



## **Interracial books for children. Volume 1, No. 4 Fall 1967**

New York, NY: The Council on Interracial Books for Children, Inc., Fall 1967

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# Interracial Books for Children

Vol. 1, No. 4

Published by the Council on Interracial Books for Children, Inc.

Fall 1967

## How about the Classics? Cool Reaction to Trash

DIG THIS! Some teacher in Hicksville, New York is puttin' down a new hype for us cats what ain't makin' it in their English classes. Says it's gonna make school real cool if you're a fool who ain't got eyes for books. Says English teachers ought to get hip that those square story books they lay on us, like the classics, ain't our bag and to turn us loose on a lot of this new stuff written by cats who are makin' the scene right now. He\* put it this way:

"How can we account for the curious fact that books which have delighted and instructed thousands are often regarded by teachers as bad, whereas books that have bored generations of school children and turned them against reading are thought of as good? Such views . . . derive from an abstract literary standard that treats books as ends in themselves, quite apart from any immediate interest or usefulness these books may have for the readers . . .

"Suppose we try a different standard, and define as good that book which gives the student a meaningful emotional experience. Then, only rarely, will a classic turn out to be a good book. The pleasure that comes from experiencing ideas, attitudes and emotions the reader recognizes as relevant to his condition is provided for most people by books of less than the highest literary quality, sometimes even by trash. Anything worth doing with literature in the classroom probably depends on finding books that give this experience. To see a student interested in a book and concerned with the welfare of its people is a fine thing, whether that book is "The

\*John Rouse, Curriculum Administrator, Hicksville Public School System. In *Media and Methods*.

(Continued on page 3)

## The American Negro In Children's Literature

By JEANNE WALTON

MARY CAME HOME from school on the first day of integrated classes, and her mother asked if she sat beside a Negro child.

Mary replied, "I don't know. I'll look tomorrow."

I have come across this story dozens

of times. I have seen it in print and heard it from speakers' platforms. It seems to have happened to some little white Mary in every school that has ever been integrated. I must conclude, from its ubiquity, that this is an American myth and, as such, represents a denial of our guilt and a wish to believe that we have not sown the seeds of racism in our children.

It is interesting that this story is always about a white Mary. The black Mary, evidently, is well aware of the color of the child who sits beside her. As in every myth, there is an element of truth in this one. It is the Negro who must become painfully aware of skin color, and it is the Negro who is still "the invisible man." (See Ellison, Ralph, "The Invisible Man," Random House, 1952.)

This myth represents the kind of thinking that once characterized our attitude toward sex, namely, "If you don't mention it, the child will never know it exists." Freud helped most of us relinquish this old myth. The writings of Clark, Goodman, and Passamanick and Knoblock provide us with evidence that should make

(Continued on page 3)

### Emergency

The Schomburg Collection of Negro History, 103 West 135th Street, New York City, in order to preserve its most valuable collection, needs staff, space, and financial help. This collection, started by Arthur Schomburg in the early Twentieth Century, has been a source of information for students and scholars from all over the world.

Miss Walton's article has been reprinted from the Eliot-Pearson School News. Additional copies are available through the Alumnae Office, Eliot-Pearson School, Tufts University, Medford, Mass. 02155.

Miss Walton, whose mother and father were both college graduates, is herself a Negro. She holds the B.S. in Ed. degree from Boston University and now teaches in Washington, D.C.

# What Other People Are Thinking . . .

It is a pleasure to receive the first Bulletin of this Council.

It contains important material, not only in its review and listing of interracial books, but especially a clear thinking point of view. I am glad for Eve Merriam's reminder about "Bronzeville Boys and Girls," by Gwendolyn Brooks. And the article by Jean Karl of Atheneum seems to be particularly clear in presenting the needs and the questions of concern now.

I enclose a small contribution toward your work, which seems to me of great significance for both the present and the future.

