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INTERRACIAL BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

BULLETIN

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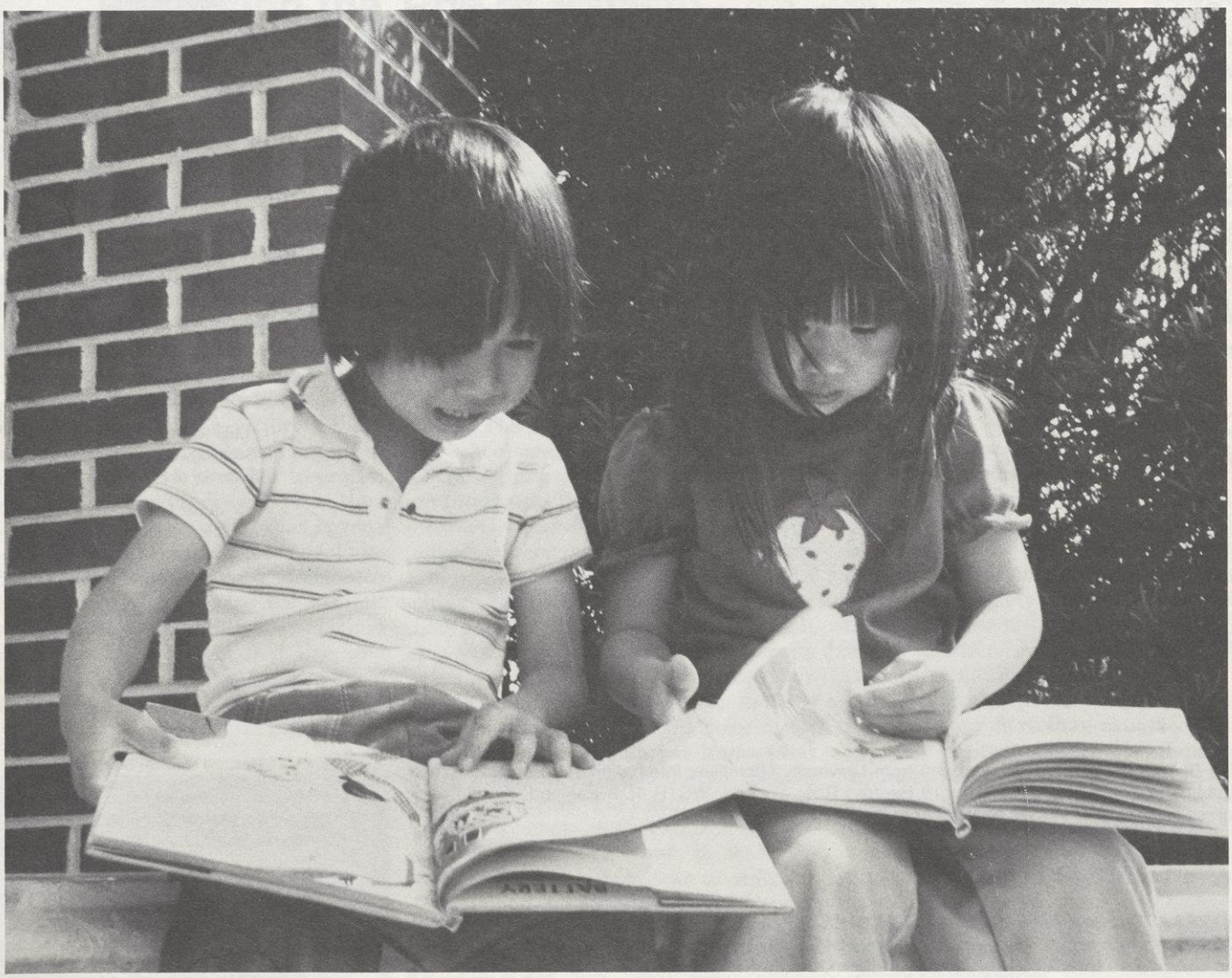

Issues for the 80s

An Interview with Haki Madhubuti

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ARTICLES

DEPARTMENTS

COVER

Photo by David C. Phillips

Indexed in
Alternative Press Index
Education Index
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Library Literature

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CIBC Anniversary Speakers Address Issues for the 80s

The accomplishments of the CIBC's first 20 years—and the current need for the organization—were noted at a celebration of the CIBC's Twentieth Anniversary, held last November at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in New York City. The occasion also commemorated the work of the late Bradford Chambers, former director of the Council, whose papers were presented to the Schomburg at the event. (See Vol. 16, No. 8.)

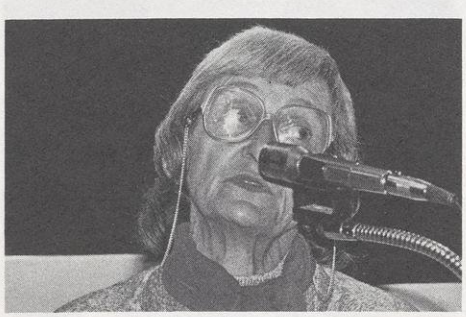
Anne Braden, Christine Choy, Eloise Greenfield and Sonia Nieto spoke to those assembled about social justice issues and the Council's work, past and present. The text of three of the speeches appears below (Christine Choy spoke extemporaneously and her remarks are, unfortunately, not available).

Reversing the Tide of Racism

By Anne Braden

Recently in my hometown of Louisville, Ky., I sat in a courtroom as a young man, nineteen years old, was arraigned on charges of setting fire to the home of a Black family that had moved into a previously all-white neighborhood last July. We've had a rash of incidents of racist violence in the Louisville area in recent months, and this was one of them. The courtroom scene was a victory for our side—for the many people and organizations that had come together to protest that arson. It was literally the first time in the history of Louisville that anyone had been arrested for an act of racist violence—and there have been many such acts, through the years. We all felt deeply for the Black families whose lives could have been lost in that fire, and were glad for them and for ourselves that someone had been arrested.

But as I sat there in that courtroom I also felt for that young man brought to the bar of justice. He was still in high school; he looked very frightened. It occurred to me as I looked at him that he was not alone in guilt for this crime. Who had ever told him it was wrong to attack a Black family? Who had ever told him this was a crime? No one where he grew up had ever been arrested for such a thing. The community was also guilty, the schools were guilty. And as I thought of these things, I thought of the Council on Interracial Books for Children.



Anne Braden

Shortly thereafter, two other young men in our community were arrested too. They were charged with defacing a church building, a Black church. They had painted KKK and swastikas on it one Saturday night. Again their arrests were a victory. Finally, it seemed, our public officials were responding to those in the community who said these racist acts must stop. But do you know what those public officials told the newspapers after that arrest? They said the painting of those symbols on that church was not racially motivated, that it was the weekend before school was to start for the fall, and the young men were just out for a final fling of the summer, just having a little fun on Saturday night. And I wondered not only what those young men had learned in school—but where those county officials had been educated, or miseducated. And I thought again of the Council on Interracial Books for Children.

Later this fall, I was invited to speak to a high school social studies class, in one of the more progressive schools in our city. They wanted to know about the history of the KKK. I told them—and I talked also of the new upsurge of Klan activity in and near Louisville, and the racist violence. They were horrified—they thought these things were terrible. They were, for the most part, "enlightened" young people; they were children of liberals. But I took the occasion, as I always do when I'm talking about the Klan, to talk about racism in a broader sense and how it permeates our society.

And so in the question period one student raised his hand and said: "But you don't think affirmative action is right, do you?" And I said, "Yes, indeed, I do. Affirmative action just means fairness. And all of history teaches us that whenever a society treats one group unfairly everyone ultimately suffers in one way or another." At which point another student said: "But affirmative action is unfair to white people. Blacks are already getting more than everybody else now. It's whites who are discriminated against today." And I said: "Look, I know you don't mean it this way, but what you just said is exactly what the Klan says when it recruits people. 'Blacks are getting everything. Whites are discriminated against. You need the Klan to stand up for your rights.' That kind of thinking is what makes the Klan grow; there's no difference.

"And the thing is that it's just not so. Blacks are not getting everything"—and I cited some statistics—"and further-

more what they have gotten has not hurt white people. The fact is that when the people who have been oppressed begin to organize and win and expand their rights, it *always* opens up new opportunities for everyone in a society. It sets a different agenda. It puts the needs of people first. It moves us all in a humane direction. That's what happened in this country during the civil-rights movement, and we must not let ourselves be pushed back."

And I thought again of the Council on Interracial Books for Children, but this time I did something about it. I said: "You all should study a perfectly wonderful curriculum prepared by the Council on Interracial Books for Children and the National Education Association on the history of the Klan and racism in America. I'll send your teacher a copy." And I went home and I did.*

I mention these incidents because I think they are some small indication from the hinterlands where I live—and let me tell you such things are happening in communities all across this country—of how badly we need the Council today.

I don't know of any other organization in the nation that is doing what the Council is doing—preparing the well-thought-out and researched material that can teach our young people, and adults too, how racism has destroyed all this nation's dreams of democracy, and how it threatens to destroy us all, but how it can indeed be overcome. I admired the Council from afar for many years, but it was in relatively recent years that I came to know it better when I met Brad Chambers and worked closely with him as a number of people and groups came together to build the National Anti-Klan Network in 1979 and 1980—the Network that now includes over 60 organizations and, by the way, has changed its name to Center for Democratic Renewal, thus taking on the entire spectrum of the Right Wing. I could not get to Brad's memorial service—so I want to take this opportunity to say here how much he meant to me. He was one of the most beautiful people I ever met, loving and gentle and very brilliant, and I came to admire deeply his long years of drudgery in building this organization, which I believe has stood as a beacon light saying to this nation: "You can indeed redeem yourself. And we'll give you the knowledge to help you do it."

*This curriculum, "Violence, the Ku Klux Klan and the Struggle for Equality," can be obtained from the CIBC for $5.95 (prepaid).

It has always seemed significant to me that the Council was really the child of the civil-rights movement—developing when civil-rights workers in the South in the 60s found they needed printed materials in order to give young people the information that could help them build a movement and a new society and that the kind of printed material they needed did not exist.

The fact is that that civil-rights movement released all sorts of creative energies in our society, and that is no accident. If racism has been the root base of what has corrupted our dream of democracy, it also is true that when we even *begin* to deal with that, we open up the way to examine all the things that are wrong with our society, as the Council has proceeded to do in its own work—militarism, sexism, economic injustice, homophobia. When we as a society begin to deal with racism, we begin to work our way toward a humane value system and a humane society.

And when we let ourselves be turned back from this basic understanding of racism as the root of our problems, we begin to turn on each other; selfishness and greed take over. That is what has happened to us over the last 15 years, and Reagan and Reaganism are the fruits of this trend.

But I remain totally convinced that this trend can be reversed. For example, I think we need to look at what the recent stirring on South Africa means. Hundreds of thousands of people in this country, white as well as Black, know in their guts that racism is wrong, and when they see a chance to move against it in a concrete way they do. One could be cynical and say, "Well it's easier when it's on the other side of the world in South Africa." In a way that is true—but many of the people moving on South Africa are also prepared to move to reverse the tide of racism here, to stop the clock from being turned back, as those in power in our nation are trying so hard to turn it.

We must open up new ways for people to move on their best instincts. I weep for the white victims of racism, as I weep for the Black—for those who bomb the homes of Blacks, those who deface Black churches, those who suggest that affirmative action is unfair to whites. But I know too that there are hundreds of thousands of people, white and Black, who can see the truth and will welcome it into their lives, if we present it to them effectively.

The Council on Interracial Books for Children offers one of our best hopes for doing this; it gives us tools to work with. I am honored to be here on this twentieth anniversary. I hope after another 20 years this organization will not be needed. But for now, please keep on keeping on. □

About the Author

ANNE BRADEN is co-chair of the Southern Organizing Committee for Economic and Social Justice.

African American Literature: A New Challenge

By Eloise Greenfield

I'm very pleased to be here at the Schomburg Center as a part of the ceremony to present Brad Chambers' papers to this important institution, and to celebrate the Council on Interracial Books for Children for its twenty years of service. In making the public aware of the state of children's literature, in encouraging publishers to acknowledge and accept their responsibility to all of the groups that comprise our society, and in supporting the efforts of writers and illustrators of color to produce literature that is truthful and humane, Brad

Eloise Greenfield

Chambers, Beryle Banfield and the other members of the Council have made enormous contributions, and so much has been accomplished during those twenty years.

Our celebrations must be tempered, however, by the knowledge that the work of the Council is as crucial today as it has ever been. Children's literature, along with other areas of U.S. life, is suffering a reversal of many of the gains that were realized during the last few decades. Many of the books that we welcomed just a few years ago are no longer in existence, and with very few exceptions, the major publishing houses have closed their doors to African American writers, both new and established.

