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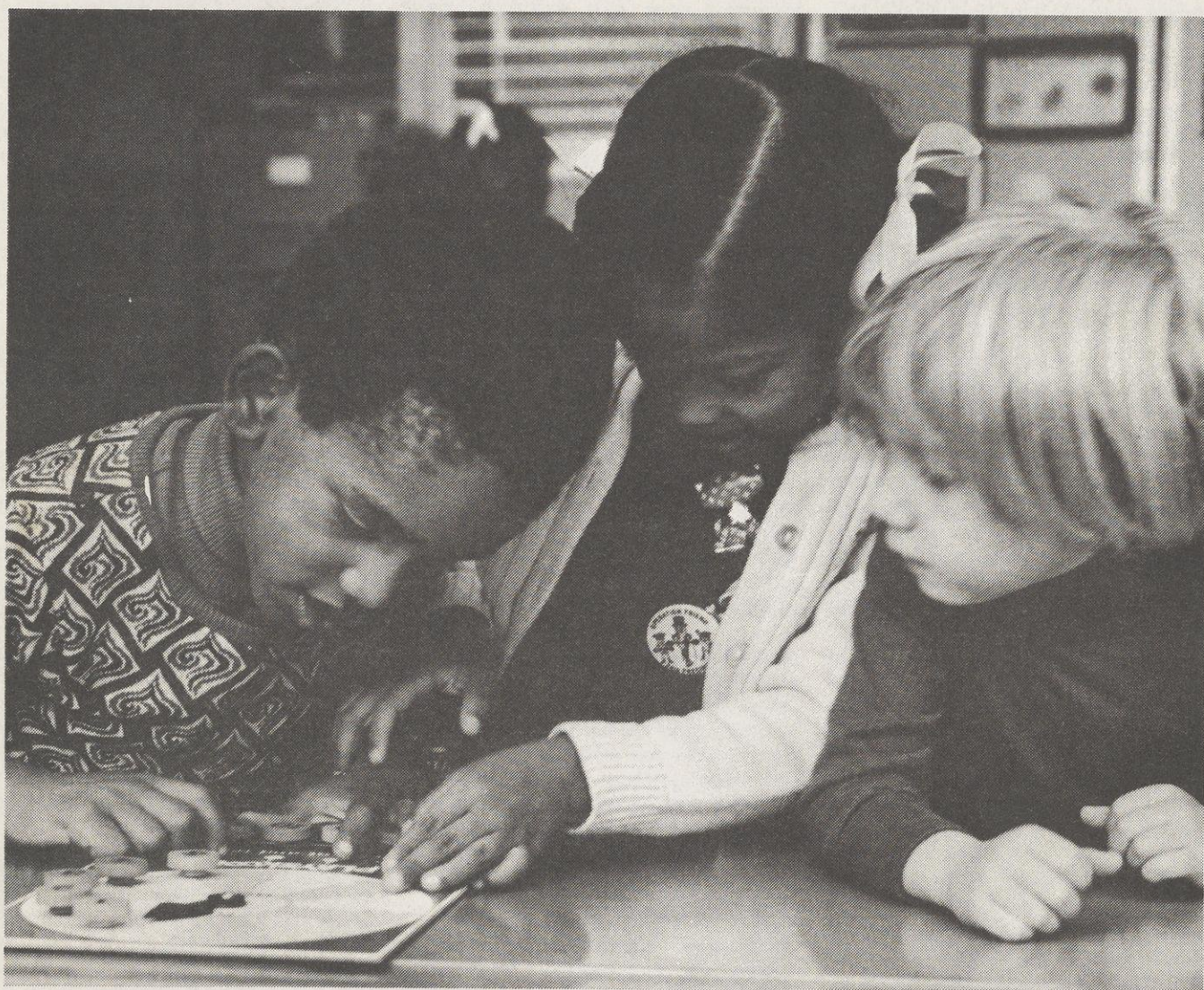
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INTERRACIAL BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

BULLETIN

VOLUME 12, NUMBER 6, 1981

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**Suggestions for Non-Biased Gift-Giving
Biased Assumptions: A Research Challenge**

COOPERATIVE CHILDRENS BOOK CENTER
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BULLETIN

VOLUME 12, NUMBER 6

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A follow-up to last year's feature on toys: a look at the toys on the market today and suggestions for creative, non-biased gift-giving

The Values Conveyed in Children's Toys

By Geraldine L. Wilson

Last year the *Bulletin* published "Toys Are Political, Too: A Guide to Gift-Giving the Year 'Round" (Vol. 11, No. 7). The piece took a close look at the toys on the market and what values they conveyed. A year later, not much has changed. As this survey of this year's toys reveals, racism and sexism still pervade the toy market.

What's more, the U.S. toy market—largest in the world and responsible for much of what is sold in other countries through exports or influence—continues to grow, even in these economically troubled times. The toy industry is relatively recession proof, according to Donald Thompson, president of the Toy Manufacturers of America. At the opening of the annual Toy Fair held in New York City last February, he noted that a survey had revealed that parents will cut spending for clothing and vacations, but continue their pre-holiday spending for children's toys.

If many more toys were worth their price, if less money went into unnecessary packaging (thereby reducing the cost of toys), if fewer toys were sexist, if there were no toy guns or war games, if there were more safe toys and toys that conveyed positive values, then there would be less cause for alarm. For it is alarming to think that parents—particularly those whose funds are limited—feel compelled to exhaust themselves financially/psychologically/emotionally to purchase toys that are inflated in price, limit play possibilities and convey negative values.

Last year's article reported on general trends and several common types of toys. Here's an up-date on what's happening this year and some suggestions on how to make gift-giving a positive experience.

Packaging: Packaging is one of the

major problems with most toys (not counting those that are actually racist or sexist, dangerous or so shoddy that they fall apart almost immediately). Toys that are not in and of themselves racist, sexist or otherwise offensive are often made to seem so by the packaging. Toy packages still show white children predominantly—and mostly male ones at that.

The absence of Asians, Latinos and Native Americans (members of cowboy-and-Indian games excluded, needless to say*) and the presence of only a few token Black children continues (and the Black children shown are usually at the side of a group or are rarely shown full face). Girls are still seen very much less often than boys or they are used primarily to advertise dolls, some hobby kits (sewing, painting), some table games and a few sports items like tennis racquets. And ads and packages still show girls standing passively by, watching boys who are actively using the toys in question.

Until packaging becomes non-racist and non-sexist (or toy manufacturers show only the toys on the boxes), determine the worth of the toy on the basis of the values it conveys and what it will contribute to play—and repackage the item if necessary before giving it to a child. (And don't forget to write to manufacturers about your concerns!)

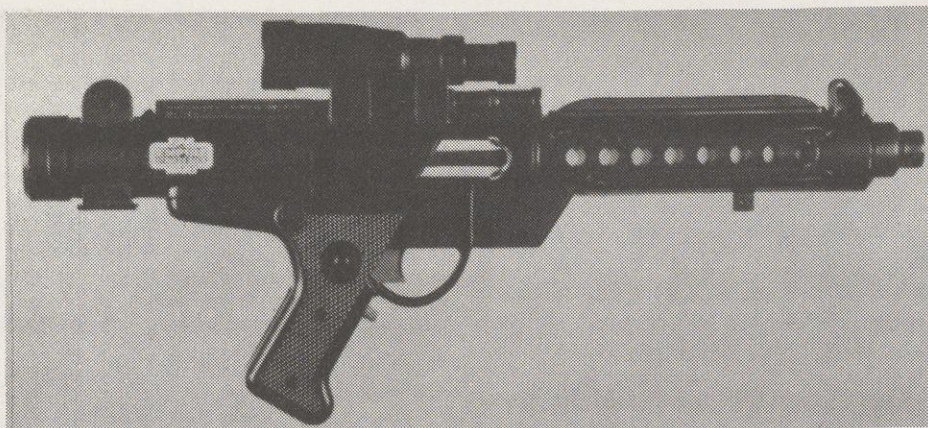
Categorizing: "We're not chauvinis-

*Caricatured and culturally repressive images of Native Americans seem to be increasing, especially on toys and educational materials for very young children. "Indians" appear on lotto games, matching games, in alphabet books as "I is for Indian" and on many small, inexpensive toys. Look carefully when shopping!

tic. [Classifying toys into boy and girl categories] is for the ease of the shopper," says Jack Guenphard, a toy-buyer at the Los Angeles-based store, Toy World. Or consider this: "Basically, we realize females are more involved in a *male world* (emphasis added), so it's harder to tell what's strictly a boy's toy or a girl's toy." Is the world male? Warren Mann, senior buyer for F. W. Woolworth, clearly thinks so.

An article entitled "Boys' Toys: More than a Label?" appeared in the July, 1980, issue of *Toys, Hobbies and Crafts*. It reported resistance to the idea and practice of developing toys and displaying them so that people will select toys appropriate for the child's interest *regardless* of gender. Toy store owners and managers—usually male—admit that they often don't label the toys because consumers will complain, but most of them still group toys in sex-related categories. In one chain—the Ben Franklin stores—there is progress. All the toys are "loosely grouped" according to the kind of toy. For instance, small wheel toys are together, including toy vehicles for Barbie and Peanuts. Shall we rejoice that Barbie's car gets grouped with the other cars, if we really object to Barbie?

Being grateful for small favors is what we're reduced to. Most people agree that girls will play with boys' toys, but boys won't play with girls' toys. Of course, that's true to a large degree and it's part of the problem. In addition, most toys are manufactured "for boys." However, if enlightened shoppers buy trucks for girls, trucks won't be a boy's toy. It's that simple. On the other hand, do girls need guns? Do boys need Barbie? If both sexes refuse to play with guns and Barbie dolls, perhaps we could be rid of both. Forever!



Cars: The car industry in Detroit may be having a rocky time, but unfortunately the toy car industry seems to be doing just fine. The car can be said to be a symbol of white male power (there are many police cars, and personalities from the TV police shows are used to sell cars), excessive speed, escape (leaving) and consumerism. (Note the advertising used to sell toy cars!) The way in which many children use cars—to race, to crash, even to collect—ought to give us pause. Last year we suggested that other vehicles might be alternative, positive choices to cars. Look, for example, for the trucks by ERTL, NY-LINT and Tonka.

Dolls: White dolls still predominate, but Black dolls can be found (particularly if you are able to afford well-made ones). Latino or "Latino-looking" dolls are harder to find. (Toy Center International distributes a doll from Italy manufactured by Bimbambole, a cute doll with deep skin tones that would be nice for Latino children.) Asian dolls are still rare. Display dolls in ceremonial Asian dress are available, but not Asian baby dolls or toddler dolls.

War Games: Euphemistically called games of strategy, these games seem a little less popular than last year, but they have yet to be withdrawn, the only sensible position. Last year's article noted the many games named for various battles or aspects of European or American wars (Stalingrad, Luftwaffe, The Third Reich, The Longest Day). There is, however, another type of war game that is more subtle. Star Wars is a good example. It is not just a space game; it is a war game in space. So is Mattel's Clash of the Titans, which is built around a Greek myth (don't miss Calibo, one of the Titan characters; the Lord of the Marsh, he is the only brown character and he has a tail!). Be aware that many space, superhero and mons-

ter sets use war and battle as the basis for play. Check carefully.

