Church and Society, Rm. 720, 475 Riverside Dr., New York, N.Y. 10115.

New Women's Times is a **feminist newspaper** with articles, news media reviews, interviews, etc. Published monthly except August, the newspaper is $12. for a one-year subscription ($24. for institutions). Write *New Women's Times,* 804 Meigs St., Rochester, N.Y. 14620.

The Testing Digest, published by the Committee for Fair and Open Testing, provides articles, news and information to parents, teachers, students, legislators and scientists interested in **testing reform**. The winter 1980 issue contains an article about funding given to Arthur Jensen and William Shockley; an upcoming issue will look at sex-bias in testing. Subscriptions to the 16-page quarterly are $4.50 for students, $9. for employed individuals and $18. for institutions. Single copies are $3. Write *The Testing Digest*, 5 Beekman St., Room 1000-E, New York, N.Y. 10038.

Approaches to Women's History: A Resource Book and Teaching Guide has suggestions on how to integrate **women's history** into an institution's regular curriculum. Sources, discussion questions, chronologies of women's activities during the past 200 years and an extensive bibliography are included. The 160-page guide is $5. from the Publications Department, American Historical Association, 400 A St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20003.

"A National Directory of **Women's Employment Programs:** Who They Are; What They Do" includes descriptions of more than 130 women's employment organizations with information on programs, fees and publications. The 140-page book is $7.50 (prepaid) from Wider Opportunities for Women, 1649 K St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20006.

"The Comparative Functionality of Formal and Non-Formal **Education for Women**" compares education programs in the U.S. and Third World countries to determine what programs will best facilitate the integration of women in development efforts. Sections on the history of women in education in the U.S. and a look at the education of women from a political perspective are included. Copies of the 189-page report are free from the Office of Women in Development, Agency for International Development, Room 3243 N.S., Washington, D.C. 20523.

Index to the *BULLETIN*, Volume 12, 1981

The index below covers Volume 12 of this *Bulletin*. All issues are still in print and can be ordered from the CIBC. The cost is $2.25 for the single issues and $3. each for the double issues (Nos. 4&5 and Nos. 7&8) **plus** 50¢ each for postage and handling. Bulk rates for 10 or more copies are $1.75 each for the single issues, $2. each for the double issues **plus** 10 per cent for postage and handling.

***Book titles are listed at the end of this index.**

Titles Reviewed in Hits and Misses Department

Dear *Bulletin* Reader:

The Council on Interracial Books for Children works to present facts and counter myths and stereotypes about race, sex roles, disability and age in children's materials. As a *Bulletin* reader, you are aware of our efforts to encourage pluralism and eliminate bias in children's literature and textbooks. Last summer you read a prize-winning *Bulletin* critique of a *Junior Scholastic* piece on the Ku Klux Klan. (Our article led to the development—with the National Education Association—of a first-of-its-kind curriculum on the Klan.) A recent *Bulletin* on the new romance series for young readers alerted parents and educators to the sexist and racist novels being heavily promoted in schools. You also saw a special *Bulletin* study, "Children, Race and Race Awareness," which offered important information on the development of racial attitudes—and suggestions for encouraging positive attitudes for *all* children.

As the Right attacks the hard-won gains of the past decade, it is increasingly important for the Council to expand its work. In the months ahead the *Bulletin* will offer an evaluation of materials about South Africa that the South African government is currently distributing free to U.S. schools. Work has already begun on an analysis of how U.S. history textbooks depict the Ku Klux Klan—and there are alarming implications for those concerned about Klan recruitment of white youth. An analysis of library selection procedures that looks at how—and if—guidelines on racism and sexism affect selection policies is slated for the spring. We are also at work on a special *Bulletin* that analyzes the impact of multinational corporations on children's books.

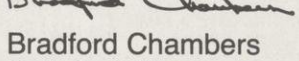
Subscription fees cover only a small proportion of our costs. Additional support is much needed for us to continue our work.

Your contribution will help the Council to carry out its important projects designed to promote non-biased, pluralistic literature and educational materials. Gifts of $100 will cover the expenses of the next *Bulletin* Bookshelf department; $35 will defray the monthly cost of up-dating the *Bulletin's* subscriber list; $75 will cover the mailing expenses of our survey to librarians; $500 will cover the typesetting costs for the next *Bulletin*. Please give as generously as you can. Send your tax-deductible contribution to the CIBC, 1841 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023.

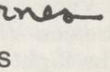
As the government funds that have in part helped support the Council in the past dry up, it is important for us to know that we can count on your support for the work that must be done.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Sincerely,



Bradford Chambers
Bulletin Editor



Ruth Charnes
Bulletin Managing Editor

New Filmstrip

UNLEARNING ASIAN AMERICAN STEREOTYPES

An appealing approach to help students "unlearn" common myths and stereotypes about Asian Americans, while they learn a great deal about Asian American history. A Chinese American teacher invites a group of Asian American youngsters to spend a day discussing experiences that have hurt them or their families. Though the children did not know one another previously, they find that they share many common experiences.

The 8-to-12 year old youngsters—Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Filipino, and Vietnamese Americans —examine stereotypes of Asians in children's books, comics, movies, cartoons and joke books. With their teacher-host, they explore the historic use of racist stereotypes in the oppression of their peoples.

Akemi tells of her grandmother's internment in a U.S. prison camp during World War II, while her grandfather fought for the U.S. Army. Kenny talks about being stereotyped when other kids assume he knows Kung Fu. And all the children discuss how they are teased about the shape of their eyes.

Though designed for elementary and junior high school history and human relations classes or assemblies, the filmstrip will also prove useful for teacher training.

A color-sound filmstrip and cassette. Includes *Asian Americans in Children's Books*, plus information about Asian American history. Grades 4-9. $32.50

Send check or purchase order to:
Council on Interracial Books for Children
1841 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023

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WHAT IS THE COUNCIL ON INTERRACIAL BOOKS FOR CHILDREN?

CIBC is a non-profit organization founded by writers, librarians, teachers and parents in 1966. It promotes anti-racist and anti-sexist children's literature and teaching materials in the following ways: 1) by publishing the *Bulletin,* which regularly analyzes children's books and other learning materials for human and anti-human messages; 2) by operating the Racism and Sexism Resource Center for Educators, which publishes reference books, monographs, lesson plans and audio-visual material designed to develop pluralism in schools and in society; 3) by conducting workshops on racism and sexism for librarians, teachers and parents; and 4) by initiating programs that bring to public attention the unrecognized talents of Third World writers and artists. For more information about CIBC and a free catalog of its Resource Center publications, write us at 1841 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023.