

Interracial books for children bulletin.

Volume 6, No. 1 1975

New York, NY: The Council on Interracial Books for Children, Inc.,
1975

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Interracial Books FOR CHILDREN Bulletin

Editorial

West Virginia: A Battle Against Multicultural Texts

A major report by the National Education Association's Teacher Rights Division on the West Virginia textbook controversy was recently published. "A Textbook Study in Cultural Conflict" was based upon an on-site investigation conducted in December 1974 by the NEA at the request of the Kanawha Community Association of Classroom Teachers. The 87-page report discusses the background history of the dispute, its cultural, political and economic features and offers suggestions for heading off such conflicts in the future. The panel submits its proposals in the interests of preserving the professional freedom of teachers and "the right of the learner . . . to explore, present and discuss divergent points of view in the quest for knowledge and truth."

Sitting on the investigative panel were representatives of the National Council of Churches, National Council for the Social Studies and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, as well as classroom teachers and an authority on the cultural and religious traditions of Kanawha County. A total of 77 witnesses, representing divergent viewpoints, testified before the panel in two days of hearings.

Three aspects of the NEA report are of particular concern to the CIBC:

1) *The panel's finding that "a pervasive concern with writings related to race" characterize a textbook critique prepared by the minority faction of the Citizens Textbook Review Committee.* Critics interpreted statements in the materials to mean that all "whites of this nation are insensitive, unaware, create hostility and suspicion, and are breakers of communication." They objected to the Langston Hughes poem, *A Toast to Harlem*, because "The toast to Harlem is that it belongs to the Negroes." They rejected a James Baldwin story as "anti-white," resented a textbook suggestion that America's racial problem is "a white problem," and were uncomfortable with discussions of the Mexican revolution which they felt would breed "hate between the races."

It was our further observation, although the report does not cite it, that the petition circulated by anti-textbook parents during May and June also reflects that pervasive concern with race. Underlying the statement in the petition's lead paragraph that materials be prohibited in the schools which "demean, encourage skepticism, or foster disbelief in the institutions of the United States of America and in Western civilization," would seem to be the concept that Western culture is, above all, white. As one witness who testified before the NEA panel put it, the anti-book protest is, at least in part, "a reaction to the black (sic) presence in America" and, by implication, expresses resistance to the idea that Third World cultures are an integral part of the Western heritage.

2) *The failure of the school authorities to anticipate the outbreak of hostilities around introduction of the new multi-ethnic, multi-cultural books into the school system.* The NEA panel felt the school authorities should have foreseen the controversy because of what had happened in 1969 when the Kanawha County Board of Education adopted a pilot sex education program for several elementary, junior and senior high schools. At that time, the same Board member who was to spearhead the anti-textbook drive had been elected to the Board on a platform promise to abolish the pilot program on sex. Virtually all

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Springfield, Ohio: A Battle For Multicultural Texts

A year-long, model study of how world and American history are taught in the Springfield, Ohio, school system was completed recently by an independently organized group of parents, educators, community workers and anti-racism specialists. Led by Ida Williams, a racism-awareness trainer and former settlement house director, the Metro-Ministry Task Force on Minority History presented a 37-page report to the Springfield Board of Education late last year.

The procedure followed by the Task Force is adaptable for use in other communities by groups of concerned citizens and represents a positive and constructive approach to fostering change in the content of educational materials.

Citing the findings of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (published in 1967), the report states:

The study of history is an important method of transmitting pride and confidence to a nation's citizens. History is no problem for white Americans—one need only scan a copy of any of Springfield's history texts to find ample evidence of the accomplishments of the white group. However, for Black and other non-white people, just the reverse is true. The textbooks are filled with myth and distortion concerning their contributions. We find the Springfield School System is aiding the promotion of two separate and unequal societies in America.

The Task Force identified as the major problem attending the teaching of world history in the Springfield schools the presentation of white European culture to all students as the predominant, superior way of life. The report states that the consequences of

that approach "are equally damaging to white and Black people, although in different ways" for the following reasons:

1. Because their teachers and textbooks tell them so, white students come to accept as fact the notion that whites have been the main contributors to civilization, that whites are smarter than any other race, that the contributions of non-whites to world and American posterity are minimal at best, and only achieved by a few exceptional people. Thus, white students believe white people are more civilized and intelligent than any other race or culture. White students are, therefore, culturally deprived and deceived.

2. Black and other non-white students are exposed to the same propaganda. However, since they cannot identify with the white heroes and achievements, and since their own cultural history is absent, many begin to believe that white people must be superior. Thus, self-hatred often takes root. Psychologists point out that people who feel inferior, who hate themselves, cannot achieve and be productive to the same degree as those who feel positively about themselves. Today, more and more Black and non-white students recognize that they are denied a true picture of their history. Many of these students become disillusioned with the system of education. In any event, whether imbued with self-hatred or disillusioned with the system, the result is a low level of achievement for all but the very strongest and determined Black students, and an alarmingly high drop-out rate among this group. They too are culturally deprived and deceived.

The report commends the Springfield School System for instituting Black history courses in two high schools in 1968 but labels the program "inadequate and detrimental." It is inadequate because Black history "is taught separately from traditional white/European world and American history, relegating it to the position of 'other' history, even though it is rightfully a part of the total world and American history." Noting that it is not required, the Task Force asks further, "Why should all students be required to know about Benjamin Franklin, Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Jefferson, etc., but given the option to learn of Frederick Douglass, Benjamin Banneker, Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, etc.?" The report also questions the granting of only one-half credit for the Black history course, thereby discouraging students from taking it and implying that Black history does not merit full credit. White enrollment is cited as having always been minimal, "i.e. in a typical class of 25 there were never more than two or three white students."

The Superintendent of the Springfield School System

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Wide World Photos
Kanawha County Courthouse, Charleston, West Virginia, November 1974: Parents who kept their children out of school in the textbook protest offer themselves for arrest.

Bert & Nan & Flossie & Fred: The Bobbsey Twins Roll On

BY MARY KAY STARK

While much attention and critical analysis is given to Newbery Award-winners and other so-called "good" children's books, little consideration or even recognition is given to series books, which continue to be among the most popular publications for children. These best sellers tend to be discounted by most critics as "bad" literature, but despite that expert judgment, the fact remains that the series books are widely read.

Since 1899, generations of children have poured over such best sellers as *The Bobbsey Twins*, *Tom Swift*, *Nancy Drew*, *The Rover Boys* and *The Hardy Boys*. Books have been handed down from parent to child, as well as exchanged between neighbors. Librarians, having finally tired of saying "No, we don't carry those books," are now stocking their shelves with *Nancy Drew* and *Hardy Boys* stories.

What the books lack in literary quality and originality, they have made up for in sales. From 1899 to

1930, 15 million copies of *The Rover Boys* and 20 million copies of *Tom Swift* were sold. With 50 million in sales to its credit, *The Bobbsey Twins* has outsold (and, in the case of *The Rover Boys*, outlasted) both of these series and, until recently, was the best-selling children's series of the twentieth century. (The *Nancy Drew* books now lead the pack.)

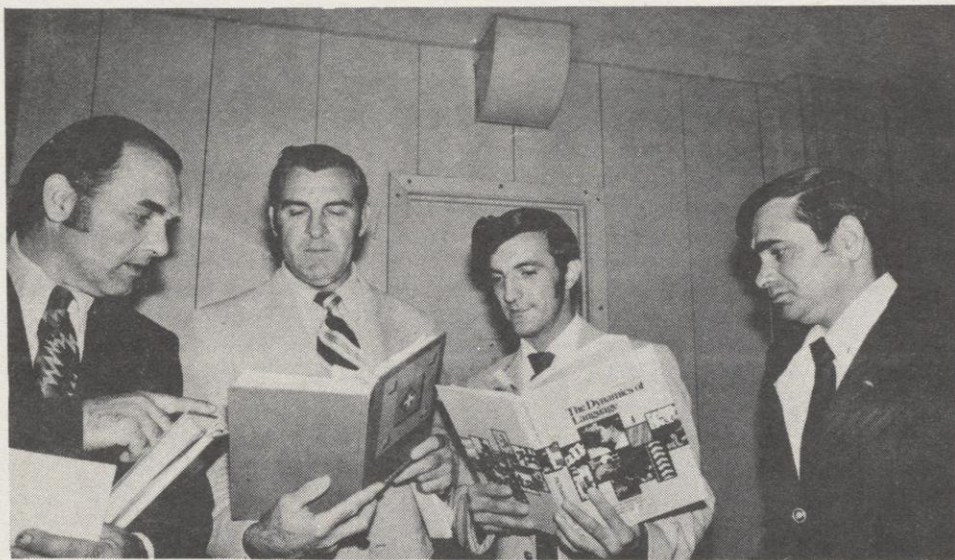
The appeal of the series books to children cannot really be disputed. However, their authors' treatment of Black characters can and should be disputed since the books contain racist stereotypes that have influenced generations of young people.