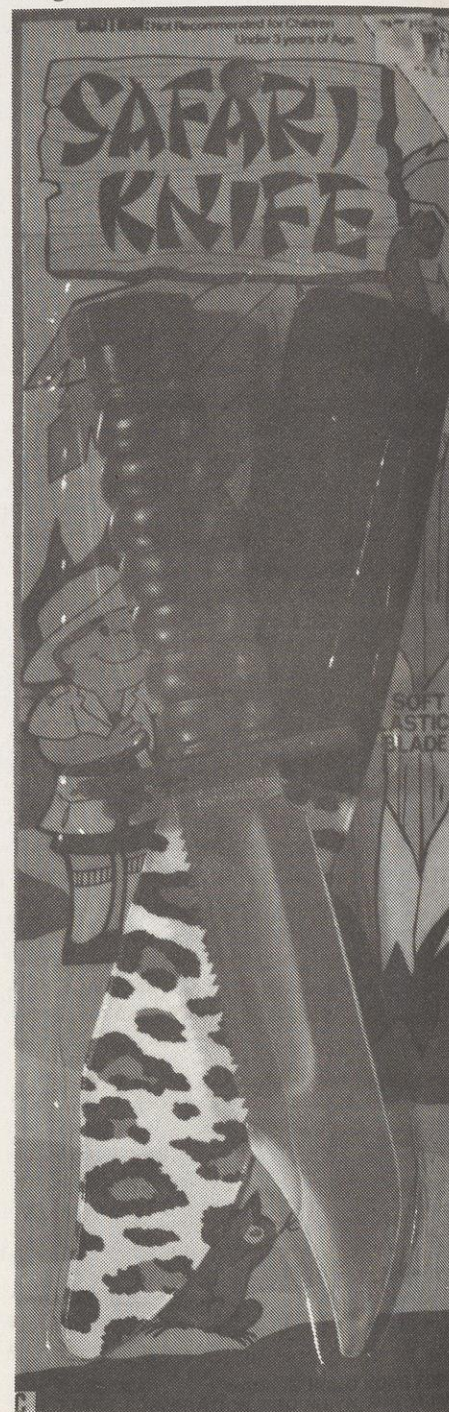
These sets are generally "color-coded" as well: The good men are light or lighter, blond or brunette. The evil men are dark or darker with dark hair. Women are usually not included in these sets, but if they are, they usually wear skin-tight suits and are always subordinate characters.

Superheros: The number of superheros seems to be increasing. The traditional ones like Superman and Batman have been joined by Spiderman, Thundarr the barbarian and others. Last year's warning about these toys bears repeating. Superheros are benevolent, paternal; they don't challenge the status quo or promote the idea that societal problems are solved collectively by people working together. Boys' identification with the negative characteristics these toys promote has serious implications for their development as nurturing men (superheros are rarely bought for girls, store owners report).

Confederate flag: This year has seen the proliferation of the South's symbol of rebellion—which is the symbol of the South's oppression for Black people. The confederate flag can be seen on lots of toys, book bags and other items. There is a game called Rebel. Or how about a General Lee car with a confederate flag on the roof? Is the spread of the confederate flag related to the resurgence of the Klan? Is it a symbol that we want children to associate with play?

Guns: Last year we reported that toy gun sales had been "down" for several years (perhaps because of the anti-war movement), but seemed to be making a comeback. This year, the toy industry is rejoicing; sales are up, especially of Western guns. What else is there to be said?

The number of toys that encourage violence is mind-boggling. Guns are making a comeback; a variety of guns (see Star Wars "laser rifle" at left) is available, but Western models are especially popular. The toy below—a Safari Knife—is "not recommended for children under three years of age," but its messages are in fact dangerous for all ages.

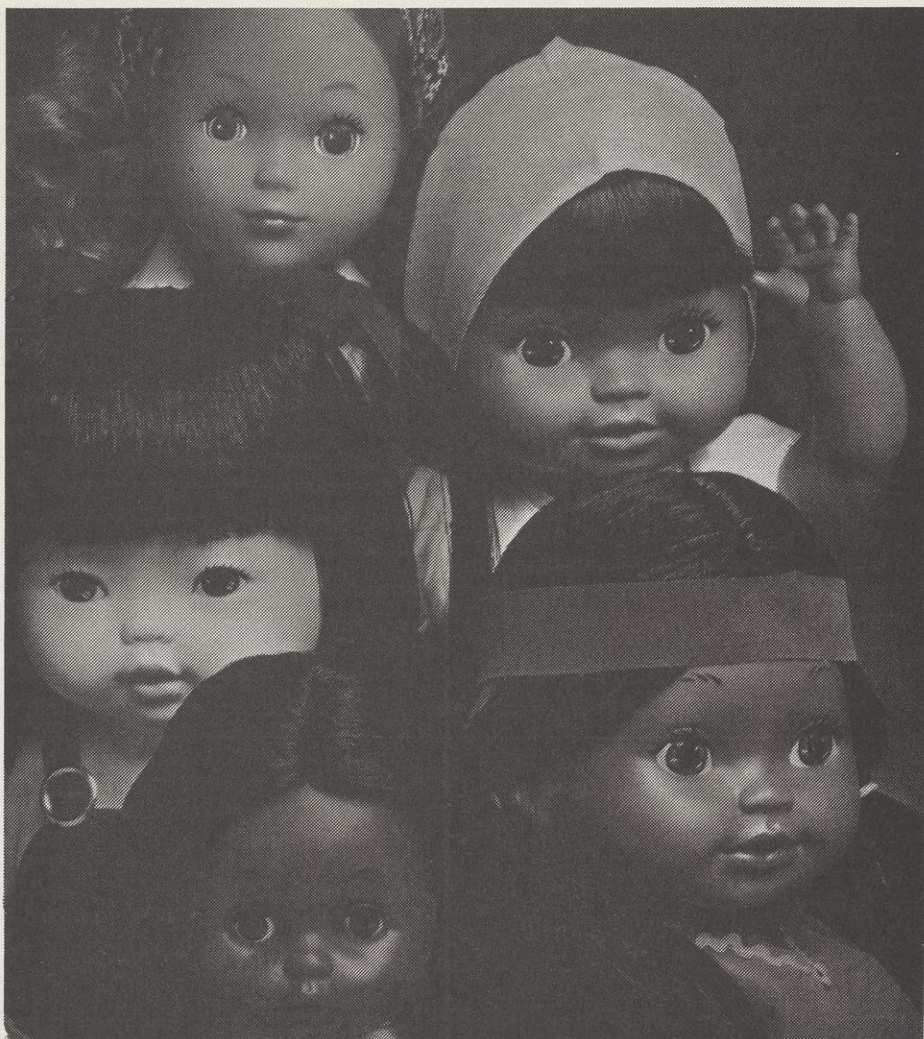


Electronic Toys: Statistics on electronic toys are mixed; some companies did well, some poorly. Toy stores visited for this article report a drop in interest and a drop in price. Electronic games from Milton Bradley, Coleco, Emtex and Parker Brothers, selling from \$25 to \$40, did well. The packaging of electronic toys is directed at boys, and most of the electronic games are "male": football, baseball, soccer, racing cars, etc. Store owners report that few people purchase them for girls—perhaps fortunately for girls, since they re-enforce passivity, do not require thought but emphasize reflex responses, do not require creativity of children.

Four large electronic games sprouted in the entrance of a store in my neighborhood. The girls hang around while the boys play the machines. Rarely do I see girls play. (Of course, it would not make me happier to see groups of girls playing electronic football for hours on end.) Electronic games that convey positive values, that do not emphasize male superiority, competitiveness or war need to be developed. According to a recent news release, the electronic game folks are developing a rationale to justify the presence of the machines in schools; *supposedly* the machines develop learning skills! It is bad enough that the electronic games are in college lounges.

The well-known calculator manufacturer, Texas Instruments, makes "electronic aids" to develop reading and math skills. Whatever the merits of these machines, their advertising follows the usual patterns: one for Speak and Reach features a boy showing a girl the machine (a little ironic since girls do better in reading than boys).

Hobby Shops, Kits and Crafts: There is a growing trend—visible in hobby, department and toy stores—toward the standardization of creative and artistic activities for children, particularly younger ones. Even early childhood catalogues now give less and less space to the more "open" materials like wet clay, finger paints, easel painting supplies, beads for stringing and the like. Instead, more and more "activity kits" are being promoted. For instance, Fisher-Price has a kit in which children "paint with yarn." The cost of the kit (and replenishing the kit) is more expensive than a bottle of Elmer's Glue-All, hanks of colored wool and oak tag or even shirt cardboards (or other kinds of cardboard if you no longer go to a hand laundry). As a kindergarten teacher I used this activity on a regular basis. Gift-givers would do well to under-



A small Black-owned doll company that grew out of the urban rebellions of the late 1960's, Shindana proved that Asian, Latino, Native American and African American dolls could be manufactured without incurring bankruptcy. (The doll industry had consistently resisted producing Black dolls, citing the additional cost of molds for different kinds of faces and the different coloring procedures as major drawbacks.) Shindana was the first Black-owned small business to produce Black dolls since the days of Marcus Garvey, when the leader of the widespread liberation movement in the 1920's manufactured them. Unfortunately, Shindana's Black dolls no longer have unstraightened/natural hair, but the company's products are still far superior to most. If the dolls are not available in your neighborhood, write Shindana Toys, P.O. Box 71466, 6107 S. Central Ave., Los Angeles, Cal. 90001.

stand that it is, in general, preferable to consider assembling such "kits" themselves. By expending a small amount of additional time, you can create a much more economical package—and are much more likely to nourish a child's imagination, since the pre-packaged kits often come with prescriptions and directions that can limit a child.

Consider using tote bags, baskets, back-packs, bicycle baskets, cardboard boxes covered with bright-colored paper, camp bags. Fill them with crayons, pints of different colors of paint, long-handled

brushes in three or four sizes, rolls of manila newsprint tied with ribbon, etc. These are art supplies that will last for six months—plus a bag that can be used for other things. Again, instead of a jewelry kit, go to a wholesale or retail bead and jewelry outlet or a trimming store. Quantities of beads and spools of bead string can be bought for a minimal cost. If you do buy kits—or even if you don't—consider airplanes, model railroad or car kits for girls; try knitting, crochet and needlepoint kits (remember Rosey Grier!) for boys!



The ways in which toys can reinforce sexism seem endless. This year has seen the proliferation of cosmetic sets for very young girls. The one at the left is part of the Barbie empire; Mattel's catalog promises that "Girls can spend hours in a dream world of grownup glamour." The doll above is just one of many sexy, sexist "fashion dolls" on the market.

Things made by craftspeople make nice gifts too, as we noted last year. Consider stuffed dolls, dolls carved from wood, stuffed animals, dolls' clothes. How about miniature furniture, knitted and crocheted scarves, sweaters, hats, gloves, thumb and finger puppets? Paintings and wall hangings are nice additions to children's rooms and help create an atmosphere in which children can develop an eye for well-made art by seeing it each day. The work of good craftspeople is a rich resource. (It's also inspiring to see the work of early retirees, women who've started their own crafts business and ex-computer people who fled from the corporate world!)

A New Collectors Item! There is a new personality in what the industry calls character licensing, which started in the 1940's when a manufacturer paid Walt Disney for the right to reproduce Mickey Mouse on his products. Since

then, licensing companies have been responsible for the spread of Superman, Bugs Bunny, Snoopy, The Muppets, the extremely popular Star Wars characters and others. This year, the \$100 million winner is Miss Strawberry Shortcake. A doll, to be sure, but she's on all sorts of toys as well as bed linens, greeting cards, party items, etc. She is pushing Snoopy from the right. Smurfs, blue, troll-like figures, seem to be pushing Snoopy from the left. Manufactured in Germany and extremely popular in Europe, the cartoon-like, visitor-from-another-planet look will probably attract American children and adults, though it is unattractive. (But then, so is Miss Piggy.)

Cosmetic Sets for Little Girls: Bureau or "dresser" sets that include a brush, hand-mirror, comb and maybe an empty lipstick case have long been available. They aren't very progressive toys and we would probably be better off

without them. Recent years have seen the development of an even less progressive idea—cosmetic sets for fashion dolls (which is what the toy industry calls adult female dolls). This year there are cosmetic sets for very young girls. For the first time in my memory or that of an admittedly small sample of colleagues, ads and/or packages feature heavily made-up *young* girls as models. Some cosmetics are sold on separate cards, like the lower priced cosmetics for adults; they feature a closeup of a seductive looking girl's face. The very young models (seven or eight) look like adult models, although most fashion models are now actually young teenagers or pre-teens. Advertised or packaged in this way, the cosmetic kits do not seem like toys or playthings. Among the lines available this year are Fresh and Fancy by Hasbro, Mego Corporation's Princess Play Cosmetics and Remco's Crayon™/Children's Cosmetics.

