



LIBRARIES

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Interracial books for children. Volume 3, No. 4 Autumn, 1971

New York, NY: The Council on Interracial Books for Children, Inc.,
Autumn, 1971

<https://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/MXXKMT2BKLFTB84>

This material may be protected by copyright law (e.g., Title 17, US Code). For information on re-use see: <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/Copyright>

The libraries provide public access to a wide range of material, including online exhibits, digitized collections, archival finding aids, our catalog, online articles, and a growing range of materials in many media.

When possible, we provide rights information in catalog records, finding aids, and other metadata that accompanies collections or items. However, it is always the user's obligation to evaluate copyright and rights issues in light of their own use.

New Ground in Publishing Field Broken by Council's First Book

Chronicles of American Indian Protest, a new book compiled and edited by a committee of the Council on Interracial Books for Children, has just been published. The book appears originally as a paperback (Fawcett, \$1.25), so that it will be quickly available to the public. The royalties from the book are being contributed to the Minority Book

Industry Development and Insurance Fund, as is a share of the publisher's profits.

The new book will be sent free to Council contributing members. See page 8 for order form and coupon describing contributing membership.)

The book totals 375 pages and consists of 76 documents, which are spoken or written expressions of Native American protest. Each document is preceded by a full commentary describing its historical context. The documents begin with the rebellion of the Powhatan Confederacy and end 350 years later with the speech of a Wampanoag Indian — a speech that was to have been delivered at Plymouth, Massachusetts, in 1970 but that was suppressed by white authorities. The book is useful for intermediate grades and up.

Below is the Preface from *Chronicles of American Indian Protest*, which we print in its entirety to make clear the Council's stand on books written about ethnic minorities:

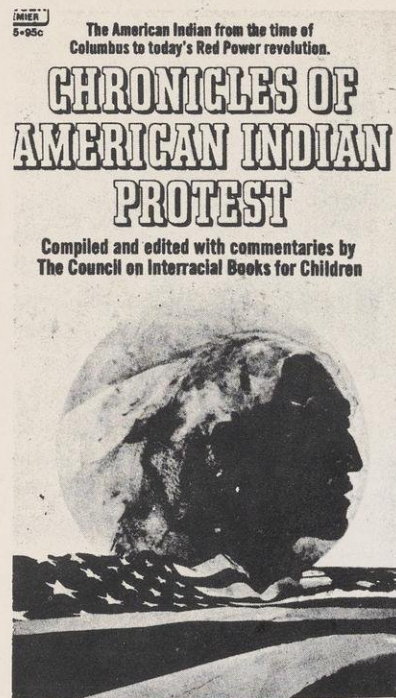
"For too long our textbooks have evaded their responsibility to deal honestly with history. Like ostriches burying their heads in the sand, the writers of textbooks — and often the publishers who commission them and many of the school boards who purchase them — have assumed that by hiding the acts of history we would all somehow be immune from the consequences of these acts.

"*Chronicles of American Indian Protest* is offered to the public in the hope of countering some of the terrible distortions perpetrated in the name of 'American' history.

"This book has been prepared by a Council that is itself interracial and that is committed to the accuracy and dignity of minority race images. Yet, although the Indian voice is presented here through the documents, this book cannot pretend to express fully the Indian experience. The editors have been forced to rely heavily on histories that represent a white point of view for the facts used to recreate the documents' historical context; even the documents themselves have largely been preserved in English translations made by white people.

"As Indian and other minorities increasingly demand that white America stop maligning or ignoring

continued on page 8



The American Indian from the time of Columbus to today's Red Power revolution.
CHRONICLES OF AMERICAN INDIAN PROTEST
Compiled and edited with commentaries by The Council on Interracial Books for Children

SOCIAL STUDIES REFERENCE
NON-CIRCULATING

Interracial Books FOR CHILDREN

Published by the Council on Interracial Books for Children

VOLUME THREE, NO. 4

RECEIVED

OCT 26 1971

UNIV. WIS. LIBRARY

AUTUMN, 1971

Council Makes Urgent Call to White Editors, Writers and Publishers

Featured In Publishers' Weekly:

The following call introduces a feature article in *Publishers' Weekly* on the aims and activities of the Council on Interracial Books for Children. The article appears in the October 11 issue of *Publishers' Weekly*, which is the independent magazine of the international book trade. We invite comment and ask our readers to pass on the call to editors, publishers and writers who may not have seen it. (See also the editorial on page 2.) This is the text of the call:

We call upon editors who are scheduling books on minority themes to assign the books to minority writers and illustrators for the next five years. Our council pledges to help editors find minority talent, as we have in the past.

We call upon publishers who have contracts with white authors for works depicting the minority experience to apportion for at least the next five years a share of the profits from those books to the minority communities. We offer the Minority Book Industry Development and Insurance Fund as one way to channel the shared profits.

We call upon white authors to make their own commitment: that for

The Call

the next five years they refuse contracts for books defining the non-white minority experience and that they use the innovative resources of their professional associations to search out minority writers to write the books, or at least to become full collaborators in the writing of the books.

Finally, we call upon writers, editors, illustrators, publishers, book reviewers, and book buyers to commit themselves to aid the emerging minority publishing houses.

In the series of articles prepared by our Council and currently running in *Publishers' Weekly*, we shall propose a number of ways by which the new publishers can be assisted, without interfering with the control of their own operations. One immediate proposal is that publishers declare a moratorium on the contract clause granting the publishers an option on a writer's subsequent work. We feel that minority writers who have achieved success with their first books should be granted the freedom to take their subsequent books to the emerging minority publishers, if they so choose.

To those who charge that these proposals are visionary or impractical or in violation of normal business practices, we remind you that we are no longer living in normal times.

Fourth Annual Writing Contest in Progress

Third Contest Winners Listed

Manuscripts for the Fourth Annual Writing Contest are being received at the Council's office, 9 East 40th St., New York, N.Y. 10016. All persons interested in joining the contest are asked to write to that address requesting contest rules and application forms. All readers are urged to post the contest announcement (see page 8) on bulletin boards and other appropriate public places.

The Council contest, open to Blacks, American Indians, Chicanos and Puerto Ricans, has a new category this year: Asian Americans. The only requirements for joining the contest are that writers and aspiring writers be members of these ethnic minority groups, that they

be previously unpublished in the children's book field, and that their manuscripts relate to liberation struggles. Winners in each ethnic category receive \$500. Deadline for the current (Fourth Annual) contest is April 15, 1972.

Winners of the Third Annual contest were announced last April 22 in the *New York Times* and other media. They are listed again below. Meanwhile, the Council's contest committee is preparing a booklet which will list all the twelve award winners to date, with their pictures and award acceptance statements. (The booklet will be sent free to Council contributing members.) Of the twelve winners of awards since the contest began, nine have had

their manuscripts published or have negotiated contracts with book publishers.

Winners of the Third Annual con-

test are as follows — Black: Ray Anthony Shepard for "Warball"; American Indian: Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve for "Jimmy Yellow

continued on page 8



Winners of Third Annual Contest: From left to right: Ray Anthony Shepard, Juan Valenzuela, Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve

EDITORIALS

WRITER POWER

It is common to hear well-intentioned people admit to the basic racist nature of American society only to ask rhetorically, "But what can I do?" For white writers, at least, the Council's call, which appears on the front page of this Bulletin, is a clear challenge to good intentions.

The call is made, not to deny the right of authors to write about any subject they choose, but to ask for a specific act of commitment to achieve a multiracial book publishing world.

The call challenges white writers to do something about a situation which most deplore — and yet which some have found profitable.

All questions of creative freedom aside, certainly white writers have it in their power to put book publishers on the spot. If white writers refuse commissions to write on minority themes, book publishers must either seek out minority writers or admit their unwillingness to open their white man's club. The first alternative would give our children minority-theme books by persons best qualified to write them. The second would amount to public confession by the publishers that they have abdicated their responsibility to the society that supports them.

CRITERIA AND RACISM

In the early days of our Council we urged two principal criteria for the presentation in books of the image of non-white minorities. These were that slanderous stereotypes be rejected and that Blacks and other non-white minorities be depicted in positive rather than in the prevailing negative roles. To these two criteria we added a third, that as far as possible, non-white minority authors become the writers of the new so-called ethnic books.

Today, as we examine the changes that have taken place in children's book publishing, the criterion that holds the most validity for our Council is the third — the racial background of the author.