All of the aforementioned series books have been produced over the years by a group called the Stratemeyer Syndicate (see box on p. 5). All have contained an assortment of minor Black characters such as maids, porters, cooks and the like. However, three of the series—*The Bobbsey*

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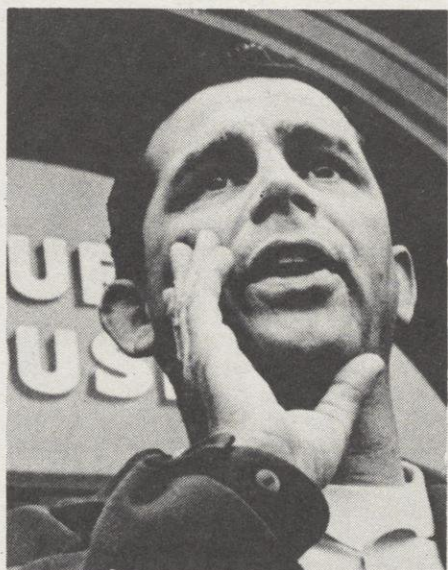
A delegation (above) opposed to multicultural textbooks went to Washington to demand federal action in the Kanawha County dispute. Reverend Marvin Horan (right), a fundamentalist minister who has been active in the protests, was recently indicted in a school bombing. (Wide World Photos)

same community forces had been called into play and had successfully destroyed the program. Concluded the NEA panel, "This censorship effort was a harbinger of events to come in 1974; its success showed that by public protest—even when that protest is based on distortions of truth and false accusations—the people can make a difference in shaping, or dismantling, public school programs."

MORE COMMUNICATION

To prevent future destructive conflicts, the NEA report calls for improvement in communications between the school authorities and their rural constituencies, promotion of more rural parent involvement in the school systems, holding of Board of Education meetings in different areas with invitations to residents to attend and an active public information program using the mass media. The report also suggests formulation of policy for the orderly handling of challenges or complaints regarding classroom materials that would require submission of specific, written charges on a complaint form, meetings between teachers and complainants and the reading in full, by the complainant, of all questioned materials.

"It must be acknowledged that the conflict might have erupted regardless of what the school system did or did not do to prepare for it," the panel stated. "There is a possibility, however, that had positive preparatory or responsive steps been taken at pivotal moments, the public schools of Kanawha County would not have made national headlines in 1974, and the academic freedom of its class-



rooms would have been preserved."

3) *The nationwide threat to the use of multicultural, multiethnic textbooks and materials in schools that the West Virginia controversy both highlights and contributes to.* "In discussing the significance of the Kanawha County textbook controversy for public education and for school systems throughout the country," the report states, "the NEA Panel considered two specific questions: 1. Had it not been for their multicultural, multiethnic content, would the language arts materials adopted in 1974 have generated as unyielding and violent a protest as that which has occurred? 2. Would the conflict have been as prolonged and intense as it was, had it not been infiltrated by representatives of highly sophisticated, well-organized right-wing extremist groups? The answer to both these questions, the Panel believes, is no."

Quite correctly, we believe, the report points up the relationship between textbooks and busing as issues which both involve race and evoke outpourings of emotionalism and political extremism. Just as busing is viewed by many as a needed tool in changing the "have-not" status of non-white Americans, multicultural, multiethnic materials seek to fulfill the right of racial and ethnic minorities to be represented in their true and legitimate relationship to U.S. culture. Citing examples of right-wing exploitation of the protest—such as the circulation of propaganda documents filled with distortions of truth and the funding of protest activities—the report sounds an urgent warning regarding the effectiveness of the manipulative tactics of the right. (The failure of the school staff and Board members who supported the books to mount an aggressive counter campaign is noted elsewhere in the report.) Right-wing organizations have extensive resources—legal, financial, communications—and their power should not be underestimated. We strongly concur with the NEA panel in their concrete suggestions to school administrators for seizing the offensive and establishing procedures to safeguard their authority in the face of irrational, destructive attack.

WHAT IS THE FUTURE FOR MULTICULTURAL TEXTS?

Concern has been expressed by Dorothy Massie, author of the NEA panel's report on the Kanawha County, West Virginia, textbook controversy, for the future of new pluralistic education materials. Citing a recent report in the *Washington Star News* that Ginn and Company, a major textbook publisher, plans to delete several selections from their recently published secondary anthologies, Ms. Massie said, "Many publishers are liable to back down from their commitment to produce these new materials in the face of such virulent protests as took place in West Virginia."

Strong criticism of textbook content was lodged by a seven-member textbook review committee in the Kanawha County dispute. A splinter group of a larger citizen's committee appointed by the Board of Education, this committee produced a 500-page document in which it suggested removal of 184 of the 254 titles assigned for review.

Ms. Massie regarded the reported pullback by the Ginn publishing house as evidence that "the West Virginia situation is having a ripple effect." Contacted by the CIBC at Ginn's editorial offices in Boston, Ben DeLuca, Jr. stated that no Ginn books had been challenged in Kanawha County. He acknowledged, however, that Ginn's *Responding* series, designed to teach literature in grades 7-12, had been criticized in three Virginia counties—Washington, Roanoke and Prince William. According to Mr. DeLuca, the company's sales representatives and managers in those areas picked up criticisms from local newspapers and, in some cases, were approached by school representatives who wanted "clarification" of certain aspects of the program. Questioning the interpretation given the *Washington Star News* article, Mr. DeLuca would grant only that "The *Responding* series is being reviewed according to our usual procedure." "No final decisions on revising the program have been made," he said.

Two elementary textbook programs that have figured centrally in the West Virginia controversy are Houghton Mifflin's *Interaction* series and D.C. Heath's *Communicating*. (A secondary Heath series, *The Dynamics of Language*, was also challenged.) The status of both of these series was changed by an act of the Kanawha County school board from required

classroom texts to supplementary, library-based texts. Contacted at the publisher's New York offices, Heath executive Lauren Korte told the CIBC: "We haven't received any formal protests. No groups or individuals have written us a list of items in the series that they don't like. But we have received several crank calls." Asked about the company's overall policy towards criticism, Mr. Korte said, "We don't intend to compromise the philosophy of our programs. We believe, not only in the multiethnic, multiracial character of these programs, but in their pedagogy as well. We would not pull any components out unless there were sound, educational reasons for doing so."

CONFLICT SPREADS

Other evidence is available to support Ms. Massie's "fall-out" theory. Armed with a Supreme Court decision affirming the supremacy of local public opinion in setting definitions of obscenity, groups in Georgia and Texas have succeeded in having state-adopted textbooks removed from the schools. Similar organizations have been writing legislators in Virginia, urging passage of laws against the use of "obscene" materials. According to Doris Colomb, a member of the Kanawha County Coalition for Quality Education—the group leading the fight to save the textbooks—teams of anti-textbook protesters are touring local libraries looking for "obscene" books. In all of these cases, obscenity is being defined broadly and, in particular, emphasizes the writings of Blacks. Speaking to what she regards as the hidden agenda of the protesters, Ms. Colomb said: "The protesters here and elsewhere aren't really concerned with obscenity. They want to turn the clock back to a whole other way of American life."

Her statement seems borne out in the demand by West Virginia protesters for more traditional methods of teaching (as opposed to open classroom arrangements), as well as traditional materials. Their tendency to lump the two together—methods and materials—is the giveaway. Although some Black parents also prefer more rigidly structured teaching of "the basics," Ms. Massie feels that giving in to the demands for other programs would lead ultimately to newly-

What the Protesters Said About the Books

A splinter group of the Kanawha County Citizens Review Committee prepared a textbook critique from which the NEA report quotes the following excerpts:

- (Text Item) Article says whites of this nation are all insensitive, unaware, create hostility, and suspicion, and are breakers of communication.
- Objection: Untruthful, generalized statement.
- (Text Item) Concerning what to call blacks.
- Objection: This is ridiculous. What does this have to do with the instruction of English?
- (Text Item) "A Toast to Harlem and Temptation" by Langston Hughes. The toast to Harlem is "that it belongs to the Negroes." Concerning temptation, reference is made to Adam & Eve. Simple [a Black character] says that if he had been in the Garden of Eden he would have stayed there and out of Harlem. But his friend tells him that he was not there because Adam and Eve were white; and that they were late arrivals on the scene.
- Objection: Anti-Christian in a satirical fashion.
- (Text Item) The problem of race in America is a white problem.
- Objection: Writer's opinion. Should not be stated as a proven fact.
- (Text Item) Not specified.
- Objection: Reference to Mexicans having a revolution against whites, breeds hate between the races.
- (Text Item) "My Childhood" by James Baldwin.
- Mr. Baldwin speaks of the vengeance of his father. He says that the church for him was almost literally a way of getting back at white people. His father wanted to kill white people!
- In the Harlem ghetto, Baldwin felt caged like an animal and wanted to get out. He had accepted his father's bitterness—that of blaming the white people for poverty, etc.—after his father's death.
- Objection: 1. The story is anti-white. The generalization is that all white people have discriminated against the black.
2. The story is not necessarily timely.
3. Has the White man caused all the problems of the Negro race in America? Is Mr. Baldwin, in any way, responsible for his own problems?
4. What is the purpose of this selection? (Many of Baldwin's works are of good quality.)
5. Why teach anti-white? (Anti-black is not taught anywhere in this series.)

Interracial Books FOR CHILDREN

is published eight times a year by the Council on Interracial Books for Children, 1841 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023. Institutional and contributing subscriptions, \$15 a year; individuals, \$8 a year. Subscription form on page 8.

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segregated schools. "The very concept of desegregation—pluralistic education," she stated, "is under siege."

Not surprisingly, the Ku Klux Klan has also been active in the West Virginia dispute. One of the groups associated with the protest, called Non-Christians' Against the Books, has been absorbed by the Klan. A recent Klan cross-burning, indicating along with other signs that the anti-book movement there is not fading away, drew about 200 people. Although a fundamentalist minister who has been indicted for his alleged involvement in a school bombing refused legal counsel offered by the Klan, Ms. Colomb quoted the leading voice against the books on the school board as having stated "The NEA is worse than the KKK."