Of course, the packaging for these items is racist as well as sexist. Very few girls of color are shown at all (perhaps we should be grateful) and those that are, well, they're almost hidden

away. One promotion poster shows four girls; true, one is Black, but we see only her profile—and only part of that. (She is shown again on another item with the top part of her head cut off.) And then there's the "I've Got a Flair for Hair" kit, with barrettes, small head combs, bobby pins, a length of ribbon and a hank of blonde hair. (Awrighty!)

The cosmetics are said to be safe, non-toxic and washable. The real toxin, of course, is the sexist, destructive and narcissistic values and consumerism they promote.

It is not enough to tell a child "No cosmetics until you are old enough." Adults should discuss their decision—and given the current media promotions for these items, it would be wise to be prepared with a well thought out response. (It's a good chance for families to help children set standards and identify criteria for selecting appropriate toys.) Some questions to consider: What does it mean that girls are being bombarded with such cosmetics, rather than with mind-stretching games and other activities? Is it important for girls' playthings to encourage a wide range of options for girls? What do these kits encourage? Parents can also consider why younger and younger girls are being projected as sexual objects—and whether or not this can increase girls' vulnerability to and acceptance of sexual abuse. Adults might also give some thought to the variety of sexist materials that are increasingly being aimed at younger and younger girls; see, for instance, the discussion of romances for young readers in the last *Bulletin*.

"Educational" Toys: There was a time when Child Guidance Toys were designed according to the supposedly considered judgments of psychologists and educators based on data gathered in university "child guidance" centers. We know now that some of those age-graded judgments were not entirely accurate, nor were they based on information about rural children or those from a variety of cultural groups (as usual, the standard was upper middle-income white—usually Anglo—children).

Nonetheless, Child Guidance Toys had the aura of academic approval and they were generally well-made, sturdy playthings—no cartoons, no gimmicks, no plastic, just wood. But things are different now. Child Guidance Toys is part of Gabriel Toys and Games (they are Gabriel's Pre-School and Baby Line). The Child Guidance label now appears on a

Evaluating Toy Stores

Some toy stores are a pleasure! Generally small, they are usually free of the razz-ma-tazz and "hyper" atmosphere that characterizes so many toy stores. There are no blinking neon signs, no persistent sound of electronic toys and very little, if any, of the clanking commercialism that pervades most other stores. The people that own and/or work in these toy stores seem to know toys and usually have a relatively positive position about toys. They are almost always informative, warm and helpful, will make suggestions, will not use high pressure tactics and they welcome browsing. The stores stock few or no guns. Most carry few or no media-related toys (those toys that are highly advertised on TV and/or toys that are built around TV personalities). War games/games of strategy are generally either not carried or are not prominently displayed. These stores almost always provide a personal shopping service and mail order.

Most of these stores carry old favorites that are marvelous because of the kinds of skills and/or play experiences they provide: jacks, pick-up sticks, kaleidoscopes, gyroscopes, chemistry and biology kits, plush stuffed toys, quality-made table games and leisure-time activities. Many of these stores carry Trend, Brio, John Adams, Galt and/or Ravensburger products. These companies make quality, well-designed, attractive, imaginative and sturdy games, toys and activities that are generally bias-free. (Brio and Galt do a particularly good job of producing things for children from two-three to those who are eight-ten.)

The stores aren't flawless, however; they sometimes have toys with racist and/or sexist packing, for example—and unfortunately, their book departments are often weak. With only one or two exceptions, these stores carry traditional titles—if they carry books at all. A number of them stock the racist and sexist teen-age series that some consider "classics." I saw Dr. Dolittle, and there seemed to be a number of books published in England, full of rampaging colonialist and anti-female ideas. So, while these special toy stores offer good shopping opportunities for toys, they are generally *not* the place to visit for children's books. Seek them out, though. The children in your life will have productive, imaginative play with the toys they offer.

The toy store picture is not, of course, generally so bright—especially in poor communities. The New York-based PACT (Public Action Coalition on Toys)* reports, "There is greatest need for our work in [poor] areas where the cheapest and worst toys are sold, and toys that are unacceptable to even minimum safety standards are being remaindered [in poor communities]." Specifically, that means the following:

- Distributors and/or manufacturers dump toys that do not meet safety standards in poor communities to be sold.

- Poorly made toys are *made* to be sold in poor communities.

In addition, stores that sell toys in Black, Latino and/or poor communities often have a variety of other problems. I noted:

- More guns displayed prominently in the store.
- Important space given to Star Wars games, war games, male superhero figures, monster games and dolls.
- A preponderance of blonde dolls, particularly in Latino neighborhoods. (In a number of stores in Latino neighborhoods, there were no brunette dolls at all.)
- A high proportion of adult/female fashion dolls.
- Usually hidden from view altogether, or at the back of the store or window display or above eye level (if they were carried at all) one can find chess, checkers, bingo, some of the more traditional games, Black dolls, art and hobby kits, etc.

PACT reports that "one third of the toys are bought by children." So the need for consumer education about and the setting of criteria for selecting toy stores ought to be a family concern. Share your concern with your children—at home and in the classroom (see page 10). Share your concerns with toy stores and other stores that sell toys (stationery stores, hardware stores, supermarkets, etc.). Work together to change the quality of the toys that are available.

*PACT works to encourage the development of safe and sensible quality toys and to discourage toys that injure, exploit or limit a child's growth, safety and welfare. To obtain a copy of the group's guidelines for choosing toys for children, send \$1. to PACT—8A, 222 E. 19th St., New York, N.Y. 10003.

range of gimmicky toys for very young children. (The rest of the line appears to be standard, commercially developed toys, some with media tie-ins.) None seems to be based on any particular academically-derived "principles" of child development.

The moral of this story: shoppers should look very carefully at toys whose labels imply a guiding hand other than that of crass commercialism. The implication that certain toys will improve and/or sharpen a child's "intellectual" skills has been grossly misused by Sesame Street and other toy manufacturers. The only thing some of these toys "improve" is the manufacturer's profit margin. The acquisition of the educational toy and equipment market by big corporations ought to be watched. In the meantime, keep a sharp eye out for so-called educational playthings that might now be designed, marketed and sold by big corporations under old "respectable" names.

Given the gloomy picture outlined above, what is a toy-buyer to do? Fortunately, there are many other possibilities—including some fine toy stores (see box on previous page) and the alternatives discussed below.

Pawn Shops and Second-Hand Stores: One smart young parent gave me a marvelous suggestion! "Go to pawn

shops," she said. I did and I felt renewed. Marvelous gifts: saxophones, harmonicas, guitars, and other instruments, small radios, typewriters (give one to seven- and eight-year-olds), watches, clocks (nice for a child's room), small

TV's, gold and silver chains (for boys these days as well as girls), compact stereo sets, watches (even including a Mickey Mouse model). The items in pawn shops are constantly changing so you may need a few visits to find the right item. If you see something you might want to buy, a small deposit will usually hold it.

The same parent who told me about pawn shops said, "I also go to second-hand toy stores—and check out second-hand furniture and clothing stores, too." What's available? Child-sized furniture (desks, tables, chairs), globes, gym sets, printing presses, sturdy games, maybe a blackboard. Trips to pawn shops and second-hand shops are definitely in keeping with the movement to (1) spend less money for gifts and (2) buy authentic gifts for children (a real harmonica rather than a plastic one) whenever possible.

Tupperware Dealers: Tupperware has fine toys for young children made of the sturdy, colorful, washable plastic for which Tupperware is so famous. The toys can be used by girls and boys and are free from sexist and racist symbols. (The Pick-Em-Up Truck comes with a gummed label showing a man and two children that can be applied to the cab window. It might have been daring to have had a label with a woman driver—women *do* drive trucks, particularly in rural areas. It might have been even

Suggestions for Early Childhood Educators

Day-care centers, nursery schools and other programs for very young children are an important market for toys and educational equipment. Below are several action suggestions that can result in an increased sensitivity among staff, parents and family members to the flourishing racism, sexism and cultural repression in the toy industry.

- Schedule regular staff development workshops on toys, early childhood materials, supplies and equipment; consider the values that you want to promote.
- Sponsor workshops and forums for parents, family members and community groups about the selection of toys, the symbols and values they convey and how less money can be spent on toys.
- Purchase all gifts—including those given by early childhood programs for graduation and/or end-of-the year programs—carefully; consider the individuals who will receive the gifts.
- Plan trips to "good" and "bad" toy stores for staff and parents; discuss the toys you find in each store.
- Review catalogs of materials and equipment. Write distributors that exclude books by Black, Asian, Latino and Native American authors and that carry sexist or racist toys and equipment.
- Remember that early childhood educators—and parents—can take a leading role in challenging the commercialization of early childhood equipment and materials. (We can expect an increase in sexist and racist packaging and "gimmickry" in educational toys and equipment as large corporations continue to buy up small, "quality" manufacturers of educational materials.) Professional protests against an increase in racist and sexist toys and equipment and against biased packaging *could* have an impact.

Toy and Gift Checklist

When making a gift list for the children in your life before shopping for Kwanza, Christmas, Chanukah, Las Navidades, Chinese New Year, birthdays or any other occasion consider the following:

- Books by Asian, Native American, African American and Latino authors (see recommended book list, page 12).
- Toys, puzzles, games, etc. produced by African Americans, Asians, Latinos and Native Americans.
- Gifts you can make (cookies, hats, scarves, clothing, rag dolls, plants, etc.)
- Gifts that tell children about their culture and/or history—and/or about the culture and history of other people.
- Toys, games or decorative items made by an artist, craftsperson, dressmaker or tailor who works/lives in your community or region. (Visit crafts fairs.)
- Gifts that encourage and support a child's interest in art, the graphic arts, writing, reading, dance (tickets to the ballet, a visit to a museum, tap dance lessons).
- Gifts that encourage and support a child's interest in music. Folkways Records and Service Co. (43 W. 61 St., New York, N.Y. 10023) and the Smithsonian Institution Record Collection (P.O. Box 2456, Washington, D.C. 20013) are good resources for Asian, Latino, Native American and African American music; write for catalogs. Buy inexpensive but good instruments—harmonicas, recorders, tambourines, etc.
- Children's magazines from institutions like the National Wildlife Association, the Audubon Society and the American Museum of Natural History in New York. (If the child is over twelve, adult publications are fine.)
- Consider plants, books on plants and related items for children from horticultural societies, garden shops and botanical gardens.



There is a growing trend toward the standardization of creative and artistic activities for children, especially those in kindergarten and the early grades. Kits such as the Color with Yarn

package above tend to stifle children's creativity; adults would do better to assemble a variety of art materials for children.

more daring to have an Asian family in the cab. But you don't have to apply the gummed label if you don't want to.) The Mini-Party Set and the Mini-Serve-It Set are for homemaking play. They're a bit small for children of six, seven and eight who might still want to play with them but the corresponding *adult size* Tupperware bowls and cups fit the bill. Same for the Mini-Mix-It Set.

Other Tupperware Products are also appropriate gifts. The Tuppercraft Planting System and the Planting Accessories would be nice for children. Ice Tups make frozen juice popsicles, a favorite snack. The Stow-N-Go, the Hobby Organizer, the Freeze-And-Save Container, and the Pack-ette container are great to give children. Fill them with homemade oatmeal cookies or nuts; they can be used to store small collectibles and hobby or craft supplies when the treats are gone. The Maxi-Canister and The Giant Canister are good for storing toys or taking them on trips. And for carrying lunch there's the very nice Pak-N-Carry Kit. You don't even have to go out to purchase these reasonably priced items. Request a catalogue or a visit from the Tupperware salesperson (check your phone book).

Museum Gift Shops: Museum gift

shops are fun! Most major museums carry items that are well-made and attractive; sometimes they sell beautifully crafted items, fashioned by craftspeople in different countries. A survey of New York shops revealed pleasant personnel, though some were not that well-informed about children's items. Questions about toys that were anti-racist and anti-sexist (or even non-racist and non-sexist) made them uneasy. To some, the questions seemed to make no sense because they were "in a museum"—as though museums don't have racist and sexist policies. So, I stopped asking; after all, many of the really fine items speak for themselves.

Most shops offer primarily European or Euro-American items, but others have a wider selection. If you have a sharp eye and a creative approach to buying gifts, you'll find unusual ones. Another plus: museum shop gifts are often free of sexist and racist packaging.