In preparing these remarks, I scanned the publishers' fall announcements in last month's issue of *School Library Journal* searching for names that I recognized as belonging to African American authors. Of those who had authored works that fall into the category of African American literature, I found four. Out of the hundreds of books advertised, only four — far from the minimum which we should be able to expect, the ten per cent that we are said to constitute of the total population.

In the current issue of *Publishers Weekly*, there is an item about the New York Public Library's annotated list of Black books, films and recordings of special interest to teenagers. The list is entitled *On Being Black*. According to *Publishers Weekly*, the committee that compiled the list could find only 112 quality books in print. This is confirmed by what I am hearing from booksellers who want to carry African American literature — that books are going out of print so quickly that their mail order catalogs are obsolete as soon as they are printed. And so, the collection that we have been trying to build is being squeezed from both ends to almost nothing.

I don't think any of us here are surprised by this turn of events. We know the climate we're living in, and we are familiar with mood swings in the U.S. But that does not mean that we will accept this gracefully. We cannot. For the suppression of the voices of targeted groups is, in fact, censorship, and censorship at its most lethal and effective level—a publisher's decision to discontinue a book is quiet and efficient, and you don't have to waste a match on a book that is never printed. Yet, those who are most vocal in projecting their image as protectors of First Amendment rights, who deliberately misinterpret our call for responsible book selection as a call for censorship, are silent on this issue.

For African Americans, the wall of racism is high, and there are so many challenges facing us. To borrow the words of Sterling Brown, "They don't come by ones, they don't come by twos, they come by tens." But we have the strength and ingenuity to meet them. How else have we accomplished the feat of becoming a dominant cultural force in a hostile environment, so that everything we create becomes a staple, and every time we move or talk or breathe, we see ourselves, or a caricature of ourselves, on television the following day. Our imitators are legion and mediocre and rich.

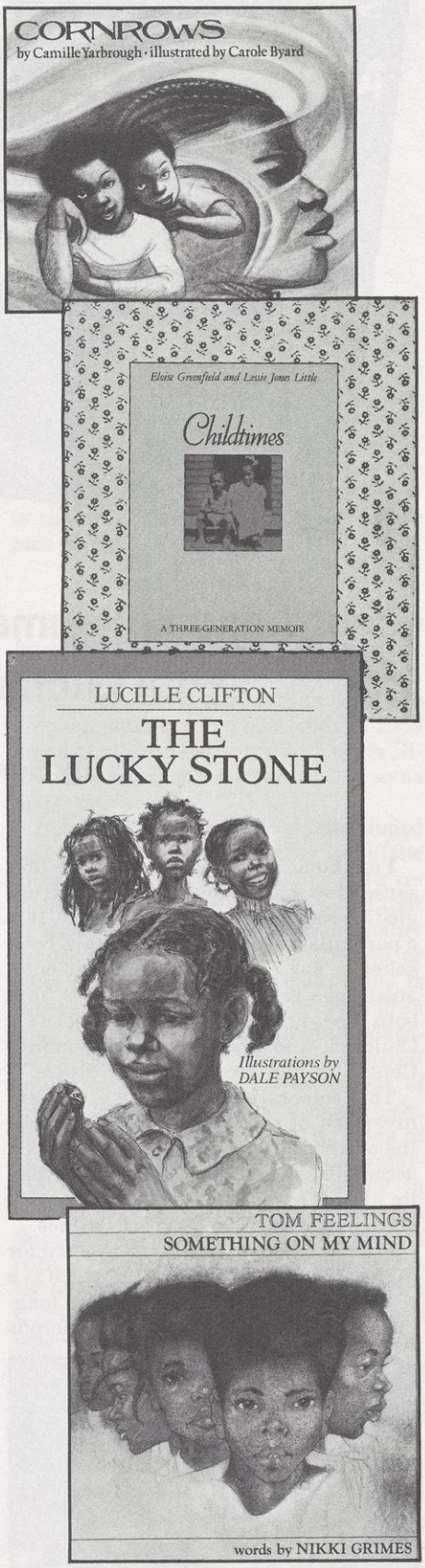
The Movement Is NOT Over

The *Publishers Weekly* article to which I referred earlier states that Ruth Rausen, head of young adult services for the New York Public Library, was told by one publisher that the Black movement was over. This publisher must be proven wrong. Pressure must be exerted to retrieve the books that have gone out of print and to save those that now exist. In addition, new publishing houses and distribution networks that are committed to making available literature by people of color must be formed to see that this literature moves from the hands of writers and illustrators into the hands of children. But, those of us who write and illustrate, if we are to do our best work, cannot and must not be expected to participate on a regular basis in the publishing and distributing aspects of this mission. The little time that we have left, after the hours necessary to earn a living, must be spent in isolation, in the worlds of our characters, if we are to produce works that are worthy of children, that provide nourishment—the excitement of language; insight into the human condition, human behavior, healthful attitudes and values; laughter, and hope.

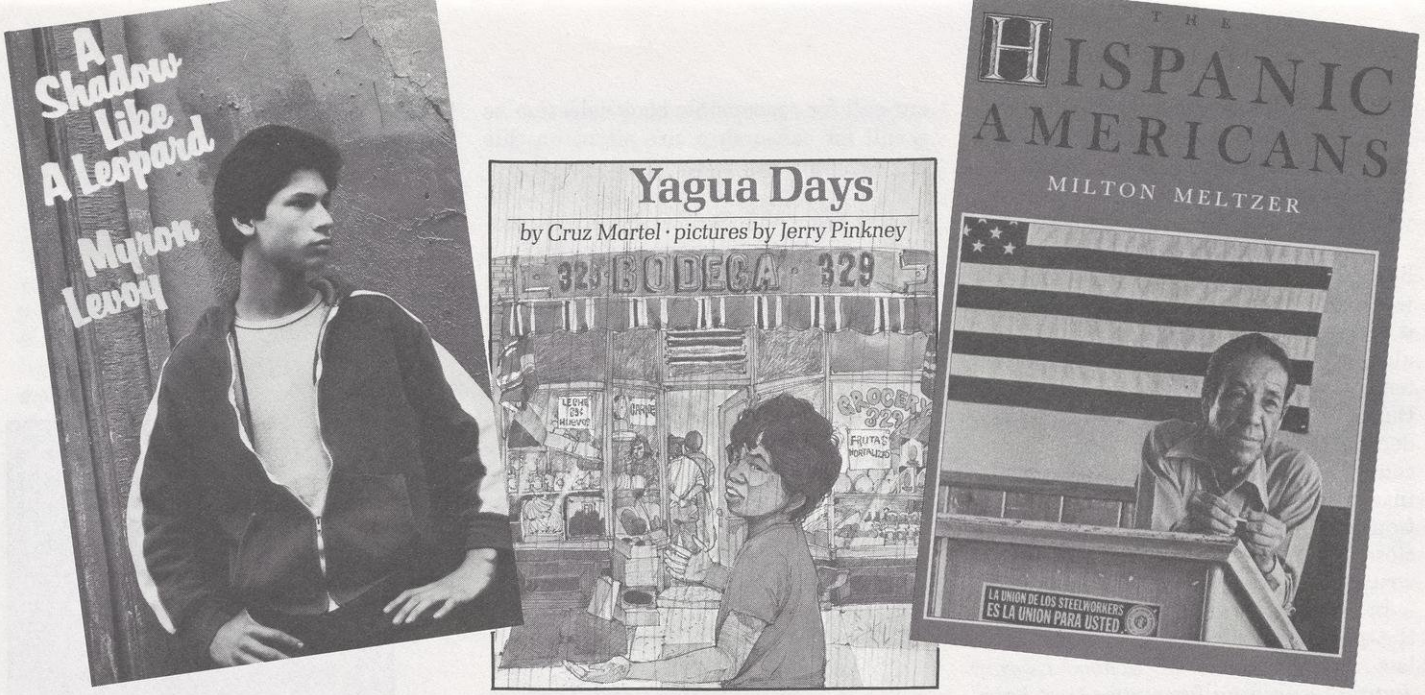
The problems are deep, but we are not in mourning. We are working, pushed by the knowledge that our efforts are an important part of a long struggle—and the struggle continues. □

About the Author

ELOISE GREENFIELD is the author of 17 books for children. Her most recent book is Daydreamers *(Dial, 1981) with illustrations by Tom Feelings.*



Quality books on African American themes are often not kept in print; the titles above are an exception to this rule.



Past Accomplishments, Current Needs: La Lucha Continúa

By Sonia Nieto

I am honored tonight to be in the presence of so many people who have struggled for social change and for justice. It is a particular pleasure for me to have been asked to say a few words at what is an auspicious gathering of colleagues from both the Council on Interracial Books for Children and the Arturo Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture.

This celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the Council gives us both the opportunity to review what has been accomplished and to reflect on what may lie ahead. I would like to attempt to do both, particularly in terms of Latinos.

We come here to honor the Council for many reasons, not the least of which is a resiliency extraordinary in its magnitude, especially given the numerous attacks, the constant financial traumas, and the increasing red-baiting to which it has been subjected and which have made its existence tenuous at best.

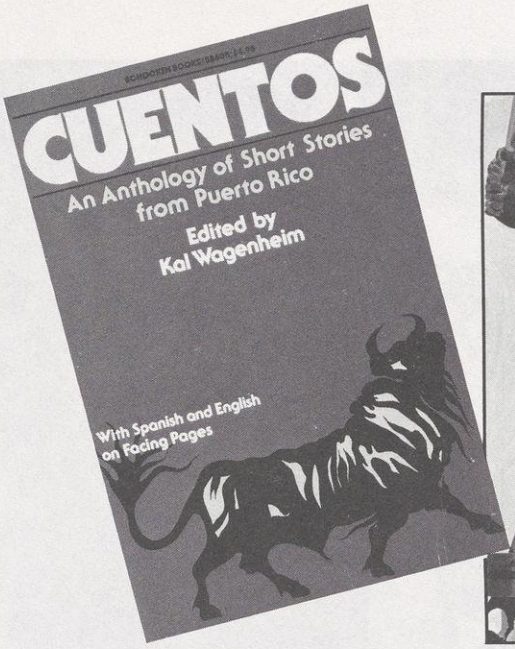
Sonia Nieto

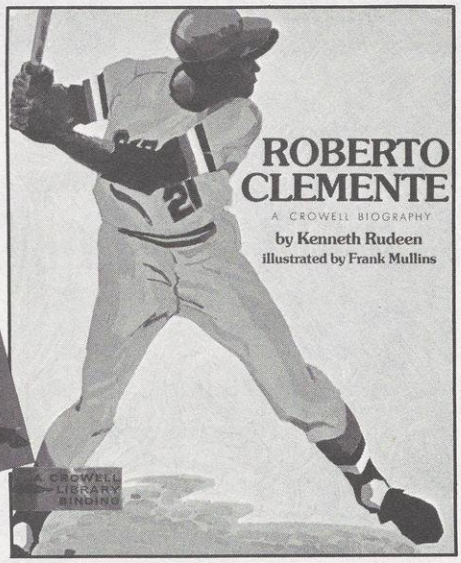
We also come here to honor the Council for its tenacity in confronting issues not discussed in polite discourse, issues which are, by their very nature, ugly: racism, sexism, heterosexism, handicapism, elitism, militarism, among others. Yet it is precisely through its peeling away of the layers of these "isms" that the Council has succeeded in educating the educators.

I remember clearly, for example, a day in 1972 when I was working at P.S. 25, better known as the Bilingual School, in the Bronx. That morning, one of the assistant principals had inserted in every teacher's mailbox a copy of the latest issue of the *Bulletin* entitled "100 Books About Puerto Ricans." She obviously felt it important enough to give each of us a copy of this particular issue, for after all, about 85 per cent of our students were Puerto Rican. Although I knew something of the work of the Council, my familiarity with it was superficial at best. Most of us, even many of us who were Puerto Rican, probably could not have named more than a handful of children's books about Puerto Ricans, but 100? You cannot imagine what an eye-opening experience that was for me and for my colleagues. Here, at last, was an organization that spoke to our concerns, that moved us, and that helped us teach our children.

Ten years later, I was asked by Brad Chambers to do an up-date on that first issue which had so inspired me. The intervening years, from 1972 to 1982, were marked by both progress and regression. In terms of Latinos, we saw, at least in the early 70s, an increase in children's books about Puerto Ricans. By the early 1980s, the number had slowed to a trickle. Even at its highest point, however, the increase in the *quantity* of these books (which never exceeded 20 in a single year) did not necessarily reflect a concomitant increase in *quality*. Where before we might have had two or three books a year which were racist, sexist and assimilationist, we now had seven or eight each year. It is difficult for me to call this progress. On the other hand, there were a small number of books published during these years which I could proudly give to my own daughters and to the sons and daughters of my friends, books which allowed them to see their lives and their vision reflected in print, something which I had never had the luxury of doing as a child. Because these were far too few, however, it was almost a relief to see the numbers of books drop once more, so that by 1980, not *one* children's book with Puerto Rican characters was published in the United States.