We see books that try to provide racial insights doing just the opposite, primarily because their authors are white. We see minority-theme books that are inherently racist receiving widespread acclaim actually because the books are racist.

Take, for example, Theodore Taylor's *The Cay*, which has won several awards including one for "brotherhood" (see review, page 7). To white people — most white people, anyway, *The Cay's* Black "hero" Timothy is a positive character. A noble character who denies himself to protect another. Timothy's altruism brings tears to your eyes — if you're white. From the Black point of view, it is altogether different. Timothy is a negative character, precisely because his subservience is glorified. A Black person yet again denying himself for the sake of a white person? Where's the equality? Where's the equal sharing of struggle and reward? Suppose the roles were reversed. Suppose Timothy were white and Phillip Black. White people wouldn't stand that for a minute. In the still all-too-white world of children's book publishing, such a reversal of roles would be met with the charge of racism in reverse.

What should we do about these books that purport to define the minority experience yet upon re-examination turn out to be racist? Certainly they should be removed from the recommended reading lists. But where they already exist on library shelves, why not use the books as classroom *teaching tools* to analyze with students what racism is all about? With conscious guidance, students would read the books and discover for themselves racism's subtle and not-so-subtle twistings.

Our Council is planning a major handbook for teachers on how to help themselves and their students look for racist content in books, movies, TV and other media. We invite your suggestions on the preparation of this handbook.



Interracial Books FOR CHILDREN

is published quarterly by the Council on Interracial Books for Children, Inc., 9 East 40th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Mickey Davidson, Evelyn Geller, Alfred E. Prettyman, Virginia Rice, Sydney Weiss, Byron Williams

COUNCIL OFFICERS

Chairman: Bradford Chambers
Secretary: David Cohen
Treasurer: Stanley Faulkner

SCHEDULE FOR FUTURE PUBLICATION OF THIS BULLETIN

Winter Issue — December 15 • Summer Issue — June 15
Spring Issue — March 15 • Autumn Issue — September 15



SUBSCRIPTION RATES

One year — \$3.00

Single and back copies — \$1.00 each

Subscriptions outside U.S. — No extra charge if sent "Printed Matter." But add following charges if "Air Printed Matter" requested:
Europe — Add \$2.00;
Far East — Add \$2.40.

Contributing Annual Membership — \$10.00*

*Includes regular subscription to Bulletin, plus free copy of "Chronicles of American Indian Protest," plus all Council Special Supplements, also awareness that you are helping to fight racism and sexism in book publishing.

miscellaneous

DEPARTMENT OF GROSS OBSCENITIES

The use of Spanish by speakers at commencement exercises in a preponderantly Chicano school in Castroville, California, brought appreciative response from the parents but racist denunciations from the school authorities.

Two student speakers and a guest speaker at last June's exercises of Gambetta School, where more than 400 of the 500 students are Mexican American, spoke in Spanish and then in English.

At the next meeting of the North Monterey School board meeting, a letter was read from a group of parents expressing appreciation for their children being given an opportunity to recognize their heritage by speaking Spanish during the program.

But Kenneth Blohm, a trustee, said: "It was a disgrace to let it happen." Board chairman Leonard Shirrel said: "Before something like this happens again the board should know about it." And school principal Paul Murray said: "It won't happen again."

CORETTA SCOTT KING AWARD

Charlemae H. Rollins has won the 1971 Coretta Scott King Award for her biography, *Black Troubadour: Langston Hughes*.

The award was founded a year ago by the New Jersey Library and Media Association. It is designed to commemorate and foster the life and works of the late Dr. Martin Luther King and to honor Coretta Scott King. According to Glyndon F. Greer, chairwoman of the award committee, "the one specific criterion we look for in a book is the inspirational quality that links it to the future."

The recent National Education Association's Human Rights Award to Educational Challenges, Inc., a white-owned firm, was criticized as "a slap in the face of the Black, Chicano and Indian communities" by Rupert Costo, president of the Indian Historian Press. Educational Challenges, funded by Hill and Wang and by grants from the federal government, is publishing minority-oriented booklets distributed by Random House. Our Council has received a number of complaints about Educational Challenges, and we shall report further in a coming issue of this Bulletin.

Hats off to Doubleday's Loretta Barrett for stepping out of her position as editor of Zenith Books to make way for Black editor Cheryl Chisholm. Establishment book publishing is the better for this move.

Winner of the Stan Steiner National Indian Short Story Awards is Leslie Chapman from Laguna Pueblo for her "Sliva, the Canoncito Navajo Kidnapper." Steiner makes the worthwhile suggestion that non-Indian writers of books about Indians finance the contest prizes in the future with contributions from their royalties. But why must the winning manuscripts appear in a book under the editorship of White Father Stan Steiner?

Black illustrator and Council executive committee member George Ford was featured guest lecturer at this past summer's Cleveland College "Literature for Inner-City Children" workshop. Mr. Ford was extremely impressed with the workshop.

Painting by Tom Feelings in *MOJA MEANS ONE: Swahili Counting Book*, authored by Muriel Feelings and published this fall by Dial Press.

JOIN THE COUNCIL

BECOME A CONTRIBUTING MEMBER

• FIGHT RACISM AND SEXISM IN BOOK PUBLISHING •

\$10 ANNUAL DUES*

*YOU RECEIVE REGULAR SUBSCRIPTION TO:

INTERRACIAL BOOKS for CHILDREN

PLUS

FREE COPY OF "CHRONICLES OF AMERICAN INDIAN PROTEST"

ALSO

ALL SPECIAL COUNCIL SUPPLEMENTS

CONTRIBUTIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE

MAIL THE FORM ON PAGE 8 TODAY!

Adventures in Blackland With Keats and Steptoe

By Ray Anthony Shepard

What, if any, is the difference between a Black and a non-Black illustrator/writer as each creates picture books set in urban Black communities? Ezra Jack Keats and John Steptoe make for an interesting comparison.

The illustrations of Ezra Jack Keats for *Snowy Day* (1963) received the Caldecott award. The year 1963 was the high point of the integrationist civil rights movement, symbolized in the March on Washington. *Snowy Day*, as a mirror of the times, was a position statement from the liberal literary establishment and set forth a new social idea for the nation's younger readers.

Snowy Day, in presenting a Black kid engulfed in snow, said that there were Black kids in the otherwise White World but that in spite of the color difference, Black kids enjoyed snow and whiteness as well as everyone else. *Snowy Day* said that Black kids were human by presenting them as colored white kids.

The success of *Snowy Day* encouraged *Whistle For Willie* (1964). The story showed Peter's world in bright and happy reds and yellows, where mommy and daddy dressed like a nice middle-class white family, and even a white girl jumped rope with a Black girl. *Peter's Chair* (1967) took a close look inside Peter's home. The colors became more somber, for after all, they were middle class; the colors provided a happy background for a happy family, nevertheless. White was the

predominant color used (ten out of 30 pages). The whiteness emphasized the universality of Peter's family and his story.

By 1968 the civil rights movement had been shot in Memphis, and the Black Power movement moved to the forefront as an ominous storm. *A Letter to Amy* (1968) kept pace with the times. It was significant. The bright and happy colors of Peter's world were replaced by dark and threatening clouds. Even though a white boy, whose parents hadn't escaped, came to Peter's birthday party, the neighborhood took on the appearance of a "slum" or a "ghetto" as seen by an outsider. Mommy was there, dressed like you know who, but middle-class daddy had disappeared.

In 1969 came *Goggles*, and the integration dream was over. Whites were not as welcome as they had been in the Black community. The drawings for *Goggles* show Peter's world as if seen from inside a locked car with windows rolled up tight. Every illustration shouts, "Look, see, we're in a ghetto." By now Peter's mommy has disappeared, and Peter and Archie are fighting to survive against a gang of older boys in an economically deprived world. This view merited the Caldecott runner-up medal.

Hi Cat! (1970) continued the adventures of Archie and Peter in Blackland. There is a retreat from the white gloom of *Goggles*; the drawings and story become lighter. It is still in an underdeveloped set-



ting, but the natives are happy. In 1971 Keats seems willing enough to bring equal time to the slum world. His latest book, *Apt. 3* (1971), shows a non-Black kid's quest in a ghetto apartment house. Perhaps the kid is even white; you are not quite sure — but at least — and at last, he is not Black.

