This Issue Features:

- What You See...Fantasy, part 2
- Using Poetry in All Subjects
- On Summer Reading
- Listservs for Librarians
- Computerized Reading Programs

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The purpose of the Christian Library Journal is to provide readers with reviews of both Christian and secular library materials from a Christian point of view. About 200 titles from both Christian and secular publishers are reviewed each issue. Materials reviewed may reflect a broad range of Christian doctrinal positions and do not necessarily reflect the views of the staff of the Christian Library Journal.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

COLUMNS and ARTICLES

What You See…Fantasy, part 2
Donna Bowling .......................... 2
Using Poetry in All Subjects?
Leslie Greaver Radloff ................... 5
On Summer Reading
Karen Brehmer ............................ 7
Listservs for Librarians
Sylvia Stopforth ........................... 8
Computerized Reading Programs
Jim McKinney, with Mary McKinney ... 9

REVIEWS

Rating System ............................. 10
Picture Books ............................. 10
Children’s Fiction .......................... 17
Children’s Nonfiction ....................... 23
Young Adult Fiction ....................... 26
Young Adult Nonfiction .................... 31
Adult Fiction ............................... 34
Adult Nonfiction ............................ 40
Reference ................................. 51
Index ...................................... 53
"Of making many books there is no end" has been true for millennia. [Eccl. 12:12] Before the preceding article had an opportunity to go to press, several additional related titles came to my attention. These focus primarily on values which may be found in fantasy. Reading is an interactive process. Different readers bring different personal backgrounds to their reading experiences and take different impressions from their reading. Some works of fantasy provide an especially rich store of positive values--for those who have eyes to see them. No two readers will agree on what they see. Many readers would not agree with Abanes's description of Harry Potter as "self-serving" (p. 171). Abanes's suggestion that the malicious, gossipy, lying, unregistered "Animagus" Rita Skeeter cares "about discipline and following rules" (p. 171) gives support to the view that people tend to see what they are looking for. Many readers know the difference between moral law and ceremonial law in biblical texts (p. 212). However, he makes a moral issue of violation of Hogwarts school administrative regulations by school officials (who have the authority to do so), as well as by students (p. 171). Any educator knows that educational policies may be subject to exceptions. Hogwarts students know the difference between school rules and "the law." Much of the disagreement in the controversy about Harry Potter arises from differences about the meanings of terms. In his illustrative Table 9.1, Abanes contrasts Tolkien's Magic with Rowling's Magick (p. 231). He perceives that Rowling's magic "Takes place in our reality; not in another realm separate from our own world." A quick check of chapters on fantasy in children's literature textbooks reveals that many fantasy works, such as Mary Poppins, use place names from our real world, but describe events that could only occur in an imaginary world. (C. S. Lewis defends his use of the same technique in *That Hideous Strength* by pointing out that traditional fairy tales begin that way.) A more accurate statement would be that Rowling's magic "Takes place in an imaginary world that..."
borrows freely from place names and some technical terms found in our reality." This "pretense" may create its own problems, but the distinction is significant. Abanes is careful to point out that "Rowling's novels do not teach Witchcraft per se" (p. 139). However, he follows with "Rowling's series does present practices used by Wiccans," but this presentation gives little or no operational detail. Abanes frequently quotes from occult sources for definitions of terms used in the series--with all the implied overtones--rather than defining such terms based only on their use in the books themselves (e.g., p. 116).

Abanes clearly is convinced that the Harry Potter books are potentially harmful to some children. Because of that possibility he believes that parents should make informed decisions for their own children. He does not advocate censorship. He recognises that "There is obviously a great degree of subjectivity when it comes to literature. No one, therefore, should be too quick to condemn others for believing that certain works of literature are harmful to children. It is all a matter of perspective" (p. 58). He regrets the unpleasant fact that "Persons on all sides of the debate have been guilty of fruitless bickering, which has produced far more heat than light" (p. 179).

This heavily-documented book is very useful for its rationale for fantasy and its comments about J. R. R. Tolkien. The information about the occult and warning about the popularization of witches and horror in the contemporary media is valuable. Even readers who disagree with Abanes's interpretations of the Harry Potter series will find his perspective instructive. Recommended for church libraries and readers who are interested in the Harry Potter controversy.

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For many years Connie Neal has enjoyed watching the clouds with her children to find shapes that look like interesting creatures or elements in a story. In their family reading, "Not only can we enjoy the story itself, we can go on to share what it means to us, what it reminds us of, and what that makes us think about in other stories and in real life" (p. viii). In *The Gospel According to Harry Potter*, Neal deliberately examines the first four books in J. K. Rowling's Harry Potter series, looking for "glimpses of the Gospel." Her purpose is two-fold. First, as an evangelistic method, she chooses "something familiar to the culture to relate unfamiliar spiritual truth" (p. xi). Neal reports her surprise at finding that "Harry Potter has more useful parallels to the gospel than almost any other piece of popular literature I have seen in decades" (p. xi). Also Neal seeks to provide a balancing point of view and to encourage fellow Christians to see "new aspects of the story that may spark fresh thoughts and (hopefully) respectful discussions" (p. xiii).

Following Neal's introduction she considers each of the four current Potter books in turn. From each book she presents several short reflections, pairing episodes or situations from the books with scriptural parallels she has found. She offers a total of more than fifty such "glimpses." For example, it is through the sacrificial death of one person that another receives life (Book One) (p. 7). Confidence is based on the knowledge of being chosen (Book Two) (p. 84). All are sinners, but God loves us in spite of our sin (Book Three) (p. 105). Whoever wishes may come, no matter what the past (Book Four) (p. 160).

Neal recognizes that this technique of examining literary works to pull out such examples--whether to look for scriptural or occult meanings--is not proper literary analysis. She also acknowledges that it is possible to find some occult ideas if that is the focus, but that is not her focus.

Her hope is that some readers might accept the truths of the Gospel through her applications and come to a personal knowledge of Christ. Her structure is similar to that of Bruner and Ware in *Finding God in The Lord of the Rings*, which she cites (although Tolkien's name is misspelled). (See below.) This book is definitely recommended for its balancing perspective on Rowling's series, and for its valuable suggestions for relating literature to our personal lives.

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Kurt Bruner is an executive with Focus on the Family; Jim Ware is a seminary graduate and the author of several books. They have co-authored *Finding God in The Lord of the Rings* as a labor of love. In the introduction Bruner briefly discusses Tolkien's Christian motivation in creating an ageless story. The authors assume that their readers are already familiar with Tolkien's trilogy. Their purpose is to share some Christian themes they have found and to inspire further reflection.

Each of the twenty-one meditations begins with a short quotation, followed by a situation from the trilogy which illustrates the theme. The discussion of a scriptural parallel or application concludes with a summary one-sentence "Reflection." Chapter titles include "A Deep Yarning, Small Tale, The Call, Evil Intentions, Wise Counsel, Deceptive Appearances, Shutting Out the Night, Hidden Courage, The Last Homely House, Loyal Companion, Oft Overlooked, No Safety, Mysterious Light, Unwholesome Power, A Crown of Flowers, A Good End, Singing in the Dark, Unwitting Instrument, King of Hearts, Seductive Voice, Redemption."

In the Epilogue, Ware responds to Christians who question that fantasy such as Tolkien's can have true spiritual value. To do so, he
elaborates on Tolkien's concept of man as a sub-creator made in the image of God. Tolkien sees the "eucatastrophe"--the miraculous happy ending--as an essential element in fantasy. He takes delight in the knowledge that such Good News is actually true in the story of Jesus Christ.

This thought-provoking book provides a model for the application of themes in a story to individual lives. The story in Tolkien's trilogy is timeless, but the themes remain relevant for the twenty-first century. Bruner and Ware have produced a book with a smooth, seamless style that reaches the heart. Recommended for school and church libraries, and the personal libraries of Tolkien fans.

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Mark Eddy Smith is a writer and an artist. His Tolkien's Ordinary Virtues comes from his deep appreciation of The Lord of the Rings, which he has read and re-read many times since childhood. The thirty-one character qualities, or virtues, are qualities found in the trilogy that have personally challenged Smith in his own life. The book is divided into six parts, one for each "book" in the trilogy (which is published as two "books" per volume). Chapter titles include "Simplicity, Generosity, Friendship, Hospitality, Faith, Perspective, Community, Sacrifice, Wonder, Temptation, Failure, Atonement, Suffering, Resurrection, Humility, Providence, Trust, Trustworthiness, Wisdom, Hope, Imagination, Submission, Stewardship, Courage, Mirth, Foolishness, Perseverance, Celebration, Justice, Love," followed by a short conclusion and bibliography.

This book complements the book by Bruner and Ware. Smith writes with an easy, pleasing style. Themes in Smith's book are concepts represented by single nouns. Several of the short chapters refer to multiple incidents in Tolkien's trilogy that illustrate the chosen qualities. The spiritual implications of those incidents are discussed in a paragraph or two, often with an accompanying scriptural reference. Themes in Bruner and Ware are sentences, propositional statements. Following their illustrative events, Bruner and Ware often give multiple biblical examples of parallels, along with various Scripture quotations. While Bruner and Ware elaborate more on the spiritual applications they find, both books offer valuable insights, without much overlap. Smith's book is recommended as an added title for school and church libraries, and the personal libraries of Tolkien fans.

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Distributed by John E. Isom, 11801 Oak Haven Road, Austin, Texas 78753, 512-837-1801, <isomj@mindspring.com>

823'912. Tolkien, J.R.R. (John Ronald Reuel, 1892-1973--Lord of the rings; Tolkien, J.R.R. (John Ronald Reuel, 1892-1973--Religion; Christianity and literature--England--History--20th century; Christian fiction, English--History and criticism; Fantasy fiction, English--History and criticism; Middle Earth (Imaginary place).

Peter Kreeft is a Professor of Philosophy at Boston College and is well-recognized for his creative and effective books dealing with apologetic issues. In view of the close personal and literary ties between Lewis and Tolkien, he was invited to the C. S. Lewis Conference in Austin, Texas, to speak on J. R. R. Tolkien. The recent events on September 11, 2001, make his topic, Wartime Wisdom: Ten Uncommon Insights about Evil in The Lord of the Rings, quite pertinent to the current situation. Kreeft presents ten surprising facts about evil. (1) We are at war, not at peace--our enemy, Evil, is real. (2) Evil is very big, in fact immortal. (3) Knowing the difference between good and evil is very easy and very clear. (4) Knowledge is not always a good. (5) What defeats evil is evil itself. (6) Evil works for good. (7-10) Four of the most powerful weapons against evil are: sacrifice, humility, friendship, and words (names). Kreeft elaborates on these ideas in a style that is incisive and often humorous, but never dull. His frequent "one-liners" bring appreciative laughter from the audience. Throughout his talk he mentions relevant biblical people and events--e.g. Eve, Joseph, Moses, Simon of Cyrene, and especially Jesus Christ, including His parables and crucifixion. "Calvary is the rule, not the exception" (# 6). Occasional glimpses of Kreeft's Catholic theology come out, but his emphasis is on Christ as "the golden key" in the fight against evil.

The cassette tape runs one hour and twenty-five minutes in length, including a five minute introduction, a one hour talk, followed by a twenty-minute question-and-answer period. John Isom recorded the session, and is the authorized distributor. Listening to this tape can be repeated with profit and enjoyment. Highly recommended for Tolkien fans, it is also appropriate for church and school libraries.

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Each of these titles makes its own unique contribution, but together their efforts only scratch the surface of the possible gleanings of positive spiritual applications to our individual lives. Beyond the delight in the stories, fantasy has much to offer to "those with eyes to see."

Additional References


Tolkien, J. R. R. The lord of the rings. New York: Ballantine books, 1965. v. 1. The fellowship of the ring; v. 2. The two towers; v.3. The return of the king.


Donna W. Bowling, Library /Educational Consultant, Dallas, Texas
With thoughts of April's Poetry Month still fresh in my mind, I'd like to share some ideas and resources with you that could easily be adapted and used throughout the school year to bring more poetry into the school library media center, and thus into classrooms. Many of you are aware that Children's Book Council began celebrating April as "Poetry Month." April, of course, is the month in which we celebrate William Shakespeare's birthday. So, what better month to capitalize on the wealth of new poetry anthologies, volumes, and new poets with appeal for students of all ages?

These ideas need not be limited to only one month of the year; however, rather poems can and should be included daily and included with other materials that teachers are given for the study of any topic, from Bible lessons to science to social studies and history, and it is a natural pairing for the study of the fine arts. When I work with teachers to pull materials from the collection for topics of study, I typically include one or two poetry books that I know will 'work' with the topic at hand. If teachers choose to use them, so much the better, if not, I try to include them when meeting with that teacher's students.

Why do I feel poetry is so important? There are many reasons: First, and foremost because poetry with its economy of words, hits the nail on the head nine times out of ten; secondly, because children who are not reading at grade level are not intimidated by the amount of print; poetry has lots of white space; thirdly, because poems often, but not always, have rhyme and that makes information easier to remember; another reason is that poems run the gamut from fun to read, begging to be read aloud and shared, to those that invite contemplation; to introduce students whose first language may not be English to the sounds and rhythm of the language and provide common ground through the introduction of nursery rhymes and Mother Goose; and because teachers are writing poetry with their classes and want examples of various kinds of poems to illustrate lessons and show topics which might be used to write poems. A final reason is that I love poetry and the language of poets.

Materials teachers can use to help them become better teachers of poetry and to better teach the writing of poetry are as necessary in the library collection as the collections of various poets' works, student guides for how to write poems. Some of the best teacher resources to include in the library's professional collection include information about poetic forms, and ideas for writing and appreciating poetry. All the titles included in the list at the end of this article have valuable ideas and suggestions for teachers and include suggested reading lists of both poems and poets whose works should not be missed.

There are, of course, many more teacher resources available in print and on the Web which give more ideas than most teachers want or will ever use when teaching poetry. To see a smathering of the resources, go to Google and type in poetry or children's poetry. The results are overwhelming. School librarians will want to become aware of some of the finest sites to point them out to teachers for various purposes. We will also want to share some of the poems and ideas with various grades as classes come into the library, and have a few ideas to include teachers in the fun of sharing poetry.

One idea to get started is to announce at the beginning of the study of poetry that there will be a free gift for each teacher who brings a poem into the library. Free gifts might include a notepad; free Internet time; pencils; cologne or after shave; small bags of candy; or other things in that vein. (I scour thrift stores, have culled items from closets and drawers, used the free gifts included with items purchased, and free gifts from jobbers for these bags). Wrapped in a bag with a ribbon and placed in a box for grabbing, the teachers and kids have fun hearing the poem and opening the bag. Poems are then posted on a bulletin board. I assure teachers and staff that the poems can run the gamut from a verse of an epic to doggerel.

Since I have a window wall looking out over an atrium area, I copy poems and post some on appropriate note paper and hang them on the window so passerby can read them. No windows? Use a bulletin board. I'm thinking of using this idea with each month and its holidays or 'Days' all year.

Volunteer to go into the classrooms to read poems of your choice and don't limit it to poets who write for children. I read some Goethe and Schiller to a sixth grade class, in translation, but next time I'll read it in German too, so that the listeners can catch the flow of the language and the rhyme in the original language. Practice before reading aloud, so you know where the logical breaks are.
Read collections of bilingual poems with a person fluent in the second language; read poems for two or more voices such as “Joyful Noise” or “Big Talk,” both by Paul Fleischman, with a student or teacher; invite participation with nonsense poems.

Highlight special days with the reading of poems for that day. In November, I typically read “In Flanders Fields” by Canadian John McCrae around the 11th to commemorate all those who have fought for our country. Likewise around the 18th of April, I always read the first verse of Longfellow’s “Paul Revere’s Ride,” often accompanying it with “Paul Revere Speaks” by Myra Cohn Livingston. Lee Bennett Hopkins’ anthology of poems for states regions, *My America: A Poetry Atlas of the United States* (Simon & Schuster, 2000) and *Hand in Hand: An American History Through Poetry* (Simon & Schuster, 1994) makes doing this a lot easier. There are of course, anthologies that pair poetry with art and music, as well as collections whose focus is math, science, and space. Your libraries probably have many already.

In weekly emails let your teachers know which poets have websites that provide useful and child friendly activities. Although I have used the Web for many teaching activities, I was amazed at the number of poetry sites and among them one of the best is that of Kristine O’Connell George who believes as I do, that the more connections that can be made while learning, the more learning that takes place. The best way to find these are to use a search engine and type in the poet’s name.

The super size magnetic poetry kits are fun to have though expensive. There are smaller less expensive kits available from gift stores and many are themed packages. These are usually about $20.00. You might find magnetic kits through one of the multitudes of children’s book clubs. An old cookie sheet or jelly roll pan makes a fine surface for using it in the library. While not as much fun as an actual Magnetic Poetry Kit, one site does allow users to manipulate words and drag them around the screen with the mouse. Unfortunately, you cannot print your composition.

One thing you will notice if you include poetry when pulling together materials for others teachers is that your own appreciation of poetry and the various kinds of poems will increase along with your enjoyment of the form. Below is a very short list of poets to include in the library collection. You will see that this list does not include Shel Silverstein, Alvin Schwartz, or Jack Prelutsky not because we should avoid them, but because students and teachers will pick them up anyway.

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<th>POETS IN THE CLASSROOM</th>
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<tr>
<td>N.M. Bodecker</td>
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<td>Gwendolyn Brooks</td>
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<td>Eve Bunting</td>
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<td>Emily Dickinson</td>
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<td>Rebecca Kai Dotlich</td>
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<td>Barbara Juster Esbensen</td>
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<td>Kristine O’Connell George</td>
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<td>Eve Merriam</td>
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<td>A.A. Milne</td>
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<td>Lisa Westberg Peters</td>
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<td>Charlotte Fomerantz</td>
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<td>Cynthia Rylant</td>
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<td>Gertrude Stein</td>
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<td>Robert Louis Stevenson</td>
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<td>Susan Marie Swanson</td>
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<td>Valerie Worth</td>
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<td>Jane Yolen</td>
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**Books for the Professional Collections**


*Denotes books that students will also find useful.

For an excellent overview of poetry read: *The Discovery of Poetry* by Frances Mayes. Harcourt, 1987. Available in public libraries, it is a highly readable text for the study of poetry and used in many universities and colleges. The writer was on the faculty of San Francisco State University at the time it was written.
At the end of the school year, teachers are often asked, “What can we do over the summer, to help our child with reading?” Here I am with a couple, asking this question of me. I review the benefits of oral reading. I offer strategies to increase reading accuracy and comprehension. We discuss the importance of parent modeling and reading aloud to children. And then I stop, wondering why my head hurts and my heart aches.

I know the answer. My student, this struggling reader, is tired. Tired of feeling different, tired of fighting with himself to be better. He wants to be a good reader, but he doesn’t know why he has trouble. He thinks he might be improving but he knows he is still behind. These parents and I have persevered with him, and we’ve shared in the victories and defeats. We all want to find relief and joy for this child.

Joy of reading. That’s it. My summer wish for struggling students is that they will find excitement through stories; that they will develop a love of words, of books, of reading.

The better question for summer reading is “How can I get my child to love books?” The first step is to expose him/her to a variety of books.

This requires homework for the parents (or anyone recommending books to children). Using resources like the library catalog, this journal, publisher or booksellers’ summaries, readers can find a variety of interesting titles to match interests. Visits to the bookstore or library will clue parents in to what subjects their child enjoys.

Often older struggling readers reject books because stories matching their ability level seem too babyish. Thank goodness many publishers have non-fiction transitional reading series, presenting factual information in an easy to read format, leveled from preschool to about fourth grade.

Should parents allow children to read anything? Regarding offensive content, parents should trust their instincts and stand by their convictions when helping children pick books. Parents should read books before commenting on them. Restrictions must be made informatively; children need to know the reasons a parent dislikes a book. This process helps teach children how use their own discretion when choosing books.

What if a child picks a book that is lacking in plot, or seems to have no literary quality? Or, what if it is obviously too easy for the reader? Should we allow these for summer reading? Yes, I say. Allow it, affirm it, but silently make it a goal to move that child on as quickly as possible! Find quality literature that has some of the same attraction as the lesser book, and introduce it to the child. If he has no interest in reading it on his own, read it aloud to him. He might be surprised, and he might just listen to your next book selection.

Teachers, parents, and librarians must see the struggle of matching books with children as a rewarding challenge. It is a hit or miss process, but when we make a connection, the child is never the same.

Enjoy your summer. May you find a new joy in the books that are waiting for you.
Listservs for Librarians

by Sylvia Stopforth

I know what you're thinking.
"More email? Please!"
"My inbox is so full it's spilling over into my outbox!"
I understand. Really, I do.

And yet ... there's just no getting around the fact that electronic discussion lists (aka listservs) can be a marvellous resource. For those who work in isolation, a listserv can provide a sense of community, of shared experience; for those who work on a team, but have primary responsible for certain areas, a listserv offers hands-on solutions, and opportunities to learn from peers. Sometimes we simply need a quick answer to a quick question, or the welcome realization that we are not alone with our software quandaries or our outdated policies.

And there are listservs for everything under the sun. Most reference librarians have heard of Stumpers (the list created for the sharing of "difficult reference questions"), and of course many of us are aware of the scores of listservs organized by the American Library Association (ALA) or the Library of Congress. But did you know that there are listservs for dance librarians, geoscience librarians, and veterinary medicine librarians?! There's even a new listserv for church librarians!

But more about that later ...

I had originally intended to highlight a select few listservs, for your consideration. But there were so many great candidates that I soon realized I had set myself an impossible task. And one of the things librarians do well is compiling resource lists. So, why reinvent the wheel? I offer here, for your browsing pleasure, a List of Lists.