**Mrs. Polly McVickar, Teacher,  
Malibu, Calif.**

Thank you for sending me a copy of your Bulletin, which I found really exciting reading. It has such a positive approach, not simply stressing the need for interracial books, which is pretty generally acknowledged, but launching a definite program for filling that need. What publishers and librarians and educators are doing and saying and thinking is challenging and important, but most of us miss these news items in the general press. Gathered in this way they are both persuasive and encouraging.

Because I have been convinced for a long time that the real answer to this need must come from new writers in the minority groups, I wanted to shout a loud cheer at the announcement of prizes for books by Negroes. I hope you will soon have support enough to offer larger prizes and to include other groups

as well. And I shall be eager to hear what response you get from this contest.

**Elizabeth G. Speare,  
Fairfield, Connecticut**

It seems that your Council is hoping to accomplish its purpose largely through professional book people and busy professional persons on the Council. Yet, you say that the appeal of these books will lend incentive to the poor. I feel that these professionals are too busy to do the promotional work needed. I feel that the educational committees of the NAACP, Urban League, and anti-poverty directors on the *county level*, armed with your list and additional information, are the ones who will do the job.

There are many mothers in the Negro minority who, although they have not had much education themselves, are very actively seeking betterment for their children (look around you in New York) but, in a manner less than appealing to the general public, and others who wish to do it quietly. Both approaches need the information that your Council can give them.

**Mrs. Jane Chauvin,  
Greystone Park, N. J.**

Thank you for the sample copy of *Interracial Books for Children*, which I find of great interest. Last semester I started a new project in human relations reading in Children's Literature, with professional reading such as *Reading Ladders* and others, and titles of appropriate children's books of varying degrees of value in this field, a few on the negative side. They, of course, contained titles involving racial differences, as well as other problems of getting along with oneself and others. It is an attempt to make students think.

**Eloise Rue,  
Associate Professor,  
The University of Wisconsin,  
Milwaukee, Wisc.**

The principal of a busy school has little time to spend reading interesting and/or possibly appropriate materials received in the daily mail or recommended to him by members of his staff. To do such materials justice, I find it necessary to take them home and carefully pore over them in the quiet and solitude of my study.

Thus it was that I read "Negroes and the Truth Gap" in Volume 1, Nos. 2 and 3 of your publication, said article referred to me by our school librarian, Miss Anne Matlin. Excellence motivates the search for encores and I found that I had read Volume 1 from cover to cover before I put it down. Congratulations upon filling a tremendous need!

**Matthew Schwartz,  
Principal,  
New York City**

Please continue sending me your stimulating publication, as I find reading it has given me incentive toward completion of my current task, a novel about urban Negro teenagers for the Young Readers department of Charles Scribner's Sons. It is also giving me many pauses for thought, since even for a writer of African descent, this is a complex area, full of constantly shifting moods and feelings, all strong, and all reflected in your publication. To get the job done, one must resolve doubts and proceed with faith in one's honest impressions and one's ability to render them. I hope, when my book is finished, that it will be the sort you recommend, because your standards seem careful and well thought out.

**Kristin Hunter,  
Philadelphia, Penn.**

I would like to have a copy of the first issue (Vol. 1., No. 1) and also a continuing subscription.

I would also like to commend you for your efforts in focusing attention on this aspect of children's literature. The emphasis is greatly needed, and long overdue. Finally

*(Continued on page 8)*

25 cents a copy — \$1.00 a year

## Cool Reaction to Trash

(Continued from page 1)

Red Badge of Courage" or "Road Rocket." . . . Perhaps occasionally one of the modern classics may prove to be a useful book, but we can expect to help most students find their place in the modern predicament only through popular works within their intellectual and emotional reach . . . .

Mr. Rouse calls his article "In Defense of Trash." He means a lot of stuff English teachers call trash, ain't. He's got a good point there. He wants us to get hooked on books by letting us read stories about what's happening. Great! I'll go with that. We sure get to hear and read a lot of deadass stuff in school. But it's no need for Mr. Rouse to be so far out. Like he puts down "Huckleberry Finn." I read it. How does he know it wasn't a "meaningful emotional experience" for me? I liked it fine. And he goes knocking a book called "Moby Dick." It's about a ol' sea captain who hunts down a big white whale and tries to kill him. Now what's wrong with killing a white whale? But this ol' Cap'n Ahab has to hunt all over the world till he finds him. The whale tears up the ship and gets Ahab instead but Ahab wasn't scared to go for broke. He drowns without knowing if he really got the whale or not.

