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Interracial books for children bulletin. Volume 9, Nos. 4-5 1978

New York, NY: The Council on Interracial Books for Children, Inc.,
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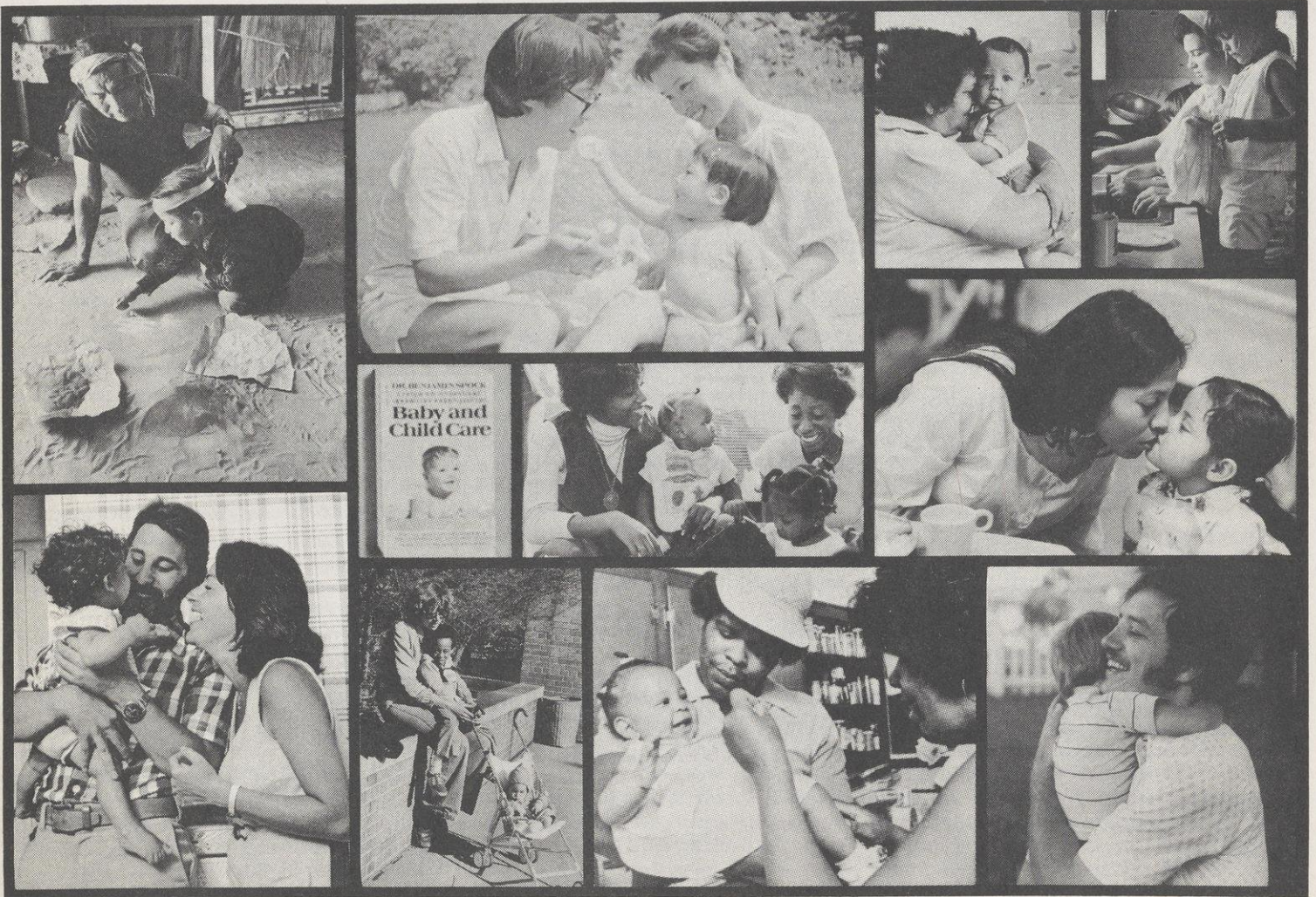
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INTERRACIAL BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

BULLETIN

VOLUME 9, NUMBERS 4 & 5, 1978 ISSN 0146-5562



The Politics of Parenting Books: Rocking the Cradle without Rocking the Boat

BULLETIN

VOLUME 9, NUMBERS 4 & 5

1978

SPECIAL DOUBLE ISSUE ON PARENTING BOOKS

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Indexed in
Education Index
 ERIC *IRCD*

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The Politics of Parenting Books: How to Rock the Cradle without Rocking the Boat

By Vicki Breitbart with Barbara Schram

Being a parent in this rapidly changing society is a complex, demanding job. Questions arise about everything from birth methods to breast feeding and spacing of siblings. Parents also want to evaluate their child's intellectual and motor development, and they find themselves perplexed by thornier issues—discipline, day care, sex education.

Parents must also teach their children methods of survival and strategies for change in a society filled with injustice and exploitation. Parents need to articulate a consistent set of humanistic values and then struggle to live by them *and* teach them to their children. We face the challenge of teaching our children cooperation in a society that pits one racial group, class or sex against another; of nurturing trust in a society riddled with fear; and of promoting assertiveness at a time when apathy and conformity are rewarded. Exploitative child-oriented advertising requires that parents help their children learn what's good for both their bodies and their psyches.

People need help in becoming, if not *perfect* parents, then the best ones they can possibly be. Many of us, faced with these challenges and without the resources of an extended family, turn to the large number of books on parenting written by psychologists, psychiatrists, pediatricians and child-development researchers as well as by child-rearing "veterans." This article reviews a representative sampling of current and popular "general" books, offering a perspective with which parents, librarians and teachers can approach this enormous body of literature. Books on topics of "special interest" are reviewed elsewhere in this issue.

The works reviewed can be roughly divided into four major categories, depending on the book's focus and emphasis.

The first category—*Child-Care Books*—focuses primarily on meeting the physical needs of the child: feeding, sleeping, health care. In the second category are the *Child Development Books*, which deal with children's physiological needs but focus on the major stages in emotional and motor development. These books attempt to map out reasonable expectations for the "typical" or "normal" child, offering tips on encouraging movement from one stage to the next.

We find the most advice-giving in the third category, the *Child Guidance Books*. These deal almost exclusively with parent/child interactions and articulate the most explicit values about the parenting process.

The majority of books in these three categories are by recognized "experts," medical doctors or mental health practitioners. All of the authors are white; most of them are men.

In the final category we have placed the *Personal Accounts of Parenting*. These rely heavily on the perceptions, experiences and feelings of an individual who has reared children, rather than on third-party observations or research data.

Reading such a wide array of books is a time-and-money-consuming luxury few parents, librarians or teachers can afford. Yet whoever reads only two or three titles runs the risk of not seeing the range and difference of opinion regarding child care. Therefore, this survey attempts to cover a cross-section of what's available. Before reviewing specific titles (see p. 5), we would like to share our conclusions

about the limitations of all parenting books.

1. Parenting is seen as an individual problem with individual solutions. In general, most books offer a limited view of the parenting role. Authors tend to see parents (usually the mother) as alone in a one-to-one relationship with a child. Even when parental roles are expanded to give men and women an equal share in child care, usually it is done only within the confines of the individual family. Most authors not only accept the privatism of the family, they encourage it. Very few offer suggestions that would help parents develop any group consciousness or find any societal and political solutions.

It is generally accepted in our society that parents should have the full responsibility for the growth and development of their child. No matter how much the school or the media share in this job, no matter how many experts or friends give advice—when something goes wrong, it is still seen as the parents' fault. The home is the "haven in a heartless world," and the authors have scant understanding of the social, economic and political forces that create this confinement.

2. Parenting books generally ignore the realities of today's families. Authors tend to overlook the indisputable changes in family structures. The nuclear family is still seen as the *healthy* family. Divorce, remarriage, step-parenting, single adults parenting out of choice and communal child rearing are either ignored or treated as social and personal "problems" instead of facts of family life that offer potential change and richness. At a time when one out of three marriages ends in divorce and nearly half the adult women in the U.S. work outside the home, au-

thors still maintain the myth of "every child with two parents, every mother at home and every father the sole breadwinner." (Those authors who do write about mothers working outside the home tend to assume that this is a matter of choice, instead of a crucial necessity for most families.)

Although many of the books reviewed were written or reissued within the last ten years, they still assume traditional and narrow stances towards the roles and responsibilities of the sexes. There are *some* signs of change. Yet, on the whole, authors of parenting books still adhere closely to sexist stereotypes and see mothers as primary *caregivers* and fathers in charge of "larger" issues. When it comes to both parents working outside the home, authors continue to say little that's positive. Children of working parents are depicted as basically deprived. Day care is almost never viewed as a *positive* experience.

3. Parenting is viewed as a science or technology. Most books lead the reader to believe that there is a perfect way to raise children. The search for the "right way" comes from a capitalistic view of progress: the notion that every problem has its own individual solution. In addition, our society's trust in technology tends to foster a mistaken belief in the "science" of parenting. Parents are led to feel that they might find *the* answer if they only look hard enough. Authors tend to reinforce this by their authoritative tone and prescriptive approach.

In spite of appearing "scientific," books do not separate fact from opinion. Little of the recent voluminous research on child development has found its way into parenting books. When it has, it is often incompletely reported, without full explanations of the specific population studied, the circumstances of the research and whether it has been replicated. For example, several books claim that a study showed that "boys exhibit more aggressive behavior than girls." The authors fail to note that the same study indicated identical scores for boys and girls on tests that measured dependency. An important omission!¹

¹Details are reported in "Sex Role Expectations in Child Care Manuals and Research," an unpublished master's thesis for Bank Street College of Education by JoAnn Hoit.

Withholding information works against the development of parents as a knowledgeable group, independent of the "experts." Parents do not need to be *told* by experts; they need to be supported in their ability to make informed judgements when dealing with the inevitable dilemmas of parenting.

Only a few authors suggest that the goal in parenting is not to do away with anxiety and conflict but to become stronger people by coping with problems. For these authors, parenting is seen as a process in which children and parents constantly affect one another and are affected by the world in which they live. This approach—one of an ever-changing dialectic—encourages social change and societal responsibility for the health and welfare of families and the community. It also makes the child a participant in the process, not a little creature to be civilized or an equal partner.

4. Parenting is rarely seen in a socio-political context. Authors of parenting books rarely acknowledge the socio-political context of the family, community and larger society in which parent and child function. They attach little importance to the impact of social forces and in turn see the family as the creator of values rather than the conduit it often is forced to be. Worse still, they assume the existence of "a universal psychology," when in fact human beings are enormously plastic and can function in diverse ways according to how they are socialized.

Few of the authors question how much of what we "know" about young children is culturally determined; they seldom distinguish between what may be universal and what is peculiar to Western, white-male-dominated, heterosexual, capitalistic society. Ruth Sidel expresses this when comparing U.S. and Chinese attitudes about child-rearing:

Our understanding of the psychology of children has become highly sophisticated in the past thirty years. . . . We expect Johnny to have mixed feelings about his baby brother, we expect him to want to do away with his father, even just in fantasy, and we expect anger and aggression. And as any newspaper or news program tells us, we get it. . . . Perhaps now that we expect certain personality developments, our expectation creates their expression. The Chinese, in the handling of their children, seem to expect

good behavior, cooperation and obedience and in general they get it. Although they clearly recognize that there is a non-cooperative, hostile, aggressive side to man, they do not emphasize it. . . . They emphasize the cooperative, not the competitive; the love, not the hate. (*Women and Child Care in China*, Hill & Wang, 1972, p. 188.)

Authors, for the most part, fail to see that their own research is culturally conditioned, and when they advocate reliance on parental "instinct," they overlook that what supposedly comes "naturally" to parents is also socially determined. Sidney Callahan offers one of the rare exceptions to this cultural myopia:

I don't think there is any innate "parental instinct" or any "common sense" or even "heart" which is not socially learned. Also unfortunately, parental instinct, common sense and heart can all be wrong, particularly when a culture such as ours is undergoing rapid change and is so unsatisfactory to so many of its members. We may need to change child-rearing practices when past instincts and common sense endorsed physical punishment, racism, social injustice, aggression and apathy. (*Parenting: Principles and Politics of Parenthood*, Penguin, 1973, p. 73.)

Most authors also deny the cultural heterogeneity of our society and suffer from a pervasive class bias. While never explicitly stated, they address an audience of young, white, middle-class, Anglo-Saxon and Protestant married couples. Different cultural traditions of child-rearing are ignored. Although illustrations sometimes (but not always) show children of various racial groups, the texts seldom concede differences in cultural norms. The needs of Third World parents and others who are not part of the mainstream are rarely recognized. Although there are now three books directed to Black parents (see p. 14), it is as if Asian Americans, Chicanos, Native Americans and Puerto Ricans who are struggling to maintain their cultural identity and rear their children in a racist society do not exist. There are other virtually invisible groups; no material has been directed specifically to disabled parents, gay parents, older parents or, to a lesser degree, step-parents. In addition, the concept of pluralistic approaches or attitudes is rarely affirmed as a healthy state of tension.

The Child-Care Books

No review of child-care titles could reasonably begin with any book other than the most often reissued and best-selling classic in the field, **Baby and Child Care** by Dr. Benjamin Spock. For years this has been the most comprehensive manual, against which all others are measured. New parents make particularly heavy use of the sections on physical care—feeding, bathing, symptoms of childhood diseases. The pages on sleeping, crying and temper tantrums also get their corners turned down very early in a new parent's career.

While Spock continues to monopolize the field, in his attempt to cover everything he explains very little in depth. Further, his views on the more subtle issues of child rearing clearly need at least a second opinion. One such supplement is **The First Five Years**, written by Dr. Virginia Pomerantz with the help of Dodi Schultz, also reviewed in this section.

In recent years, Spock's *Baby and Child Care* has drawn harsh criticism from both ends of the political spectrum. To conservatives, Spock epitomizes the "new permissiveness" that presumably spawned the campus radicals of the '60s. Criticisms from the left have pointed to his stereotypical prescriptions for male and female behavior and to the blatantly middle-class, middle American values that infuse his advice.

Yet Spock and his work have managed to stand up well in the face of these criticisms. When one reads him carefully, the "permissiveness" criticism seems patently exaggerated. In fact, Spock often seems quite traditionally authoritarian. He advocates, for example, weaning from breast or bottle at five months and letting the infant "cry it out." In another context, he cautions parents against being visibly hesitant or apologetic, even if they are unconvinced of the wisdom of what they are doing.

In answer to his radical critics who rightly attack his sections on values and lifestyles, it is to Spock's credit that he recently (1976) revised his book in a way that puts child care in the context of new socio-political realities. There is now a section on natural childbirth and changing family styles. Separated parents, working mothers and single parent families are now referred to as special situations and not "special problems."

The few illustrations now include both Black and white men. Spock uses the pronouns "he" and "she" interchangeably,

and "human being" or "person" for more general terms. He has also rewritten passages concerning sex roles. Females are no longer automatically designated as passive—girls are welcomed in "backyard sports, on fishing and camping trips, and in attendance at ball games" (p. 357). Boys can be both active and passive. They are encouraged to express their emotions, and both parents are now able to roughhouse with their children. Although boys and girls are still assumed to identify largely with the parent of their own sex, there is some recognition that children take characteristics from both parents.

The new *Baby and Child Care* dramatically revises the role of the father. Although still called the "head of the family," he is encouraged to fully participate and give practical help with child care rather than just moral support. Spock also recognizes women's oppression in the home and the "lack of respect shown by a materialistic society to an occupation that pays no salary" (p. 32).

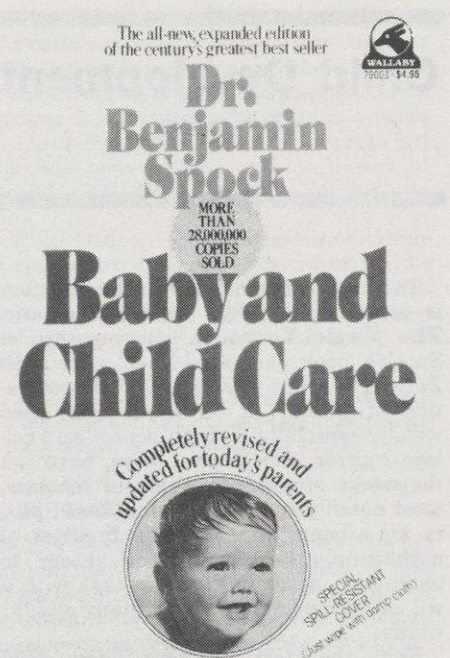
The new edition also acknowledges working parents as a reality and contains a long discussion of child-care alternatives. There is a description of family day care, and the suggestion that a network of units could reduce overwork and isolation for caregivers. The book describes quality day care and states that "most children would benefit from a group experience" (p. 421). It even advocates government support for day-care centers.

Spock's enlightened attitude towards day care reflects his concern with social issues. In this respect, his book stands out among the rest. He is clearly a social activist who hasn't hesitated to bring his ideas into his writing. Of all the books reviewed here, this "old classic" makes one of the strongest statements about the political and social forces that affect child rearing.

Spock is also noteworthy for his discussion of topics not found in other parenting books. For example, he includes information for parents of disabled children. Though marred by handicapist language ("deformity," "defect," etc.) and by a racist remark (defining "mongolism": "The eyes slant upward somewhat like an Oriental's. . .") the advice is worthwhile.

Spock stresses the importance of human values and idealism in raising children. While he maintains great faith in "the system," he talks about problems of materialism and touches on the need for non-hierarchical lifestyles. Unfortunately, there is no mention of racism. The only time "race" appears is when Spock notes that schools "should contain children from various races and backgrounds." Such superficial handling of an important child-rearing issue points to a basic flaw in his book.

Nonetheless, Spock is the rare author who has revised his work rather than allow it to become dated. But readers must be cautioned again to *check the date of the*



Dr. Spock's "classic" proves—at least in the revised edition—to be one of the more up-to-date works. More than 28,000,000 copies have been sold since the book first appeared in 1945.

edition before they buy a copy. Libraries must be urged to replace older editions.

Although Pomerantz and Schultz repeat much of Spock's basic child-care advice, their scope is narrower, and they handle several topics in greater depth. Like Spock, the authors make few distinctions between proven medical facts and their own opinion on psychological issues. From the beginning, though, they are honest in explaining that the book is not written from theory or research, but based on 20 years of a pediatrician's experience. On most issues, *The First Five Years* generally takes a more relaxed approach than Spock. When it comes to giving up the bottle, for example, it allows for extenuating circumstances, specifying no "correct" timetable. In most instances, anecdotes accompany statements, making the advice real and very human. Here parents come first, and a "happy contented parent is a far better parent than one who is tense and frustrated." The authors discuss women working outside the home, urging mothers to do what *they* think is best.

The book also advises parents to share their cultural heritage with children, and it is the only book that mentions the positive benefits of a bilingual home. It treats cultural identity superficially, however, and reveals little concern for other social issues.

Child Development Books

The most venerable title in this category is psychologist Selma Fraiberg's classic, *The Magic Years*. A contemporary of Spock's book, it shared shelf-space with *Baby and Child Care* for a whole generation of parents. It continues to be used widely, especially in high school and college courses. *The Magic Years*, based on the works of child development scholars, most notably Anna Freud and René Spitz, is an attempt to bring the findings of psychoanalytic research and theory to parents. It accomplishes this task with a wit and humour lacking in many similar works.

From the start, Fraiberg places child rearing in a social context. She draws an analogy between a healthy ego and a healthy nation—both of whose priorities should be the “pursuit of healthy human goals.” Using anecdotes from her own work, Fraiberg describes the drama of growing up and being a parent. She does not expect conflict-free perfection, but

rather a life in which we deal with conflicts in order to grow.

This volume actually conveys an image of what it must be like inside the head of a growing child—an appreciation of a child's “magical thinking,” fears, anxieties, and mechanisms of coping. These insights in turn help parents to cope, which may explain the book's 20-year survival.

In other ways, however, *The Magic Years* is flawed. Its humanism stands in sharp contrast to its wholesale acceptance of traditional theories that fail to distinguish between characteristics that are biologically or genetically determined and those that are culturally conditioned. In discussing sex roles, Fraiberg's shallow grasp of cultural factors leads her into stereotypical thinking. Mother is assumed to be the only appropriate full-time caregiver, and father is the “final authority” in the home. Girls, Fraiberg believes, must be taught the “symbols of femininity—cooking, bathing a baby, applying make-up.” Boys “cannot be bound by the code of women and girls.” Her plea to open up our schools and allow more physical activity and creativity is commendable, but these worthwhile aims cannot be just for boys, as she suggests, but rather must be for *all* children.

Selma Fraiberg is somewhat of a guru among parenting experts, so anything she writes will draw attention. Her latest book, *Every Child's Birthright: In Defense of Mothering*, is an impassioned plea for humankind—more accurately mothers—to ensure the development of initial human attachment in infants. Fraiberg believes that parent-infant bonding is the basis for responsible and productive adulthood. She leads one to believe that a lack of maternal bonding dooms the child to a life filled with crime and violence, devoid of meaningful relationships. Fraiberg also insists that bonding is the mother's full-time responsibility for the first three years of the baby's life. This is not a new idea. It held sway at the close of World War II when women were being strongly encouraged to leave the work force and return home to procreate. It is no accident that this admonition returns to haunt us when unemployment is high and the women's movement has made profound changes in the status quo of family and work. Most of Fraiberg's theoretical arguments come from Anna Freud, Bowlby and Spitz, whose works on maternal deprivation supported the last wave of pro-(full-time)-motherhood. Fraiberg neglects several more recent studies that have shown no evidence of negative effects clearly attributable to alternate child-care arrangements.