The Council, along with Latino educators and parents, has clearly had





The number of books on Puerto Rican themes has decreased each year, and only a fraction of the available titles can be recommended. Shown on these pages, some of the better books published during the past decade.

an impact on the publishing industry, although it's also necessary to point out that the publishing industry has not always responded in positive ways. Through the progressive campaigns of the CIBC to highlight Latino authors and illustrators and combat the rigid and destructive stereotypes of Latinos in the media, publishers were forced to look beyond the whiteness of their children's book offerings to present other images. I should add that the Council had an even more important impact on teachers, librarians and parents who read the *Bulletin*. During the same years that I became increasingly aware of and concerned about the images of Puerto Ricans in children's books and their impact upon my own children, I was able to enrich their lives with books about all sorts of people traditionally absent from the majority of children's books. While the work of the Council should be seen in the broad impact it has had on publishing, I would like to add my personal "thank you" to the staff of the Council for allowing me to broaden my *own* children's view of the world. If they have learned to value diversity and to show love and solidarity for others, the Council must take some of the credit.

The historic reality of the late 60s and early 70s helped all of us along in making demands and achieving success, for it was a time of increasing optimism, of growing militancy and of opening doors. Both the Council and the times have changed. Because of the situation in which most Latinos find themselves today, demanding positive images in children's books can hardly be considered a high priority. Our current situation is dismal, to judge from current statistics. Latinos' real earnings, for example, are lower than ever: while the median family income for the general population in 1982 was over $23,000, Puerto Ricans had a median income of about $12,000. The number of Latinos living in poverty has actually increased. From 1970 to 1982, Latinos experienced a *reduction* in family income; during the worst period, from 1979-1982, the decrease amounted to 14 per cent in loss of real income. Meanwhile, the proportion of Latinos living below the poverty line (an arbitrary line having little to do with providing for a family's needs) increased from 23 per cent to 30 per cent.

For Women, Distressing Realities

For Puerto Rican women, the picture is even more distressing: fully 41 per cent of Puerto Rican families in New York City are now headed by women, compared to 15 per cent for the general population. The overwhelming majority of these families live in abject poverty, victims of both racism and sexism.

In education, the strides we made in the 60s and 70s have been largely eroded. A 1979 study pointed out, for example, that over 17 per cent of Latinos aged twenty-five and over were illiterate, compared to 2.8 per cent for whites. Forty per cent of all Latino students are in what is called a "general track"; only 25 per cent are in an academic track, and even fewer go on to college. While enrollment of Latinos at the university level rose somewhat during the 60s and 70s, it is declining in the 80s: of all college freshmen in 1982, only 1.78 per cent were *either* Chicano or Puerto Rican. Even more devastating than this are drop-out statistics: a major study in 1984 found that drop-out rates for Puerto Ricans are as high as 80 per cent in some major cities.

Bilingual education, a right demanded and won by Latino and other linguistic minorities in the late 60s, has been reduced. In fact, while it is estimated that as many as 6.6 million children qualify for bilingual education, only 206,000, or 3 per cent, are in bilingual classrooms. Is it because of this tiny number of children that the debate about bilingual education rages on or is it because bilingual education has the very real danger of succeeding? The debate, interestingly, does not even mention the millions of other children who waste their days staring blankly at teachers who speak in what is to them a foreign language. The Supreme Court, in its 1974 landmark ruling, *Lau* v. *Nichols*, stated that equality of educational opportunity is a sham if children are forced to sit in classrooms where they do not understand the language of instruction. It is for *this* reason (along with others having to do with economic and social oppression)—and not because of bilingual education—that schooling is meaningless for so many of our young people and that dropping out can be seen as a positive statement made by young adults who refuse to be dehumanized.*

*A special *Bulletin* on bilingual education is scheduled for publication later this year.

Freda Leinwand

While more and more research is pointing to the effectiveness of bilingual education, more and more of our children are removed from such programs. Ironically, our enemies have begun using our own words. No longer quite as acceptable is Reagan's slip a couple of years ago that "bilingual education seems somehow 'un-American.'" Secretary of Education William Bennett can now assert, "The responsibility of the federal government must be to help ensure that local schools succeed in teaching non-English students English, so that every American enjoys access to the opportunities of American society." This from a member of the Administration that has cut back on every single program to benefit the poor and the disenfranchised, that has stalled implementation of every civil-rights law and actively opposed the extension of the Voting Rights Act, that has stacked the Civil Rights Commission with right-wing ideologues, whose tax policies penalize the poor and middle classes and benefit the owning class of society, that openly and shamelessly supports racist schools in this country, that sits by while 800 Blacks are massacred in South Africa but protests loudly when one citizen of the Soviet Union is put under house arrest, that has recently named several outspoken opponents of bilingual education to the National Advisory Council on Bilingual Education, and whose so-called "Justice Department" is pressing the Supreme Court to dismantle affirmative action guidelines.

Nice Books Aren't Enough

The Council on Interracial Books for Children has provided us with a forum for issues such as these. While focusing primarily on children's books, the Council has *never* neglected the broader social and political picture. Brad Chambers knew that having more nice books about Blacks, Puerto Ricans, women and disabled kids would do nothing at all unless the underlying assumptions of a society which categorizes us according to race, class, gender and other traits were not attacked in a direct and fundamental way.

We have a lot of work to do and, unless we are uncritical optimists, we all become at times demoralized. That is why celebrations such as this one are so important: they help us re-group, they put us in touch with soulmates who struggle with the same issues every day, and they motivate us to continue our work.

Our vision would be dimmed, however, unless we left here with a sense of purpose and a clearer understanding of what has to be done. Yes, the Council has done extraordinary work; it has broadened our focus, it has challenged us, it has moved us forward. It is now our turn to do the same for the Council. While we celebrate your twentieth anniversary with you, we remind you that a celebration is not enough. All the resiliency and the tenacity which you've demonstrated in the past 20 years we ask you to redouble; all the controversial issues which you've confronted over the past 20 years we ask you to confront even more directly now; and all the achievements you've had in the past 20 years, we ask that you consider only a beginning. In this process of mutual support, criticism and prodding, we will nurture one another and more importantly, we will be back in 20 years to celebrate, in the year 2005, the fortieth anniversary of the Council on Interracial Books for Children. As we say "Happy Anniversary," we must add to it, "La lucha continúa." □

About the Author

SONIA NIETO is Assistant Professor in the Bilingual-Multicultural Education Program at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

A noted African American editor, writer, publisher and educator discusses some important issues for the Black community

An Interview with Haki Madhubuti

By Donnarae MacCann

Haki Madhubuti (Don L. Lee) is Editor of Third World Press, Associate Professor of English, Chicago State University and Director of the Institute of Positive Education in Chicago. He has been Poet-in-Residence at several universities, published widely in magazines, quarterlies and newspapers, and been an active lecturer, community worker and researcher in the area of culture. His latest book of poetry—*Earthquakes and Sunrise Missions*—was published in 1984 by Third World Press.

Haki Madhubuti was recently interviewed by Donnarae MacCann, a member of CIBC's Editorial Advisory Board. He spoke about the education of Black children, his experiences as a publisher and other topics. That interview appears below. (For more information about his work, write Haki Madhubuti at the Third World Press, 7524 South Cottage Grove Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60619.)

Would you talk about how the educational system meets the needs of Black students?

The failure of school systems to include Black writers in school curriculums is a very serious problem. I did not get introduced to any Black writers in secondary school or in my early years of college. My education was not education but acculturation, that process in which one is brought into another's culture, regardless of the damage.

For the most part, my generation did not question this acculturation process. We came across Black writers by accident and these writers influenced us, opened up another world. For myself, I stayed in that other world. I came across Richard Wright when I was thirteen. Wright became a dominant influence on my early life and led me to other authors. In school I read Hawthorne, Twain, Hemingway, Fitzgerald—the major Western writers. My generation learned from that Western tradition, but we were not given the tradition that best spoke to our insides. It was thanks to Langston Hughes and Margaret Walker and Gwendolyn Brooks (and I want to go on and on) that I began to be complete.

I think what happened to me happens to most Black people. If we saw our writers represented in educational institutions, we would feel a little better about learning. If you go to an institution and that institution gives merit only to other people's traditions and histories, how can you relate to that? I see the failure to include Black writers, Black historians, Black philosophers—the whole Black experience—as one of the major problems with the U.S. educational system. This is a problem not only for Black people, but for the general population. We live in a multicultural world, and therefore the cultures of the world (most certainly the cultures of the United States) must be represented. Black, Asian, Native American and Hispanic cultures—as well as European cultures, which we get without question anyway.

Have the ongoing efforts to desegregate schools improved the education of Black children?

We grew up thinking that integration was the way, was the answer; and so, in the latter part of the 60s and most of the 70s, efforts were put into integrating our school systems. But how can you integrate the Chicago Public School System when it's 70 per cent Black and Hispanic? That's an impossibility.

Moreover, I think we must understand that integration into the white world is not necessarily psychologically healthy. A good educational experience takes more than just sitting next to a white person in the classroom. People need to be in a comfortable environment to learn, and when you need to deal with the stress of a new neighborhood, the stress of a new school, the stress of new teachers, it takes away from learning. Janice E. Hale's *Black Children: Their Roots, Culture and Learning Styles* (Brigham Young University Press, 1982) looks closely at the educational system and this culture in terms of how they aid or hamper our child-rearing. She shows how the humanities can be taught within a context of Blackness or Africanness, and how this aids the development of our children. She looks at how the extended family used to be a part of the teaching apparatus.

Are there other factors that impact on the education of Black children?

Basically, Black people are an oral people; this is best exemplified in the churches and in our music. The Black public reads newspapers, religious materials, magazines, etc., but Black lives do not generally revolve around literature.

Most Black homes, like white homes in this country, are not centers of serious study in any field, let alone literature. Research shows that if parents read, children will read; if parents study, the children will study. The key to reading, like other skills, is that it has to be cultivated; it has to be taught early, taught properly in an atmosphere that is encouraging rather than discouraging.

In fact, if you look at the great majority of people in this country, not just

Black people, you see that there has been a serious amount of brain mismanagement that has taken place over the last 25-30 years.

What do you think causes this "brain mismanagement"?

The mass media, especially TV, are probably the most dangerous monsters of the 20th century in terms of redirecting the average person away from reading. For the mind to develop, it has to be challenged. And for the most part, TV does not challenge the mind at all. The average newspaper—like all mass media—is directed toward those at an eighth grade level and very seldom offers the type of stimulus that will push your mind forward. Therefore, there's an anti-intellectual mindset that is pervasive throughout the country, not just the Black community. Mediocrity is encouraged rather than discouraged.

When people do not read, they do not, for the most part, deal with the real world. By that, I mean that the world, especially the Western world, is a scientific, technological world, where most of the life-giving and life-saving information is found in two places. One place is computerized data banks that are basically controlled by the government, the corporate and military organizations. Most of us have little or no access to this information. The second area is in books, scholarly journals and, increasingly, in library data banks. *That* information is reserved for those who are skilled in research or methods of serious study. We may be developing a whole generation of young people that does not understand that reading, writing, critical thinking and computer literacy are necessary to their development.

There is, in effect, an educational system for those who rule the world and a system for those who are expected to work for those who rule the world. As scientific technology becomes more important, more and more people will be left behind, pushed out of the new world order.

The media also helps shape public consciousness by putting everything into 30- or 60-second slots or "solving" serious, difficult problems in a half-hour or an hour program. People expect difficult problems to be solved quickly; they look for simple answers to very complex questions.

In the U.S., the average person watches six to seven hours of television a day; the average Black American watches between eight and nine hours a day. (The average American child, by the way, sees approximately 18,000 murders on TV before reaching adulthood!)

With so much TV watching, there is no time for serious investigation of ideas in the average home. I mean ideas run the world, and generally those who control the ideas control the world. Most people (white as well as Black) seldom confront ideas at a serious intellectual level. Basic concepts on how the world is run—the differences between Socialism, Capitalism and Communism; the governing systems of different countries—are really not discussed in depth. And when you do not have serious discussion about concepts that essentially control one's every motion, it is very difficult to begin to deal with such ideas outside the home.