Organized countermeasures, aimed at tempering the effects of the criticism and protests, are increasing. The Kanawha County Coalition for Quality Education has petitioned the Superintendent to conduct hearings on the functions of a book-screening committee (composed of 15 parents and 5 teachers), charging that the committee infringes on the authority of educators to determine curriculum content. Legal action is also planned by the Coalition to challenge the guidelines for future textbook adoptions approved by the Board of Education in November 1974. Stated Ms. Colomb, "The new guidelines subvert the rights of teachers to teach and, specifically, prevent the use of the D.C. Heath series, which was adopted for use in the classroom in conformance with state law."

BLACKS SPEAK OUT

Supporting the Coalition in its actions, in addition to mounting a campaign of its own, is the Black Alliance Against Child Neglect, a loose federation of Black sororities, fraternities, ministerial groups and the Charleston NAACP. Pulled together to represent the interests of Black children in the public schools, the Alliance is the organized voice of the Black community in the textbook crisis. Reverend Ronald English, a member of the board of directors of the Coalition and spokesperson for the Alliance, told the CIBC that at a recent meeting of the Board of Education he and others deplored "the abuse of Black children" and declared that "further abuse will not be tolerated."

Reached in Charleston, Reverend English said further that "White racism, not Christian concern, is behind the textbook controversy. Whites don't want the Black perspective represented in the teaching of American history nor do they want any exposure of Black culture. The only hope of including these things in the curriculum, the only hope of truly integrating the content of American education, is through these multi-racial, multicultural materials."

URGENT MESSAGE TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS

Ms. Doris Colomb of the Kanawha County Coalition for Quality Education, whose comments are quoted in the above article, informs us that Congresspeople throughout the country are receiving large quantities of mail attacking multicultural textbooks. It is extremely important that people who support the use of multiracial, multicultural materials in public education also make their numbers felt by

1) writing your congressional representatives, both state and federal;

2) keeping abreast of what is happening in your communities regarding textbook adoption;

3) organizing citizen groups like the Metro-Ministry Task Force in Springfield, Ohio (see article on p. 1) to study the curricula and materials in use in your schools.

HOW TO COMBAT SEXISM IN TEXTBOOKS

BY JUDITH KRAM

The techniques described in the article below can of course also be used in the fight against racism in all child-oriented materials. — Editors.

Boys are clever, resourceful, industrious, independent and strong; girls are altruistic, emotional, fearful, weak and incompetent. This is the lesson children learn from their elementary school readers.

Quite a few individuals and organizations have carried out content analyses of textbooks, and their findings have led to the same conclusion: Textbooks are tracking children into narrowly defined sex roles, which are demeaning to girls and detrimental to both girls and boys.

The first step in seeking to eliminate sex-role stereotyping from instructional materials is to research the material currently in use in order to arm oneself with specific examples. The next step is to publicize these findings.

USE THE MEDIA

The media is a useful tool for communicating the problem and for recruiting support. *Send letters to the editor.* These columns constitute free publicity for your efforts and reach a wide and diverse audience. Keep your local newspapers, radio and television stations informed of your efforts to combat sexually biased instructional material. In addition to dealing with the media directly, contact businesses and urge them to sponsor a program on the subject.

Concerned individuals and organizations should pressure legislatures—state and federal—and Boards of Education to prohibit the use of stereotypical sex-role material in the public schools. Write letters to these agencies. A letter from a group carries more weight than one from an individual. Even if there are only two of you, it pays to establish yourselves as a group and have stationery printed. Write to your senators, congresspeople and the chairperson of the State Board of Education. For local grievances, write the chairperson of your local school committee. If you do not receive a response, write to the Commissioner of Education. Make some investigatory calls—it is important to address your initial complaint to the appropriate party to save time and to avoid alienating potential supporters.

At present, at least three states—California, Iowa and New Jersey—have passed legislation against sex-biased school materials and the Boards of Education of Colorado, Maryland, New Jersey, South Dakota and West Virginia have passed or proposed resolutions.

You are apt to meet resistance from people who contend that such legislation and resolutions abridge the First Amendment guarantee of freedom of speech. However, Holly Knox, director of PEER (Project on Equal Education Rights), a new project of the NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund, points out that "state and local school officials already routinely review and select textbooks." Feminists are only asking that these officials incorporate measures to avoid the adoption of sex-biased materials.

Strong legislation would enable feminists to take school systems to court. Under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Kalamazoo Committee to Study Sex Discrimination in the Public Schools filed a com-

plaint against the Kalamazoo School System for its purchase of a \$68,000 Houghton Mifflin reading series which the Committee claims discriminates against women. [This case has not yet been decided. For information, contact Ms. Jo Jacobs, Chairperson, Commission to Study Sex Bias in Kalamazoo Public Schools, 732 Garland St., Kalamazoo, Mich. 49008. — Editors.]

While lobbying for legislation, you should also meet with the textbook selection officials. At the state level, this may mean contacting a textbook selection committee or a division of curriculum planning/instructional materials. Within an individual system, a coordinator of elementary education or individual teachers may be responsible for textbook selection. It is important to let the proper officials know you are concerned and want to meet with them.

School systems—state or local—can also exert pressure. They can refuse to buy material which does not meet established guidelines for portrayal of the sexes. Official letters from the school system should be sent to every textbook publishing company informing them of the decision not to purchase material that fails to meet specific criteria; a copy of the guidelines should be included. The system may choose to develop its own guidelines or may adopt those already compiled by a publishing house, State Department of Education, or feminist group.

Write to textbook publishing companies about their materials. Address the editor of the textbook division and send a carbon copy to the company president; *Literary Market Place*—available in most libraries—will give you the exact person to write. Criticize sexist material, giving specific examples and offering alternatives wherever possible. Also, remember to commend companies for their good material.

CHANGE IS EXPENSIVE

It must be noted that the problem of eliminating sex-role stereotypes from textbooks involves economics—the cost of publishing a single textbook is extremely high. While textbook publishing houses are concerned about the problem of sex bias, they can rarely afford to make more than cosmetic changes in their present publications. Many companies have committed themselves to eliminating sex bias from future publications; however, it takes at least two years for the writing, production and printing of a textbook. Then it must be approved by adoption committees and ordered, usually one year in advance of its usage, by teachers or school systems. According to an education kit developed by the Women's Equity Action League, "It takes half a million dollars to launch a new series and five years to get that series from writer to child."

Because textbooks are so expensive to produce, the current trend away from their use is a significant development. Many elementary schools have replaced traditional reading programs with individualized ones. Paperback readers are replacing such notorious textbooks as the Dick and Jane series. For several years now, feminists have been writing children's books which can be used in these individualized reading programs. (Feminist presses have been established to facilitate the publication of books of this kind.)

These same books can be used out-

side of the classroom to supplement a child's classroom reading material. Speak to both the school and local librarians. Encourage them (1) to purchase storybooks from available lists of non-sexist books; (2) to provide biographies of famous women, particularly those who excelled in traditionally male roles like Elizabeth Blackwell, the first female doctor, and those who worked for women's rights like Susan B. Anthony and the Pankhursts; (3) to purchase women's magazines such as *Ms.* and *Womansport*.

A need exists for new material on women, integrated material and easily accessible bibliographies and samples of non-sexist curricula. The latter would be of particular use to teachers who are concerned about sex-role stereotyping but who for lack of time, commitment or resources are unable to do their own research.

For those interested in developing bibliographies, the following is suggested:

1. Decide on the subject area and reading level for investigation. Choose a narrow focus, e.g., fifth grade history or fifth grade math, and combine bibliographies at the end if so desired.
2. Decide what type of instructional material to investigate, e.g., integrated textbooks or supplementary material.
3. Familiarize yourself with the field before investigating available material in order to clearly define beforehand what an acceptable text should include. (In an area such as history, most people are unfamiliar with women's contributions and, therefore, are unaware of what constitutes accurate and adequate material.)
4. Remember: Written authorization is required for each piece of copyrighted material to be included in any document intended for publication, unless it is an excerpt of less than 300 words used for illustrative purposes.

In the absence of adequate material, teachers must acquire compensatory skills. In Kalamazoo, the Committee to Study Sex Discrimination in the Public Schools pasted annotations and supplements into the present material while awaiting the outcome of their complaint. *Stop Sex Role Stereotypes in Elementary Education*, by Martha Cohen for ConnPIRG (Public Interest Research Group), contains an excellent section on teacher training as well as methods for using deficient material. This is just one of many in-service training manuals.

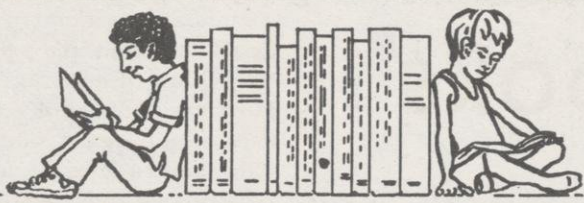
Ethel Sadowsky, Chairwoman of the Education Task Force of the Massachusetts Governor's Commission on the Status of Women, suggests using such slide tapes as "Dick and Jane as Victims" by Women on Words and Images and "The Hidden Curriculum," studies of elementary textbooks by a group of Seattle women, to help teachers become aware of what is harmful and inhibiting in the instructional material they are using.

Finally, contact the women's organization.

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The CIBC deeply regrets the inadvertent omission of Chicano Manifesto by Armando Rendón (Random House, 1971) from the "Recommended Background Reading" list published in the special Chicano issue of the Bulletin, Volume 5, Numbers 7 & 8. The book was reviewed in Volume 3, Number 4 of the Bulletin.