Museum shops that sell children's books could all do a 100 per cent better job of including books by African Americans, Asians, Latinos and Native Americans. Unfortunately, fairy tales and racist and sexist "classics" like *Robinson Crusoe*, *Dr. Dolittle* and *Mary Poppins* are museum favorites. Share your con-

cerns with the person in charge!

Here's a brief list of museums that offer catalogues:

The American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West and 79th St., New York, N.Y. 10024;

Boston Children's Museum, 300 Congress St., Boston, Mass. 02110;

Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Avenue, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11338;

Children's Museum of the Native American, 550 West 155th St., New York, N.Y. 10032;

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fifth Avenue and 82nd St., New York, N.Y. 10028;

Museum of African Art, 324 A Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002;

The Museum of the American Indian, 155th Street and Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10032; and

The Smithsonian Institution, P.O. Box 2456, Washington, D.C. 20013.

Happy shopping! □

About the Author

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Analyzing the Messages in Toy Packaging: A Classroom Project

By Leonore Gordon

The *Bulletin's* article "Toys Are Political, Too: A Guide to Gift-Giving the Year 'Round" (Vol. 11, No. 7) inspired me to take up the issue of biased toy-packaging with my fifth grade class. I hoped to raise their awareness of how they are manipulated by toy companies and to reinforce the discussions we had already had about the concepts of racism, classism and sexism. By examining toys, we could study how these forms of bias are manifested in ways that are relevant to the children's lives.

I teach in a small Brooklyn private school, and this class was racially mixed, with an equal number of boys and girls. Economically, they ranged from lower middle-class to upper middle-class, with a large number living with single working mothers. Their consciousness about racism and sexism had been raised throughout the fall and winter as we studied Native Americans, working people at their jobs and, on occasion, television commercials. Discussion of Studs Terkel's book *Working* (Pantheon, hardback; Avon, paperback) had provided them with some insight into classism as well, and this had been furthered by their own interviews with working people in a wide variety of jobs. We had also studied the lives of well-known feminists and civil rights activists, and the students had become activists themselves as they enthusiastically took on issues relating to the rights of animals (seal slaughter, animal experimentation, etc.).

Thus, the group was primed for action when I brought up the issue of toys and the political implications behind their packaging. First I read the class an excerpt from Liv Ullman's book *Changing* (Knopf, hardback; Bantam, paperback) in which she recounts her birth. She

writes that her mother remembers "a nurse bending down and whispering apologetically, 'I'm afraid it's a girl. Would you prefer to inform your husband yourself?'"

We launched into a discussion of societal attitudes about the birth of girls versus that of boys, and how male and female children are treated with such different expectations. We then made the connection to gift-buying, and students began to share their feelings about growing up male or female and making relevant connections to the kinds of toys they had received.

Stimulating Discussion

The questions I asked to stimulate this discussion included the following: Why might some fathers not want girls? Why might some want girls? Why might some mothers want girls? If you're a boy, what kinds of presents have you gotten on holidays? What do people expect you to be like? What have girls gotten as presents? What are you expected to be like? How many girls have wanted trucks? How many boys have wanted dolls? Tell me about the TV commercials you've seen. Describe each one specifically. What kinds of kids are they about?

What emerged from the discussion was that boys and girls in the class had, on the whole, received predictably stereotyped gifts, although some obviously had parents who were not bound by sexist notions. Many girls admitted to having wanted, or played with, trucks; and several boys admitted to having played with dolls that were not necessarily G.I. Joes. One child pointed out quite emphatically that toys ought to be bought for the interests of the particular child, and not because of what the adult *thinks* the child

ought to have. Following are some of the comments made by the children during the discussion:

- From a girl: "My father wanted me to be a boy. . . a boy would get around. . . . I don't know if he wants me or not. . . ."

- From another girl: "My father lives in the South. He sends my brother presents, not me. . . ."

- From a third girl: "My dad wanted a boy, but he sent me baseball gloves and now he's proud because I can use them. . . ."

- "You know on commercials Black dolls have 'white' hair and you never hardly see them, either."

- "I never see Black male dolls."

We then attempted to define classism and began to discuss what made toy packaging classist. Our criteria for classism became: Was the toy expensive and unaffordable to working-class children? We also asked: What does this toy say to a poor person? The first products the children discussed were sneakers and jeans. When one child noted that "You wear Jordache and Pumas if you're poor," other students added: "It's because of status"; "It's the only way to show you have something." "What's 'Status'?" asked one student. Another answered, "Belonging—it means you're part of the group."

They spent a good deal of time discussing the manipulative techniques of corporations trying to create a need in a consumer who really can't afford a product, and how people need to feel that they "belong" to a larger group. By the end of our discussion, we had begun to plan our next step, which was a visit to a local branch of Toys-R-Us, a toy store outlet chain.

We created a checklist (which I dictated), and I suggested that each child

carry a clipboard with a copy of the checklist on it. The list had such items as: Describe the picture on the package. Is it racist? Why? Is it sexist? Why? Is it classist? Why? What does the toy cost? Is it sturdy? Are minorities shown in the picture on the package? Is it a stereotypical picture? Do the kids on the package look real?

They were also asked to note the name of a toy, its manufacturer and the firm's address, in order to be able to write to at least one company if there were complaints.

When we arrived at the store, the students set to work with enormous enthusiasm, as well as a good deal of relish. Some of the products they found to be the guiltiest were, of course, the kitchen toys (with pictures of little white girls), most science toys (only boys shown experimenting) and the sports equipment. In general, I was most impressed with the packaging by Child Guidance, Skillcraft and Creative Products, but I also found that although girls were being increasingly included on previously male-designated toys, the issue of racist packaging was barely being touched.

Findings Analyzed

When we returned to school, we discussed what we had seen and analyzed the students' checklists. In order to see what they had absorbed, I also asked them to redefine racism, sexism and classism, first through class discussion and then in writing. Reporting on their experiences in the store, they spoke of the noticeable absence of Blacks, especially on a popular Kenner Star Wars kit. One boy informed us, "We found . . . a really cheaply made thing—a white little boy with stereotyped Indian head-dress, not sturdy, and racist and sexist!" A girl added, "And it was classist because it was poorly made, [even though it was] just a little bit of money."

A Fisher-Price toy showed "a white girl holding an ugly white doll in a beautiful white dress, blond hair, blue eyes; no boys anywhere. I wouldn't buy it. It doesn't show people in lower classes and it's high in price. . . ." Students also reported on a Super Deluxe Tool Kit showing "a white boy making a racing car. It was racist and sexist. The girl was just holding on helping him." Finally, there was Bake and Decorate, with "fake blue icing, all white sugar things, two little nicely dressed white girls, and a boy. The boy didn't help, he was just ready to eat, and all the parts weren't even included!"

Following the discussion I asked for written responses to the following questions: "What are racism, sexism and classism, and how do they show up on toy packages?" The children were quick to see how sexism was manifested in toy packaging. ("Sexism is showing [only] boys playing sports and girls only playing with dolls. This shows boys not to play with dolls and girls not to play sports," said one child. "Sexism is when you favoritism one sex," said another.) They were equally quick to see racism. ("You don't hardly see Blacks, [but you see] plenty of whites . . . like the Barbie dolls. It makes a lot of Blacks feel like they're put down," noted a student.) Classism was more difficult for children to grasp and some did not grasp it at all. Most children were able to understand how classism relates to buying power, but they did not understand classism as a form of bias.

As part of this examination of toy packaging, I encouraged students to share their complaints with toy manufacturers. Following are samples of letters written by the children.

Dear Kenner,

Your product, the X-Ray Stretch is racist and sexist because your toy only has whites on the toy but no Blacks. The toy is sexist because there's a boy in it but not a girl. I advise you to change the appearance of this toy.

To whom it may concern,

My class and I went to "Toys-R-Us" to do a study on toys and how they're packaged. I took the privilege to look at your toy, "Baby Soft Sounds." I found that the package . . . was sexist because there are only girls on the package and not only girls play with dolls. It is classist because the price is so high so no one who is "poor" can buy it and the girl holding the doll is white "racist" and is wearing fancy clothes.

To whom it may concern,

I think your Star Wars packages are very racist and sexist. You need some Blacks on your packages and some girls.

Dear H-G Industries,

One of your products [an archery set] is very badly stereotyped of a Native American. The facepaint, headdress and clothes are all stereotyped. Another thing, your toy is so badly built everything in the package is warped so get it together and put together your toy.

Merry Toys,

I think you have an extremely sexist and racist toy; your play hospital lab equipment toy. It puts a thought in the child's mind that only boys should do the real work: the testing, using of samples, etc., while in the



Not every toy package is as racist and sexist as the one above for a Busy-Boy Tool Set. Children can, however, become aware and critical of the messages that many toy packages convey.

girl's mind it says she is only to wait on him and hand him things while he does the real job. Also you could of had at least two other kids, Black, somehow participating also. . . .

This project helped the children develop a far more highly tuned awareness of corporate mentality and the feeling that they are capable of judging material that spreads that sort of mentality. They can also more readily identify the tactics of some of these manufacturers and, hopefully, will be able to recognize similar tactics in other sectors of society. Most important, they have become, to some extent, children who are no longer the easy, gullible targets of corporate advertising. □

About the Author

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Positive Books: The Ideal Gift

Looking for a gift—or for an addition to a library for young readers? The 25 titles below are a selection of books recently recommended by *Bulletin* reviewers. These titles offer children of color positive self-images, offer white children a better understanding of children of color and offer all children positive portrayals of groups often misrepresented or derided in children's books. In addition, these books will provide a child with many hours of reading pleasure. What could be a better gift?

This listing is new ground for the *Bulletin*. In the past we have been reluctant to publish recommended booklists, feeling that unannotated listings can be misused (see Vol. 3, Nos. 2 & 3). Realizing, however, the pressures on parents, librarians and teachers in the matter of selecting books, we will open up more space in future issues to listing books that our reviewers feel can be recommended on various subjects.

The books below are listed according to age groups; this information is a guide only; do consider the child's reading level and experience when choosing books. The data following each annotation refer to the *Bulletin* issue in which the book was fully reviewed.

FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

El Circo Magico Modelo/Finding the Magic Circus written and illustrated by Macduff Everton. Carolrhoda Books (241 First Ave. N., Minneapolis, Minn. 55401), 1979, \$7.95, 20 pages, grades p.s.-4.

A father-and-son trip to visit old friends in Mexico described with warmth

and affection; outstanding art. [Vol. 11, Nos. 1 & 2]

Honey, I Love and Other Love Poems by Eloise Greenfield, illustrated by Diane and Leo Dillon. T.Y. Crowell, 1978, \$5.95, unpagged, grades k-4.

Poems characterized by rhythm, imagery and cadence accompanied by striking illustrations. [Vol. 9, No. 2]

Idalia's Project ABC: An Urban Alphabet Book in English and Spanish written and illustrated by Idalia Rosario. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1981, \$6.95, unpagged, grades p.s.-3.

A bilingual tour through an urban child's sights and experiences with realism and humor. [Vol. 12, Nos. 4 & 5]

I'm Busy, Too by Norma Simon, illustrated by Dora Leder. Albert Whitman, 1980, \$6.25, unpagged, grades p.s.-1.

A delightful book, especially for youngsters in day-care and nursery schools. [Vol. 11, No. 7]

My Friend Jacob by Lucille Clifton, illustrated by Thomas DeGrazia. Harper & Row, 1980, \$7.95, unpagged, grades p.s.-2.

A sensitive tale of a special friendship between Sam, an African American boy, and Jacob, a white teenager who is retarded. [Vol. 12, No. 2]

My Mother and I Are Growing Strong!/Mi mamá y yo nos hacemos fuertes by Inez Maury, illustrated by Sandy Speidel, translated by Anna Muñoz. New Seed Press (P.O. Box 3016, Stanford, Cal. 94305), 1978, \$2., 28 pages, grades 1-6.

A wonderful bilingual story about a believable working-class family. [Vol. 10, No. 3]

My Mother the Mail Carrier/Mi mamá la cartera by Inez Maury, illustrated by Lady McCrady. The Feminist Press, 1976, \$3.50, 32 pages, grades p.s.-2.