For those who think I'm being unfair, and that my comments have more to do with politics than art, let me ask you: How would any of the Keats' books be changed if the characters were white? The stories would be the same, of course, thematically speaking. The color of the characters is irrelevant. It is relevant only in terms of one's understanding of the book-buying market and the political-social times; thus the books were conceived with political awareness.

John Steptoe's *Stevie* (1969), published the same year as *Goggles*, is another story set in Blackland, but this is a work seen through the eyes of an insider. The drawings in the two books — one by Steptoe, the other by Keats — offer sharp contrasts. Steptoe had no need to convince his readers of where he is, so gone are the signs that announce G H E T T O, for *Stevie* is set in a Black community, and although it may be part of the same city shown by Keats, the difference is obvious. Steptoe shows love for his people.

The same sense of love of one's people holds true in *Uptown* (1970) and *Train Ride* (1971). Of course, John Steptoe is not a liberal white, thus he has no need to show human sameness, but instead celebrates the ethnic difference of Blacks. His three books are in harmony; the illustrations, narratives, the settings, and the language sounds feed into each other, creating a harmonious total. He sees his world. Thematically, his books would have to be

considerably changed if the characters were made non-Black.

The language gives an indication of different points of view: From *Goggles*: "Footsteps! The big boys! They followed me." From *Stevie*: "Naw, my Momma said he can't go in the park cause the last time he went he fell and hurt his knee, with his old stupid self."

Stevie, Steptoe's first book — like Keats' *Snowy Day*, was a beginner's success. *Stevie* received the Society of Illustrators Gold Medal, and it was also named an American Library Assn. Notable Children's Book. This is not surprising because the story is about an easily recognizable universal theme of peer jealousy. It is not difficult for all children to find themselves in *Stevie*. One reviewer called the book "a convincing story for all children" (emphasis added). But *Uptown* and *Train Ride*, his best so far, move away from the easily recognizable universal theme and move closer to the particular experience of a Black kid growing up in Harlem. Even though the universal theme is there, as it is in all literature, one senses the critics cooling off in their embrace of Steptoe. In order to love what he has done in his last two books, one must be willing to surrender the idea that in order for there to be equality, there must be similarity. Steptoe pushes one to see equality in terms of our ethnic differences.

It may be unnecessary to have an either/or situation, but it is necessary that Keats' books be recognized as an outside view of Black life. His books may serve a necessary function for those people who need to be convinced of our human similarity, and who can not give up the melting pot myth.

The white reader, if I may engage in the dangers of generalization, will see in Keats' characters, children who confirm sameness, but who live

in a terrible environment. The reader's emotional response combines a feeling of pity and an attraction to the children's adventures. Thus is created another generation of liberals. In the Steptoe books white readers are exposed to a life style that is foreign to them. The illustrations do not push them into emotional ambivalence: attraction, on the one hand, and sympathy, on the other. Steptoe presents an uncompromised Black world that increases the readers' awareness of ethnic grouping in this country. It makes them realize that the world is not made completely in their image.

For the Black reader, to continue the dangers of generalization, the difference is simple. In Keats there is someone who looks like me, and in Steptoe there is someone who knows what is going on.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mr. Shepard lives in Roxbury, Mass. He is an Assistant Professor of Education at the Institute of Open Education. He is also one of the winners of the Third Annual Writing Contest of the Council on Interracial Books for Children.

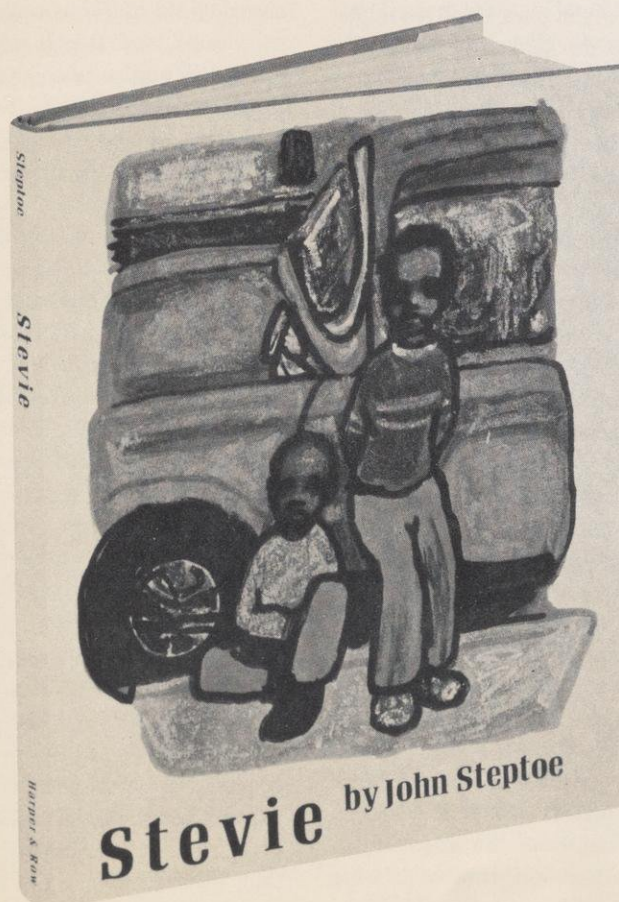
STUDY OF THEATER IN THE SIXTIES REVEALS DESTRUCTION OF BLACK STEREOTYPE

The theater of the sixties saw the destruction of the stage stereotype of the Black as "the comic slave-servant, the contented, devoted slave-servant, the tragic mulatto and the brute," according to a study at Yeshiva University.

Rosa Lee Nash, who completed the study as a doctoral dissertation at Yeshiva University's Ferkauf Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences, states: "In the sixties, there emerged a new characterization of the Black as young, aggressive, articulate, self-assertive and militant."

Ms. Nash examined some 100 plays prior to 1960, beginning with "The Padlock," a comic opera produced in 1769, which introduced the first comic servant, Mungo. For the sixties, Ms. Nash selected eight plays which were seen on the stage in New York City during 1960-69: "A Raisin in the Sun," "Blues for Mister Charlie," "The Dutchman," "The Great White Hope," "Ceremonies in Dark Old Men," "No Place To Be Somebody," "The Black," and "Slave Ship." All these plays were written by Black writers except "The Great White Hope" and "The Blacks."

Ms. Nash is a past co-chairman of the Council on Interracial Books for Children, a post she left to complete her doctoral thesis. Both her grandparents were emancipated slaves of Wharton, Texas.





Alfred E. Prettyman

Dr. Charles A. Wesley

ALFRED E. PRETTYMAN, chairman of the Minority Publishers' Committee and president of Emerson Hall Publishers, Inc.: The classicist scholar, Mr. Gilbert Murray, suggested that the decline of ancient Greek culture could most accurately be ascribed to a "failure of nerve." By this he did not mean that an isolated act or acts of cowardice tumbled the superstructure of society. He meant that in retrospect, one could clearly trace the enfeeblement of creative energy and intellect that gradually reduced glorious Greece to a flaccid culture. We are here today to call attention to one exhibit of the analogous enfeeblement of our national culture — the failure of the nation's book publishing industry to date — and those financial institutions most closely identified with it — to understand, even on a minimal basis, the complexities of existence for Black Americans, Native Americans, and Spanish Americans in this society.

Whether deliberately or not, white publishers tend to distort the image of minorities in their text and trade publications, to restrict the employment of minorities, to inhibit their advancement, and to limit the publication of books by and on minorities for fear of being stigmatized among their peers and in the market place by an apparent closeness to non-white minorities.

Some may consider this prudence. It really goes by another name: racism. Some may consider the alternation of earnest concern and the outbursts of occupational sadism on the part of some of the nation's best financial experts as humane but toughminded judgments in appraising the soundness of minority projects in book publishing. But it is really the pathological roil of gut racism in conflict with good intentions.

We cannot afford to indulge our dismay at such failures of nerve and perception, so we are here today to survey our own proposed remedies. And, although the support of the Association of American Publishers

would be salutary to our efforts to administer these remedies, its absence will not deter us. We would hope that whatever new measures are considered in the coming days by the AAP's recently appointed ad hoc committee on Minority Publishing will eschew the error of seeking to implant a white program in this strong body of Native American, Spanish American and Black American solidarity for the funding and further development of this minority book publishing industry.