In the same issue the credit for several illustrations was unfortunately inadvertently omitted. The illustrations on pages 2, 4, 7, 11, 15 and the portraits on page 13 were reprinted from Bantam's edition of Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales' I Am Joaquín/Yo Soy Joaquín. The two murals on page 13 were reprinted from slide sets prepared by Environmental Communications (64 Windward Ave., Venice, Cal. 90291)—the top one is from "Barrio Murals of Santa Fe," the lower, from "L.A. Chicano Street Art."



THE BOOKSHELF

She Come Bringing Me That Little Baby Girl by Eloise Greenfield, illustrated by John Steptoe. Lippincott, 1974, \$5.95, unpag.

The birth of a sibling can be a traumatic experience for an only child, and adults must be sensitive and intelligent in their handling of this delicate situation. In *She Come Bringing Me That Little Baby Girl*, Kevin, an only child, faces a new baby with little preparation. It is obvious that he is loved by his mother and father as well as by other relatives, but love is exactly what is questioned by children at a time like this: They are afraid their place will be taken by the new child.

In the course of the story, Kevin has to cope with several misconceptions about babies. He feels that if the baby had been a boy he would have been different. His hands would have been larger, and, therefore, better suited to ball playing. He is afraid to hold his new sister because she might break. Kevin is disappointed by the baby's wrinkled skin and loud cries. The sexism that we unfortunately see emerging as Kevin gropes for a way to accept his sister is fostered by a simplistic attempt to deal with Kevin's real problem of accepting a sibling.

Kevin is left to contend with these problems alone but is put at ease by his mother's assurances that she was a baby girl once and that his uncle, her big brother, had helped to take care of her. She then solicits Kevin's help in caring for his sister. This marks a turning point in the story, leading to a happy ending. It's all a little too simple, although the story is warm and shows a strong Black family grouping.

Parents or teachers can use this book to help children adjust to a new brother or sister, but only if they use it as a starting point for discussion and go on to deal more directly (and in an anti-sexist fashion!) with the concerns a child has.

John Steptoe's warmly-colored illustrations are effective in capturing the behavior of the other characters and contribute greatly to enlivening the story. [Mary Ellen Shepard]

* * *

Naomi in the Middle by Norma Klein, illustrated by Leigh Grant. Dial Press, 1974, \$4.95, 53 pages

This book is about sex, a mother's pregnancy and sibling rivalry as viewed by Naomi, the seven-year-old second child in a family that is soon to have a third. Within a light, somewhat humorous fictional format, the author tries to handle, forthrightly, subjects usually considered taboo in children's books.

Questions about sexuality associated with a mother's pregnancy are addressed: Why doesn't the mother look pregnant during the early stages? Will Naomi have pubic hair like her mother when she grows up? The Number One Question also comes up: "Bobo said the baby got there by Daddy putting his penis in you. . . . Is that right?" Given the answer, Naomi's response is, "I don't like it. . . . I wish I could lay an egg."

Concurrent themes include Naomi's feelings of resentment toward her "bossy" older sister, Bobo, and the fears of both children about displacement by the new child—two more sub-

jects not always treated openly or honestly in children's books.

While the author deserves praise for dealing with "bold" subject matter, the parents' responses to the young girls' concerns are somewhat less than satisfactory. In fact, they are superficial and perfunctory, leaving the impression that the children are not to be taken seriously. To Naomi's statement about not wanting sex, her mother replies, "When you're old enough you'll like it." End of discussion. When Naomi laments her status as the second child, her mother says only, "Daddy was a middle child." When Bobo threatens to leave home if the mother has twins, the mother's response is, "I doubt it will be twins." Not much reassurance for children.

The book is also limited by the white, very middle class-ness of its characters and by its basic assumption of universal heterosexuality.

But *Naomi in the Middle* is one of the few books of its kind, using words like "penis" and "vagina" easily within a fictional framework and projecting a feeling that sex and pregnancy are "healthy" things. The story reads well and fast, and the drawings by Leigh Grant are terrific. [Sue Ribner.]

* * *

All in a Day's Work edited by Miriam Levitt Baygell and Anne Ackerman. Globe Book Company, 1974, \$2.88 (1-9 copies), \$2.44 (10 or more copies), 199 pages

All in a Day's Work deals with career education. Through a series of diversified, "on-the-job" incidents that the editors claim actually occurred, the book offers language arts exercises, as well as an examination of career possibilities.

All in a Day's Work contains exciting stories (from one to five paragraphs long, increasing in length as the book progresses) plus exercises ranging from grammatical skills to the retelling of personal experiences to "how do you feel" questions. It appears that a student would have a sense of accomplishment on finishing the book because it lends itself to independent or individualized work.

At a cursory glance, one receives a positive impression of this book, but a closer look reveals racial, ethnic, and sexist stereotyping by the editors. The distribution of jobs among various characters in the stories clearly reflects the tracking of Blacks, Hispanics and Asian Americans, and women into particular areas and away from others. Most women and minorities are shown in low-paying, semi-skilled jobs, thus reinforcing the idea that certain jobs are for white males only and should not be sought by other groups.

Women are portrayed either as dependent on male employers and male occupational instructors, or as vocational helpmates—the secretary, elevator operator, or woman who protects the mailman from a neighborhood dog. (The editors did include a female lawyer and plumber—and a male nurse—in an attempt to offset their otherwise blatant sexism. The plumber is a Black woman of Hispanic origin, but the lawyer—identified as female only in a picture—appears as a stereotyped W.A.S.P.) Other stories in which women appear show them as hysterical, prone to emotional outbursts or unable to dis-

tinguish between reality and a private dream world. The labels Miss and Mrs. appear ubiquitously; Ms. is found once in an exercise. The editors, themselves women, continue the tradition of gender-determined occupational labelling by using the terms policeman, repairman, salesman.

The omission of jobs that are associated with power and influence in such areas as politics, communications, big business and the arts from a list of possible careers for young people raises serious questions about the editors' use of a language skills book. Is the primary function of *All in a Day's Work* to improve reading and writing skills and to explore career possibilities? Or, is the editors' fundamental purpose to keep poor, Black, Hispanic, Asian, and female young people from considering the kinds of employment that would increase their economic and political power? [Claudia Strauss]

* * *

Thank You, Jackie Robinson by Barbara Cohen. Lothrop, Lee & Shepard, 1974, \$4.95, 23 pages

Thank You, Jackie Robinson begins with a young boy named Sam recounting the history of the Brooklyn Dodgers baseball team. Fair enough since during the 50's everybody and their uncle followed, blow by blow, the fortunes of baseball's first Black man. For some reason, Sam doesn't have a T.V.—an unusual situation since he is a middle-class Jewish boy who probably knows more about the Dodgers than Branch Ricky.

Anyway, it doesn't take much time before we're in the middle of a father-son relationship between ten-year-old, fatherless Sam and a sixty-year-old Black man named Davy (with shades of that traditional "young boss"/Black adult stereotype). They are friends joined forever by their mutual love for the Dodgers and/or Jackie Robinson.

Why isn't Davy Mr. Davy? That's not his last name, you say? Well, what is his last name? Who is Davy anyway—a friend, a male nanny or just a big Black man with enormous hands?

Perhaps you've guessed it: This book has some shortcomings. Sam comes off as being larger-than-life in his ability to handle all difficulties very well—for example, his father's death, the changing of the guard at his mother's inn and, finally, the death of Davy. (One can see Sam waiting for the next cook and interviewing him to find out whether he cooks apple pie with sugar and cinnamon.) And although the story has a nice flow and might interest the 9-12 age group by its subject matter, the subtle tones of racial superiority that color the relationship between Sam and Davy are most disturbing. [Edwin Henry]

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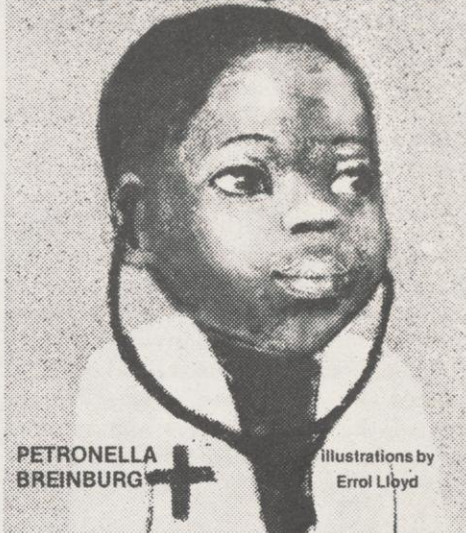
Doctor Shawn by Petronella Breinburg, illustrated by Errol Lloyd. Thomas Y. Crowell, 1975, \$5.95, 25 pages

This is the second book about a little boy named Shawn from the Black British writer and illustrator team of Petronella Breinburg and Errol Lloyd. Shawn, who faced his first day of school in *Shawn Goes to School* (Vol. 5, No. 5), is left at home one Saturday with his sisters and their friend Robert. Shawn's mother has told the children to be quiet and to keep the house tidy while she is away.

When Shawn's older sister suggests a game of hospital, it's Shawn's turn to be doctor, and his elder sister is the nurse. The two other children—along with the cat—are the patients. Predictably, a great mess is made. But lo and behold! when Shawn's mother returns, instead of fussing, she smilingly serves lunch to the children.