The Rolling Prairie Library System, based in Illinois, has provided an useful starting point. They begin by offering links to information re listserv software, and to Listserv Etiquette (referred to as "Netiquette"), then plunge into a list of listservs provided by such organisations as the ALA, ACRL (Association of College and Research Libraries), and ERIC (Educational Resource Information Center). They finish with a smattering of Listserv Gateways, which provide "information about a large number of sites."

The RPLS webmaster most recently updated this site in February of 2002; look for it at: http://www.rpls.ws/Links/listserv.htm

One of the more comprehensive—if unorthodox—lists can be found at the Wild Librarian website, at:

http://home.earthlink.net/~jsmog/library4.html#listservs

Our untamed colleague offers a straightforward list of listserv titles (and live links) in alphabetical order, last updated in November of 2002.

A Google search for "listservs for school librarians" generates eight hits. The top two belong to the Hong Kong Teacher-Librarians' Association. At this website, one can find a very useful collection of a dozen or so listservs, primarily American, Canadian, and Australian. The HKTLA has provided urls as well as a brief description of each list, its source or sponsor, and its scope. Also available are links to online discussion groups and E-journals geared specifically to those in the area of Education. This site, which can be found at: http://home.hkstar.com/~library/library/listserv.htm was apparently last updated in July 1997, but a quick random sampling did not turn up any dead links.

The most extensive- and somewhat overwhelming - site is titled the "List of Library Oriented Lists and Electronic Journals," and can be found at: http://liblists.wrlc.org/home.htm. This document was originally the work of folks at the University of Houston Libraries, who began to compile the list in 1990. In 1996, maintenance of the list was assumed by Wei Wu, initially at the University of Houston Libraries and now at the Washington Research Library Consortium (WRLC). This site, updated in January of 2003, features some nifty keyword search options (of list title or address, for example) and includes title and subject indices.

I did not have great success tracking down numerous listservs geared specifically to Christian, or even religious, librarians. But then, the majority of our concerns are very similar to those of our professional colleagues serving in secular organizations and institutions.

But here's something that will most certainly be of interest to the church librarians amongst our readers. In December of 2002 Shawn Brouwer, Circulation Coordinator at Alloway Library, Trinity Western University, sent out the following announcement regarding a new discussion list: "LINC-List (The Libraries in Churches List) is an electronic discussion list for anyone who serves in a church library ... LINC-List is an open, email-based forum created to inspire, inform and encourage those who work in church or other congregational libraries. LINC-List participants are encouraged to share ideas on all aspects of developing and maintaining a church library. Topics of discussion may include: circulation policies, collection development, library promotions and programs, book and media recommendations, resources, supplies, technology, readers, staffing and more."

To become a list member, send an email to "join-LINC-L@patience.twu.ca," wait for a confirmation and then join in on the discussion. You can also join via the web at http://patience.twu.ca/cgi-bin/lyris.pl?enter=linc-l. For more information about LINC-List, contact Shawn at sbrouwer@lynx.net

Happy subscribing!

[Please note that all websites mentioned in this column were accessed by the writer in January of 2003.]
Computerized Reading Programs That Point Back to Books
by Jim McKinney, with Mary McKinney

There has been a push over the last several years to promote e-books and the such, thinking that this could become the newest rage. Could reading from an electronic device actually eliminate the need for the in-hand paper “page-turner”, alias, the book? Will the cyber-book ever totally replace the paperback for reading? I can’t speak prophetically on that issue, but I can give you some pointers on a couple of programs promoting ways to keep kids and others between the covers of your library treasures. The two I’m most familiar with are Accelerated Reader (AR) by Renaissance Learning Inc. and eyeQ by the Infinite Mind Company. Both of these companies want to improve readers’ abilities to enjoy books and learn more in other areas, too.

After teaching twenty-three years (eighteen in America and three overseas) I came back to the U.S. in 1991 and saw an article on the AR reading program in a magazine. We only had a few Apple II computers in our junior high and I had $300 I could use for my own classroom materials. I purchased a few test discs along with the main program and got my seventh graders started into the AR testing program. They would read the books, be tested for each one, and the computer would then score their tests and award them points according to the results. At first it sounded too cut and dried to be worth much, but my students jumped in enthusiastically, and since then, I have used it with all three levels at my Junior High. Each year I’m more and more pleased with the depth and breadth of reading my students do. No other Language Arts teacher in my school has as many books read per class, and I now enjoy a favored spot with the library staff. They have worked with us to spread the wonder of this program to all 1,000 teens in the building.

The eyeQ program is quite new compared to Accelerated Reader and I was intrigued by the infomercial. It claimed to enhance reading speed and comprehension to remarkable heights. I went for the $150 family program in the summer of ‘02 to see what it would do for me before I took it into the classroom. Sure enough, within a couple of lessons I was seeing an increase in reading speed, and the eye exercises did keep me on track. If you know of someone who is a slow reader, or lacks concentration skills, I believe this program will help. It also has benefits for those who suffer from “lazy eye” or other physical tracking problems with the eyes. It does require a fairly updated computer to run the program, but depending on your need, the rewards are good.

If there are other programs you’ve found to be successful in encouraging reading, let our readers know. One last note: the Renaissance Learning Company also has Accelerated Math and Perfect Text writing programs that are worth checking into. The following websites will help you find information on both programs.

www.renlearn.com/Default.htm
www.infmind.com

Let the computer become a tool to help you and your family sharpen their skills and interest in a time-proven pursuit– reading!
E. Cats--Fiction; Dance--Fiction; Stories in rhyme.

The Alley Cat's Meow by Kathi Appelt is a tribute to Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, starring Red and Ginger, two tabby cats who meet at the Alley Cat's Meow juke joint and dance the light fantastic. They go on to dance on Broadway, the silver screen, and around the world.

The illustrations by Jon Goodell are wonderful full page oil/acrylic paintings—colorful, graceful, elegant—conveying the silver screen world of the Forties and the golden age of jazz. The costumes are magnificent, expressions are delightful and the dance is graceful.

The text is in rhyming couplet and there is little story here. The true heart of this book is in the illustrations. This book could be used to introduce children to the art of dance and music of the Forties. As a pleasurable read aloud and visual delight, highly recommended.

Karla Castle, Public Services Librarian, Warner Pacific College, Portland, Oregon

E. Epilepsy--Fiction; Courage--Fiction; Sisters--Fiction; Schools--Fiction. unp.

Sarah feels very blessed to have her big sister Becky to help her do scary things. Becky helps Sarah through her first day at their new school, she faces down a big barking dog, and she lives with epilepsy! Sarah thinks Becky is so brave she is astonished to find out that Becky does actually have one big fear. Becky is afraid she'll have a seizure at school and then no one will like her anymore. Sarah squeezes her hand each day and silently wishes her big sister a good day.

RATING SYSTEM

5  The best you can find on this subject/area- buy even if you have a very small library/small budget

4  Very good, strong appeal—buy if you possibly can

3  Good, will be useful—buy if you have a bit more money

2  Pretty good, nice to add to complement other titles in an area—buy if you have a larger budget

1  Poor—Not necessary to purchase

* Outstanding Book of Its Genre

Commonly Used Abbreviations in CLJ Reviews

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This book is delightful in its rhyme and its primary audience.


Elliot finally works himself free and he and his friends enjoy the rest of their spring day. A great picture of natural consequences our impatience can bring.


Elliot has done a wonderful job of giving little lessons through Elliot Moose’s life, in Elliot Gets Stuck. The sixth in the Elliot Moose series, Andrea has once again created a charming story with exceptional illustrations. A must have for every library.

Karen Schmidt, Freelance Writer, Marysville, Washington
Although Riley isn’t ready for the next stop, Grandma massages Jasper and says goodbye. Grandma’s house, they pause for Jasper’s spring day. On the way to their next stop, Jasper loves best. They feed him his favorite dog before his final trip to the veterinarian. Riley stays home from school and his parents stay home from work so they can do everything they have to do. After Green Cat removes all the items and hugs them goodbye, Tom and Lynn, brother and sister of medium age, share a bedroom. Every night they fight over the space and try to oust each other into the hall. Then Green Cat turns up. He shows them in a surprising way that their bedroom is roomy enough for more than just two children by bringing in all kinds of new things, from animals to kitchen chairs. Tom and Lynn have fun until the room actually does become too crowded. After Green Cat removes all the items and hugs them goodbye, Tom and Lynn now feel their room is just right. Still, they drag a couple of chairs back into the bedroom before they can go to sleep.

Green Cat, written and illustrated by Dayal Kaur Khalsa, is a clever picture book for little ones. The pictures are bright folk-art, although somewhat small and faraway looking. The rhyming story will attract little ears and convey a message. It will teach young ones to appreciate what they have and to not be selfish.

Some readers will recognize Green Cat as a fresh take on the folk tale, “The Crowded Room,” and will find it similar to Cynthia Rylant’s Cat Heaven (Blue Sky, 1997).


Jasper is a beloved old golden retriever whose cancer is advanced to the point that the family must say good bye to him. Riley has never known a time in his life without Jasper and is heartbroken at the necessity of parting. He comes up with Jasper’s Day to celebrate the old dog before his final trip to the veterinarian. Riley stays home from school and his parents stay home from work so they can do everything Jasper loves best. They feed him his favorite food before going to Jasper’s favorite stream. At the stream they laze and enjoy the spring day. On the way to their next stop, Grandma’s house, they pause for Jasper’s favorite treat— butterscotch ripple ice cream! Grandma massages Jasper and says goodbye. Although Riley isn’t ready for the next stop, Jasper’s whimper of pain reminds him that it is right. Riley and Mom wait at home while Dad takes Jasper to the veterinarian. When he returns with the old dog’s body they bury him and share memories of him. Riley goes to bed that night sad but resolved to make a memory book of his cherished friend.

Anyone who has ever said goodbye to a beloved pet will be smiling and crying at the end of this book. Marjorie Blain Parker has written a sweet story to help children cope with the loss of a pet. The chalk pastel illustrations by Janet Wilson are rendered lovingly and faithfully to the story. The boy’s love for the dog as well as the weariness Jasper is experiencing come through clearly. A bit intense for the under six crowd, there is one picture of the dog’s body, wrapped in a blanket, being put into the grave. Jasper’s Day is best for older children.

Kelley Westenhoff, Parent-Librarian, Dominion Christian School, Oakton, Virginia


The anticipation and excitement of getting ready for a baseball game dissipates when things start to fall apart because of team members who don’t want to share. Through song and dance, children see the results of two boys not sharing, or friends not willing to give up some comfort to help out another person. The active dialogue and activities enable children to see what it means to share (and the consequences of not sharing). The group includes boys and girls, children of different races, and active motion. The story is realistic and sets the stage for hearing the message that God uses kindness to remind us of what’s important. Learning to Share supports children as they see that sharing does not happen automatically or even easily.

Recommended for children’s collections needing a video on teamwork, sharing, and/or consequences. Best suited for ages six through twelve.

Dr. Leroy Hommerding, Fort Myers Beach P.L. District, Ft Myers Beach, Florida


Feel the enchantment of these poetic verses taken from Robert Louis Stevenson’s A Child’s Garden of Verses, as this treasured classic becomes a perfect read-aloud story, letting children both play and dream. By closing their eyes, the verse goes, children can go sailing through the skies to the Land of Play. They visit fairyland, sail on little ships, see the spider and fly, and climb in the clover tree, just to mention a few adventures.

Parents and teachers familiar with Stevenson’s work will appreciate how the full-page illustrations complement these verses, drawing in the reader. Fernandes’ award-winning three-dimensional Fimo illustrations have graced many picture books; here the multi-colored unique illustrations make the verses come alive. Children will want to page through the verses and pictures on their own to relive parts of the story or discover something new in the pictures.

Recommended for children’s collections in all public and school libraries. The creative mix of art and story are sure to enhance family story times.

Dr. Leroy Hommerding, Fort Myers Beach P.L. District, Ft Myers Beach, FL

Colorful full-page art illustrations convey a playful cartoon approach in this preschool title. The serious subject, parental care of children, deals with consequences, e.g., don’t ever stand up in the bathtub for if you do, you could fall and break your tail. The gleeful story of Little Pig’s adventures point out his resourcefulness at home and on a Scout troop outing, and is sure to stimulate the imagination of children while providing both intrigue and surprise, e.g., “what is eggplant-banana juice or why does Little Pig feel suspicious when the Scout leader ate twenty beet and onion sandwiches?”

Recommended as a title for all children’s collections, Little Pig Is Capable offers positive, can-do stories for children to emulate. The colorful gouache cartoons convey a feeling of playfulness amid the imparting of a serious message, keeping both children’s interest and the amusement of adults reading the work with a child. Those familiar with Roche’s Brave Georgie Goat (Crown Publishers, 1997) or Ollie All Over (Houghton Mifflin, 1997) will find here the same light-hearted approach with serious overtones.

Dr. Leroy Hommerding, Fort Myers Beach P.L. District

E. Voyages and travels--Fiction; Fathers and sons--Fiction; Jamestown (Va.)--History--Fiction. unp.

As Sam and his Father head for the new settlement at Jamestown in Virginia, they have no idea what intrigue awaits on their voyage. The neighbor who sees them off gives Sam a lucky sovereign which saved his life at the Battle of Cadiz. On board the Treasure, Sam is overlooked by most because he is a child. But it is Sam who discovers and catches a sailor stealing food. This leads to the sailor’s punishment by flogging and Sam knows he has made an enemy. The sailor, Flint, gets even by stealing all of Sam’s father’s money, which means he and Sam will be forced into slavery. Sam’s lucky sovereign is in the cache though, so there is a fitting ending to the story.

Realistic in its portrayal of an early seventeenth century voyage, The Lucky Sovereign is exciting and interesting. Hazards of the voyage include rats, flogging, and death of some sailors in a storm, it is not another sanitized version of life long ago. Although Sam does not set out to be a hero, his quick thinking saves his father from a dismal fate in the new colony. Stewart Lee’s masterful colored pencil illustrations give this story a realism of its own—it’s not just a dramatized history lesson. Enjoyable for children five through eight. This is a very good value if your collection needs more adventure books for this time period.

Kelley Westenhoff, Parent-Librarian, Dominion Christian School, Oakton, Virginia

E. Twins--Fiction; Brothers and sisters--Fiction. 38 p.
Max and Jax are boy and girl twins. They resemble alligators, although there is not a word to confirm that in the story. Max loves to fish. As he finishes second grade, fishing and his summer vacation are so heavy on his mind that he has a hard time spelling and doing his math problems.

Max’s sister Jax also loves to fish and she catches more fish than her brother. Jax has lots of plans for summer, too, starting with a slumber party for her friends. Late at night when Max goes to the kitchen he finds his sister making her special fish bait—just for him. But Max also has a new fishing lure. What will he do?

When Max and his father go fishing, his dad reels in several fish while Max doesn’t get a single bite on his new lure. Finally he rolls a bit of Jax’s Secret Lucky Fishing Bait and in moments he feels a huge tug on his line.

Karen Lee Schmidt’s bright watercolor sketches of Max, Jax, and their friends and family are as fun to look at as the story is to read. Sharing is a theme, as Jax shares her special fish bait with her brother and Max brings his catch home to her. Jerdine Nolen has written this early chapter book for ages six to nine.


E. Parent and child--Fiction; Rabbits--Fiction; Toys--Fiction. 32 p.

Kara likes to eat spaghetti with Papa. She and her best friend Rabbit like to snuggle against her brother and Max brings his catch home to her. Jerdine Nolen has written this early chapter book for ages six to nine.


E. School buses--Fiction; First day of school--Fiction; Kindergarten--Fiction; Schools--Fiction. unp.

Getting ready for the first day of kindergarten, Molly dreads the idea of riding the bus. Mom reassures her that big kids are nice and that her bear, Willy, will keep her company. Although a big kid greets her at the bus stop, Molly doesn’t want to talk to her. After she takes a seat Molly realizes she has lost her bear. Suddenly she sees Willy flying through the air, tossed by older children who don’t know who he belongs to and how special he is. Fortunately, Ruby rescues Willy and sits down with Molly, who discovers a new friend.

Written and illustrated by Julie Brillhart, this book would be a good aid to defuse first day on the bus jitters. The watercolors are delightful, showing Molly’s pregnant mom with humor, older child Ruby with true “cool,” and the bus driver with a mix of humor and reality. Ruby’s ten tips for bus riding at the end are a nice touch. This is actually more of a ‘getting ready for school’ book rather than one to have in the elementary library—by the time the children get there, they’ve already mastered the bus. It is most appropriate for preschoolers who will be entering kindergarten soon.


E. Safety--Fiction; Lost children--Fiction; Problem solving--Fiction. unp.

Peanut’s mom isn’t there to pick her up from school. While Peanut is waiting she climbs a tree and even her teacher forgets she is there. After the teacher leaves, Peanut starts getting concerned about how to get home and starts to wander off. She realizes she has spent her emergency money and she can’t remember her telephone number. When a stranger approaches her to help find his lost puppy (a red flag for kids these days), she does remember her safety rule, shouts “I do not talk to strangers,” and flees into a nearby shop that her mother frequents. The lady there helps her by looking up her parents’ number in the phone book and calling until she reaches Peanut’s family. When reunited with her parents, they are so happy to see her that Peanut gets angry telling them all the things she did wrong. They lovingly correct her mistakes and point out the things that she did right.

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E. Pinatas--Fiction; Birthdays--Fiction; Parties--Fiction; Hispanic Americans--Fiction; Spanish language materials--Bilingual. unp.

Marissa is going to have a birthday! She is so excited because she will get many presents and a piñata. She goes shopping with her mother to select the perfect piñata. She sees one in the shape of a butterfly and chooses it. On her birthday she is torn—should she break the piñata or keep it forever? She decides to keep the butterfly piñata and her family takes a sack and makes a different piñata.

The reader is led on the exciting story of Marissa’s birthday. Hispanics will enjoy the cultural sensitivity and good story telling and all children will relate to it. The choice to celebrate how a family works together is a positive reinforcement of Judeo-Christian belief. The words of the story are set off by colored stars indicating which language is to be read so people won’t read the wrong line. The illustrations are colorful, yet not overwhelming or distracting. They facilitate the telling of the story rather than compete with it. The child will have active images to help relate to the story long after the book is closed.

This bilingual picture book is a literary and illustrative work of art. Kelli Kyle Dominguez creates a believable dilemma and then provides a wonderful solution. The illustrations by Diane Paterson are ethnically correct and add to, never distracting. They facilitate the telling of the story rather than compete with it. The child will have active images to help relate to the story long after the book is closed.


E. Parents--Fiction; Birthdays--Fiction; Parties--Fiction; Hispanic Americans--Fiction; Spanish language materials--Bilingual. unp.

Karen Lee Schmidt’s bright watercolor sketches of Max, Jax, and their friends and family are as fun to look at as the story is to read. Sharing is a theme, as Jax shares her special fish bait with her brother and Max brings his catch home to her. Jerdine Nolen has written this early chapter book for ages six to nine.


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E. Parents--Fiction; Birthdays--Fiction; Parties--Fiction; Hispanic Americans--Fiction; Spanish language materials--Bilingual. unp.
Jimmy’s dad is an electrician and stays very busy making things “shine.” Jimmy has a very important part in the Christmas show at school though and wants his dad to be there to see him. Day by day, Jimmy practices his part diligently. On the night of the performance Jimmy’s dad goes to work promising that he’ll do his very best to get to the play. As the play proceeds Jimmy gets more and more anxious, willing his dad to be there to see him shine. The Star in the show, Jimmy comes on last, giving him time to see that his dad is there. In turn, Jimmy shows his dad that he has learned a thing or two about lighting things up as well.

The older children get the more important it is to them that their parents attend their performances. In this premier book by Karen Langley, the child’s need to have his dad see his show is realistic to those of us with young children. Illustrator Jonathan Langley, the author’s husband, has created engaging characters in Jimmy, Dad, and Nana. They all look very British. The two pages showing Jimmy getting ready for his part at the same time his dad is rushing through his task wonderfully capture the growing anxiety of both. The scenes of the play are absolutely adorable, the donkey bumping, the sheep shoving and the kings sneezing. Although Shine! is set at Christmas, this is not strictly a Christmas story, but rather a story of love between kids and dads. It is an excellent addition to any collection.


“This is the man who wears purple tights, who gets shot from cannons and goes on flights.” It’s hard to stop reading once your tongue gets involved in this delightful rhyming book, Song of the Circus by Lois Duncan.

Gisselda and Bop are children who travel with the circus. Gisselda takes naps on spangled laps and the bicycle clowns, Mom and Pop, are the parents of the boy named Bop. “The jungle cat is so mean and wild that he dreams of eating a circus child! (For he hates the food of the circus.)” When the clown’s bicycle tire explodes, the mean jungle cat gets loose, but the stars of the circus, Gisselda and Bop, heroes of the circus, turn the event into a crowd pleaser.

Talented Cundiff allows Duncan’s words to rise and diminish in size, like waves of the sea. Curvy sentences swing above, below, and around circus performers with overly large heads, mouths, fangs, and trunks. Bright background pages are circus pinks, oranges, blues, and purples. At times, the gouache figures contain more detail than the eye can absorb at one reading. The strong rhymes in this book are delightful. There is one word in the book that grownups may find objectionable; children will laugh. (The word is poop. And, considering the context of performing around elephants, it fits in quite naturally.) The rhymes in this book are so strong the word doesn’t carry as much weight as a person might think.

