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Interracial Books FOR CHILDREN Bulletin

"ACTION AGAINST APATHY" FIGHTS RACISM IN THE MIDWEST

Action Against Apathy is a St. Louis-based organization formed in 1969 to combat racism, which its members feel is primarily a "white problem."

Composed of white suburbanites, ranging in age from their teens to their late 50's, the volunteer group began to take shape after its founders attended a racism awareness workshop conducted by the Committee for Action through Education. Its membership grew as other whites in the St. Louis area emerged from the same workshop program with a heightened consciousness and the desire to develop strategies for attacking racism at the social and institutional levels.

According to Roni Branding, a founder of Action Against Apathy (AAA), the group's philosophical guidance comes from Robert Terry's book, *For Whites Only* (see box). Says Ms. Branding, "Because we view racism as a white problem, our area of operation is the white community. We believe that maintaining a racist system not only extracts enormous costs from those who are oppressed but also from those who maintain the system."

AAA decided to focus on the electronic media and educational institutions because of their great power and influence. Two committees concentrate on these areas.

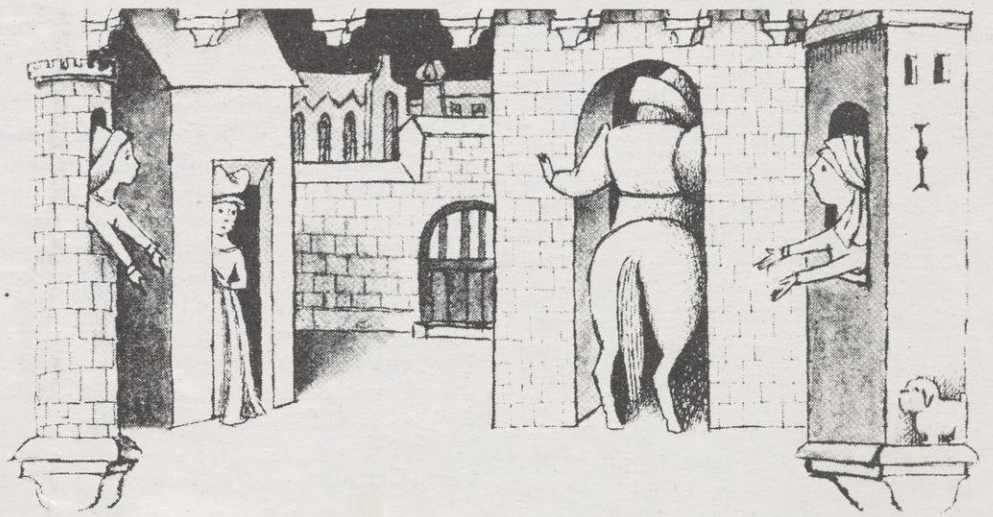
The media committee bases its operations on the following premises: 1) the airwaves belong to the public; 2) management should be responsive to public needs and interests; 3) access to the airwaves for expression of its views is a public right, and 4) the media has more potential than any other single

institution for changing racist attitudes and it has the responsibility to implement change. AAA takes six basic steps to influence the employment, news and programming policies of stations. The committee:

1. Reviews and analyzes a station's licensing application.
2. Writes a proposal citing specific points it would like to see included in the license.
3. Negotiates with the station management.
4. Files a petition to deny license renewal if no positive results come out of the negotiations.
5. Files responses to the station's opposition to denial.
6. Continues negotiations.

One of AAA's first campaigns to influence the media took the form of picketing two St. Louis stations to protest their hiring policies, and negotiating with two others whose licenses were up for FCC renewal. This was in 1969-70, when only four Black announcers were on the air in the St. Louis area. Because of the protests, one of the picketed stations hired three Black announcers and the other hired one. One of the stations with which negotiations were held also improved its hiring practices and renovated its programming. The media committee is now represented by a lawyer associated with the Washington-based Citizens Communication Center, and AAA's media chairperson, Nancy Schmidt, testified twice before the FCC in the past year. Petitions filed in 1974 to deny license renewal for four St. Louis stations are still being processed.

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In "The Princess and the Pea," princesses plead with the prince to be taken as his love. Children take such tales as this at face value and miss the satire.

FROM RAGS TO WITCHES: Stereotypes, Distortions and Anti-Humanism in Fairy Tales

BY ROBERT MOORE

Traditionally, it has been thought that fairy tales are an important literary experience for children: they are exciting, satisfy children's boundless imaginations and provide useful lessons and morals. But an analysis of the images and values that fairy tales are transmitting reveals serious flaws in the quality of that literary experience.

The "classic" fairy tales that are so popular in America are almost all of European origin, reflecting the cultural and economic values and attitudes of white, western people. Western societies have undergone great changes since these tales were written. However, the societies' values and beliefs

and the behaviors that derive from them have not changed appreciably, even though many of them are now obsolete and dysfunctional. To the extent that fairy tales are part of the socialization process, they encourage or reinforce concepts and behaviors that are being questioned increasingly by concerned educators and parents.

Most adults regard fairy tales as fantasy or satire. Arbuthnot and Sutherland, in *Children and Books*, write that in "The Princess and the Pea," Hans Christian Andersen takes "as sly a jibe at snobbery and the myths of blue-bloodedness as can be found anywhere" (p. 214). The editors of *Anthology of Children's Literature* state that:

The proof he uses to show why the princess is a "real" one reflects the feelings of the poor shoemaker's son toward the higher ranks of the social order. This modern fairy tale could have been created only by one who had learned from experience how stupid is the basis of superiority which the so-called highest classes appropriate to themselves (p. 214).

The problem is that children usually take these stories at face value, making no distinction between fantasy and reality. Arbuthnot and Sutherland admit this: "Most of the satire goes over the children's heads, and they take the stories literally. They are perfectly serious over the absurd princess on her twenty mattresses" (p. 214).

One of the most obvious and pervasive negative aspects of fairy tales is their sex-role stereotyping. Females are usually portrayed as princesses or poor girls on their way to becoming princesses, fairy godmothers or good fairies, wicked and evil witches, jealous and spiteful sisters, proud, vain and hateful stepmothers, or shrewish wives. Beauty is the dominant attribute of "good" women, their main strength and saving grace. The most powerful and enterprising women are usually evil—either witches, mean

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The Bicentennial: Celebration or Challenge?

Teaching About the American Revolution



From Common Sense

The Bicentennial offers all Americans the opportunity to examine our basic concepts about this nation. Instead of mindlessly accepting the flagwaving, "Hooray for Uncle Sam" approaches that are being promoted, teachers, librarians, parents and other concerned individuals may look more closely at the history of the United States. A rich harvest of potential teaching tools is available in books, newspaper and magazine articles, TV programs, commemorative postage stamps and even such commercial items as Bicentennial tee-shirts.

It is especially important—since we are being bombarded with "verities" about America's greatness—to keep an open mind about the founding of this country and the subsequent 200 years of American history. A nation's history is rarely the great and noble panorama it is portrayed to be, and in

the case of the U.S., omissions, distortions and stereotypes mar the story. Following are some basic facts and concepts to keep in mind when choosing materials for classroom use, library display or at-home observances. The information focuses on the revolutionary period. Future *Bulletin* articles will deal with later periods of American history.

1. Most accounts of the American revolution give the impression that the citizenry of the 13 colonies consisted only of white males of British descent and that they—and they alone—fought the revolution. Remember that women—as well as men—of all races and other European ancestry were involved. Read at least one history book that was written from a non-traditional point of view and that includes the role of women, Blacks and/or Native Americans (see the bibliography at the end of this article). These are some facts which challenge traditional concepts:

- At the time of the American revolution there were about three million people living in the colonies (this does not include Native Americans, for whom figures seem unavailable). Twenty per cent of this number were Black people, 550,000 of whom were held in slavery.
- More than 5,000 Black people

fought in the Continental Army, with at least that many again in support and service positions. Black people fought in every major battle, from Lexington and Concord, Bunker Hill to Yorktown, and were directly responsible for a number of major victories.

- Women fought in the revolutionary army, often disguised as men. Deborah Gannett, a Black woman from Massachusetts, served for 17 months disguised as a man, as did Sally St. Clair of South Carolina. Other women—Molly Pitcher, Nancy Hart and hundreds or perhaps thousands unnamed—participated in battles or skirmishes during the war.

- Industry was developing during this period and women were widely employed as workers. The American Manufactory of Philadelphia, established in 1775, employed as many as 400 women. Women workers organized and held work stoppages to demand higher pay during the inflation of the war period. One such strike took place in Virginia in 1777 by women laboring as shirtmakers.

- The Cherokee in western Carolina and Tennessee saw the war between the colonists and Britain as an opportunity to drive the settlers away from Cherokee lands. Americans attacked the Cherokee, burned their villages

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FAIRY TALES

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stepmothers or jealous sisters who act independently and, for a time (until thwarted by a male), with effect. Aggressiveness or the power to solve their problems is not often assigned to "good" females. Schemes against the beautiful and virtuous heroine are foiled not by the heroine herself, but by a magic godmother or, more often, a male in the form of a handsome prince or mystical dwarf.