We invite the support of churches, labor unions, foundations and — most important — the Congress of the United States in seeking the elimination of the Small Business Association regulation that prohibits the granting of loans to publishers. Surely, a nation that can consider allocating \$250 million of our tax money to bail out the disastrously mismanaged Lockheed Aircraft Company can allot a few millions for the development of a minority book publishing industry. With our current depressed economy, this might best be done this year by reallocating a portion of the Government Printing Office's budgeted funds. Surely, we could put those funds to better use than the publishing of the monumental trivia and propaganda which is so significant a portion of GPO publications. We shall be carrying our discussion of these and other remedies to publishers, unions, foundations, churches and the Congress in individual discussion. In the meantime, we shall continue as we have in the past to assure you of our uncompromising candor as well as our resolve. . . . You can make a minority publishing company survive — not thrive — but survive, if you want to. If you have the time, the energy — there is never enough of it — and the commitment, and that's a good thing to remember when most of the assumedly best enlightened people in the industry tell you this cannot be done. "Book publishing cannot be done this way," they say. "You cannot survive. All of the studies that we have seen say

that a book company that establishes itself in this manner, cannot survive, cannot produce sound books," they say. It's understandable why they say this. They've brainwashed themselves. They're spoiled. They're locked in. We're not. And we won't be.

Dr. CHARLES A. WESLEY, director of the Association of Negro Life and director of the Associated Publishers: Mr. Prettyman and members of the Minority Publishers' Committee, friends of freedom and justice. The only reason that the Associated Publishers is not represented on the listing of minority publishers is that when the Minority Publishers' Committee was first organized, it was proposed to have the new minority publishers listed. Now, we've been in the book publishing business a long time. As I said to my friend Sam Yett [reporter from *Newsweek*] a few moments ago, the only difference is we've been crawling on our hands and knees longer than you have. You're just beginning.

Our Association was started in 1915 under Carter G. Woodson, whose name I'm sure has some reverence from members of this group. Then in 1921 we started the Associated Publishers. Woodson had published his first book in 1915, the same year the Association was started. It was *The Education of the Negro Prior to 1861*. Woodson offered that book to G. P. Putnam Sons. They would not publish it without a subvention. So Woodson pledged his life insurance policy — the records of which we have — for \$450 and sent that money to Putnam with the vast amount of money which they had. He pledged his policy. I don't know if he ever renewed it or paid the loan or not. But he pledged it for his first book.

This is an experience which has constantly affected minority publishing. Right now our Associated Publishers has two books in manuscript with illustrations. One of them deals with a book published for

Minority Book Publis

EXCERPTS FROM WASHINGTON

Despite the prominence given by *Publishers' Weekly* and this Bulletin to the issue of minority publishing, and the growing public interest expressed in supporting letters, this year's annual convention of the Association of American Publishers neglected to schedule a single meeting devoted to the concerns of the emerging Black, Native American and Chicano publishing houses.

The Council's Minority Publishers' Committee responded to this by calling a press conference in the same hotel as, and coincident with, the AAP's convention opening in Washington, D.C., April 28.

The efforts of the Council and the position of the minority publishers were supported by the Congressional Black Caucus, either by the Congressmen's personal appearance or by statements. A white Senator — George A. McGovern — who had been invited by the AAP as a keynote speaker at its dinner banquet also endorsed the Council's support of minority publishing and urged the white establishment publishers to do likewise.

Material help and moral support came from the Washington, D.C. Black Writers'

many years — Carter G. Woodson's *The Negro in Our History*. The other deals with the history of the Negro church, which I am changing to *The History of the Black Church in the United States*. Both of those books are ready for publication, with illustrations. We have not the money with which to do it.

Now, we had an experience about joining with white publishers which briefly I think I should generalize about. When I came in 1965 to the Association I had been closely related with Carter G. Woodson. He died in 1950. Rayford Logan took his place for one or two years. He got out of it, because this is a terrible thing to carry when you don't have any money and you don't have any sources for getting it to the public. In 1965 a man came to me representing a publishing firm and asked me if we could do an encyclopedia. Well, Woodson had materials for an encyclopedia in part. I said we might be able to do it. And he said, "We would be interested in it." So we went into a program.

Now, the program at first was this: we were to get 1 per cent royalty from those books. They expected to sell those books for \$150-\$160. There were to be ten volumes. We were to get 1 per cent of that, which of course is nothing. We were creating it and all they were doing was putting the money in. We implemented that and insisted on changes. We finally got, as a result of the hassle, a thousand dollars per set, a promise that there would be at least \$25,000 a year which we would get. Here we were prostituting ourselves and our abilities and not being given a chance to do it ourselves. They had no black people on their board of directors, as Representative Mitchell alluded to a few minutes ago. They gave me an office in their suite of offices which I occupied with my name on the door and so on. All of that was window dressing for their own benefit. But this is the kind of colonialism, it's the kind of prostitution that we blacks have gone through and which our Asso-

ciation has gone through longer than you have. And if we continue in the situation in which we are, we'll be doing practically the same thing that they did to us — what whites did to us in slavery. We're enslaved.

I am very happy to see this organization developing. I congratulate Mr. Prettyman and those of you who have been with him in doing this kind of thing. We should confront these publishers. We should try to find money from somewhere so that it isn't necessary for us to extend ourselves as we have with a "yessa boss" opinion which might ultimately affect our writings also. Up to now this has not been done. . . .

Another thing these publishers are doing is that they are taking a hold of some writers who haven't had a market, they're bringing out books by white authors which normally ought to be published by black authors. These white authors are taking a hold of our associations and our groups, and they'll take a hold of you, if you're not careful, with the slightness of hand, the sort of protection which they can give most and soon we are the underlings of a great big industry.

We're here as an association to join with you in a history that is longer than yours, but it's a history of suppression, a history of profit-making. We join with you. We hope to be with you in everything that you will do, and we pledge you our resources — whatever they are — in the experience we've had with the Associated Publishers. In any way that we can help, we will be here. . . .

JOSEPH OKPAKU, president of the Third Press, Inc.: We have been trying to establish minority publishing houses for the past five or six years. It's almost painful to reiterate the experiences. I think one of the saddest things in this country is the fact that those who get the most frustrated and those who find themselves forced to go their own way are often those who have done the most they possibly could to avoid that ul-

Publishers Challenge AAP

N, D.C. PRESS CONFERENCE

Workshop, whose members prepared placards challenging the AAP. A rainstorm spared the publishers' convention from being picketed by the writers bearing such slogans as "Mind Control Begins with Book Control." The placards were used to line the walls of the press conference meeting room. Anne Crittendon, director of the Workshop, said: We are happy to support the pioneering work of the Minority Publishers' Committee. We see in the emerging Black publishing houses our hope as writers."

For any publisher-members of the AAP who might regret their Executive Committee's action which deprived them of the chance to hear the views of minority publishers, we are pleased that our publication of the following statements by the minority publishers who participated in the Washington news conference will provide a second chance to be informed. The following are excerpts from the publishers' statements. (A full transcript of the press conference, including the statements by participating Congressmen, will appear in a forthcoming booklet to be published by the Council on Interracial Books for Children.)

imate decision they have to make to turn away. I think if you study the biographies of most of the so-called Black militants, they've been the most accommodating Black people in the country who've done the best they could somehow to make people understand and [come] together. . . .

Now, I think the problems of minority publishing are very simple. One of them is finance. There are several ways — obviously I think that contributions to the proposed Minority Book Industry Development and Insurance Fund will help a lot — it doesn't have to be too much. I think there can be contributions from large corporations, from foundations, from churches, as well as from individuals. I remember a young woman read the book we published on the Chicago Eight Trial, and she sent me a check for five dollars. In some ways, that was better than a larger contribution. She really meant it.

I think there are other things that can be done. The Small Business Administration's regulations have to be modified. It does not make sense in a society that is power-oriented to keep saying that minority activity — minority economic activity — can only be restricted to what they call "grass roots." The country, it's been said, can bail Lockheed out of its crisis. At the same time, minority people are told that in order to get money you have to have a grocery store. And then you are told later that in order to have money for a grocery store, you have to have a neighborhood community. They know very well that when you have sixty or seventy people trying to supervise \$20,000, you will have sixty or seventy people fighting for pennies. You can see this in Harlem. You can see this in most other Black neighborhoods.

Then we have problems of editorial and technical considerations. This is one of the areas in which I think the publishing industry behaves very much like the medical profession. There are tremendous

myths surrounding what it takes to be a publisher. You hear about how you've got to have the editorial knowhow, the technical knowhow. You get the impression, if you're not in publishing for 20,000 years that you're not competent to be a publisher. So you are told, why don't you become an editor in some publishing company and maybe in a little while you can get somewhere.