An anti-sexist bilingual tale of a single mother and her daughter; with lovely illustrations. [Vol. 7, No. 7]

Tar Beach written and illustrated by Arthur Getz. Dial, 1979, \$7.95, unpagged, grades p.s.-3.

An exuberant tale of a hot day in a multicultural community. [Vol. 12, No. 3]

Tonweya and the Eagles by Rosebud Yellow Robe, illustrated by Jerry Pinkney. Dial, 1979, \$7.95, 118 pages, grades 2-up.

A collection of stories portraying Native life, history and oral traditions. [Vol. 11, Nos. 1 & 2]

Weaver's Gift, The by Kathryn Lasky, photographs by Christopher G. Knight. Frederick Warne, 1981, \$8.95, 58 pages, grades p.s.-up.

An informative description of the process of weaving with a strong female central character (the weaver) and a competent older person (a sheep shearer). [Vol. 12, Nos. 4 & 5]

What's That? by Virginia Allen Jensen and Dorcas Woodbury Italler. William Collins & World, 1980, \$10.95, 24 pages, grades p.s.-3.

A creative picture book for both sight-impaired and sighted children. [Vol. 11, No. 8]

When Megan Went Away by Jane Severance, illustrated by Tea Schook. Lollipop Power (P.O. Box 1171, Chapel Hill, N.C. 27514), 1979, \$1.85, 32 pages,

Continued on page 22

This is the second article in a series on how supposedly objective research reflects and at the same time perpetuates societal bias

Skewed Assumptions: A Challenge to Educational Research

By Patricia B. Campbell

"The things a social scientist selects for study are determined by his [sic] concept of what are socially important values. The student of human affairs deals only with materials to which he [sic] attributes cultural significance."¹

A publisher once commented that while schools and libraries influence what is read, what is written and what gets published exert a much greater influence. Her remark also applies to research. The research questions that are asked, how they are asked and whether the research is published determine what research "knowledge" exists. As shall be seen, these factors are influenced by racism and sexism with the result that much research "knowledge" comes from and reflects a white male perspective.

What research is done is influenced by a number of areas outside of, but related to, individual interest. Research choices are affected by funding possibilities, publishing opportunities, priorities of professional organizations, and the interests of authority figures. Of these, the greatest influence on what is studied, at least for large programs, is the opportunity for funding.

Today, few institutions and even fewer individuals are willing or able to assume research's financial burdens. Most researchers must seek private and public funding, and they must therefore match their research interests to the interests and priorities of funding agencies.

Research on equity for minorities and women and similar areas is generally a low priority of private and public funding agencies. In 1979, the National Institute of Education, the research arm of the Department of Education, spent 6.4

per cent (\$5,100,000) of its \$80,200,000 on women and sex equity. (This included \$3,200,000 spent on the training of minority and women researchers.) In 1980, less than \$500,000 was allocated for research on women and sex equity (\$2,700,000 was appropriated for training minority and women researchers).

Small Amounts To Be Reduced

In 1979, the entire Department of Education allocated only 0.22 per cent of its resources for women and sex equity. This year, the Reagan administration is trying to eliminate *all* federal spending for research and development on women and sex equity. Although it currently appears that such efforts will not succeed, the already small amounts being spent will be further reduced.

Foundations have only a slightly less dismal record. In 1976, the latest year for which figures are available, 0.6 per cent of funds went to women's programs or issues of sex equity, and these disbursements covered not only research, but also the development and provision of services in education, health, employment and other areas.²

More money has been spent in minority areas; but again, the emphasis has been on training and the provision of special services rather than on research. In 1980, the Department of Education spent over half a billion dollars on minority and desegregation programs, but these programs did not include research. Current plans call for a large reduction in such monies.

As the funds decrease in an area, so do opportunities for related research. The small sums available for research specifically related to minorities and/or wom-

en contribute both to a lack of research and to a lack of interest in doing such research.

In addition to money, researchers need an opportunity to share their work with others; publishing opportunities are thus a strong influence on what research is done. Publishing disseminates research, generates feedback and, perhaps most important, influences decisions about hiring, firing and promotion. Most researchers *need* to publish their work. "Publish or perish" is still very much the reality in academia and in research and development centers. The unpublished researcher is soon the unemployed researcher.

The interests of professional journals are an important influence on what gets published, but those interests rarely include research specifically related to minorities and women, unless the research labels these groups as somehow "deviant" or defective. An analysis of the articles published in five education journals found that the percentage of articles on women and education ranged from 5.0 per cent in the *Journal of Educational Measurement* to 17.4 per cent of the brief reports in *Child Development*. An analysis of the *American Educational Research Journal* (AERJ) produced similar findings. In 1978, three of AERJ's 44 articles focused on minorities *and/or* women in education. In 1979, three of its 33 articles were on minorities *and/or* women.³

In response to the apparent lack of interest in minorities and women on the part of "mainstream" education journals, a number of "special area" journals such as *Integrated Education*, *Journal of Black Psychology*, *Psychology of Women Quarterly* and *SIGNS: A Journal of*

Women in Culture and Society have been established. However, the subscribers, and presumably readers, of "special area" journals are primarily minorities and/or women. Few white male researchers read these journals, and thus much of the work found in them is ignored or unknown by the "mainstream."

Publishing opportunities are also closely tied to the interests and priorities of professional organizations. Such organizations publish many of the relevant social science journals and necessarily influence editorial and selection policy.

(Professional organizations' priorities also determine the focus of national conferences and meetings and the papers prepared for them.) Although the situation has changed somewhat recently, due in part to the increase of special interest groups and caucuses, research on minority and women's areas have not generally been high priorities for most professional groups.

Racism and sexism lead to a general de-emphasis on—and devaluing of—research related to minorities and women. Work done by men (teaching of graduate

students, medicine in the USA) is valued; similar work done by women (teaching of young students, medicine in the USSR) is devalued. Women's traditional work is often ignored. For instance, unpaid housework and childrearing are not usually considered work, and therefore studies on the labor force or on working generally omit the millions of full-time homemakers. From a 1922 study that found that men talked about their work far more frequently than women (because housework was not considered work) to the exclusion of unpaid home work in the calculations of the Gross National Product, homemaking has been pretty well ignored. Recently there have been some signs of change in this area, as Ann Oakley and others begin to study homemaking. Sexism affects other research areas as well. For example, much more work is done on "Why Johnny can't read" than on "Why Janey can't add." Researchers ask "Are women feminizing our schools?" not "Are men polarizing our schools and causing them to be violent places?"⁴

Research Focuses on "Male" Areas

Social science research also focuses on areas in which men traditionally dominate—territoriality, aggression, politics, economics, etc. It has been found, for example, that in the field of early childhood education the majority of male researchers (who are themselves the majority of researchers) tend to study control of persons and institutions, philosophy and methodology; women tend to study the family, the role of women and the development of young children.⁵ (Since control is important within the male scheme of values, the research procedures which appeal to men are those in which the experimenter has control. The results of the "masculine" approach are considered "hard data," more reliable and more "objective" than the less controlled, more qualitative communal methods that emphasize observation and participation.⁶)

Too often the research establishment reflects the attitude that Gloria Steinem faced when she was studying under a Woodrow Wilson Fellowship:

My own work on theories of gender based power was academically suspect as a single-factor analysis while my neighbor's work on one man's military acts during one decade was thoughtful, scholarly and basic.⁷

Racism causes a similar myopia. Researchers study "the effects of racism

Researchers Haven't Been the Only Ones Affected by Racism and Sexism

Racism

"Passport and traveling privileges should be absolutely forbidden to the Jews. For they have no business in the rural districts since they are not nobles, nor officials, nor merchants, nor the like. Let them stay at home."—Martin Luther

"The question is simply this: Can a Negro, whose ancestors were imported into this country, and sold as slaves, become a member of the political community formed and brought into existence by the Constitution and as such become entitled to all the rights, and privileges, and immunities, guaranteed by that instrument to the citizen? We think not."—U.S. Supreme Court Decision in *Scott vs. Sandford*, March 6, 1857.

"I tell you, this people that are commonly called negroes are the children of old Cain . . . they cannot bear rule in the priesthood."—Brigham Young

"I will say then that I am not, nor ever have been in favor of bringing about in any way the social and political equality of the white and black races—that I am not nor ever have been in favor of making voters or jurors of negroes, nor of qualifying them to hold office, nor to intermarry with white people; and I will say in addition to this that there is a physical difference between the white and black races which I believe will for ever forbid the two races living together on terms of social and political equality."—Abraham Lincoln

"I am satisfied the present Chinese labor invasion (It is not in any proper sense immigration. Women and children do not come) is pernicious and should be discouraged. Our experience in dealing with the weaker races—the Negroes and the Indians, for example—is not encouraging."—Rutherford B. Hayes

"I entirely agree with you that as a race, and in the mass, the [blacks] are altogether inferior to the whites."—Theodore Roosevelt

Sexism

"All wickedness is but little to the wickedness of a woman."—Ecclesiasticus XXV

"Women who are with child should be careful of themselves; they should take exercise and have a nourishing diet. . . . Their minds, however, unlike their bodies, they ought to keep unexercised."—Aristotle

"When a woman thinks alone she thinks evil."—Cicero

"They [women] ought to mind home—and be well fed and clothed—but not mixed in society."—Lord Byron

"Women are directly fitted for acting as the nurses and teachers of early childhood by the fact that they are themselves childish, frivolous and short sighted; in a word, they are big children all their life long—a kind of intermediate stage between the child and the full-grown man."—Arthur Schopenhauer

"Regard the society of women as a necessary unpleasantness of social life and avoid it as much as possible."—Leo Tolstoy

Where Is the Money for Research on Sex Equity?

Department of Education Programs	Fiscal Year 1979	Fiscal Year 1980	Fiscal Years 1981-82
Women's Educational Equity Act Program (WEEAP)	\$8,800,000	\$10,000,000	The current plans include cuts and cancellations so deep that without concerted action, the totals may be 0!
National Institute of Education (NIE)	5,100,000	3,180,000	
Vocational Education Act Programs			
Federally Dispersed for National Projects	1,646,667	496,667	
Federal Funds Dispersed by the States	1,059,745	5,137,576	
Civil Rights Act, Title IV (CRA IV)	9,500,000	13,200,000	
Fund for the Improvement of Post Secondary Education (FIPSE)	1,579,725	1,441,000	
Consumer Education	190,039	unknown	
<hr/> Total Dept. of Education Identified Support for Sex Equity	<hr/> \$27,876,176	<hr/> \$33,455,243	
 Other Departments and Agencies			
National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)	\$8,286,361	unknown	
National Science Foundation (NSF)	1,243,295	\$1,021,000	
National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)	1,693,065	1,873,078	
Community Services Agency (CSA)	1,323,901	1,500,000	
<hr/> Total Education Related Sex Equity from Other Departments and Agencies	<hr/> \$12,546,622	<hr/> \$4,394,089	
<hr/> Combined total federal support for sex equity related to education	<hr/> \$40,422,798	<hr/> \$37,849,332	

on Blacks" rather than "the effects of racism on whites" and question "if Blacks are as intelligent as whites," not "Are whites as intelligent as Blacks?" Few ask the basic questions: Who decides what intelligence is? How biased are our intelligence tests?

Researchers interested in examining topics related to racism and sexism don't get much encouragement from their peers and counselors either. Those who do research in these areas fail to encourage others, particularly new researchers, to do the same. Since professional leadership, recognition and other rewards come less often to people working in these areas, experienced researchers are loath to encourage their students and protégés to work in them. If they wish to progress

professionally, many researchers (particularly minorities and women) have found that their research cannot be totally or even primarily focused on racism or sexism.

Research on racism and sexism or from the perspectives of minorities and women is indeed minimal, but the research on minorities and women is considerable. Unfortunately, much of the research comes from a blame-the-victim perspective and focuses solely on what a white male society views as pathological or deviant. As a 1967 *Jet Magazine* article concluded: "When we pick up a social science book [and] we look in the index under 'Negro,' it will read 'see Slavery,' 'see Crime,' 'see Juvenile Delinquency,' perhaps 'see Commission on Civil Disorders,' per-

haps see anything, except Negro. So when we try to get a perspective on the Negro we get a distorted perspective." Little has changed since this article was published.