Duncan is best known for her young adult mysteries, especially the real life story, Who Killed My Daughter? (Delacorte, 1992). Acquainted with the circus from early childhood, she first published The Circus Comes Home (Doubliday, 1993), a compilation of her late father’s black and white photographs of the Ringling Bros. Circus in its heyday.

Stories about children and favorite toys are perennial, with titles like The Velveteen Rabbit (Doran, 1922), Winnie the Pooh (Dutton, 1926), and Corduroy (Viking, 1968) coming immediately to mind. The Teddy Bear, by David McPhail, is a nicely done example of that genre. The little boy in the book has a beloved teddy bear that goes everywhere with him, until he accidentally leaves him behind one day and the bear ends up in a trashcan. A homeless man, picking through the trash, finds him and adopts him and takes him everywhere, as the little boy did.

Although the boy seems to adjust to the bear’s absence, he is still sad, and when he sees the bear one day on a park bench, he is thrilled and takes him back. Then the man discovers that the bear is missing and begins to shout and cry, for he, too, loves and needs the bear. The boy hears the man’s cries and runs back to the bench to return the bear to the man, for he knows how bad it feels to lose him. Then, as his parents take his hands and lead him away, he takes one last look at the bear sitting happily on the man’s lap.

McPhail’s watercolor and ink illustrations are soft and cozy, making the homeless man, his clothes, and even the trashcans he picks in look far more attractive than reality, but accuracy would certainly make the book too grim for this age group. The existing illustrations make the book an excellent way to introduce little ones to a homeless person and how to respond to such a person with compassion. It can also be used to illustrate the Golden Rule and may even give an older child a desire to do something for the homeless or needy in his own neighborhood.


Thanksgiving, What Makes It Special? Is it Turkey Day or Pig Out Day? NO! It’s from other circus rhyming books on the shelves, Song of the Circus, with Duncan’s innate sense of rhyme and Cundiff’s pictures, will encourage children to read this book over and over again.

Maxine Cambra, Freelance Writer, Anderson, California


Sixteen Miles to Spring provides a fun alternate explanation of how spring arrives. Maddy knows something different is in the air but can’t quite figure it out. As she and Dad set out on an errand she notices things have changed around her. They come across an old jolly with “sixteen miles to spring” painted on it. Intrigued and fearing the jolly has broken down, Dad and Maddy stop to help. The jolly’s occupants, Wilbur and Wiley, tell her they are just waiting for something. As they stand talking, sure Wilbur and Wiley, tell her they are just waiting for something. As they stand talking, sure
Thanksgiving Day, and with very good reason. Journey along with Dad and Mom, school aged Michelle and Todd, and preschooler Greg as they prepare the feast for and discuss the whys and wherefores of Thanksgiving. They take a historical look at the first American Thanksgiving Day; discover Moses’ full week of Thanksgiving; consider gratitude towards Jesus; learn about the health giving aspects of thankfulness. Then they welcome a large group of rejoicing relatives and guests.

Harold Myra’s story is fun, attractive, and full of thoughtful facts. Thanksgiving, What Makes It Special? makes a good read-aloud book. It opens flat, is small and light enough to be held in one hand, yet has large illustrations for all to see. Students grades one through three will enjoy reading this book for themselves. On every page Jane Kurisu’s simple, bright illustrations add family activity to the narrative: Dad chops mushrooms; little Greg rides Mom pig-a-back; pilgrims include lobsters in their feast. Written for Thanksgiving, this book will be useful all year, lending itself to many subjects, including reading, art, history, and social studies. Libraries and families will find this book helpful.

Donna Eggett, Freelance Writer, Radford Virginia


On her class trip to the zoo Tina acquires an unusual pet. A penguin is making a break for freedom and Tina decides to help. Disguising the penguin in her coat and pink beret, Tina smuggles him home. As she quickly discovers, however, the right habitat for a little girl is not the right habitat for a penguin. Resigning herself to living the way the penguin is most comfortable, Tina goes to bed in her thick socks and woolly hat. Her mother, abnormally unobservant, merely checks Tina’s forehead and asks where Tina got the stuffed penguin. “The zoo,” Tina answers. As the week goes on it becomes apparent that the penguin and Tina are not destined to be roommates. One morning when Tina awakes, the penguin is gone without a trace and Tina’s life gets back to normal. Then one day, her dad is watching a show about penguins in the Antarctic and Tina notices a familiar pink beret.

A new twist on “it followed me home, can I keep it?” Tina and the Penguin is Heather Dyer’s first picture book. It is a cute read-aloud, exploring friendship and habitats. The strength in Tina’s character is her innocence. She doesn’t try to change the penguin to adapt to her habitat, but tries to adapt her habitat to suit the penguin. The illustrations by Mireille Levert are wonderfully engaging. Children will especially like the one showing twin boys on the bus doing what boys do—dangling critters in order to scare girls. For children in kindergarten through third grade, this book has great appeal.

Kelley Westenhoff, Parent-Librarian, Dominion Christian School, Oakton, Virginia


Stubby and Prissy, two bear cubs who are brother and sister, fight constantly. When they decide to settle one of their fights with a game of You Move, You Lose, things nearly turn tragic. A pair of raccoon burglars take advantage of each cub’s stubborn refusal to move by robbing their house. Then a wolf attacks a kitten. Will one cub move first—and lose the argument—to save the kitten?

You Move You Lose, by Carl Sommer provides a nice, age-appropriate lesson on the perils of having too fierce a sibling rivalry. Not only do Stubby and Prissy allow the burglars to steal from them and almost allow the kitten to be killed, all their friends become disgusted with their constant fighting and threaten to leave them.

The book is part of the Another Sommer-Time Story series, eighteen books meant to teach positive values to children. (Each title, with different characters and plots, can stand alone). Kennon James’ bright and bold illustrations nicely capture the action and spirit of the story while subtly adding humor for adults reading the books aloud (the robber raccoons, for instance, have fuzzy dice on the rearview mirror of their pickup truck). The text is simple enough for its age group (children aged four to eight), while still entertaining. The story is sweet and the lesson it teaches is clear enough to be understood by its youngest readers.

Rosemarie DiCristo, Children’s Writer, The Bronx, New York
BOOK REVIEWS

CHILDREN’S FICTION

F. Brothers and sisters—Fiction; Orphans—Fiction; Buildings—Repair and reconstruction—Fiction; Charity—Fiction; Auctions—Fiction; Mystery; and detective stories. 114 p.
Someone is sabotaging the tiny candy factory owned and run by Mrs. Winkles, a family friend of the Boxcar Children. Orders are lost, shipments are damaged, and threats are being printed on the candy conversation hearts. Since the Boxcar Children had planned to visit Mrs. Winkles anyway, they agree to help her figure out what’s going on.
The Candy Factory Mystery, Boxcar Children Mysteries Special #18, is a story filled with family values. It opens with the children sitting in front of a crackling fire, playing checkers as their grandfather eats the last of the coconut cake their housekeeper has made.
The mystery is tame, and suitable for its seven to twelve-year-old age group, although readers at the older end of this group may become impatient. Each suspect behaves suspiciously enough to keep the Boxcar Children—and the child reader—guessing, but the resolution is rather simple. There’s not a lot of action in the story, just a number of innocent acts of vandalism (the messages on the hearts, printed on the candy conversation hearts. Since the messages are tampered with, the children must investigate. The Boxcar Children are likeable children, though, and little Benny’s antics will keep the youngest readers laughing. In addition, there’s a painless lesson on the way candy factories work, especially regarding how to make hollow chocolate Easter eggs; that said, having only one worker and one supervisor run an entire factory seems a little unrealistic.
The only potential problem: once the children exclaim “darn!” and on another occasion they exclaim “doggone.” In all other respects the book is a wonderful entry in a classic series created by Gertrude Chandler Warner, and entirely reminiscent of the other classic children’s mysteries of the mid-20th century.

F. Seattle Mariners (Baseball team)—Fiction; Friendship—Fiction; Interpersonal relations—Fiction; Baseball—Fiction. 32 p.
This is a warm, simple story of anger and forgiveness. Henry and his best friend Oliver have a fight when Oliver drops Henry’s favorite toy (the one he still sleeps with) in the toilet. Henry vows to hate Oliver for life, until his grandfather takes Henry to a Seattle Mariners game in which Ichiro Suzuki and Kazuhiro Sasaki play. His grandfather’s quiet reminiscences of how he considered Japanese people enemies during World War II, but is now proud to have Japanese players on his hometown team, start Henry thinking about forgiving Oliver.
Dear Ichiro is a story that could easily turn schmalzy, but Jean Davies Okimoto’s straightforward prose and Doug Keith’s deft, colorful illustrations keep it fresh. Its message on forgiveness—time must pass, there must be goodwill, and the person must want to forgive—is a fine one and it’s delivered carefully enough for even the book’s youngest readers to understand (Dear Ichiro is geared to children five and up).
Potential problems: while the fight is played for laughs, Henry gets really angry at Oliver, and fantasizes about flushing Oliver’s baseball cards and putting dirt in his chocolate milk. He calls Oliver slug slime and snail brain (not aloud) as well as bobberty-woop and blibbity-doop (code words so his mother won’t realize he’s used bad words). Baseball fans will especially like Dear Ichiro, but it’s a nice read for all children, and should appeal to girls as well as boys.
Rosemarie DiCristo, Freelance Writer, The Bronx, New York

F. Brothers and sisters—Fiction; Orphans—Fiction; Buildings—Repair and reconstruction—Fiction; Charity—Fiction; Auctions—Fiction; Mystery; and detective stories. 115 p.
The Bugbee house, which everyone calls the Bugaboo House, is the local haunted house. When it’s donated to House and Hands, a group dedicated to restoring old homes for senior citizens and other groups, the Boxcar Children help out with the restoration. But odd things are happening. Some of the valuable Bugbee antiques vanish. Strange footsteps are heard upstairs when no one is up there. Most of the workers on the restoration seem to be hiding something. But what?
Haunted house stories are always appealing to children, and The Disappearing Staircase Mystery, #85 in the Boxcar Children series created by Gertrude Chandler Warner, is a fine one. Bugaboo House is filled with secret panels, dead-end passages, and doors that lead nowhere. The Boxcar Children even get to prowl about the house, alone, at night, without adult supervision. (They aren’t really alone, though; the adult volunteers are asleep on the ground floor).
The mystery is challenging enough for its seven to twelve-year-old age group. As always, there are several potential villains who act in suitably suspicious ways, but they are never menacing and the children are never in danger.
The Disappearing Staircase Mystery is a pleasant book. The text is easy to read, and is interspersed with ten full-page illustrations by Hodges Soileau. The illustrations make the Boxcar Children look older (early teens) than the age group the book is marketed to, which is always a plus. Parents can rest assured that the Boxcar Children are always good-natured, polite, and thoughtful. The book is full of family activities such as cookie baking and doing things together. There’s one instance where the kids exclaim “Darn!” but in all other respects the book is innocent.
Rosemarie DiCristo, Freelance Writer, The Bronx, New York

F. Grandmothers—Fiction; Stepfamilies—Fiction; Family life—Fiction; Moving; Household—Fiction. 124 p.
Margaret Mack’s life is disrupted with a stepmother, Wendy, and three stepsisters, Emily, Sara, and Claire. She misses her grandfather,
Tad, who died, and her Gran, who moved to a retirement village. Margaret sees herself pushed further into the background, especially when she must share her room with Claire. She is excited at her father’s suggestion that she visit Gran. However, Margaret finds her normally energetic grandmother sad and lonely. Gran is upset with village rules and has no interest in meeting her neighbors.

Margaret enlists the help of her cousin, Roy, to find Gran a friend. Meeting Gran’s neighbors and the director of the village, Margaret sees they will be perfect for her grandmother. Gran meets her neighbors and finds that they have a lot in common; she realizes it is time to let the past go.

Matt Mack arrives with Claire to give Margaret news of her new baby brother. Talking with Gran, Margaret realizes she loves Wendy and her stepisters. Given the honor of naming her brother, she names him David, but plans to call him Tad, knowing this will please Gran.

This book is humorous and entertaining. Being family-oriented, it is a story that blended families with young children will enjoy.


F. Dragons--Fiction; Knights--Fiction; Magic--Fiction. 48 p.

Shelly Moore Thomas has written a delightful, “bring a smile to your face” book in Get Well, Good Knight. The story deals with a knight—all dressed up in armor—who finds himself taking care of three sick young dragons. When he realizes that his dragon friends have a “sniffle, a cough, and an achoo,” he looks for some special medicine to cure them.

First he goes to a wizard who mixes up a horrid potion in his big black pot. However the dragons turn up their little green noses. Even the Good Knight has to agree when he tastes it! When he returns to ask for a different potion, he is given a similarly awful mixture. Finally, he rides to his mother’s house, because mothers always know best, and her soup is the kind of medicine that adds to the fun!

This is the second installment about the Good Knight and is as charming as the first.

Paula Stewart Marks, School Principal, Bend, Oregon


F. Segregation--Fiction; African Americans--Fiction; Nashville (Tenn.)--Fiction. unp.

In Goin’ Someplace Special, ‘Tricia Ann experiences a rite of passage unique to the time and place she lives in. Her grandmother, Mama Frances, agrees she is finally old enough to go Someplace Special by herself. Setting out in her prettiest dress with her prettiest smile and visible excitement, ‘Tricia Ann enters the world of Jim Crow all by herself for the first time. Her goal is the one public place where there are no Jim Crow laws, and black people are treated equally.

Step by step the indignities of segregation start getting her down even though there are kind friends of her grandmother’s along the way to guide her. There’s even one scary moment where she gets swept along with a crowd and ends up in a place forbidden to “colored people.” Fleeing, she ends up crying in a garden where a nice white lady, who many people reject as addled, helps ‘Tricia Ann find those values that Mama Frances has instilled in her, fortifying her to resume her journey. ‘Tricia Ann finally arrives at the steps of Someplace Special and rushes in.

Beautifully illustrated watercolors by Jerry Pinkney capture both the happiness and sadness of ‘Tricia Ann as she goes on her journey. The vivid colors of ‘Tricia Ann’s dress fairly spring from one page to the next. The background fades as the reader concentrates on what ‘Tricia Ann is doing. Patricia McKissack tells an autobiographical story that is a triumph of hope for a young girl in 1950’s Nashville, Tennessee. The note at the end of the story explains what Jim Crow laws were, and how most African-American parents shielded their children as long as possible. This is a good book for first through third graders and will prompt many questions about fairness.

Kelley Westenhoff, Parent-Librarian, Dominion Christian School, Oakton, Virginia


F. Gulls--Fiction; Beaches--Fiction; Ecology--Fiction. unp.

Gooney Bird is a seagull, with all the seagull behaviors that make these birds a mixed blessing. Although he is unable to fly because of a damaged wing, he still gets about easily. The children in the story grow protective of him, bringing him scraps to eat, and hunting special tidbits. Their relationship with Grayboy is the connecting tissue of their summer adventures. They bring him minnows and crabs to eat. They build sand castles for him to lord over. They watch him on the water as they also swim. He comes to expect them and squawks when they leave.

One day a big storm blows up while Robert is out fishing with his father. The girl’s anxiety about Robert is heart-wrenching, and the big sigh of relief at his safe delivery is personal to the reader as well. The storm has claimed one victim, though, and the next day the children bury their friend, Grayboy. Still, they appreciate the fun summer they had with him, and understand that he probably would not have survived the winter, and so they choose to cherish the memories.
Author-illustrator Kay Chorao has a talent for making her reader care about the characters and the storyline. Her illustrations of this area of Long Island are inviting in their warmth. I forgot the winter snows outside and immersed myself in sand and sun. Chorao’s celebration of Peconic Bay’s fragile ecosystem sings out from the beautiful watercolor illustrations. A note at the end of the story laments the degradation of this habitat and urges its protection and respect. Because of the death of the bird, this book is best for children six and up.

Kelley Westenhoff, Parent-Librarian, Dominion Christian School, Oakton, Virginia


If Only I Had a Green Nose is another sequel to Max Lucado’s best-selling You Are Special [CLJ 3, (4/5):13, 1998], which was followed by You Are Mine [CLJ 7, (2/3):29, 2002]. Sergio Martinez’s full-color illustrations retain the high quality and spirit of the earlier books. The three books share the theme of self-acceptance. However, they each point out different fallacies in the search for significance. You Are Special shows that the opinion of others pales in light of the Creator’s love. You Are Mine demonstrates the costs, as well as the futility, of relying on possessions for self-worth. Now, If Only I Had a Green Nose illustrates the emptiness and bondage that comes from trying to keep up with passing fashion. These books each make valuable contributions in a delightful and convincing manner. If Lucado’s engaging stories inculcate children against falling for these fallacies, they may be spared much heartache as they grow. Highly recommended for home, church, and school libraries.

Donna W. Bowling, Library/Educational Consultant, Dallas, Texas


If Sisters—Fiction; Family life—Kentucky—Fiction; Reckless—Fiction; Kentucky—History—1865—1910. Fiction. 121 p.

During the late 1800s, the world is abuzz with change. Even The Willows—the wealthy McBees’ family home—though reclusive, is filled with mystery and movement. Amen McBee, youngest of five daughters, is serious, naive, and attentive to the world around her. When Grandma comes to stay for a time, the girls find out that they are going to have a baby brother or sister soon. Amen sees Mama’s medicines and is afraid that she is ill, but when baby brother arrives, only tears of joy fill the house.

Amen fears Mr. Tominski, the man who tenderly cares for the family doves, and who lives in an old, abandoned chapel in the woods. Her sisters tell scary stories about him, and Amen more than half believes them. But Papa says Mr. Tominski once saved his life.

When the family dog is found kicked to death, Amen’s sisters blame Mr. Tominski. He overhears them calling him a murderer, runs away, and is killed trying to hop a train. After the funeral, Papa tells Amen that Mr. Tominski was a fugitive from accusations of murder. Amen is puzzled by the many facets of Mr. Tominski and begins to see that people are rarely one-sided.

Keeper of the Doves is a story of a young girl who walks through life with both eyes open. Although the character sketches of the family are not fully developed, and Mr. Tominski’s character seems sort of thrown together at the end of the story, the main character, Amen, does connect with the reader through her intensely poignant observations and sensitivity to humanity. Betsy Byars, Newbery Medalist for her book, Summer of the Swans, delivers a thought-provoking story about family and belonging.

Kim Harris, Librarian, Churchville, New York.


E. Inner cities—Fiction; City and town life—Fiction. unp.

Light Your Candle is part of Advance Publishing’s Another Sommer-Time Story series, eighteen books that attempt to painlessly teach values to children. Each book is complete in itself, with different characters and plots.

In Light Your Candle, Stephanie, Lori, and Cindy live in a city neighborhood overrun by crime and filled with apathetic adults. They decide to do as much good as possible for one week, reasoning that helping even one person is a positive thing (in another words, lighting even one candle helps a bit). The idea of individuals helping individuals is a marvelous one, and it’s a fine lesson to teach children, but when the girls begin instantly solving all their community’s problems, the story turns sticky… and possibly dangerous, if real children try what the girls try.

When they confront a drug dealer, he just gets mad and yells at them. When their parents confront him, he runs off in fear. A disruptive school atmosphere is changed solely through one PTA meeting where every parent vows that his or her children will be better behaved from now on. The slum buildings the characters live in are cleaned and fixed simply because the tenants ask the landlords to fix them. While author Carl Sommer has taught in New York City and “has witnessed some of the tragic events” described in the book, his solutions seem based on wishful thinking.

The characters are suitably multi-ethnic and Kennon Jones’s illustrations are realistic while still appearing upbeat. The story is well told, the girls’ motivations are noble, and the lessons taught are wonderful. However, this book might be best for rural and suburban audiences where the solutions presented would have a better chance of taking effect.

Rosemarie DiCristo, Children’s Writer, The Bronx, New York


F. Raccoons—Fiction; Animals—Fiction. 64 p.

What a delight to see Little Raccoon again! Three of Lilian Moore’s original stories are back in one volume. The first, “The Thing in the Pool,” is about Little Raccoon being sent on an errand by his mother, and falling victim to Fat Rabbit’s suggestion and his own imagination. Although Little Raccoon is scared of the thing in the pool, the story is not scary to the child reader. In fact, the reader is in on the joke and will enjoy knowing something the central character has not yet figured out.

The second story, “The Outside World,” shows the perils of disobedience in a non-threatening way. Little Raccoon’s adventure into the outside world is prompted by his mother not taking the time to answer his questions and explain the difference between that world and theirs. The joke at the end is that the reader will grasp, and many will understand perfectly why Little Raccoon just had to see for himself!

In the third story, “No Trouble At All,” Little Raccoon is older, babysitting two ostensibly harmless chimpunks. Underestimating the
with a large cash prize. Their cooperative efforts by washing windows. They simultaneously kids pitch in to help an injured window washer. Their efforts are included on different kinds of gems, their names, size, and importance. Educational information is understood what a flume is and how it is used for enough to be believable. Humor is used in an engaging way to make the reader part of the story.

Kelley Westenhoff, Parent-Librarian, Dominion Christian School, Oakton, Virginia

F. Mummies--Fiction; Fisher--Fiction; Orphans--Fiction; Mystery and detective stories. 137 p.

F. Brothers and sisters--Fiction; Orphans--Fiction; Mystery and detective stories. 131 p.

A visit to a local museum containing dinosaur bones and mummies forms the plot of The Mystery of the Mummy's Curse. The four siblings volunteer to help the museum curator get the Egyptian exhibit ready. While they work, they uncover the dishonest plan of a visiting scientist who intends to sell artifacts for quick money. The children help Grandfather's friend figure out whether it's a ghost or an unusual alligator that's plaguing the fish camp. This edition is a Special—after finishing the story, readers can use their new knowledge of the Louisiana bayou to do a variety of paper-and-pencil puzzles, then check their answers with the answer key.