Red Riding Hood and her grandmother are saved from death by a hunter. Snow White is also saved from death by a hunter and is then assisted by dwarfs who give her shelter and a handsome prince who brings her back to life. The females in "Rumpelstiltskin" and "Snow-White and Rose-Red" are also rescued from their predicaments by males—in the first instance by a dwarf, and in the second by a prince disguised as a bear. Cinderella is helped by another woman—her fairy godmother—but in the end it is her beauty that overcomes her problems and a prince who snatches her from the jaws of fate.

Gretel is one of the few females who defeats an evil character without the intervention of magic, mysticism or a male. But, for most of the story, Gretel is frightened and tearful in the face of adversity and in need of comfort and support from her brother Hansel—who is strong, intelligent and brave. Forced to act when Hansel is locked up and unable to take the lead, she finally asserts herself by pushing the witch into the oven. One wishes Hansel were on the scene, yet passive, while Gretel acts decisively to save them both.

Another female who is relatively assertive and adventurous (but underneath, an "old fashioned gal") is the princess in "The Iron Stove." When a prince is imprisoned in a stove by an old witch, the princess—who is lost in the forest—comes upon the stove. The prince begs her to help him get free and offers, as a reward, to marry her—sight unseen! Thinking only that she has stumbled upon a talking stove, the princess says (uncharacteristically for a female character), "Good Heavens! What can I do with an iron stove?" She finally agrees to help the prince—a positive female action—but only because she is lost and needs his help to get home. When she peeps in the stove, she sees that he is "a youth so handsome and so brilliant with gold and with precious jewels, that her very soul was delighted." After the prince is freed, "He wanted to take her away with him to his kingdom, but she entreated" him to let her see her father once again. Failing to follow his instructions, she becomes separated from him and embarks on a lonely, treacherous journey to find him. She crosses a slippery glass mountain, three piercing swords and a great lake

(all with the magic assistance of toads) only to find that the prince "had another woman by his side whom he wanted to marry" because he thought the princess was dead. So far, the princess has had an unusually exciting experience for a female character. But it must be remembered that she was "hanging in there" mainly to fulfill that most important of female needs—a man.

Her harrowing escapades culminate in a classic contest between two women for the attention of a man. The wily princess, sensing the "female" weaknesses of her adversary, entices the new maiden with beautiful dresses. She then persuades the new maiden to allow her to sleep in the prince's bed three times (to let him know she is still alive). Each time the maiden "gave her permission because the dress was so pretty, and she had never had one like it." The maiden does not, however, value dresses more than men, for each time she puts the prince to sleep for the night with sleeping powder. . . . Enough! The plot may seem murky but the stereotyped behaviors are crystal clear.

Beauty Is All

A great many fairy tale heroines are defined almost solely by physical appearance—that is, their beauty. Although many of these women are kind and display perseverance (or is it acquiescence?), it is their beauty, not personality or actions, that defines them and makes them valuable to others. "Beauty and the Beast," "Snow White," "Sleeping Beauty," "Rumpelstiltskin," "Snow-White and Rose-Red" and "Puss in Boots" all feature beautiful women whose fulfillment is derived from handsome men and/or princes and from marriage (or, as it is put in "The Princess and the Pea," being "taken as his wife"). With the possible exception of the women in "Beauty and the Beast" and "Snow-White and Rose-Red," who show compassion for "creatures" (soon-to-be handsome princes), all other women are passive, empty and dependent. (Actually, Beauty's behavior towards her father could more rightly be described as self-sacrificing, a standard female "virtue.")

Women characters are often introduced as secondary and inferior people, or as possessions of men. "Hansel and Gretel" begins: "Close to a large forest lived a woodcutter, with his wife and his two children." "Rumpelstiltskin" begins: "There once was a miller who was very poor, but he had a beautiful daughter." "Cinderella" begins: "There once was an honest gentleman who took for his second wife the proudest and most disagreeable lady in the whole country." The prince in "The Princess and the Pea" looks for a princess as one might shop for a new car—he "wanted to find himself a princess. But, of course, she would have to be a real, genuine princess." Unfortunately, it was "hard to tell whether they were the real thing or not" so he returned home disappointed. As luck would have it, he finally found a "real genuine one" and "took her for his wife." An illustration with the LeGallienne translation portrays princesses begging and pleading like puppies in a pet shop to be "taken" by him.

Female roles are very traditional—those of mother, wife and housewife. The dwarfs ask Snow White to live with them: "You could sew and mend, and keep everything tidy." This made Snow White very happy: "Oh, thank you," she said, "I could want nothing better." (Not only is she more than satisfied with this traditional assignment, but she takes absolutely no action against her stepmother who tried to have her killed and is the cause of her banishment.)

Males (human or animal) are usually courageous, adventurous, powerful, intelligent and resourceful. "Puss in Boots" is creative and industrious. Jack (of *Beanstalk* fame) is daring,

courageous and resourceful in defeating the giant and saving his mother and himself from poverty. The bear (prince) in "Snow-White and Rose-Red" acts decisively to defeat the evil dwarf. Hansel is brave, resourceful and intelligent, as well as being an emotional pillar of strength for Gretel to lean on. The most adventurous thing Red Riding Hood does is to dawdle and pick flowers on her way to grandmother's, after her mother has told her not to tarry. (Picking flowers is a very passive activity and one that Snow-White and Rose-Red engage in frequently when they are not cleaning house.) The only consequence of Riding Hood's flower-picking is that it gives the wolf time to beat her to grandmother's house. Yet, after being saved by the hunter, she concludes: "I will never again wander off into the forest for as long as I live, when my mother forbids it." Riding Hood has learned her lesson well: Wandering—for girls—is a no-no. Meanwhile, Jack will continue to wander where and whenever he likes, slaying giants as he goes.

Other men, while not necessarily adventurous or powerful, are still portrayed more favorably than their female counterparts, who are evil, hateful, scornful, shrewish or cruel. In "The Fisherman and His Wife," the fisherman is portrayed as modest and goodhearted while his wife is domineering and greedy.

Hansel and Gretel's father loves them dearly and only abandons them in the woods because of their mean stepmother. The stepmother dies in the end, and the father is thrilled at his children's return. Cinderella's father is a good man who is completely at the mercy of his hateful wife and spiteful daughters. The father of the prince who awakens Sleeping Beauty is, at worst, a neutral character, while his wife is a child-eating ogre. Beauty, of "Beauty and the Beast" has a father and brothers who are decent and love her; her sisters are jealous and hateful.

Men Are Absolved

Even men who do negative things often have redeeming virtues or, at any rate, are not admonished for their negative behavior. Hansel and Gretel's father suffers only temporarily for his deeds and is rewarded by getting his children back—plus a small fortune. The soldier in "The Tinder Box" kills a witch after she provides him with great wealth, kills a king and queen in order to have their daughter (a beautiful princess, of course) and ends up a king himself, with the daughter as his queen ("which pleased her very much"). When the poor father in "Rumpelstiltskin" lies to the king about his daughter's ability to spin straw into gold, he gets her into all sorts of predicaments but is never admonished for his actions—in fact, because of them, his daughter becomes queen. The greedy king in the same story threatens the woman with death if she does not produce more gold, then decides to marry her "Even if she is only a miller's daughter [for] I shan't find a richer woman in the whole world" (she is also beautiful). He ends up with the gold, the beautiful woman and nary a hassle.

On the surface, several tales seem relevant for children today because they do not project the two-parent nuclear family of "Dick and Jane" fame. Snow-White and Rose-Red live with their poor, widowed mother; Jack lives with his poor, widowed mother, and others are into second marriages (Cinderella's father, Snow White's father, Hansel and Gretel's father). However, the single mothers are invariably meek and incapable of supporting their families, except in poverty. Moreover, while Jack's boldness and courage save him and his mother, Snow-White and Rose-Red make it possible for their mother to live "peacefully and happily" by marrying two princely brothers. As for second marriages, they are invariably a disaster,



Sexist roles: Brave Hansel tries to calm his hysterical sister, Gretel.

resolved only by the stepmother's death. In an age when a great number of children are experiencing single parentage and re-marriages, these stories are not terribly encouraging.

Materialism is another value commonly found in many fairy tales. Young readers learn that money solves your problems and allows you to live happily ever after—with a handsome prince or beautiful princess thrown in. Perhaps the most obnoxious of these odes to materialism is "The Tinder Box," in which a soldier meets an "ugly, old" witch who makes him wealthy in exchange for retrieving her magic tinder box. Not satisfied with the riches, he kills the witch because she will not tell him what the box is for. Taking the money and the box, he goes on to lead a "merry" life—his money having enabled him not only to possess the best of everything, but to become a popular, "thorough gentleman." (In all fairness, it should be noted that he gives away a lot of money to the poor.) The only thing he lacks is the beautiful princess, and he "longed to be a prince, so that he might have her for his wife." After using the magic box to kill the king, queen and numerous soldiers, he is rewarded for his killing and greed by becoming king and marrying the princess (to the victor go the spoils). As mentioned earlier, the satirical dimension of fairy tales is not perceived by children, so the message of this and other stories is that m-o-n-e-y spells happiness—no matter how you get it.