First of all, the Blacks who have been in these companies have not gotten anywhere. Even when they become senior editors, it doesn't make a difference. Because the person who decides *whether or not* a book gets published is the publisher.

Then there is the whole problem of authorship. This concerns me because even if you do raise the money, then you discover that most of the best Black authors are unavailable to you as a Black publisher. There is a gimmick now in which some Black authors are being offered contracts covering their next three books, sometimes their next four books. In so doing, once again, you buy the Black author out of the market and nobody else has access to that author. Generally, he doesn't have a tough agent or a tough-minded lawyer who can break the contract.

I would like to suggest in this area that the publishing industry, like the medical profession, be willing on its own to abolish the clause by which a publisher has an option on an author's next work. I think an author should go to a publisher only if he wants to. I think that should depend on the performance of a given book. If this is done, it will free a lot of Black — as well as white authors — to go where they want to go and give new publishers a chance to consider new authors. . . .

CORTLAND COX, representing *Drum and Spear Press*: . . . I think that books by Black publishers — and I do not use the word minority publishers purposely because I view that when you talk about Black publishers you're talking about writing books for Black people in the world,

and we're not a minority in the world. We write books for a particular audience of quality, and the important thing, I think, is writing books of quality that cover truth and writing books well and with certain standards of excellence. It seems to me that the one thing Drum and Spear Press is trying to do is not trying to prove that we can. Well, let me say what we're trying to do rather than what we're trying not to do. One thing that Drum and Spear is trying to do is to say that Black people in the world have a history, a culture, a religion. That essentially the Black people of the United States are a segment, not of American history as we view it, but of the wider history which is Black history or African history.

Now, the one thing that book publishers do in the United States — and historians do when they talk about history, and when they talk about music, and when they talk about food, and when they talk about anything else, is they refer to Europe. They refer to their own backgrounds. They refer to the genesis of what they are talking about. The history of America is a continuation of European history, and it has to be recognized as such. Now, it seems to me that if we are going to be honest and truthful with ourselves, essentially when we talk about Black history, when we talk about the history of Indian people, when we talk about the history of Chicano people, we must understand their antecedents. We must understand their roots in order to understand what the situation is presently. Therefore, I think that our intent in publishing might be somewhat different from some of the other brothers and sisters, but I think that in no way do we disagree on the major principles that Black people should publish things for Black people in terms of the audience they address themselves to. . . .

JEANNETTE HENRY, editor of *the Indian Historian Press*: The en-



Cortland Cox

Joseph Okpaku

trance of the Indian Historian Press into the field of book publishing has brought a realization of the rich literary vein still to be tapped about the original Americans. We Native Americans have the talent, the expertise and the knowledge to be successful publishers in the best tradition. We can make a profound contribution to this country as we have influenced its heritage. We Indians want the opportunity to bring the richness of our history, our poetry, our songs, and our spiritual power to the people of this land. In the literature and the textbooks of this country the true Indian voice has not yet been heard. For the good of this country, we

must be heard.

To do this, we need help for the Indian Historian Press — financial help from every quarter: private, government, labor — and from the publishers as well.

So far, no publisher has given us help. One publisher is now trying to cut us down. We say to them: please don't walk on our heels. We can be a great asset to the publishing profession, stimulating new thought, new avenues and qualities of expression. This country is desperately in need of creative talent, progressive and innovative ideas. We want a chance to make our own contribution in satisfying this need.

MINORITY PUBLISHERS

The following are the minority publishers known to this Council and are the houses profiled by the Council's Minority Publishing Committee in the featured March 15 issue of *Publishers' Weekly*, titled "Why Minority Publishing: New Voices Are Heard."

The list below does not pretend to be exhaustive. The Council welcomes information on new publishers, so that the list can be expanded in future issues.

AFRO-AM PUBLISHING CO.

1727 S. Indiana Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60616
David P. Ross

BARRIO PRESS

665 Grant Street
Denver, Colorado 80203
Abelardo Delgado

BLACK ACADEMY PRESS

135 University Avenue
Buffalo, New York 14214
Okechukwu Mezu

BLACK STAR PUBLISHERS

8824 Finkle Street
Detroit, Michigan 48200

BROADSIDE PRESS

12651 Old Mill Place
Detroit, Michigan 48239
Dudley Randall

BUCKINGHAM LEARNING CORP.

76 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10016
Oswald White

DRUM AND SPEAR PRESS

1802 Belmont Road, N. W.
Washington, D.C. 20009
Carolyn Carter

EDWARD W. BLYDEN PRESS

P. O. Box 621
Manhattanville Station
New York, New York 10027
A. Falkner Watts

EMERSON HALL PUBLISHERS, INC.

209 West 97th Street
New York, New York 10025
Alfred E. Prettyman

INDIAN HISTORIAN PRESS

1451 Masonic Avenue
San Francisco, California 94117
Jeanette Henry & Rupert Costo

MICTLA PUBLICATIONS

c/o Dr. R. Gardea
5301 Alameda Avenue
El Paso, Texas 79905
Ricardo Sánchez

NEW DIMENSIONS PUBLISHING CO.

151 West 25th Street
New York, New York 10001
John Hines

THIRD PRESS

444 Central Park West
New York, New York 10025
Joseph Okpaku

THIRD WORLD PRESS

7850 S. Ellis Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60619
Don L. Lee

Cultural Imperialism Against Puerto Ricans

*Entire Next Issue of Bulletin Devoted To
Analysis of Puerto Rican Children's Book World*

In the course of preparing materials for the article on children's books in and about Puerto Rico, announced in the Bulletin's last issue, we have been struck forcibly by two factors of paramount importance. First, the amount and variety of evidence of U.S. manipulation of the Puerto Rican self-image; and, second, the clear relationship between that manipulation and the U.S. racist and colonialist exploitation of Puerto Rico and its people.

Recognizing that one brief article can not begin to do justice to the problem, we will devote our entire next issue of the Bulletin (Winter 1972) to an examination of such facts and charges as the following:

- The English language was forcibly imposed on Puerto Rico as the language of instruction in its schools until 1949. President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes are only two of many U.S. political figures who intervened personally to enforce this language policy. Political pressures from the U.S. still operate to sustain the use of English as the language of instruction in many of the island's private schools.

- Textbooks used in Puerto Rican schools, even when in Spanish, are generally translations of books prepared for mainland Anglo-American children. Puerto Rican children recognize in them neither themselves nor their island.

- History taught to Puerto Rican children is essentially the history of the United States. Puerto Rican

children are likely to name Abraham Lincoln as the "man who freed the slaves," never having heard — at least not in a classroom — about the Puerto Rican abolitionist and patriot, Ramon Bentes.

- Puerto Rican attempts to recapture their history and their self-image have been thwarted. For example, a University of Puerto Rico special program of the early 1960's, *Grupo Proyecto*, aimed at educating students to a higher consciousness of their history, culture, and identity recently succumbed to political pressures.

- There is evidence that federal funds for bilingual education programs (in response to charges of cultural discrimination against Spanish-speaking people in the U.S.) have been used in Puerto Rico to support education in the English language. In the case of Puerto Rico, this amounts to a deliberate perversion of the Federal program's avowed intent.

- Schools in the United States with large Puerto Rican enrollments, such as the New York City school system, have been criminally slow to recognize the special needs and problems of Puerto Rican children. In spite of studies and pronouncements, attempts to provide an adequate education to Spanish-speaking children amount to little more than tokenism.

- Though U.S. educators blame much of their failure to resolve the above on lack of adequate materials and a lack of bilingual teachers, legal and economic restrictions inhibit the publication of such materials in

Puerto Rico (an obvious source), and even teachers from Puerto Rico have been barred from teaching in New York city schools on the grounds of "speech impediment" — a euphemism for a Spanish accent.

We charge that the cultural disorientation and the high rate of practical illiteracy consequent on factors such as these have served to restrict most Puerto Ricans in the U.S. to the class of low-paid menial workers, and might as well be the result of deliberate conspiracy against them.