Every Child's Birthright does place the problems of human relationships in the context of a society plagued by poverty, unrest and misplaced priorities. And this is a unique contribution to parenting books. Yet when identifying the causes of these problems, Fraiberg points to working mothers and misguided policy-makers

rather than to capitalist values and life style. She does acknowledge the need for change on the societal level in the form of new policies and legislation, but these are intended to support women staying home rather than encourage a full range of options.

In sum, the book is an example of victim blaming at its most virulent in which, once again, mothers and all poor people bear the full burden of guilt for the sins of a society largely unconcerned with the welfare of its very young citizens.

Traditional child development books often treat children and mothers (and even fathers on occasion) as if they were monolithic categories. Two books by T. Berry Brazelton, *Infants and Mothers* and *Toddlers and Parents*, are refreshing exceptions.

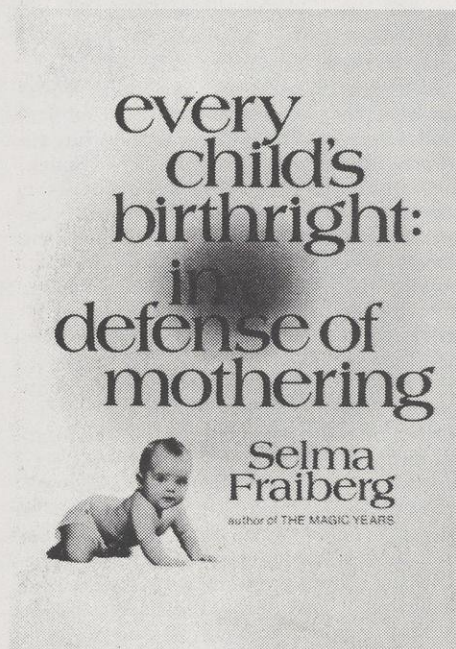
The first book follows the development of three babies from birth to twelve months. Each child is a composite, portrayed with an emphasis on “differences in development.” Brazelton calls one child active, one average and one quiet. Each is described in the context of a family with its own dynamics and personalities. The child affects and is in turn affected by family forces. While Brazelton avoids strict developmental guidelines and upholds the uniqueness of parent-child relations, he nonetheless falls into the same traps as Fraiberg.

As the title of his first book—*Infants and Mothers*—strikingly reveals, he assumes the mother to be the primary caregiver. Although men appear in several photographs, they are all holding children at a distance or are roughhousing. This book also shares Fraiberg's bias in favor of women staying at home and intimates that women working outside the home have limited capacities to mother. To his credit he admits that this is his personal opinion and does not pass it off as a “universal truth.”

Brazelton draws on his experience as a pediatrician. However, although he practices in the racially and economically integrated town of Cambridge, Mass., there is not a single reference—in either text or photographs—that would lead one to believe that all babies and their parents aren't white and middle-class.

His second book, *Toddlers and Parents*, is in many ways an extension of the earlier work. Also weak on racism, the book does show, however, less sexism. As the title indicates, both mother and father are now key figures in the developmental drama. Still, when discussing sex roles, Brazelton finds it “impossible to describe behavior without labeling it boyish or girlish.” He explains:

Even in these days, when we are consciously trying not to reinforce stereotyped sex roles which may not be productive for the child's future, it is virtually impossible for parents not to treat boys and girls differently. . . . Whatever the source, it is self-perpetuating and I doubt that we can



Respected for *The Magic Years*, Selma Fraiberg has unfortunately written a book in which mothers—and all poor people—are made to seem responsible for society's failures. Evidence that alternative child-care arrangements are not harmful is ignored in this plea for full-time mothering.

eradicate these subtle influences upon our handling of children in less than several generations of reconditioning. I am not sure if we want to either. (p. 231)

The book presents working parents, a single working mother and a single father. Yet children still seem to lose out in chapters dealing with working parents. The first set of working parents Brazelton describes spend a harried morning, rushing to get out of the house. There are no clean clothes for the child and no time for her breakfast. She is taken to a sitter who is caring but very authoritarian, causing the child to save her emotional outbursts until her parents return. The parents are then pictured as too filled with guilt to successfully cope with the child. In a second chapter on working parents, the adults are "too involved in their own lives," and the child is again short-changed. Not a pretty picture. These are real problems, of course, but when presented in this unbalanced manner, they only serve to say "Danger! Do not try this parenting route." This message remains despite a statement that some parents do successfully manage work and family needs.

On the positive side, the book does explore day care and shows an awareness of the complexity of the issue. It stresses parent involvement and agrees that centers should integrate parents' "strong ethnic or individual beliefs."

Overall, Brazelton demonstrates a deep understanding of children's needs and the challenges they present to parents. Also, he is consistently sensitive to individual differences in the personalities of both parents and children.

Among the more recent and noteworthy books that deal with the child's growth and development is *The First Twelve Months of Life* by the Princeton Center for Infancy and Early Childhood. It goes into some depth on all aspects of child development. Each chapter is followed by a growth chart with a separate column for motor, language, mental and social abilities, but the authors warn, "Please do not regard this chart as a rigid timetable. Babies are unpredictable. Some perform one activity earlier or later than the chart indicates."

Like most other books, this one assumes the baby is white. Though eye color is described for both white and Black babies, racial differences in skin color are not noted. On the other hand, the numerous photographs in the book are a real asset. They show a variety of races as well as portraying men and women, young and older adults in caring roles.

The book does not encourage men to fully participate in their child's life. Although the authors state that they hope that father will read the book and that "mother and father decide together what to do with the baby," they still see mother as the primary caretaker and father as

"possibly more important behind the scenes in the first year" (p. 13).

The authors are ambivalent about, as they put it, mother "returning to work" (as if child-rearing were all play). They do state the positive aspects of others caring for the child and describe qualities "she" must have. Yet they state that a mother's absence can "deprive" her baby, and that the amount (rather than the quality) of mothering will influence a child's growth.

Overall, the book's strength lies in its respect for the intelligence and the nurturing ability of the parent. The authors rarely give advice, and when they do, they explain their rationale.

Child Guidance Books

The plethora of child guidance books no doubt represents publishers' accurate assessment of parents' yearning for final answers to the problems of raising a child in today's complex society. Within this category we also find the most dramatic divergence of opinion over which types of parental behaviors will result in the best adjusted children. These books are burdened by value judgements, and the author's biases are often buried inside mounds of valuable helpful hints. If these books are to be of any use, the reader must search out those underlying values and assumptions most carefully.

Probably one of the most popular books is the somewhat arrogantly titled *How to Parent* by Fitzhugh Dodson, which falls at the prescriptive and didactic end of the spectrum. Dodson's work begins with some brief obeisance to the individuality of babies, but quickly proceeds to an abundance of advice aimed at *all* parents. Dodson admits to drawing heavily on the pioneer work of Gesell, but never mentions that this research was done on a highly select population. He also refers to the theories of analysts like Erikson and Freud but withholds specific information and references.

Dodson's discussion of discipline is indicative of his generally authoritarian and traditional attitude towards parenting. (One chapter is devoted to negative and positive reinforcement based on techniques from animal training.) It is, however, in Dodson's treatment of sex roles that his conservatism is most dramatic. Clearly he sees parenting as mothering. Dodson himself must have realized this mistake when he wrote his sequel *How to Father* (reviewed on p. 19).

Dodson's sexism extends to a discussion of a child's attitudes towards "his" body as well. According to Dodson, the only sex organs toddlers have are penises. As far as Dodson is concerned, "boys have a penis . . . girls do not" and "the girl is apt to feel she has been gypped and is a sort of second class citizen in this respect" (p. 175).

While Dodson acknowledges that culture plays a part in sex-role identification, he doesn't want to change a single stereotype. Boys are to become "aggressive" adults—girls, "coquettish" and "mothering." He states:

Mother needs to allow for the fact that it is the nature of a boy to be feisty, mischievous, rambunctious and crude. She should not try to make him over into a docile, sweet, quiet creature who is remarkably like a little girl. (p. 179)

Clearly he believes sex-role stereotypes are an immutable fact of life. Dodson is also years behind the time when charging that homosexuality, like fetishism and peeping tomism "are sexual deviations and neuroses . . . unfortunately so abundant in our society" (p. 182).

The book has a strong class bias as well. When Dodson talks about "our Puritan heritage," we know to whom he is talking. He insists that children of middle-class parents have a much higher level of intelligence than do poor or "disadvantaged" children and that "children from poor homes are spoken to very little."

Materialism is rampant in *How to Parent*. Dodson gives the impression that the more *things* you provide for children the better. For every stage of development he offers a list of recommended playthings.



The photographs in *The First Twelve Months of Life*, unlike those in most parenting books, are a real asset because they show parents from many cultural groups.

The final 120 pages of the book list toys, books and records plus an annotated bibliography. Some of the suggestions are helpful, but these lists are overwhelming.

Another child-rearing book with emphasis on the how-to is the popular **Between Parent and Child** by Dr. Haim Ginott. Here is a step-by-step guide for developing an effective way to talk to your children. Sounds great? A lot of it is. Most important, Ginott's method is based on mutual respect between parent and child. It encourages parents to listen to their children, to understand the hidden messages in what they say and only then to give advice and support. Parents are to make clear what is unacceptable and what alternatives are O.K. This method helps children solve their own problems, make their own choices and move towards independence and autonomy.

Yet the book is very one-sided because of its emphasis on language. It is also painfully out-dated when it comes to a discussion of sex roles. In Ginott we find the biology-is-destiny argument intact: "Both boys and girls need help in their progress toward their different biological destinies." "Boys will be boys" he tells us, and fathers should compliment their daughters on "their looks, dress and feminine pursuits." Ginott cautions a father against boxing or roughhousing with his daughter "lest she conclude that father would have loved her more if she were a boy." Father's role is confined to protector and guardian; if he participates in child care, "there is the danger that the baby may end up with two mothers, rather than with a mother and father" (p. 201). At the same time mother should be teaching her daughter the "joys of homemaking." As Ginott puts it: "This is mother's golden hour to convey to her daughter the satisfactions of being a woman, wife and mother." This heavy dose of sexism is somewhat excused by the fact that the book was written more than ten years ago. Yet since it is still widely read and has such a progressive flavor the book's sexist message can be doubly dangerous.

Ginott's work has greatly influenced Dr. Thomas Gordon, a more modern and certainly as popular "expert." Gordon is responsible for writing **P.E.T. (Parent Effectiveness Training): The Tested New Way to Raise Responsible Children** and—indirectly—training over a 1/4 million parents through P.E.T. courses. Gordon agrees with Ginott that "parents are blamed but not trained" and offers his own set of skills as remedy. The emphasis here, too, is on communication, but Gordon takes it several steps further. With lists, outlines and diagrams, he makes it into a science. What was method for Ginott is a way of life for Gordon. Throughout the script-like book, Gordon repeats the importance of infusing his techniques into every parent-child interaction.

On the positive side, Gordon recognizes

Preparing for Parenthood

Your Mixed Feelings About Becoming a Parent

Organizing Your Home for Your Baby

Whether to Breast Feed or Bottle Feed

Preparing Your Older Child for the New Baby

Delivery: The Birth of Your Child

The Hospital Stay

Post Partum Feelings: Physical or Psychological

Handling Advice from Others

The Practicalities of Life with a Newborn

Meeting Your Child's Emotional Needs

Organizing a Life of Your Own Away from Your Baby

When and How to Discipline

Changing Trends in Family Life

Understanding Your Feelings About Pregnancy, Childbirth, and Your Baby

Dr. Lee Salk

author of *What Every Child Would Like His Parents to Know*



Preparing for Parenthood is noteworthy for its awareness of changing sex roles and its emphasis on providing parents with enough information to make informed decisions.

the parent-child power struggle and warns that authoritarian dictums will only lead to negativism and resistance on the part of the child. Yet his "solution"—that parents negotiate *everything*—ignores the reality that young children are not simply miniature adults.

In Gordon's discussion of conflicts between parent and child, the emphasis is on minimizing the tension, not understanding its causes. Gordon deals with symbolic acts of rebellion (like long hair), not the different beliefs and values that they may represent. The list of behaviors that may cause conflict—which includes drinking and smoking as well as "having dates with members of another race or religion"—lumps together actions that are physically harmful with issues that are heavily value-laden. Those that relate to values assume a certain character and philosophy of life on the part of the parents but this is not explored. A discussion of racism and class is sorely lacking in his discussion of values and lifestyles.

Much in Gordon is over-simplified. He gives the impression that every interchange with a child is critical and has a "right" solution. Once again, parents may be left feeling that they must learn a scientific, "expert" way to parent.

Eda LeShan's **Natural Parenthood**, appropriately subtitled *Raising Your Children Without a Script*, offers a very different approach from Gordon's. LeShan asserts that parents have been immobilized

by an avalanche of information, and she suggests that giving parents scripts denies their ability to deal successfully with complex interactions.

This is not a comprehensive book. The choice of topics is somewhat idiosyncratic, but to LeShan's credit, she deals with issues that others omit, including death, adoption and homosexuality. The chapter on homosexuality illustrates her enlightened but not particularly radical point of view.

LeShan is one psychologist who warns parents against becoming therapists for their children. She feels this creates a "clinical relationship instead of a spontaneous and unselfconscious one through which one can experience genuine emotions" (p. 128). She believes parents should be leaders who are respected and admired with all their strengths and weaknesses.

Unfortunately, *Natural Parenthood* is directed almost exclusively toward middle- or upper middle-class white parents. Indeed, several chapters deal with the problems of giving children *too many things!* There is also the statement that "our children can realistically expect to find work that they enjoy doing" (p. 45). The chapter on working mothers assumes that women work outside the home only for self-fulfillment.

Overall, this book is easy to read (the short chapters are like essays), and the advice is low-key. The volume is filled with humor and many appropriate anecdotes. This form helps create more of a dialogue with the reader than is usual in parenting books.

LeShan also gives examples of her own failures, both as a parent and as an "expert." Few authors include this important aspect of parenting.

Dr. Lee Salk is another author with a generally humanist approach to child-rearing. In **Preparing for Parenthood**, Salk takes to task what he calls "cookbook style" parenting books which supply "recipes" but omit the ingredients necessary for successful child-rearing. He feels it is essential to understand the causes of children's behavior and that parents are "capable of making intelligent and correct decisions if they know what they should about human development" (p. 9).

Salk is keenly aware of changing sex roles. He suggests that all children should get "human survival training," which would include cooking, home maintenance and repair, as well as basic knowledge of child development and care. In addition, Salk avoids the generic "he." (He also refers to doctors as he or she, and includes midwives in his discussion of child-birth.)

Salk is very concerned that father play a crucial role from the beginning. He feels that caring for the newborn is a physically and emotionally exhausting experience requiring two parents. How parental responsibility for child care should be assigned depends upon cultural background,

life style and personal feelings of each member, Salk feels. Although he does not advocate that mothers stay at home, he believes that *one* parent should devote full time to parenting for a child's first nine to eleven months. Ideally he would like to see changed work schedules and more employers sympathetic to the needs of the family. Unfortunately, Salk's one example of a family with two parents working outside the home is negative—a child with a stealing problem is diagnosed as a case of parental neglect.

Other examples in this book suggest that Salk finds the world a very unfriendly place, and, in effect, this book gives parents the impression that bringing up their children pits them against a hostile, outside world. On the other hand, Salk does avoid placing the full blame on parents and acknowledges the role society has played—or rather not played—in creating the optimal conditions for healthy emotional development. He adds that "little effort has been made to accept family needs being at least as important as the needs of industry and government" (p. 188).

What Every Child Would Like His Parents to Know, also by Dr. Salk, focuses on the child after infancy and tackles such issues as weaning, toilet training, sex education and schooling. The book is written in a more formal question-and-answer format. It expresses many of the same attitudes as *Preparing for Parenthood*, but more briefly and with less sensitivity.

Salk encourages father participation, even suggesting joint custody in case of divorce, but here he assumes the mother is the full-time caregiver. In general, this title shows little awareness of changing sex roles, possibly because it was written before *Preparing for Parenthood*. There is talk of "instincts," "natural biological tendencies" and "mother's rhythms." Salk states that "a father's pride in his child's accomplishments and his wish to have a 'chip off the old block' suggests a biological factor" (p. 26). There is nothing to back up these statements, and the author did well to discard them in his later work.

The most comprehensive book (564 pages, with a table of contents that runs seven pages) on child guidance to date is **The Parenting Advisor**. It was compiled by Frank Caplan, who also edited *The First 12 Months of Life* (see p. 7). Each subject area—baby care, child development and parenting advice—was thoroughly researched and there was input from a group of *parents* and child development professionals.

There is up-to-date information on nutrition, learning theory and personality formation. There is a chapter on "Today's Family." Issues such as sex-role stereotyping and racism are included, although in a limited fashion.

The book tries to be objective. A running commentary by the Princeton Center for

Because of its comprehensiveness, The Parenting Advisor is a valuable resource. Excellent photos show a variety of life styles and racial groups.

Infancy is clearly labeled "PCI point of view." Where controversy exists, it reports both sides—and the book goes so far as to include a blatantly sexist essay by Ashley Montagu.

The Parenting Advisor presents a relaxed and realistic picture of child-rearing as an interaction between child's and parent's needs. It applauds the "good-enough" parents who do things well and are "not guilt-ridden for the shortcomings they do have."

The book acknowledges the advantages and disadvantages of day care, but clearly states that the problem is in finding good day care and not in the separation of the child from his or her parents.

Excellent photographs show men and women with varying life styles and from diverse racial groups interacting with their children. But examples in the book are largely directed to middle-class parents. (The last two chapters, in particular, emphasize *things* that can be bought.) Political analysis is minimal, but clear. Changes in our society are seen as the result of personal choices rather than of economic influences.

Because of its scope, *The Parenting Advisor* is a valuable addition to any library and will no doubt find a spot alongside Spock's *Baby and Child Care*.

What Now? A Handbook for New Parents by Mary Lou Rozdilsky and Barbara Banet stands apart from other child guidance books because of its focus on *parents'* needs. Father is considered part of parenting from the very beginning. Both mothers and fathers are seen as

partners in a life crisis that requires all the honesty and caring they can give to each other.

The authors talk openly about emotionally charged issues of early parenting. They recognize babies' space and financial demands and make specific suggestions for different income levels. They are the only authors to discuss the parents' sexual relationship.

This book also differs from other books in its emphasis on breaking through the isolation of nuclear-family parenting. It explores babysitting co-ops, day care, baby equipment exchanges and parent discussion groups as ways of creating mutual support among parents.

Though reporting their own experiences is an asset, the authors limit themselves by this method. The book is restricted to two-parent families and fails to cover other life styles or cultural groups. An expanded version that solicited input from others, particularly Third World parents, could be the basis for a book that would be a vital part of the parents' self-help movement.

In order to find out how the authors of most child-rearing books perceive sex-role socialization we have had to excerpt stray paragraphs and interpret between-the-lines messages. It is particularly refreshing therefore to find an author who is not only upfront about sex-role stereotyping in child development but sees it as important enough to spend a whole book exploring it. Selma Greenberg's **Right From the Start: A Guide to Non-Sexist Child Rearing** is clearly intended to be immediately useful to both parents and child care professionals. In an easy yet credible style the author stresses that to understand child-rearing one must be clear about the impact of the social milieu in which it happens. She builds the case that in our society child behavior is not dependent on innate predispositions nor even on some rational division of labor in society but, rather, is the offshoot of patriarchal society. Thus it is no accident that male theorists (or traditionally socialized female experts) not only do not view stereotyping as confining to children, but, instead, they often have a stake in perpetuating the inequities it leads to.

The feminist perspective on child-rearing is presented as a basically democratic one in which boys and girls, adults and children are encouraged to develop characteristics and decision-making capacities free of preordained judgements. In looking at the "basic issues" found in other parenting manuals—identification, penis envy, oedipal conflicts, sibling rivalry, adolescent rebellion, Greenberg comes to quite different insights than the traditional (read Freudian) positions. Some interactions now taken as standard are seen to be culturally and socially induced and very much open to change as adults begin to reshape their expectations and actions towards children.

The book begins its analysis at the

moment of birth when the "pink and blue syndrome" begins to operate, the battle of the sexes opens and mothers and fathers begin modeling very different forms of nurturant behavior.

In its wit, clarity and belief in change, the book is very heartening. Yet, it misses the opportunity to fill a real gap in our child-rearing information. It is unmistakably talking about middle-class white families most of the time. In addition, although the author is sharp enough to know that the process of oppression in patriarchal society is virtually identical to that in neo-colonial societies, she does not expand her analysis of role stereotyping and liberation from sex to race roles. It is a basic flaw in the feminist movement that so many opportunities to link up these forms of oppression are casually thrown away.