This book is most welcome. The author presents a warm and loving Black family with a mother who understands that play can't always be

Doctor Shawn



done neatly! Many Black parents must leave their children home unattended for lack of babysitting money, requiring the children to develop self-reliance at an early age. The book shows that "problem" in a positive light. Another good feature of the book is that both Shawn and his sister, in their conversation, express awareness of the fact that the roles of doctor and nurse have nothing to do with being male or female. [EdCelina Marcus Snowden]

* * *

A Hero Ain't Nothin' But a Sandwich by Alice Childress. Avon (paperback), 1974, \$.95, 127 pages; Coward, McCann & Geoghegan (hardback), 1973, \$5.95, 128 pages

The young adult novel seems to be here to stay, and with books like Alice Childress's *A Hero Ain't Nothin' But a Sandwich* (now available in paperback with a major film in the works) one can see why.

Young and Black Benjie Johnson is a junkie. Through a series of brilliant vignettes, we see Benjie through his own eyes and through the eyes of those around him as he nods his way through his thirteenth year.

Benjie wants someone to believe in him, but since heroes are only sandwiches, the question for Benjie is who can be his hero? It can't be his mother because she is preoccupied with finding happiness with her boyfriend. Benjie's mother loves him and he knows it, but he can't understand why an old (34) woman can't be happy with just loving her son. And Benjie won't let Butler Craig, his mother's common-law husband, get too close to him because Butler is the one who has stolen his mother. School is no help even though Nigeria Green and Bernard Cohen, two of Benjie's teachers, are willing. They, like the principal, can't reach beyond their own personal differences or beyond the system.

In short, there is no one so Benjie tries to become his own hero.

Finally, Butler Craig, the common man—not the sports hero or movie star or street corner preacher or Black intellectual who are usually paraded out for Negro History Week in local schools—who reaches out and pulls Benjie over the edge. Butler is willing to believe in Benjie and be his father a hundred times. With that kind of pulling maybe Benjie, and all of us, can make it. [Ray Anthony Shepard]

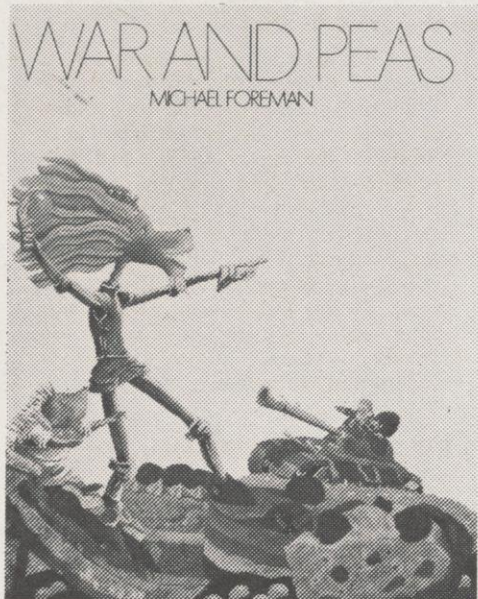
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War and Peas written and illustrated by Michael Foreman. Thomas Y. Crowell, 1974, \$5.95, 32 pages

In the country of King Lion everyone is very unhappy because the earth, dry for lack of rain, yields no food. King Lion visits a nearby kingdom to ask for help since that country has more than enough to eat. The "fat" kingdom is very greedy and not willing to share any of its wealth. King Lion and his minister are taken into custody, but they escape and are pursued by the fat army as they flee homeward. A battle ensues between

the two kingdoms, during which the army trucks dig up the land. As a result, seeds begin to grow. King Lion is joyful because now there will be plenty of food.

Michael Foreman's parable is, supposedly, a plea for peace but it doesn't come off. At the story's conclusion, the Lion says "Peace" to the Fat King, who replies: "Never heard of it. . . . What's the recipe?" Is this book really a request for peace and sharing or



merely a vehicle for Mr. Foreman to demonstrate his brilliant graphic art talents? The book is beautiful: muted watercolor scenes contrast with huge collages of cakes, cookies, malteds and luscious desserts. All the world loves "pretty" pictures, but whether the content of this book can stand on its own merit is a real question. [EdCelina Marcus Snowden]

* * *

The Amazing Travels of Ingrid Our Turtle by Peter Lippman. Western Publishers, 1973, \$2.50, 32 pages

The objective of many recent children's books to inform us of the range of vocational possibilities open to females and emotional opportunities open to males is often executed with a heavy hand. *The Amazing Travels of Ingrid Our Turtle* by Peter Lippman is a refreshing change of pace for those on the lookout for non-sexist books for young children. The story, about achieving one's goal in life, is endearing (and possibly enduring) in part because it is *not* polemical.

Like many of us, Ingrid has a modest desire to do something with her life. She would like to travel past the garden gate. But she has little hope of achieving her ambition because she is "slow, even for a turtle." (My guess is that she was made a female character chiefly in order to maximize her status as an underdog.)

In spite of her handicap, Ingrid systematically goes about resolving her problem. First, she merely thinks about how to go faster. Then she considers a variety of transportation modes before settling on a train as her role model. Noting that trains get off to a slow start before picking up speed, Ingrid discovers the secret of locomotion is to say the word, "chug." The first day this takes her one inch beyond the fence. The second day, two "chugs" later, she has doubled this distance and by the end of a month she has chugged a whole mile and is going strong.

Her ambition increases: from her humble slow start, Ingrid becomes nothing less than a world traveler. In roaring color and double-page spreads, Ingrid takes us through Europe, Africa, the Orient, the U.S.A. and finally to outer space. Peter Lippman's illustrations have the kind of detail and humor to repeatedly delight a child in the best tradition of picture books.

The lesson in *Ingrid* is to take things one step at a time and not to limit one's dreams. The joy of *Ingrid* is you never feel it's a lesson. [Vicki Cobb]

THE BOBBSEY TWINS

Continued from page 1

Twins, The Rover Boys and *Tom Swift*—have featured Black characters in leading roles.

The Rover Boys, out of print (though not necessarily out of circulation) since 1930, included a Black man named Alexander Pop; *Tom Swift* featured Eradicate Sampson, and both characters embodied nearly every stereotype ever created about Blacks. They were shuffling, head-scratching, dialect-speaking, servile, good-natured, dull-witted buffoons who served as the main source of comedy throughout the series.

The original *Bobbsey Twins* stories also contained prominent Black characters—Dinah and Sam. They also spoke in heavy dialect and, in general, comported themselves along the lines of "Aleck Pop" and Eradicate. In fact, all of these characters mirrored one another: they were all variations of the Sambo theme.

What concerns us here is that a line of continuity exists from the stereotypes of the past to the present. Dinah and Sam have survived many editings and revisions of *The Bobbsey Twins* and they appear in the current editions and new stories. Although they are now only pale reflections of their precursors, they are still essentially racist stereotypes.

In 1904, Edward Stratemeyer, using the pseudonym Laura Lee Hope, wrote the first volumes in *The Bobbsey Twins* series. In these books, for the first time in a popular children's series, a Black woman figured as a major character. She was Dinah, the Bobbseys' cook, and she was accompanied by her husband Sam, a general handyman for the family.

The Bobbsey family lives in an East Coast community called Lakeport. The father, Richard Bobbsey, owns a large lumberyard. The mother, Mary Bobbsey, is described as "a slender, pretty woman with a gay smile" who sews, gardens and visits Rolling Acres Nursing Home occasionally, although her activities are not detailed until later revised editions. There are two sets of twins: twelve-year-old Bert and Nan and Flossie and Freddie who are almost six.

SERVANTS LOVE THE TWINS

Dinah and Sam Johnson, the Bobbseys' Black servants, are described as two "much loved members of the household." Dinah, who was (and still is) nearly always to be found in the kitchen preparing food for the Bobbseys, is depicted as being fat throughout the series—including the revised editions. In the early books, she was often said to "waddle" because of her great bulk. She fit perfectly the Aunt Jemima stereotype, so often used for Black women in children's literature in the first half of this century.

It was clearly established in the early books that Dinah and Sam adore the children. Like the stereotyped Black mammy of the slave plantations, Dinah loved the twins as if they were her own and she was regarded, particularly by Flossie and Freddie, as a mother figure. Lavish in her concern, Dinah was often shown getting excited and upset if some adversity seemed to have befallen one of them. By contrast, Mrs. Bobbsey, who was rarely shown interacting with her children, was calm, sensible and self-controlled. (In several instances, it seems that Mrs. Bobbsey regarded Dinah as one of her children.)

Sam Johnson was always introduced in the stories as Dinah's husband. His responsibilities varied: sometimes they included "keeping the lawns green for the children to play on in the summer and attending to the furnace in the winter." Occasionally, he worked at Mr. Bobbsey's lumberyard and also acted as the family's chauffeur.

LITTLE-KNOWN FACTS ABOUT SERIES BOOKS

A multimillion dollar enterprise was born in the early 1900's when Edward Stratemeyer launched his first batch of stories about some twins named Bobbsey, some boys named Rover and an eighteen-year-old amateur sleuth named Nancy Drew. In each series, volume followed upon volume and children loved them. To date, the combined total sales of these series books equals a whopping 95 million copies.

Using more than 60 pseudonyms and aided by a battery of ghost writers, Mr. Stratemeyer also created such fiction heroes as "Tom Swift," "Bomba the Jungle Boy" and "The Hardy Boys." Although most publishers began to phase out juvenile series books in the 1940's, several Stratemeyer series are still going strong and accounting for 12 per cent of Grosset and Dunlap's total sales.

When Mr. Stratemeyer died in 1930, the Stratemeyer Syndicate was taken over by his daughters, Harriet S. Adams and the late Edna C. Squier. Mrs. Squier was not very active, but Mrs. Adams assumed the name of Carolyn Keene, the pseudonym her father had used in writing the "Nancy Drew" mysteries, and continued to produce volumes in the series. In 1948, Andrew E. Svenson, an ex-newspaperman, joined the syndicate as a writer and editor, becoming a partner in 1961.