Magic and Luck

Fairy tales are sometimes scorned for their proverbial "They lived happily ever after" endings, which distort reality for youth. But a far more insidious aspect of the stories is the nature of the actions that enable the characters to live happily ever after. Arbuthnot and Sutherland, writing of "Cinderella" and "Snow White," state that:

. . . they dramatize the story conflict of good and evil. And they reiterate the old verities that kindness and goodness will triumph over evil if they are backed by wisdom, wit and courage. These are basic truths we should like built into the depths of the child's consciousness; they are the folk tales' great contributions to the child's social consciousness (p. 35).

However, it is not "wisdom, wit and courage" that usually allow fairy tale characters to prevail over adversity.

"Hansel and Gretel," "Rumpelstiltskin," "Jack and the Beanstalk," "Beauty and the Beast," "Puss in Boots," "Snow-White and Rose-Red" and "Cinderella" all have characters who begin the story in poverty or oppressed conditions, with no explanation provided as to the socio-economic causes of their condition. Poverty and oppression are either real for many youngsters reading the stories, or realities that more fortunate readers need to be aware of. Yet in each of the above stories it is beauty, good luck, magic or mysticism that frees the character from hard times. Almost

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never is a change in status the result of actions taken by the characters themselves to overcome their situation by confronting its causes. To instruct youth that beauty, good luck or magic (or for that matter "old verities" like kindness, goodness, wisdom, wit and courage) will "cure" injustice deters them from recognizing the necessity for action—and the power of collective action—to confront the institutional and social causes of poverty and oppression.

"The Ugly Duckling" suffers a great deal of hatred and prejudice and ends up a stronger being for his suffering. But he changes from being "ugly" to being "beautiful," rather than being accepted and appreciated for what he is. "It does not matter in the least," says the story, "having been born in a duckyard if only you come out of a swan's egg!" (This bit of elitist nonsense is similar to the racist message our culture teaches white people that even if you're poor, you're "acceptable" if you're white.) In the real world, black skin does not change into white skin, females do not change into males, "ugliness" (by whose standards?) does not become "beauty" except in the eyes of the beholder and poverty does not change miraculously into wealth.

The elitism which pervades fairy tales is due partly to the fact that, as a genre, they originated in 17th century France as amusement for members of the court. Subsequently, they became vogueish among the upper classes throughout Europe. Hence, the tales' litany: People are handsome, beautiful and popular when dressed in fine clothes; can be good people *even though* from poor backgrounds; are "acceptable" only after proving that though born in a duckyard, they hatched from a swan's egg; and are clearly better people if wealthy or royal than of the working class. Regarding the last point, persons of royal birth seem to vastly outnumber working people as characters in fairy tales.

As noted earlier, most of the classic and popular fairy tales are of European origin and reflect European culture. They also have only white people as characters. Andersen wrote in "The Princess and the Pea" that the prince travelled "all over the world" to find a real princess, yet the LeGallienne translation contains an illustration of the prince encountering, in his world-wide travels, six princesses—all white! Since the civilizations of Africa, Asia and the Americas predate those of Europe and contain royalty and great wealth, and since white people represent less than a quarter of the world's population, such dashes of ethnocentrism and racism are particularly offensive.

The whiteness of fairy tales alone should cause us concern about their use in our multiracial society. This atmosphere is epitomized by the queen in "Snow White" wishing for and being blessed with "a lovely little

daughter who had skin as white as snow." One wonders if the child would have been so well-received had she been a lovely little daughter with skin as black as coal. At a time when the positive connotations of "white" and negative connotations of "black" that are manifest in the English language are being challenged, it seems inappropriate to continue celebrating stories in which all of the beautiful and good women are fair and white. Fairy tales perpetuate the correlation between beauty/virtue and whiteness and the concept that black is ugly, evil and to be feared.

Some will still argue that the fantasy in fairy tales is a necessary part of a child's literary diet, that children should not be burdened with unpleasant realities but rather allowed to enjoy the so-called innocence of youth. But surely children can be entertained by stories which provide larger-than-life situations without at the same time being fed negative stereotypes and role models, subtle racism and gross distortions of reality.

Fairy tales, like much of western literature, contain many values and assumptions which reinforce unhealthy and destructive images for the reader. It is not enough to dismiss these negative elements as reflections of the times in which the stories were written because of the real influence they have on the attitudes, expectations and behavior of people in today's world. Concerned parents and educators should work to liberate homes and schools from such potentially destructive materials and to provide children with more progressive and equally enjoyable fare. However, since it is next to impossible to prevent children from being exposed to fairy tales, we need also to assist them in recognizing negative concepts and values and in developing the skills to analyze whatever they read. In this way, fairy tales or any of the other sexist, racist and anti-humanist materials that abound in their world can become important tools for imparting more positive values and concepts.

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Anthology of Children's Literature, edited by Edna Johnson et al., Houghton Mifflin, 1948.

Children and Books, May Hill Arbuthnot and Zena Sutherland, Scott, Foresman and Company, 1972.

FAIRY TALES

The versions of the fairy tales discussed in the article were found in the following books:

"The Iron Stove," "Jack and the Beanstalk" and "Snow-White and Rose-Red" were taken from the *Anthology of Children's Literature* cited above.

Beauty and the Beast by Mme Le-Prince de Beaumont, translated by P.H. Muir, Knopf, 1968.

"Cinderella," "Red Riding Hood," "Rumpelstiltskin," "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," "The Tinder Box" and "The Ugly Duckling" were taken from the *Illustrated Treasury of Children's Literature*, edited by Margaret E. Martignoni, Grosset & Dunlap, 1955.

"The Sleeping Beauty" by Perrault was taken from *Puss In Boots, The Sleeping Beauty and Cinderella*, translated by Marianne Moore, Macmillan, 1963.

"The Princess and the Pea" by Hans Christian Andersen was taken from *Seven Tales* by H.C. Andersen, translated by Eva LeGallienne, Harper & Row, 1959.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

ROBERT MOORE is resource coordinator of the Racism and Sexism Resource Center for Educators. He has had extensive experience in racism awareness and action training, and received his doctorate in education from the University of Massachusetts School of Education with a focus on racism in education.

INFORMATION CLEARINGHOUSE

La Causa Publications is a non-profit distributor of books, journals and posters for and about **Chicanos**. Their 1975-76 catalogue lists books in English and Spanish dealing with history, political and social sciences and also fiction, posters and journals. Write La Causa Publications, P.O. Box 4818, Santa Barbara, Cal. 93103.

"Multicultural Workshop Resource Packet on **Asian Americans**" was based on Amherst (Mass.) workshops on: (1) historical background and contemporary social issues; (2) psychological aspects of the Asian American experience; (3) evaluation and analysis of curriculum and extracurricular activities; and (4) implementation of Asian American/Asian education. The packet was designed to aid those planning similar workshops and includes an annotated bibliography. The booklet is \$2 from Amherst Asian American Education Committee, P.O. Box 370, Amherst, Mass. 01059.

Alternatives for Education is a monthly newsletter about "humanistic education and how it works." It contains information about **alternative schools**, colleges that offer training for alternative school teachers, etc. Subscriptions are \$5 a year for parents, students and alternative schools; \$10 for libraries, institutions and colleges. Write P. O. Box 1028, San Pedro, Calif. 90733.

The Little Magazine has published a special double **women's** issue featuring fiction and poetry. Contributors include June Jordan, Joyce Carol Oates, Marge Piercy and Adrienne Rich. Cost for this single issue is \$2.50; annual subscriptions (4 issues) are \$5. Write the magazine at Box 207, Cathedral Station, New York, N.Y. 10025.

Liberating Our Children, Ourselves is a handbook of **women's studies** course material for teacher training. Published by the American Association of University Women, it includes learning projects, course objectives, an extensive bibliography, etc. Available at \$1.50 from the AAUW Sales Office, 2401 Virginia Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037. Bulk rate on request.

The newly published 224-page *A Practical Guide to the Women's Movement* summarizes the strategies, philosophies and growth of the **women's movement** in the past 3 years, lists over 200 women's groups, provides a reading list and consciousness-raising guidelines. Send \$5 to the Women's Action Alliance, 370 Lexington Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017.

The Portland (Oregon) public schools publish a 140-page **bibliography of multicultural books and A-V materials**. Titled *A Community of People—A Multi-Ethnic Bibliography*, it is available for \$5 from the Educational Media Department, Portland Public Schools, 220 N.E. Beech St., Portland, Or. 97212.

A revised list of **job titles** that seeks to eliminate references to age and sex has been published by the federal government; it's entitled, *Job Title Revisions to Eliminate Sex- and Age-Referent Language from the Dictionary of Occupational Titles, Third Edition*. Price is \$4.30. Write: Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

Voices from Wounded Knee, 1973 is a 263-page words and pictures paperback that records the Native American occupation of **Wounded Knee**. It is published by Akwesasne Notes with the profits shared between them and the Wounded Knee Offense/Defense Committee. Available at \$4.95 from *Akwesasne Notes*, Mohawk Nation, via Roosevelttown, N.Y. 13683. Dealer inquiries welcome.