Each of these three Boxcar Children stories, part of a series created by Gertrude Chandler, is well-plotted, and carries on the tradition of helpfulness, team work, and compassion that are Boxcar Children hallmarks. Readers will be captivated by the stories and positively impacted by the noble and upright character traits exhibited by the Alden children.

Karen Schmidt, Freelance Writer, Marysville, Washington

F. Precious stones--Collection and preservation--Fiction; Brothers and sisters--Fiction; Orphans--Fiction; Mystery and detective stories.

In The Mystery of the Star Ruby, another title in the Boxcar Children Mysteries series created by Gertrude Chandler, the Alden kids, along with Grandfather Alden, visit the Ruby Hollow Gem Mine and Resort. After checking in and putting their belongings in their cabins, Grandfather pays the entry fee for each of them to participate in the gem contest. Whoever finds the largest ruby wins a prize of $1000. Each day the children collect their buckets of dirt and take their place by the flume, where they wash the dirt and stones in mesh-screened trays. All of the children find gems, but it is Jessie who finds a star ruby.

The problem is, the ruby disappears just before the end of the contest—which Jessie surely will win. The Aldens put their heads together to solve the mystery, which they do, just in the nick of time. Soileau’s sketches help the reader understand what a flume is and how it is used for washing the stones. Educational information is included on different kinds of gems, their names, size, and importance.

Helen Hunter, Freelance Writer & Church Librarian

F. Ghosts--Fiction; Buried treasure--Fiction; Mountains--Fiction; Brothers and sisters--Fiction; Orphans--Fiction; Mystery and detective stories. 85 p.

With nearly ninety books in this children’s series, created by Gertrude Chandler, you may already be familiar with the story set-up. The four Alden children (the boys, Henry and Benny, ages 14 and 6; and the girls, Jessie and Violet, ages 12 and 10) have been orphaned, and lived in an abandoned boxcar in the woods until their grandfather Alden found them and they went to live with him.

In Mystery on Blizzard Mountain, Grandfather takes the children to visit the daughter of an old friend at Seven Mountains Wilderness Park. Though Mr. Alden doesn’t go up the mountain with the children, older adults play a large role in the story. In addition, at the beginning of the book, one of the adult characters makes a semi-strong environmentalist appeal about people not hiking on the mountain.

A ghost is reported to be on Blizzard Mountain. There is also a missing stronghold of gold from a long-ago stagecoach robbery. During the time the children hike and camp on the mountain they learn many pointers for hiking safety. But they are also certain the ghost has visited them several times: a truck won’t start, tires go flat, food disappears, shoes are taken, and they hear steps around the cabin. The tension of the mystery will keep children turning the pages. The children work together to solve the mystery. Hodges Soileau’s black and white sketches help to identify the characters, with the exception of the “tall, thin waitress with silver hair” whose black ponytail makes her look like a teenage.

Helen Hunter, Freelance Writer & Church Librarian

F. Pets--Fiction; Pet sitting--Fiction; Dogs--Fiction; Schools--Fiction. 118 p.

What do you do when you’re desperate for a pet and your parents always say “NO!” If you’re Robert, you set up a pet-sitting business to show a sense of responsibility, and, along the way, to vicariously enjoy pet ownership. Life doesn’t always follow your script though, so starting with a tarantula named Fuzzy, Robert’s life gets very interesting. Through some love birds he learns compassion for his elderly neighbor. Through a TV star rabbit he has a brush with fame.
Finally, his dream comes true, and he acquires a dog. Acting as a foster owner until a home for the dog can be found, Robert gets to experience all the joys and pitfalls of dog ownership. Robert trains Pepperoni, scoops the yard, cleans up the shredded toilet paper, and replants his mother’s petunias. The trade-off is waking up with a dog on his bed and being greeted with sloppy love when he returns from school. Having Pepperoni around even helps Robert conquer a huge fear. Alas, a family wants Pepperoni and Robert’s heart is going to break. The resolution is a win for everyone concerned.

This funny book by Barbara Seuling had my third grader laughing out loud. Robert is a normal third or fourth grader with a familiar sense of life spinning out of control. The black and white pencil drawings by Paul Brewer occur often enough to give the reader a visual break from the text. A true chapter book, Robert and the Great Pepperoni is punctuated with humor, including the input of an obnoxious older brother. It is wholesome and believable. For the librarian in search of a book that will appeal to girls, boys, dog lovers, and children who love humor, this book is a must buy.

Kelley Westenhoff, Parent-Librarian, Dominion Christian School, Oakton, Virginia


Runt is the smallest and weakest wolf pup born to King, the leader of the wolf pack, and his mate, Silver. In Runt’s determination to prove himself to the pack, he gets lost trying to follow the older wolves on the hunt, gets a muzzle full of quills in a tussle with a porcupine, and nearly gets struck by lightning. Everything he does seems to make him more disgusting to King.

Bider, a hunter wolf, challenges King’s position by offering meat from the humans’ livestock to the hungry pack. When King refuses to accept the meat, Bider calls him a coward, and the battle for leadership ensues. Bider loses and is kicked out of the pack. Runt follows in hungry fascination, as Bider returns to his kill. Bider gorges himself with the meat and meets with a horrible death, from which Runt narrowly escapes. Humans have poisoned the half-eaten carcass in order to kill the wolf that attacked their livestock and discourage other wild animals from slaughtering, as well. Runt learns that King was right to stay away from people.

Runt, by Marion Dane Bauer, is a book about the runt of a litter of wolves growing up in the Minnesota woods. What starts out to be a tale of how Runt overcomes adversity and finds self-worth, ends by propagandizing humans’ cruelty to wild animals. The Afterword points out that wild animals are often portrayed as monsters in children’s fairytales. Wolf-lovers will enjoy the bibliography of both fiction and nonfiction books about wolves in the wild. Bauer, author of Newbery Honor book On My Honor [Yarling Books; Reissue edition (October 1, 1987)] is gifted at involving the reader in the tale she tells.

Kim Harris, Librarian, Churchville, New York


F. Teddy bears—Fiction; Bears—Fiction; Mystery and detective stories. 118 p.

In Gertrude Chandler Warner’s The Stuffed Bear Mystery, illustrated by Hodges Soileau, Henry, Jessie, Violet and Benny Alden travel to Wooly Farm. Doc and Peggy Firman invite them to help with sheep shearing, and to make bears for the Teddy Bear Jamboree. When Herr Bear, an antique teddy bear, is stolen from Doc’s locked cabinet, the children set out to uncover the thief. The mystery deepens when freshly sheared wool for stuffing, a pattern book for Peggy’s bears, and Bear-collector magazines also disappear.

Who could have taken Herr Bear? The list of suspects grows to include three very unkind and impatient adults who could learn a few things about honesty and respect. As the Alden children gather clues they notice a look-alike bear in the possession of one of the suspects. The children solve the mystery, but the thief claims she only wished to borrow Herr Bear. The owner of Herr Bear feels sorry for the thief, and gives her the bear because “she loves him most.”

The Stuffed Bear Mystery lacks the excitement and charm of the original Boxcar Children stories. Miss Warner’s first 19 titles are packed full of challenging seeds of learning, and draw the reader into her stories. I read two, Surprise Island and The Bus Station Mystery, and was captivated by them. In The Stuffed Bear Mystery, the consequences of the theft are left unanswered. The message regarding right and wrong is vague, and could be confusing to children.

Jeanne Doyon, Freelance Writer, Pomfret Center, Connecticut


F. Underground railroad—Fiction; Fugitive slaves—Fiction; Slavery—Fiction; African Americans—Fiction. unp.

A young slave girl and her loved ones are using the cover of night to escape to Canada. Running, waiting, watching, hiding, traveling, and finally rejoycing, the little girl in the story carries us along with her every moment. This escape from slavery reads like a poem, gathering speed as the danger draws near. There is no going back. Each stop of safety provides a bit of relief, but with an edge of danger. When the girl sees a quilt hanging in a yard she rushes forward, certain that this quilt has the ‘safe’ signal, but is she correct?

Although children today study the Underground Railroad, this is not a dry historical recitation of the facts. There is a connection between a young girl fleeing slavery, and the readers, who can understand running away from something they fear. James E. Ransome’s masterful oil paintings capture the fear and urgency of every member of the escape party, as well as the determination in their eyes. Under the Quilt of Night, by Deborah Hopkinson, is good for units on poetry, history, and art. The quilt, central to this poem’s resolution, provides a teacher or librarian a great foundation for discussing codes and messages hidden in plain sight and would be a nice springboard for an art project using tromp l’œil. Ages seven and up will enjoy this book.

Kelley Westenhoff, Parent-Librarian, Dominion Christian School, Oakton, Virginia


F. Monsters—Fiction; Fear of the dark—Fiction; Grandmothers—Fiction. unp.

Wanda is certain that a monster lives in her closet. Her parents search, and find nothing. Her brother just laughs. Then her grandmother confirms it: Yes, there is a monster in Wanda’s closet, but Wanda shouldn’t be afraid. After all, monsters hide in closets because they’re shy, and anyway, Granny asks Wanda, “How would you like to live in a dark, cold closet?”

Her grandmother’s words start Wanda thinking, and soon she’s leaving a pillow, and then toys, and then food in the closet for her monster. She even begins reading it stories. Just when she’s gotten used to the monster, she’s told it has to leave: the rules state monsters can only stay in one place for seventeen days.

Wanda’s Monster is an appealing story that should delight little girls. Eileen Spinelli’s prose is simple and friendly enough for young children (Wanda’s Monster is a picture book geared to kids aged four to eight) yet it’s never simplistic. In fact, Spinelli, wife of author Jerry Spinelli, seamlessly introduces words like “trudge,” “thoroughly,” and “zigzag” into her text.
Nancy Hayashi’s watercolor and colored pencil illustrations perkily capture Wanda, her family, and the monster. True, the horned, sharp-toothed monster may seem a bit scary to the book’s youngest readers, some of whom may be frightened by the confirmation that monsters do live in closets. Other children may feel sad when Wanda has to send her monster on its way. But for children charmed by the idea of a shy, harmless monster temporarily residing in their closets, Wanda’s Monster would be a delight.

Rosemarie DiCristo, Children’s Writer, The Bronx, New York
100’s—Philosophy & Psychology

Elementary. Rating: *5
197p. & Courage. [32 p.].

Bernard Waber, author of the Ira series, provides readers with some exceptional ideas as he defines the many facets of “Courage.” In this impressive children’s book, courage comes in many packages that include having courage for the spectacular (trapeze artists, firemen) or everyday (going to bed without a nightlight, eating vegetables without making a face).

This is definitely a “feel good” read aloud book that challenges every member of the family (including the pet that has to guard the house in the midst of strange night noises) to develop courage in big and little areas of their lives. Waber has touched on areas of courage that affect lives of children and grown-ups. (Note: I watched two different grownups get tears in their eyes when this book was read aloud to them). The cartoon-form illustrations, with a combination of black ink, watercolors, and even some crayon looks, convey the various types of courage in a distinct and compelling manner. This is definitely a book that will be read again and again to everyone!

Paula Stewart Marks, School Principal, Bend, Oregon

200’s—Religion

222. Ten commandments. 30 min.

222. Ten commandments. 27 min.

Ten Commandments is a series of animated mini-movies combining excellent animation, well-known Hollywood voices (Peter Strauss is Moses), positive songs, and movie-like stories to help children gain a better understanding of the ten commandments. Each episode (with five scheduled) illustrates two commandments. A good advisory board encompassing historical experts and different religious backgrounds—Jewish, Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Eastern Orthodox—give credibility to the stories and background presented. All episodes are set in biblical times and told through the character of eleven-year-old Seth. Seth’s mother and his special animal friends, who also talk, help clarify the issues.

The first episode, The Not So Golden Calf, deals with the first two commandments. This is the story of Moses and God’s giving of the commandments. When Moses delays coming down from the mountain and everyone complains, Aaron makes a golden calf to give them a visible god. Seth gets involved when his calf becomes the model. The calf, Jacob, feels superior to the other animals and makes their life miserable. Both learn to stay focused on the one true God. Overall, this is an excellent portrayal of the problem and although a fictionalized account, the movie gives a deeper understanding of what actually occurred in biblical times. One caution: smaller children may misunderstand, and focus on the negative—worshiping the calf, rather than the resolved problem.

Episode two, The Rest Is Yet to Come, is more for everyone and easily understood. While Moses is back on Mt. Sinai replacing the tablets, Seth’s mother is needed to help someone having a baby. Seth ends up being babysat by a greedy man who forces him to work on the Sabbath Day. Part of the story revolves around gathering the manna, part about digging for a well. Children should immediately see the forced labor and greed as negative. This film deals with not misusing God’s name and remembering to keep the Sabbath day holy.

Paula Stewart Marks, School Principal, Bend, Oregon

242'.6. Creation; Prayer books and devotions. unp.

Rolling down a hill; dripping ice cream for ants; a dog saying thank you for snow; petting a policeman’s horse; all these adventures and more become poems for little ones and their parents in Look What You Made, God. Each poem has its own NIV Bible verse and full-page illustration. The first page of this book is a presentation plate for gift giving or awards day.

Printed on sturdy paper, with a cleanable, hard cover, Look What You Made, God lends itself to intimate parent/Preschooler reading. It is easily held in one hand for group reading. Elspeth Campbell Murphy’s poems combine events children will easily recognize with the praise to God that naturally flows from those events.

Each NIV Bible verse fits neatly with its poem. Jim Lewis’ bright, active illustrations display happy children from many backgrounds. Preschools in both church and school, and parents and other relatives of preschoolers will find this book useful.

Donna Eggert, Free Lance Writer, Radford, Virginia

300’s—Social Sciences

372. Schools; Education. unp.

There are certain threads that are common to children around the world, and which make them curious about each other. In Back to School, Maya Ajmera and John Ivanko use photographs to illustrate shared concepts in education, even if the execution of those concepts is different. For example, in “when you are at school you learn to read and write,” the two page spread shows children in Bangladesh, Niger, Saudi Arabia, and Rwanda. Each child is writing in a different format with a different language, yet they’re all doing the same thing. The children look different in their skin color, their type of clothing, and their immediate physical environment, yet they’re all enjoying the excitement of learning. Some of the most striking photographs are from South Africa, showing children in a completely integrated environment. There is even a photograph of boys in Iraq exercising in P.E. Although one of the pictures purporting to be from Thailand is probably from Malaysia and the photo of American children in a library is probably in a bookstore, the ideas expressed in the book are coherent and nicely presented.

It is a good thing this book is available in library binding, because children will pore over the photos searching for clues about who these other children are and what their lives are like. Back to School is a project of SHAKTI for Children, a program of the Global Fund for Children which supports the Christ School in Uganda. A portion of the proceeds from sales of the book is donated to the Global Fund for Children to support community-based educational programs around the world.

Kelley Wetenhoff, Parent-Librarian, Dominion Christian School, Oakton, Virginia
500’s—Natural Sciences & Mathematics


Hey, Daddy! introduces us to several interesting animal daddies. Where would blue jay babies be if dad didn’t help build the nest and poke worms down those gaping mouths? How about that penguin dad incubating the egg at the Antarctic? Consider the giant waterbug dad with hundreds of eggs glued to his back; that marvelous carpenter, the beaver dad; or the tiny mormoset dad carrying those twins all about the place. Mary Batten closes her unusual, much needed book with a look at a rainbow of human dads shepherding their families around a zoo. Indeed, it takes someone special to be a good daddy.

Donna Eggett, Freelance Writer, Radford, Virginia

600’s—Technology (Applied Sciences)


Starting in winter where a child and grandparent walk through a snow-covered orchard, Apples Here! conducts young children through the development of a favorite fruit. Artist and writer Will Hubbell begins with the dormant season where only small buds on limb tips give evidence to the fruit to come. Spring is a curtain of white blossoms and bees, with the hint of sweet fragrance, and then children play amid the leafy green trees during summer, noticing the swelling fruit. About half the pages are devoted to fall, as children help pick the fruit, shop at a farmers market, and create savory dishes with the harvested apples. The book returns to the winter season as a toddler pulls a red apple from a Christmas stocking and deer munch fallen fruit in the orchard.

Donna Eggett, Freelance Writer, Radford, Virginia

700’s—The Arts and Recreation


Greg and Deborah Shaw Lewis have written a thoughtful, easy to read biography that helps the young reader understand Dave Dravecky’s faith and determination as Dave and his family approach adversity. Left-handed pitcher Dave Dravecky’s dream of playing professional ball began when he was seven years old playing catch with his father, his hero. Playing any type of ball game was a consuming passion as a youngster; even his first baby word was “Ball!”

The oldest of four boys that were often getting into trouble, but who were loyal and protective of each other, Dravecky had a strong Catholic background strengthened by both church and school. He was drafted by the Pittsburgh Pirates as a senior in college, but played poorly and ended up traded to Amarillo, Texas. There he experienced the input of a born-again roommate. When he finally seemed to be playing better and had become an all-star major league pitcher for the San Francisco Giants, he faced one of his biggest challenges—cancer!

The doctors ended up removing half of his deltoid muscle and told him he would never be able to lift his arm above his head. But Dave’s persistence and faith proved them wrong. Again, he became a pitcher to be reckoned with.

This is the story of the comeback he made as he gave glory to God. But the story is not finished; he had to face an even greater challenge, a struggle that tested his faith and determination. Readers will be impressed with Dave Dravecky’s choices and decisions as he becomes what God wants him to be.

Donna Eggett, Freelance Writer, Radford, Virginia

800’s—Literature & Rhetoric


Verla Kay’s Broken Feather uses short poetic phrases rather than sentences to convey images and bring ideas and emotions to life. This is a wonderful, read-aloud story that is music to the ears. Broken Feather is a Nez Perce youngster. The Nez Perce are shown to be a gentle people living in tepees, using the abundant natural resources and natural beauty of their land to provide for their needs. Then the white people begin moving in to the area. At first it looks like they will pass through, but more and more come and stay. Eventually, the Nez Perce resort to warfare to protect their homeland.

The story line follows until the Indians are forced into a reservation (in 1877 in Idaho, according to the author’s added notes). The ending, as Broken Feather asks his Father “Why?” conveys that what happens next is up to Broken Feather. The story is well researched historical fiction and will help students grasp the real difficulties the Indians faced when the White Men moved in. Illustrator Stephen Alcorn’s dramatic color (water color and oil) relief-block prints give vivid portrayal and strength to the Indian story.

Paula Stewart Marks, School Principal, Bend, Oregon
American Revolution and with the Constitutional Convention.

Loyd Uglow writes with simple, straightforward language, and places much emphasis on Franklin’s honesty and his quest to live an ethical life. The book contains a list of some of Franklin’s most famous sayings, and the Constitutional Convention scene mentions a quote of Franklin’s where he stresses the country’s need for God’s help if it is to succeed. Uglow focuses on the positive in Franklin’s life. For instance, while Franklin’s rocky relationship with his brother is mentioned, it’s not emphasized unnecessarily.

The book is geared to eight to twelve year olds. There’s lots of text per page, but there’s also an illustration by Greg Budwine on each page, and the vocabulary and style used is suitable for the youngest end of the age group. It’s possible, though, that the picture book look would be a turn off for the oldest end of the age group.

Benjamin Franklin, You Know What to Say is a nice introductory volume on the life of Benjamin Franklin. It’s well-rounded enough to please teachers and older children, yet easy enough for early elementary schoolers to read and enjoy.

Rosemarie DiCristo, Children’s Writer, The Bronx, New York


921 (973.3’092). Franklin, Benjamin, 1706-1790; Authors, American; Women--Biography. 61 p.

Benjamin Franklin, You Know What to Say is part of Advance Publishing’s Another Great Achiever series, junior biographies about historical figures. The book nicely covers all aspects of Franklin’s career: his childhood and his apprenticeship to his brother, his inventions and experiments, and his involvement in the
F. College students--Fiction; Journalists--Fiction; Young men--Fiction. 320 p.

From a farm in Blessing, North Dakota, Thorliff Bjorklund leaves his Norwegian family to pursue his dream of college and journalism. He arrives in Northfield, Minnesota. While attending St. Olaf College he works for Mr. Philip Rogers, owner of the Northfield News. Here he meets Elizabeth Rogers, who works for her father while attending St. Olaf College. She is a talented pianist, but her dream is to be a doctor. Elizabeth and Thorliff support each other through the trials and obstacles they face while striving toward their individual goals.

This is a warm-hearted story of families, their traditions and cultures. Their faith in God to solve their problems is evident throughout the book. This book reassures the reader of the possibilities these books open, and look forward to the next new escapade.

The adventurer at heart will enjoy the stories; Pirates--Fiction; Sex stories--Fiction; Sex role--Fiction. 278 p.

Bloody Jack is a first novel by L.A. Meyer, modeled after the confessional novels of the 18th century, such as Moll Flanders. Mary Faber loses her family to disease when she is only eight and ends up an orphan on the streets of London. She survives by being taken into an orphan gang. When the leader of her gang is killed, Mary decides to strike out for herself, dressing as a boy and getting a job as ship’s boy on a British warship. The hardships of ship life are a blessing to Mary in comparison to her life on the streets. She has many adventures fighting pirates and learning seafaring skills, while in constant danger of discovery. Mary proves herself to be an outstanding ship’s boy through her loyalty, reliability, and courage. Her disguise is eventually discovered and she is sent to a Boston girls’ school.

The only illustration is a labeled diagram of the HMS Dolphin, which helps clarify descriptions of events on board the ship.