The electronic media, with their hypnotic control, have helped make illiteracy almost respectable. In *Illiterate America* (Anchor Press, 1985) Jonathan Kozol points out that people have been able to develop ways of appearing literate when they are not. The concept of shame has been wiped out as one of the major control factors. When I was coming up, one was ashamed to be illiterate. One was ashamed not to be able to read or write, and most certainly ashamed if one was not trying to develop those skills. Today, illiteracy is so widespread that we find a certain amount of comfort in putting down those who are trying to learn. In addition, there exists, in some sectors of the Black community, an anti-intellectual attitude, especially on the part of young men. They would much rather be seen carrying a basketball or football or a large radio/tapedeck than books. But again, that's probably the result of Western acculturation. The West has done strange things to our minds.

You have been publishing books on Black themes for a number of years. What are some of the difficulties Black publishers face?

When we first started Third World Press in 1967, there were seven or eight Black presses and they were coming on quickly; by the end of the 60s, there were 18 or 19. Today, only five Black houses publish with any regularity.

Black publishers face a serious lack of financial support. It is very difficult to find start-up money, or capital for development, expansion or modernization.

It is also difficult to get our materials into most bookstores, which generally do not like to deal with small presses. Most bookstores go after the blockbusters, the best-sellers—books from the large houses. We small Black presses do not have the kind of money that would allow us to buy these "best-selling" books, nor do we have money to finance large ad campaigns for those books we do publish.

In addition, major distributors do not want to handle our books. They look at the profit margin; they are not concerned about trying to develop a literate America. (In the last five or six years some alternative distributors have come into existence and they try to help small publishers.)

Our experience has been that we have to develop our own distributing network. We try to set up sales tables at major Black conventions and conferences; we try to go to churches; we go wherever Black people are. Over the 18 years we've been in business, we've been able to establish a mailing list, and a considerable amount of our sales are through the mail. When I travel (and I travel quite a bit), I try to pick up mailing lists wherever I go. If I'm speaking someplace, I'll pull out a pad and ask people to sign so that I can put them on my mailing list.

Have you noticed changes in books on Black themes in the past ten years?

In many cases we are finding the younger writers, the new writers, are ambivalent about themselves. It seems in the 70s some people lost the whole spirit, the whole direction, of being Black and being African in this country. Now we find a lot of Black writers who are not speaking to the whole ambivalence of living and being in this country—not speaking about functioning in this technological, highly impersonal, race-oriented, cultural wasteland.

We look for writers who continue to critically assess the ambivalence of being Black in America. This isn't to deny that there are Blacks in this country who have "made it," but what we are trying to do is to service the great majority of Black people, those who do not have a voice, who have not made it.

Black themes over the past years have moved from reaction and rage to contemplative assessments of today's problems to a kind of visionary look at the world. We now have writers and poets and children's book writers who are looking at the world a little bit differently, trying to assess the world. They feel they have something to offer the entire world, that they are not writing only to Black people.

Would you share some of your experiences with the Institute of Posi-

A Kwanzaa program at the New Concept Development Center of the Institute of Positive Education.

tive Education?

Our experiences over the last 18 years have been ones of joy, ones of frustration, ones of contemplating whether we've lost our minds or not. I think that anytime you try to do anything in the U.S. without resources you are bound to have these doubts once in a while. But one of the reasons we continue to "hang in there" is because we are involved in building an educational institution in addition to working on our publication efforts.

The Institute of Positive Education (IPE) is a community resource and research center. Founded in 1969, IPE has sought to provide educational and communication services to a community struggling to assert its identity amidst powerful, negative forces. IPE has dedicated itself not only to revitalizing Black consciousness and self-reliance, but in making that vision a concrete reality. We still adhere to the value system outlined in the Nguzo Saba (Seven Principles of Blackness): Umoja (Unity), Kujichagulia (Self-determination), Ujima (Collective work and responsibility), Ujamaa (Cooperative economics), Nia (Purpose), Kuumba (Creativity), and Imani (Faith).

IPE's various programs illustrate our multi-dimensional approach: New Concept Development Center (a school organized in 1972); Third World Press (which has published over 130 titles); *Culture Magazine* (formerly *Black Books Bulletin*, a source for literary commentaries and bibliographies); African-American Book Center (a retail outlet for the best in poetry, fiction, history, children's books, and so on); Nation Studies (a lecture series on issues affecting Black communities); Nation Studies Music Series; African-American Art Gallery; and African-American Film Project.

Our New Concept Development Center is the children's educational wing of IPE; it provides a loving, family-like atmosphere for children two-and-one-half through eight years of age. The Center has been a source of pride and encouragement, because over the past 13 years, we have seen what is possible, we have seen how children have been able to grow. We've seen how important it is to develop an atmosphere of seriousness.

This brings us back to a question we started with: Why critical minds do not exist in the U.S. to the extent they should. Frances FitzGerald, in *America Revisited* (Little, Brown, 1979), talks about the textbooks that have been used in this country. For the most part, they have not developed critical minds. We have to begin to look at the teaching materials we use. At New Concept Development Center we write our own materials and try to find materials that allow us to develop at higher levels. Amos N. Wilson's important book, *The Developmental Psychology of the Black Child* (Africana Research Publications, 1978), helped us realize that Black young people are not only being taught improperly, they are not even being challenged properly.

Our experience has shown that when children are put into an atmosphere that is caring, that is competent, that is challenging, they will grow, they will develop. When teachers work closely with the home, when parents and teachers are not antagonistic but partners in the children's development, the children will grow and will develop. This is crucial. □

About the Author

DONNARAE MacCANN is a columnist for The Wilson Library Bulletin; *she co-authored* The Black American in Books for Children *(Scarecrow Press first edition 1972; second edition 1985) and other books on children's literature. She is currently a doctoral candidate and teaching assistant in American Studies at the University of Iowa.*

We Can Go Back Again (And We Will If We Don't Do Something!)

Shop is for boys, home ec. is for girls. Competitive sports are only for boys. Getting pregnant means getting thrown out of school.

We thought we fought the battle for educational equity under the law, but we may be wrong. Current trends are likely to lead to the reversal of the progress that has been made to date — unless we act.

In 1972 Congress passed Title IX, outlawing sex discrimination in public and private schools receiving federal funds. Under Title IX, women and girls gained new academic, athletic and employment opportunities. However, in 1984, the Supreme Court ruled that Title IX was "program specific," meaning that *only* the program receiving federal money was prohibited from discriminating; the rest of the school could do as it wished! Thus, a college biology department receiving federal funds can not discriminate, but the School of Engineering in the same college, not directly receiving federal funds, is free to forbid women to even enroll. The same principle applied to other laws leaves educators free to discriminate based on age, race and disability as well as sex.

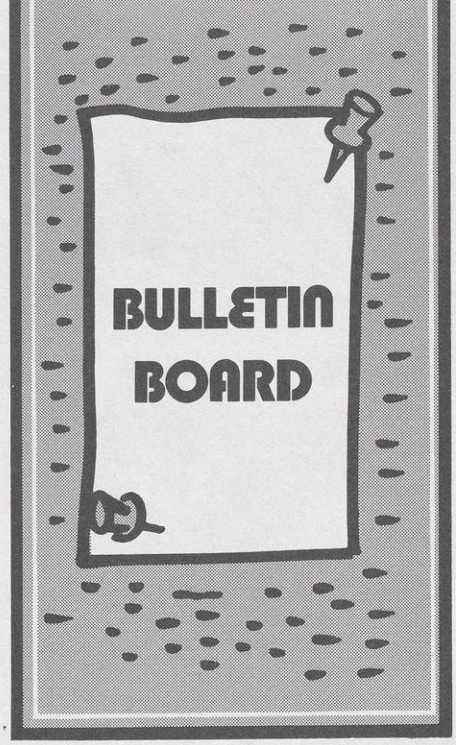
Elementary and secondary schools have felt little impact from the 1984 Supreme Court decision. It has been assumed that the Chapter 2 and other funds directed toward elementary and secondary education affected the schools as a whole. But the Education Department, independent of Congress and independent of the courts, has decided that most aspects of elementary and secondary education are no longer covered by anti-discrimination laws. Suddenly, public schools are free to discriminate, to set up separate classes, separate programs and even separate schools! Except where federal funds are specifically used, the Education Department is saying, separate and unequal is fine with them; if one education is given to white males and another, inferior education is given to everyone else, it is none of their business.

Something can be done. Congress has before it The Civil Rights Restoration Act that mandates institutions receiving federal funds not discriminate based on sex, race or disability. If you want civil rights to apply to education, you must let your representatives know you want them to support the Act and to support it without any amendments that would limit its coverage.

As the Administration works to kill anti-discrimination laws, it is also trying to destroy the few programs that support educational equality. The Administration has been trying to destroy the Women's Educational Equity Act Program (WEEA) since 1981; currently, it is requesting that all 1986 WEEA funds be rescinded and that no funds be allocated for 1987. This small program (under $6,000,000) is the only program in the entire Education Department concerned specifically with educational opportunities for women and girls. It has had an impact far beyond its limited funding, and because of this has been a right-wing target. Without our support the program will die. A similar death is scheduled for Title IV, which supports efforts to desegregate education in terms of race, sex and national origin.

Education is less discriminatory than it was in the past, but there is still a long way to go. Unless you call and write both Congress and Secretary of Education William Bennett, progress will be impossible and the "bad old days" will return to education.

To join with others working for equity in education or to obtain more information on current struggles, contact Jennifer Tucker or Theresa Cusick, Project on Equal Education Rights (PEER), 1413 K St., Ninth Floor, Washington, DC 20005; (202) 332-7337. Don't delay; act now. [Patricia B. Campbell]



Children's Book Reviewers Sought

Publication of children's books around the world is increasing, but U.S. librarians have difficulty selecting books from various cultures in languages other than English. The Committee on Selection of Children's Books from Various Cultures, Association for Library Services to Children (ALSC), is looking for reviewers who are competent in languages other than English (particularly Asian and Middle Eastern languages) and experienced in evaluating and selecting children's books. Reviewers should have access to current in-print titles, as the Committee does not receive review copies. Those interested should contact Committee chair Janice Yee, Santa Clara County Library, 1095 N. 7th St., San Jose, CA 95112.

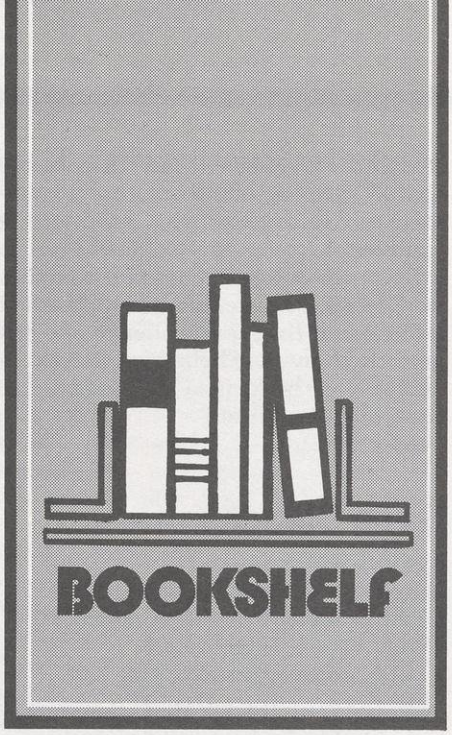
"Making Peace" Subject of June Institute

"Making Peace: Weaving Threads of Faith and Action" is the theme of a five-day summer institute for educators, clergy, parents and lay and religious leaders to be held in St. Louis, June 16-20.

Co-sponsored by Eden Theological Seminary and the Institute for Peace and Justice of St. Louis, the week will explore links between social action, social analysis and spirituality, as well as strategies for incorporating peacemaking and acting for justice into the life of the family, school and congregation.

Joe Holland, author and lecturer from the Center of Concern in Washington, D.C., will provide leadership in "Social Analysis and Biblical Reflection." Holland, along with Dr. Allen O. Miller and Sr. Margaret Collins, C.S.J., will examine the political, economic and cultural forces framing the Biblical mandate of the 80's. Staff members from the Institute for Peace and Justice will lead programs on such topics as "Educating for Peace and Justice."

Tuition for all five days is $100, or $75 for Wednesday through Friday. Room and board is available; motels with special rates are convenient. For further information, contact the Institute for Peace and Justice, 4144 Lindell #400, St. Louis, MO 63108; (314) 533-4445.



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

Issues in American History: The Worker in America

by Jane Claypool.
Franklin Watts, 1985,
$9.90, 120 pages, grades 5-up

This book attempts to present a comprehensive history of the U.S. worker in just 120 pages! The task is impossible, and although the author succeeds in many ways, she falls short in others.

Successes: Claypool avoids the traditional definition of "worker" as white, male and professional, including chapters on "Black Workers," "Women in the Work Force" and "Immigrants Seek Opportunity." (However, there are problems with these chapters; see below.)

The book also contains important information on unions. Another plus is that the author refers to certain facts not included in conservative history books. For example, Claypool mentions that an amendment prohibiting discrimination by sex was included in the 1964 Civil Rights Act by opponents of the bill, who hoped that "it would dissuade Congress from passing the bill."