Carrie Carmichael's **Non-Sexist Child-raising** is written for those already convinced of the dangers of sexism and looking for support, information and ideas. Carmichael calls her book a "report" and a "clearinghouse of ideas" and this is precisely what it is. An excellent resource for non-sexist child-rearing, it is rich in anecdotes and examples. Carmichael draws from her own life and from interviews with men, women and children who are trying to break out of the old molds. She explores a lot of new territory—finding new divisions of labor, creating new options and role models for boys and girls, dealing with TV, schools and other ways in which society daily assaults our children with sexism. There is a heavy emphasis on specific ways to counteract sexism. But Carmichael does go further. She acknowledges people's difficulties in dealing with

the issue of homosexuality, their fears that non-sexist children will be "social misfits" and the challenge of not only sex roles but also the power relationships in this society. The book doesn't delve deeply into these conflicts though, and tends to focus on the "positive" examples.

Carmichael demonstrates an awareness of race and class, yet her examples tend to illustrate middle-class options. The relationship of sexism to racism and class is mentioned, but not explored. Like many survey books, this one is comprehensive, but not penetrating. It is, however, a valuable beginning.

Personal Accounts

Personal accounts, the final category, do not offer a great deal of assistance on the daily details of child care, but of all books reviewed they are the most helpful to parents thinking about the complexities of their new role.

Angela McBride's **The Growth and Development of Mothering** is a caring and positive statement. Although she admits the limitations of her own experience and background, her insights are enormous. Parenting to her is a mutual process in which all individuals have a chance for growth.

She feels that most child-care manuals offer contradictory advice, tending to confuse and intimidate parents. She rejects the capitalistic fascination with technology that leads us to blame our parenting mistakes on insufficient knowledge or not enough hard work. Rather, she thinks the unfinished business from our own childhoods, especially the myths surrounding motherhood, interfere with parenting.

McBride does an outstanding job with sex roles. She states that "the educational experience of identification should not be unplanned" and she suggests that every parent give adequate thought to the roles men and women play in this society. She questions the theory of "penis envy" and chastises other authors who present sex roles as unalterable. She feels children get their human values from *both* parents and believes culture plays a dominant role in determining behavior. As far as McBride is concerned, if it takes a restructuring of society to change oppressive stereotypes, then so be it.

This is a moving book with a genuine ring of the familiar and real. McBride's anger strikes a responsive chord, and her visions help clarify our dilemmas. By encouraging us to explore our deepest emotions and deal with the most difficult

parenting conflicts, this book can work to liberate positive energies for personal growth and societal change.

Of Woman Born by Adrienne Rich is both a personal and polemical exploration of the experience and institution of motherhood. Rich draws from her own life as a daughter, feminist and mother, as well as from anthropology, history and literature to give a penetrating analysis of child-rearing in a patriarchal society.

Rich presents the radical feminist view that the concept of illegitimacy, monogamous marriage and the "imprinting and continuation of heterosexual roles" are all oppressions attributable to the patriarchal family. As Rich herself notes, *Of Woman Born* is "not an attack on the family or mothering, *except as defined and restricted under patriarchy*" (p. 14). She places the ambivalence and rage that are so often part of the parenting experience within this political perspective.

Rich is strongest in her discussion of the power-relationships in our society and their effect on parenting. Penis envy, for example, is seen as power-envy rather than a universal psychological truth. Rich also believes that women become possessive of their children in part because it is one of the few expressions of control and power they have. She extends this to an understanding of the mother/son relationship. Here, as a feminist mother of sons, she has many unique insights:

The less our energy and power, as women, is expended on making our sons into our instruments, our agents in a system which has tried to keep us powerless, the less our sons need to live under the burden of their mother's un-lived lives. (p. 207)

Rich also takes on the myth of the Black castrating mother and more accurately accuses "racism, sexism and poverty" (p. 204) as oppressors of the Black family. As an investigation of the ways in which a society can limit and distort expressions of love and nurturance in the parenting process, this eloquently written book will have lasting impact.

Another powerful book based on personal experience is **The Mother Knot** by Jane Lazarre. Written with insight, poetry and compassion, this is an absorbing work with enormous impact. Recounting her personal experiences of parenting, Lazarre explodes the cultural myth of the "good mother."

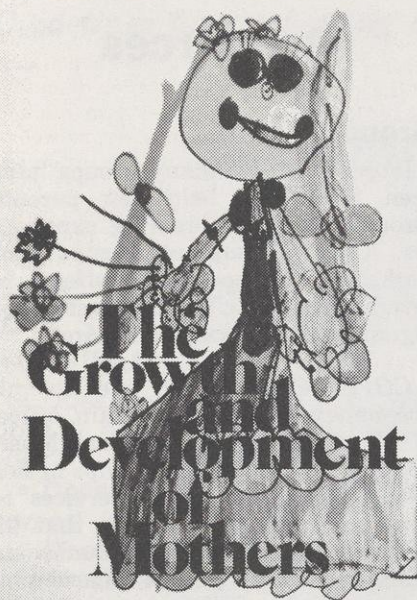
Jane Lazarre's life has been rather atypical. She describes herself as an artist, temperamentally intense and middle class "in a certain sense." From a Communist background, she is white and married to a Black man, and explains that she is "not now nor ever had been a member of the American club." Nonetheless, her *typical* experiences as a woman and mother help expose the oppressive motherhood mystique.

Mother Knot constantly swings from the individual to the universal. Lazarre's me-



Non-Sexist Childraising is a useful resource for parents who want to change traditional sex roles.

ANGELA BARRON McBRIDE



The Growth and Development of Mothers is a personal account that will strike a responsive chord in many mothers.

mories of her mother, who died when she was young, provide real insights into mother-daughter relationships. Her disillusionment with the early stages of the women's movement for its subtle put-down of parenting, her anger at the medical establishment for controlling her child-birth and her pain upon encountering racism give the reader many points of identification. She voices the ambivalence most women have towards their children and their new lives as parents and describes the difficult process of incorporating another human being into an established relationship. She captures the need many women feel to break out of the isolated one-to-one parent/child world.

The last section of *Mother Knot* describes the author's experiences of getting together with other women in a consciousness-raising group, of sharing child care with other couples and of forming a parent-run day-care center. These last incidents, too, are not without conflict but are written with a welcome optimism about people's ability to deal with the problems of parenting when they work together. □

Books Reviewed

Books are rated on the following scale: no stars—not recommended; one star—recommended; two stars—highly recommended.

*Brazelton, T. Berry. *Infants and Mothers: Differences in Development*, Delacorte, 1969, \$12.95; Delta, 1972,

\$5.95. Dramatizes the individuality of infants and parenting styles. Comforting in its appreciation of differences.

*———. *Toddlers and Parents: A Declaration of Independence*, Delacorte, 1974, \$12.95; Delta, 1976, \$5.95. Here, too, Brazelton is aware of the variety of approaches necessary in dealing with the many challenges confronting parents.

*Caplan, Frank, ed. *The First Twelve Months of Life*, Princeton Center for Infancy and Early Childhood/Grosset & Dunlap, 1971, \$12.95; 1973, \$6.95 paper. A wealth of information about early child development, presented in a straightforward manner.

**———. *The Parenting Advisor*, Princeton Center for Infancy/Double-day, 1977, \$12.95. A sophisticated, up-to-date and comprehensive work.

**Carmichael, Carrie. *Non-Sexist Childraising*, Beacon, 1977, \$9.95. A ground-breaking, long-overdue guide. Unfortunately weak on race and class.

Dodson, Fitzhugh. *How to Parent*, New American Library, 1973, \$1.95. Written in a very chatty style, but the book's prescriptive approach and traditional outlook limit its usefulness.

*Fraiberg, Selma H. *The Magic Years: Understanding and Handling the Problems of Early Childhood*, Scribner's, 1968, \$7.95, \$2.95 paper. While out-dated (particularly because of its sexism), this highly readable book is still a skillful interpretation of psychological theory for parents.

———. *Every Child's Birthright*, Basic Books, 1977, \$8.95. A great disappointment. Although Fraiberg remains a staunch advocate of children's rights, her understanding of the causes of today's problems is limited and her suggestions for change are off target.

*Ginott, Haim G. *Between Parent and Child*, Macmillan, 1965, \$6.95; Avon, 1973, \$1.75. A step-by-step guide for developing effective communication with children, undercut by some of the author's out-dated, sexist views.

Gordon, Thomas. *P.E.T. (Parent Effectiveness Training): The Tested New Way to Raise Responsible Children*, McKay, 1970, \$10.95; New American Library, 1975, \$4.95. A script-like, mechanistic approach for dealing with children. The book tends to reduce parenting to a set of techniques.

**Greenberg, Selma. *Right from the*

Start: A Guide to Non-Sexist Child Rearing, Houghton Mifflin, 1978, \$8.95.

**Lazarre, Jane. *The Mother Knot*, McGraw-Hill, 1976, \$7.95; Dell, 1977, \$1.95. Based on personal experience, this book is an absorbing work with many important insights.

Missing Parents

As noted in the article beginning on page 3, the needs of many parents in our society are ignored by most parenting books. The concerns of some of these "missing parents" are addressed in statements that appear throughout this issue.

Chicano Children: Immunize Them Early

In this country minority children are taught that they are of little value. Therefore the pressing problem for Chicano parents is to develop their children's pride in identifying with their own people. We must build new strategies into our child-rearing practices—strategies to teach our children that they are living in a racist, sexist, classist society which they must struggle to change.

It is crucial to provide our children with constant reassurance, so that when they are assaulted by white society—as they will be—they understand that the fault is not their own. Too many of our children are destroyed because they believe that they are to blame for the indignities our society heaps upon poor and minority children.

We must develop our children's skills for critical analysis. The books they read, the TV programs they watch, their school assignments all give out messages which can be harmful. We must take the time to talk with our children and help them learn to analyze these messages and immunize them against racism, sexism and class injustice. And we must help them to become educated, not for the goal of individual "success," but in order to be better prepared to struggle for their people.

A statement by members of the United Parents of East San Diego (California)



Parent Child Development Project, Bank Street College of Education; photo by Elaine Wickens

*LeShan, Eda J. *Natural Parenthood: Raising Your Child Without a Script*, New American Library, 1973, \$.95. Some very tough problems explored with humor and sensitivity.

**McBride, Angela Barron. *The Growth and Development of Mothers*, Harper & Row, 1973, \$9.95; Barnes & Noble, 1974, \$2.25. A moving book that highlights the importance of self-discovery as part of the child-rearing process. While stressing personal awareness, McBride doesn't lose sight of society's influence on parenting.

*Pomerantz, Virginia, with Dodi Schultz. *The First Five Years of Life: A Relaxed Approach to Child Care*, Doubleday, 1973, \$6.95; Dell, 1976, \$1.75. Well-titled. A relaxed view of some very basic issues in child care.

**Rich, Adrienne. *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution*, Norton, 1976, \$8.95; Bantam, 1977, \$2.95. Eloquently combines the personal and political aspects of motherhood. A profound and powerful book.

**Rozdilsky, Mary Lou and Barbara Banet. *What Now? A Handbook for New Parents*, Scribner's, 1975, \$2.95. A must for every library. Covers topics of concern for new parents with sensitivity and frankness. Demonstrates a respect for parents' abilities and caring.

*Salk, Lee. *Preparing for Parenthood*, McKay, 1974, \$7.95; Bantam, 1975, \$1.95. Deals with emotional and psychological impact of pregnancy. Especially helpful for expectant parents.

*———. *What Every Child Would Like His Parents to Know*, McKay, 1972, \$7.95; Warner, 1973, \$1.95. Question and answer format focusing primarily on the emotional development of the young child.

**Spock, Benjamin. *Baby and Child Care*, Simon & Schuster, 1976, \$1.95. The basic text for parents. It is still an excellent reference on everyday child care. Make sure to get this revised edition.

About the Authors

VICKI BREITBART, parent of two children, has taught early childhood education and worked with various parent groups. She is also author of *The Day Care Book (Knopf)* and co-author of *Open for Children (McGraw-Hill)*. BARBARA SCHRAM is co-ordinator of the Human Services Program in the School of Education, Northeastern University. The parent of one child, she has worked as a community organizer for welfare rights and community participation in schools and is active in several feminist groups.

Resources

Groups

In recent years many groups have been formed to help new parents through early child-rearing experiences. Courses, support groups and workshops are now being offered in several different cities by a variety of organizations; among them are:

COPE (Coping with the Overall Pregnancy Experience), main office: 37 Clarendon Street, Boston, Mass. 02116. One of the oldest groups in this new field, COPE offers services to expectant and new parents that include support groups, individual counseling, workshops, crisis intervention and referrals. COPE is staffed by professionals and provides a sliding scale for its individual and group sessions.

MOMMA, P.O. Box 5759, Santa Monica, Cal. 90405. An organization of single mothers, this California-based group with 50 nationwide chapters provides information on starting other chapters, publishes a newspaper and compiled *MOMMA: The Sourcebook for Single Mothers*, reviewed elsewhere in this issue.

Mothers Center, P.S. 179, (196-25 Peck Avenue), Fresh Meadows, N.Y. This is a mutual-support group which emphasizes a self-help approach. For a \$15 yearly membership fee mothers can participate in discussion groups led by center members who have been trained as group leaders.

Books

Parents' Yellow Pages, a directory by the Princeton Center for Infancy, Frank Caplan, editor, Anchor Books/Doubleday, 1978, \$7.95.

A compendium of information, suggestions and resources covering a multitude of topics from Abortion to Zoos. The political perspective is sometimes questionable and a stronger feminist perspective would be desirable in the essays, but the breadth of coverage and the inclusion of so many resources make this a helpful tool.

Parenting Books: Check 'Em Out

DOES THE BOOK DISCUSS PARENTING IN A SOCIETAL RATHER THAN INDIVIDUAL CONTEXT?

• Does the book focus on families in isolation? Does it encourage private rather than group solutions?

• Does the book suggest that families are "safe havens" in a dangerous world?

• Does the book imply that if anything goes wrong it is essentially the parents' fault?

• Does the book promote individuality (an appreciation of people's differences) or does it stress an individualism that encourages a competitive, dog-eat-dog mentality?

• Does the book suggest ways to counter the isolation of the nuclear family to insure that children interact with people from different cultures, with older people, etc.?

• Does the book acknowledge the value of extended relationships outside the immediate family group?

DOES THE BOOK REFLECT THE REALITIES OF CONTEMPORARY FAMILY LIFE?

• Does the book imply that a two-parent family with the woman in charge of full-time child care and the man the breadwinner is the only "normal" or "healthy" family?

• Does the book present different racial groups in both text and illustrations or does it assume that the reader is white, middle-class, Anglo-Saxon?

• Is the book sexist in its presentation of parenting roles?

• Are various lifestyles—single parenting, men as chief nurturer, gay parents, disabled parents, older parents, etc.—presented? Are they labeled "special problems"?

• Are differences in income levels taken into account?

• Does the book recognize that parents—as well as children—have needs?

• Does the book supply positive suggestions on such complex issues as sex education, discipline, TV viewing?

• Does the book stress a materialistic, buy-things approach to child-rearing?

DOES THE BOOK PRESENT PARENTING AS AN ON-GOING, NOT-ALWAYS-SIMPLE PROCESS, NOT AS A SCIENCE OR TECHNOLOGY?

• Is the tone authoritarian? Directive? Prescriptive? Elitist?

• Does the author offer a "script" that implies that there is a correct answer for every problem?

• Is the author clear about what is "fact" and what is "opinion"?

• Does the book encourage false expectations about conflict-free child-rearing or does it give a realistic picture of the on-going adjustments and changes that take place?

• Does the author empower parents by giving them enough information to make informed judgements relevant to their own situation?

DOES THE BOOK DISCUSS PARENTING IN A SOCIO-POLITICAL CONTEXT?

• Does the author see parenting as an interaction between parents, child and society?

• Does the book acknowledge the racism, sexism, ageism and classism in our society? Does it provide insights that will be helpful to parents in combatting these "isms"?

• Does the book address itself to the problems faced by minority group parents in a racist society?

• Does the book acknowledge differences in cultural values?

• Does the author assume the existence of "universal truths" or is social conditioning acknowledged?

• Does the author seem to understand the politics of such issues as day care, welfare, health delivery systems, etc.?

• When discussing topics such as discipline, punishment, violence and aggression, does the author relate them to the issues of power, control, hierarchy within the family and society as a whole?

• Does the book accept existing societal values or suggest ways that parents—and children—can struggle against oppression?

Books are, at last, being written for Black parents—but what are they saying?

BLACK PARENTING: A Collective Concern

By Geraldine L. Wilson

The Black community has always valued the idea of “raisin’” or “bringin’ up” children as a vital, collective concept and aspiration. Both expressions have been our way of characterizing a whole array of mutually understood (and sometimes not-so-well-understood) goals, rules, regulations, responsibilities, issues, agreements, disagreements and ancestral mandates about what folk should do with children.

“Raisin’ children” or “bringin’ em up” have become, in a sense, our cultural symbols embodying our spoken and unspoken values (attitudes/beliefs and behaviors) and providing guidelines and directions understood to be mutually important, necessary, crucial (whether we agree on them or not). The mandates have provided historical collective roles and responsibilities, giving a reasonable flexibility that is rooted in our heritage and required of us by our experiences.

Some of us consider that we have strayed from the principles of our child-rearing in an attempt to become something other than who we are. However, the conference programs of Black organizations over the last ten years stand as dramatic documentation of what Robert Lovell (author of *Black Song—The Forge and the Flame*) called the African’s “ineradicable sense of family.” The conference themes and workshops stand as testimony to two facts. *One*: The issues of child-rearing and raising children are not separate from family. *Two*: The raising of Black children is viewed as a collective concern and task.

There were—and continue to be— one-day conferences, two-, three-, four-

day conferences about children and families—we always conferencin’ about family and children! “Talkin’ and testifyin’” together about children and how we should raise them. It is inevitable that books about the care of Black children would grow out of all that concern.

To some of us, the growth and widespread use of the word “parenting” is a fascinating phenomenon that has the potential for further eroding the Black community’s traditional collective work in raising children. As a context for discussing aspects of the care of Black children, “parenting” seems too limiting. It excludes, by definition, participation of the collective. The Oxford English Dictionary reveals the Roman-Franco-Anglo-Germanic origins and meaning of the word. In meaning, thought and practice, now as in the past, parenting implies and reinforces a specifically Western concept. Traditionally it has meant that the male and female biological creators of the child, with the approval and certification of the state, are legally responsible for children and are, therefore, the only ones who can be held accountable for children’s behavior. (Only on rare occasions does the state give legal responsibility to someone else.)

Black folks have been in too many conflicts with the law about the Anglo-Judeo-Christian concept of who “owns” the children to fully accept the meaning of *parenting*. Adoption agencies have policies which prevent Black relatives from legally adopting their families’ children. Courts and social workers have consistently denied brothers, sisters and cousins the right to care for their kin. Presently, Black families are being denied the

right to adopt the children of interracial unions (such children being, for the first time in history, called biracial, not Black). All of these practices mean, in effect, that Blacks can’t become parents! Additionally, lots of “home-based” early childhood programs have been started in Black and some poor white communities. The programs are architected by white professionals and focus on teaching “parenting skills,” implying the need for “professional” help (without it, you can’t become parents!). So, some of us are suspicious of the paternal verb *to parent*—of its meaning, its present use and its potential for eroding the strength of our child-rearing system.

Any book written about the care and the caring system of Black children should grapple with two major areas that have had profound effects on our child-rearing. *One*: This society’s consistent struggle to change Black people (inferior us), through cultural repression, into something we have resisted becoming (controllable). *Two*: The books must carefully lay out for examination the ways in which we have *in fact* grown and developed. That growth and development must be portrayed independent and apart from the many major myths about us that have been constructed out of psychological, historical, sociological, psychoanalytic and child development theories.

The Black Child: A Parents’ Guide by Phyllis Harrison-Ross and Barbara Wyden is a warm, chatty, comforting book, filled with anecdotes and incidents about Black and some white parents struggling to explain the destructive absurdities of racism and emphasis on color to young chil-

dren. Mostly it is about Black parents, their children, the effects of racism on them as individuals and its impact on their relationships.

The authors use the anecdotes and incidents as vehicles to illustrate and examine some of the painful—yet to be expected—dynamics between children and adults as the adults first try to understand their own feelings about color, and then try to explain to children, in reasoned ways, an unreasonable way of life. Adults who have been looking for some possible explanations of racism that could be shared with children will find them in this book. In addition, the chapters on drugs and discipline are thoughtful, well-done, specific and direct. They should be helpful to parents and other family members.

However, those aspects of the book which offer parents incomplete or unhelpful answers are profoundly disturbing. For example, it is stated that, "Apart from color, there is no difference between Black and white except the emotional crippling [sic] imposed on a minority in a racist society." Aside from being false, this position creates a standard and/or negative deficit approach to Black life. The truth is, there *are* differences in Black life: in language, thought, movement, philosophy and child-rearing, among other things. These differences can cause children as much difficulty outside of the Black community as their color—indeed, sometimes more. Also, the emotional and psychological damage to whites through their participation in racism has only begun to be chronicled. The negative deficit context of the book creates a kind of umbrella of powerlessness that prevents the vibrancy and resiliency which characterize Black life from ever coming through.

This negative approach by the authors is further reinforced by the jacket's claim that the book will tell parents "How to Overcome the Problems of Raising Black Children in a White World." Children need to know correct mathematical proportions, don't they? The world is not white. It is largely Black and Asian. That reality needs to be tied to the serious child-rearing issues of how Black adults define, perceive and teach power or powerlessness to their young.

It is unfortunate that both this book and **Black Child Care—How to Bring Up a Healthy Black Child**



Bill Hilton

in America by James Comer and Alvin Poussaint reflect the position that the world is white. By so doing, they exacerbate Black readers' feelings of powerlessness and perpetuate, for all readers, a myth.