Is Mr. Rouse tryin' to say that it ain't within my "intellectual and emotional reach" to know what it means to hunt day and night for something you need to find, to save your livin' soul, even if it kills you? Hell, if all the things I been huntin' all my life was put into one package, they'd be big as any damn white whale you ever saw.

Know what I think? Wouldn't be too much wrong with a lot of those square classics if somebody would go out of their way to run 'em down for us in class like it ought to be done. Might be we'd get the message a lot sooner'n anybody thinks, if somebody would really go with those books. But the teachers and the whole cotton-picking school

(Continued on page 7)

## The American Negro in Children's Literature

(Continued from page 1)

us free ourselves from this new myth.

Before we can begin to answer questions of what books about Negroes we should present to children and how we should deal with these books, we must face some facts.

We live in a racist society. All of us, black and white, have been influenced and molded by that society. Teachers and children alike enter the classroom with already formed attitudes, with experiences to justify these attitudes, with dislikes, with feelings about themselves as white people or as Negroes.

In all other areas teachers realize that they must, themselves, be informed and that they must be aware of children's knowledge and past experience in order to build and implement a curriculum. In all other areas we tackle misconceptions, lack of information, biased attitudes. In the area of race relations we tend to think that we have done our jobs if we establish "democracy in the classroom" and preach brotherhood occasionally. (But don't say too much because the children really don't notice differences, and we don't want to make them conscious of race.)

### Only White Children

We give our children readers—and science and mathematics textbooks—that depict only white children. (There have been some new and welcome ventures in this area.) Social studies books mention Negroes and Africans but briefly. African history and the role of the Negro in American history, if dealt with at all, are often discussed in a depreciating manner. Most of the material deals with the slave era.

This very lack of materials tells children about our attitudes. Negroes are not important. They have contributed nothing to the progress of the world. They are not part of "our" history. They were once "our" slaves. Outside of school (and in some cases within) the children may also learn that "they" have "their" neighborhoods and "their" schools and, perhaps, that "they" are trying to get into "our" schools and "our" neighborhoods.

If we are concerned with children's racial ideas we must combat a host of experiences that the children have daily, experiences that tell them over and over that the Negro is inferior. We cannot present literature to children as though they have existed in a vacuum. When we read to them or talk to them, we must deal with those ideas of theirs (and of their parents and their society) that contradict the attitudes that we are trying to develop. We must always remember that children learn, even when they are not "taught."

### TV "Learning"

I once heard a five-year-old white boy say to his Negro classmate, "You can't play because there are no colored cowboys." He had "learned" this from television. Remember that the very absence of Negroes in their lives, in their neighborhoods, on T.V., in books, in movies, etc. leads children, white and Negro, to conclude that Negroes are somehow inferior and undesirable.

The literature that we present to children, therefore, and the ways in which we make this presentation must take cognizance of what the children are bringing to the reading. I think that I might categorize literature dealing with Negroes in the following ways.

1. Stories of famous Negroes.
2. Stories of segregated Negro life—often "quaint" and "humorous."
3. Stories stressing brotherhood—sometimes supposedly subtle, sometimes contrived and almost always blind to objective facts of prejudice, discrimination and segregation. (In the past few years there have been several exceptions to this rule.)

Books in the first category, when well written and when the author has included a wealth of historical material from primary sources, are often very good. It is important, however, that the teacher use the reading of these books as a springboard for discussions. It is very easy for children to have the following attitudes:

1. Some Negroes are just as smart as we are.
2. White people can be presidents and generals and composers and authors and chairmen of boards; Negroes can only be baseball players and jazz singers.
3. Some Negroes aren't treated so badly. If the others were not so dumb and lazy, they could achieve, too.
4. O.K., so George Washington Carver discovered a lot of things to make out of peanuts—but I want to be an airline pilot, and airlines don't hire Negroes. (At this writing this is true, and the truth should never be denied. This child should be encouraged in his ambition and told that through struggle many doors have opened and are opening.)