Shortcomings: The book fails to present a powerful viewpoint on the oppression of workers. The chapters on Black people, immigrants and women referred to above tend to generalize and stereotype workers and minimize their struggles in the workforce.

In addition, little description is offered about working conditions for slaves on plantations or workers in factories. Furthermore, certain historic "facts" remain unchallenged, as illustrated in the following passage about Colonial America, which glosses over the injustice of European conquerors:

> Once in the New World, some of these [European] adventurers gave up their old occupations as soldiers and sailors and settled in the new land. Hernando Cortez, for instance, led the military campaign against Aztec Indians and conquered the land that is now Mexico.

The author's treatment of Native Americans also contains glaring historical omissions. Claypool justly describes Native Americans as our nation's first farmers, yet she never discusses the atrocities inflicted on the native population by the European settlers.

The Worker in America can be used as a resource in upper elementary school classrooms if it is supplemented with a more accurate historical view. (See CIBC's *Stereotypes, Distortions and Omissions in U.S. History Textbooks*.) In addition, students' interest would be piqued if Claypool's facts were accompanied by oral and written testimony by workers. Issues about workers' oppression can be raised by thorough and thoughtful discussion! [Jan M. Goodman]

Sally Ann Thunder Ann Whirlwind Crockett

by Caron Lee Cohen,
illustrated by Ariane Dewey.
Greenwillow, 1985,
$10.25, 40 pages, grades 1-3

Does the image of a woman holding a gun, with a knife strapped to her side, provide a better role-model for a child than He-Man or G.I. Joe figures? This tall tale seems to be saying just that.

Sally Ann Thunder Ann Whirlwind Crockett (Davy's wife) is made of "thunder and lightning." She wears a bearskin dress and can "stomp" wildcats and "smash" wolves. She is as strong as an ox and as fast as a fox. In this tale, she overwhelms "bad man Mike Fink," who "couldn't tell his friends he had been beaten by a woman."

Is Sally Ann's character meant to show that women can be strong? (At the same time, are we to believe that "pioneer" women who lived "traditional" lives were not as strong as their husbands and brothers and sons who stripped the land of resources, killed animals for profit and massacred Native people?) Sally Ann's beehive hat, live snake belt and gun do not make her into the liberated woman that we would want our daughters to be. Will my five-year-old know, after reading this book, that she can be strong and still open her arms to hug a friend?

Sally Ann is, of course, an exaggeration, and myths and tall tales are full of exaggerations. It's part of their charm and humor. But I think it's time that we find a way to keep the humor and fantasy while shifting the focus from macho ideals. I'd like to see Sally Ann use her strength to change the course of a river to irrigate fields, which she plants in the wink of an eye to feed the world. Will it be a gain for feminism if the president that pushes the button is a woman? [Karen Mantlo]

African Images: A Look at Animals in Africa

by Dorcas MacClintock,
illustrated by Ugo Mochi.
Scribners, 1984,
$14.95, 158 pages, grades 7-up

Italian artist Ugo Mochi (1884-1977) studied animals for a significant part of his life, becoming familiar with their bone and muscle structure and their movements. Author MacClintock worked with Mochi's daughter in selecting illustrations for this unusual book.

Mochi's great talent and love for animals helped him create silhouette forms cut from black paper that are at once delicate and strong. They reveal a great deal more about the animal than most typical, brightly colored, full-page illustrations. The animals in this book are in scale, depicted in the context of their nat-

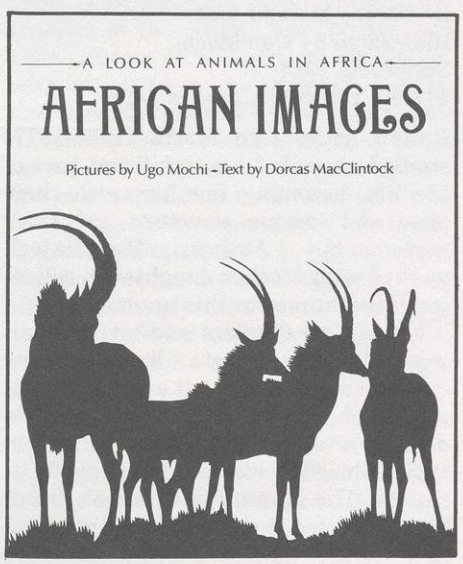
ural habitat. (In most cases, animals are shown with their young.)

Most children's books about the animals in Africa (and most adult books, as well) focus on what has been considered "exotic"; they are further marred by an emphasis on so-called "wild" or "jungle" animals. This book makes one aware of how much our perception of animals in Africa (and therefore what we have conveyed to children) is based on the striking characteristics of one or two animals.

Here the text describes the land of Africa—in its infinite variation and great beauty—with thought, concern and variety. Chapters entitled "The Forests," "Along Rivers," "The Bush," "Savannas," "The Grasslands" will go a long way toward correcting the racist language used to describe Africa's topographical diversity. (The word "jungle" is not to be found anywhere.)

We see the extraordinary diversity of animal life in Africa. One learns that there are at least two kinds of African elephants—a forest elephant and a savannah elephant. Remember how we were taught about The African Elephant and The Indian Elephant? It seems stereotyping applies to animals as well.

The chapter entitled "The Bush" describes the Nyika, meaning the East Africa bushland. Noting that the weather is "hot and waterless most of the year," the author describes what happens to the water in the dry season and the effect on vegetation. She goes on to detail how various animals deal with the dry life. (This section contains an excerpt from Rudyard Kipling's "The Elephant's Child," from his *Just So Stories*; it is unclear why this rather racist retelling of a traditional African story is included.)



The book is lovely, informative and a work of art. Its pages are certainly full of information that can challenge and engage children—and help them think critically. The book is a visual delight. [Geraldine L. Wilson]

Rose Blanche

by Christopher Gallaz,
illustrated by Roberto Innocenti.
Creative Education (123 S. Broad St., Mankato, MN 56001), 1985,
$14.95, unpaged, grades 3-up

The jacket tells us that the author created this book "to illustrate how a child experiences war without really understanding it." Unfortunately, so little information is provided by the text that young readers will come away with the same sense of bewilderment, unless an adult provides a great deal of background information.

Rose Blanche is a young girl living in a small German town. Soldiers appear in the streets. Rose sees a young boy try to escape from a truck guarded by soldiers. She follows the truck to a place surrounded by barbed wire, where young people wearing prison outfits with a small yellow star peer out at her. Rose begins to bring food to these prisoners. Eventually other soldiers, in different uniforms, attack the town. In the confusion, Rose is killed.

Adults will find the illustrations well-done and evocative. They will recognize the Nazi symbols that appear with the first group of soldiers and the place surrounded by barbed wire. They will understand who the prisoners are and what the yellow stars on their uniforms mean. They will identify the second group of soldiers, with red stars on their tanks. (They may, however, wonder why it is so easy for Rose to bring food to the prisoners, but that's another story.) Adults will learn from the jacket flap that "Rose Blanche" was the name of a group of young Germans "protesting the war." But what will young readers get from this book?

In a press release that accompanied this work, the author states, "If the story is well understood, it will teach people not to repeat history's worst pages." The aim is noble, but it is impossible to imagine any child—or adult—getting that message from this book. [Albert V. Schwartz]

All But the Right Folks

by Joan Kane Nichols.
Stemmer House (2627 Caves Rd., Owings Mills, MD 21117), 1985,
$11.95, 100 pages, grades 4-up

In one afternoon, Marv—a young Black adolescent—meets a grandmother he never knew existed, finds that both she and his mother, dead since he was an infant, were white, and sees his father arrange for him to spend the entire summer in New York with this "new" grandmother.

Luckily, this grandmother, Helga, turns out to be a dream come true—kind, energetic, bike-riding—quite an anti-sexist and anti-ageist image. Marv builds up his strength (having previously been weak and asthmatic), conquers his bed-wetting problem, meets a delightful trio of Black girls (one with a younger brother), and learns karate from one of the girls (another anti-sexist note). All the while he is wrestling with his identity, confused by his father's anti-white stance, afraid to admit to his new Black friends that Helga is his grandmother and not his "nanny," crushed and confused that his dream of his mother as a brown-skinned "flower child" had been shattered. There is also a distracting robbery, kidnapping and escape.

There are several serious problems with the book. While the author tries to address the identity conflict for a biracial child in a society which recognizes only Black and white, all of the positive feedback comes to Marv through his white grandmother—a grandmother who had shown no interest at all in him until this summer. His Black grandmother is brusquely affectionate, but neither she nor his father had felt it important to explain who his mother was and how she died. In fact, his father's anti-white cracks (despite his willingness to entrust his son to his white mother-in-law) make it impossible for Marv to turn to his father for help with his identity confusion.

Since traditionally it has been the Black community and family which have been most supportive of interracial unions, much of this story doesn't ring true, and Helga's role as the understanding adult makes the negative image of the Black family more pronounced. In addition, Marv meets no positive Black males, either peers or adults, and the girls who befriend him speak in an inauthentic dialect which is grammatically painful. ("That mean she almost a green belt. If she do good in the tournament tomorrow, she get her green belt.")

Although Marv does come to some conclusion about his identity which is comfortable for him ("I'm not a blend, Helga—I'm a bridge"), the ultimate image of interracial families is once again of families which are not intact, where the Black side of the family is unhelpful or hostile to the union, and the child must come to his/her own conclusions with the help of a friendly white person. This book reinforces negative Black images and belies the thousands of interracial families which are helping their children develop healthy identities despite the racism of the larger society. [Kate Shackford]

Margaret Thatcher: Britain's "Iron Lady"

by Doris Faber,
illustrated by Robert Masheris.
Viking Kestrel, 1985,
$9.95, 57 pages, grades 3-7

Doris Faber does a good job of explaining how Margaret Roberts, the bright, strong-willed daughter of hard-working, religious parents, grew up to become the first female Prime Minister of Britain. Despite a "humble background" and discouragement from a grammar school headmistress who thought she was aiming beyond her station, Margaret made it to Oxford University through determination and hard work, two guiding forces in her life.

The book details how Margaret mastered the male-dominated art of politics and continued her quest for elective office, despite losses in her first two contests. The text takes us through Thatcher's rise—in 1979—to Prime Ministership and provides a very brief summary of the first years of her leadership. (Readers curious about recent events are advised to consult magazines at a public library, a nice touch.)

Unfortunately, Thatcher's policies are cursorily treated and the author tries so hard to present a "balanced" perspective (detractors say so-and-so, supporters such-and-such) that young readers will gain little sense of the disastrous effects of her conservative positions. And although this book, one of a series on "Women of Our Time," might be assumed to provide literature with a feminist perspective, it is difficult to see this book filling that role, particularly since Thatcher is reported to think of herself not "in terms of being a woman" but "as a politician who happened to have been born female." [Carole M. Martin]

Why Me?

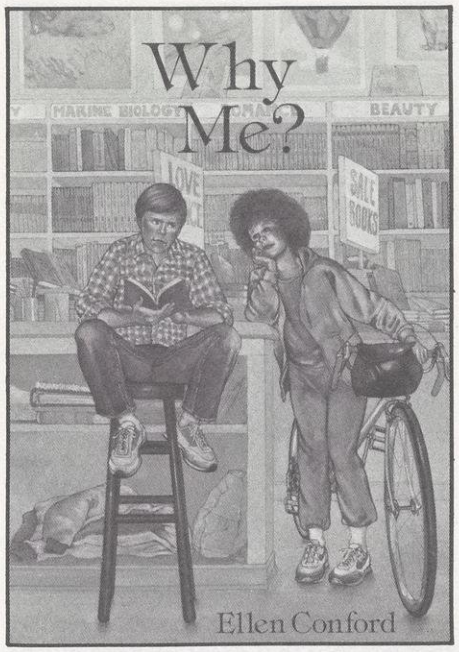
by Ellen Conford.
Little, Brown, 1985,
$12.95, 145 pages, grades 5-up

Here is one more book about young (white) female and male teenagers becoming romantically involved. It is, however, a book worth reading.

Hobie, a ninth grader, is being pursued by one girl while he pursues another. Caught up in the influence of romance, poetry and, as Hobie describes them, "glands," Hobie is frequently thoughtless and occasionally cruel. Yet throughout the book we see his underlying decency as Hobie acts on a friend's advice that only a creep, not a man, deliberately hurts people and tries to make himself feel better by making others feel worse.

Naturally, G.G., the girl pursuing Hobie, is the "brain," while the girl being pursued (Darlene) is the "beauty." Hobie gets used by the beauty, the brain starts dating Hobie's best friend and by the end the brain is looking better and better. There is, however, no final "clinch" on the last page; the conclusion is nicely open-ended.