- We charge that the frustration put in the way of the honestly concerned Puerto Rican educators in their own land have resulted in a shortage of skilled Puerto Ricans. The supply is insufficient even for the island's own needs. Anglo-Americans take advantage of this to find well-paying jobs in Puerto Rico, enjoying a climate, clean air and tropical beaches while Puerto Ricans are forced into New York City slums and left to fight the D Train summer crowds to get to Coney Island's polluted waters.

- Finally, we charge that the at-least-de-facto system of cultural discrimination practiced against the children and people of Puerto Rico robs them of political rights and perverts even the U.S. government's self-avowed principle of political freedom for all peoples. A people who are deprived of self-knowledge and of respectable self-image are effectively barred from self-determination.

Armando Rendon Authors New Book

A revolution is now in progress in the Southwest. It has a Spanish accent; it operates through some unique methods; and it poses new problems for the Anglo dominant society.

This movement is growing in many directions, from the union offices in California to the campsites and courthouses of New Mexico, and eastward into the barrios of Chicago and New York. Fear is giving way to courage, passivity to direct political action, and self-denial under the guise of "assimilation" to self-confidence and the revitalization of such profound concepts as Chicanismo, Aztlan, el Quinto Sol.

With insight and determination, Armando Rendon has written a comprehensive manifesto that is not only an economic, philosophical, political, and spiritual history of his people, but a call to action as well. The title of the book is *Chicano Manifesto*. It will be published by Random House in October.

Armando Rendon was a runner-up for unpublished Chicano writers in the Third Annual Contest of the Council on Interracial Books for Children.

INFORMATION CLEARING HOUSE

We have seen galleys of the first **Indian magazine for children**, *Weewish Tree* (Indian for acorn), and it is beautiful. The magazine is 48 pages, 6" x 9", printed in two colors, and published bi-monthly — six editions during the school year. The price for a subscription is \$6.50, with special rates for bulk orders. Send to Indian Historian Press, 1451 Masonic Avenue, San Francisco, Calif. 94117.

The bi-weekly **Race Relations Reporter** does some of the best journalistic coverage we've seen on the struggles of minority groups against oppression. The 12-page newsletter is a must for all our readers, and is well suited for use in classrooms for ages 12 and up. Available from Race Relations Information Center, Box 6156, Nashville, Tenn. (FREE).

A **Bibliography of Materials in English and Spanish Relating to Puerto Rican Students**, published in June, is available from the Connecticut Migratory Children's Program, University of Hartford, 200 Bloomfield Ave., Hartford, Conn. 06117. It lacks annotations, but we think it is a good listing, and it gives the sources of a number of other current bibliographies. All these bibliographies show the utter paucity of books relevant to Puerto Rican children. Watch for our Council bulletin's next issue which will be devoted entirely to Puerto Rican materials.

Community News Service (CNS), an excellent news service covering events in the Black and Puerto Rican communities, offers **educational materials** for junior-senior high school students who read below grade level. A CNS Drug kit, based on actual stories from the news file, can be used for social studies, remedial reading, urban studies, journalism, open classroom and English classes. The 36-page CNS Drug kit is being sold in class sets (30 student kits plus one teacher's guide) for \$30 per class set. To order, contact Phyllis Dolgin, School Service Editor, Community News Service, 209 West 125th Street, New York, N.Y. 10027.

Little Miss Muffet Fights Back is a list of **books about girls** — books considered by the Feminists in Children's Literature to be the least sexist of the books available. Send 50¢ to P.O. Box 4315, Grand Central Station, New York, N.Y. 10017.

Portraits: The Literature of Minorities is a 70-page bibliography that tries to identify "printed materials of literary quality" that relate to Blacks, Chicanos, Indians and Asian Americans. Aimed for junior and senior high school students, it is prepared by a Los Angeles committee of librarians, teachers and curriculum consultants. The bibliography has the merit of providing longer-than-usual annotations. By far its best offerings are books by minority writers, and it is unfortunate that racial authorship is not indicated. An ideal classroom project would be to find out the racial backgrounds of the writers, and let students decide for themselves who is better equipped to write on minority themes: white writers or non-white writers.

The Office of Education appropriations bill for fiscal year 1972 (which we are now in) contains \$35 million for **bilingual education**. The bill has been signed by Nixon, but it is yet early to determine if all the money will in fact be released.

READERS' HELP REQUESTED ON "LITTLE BLACK SAMBO"

Sadly, at this late date, *Little Black Sambo* is very much alive in libraries throughout the country. The Council on Interracial Books for Children is planning a major statement in booklet form, which will include analyses and opinions from multi-cultural sources. We request our readers to take part in this endeavor, which we hope will relegate *Little Black Sambo* to where it belongs. We ask you to share your comments and experiences. Send anything from a paragraph to an article to the Council at 9 East 40th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016.

"Little Black Sambo" In Scandinavia

by Kerstin Stjärne

The *Little Black Sambo* experience in Scandinavia shows how thoughtlessness and ignorance blur the power of judgment of otherwise sensible people with the best intentions in the world.

The book was introduced into Sweden in 1945 and met with instant and continuous praise. The classic Swedish handbook of children's literature, widely used for the last 25 years by librarians and teachers, Bolin — Zweigbergk "Barn och böcker," pronounced *Little Black Sambo* "indispensable in every nursery." The handbook added: "It has the spark of genius that makes a fairy tale an immortal work of art, that in a seemingly simple story tells you something about the art of living."

Not until the handbook's sixth edition in 1966 — updated by the director of the Institute of Children's

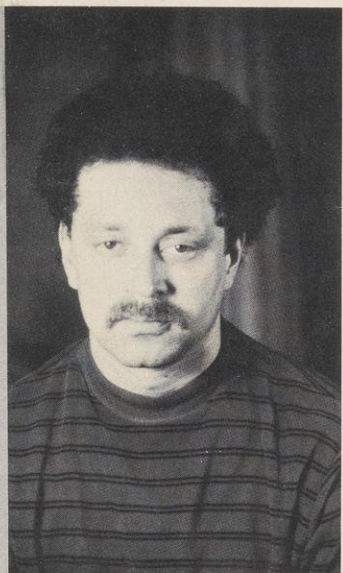
Literature in Stockholm, Mary Örvig — was a hint of criticism ventured, and disposed of: "In today's USA *Little Black Sambo* has become something of a problem, and in the inflamed racial climate that now prevails it has been considered discriminating and derogatory to the Negroes. For us this is a good thing to know, but it should not be a reason to give up the charming and funny book."

Bonniers, Sweden's biggest publishing house, had no intention of giving it up. In 1964 a fourth hardcover edition was published in cooperation with the Danish publishing house Gyldendals. In 1969 appeared the eleventh Danish edition, and the cover blurb says the book has sold 265,000 copies.

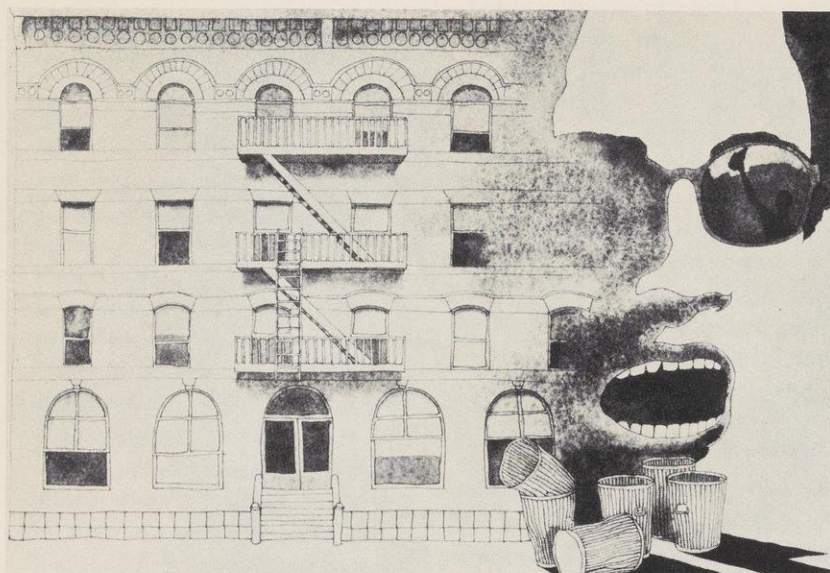
Bonniers has reached even more Swedish children with the message of *Little Black Sambo* in the anthology of famous children's literature —