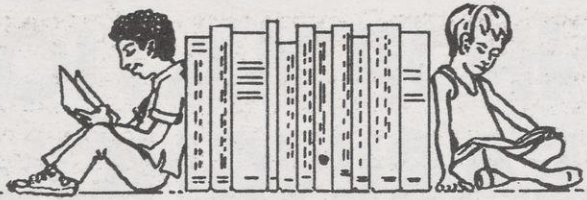
The Center for Cuban Studies, mentioned in Vol. 6, Nos. 3 & 4 as distributors of the new Cuban Family Code (25¢), also has available a number of posters, records, magazines and books in Spanish. The Center publishes a bimonthly bulletin of Cuban news and a quarterly cultural review. For more information, contact the Center at 220 E. 23rd St., New York, N.Y. 10010.

The 1975-76 sales/rental catalog of "**Third World Cinema**" is now available from Tricontinental Film Center. The 48-page catalog lists over 75 films (feature length as well as shorter films); most are suitable for classrooms from secondary level up. The catalog is free from Tricontinental at any of these addresses: 333 Sixth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10014; 1034 Lake Street, Oak Park, Ill. 60301; or P. O. Box 4430, Berkeley, Calif. 94704.

Riding Hood learns a girl's lesson: Don't wander—adventure is for boys!



Art Resources for Teachers and Students (A.R.T.S.) has produced a trilingual/tricultural—English, Chinese, Puerto Rican—**school-year calendar**. The 10"x14" calendar features Chinese and Puerto Rican poetry with multicolored illustrations. Single copies are \$2.50. Write A.R.T.S., 98 Madison St., New York, N.Y. 10002.



THE BOOKSHELF

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

Morris and the Brave Lion by Helen Spelman Rogers, illustrated by Glo Coalson. McGraw-Hill, 1975, \$5.95, 48 pages, grades K-3

How a four-year-old learns to live with his parents' divorce is the subject of *Morris and the Brave Lion*. On the day Morris' father goes away, he leaves a huge box for Morris that contains a toy lion, just like the one he had seen in the zoo the day before. His dad tells Morris that the lion is brave and strong. In the days and months that follow, the toy lion is a silent but constant reminder to Morris to be brave and strong. Although he receives many gifts and letters from him, Morris misses his father very much. So for his fifth birthday, he thinks of a way of bringing his father back to see him.

The author's tender and straightforward handling of the divorce issue, without condescension, shows depth and understanding of children's needs as well as a basic respect for human feelings. Ms. Rogers depicts a warm relationship between Morris and his mother punctuated by humorous moments and frank discussions of what divorce is and why his parents cannot live together anymore. The mother also tries to help Morris understand that reality involves times of sadness as well as of joy. Human feelings are treated as being more important than property in that Morris' unhappiness is not allayed by his father's gift. Neither Morris nor his mother is portrayed as bitter or self-centered. In fact, the mother encourages Morris to consider his father's feelings.

My only criticism is the author's emphasis on strength and courage in males. The zoo lion is automatically a male. Yet Morris' father's "strong and brave" image is superficial and stiff. He tells Morris "your mother has a problem," as if divorce results from only one partner's "problem." He evades Morris' questions by promising to "explain it all some other time," then cops out completely by leaving.

By contrast, the mother is a real character—multi-dimensional and strong. She tells Morris it is all right to cry and still be strong and brave and she answers his questions about divorce thoughtfully. At the very end, Morris realizes "she knows what it means to be brave." Overall, the sensitive text and warm and appealing illustrations make this a very good book for children. [Elizabeth Young]

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Amy by Julia First. Prentice-Hall, 1975, \$5.95, 84 pages, grades 4-6

Amy portrays a sixth grader struggling through the competitive atmosphere of a white American suburb. The heroine is insecure because she is poor at math and jealous because the pretty and bright new girl next door might steal her friend Eddie. But most of all, she is consumed with HATRED for Donald Randall, a smart-alecky classmate who always thinks he's right and is a racist to boot—which offends Amy's supposedly strong anti-racist feelings.

The resolution of these problems is highly unsatisfactory and often confusing. Amy launches a one-girl campaign to "change the system"—her objective is to make math non-

compulsory, but strong social pressure (in the form of an unwritten rule which says a person cannot be class Vice President and flunk math at the same time) forces her to knuckle under. Says Amy, "I got the strange feeling that I had to do something the way I was expected for a change." A conformist is born.

The jealousy issue is never really resolved, and Amy ultimately apologizes to her arch enemy, Donald. (This reader cannot imagine why, since he is indeed obnoxious and very racist.) Amy asks herself the question: "Am I really that carried away about changing the world? Maybe I could just set aside one day of the week for the cause. . . ."

Mass distrust, jealousy and competitiveness dominate the atmosphere of this book, yet the author never seriously questions these phenomena. A contrived attempt to handle a racial issue is, instead, racist. Donald insults a Black girl who then socks him in the jaw. Amy's mother (a positive figure in the book) thinks the girl "overreacted," and the Black child apologizes more than once. Donald never does.

The author's anti-feminist bias also seeps through now and then. Amy criticizes her friend's mother who paints in a studio all day but forgets to defrost the TV dinners on time, whereas her mother cooks everything from scratch and bakes at least four cakes during the course of the book.

This is a book that leaves the reader confused, unsatisfied and angry. [Sue Ribner]

* * *

Cissy's Texas Pride by Edna Smith Makerney, illustrated by Margaret Leibold. Abingdon Press, 1975, \$3.75, 80 pages, grades 3-6

When the Russell family's bean crop is destroyed by an early Texas frost, they are faced with the prospect of losing their farm unless they can quickly raise \$4,000. Eleven-year-old Cissy's primary concern is saving her beloved horse, Texas Pride, from being sold to raise the necessary money. In this quite boring, 1950's-style tale, the white, church-going, hard-working family of three embarks upon a series of money-making schemes. Of course, they succeed in raising just the right amount of money in the nick of time.

Aside from her ability to work tirelessly without complaint and ride horses well, Cissy is a rather bland character. But a worse flaw is that the author and illustrator seem not to have heard of feminism. Although Cissy is energetic and capable, she aspires to get married and "be as pretty and sweet as her mother" when she grows up. Meanwhile, her mother (shown as ultra-feminine in contrast to her super-masculine husband) is confined to kitchen and beauty-salon work, while the father—self-appointed President of the Russell Family Company (his name for the family)—is waited on by the two already overworked females.

The moral of the story, in true American fashion, is that through hard work you can make it—a faulty concept if there ever was one. Where the hard work is really needed is in giving this book some more depth, reality and excitement. [Sue Ribner]

Nobody's Family Is Going To Change written and illustrated by Louise Fitzhugh. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1974, \$6.95, 221 pages

Emma and Willie Sheridan, ages eleven and seven respectively, live with their parents on New York's fashionable East Side. Both children attend private schools. Their father is a lawyer, and their mother is a housewife. The family is Black, and they have a white maid.

Willie and Emma have problems. Willie wants to be a dancer more than anything in the world. He is talented, but no one cares about his passion except an uncle. His father thinks dancing is for girls.

Emma is overweight, bright and wants to be a lawyer. This is unacceptable to both parents, especially her father—even though it is obvious that she seeks to emulate her father and is like him in many ways.

Searching for something worthwhile to do, Emma joins the Children's Army after seeing a recruitment ad on TV. (The Army is dedicated to preventing the abuse of children by adults.) Through exposure to other people's problems, Emma comes to understand that her and Willie's most serious plight is that of not being loved and accepted by their parents. Prior to this discovery, she and Willie had fought constantly.

The book does not work. The characters do not ring true as Blacks; rather, they are stereotypes of a white middle-class family. (The story might have worked better had the characters been white and less caricatured. The issue of sexism, as it is raised in the book, might have been better explored in a white social context.) Also, the profanity that appears in the dialogue seems unnecessary, as if it had been included just for spice. [Mary E. Shepard]

* * *

Amelia Mixed the Mustard edited and illustrated by Evaline Ness. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1975, \$6.95, 48 pages, grades 1-5

Amelia Mixed the Mustard is a collection of 20 poems, ranging from light verse and limericks to lyrical and traditional styles. Evaline Ness selected poems for their reflection, understanding and appreciation of the individuality of women. Her dedication, "To females all: Big, Little & Middle," leads the reader to hope and expect that the book will strengthen female self-images. How disappointing it is to have those hopes shattered! Because the selections are open to being misunderstood by the age group this picture book will attract, consultation with a sensitive adult would be necessary if this book is to break, rather than accentuate, stereotypes.

Although poems such as "Amelia Mixed the Mustard" and "Rebecca, Who Slammed Doors for Fun and Perished Miserably" show girls can be mischievous and active, bold or adventurous qualities prove to be mean or fatal in too many instances.

Pandora's curiosity—a positive trait—becomes a negative one when she opens the box and releases evil, famine, crime, war and greed. Assigning the worst traits of males to females, or showing damaging consequences for bold actions are not ways to strengthen female self-images.

In "Ms. Minnie McFinney of Butte," one is glad to see the term Ms. used and anti-conformist vegetarianism depicted, but why must Ms. Minnie be shown with an hourglass figure, lounging haughtily on her "Butt(e)"? "Eat-It-All Elaine" eats everything at camp from prune pits to stinkbugs and gets the Most Outstanding Camper award. The message conveyed is certainly not a healthy one.