Books and poetry infuse this story. Darlene only wants Hobie for the poems he writes. G.G. uses books to supplement her meager knowledge of men and her not-so-meager knowledge of marine biology (Darlene goes in for not-very-long romance novels). Hobie works in his grandfather's bookstore, and his father goes to books to find out "How to Talk to Your Teenager." Readers will see that although books aren't the only answer, they certainly are good sources of help.



The portrayal of the adults is somewhat uneven, with several treated stereotypically. For example, Hobie's father—who wants Hobie to settle down (at fourteen?), have goals, decide on a career and get ready for a financially rewarding life—comes across as somewhat lost. His grandfather—who chucked his own financially rewarding life to run a bookstore—is a sympathetic figure who provides Hobie and others with asked-for advice on books, sex, life and almost everything else. (Hobie's mother barely appears.)

Why Me? is funny, warm and fun. Read it and enjoy. [Patricia B. Campbell]

Dyslexia: Understanding Reading Problems

by John Savage.
Julian Messner, 1985,
$9.95, 87 pages, grades 5-8

Here is a clear-cut, comprehensive description of dyslexia, its impact, diagnosis and general teaching approaches, written in a straightforward age-appro-

priate manner. It's unfortunate, however, that patronizing handicapism mars this otherwise well-written book.

Since it is a hidden disability, the impact and frequency of dyslexia is often underestimated, and children and adults who are dyslexic often go to great extremes to avoid the social stigma associated with reading, writing and language difficulties. However, like all disabilities, dyslexia needs to be demystified, and *Dyslexia: Understanding Reading Problems* goes about this task in a basically positive manner. Terminology is clearly defined, and the author attempts to dispel the myth that associates dyslexia and below-normal intelligence. Also presented are concrete examples of different forms of dyslexia and how such learning difficulties can affect a child's social and emotional growth and self-image. Coping strategies and adaptations are discussed in a context that assumes that adaptations should be made for students with learning impairments just as they are for students with mobility and/or sensory impairments.

In two areas, however, this author falls short, namely, in over-dramatizing the trauma of specialized educational testing and in talking about overcoming a handicap. People with dyslexia, like those with other disabilities, learn to adjust and cope with their limitations and the demands placed on them, but implying that "some handicapped people overcome their disability" denies the reality that some disabilities cannot be ameliorated, regardless of the strength of an individual's will-power or determination. These flaws prevent this otherwise excellent book from being highly recommended. [Emily Strauss Watson]

The Oval Amulet

by Lucy Cullyforth Babbitt.
Harper & Row, 1985,
$13.50, 246 pages, grades 7-up

This sci-fi novel suggests that an harmonious world is only possible when male and female share equally in its leadership. In the colony of Melde, however, the evil Ram usurped all power and drove his co-ruler Zessiper and her supporters into hiding. Moreover, the oval amulet that symbolized women's right to share in the leadership of Melde has been "lost" since that time. It falls to Paragrin, a teenager who refuses to conform to the gender roles imposed on her sex, to rediscover the meaning of the amulet and lead women back to their rightful place in society.

While the goal of equality is commendable, there are several disappointing aspects of this book. One is the fact that the right to leadership is based not so much on intelligence and initiative as it is on the will of god (albeit a genderless god, in this case) and heredity. There is also a rather bloody climax in which Paragrin and her followers are only saved from annihilation by the god's intervention; would that they had defeated the men of Melde by outwitting them. Another problem is that the characters are not well developed; most seem to represent "positions" rather than people. Paragrin herself is more often petulant than spunky, and readers will be well ahead of her in recognizing that the sensitive, supportive Cam is more worthy of her love than his chauvinistic brother. This is a first novel; one hopes that the writer's next book will have more fully developed characters. [Carole M. Martin]

The Good Thoughts Series

by Jane Hoober Peifer and
Marilyn Peifer Nolt.
Herald Press, 1985,
$2.95, unpaged, grades p.s.-2

This series of three books (*Good Thoughts about People, ... about Me, . . . at Bedtime*) generated a lot of bad thoughts for me in spite of the benevolent intentions of the author and photographer, in spite of the charming brown-and-white photographs, in spite of the seductive sweetness of the text.

These large format paperbacks do attempt to challenge sexist stereotypes: a little girl pulls a nail with a hammer; a doctor is female; one boy gently pets his dog, another practices the violin. There are brief references to disabilities: a child learns to "talk with her hands"; another is grateful for glasses; a boy is shown hospitalized, his leg in traction. An older couple is included among the "special friends." People of color appear throughout the series. (One particularly appealing photograph shows two little girls, one Black, one white, "sharing secrets.")

Another plus is a section on inter-related activities: "When someone talks, someone else listens. . . when someone hides, someone else seeks." (On the other hand: "When someone wins, someone else loses.") But why "fireman" instead of "firefighter" and why not use "Janie's" computer as well as "David's"? And did they really have to help clean "Mommy's cupboards"?

Unfortunately, there is more to dislike than to like. Of the 29 large pictures, only one is of a Black child alone. Another is of two Asian American boys. One is of a cat. The rest are of white children and adults, with a few multicultural groups in which whites predominate. What this arrangement says to me is that the white children are significant, children of color are not.

A picture captioned "Sometimes I like to share these things with someone else" features two girls (one Black, one white) bathing a white doll. This picture leaves little question in my mind about which child is the "I" referred to in the text.

In a photo of a Christmas play, all of the participants (even the doll) are white; even the obligatory Black wise man is not to be seen. Since geographical and historical realities are often distorted to satisfy racist and ethnocentric cravings to see Jesus as blue-eyed and blond, it is especially important to acknowledge the ethnic origins of the Christian Holy Family in literature which purports to be non-racist.

A strong religious theme runs throughout this series, not surprising given the publisher. All "good things and good thoughts" are attributed to God; "bad"/troubling things are not mentioned. Are we to conclude that we do not have a hand in generating the positives in our lives? What about bad things? Are we to suppose that if we ignore negatives, they will magically go away?

There are some very basic problems with a series which states "Encouraging good thoughts and positive attitudes helps children become happier, better adjusted individuals." Reads one passage: "Grandma says I *should always* have good thoughts" (emphasis added). How does this help prepare children to cope in a world where good things do not always happen and good thoughts are not always appropriate? How much better to

talk about the clouds as well as the silver lining, to let a child know that it's acceptable to have—and share—a variety of feelings. And equally significant, that some things *are* "bad" and people should work to change them.

The series is reasonably priced and therefore accessible to those of us who watch our budgets. To me, however, that's like going to a restaurant where the food is low-priced and tastes awful—but there's plenty of it. [Ashley Pennington]

What If They Saw Me Now?

by Jean Ure.
Delacorte, 1982,
$13.95, 150 pages, grades 7-up

Every Friday Jamie escorts his sister Kim home from her ballet lessons at Thea Tucker's studio. Arriving early one evening, Jamie stays to watch the rehearsal. Lo and behold, a replacement is needed for a show. After testing Jamie, Thea Tucker and student Anita Cairncross convince him to assist with the upcoming benefit show. Jamie, forced by the "habit of obedience" to help a charitable cause, unenthusiastically agrees to perform in the show. The remainder of the book describes Jamie's increasing respect for ballet, his admiration for Anita, and his constant obsession with keeping secret his participation in a ballet performance. The show is a success, but who actually succeeds is unclear.

Although the author tried to create an individual who overcomes rigid gender roles, the story is merely another case of potential-gone-sour. Indeed, instances of subtle bigotry are hidden with what appears to be a moderately liberal plot. For instance, Jamie is convinced to help not because of the artistic value of ballet, nor even because of the exercise he would get, but because the show's proceeds will go to persons with disabilities. More specifically, the money will go to Fairfield, a segregated institution where his cousin (who is never described in detail) resides. "But, Jamie, it's for the handicapped!" rings oppressively loud at key points throughout the narrative. (It is never mentioned that the money would be more appropriately raised for a program which encourages mainstreaming, employment, accessible recreation or independent living.)

Handicapism is matched by the book's classism. The rich are portrayed as genteel, cultured, intelligent and clean ("He marveled at [their weedless flowerbeds]: not an empty Coca-Cola can or cigarette pack in sight."), while the poor are depicted as brazen, uneducated toughs.

And then there's the sexism. Anita's reasoning for wishing that Jamie perform with her rather than be the star attraction herself boggles the mind. She argues:

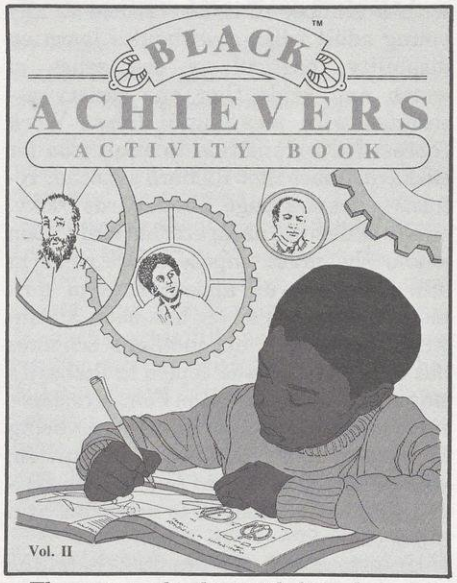
> "If we *don't* do it I'll be the star attraction because then I'll have to fill in with the Sugar Plum Fairy, which I already did last year.... It's the *show* I'm thinking of — that and giving other people a chance. It's a man's thing, not a girl's: I'd only be playing second fiddle."

Perhaps the greatest failure of the book is the finale: That Jamie is a star, that Anita is finally "going potty" over him, that he has survived the ridicule of ruffians (the tough guys attend remedial classes, thus reinforcing the myth that bigotry is limited to those with "low" intelligence) does not convince him to pursue his talent openly and with pride. In the end, Jamie worries only about how he will face his "sex-polluted slob" of a best friend, Doug. (Does Jamie fear that Doug will think him a sissy or, perhaps worse, gay?) This is just a cutesy tale with a very *un*cutesy message. [Michael E. Grafton]

Vol. I: The Black Achievers Coloring Book; Vol. 2: The Black Achievers Activity Book

by Mary and Charles Russell,
illustrated by Jill Waskowsky
and Linda Rzoska.
C & M Publishing Co. (P.O. Box 191,
Oshtemo, MI 49077), 1984 and 1985,
Vol. I: $2, Vol. II: $2.25, unpaged, grades 1-up

Parents and teachers searching for material on Black history can offer youngsters something a bit different with these two volumes.



These paperbacks, with line drawings done in a style which makes them accessible to children of various ages, present inventions by Afro Americans. One page shows the technical design of the patent, the opposite page depicts the invention being used and gives information about the inventor and the invention. The inventions include such "basic" items as a traffic signal, refrigerator, elevator, fire extinguisher and phonograph.

Afro Americans' achievements are continually overlooked, except for a few "standards"; these books offer the opportunity to build on what we have. They should be in every classroom—not just for Afro American students but for all students year round. (A teacher's guide is provided.) We are always in need of more material like this. [Emily Leinster]

First Your Penny

by Donna Hill.
Atheneum, 1985,
$12.95, 207 pages, grades 5-up

Richard David Tilden Downing, a learning disabled adolescent, has led a sheltered life — too sheltered for his taste. At sixteen, he wants very much to get a job, earn some money and become a "real person." His mother, however, has other ideas and it is not until Richard meets Pompeyo Carlo Jonatas Augusto Fuentes y Quinones that Richard's goals move to a realistic fruition.

First Your Penny successfully deals

with a number of issues critical to any young adult with or without a learning disability, particularly the sense of worth and pride that our society associates with meaningful labor. Work represents a transition to adulthood for Richard, a fact that Richard's mother refuses to acknowledge. She regards Dicky, as she calls him, as an eternal child upon whom she must impose strict rules in order to keep up appearances of normalcy. Richard's sister has been an unwilling cohort to his mother's schemes but to her credit, she comes to Richard's side when necessary. It is Pompeyo, however, who serves as a catalyst to bring Richard's amorphous goals to fruition; when Pompeyo is killed in a bicycle accident, Richard is moved to make his own life decisions.

Unfortunately, the sensitive handling of Richard's issues is "balanced" by extreme insensitivity regarding issues of race. Stereotypes abound. Pompeyo — a "dark, skinny boy with kinky black hair" and a "grimy neck and rank smell" — is a rough street kid with a heart of gold who steals, forges adults' signatures on documents, sneaks into movies, etc. etc. etc. His prime function is to serve as a catalyst for Richard's maturation. And then there is Raoul, a janitor who takes constant "coffee breaks" that are really drinking binges. A supermarket cashier named Judy Wang is "small and trim with oriental eyes and straight black hair that framed her face like a wig on a pretty doll."