In addition, because the authors feel the world is white, they rule out a host of functional Black solutions to problems of child-rearing that should be included in books about raising Black children. Some—certainly not all—of those solutions have helped us deal with fear, anger and powerlessness. Could it be that the authors' incorrect claims about the all-white world and the "mainstream" are also responsible for both books' positions about Black people and anger? Black children don't need traditional myths about anger. Some of the most concerned, creative, productive, rational, political, strategic and loving Black people I know are angry *all the time*. And they've developed ways of dealing with it. We desperately need to use the characteristics and strategies of such folk as resources for parents because recognizing and handling anger is a tough issue. The Harrison-Ross/Wyden and Comer/Poussaint books are not helpful in this regard.

The bibliographies in each of these books (except for a too-short section of books by Black authors in the Comer/Poussaint book) are depressing and painful to read. The Harrison-Ross/Wyden one is blessedly brief. The Comer/Poussaint one is unrelievedly long. Neither is very helpful,

and they neglect resources that bring to light the work on Black child-rearing which has been done in the past by Black scholars. The Comer/Poussaint bibliography includes books by some of the white behavioral scientists who are architects of deficit theory about Black children. Why are they listed?

Another "Why?" has to do with the choice of chapter titles in the Harrison-Ross/Wyden book. The entries in the Table of Contents and the description of "the Black child" in the Introduction put me in shock. No joy? No humor? No love? No sassiness? No defiance? Why no discussion of these traditional behaviors taught to young Black children as cultural, political responses to their environment?

Lastly, both books seem to be based on the assumption that Blacks and whites share equal responsibility and power for the phenomena of institutional and personal racism. Among the solutions offered are that if both Blacks and whites work hard to get rid of anger and fear, "the problem" will go away. Some of "it" probably would. However, we need a more comprehensive answer than this. In order to raise children to understand and deal constructively and directly with racism, economic and political exploitation, force and cultural repression, we need bold new approaches based on some traditional handling of the anger, the fear and the resistance that has worked for us in the past.



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The Comer/Poussaint book is an interesting phenomenon. It has stirred controversy because of the polar opinions about it. Many college and university staff who teach anything related to Black children use it as text, and a large insurance company has endorsed and disseminated it in large quantities. The book will undoubtedly answer some questions for some people satisfactorily. But the aura of powerlessness that pervades the book, the emphasis on competitiveness (you know, I'm through with arguments that we can't compete; we need to chronicle the methods that *bar* our starting at the line and the change of rules that occurs as we approach the finish line), the "middle-classness," the strong endorsement of individualism and the authors' repeated support of fairy tales are alarming.

Comer/Poussaint must come to terms with seven-year-olds who are die-hard racists. Most child development books continue to ignore this ugly reality. Black and concerned white adults seem unable to deal with the fact that there are four- and five-year-old white children who refuse to play with Black children on the basis of color. I was recently in a classroom where a white male teacher daily lets 2 white five-year-olds bully 13 Black children. Obviously, the five-year-olds are not responsible and can be helped to change. But how can we change society, if solutions in impor-

tant books are based on inaccurate information about the reality of child life in this society?

Comer/Poussaint believe that Euro-American psychological principles of human behavior are universally applicable to all, instead of recognizing them for the cultural, conceptual, political artifacts that they actually are. This view weakens the book considerably; the authors' perspective allows them to ignore the loyalty many Blacks have for each other, their resistance to oppression and, in some instances, their considered choice not to be like whites. Children learn such behaviors when Black adults in their environment exhibit them. The Comer/Poussaint perspective obscures some of the nuances of colonialism and the subtleties of Black resistance and protection.

What can be called "extraordinary statements" pop up throughout the Comer/Poussaint book. One is that TV now portrays "healthy and successful Black families." I've been a constant TV monitor. Where are they? Another questionable statement is, "Black excellence is too apparent for the negative message to do much damage to the self-concept." Black parents need to know that as long as racism persists, its power and capacity to weaken self-concept presents a threat. There is another shocking statement in the authors' answer on what to do about rape: "Black women should demand more protection in

their communities." Rape is, of course, a matter for family and community concern; men should be equal partners in the fight against rape.

Clara J. McLaughlin has written, with the resource assistance of three physicians, a very important book—**The Black Parents Handbook: A Guide to Healthy Pregnancy, Birth and Child Care.** It is specific and clear. It is rooted in common sense, which is highly valued in the Black community (if it is perceived that you don't have sense—not brains! Everybody has them!—you are counselled to get some from **SOME** place!). In the Introduction the author speaks sharply, as an informed mother, to the heart of what must be the issue for Black folk in this society—our differentness.

McLaughlin briefly describes some of the physiological differentness—in motor development, teeth eruption, developmental patterns, etc.—shown by Black infants and toddlers. Some of these differences have been documented in other fields, primarily anthropology, but ignored by psychologists and educators. McLaughlin includes the revelation that none of this information is in infant care and medical texts.

Citing the prevalence of inappropriate physical developmental growth scales that are applied to Black infants, McLaughlin is right on target. As a matter of fact, her ultimate intent seems to have been to help us all raise some profound and common sense questions about the validity of the wide range of tests to which we subject our children. The message of her book, while it is primarily for Black parents, should be made available to all the behavioral, social and medical scientists and practitioners who have labeled our differentness "deviance." It would have helped us greatly had McLaughlin cited her references. Black students and others of us desperately need documentation of the reality of our differences when we run into the "prove-it" wall erected by professors and others who insist that "everybody is the same" while they pour out our children's supposed negative differences.

McLaughlin's book is set in a context of Black child-rearing, and she makes clear that her work is not based on traditional child development theories. The Comer/Poussaint book—and therefore some of its projected solutions—is weakened consid-

erably by the authors' decision to organize it uncritically around child development theories. Many of the theories, which are rooted in a competitive, individualistic value system, often stand in contradiction to *our* child-rearing system and to some of the realities we have to face. As a result, their messages are frequently contradictory and their view of some of our children's behavior comes across as negative.

McLaughlin, by contrast, steps right on out there and deals head-on with the elitist, economic and divisive class factor that pervades child development theories. She states that "children who continue to receive emotional warmth after the first two years of life regardless of family status, attain greater academic advancement, usually have a higher opinion of themselves and show a high regard for others." This is offered following her indication that the studies she examined show that the "educational and financial status of parents" does not necessarily have a negative effect on the development of the infant. In contrast, Comer/Poussaint have a strong allegiance to the "middle class experience" for children as a major indicator of the "achievement of success" (it may have been so for the authors; it is not so for most of us).

McLaughlin is to be commended for dealing with class directly. Moreover, in so doing she rejects a major myth in this society that "intellect" is a middle-class phenomenon. She recognizes that the Euro-American class-bias view (a) obscures the presence of many African-based and African/American behaviors that can be found in Black families regardless of income, and (b) incorrectly describes such behavior as "lower class." (Those of us who are "middle class" or aspire to "middle classness" then spend important psychic energy suppressing "lower class," i.e., African-based behaviors, thereby assisting in the process of cultural repression.)

In the direct style of teaching valued by many Black folk, McLaughlin presents examples of what we should and should not do and say to children through the use of proverb-like sayings. Her approach implies that, as my mother used to say to me, "Only those who love you will tell you the *real* truth." McLaughlin wants us to push against what she shows us so we can struggle hard to do a good job of raising our children. No nonsense!

(This is in contrast to a disquieting air of potentially destructive middle-class permissiveness in the Comer/Poussaint book.) McLaughlin provides accurate information in brisk, clear and enthusiastic fashion. She *expects* you to stop "trying" and DO IT! She *expects* you to work at and master the job of rearing children.

The weakest, least helpful chapter in the book is the one about communication. Unfortunately, McLaughlin joins Comer/Poussaint and countless respectable others who seem to have little or no understanding of the functions and characteristics of language or its developmental processes. Like her colleagues, she echoes the myths and destructive descriptions of our linguistic behavior. This lack of accurate information contributes to our shame in the face of white assaults on the nature, form and content of our speech and language. In our shame,

we submit our children to ridiculous, impossible tests and inhuman, impossible classroom demands about how to use language. The issue of our language and speech must be resolved soon!

McLaughlin, nevertheless, provides us with a good model for starting the serious job of analyzing and describing Black children's behavior for parents, extended family and community members—which, by definition, includes Black behavioral scientists and researchers. Mothers like McLaughlin should lead the way. For those who are not Black and who work with Black children, she has provided important information regarding some of the bases and forms of our children's behavior and our expectations for them. Among the things that encourage and lift me about the McLaughlin book are:

1. The author's early and repeated

Hispanics: Bolstering Cultural Strengths

I think that what is needed is not so much a book for parents but a study guide for those *working* with parents from other cultures.

When people work with parents from other cultures, they should be able to recognize what is harmful and should be changed, what is helpful (even if not to their liking) and should be encouraged, and what they simply don't understand and should leave alone. The crucial question to me is how you identify people's strengths, whatever their culture and background, and bolster them. In this society Hispanic parents are in particular need of reassurance since they are undermined by every social system there is. And it's important to eliminate the negative quasi-parental role that many professionals play.

People need help in building bridges from what was to what is. For example, with increasing urbanization and isolation, parents need ways to replace the benefits of the extended family. They should be encouraged to seek out others in the same situation and develop group solutions.

People also need to recognize that the difficulties they have in

surviving are societal, rather than personal, failures. That's the beginning of feeling stronger. Recognizing one's anger is also a crucial step.

It's also important that women see themselves as more than just care-takers of children. Patronizing health-care professionals who ignore the complicated realities of women's lives, who refer to their clients as "Mama," constrict and limit women. When I grew up and began raising my children, Puerto Rican culture was more sexist. I wish that someone had sparked my thinking in a critical way.

There is a great need, too, for books geared to working-class parents. These are people who have never been heard. I would like to see materials—kits, perhaps—that would encourage discussions, start the kind of dialog between parents that is missing from existing books. The emphasis should be on what works for people within different cultures and different classes.

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Photo by Jim Levine. Distributed through the Non-Sexist Child Development Project of the Women's Action Alliance, Inc.

use of, and reference to, the word "respect"—an important behavioral value and goal in the Black community.

2. The graphs documenting the nutritious value of foods like collards and sardines for the young. McLaughlin cautions us not to put down these nutritious foods because we've been brainwashed to believe they are "poor man's food."

3. The chapter on Black folk medicine (though its import is weakened by the use of words like "superstition," "voodoo" and "witch doctor"). Given the awesome repression of African religions, McLaughlin does a fair job. It is our collective task to begin to understand and make some present-day sense of what was and what remains of our traditional belief and healing systems and our spiritual world view. McLaughlin points out the persistence of these views in our lives, even in the "middle class."

4. The warning about TV as a major cause of Black feelings of inferiority. She cautions parents about it most seriously.

5. The book's emphasis on the importance of naming children, a serious tradition in our culture. I can't agree, though, with her view that we shouldn't continue naming girls after fathers and other valued men. It's a nice tradition in the Black community to name "regardless of gender." Clem,

Willie, Johnnie are nice names for girls, if we say so. And we can add May and Belle to them, if we like!

6. McLaughlin's encouragement to parents to actively attend to the preservation of cultural behavior (a serious neglect in the Comer/Poussaint and Harrison-Ross/Wyden books).

7. Reference to the traditional importance of attending to the child's spiritual life. Things of the spirit are an important part of how Black children see and understand the behavioral and natural environment.

8. The caution to watch out for "degradation" of our children and their intellect by social scientists (see pages 127 and 128: they're important!).

9. The author's discussion of young children's need to have playmates their own age and/or older who can "teach" them. This reference sanctions an important African-based behavioral/cultural tradition—the system of care of younger children by older ones.

10. Reference to the importance of play and music. (I am extremely agitated by the Comer/Poussaint covert paternalism about our traditions of music and excellence in sports. It's other folks' problem if they think that all we do or can do is sing, dance and play basketball!)

11. The chapter on discipline. McLaughlin distinguishes punish-

ment from discipline and makes clear that discipline is a time-honored system for teaching Black children. She feels that if any one has a "Terrible Two" (a reference to a famous child development film), it's because that child is being poorly disciplined and trained—reflection on the adult.

McLaughlin has done a serious, caring job. She should have our thanks and respect for setting positive directions for the books that will inevitably be written in the future about the cultural/aesthetic, problem-solving, physical, psychological and emotional development of young Black children. Such books will help older children and adults in their complex job of raising young children. Serious decisions must be made about discarding, changing and preserving our behavior. We need well-written books that are carefully researched, that are rooted in the realities of this social system and in our cultural heritage. All books written for and/or about children must be analyzed using these criteria. Books that meet these criteria can help us make the right decisions about Black child-rearing and about what should go into that precious process. □

Books Reviewed

Books are rated on the following scale: no stars—not recommended; one star—recommended; two stars—highly recommended.

Comer, James and Alvin F. Poussaint. *Black Child Care—How to Bring Up a Healthy Black Child in America: A Guide to Emotional and Psychological Development*; Simon & Schuster, 1975, \$9.95; \$1.95 paper.

Harrison-Ross, Phyllis and Barbara Wyden. *The Black Child: A Parents' Guide*; McKay, 1973, \$9.95.

**McLaughlin, Clara J. *The Black Parents Handbook: A Guide to the Facts of Pregnancy, Birth and Child Care*; Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976, \$10; \$3.95 paper.

About the Author

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At first glance, the new fathering books seem to indicate that the revolution is here; however, a closer look at 7 books reveals many old messages.

FATHERING: What If He Bends the Twig?

By Eric Breitbart

Few parenting books are written with fathers in mind. Experts are always willing to give advice on raising children to mothers, but men are assumed to be out raising the family's living standard. Increasingly, though, men *are* seeking ways to spend time with their children, and more attention has been focused on the importance of the father's role, particularly with young children. Since few men have had a nurturing father for a model or have been socialized into the role, the need for advice, support and assistance is urgent.

In selecting books for discussion in this issue, I was looking for both those that direct their parenting advice specifically at fathers and for others concerned with the general concept of fatherhood. Since I am not a child development expert, I read and evaluated the books primarily from my own experience as a father who has spent a lot of time with his children (now aged three and seven). In analyzing the books I asked: Is the advice given relevant only to me as a father, or should it be directed at both parents? How does the advice fit in with my own experience? Is the advice helpful, and would it be useful for other men helping to raise children? Does the book give a historical perspective on the father's role? Is there consciousness of class, race or cultural differences?

One general problem about fathering books is that they tend to reflect the dominant values of our society. "Fathering" is discussed as a concept unrelated to race, class or age. In fact, the father being talked about is *assumed* to be white and middle class; when any exception to this does appear (and it rarely does), it is considered, as in *Father Power*, to be a

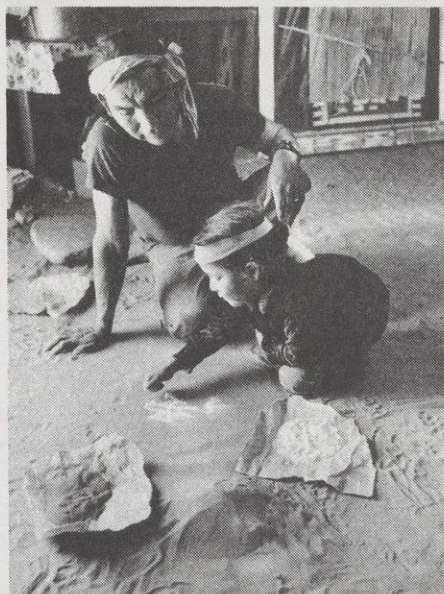


Photo by Bernard Wolf from *Tinker and the Medicine Man: The Story of a Navajo Boy of Monument Valley* (Random House)

"special problem." The authors all seem to assume that fathers should be brought back into the family to do a *better* job of instilling societal values, rather than questioning or changing them. This assumption is never stated or examined. In addition, authors too often also assume that the qualities that make a man successful in business can be transferred to the home, rather than seeing that change is needed in both spheres.

Reviews of the books I examined follow, in order of their publication date.

How to Father by Dr. Fitzhugh Dodson, Signet Books, 1974, 497 pages, \$1.95.

As a follow-up to his best-selling

("over 1/2 million copies in print") *How to Parent* (see p. 7), Dodson's book is, in some sense, mistitled. Aside from an opening chapter, there is little specific discussion of the father's role. The core of the book is meant to be a comprehensive child development manual from birth to adulthood, based primarily on the Gesell Institute studies, and it should be directed at *both* parents (in families where there *are* two parents). In the brief discussion of the fathering role, judgmental statements are offered with little justification or discussion. We are told:

Fatherhood was meant to be a deeply satisfying experience. Few things are more rewarding emotionally than the delight a man gets from satisfactorily guiding his children.

"Satisfactory guidance" is defined in the section on discipline as "being motivated to behave in socially desirable ways and to avoid socially undesirable behavior." None of these value-laden terms is defined, nor is it explained why our society places so many barriers between men and what is meant to be a "deeply satisfying experience." Because Dodson assumes fathers to be ignorant of any knowledge about children (although, out of fairness, it should be noted that he considers mothers equally ignorant), he dispenses his ideas with a breezy, light-handed authoritarianism, with rarely a nod to his sources or justification for his conclusions.

Since *How to Father* strives for completeness, the book contains over 150 pages (a third of the book's total length) of lists of things to do and make, other books on parenting, and books, toys and records. The sheer amount of this material alone is over-



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whelming: over 800 books are recommended for three-to-six-year-olds alone.

While Dodson does mention the limitations of the Gesell studies and says they are not intended to be used as models, the way they are presented in this book leaves little room for the average parent to do otherwise. The studies do little to reassure the parents of children who do not match the model.

The book also encourages sex-role stereotyping. At age eight, we are told, boys will dramatize "air raids, accidents, fighting and bombing" while girls are "more sedentary." Age seven is "an excellent time for a father to help a girl appreciate her

femininity." In early adolescence, boys will be interested in "radio, photography, model construction and sports"; girls will be interested in "sewing, macrame, cooking and the creative arts." While this book may preach father involvement, it does little to encourage it in the next generation.

The Expectant Father by Dr. George Schaefer, *Everyday Handbooks*, 1974, 167 pages, \$1.95.

An advice-giving guide, this book is at its best in the chapters devoted to explaining the nature of conception and pre-natal growth. Although some illustrations would have been helpful, the text is clear and straight-forward.

The book urges fathers to be involved in the delivery of their children, and its medical glossary is a useful guide to a language that is too often used to disconcert and intimidate. Although the medical information is helpful, there is a patronizing tone of trust-the-doctor-and-all-will-be-well.

The book touches on other aspects of the father's role from sex education to the costs of raising a child. The fact that this last area is the longest chapter (and ends the book) tends to shift the emphasis from becoming an involved father to the "real" concerns of a father—getting the money to pay for it all. While most of the cases used as examples tend to be extreme, and often silly, there are two warm and positive anecdotes about older fathers. "Older" men are a rarity in fatherhood books, where the "average" father is a successful executive in his mid-thirties.

Bachelor Fatherhood by Michael McFadden, Walker, 1974, 158 pages, \$7.95.

McFadden's book is drawn from his own life and interviews with 50 other bachelor fathers (a number of them writers) and is subtitled "How to Raise and Enjoy Your Children As a Single Parent." "Enjoy" should be emphasized, perhaps, because for McFadden, being a single parent means, above all, having a Good Time.

Divorce gave McFadden the opportunity to discover himself, his options and the fact that being a single parent father in Laguna Beach gives you the best of bachelorhood and fatherhood. In what appears to be a vast support community of attractive, successful, divorced men and women, McFadden has found a way to have fun with his kids, his job and his social life. It has also given him the strength to tell us that "The world offers unlimited options, so just trust yourself and with the help of God you'll find what is best for you and your children" (p. 52).

The book also includes recipes, ways for dealing with laundry (the author's pet peeve), attractive young housekeepers, teen-age drug use, and a bibliography that includes *Open Marriage*, *Stranger in A Strange Land*, *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* and *Baby and Child Care*. "Hang loose" is the message here, which seems to be how they do things out there.

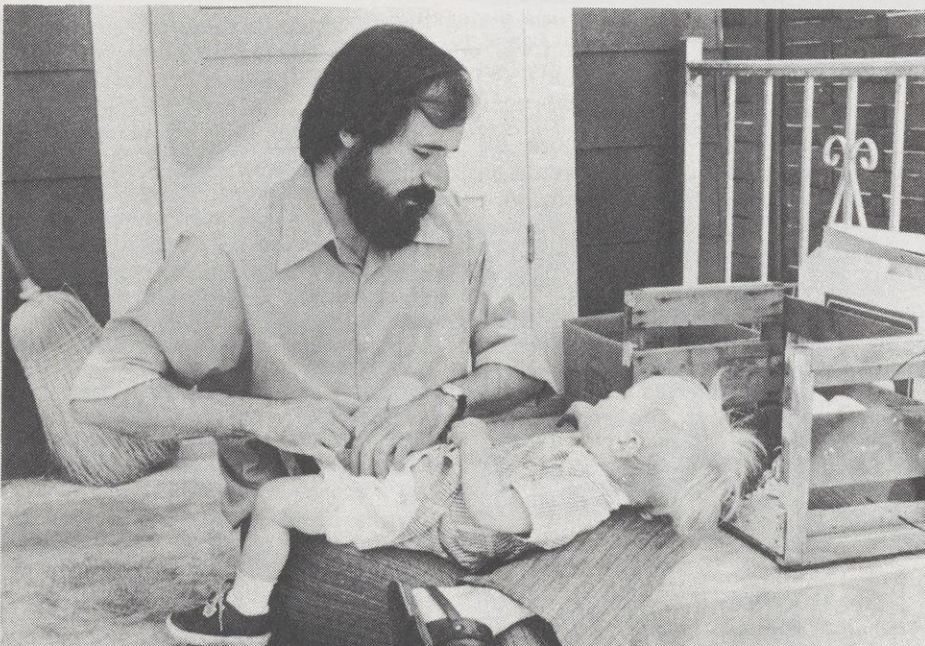


Photo by Jim Levine. Distributed through the Non-Sexist Child Development Project of the Women's Action Alliance, Inc.