A five-person operation based in East Orange, New Jersey, the Stratemeyer Syndicate adds significantly each year to the more than 1,200 books it has turned out. (The syndicate does such a big business that even the "Wall Street Journal" featured a front-page article by Roger B. May on the subject in their January 15, 1975 edition.) Among forthcoming titles are some new "Bobbsey Twins" stories, several revisions of early Nancy Drew books and two more books in a recently launched car-racing series.

The Stratemeyer books were heavily seasoned with offensive stereotypes—mainly of Blacks, but of some other groups as well. In the many rewritten or revised editions of the early books, dialect speech has been dropped and the grosser stereotypes eliminated—often by eliminating the Black characters altogether. But to the extent that those blatant stereotypes reside somewhere deep in the consciousness of millions of living Americans who were children at the height of the "Rover Boys" and "Tom Swift's" popularity, Alexander Pop and Eradicate Sampson (see accompanying article on the Bobbsey Twins) are alive and well.

In contrast to Dinah, Sam was tall and slim and, until the most recent editions, remained in Dinah's shadow. The few times that Sam made an appearance, he was a good natured, faithful servant.

Dinah was portrayed as a domineering, nagging wife and Sam, a milque-toast husband. When Dinah spoke to her husband, it was generally in a scolding tone, but Sam accepted his wife's dominance with a wide grin and "natural" good nature.

Dinah and Sam were not the only Blacks portrayed in *The Bobbsey Twins* series. Like the Rover Boys, the Bobbseys in the course of their adventures met a number of grinning, good-natured porters and cooks who were identifiable by their dialects.

MASTERS AND SLAVES

The most extensive portrayal of Blacks in the series was in *The Bobbsey Twins in the Land of Cotton*, a volume that was still in print in 1974 and can no doubt still be purchased (it has since been discontinued). Every stereotype ever dreamed of regarding plantation slaves was present in this book.

Upon their arrival in the South, the Bobbsey family was greeted by Colonel Percy, his wife Martha, daughter Susan, and a number of smiling Blacks. The twins were "given" two servants, both of whom were described as being devoted and loyal to their white master. The Colonel introduced them to their first servant, Jimmy, who bowed and grinned at the twins:

'He's a good lad and has a way with horses. He will be your groom. Now stop bobbing about, Jimmy,' he ordered briskly, 'and fetch me Topsy and Prince. Be quick!

Throughout the story, Jimmy greeted the twins in a deferential manner, with a "wide-mouthed grin," and called them "little missy and master."

The other servant the twins were given for their stay was an old Black woman named Mammy 'Liza. Even more than Dinah, Mammy 'Liza epitomized the mammy stereotype.

They were taken to two bedrooms and introduced to a darling old mammy who looked like someone right out of a storybook. Mammy 'Liza, Mrs. Percy said, would serve the children during their visit to Great Oaks. 'Ask Mammy 'Liza for anything you want,' their cousin Martha said with a smile. 'Whether it's possible or not, she will do it for you. We all depend on 'Liza here.'

Great Oaks also had its foot-shuffling, stoop-shouldered "house nigger" in the person of Old Nebo, who could be implicitly trusted by the Colonel and Mrs. Percy.

The plantation picture was rounded out by the presence of a group of cotton

pickers—"the field niggers"—who also displayed devotion and affection for the Colonel. "One thing that interested the Bobbseys was the large number of Negroes they saw about the place. All looked healthy and happy, and each had a respectful word or smile for Colonel Percy." One morning, the Colonel took the twins out to his fields to watch the cotton pickers and try picking some cotton themselves.

The Negroes, both men and women, were gaily dressed in bright-colored shirts, or sunbonnets and aprons. Most of them were singing.

'They must like their work,' said Nan. 'They seem so happy.'

'Cotton picking is healthful exercise,' smiled the plantation owner.

He said no more, but the children knew the workers were happy because they liked Colonel Percy.

In 1950, revisions of *The Bobbsey Twins* stories were begun. Outdated customs and language were replaced by new forms and in response to pressure from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the dialect assigned to Blacks was modified. Dinah and Sam no longer live in rooms above the stable; now they occupy an apartment on the third floor of the Bobbsey home. Sam has also been given a steady job at Mr. Bobbsey's lumberyard and is mentioned more in the revised stories. His overall status, however, is very much the same. He is still the chauffeur (although now he drives the lumberyard truck and boats for the Bobbseys), is still introduced as Dinah's husband and continues to display his good nature by grinning and chuckling often.

The "new" Sam shows some intelligence and a sense of responsibility—his forethought is exhibited a number of times in the newer books. For example, in *The Bobbsey Twins on a Houseboat*, the following exchange takes place:

'We forgot Snoop and Snap! Tell Sam to turn around!'

Dinah grinned. "They're already aboard. Sam took them down to the boat early."

STEREOTYPES PERSIST

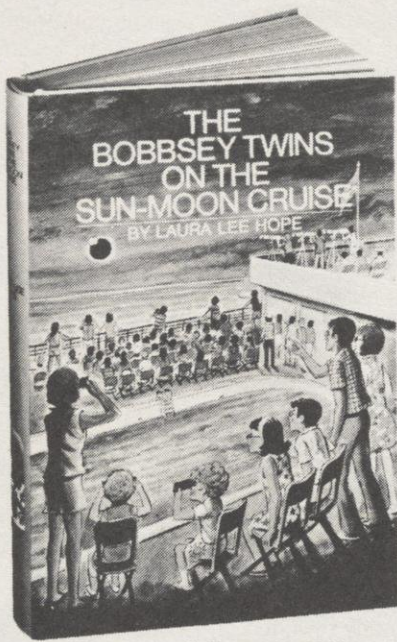
Dinah, too, appears to have a new look. She is now described as "the jolly-looking, colored woman who helps Mrs. Bobbsey with the housework." But the truth is that Dinah is still stuck with all the dirty work. She spends as much time in the kitchen as she ever did and most of the stereotyped patterns prevalent in the older books underlie Dinah's portrayal in the revised books. She remains the loving, devoted, and forgiving servant.

Dinah also retains many of the same

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THE BOBBSEY TWINS

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The twins' "new look."

fears and superstitions in the newer editions that she had in the old. Still afraid of machines, she refuses a helicopter ride. A black cat means a "trip's sure goin' to bring bad luck."

Nor has she lost her fear of ghosts: 40 years have only seen the emergence of a bit of skepticism. "'Ghosts!' sneered Dinah. 'You can't play the same trick twice on old Dinah. There's no ghost on this ship.'" But later in the same story, Dinah's big eyes are rolling again, and she is convinced that "Indian ghosts" are taking her missing food. Informed by Nan that ghosts don't eat, Dinah says she doesn't care and persists in her belief. She even believes that ghosts leave fingerprints.

Dinah also continues to fulfill the image of Black people as highly emotional. In *The Bobbsey Twins on a Houseboat* (1955) the following occurs:

'What is it, Dinah?' asked Mrs. Bobbsey.
'Seasick pills!' the cook announced, rolling her eyes. 'You won't catch old Dinah without 'em. I'm going to take some as soon as this boat leaves the dock.'

Flossie looked at her mother and started to giggle. The boat had left the dock fifteen minutes before! Evidently Dinah had been so busy that she had not noticed when they set off.

'What's the matter?' asked Dinah, gazing at Flossie suspiciously.

The little girl pointed to the window. Dinah rushed over and looked out.

'Goodness me!' she cried. 'Where's the land? Oh, I feel sick!'

Mrs. Bobbsey smiled. 'That just proves it's only your imagination, Dinah.'

Dinah's large bulk continues to be a comic element, although she is now described as "plump" rather than "fat." Occasionally, her massive bulk collides with one of the twins, causing much laughter among the Bobbsey family.

NEW BLACK IMAGES

Her dialect, though not nearly so exaggerated as before, remains. "G's" are still left off the ends of words, and "You all," "Land sakes alive!", "Lawdy me!", "Mercy!" and "Praise Be!" enter her speech with consistency.

To be sure, the authors have made some attempts to change the images of Dinah and other Blacks in the stories. Sometimes Dinah is shown reading a newspaper or book, which she never did in the earlier books. In addition, all of the porters, cooks, and conductors have been transformed into whites with names of conspicuous Anglo-Saxon origin. According to Andrew E. Svenson, a partner in the Stratemeyer Syndicate, whitening of formerly Black characters is the common practice:

I do not like to see minorities made into servile characters. Yet, on the other hand, what do you do when a servile character becomes functional to the story? Well, I'll tell you. You give your character a good old Anglo Saxon name to avoid any repercussions, and I sup-

pose it will be like this for a long time to come in our juvenile writing profession. The same applies to the names of villains. We must be sure not to make them sound Jewish, or Polish, or Italian. We might get away with a Scandinavian or German name because these minorities have long since been integrated into the American scene and are not so sensitive.

Mr. Svenson goes on to say that a unique problem attends the writing of *Bobbsey Twins* episodes. "Since the characters remain the same, it would be hard to make Sam and Dinah, the lovable Black couple, white. Therefore, whenever I handle these characters, I make them friendly, understanding, and use them as sparingly as possible. And I never have them kowtowing to their employers!"

With these statements in mind, it is interesting to trace the evolution of Dinah's character through various revisions. In 1907, Aunt Sarah invited the Bobbsey family to her farm for the summer:

'And be sure to bring dear old Dinah! We have plenty of room, and she will so enjoy seeing the farming—'

'Farming! Ha! Ha! Dat I do like. Used to farm all the time home in Virginie!' the maid declared. 'And I likes it first-rate! Yes, Dinah'll go and hoe de corn and' (aside to Bert) 'steal de watermelons!'