In spite of its good points, this book cannot be recommended. [Emily Strauss Watson]

Journey to Almost There

by JoAnn Bren Guernsey.
Clarion, 1985,
$11.95, 166 pages, grades 7-9

After a passionate quarrel with her mother, fifteen-year-old Alison packs herself and her grandfather into the car and heads east from Minnesota. Her destination is Massachusetts, where her artist father lives and paints — successfully, he writes.

It's a suspenseful trip. Alison has her driver's permit, but she is not very experienced. Her grandfather has Parkinson's disease, which somewhat hampers him, and he also has progressively worse attacks of paranoid delusions.

Alison is exhausted when they arrive at her father's boarding house to discover that he is not only a failure as an artist, but he has run away leaving a short letter for Alison and his rent bill for his father. So much for high hopes, and now back to reality.

The reader is pulled along by the action and by curiosity about what the travelers will eventually find. And what about grandfather's delusions? (They turn out to be caused by a severe conflict between two kinds of medicine, so all is well.) But that is about all the book has to offer. The characterization is superficial. The dialogue has the ring of authenticity but doesn't say very much. The plot is trite—child of divorced parents fights with the one she lives with, hopefully seeks out the other one, is disappointed and has to make peace with "real life." The automobile trip does add some spice to this stock situation, but otherwise we feel we have read it all before. (The relationship between Alison and her grandfather—in which first one and then the other is the strong, mature adult leader—offers the only complexity in the book.)

The book's basic flaw is that it is a mass of stereotypes. Alison's mother is the caricature of the narrow-minded feminist so determined to be strong that she cannot see anyone else as an individual. An ambitious young Black woman who hitches a ride is headed for the theater. What else? You don't find young Black women in books headed for scientific careers, do you? And the young woman's mother? Alcoholic, of course. Isn't that how Black families are—in books anyway? As for Alison's father, a painter who grew to maturity in the sixties is bound to be both unsuccessful and irresponsible. Those people never did grow up, did they? Certainly not in books.

Finally, the grandfather. He sometimes seems like a man in his late seventies or early eighties, but the ages of child and grandchild suggest that he is probably under sixty-five. Lest he should be a consistently competent adult (which old people in books for young readers almost never are), he has to have Parkinson's disease. *And* he has medication problems so that he appears to be senile and psychotic. The incompetent elderly are not unusual in books, with "the problem" being whether to keep them at home or send them off to a nursing home or special residence. (That possibility is suggested at novel's end, although the grandfather gives it short shrift.)

In her determination and her doubts, her courage and her fears, Alison is more real than the rest of the characters. But how much stronger the book would be if others were individuals instead of the same old stereotypes. [Betty Bacon]

Anti-Semitism: A Modern Perspective

by Caroline Arnold and
Herma Silverstein.
Messner, 1985,
$10.79, 224 pages, grades 7-up

Here is a text for children on an important topic. It is a pity that the book's "modern perspective" seems to be based upon the authors' own prejudices.

The authors seem to feel that merely presenting one terrible incident after another is sufficient to enlist the reader against anti-Semitism; they state: "An awareness of its many faces will help more people to recognize anti-Semitism, and then to stamp it out before it has a chance to grow." Reading about anti-Semitic acts is important, but not enough. Neither is learning of major organizations that fight anti-Semitism. A section on what children can do in their own schools and communities—and more information about what adults are doing—would have improved this book considerably.

The text itself, in addition to being poorly written, is flawed. Some explanations are outrageously misleading; for example, among the reasons given for an increase in anti-Semitic incidents in 1982 in Los Angeles, a city with a large Jewish population, is that "the depressed economy, scapegoating, and the *prevalence of black, Jewish and Hispanic public officials whose new position of authority pose a perceived threat to much of the lower economic Anglo population contributed to the increase*" (emphasis added). In addition to blaming the victim, this suggests that we fuel anti-Semitism by electing candidates of color!

And then there is the misinformation.

I groaned, for example, when I read, "Livingston also succeeded in getting the Associated Press to cease its custom of identifying Jews—and only Jews—when reporting crimes." People of color, Italians, and others (as well as Jews) have long complained of such reporting.

And again: "German soldiers had fought against the Bolsheviks in the Russian Revolution of 1917 and absorbed some of the Russian brand of Jew-hatred." The German soldiers had nothing to learn about anti-Semitism, especially from the Bolsheviks, whose constitution outlawed this form of bias. (And the term "Jew-hatred" only repeats the oppressor's terminology.)

The book's discussion of the Middle East is seriously limited by a superficial discussion that ignores the plight of the Palestinian people. Moreover, the anti-Arab racism of Meir Kahane, who is mentioned in passing early in the book, is glossed over as "incitement" and "disturbing the peace."

The authors appear to be documenting anti-Semitism around the world, country by country. This goal is worthwhile, but, why are African and Asian nations totally omitted? Are they considered less important than European nations? If research had revealed that there are fewer incidents of anti-Semitism in these nations, that would be good to know.

Fuller and more balanced treatments of anti-Semitism are needed so that this limited volume may be replaced quickly. [Albert V. Schwartz]

Betty Friedan: A Voice for Women's Rights

by Milton Meltzer,
illustrated by Stephen Marchesi.
Viking Kestrel, 1985,
$9.95, 57 pages, grades 3-7

This sympathetic biography of Betty Friedan tells of her early life, her difficult growing-up years and how she gave up a challenging and satisfying job as a labor reporter when she married in order to fulfill the role expected of her: wife and mother. It describes her distress at the lack of creative work of her own after she married. When she realized that other women shared her feelings, she began the research that eventually became a major manifesto—*The Feminine*

Mystique. Her book articulated the dissatisfaction felt by millions of women of her generation (especially white women of the middle class) and led to Friedan's becoming a major figure in the modern movement for women's rights.

Working with like-minded women, Friedan became a founding force behind the National Organization for Women (NOW) and one of the strongest voices for a change in women's status. In subsequent works, such as *The Second Stage*, she would write of the need for both men and women to work together in combining work, marriage and children into satisfying lives.

This book, part of the publisher's "Women of Our Time" series, does a good job of detailing the turning points in Betty Friedan's life, including the anti-Semitism and social ostracism in high school that made her work all the harder to achieve academically and in extracurricular activities. Unfortunately, this section is marred by a sentence which, however unintentionally, attempts to win sympathy for Betty at the expense of others: "The girls from well-to-do families like her own lumped Jews with blacks and working-class kids who lived on 'the wrong side of town.'" The same point could have been made in a more sensitive manner. Similarly, the issue of race and class bias in the women's movement could have been discussed in more detail. [Carole M. Martin]

Shadows on the Pond

by Alison Cragin Herzig.
Little, Brown, 1985,
$12.95, 244 pages, grades 6-up

A mother and father on the outs, a sister who probably has an eating disorder, a "tomboy" best friend and a first love—these standards of preteen "girls" literature all turn up in *Shadows on the Pond*. While the plot is familiar, there are some twists that are downright dangerous. Main character Jill has come to Vermont for the summer with her mother. When Jill and friend Migan find their beloved beavers under attack by a trapper, they take action, illegal and dangerous action. In spite of gunshots, threats of adult violence and terror, they do not discuss matters with any adult, and more amazing, although adults guess that their children are in danger, *they* take no action. In this book, irresponsible behavior has no negative consequences, only positive ones!

The book has other areas of concern, as well. Jill's mother and father get back together because Jill does something heroic and is injured. The notion that a child's injury can resolve whatever problems a couple has (we never learned what they were) is not a healthy one for young readers. (Migan also suffers a convenient injury that permits Jill to be alone with her new boyfriend Ryan.) Even though there is no need for her to make such a decision, Jill decides that she would rather be with Ryan than with her long-time friend Migan. In addition, there are many things we never learn, including whether Naomi, an Asian child who has been adopted by a neighborhood family (and the only character of color), lives or dies after Jill rescues her from drowning.

Money is not treated realistically. Even the trapper—whose livelihood appears to be the beaver traps the kids spring and later steal—has no financial problems. Migan leaves the hospital because it is so expensive—even though money does not otherwise seem to be an issue for her family.

The characters are, however, very appealing, which makes their irresponsibility more dangerous.

Shadows on the Pond is well written and exciting; but that is not enough. The book cannot be recommended. [Patricia B. Campbell]

Another Look at "The Color Purple"

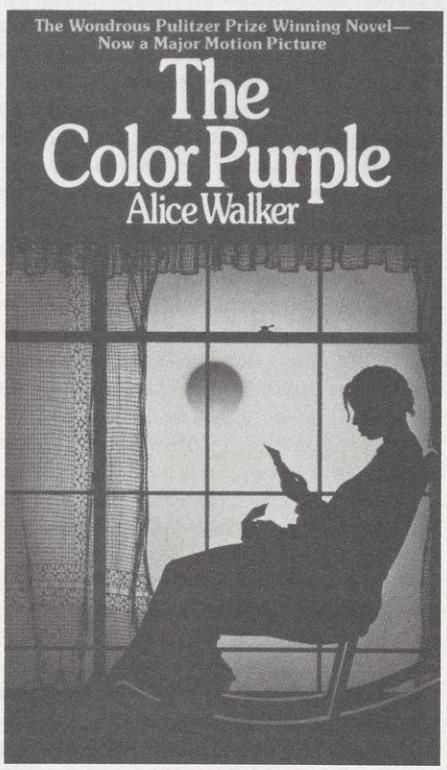
What can we say that has not already been said about the film "The Color Purple"? Reviewers have argued its merits (and de-merits). Discussion in the African American community has been wide and deep. There have been dinner-table discussions, discussions in bars, behind-file-cabinets-at-work discussions, over-lunch discussions. A church in Washington, DC, reported that 1,000 people showed up to discuss "The Color Purple." A preacher at a large prestigious AME church in Brooklyn preached a sermon on "The Color Purple" to a full house, and tapes of that sermon sold out.

Discussion—and protest—began some time ago, initiated by African Americans who have worked long and hard for equitable treatment of African Americans by—and in—the film industry. They raised serious questions about the opportunities that making the novel into a film would provide for African Americans—both behind the scenes and in front of the cameras. They asked who would control the film, who write the script, who direct. African American control of the story—and of the images that would be created—was seen as crucial. Control of your own story is a primary need of oppressed people; getting control in this society is a major task, one that is often not possible to a significant degree. (Consider children's books as prime examples of how unyielding is the resistance to having authentic stories told by and about people of color.) What African Americans did *not* want was to see this film become yet another African American story told by whites. It was hoped that when Quincy Jones was selected as a producer, he would advocate on behalf of "Black issues," but he remained unavailable for comment and discussion.

In any case, a white director was hired, as was a white screenwriter (a Dutchman rumored to be of Afrikaner heritage). Those actors hired were largely newcomers to the film industry, even though there had been many requests that actors who had "paid professional dues" be considered for the film.

Early protests and concerns were ignored, and now the film is drawing tremendous crowds. Many children are being taken to see it. (A number of Blacks—and whites—who loved "E.T." and other Spielberg films seem to be predisposed to like this film and think it suitable for children, even though Spielberg's previous work excludes Black people.)

How do we decide whether or not children should see a film? Shouldn't a film about African Americans give children (all children) authentic cultural clues and accurate historical information and settings? And shouldn't African American children see reflections of themselves that enrich and regenerate? These issues are particularly important in a society where children see films about Black people so infrequently. A first step, it seems, would be that adults see and analyze a film before permitting—or taking—children to see it. In regard to "The Color Purple," the questions and issues listed below can help adults begin to identify important concerns.



Alice Walker's acclaimed novel, The Color Purple, *has been turned into a controversial movie.*

1. How authentic—and culturally accurate—is the music? Why doesn't the music sound like authentic African American music of the 20s, 30s and 40s? Why isn't authentic East African music incorporated in the score? Why is the music so "Hollywood" and why so romantic? Why is it used so sweepingly in "emotional" moments?

2. The ending of the novel conveys that the male and female protagonists are beginning to work out their differences in a positive way. Whether the book's ending satisfies those who have criticized Walker on this issue in the past is a separate topic, but it is ironic that Spielberg minimizes the book's treatment and presents a resolution of the male/female conflict so ambiguous that its importance does not emerge for many viewers.

3. What is the purpose of the intense, sustained and relatively lengthy film depiction of Mr.'s violence against Celie? The book's presentation of the abuse is subtle, consistent, not blatant. Perhaps if there were more "balance" in the films about Black people available to the public there would be no protest. Blacks are often shown as initiators of violence in films, and one of the three major images of African American men in film and literature by whites is the Black man as brute. (The others are the Black man as athlete and the Black man as sidekick.)

4. Why did the screenwriter or director include a bar fight scene in the film when it was not in the book? It adds to stereotypic views of African Americans as violent and caricatures the rich and homey atmosphere that is often characteristic of Black rural cafes.