continued on page 8

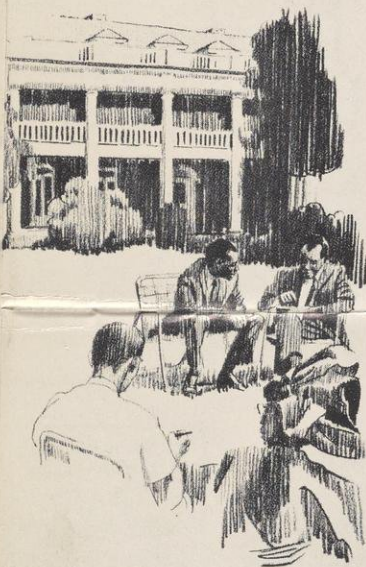
Art Directors, Take Note



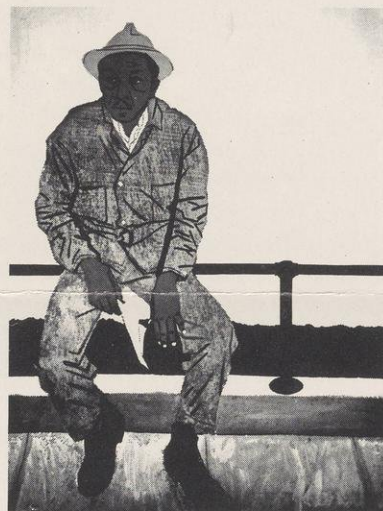
KENNETH M. JORDAN is a graduate of Pratt Institute and the Department of Advertising Design at New York Community College. He is currently working as Assistant Art Director in the Division



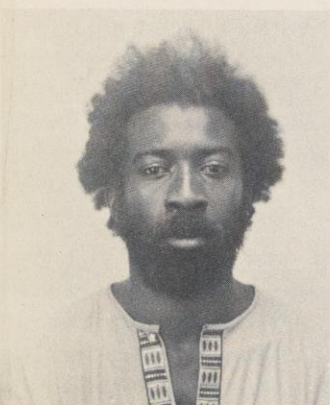
of Graphic Services of the Atlantic Richfield Co. **Art Directors**, take note: Mr. Jordan may be reached at 170-20 130th Avenue, Jamaica, New York 11434. Tel.: 723-0919.



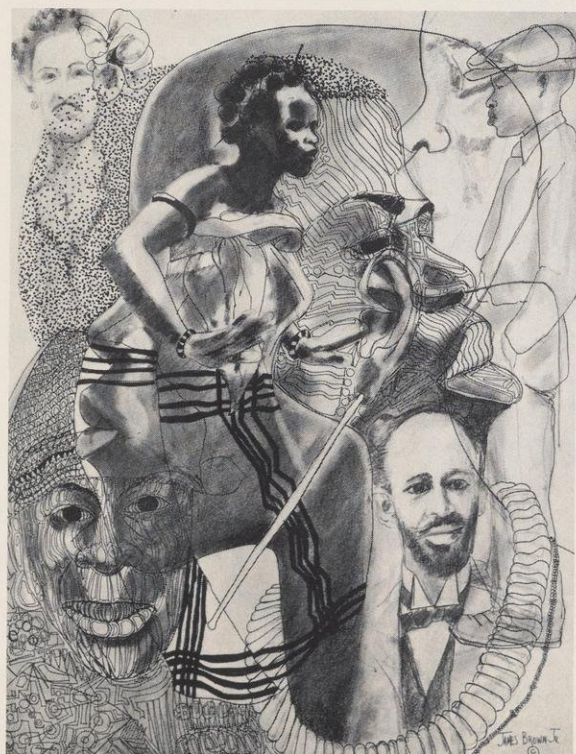
DEXTER F. KNOX attended Massachusetts College of Art and Pratt Institute. As a student, he designed a Russian fairytale book with contemporary children's art work; he set the type, cut the illustrations into woodcuts, printed and bound the book, and it is available for publication. He has since done jackets and book design for, among others, Bobbs-Merrill, Dodd, Mead and Random House. **Art Directors**, take note: Mr.



Knox's studio is at RR 3 Box 21, Duell Road, Litchfield, Conn. 06759. Tel.: (203) 567-0344.



JAMES BROWN, JR. has worked as graphic artist with the Negro Ensemble, does illustrations and posters for performing artists, and contributes to "YOU" magazine. He is currently designing and illustrating a brochure for the Educational Guild's day-care center. **Art Directors**, take note: Mr. Brown's address is 566 West 161 St., New York, N.Y. 10032. Tel.: (212) 927-7676.



This feature has achieved outstanding success in bringing book illustration assignments to artists who are members of ethnic minorities.

"The Cay": Racism Still Rewarded

Reviewed by **Albert V. Schwartz**

Rather than praise for literary achievement on behalf of "brotherhood," *The Cay* by Theodore Taylor (Doubleday 1969) should be castigated as an adventure story for white colonialists to add to their racist mythology. That the major review publications* and the five organizations** that gave it literary awards — one even for "brotherhood" — so totally misinterpreted *The Cay's* meaning supports the charge that children's book publishing is indeed a racist institution.

The Cay is the story of the initiation of a white upper-middle-class boy into his superior role in a colonialist, sexist, racist society. Colonialist, because the people of Curacao and most other people of the Caribbean Isles, where the story is set, are "owned" by outside white powers, which is taken for granted by the author as an acceptable way of life. Sexist, because the only woman in the story is a weak, subservient mother, whose very weakness sets in motion the boy's adventures. Racist, because the white boy is master and the Black man is subservient throughout the story. It is incredible that in a book for children today, any writer would be so racially insensitive as to put a Black man in the role of subservience to a white boy — a servant who risks his life for the boy and, in the end, sacrifices his life so the white boy may live.

Specifically, the story is about eleven-year-old Phillip Enright, who is marooned on a small island (a cay) with an elderly West Indian, Timothy (no last name). Phillip, who relates the tale, has been living in the Caribbean because his father is an oil refining expert on loan to the Royal Dutch Shell from a U.S. company.

The first half of the book sets Phillip up as a young Southern cracker. The reader knows from the outset that the boy's bigoted remarks are deliberate and that the author will slap Phillip down. Phillip early in the book declares that his mother was brought up in Virginia and that "she didn't like them." The "them" are Black people. Of the Black Timothy, says Phillip, "[his] smell was different and strong." The Black man's appearance, says Phillip, "is very much like the men I'd seen in jungle pictures. Flat nose and heavy lips." Phillip recoils from the touch of Timothy.

*Marilyn B. Singer, *School Library Journal*; Paul Heins, *The Horn Book*; Polly Goodwin, *Book World*; Charles Dorsey, *New York Times*

**Jane Addams Book Award, Lewis Carroll Shelf Award, Commonwealth Club of California Literature Award, Southern California Children's Literature Award, Woodward School Annual Book Award

Midway in the book Phillip undergoes a conversion — or so the author would like the reader to believe. This is the "character growth" of young Phillip that is supposed to contribute to the literature espousing "brotherhood." If Phillip's racist attitudes were to undergo substantive change, were Phillip really to have his consciousness raised and grow in human understanding as a result of his close association with Timothy — all well and good. But this just doesn't happen. All that changes in Phillip's growth is a shift in the direction of his racism. Binnie Tate in an article dealing with authenticity and the Black experiences in children's books (*School Library Journal*, October, 1970) states that, from the Black point of view, "the author fails in his attempt to show Phillip's growth in human understanding."

Phillip's "conversion" stems from loss of eyesight after he is shipwrecked, and he comes to depend on Timothy for help and protection. The conversion comes when Phillip — remember, now, he is blind — lies down next to Timothy and says, "[Timothy] felt neither white or Black." Soon he is saying that Timothy is "kind and strong." Then comes the question: "Timothy, are you still black?"

Elsewhere in this issue of *Inter-racial Books for Children*, Ray Anthony Shepard contrasts the interpretations of the Black experience by two author/illustrators, one white and the other Black. Mr. Shepard makes the point that the stories of the white author/illustrator are oriented toward the liberal insistence on human similarities and sameness, whereas the Black author/illustrator celebrates the ethnic differences of Blacks.

In this light, consider the implications of Phillip's question to Timothy: "Are you still black?" Phillip is really saying that in order for him to have warm feelings toward a person, that person must be white. Instead of having Timothy answer loud and clear, "No, I am not white, I am Black," he has Timothy disappearing into anonymity.