The publisher’s website promotes this book to children as young as eight, the dust jacket indicates that it is for age twelve and up, but the violent and sexual content makes it inappropriate for children under sixteen. Mary’s life on the street includes many harsh realities, such as the dead being gathered up and sold to anatomical scientists who dissect the bodies and preserve the parts in jars. Mary sees this as her future—to be just another specimen in a jar. Girls on the street often “escape” to brothels. Once on ship, Mary encounters other harsh realities, such as the sailor who has sexual interest in the ship boys. She eventually attempts to rape Mary.

The book is well written, and the message conveyed by the harshness of Mary’s life is valuable. Despite the blows life has given her, she perseveres, makes strong, positive, loving relationships, and succeeds at life. It is important to remember that there was a time before social welfare and child protection, a time when women and children were nearly powerless and unprotected. This is an important story that should be told, but not to young children. Recommended for older teens and above only.

Katie Castle, Public Services Librarian, Warner Pacific College, Portland, Oregon

F. Old age--Fiction; Nursing homes--Fiction; Punishment--Fiction. 88 p.

After participating in a practical joke that backfires, twelve-year-old Mitchell Riley is sentenced to spend two afternoons a week at police headquarters, chatting online with a resident of a nearby nursing home. Mitchell is initially disgusted with the idea of making conversation with some old person who’d probably “lecture about the good old days when kids had to walk eight miles to school in all kinds of weather.” But Wootie, the “shriveled old lady” he gets as his partner, is not what Mitchell expected. Testy, sharp minded and sharp tongued, Wootie teaches him to be a real friend, to her and a lonely old lady in his neighborhood.

Mitchell blames his obnoxious neighbor, Trotter, for convincing him to play the practical joke; his relationship with Wootie allows him to
realize his own responsibility in the incident, as well as his need to personally ask the victim’s forgiveness. Doing Time Online, a novel by Jan Siebold, is a slim, readable story about friendship and honesty with a neat lesson on being responsible for one’s actions. Conversation, of the chat room variety, forms the action in this swiftly moving book written in simple, direct prose.

The relationship between Mitchell and his father is beautifully laid out as a close, caring relationship. Mitchell is a latchkey kid whose mother is dead and his father works late at a radiator plant.

Doing Time Online is a nicely done book. Its spare, quick style will appeal to reluctant readers or children with short attention spans, and the computer angle keeps the story fresh. Recommended.

Rosemarie DiCristo, Freelance Writer, The Bronx, New York


F. Baseball—Fiction; Sportsmanship—Fiction; Universities and colleges—Fiction. 175 p.

Ben Green’s terrific home run hitter and tries to hit slam one in every at bat, even if it hurts. State’s chances of winning. But Ben is not State’s only problem. Biggie Cohen, starting first baseman, is benched after a hit-and-run accident report matches the description of his vehicle. Chip accidentally beans a player and is so afraid of doing it again he can’t pitch. State begins losing, the players are fighting, and two of the stars are benched for missing classes.

Home Run Feud (Chip Hilton #22) is Clair Bee at his best. These books deal with troubled teens. Here Ben is obnoxious, selfish, and hot-headed, but like most of Bee’s characters, vulnerable enough for the reader to care about. Chip would love to show Ben up—or shut him up—but he doesn’t, which nicely contrasts his attitude to Ben’s.

One surprise: Chip becomes an ordinary player because of his fear of hitting another player. He wallows in self pity, then through sheer will power, he pulls out of it and apologizes to the team. His actions turn Ben around. Is that more hopeful than realistic? Maybe not. It shows Chip has decided to treat Ben with respect, even before Ben “deserves” it. A good Christian concept. Through Chip and his friends, these books give kids good examples to follow.

Rosemarie DiCristo, Freelance Writer, The Bronx, New York


There’s trouble in Valley Falls. A scarcity of jobs and a lack of things to do has turned the teens and young men toward juvenile delinquency. Chip is expected to find a way to help but he has his own problems. His inability to pitch after he beans a player in the college championship costs State the NCAA title. Now Chip vows never to pitch again.

Hungry Hurler is the last entry in the original Chip Hilton series (Fiery Fullback, written by Clair Bee in the late 1960s, was never published until 2002). In many ways it reads like a final volume. There’s a seriousness to it that the earlier stories don’t have, and it focuses much more heavily on the troubled teen theme than on Chip’s pitching problems. Despite his forming a special sports program for children and joining the town baseball team, Chip isn’t shown playing ball until the last fifty pages of the book. This may put off readers expecting exciting sports action, but then again it may not because, as usual, Bee’s finely crafted, vulnerable characters draw the reader in. It’s very easy to care about the “roughnecks” and Chip’s efforts to reach them. It’s slightly less easy to believe he reaches them so little effort: by gently talking to one boy, by letting another join the baseball team, and by stopping one boy’s brother’s drunken rampage. (The rampage, by the way, is graphically depicted). Would troubled teens and men reform so easily in real life? Probably not, but that’s an issue to concern an adult, not a child. Hungry Hurler is engaging enough to hold its readers’ interest, and the sports action, when it does come, is as down to the wire exciting as it usually is in a Chip Hilton sports book.

Rosemarie DiCristo, Freelance Writer, The Bronx, New York


F. Science—Experiments—Fiction; Schools—Fiction; Canadian Americans—Fiction; Humorous stories; New York (N.Y.)—Fiction. 167 p.

Billie’s class field trip is nearly ruined when her archenemy, Alyssa, steals Billie’s backpack, and gets into her invisibility powder. The antics begin when Billie comes up with a plan to get Alyssa aboard the bus, past the bus driver and an irate teacher, without raising any questions. Billie explains that Alyssa has had an accident in her pants, securing the girls a seat to themselves at the back of the bus. When they get back to school, Alyssa invites herself over to spend the night at Billie’s. Upon arrival, the girls must get past Billie’s mom, the school librarian who doesn’t miss much, her dog, and little sister Jane. Billie calls her friend, Jody, who developed the formula, and the girls agree to meet the next day to try out a new antidote Jody has developed.

Now, the only problem is to convince Hubert, Billie’s best friend, that they need his help, but Hubert isn’t speaking to Billie since their argument over the new boy, Jean-Pierre. He is becoming a close friend with Hubert. Billie is hurt and jealous of the new relationship between the boys and isn’t very nice to Hubert because of it. Billie and Hubert make up, Alyssa is brought back to visibility and seems just a little bit nicer, and Jean-Pierre begins to fit into the group.

The Invisible Enemy written by Marthe Jocelyn, is a fun-filled adventure chapter book, with reader-friendly wording and print. Mild profanity only slightly detracts from the story line. Abby Carter’s illustrations are black and white, full page drawings that, though few in number, are well spaced throughout the story for maximum enjoyment. Younger middle school children, as well as the elementary school crowd, will enjoy this humorous sequel to The Invisible Day and The Invisible Harry.

Kim Harris, Librarian, Churchville, New York


F. Stalking—Fiction; Internet—Fiction. 159 p.

FBI Agent Nick Steele is tracking a cyberstalker, alias Elvis, who kidnaps, tortures, and possibly even kills his victims. He and his agents have Elvis right where they want him and are about to close in, when Elvis’ RV blows up, injures agents, and takes valuable proof with it. Time ticks on, as Steele proceeds to follow Elvis’ moves, in hopes of preventing further bloodshed.

Heather has met the perfect guy on the Internet, code named JesusFreak2. Jodi and Kat, her best friends, suspect he is a cyberstalker. They are shocked to find that he is only Stan, the guy she turned down for the prom in order to go with her Internet friend. While Heather and Kat go to freshen up, Jodi stays to talk with Stan, and is locked in the limousine by Elvis, the driver. Before long Jodi and Stan find themselves kidnapped and imprisoned in a tomb with a rattlesnake, while Elvis watches the ensuing drama through previously installed cameras.

Between two attempts by Jodi to contact her family, a call from the graveyard groundskeeper, and a mole inside the prison, the FBI pinpoints Elvis’ exact location, catches him in the act, and

YOUNG ADULT FICTION

CHRISTIAN LIBRARY JOURNAL 27 APRIL 2003
sets Jodi and Stan free. Bodily injuries from near death experiences heal quickly, and Stan becomes a true Jesus Freak in the end.

Tim LaHaye, veteran author of dozens of spiritual self-help and scripture study books and co-author of the highly acclaimed Left Behind series teams up with Bob DeMoss, also a veteran author and leading authority of today’s popular culture scene, to create a suspense filled quick read. The Last Dance, the third installment in The Soul Survivor Series, is a typical teen series read, with the bonus of Christian values added.

Kim Harris, Librarian, Churchville, New York


F. Erasmus, Desiderius, d. 1536--Fiction; Humanists--; Fiction. 119 p.

Gerhard Koestler is a fictional German orphan in the 1500s. Raised by two uncles, one a Catholic monk, Gerhard desires to study under Erasmus; a contemporary of Martin Luther who promotes what becomes known as “the new learning." The uncles deny his request and expect him to enter the monastery, but Gerhard is determined to seek out Erasmus and learn more about his teachings on the Bible.

Gerhard teams up with his uncle’s servant boy, Andreas, and sneaks away to Basel, Switzerland, to find Erasmus. They find their way to the man’s home and eventually live under his roof. Andreas enters a traditional school while Gerhard studies under Erasmus. Both are caught up in the whirlwind of discussion, debate, and dissension surrounding the different directions of religious thought being promoted by Luther and Erasmus. Through this turbulent era, Gerhard discovers the truth of Scripture.

Louise Vernon’s title, The Man Who Laid The Egg, is from a statement passed on by Europeans of the time, “Erasmus laid the egg that Luther hatched.” The book depicts an era of religious history and the Reformation of today’s Christian church. This book contains valuable societal, theological, and denominational facets that Vernon shows through the character of Gerhard. The subject matter is appropriate for middle schoolers and up but the style makes it tough reading, partly because of numerous tongue-twisting names which, if not familiar to the reader, tend to muddle the story rather than advance it.

Karen Schmidt, Freelance Writer/Editor, Marysville, Washington


Rosie Meyer is a social studies teacher and one-time Olympic Silver Medalist swimmer. She and her husband Phil, an ex-Navy Seal, have enlisted eight students to participate in a tolerance experiment. Jodi and Heather sign up to meet cute guys. Stan, the popular football player, signs up intent on committing suicide.

Justin, a runaway, joins to keep an eye on Stan. The others just need the extra credit. Soon after the group boards the dilapidated looking houseboat, home for the next week, they confide in each other about fears and experiences that have affected them. The stories run the gambit from abusive parents to missionaries shot for their beliefs, and tolerance emulates compassion. Unfortunately, Jodi begins to realize that her Christian views aren’t tolerated here.

A mixture of chores and fun take on a daily rhythm, until tragedy, in the form of a diving accident, strikes. Kat is medivaced to a hospital, where she is diagnosed with kidney failure. She has lost a great deal of blood, and will die within a few days, if a donor with her rare blood type is not found. After much prayer, Jodi, who shares Kat’s rare blood type, decides that the Lord has called her to be a live donor for Kat. Neither storm, nor fear, nor facing death can stop Jodi now, but it sure helps to have Jesus, the Coast Guard, and a quick thinking and acting ex-Navy Seal on her side.

The Mind Siege Project by Tim LaHaye and Bob DeMoss is the first thrilling installment to The Soul Survivor Series for high school readers. With their illustrious writing backgrounds and Christian chemistry, LaHaye and DeMoss have formed a winning team that this writer trusts will continue to add more exciting, yet hopeful, episodes to the series.

Kim Harris, Librarian, Churchville, New York


F. Aunts--Fiction; Death--Fiction; Frontier and pioneer life--Minnesota--Fiction; Minnesota--Fiction. 151 p.

Up until the 20th century, shrouding, the practice of preparing a body for burial, was done by women. Generation after generation, women trained by their mothers or other women in the family, handed down the skill until the middle eighteen hundreds. After the American Civil War, the practice of embalming bodies for burial began to be used more and more, which moved this task out of the home and into male run funeral parlors, thereby not only taking the practice out of the home but also out of the hands of women.

Using information about the custom of shrouding and its practices, Loretta Ellsworth crafts a novel that removes the mystery and superstition. In southern Minnesota, Evie and her family grieve for their mother who died of consumption. The father brings his widowed sister to live with them. She arrives with a box that she promptly tucks under the bed.

Evie is determined not to allow this woman to take her mother’s place even though her younger sister and father welcome her. Then Evie learns of Aunt Flo’s own heartbreak, the loss of her children and husband. Evie is asked to accompany Aunt Flo when she prepares a body for burial. Seeing the comfort her ministrations give the family helps Evie begin to heal and accept her aunt.

The Shrouding Woman explores a daughter’s loss of a mother much as Patricia MacLachlan’s Sarah, Plain and Tall (Harper & Row, 1985). Ellsworth treats the subject of death and healing in a way that will touch the heart of readers while providing a look at a custom and vocation lost to mortuaries and funeral parlors.

Leslie Greaves Radieloff, Teacher/School Librarian, S. St. Paul, Minneapolis


F. Fantasy. 284 p.


F. Fantasy. 312 p.


F. Fantasy. 402 p.


F. Fantasy. 408 p.

F. Fantasy, 319 p.


F. Fantasy; Christian fiction. 296 p.

Book 1. The Sword Bearer. Thirteen-year-old John is suddenly transported from England into the land of Anthropos where the Unchanging Changer commissions him as Sword Bearer and gives him the task of slaying the evil Goblin Prince. Lord Lunacy temporarily distracts John with his false brainwashing. After much hesitation, John accepts the “wine of free pardon” from his mentor, the old prophet Mab. His hesitation, John accepts the “wine of free pardon” from his mentor, the old prophet Mab. This enables him, with the help of others along the way, to complete his task.

Book 2. Gaal the Conqueror. John and his father are trying to rescue runaway Eleanor when she suddenly disappears on a frozen lake in Canada. Suspecting that she might have been whisked to Anthropos, John follows her. Gaal, the Shepherd, gives them the task of imprisoning the wicked sorcerer, Shagah. Gaal gives his life to defeat the evil enchantment, but rises again to deliver the victims, leaving a defeated and weakened Lord Lunacy.

Book 3. The Tower of Geburah. Lisa, Wesley, and Kurt Friesen are living with their middle-aged bachelor Uncle John. In the attic of his house they discover five unusual TV sets, through which they are drawn into Anthropos. They join in the efforts of Gaal’s forces to defeat the evil Shagah and his henchman Hocoonio, and to return King Kardia to his rightful throne.

Book 4. The Iron Sceptre. Mary McNab and her cousins Lisa, Wesley, and Kurt are pulled into Anthropos to assist the forces of Gaal in the rescue of Kardia’s wife, Queen Suneidesis, and Prince Tiqyah from the clutches of the witch Mirmah.

Book 5. Quest for the King. Immediately after Uncle John’s wedding to Aunt Eleanor, the newlyweds disappear. Jealous Mary assumes they are in Anthropos, and tries to use magic to follow them there. She and her cousins find themselves in an earlier time, assigned to help ensure safe haven for the toddler Gaal, Son of the High Emperor, before wicked King Tobah Khukah and the sorcerer Shagah can find and kill him.

Book 6. The Dark Lord’s Demise. As new neighbor Betty Rigg comes to visit the Friesen children, the four children are called into Anthropos and become involved again in the conflict between Gaal and the forces of Lord Lunacy. Gaal heals King Tiqyah from the slow poison given to him by charming, but sinister, Queen Hisschi. Gaal and his followers decisively defeat Lord Lunacy and the forces of evil, and Gaal begins his endless reign of peace and joy.

John White is the author of a number of well-respected, non-fiction religious books. After he read the Chronicles of Narnia by C.S. Lewis to his children, they asked him to write a book for them, “But it has to be just like Narnia!” His land of Anthropos is peopled with noble kings and queens, stout Matmon (dwarfs), talking beasts, flying horses, and dragons, as well as evil spirits, goblins, jinn, and other awful creatures that serve the Dark Lord.

White’s allegorical intent is apparent in the several names based on Hebrew or Greek terms (e.g., the ageless lady “Chocma,” from the Hebrew for “wisdom”). Many incidents have biblical allusions: Three philosophers from a distant land seek the toddler king. A white pigeon guides or empowers the children in their tasks.

Action and dialogue express the individual personalities of the characters. The Canadian children grow through their experiences in Anthropos. Left alone after the death of his grandmother, John longs for a father figure. Parental abuse has crushed Eleanor’s self-esteem. Coming from a dysfunctional family, Mary seeks beauty, and a stable family relationship. Betty’s New Age ideas call for correction. The Friesen boys deal with sibling rivalry and rebellious attitude. Lisa learns the importance of immediate obedience. Similar growth appears in several characters from Anthropos.

More supernatural events occur in Anthropos than in Narnia. White repeatedly makes a distinction between “miracle,” done through the power and at the instruction of the Unchanging Changer or his son Gaal, and “sorcery,” done through magical spells for personal power and self-interest. “Bigger on the inside than on the outside,” Gaal trees appear at opportune times along the way to provide refuge and needed sustenance. Reading from the Book of Wisdom generates a protective canopy and its light can destroy evil attackers. A recurrent theme is the assurance of full pardon, in spite of repeated failures. The presence of Gaal brings the warmth of love, joy, and peace. At the end of their adventures in Anthropos, Gaal promises the members of “the household of the Sword Bearer shall ever enjoy the gladness of my presence,” even in Canada, where “they did learn to know him by a different name.”

Like Lewis, White started his series at one point in the chronology of his imaginary world and later went back to fill in some of the earlier history. (This results in a minor inconsistency about the manner of Gaal’s death and resurrection.) Since Gaal is Lord of Time and Space, in Book 5 he even returns the children to Anthropos at a time much before their previous visits. Dale and Sandy Larsen collaborated with White in Book 6, as they have in some of his non-fiction works.

White recognizes that the Archives of Anthropos do not reach the stature of Narnia. Although both series have both humorous and serious moments, Narnia seems to have more humor, while Anthropos seems generally more serious. The occasional black-and-white illustrations by Kinuka Kraft and Jack Stockman are adequate, but not distinctive. Nonetheless, this captivating series will appeal to young and old alike. It merits reading aloud with thoughtful discussion. Highly recommended for home libraries as well as church and Christian school libraries.
in your collection, but it is inexpensive enough to have duplicates.

Kelley Westenhoff, Parent-Librarian, Dominion Christian School, Oakton, Virginia

**Wooden ox** / by LeAnne Hardy. LCCN 2002005392. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2002. PAP, 0825427940, $6.99. Middle school (High school, Adult). Rating: 4


Living in Mozambique with her parents, who are relief workers, and her younger brother, 13-year-old Keri encounters war, hunger, teenage mercenaries, daily uncertainty, and a lengthy trial of her faith in Christ. On a car trip upcountry to deliver clothing to refugees, the family and Pastor Makusa, a local leader who lost most of his family in the war, are taken captive. The majority of the *The Wooden Ox* describes in vivid detail how Keri and less prominently, her family and Pastor Makusa, cope with the privation, menace, and fear each day presents to them. Keri’s brother Kurt disengages from the nightmare by playing with a tiny wooden ox carved for him by Pastor Makusa. When the ox is broken during the arduous cross-country trek, Kurt is in anguish and Keri’s faith is further stretched. During their captivity, the family reaches out in tentative concern to Mfana, a young member of the rebel band. Mfana’s role becomes prominent as the story comes to a close, leaving each member of Keri’s family with a clarified appreciation for freedom and for God’s mercy.

LeAnn Hardy has dramatically and realistically rendered a tale about the day-to-day effects of civil war. *The Wooden Ox* is rich in detail, dialogue, and the thoughts and questions a middle school age girl might ponder. Though the story is not biographical, it does contain much truth; Hardy lived with her family in Mozambique during its civil war and incorporated many authentic elements from various sources. The story is powerful and captivating, both for adults as well as for middle schoolers and teens. However, some war-related descriptions are graphic enough to be unsuitable for younger children and even sensitive pre-teens.

Karen Schmidt, Freelance Writer/Editor, Marysville, Washington
BOOK REVIEWS  YOUNG ADULT NONFICTION

200’s—Religion


200’s—Religion


200’s—Religion


200’s—Religion


200’s—Religion


200’s—Religion

Beverley holds a doctorate in Judaic studies and is program director at a Connecticut temple. Karesh, with a doctorate in religious studies, is director of education and youth at a temple. These chapters are devoted to how Judaism has influenced American culture, Jewish impact on American social issues, and the national and political impact of Jews and Judaism.

Islamic faith in America

Islam and the influence of Islamic nations on Muslim world. The influence of Islamic nations on Muslim life.

Hindu and Sikh faiths in America

Harley specializes in American and world religions and is editor of the Encyclopedia of Women in American Religious Life. Of particular note is the chapter on Hindus and Sikhs in American culture. Especially informative are the events and aspects of our public scene that trace from these traditions.

Murphy is a veteran lecturer, author, and consultant to film and television productions on religion and faith in African-American communities. He is also editor of the Journal for the Society for the Study of Black Religion. One sees the diversity of African-American faith in this volume, as well as the influence of gospel and Black church music on mainstream music.

Catholic faith in America

Gillis is professor of theology, holding double doctorates. He contributes to many popular and scholarly journals and has won a silver award in the ForeWord Magazine Book of the Year, Religion category. Of particular value are the insights provided that contemporary Catholics differ from previous generations. The chapters on Catholic impact on American culture and social issues provide timely insight into Catholicism especially for non-Catholics.