5. Why does the film present African culture in so disrespectful a fashion?

a. Why is the ancient, traditional African practice of marking the skin for either beauty or identification alternated with a low-threat scene of Celie shaving her husband that focuses on the razor and implies barbarism?

b. The film suggests that Celie's sister works as a missionary in East Africa; if this is the case, why was *West* African cloth and dress used? (And why is the setting East Africa, when most African

Americans who were AME missionaries worked in West and Central African countries. Why was an unlikely, or less probable, setting chosen?)

c. Why isn't the issue of African language handled more appropriately? Why don't Celie's children, when they come back from Africa, speak to her in English? It is unlikely that children reared by missionaries would not speak English since the suppression of African languages was a major goal of missionaries. (When I saw the film, the audience laughed at the children.)

6. How accurate is the film's depiction of the South? Various reviewers have commented on the film's "prettyness." Certainly the film does not have a Southern feeling, the kind of "feeling" that African Americans remember or have heard about, the kind of South that made your family pack food and rolls of toilet paper when traveling in case you couldn't find a Black folks' restaurant or bathroom. The kind of South where lynching and sharecropping were sharp realities for Black people, regardless of income!

Unfortunately, good commercially produced films about African Americans, where African Americans had a controlling hand or significant artistic control, are few; "Buck and the Preacher," "Leadbelly" and "Nothing But a Man" are three that the Hollywood white elite railroaded into porno or second-rate movie houses. (The extraordinary "Sugar Cane Alley," directed by a Caribbean woman from Guadaloupe, won many prizes, but its distribution was limited.) That's Hollywood! And so, it seems, is "The Color Purple." Talk to young folk about the film; help them to be critical. [Geraldine L. Wilson]

Alice Walker

Gung-Ho for Stereotypes

Japanese managers are enigmatic, humorless, disciplined, honor-bound. They are cowardly and unfeeling. They cannot pronounce their r's! But they *can* manufacture cars! *And* Japanese workers make them faster and better than U.S. workers do.

These are the basic messages of "Gung Ho," a "comedy" about a Japanese firm that is persuaded to rescue a failed U.S. auto factory. Most of the jokes depend on negative stereotyping. The "positive" notion that the Japanese are "more efficient" is given grudging recognition, although the value system that produces this efficiency is dismissed with contempt and outrage. There is, of course, one Japanese person who sees the error of his ways and starts becoming more like an "American" (read white, middle-class American); he proves that *even* a Japanese person can be a regular guy.

In an apparent effort to balance the bias, this movie also takes a few pot shots at U.S. workers. Union members, for example, are depicted as a bunch of rowdy boys, easily swayed and highly susceptible to flattery. (The movie misrepresents the realities of the workplace and ignores the long struggle that unions have waged to win safe working conditions.)

When one of the U.S. workers cheats in a baseball game (we cannot let them beat us at *our* game!) or harasses a Japanese woman in the supermarket, his behavior is disapproved of—but treated as completely understandable. After all, he's just a regular guy who is having a hard time. Who knows what we might do in his place?

This movie ridicules Japanese values and shows an amused tolerance of the "good-natured" prejudice and sloppy work habits of "American" workers. All of this is in an atmosphere that enshrines the notion that the only *legitimate*, indeed possible, motivation for hard work is money.

This movie is insulting to everyone, and, but for its stereotyping, would not be worth reviewing at all. At the same time, being stereotypic doesn't make a film unpopular. This heavily promoted work became the "best-earning opening film" by taking in $7.2 million its first weekend. [Dinah Eppel]

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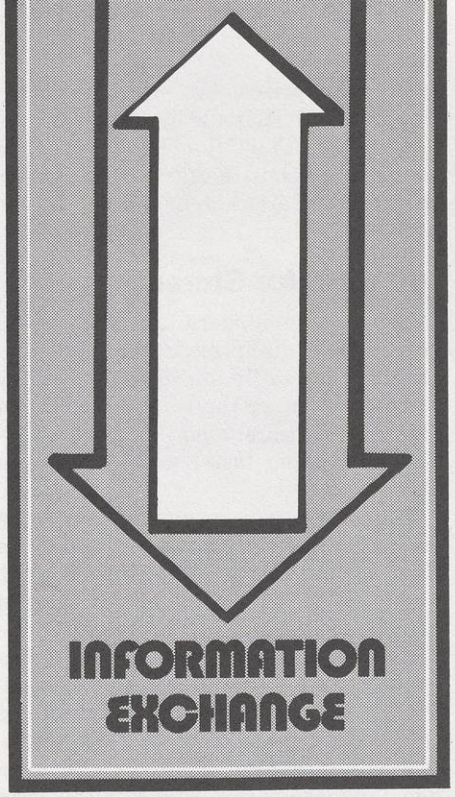

Woman of Power, a magazine of "**feminism**, spirituality and politics," is planning two issues for 1986—"Women of Color: A Celebration of Power" and "Healing." (The theme of the most recent issue was "Woman as Warrior"; it contains profiles of various women, articles, fiction, poetry and artwork.) Single issues are $5; for more information write P.O. Box 827, Cambridge, MA 02238-0827.

"**Resisting Racism**: An Action Guide" contains background information, suggestions for workshops and activities, an extensive bibliography and other materials to combat racism, with a particular emphasis on the needs of the gay/lesbian community. Produced by the International Association of Black and White Men Together, the 125-page paperback is $15 from Gerald L. Mallon, 250 Ridge Pike, #136-A, Lafayette Hill, PA 19444. (Orders must be prepaid; make checks payable to IABWMT.)

A special organizing kit on **Martin Luther King** has been prepared by Clergy and Laity Concerned. (The material was unfortunately not received in time for inclusion in the special *Bulletin* on King—Vol. 16, No. 8.) Included in the packet, suitable for use throughout the year, are two sermon outlines (one appropriate for Jewish communities, the other for Christian communities), a pamphlet on King's position on "hunger, poverty, unemployment . . . and peace," a revised edition of King's "Beyond Vietnam" address and a bibliography/resource list. The kit is $3 plus 90¢ postage and handling. Order from Clergy and Laity Concerned, 198 Broadway, New York, NY 10038.

The National **Central America** Health Rights Network publishes a variety of materials, including LINKS, a newsletter that covers health and human rights issues in Central America. (Listed in a previous *Bulletin*, the newsletter is $10/year for individuals, $25 for foreign or institutional subscribers.) The Network recently published *El Salvador 1985: Health and Human Rights and the War* ($3) and has offered to supply *Bulletin* readers with free copies of an earlier edition of that work. Individuals can either pick up copies at the Network's office (address below) or arrange to have copies mailed for the cost of postage. For further information, contact The National Central America Health Rights Network, 853 Broadway, Suite 1105, New York, NY 10003 or call Toby Willner at (212) 420-9635.

"Celebrate Women" is a full color 24 x 37" poster with more than 700 U.S. **women of achievement** listed by their birth dates. A brief description is provided for each woman, and a separate alphabetical listing accompanies each poster. Posters are $10 each ($7 each for 20 or more) from Celebrate Women, 701 Roxboro Rd., Rockville, MD 20850.

Equity and Choice looks at efforts to "achieve educational excellence in desegregated settings." A recent issue focused on the "'nuts and bolts' of providing **equal educational opportunity**."

Volunteer(s) Wanted!

Our library of children's books is in need of organizing. Can you help us? We would welcome assistance from any reader interested in doing a simple organization of approximately 2,000 books. Schedule would be at your convenience; no monetary remuneration is possible, unfortunately, but volunteers would earn the gratitude of the CIBC staff. If interested, please write the CIBC, 1841 Broadway, New York, NY 10023.

Subscriptions to the magazine, published three times a year, are $15. Write the Institute for Responsive Education, 605 Commonwealth Ave., Boston, MA 02215.

Everyone's Books is a **progressive book store** that provides a mail order service for children's books. For information about current offerings, write the service at 71 Elliot St., Brattleboro, VT 05301 or call (802) 254-8160.

"Children's Songs for a Friendly Planet, Kindergarten through Grade 6," contains more than 100 **songs** from various countries. These are songs of "freedom and social justice . . . peace and non-violent movements of former and modern times." Environmental issues are also addressed. The paperback is $6.75 (postpaid) from Riverside Church Disarmament Program, Riverside Church, 490 Riverside Dr., New York, NY 10027.

The Cinema Guild provides **films** on a variety of topics including women's studies, Black studies, Chicano studies, Native American studies, history and criminal justice. For a copy of its new catalog, write the Guild at 1697 Broadway, Suite 802, New York, NY 10019.

The Black Rose Books booklist offers a variety of materials on **feminism**, economics, Canadian politics, education and ecology, and other topics. For a copy, write Black Rose Books, 3981 Blvd. St. Laurent, 4th floor, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2W 1Y5.

Bread and Roses, which specializes in posters and other items on issues related to **labor and labor history**, has several new "disarming images" posters related to **peace issues**. For information write Bread and Roses, 625 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

Several resources on **early childhood education** have recently been published by Oryx Press. *Current Issues in Day Care: Reading and Resources, Environmental Hazards to Young Children* and *Directory of Child Day Care Centers, Volume 1: Northeast* are among the new offerings. For more information, write Oryx Press, 2214 North Central at Encanto, Phoenix, AZ 85004-1483, or call toll-free 1-800-457-ORYX.

Two audio-visual training kits for early childhood staff, parents and teachers; each program presents the problems, relevant research and simple-to-follow strategies

CHILDCARE SHAPES THE FUTURE . . .

Anti-Racist Strategies

The first part of the learning kit on *racism* presents research findings relevant to racism and young children; common ways racism surfaces in childcare situations; how racism specifically affects Afro-American, Asian American and Latino children; how racism and classism often converge, destroying the chances of very young children; the role of print and electronic media in forming children's racial attitudes; and how racism destroys the quality of life in the U.S.

The second part offers specific strategies for adults to help all children become consciously anti-racist—secure in, and proud of, their heritage. There are also techniques for helping children of color learn to cope with racism when it crops up in their lives and for helping white children overcome racist behaviors. Suggestions for anti-racist role models, environments and resources are included.

"*Fills a longstanding need. In clear, uncomplicated language and pictures, it points up the pitfalls of racism confronting young children and offers suggestions for overcoming this blight on their lives.*" Priscilla Pemberton, Early Childhood Consultant (formerly at Bank Street).

Contains: 2 sound-color filmstrips or 2 slideshows with automatic and manual cassettes; 94 frames and 108 frames, each 15 minutes; includes 3 booklets of readings, facts, research, resources and curriculum activities. LC 83-730389.

Cost per set of filmstrips is $45.

Cost for set of slideshows $55.

Anti-Sexist Strategies

This learning kit on *sexism* contains two filmstrips. The first filmstrip presents research findings on differing adult treatment of girls and boys; conscious and unconscious ways in which adults mold children to fit societal sex-roles; the harm of fixed sex-roles to children's full development; the special harm of "masculine" behaviors to our society and planet; and anti-sexist childcare goals.

The second filmstrip offers ten strategies for anti-sexist childcare. These strategies, with examples of each, go far beyond the usual rules for establishing a "non-sexist" environment. Rather, they explore methods of helping children to become aware of various forms of sexism and to become strong enough to resist pressures for conformity by peers, TV and storybooks.

"*Through the use of these filmstrips adults can begin to question some of their attitudes and learn ways in which to eliminate sexual stereotyping from schools, day-care centers and playgroups.*" Linda Lusskin, Mt. Pleasant School, Livingston, N.J., *School Library Journal.*

Contains: 2 sound-color filmstrips and 2 automatic and manual cassettes. The first strip is 93 frames and 12 minutes, the second is 118 frames and 15 minutes. A booklet is included with scripts, research studies and recommended reading, plus an 8-page Report Card. LC 81-730652.

Cost for set of filmstrips is $45. (Slideshow not available.)

Send check or purchase order to
The CIBC Resource Center for Educators
1841 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023

For a free catalog listing anti-racist, anti-sexist materials, write the CIBC at the address given above.

What Is the Council on Interracial Books for Children?

CIBC is a non-profit organization founded by writers, librarians, teachers and parents in 1966. It promotes anti-racist and anti-sexist children's literature and teaching materials in the following ways: (1) by publishing the *Interracial Books for Children BULLETIN*, which regularly analyzes learning materials for stereotypes and other forms of bias, recommends new books and provides consciousness-raising articles and alternative resources; (2) by operating the Racism and Sexism Resource Center for Educators, which publishes reference books, lesson plans and audio-visual material designed to challenge and counteract stereotypes and to develop pluralism in schools and in society; and (3) by conducting workshops on racism and sexism awareness for librarians, teachers and parents. For more information about CIBC and a free catalog of its Resource Center materials, write us at 1841 Broadway, New York, NY 10023.

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