Negative and Pathological Emphasized

This emphasis on the negative and the pathological can be seen in such social science "classics" as Oscar Lewis' *Children of Sanchez*, a study of the "culture of poverty" of a Mexican family, and Elliot Liebow's *Talley's Corner*, on the street corner society of unemployed Black males. As A. Thomas and S. Sillen have noted in *Racism and Psychiatry*, "seen narrowly as a 'victim,' the black man appears in the learned journals as a patient, a parolee,

a petitioner for aid, rarely as a rounded human being."

When Thomas and Sillen used the term "black man," it is doubtful that they were using it in the generic sense. While Black males have appeared in research literature—distorted or ethnocentric as the portrayal may be, there has been little about Black females or indeed about any minority females. (One exception is *All of Our Kin: Strategies for Survival in a Black Community* by Carol Stack, which looks at the lives of Black women and children.)

Perspective Distorted

There has been more research on white women, but like the research on minority males, it comes from a distorted perspective. Women are studied in terms of how they conform to or deviate from the male model. For instance, traditional work on moral development—based on models developed by men and on male samples—has found women's moral development deficient. Work by researchers such as Carol Gilligan, who do not believe that females should be studied in terms of how they relate to a male model, are finding that females are different from males but not deficient.⁸

If, as noted above, women fulfilling traditional roles are not studied, women acting in what are considered non-traditional ways are—but from a perspective that stresses the problematic. Research emphasizes the problems of single-parent families, but there are few studies of the problems associated with two-parent families because situations in which people conform to prescribed sex-roles are assumed to be non-problematic. In the same vein, the problems of "working" mothers and the problems of children in child care are studied, but not the problems of "non-working" mothers or of children at home full-time. (Similarly, the problems of "non-working" fathers are examined, but research is rarely done on the problems of "working" fathers—or at least not in relation to these fathers and their families.)⁹

When research challenges traditional sexist expectations and perspectives, the results are frequently ignored; for instance, evidence of male hormonal, emotional and behavioral cycles has been documented for decades but has only recently been published in mainstream journals. The need to believe that women are changeable and unreliable while

men are consistent and reliable has led psychologists and others to ignore such evidence.¹⁰

Research that reinforces stereotypes is actually encouraged, even when the results are shown to be incorrect. For example, research on the negative effects of athletics on women's reproductive systems continues, even though studies in this area find no serious negative effects. Researchers persist, for example, in attempting to prove that sports are a possible cause of breast cancer, although such research is repeatedly refuted. In another reflection of sexism, much work is done on the effects of athletic training on menstruation; few examine the effects of such training on sperm counts.¹¹

One major result of racism's and sexism's influence on research is that there are significant gaps in what we know. Thomas Pettigrew's 1964 comment that "Many of the most basic and important personality questions about Negro-Americans [sic] have not received even tentative answers" still holds true today¹²—and it is just as true about issues affecting women.

A Faulty Data Base

Current research is based on the research that has gone before. Every research student is told early and often that research ideas should not come out of nowhere; they must grow out of previous research. As long as previous research is biased and ignores racism and sexism, there is little hope that current and future research will be much better.

Because of these knowledge gaps and misinformation and the unwillingness or inability of researchers to fill them, decisions are made, programs are developed and services are offered without an adequate research base. Our response to sexism and racism and our quest for equality, particularly in education, have become a very expensive trial-and-error process. Without an adequate understanding of the problems faced and without tested strategies based on non-racist, non-sexist theories, our educational and social programs will continue to promote inequities.

Bias has contributed to gaps and misinformation in the knowledge base; it has also allowed us to close our minds to testing alternative hypotheses or explanations for behaviors that fall outside of our stereotyped expectations. To challenge existing structures and perspectives is difficult, but challenge them we must. □

FOOTNOTES

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²S. S. Klein and M.A. Goodman, *Federal Funding to Promote Sex Equity in Education, 1980* (Washington, D.C.: Women's Educational Equity Act, U.S. Department of Education, 1980).

T. T. Saario, "The Ford Foundation," in *Funding for Women's Educational Equity*, ed. L. Hunter and J. Marzone (San Francisco: Women's Educational Equity Communications Network, 1980).

³M. E. Lockheed and S. L. Stein, "The Status of Women's Research in Educational Publications," *Educational Researcher*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (1980), pp. 11-15.

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⁴C. Shakeshaft, "Dissertation Research on Women in Academic Administration: A Synthesis of Findings and Paradigm for Future Research," Ph.D. dissertation, Texas A & M University, 1979.

⁵G. McDonald, *Two Windows on Research*, ERIC Document ED133053, 1977. Shakeshaft, *op. cit.*

⁶J. Bernard, "My Four Revolutions: An Autobiographical History of the ASA," in *Changing Women in a Changing Society*, ed. Joan Huber (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), pp. 11-29.

⁷Steinem, Gloria, "Feminist Notes," *Ms.*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (1980), pp. 98-103.

⁸C. Gilligan, "In a Different Voice: Women's Conceptions of the Self and Mortality," *Harvard Educational Review*, 1977, 44, pp. 481-517.

⁹Committee on the Status of Women in Sociology, "Sexist Biases in Sociological Research: Problems and Issues," *ASA Footnotes*, Vol. 1 (1980), pp. 8-9.

¹⁰J. Silveria, *The Effects of Sexism on Thought: How Male Bias Hurts Psychology and Some Hopes for a Woman's Psychology* (Pittsburgh: KNOW, 1972).

¹¹P. S. Wood, "Sex Differences in Sport," *New York Times*, May 18, 1980, pp. 30-38, 96-103.

¹²T. F. Pettigrew, "Negro-American Personality: Why Isn't More Known?" *Journal of Social Issues*, Vol. 20, No. 2 (1964), pp. 4-23.

About the Author

PATRICIA B. CAMPBELL is the Director of Campbell-Kibler Associates, an educational research and evaluation firm located in New York City and Groton, Mass. Dr. Campbell is currently completing what may be the last federally funded survey of the relative status of minority women and men in education.

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

I'm Still Me

by Betty Jean Lifton.
Knopf, 1981,
\$8.95, 243 pages, grades 7-12

Upper middle-class, suburban (near New York City), Jewish, sixteen-year-old Lori Elkins undergoes a major life crisis when her social studies teacher asks the students to delve into their families' genealogy. Lori was adopted when she was a few weeks old, and her well-meaning but ineffectual adoptive parents have not told her anything about her biological parents.

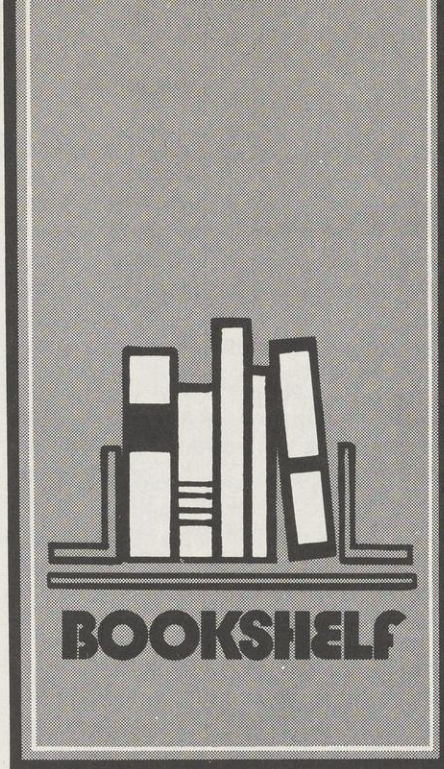
The author, also an adopted child, has written extensively about the right of adopted children to learn about their background. Her reasons are explored here through Lori's feelings, as well as through the feelings of Lori's adopted brother, some classmates, and a group of adopted people seeking their parents whose meeting Lori attends.

Lori is successful. She finds her mother, learns who her father was, and strengthens her relationship with her adopted parents—and she matures in the process. Lori has help from friends and a young lawyer, and she in turn helps her best friend discover who her father was, thus ending up with new adoring grandparents. All in all, the class assignment results in everyone gaining intellectually and emotionally in a most uniformly unbelievable manner.

This book is harmful because it implies that truthfulness in such cases brings uniformly beneficial results. In addition, a number of other gratuitous implications, totally incidental to the thrust of the book, leave an unpleasant aftertaste.

When Lori's best friend discovers that her real father committed suicide, she says of her mother—active in anti-nuclear demonstrations—"Maybe she's trying so hard to save the world because she wasn't able to save him." The message is that political activists need to assuage personal guilt.

This same mother takes her daughter to a gynecologist for an IUD—better to be "prepared than pregnant." Not only



does this stereotype political activists as promoting early sexual activity—since the daughter, a virgin, made no such request—but it also promotes an unsafe method of contraception criticized by feminists.

When Lori and her boyfriend start "doing it," he uses condoms. Lori muses about pregnancies and notes that most girls in her school who do get pregnant "refused to give their babies up for adoption. . . . I knew I couldn't get an abortion—after all, I might have been an abortion. . . . I would never give my baby up for adoption like she [her real mother] did." This shovels guilt on women who choose abortion and on those who choose to give babies up for adoption.

In addition to the sexist messages above, there is also some gratuitous racism. The social studies teacher's project of the previous term is mentioned: "Last semester he was into Indians, and we all had to take Indian names, wear beads and blankets, and behave as if we were authentic Indians." Here is yet another tiresome implication that "playing Indian" with beads and trivia is a valid teaching approach (the author clearly approves of the social studies teacher).

And, finally, the one and only Black in Lori's class discovers, through the class project, that his "mother" is really his grandmother and his "sister" is really his mother. Not too terrible? Maybe. But the author also throws in that his brother is a junkie who has been "in the slammer" three times so far. [Lyla Hoffman]

Nick Joins In

written and illustrated
by Joe Lasker.
Albert Whitman, 1980,
\$5.95, unpagged, grades 1-3

For most children, going to school is a part of growing up, but for ten million children with disabilities going to school with non-handicapped children has only recently begun to become a reality. The passage of P.L. 94-142, the Education of All Handicapped Children Act, has opened doors to "a free and appropriate education . . . in the least restrictive environment." (Disabled children had previously received instruction in their own homes or in special classes or schools where even partial mainstreaming was not possible.) All children, disabled or not, benefit from social interactions with peers and through P.L. 94-142, mainstreaming is at least taking place.

In *Nick Joins In*, Nick, a youngster with a mobility impairment, goes to school for the first time and does indeed join in. Yes, Nick is scared about meeting new people. Nick's classmates also have questions about Nick and his disability. However, everyone's curiosity is satiated quickly and without pompousness, and Nick soon becomes a part of the class. Nick's classmates are varied, helpful and aware that each member is unique in his/her own way. Third World students are well represented in appropriate, colorful pictures. Text and illustrations also reflect the school's attempts to provide for architectural accessibility. Most important, Nick is shown as an active, vital member of his class.

One criticism must be leveled at the author, a criticism that reflects society's attitudes towards people with disabilities. When playing with classmates, Nick is shown as active and involved, but when Nick goes to gym, he is shown and described only as the gym teacher's helper. Instead Nick could be shown playing baseball or basketball from his wheelchair. Disabled children, like their non-disabled peers, benefit from and are required to receive physical education.

In addition, the author has shown Nick as "special" (he is the only one who thinks of using a window pole to dislodge a trapped basketball). It should be unnecessary for disabled people to have to "prove" their worth in such ways. Although *Nick Joins In* is basically sensi-

tive, well written and illustrated, the author might do well to expand his awareness of the many facets of life that people with disabilities can and do enjoy. [Emily Strauss Watson]

Talking Bones: Secrets of Indian Burial Mounds

by William O. Steele,
illustrated by Carlos Llerena-Aguirre.
Harper & Row, 1978,
\$6.95, 63 pages, grades 2-5

Author Steele has taken on a controversial subject, since the origin of the burial mounds of North America and the people who built them are still somewhat of an open question. The annotated bibliography is helpful for those who want to read more and shows that Steele recognizes that archeologists differ.