The image of women as lazy or dreamers if they neglect their household chores for a breath of fresh air, as implied in "Where's Mary" and "Portrait of a Neighbor," is disheartening. Add to these negatives the fat girl

pictured as "Greedy Jane," who does not marry because "nurse says I'm not pretty."

In fairness the book's virtues deserve note: the illustrations are energetic and spunky; the poems about Adventurous Isabel, "Jumping Joan" and "bold" Abigail are effective and positive, and the inclusion of poems by men and women of different cultural backgrounds, whose work is celebrated for its quality, is commendable. The image of old "Meg Merrilies" as self-sufficient and productive is anti-ageist, and Gertrude Stein's "Rose" and Nikki Giovanni's "Flora" are also examples of positive self-concepts. [Carol Snyder]

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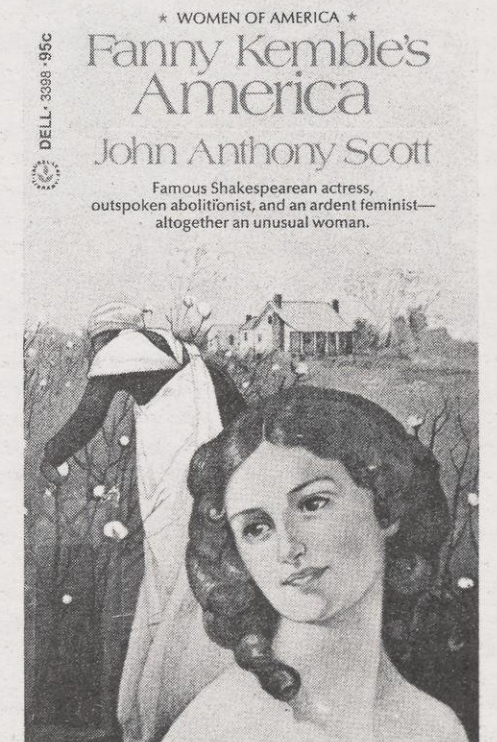
Fanny Kemble's America by John Anthony Scott. Dell, 1975, \$9.95 (paper), 136 pages, grades 8-12

Fanny Kemble's America is about a wealthy slaveowner's wife who left her husband to become a successful Shakespearean actress and author of an anti-slavery journal. Born into a famous English theatrical family, Fanny suppresses her desire to write and becomes an actress out of necessity—to save her family from financial ruin. During a two-year tour of America with her father, Fanny is courted by Pierce Butler, an aristocratic young Philadelphian. It is only after marrying Pierce that Fanny learns his wealth comes from ownership of the largest plantation in Georgia with 700 slaves. Their marriage, which ends bitterly in divorce, is marked throughout by conflict. Pierce firmly believes in the superiority of white men and the subjugation of women and slaves; he considers both his property and demands strict obedience. Fanny, on the other hand, understands first hand the realities of economic survival and values independence and equality based on hard work.

The clash in their values intensifies on the plantation, as Fanny observes that Black women suffer especially in the oppressive relationship between slave and master. The more Fanny tries, in her own way, to help relieve some of their misery, the more resistance she encounters from Pierce, until the slavery issue becomes intertwined with her personal struggle for equality and dignity.

Fanny's "Georgia Journal" becomes the symbol of this struggle. She decides to publish it after returning to the theater to support herself, following her divorce from Pierce and his death. In her desire to serve abolitionism during the Civil War, Fanny also found fulfillment of her life-long desire to write.

This is a very readable history which brings Fanny Kemble to life, giving



Fanny Kemble's America is a much better book than its cover—with its Gone with the Wind overtones—would indicate.

due weight to the economic realities that confronted her and other women at that time. Scott's treatment of the period before and during the Civil War is accurate and valuable for its account of Lincoln's little-publicized, real motivation for issuing the Emancipation Proclamation.

A word about the cover illustration: Its depiction of a "Southern Belle" in the foreground and a toiling Black female slave in the background has *Gone With the Wind* overtones which completely contradict the book's contents and everything Fanny Kemble struggled for. [Elizabeth Young]

* * *

George Washington Carver by Reta Torine, illustrated by Elizia Moon. Thomas Y. Crowell, 1975, \$4.50, 33 pages, grades 4-6

George Washington Carver is the newest entry in the well-thought-of Crowell Biography series. It is the story of the Black scientist who, in addition to teaching at Tuskegee Institute, developed hundreds of by-products from the peanut and sweet potato. But anyone concerned about racism in children's literature would do well to avoid this book, which is the type often purchased for school and classroom libraries.

It should no longer be possible to speak about slavery in a casual tone. To evade slavery's moral dimensions while purporting to tell the story of a Black man born into slavery is unacceptable. At the outset, the author writes:

For a long time some white people in America had been buying and selling black people. The black people were called slaves. They were used like work animals. Moses Carver thought it was wrong to own slaves the way he owned his plow horses. But his wife wanted help with the housework. So for \$700 Mr. Carver bought Mary. [Mary was Dr. Carver's mother.]

The Civil War is called "a terrible war in America." It is explained away with, "People from the south of the country were fighting hard for the right to keep their slaves. The northern people said that was wrong."

The illustrations support the racism of the text. The Blacks all look alike, and they are well dressed and healthy looking (even while toiling in the cotton fields). A slave family being auctioned off seems remarkably calm and content.

Carver's disregard of material rewards, his struggle to overcome the evils of oppression and his success as a scientist are factors which, presented in the proper context, could serve as positive images for the minority child. It is unfortunate that a book about Carver has, instead, the effect of perpetuating racism. [Ina Henriques King]

* * *

A Man Ain't Nothin' But A Man by John Oliver Killens. Little, Brown, 1975, \$5.95, 176 pages, grades 7-12

The story of John Henry has been, to most of us, simply an entertaining folktale about a man's peculiar obsession with beating a machine. John Killens' book reveals a larger purpose in the contest—one which adds dimension and clarity to the old tale.

As presented here, John Henry is not ego-tripping; he is making a last-ditch effort to protect the jobs of thousands of men, especially Black men: "... you know the first to be laid off gon be our people. Black people! They gon be the first to go."

John Henry is not really fighting the machine per se. He understands that it is merely a tool of those in control and that by "beating" it he would be able to beat "the Cap'n" and get away with it. As he tells his wife, "... who is the enemy? I'm fighting Cap'n Brad this morning. Him and the steam drill the same damn people." An earlier inci-

dent had caused John to learn this lesson well. False rumors spread by the Cap'n had succeeded in temporarily severing the friendship between John and a white co-worker. As the two men are about to do battle, their Chinese mutual friend gives John some information which reveals the treacherous way they have been pitted against each other. The three friends then unite and go to challenge the machine.

Unfortunately, the book has sexist overtones. When John Henry dies in his struggle with the machine, his wife, Polly Anne, begins to cry hysterically and grow weak with grief. It is only when she picks up her husband's hammer and feels "the growing strength flow through her body, as if it were transferred to her through John Henry's mighty hammer" that she realizes she must be strong in support of her husband's purpose and for the sake of their expected child. Here, as in some other instances, Polly's worth is mainly a reflection of John Henry's. However, it must be said that Killens' Polly Anne does not lack strength or intelligence: "If she had an opinion she was bound to give it expression, and masculine voices did not intimidate her. The thing to do, she told them, was to ignore the captain. 'Show him he can't break up friends so easy.' ... John Henry looked at her in admiration and wonderment." The book also shows the female as accepting of the status quo, while the male is shown struggling against it to maintain his manhood. John's mother tells him: "But just don't talk back to the captain, not even under your breath. ... A captain is a captain all over this world." His father says: "One man is just as good as another. Sometimes even a whole heap better."

I would also have preferred less reinforcement of the traditional qualities of "a real man," which include attracting women through displays of "vigor and masculinity" and crying silently while the woman is shown as verging on hysteria. But all in all Killens has provided the young reader with a hero whose life and struggle can clearly be applied to the challenges facing today's youth. [Judy Richardson]

* * *

Who Goes There, Lincoln? by Dale Fife. Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1975, \$4.86, 63 pages, grades 3-5

Who Goes There, Lincoln? describes the search for a new clubhouse by Lincoln Farnum and his friends, Wilbur and Bunky. Their search leads ultimately to an old, deserted firehouse which is about to be torn down. Lincoln becomes particularly interested in the building when Mrs. Crauch, an elderly neighbor, recounts tales from her youth when the firehouse was an opera house.

After the police interrupt the boys' initiation rites for new club members and chase them out of the condemned firehouse, they return to prowling about in the hope of finding something of value that will insure the building's preservation. The discovery of an old diary, a secret panel and an underground tunnel reveal that the firehouse had once been a station on the Underground Railroad. (The Railroad is described in the book as "how people helped slaves escape to the North and to Canada." Aren't slaves people?) Because of the boys' discovery, plans are made to save the firehouse and turn it into a community center and historical site.