Jewish faith in America

Buxbaum holds a doctorate in Judaic studies and is program director at a Connecticut temple. Karesh, with a doctorate in religious studies, is director of education and youth at a temple. These chapters are devoted to how Judaism has influenced American culture, Jewish impact on American social issues, and the national and political impact of Jews and Judaism.

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Islam and the influence of Islamic nations on Muslim world. The influence of Islamic nations on Muslim life.

Hindu and Sikh faiths in America

Harley specializes in American and world religions and is editor of the Encyclopedia of Women in American Religious Life. Of particular note is the chapter on Hindus and Sikhs in American culture. Especially informative are the events and aspects of our public scene that trace from these traditions.

Dr. Leroy Hommerding, Director, Fort Myers Beach P.L. District, Fort Myers Beach, Florida


In thirteen short, easy-to-read chapters Geisler and Holden help teens consider their theological beliefs. Additionally, the teen is given a brief course in apologetics. Teens will enjoy the scenarios which begin each chapter and build on previous topics. Using situations that are believable to teens, the authors address issues of faith. Some of the topics are the existence of God, evolution, the problem of evil, miracles, and the trustworthiness of Scripture. The letter of introduction to the parents and teenagers captures the world they live in currently, addresses the needs of the book, as well as the goals of the book.

Each chapter begins with a scenario, questions regarding the scenario, purpose, goal, and objectives of the chapter. In this respect it is reminiscent of a textbook. The material is then presented in easy to understand paragraphs. The end of the chapter review helps internalize the material presented. The teen is not left with a textbook but is led to the next level in “studying to show himself approved” with the “Where do we go from here?” and recommended reading sections. Additionally, there is a notes section and a page of additional resources available.

Bianca Elliott, Teacher, Limosol, Kansas


252 p.

Readers of the Heidelberg Catechism and those familiar with Reformed Church theology will welcome this devotional book. Schaap writes from a depth of understanding and relevance that well read young people will readily latch on to. Each page is addressed to one of 129 questions in the catechism. With a short Scripture reference, Schaap proceeds to give examples, anecdotes, and relevant issues to drive home the lessons from the catechism. Then he ends the devotion with a short, meaningful prayer.
Parents will enjoy providing their children with a book that explains the faith of their fathers in contemporary terms. The children will like how sincere and open Schaap is with his work. He achieves special honesty in the introduction when he admits to being tempted and finds his faith giving him the strength to do the right thing.

Comparing this with other teen devotions is difficult. Many teen devotional... without being overwhelming for the youthful reader. The only caution may be that of the things which makes this a current devotional reader. The only caution may be that some of the faith giving him the strength to do the right thing.

Most enticing is the easy, flowing writing style, enabling teens to feel involved in the devotions without being preachy or being talking down to. This makes a wonderful, economical gift for teens, for use in youth groups (ages 12 to 18), and in Christian schools encouraging journaling and some quiet time reflection. School and public libraries offering devotional titles can add... book is a welcome addition to other books on... stagecraft.

The poetry of Emily Dickinson, The power of Emily Dickinson, and New England culture and... the stage for a fast-paced, informative introduction to the world of acting and stagecraft. A no-nonsense directness in the chapters is balanced with clever titles such as "meltdown" (describing difficult concepts for the student). All major concepts are listed, from warm ups for the actors to tearing down the set. Not only are these chapters concise, they include many color and black and white photos. Friedman includes movies from Chaplin to today to provide professional examples. She also uses professional child actors as examples to help the student learn. The appendixes have further material to read, web sites to visit, credits, and monologues, dialogues, and ensemble scenes to memorize to help the student learn more about the world of acting and stagecraft.

“Simple, easy to understand, and many great pictures” were just some of the comments a high school teacher made looking at this new book. She went on to say this book would help the aspiring student understand the craft. Written for middle/junior high students, Break a Leg! would be great for the high school library, too. This book is a welcome addition to other books on the market as it targets younger students well.

Each of Bloom’s BioCritiques has an identical format. The book begins with a general introduction to the series, written by Harold Bloom. Then a specific introduction to the work of the author of subject, in this case, of course, Emily Dickinson, also written by Bloom. A short biography follows, and then specifics, such as the poetry of Emily Dickinson, The power of Emily Dickinson, and New England culture and Emily Dickinson, written by various authors. Included at the end of the book is a chronology...
of the author’s life, works of the author, and works about the author.

All this being said, BioCritiques are a combination of biography and criticism, written for the secondary student. Emily Dickinson’s life and works are covered in depth and the information provides the reader with a wealth of knowledge about Dickinson. The book is well-written, challenging reading yet not inaccessible to one who reads thoroughly. Bloom’s Emily Dickinson would be a worthwhile addition to any school or public library collection

Ceil Carey, Young Adult Librarian, Public Library, Plano, Illinois


*Angel of Mercy* is the third in the Shannon Saga series by Tracie Peterson and James Scott Bell. While it is an exciting stand-alone book, one feels that much has been missed if the first two have not been read first. However, returning characters from the previous books that play a major role in the story are fleshed-out well enough for the reader to understand the thread of continuity.

Kit Shannon is a female lawyer living in Los Angeles in 1904. She is also a strong Christian besieged by an old adversary as to whether to defend him against murder or not. Kit’s quandary is one of deciding whether or not God is calling her to defend a man who appears, with mounting evidence, to be guilty. Her decision to do so may put her own life in danger. She also struggles with her relationship with Aunt Freddy, who is growing more distant after another clash with Kit over her Aunt’s dalliance with a persuasive mystic. Kit is determined to protect her at any cost.

Other subplots which make interesting reading include the return of Ted Fox, Kit’s love interest who is struggling with his disability after losing a leg, and the instigation of a lawsuit against her. The combination is winning, and a spirited dialogue keep the pace moving. The intriguing courtroom scenes with plenty of spirited dialogue keep the pace moving. The known characters from the previous books that play a major role in the story are fleshed-out well enough for the reader to understand the thread of continuity.

Paula Stewart Marks, School Principal, Bend, Oregon

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**Autumn’s shadow** / Lyn Cote. (HeartQuest (Northern intrigue)). LCCN 2002011989. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale, 2002. PAP, 0842335749, $9.99. Adult. Rating: 4

F. Women school principals—Fiction; School vandalism—Fiction; Sheriffs—Fiction; Wisconsin—Fiction; Christian fiction. 285 p.

*Autumn’s Shadow* by Lyn Cote, second in the Northern Intrigue series, is set in the small town of Steadfast, Wisconsin. In this book, school principal Keely Turner teams up with new Deputy Burke Sloan as they battle a series of pranks that turn sinister. Both also deal with problem younger brothers and unresolved family issues.

Lyn Cote combines romance, suspense, believable characters, and Christian faith into positive entertainment. She interweaves multiple stories, small town intrigue, and gossip to bring out the relationships and interaction of the people within the town. Can Keely and Burke overcome their personal conflicts as well as the town conflicts? Can either of their brothers’ lives be turned around for good? Is there room in their lives for the growing attraction they feel? Their constant inner conversations with God enable them to find the final answers. God has a definite plan for the town and for them.

Paula Stewart Marks, School Principal, Bend, Oregon

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F. Women physicians—Fiction; Widowers—Fiction; Clergy—Fiction; Colorado—Fiction. 302 p.

The importance of trusting God is the theme of this book, *Child of Promise*. Beth McKay, disappointed when Noah Starr marries another, pursues her dream of becoming a doctor. Returning home five years later, she goes into practice with Doc Childress. Pastor Noah Starr, living with his Aunt Millv, is raising his crippled daughter Emily, after the death of his wife Alice. Beth rents a room at the rectory. She and Noah cautiously renew their friendship. Noah and Beth marry and have some difficulties in supporting each other’s professions. The death of his aunt and Harlow Peterson, a church member he was counseling, have Noah questioning his calling and faith. Beth tries to help Noah renew his faith in God. With support from his congregation, Noah realizes the Lord kept His promise and never deserted him in moments of doubt. Noah knows God has always been in the heart of Beth who faithfully loves her husband.

This book is fourth in the Brides of Culdee Creek. I have not read the first three books. The author, Kathleen Morgan, presents a book worth reading with strong Christian content. The story line is excellent.

Pam Burns, Librarian, Promiseland Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Florida

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F. Sisters—Fiction; Amish—Fiction; Lancaster County (Pa.)—Fiction. 318 p.

*The Covenant* by Beverly Lewis is a nice read. Set in an Amish family, two sisters blossom into womanhood in entirely different ways. The historical, religious, and social intertwine in this novel. The story moves slowly with considerable description of the rich surroundings of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Leah and her sister Sadie are teenage Amish girls in their courting years. They are also in what is called the rumschpringe, or time before Amish children take the kneeling vow to the Amish church. It is a time when they explore many issues inside and outside of
themselves before they make a lifetime commitment to the church. Sadie, Leah’s older sister, is secretly dating an English boy. After a short period she discovers she is pregnant and is unsure what to do. No one in the family knows for a while. The English father doesn’t want a child, and the child is stillborn, or so it is thought. The doctor, who is really the grandfather, finds the baby is still alive and makes sure the baby lives where he will embarrass neither family. Sadie goes to live with relatives, not coming to grips with her past. Abram, Leah’s father, wants Leah to marry an Amish boy with ability to provide for her, while Leah’s heart belongs to Jonas, another Amish boy. The book ends with Jonas and Leah looking forward to their wedding day.

While this story is well written, it is slow and prodigious. The plot is timeless and yet current. The solutions are predictable as are the behaviors of the characters. The book has so many characters and story lines it can become confusing. Unlike other historical fiction, this book tries to blend too many issues in at one time. Sex before marriage, cross faith and cross-cultural relationships, and the historical elements are each worthy of their own story line. Lewis does know her subject and setting which provides some moorings for the reader.

Bianca Elliott, Educator, Linwood, Kansas


F. Windolf, Thomas (Fictional character)--Fiction; Clergy--Fiction; England--Fiction. 187, 209, 218 p.

Snobbish attitudes, rich poor people, poor rich people, misguided love, heartbreak, pain and sickness, suicide: The Curate of Glaston, a trilogy, presents a close look at humanity’s struggles. These modern themes were penned in the late 1800s by Scotland’s beloved storyteller and pastor George McDonald. Shunned by the sleeping church, McDonald, Spirit led, used fiction to present basic Bible truths to his fellow Christians. In these three books, published in one volume, McDonald introduces Thomas Wingfold, a young preacher who grows from Pharisaism to trusting the Lord even when other church attendees can no longer understand his leading. The Curate’s Awakening deals with the resuscitation of Thomas’ spirit, and how his life touches spiritually unaware Helen, her atheist cousin George, who wants to disciple and then marry her, and the great love of her life, Leopold her drug addicted, love besotted brother.

In the second story, The Lady’s Confession, Thomas, now God’s man, interacts with the self absorbed Dr. Paul Faber, and the mysterious, sickly, beautiful Juliet. The third story, The Baron’s Apprenticeship, presents two intellectually honest, unbelieving young people, Barbara and Richard, as they move, guided by Thomas’ friendship, from darkness into the light of the Gospel. It also deals with problems between generations, social classes, and peers. In all three stories you meet a wide variety of Christians, from those who viciously dissect others, to those who cannot do so.

George McDonald’s The Curate of Glaston softly guides the reader into deep contemplation of obedience to Christ the Creator, Savior, and Lord. Full depiction of each important character grows through closely reasoned conversations, glimpses of inner thoughts, and comparisons as different persons see and understand each event. Winsome descriptions of surroundings add to the depth and interest of the plot. The plot itself blooms slowly, engagingly, reaching fruition near the end of each story. Action and mystery play an important part in the stories; however, the reasoning ability and will of the characters take precedence over plot. Being very true to life, not all characters move in the direction that Christians would hope. One of today’s most prolific Christian authors, Michael Phillips has edited, but not changed or cheapened, this trilogy. Philips introduces each story, also telling a bit about McDonald himself. Both young adult and adult readers will easily identify with the characters, their problems, and joys. The Curate of Glaston will be useful in the English Literature class, for all libraries, for communal reading, and insight sharing in home schooling and other families.

Donna J. Eggett, Freelance Writer, Radford, Virginia


F. Adult child abuse victims--Fiction; Separated people--Fiction; Women singers--Fiction; Michigan--Fiction; Actors--Fiction. 267 p.

This romantic fiction chronicles the story of Elena, a girl who ran away from home after her mother’s death. She hopes to escape the wicked clutches of her father and brothers only to find herself in another relationship of abuse—both mental and physical—and used because of her beautiful singing voice. As the story opens, Elena lies in an 1885 hospital in Detroit waiting to die of self-imposed starvation. There, a sensitive nun prods her to eat a couple of spoonfuls of soup and learns that Elena has a husband in the area.

The story turns when Jesse Golden finds her and brings her home to recover, meets Robert, her four-year-old son, and they begin their marriage anew. But the past hangs on for dear life, causing Elena to fear Jesse’s rejection of her if he knew all the truth of her past. And in the present, Jesse’s mother, in whose home she is recuperating, hates her and wishes her dead and gone.

A strong dependence on prayer, and God’s working in each life to bring truth to the surface redeems the story. Though the setting is 1885, numerous things made me feel the story was contemporary: “parking” the horse and buggy and “making calls” on the telephone to name a couple.

Helen Hunter, Freelance Writer, Church Librarian, Cedar Rapids, Iowa


F. Post-traumatic stress disorder in children--Fiction; Student counselors--Fiction; School shootings--Fiction. 293 p.

Author Dee Henderson has written seven in the O’Malley series. The O’Malleys are a group of orphans who banded together in a foster home to make a family. Each book tells the story of a different O’Malley. In this book, 35-year-old Rachel O’Malley, is a caring counselor specializing in critical care after disasters. She must shoulder the burdens of those displaced by a flood, traumatized by a murder, and overwhelmed by a school shooting. While all of this is happening, her youngest sister battles cancer. Rachel’s new faith helps to sustain her.

In the first chapter we learn about the complex trauma’s facing the characters. Many O’Malleys wade into the problems. Kate is an investigator; Marcus, a U.S. marshall, helps in the investigations; Lisa, a doctor, helps with trauma response. Even doctor Jennifer, on a rare outing from the cancer treatments that debilitate her so, jumps into the fray after the school shooting and helps save lives. We also meet her friend Cole, the fire Chief whose dedication to his job is part of his attraction. Jack, a brother O’Malley, works alongside Cole. Stephen, another brother, is drawn to single mom and flood victim, Ann, and kids Nathan and Adam, who are taken under the protective wing of Rachel and Cole. Using a unique follow-up system, Rachel can track those she counsels for years. An old card found at the murder scene, leads to the identity of the victims. A troubled boy precipitates more grief when two students rage through a school shooting and hit more than each other. After the dead are identified the motives remain a mystery that seems linked to the original murder. Various siblings plan weddings and help end the book on a more jubilant, hopeful note.

Fast moving, turbulent with trauma, this book does not shirk from descriptions of terrible events. Character development centers around
response to the needs of others, family loyalty and love. As this book focused more on Rachel, her character is more richly made. Although the reader may be stretched to believe so many traumas could happen to one sane group of people in such a short time, helpful perspective is given on the steps to healthy adjustment, and going on with life.

Carol Taylor, Freelance Writer, Independent Clinical Social Worker, Poulsbo, Washington


The Heavenly Fugitive continues Gilbert Morris’ successful series, The House of Winslow,” with a new branch of the infamous Winslow family, Phillip and Amelia Winslow, grown children of Andrew Winslow. Amelia lands her first job as a nightclub singer with the help of Big Tony Marino, a local gangster. Phil finds love with Big Tony’s daughter, and lands a job with the District Attorney’s office. Also making a return appearance is Wes Winslow on a photography assignment for someone who is writing about New York. Amelia and Philip become more and more entangled in a precarious underworld. Unless they can find a way out, they may be destroyed by their own most cherished dreams. This is an action-packed story that you’ll find difficult to put down!

In The Fiery Ring, Joy Winslow has led a picture-perfect life until now. When a family tragedy leaves her and Travis Winslow at the mercy of greedy relatives, they flee a life of certain servitude. A series of events suddenly finds her alone, riding in a boxcar where she is harassed by two vandals. Chase Hardin, a handsome young circus performer, steps in to rescue her. As a result, he is injured, and Joy temporarily forgoes her journey to search for her brother, to find help.

Chase takes her under his wing and helps her find work in a traveling circus. Though Chase discourages it, Joy thrills to the danger of performing with the big cats. But her growing feelings for Chase only add to her uncertainty over the future. She must find her brother and recover what is rightfully theirs. Unless she can arrive at some path to inner peace, the struggle between her love for Chase and her anger against those who wronged her may tear her world apart.

Late 1920’s America is the backdrop for book 28 in this series and, as usual, Mr. Morris knows his history. An inactive hero and the fact that we are told of the heroine’s desire for revenge, but never really feel it, weaken this story. And yet, numerous events and the behind-the-scenes details on circus life keep it interesting.

Rick Estep, Media Director, HeavenBound Media Center, Middleburg, Florida

Let there be light / Al & JoAnna Lacy. (Mail order bride series; 10.) LCCN 2002009316. Sisters, Ore.: Multnomah, 2002. PAP, 1590520424, $10.99. Adult. Rating: 4 F. Prisoners of war--Family relationships--Fiction; Mail order brides--Fiction; Women pioneers--Fiction; Revenge--Fiction; Arizona--Fiction; Christian fiction; Western stories; Love stories. 305 p.

Popular authors Al and JoAnna Lacy, having written more than ninety historical and western novels, offer fans and new readers compelling reading in this latest of the Mail Order Bride series. Opening with a woman setting out for Arizona in response to mail order bride correspondence, and a relationship centered in the Lord and working, the story moves to Georgia where a Captain is murdered under mysterious circumstances. The Captain’s daughter, Jenny, vows to avenge him, and one sees both the evil lurking in plans, and the interesting twists God brings across human paths. There is enough intrigue to keep the reader interested in Let There Be Light, even though the dialogue gets a bit contrived at times.

Recommended for public library collections where Lacy fans reside, and for adding to collections where readers can enjoy an easy read without vulgarity. New readers interested in women pioneers can be encouraged to try this title.

Dr. Leroy Hammond, Fort Myers Beach P.L. District, Ft Myers Beach, Florida


Mary, age twenty-five, partner of Jonah, a crazed drug dealer, realizes she is headed out of mourning, still feels responsible for her husband’s suicide. Bridie lovingly nurses the family back to health, remodels the parsonage from mausoleum to livable abode, and potty trains the twins.

One year later, Bridie, accepts a position as Nanny to a burned out minister, Alisdair, and his three children, thirteen-year-old Samantha, with a chip on her shoulder, and two-year-old twins Bonnie and Cameron, who don’t speak and are still in diapers. Bridie learns that Alisdair, after two years of mourning, still feels responsible for his wife’s suicide. Bridie lovingly nurses the family back to health, remodels the parsonage from mausoleum to livable abode, and potty trains the twins.

Jonah gets out of jail, and, bent on revenge, kidnaps Bridie. Jonah soon finds he is outnumbered, when Bridie’s loved ones join forces with the police to rescue her and send him back to jail. Bridie turns herself in for her involvement in the drug business, is given probation, and set free for good behavior. Alisdair resists his position, proposes marriage to and is accepted by Bridie, and the whole family moves back to Bridie’s country home.

Not a Sparrow Falls by Linda Nichols is an exquisite story of God’s love and surprising plans for each life. Nichols reminds the reader that God’s grace truly is sufficient, if often mysterious. Although there are a plethora of characters introduced, causing some confusion at first, the main characters are well developed and easy to identify with. The story is reminiscent of a glorious puzzle that frustrates at first, as the pieces all look alike, but develops into a most satisfying and endeavoring mixture of prose and gently imparted wisdom. Highly recommended for all library collections.

Kim Harris, Librarian, Churchville, New York
Swede and Ruben rarely quarrel, “I never held opinions in those days, and her’s (Swede’s) were never wrong.”

Ruben and Swede overhear an argument between Dad and Davy. Jeremiah Land, a janitor at the high school Davy attends, catches two teenage troublemakers assaulting the girl Davy likes. When he stops them they threaten him and his family. Davy becomes quiet and rebellious. One night, these same boys break into the Land’s home and Davy, his hunting rifle with him under the covers, kills both boys. The sheriff arrests him and puts him in jail. While Ruben and Swede plot ways to break him out, Davy escapes.

Mail from distant friends west of Wisconsin indicate, in mysteriously worded letters, they have seen and helped Davy. Because of Jeremiah’s health, the Lands decide to take a trip west in their Airstream trailer. What they find is heartbreak, a new mother, and an undisputable possibility that Mr. Land does in fact create miracles.

Maxine Cambra, Freelance Writer, Anderson, California


F. Women lawyers--Fiction; Nonprofit organizations--Fiction; Chesapeake Bay Region (Md. And Va.)--Fiction. 337 p.

Callie Webber, attorney for the J.O.S.H.U.A. foundation, investigates the legitimacy of non-profit organizations that submit proposals to the foundation for grants. Tom, Callie’s employer, asks Callie to make a delivery to his long time friend Wendell Smythe. Wendell owns a large for-profit clothing manufacturing business as well as a non-profit organization that specializes in feeding needy children around the world.

Jennifer Stilcroft, Computer Analyst, Avid Reader, Benton, Washington


Postmarked Heaven is listed under the genre fiction, but don’t look for a plot. Or maybe you need to find forty-three plots. Author Jack Cavanaugh presents forty-three letters sent from heaven by four people who have gone on to glory. These four have been given an opportunity to write to the folks back home.