Single parent fathers have a chapter in Carol Klein's *The Single Parent Experience* (see p. 26).

Father Power by Henry Biller Ph.D. and Dennis Meredith, Anchor Books, 1975, 390 pages, \$3.50.

As the authors state, this is a one-sided book. In reaction to the father's absence from most child-care manuals, *Father Power* brings him back—sometimes with a vengeance. While I can't quarrel with the authors' definition—"Father power is the use of your profound, natural influence to help your child become what he wants to be" (I might quarrel with the sexist language)—the authors' overuse of the word "power" speaks more to the powerlessness they see in most fathers. To redress the balance, a father's role is almost made into the touchstone of human existence, and "superfather" replaces supermother. Men are told to leave their work at the office, even if it means a hurried lunch, because "such a habit is not dangerous if you balance it with a period of rest, relaxation or exercise with your child." What happens with a period of tension, hostility or sleeplessness with your child is, no doubt, another matter. A brief mention is made that successful men generally have had "involved fathers," and several pages are spent on that prize product of a neglectful and aggressive father—Adolph Hitler.

For those of us whose children fall somewhere between these two extremes, there is a great deal of useful advice and support for father involvement, but the authors of this book, like Dodson, have an annoying habit of giving value-laden advice, as in the following:

Your overall disciplinary role is to use the various appropriate means at your disposal to channel the child into a workable relationship with the world around him [sic]. Remember this tenet and you will broaden not only your idea of discipline but also your general philosophy of childraising. To some extent, fathers today have abdicated their role of setting limits for their children. In more than half of American families, fathers play only a minor role in setting such limits. (p. 154)

Like Dodson's "socially acceptable behavior," this "workable relationship" is never explained, but I suspect it is akin to David Reisman's "other-directed" children of the 1950's.

At other times, the analysis is con-

tradictory. The authors state that:

Mothers . . . have been taught not to value aggressiveness and thus they neither encourage it, nor act as a model of it for their daughters. (p. 134)

While both fathers and mothers use physical punishment, mothers may have to resort to it more often than fathers. . . . Women have also been brought up to be less inhibited about using physical punishment on someone smaller than themselves, while you have probably been imbued with a strict code of honor that precludes "bullying." (p. 154)

The book exhibits little consciousness of class or race differences. While there is nothing wrong with the idea that children should be permitted and encouraged to visit their fathers at work and that employers should recognize fathers' responsibilities, the authors *assume* that all fathers are in a position to demand this of their employers, that they would *want* their children to see them at work, and that all workplaces are safe for children. While *Father Power* includes a section on the "Black father," it is relegated to a part of the book entitled "Fathers with Special Problems"—along with the physically handicapped father, the older father, the unwed father—and deals almost exclusively with the effects of father absence. Consider that message!

What's a Father For? by Sara D. Gilbert, Warner Books, 1975, 268 pages, \$1.75.

The book cover tells us that the author interviewed "hundreds of fathers to find out what they wanted to know . . . consulted Drs. Spock, Margaret Mead, Ames and Eda LeShan, and based her book on the theories of Freud, Jung, Piaget, Erikson and others." With this build-up, I expected more. This is a folksy, breezy little book that too often refuses to take itself seriously—a fact underscored by the James Stevenson cartoons which exaggerate and distort points in the book, rather than illustrating them. Although the book assumes a family of in-home mother and at-work father, it has the best consciousness of any of the books about the importance of male nurturing models for young children (particularly boys) and of non-stereotyped behavior for girls. Author Gilbert says:

As his model for masculinity, you owe your son praise for his expressive qualities—his warmth, love, sensitivity

and sharing—as well as for his instrumental and intellectual ones.

Still, Gilbert's use of words at times approaches the absurd, particularly in a chapter that attempts to talk to fathers in language they supposedly understand: "Every pitch needs a windup, and every child needs fathering while it is still little more than a blob."

Perhaps the book's major flaw, and one that it shares with others, is an insistent emphasis on the individual approach to problems, and this becomes especially irksome when the

Disabled Parents in Limbo

Children with disabilities have long been visible in our society—too visible. They have been exploited on fund-raising telethons, as poster children . . . oh, the poor, pitiable child—pity, pity, pity.

It is only in the past few years that society has been willing to realistically perceive disabled children growing into disabled adults. The stereotype has been that disabled adults just do not exist, let alone lead fulfilling lives. Certainly they don't (or shouldn't) marry and have children!

Disabled people were generally seen as asexual. Even when the sexuality of disabled persons was partially accepted, still they were not considered capable of being adequate parents. Children of disabled parents are still taken away from their homes to be sent either to foster homes or institutions, supposedly in the "child's best interest."

With the emerging consciousness, the number of new books about children with disabilities is growing. But the disabled parent is still invisible.

Some parenting books—Dr. Spock for one—now address the problems of disabled children. But the stereotype of the asexual disabled adult dies hard. Deprived of sexuality, the disabled adult cannot be a parent. And so there has been no effort to include them in books on parenting.

Frieda Zames, president of Disabled in Action, New York City.

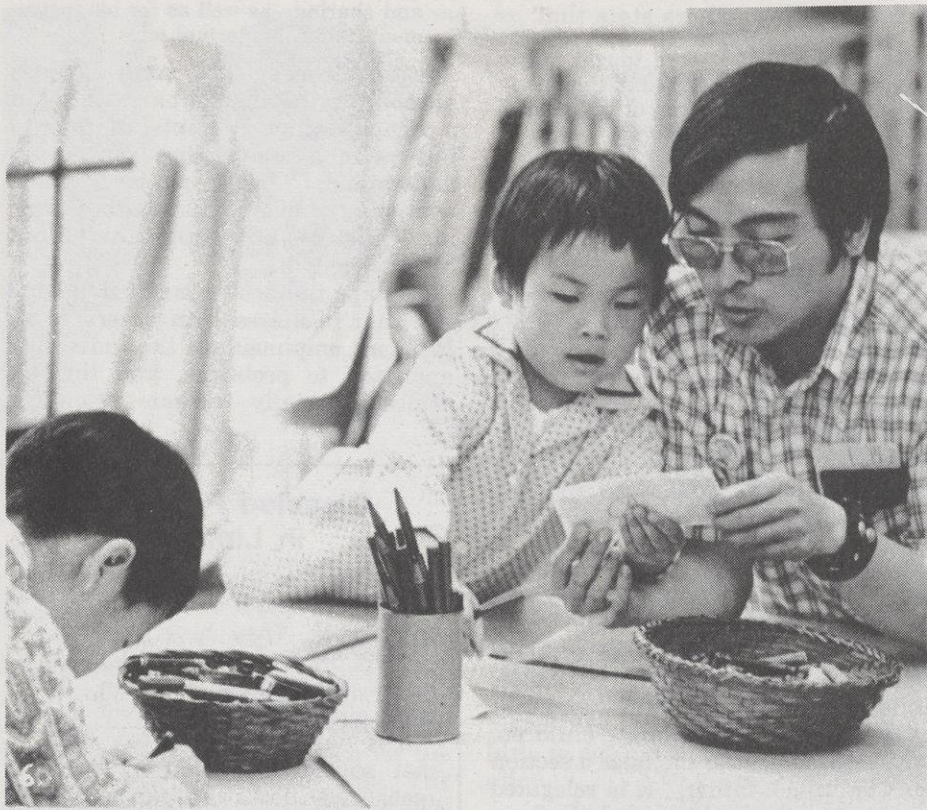


Photo by Jim Levine. Distributed through the Non-Sexist Child Development Project of the Women's Action Alliance, Inc.

author tries to give personal solutions to what are social and political questions. Nowhere is this clearer than at book's end, when Gilbert attempts to sum up an answer to the question posed by the book's title, "What's a Father For?":

"There are no easy answers, you have to look into yourself, assess your own style of life. What are you comfortable with, no matter what tradition or faddism urges on you? *Your* goals, for *yourself*, and *your* children are what count" (emphasis in the original).

Who Will Raise the Children? by James A. Levine, Lippincott, 1976, 192 pages, \$8.95.

Thanks to a Ford Foundation grant, Levine was able to travel around the country interviewing men who had *chosen* to be involved with young children: fathers who fought for custody in divorce cases, couples who had rearranged their work schedules to permit sharing of child care, single men who had adopted children and men who were basically "house-husbands."

Unfortunately, the first-person accounts have a ring of unreality about them because of Levine's insistence

on accentuating the positive aspects of male parenting. In addition, the examples are heavily weighted towards the top rungs of the job ladder—corporate executives, lawyers, college professors—illustrating Levine's statement that, "The higher up you go, the more flexible you can make your time."

The book does discuss psychological and social issues (though not racism) stirred up by conflicts between work and family roles, and it gives examples of Scandinavian social policies that encourage father involvement in child care. It is an intelligent, thought-provoking—though limited—piece of work.

Fathering by Maureen Green, McGraw-Hill, 1976, 230 pages, \$7.95.

While individual fathers are quoted in this book, it is primarily a survey of the fathering role from a cultural perspective. Few of the popular books on fatherhood spend much time looking at the reasons for the decline of the father's role, as Green does, or give examples from the works of Mead and Malinowski of fathering in other cultures to emphasize the social aspect of the father role.

The influence of the women's movement and the limitations of the father's traditional role as breadwinner are discussed in some detail, as is the increased role of the government as provider of services that were once the father's province. I found this quite helpful. By the time Green makes her argument for father involvement, the reader has enough of a historical perspective to understand it. She sees the abandonment of the father's traditional roles as a positive step, one that will permit him to enjoy his children instead of dominating them. As Green says, "By abandoning the excesses of the past, men may find themselves with a less limited part to play in the family."

Part of the success of this book is the author's willingness to see parenting as the responsibility of *both* parents, without overemphasizing the importance of the father's role. Perhaps because she lives in England and therefore has a certain distance from the U.S. parenting scene, Green is able to bring in material (such as Urie Bronfenbrenner's study of child rearing in the U.S. and the Soviet Union) not found in most fathering books.

Conclusions

I would like my children to grow up to be strong, competent, loving adults—and capable not only of adapting to, but of fighting for, change. I understand the importance of my role as a parent in this, but I also want them to know that the entire universe does not revolve around the U.S. white middle-class family, and that individualistic solutions are not the only way to solve problems. For this, I will have to look elsewhere than books about fathers.

Still, these are the books we have. If you feel you must own one, I would suggest *What's a Father For?* It has some good chapters in it, and costs about the same as a box of overnight Pampers. For those with more ample budgets, and a desire for a more comprehensive picture, *Fathering* and *Who Will Raise the Children?* provide additional perspective. □

About the Author

ERIC BREITBART is a free-lance writer, associate director of the Film Forum in New York and the parent of two children.

An overview of relevant literature shows that critical issues missing from books ten years ago are at least being addressed.

ADOPTION AND FOSTER CARE: Very Planned Parenthood

By Barbara Schram

A review of books dealing with adoption and foster care must begin with the caveat that *any* book on the subject written more than ten years ago is hopelessly out of date. Although books from the 1950's and 1960's give scant insight into the current processes or problems of foster care and adoption, they do provide poignant insights into the pervasive stereotyping and pigeonholing that children and adults were subject to just a few years ago.

Traditionally, child custody agencies have been class and race bound. Arbitrary requirements for prospective adoptive parents successfully screened out those who were other than middle class, suburban, married, young and infertile. Since it was assumed that couples wanted to adopt children who were just like them, youngsters who did not fit the same mold were also screened out of the adoption process. Thus, in actual practice, white "healthy" infants were adopted by the so-few middle-class white couples able to pass muster. Non-white, older or disabled children were channeled to the foster care system or consigned to the restrictive, often brutal environment of institutions. Similarly, non-white, non-middle-class, single or older adults were accepted as foster parents only. Agency policies prohibited them from adopting their charges regardless of their demonstrated qualities as parent surrogates.

It is difficult to pinpoint exactly what forces helped to pry open this very closed and discriminatory system. Surely the decline in the birthrate (especially among white women) made those model (white, "healthy") infants rather scarce.



Parent Child Development Project, Bank Street College of Education; photo by Elaine Wickens

The media have distorted the position paper on transracial adoption issued by the National Association of Black Social Workers in 1972. A clarification of that position appears in the box on page 25.

Childless people began looking beyond the dwindling pool of "adoptable children" and demanded access to the larger number of youngsters long labeled "unadoptable." Many of these prospective parents formed citizen pressure groups, and challenged social agency practices through law suits and public media campaigns. It is always difficult to differentiate cause from effect but changes in social attitudes towards marriage, the nuclear family and childbearing pro-

vided impetus to the change. Child development literature began to focus on the totally negative effects of instability and institutionalization on children, exerting still more pressure on agencies to find permanent homes for all children.

Books on adoption reflect these changing concepts. Issues that were totally missing from books ten years ago are now addressed, perhaps not adequately but at least recognized: issues of adopting the so-called "overseas" or "foreign" child, the physically or emotionally disabled child, the older child, the "mixed race" and minority child. The newer books also try to deal with single-parent adoption, independent (non-social agency) adoption, government subsidized adoption and offer the option of expanding one's family by adoption regardless of one's reproductive capacities or desires. Similarly, books on foster care have become much more sensitive to the biases previously built into the system. Most deal thoughtfully with ways in which long-term foster parenting can be changed into permanent adoptive parenting. Some propose new, creative ways in which short-term parenting can be provided outside the nuclear family model.

Although rigidities of the previous system have been substantially softened, adoption and foster parenting are still complex issues riddled with controversy. In selecting the most current and up-to-date books to help parents and care providers, I have made selections from a bibliography available from the Massachusetts Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE), an information clearinghouse at 600 Washington St., Boston, Mass. 02111.

I. The Basic How-To-Do-It Books

Three recent books form the starting point for any comprehensive review of this subject. These are Joan McNamara's *The Adoption Advisor*, Claire Berman's *We Take This Child: A Candid Look at Modern Adoption* and Susan and Elton Klibanoff's *Let's Talk about Adoption*. Libraries would be well advised to carry at least two, if not all three, of these titles. If only one book is to be purchased, my preference is for McNamara's *The Adoption Advisor*. But for a parent or library with limited funds, any one of the three books is worthwhile. A fourth book, *Adopting a Child Today* by Rael Jean Issac and Joseph Spencer, though written too long ago to be completely valid today, does offer a unique section on "psyching out your social worker." (Sadly, game-playing in the more traditional agencies is still necessary.) This book also focuses on the process of independent adoption, which most other books unfortunately lump with illegal adoption. Though adopting a child through a lawyer or doctor is a prac-

tice much maligned by adoption agency personnel, it can be an alternative path for the biological mother fearful of losing all her control to the "social workers" as well as for those prospective parents who do not fit the preconceived molds still in vogue in some agencies.

II. Adoption of the Foreign, Older or Special Needs Child

A number of books, some written by parents who have travelled these paths themselves, offer insights into the adoption process when circumstances make adjustment for child and family a special challenge. While most are engrossing accounts of unusual families, those like Joseph Blank's *Nineteen Steps Up the Mountain* can easily end up frightening away prospective parents. This is the account of a family that added to their own biological children a large number of severely disabled, foreign and minority children. Integrating one sight impaired or paraplegic child into their family would be rather overwhelming for most people. This couple, however,

appears to accomplish the most remarkable feats of adjustment almost effortlessly. This leaves the rest of us—perhaps already struggling to rear one or two children—feeling awkward and incapable. The book fails to deal with the thorny issues of so-called transracial adoptions, and it neglects social attitudes towards disability. The author makes the tacit assumption that love and good intentions will solve all difficulties. Oh, would that it were so! Unhappily, our culture provides anything but a benevolent environment for parenting, and extensive preparations are necessary to prepare ourselves and our children for life in a society filled with racism, sexism and other barriers to bias-free child-rearing.

A less intimidating, but in some ways equally unrealistic picture of a special type of adoption, is offered by Marjorie Margolis in *They Came to Stay*, an autobiographical account of a single woman's adoption of two young Vietnamese girls. Although the author does honestly describe the struggles of adjustment when language and unknown history separate a child and parent, she is a writer-reporter for a major television network and so has at her disposal resources beyond the means of most single parents.

Another personal account by Ann Carey, *No More Here and There: Adopting the Older Child*, is useful but flawed by the writer's very stereotypical ideas about the roles of mother and father ("he is, of course, the final authority"). A resource book written by Alfred Kadushin, a professional social worker, *Adopting Older Children* reports on numerous studies on the subject and is a richer, though more difficult to decipher, treatment. As this issue of the *Bulletin* was going to press, a book with the same title by Claudia Jewitt was published by Harvard Commons Press, and while I have not reviewed it, the book is highly recommended by the MARE clearinghouse mentioned above.

III. Transracial Adoption

No issue in modern adoption policy or practice evokes quite the controversy as does the question of transracial adoption. *We Take This Child*, cited previously, presents the views of the opposing sides in a reasonable fashion although it concludes with the author's clear bias in favor of the

You Took Our Land—Why Take Our Children?

It's difficult to discuss what I, as a Native American, would like to see in parenting books when our people's biggest problem is simply *keeping our own children*. The enforced separation of Indian children from their families is one of the most tragic aspects of Native American life today.

Unjust and unwarranted governmental interference with Native family life is due primarily to racism and ignorance about Native life. Standard Native practices such as entrusting children to members of an extended family are labeled "neglect" and used as grounds for taking our children from us. Government policies continually attempt to coerce Indian families to conform with non-Indian child-rearing standards.

Statistics on the destruction of families are frightening. Approximately 25-35 per cent of all Indian children are separated from their

families and placed in foster homes, adoptive homes or institutions. The disparity in placement rates for Indians and non-Indians is shocking. In Minnesota, Indian children are placed in foster care or in adoptive homes at a per-capita rate five times greater than non-Indian children. In Montana, the ratio of Indian foster-care placement is at least 13 times greater. In the state of Washington, the Indian adoption rate is 19 times greater and the foster-care rate ten times greater. In Wisconsin, the risk run by Indian children of being separated from their parents is nearly 1600 per cent greater than it is for non-Indian children.

If all our children are gone, there is no future.

Mary Gloyne Byler, an Eastern Cherokee, is editor of the newsletter of the Association of American Indian Affairs.

practice. The book adds to understanding the issues by reprinting the 1972 position paper of the National Association of Black Social Workers (NABSW). In this statement the NABSW vehemently opposed the placement of Black children with white families for either adoption or foster care (see box). NABSW members are convinced that children are unable to achieve a healthy self-concept cut off from their own people. This position, reaffirmed in one form or another by other Black professional groups, has effectively stopped or decelerated the adoption of Black children by white families in many states. (This is definitely *not* the case for Native American children as Mary Gloyne Byler makes clear in her statement on page 24.)

The recent *Mixed Families: Adoption Across Racial Boundaries* by Joyce Ladner represents a careful attempt to analyze the pros and cons of transracial adoption. Ladner, a Black sociologist, interviewed 136 adoptive families, and her book offers vignettes of a variety of adjustments. She observed that, in transracial adoptions, it was critical that the Black children be exposed to, and have the opportunity to interact with, Blacks—both adults and children.

IV. Foster Care

With the growing trend to deinstitutionalize dependent children, the temporary (although often long-term) care of a child in a home subsidized by a local welfare agency has grown enormously. Several recent books on the subject have seriously criticized this care. Among these, Robert Geiser's *The Illusion of Caring: Children in Foster Care* and Betty Mandell's *Where Are the Children?* are outstanding. Both place foster care in historical context and raise profound questions about when and how it should be used and what other alternative arrangements might be created. Both are critical of the existing foster care system as reflecting many of the problems of the nuclear family, particularly the property model of the relationships between children and parents. Both books are important for the serious student of foster care. However, neither of the books provides information on the how-to's of becoming a foster parent. Readers interested in such practical information are well advised to in-

quire about foster care procedures from their local welfare departments.

It is interesting to speculate on why there are so few books for foster parents compared to the number of books for adoptive parents. One reason is that adoption is a much more complicated process than becoming a foster parent. But the fact is that adoptive parents have traditionally been a more privileged and middle-class group than foster parents, so I suspect that publishers may simply be aware of who is buying their books. □

Books Reviewed

Anderson, David. *Children of Special Value: Interracial Adoption in America*, St. Martin's Press, 1971, o.p.

Berman, Claire. *We Take This Child: A Candid Look at Modern Adoption*, Doubleday, 1974, \$5.95.

Blank, Joseph. *Nineteen Steps Up the Mountain*, Lippincott, 1976, \$7.95.

Carey, Ann. *No More Here and There: Adopting the Older Child*, University of North Carolina Press, 1976, p.n.a.