True to the liberal absurdities of a bygone age, the *New York Times* book review of *The Cay* made this comment on Phillip's question: "Phillip . . . realized that racial consciousness is merely a product of sight." What a racially unaware remark that is!

One thing we are certain about. Phillip won't grow up to march with a Martin Luther King (to whose memory *The Cay* is dedicated). On

continued on page 8

continued from page 6

"Barndomslandet," *The Country of Childhood*, where it appears in full.

A year ago, regular university courses in children's literature started for the first time in Sweden. The textbook almost exclusively used in the courses (for want of a better choice) is a translation from Danish, Vibeke Style "Fran Snövit till Snobben," revised and published in 1970. The text introducing *Little Black Sambo* to the future teachers, librarians and journalists taking the course praises the simple and rhythmic repetitions, and calls it a "renewal of children's literature" and a "forerunner of the simple style in story and pictures for small children."

The critical voices that have been heard both in Denmark and Sweden calling attention to the book's distorted Black image is dealt with in passing: "At quarters this book is considered an insult to Negroes and has especially lately been misjudged."

This treatment of *Little Black Sambo* is part of an unfortunate general tendency — not uncommon among friends of children's literature — to be defensive and to take on the role of champion and justifier of children's literature rather than to inspire self awareness and understanding.

I am happy to be part of the late "misjudgment" of *Little Black Sambo* in Sweden. I believe the "quarters" are rapidly increasing. Young people struggling against injustices and concerned with the problems of the third world simply don't swallow the textbook nonsense.

A revision of the textbook mentioned above is in the offing, as the result of mounting criticism against it. Surely this will lead to a thorough reevaluation of *Little Black Sambo*.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kerstin Stjärne, who is a lecturer on children's literature at the University of Lund, Sweden, is working on a Ph.D. thesis on "Race Relations in American Children's Books." She resides at Rabyvagen 34A, 223 57 Lund, Sweden.

COUNCIL FEATURED IN NATIONAL MAGAZINE

The feature article of the September 20 issue of *Publishers' Weekly* presents the history of the Council on Interracial Books for Children and describes in a highly interesting manner the Council's history, aims and activities. Criticisms and comments on the state of multi-racial children's books are a significant aspect of the article.

Copies are being sent to the Council's contributing members and subscribers and are available free to others by writing the Council on Interracial Books for Children, 9 East 40th St., New York, N.Y. 10016.

continued from page 1

Hawk"; Chicano: Juan Valenzuela for "I Am Magic."

Runners up are — Black: Douglas Staton for "The City"; American Indian: Traveller Bird for "The Path to Snowbird Mountain"; Chicano: Gerald Lopez and Armando Rendon for "The Boy Who Invented Cowboy Boots."

Since winning this year's awards, the four Black and American Indian writers have signed contracts with publishers to have their mss published; the Chicano winners have yet to find publishers for theirs. *Publishers, take note:* Our Council feels that the Chicano winners have very publishable mss. Although the Council does not act as an agent, we do make all winning mss available to interested publishers.

For the Fourth Annual contest and all future contests, the Council announces a new policy affecting availability of winning mss to publishers. In the future, winning mss will be sent as a matter of course to the fourteen emerging minority publishers listed on page 5. This will be done in May of each year prior to public announcement of the winners. After the minority publishers have had an opportunity to consider the winning mss, the mss will then be made available to commercial publishers.

Publishers are asked to notify the Council in writing of their interest in seeing the mss. All publishers who have notified the Council of their interest in past contests will continue to receive the mss of future contest winners.

continued from page 1

their heritage, it is no longer sufficient that offensive passages be eliminated from existing books or that factual details be inserted about a particular minority's past. Racism cannot be edited out of books. What is required is that the minorities present their own image in their own books."

As an extension of the Council's beliefs, the copyright page of *Chronicles of American Indian Protest* carries a statement giving reprint rights to anyone wishing to make use of the original material contained in the book.

"THE CAY"

continued from page 7

the contrary, Phillip will return to the Islands and, following in his father's footsteps, he will become a leader in the system that exploits the "natives."

Near story's end, when Phillip has successfully fulfilled his initiation, he puts on a verbal blackface: "Dis b'dat outrageous cay, oh, Timothy?" In the end, the white boy is given control even of the Black man's language!

We will be hearing a lot in the months and years to come about "Black language." One thing Black language is *not* is verbal blackface, and that is the use of apostrophes and abbreviated word forms to stereotype the language of America's non-white minorities and, to some extent, its lower-class whites. The use of apostrophes and abbreviated word forms is a shoddy literary device used to connote inferior status

under the guise of authenticity.

We have said very little about the Black servant. At the story's beginning and through to its conclusion, Timothy is very much the invisible man. We know more about him by omission than by commission. We know that he is good, kind, generous, resourceful and happy. We know that he is well schooled in oppression and colonialism. He is very much aware that the system dictates he call a white boy "Young bahs." Only when the white boy no longer is afraid of his servant is Timothy given permission (which is granted, not assumed) to call the white boy by his first name. Phillip at eleven knows much history. The considerably older Timothy knows no history. When asked about Africa, Timothy answers: "I 'ave no recollection o' anythin' 'cept dese islands. 'Tis pure outrageous, but I do not remember anythin' 'bout a place called Afre-ca."

Outrageous? Yes. What should outrage all of us is that the book's author, its editor, and its publisher should foist upon our children such an image of a Black man today!

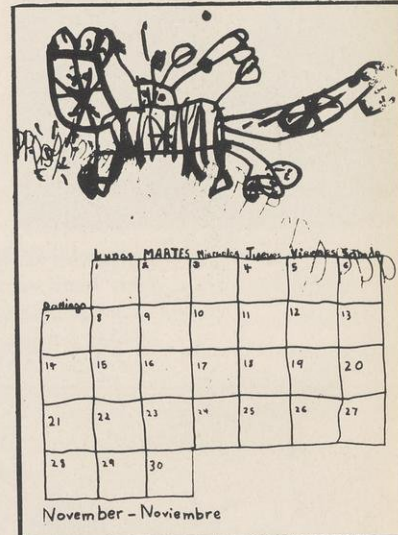
Not only is Timothy denied his color by the act of a white boy's "conversion," He is denied parents, family, children. He is denied all social ties except one, and that single tie is with a white boy, for whom in the end he is denied his life.

About the Author

Albert V. Schwartz is Assistant Professor of Language Arts Richmond College, Staten Island, New York.

CHILDREN'S CALENDAR FOR CHRISTMAS GIFT

If you're thinking ahead to Christmas, here's a gift suggestion. The Children's Art Workshop — a graphic art center with preponderantly Puerto Rican children on the Lower East Side of New York — is now printing their colorful 1972 calendar. Proceeds will go to their newly opened alternative school for elementary school dropouts. Send \$2 plus 25¢ postage to Small Patoches Press, 523 East 6 St., New York, N.Y. 10009.



ON SHIRLEY GRAHAM INTERVIEW

Due to shortage of space, the interview with Shirley Graham Du Bois — to have been concluded in this issue — will be printed separately and mailed in its entirety to Council contributing members and subscribers.

PLEASE CLIP AND POST ON BULLETIN BOARD!

Fourth Annual Contest

for writers who are unpublished in the children's book field

Open to

- AFRICAN AMERICANS • AMERICAN INDIANS
- SPANISH SPEAKING • ASIAN AMERICANS

Four \$500 CASH PRIZES

For Entry Blanks and Contest Rules write to

Council on Interracial Books For Children, Inc.
9 East 40th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016

Contest Ends
April 15, 1972

Council on Interracial Books For Children, Inc.
9 East 40th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
NEW YORK, N. Y.
PERMIT No. 5090

THE MEMORIAL LIBRARY 24
SERIALS DEPT
UNIV OF WISCONSIN
728 STATE ST
MADISON WI 53706



Mail Today To:

Council on Interracial Books For Children, Inc.
9 East 40th Street, New York, New York 10016

I wish to become a contributing member to support the activities of the Council and to receive the quarterly Bulletin, plus a free copy of the book "Chronicles of American Indian Protest," plus all pamphlets and article reprints of the Council. I enclose \$10 for one year ☐. Please bill me ☐.

I wish to enter my library, school or other organization for the contributing membership mentioned above. I enclose \$10 ☐. Please bill me ☐.

I wish to receive the quarterly Bulletin only and enclose \$3 for one year ☐

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

CONTRIBUTING MEMBERSHIP IS TAX DEDUCTIBLE