The purpose of the letters is to point out biblical truths the writers didn’t learn until they looked at them from a heavenly viewpoint. They contain such pithy sayings as, “Having experienced life on both sides of the veil, it is generally agreed among us that the greatest challenge of living on earth is one of perception. On earth, the physical reality of the world appears to be true, while the things of the Kingdom, in comparison, lack substance and appear dreamlike.”

Then the writers give advice to those still on this earth. Basically the book is sermons in letter form. “When your choices, time, sacrifice, and emotions don’t verify what you say you believe, they become as visible to others as the teraphim were to the neighbors of the Israelites.”

The four writers are from four eras of history: Shankala, the son of an Ethiopian witch doctor; Dr. Everett Parker, a scientist and physician who lived in Illinois and died in 1868; Jared, a 31-year-old who died in 2000; and, Theodora, raised in Antioch during the height of the Roman Empire.

Each chapter is three to five pages long and self-contained. This format makes it easy to read in short snatches of time.

Myrelleym Crane, Freelance Writer & Editor, Alderwood Manor, Washington


F. Survival after airplane accidents, shipwrecks, etc.--Fiction; Women pioneers--Fiction; Alaska--Fiction. 383 p.

Miranda Colton, unconscious after being washed overboard, recuperates in the small cabin of Thomas Edward Davenport. Quiet, reserved Davenport, a botanist, frowns on the interruption into his world of plants and herbs of Yukon Province. When winter threatens, Davenport, a Christian and an English gentleman, will not leave his houseguest, who is too weak to travel. The storm subsides and Davenport's guides arrive to drive them into town. Miranda does not know where to start looking for her shipmates, and without money to rent a room she has nowhere to turn. Davenport invites her to stay with him at the hotel, but Miranda, uncertain of what his suggestion implies, hesitates. Davenport confesses to owning the hotel and having a suite of rooms kept for his use year round. Miranda accepts the offer of his room and he stays in another room with his plants. Romance hovers but Miranda’s mind stays on finding her friends.

Each book in the Yukon Quest series contains a different female protagonist. A reader may lose bits and pieces of the story by reading only book three. Rivers of Gold, written from a multi-character point of view, catches the reader in a web of unknown people and their trials. Even though Peterson foreshadows each new character, there are still some lost issues. Peterson wraps this third and last book of the Yukon Series up in a pretty blue bow. The plot brings Miranda and all her friends to a happy ending. Peterson’s great dialogue moves the reader at a fast pace but her exposition drags. A prolific writer, Peterson has five series in print and six novels. Fans of the Yukon Quest series must have this book.

Maxine Cambra, Member SCBWI, Anderson, California

Roses will bloom again / Lori Copeland. (HeartQuest.) LCCN 2001008344. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, 2002, PAP, 0842319360, $9.99. Adult (High school). Rating: 4

F. Women pioneers--Fiction; Sheriffs--Fiction; Colorado--Fiction; Christian fiction; Western stories; Love stories. 279 p.

Emma has made a good life for herself in Seattle, complete with close friends and a successful business. Nothing interrupts her well-ordered days, until she receives a phone call that her only sister, Lully, has died. Now she must return to Serenity, to the battered, old Victorian house, once a funeral home, that still represents the painful growing up years after Mom’s death and Dad’s desertion.

Emma arrives and is faced with sorting through Lully’s pack rat like collection of worldly goods. She is greeted by unfriendly townsfolk, a motley assortment of reptilian pranks, and fishy land deals. As if that were not enough, Lully has left Davenport’s guides arrive to drive them into town. Miranda does not know where to start looking for her shipmates, and without money to rent a room she has nowhere to turn. Davenport invites her to stay with him at the hotel, but Miranda, uncertain of what his suggestion implies, hesitates. Davenport confesses to owning the hotel and having a suite of rooms kept for his use year round. Miranda accepts the offer of his room and he stays in another room with his plants. Romance hovers but Miranda’s mind stays on finding her friends.

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Maxine Cambra, Member SCBWI, Anderson, California
Emma’s relationship with God is challenged, as she reflects on feelings of abandonment at an early age. Forgiveness is the key that unwraps the wonderful package God has waited fifteen years to give Emma. When she decides to fulfill her dream of botanical gardens and tearoom in the old Victorian manse, a light romance begins to develop between Emma and Sam. Their spiky banter is a delightful mixture of tenderness and verbal swordplay.

Roses Will Bloom Again, by Lori Copeland, is a charming tale of godly romance with a splash of mystery. More than fifty published books, including her best-selling Brides of the West series, hail Copeland as a seasoned writer of quality romances. Godly morals and a down-to-earth style create a fun, quick read, appropriate for high school, as well as adult readers.

Pam Webb, Freelance Writer, Sandpoint, Idaho


F. Emergency physicians--Fiction; Medical personnel-Fiction. 345 p.

Continuing on from an earlier Christian medical series (Sacred Trust, Sollemn Oath, and Silent Pledge), Hannah Alexander focuses on nurse Lauren McCaffrey in this new series, The Healing Touch. As introduced in the previous series, Lauren is a likable, dedicated nurse who takes her faith to work. She decides to escape the pressures of well-meaning friends and family to marry her off, and goes to work in a small community hospital in Dogwood Springs, Missouri. Lauren has difficulties fitting into this outwardly picturesque little town, yet she desires to make a go of her new locale. When Grant, an older attractive widower who has teen twins arrives, things begin to change for the worse, and for the better for Lauren. Lauren finds herself battling her feelings for Grant, as she contends with a suspected drug ring, and tries to solve a medical mystery.

Hannah Alexander is the pen name of the husband and wife writing team of Melvin and Cheryl Hodde. Their combined talent, and knowledge of writing and medicine make for a realistic and enthralling novel. The characters are believable, as are the situations. There is a fine balance of drama and humor as the plot moves swiftly along. Those seeking suspense, as well as human drama will be interested in Second Opinion. And those who became fans of the previous Alexander series will definitely be putting this one on the-to-read list.

Kim Harris, Librarian, Churchville, New York


F. Terrorism--Fiction; Undercover operations--Fiction; Nuclear power plants--Fiction; Middle East--Fiction; California--Fiction; Christian fiction. 368 p.

When a terrorist bomb blows up the Californian BART subway, Chapter 16, an elite, counter-terrorism team is called upon to track down the perpetrators before they launch an even bigger attack. Shafton’s Fire, by Jake Thoene, is so titled for the name of the small terrorist group of radical Hezbollah members determined to cause “Satan’s Fire” with the meltdown of Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant—a catastrophe that Chapter 16 is narrowly able to avert.

Jake Thoene has written an eye-opening and timely novel which raises interesting questions about the security of our nation’s nuclear power plants. However, the book does not reach the quality level found in other recently released novels of similar topics. The plot line is not unified, and character development is inconsistent. An inordinate amount of time is spent pursuing a false lead on a white supremacist group, which is left unsatisfactorily resolved when the second half of the book pursues the Hezbollah track. The book also gives the sense of a military team operating purely on hunches and suspicions, rather than any hard fact; there seems to be a “Rambo” mentality, rather than the sense of an organized team with all parts working together under an umbrella of an authority who really knows what is going on. In some ways, the Chapter 16 team seems almost as much of a rogue team as the Hezbollah group does.

The reader expects the Chapter 16 team to be the focal point of the story, but it soon becomes essentially a one-man-show, with minor appearances by a couple of other stereotypically described team members. Additionally, the book describes one rather crude, albeit slightly humorous scene, and has somewhat gruesome scenes of violence, which are mercifully brief. What is disturbing about this book is that it is not entirely believable. The events seem plausible, but because of the inconsistencies of its parts, the whole story has an air of unreality about it, and thus the violence is more disturbing than if it were realistic. The book reads like an action movie, where the reader is already assured of the outcome, and is never really scared or worried about the actual events. Despite these weaknesses, Shafton’s Fire is an interesting book, and reminds us that although evil does exist in this world because God gave man free choice, God is, however, still on the throne, in control of all things.

Pam Beeler, Teacher, Cascade Christian High School, Medford, Oregon


F. Married people--Fiction; Christian fiction. 236 p.

Kathleen Scott has written the consummate marriage story—perfect Christian couple marries and has a perfect life, perfect home, perfect children. But, as in many marriages, life goes stale—husband has business problems but doesn’t want to worry wife so he doesn’t share. Wife has emotional needs but has been disappointed when husband hasn’t responded, so refuses to set herself up for continued rebuff. Communication is at a standstill. Both persons are prime targets for relationships outside the marriage and Juliet nearly succumbs. Ironically it is the death of a family pet that is the catalyst for change. Juliet gets so angry that she asks Michael to move out.

Michael is so afraid of losing his family that he seeks counsel and is surprised to learn that he has been a real jerk. Juliet questions a friend and realizes that instead of trusting God to meet all her needs, she has been looking to Michael. Individually they come to their senses, seek forgiveness, and live happily ever after. The story is a simple straightforward plot with a satisfying, though predictable, ending. Each woman who reads it will wish the shortcomings in her marriage could be solved as quickly and easily. In addition, she will wish for her husband to read it and see his part in their marriage problems.

Helen Hunter, Author, Freelance Writer, and Church Librarian, Cedar Rapids, Iowa


Robert Vaughan proves himself both a war veteran and a writing veteran with Touch the Face of God. The year is 1943 and Mark White is a B-17 bomber pilot of the 685th Heavy Bombardment Group. Just before his mission he falls for Emily Hagan. He and many of the others of his group have girls they hope to marry when the fighting is done. As the missions add up so does the anticipation of going home. As Mark battles the enemy he also fights his need for God. And it is after a particularly grueling battle that Mark finally realizes who the Pilot of his plane is.

Vaughan deftly intertwines Mark’s story with that of other pilots through letter and diary entries. In between the fast-action battle scenes we learn about the contribution of the Negro pilots during the war, as well as the difficult mission of the army chaplain, who has to fight the spiritual war while the men wage the physical. Touch the Face of God provides a


Twilight, by Kristen Heitzmann, is a gritty story of redemption. Suffering from post traumatic stress disorder, Firefighter Cal Morrison finds himself recovering from a stint in a mental health center, where he struggled through group therapy after his failed attempt to rescue a little girl caught in an unpredictable fire. Taken off the regular duty rotation at the firehouse, Cal employs his natural sense of humor by visiting schools and nursing homes, playing Spanner the fire safety clown. His painted-on smile, however, hides the intense mental and emotional struggle he encounters almost daily. Fire in any form gives him flashbacks; even barbequing steaks proves difficult.

Laurie, Cal’s old sweetheart, returns to town with her two young children, escaping a marriage gone horribly awry. When Laurie is kidnapped in a drug deal, Cal is forced to face his demons in the ultimate fiery test when he must save them both from a blazing inferno. While this may sound like a predictable plot-line, the story is anything but cliché. Heitzmann has written a pithy story about the flaws and frailties of real people, their struggles with God, difficult life situations, and relationships—and ultimately their redemption. Cal finally quits trying to handle things on his own, surrenders his life to God, and then learns the difficult lesson of waiting for God’s timing for the one thing he desires most. Laurie learns just how precious she is in God’s eyes when God’s love for her is mirrored in Cal’s willingness to lay down his life for her safety. Thrown in the mix is a large dose of mystery and suspense. Readers will find this a substantive book, well worth reading.

Pam Webb, Freelance Writer, Sandpoint, Idaho


F. Separated people—Fiction; Restaurateurs—Fiction; Restaurants—Fiction. 284 p.

Wildflowers, the eighth book in Robin Jones Gunn’s Glenbrooke series is a book that speaks to every woman’s heart. Once again, Gunn has made us feel at home in Glenbrooke by bringing back all of the characters we’re already familiar with from her other novels—only this time they are the givers, not receivers, of the much needed advice. Her emphasis remains on the necessity of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and she presents the awkwardness of being “unequally yoked” before she resolves the conflict. Following in her own traditions, Wildflowers is a compelling novel one is not anxious to put down.

Amanda Ottaway, English Major, Meredith College, Raleigh, North Carolina.

It is no surprise books describing small towns with larger-than-life folks are arriving en force. Authors like Garrison Keillor and Jan Karen regale tales of Minnesota and Mitford, while Angela Hunt and Lori Copeland weave stories of those inhabiting the island of Heavenly Daze. And now we have a slice of small town life Texas-style with Annette Smith and her Watermelon Days and Firefly Nights. This makes her fifth collection of original short stories and this one truly does contain heartwarming scenes from small town life as the substitle promises.

When times have become complicated a person longs to slow down, something the 3,400 some odd collection of inhabitants do so well in the fictional town of Ella Louise, Texas. Life indeed goes on there but at a slower, sweeter pace. For instance, that gaping hole in the Newman’s roof that’s been there for the past seven years, isn’t fixed for lack of negligence—it’s simply a reminder of how good their marriage really is. And life could be complicated for spinster twins and housemates Molly and Polly who get mixed up as babies and weren’t told by their mother until some eighty years later. If it made no difference who was who all that time, why worry now? Then again life can be a bit stressful for a newly divorced mother of active twins who tries to run the town’s only medical clinic; however, sometimes old hurts can be slowly healed with the help of a runaway dog. Through these vignettes readers will see love, friendship, forgiveness, and guilt, not to mention humor and heartwarming moments as they read all about the quirky townsfolk of Ella Louise.

For the most part Watermelon Days & Firefly Nights carries off the ability to combine modern times with old-fashioned goodness. The stories and characters could be even more developed, allowing readers a good hard look, instead of quick glimpses of the featured population. Readers who enjoy tales of small towns will want to look in on Ella Louise’s crew.

Sherri Beeler, Teacher, Cascade Christian High, Medford, Oregon

It is a large dose of mystery and suspense. Readers will find this a substantive book, well worth reading.

Pam Webb, Freelance Author, Sandpoint, Idaho


F. City and town life—Fiction; Humorous stories, American; Southern States—Social life and customs—Fiction. 185 p.

It is no surprise books describing small towns with larger-than-life folks are arriving en force. Authors like Garrison Keillor and Jan Karen
BOOK REVIEWS

ADULT NONFICTION

000’s—Generalities


“For those who love books, children, and God” is the invitation extended on the cover of A Time to Read, by Mary Ruth W. Wilkinson and Heidi Wilkinson Teel. This Canadian mother-daughter team offers a wealth of expertise with a unique perspective in their annotated bibliography listing more than 750 titles. Their insightful comments introduce each chapter and are also interspersed among the annotated book titles. A few less frequent topics appear in the chapter titles: Restoring, Introducing Young Children to Books, Picture Books, Music, Poetry, Bible Stories, Fairy Tales and Mythology, Fantasy and Science Fiction, Animal Stories, Historical Fiction, Good Stories, Prolific Authors for Avid Readers, Alternatives to “Young Adult” Fiction, Helps Along the Way to Good Books, and References. A box with one or more salient quotations graces the page before each chapter. Annotations vary from single sentences to paragraphs in length. Many entries refer to other titles by the same author, either specifically by name or generically.

Mary Ruth Wilkinson has taught “a literary and Christian approach to children’s books,” and has shared them together with her daughter, for more than thirty years. Chapter one demonstrates the value of The Story, and other significant stories, in providing context for life decisions. Chapter two gives several practical suggestions for employing literary experiences with the very young child. The last chapter on helps includes hints for Family Reading, The Family Library, Parental Guidance Suggested (with a section on The Potter Problem), Helpful Books and Articles, Magazines, and Sources of Good Books. The References include many comments about the sources cited. Separate indexes list authors, illustrators, and titles.

More than half of the titles included do not appear in the other booklists by Hunt, Lindskoog, McCallum & Scott, or Wilson [cf. CLJ, 7 (2/3):10-12]. Titles focused on Canada receive special attention. The wisdom displayed in the essay sections more than outweighs the very few typographical errors in this valuable tool. Highly recommended for all libraries as a supplement to the other standard tools.

Donna W. Bowling. Graduate Institute of Applied Linguistics Library, Dallas, Texas


027.62.51. Storytelling—United States; Children’s libraries—Activity programs—United States. 239 p.; 1 audio CD-ROM

Easy to use and full of ideas describes Six Ready-To-Go Storytimes with interactive 30-minute storytime programs. Each of the six thematic chapters begins with an outline, followed by a read-a-loud book suggestion, fingerplays, prop or puppet script, patterns, songs, and activity sheets. An accompanying CD, featuring fourteen songs, provides music to use with each storytime including a “welcome song” to begin each time.

From novice to seasoned veterans, this resource provides school and public librarians, preschool and elementary teachers, daycare providers and home-school parents ideas and all-inclusive directions to ensure an active, welcoming storytime. Public libraries will likely see active circulation from home school families as well as daycare and teachers.

Leroy Hommerding, Director, Fort Myers Beach P.L. District, Fort Myers, Florida

200’s—Religion


211. God—Proof. 1 video, col. 155 min.

The debate presented in this video enables the viewer to clarify his/her thoughts regarding God’s influence in the world. By presenting evidence for and against the existence of God, Craig and Atkins present a wealth of material for consideration. William Lane Craig, with doctorates in philosophy and theology, has written widely on reasonable faith, the Big Bang cosmology, and theism. Peter W. Atkins, with a doctorate in chemistry, has written university-level chemistry textbooks and on the interface of science with religion. The debate, moderated by William F. Buckley Jr., is lively and entered enough on specific points that the viewer comes away with having been challenged.

Recommended for academic library collections on science and religion, and in public libraries for contemporary discussion of science and religion. Adult discussion groups are sure to have much for deliberation and can divide the discussion presentation into three segments: for, against, and follow-up points.

Leroy Hommerding, Fort Myers Beach P.L. District, Fort Myers, Florida


220.5. Spiritual warfare. 302 p.

Unique in its subject, treatment, and conclusions, Beth Moore’s book is relevant, practical, and deeply challenging for all in the body of Christ. It has often been said that Christians are the only animal species that crucifies its wounded, and it is this topic that she so ably and compassionately treats. She has a wonderfully intimate way of talking straight to the reader as in a dialogue, making readers feel as if they were her most trusted friend and she is completely safe with them. In so doing the hard things she shares, many from her own personal experience, lose their rough edges that otherwise would bring denials and defensiveness.

The disciplined writing came as a consequence of reader reaction to her previous books: Breaking Free and Praying God’s Word. She discovered through letter research and personal interview several areas of commonality in those who had been seduced by Satan even while being godly people. This considerable treatment has three sections: a warning of danger, a prescription for avoiding seduction, and a treatment process for those who have fallen. Significant, also, is the way she gently yet firmly carries the reader along, even the somewhat resistant (as I was) who prefer not to read about evil. Her case studies are well encapsulated into 16 clearly defined characteristics of the process of seduction. She warns about the fragile balance which must be maintained between spiritual passion and biblical knowledge; in spending time in the Word to prepare a sermon or lesson compared to spending time in the Word to hear and love the Giver of the Word.

As Moore found it difficult to write the book briefly so it is hard to review it briefly. I kept asking where the book could be divided into two or even three books: I am sure her editors did the same. The sheer size of the book could put many readers off; and it is not one of the bedside variety. Working through it is a spiritual
discipline in itself but invaluable in its results. If one cannot manage the whole thing, at least the last part might be helpful for any church leadership group which deals in church discipline. I think it highly probable they will be hooked and read it from cover to cover; so packed with piercing gems and gracious wisdom as it is. There is gentle humor, in your face confrontation, and mature godly counsel all shot through with humility and grace. There are manyquotable statements but my favorite has to be from page 127, “God says yes to us as often as His purposes allow Him to; but when He does say no, He comforts us with His promises.”

This book is not one to be given to the newborn Christian, but to those who have walked the way enough to be humbly grateful for the keeping power of God. It is specifically written to those who may feel impervious to Satan’s assaults, or judgmental of the fallen, and especially to those who know their vulnerability and seek to shore up the defenses.

Ronadee Stent, Retired Missionary, Lamplighter Reviewer, Church Librarian, Avid Reader, Dallas, Oregon


This dramatic presentation brings to life the precarious existence of early Christianity. The epic network television mini series from the late 80s follows two key leaders—Peter and Paul— together and separately, through three epochal decades. The viewer witnesses the stoning of Stephen, the road to Damascus, their encounter in Jerusalem, their conflicts over how the word of Christ should be spread. Paul’s travels to Asia Minor and Greece. Peter and Paul’s clashes over Jewish law, and Peter’s decision to follow in Paul’s courageous footsteps enable the viewer to see both the challenge and influence of Jesus in one’s life.

Recommended for public library collections offering historical drama and a movie title worthy of inclusion because of Emmy Awards. Features include closed captioning in English, and a Spanish language track with or without English subtitles. The chapter titles, and titles when geographic location changes, enable even junior high youth to readily understand and follow the story and events.

Lorey Humberding, Fort Myers Beach P.L. District, Ft Myers Beach, Florida


This title introduces the idea that God as our Father remains unknown to many Christians—that fatherhood is obscure. Interesting thought. Phillips suggests that because Jesus came in the flesh as man, the chasm that separates man from God doesn’t exist between Jesus and man. He further asserts that “we stop short of the very thing Jesus said was His deepest heart’s desire—that we know His Father as He did.” Then he sets out to prove that is true.

In 39 short chapters of three to four pages the reader is taken through every conceivable (so it seems) thought about the fatherhood of God—Abba-Father, the world’s most loving Daddy, discovering whether or not God is really good, etc. Some chapters end with a prayer and most leave you encouraged to pursue a relationship with Him. He addresses the lies of Genesis, i.e., independence (which says we don’t really need God) and fear (God is going to punish you. Hide from Him) which keep us from a deep relationship.

This book, meant to be read contemplatively and without too many stops and starts, is devotional in nature. Recommended for adults and older teens and would work well in church libraries.