Geiser, Robert. *The Illusion of Caring: Children in Foster Care*, Beacon Press, 1973, \$9.95; 1975, \$3.95 paper.

Issac, Rael Jean and Joseph Spencer. *Adopting a Child Today*, Harper & Row, 1965, o.p.

Kadushin, Alfred. *Adopting Older Children*, Columbia University Press, 1970, \$12.

Klibanoff, Susan and Elton Klibanoff. *Let's Talk about Adoption*, Little, Brown, 1973, \$7.95.

Ladner, Joyce A. *Mixed Families—Adopting Across Racial Boundaries*, Doubleday, 1977, \$10.

Mandell, Betty. *Where Are the Children?*, Lexington Books, 1973, \$13.

Margolis, Marjorie. *They Came to Stay*, Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1976, \$8.95.

McNamara, Joan. *The Adoption Advisor*, Hawthorne, 1975, \$9.95; 1977, \$3.95 paper.

About the Author

BARBARA SCHRAM is co-ordinator of the Human Services Program in the School of Education, Northeastern University. The adoptive parent of one child, she has worked as a community organizer for welfare rights and community participation in schools and is active in several feminist groups.

More on the Black Social Workers' Position

There has been considerable controversy over the 1972 position paper of the National Association of Black Social Workers (NABSW). To help clarify the issues, the Bulletin has solicited the following statement from an official of NABSW. The Bulletin has also learned that the NABSW is preparing an update of the 1972 position paper to be released this fall.—Editors.

NABSW's 1972 position paper on Transracial Adoption *never stated* that Black children should remain in foster care or institutions rather than be placed in white homes; nor does the organization advocate such a policy. In our position against Black children being reared by whites we stated that putting children in Black adoptive homes would be a viable alternative to children being raised in institutions and foster homes. However, the media chose not to focus on this part of our position. It is NABSW's contention that in most cases Black families can be found for the Black children in need of adoption thereby making placement with white families totally unnecessary.

It is a myth that Black people are not interested in adoption. Black people have always taken in and cared for children through the "informal adoption system." They were not adopting through child care agencies until recent years because there has been little outreach into the Black community in order to recruit adoptive homes.

Up until the last ten years, such requirements as having to own a home, have a large bank account, a professional job and a non-working wife excluded the majority of Blacks. Although these requirements have been eliminated for the most part, Black children are still not being moved into adoptive homes because child care agencies for the most part are not truly committed to permanency for children. Because of the way the financial reimbursement system is operated in many of the states, it is more profitable for the agencies to maintain children in foster care than to move them into adoption.

Leora Neal, Director, New York Chapter, NABSW Child Adoption Counseling and Referral Service

There is a phenomenal increase in single parent families—two books approach the subject from very different perspectives.

SINGLE PARENTING: Money Helps

By Carol Brightman

Single parent families—women or men raising children without the help of a partner—are increasing in number. Divorce, single-parent adoption, women choosing parenthood without marriage and death of a partner are turning this former “phenomenon” into an everyday reality for more and more people.

Most books on child-rearing, however, still insist that the nuclear family is *the* norm (see article beginning on p. 3). One book devoted to single parents is Carole Klein's *The Single Parent Experience*, although it must be noted at the outset that this work deals only with those who *choose* single parenting, and ignores those who do it out of necessity and often have fewer economic options.

Based on interviews with twelve single parents and informal consultations with sociologists and psychologists (unfortunately unidentified), the book presents single parents as change agents and pioneers in social innovation.

Among Klein's informants, only one (a young woman who had her baby at the threshold of an unsummated career) found the experience joyless and oppressive. The others, who include natural as well as adoptive mothers, one lesbian mother and two adoptive fathers, are success stories. Why? Because while some expect to marry and others do not, all appear to be mature individuals who choose single parenting only after serious deliberation and preparation—a precondition which, according to Klein, is often missing for the married parent acting uncritically out of custom.

Klein's survey of the factors which

lead people to assume the responsibility of parenthood without marriage is sensible, if superficial. “I'm simply a person who would make a better parent than I would a husband,” explains one man. Klein finds that “single parents were raised in marriages that seemed to them loveless and unfulfilling” and they are unable or unwilling to reproduce the experience in their own lives. (Their faith in parenthood is apparently less easily shaken.)

I am not necessarily convinced of Klein's assumption that the single parent is farther along the road toward shaping the kinds of relationships with their children that ensure independence, self-reliance, etc. Our society is notably unsupportive of parenthood. The isolation visited upon the nuclear family is usually even harsher for the single parent family. And the insecurities that exacerbate possessive relationships in the nuclear family may be stronger for the single parent.

I think Klein is right, though, in pointing to communal living as an “alternative life style” that has real meaning for single parents. In a society that rewards competitive individualism, communal living can encourage different values and, ideally, less rigid and compulsive ones. It is silly of Klein to assert that “the whole category of bad, good, right, wrong . . . is being left at most commune nursery doors—in favor of ‘what works.’”

Klein's study is full of advice for single parents, especially for people considering adoption. Much of it drawn from her case studies seems valid enough, but there are too many

casual (and apparently unresearched) recommendations about this or that public or private agency.

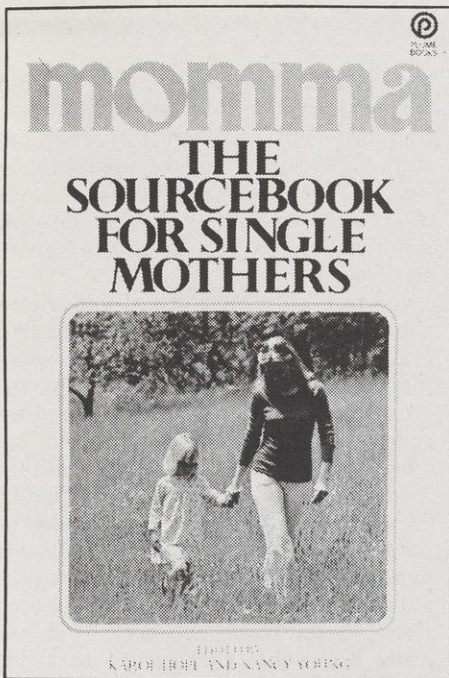
A more serious limitation is the book's failure to examine the attitudes of minority and working-class groups toward single parenthood. Klein interviews only one Black person (a professional woman who adopts) and no Hispanic parents. At one point she notes that while the number of “illegitimate births” is increasing for white women, it is decreasing for Black women, but she fails to explore the social implications of this divergence.

Overall, Klein's somewhat mindless celebration of the “new” and the “different” ignores too many complexities of single parenting.

A book that does present a much more realistic picture of the complexities of single parenting is *MOMMA: The Sourcebook for Single Mothers*. The book was prepared by MOMMA, a nationwide organization of single mothers, and it is a collection of interviews (“voices”) and essays, many of which first appeared in the MOMMA newsletter.

The book is indeed a *sourcebook*, even though it does not deal with the “everyday” details of child-rearing (no developmental charts here) or offer any prescriptions for being a successful single mother. What it does do is focus on the basic needs, concerns and difficulties that single parents—especially women—face. There is much sharing of the emotional aspects of being a single parent—the pain, confusion and despair as well as the joy and satisfaction—that are usually omitted from parenting books.

Unlike *The Single Parent Experience*—and more reflective of



Women discuss a wide variety of problems, experiences and lifestyles in this handbook.

reality—*MOMMA* is primarily about women who did not choose to be single parents but who, most often, found themselves sole nurturers after abandonment, separation or divorce.

The women who speak in the "voices" sections come from many backgrounds. They all speak, however, about the sexism in their upbringing, their marriages and relationships, and their jobs, which range from truck driver to TV writer. A variety of lifestyles is also represented—single mothers struggling to make it alone, women co-parenting (in separate homes) with the fathers of their children, women living collectively to share child-rearing, lesbians living together. One of the strongest features of this book is the variety of possibilities, the range of options discussed.

The essays are also particularly valuable; they are written from a feminist perspective, often by women who have been there and speak of their own experiences in "the system." The essays on divorce, welfare and the economics of being a single mother are particularly interesting. An essay on poverty and the single mother offers statistics on the economic oppression of single mothers: 36 per cent of female-headed families are below the poverty line; 18 per cent of all college educated female family heads are in poverty (as opposed to 3

per cent of those headed by a male); and the number of middle-class mothers forced into poverty through poor employment opportunities and/or low pay, high day-care and other child-rearing costs, lack of child support, etc. has dramatically increased (in California, for example, the number of woman-headed families on welfare doubled from 1968 to 1970).

Certainly the experiences and the information in this book are not all positive, as they are in *The Single Parent Experience*. Many of the women are struggling to care for themselves and their children, and the difficulties of being a single parent in this non-supportive society come across loud and clear. But the book offers many positive suggestions and options and, perhaps most important, counters the isolation many women experience.

Though better than most books because it is not class limited, the book would be improved if it included women of different races. One Chicana is interviewed, but there are no Black, Asian American or other minority women—or at least none that speak of their experiences in a racial context. The group members are, however, aware of this shortcoming and in the last chapter (which covers the history and aims of *MOMMA*) acknowledge the need to be relevant to Black women and Chicanas. For further information on *MOMMA*, write P.O. Box 5759, Santa Monica, Cal. 90405 (please send a self-addressed, stamped envelope). □

Books Reviewed

Books are rated on the following scale: no stars—not recommended; one star—recommended; two stars—highly recommended.

**Hope, Karol and Nancy Young, eds. *MOMMA: The Sourcebook for Single Mothers*, New American Library, 1976, \$3.95

Klein, Carole. *The Single Parent Experience*, Avon, 1973, \$1.95

About the Author

CAROL BRIGHTMAN, reviewer of *The Single Parent Experience*, is a writer who is also currently teaching courses in family and community history at the National Congress of Neighborhood Women's College in Brooklyn, N.Y. Because of scheduling problems, the second book was reviewed by a CIBC staff person.

Gays:

The Invisible Parents

As a Puerto Rican mother who is also gay, I know that the total negation of my existence in establishment media is deliberate and part of my oppression. Clearly I would want to see parenting books that provide positive reinforcement of the lifestyle that I lead for three reasons: (1) It reflects the reality that there are thousands of us! (2) My existence is a constant challenge and threat to the establishment because I refuse to define myself on their terms and I need support. (3) My five-year-old daughter is adversely affected by the promotion of the patriarchal nuclear family as the only valid model.

My daughter is in her most formative years and of course very impressionable. She is beginning to learn the "rules." Everywhere she looks she is exposed to only one approved family model unit—that is the nuclear family with a mother, father and children.

What is my daughter's attitude and response as she begins to perceive that our household (I have been living with another woman for the past three years) is somewhat "different" from the approved version that she sees in the media presentations?

In the absence of any other facsimile to our family unit anywhere that she looks, she has concluded that the way we live is wrong. No matter what we tell her, she is already convinced of this. Because she loves us she accepts us but she knows that others will not and this creates anxiety. She is already so much influenced by teachers, relatives, TV, movies, schoolbooks and the like that she does not question *their* values or that perhaps being different is not necessarily bad.

Instead, she feels afraid for us and sometimes she is frustrated and even angry with us because we do not fit into any norm. She continues to search for some semblance of our family in one of those approved sources of her information. The closest that we have come to in her mind is TV's

Continued on page 38

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

A History of the Cheyenne People

by Tom Weist.

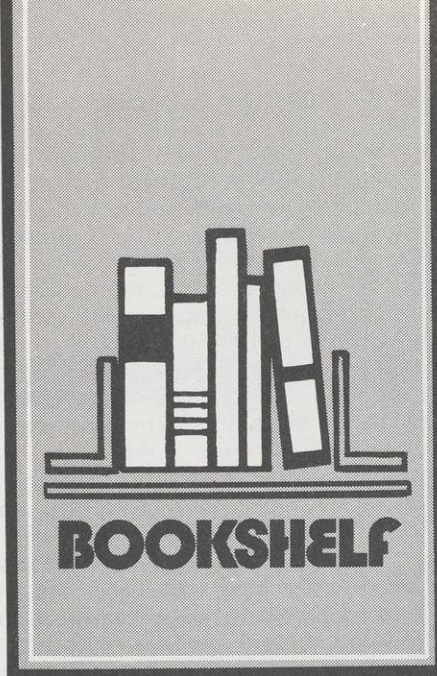
Montana Council for Indian Education [517 Rimrock Road, Billings, Mont. 59102], 1977, \$6.95, 227 pages, grades 7-up

As a Cheyenne raised by people from the dominant society, my learning experience of our people's history has come, for the most part, from the well-known parade of anthropological scholars and historians whose many volumes have rarely imparted any genuine understanding of the heart and values of Cheyenne or any other Native nation's people. Rather, as reader I was always left with the feeling, shared by many Indian people, that we were and are quite sub-human beings under the superior beings' microscopes, at the complete disposal of their value system and for their purposes.

Though Tom Weist is not Indian, his book was a pleasure to read. It shows respect for Cheyenne people and is a genuine attempt to portray our history from ancient times to the present day as Cheyenne people experienced it. The history is of both Northern and Southern Cheyenne people until 1875, when Southern Cheyennes were settled on their reservation in Oklahoma. From 1875 to the present, the history of the Northern Cheyennes is followed. Mr. Weist collaborated extensively with knowledgeable and respected Cheyenne people in writing this history, a fact which gives the book credibility for Indian readers.

The book seems to follow an "Indian time" sequence as opposed to the strict chronological time clock of Euro-American scholars. That is, Indian people prefer to record history by significant events; chronology exists but does not dictate.

In general, this book does a good job of de-stereotyping Cheyenne people and history. Not being a historian,



I cannot evaluate the book on that level. However, as an educator of Indian children, I feel that Mr. Weist's book represents a valuable and long overdue approach to the education of children, be they Indian or non-Indian.

Since written histories continue to be the only accepted educational vehicle, I hope the future books of this nature will be written by Indian historians who will be in the position to choose to collaborate, when necessary, with the appropriate non-Indian sources. [Dotti Starks]

Belonging

by Deborah Kent.

Dial, 1978,
\$7.50, 200 pages, grades 6-up

This is a realistic, unsentimental book which shows that the basic task of adolescence, the resolution of the conflict between the desire to belong and be like everyone else and the desire to be oneself and value one's uniqueness and individuality, is very much the same whether the adolescent is disabled or non-disabled.

In *Belonging*, Meg's blindness is neither minimized nor unduly emphasized. The reactions of some of her teachers and classmates are real, and Meg's anger and other responses are also real. For example, when Meg asks the secretary the whereabouts of

the principal's office and is told, "Over there," that is a situation faced frequently by visually impaired persons. The annoyance of the secretary when Meg does not respond, even after she realizes that Meg is sight impaired—that, too is a common response.

In the story the main character comes to cope effectively with attending school with her sighted peers. More important, however, we see her gain increasing self-understanding, self-confidence, and acceptance of her own uniqueness and that of others. Meg shows the beginning of her increased self-awareness when she refuses the principal's request to put on a special show of her braille equipment at a parent-teacher conference. Later in the book, she says: "I should have been able to go back to Lindy and Keith and Miss Kellog, to value their uniqueness, to nourish my own. . . ." However, we see her conflict when she says later on the same page "I would enter the Institute for the Blind, a world apart, where I would be just like everyone else." Still later, Meg comes to realize that being asked to parties given by those in the popular crowd does not mean for her what she thought it would (in fact, she doesn't even like the parties or the people very much). She gains the understanding and self-respect to realize that "somehow I had been trying to claim my own right to be different too."

It is worth noting that in this book, the surroundings are described in terms of the perceptions that a blind person might experience, and not from the perspective of a sighted person. For example, when Meg describes her mother approaching the house, she does so in terms of the sounds her mother's heels make on the path leading to the house. There is no mention of her mother's blue dress or the bright green grass. Unfortunately, this is rarely done in books dealing with sight impaired characters, and so subtly devalues the perceptions of sight impaired persons.

It should be pointed out that the emphasis in this story is on Meg's personal growth, and little attention is given to the need for school staff members to develop their ability to deal effectively with the needs of their

BELONGING

• A NOVEL •

DEBORAH KENT



students, including the needs of a student who is sight impaired. For example, the principal's request that Meg display her special equipment shows insensitivity to her feelings. In addition, it shows the low consciousness of the administration since they feel the need to display Meg and her equipment as something extraordinary.

Ms. Kent is to be commended for *Belonging*. I would recommend it highly for disabled and non-disabled adolescents. Both groups could easily relate to this book and some very interesting discussions and insights would result from its use. [Paula Wolff]

The Trip

written and illustrated by
Ezra Jack Keats.
Greenwillow (Morrow), 1978,
\$7.95, 32 pages, grades p.s.-2

Once again Keats uses a small boy as a vehicle for his imaginative and exciting artwork. The story line is even more minimal than is usual for Keats. Mixed media, using cutouts, photographs, pastels and paints—plus a Halloween theme and Keats's artistry—make this slight tale a colorful visual adventure. [Lyla Hoffman]

Refugee

by Anne Rose.
Dial, 1977,
\$6.95, 118 pages, grades 7-up

Mischling, Second Degree: My Childhood in Nazi Germany

by Ilse Koehn.
Greenwillow (Morrow), 1977,
\$7.95, 256 pages, grades 7-up

The Secret Ship

by Ruth Klüger and Peggy Mann.
Doubleday, 1978,
\$5.95, 136 pages, grades 4-8

Many children are familiar with the *Diary of Anne Frank*, the poignant, tragic account of the young Jewish girl who was eventually killed by the Nazis in Holland. Fewer, however, have read of the "luckier" Jewish children—those who survived the Holocaust by escaping from or surviving within the various Nazi controlled countries. Anne Rose's *Refugee*, a novel based upon her own life, and Ilse Koehn's autobiography, *Mischling, Second Degree* (nominated for the 1978 National Book Awards for children's literature), are two such books. They present us with the less tragic, but nonetheless difficult, tormented and often courageous lives of such young survivors.

These two books are similar in many respects. Both are written as the diaries of young girls from relatively well-off, anti-Nazi, working-class families, who live quite pleasant adolescent lives until the advent of Nazism in their respective countries of Belgium and Germany. Through the next few years, Elke of *Refugee* and Ilse of *Mischling* suffer serious displacement when their parents, hoping to save their children's lives, send them away from home. "Very lucky" indeed is Elke who is sent to relatives in America while her parents escape to Rio de Janeiro just six days before Hitler's entry into the country. Lucky too is Ilse who survives the war by being shifted from one branch of her family to another, and is then sent away to various "evacuation camps" for children in Germany and Czechos-

lovakia. Luckier still, her identity as a "Mischling, second degree"—a person with one Jewish grandparent—is never discovered, and Ilse, herself, remains unaware of her Jewish heritage until after the war. When she is evacuated by the Germans, it is done for her protection rather than extermination.

These two children, however, do not feel quite so fortunate. While neither suffers intolerable physical deprivation or injury (both have enough to eat and wear most of the time), they do experience tremendous mental deprivation: loneliness, fear, and anguish over the unknown fate of their parents. Both suffer the loss of childhood friends and relatives through separation or death (although both sets of parents do survive) and both must grapple with guilt for being survivors.

Refugee is particularly interesting for its sensitive portrayal of the conflicts besetting a young immigrant to this country. Teenager Elke must learn to fit into a new school with a new language and new social mores just at an age when acceptance by one's peers is so important. She is additionally burdened by identity conflicts—is she American? Belgian? (Jewish isn't mentioned)—and guilty for living in the peace and security of the U.S. while friends and relatives are being killed in Europe. Can she be concerned with what sweater to wear like the other girls in George Washington High School when her close friend from Antwerp has been forced into prostitution to keep her family alive?

While author Rose does a skillful job and we grow to like and respect Elke, portions of the book call for a more complete treatment. One wishes that a shorter time period, and perhaps fewer problems, had been covered with more depth. (A six-year period is tackled in 118 pages, and one entire year unsatisfactorily takes place in just one page.) Also missing, and mysteriously so, is a sense that Elke and her family are Jewish. On first reading, in fact, this reviewer missed one sentence at the beginning and never knew that Elke was Jewish until the end of the book. (I also missed the Jewish star on the cover first time around.) Yet Elke is not a *Mischling* or "passing"—why then

such a dearth of Jewish culture, feeling, identity?

The longer, in some ways more Jewish, more complete and satisfying is *Mischling*. This book (which covers 19 years) is most interesting for its glimpse of the day-to-day lives of some of those anti-Nazi people, both secret Jews and non-Jews who, although they hated Hitler, lived and worked in Germany throughout the war. We rarely get such a view. Ilse's conflict in school, for example, is how to be a popular, bright and successful German girl without at the same time rising too high in the Nazi Youth leadership—something she knows would be abhorrent to her parents. The depiction of her parents and grandparents shows us the tremendous hard work, courage and sacrifice it took for a family of this kind to survive. Also fascinating is the information at the book's exciting close, of how terrified the Germans were of their Russian "liberators" who raped and murdered many German people in the process of "liberation."

Unlike Elke and Ilse, many of the Jewish girls and women who survived the Holocaust were heroic fighters against the Nazi regime. One such woman was Ruth Klüger, a Rumanian Jew who escaped to Palestine but returned to Rumania as the only woman member of the Mossad, an underground organization that smuggled Jews out of Europe in secret ships and into Palestine through the British blockade. Caught in Europe, the Jews could be killed; caught in Palestine, they could be sent back to Europe or out to sea to die.