One of the major themes in discussions about the mound builders has been that they must have been built by a race other than American Indians. Whites have yearned for an Egyptian-like people as builders, and it has suited their racist sensibilities to pretend that ancestors of the present-day Indians couldn't possibly have had anything to do with the mounds.

Steele not only acknowledges that the mound builders were Indians, but points out that they had a good life, cared for one another and were not savages. He also discusses the elaborate continent-wide system of trade that existed (it included the mining and use of copper), the details of which are still unclear today. He might have explored the early civilizations further, showing how the execution of projects like the mounds could only have been accomplished by well-organized societies in which the basic needs of life were being met so that cultural and artistic enterprises were possible.

While the cultures that actually built the mounds were not the same Indian nations that exist today, the book could have made more of an effort to emphasize the continuity with Indians of the present. (It would also have been nice if some of the illustrations had featured women.) Still, credit must go to the author and illustrator for an attractive, readable introduction to the mound builders. [Paul Smith]

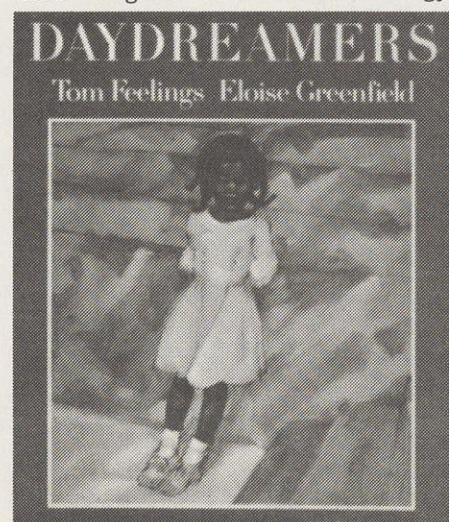
Daydreamers

by Eloise Greenfield,
illustrated by Tom Feelings.
Dial, 1981,
\$9.95, unpagged, grades 6-up

The portraits of children in this unique book are healing to look at. They rest the eye, inspiring the viewer to dream and think about them. Young readers look carefully at the children on the pages, as if looking at themselves. The illustrations invite you into *Daydreamers*, a spirit-book.

A collaborative work by two award-winning artists—Eloise Greenfield, writer/poet, and Tom Feelings, illustrator/artist, the book is subtle, quiet, evocative. This is a book for these times that are terrible for us all, but especially for victimized children who are murdered, mislabeled, exploited as laborers or denied work altogether. While not speaking about these specific problems or even alluding to them, the poetry emerges from these times, thereby creating a poignancy that is at the same time filled with hope, light and dynamism. You know more about what children do when they day-dream. You feel day-dreaming. And the Truth for Greenfield and Feelings seems to be that children's daydreams have to do with becoming men and women who can become "new" and "move forward."

Daydreamers is considered and thoughtful verse, with a poetic economy that speaks "through" this collective portrait with quiet power. The illustrations are a creative statement about the artist's imaginative use of technology.



Feelings Xeroxed his pen and pencil drawings and then treated them with white and transparent color-dye, manipulating the color till the children came alive. The result is dramatic and gives the children a luminescent quality. The eyes of the children are captivating, with a subtlety and vigor that is characteristic of the non-verbal communication that is one of the hallmarks of Black language. Feelings moves us away from traditional picture-book portrayals of children, providing clear, polished mirrors for Black children and authentic portraits for children who aren't Black. Greenfield moves us away from the prison of occupational status in which we place children when we ask them what they want "to be" when they grow up. She assumes that the children "be" or exist now and are moving "toward womanhood, toward manhood." It's nice to give children the words *womanhood* and *manhood*—like a blessing.

Both writer and artist have consistently spoken about racism in publishing; both work to identify and clarify issues in the contemporary writing and illustrating of children's literature. They have both carried their work, their advocacy, their commitment to their own communities, including their professional communities. So it is more than a pleasure to see, handle and experience a book they worked on together. (How sad, though—and how revealing—that the Library of Congress cataloging data for this book neglects to mention that the book is about Black children.)

Daydreamers, anchored in its cultural world-view, speaks to all children about something that adults should indulge in more often. Adults will find the book to their taste as much as children. A salute to Greenfield and Feelings, spirit dreamers. [Geraldine L. Wilson]

Stories from El Barrio

by Piri Thomas.
Knopf, 1978,
\$6.95, 141 pages, grades 9-up,
also available in paperback
from Avon for \$1.75

Youngsters now have the opportunity to enjoy the story-telling skills of Piri Thomas just as older adolescents and adults have in the past. Matching his previous

work in every way, these eight stories present an authentic look into Barrio life, from the stench of uncovered garbage in July to the sudden and violent death of gang members.

Anyone who has grown up in the ghetto can recognize and relive the joy and the pain of these experiences. The Barrio of the title is not limited here to Spanish Harlem; it encompasses the Loisaida (Lower East Side), as well as Brooklyn and the Bronx, representing the many places where Puerto Ricans live in New York.

The stories also represent a variety of experiences. We have, for example, in "The Three Mosquiteers," the humiliating experiences of three youngsters who can hustle in Harlem but who are completely helpless as Boy Scouts in the swamps of New Jersey. In "Amigo Brothers," which takes place on the Lower East Side, the author uses two "panitas" (close friends) to tell us about the invincibility of friendship in the ghetto. There is the fanciful and adventuresome "Mighty Miguel," in which good triumphs over evil through the creative imaginings of a young boy left alone for an evening in his brownstone. There is also the stark realism of "The Blue Wings and The Puerto Rican Knights," which begins as upbeat, cool and funny and ends with quick and surprising death, the death of children struggling to survive in a brutal environment.

Growing up Puerto Rican, the pride and the shame of it, is amply documented here. The searing pain of straightening nappy hair, in both a physical and an emotional sense, is vividly described in "The Konk" ("If you want white man's hair, there's a price you gotta pay," says the barber). Above all, the humanity of Thomas' characters jumps out at us. In spite of the oppression of El Barrio, the people enjoy one another, struggle through adversity, make mistakes and love their kids, whether embracing, forgiving or beating them. Throughout there is a sense of warmth and affection, of family ties and friendship as one's real strength in this life.

Humor is likewise present in every story, from the hilarious "Three Mosquiteers" to the poignant "La Peseta" (who among us does not remember stealing a quarter from our parents' bureau to have some illicit though fleeting pleasure at the candy store?).

Stories from El Barrio is anti-racist as well as anti-individualistic (friends are always hanging out together, fighting, teasing, helping and loving one another through a myriad of experiences), a welcome relief from stories extolling the virtues of "rugged individualism." Unfortunately, but perhaps inevitably, the majority of the characters in these stories are men, since they draw upon the youthful experiences and remembrances of a young man growing up in El Barrio. The women included are not necessarily presented in a sexist way, although one of the few mentioned is of course beautiful and dainty. On the other hand, there are the Honey Debutantes, a gang of girls that fights alongside the boys till the end. All in all, the accounts tend to be non-sexist. There is, however, an offensively stereotypic lisping and limp-wristed Devil in "Mighty Miguel," and teachers and parents should be aware that some of the stories are realistically sprinkled with curses, both in English and Spanish.

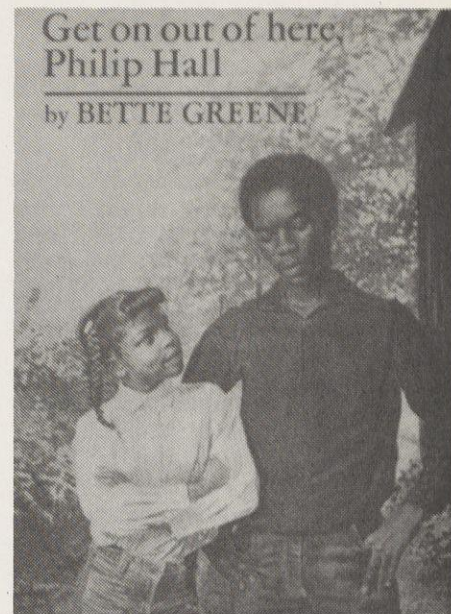
Racing through all eight stories, I remembered my own childhood, at times laughing knowingly, at times profoundly saddened by these familiar vignettes of ghetto life. The humor which shines through the perplexities and twists of life will hopefully instill in both Puerto Rican and non-Puerto Rican youngsters who read the book a healthy respect for the people who populate the streets of all urban ghettos. [Sonia Nieto]

Get Out of Here, Philip Hall

by Bette Green.
Dial, 1981,
\$9.95, 150 pages, grades 3-6

It's rare to encounter a children's book that conveys the ambience of the rural South as faithfully as *Get Out of Here, Philip Hall*, the story of Beth Lambert, her family, friends and life in the small community of Pocahontas, Arkansas. Through Beth's experiences we feel the pulse of life in a rural African American Southern community.

The vivid metaphorical speech of Southern African Americans is skillfully woven into the dialog and narrative; this humorous, perceptive and original mode of speech will be novel and amusing to



some readers and pleasantly familiar to others.

Beth is an energetic planner, doer and sometimes manipulator of her peers. The story begins as Beth receives a humiliating lesson in the evils of pride. With somewhat reckless abandon, but admirable organizational ability, she plans a spectacular event to retrieve her pride and her leadership position among the junior citizens of Pocahontas. Beth fails to achieve her aims, however.

Eventually, with the help of family and friends, Beth makes the sometimes painful journey from egotism to self-awareness. Along the way, she develops a very charming friendship with her one-time antagonist, the Philip Hall of the title. (*Philip Hall Likes Me. I Reckon Maybe* was the first book about their relationship.)

The vital, energetic portrait of a young Afro American girl is not drawn at the expense of Afro American male characters. Also, some extremely useful lessons in values clarification are provided through Beth's example.

The author (who also wrote the controversial *Summer of My German Soldier*) does an excellent job of creating empathy for Beth. In spite of being frequently dismayed by her words and actions, it's impossible not to root for her, too. *Get Out of Here, Philip Hall* should provide considerable pleasure as well as salutary object lessons to bright young readers. [Ismat Abdal-Haq]

An Eye on the World

by Beatrice Siegel,
Frederick Warne, 1980,
\$8.95, 123 pages, grades 5-up

Beatrice Siegel has compiled a fascinating biography of one of this country's most famous photographers, Margaret Bourke-White. Bourke-White was a pioneer in many ways—as a woman who achieved respect and excellence in a field dominated by men; as an expert architectural and industrial photographer; as someone who captured the isolation and frustration of poverty in the U.S. and the terror of Nazi Germany.

The book begins with Bourke-White's childhood and chronicles her struggles, perseverance, and hard work to become a photographer. The story is told realistically and no attempt is made to glorify Bourke-White's life. She is portrayed as a woman of unusual courage, striving to perfect her photographic techniques, climbing scaffolds and girders of buildings, braving the danger of the mills to photograph the making of steel, staying within yards of a bombing in order to capture its effects.

Siegel also follows the development of Bourke-White's political conscience and awareness. At first, Bourke-White was fascinated with the intricacies of technology and industry. In her later work, Bourke-White focused on people—the realities of the Depression, the working conditions in and around the factories, the cities destroyed by bombs in World

War II, starvation in India.

Throughout her life, Bourke-White's career was her most important priority. Siegel mentions that the photographer was married twice, and both marriages ended because they interfered with Bourke-White's work. Until her death in 1971, she remained an active photographer, struggling in her later years to overcome Parkinson's disease, which caused her to lose some control in her hands and legs.

Siegel's portrayal is vivid and well-written. The photographs by and of Bourke-White enhance her life story. This biography would prove to be a valuable addition to both upper elementary, junior high and high school classrooms. It is enlightening to read a biography of a strong, talented woman, who struggled to achieve perfection in her art, and who used her art to make political statements and work for change. [Jan M. Goodman]

Stepchild

by Terry Berger,
photos by David Hechtlinger.
Messner, 1980,
\$6.97, 63 pages, grades 2-5

Stepchild makes an honest attempt to deal with both divorce and remarriage from a child's point of view. The book was well-received by my middle-class, integrated fifth grade class, and it triggered a sensitive discussion about the divorce experiences of many students. Although the children judged the book to be realistic, it missed on a number of points. The format—photographs of a particular upper middle-class, white family plus the stilted, first-person voice of the child—results in a one-dimensional family that seems to have been invented merely to make certain predictable points about stepparents. The adults are idealized (they make only one or two false moves), implying that the problems of coping with divorce rest ultimately with the child. In reality, parents often have as difficult a time as their children, and rarely are children treated with as much sensitivity as the child in this story.