Stories of famous Negroes should include not only those who have achieved success within the limitations of a segregated society but also those whose very achievement was the attack they made on that society.

#### Class Discussion

The teacher needs to point out to the class the shameful oppression and discrimination the Negro has endured, to indicate that these famous Negroes had to overcome more obstacles than did their white counterparts, and that were it not for these obstacles they could have contributed even more. I would hope that out of discussions in junior high and high school classes there would come a desire to participate in some way in the freedom struggle, a commitment to action. For unless there is such a commitment, there has really been no teaching. I would hope, too, that there would be a commitment to action on the part of the teacher. I have always been ashamed that teachers and teacher organizations who should be leading the fight for school integration and for better education for deprived youngsters have been (outside of their professional journals) so terribly silent.

The second category of books—those dealing with segregated Negro life—are usually written for younger children. They tend to introduce

and perpetuate stereotypes. They present children with a "happy" picture of segregated life with the unstated implication that this is normal and right. I have no objection to a realistic book of segregated life for older children where there can be a discussion of the political, economic and social factors that cause segregation and discrimination. Even here it would be better if the plot of the story involved some kind of conflict or struggle rising out of the handicaps suffered by the characters.

"Little Black Sambo" is still thought by many to be a good book for little children. I object to it on many grounds. First, the Negro is presented as a comic figure—children are encouraged to laugh at Negroes,

White Johnny"? In addition, since the publication of this book, "Sambo" has become a widely used derogatory term for Negro. This last reason, alone, should be sufficient for us not to use the book.

The third category of stories—those that moralize about brotherhood—is often the worst, primarily because many of these stories are dishonest. Here, I believe, are some of the things that should be avoided.

1. The underlying notion that white is right. This appears in such forms as "His skin is brown, but he's white inside" or "You get white milk from a brown-skinned cow." (In passing let us be careful to avoid stories in which black is associated with dirty and white with clean. An example of this, in a book for preschool children, is Margaret Wise Brown's "Two Little Miners.")

2. The story with a too-pat solution, which leaves the reader, white or black, no room in which to explore his own feelings. An example: white boy refuses to play ball when Negro boy joins team. Other white boys say, "Good riddance." Negro boy makes spectacular play, wins game. Bad white boy apologizes, reforms. All live happily ever after.

Children can handle conflict in their stories. Let's give it to them. All of the white boys could do some soul-searching, and the decision, whatever it is, could be a hard one. None of the boys has to be "bad" or "good." Perhaps the Negro youngster, himself, can play a role and not wait by idly while others decide his fate. And must he always be an outstanding player?

#### No Identification

The white reader, with some prejudice, cannot identify with the bad white boy. He must repress his feelings and side with the "good guys." We get no insight into the feelings of any of the characters. We are given the idea that the Negro cannot determine his own fate. He must put his trust in the "good guys" ability to defeat the "bad guys." Children who read and discuss this story will not explore their own feelings or situations. They will give back the moral. They will know what is expected of them.

3. The preachy, moralizing story which keeps telling us that we should all love one another, that everybody has a contribution to make. These often make such inane comparisons as these: "God made flowers of every color"; "Some people are tall, some are fat, but they're all wonderful."

The problem with which we are contending is not that people *look* different, but that people are *treated* differently on the basis of how they look. We will not achieve good human relationships if we attempt to avoid the central problem.

#### Race Does Matter

Other stories that fit loosely into this third category are those with a Negro hero or with some Negro characters where no mention is made of color and the plot of the story does not deal with race. However, in some of these, the reader is supposed to get the idea that race does not matter. The problem is that it does. Many of these stories are good as stories, and beautifully illustrated, but since race is not mentioned *per se* both teachers and children get the idea that you aren't supposed to talk about it. The child will, however, talk about it—but not with the teacher. I have known Negro children in nursery schools who have disliked "Two Is a Team," and I believe that it is partly due to things white children have said to them about the story. I have heard white children say of the scooter race, "I hope the white boy wins!" They also giggle and point and say, "That boy's colored," or, to a Negro child, "That's you." This may be, and often is, at least for the first time, said without malice. However, some Negro children have found it so painful to be black that any calling it to their attention is felt as an attack.