By 1950, although Dinah had supposedly shed her dialect, she was still heavily into watermelon in keeping with that age-old stereotype. Her response to Aunt Martha's invitation in 1950 is no different in this respect:

'Farm! That I do like,' Dinah replied. 'Used to farm all the time down home in Virginia! Yes, Dinah'll go and hoe the corn and—' Turning to Bert she grinned. 'Are there any watermelons at Meadow Brook? You and I—'

Dinah stopped talking.

The Bobbseys looked at one another, wondering what Dinah had in mind. When she did not tell them, Bert spoke up.

'You and I what?' he asked.

Dinah looked at Mrs. Bobbsey, then at Bert.

'Well, I was a-figurin',' the cook laughed, 'that maybe Bert and old Dinah could have a watermelon-eatin' contest. But maybe we'd better not. Bert might get himself sick!'

'How about you?' Nan teased.

'Oh, I could eat watermelon til the cows came home,' declared Dinah, as she went chuckling to the kitchen.

The others laughed, too.

The 1961 version of this same book makes no mention of Dinah eating or stealing watermelons.

But despite the excision of the more blatant stereotypes, Dinah and Sam are still essentially stereotypical characters. Still subtle variations on the Sambo theme, they remain loyal and contented servants whose superstitious natures, emotionalism and physical traits provide the main comic ingredients of the series.

The CIBC has long held that racism cannot be revised or edited out of children's books. The revisions of *The Bobbsey Twins* stand as proof of this. They also stand as proof that racism can be very subtle indeed.

Peter Soderbergh has written of the series books written between 1899 and 1930 that "as reinforcers of the Negro stereotype, they were second to none." He contends, however, that since the 1960's, series books have "freed the Negro from literary bondage." He bases this statement on what he calls a careful reading of recent copies of *Nancy Drew*, *The Bobbsey Twins*, *Dana Girls*, *Hardy Boys* and others. His findings are frightening: they prove that the racism in the revised books is subtle enough to have escaped the scrutiny of a critic who is knowledgeable about the literary stereotyping of Blacks. No wonder, then, that the publishers and authors honestly believe Dinah and Sam have been liberated!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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SPRINGFIELD, OHIO

Continued from page 1

field City Schools told the Task Force that Black history was only instituted as a stop-gap measure until fully integrated textbooks could be purchased. But, the report states, "that was six years ago."

Summarizing their findings, the Task Force states:

Students should not be expected to search supplemental books or take separate Black history courses to find out about the origins and achievements of people other than white/European. Ours is quickly becoming a small planet, and white people are a minority of its population. If whites are to survive and live peacefully with the rest of the world's population, respect for all cultures and the achievements of all races must be instituted now. Let us begin in Springfield, Ohio, and present ourselves as a model of honesty and justice to the rest of the Nation. We cannot afford to delay any longer.

In addition to an examination of how information is presented in the classroom, a major facet of the study is an analysis of the textbooks in use in the curriculum. Copies of each textbook used in the Springfield School System for required history courses in grades one through twelve were examined. These books were then critiqued by members of the Task Force, utilizing the "Guide to Racism Rating" from the Foundation for Change and "Criteria for Evaluating the Treatment of Minority Groups in Textbooks and Other Curriculum Materials." The books were also evaluated by Dr. Robert Cutler, Professor of History at Wittenberg University, who concurred with the conclusions reached by the Task Force.

TEXTBOOK CRITIQUES

Of the eleven books examined, six were found to be totally unsatisfactory, and three were less than satisfactory; only two were judged to be satisfactory (see box).

Based on an analysis of the third-grade textbook entitled *People Use the Earth*, published by Silver-Burdett, the Task Force reports:

This textbook is totally unsatisfactory. Page 20 speaks of the first people to settle in America, referring to the Europeans. It implies that the American natives who had lived here for thousands of years were not people. Pages 35-51 on Rice County, Kansas, picture only whites, as do pages 53-67 on Hazelton. Pages 77-85 discussing Israel do not explain how the Jews came to receive that land, nor the displacement of the Palestinians who lived there. Some background could be provided to third graders to help them better understand the Middle East situation at the present time. Within these same pages there is only one group picture which shows the variety of racial backgrounds of Jews. All of the other pictures (both group and single) depict European Jews. Page 96 discusses "slums" but gives a distorted view of how the buildings got old and ugly, why the streets are dirty, why people are crowded together. The students are given the impression that it is the fault of the people living there. All of the people in the picture are black [sic]. This should be explained. On page 99, Washington, D.C., only white people are pictured. Pages 115 through 129 (Atlanta, Georgia) no blacks are pictured except for a garbage man on page 126. Pages 138 through 141, the entire explanation regarding slums is distorted. The student is led to believe that the fault lies with the residents, and the solution is to tear down the old houses and build new ones. The book does not try to deal with the root causes (racism) of the "slums" nor offer realistic solutions. On page 146 it states "People live in slums because they can't afford to live anywhere else." This is a grossly distorted explanation. Students should be told the truth—that people live in slums because they aren't allowed to live anywhere else, that even though there are laws to protect them, they are not adequately enforced. The houses become run down because the absent landlords will not repair them, and the streets are dirty because the city does not clean them as they do in white neighborhoods. Page 203—no mention of what happened to

the Indians after the Europeans came here. Gives the impression that they just quietly faded out of the picture. This book lays the foundation for racism to begin sprouting in third graders. It should be immediately replaced.

A fourth-grade text is criticized for being written entirely from a "Eurocentric viewpoint" with emphasis being "placed throughout the textbook on how the white people have changed the ways of other people for the 'better.'"

The sixth-grade text, *The Changing Old World*, (Silver-Burdett), is rejected on the grounds that

It does not seek to motivate students to examine their own attitudes and behavior nor to comprehend their own duties and responsibilities as citizens in a pluralistic democracy to demand freedom and justice and equal opportunity for every individual and every group. It does not help students appreciate the many important contributions to our civilization by members of the various human groups emphasizing that every human group has its list of achievers, thinkers, writers, artists, scientists, builders and statesmen.

NEW TEXTBOOKS SOUGHT

The Task Force also instituted a search for, located and obtained copies of textbooks published by Silver-Burdett which include more and accurate information concerning Black and other non-white groups. These books were evaluated by the same criteria that were used for those presently in use, and adoption of several of them was ultimately recommended in the report. The director of curriculum and instruction had informed the Task Force that teachers are not required to use only the textbook assigned to them but have a number of supplemental books which include Black history from which to choose. But the Task Force noted in its report, in response

Listed below are the Task Force's textbook ratings. The CIBC has not evaluated the textbooks recommended by the Springfield Task Force and cannot, therefore, endorse their selections.

TOTALLY UNSATISFACTORY

People Use the Earth (grade 3); Edna A. Anderson et al.; Silver-Burdett; 1972; \$4.53.*

Learning to Look at Our World (grade 4); Kenneth S. Cooper et al.; Silver-Burdett; 1969; \$4.74.

The Changing Old World (grade 5); Kenneth S. Cooper et al.; Silver-Burdett; 1969; \$5.70.

Ohio Geography, History, Government (grade 7); Carl H. Roberts and Paul R. Cummins; Laidlaw Brothers Div. of Doubleday; n.d.; \$4.59. "This textbook is the worst of all those evaluated."

The Free and the Brave (grade 8); Henry F. Graff; Rand McNally; 1970; \$6.39.

Magruder's American Government (grade 12); no information available.

LESS THAN SATISFACTORY

Communities and Their Needs (grade 2); Edna A. Anderson et al.; Silver-Burdett; 1969; \$3.69.

Man's Unfinished Journey (grade 10); Marvin Perry et al.; Houghton-Mifflin; 1972; \$7.20.

Background for Tomorrow (pub. note: slow learners grades 9-12; regular learners grades 6-8); Bertha H. Davis; Macmillan; 1969; \$7.47.

SATISFACTORY

Families and Their Needs (grade 1); Edna Anderson et al.; Silver-Burdett; 1969; \$3.24.

Land of the Free (grade 9); John W. Caughey, John Hope Franklin and Ernest R. May; Benziger, Inc.; 1971; price not given.

RECOMMENDED

The Task Force searched for new textbooks as replacements for the unsatisfactory ones. Retention of Silver-Burdett's *Families and Their Needs* for grade one was recommended, but no replacements were found for grades 2, 3, 10, 11 and 12. The following were recommended for grades 4 through 9:

This Is Man (grade 4); Edna A. Anderson et al.; Silver-Burdett; 1972; \$4.74.

Man and Society (grades 5-6); Edna A. Anderson et al.; Silver-Burdett; 1972; \$5.28.

Man and His World (grade 7); Edna A. Anderson et al.; Silver-Burdett; 1972; \$6.37.

Man in America (grade 8); Richard C. Brown; Silver-Burdett; 1974; \$6.93.

Man and Change (grade 9); Edna A. Anderson et al.; Silver-Burdett; 1972; \$5.70.

*All prices are for schools and libraries

to this point, that textbooks are the main source of information to which students are most consistently exposed, that the supplements are optional and used sporadically, that students are usually not aware of their existence and that "the conflict of information between the supplements and textbooks is contradictory and confusing."