This book is non-racist in that no distinctions based on race are made between the characters. However, that presents its own problems. If it wasn't for shading in the bland and racially inaccurate illustrations, it would be impossible to tell Black characters from white. Another minus is the use of the term "swagger," with its macho overtones, to describe the boys walking down the street. It is also unfortunate that the boys' desire to have the

firehouse for their personal use is the main motivation of their efforts to save it.

But the most objectionable element of this book is its treatment of the elderly. Mrs. Patch, "the very oldest person on Plum street," is regarded as a "weirdo" by the boys, and her references to a railroad (that is, the Underground Railroad) are presented as near-ravings. Mrs. Crauch is portrayed as a fluttery old keeper of cats. These depictions, plus the boys' lack of respect for the two women, convey the message that to be old is to be senile and out of step.

Who Goes There, Lincoln? could only be useful in the hands of a perceptive teacher or parent who would point up the book's flaws to young readers. [Debria Smith]

* * *

Liliuokalani by Mary Malone, illustrated by Cary Garrard, \$3.40, 1975, 80 pages, grades 2-5

Liliuokalani is a biography of Hawaii's beloved last queen. Totally committed to her people, Liliuokalani strongly championed Hawaiian values and lifestyle and believed that Hawaii should be governed by Hawaiians. The book recounts her childhood, her marriage to a British *haole* (Hawaiian for white person), her service to her people (in combatting smallpox, the ravages of a volcanic eruption, etc.) and her unsuccessful struggle for control of Hawaii against the powerful *haoles*. Defeated, Liliuokalani became a kind of monument—without real political power, but a strong cultural symbol for her people.

Ms. Malone's account of Hawaiian history is racist to the core. She writes from a biased, white American point of view, and although enough facts are presented to give some semblance of historical reality, her half-truths oversimplify and gloss over the injustices perpetrated against Hawaiians by the white invaders. For example, she writes, "the white man brought new ideas and ways of living. They also brought diseases . . . many Hawaiians died." Smallpox and measles are the diseases mentioned. Ms. Malone leaves out VD and alcoholism—the leading killers of Hawaiians. Later, she explains that Asians were recruited to work on the sugar and pineapple plantations because "there were not enough Hawaiians." How could the reader know that between 1776, when the first whites came to Hawaii, and 1840, the population of 400,000 Hawaiians was reduced to 100,000 by the new diseases—which is why there were not enough Hawaiians to work on the plantations.

The racism which dominates white-Hawaiian relations and which was manifest in Liliuokalani's relations with her mother-in-law is noted by the author as follows: "It took a long time for John's mother to accept Lydia." (Lydia was Liliuokalani's Christian name.) The inadequacy of this less-than-candid reference is compounded by an illustration depicting Liliuokalani as white-skinned even though, in fact, she was very dark. Missionaries are described as people who "had come to Hawaii to teach the people about Christian religion. They started schools." True enough. But the missionaries also helped destroy traditional Hawaiian culture and morality. The white, missionary influence on the royal family is clear enough—both Liliuokalani and her sister married *haoles*. The author explains Liliuokalani's marriage by stating that Liliuokalani "knew the old customs and ways were as dear to John as they were to her."

The last straw comes, appropriately, on the last page: "As Queen, Liliuokalani tried to save the ancient Hawaiian way of life. Time and change worked against her . . . and now her story is part of America's heritage."

Here, Ms. Malone perpetuates the concepts that 1) America has a preor-



Diane and Leo Dillon illustrated *The Song of the Boat*, Lorenz Graham's new book of legends from West Africa.

ained right to rule and that 2) change and progress are synonymous even though "change" may mean the annihilation and oppression of a whole people. Pushed aside by the profit motive, private property and the concept of original sin, the old ways of Hawaii become—from Ms. Malone's perspective—relics of the past, something to be admired "as part of America's heritage."

This book endorses materialism and exploitation and encourages racist and paternalistic attitudes about a non-white people and culture. It is not recommended as a child's introduction to Hawaiian history. [Elizabeth Young]

* * *

Song of the Boat by Lorenz Graham, illustrated by Leo and Diane Dillon. Thomas Y. Crowell, 1975, \$6.50, unpaginated, grades 1-4

In this delightful tale, Lorenz Graham captures the magical quality of West African legend. He depicts the close village and family relationships, where every significant individual act is witnessed by the community. Here is understated, affectionate, deep respect of son for father, and quiet, unerring sustenance from wife and mother.

The most striking feature of this story is that the unique quality of African folklore is evoked through a poetic style. Mr. Graham uses the "pidgin" spoken throughout English-speaking West Africa, and his rendering of this language is authentic. He uses repetition and rhythm to suggest the tonality and rhythmic beat of African languages. He tells the story with sensitivity and simple beauty.

It might have been helpful if the author had informed his readers that the story is set in Liberia. (Momolu is a Liberian version of the name Mo-

Continued on page 6



These two books are attractive, but their contents aren't. Where Was Patrick Henry . . . (above) sidesteps the racist implications of its hero's life; Amelia contains sexist poems.

Amelia mixed the mustard and other poems



illustrated by Evaline Ness

Continued from page 5

ammed, and Flumbo is a name from the Kpele people and their language is typical of that country.) Also, a brief glossary might have assisted the young reader in interpreting such expressions as "This time" (now), "make it" (allow, may) and "small chop" (snack).

The book's design, which employs a rich, cream-colored paper and illustrations by Leo and Diane Dillon in warm earth tones and black, is effective. With abstract and modified geometric forms, the illustrations capture the feeling of the masks and decorative arts of Africa. This is a satisfying story for children. [Joyce Arkhurst]

* * *

Where Was Patrick Henry on the 29th of May? by Jean Fritz, illustrated by Margot Tomes. Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1975, \$5.95, 48 pages, grades 3-5

In a lighthearted and humorous vein, this story describes the childhood, adulthood and old age of Patrick Henry. The author uses Henry's birthday—the 29th of May—as a focal point for summing up the different stages of his life.

The book's cheerful style is engaging. It is unfortunate, however, that the author studiously avoids any mention of the seamier sides of colonial life in Virginia.

Early in the book we are told that Henry praised freedom all his life. Strange then, the following sentence about Henry's marriage to Sarah Shelton: "As a wedding present, Sarah's father gave them six slaves and 300 acres of land. . . ." This is the first and last mention of slavery in the book! Nowhere is there any discussion of the evils of slavery or even of the important role slaves played in the development of the Virginia economy. In fact, Henry gets all the credit for farming his new estate: "For three years he went through the business of planting, cultivating, leafing, worming and curing tobacco, and then his house burned down and he gave up the farm."

Patrick Henry became one of the largest landowners and slaveholders in Virginia. The contradiction between his cry for freedom and liberty during the Revolutionary War, while at the same time holding large numbers of Black people in bondage, is never pointed out. Also ignored is the fact that as a shareholder in the Ohio Company, he was an active speculator in land, particularly in West Virginia.* Can anyone honestly profess a belief in life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness and yet be actively involved in stealing Indian territory?

The art work, like the text, does not accurately reflect the racial composition of Virginia. Everyone is white! There is not even the usual isolated picture of slaves working on a plantation.

Children do not need the distorted and racist view of history presented in this book. [Jane Califf]

*Chronicles of American Indian Protest, compiled and edited with commentaries by the CIBC, Fawcett, 1971

Stereotypes About Jews

Anti-Semitism is fed by many stereotypes, the most common being that all Jews have money. In our review of *Thank You, Jackie Robinson* (Vol. 6, No. 1), surprise was expressed that during the early 1950's a "Jewish middle-class family" did not own a television set. Since it was the whiteness rather than the Jewishness of the family which was pertinent to the critical review, we wish to express regret for our editorial insensitivity on this issue.



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RACIST AND SEXIST CLASSICS

Many children's books about the revolutionary period that are regarded as classics are racist and sexist. Following are sample quotes from several such books.

- Johnny Tremain** by Esther Forbes (Houghton Mifflin, 1943), winner of the Newbery medal and considered a classic on the American revolution
White is synonymous with beauty: "He was a fine-looking young man, with fresh skin and thick blond hair . . . clean, clear blue eyes." Black is sinister: ". . . black asimps from Hell and skinny, slippery-looking old black slave . . . wiry black fingers. . . ." Of John Hancock's slave: "[Jehu] came mincing in . . . rolling his eyes . . . that dressed up doll of a black boy. . . ." Sexism is also evident. Of Mrs. Lapham: "Slowly, like a great sow pulling out of a wallow . . . her enormous bosom heaving. . . ." And "Men went to war and women wept. All was as it should be."
- George Rogers Clark: Frontier Fighter** by Adele DeLeeuw (Garrard, 1967), recommended by the *Children's Catalog*, 12th Edition (H.W. Wilson, 1971) and the *Elementary School Library Collection* (Bro-Dart, 1971)
". . . a band of Indians came whooping toward the town. . . . Clark captured the Indians and had them tomahawked. This was a bold act. . . ."
- Paul Revere: Rider for Liberty** (Garrard, 1964)
"Paul and his men started whopping like wild Indians."
- This Dear-Bought Land** by Jean Lee Latham (Harper, 1957)
". . . the painted savages leaped to their feet, yelling, and attacked. . . ."
- Young Paul Revere's Boston** by Sam and Beryl Epstein (Garrard, 1966)
"Girls stood under the big elm tree in their best dresses. Young men played ball. . . ."

and sold captured women and children into slavery in the West Indies.