Ruth Klüger and Peggy Mann wrote of Ruth's heroic life in the adult book, *The Last Escape*, and now have adapted one episode into a quite easy to read book for children. *The Secret Ship* tells of Ruth's single-handed efforts to deal with a crisis involving one ship, the *Hilda*. Holding 727 Jews, the ship is stuck in the ice near Balchik, Rumania, faced with freezing weather, not enough food, a mutinous crew, and a town that says the ship must sail. Despite Ruth's inexperience and almost total lack of support from anyone, she resourcefully and successfully handles the situation. Through her efforts and the courage of the *Hilda* passengers,

hundreds of Jews escape death and are successfully brought to Palestine.

Unfortunately, the story of this undoubtedly courageous and competent woman is marred by some sexist stereotypes. The cover reads: "The true story of a beautiful young woman who rescued thousands." The flyleaf: "Everything rests in the hands of the beautiful redhead." The text: "a beautiful twenty-five-year-old redhead was in charge of the ship." While it's great to be blessed with both beauty and competence, the way that beauty is stressed in this book is demeaning.

Secondly, the story seems to dwell on Ruth's feelings of insecurity and inexperience. Although this gives the reader a sense of the hero as an ordinary vulnerable human being with whom one can identify, we get too much of this little girl voice. One finishes the book feeling that some child has pulled off an enormous coup.

Finally, the book is completely anti-Arab. While it is understandable that Ruth Klüger and others who worked so strenuously for Jewish survival would be pro-Israel and furious at the Arab opposition to the settlement of Jews in Palestine of the 1940's, no understanding of the reasons for Arab opposition is given. None of the complexity of an enormously complex issue is explored.

Despite these criticisms, the book does offer exciting, moving and informative reading, and can provide a good counterbalance to the more prevalent books of Jewish suffering and victimization. *The Secret Ship* depicts a very courageous Jewish woman risking her life, succeeding on her own against great odds and saving, in fact, hundreds of people. Additionally, the book is informative about Nazi atrocities and the overwhelming indifference of the Western world to appeals to save the Jews of Europe—a situation that made such secret missions as the *Hilda's* necessary in the first place.

Note: Good complementary reading is *Hannah Senesh: Her Life and Diary* (Schocken Books). This is a collection of the diary, letters, poems and remembrances by relatives and friends of a young Hungarian Jewish girl who, like Ruth Klüger, went to Palestine as a young girl, later be-

came the only woman in an elite parachute secret corp and was dropped behind the Nazi lines in Yugoslavia. Unlike Ruth Klüger, however, Hannah Senesh was caught, tortured and killed in 1944, at the age of 23, but her courage and resistance were extraordinary. [Sue Ribner]

How We Live

by Anita Harper,
illustrated by Christine Roche
of The Kids' Book Group.
Harper & Row, 1977,
\$4.95, unpagged, grades p.s.-2

How We Work

by Anita Harper,
illustrated by Christine Roche
of The Kids' Book Group.
Harper & Row, 1977,
\$4.95, unpagged, grades p.s.-2

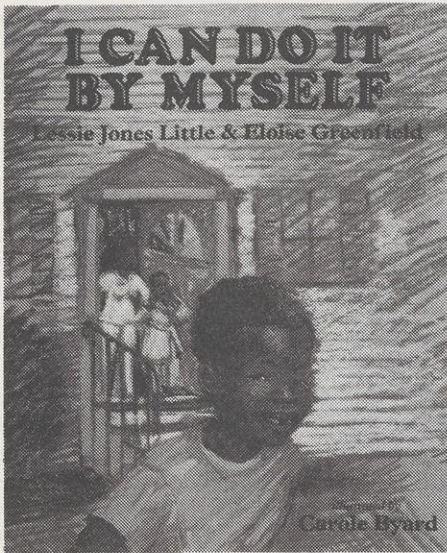
People of all races mix happily in various types of homes with different lifestyles (including single mothers and nurturing fathers). They are young and old but all appear in a sprightly comic-book four-color format that makes these fun books for pre-schoolers. Feminist messages and wholesome social concerns are apparent in the pleasantly illustrated pages. [Lyla Hoffman]

I Can Do It By Myself

Lessie Jones Little and
Eloise Greenfield,
illustrated by Carole Byard.
T.Y. Crowell, 1978,
\$6.95, unpagged, grades 3-4

Publication of this story marks the debut of the new mother-daughter writing team of Lessie Jones Little and Eloise Greenfield.

Eloise Greenfield is already well known as the author of consistently superior books for young children. Lessie Jones Little began her writing career in 1974 at the age of sixty-seven. Their collaboration has been most successful. The story deals with young Donny's efforts to establish his independence by proving that he



can go by himself to purchase a plant for his mother's birthday. Family relationships are portrayed with warmth and good humor.

Carole Byard's illustrations are realistic and attractive and add a great deal to one's enjoyment of the book. [Beryle Banfield]

Benjamin Bannekar: Genius of Early America

by Lillie Patterson,
illustrated by David Scott Brown.
Abingdon, 1978,
\$5.95, 144 pages, grades 3-7

The life of Benjamin Bannekar, the Black astronomer and surveyor, is described in this entertaining and informative book. It begins with his grandmother, Molly Bannekar, an early influence in Benjamin's life. Molly, a white Englishwoman, came to America as an indentured servant, gained her freedom and later married a former slave who had been a prince in Senegal, Africa. Molly taught Benjamin to read and instilled in him a desire for learning. Although Bannekar had to leave school, he continued to learn by teaching himself.

One of Bannekar's first accomplishments was the creation of the first striking clock with all its parts made in the U.S. The clock took almost two

years to complete, and it brought him wide-spread fame.

Bannekar's close friendship with his Quaker neighbors, the Elliots, opened new avenues of learning to him. George Elliot introduced Bannekar to surveying and astronomy. Through his interest in astronomy, Bannekar developed a desire to write an almanac. Bannekar's work on the almanac was interrupted when he received a presidential appointment to assist in surveying the site designated to be the nation's capital. When he finished, he returned home and completed the almanac. Because of his color, Bannekar had difficulty in getting his almanac published; however, he eventually found several printers willing to publish his book. His almanac brought him much acclaim and helped change some whites' belief that Black people were inherently mentally inferior to whites.

Although Bannekar performed many important deeds, he was virtually ignored for many years. He has received some of the long overdue recognition for his accomplishments in recent times.

While describing Bannekar's life, Patterson includes fascinating information about the customs and lifestyles of the U.S. colonial period. However, while the author often describes many occurrences as reflecting the "customs of that time," rigid sex roles are not so described. Also, the upwardly mobile Bannekars must have encountered frequent racist treatment, living as they did in Maryland during slavery days, but this book offers only encounters with kind, friendly whites.

There are other flaws. The use of Blacks to care for the sick and to bury the dead during a yellow fever epidemic at a time white people feared those tasks is presented in a way that is certainly favorable to the Blacks but not at all critical of the whites. And, finally, the book seems to willingly lend itself as "proof" of Black intelligence. However, because it also makes such a big point of an unusual white grandmother, of a Black "prince" grandfather, and of highly educated helpful white neighbors, the book ends up saying how exceptional Bannekar was rather than how fully human Black people are.

On the plus side, the author shows that Bannekar's greatness lies not only in his achievements but also in the inner qualities he possessed. He is depicted as a man who lived a simple life, shared his knowledge with others willingly and used his genius to benefit other people.

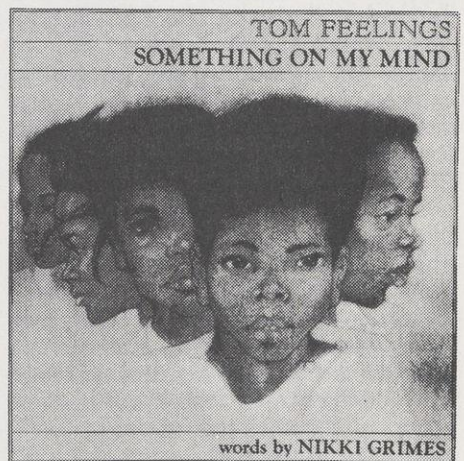
The excellent black-and-white line drawings by David Scott Brown beautifully illustrate various incidents in the book. [Barbara R. Walters]

Something on My Mind

by Nikki Grimes,
illustrated by Tom Feelings.
Dial, 1978,
\$7.50, unpagged, grades 1-up

Tom Feelings presents portraits of Black youths in various stages of their development from childhood through young adulthood. Drawn with the keen perception and sensitivity which won Feelings such well-deserved acclaim, the portraits inspired Grimes' excellent poetry. The text presents responses to many of the dilemmas with which young people have to cope: the unconscious insensitivity of grown-ups and the joys and pains of relationships.

This book is an excellent resource for teachers. Suitable for all grade levels, it will stimulate many exciting and enriching classroom experiences, especially in the areas of creative writing and creative dramatics. It could also serve as a springboard for discussions of relationships. [Beryle Banfield]

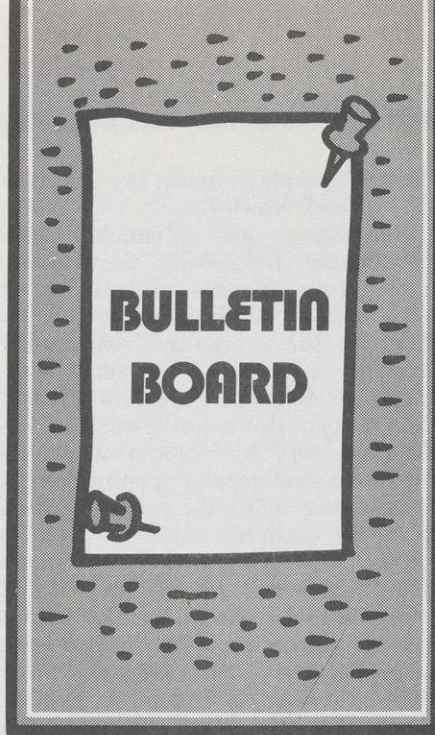


Outline of ALA Hearings on Intellectual Freedom Issues

The 1978 convention of the American Library Association (ALA), held in Chicago the last week of June, provided a more extensive and open forum than usual for important issues on intellectual freedom and human rights. Of particular interest to *Bulletin* readers is that the Racism and Sexism Awareness Resolution, which forces within ALA have been attempting to rescind, came through intact. The following is an outline of important ALA actions:

- **Hearing on the ALA charge to the Intellectual Freedom Committee (IFC).** Held to consider the criticisms that have been leveled against IFC and to determine whether ALA's charge to IFC should be changed. *Conclusion:* IFC problems have been due not to the charge, but to the way it has been implemented. Henceforth, steps will be taken to make IFC, and with it the Office for Intellectual Freedom (OIF), more accountable to the ALA membership. A first step will require that IFC have at least one hearing a year, where ALA members can openly voice their concerns.

- **Hearing on instructions from the ALA Council that IFC devise a compatible synthesis of the Library Bill of Rights and the Racism and Sexism Awareness Resolution.** In 1977 the IFC majority voted to recommend rescindment of the entire Racism and Sexism Awareness (R/S) Resolution adopted by ALA membership the previous year. The ALA executive board refused to hear that recommendation, and IFC then called for opinions from the various ALA divisions on whether a particular clause in the R/S Resolution violated the Library Bill of Rights (in question, the clause that calls on librarians "to raise the awareness of library users to the pressing problems of racism and sexism"). The IFC majority argued that implementation of this clause would in effect remove librarians from their traditional stance of neutrality and put them in an advocacy role. The IFC minority argued that to delete that clause would destroy the intent of the R/S Resolution. The hearing was held to consider this "basic conflict of viewpoints [that] has wracked IFC" (quoted from the IFC Report, June 29, 1978). At the hearing numerous representatives of minority and feminist



groups within ALA spoke in favor of retaining the clause. *Conclusion:* IFC found that the disputed clause does not in fact violate the Library Bill of Rights. The IFC now accepts the R/S Resolution in its entirety.

- **Hearings on revision of the Library Bill of Rights.** The IFC minority had stated that, instead of changing the R/S Resolution to conform to a narrow interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights, the Library Bill of Rights be broadened to encompass the goals of the R/S Resolution. At the hearings a number of proposals to revise the Library Bill of Rights were introduced. A significant one called for the inclusion of an affirmative action clause assuring greater Third World collaboration in the materials selection process. *Conclusion:* The proposals will be distributed to concerned ALA divisions, particularly divisions having to do with children and schools, for discussion and future action.

Other ALA Actions on Human Rights Issues

- The long-awaited model in-service Racism Awareness workshop, originally called for in ALA's 1976 Racism and Sexism Awareness Resolution, was presented during the ALA convention in two identical workshops lasting two days each. The workshop was sponsored by an ad hoc

committee of ALA's Personnel Administrative Division. It was conducted by Ulibarri Associates, a three-person training team from Weber State College, Utah. The number of participants in the free workshop was disappointing, considerably less than half the 150 applicants anticipated (the workshop was to have comprised two groups of 75 each; fewer than 30 signed up for each of the sessions). Those who did participate felt the workshop was outstandingly successful.

A fuller discussion of the workshop will appear in a future *Bulletin* issue.

- The new SRRT Task Force on Tools for Consciousness-Raising conducted a program which assessed the current anti-racist and anti-sexist activities in ALA, and offered for preview some selected "tools." These were "A Minor Altercation," a case study film on racial conflict, distributed by Tri-Continental Films (333 Sixth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10014) and two CIBC filmstrips—"From Racism to Pluralism" and "Understanding Institutional Racism." The film and filmstrips were well received by the approximately 100 librarians in attendance. The Task Force will present additional consciousness-raising tools at future ALA conventions.

- The feminist groups at ALA were very active. Regarding women's rights:

- 1) ALA Council agreed to move the next Midwinter Conference, traditionally held in Chicago, to an ERA-ratifying state.

- 2) A motion to move ALA's national headquarters from Chicago to an ERA-ratifying state failed, but a proposal to initiate the planning of such a move passed.

- 3) Council also acted to require that all ALA publications accept only job advertising that specifies the salary or salary range; approved the National Plan passed at the Houston women's conference; endorsed the extension of ERA; agreed to fund a bus from Chicago to Springfield, Illinois, to lobby for ERA in the fall; and passed a resolution calling for comparable wages for comparable work.

- 4) The SRRT Task Force on Women sponsored two presentations—the Boston Collective's "Our Bodies, Ourselves" and a discussion by Rita Mae Brown on subjects ranging from the importance of small presses to pornography violence to the dangers of industrial conglomerates. More than

500 people attended each presentation.

• At the SRRT Action Council, Barbara Gittings reported that the Gay Liberation Task Force is:

1) Preparing a booklet of tips to gay groups and individuals who are not librarians on how to get gay materials into libraries. The booklet will be ready this fall.

2) Conducting a survey of job discrimination against gay librarians. Copies of the questionnaire are available by mail or phone from Barbara Gittings, P.O. Box 2383, Philadelphia, Pa. 19103 or (215) EV2-3222.

3) Setting up a committee to analyze encyclopedias for what they say or do not say about homosexuality.

4) Completing a new 6th edition of the gay bibliography, to be published early in 1979.

The Latest on "The Speaker"

The grassroots movement to protest ALA's endorsement of the film, "The Speaker," continues to grow. The latest development occurred as we were going to press and a copy of a letter from the NAACP reached our office. Here are some excerpts.

Under the pretext of the First Amendment rights, this film does no more than condone racist attitudes, project negative racial stereotypes and contribute to the country's reactionary attitudes toward racial equality. . . . We strongly urge the ALA to take this film out of distribution, issue an apology to the public, and appoint minority representation on its screening committee. . . .

Gerda Steele
Director for Education Programs
NAACP

Other developments included the following statement, signed by 65 librarians and issued on May 20th by the Ad Hoc "Speaker" Committee.

WE ARE ASHAMED AND DISGUSTED.

The American Library Association has produced a film, "The Speaker," that purports to deal with intellectual freedom and the First Amendment.

It does not.

Instead, it distorts and confounds the First Amendment.

But even worse than this intellectual dishonesty is the film's wanton assault upon Black people.

In effect it says: "Blacks are irrational. Blacks are unprincipled. Blacks must be 'protected' by Whites. And Blacks may indeed be less than fully human."

WANTED: Creative 5th and 6th grade teachers to test a six-week curriculum on **Institutional Discrimination: Sex and Race**

REWARD: A lively anti-sexist, anti-racist unit
A small honorarium for your advice

CONDITIONS: A supportive school climate

DETAILS: Write to Dr. Beryle Banfield,
Council on Interracial Books for Children,
1841 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023

As librarians and citizens, we reject this film.

It does *not* speak for the whole profession.

We are ashamed that it was ever made. And disgusted that A.L.A. continues to support it.

(For further information on the Ad Hoc Committee, contact Sanford Ber- man, Head Cataloger, Hennepin County Library, Edina, Minnesota 55435.)

The New York Library Association (NYLA) Intellectual Freedom Committee voted to request the NYLA Executive Board to call on ALA to remove its endorsement of "The Speaker." The NYLA Executive Board, by a unanimous vote, agreed to the request.

Schools to Continue Use of Racist Book

In a recent *Bulletin* (Vol. 9, No. 2) Michael Dorris told of his efforts to convince the New Hampshire Regional Center for Educational Training that their book, *Michael Hendee*, should not be used in classrooms because of its racist portrayal of Native Americans. At the time the article went to press, the Regional Center had not yet issued a final decision on the request.

The Center's Teacher Advisory Group met on May 9 and voted to continue to sell the book. They offered to supply teachers with a free copy of a guide which would "give prominence" to Dorris' criticisms and also to supply him with the "names and addresses of buyers who provide such information to us—subject only to our

receipt of copies of any materials you send to such persons/addresses."

In a letter to Del Godwin, director of the Training Center, Dorris expressed sadness and disappointment at the decision to continue distribution of the book. Dorris noted:

In its "solution," the Center and a majority of the Teacher Advisory Group has, in my opinion, abdicated its responsibility, in particular towards the children of this region. After much serious consideration I find that, in conscience, I cannot participate in any process which includes the distribution of *Michael Hendee* to second and third graders. No denials or disclaimers will undo the impact of those illustrations and that text in the minds of most seven or eight year old children.

As Dorris also pointed out, "Through [the group's] decision, yet another generation will be wantonly exposed to an ethnocentric and patently untrue version of history." There the matter rests.

CIBC Contest Results Announced

Judging has been completed for the CIBC's Ninth Annual Third World Writers Contest for unpublished writers of children's books.

For "Recognition of Effort" the following writers received awards ranging from \$25 to \$100: African American—Glenda M. Alvin and Eugene Redmond; Asian American—Ai-Ling Louie; Chicano—Rey Davis; Native American—Jack Moseley (Cherokee Nation); and Puerto Rican—Ginnie Arjona Zanck.

We received and read over 300

manuscripts—many of high literary potential—but regret to report that none of them could be judged winners. Not one, it was concluded by the judges, fully met the specifications of the contest rules for the \$500 prizes. (The purpose of the contest is to promote positive human values in children's literature and to encourage new writers to produce literature that stimulates children to become caring and sharing individuals.)

The Tenth Annual Contest is now underway, and the deadline is December 31, 1978. We hope many who have participated before will do so again. For further information, please

write the Contest Director, CIBC, 1841 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023.

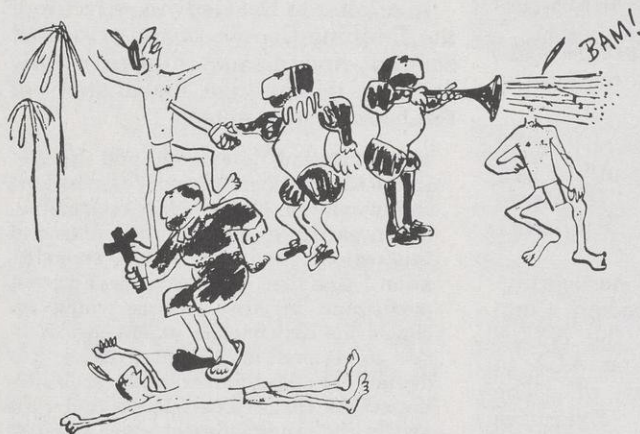
CIBC On the Road

CIBC President Beryle Banfield conducted a course on Racism in Education at the University of Missouri, Columbia, from June 19-23. During Dr. Banfield's visit to the University, she gave the Distinguished Scholar lecture sponsored by the Black Studies and the Women's Studies Departments and the College of Education of the University; the lecture on "Non-Racist, Non-Sexist

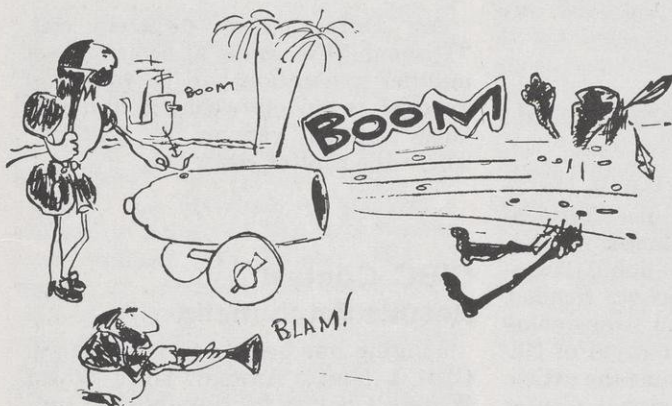
Education: How Do We Achieve It?" was open to the public.