I do not believe that we should avoid stories or discussion because they might be painful to some Negro children. These children can only express and accept their feelings and accept themselves if this painful area is opened up. Of course the teacher will need to be alert and sensitive to children's feelings and aware of what is happening inside and outside the classroom. If chil-

dren feel free to express themselves in front of the teacher, they are less likely to snicker or tease other children behind the teacher's back. If children are keeping their thoughts and feelings to themselves in order to meet the teacher's standards of brotherhood, we are not achieving good relations. I think, even though it may sound contradictory, that we have to heighten children's awareness of race before we can get them to the point of being unaware. All around them they see and hear "evidence" of the Negro's inferiority. We must help children analyze this "evidence," find the causes for it and, hopefully, do something about changing it. If we try to make children color blind, we only succeed in teaching them to inhibit, to deny and to pretend—in short, to be as dishonest about the problem as we have been.

To create an atmosphere in which awareness can be accepted and fostered, books and pictures are invaluable if they are used as a spring-board for discussion. Books dealing with the Negro are becoming better and more abundant. But there is still room for improvement.

I would like to see history and social studies textbooks that truthfully portray the history of man and of the world, not just the white man and "western civilization."

I would like to see readers and science and mathematics textbooks and elementary social studies books that depict children of all colors and classes in situations familiar to many children. I would like to see fiction that presents problems and conflicts—perhaps a story of a Negro child who wished to be white, of a white child whose mother forbade him to bring home his Negro friend, of a Negro child whose father cannot find a job. Let us have endings that are not always so happy. Let us have stories that are not afraid to let children know that there are such things as discrimination, segre-



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gation, poverty and injustice.

Generally speaking books for younger children need to be quite free of the defects I have mentioned, because little children cannot be critical of what is read to them or what they read, and it is not easy to give them the kinds of explanations I have suggested here. Older children, however, if properly guided, can read books with some of the faults I spoke of and even books that present a definite race bias. They can learn to analyze these stories, to compare them with other stories they have read, to go back to original sources, to interview people, etc.

I think that the teacher needs to accept whatever children have to express, but she must let children know where she stands. She cannot be detached or uncommitted. If she does not believe in the worth of every human being and in doing all she can to see to it that each child grows up in a society that respects his worth, then she should not be teaching.

Books alone will not create good attitudes, good relationships, a good society. But books can be a means through which children and teachers examine themselves and their world and face the problems and contradictions in both.

#### IN MEMORIAM

Mary Elizabeth Vroman, celebrated writer of short stories, poetry, and children's books. "See How They Run" and her last book, "Harlem Summer," were published this year.

Langston Hughes, one of America's most beloved and outstanding authors. His many years of work as a writer resulted in poetry, fiction, and nonfiction for adults as well as children. Among his children's books are the "First Book" series on The Negro, Africa, Jazz, The West Indies, and Famous American Negroes.

Carl Sandburg, world-renowned writer and artist. His contribution to the literary and artistic world is inestimable. Besides his epics on Abraham Lincoln, his works include stories and poems for children.

# Culled from Other Publications

## A Tremendous Task

To seek to teach universal love and brotherhood for all little folk, black and brown and yellow and white, to make colored children realize that being colored is a normal, beautiful thing, to make them familiar with the history and achievements of the Negro race, to make them know that other colored children have grown into beautiful useful, famous persons, to teach them delicately, a code of honor and action in their relations with white children, to turn their little hurts and resentments into emulation, ambition and love of their own homes and companions, to point out the best amusements and joys and worthwhile things of life, to inspire them to prepare for definite occupations and duties with a broad spirit of sacrifice. This is a great program—a tremendous task.

*Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois (in a prospectus for The Brownies' Book, a magazine designed to meet the special needs of Negro children), 1920*

## Historical Repair

If such fictional themes of children's literature still seem new, and perhaps dismaying to some, part of the reason can be traced to the short shrift given to Negroes in standard history books and the misconceptions that have flourished as a consequence. As a further result we find

ourselves involved in a kind of crash program of historical mending and repair. If some of these efforts seem hurried, and perhaps uneven, I for one would hesitate to complain. Massive correctives are needed.

*Arna Bontemps, Book Week, Fall Children's Issue October 31, 1965*

## Books by or about Negroes

Teachers hunting, as they now do, for books by or about Negroes, in order to allow some members of integrated classes to recognize themselves in literature, will want to consider the essays of Ralph Ellison, "Shadow and Act" (Signet, 95 cents); both the good and poor short fiction of James Baldwin in "Going to Meet the Man" (Dell, 75 cents); the early history of the American Negro by Lerone Bennett, "Before the Mayflower" (Penguin, \$2.45); and Elizabeth Kata's tender story of a blind white girl and a noble Negro, now retitled "A Patch of Blue" (Popular Library, 50 cents). Two other valuable books require more maturity from students, parents and administrators, but they have much to offer. The lesser is Sammy Davis Jr. and Jane and Burt Boyar's "Yes, I Can" (Pocket Books, 95 cents) and the finer is Claude Brown's "Manchild in the Promised Land" (Signet, 95 cents). Brown depicts sordid scenes that may curl the school board's hair, but which must be handled

## CLIP AND MAIL

**The Council on Interracial Books for Children, Inc.**  
9 East 40th Street, New York, N. Y. 10016

I wish to continue receiving Interracial Books for Children and enclose \$1.00 for four issues.

I wish to contribute \$..... to help the Council carry out its program. (Contributions are tax-deductible.)

Name .....

Address .....

wherever a teacher attempts to present honestly the wretchedness of much past and present Negro life. Teachers who have sufficient confidence in their own ability and their methods of presentation of this kind of material are finding appreciation from students and parents, Negro and white, in all sections of the country.

*Margaret F. O'Connell,  
The New York Times Book  
Review, February 26, 1967*

## **Cool Reaction to Trash**

(Continued from page 3)  
system has got to make the first move.

Sure, I'm for new books but I'd like to get to know some of the old stuff, too. I ain't scared of being square, just so long as I know I don't have to be if I don't want to be. On the other hand, lot of squares look like they enjoy being square. I'd like to read enough of those books to find out what it is makes them enjoy it. Might be some kicks there I ain't found out about yet. It can't all, or most of it, be in the new books. Because if it is, where'd those cats who's writin' the new ones today get so smart? They musta read the old ones. They couldn'ta read each other's because they wasn't writin' yet. I gotta know some of the same things the writer knows. Else, how can I tell if he's levelin', lyin' or if he's just plain out of his mind.

I get the feeling that Mr. Rouse is signifying. Like us cats could never make it with this good literature jive, nohow, because most of us was born too dumb. The schools sure do need new ideas. Lettin' in popular literature is one of them. But that ain't the whole bag.

And I got some news about "the modern predicament." Us cats got no need to "find their place" in it. We already know that. We want to know how to get out of it. We get turned loose on books that tell us, we'll read up a storm. So I do thank Mr. Rouse, because he's been anyway thinking, but I wish he didn't call his article "In Defense of Trash." Don't he know that everybody, and I do mean everybody, has got enough trash in their lives right now?