2. Check out the noble rhetoric of the revolution. Was the Declaration of Independence really meant to apply to all Americans? Was the revolution actually fought for human liberty, or was it fought for economic and political reasons?

- Remember that the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution were written by white men whose concepts of freedom applied primarily to propertied members of their own group. "Inalienable rights" were not enjoyed by the landless poor, women, Blacks or Native Americans.

- Senator Stephen Douglas, speaking in 1858, admitted: "The signers of the Declaration of Independence never dreamed of the Negro when they were writing that document. They referred to white men, to men of European birth and European descent when they declared the equality of all men. . . . I say to you frankly that in my opinion this government was made by our fathers on the white basis. It was made by white men for the benefit of white men and their posterity forever, and was intended to be administered by white men in all time to come."

- Elizabeth Freeman, a Massachusetts slave, went to court to demand her freedom. She declared: "I want to be free. . . . The Massachusetts constitution says that everybody is born free and equal. . . . I'm a person. I'm not a dumb beast. I was born, but I'm not free. The constitution ought to mean what it says. . . ."

3. Children's story and text books ignore facts which contradict the idea that America has always guaranteed freedom for all.

- Most Black people held in slavery were in the southern colonies (Georgia and South Carolina), but all 13 colonies allowed and practiced slavery. Vermont was the first northern state to abolish slavery (in 1777) and New Jersey the last (in 1804).

- In 1780, South Carolina enacted a law that gave a Black person as a slave to white men who volunteered for military service in the cause of independence and "freedom."

- South Carolina and Georgia made it a practice to partly pay their officials' salaries during the revolutionary war by giving them Black people held in bondage.

- The U.S. Constitution, sometimes referred to as the oldest and greatest document of government for a free people, in three sections specifically endorses the enslavement of a fifth of the population. Article I, Section 2 declares that for purposes of taxation and representation, 5 Black people would be counted as equal to 3 white people (known as the "3/5th's of a man" clause). Article I, Section 9 declares that for at least 20 more years, African people could be stolen from their homes, forcibly brought to the United States and sold as property. Article IV, Section 2 declares that Black people who escaped from slavery and sought freedom were to be returned to slavery.

In an *Ebony* magazine article published in August, 1975, historian Lerone Bennett stated that Americans—especially non-white Americans—should not celebrate the Bicentennial. Teachers might introduce Bennett's perspective for discussion in the classroom. Below is an excerpt from his article.

Two hundred years of the Declaration of Independence, and not one day of freedom for blacks [sic], and millions of other Americans, and we not only have no shame, we propose to celebrate it.

Two hundred years of betrayal of one of the greatest dreams mankind has ever known, and we are not only oblivious to the enormity of our default, we have declared a year-long holiday to commemorate it.

Really, this behavior is astounding. And what makes it ominous, frightening even, is that most Americans seem to consider it normal.

Two hundred years of evasion of the central mandate of our revolutionary birth, two hundred years of slavery, segregation, inequality, unemployment, racism, and poverty, two hundred years of Little Rocks and Little Big Horns and Scottsboros and South Bostons have brought us to the brink of national disaster. Our economy is in shambles. Our political institutions are in disarray. Our spiritual temperature is at an all-time low. And grown men are dressed up in ridiculous costumes, playing freedom games with rusty muskets on astroturf.

This spectacle is an affront to truth and freedom. It is a desecration of the ideal. It is a mirage, an illusion, designed, at least in part, to divert attention away from our failure to create a human environment not only for blacks but also for whites and reds.

Let there be no mistake about my meaning. The question I'm raising here is an American question, not a black question. Or, better, it is an American question precisely because it is a black question. America is not right. America has never been right. The wrong we suffer as black people is a reflection of a deeper sickness at the heart of American society. What we suffer, to paraphrase Richard Wright, is what America is.

For this reason, and for others as well, I say No to the Bicentennial.

depicted (see box). Do the books still deserve to be regarded as classics?

6. Look behind the traditional "noble myths." Be a detective. Choose a hero such as Washington and be alert to facts which contradict his storybook image. Do most books leave out "unpleasant" facts? Do certain "facts" contradict each other? For example, is it mentioned—even casually—that many of those most active in the fight for "freedom" were slave holders? Is there any contradiction between a hero's noble ideals and his behavior?

• George Washington controlled 317 Black people as slaves when he died in 1799, and Thomas Jefferson, John Hancock, Patrick Henry, John Randolph, George Mason (chief author of the Bill of Rights) and many other "founding fathers" held Black people in bondage.

• George Washington, Patrick Henry and Benjamin Franklin were among the large plantation owners who speculated in Native American lands to offset their constant indebtedness to British merchants. They were hurt financially and infuriated by the British Proclamation of 1763, which prohibited ownership by colonists of land west of the Alleghenies. This proclamation was a major economic factor in exacerbating relations between the colonies and England.

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ACTION AGAINST APATHY Continued from page 1



Members of the Action Against Apathy staff are, l to r: Mary Lee Sander, Judy Nash, Helen Delaney (chairperson), Roni Branding, Rosemary Johnston and Mary Williams (Missing: Judy Sherman).

AAA believes that diversity in television content is best served by the prohibition of cross-ownership of stations, and the group has successfully blocked a St. Louis educational station's annexation of a new channel. AAA also opposes the educational station's programming, which they feel excludes the interests of several community segments (the unemployed, poor and minorities)—especially in the public affairs area. Negotiations with the station have led to the creation, by Channel 9, of a public affairs show and the formation of a minority programming board.

An adjunct to the efforts of the media committee is the work of the St. Louis Broadcast Coalition, a loose federation of anti-racism groups which AAA helped form. Joint ventures have had impressive results: The number of minority people employed by St. Louis stations rose from 40 in 1971 to 64 by 1974. One station which had a 5 per cent minority staff now has 15 per

cent. The same station now airs, nightly, five minutes of news from a Black News network—a first in St. Louis. Several Black public affairs shows are now on radio, and more minority people are at the microphones.

Education

In education, AAA's goal is to have St. Louis county's 26 school districts implement multicultural programs. Specific objectives are racism awareness seminars for all school personnel, minority hiring and promotions at all levels, and curricula that reflect minority perspectives.

An 11-point program in support of cultural pluralism was proposed by AAA in the spring of 1975 and sent to all superintendents, school board presidents, and principals in the county. As a follow-up to their proposal, AAA sponsored a workshop for teachers and librarians called "The Hidden Curricu-

THE "NEW WHITE CONSCIOUSNESS"

A philosophy called "new white consciousness" forms the basis for the anti-racism program of Action Against Apathy, a St. Louis-based organization described in the adjoining article. In his book *For Whites Only*, Robert Terry defines this philosophy. Below are excerpts from Mr. Terry's book.

"The idea of new white consciousness has puzzled many people. A first impression for some is that it is a step backward rather than forward. The emphasis on color, they argue, only serves to perpetuate division. Instead of being color-conscious, we should be color-blind. We need a new *human* consciousness, not *white* consciousness. . . .

"Protestations to deny whiteness eliminate neither the fact nor the problem of white privilege. American culture is color-conscious. We sort people by color, to the advantage of some and detriment of others. To dissociate oneself from whiteness by affirming humanness ignores what whiteness has done and how we continue to benefit from it. . . .

" . . . color consciousness is a fact of life in America . . . and recognizing that fact does not in itself make one a racist. Racism is not color consciousness per se, but how that color consciousness is used by one people against another. . . .

"If we seriously want to eliminate racial injustice in America, instead of pretending to ignore color we must be color-conscious in a radically new way. . . .

"New white consciousness is a bridge concept. The *new* in the label points to fresh possibilities. We are not totally limited by our past. *White* is a constant reminder that we still participate in racist institutions and culture. *Consciousness* continually reminds us that we need to reconstruct totally our understanding of who we are and what we ought to do. New white consciousness, then, is a way for us to understand ourselves simultaneously as white racists and as creators of injustice."

lum of Cultural Prejudice." Held at a local community college, it was designed to help those attending perceive racism in children's textbooks, trade books, and play materials, and to develop their analytical skills.

Other AAA workshops include one on the importance of Afro-American studies and a six-session course on developing healthy racial attitudes in young children. The latter is being held this fall in an area which embraces three school districts in the process of desegregating and merging. Coming up in January is a workshop called "Identifying Cultural Prejudice in School Situations," which AAA has been invited to conduct for all school administrators in the Kirkwood school district. A mini-workshop called "Toward a New Awareness" explains institutional racism to people who are not familiar with the concept. According to Ms. Branding, it has proved generally successful as a consciousness-raiser with church and community groups, schools and even the St. Louis Broadcasters Association. (The administrative staff of Channel 9 has also participated in this workshop.)

Credibility Questioned

A formal complaint against 22 county school districts, filed by AAA in 1972 with the Justice Department, HEW and the Missouri Human Rights Commission, had great impact. It ultimately resulted in improved minority hiring practices in the districts, even though the complaint was thrown out on jurisdictional grounds.