In fairness, many of the feelings expressed when David (the protagonist) is discussing his own anxieties are insightful and relevant to children in this situa-

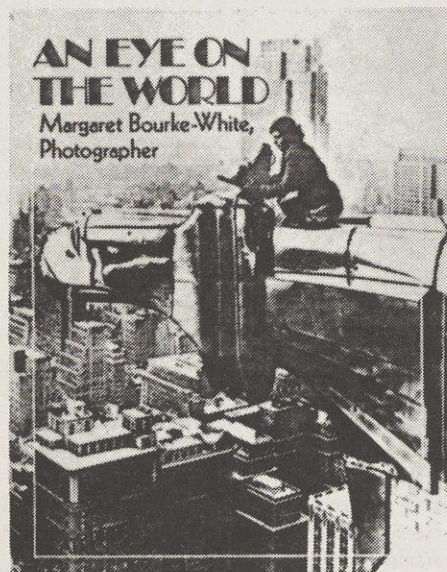
tion. He describes fears of his mother and stepfather fighting about him (in his fantasies this signals another divorce), as well as fears of betraying his father if he begins to like his stepfather too well. (David is in fact falling behind in his schoolwork as he becomes preoccupied with the task of "balancing" the two father figures in his life.) Eventually he learns to accept them both as they are: his real father is not simply angelic—he can also be moody and even cancel weekends with him; and his stepfather is not all negative and, in fact, has a few skills that David would like to learn.

At one point, David releases his anger and frustration with his mother's new marriage by throwing her perfume against the wall. The children in my class expressed a great deal of empathy with this action, and seemed cathartically relieved about the kinds of anger that they had needed to express during their own experiences.

While David himself is believable, and may be identified with, the adults are essentially superficial, and there is little positive interaction of any depth between the other individuals in the story. In particular, David's relationship with his stepbrother and stepsister (referred to as "the steps") remains hostile throughout the story, and there is no attempt to work through these conflicts in any constructive way. The materialism inherent in their interactions is especially distressing, as they haggle over which father paid for David's records and summer camp. The only "solution" to alleviate the tension is the announcement at the end of the book that the mother is going to have a new baby "that will belong to all of us." Knowing my own students' problems with sibling jealousy at the birth of a new baby, I found this solution not only simplistic but completely non-credible.

Working together is not at all stressed as a group or family goal. David's focus on his own needs and his self-absorption are emphasized too strongly. His expectations of "the steps" are also rather sexist, as he objects to his stepbrother's not liking his mother's cooking and that the sister did not serve or clean up.

Because the book was so successful in helping children deal with divorce and stepparents, I would have to recommend it, even though it falls short on several scores. [Leonore Gordon]



Hits & Misses reviews material intended to assist adults working with children in the classroom, the library and at home. Professional literature, parenting materials and other resources are reviewed. Readers are invited to submit materials to be considered.

Portrait of Inequality: Black and White Children in America

by Marian Wright Edelman,
with research by Paul V. Smith.
Children's Defense Fund
(1520 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W.,
Washington, D.C. 20036), 1980,
\$5. paperback, 116 pages

For those committed to achieving full and equal opportunity for Black children and Black families, this might well be the most important book of the decade. It is a reasoned, yet impassioned call to action by a staunchly committed advocate for the rights of children. Marian Wright Edelman has drawn on her considerable experience as a Black person who grew up in the South and as an attorney and civil rights activist to project an action agenda that will alleviate the crushing inequities suffered by so many Black youth. The statistics graphically underscore the extent to which these inequities affect every aspect of the lives of Black families and their children.

Much of the book is written in an admittedly personal manner, and the au-



thor's concern and sense of urgency fairly leap from every page. The book is effectively organized into two parts. Part I presents the inequities suffered by Black children and their families in the areas of child health, child care, education, employment and housing. Part II provides in clear, easily understood form the latest statistical data which document the continuing disparities between Black and white children, youths and their families.

The discussion of inequality underscores the fact that although many Black families are thriving and more Blacks are moving into the middle class, the Black poor is growing at a faster rate. There are also ominous indications that the number of Blacks in the medical and legal professions will decline, since fewer Blacks are currently gaining admission to these schools.

Edelman emphasizes several critical understandings and attitudes that are basic to any successful fight for the rights of Black children. She underscores the importance of recognizing the need for constant monitoring and enforcement of laws already on the books. This must be done even as additional resources and laws are being sought. It is also important, notes Edelman, to recognize that the ground rules for achieving change are different from those operative five or ten years ago. Also stressed is the importance of arming oneself with the knowledge of how bureaucracies work, how power is used and what influences can be brought to bear on those who exercise power. The need to teach Black children their own history so that they can gain

confidence, self-reliance and courage is also emphasized.

For each problem identified, a program of action is clearly outlined. Edelman cautions that the action agenda contains nothing that is new or catchy. Rather, it consists of vital steps that have not been taken but must be if the condition of Black families is to be improved.

While emphasizing the importance of Black self-help, Edelman also notes the need for support and action from public and private sectors. She presents very cogent arguments for the involvement of whites, particularly since those problems that affect poor, Black, Latino and Native American children also affect large numbers of white and middle-class children. (More whites than Blacks are poor, on welfare, ill-educated and without adequate child care or health care.)

Edelman declares that "the task of erasing barriers to equal opportunity does not rest solely on the backs of the Black community. Just as the entire nation condoned slavery and segregation for decades, so the entire nation must work to reverse its effects."

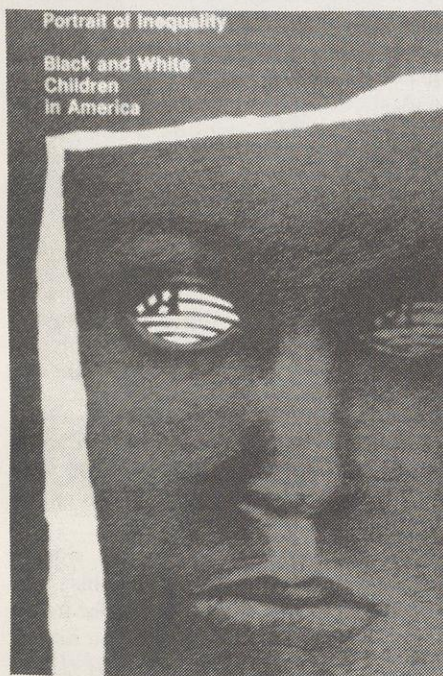
It is difficult to see how day-care centers, churches, social work organizations, professional schools, teachers and colleges can function effectively without making use of the information supplied in this book. It provides a guide to informed social action and serves as a valuable resource for increasing awareness and sensitivity.

Man Made Language

by Dale Spender.
Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980,
\$11.50 paperback, 256 pages

This short book provides an analysis of sexism with an emphasis on language. Spender's analysis of the effect of sexism on language research is lucid, well-documented and fascinating. Her demonstration of how research on women and language takes male language as the norm, measures women against that norm, and classifies differences on the part of women as "deviation" is readable and does an excellent job of raising one's consciousness.

Spender doesn't limit herself to reciting horror stories of poor research and how it has influenced us; she goes on to examine how the sexist patriarchal ideas and theories became established in the first place. Her documentation of the establishment of the use of "man" as a so-



called generic term is a fine example. The use of man to include women and men was not established in ancient history as we have been led to believe. In 1746 John Kirby formulated 88 grammatical rules and decided (in rule number 21) that the male gender was "more comprehensive than the female." Using this rule, which Mr. Kirby based not on research but rather on his own misogyny, 19th century grammarians insisted that "he" (being more comprehensive than "she") should be used for sex unspecified individuals and "men," for groups of women and men. They even went so far as securing an Act of Parliament in 1850 which legally insisted that "he" stood for "she"!

Spender also does an excellent job of indicating how sexism has perverted the meaning of words, providing so many words relating to women with negative sexual connotations not found in comparable male words (for instance, the words Mistress, Madam, Queen as against the words Master, Sir, King). She also discusses the role that sexism has played in naming or labeling; sex, for example, is described as penetration rather than encompassment, and researchers investigating learning styles label women as field dependent and men as field independent rather than saying that women are context aware and men are context unaware. The first set of labels perpetuates stereotypes and is in common usage; the second doesn't and is not. The examples could go on and on; the sections of the book dealing with language are full of excellent examples supporting well-reasoned analyses.

Unfortunately, when Spender strays away from language, the book suffers. For example, she includes a philosophical analysis of feminism in the middle of a chapter on Women's Silence that is quite out of place and not particularly well done. She also touches on a number of other issues (women and athletics, religion, women's prejudice against other women) that are not germane to the topics under discussion and that are themselves covered in a very superficial manner.

Other than Spender's unfortunate digressions, this is an excellent book. It is not a difficult book to read, but it does deserve thought. A second reading finds many things that were missed the first time. My advice is to read the book, buy it and give it to every English teacher and speaker you know. It will change the way you—and they—view language. [Patricia Campbell]

Positive Books Continued from page 12

grades 2-up.

A warm and moving book about a particular separation—that of a child from her lesbian mother's lover, who moves away—that teaches a great deal about all intimacy and loss. [Vol. 11, Nos. 1 & 2]

Window Wishing by Jeannette Caines, illustrated by Kevin Brooks. Harper & Row, 1980, \$7.95, 20 pages, grades p.s.-2.

Appealing account of vacations spent by two Black youngsters with their Grandma Mag; the illustrations add greatly to the book's appeal. [Vol. 12, No. 3]

FOR MIDDLE GRADES

Childtimes—A Three Generation Memoir by Eloise Greenfield and Lessie Jones Little with material by Pattie Ridley Jones, illustrated by Jerry Pinkney. T.Y. Crowell, 1979, \$8.95, 180 pages, grades 5-up.

Beautifully told reminiscences of three Black women which celebrate the strength of kinship bonds across three generations. [Vol. 11, No. 5]

Chinese American, The by Milton Meltzer. T.Y. Crowell, 1980, \$8.95, 181 pages, grades 5-up.

A well-researched history with a good chapter on stereotyping. [Vol. 12, No. 1]

Corn Rows by Camille Yarborough, illustrated by Carole Byard. Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1979, \$7.95, 48 pages, grades 3-7.

Dramatic illustrations enhance the powerful, rhythmic prose to make this an unusually appealing presentation of Black heritage and positive Black self-concept. [Vol. 10, No. 8]

Daydreamers by Tom Feelings and Eloise Greenfield. Dial, 1981, \$9.95, unpagged, grades 6-up.

A handsomely produced volume in which the sensitive drawings of Tom Feelings are matched with the lyrical writing of Eloise Greenfield to create sensitive portrayals of the wishes and dreams of Black children. [See page 18]

Growin' by Nikki Grimes, illustrated by Charles Lilly. Dial, 1978, \$6.95, 107 pages, grades 4-6.

Tender story of developing friendship between two fifth grade Black youngsters. [Vol. 9, No. 8]

Grandpa—A Young Man Grown Old by Harriet Langsam Sobol, photographs by Patricia Agre. Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1980, \$8.95, unpagged, grades 4-up.

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Short biographies and wonderful photos introduce a marvelous cast of older people. [Vol. 10, Nos. 1 & 2]

FOR OLDER CHILDREN

Many Smokes, Many Moons: A Chronology of American Indian History Through Indian Art by Jamake Highwater, illustrated with drawings by Asa Battles and photographs. Lippincott, 1978, \$8.95, 128 pages, grades 7-up.

A good introduction to Native American history. [Vol. 11, No. 8]

Mishomis Book, The: The Voice of the Ojibway by Edward Benton-Benai. Indian Country Press and Publications, Inc. (560 Van Buren St., St. Paul, Minn. 55103), 1979, \$8.50, 120 pages, grades 8-up.

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A helpful guide for young people who have disabilities. [Vol. 12, No. 1]

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