Of the recommended textbooks, *This Is Man*, a fourth-grade text published by Silver-Burdett, received the following evaluation by the Task Force:

The textbook *This Is Man* is very satisfactory and deals with facts but not in isolation and the way facts are presented gives a student an opportunity to formulate his understanding. This textbook is contemporary, dealing with today's problems and there is a section on the future: how problems of today will affect the future.

Minority treatment throughout this textbook is very good. Minority children will be able to identify with positive images. The portrayal of racial, religious and ethnic groups is such that all students will view the multi-cultural character of our nation with special value. There are many instances of integrated human settings. No group is stereotyped by the pictures.

The report states that the Task Force was unable to locate substitute texts for five out of the twelve grades. To remedy that situation, it is recommended that

Totally integrated textbooks . . . be immediately located and purchased for required world and American history for Grades One through Twelve. Springfield citizens concerned with racial justice, such as members of the Metro Ministry Task Force on Minority History, as well as recognized professional consultants in Minority History, should be included in the decision-making process prior to the final selection of textbooks.

Other recommendations include (1) the continued use of supplemental books and audio-visual aids; (2) the awarding of full credit for separate Black history courses, and (3) the establishment of mandatory, in-service training programs for all Springfield City school teachers to increase their awareness and understanding of racism and educate them in the basics of minority history.

The Task Force called for implementation of their proposals by no later than August, 1975.

SCHOOL BOARD RESPONDS

Upon receiving the Task Force's report, the Springfield Board of Education requested four to six weeks to study it. On January 13, 1975, the Board replied in a published statement. While not accepting the report "as being valid in every detail," the Board endorsed it in substance and affirmed that "Textbooks currently in use in history and social studies courses shall be assessed in the light of the Task Force Report and a schedule established for such replacements as may be recommended by textbook committees and the Superintendent of Schools." The Board also vowed to incorporate racism awareness training into its mandatory orientation program for new teachers but no target dates or timetables were mentioned.

Before the Board issued its statement, the Task Force met with its members and the Superintendent of Schools. When budgetary factors were cited as inhibiting the rapid replacement of textbooks, the Task Force promptly published alternative courses of action, in the spirit of their original proposals, that would not cost anything to follow. Among their suggestions were the construction, by teachers of required history courses, of a course syllabus that would compensate for textbook inadequacies and the abundant use of supplemental materials.

Meetings are currently being held regarding the implementation of the Task Force proposals.

A copy of the report can be obtained by sending \$3.00 to Metro-Ministry, 2 E. Grand Ave., Springfield, Ohio 45506.

ART DIRECTORS, TAKE NOTE

This section of the Bulletin regularly features the work of minority artists who would like to illustrate children's books. Publishing houses and art directors, please take note.



Kahones (John Fadden) majored in illustration at Rochester Institute of Technology. He has done illustrations for such firms as Editions Lemeac, Collier-Macmillan Canada ("The Fourth



World"), Akwesasne Notes, and National Film Board of Canada. He can be reached c/o Akwesasne Notes, Onchiota, N.Y. 12968. (His photo appeared in error in a previous edition.)



Ademola Olugebefola received his education at the Fashion Institute of Technology, The House of Umoja and The Yoruba Academy. In addition to having works in private and institutional collections, his illustrations have appeared in such publications as *Art Gallery Magazine*, *Black Theatre Magazine*, *Essence* and *Natural History Magazine* and books including *The Theme Is Blackness* (William Morrow) and *Fourteen Hundred Cowries and Other African Tales* (Lothrop, Lee & Shephard). He can be reached at 240 West 139th St., New York, N.Y. 10030; tel.: (212) 368-4785.



Carol Blank studies illustration and fine art at the New School of Fine and Industrial Art, fine art at the Art Students League and etching at The Printmakers Workshop. Ms. Blank can be reached at 43 Broadway, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11211; tel.: (212) 387-2075.



SEXISM IN TEXTS
Continued from page 3

zations in your area. Keep them informed of your plans; you may be able to work together.

RESOURCES

- 1. Stop Sex Role Stereotypes in Elementary Education. Available free of charge from ConnPIRG, Box 1517, Hartford, Conn.
- 2. Education kit for K-12 available for \$1.25 from Women's Equity Action League, 538 National Press Building, Washington, D.C. 20036.
- 3. You Won't Do by Jennifer S. Macleod and Sandra T. Silverman. Includes annotated source list called "Sexism in Textbooks: 150+ Studies and Remedies." Available from KNOW, Inc., P.O. Box 86031, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15221. \$2.25 (fourth class); \$3.00 (air mail).
- 4. Dick and Jane as Victims: Sex-Role Stereotyping in Children's Readers. Developed by Women on Words and Images, 1972. Contact: Phyllis Alroy, P.O. Box 2163, Princeton, N.J. 08540.
- 5. For information on legislation, contact: Holly Knox, PEER, 522 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.
- 6. For a list of bibliographies and catalogs of non-sexist children's literature and bibliographies on sexism and related publications, write to Massachusetts Governor's Commission on the Status of Women, Room 2108, 100 Cambridge St., Boston, Mass. 02202.
- 7. "A Resource for Eliminating Sex-Role Stereotyping in Textbooks:" bibliographies of readers, biographies, integrated textbooks, supplementary material and literature on sexism in children's books. Also textbook guidelines developed by publishing houses, state departments of education, professional and feminist organizations. Legislation and instructional material. Available for consulting only in office of Massachusetts Governor's Commission on the Status of Women, Room 2108, 100 Cambridge Street, Boston, Mass. 02202.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

JUDITH KRAM was a volunteer with the Massachusetts' Governor's Commission on the Status of Women in connection with her undergraduate studies at Cornell University. She is currently studying at Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

Vol. 5, No. 6 of this Bulletin featured an article entitled "Black Authors of Children's Books"; this bibliography covered books published through 1973. A forthcoming issue will include a list of books by Black authors that were published last year as well as those books and authors inadvertently omitted from the list. We welcome readers' suggestions for this list—and especially ask that publishers send us relevant information about their 1974 lists.

INTERNATIONAL HOUSE WILL HOST CHILDREN'S LITERATURE CONFERENCE

The Literature Committee of the International Women's Year Arts Festival is sponsoring a one-day conference on "What We're Telling Kids/What They're Telling Us." Discussion groups on children's books, films, TV, etc. will be chaired by noted authors, artists, editors and educators. The conference will be held Sunday, May 18th from 10:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. at International House, 500 Riverside Drive, New York City. Tickets at \$3.00 (\$1.50 for students) will be available at the door. For further information write M. Newfield, 35 W. 92 St., New York, N.Y. 10025 or call S. Jordan at (212) 489-2200.

CORRECTION: INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS IN ILLINOIS

The training model of the Center for Program Development in Equal Educational Opportunity described in the Bulletin article "Innovative Program in Illinois" (Vol. 5, No. 6) is a modification of a design by Dr. Pat Bidol, superintendent of Baldwin Community Schools, Baldwin, Michigan. The author of the article, Ms. Claire Halverson, is Associate Director of the Center, not Co-Director; Mr. David Henry is Director.

Court Challenges I.Q. Tests

Under the headline "California Judge Extends Ruling Against I.Q. Tests," The New York Times reported, on November 29, 1974, that U.S. District Judge Robert F. Peckham had ruled against the giving of I.Q. tests to Black children in the state of California if the tests do not reflect the cultural background of the students. The ruling extended an order handed down by the same judge in 1972 prohibiting a San Francisco school district from using I.Q. tests to determine whether Black children should be placed in EMR (for the educable mentally retarded) classes. Both judgments pertain to a suit called Larry P. vs. Riles, brought by the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund Inc. (Inc. Fund) on behalf of a Black youngster whose parents contend that he was wrongly placed in an EMR class. The parents' claim is supported by Black psychologists who retested their son using different cultural references, and who maintain that I.Q. tests are biased in favor of white, middle-class children. Upon seeking further information about the case, the CIBC was told by an Inc. Fund lawyer that no children have been reclassified as a result of Judge Peckham's ruling. "In the three years of this litigation," Norman Chachkin told the CIBC, "nothing has changed because the judge has refused to require the retesting of youngsters to determine the correctness of their classification. He has also refused to require the creation of a permissible scheme for assigning children to EMR classes." The ruling only goes so far as to place a burden on the state where EMR classes in any given district are disproportionately Black, of showing

that the tests used were not culturally biased. Mr. Chachkin told the Council that a similar suit was brought about six months ago in Portsmouth, Virginia. The case was argued before a "hostile" judge and has yet to be decided.

CONSENT DECREE REPRESENTS VICTORY FOR BILINGUAL EDUCATION

A class-action suit brought by two related Puerto Rican organizations, ASPIRA of New York, Inc. and ASPIRA of America, Inc., resulted in the issuing of a consent decree last August directing the New York City Board of Education to provide bilingual education in elementary, junior high and high schools for all Latino children who have English language difficulties. A major breakthrough for the advocates of bilingual education, the order requires implementation of the programs by September, 1975. The ruling is expected to prompt suits by other groups with children in the school system who have problems with English, such as Italians, Greeks, and Haitians. The consent decree, handed down by Judge Marvin E. Frankel, is the result of three years of litigation pursued by the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund on behalf of students who were unable to read or communicate in English and were receiving inadequate or no educational services to rectify their deficiencies. A booklet entitled "Bilingual Education and the Aspira Consent Decree: Questions & Answers for Parents" is available in English and Spanish from Aspira of New York, 296 Fifth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10001.

The CIBC would like to thank everyone who responded to our recent questionnaire about the Council's work. The number of letters we received has been so great that individual acknowledgements are impossible, but we want to extend our warmest thanks to all of you who wrote—and who took such care and time with your replies.

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