In addition, Dr. Banfield was a citizen delegate to the Governor's Conference on Libraries, held in Albany, N.Y., on June 5-7.

On June 5 CIBC representative Brad Chambers led a workshop of the staff of the San Diego State University's General Assistance Center on the topic, "The Movement to the Right in Children's Book Publishing." Chambers also was a participant in the model Racism Awareness Workshop held June 25-26 at the American Library Association's annual conference.



AFTER THE ARMISTICE IN 1918, EUROPE WAS EXHAUSTED AND IN DEBT, BUT UNCLE SAM EMERGED AS



WHEN THE INDIANS COMPLAINED, THEY WERE TOLD ABOUT LAW AND ORDER AND EXPOSED TO THE CULTURE OF EUROPEANS.



Uncle Sam Super Cop: A Satirical View of American History written and illustrated by Jim Hughes, Lawrence Hill & Co. (Westport, Conn.), \$4.95, 90 pages, grade 10-adult. Using black-and-white captioned cartoons, plus an occasional UPI newsphoto, Hughes irreverently presents the history of

U.S. racism, capitalism, imperialism and hypocrisy. (Unfortunately, sexism is not one of the targets.) This book may not convert any patriotic true believers, but it sure packs a lot of fun for those already committed to turning this country around.

Films on Parenting

The Effective Parent, four-set series (each set contains five filmstrips, records or cassettes, script booklets and discussion guide); price per set: \$49 with records, \$58 with cassettes; price per series: \$160 with records, \$200 with cassettes; Parents' Magazine Films, 52 Vanderbilt Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017.

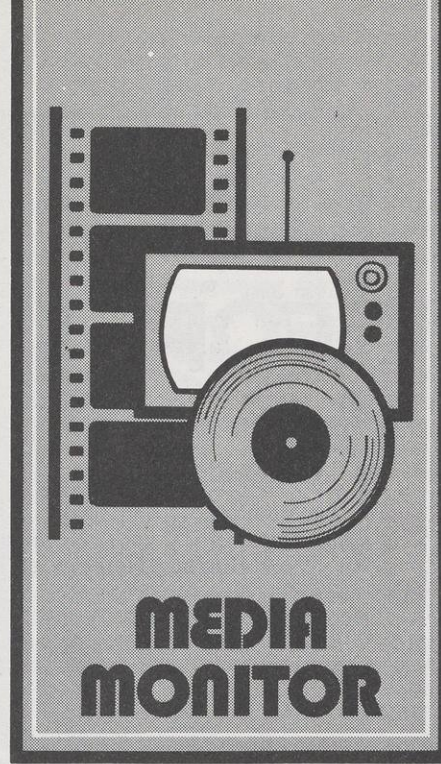
This series focuses on the parent as teacher. Oversimplified in its approach, the series deals only with how to make everyday activities educational—counting, learning colors, etc. It does not deal with values or the effects of racism or sexism, even though it does discuss the importance of a positive self-concept.

The cast is integrated with Black and white members, but shows no representatives of other groups.

Mothers and Fathers, four-set series (each set contains five filmstrips, records or cassettes, script booklets and discussion guide); \$65 per set (with either records or cassette), \$220 per series; Parents' Magazine Films, 52 Vanderbilt Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017.

From the same company that produced "The Effective Parent" (see above), this far-better film seems to have benefited from input from a variety of sources, including Black and Hispanic consultants. It touches on racism and sexism, single parenting, working mothers, cultural values, etc. The multiracial (Black, Hispanic, white) cast illustrates a variety of situations and lifestyles.

The four-part series includes "Child-



dren and Adults," "Family Relationships," "Mother/Father Roles" and "Changes in the Family." The first set is especially good for its overview of different facets of parenting and the series would be helpful to start discussions on parenting values, keeping in mind that the series stresses personal rather than societal solutions.

Our only quibble is with the packaging (see illustration)—the mawkish racist and sexist illustration should be replaced with graphics that reflect the series.

Adapting to Parenthood, \$30 rental, \$285 purchase; Polymorph Films, 331 Newbury St., Boston, Mass. 02115.

"Adapting to Parenthood" is a superficial treatment of a very intense experience. In the film, both mothers and fathers discuss their feelings about becoming parents for the first time, but they spend an inordinate amount of time on topics like changing diapers, while the more distressing issues—the adjustments that couples have to make, the jealousies that often occur and the problems that arise from different expectations—are barely mentioned.

While trying to be an overview of the subject, the film shows only white couples. In general the film is limited in its usefulness to new parents trying to make sense of a very difficult and confusing time.

Materials on Sexism

Choices: Learning About Changing Sex Roles by Nancy Register Wangen and Sherri Wagner; Level A (p.s. to 4th grade) \$24 plus \$1 postage; Level B (6th to 9th grade) \$24 plus \$1 postage. (Jenny Publishing Company, 57 Queen Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minn. 55405.)

Each curriculum contains activity sheets (which the teacher can duplicate) plus six posters and a teacher's guide. The goal of both sets is to increase student awareness of sex-role stereotypes and present alternatives to sexist practices and to sexist role limitations.

We highly recommend the teacher's guide, which has excellent background information, a bibliography, a school checklist and some well-done comments on the varying perspectives of Third World women. All elementary teachers should find these kits useful, and all elementary students should find the activities rewarding.

Our only criticism would be that the connection between the economic oppression of women and sex-role stereotypes is never mentioned. That is unfortunate, because it is our experience (CIBC is currently testing an elementary curriculum on institutional sex and race discrimination) that elementary children are easily able to understand that sexism is profitable, and thus are better armed to counteract it. We wish that the authors of this useful kit would include information about the economic foundations for sexism, and not lead children to believe that individual attitudes alone are responsible for an unfair society.

Despite this criticism this is a well-done effort at filling the need for anti-sexist curriculum materials at the elementary levels.

Yes Baby, She's My Sir, 2 filmstrips with cassette; sale price \$35 plus \$3 postage and handling. (Feminist Productions, 31 Greenway South, Babylon, N.Y. 11702.)

The first filmstrip—"Who Is 'Man'?"—is somewhat repetitious as it looks at the use of so-called generic "man" words and documents that people do think "male" when they hear such words. The far superior second film—"A 'Woman' Is . . . ?"—contains a lot of information; it examines not only negative words for women, but also how words referring to women are used to ridicule men,



The racist and sexist—as well as mawkish—packaging for "Mothers and Fathers" does not reflect the filmstrip, which is reviewed above.

TENTH ANNUAL CONTEST FOR THIRD WORLD WRITERS

5 PRIZES OF \$500 EACH
FOR
AFRICAN AMERICAN,
AMERICAN INDIAN,
ASIAN AMERICAN,
CHICANO
AND PUERTO RICAN
WRITERS WHO ARE
UNPUBLISHED IN
THE CHILDREN'S BOOK
FIELD

Minority writers who have not previously been published in the children's book field are invited to submit manuscripts. Only stories—fiction or non-fiction—which are anti-racist, anti-sexist and which are relevant to the struggle for full human liberation are eligible. For full contest rules, please send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to the Contest Committee, Council on Interracial Books for Children, 1841 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023.

CONTEST ENDS DECEMBER 31, 1978

sexism in business language, etc. The packet—particularly the second filmstrip—would be valuable to begin a study of sexism in the English language, but viewers should note that these filmstrips, like so very many others, suffer from race and class bias.

Not Recommended: *Male and Female Roles* by Coronet Instructional Media, 369 W. Erie St., Chicago, Ill. 60610; six filmstrips and teacher's guide plus records or cassettes; high school. This boring production belabors its subject in simplistic fashion. The message is that a career or career choices should not be limited by sex-role stereotypes and that the choices are entirely up to YOU. While that may be true for some upper-middle-class youngsters, it is nonsense to tell this to poor and/or Third World youngsters. Some unfortunate combinations of narrative with visuals while Blacks are shown result in inadvertent racism.

Series on Chicano Life

Contemporary Chicano Life Series, set I; 4 filmstrips with cassettes; English or Spanish \$71.50, bilingual \$107.00; junior and senior high school. (Bilingual Educational Services, Inc., 1607 Hope Street, P.O. Box 669, South Pasadena, Cal. 91030.)

Excellent scripts—on racism in education, historic and current land struggles, mural art and the farm-workers' struggles—are accompanied by visuals of mixed quality and an occasional dash of sexist language. Nevertheless, the information presented is important.

One disappointment is the absence of supportive materials for classroom use and of a bibliography for the teacher. Since much of the material presented—particularly on land struggles—will be surprising to both students and teachers, this is an unfortunate omission.

Despite the above criticism, we would recommend the series for classroom use if teachers have access to some of the following books: *North from Mexico* by Carey McWilliams (Greenwood Press), *Occupied America* by Rodolfo Acuña (Canfield Press/Harper & Row) or *Viva La Raza!* by Elizabeth Martínez and Enriqueta Vázquez (Doubleday).

Dear CIBC:

I am presently a student at Hamline University in St. Paul, Minnesota, majoring in theater. As part of my theater education, I have been asked to direct the children's touring show in the spring of 1979, but have been dissatisfied with the selection of scripts I have received thus far, finding them sexist, lacking in message or significance, and sometimes a bit dated.

In my search for more acceptable material, I have contacted various local feminist organizations, only to find that there was surprisingly little written for children which treated the sexes equally.

If there are any scripts . . . that are specifically for children and performed by adults, reasonably substantial in length (45 minutes to 1½ hrs.), easily adaptable to gymnasiums and auditoriums, or if you know where I could find such works, your help would be greatly appreciated.

Also, because my time is limited, if you could respond as soon as possible, I would be more than grateful.

Thank you ever so much.

Sally G. Ramirez
St. Paul, Minn.

Readers are asked to send suggestions (other than *Political Plays for Children*, *The Grips Theater of Berlin*, Vol. 8, No. 3) to us for forwarding to Ms. Ramirez.—Editors.

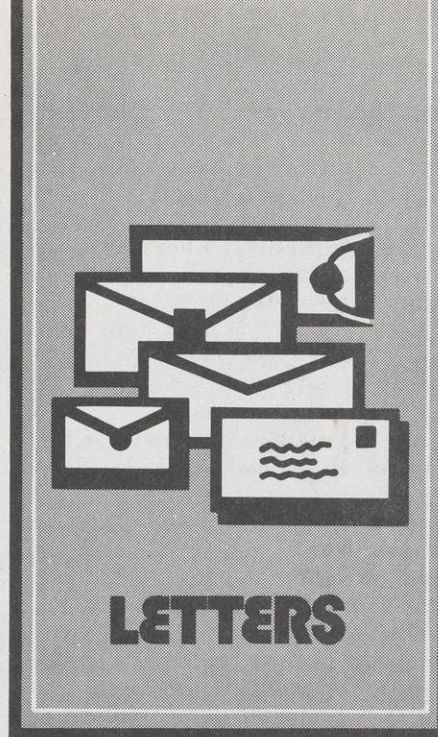
Dear CIBC:

In answer to Ralph Ledley's request [Vol. 9, No. 3] for children's books featuring good stepmothers, may I refer him to *The Bookfinder; A Guide to Children's Literature About the Needs and Problems of Youth aged 2-15*, by Sharon S. Dreyer and published by American Guidance Service, Inc., Circle Pines, Minn. 55014. It lists and annotates several books for stepparents—both fathers and mothers.

Peggy Kelley
Professional Library
Houston Independent School
District
Houston, Texas

Dear CIBC:

Congratulations to Susan J. Hall for her fine critique "Tarzan Lives! A Study of the New Children's Books



We welcome letters for publication in the *Bulletin*, and unless advised to the contrary, we assume that all letters to the CIBC or *Bulletin* may be published.—Editors.

about Africa" [Vol. 9, No. 1]. At last, someone of national reputation has blown the whistle on the continuing and inexcusable purveyance of such neocolonial jargon as: "native," "costumes," "primitive," "savage," "jungle-people," "hut" and "bush" village. Many children's books on Africa are exciting and richly illustrated. But they project idealized African lifestyles which bear little or no relation to historical or contemporary reality. This is usually because the writers and illustrators have labored under a knowledge of Africa they acquired in their own childhood. Few of them have a background in African anthropology or history. Consequently, old stereotypes are carried forward. Less attention is given to the story than to the illustrations; and many of the latter tend to distort rather than to clarify the text.

There are few people in the United States who are as qualified to evaluate materials on Africa as Susan Hall. I hope Ms. Hall's essay will have an impact and that within a few years her sequel will be entitled "Tarzan Dies! May he rest in peace forever."

Richard W. Hull
Associate Professor of
African History
New York University
New York, N.Y.

Dear CIBC:

As a subscriber of the *Bulletin* for several years, now, I have become increasingly concerned with the quality and tone of your book reviews. I am not adverse to criticizing books on the grounds of stereotyping, but am upset when your reviewers are ready to tear to shreds any book in which there is a stereotype an adult finds difficult to accept. Little attention is paid to intent, literary merit, artistic integrity or the value a *child* might get from a book.

I am particularly offended by Susan J. Hall's piece, *Tarzan Lives!* [Vol. 9, No. 1]. Although I am not familiar with all of the books, I am familiar with *Who's in Rabbit's House?* by Verna Aardema, illustrated by the Dillons. I find her criticism pointless. Surprising as it may seem, when people do put on a play, they do wear *costumes* . . . and the retelling of the delightful tale is done in play form. Rather than put down the Dillons for interpreting the action, the artists should be applauded for blending in a creative manner the best of both worlds in their unique masks. It does not matter that they are not *authentic*; they give the flavor of African masks—and the effect is electric! Children are instantly drawn to the story and the action.

I am also disturbed by Hall's attack on Margaret Musgrove's *Ashanti to Zulu*—Ms. Hall has caught the point *precisely*. She, just as a kid would, made the connection between a bride carrying a beaded doll and one who has a bouquet of flowers—but kids have enough sense to understand the importance of building bridges of commonality. Although Hall seems to find marriage trivial, most people do not, even in a changing society. I am further horrified that you obviously encourage this sort of mindless attack on one of your contest winners!

It seems to me that some serious rethinking needs to be done at CIBC. Have you changed from your original purpose? Do you now allow people to spew forth their own particular form of anger, forgetting that most artists and writers are attempting to create the best book they know how for kids who have the intelligence and wit to make critical decisions. Why not keep to your task of seeking out minority authors and illustrators who have a valid point of view and need to be in print? I have no quarrel with attempts to point out flaws in books for chil-

dren. Some of your past criticism has been valuable to writers, artists and editors. Whatever your point of view, you must still take into account literary and artistic merit. The truth is that there has been no (or very little) research on what children take away from books. Certainly it matters what a child brings to the book in the first place. Books alone simply are not going to do the job of eradicating prejudice.

Permitting such venomous and undisciplined and unfocused articles as Susan Hall's in your *Bulletin* strains the credibility of your publication.

Bryna J. Fireside
Ithaca, N.Y.

Dear CIBC:

Before I comment on Ms. Hall's *Tarzan Lives!* [Vol. 9, No. 1], allow me to relate a small incident. About three years ago I took my young daughter and her friend to see *Midsummer Night's Dream* in Manhattan. The stage was a slightly raised mound set with trees, bushes and rocks. The cast was barefoot, in russet and maroon-fringed tunics or grass skirts. In spite of the briefing my daughter's young

friend had prior to the play, she insisted the play was about Africans. Her reasoning was that the players dashed from tree to tree, they had no shoes on, and they wore old clothes. Later conversations with her revealed that she believed we Africans all live in huts "down there"!

Needless to say, it was with great interest that I read *Tarzan Lives!* and I found myself saying "Bravo, Ms. Hall"!

More and more people are travelling to Africa. But instead of the healthy enlightenment one would hope for, a kind of cultural shock sets in and we see some sort of disdain for the way things are done "down there." Very often the mere fact that a person has been or spent time in Africa transforms one into an authority on the continent. Alas, there are many who elect to perpetuate the old myths on Africa. Sad to say, the public has always been eager to devour that kind of reporting. It is upsetting that during the second half of the 20th century publishers are letting their authors perpetuate 18th century images of Africans.

There is no harm in fantasy. The only trouble is that when fantasy is applied to Africa people tend to take it as fact. I strongly agree with Ms. Hall that imagination should go hand in hand with constructive, factual information. Why attempt to delight a child at the expense of another?

Putting the Masai in rabbit and frog masks is an injury to a culture that does not use masks. In fact, given the arid conditions of the Masai's land it is doubtful that frogs and rabbits are common sights. (Perhaps cow masks would have been more appropriate.) Looking at this point in a broader sense, there is a disservice done to those African cultures that do use masks. Where employed, masks are reserved for special ritualistic functions. They are not everyday wear. If for the sake of fantasy or artistic illustration masks are put on characters going about their everyday chores, an explanation should be included.

Probably it is too late to change the attitudes of most adults. But children can be steered away from those attitudes. Teachers and writers have the greatest opportunity to halt racial and cultural stereotypes.

M. Kironde Weeks
Elimu Center for African Arts
New York City

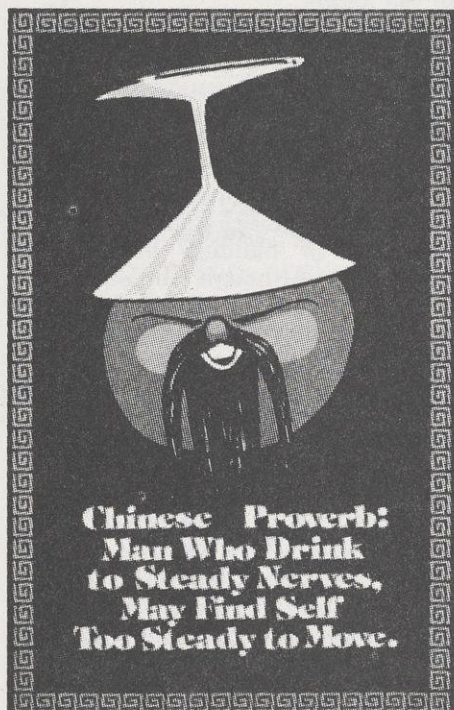
Continued from page 27

"The Brady Bunch"! One morning she announced that my lover was like Alice, the faithful house-keeper in the show, since Alice does all of the cooking (which my lover does) and Alice cares for the children even though she is not related to the family.

It is a constant source of frustration to me that no matter how loving and stable a situation I try to create for my child in our home, the outside pressures bear down on her at such a young age. I have always felt, however, that it is unfair to myself and to my daughter to deny who I am and I can not live a lie—even for her.

I am confident my daughter will eventually reconcile this contradiction. She will also have to grapple with the contradiction of being a non-white female in a white male dominated society. She needs models and I need tools—tools with which to help her grow strong and confident about who she is and where she came from.

Julie Cherry, medical worker



Noted without comment, the above alcohol abuse poster sold by Spenco Medical Corp., Waco, Texas.

Straight parents of gay children face related, but different concerns than those mentioned above. These, too, comprise a serious omission in parenting books.

A number of groups are forming around the country to address the concerns of parents who have gay children. These groups can play a particularly effective role in raising the consciousness of the anti-gay public. A list of 44 groups or individual contacts interested in communicating with such parents is available as a supplement to a helpful resource titled "Parents of Gays," a 20-page booklet available for \$1 from Betty Fairchild, 1435 Vine St., Apt. 6, Denver, Colorado 80209. A forthcoming book by Ms. Fairchild and Nancy Grosse, *Now That You Know*, will be available in March, 1979 from Harcourt Brace. This is the first commercial book offering advice to parents of teenagers who are concerned about their children's sexual preference.

Provocative new filmstrip from the CIBC Resource Center

Unlearning "Indian" Stereotypes



Mona is Pawnee-Osage. She talks about the reasons she feels insulted by ABC books that say, "I is for Indian," and by illustrations of animals dressed-up as "Indians" or by children "playing Indian."



Meet Lance, who is Mohawk and has lots to tell about some old traditions and some new pollution on his reservation in upper New York State where "Trees are dying and cows' teeth are rotting out."

An engaging method for your students to learn many new facts about Native Americans—past and present—while they "unlearn" many common stereotypes about "Indians."

Native American children discuss the harm done by the stereotypes in many children's picture books. They reveal their own perspectives on history and discuss their own cultures, viewpoints and dreams. The children also debunk many common stereotypes—including those dealing with traditional styles of housing and clothing, including the headdress. They explain why some Native people see little cause to celebrate Thanksgiving Day or Columbus Day. Contemporary and historic visuals combine with an informative and appealing audio-tape to provide your students with an enjoyable experience. The filmstrip will assist them in unlearning stereotypes about "Indians" picked up from movies, TV and books, while learning many things about the reality of Native Americans.

The filmstrip was prepared in cooperation with Native American educators and other classroom teachers. Part of the sales proceeds will go to the We Will Remember Survival School on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota.

The accompanying 48-page handbook features a major, in-depth study of stereotyping in 76 popular children's picture books. It offers teachers and librarians discussion pointers for the filmstrip; many classroom activities, including role-play formats; ten dos and don'ts for teaching about Native Americans; historical background information; a Native American perspective on why Thanksgiving, Washington's Birthday and Columbus Day are not their days for celebration. Student handouts to accompany the film are also provided. All this, and more, add up to an exciting and unique teaching unit on Native Americans to use in one to ten classroom periods.

15-minute, 130-frame, color-sound filmstrip and 48-page elementary teaching units (grades 2-6). **\$32.50**

To order, send check or purchase order to
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1841 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023

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