The fact that AAA is all-white has raised questions on all sides about the group's credibility. Whites have both questioned the need for white people to be concerned about racism and expressed resentment at being lectured on the subject by other whites. Blacks express concern as to whether there is minority input into AAA's program. Ms. Branding hastens to explain that AAA does not attempt to speak for Blacks, only for whites who value cultural pluralism. More importantly, the group does solicit minority input. AAA's advisory board includes several minority members with expertise in the media and education fields. Contact with Blacks is also fostered by the group's work with the St. Louis Broadcast Coalition, and through collaboration on projects with Black or Black-oriented groups. In addition, members of the St. Louis Black community are invited to address AAA on "speakers nights" held several times a year. Ever aware of the need to keep its perspective as broad as possible, AAA also draws on resources outside of the St. Louis area—like the CIBC, Foundation

for Change, PACT, Citizens Communications Center in Washington, D.C., and other groups.

One of the most serious problems encountered by AAA is funding. Lacking the expertise and staff to write proposals for foundation grants, the organization has had to rely mainly on individual contributions. Fund-raising parties, theater parties and garage sales are other sources of support. However, meager finances have not prompted despair among AAA members. Says Ms. Branding, "We could certainly be more effective with more money, but we will not go out of existence for lack of funding."

Another problem has been the difficulty of establishing rapport with broadcasters and school administrators, whose responsiveness has been mixed. In the media field, the problem has been somewhat alleviated by FCC requirements, which oblige broadcasters to deal with AAA whether they like it or not. School administrators have been very reluctant to meet with AAA ever since the complaint was filed against the districts in 1972. But "real allies" have been found by AAA among teachers, many of whom have recognized the relevancy of expanding their understanding of racism.

Staff—or, as Ms. Branding calls them, "people resources"—have also been a problem. Only a small number of people comprise the working core of AAA. They serve on a weekly (occasionally, daily) basis, aided by a support group called Friends of AAA, which provides assistance in such areas as the monitoring of television or radio programming. But although the small staff prohibits the expansion of AAA activities, Ms. Branding is impressed by, and proud of, the commitment of the group's members.

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CENSORSHIP DIALOGUE CONTINUES

The CIBC is concerned with the ways in which censorship—especially the covert variety—affects the selection of books in library collections. An article titled "Censorship and Racism: A Dilemma for Librarians" appeared in Vol. 6, Nos. 3 & 4, and additional comments appeared in the last issue of the *Bulletin*. The censorship issue was also discussed at a CIBC-sponsored meeting held during the ALA's annual convention last summer in San Francisco. Below we print a statement by Moon Dea, librarian at the Palms-Rancho Park Branch, Los Angeles, which was prompted by that meeting. We welcome further comments from our readers.

And on this issue, I admit to not having crystallized my own thoughts and feelings. It was in part to share ideas and hear the opinions of others on the subject that I attended both the Glide Memorial Church meeting and the SRRT workshop on the treatment of minorities in libraries and publishing. At this point in time, rather than give a position statement as such, I would prefer to just offer some general comments on the article in the special ALA issue of the *Bulletin* [Vol. 6, Nos. 3&4], "Censorship and Racism: A Dilemma for Librarians."

I am not hung up on the word "censorship" per se as many librarians are. I agree that most librarians profess opposition to censorship of any kind, but in actuality mean only overt censorship—your distinction between overt and covert censorship is well-taken. The library profession, particularly the ALA hierarchy, has been

The last *Bulletin* (Vol. 6, Nos. 5 & 6) contained a list of picture books for young children. *Echogee* was among the recommended books on Native American themes, but at press time we had not been able to locate the publisher. We are pleased to advise readers that the Council of Three Rivers, American Indian Center of Pittsburg has advised us that the book can be ordered for \$6 from the Indian American Quarterly, P.O. Box 52009, Tulsa, Okla. 74152.

In addition, the list noted whether an author and/or illustrator were members of the same minority depicted in a book. We have learned from Barbara Lucas, editor-in-chief of the children's book department at Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, that we neglected to identify Margery W. Brown as the African American illustrator of *I'm Glad I'm Me!* We regret this omission.

remarkably blind to the pervasive covert censorship which has served in both the library and publishing worlds to filter out the viewpoints of non-white Americans and perpetuate racist and sexist ideas. The fact of the matter is that the concepts of intellectual freedom and balance of point of view really never have operated for Third World peoples. Ours is a multiracial society, but the books in our library collections do not reflect the realities and needs of a multiracial society.

I believe that librarians have special responsibilities and obligations in service to children, and I support the "re-evaluation" concept set forth in an ALA Children's Services Division statement. Re-evaluating as to continued value and use of old books is as important and legitimate [a] function of a librarian as the selection of new titles. For many years before this present controversy, the mechanism for evaluation in the form of standing committees has been provided as part of the structure of Children's Services, Los Angeles Public Library. Every Children's Librarian participates on an evaluation committee, and it is not only legitimate, but I think necessary, to consider points related to racism and sexism during the discussions of individual books.

We have also formed recently an ad-hoc committee to consider specifically racism and sexism in children's books. It is particularly as a member of this committee, which has the objectives of consciousness-raising, working out guidelines, dealing with problem titles, that I have come to realize the extreme complexity of the issue and confront a number of disturbing, difficult nitty-gritty questions. What constitutes a racist book? A sexist book? How important is the author's intent? How important is historical context? How should we deal with considerations of historical and/or reference value? Is there any justification for applying guidelines only to new books and leaving ones already on the shelves alone? These are only a few of the questions. There are problems of balance, keeping the approach positive rather than negative. At the same time, I am aware of the possibility of using the evaluation process for what is termed in the *Bulletin* "undemocratic purposes."

I am interested in reading the opinions of others working with children on this issue.

—Moon Dea

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CIBC CALENDAR

New York City; November 21 and 22

"Our Response to Racism and Sexism: Working with Children's Books to Shape the Future." A two-day conference co-sponsored by the General Assistance Center of Teachers College, Columbia University, and CIBC. Morning presentations will be followed by afternoon workshops on each day. There will be ten workshops. Speakers: Dr. Alvin Poussaint, Dr. Luis Nieves Falcón, Ms. June Jordan. Panelists: Jack Agueros, Mary Lou Byler, Warren Halliburton, Armando Rendón, Elinor Wong Telemaque, authors of multicultural school materials. 8:45 A.M. to 4 P.M., each day, Horace Mann Hall, Teachers College, West 120th St. and Broadway.

Atlanta, Georgia; November 26

CIBC presentation at the annual meeting of the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS). "Multiethnic Studies and Social Education." Dr. Beryle Banfield, CIBC representative. 9 A.M. to 5 P.M., Hyatt Hotel.

San Diego, California; November 25, 26, 28

CIBC presentations at the annual convention of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE). Dr. Albert V. Schwartz, CIBC representative. Committee on Bias and Censorship in the Elementary School. November 25 and 26. 9 A.M. to 4 P.M. each day. "The Minority Image in Children's Books." November 28, 10:15 to 11:45 A.M.

Princeton, West Virginia; December 1

Opening of Appalachia Children's Interracial Book exhibit in cooperation with the John Henry Memorial Foundation. This traveling exhibit is based on a book display and workshop organized by CIBC last summer for the Appalachia Intercultural Heritage

Festival. Publishers who wish to contribute books are requested to send them to Edward J. Cabbell, Director, John Henry Memorial Foundation, P.O. Box 135, Princeton, West Virginia, 24740. In conjunction with this exhibit, workshops are now being planned for next summer on children's book writing for and by Appalachian minorities.

San Francisco, California; December 3

"Aids in the Selection Process: Analyzing Racism and Sexism in Current Children's Books." CIBC presentation and workshop at the California Library Association's annual meeting. This program is an outgrowth of meetings held last summer at the American Library Association's annual convention in San Francisco when librarians and CIBC representatives discussed censorship in children's book services. 9 A.M. to noon; 2 to 4 P.M. Continental Ballroom, San Francisco Hilton.

New York City; January 15 through February 2

"Bias Free Illustration Show: Guidelines in Action." CIBC and NOW (National Organization for Women), New York Chapter, in cooperation with the American Institute of Graphic Arts (AIGA). Deadline for submission of art work: originally November 26, extended to December 15. Children's book illustrators, agents and publishers are invited to submit works of art, design or photography which depict racial minorities and women of all races in ways they feel are appropriate and representative. No entry or hanging fees. Write AIGA for details. As part of the AIGA exhibit, a symposium on race and sex bias in textbooks and children's book illustrations will be held January 22; see announcement in the next *Bulletin*. AIGA Gallery, 1059 Third Ave., New York City.

WHAT IS THE COUNCIL?

The Council on Interracial Books for Children, a non-profit organization founded in 1965, is dedicated to promoting anti-racist and anti-sexist literature and instructional materials for children in the following ways: 1) by publishing this *Bulletin*; 2) by running a yearly contest for unpublished minority writers of children's literature; 3) by conducting clinics and workshops on racism and sexism; 4) by providing consultants and resource specialists in awareness training to educational institutions, and 5) by supporting community groups who are working toward similar goals. Write to the CIBC for further information about these services.

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