—MC<sup>2</sup>

# **THREE \$500 PRIZES FOR THE BEST CHILDREN'S BOOKS BY NEGROES**

### **Fiction**

**\$500 for the best manuscript for ages 3 to 6**

**\$500 for the best manuscript for ages 7 to 11**

**\$500 for the best manuscript for ages 12 to 16**

### **Non-Fiction**

**\$500 for the best manuscript for ages 3 to 6**

**\$500 for the best manuscript for ages 7 to 11**

**\$500 for the best manuscript for ages 12 to 16**

**CONTEST CLOSES DECEMBER 1, 1967**

### **Contest Judges**

#### **CHARLEMAE ROLLINS**

Retired Children's Librarian, Chicago Public Library

#### **JOHN O. KILLENS**

Writer in Residence, Fisk University

#### **LERONE BENNETT**

Senior Editor, "Ebony" magazine

#### **PAULE MARSHALL**

Writer

•

### **Contest Rules**

1. Your story must be original and unpublished at the time it is entered, but can be sold afterward since it remains your exclusive property.
2. We prefer it to be typewritten on one side of 8½" x 11" white paper. A stamped, self-addressed return envelope must accompany all manuscripts.
3. Every story entered will be read by the judges, and their decision will be final. Manuscripts will be returned as soon as possible after the contest closes December 1, 1967, and all winners will be announced no later than April 1968 in **INTERRACIAL BOOKS FOR CHILDREN**. All entries must be postmarked before midnight of December 1, 1967.

**The Council on Interracial Books for Children, Inc.**

**9 East 40th Street, New York, N. Y. 10016**

### **Entry Application for Contest**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State & Zip \_\_\_\_\_

#### **CATEGORY**

**Manuscript for ages 3 to 6** \_\_\_\_\_

**Manuscript for ages 7 to 11** \_\_\_\_\_

**Manuscript for ages 12 to 16** \_\_\_\_\_

**TITLE:** \_\_\_\_\_

## What Other People Are Thinking...

(Continued from page 2)

we are getting some books of quality which reflect our pluralistic society and multi-ethnic origins; but much more effort will be needed before we achieve a balanced treatment in trade books as well as textbooks. How much of the literature for children has relevance for the inner-city child? In addition to that literature which provides a release from the limitations of his own environment, the child also needs stories of authentic people drawn from the realistic world in which he lives and with which he can identify. The suburban child who lives in a type of cultural ghetto also needs to encounter other values and life-styles as reflected through literature.

**Dale W. Brown,  
Assistant Professor,  
Library Science Education,  
University of Maryland**

The three \$500 prizes for the Best Children's Books by Negroes is certainly an encouraging step in the right direction. Let's hope there will be lots of entries.

Perhaps publicity on this will encourage Negro writers to submit their own spontaneous efforts and sure knowledge, and discourage those who manufacture stories merely to fit the present demand.

**Lee Wyndham,  
Morristown, N. J.**

The school in which we teach is a totally Negro school and has long searched out lists of interracial books. Your quarterly will be of tremendous assistance to us.

**Mrs. Miki Gutman,  
Teacher in a  
Manhattan school**

I was very much impressed with the winter issue of *INTERRACIAL BOOKS FOR CHILDREN*, which you kindly made available to us. We are entering a subscription through our Purchasing Department.

As Dorothy Sterling's testimony was in a public hearing, is there any restriction which would prevent me from duplicating your article titled "Negroes and the Truth Gap"? If not, I would like to do so and give it wide circulation.

**Daniel U. Levine,  
Associate Director,  
Center for The Study of  
Metropolitan Problems in  
Education, University of  
Missouri at Kansas City**

I was absolutely delighted to receive your Newsletter. My reaction to it can be shown by the enclosed sheet which is sent to all the Branches of the U.S. Section of the Women's

International League for Peace and Freedom. I am sure you will be receiving subscriptions from many of our members, as well as advice and assistance as requested.

**Mrs. Libby Frank, Chairman,  
Committee on Childhood  
Education, Women's Interna-  
tional League for Peace  
and Freedom,  
Teaneck, N. J.**

I have long felt a need for the program which you are sponsoring. Enclosed is a contribution toward this program.

**Mrs. Ida Z. Alphin,  
Supervisor, Day Care,  
Trenton, N. J.**

Hooray for Interracial Books for Children! An excellent idea. Count me as a permanent member. When we have the wherewithal, let's do a complete bibliography of books for and about minority groups. The lists produced so far have been hit and miss, with little attention given to the quality and usefulness of the titles.

**Robert Whitehead, Ed. D.,  
Associate Professor  
and Instructor in  
Children's Literature,  
Sacramento State College**

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