Helen Hunter, Freelance Writer/Editor, Cedar Rapids, Iowa


“This is perhaps the most exciting age in all of history as God moves His players into position on the chessboard of history,” writes John Loren Sandford, author of Elijah Among Us. This book is a sequel to his earlier work, The Elijah Task (Logos Int’l., 1977).

In Elijah Among Us, Sandford explores the prophetic office and explains why he believes we live with end-time prophets. His work reveals an underlying concern that the church and lay people frequently pursue “a personal word” from prophets that borders on using prophets as diviners or fortune tellers.

He explores word definitions, using Hebrew text, and identifies what he feels are prophetic requirements, such as self-discipline, prayer, and Bible study for those working in the gifts of prophecy.

The book is divided into three sections. The first examines the history of the prophetic office and how God talked to humankind through the prophets. The second describes the functions of the prophetic office and includes warnings, personal words, words of knowledge, and dreams and visions. Part three highlights the purposes and tasks of prophets today. The index is reader friendly, while the bibliography shows the depth of his research.

The book is informative and well written.

Gail Welborn, Freelance Writer/Reporter, Everett, Washington


Those who judged Jesus were actually judging themselves. What a powerful premise. Using Black’s Law Dictionary and other secular sources, Boice and Ryken explore the judicial process Jesus was exposed to while on Earth the first time. This topic has been explored before and well researched, however this book also provides the reader with a theological lesson regarding Jesus and His divinity and humanity.

Donna Eggett, Freelance Author, Radford, Virginia

CHRISTIAN LIBRARY JOURNAL 41 APRIL 2003
It also shows how the Father God was involved in the trial. Within every chapter the authors turn to the reader and force the reader to come to terms regarding their own spiritual condition. The readers are asked to consider if they are ready for their trial.

Short, riveting chapters compel the reader on to the next chapter. Facts and research are never provided out of context or without explanation. The reader never gets lost in the factoids but in fact is drawn in to the whole mistrail of Jesus. Without being overly dramatic the authors present the suffering of Jesus at the hands of the people in power then. This book would be great to read during the Easter season. It will help one appreciate what Christ did for us.


Michael Card’s written work (he also wrote a song under the same title) on creativity, art, and the Christian journey is as lyrical, emotive, and profound as many of his songs. He’s accurate in calling Scribbling in the Sand a discussion, because he constantly invites the reader’s interaction as he describes biblical personalities—Noah, John, the prophets, Jesus—and various contemporary examples that add more facets to the discussion. His personal vignettes and slices of his song lyrics weave in and out of the text. Card gives significant space to the role of community in the expression of artistic creativity. The chapter, “Letters to Christian Artists,” brings in the insights and contemplations of five men from diverse backgrounds. The final two chapters contain a prompting for readers to discover how to give of their creativity; and eleven succinct suggestions, which Card calls advice, for getting practical about using the creative being God has molded within us, His creations.

From the explanation of how he came to title his book Scribbling in the Sand to his “practical advice” on how to exercise God-given creativity, Michael Card magnetizes a reader’s attention. He is genuine, humble, and candid in sharing his own questions while seeking to understand the subject. Card’s own experiences add authenticity to the book, but don’t take center stage or skew his focus on the place creativity does and should take in a Christian’s journey of worship and obedience. Anyone with a leaning toward writing, music, or the arts will be stimulated by and absorbed in his sharing of ideas, his examples, and his single-minded concentration toward worshiping the Creator using all of one’s creativity. Card’s writing is descriptive, gentle yet intense, and wholly pleasurable to read. Those who enjoy his songs will appreciate his stylistic and excellent writing, as will anyone interested in the topic of creativity, the arts and how these interplay with a lifestyle of following Christ. However, expect to be challenged to move forward in the expression of creative skill—Card’s words won’t leave you sedate and sleepy.

Karen Schmidt, Freelance Writer , Marysville, Washington


The Seven Churches is a video for public library collection for anyone interested in seeking to study biblical end-times and the significance of the book of Revelation. Host David Dunn takes the viewer to Turkey for a firsthand visit to the seven cities addressed in the book of Revelation 2-3. The historic comparisons between ancient and modern times, and the meaning of Scripture’s words enable both an appreciation for the natural beauty of Asia Minor and the relevance of Revelation for today.

Private and religious high school and college instructors in religion or the humanities will find this docudrama useful for discussion and reflection. The map illustrations and real life scenes will spark an interest among youth to enable consideration of Revelation’s message.

Leroy Hummerding, Fort Myers Beach P.L. District, Ft Myers Beach, Florida


239'. Terrorism--Religious aspects--Islam; War--Religious aspects--Islam; Jihad; Islamic fundamentalism: Islam and politics; Religion and politics. 121 p.

Many times powerful information is shared in few words. Such is the case with Light in the Shadow of Jihad by Ravi Zacharias, renowned theologian and apologist. He takes the reader back to September 11, 2001 and shares answers to pressing questions such as, Where was God—and on whose side? Is this true Islam or a pollution of it? and so forth. In a conversational manner, Zacharias helps the reader to begin to understand God’s view regarding this tragedy. Using easy-to-read passages to clarify his position, he delves into the Biblical response to September 11th. While written primarily to comfort and clarify, there is also a teaching component which readers searching for answers may not benefit from in the book. The reader is looking for answers and they are provided but not in an easy to determine fashion all the time.

Zacharias, at times, wanders from the main theme and goes into apologetics mode, leaving the reader with confusion regarding what the theme of the chapter really is. Short, powerful chapters attempt to convey the essence of Christianity’s answer to bad occurrences. Adults interested in apologetics or comfort may find this book helpful.

Karen Schmidt, Freelance Writer , Marysville, Washington


241. Children and war; War--Miscellaneous; War--Religious aspects--Christianity; Terrorism--Miscellaneous; Children’s questions and answers. 151 p.

130 Questions Children Ask is a timely resource and valuable resource for teachers and parents as they respond to children’s reactions to war and terrorism. While the questions are those children ask, the answers are ones fifth graders can read, and answers parents/teachers can use to help deal with younger children’s fears and concerns. Questions range from “Do we need gas masks in our home?”, to “Is it wrong to hate Osama Bin Laden?”

Of particular help is a section of twenty family activities, and one offering family devotions for times of war. The Bible is used in some of the answers and a section offers comforting Bible memory verses.

Recommended for public library children’s collections offering contemporary issues. Christian librarians can add to bring both life and faith to this timely discussion.

Leroy Hummerding, Fort Myers Beach P.L. District, Ft Myers Beach, Florida


In the prologue to Charles F. Stanley’s most recent book he establishes that wisdom will help one walk wisely. Without wisdom man can only walk unwisely. He enumerates the expectations one can have if he chooses to walk wisely: contentment, courage, confidence, peace, progress and prosperity. Walking unwisely is also a choice and the harvest from the choice will be conflict, consternation, disappointment, disillusionment, and discontentment.

Using that succinct bit of information as a springboard for the remainder of the book, Stanley clearly establishes the difference between the wisdom of the world and God’s wisdom. The former is grounded in man’s fallen
nature, the latter in the “new nature” given at the time of spiritual rebirth.

The reader could pick and choose chapters depending on his need for wisdom in a particular area—Wisdom for: confronting temptation; choosing friends and business associates; building deep, lasting, godly friendships; healing a damaged relationship; in times of conflict and criticism; and for establishing the ultimate relationship.

The book is appealing because it is so readable, but one of the things I particularly like, especially from “big” name authors is that Stanley is transparent about his own search for wisdom. He freely uses anecdotes from his life and his church to illustrate his points. The book is full of practical suggestions for finding wisdom and making the right choices.

I highly recommend it for church libraries and public libraries.

Helen Hunter, Freelance Writer/Editor, Cedar Rapids, Iowa


During the 18th century, Jonathan Edwards, drawing on his deep dependence upon God, fueled the Great Awakening. Many modern Christians also have been awakened by Edwards and his message about our sin-hating, mercifully redeeming God. A thirty day devotional, His Redeeming Love, gives the reader a chance to establish the ultimate relationship. The lack of scriptural reference in many devotional studies illustrating the ways in which prayer was answered in Finney’s life. Each chapter begins with a quote from Parkhurst’s edited book on Finney’s Principles of Prayer (Bethany House) and ends with a question to provoke personal reflection or group discussion.

Although the primary intention of the book is not to stimulate interest in the Autobiography of Charles G. Finney (Helen Wessel, ed.; Bethany House), it will certainly do so for many readers. The anecdotes quoted reveal a man honestly and openly sharing his life experiences, including his struggles. When he quotes his successes he does so without seeming proud of them. There is a summary of Finney’s life in Appendix C.

Many of the experiences related are most instructive. In chapter twenty-one, on Prayer and Difficult Decisions, he relates how he went to Rochester to serve a church there after advice not to go, because he realized as he continued to pray that he was saying no for the wrong reasons.

The danger of any anecdotal work is evident here. Not every experience could be imitated, and some should not be sought or thought to be normative. This is true, for example, in chapter three where he speaks of his experience of the baptism of the Spirit or in chapter fourteen on Prayer and the Pulpit. In the latter, Finney’s testimony to not doing any written preparation at all before preaching is not good advice, even though his emphasis on coming to the pulpit in a spirit of prayer and dependence on the Spirit is. The lack of scriptural reference in many chapters is not helpful in this regard.

Rodney Sent, Former Missionary to Pakistan, Adult Sunday School Class Teacher, Dallas, Oregon


A Simple Gift of Comfort is an update of Jane Kirkpatrick’s A Burden Shared. It is an appealing, encouraging-to-read gift book which will remind readers of a sixty-four page “thinking of you” hardcover greeting card.

“A Healing Words for Difficult Times,” proclaims the sub-title. Throughout the book Kirkpatrick speaks as if she and the reader sit across the table from each other, sipping cups of tea. She begins by saying, “I want to give you words of wisdom... comfort... joy... endurance... words to nourish your soul...”. She goes on to mention sorrow, loss, dreams unfulfilled, and change. Scripture verses add credibility and reinforcement to her gently-spoken advice.

Photos by Lisa Hollister Sorenson, an award-winning photographer, add to the allure of the book throughout its five sections. She includes small, simple, homey pictures with muted colors and a pleasing non-glare finish easy to look at.

A Simple Gift of Comfort is an ideal gift for a good friend who needs comfort and hope. It is also well-suited for the church or home library. Librarians can suggest it to a patron passing through a life-storm. For home use, a book of this caliber merits a place on the coffee table where one can pick it up and reread snatches again and again, or to offer to a guest who needs encouragement.

Betty M. Hockett, Writer/Speaker/Teacher, Newberg, Oregon


Dr. Dick Eastman, president of Every Home for Christ, writes a small book with a powerful, profound, yet simple message. God created people to worship. Worshipping God brings God into our midst. The Japanese translation of Psalm 22:3 reads “When God’s people praise Him, He brings a big chair and sits there.” Whatever the problem or need, whether global or local, worshipping God is an important key of intercession. Dr. Eastman traces seven important steps of worship saturated intercession that help people focus on God with new passion.

This is the type of book that excites the reader with new purpose and devotion by encouraging readers to find out how worship brings joy and transforms every situation. God answers the worship of his people with miracles that cannot be understood or explained apart from His power. Read how a 200-year-old omnu tree mysteriously explodes, not once but twice; or how a monastery disappears in fire. Find out how worship is an important key of revival. As Eastman quotes A.W. Tozer, “Revival is a sudden bestowment of a spirit of worship upon God’s people.” This compelling book is for everyone who wants to be part of a new surge of revival. Learn how to pray big prayers.

Paula Stewart Marks, School Principal, Bend, Oregon


Louis Parkhurst Jr. has done a commendable job of taking extracts from Charles Finney’s autobiography and compiling a one-month series of devotional studies illustrating the ways in which prayer was answered in Finney’s life. Each chapter begins with a quote from Parkhurst’s edited book on Finney’s Principles of Prayer (Bethany House) and ends with a question to provoke personal reflection or group discussion.

Betty M. Hockett, Writer/Speaker/Teacher, Newberg, Oregon

Donna Eggett, Freelance Writer, Radford, Virginia
**Christian Library Journal**

**ADULT NONFICTION**


Here’s a title for career and family growth collections in public libraries. In *God at Work*, Veith unpacks the biblical teaching about the doctrine of vocation, emphasizing now what we should specially do with time or career, but what God does in and through our callings. The spiritual framework for thinking about these issues can help to balance collections dependent on self-help therapies and self-chosen platitudes.

Clearly meant to challenge the reader as a worker, as a citizen, in the family, and in vocation, this book will probably do well by word-of-mouth referral. Veith is co-author of several books on Christianity and culture and a frequent conference speaker.

*Lenoy Hommerding, Fort Myers Beach P.L. District, Fort Myers Beach, Florida*


*Lenoy Hommerding, Fort Myers Beach P.L. District, Ft Myers Beach, Florida*


248.4. Christian life; David, King of Israel. 236 p.

Rebecca Manley Pippert, who once worked as a field worker for Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, is now an internationally known speaker and writer. She has given keynote speeches at many conferences, including Billy Graham’s, and her books have been translated into more than twenty-five languages. Pippert is best known for *Out of the Saltshaker & into the World*, her book on lifestyle evangelism, but I predict *A Heart For God* will soon catch up. In it, as the subtitle says, she shows us what we can learn from David’s life, but instead of focusing on the same old angles of adultery, murder, and rebellious children, which Christians sometimes feel they know only too well, she focuses on his years in the wilderness running from a vengeful and murderous Saul, what he learned from it, and what we, in turn, can learn from him.

Pippert’s insights on David are fresh and thought-provoking and each of her chapters ends with questions that encourage the reader to personally apply what she’s taught so far. Throughout, she shows readers how David brought all of his life - his sin, his anger, his grief, his joy - to God in honest openness, and how by doing so, he developed “…a heart like his’ - a heart that draws its life moment by moment from the living God, our Creator and Redeemer’. Her conclusion is that the same thing is possible for us, if we approach life the same way. We, too, can have a heart for God.

*Betty Window, Bowling Green Christian Academy, Bowling Green, Ohio*


From a reluctant waitress to a back stage pass, Tommy Tenney brings us to a full orb view of worship; one way to seeing things from God’s perspective. Written with uncomplicated vocabulary and style, each of the chapters contain much practical information to guide into attitude and life-changing magnification of God.

Tommy Tenney takes two of his biggest concerns, forging together the passion for God with compassion for man, and creates a work that is a practical primer in accomplishing his goal. Tenney builds on his previous title, *Chasing God, Serving Man* (*Destiny Image*, 2001), where he set the premise that we need both Marys and Marthas in the Church.

In his new work, Tenney has constructed a resource book, a how-to that answers many of the questions Christians have about pursuing God and providing service to the body. He begins by building an inspirational foundation, using compelling classics from the past. Many heroes of the faith such as Amy Carmichael George MacDonald, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and Hannah Smith, are highlighted. At the conclusion of each moving story, Tenney adds a Reflections and Recipes section that offers practical suggestions to overcoming the subject of that person’s contemplations.

The book is divided into three sections: Mary’s Prayers, Martha’s Recipes and a Resources portion. In the first segment, Tenney explores classic thoughts on prayer and pursuit. He then supports it with contemporary thought on the same subject. The second segment speaks to the challenge of equipping the saints for the work they are now impassioned to pursue. The third part bursts with a storehouse of resources: a list of devotional books, a compilation of ministries nationwide containing addresses, telephone numbers, and their web sites, and Internet resources.
Tenney’s book will itself be an excellent resource when it comes to applying the principals of living out one’s faith through service to others. It is full of insightful advice for the layperson and clergy alike. Highly recommended.

Cathy M. Elliott, Freelance Writer, Anderson, California


248.8'45. Family--Religious life: Character--Study and teaching; Christian education--Home training. 196 p.

John and Susan Yates take on a timely topic that has great relevance—character. It isn’t difficult to see how our country is showing bankruptcy when it comes to character—all one has to do is turn on the news or glance at the headlines. The authors early in their book recognize how our country has shifted in values since WWII, with the shift going to a more self-oriented society. And though society is a contributor towards shaping and influencing our children, there are other factors that form character, the parent is still one of the most influencing factors. However, with all these considerations in mind the authors point out that it is God who truly fine-tunes a life.

It is quite clear children learn more through example, so much of the book is directed to adults, particularly parents, describing ways in which readers can show, instead of tell, their children what character is all about. Each chapter concentrates on one particular character component and concludes with study questions, making this a resource adaptable to group studies, such as a Sunday school class. And yet, this book is not just for parents—it is beneficial to anyone who is concerned about developing Godly character.

Each author takes turns at a chapter, lending a personal point of view to the material covered. Writing with confidence and experience, being pastors and parents of five children, the Yateses provide a thoughtful guide for developing our children’s character, using personal accounts and practical advice. Each chapter concludes with questions to the panel. The subject is handled with directness and respect as the panelists challenge each other and deal with audience concerns, as well as bring in humor.

The video lends itself to being viewed in one setting or in segments. Adult discussion groups would have a lot to probe. Retreat planners could use as a provocative and challenging session. Public libraries could add to comparative religions or contemporary religious discussion collections.


How do couples stay connected? Do emotions lead us to God? The Willifords open their lives and their married relationship to readers to see how couples can address these questions and others. While not being perfect examples (a plus for readers), they enable readers to assess how everyday activities, including frustration and crisis, become part of the process of growing together spiritually.

The practical steps offered are sure to give hope that growth is possible. Because the steps are offered amidst their real life challenges, spirituality becomes not so much a model but a process a couple does together.

Highly recommended for self-help, marriage and family, and adult growth collections.

Lenny Hommerding, Fort Myers Beach P.L. District, Ft Myers Beach, Florida


248.8'66. Bereavement--Religious aspects--Christianity; Suicide--Religious aspects--Christianity; Consolation. 180 p.

Suicide is a subject that most of us would rather not consider because it raises such heartrending questions, particularly when the suicide victim is a Christian. Author Albert Hsu is no stranger to the pain and anguish felt by someone who has lost a loved one to suicide. After his father’s suicide, Hsu wrestled with the emotional and theological questions that surround suicide, and out of his pain and searching arose Grieving a Suicide.

This book—divided into three parts: When suicide strikes, The lingering questions, and Life after suicide—is well organized and covers many of the issues facing loss by suicide. It includes an appendix of resources for suicide survivors and suicide prevention and many footnoted references. Yet the author never loses sight of the compassion and comfort needed for healing as he draws on the resources of faith to point survivors to God and the hope he gives for the future.

A fitting summary of the author’s views on Grieving a Suicide is as follows, “God doesn’t only absorb the pain of grief and loss; he makes a way through it. Because suffering is within the realm of God’s comprehension and knowledge, it becomes a point of contact between us and God. If God knows suffering and we know suffering, then we can know God even in the midst of the suffering. God can be known through suffering because he has made himself available to us through it, through opening himself up to the pain and grief of this world” (150).

Grieving a Suicide is a book about a very difficult subject yet one that needs to be faced by those who have lost a loved one, their pastors and counselors, and all those who love and grieve with them. An excellent resource for all library shelves.

Coil Carey, Young Adult Librarian, Public Library, Plano, Illinois


Counseling in African-American Communities is not your typical reference book. Unlike other counseling books, June and Black have collected essays from experts addressing specific needs in any community. Four powerful chapters enurate the experiences and teaching of respected professionals with years of experience dealing with the topic written to in each section. The four chapters are confronting addictions, confronting family issues, confronting issues of mental health, and confronting other critical issues. Subsumed in these chapters are wonderful, informative, and well-written essays with a balanced view of the issue under discussion. In the first chapter regarding addictions, gambling, sex, internet, and other addictions, the issues are discussed with passion and love for the person suffering and the family. One strong point of the book is a full appreciation of the problem is demonstrated with no toleration for the sinfulness of it. For example, in the mental issues chapter depression is discussed openly and the possible causes for it. Along with a frank discussion of the medicines is a helpful biblical insight. This insight is not just added for show but demonstrates people are a mixture of body, soul, and mind.

There are many issues candidly handled in this book, including straight forward discussions and suggestions. There is a chapter regarding demon possession. The practical, biblical advice and counsel provided is excellent and worthy of reading by counselors, patients, and family members. While written for the African-American community, this book is helpful for all ethnicities.

Bianca Elliott, Teacher, Linwood, Kansas


261.5'5. Religion and science. 252 p.

Jimmy H. Davis and Harry L. Poe follow up their previous, title, Science and Faith: An Evangelical Dialogue, (Broadman & Holman, 2000) with this study of intelligent design as an evidence for the existence of God. Davis is Professor of Chemistry and Poe Professor of Faith and Culture, both at Union University in Jackson, Tennessee.

Davis and Poe begin with a historical overview of how religion and philosophy have viewed the subject of design up to its eclipse by skepticism and Darwinism in the nineteenth century. In separate chapters on cosmology, mathematics and physics, and chemistry and biology; they describe the recent developments renewing interest in design as an evidence of the Creator.

Despite the skepticism of both liberal and conservative Christian groups about intelligent design, the authors guardedly defend the utility of the argument: “Satisfactory empirical evidence may be present to conclude that a Designer made the universe but . . . we receive this knowledge by faith.” They hope that the current discussion of design in nature may restore a recognition of other ways of knowing reality besides empirical science and even point the way to a reintegration of our knowledge of physical and spiritual reality “rooted in the ancient Hebrew understanding of the soul made in the image of God.”

This book provides an excellent survey of the history of the idea of design and of the scientific developments that have brought design back to the fore in our postmodern era. The tables, graphs, and line drawings are adequate to help understand the chapters on science and the index includes the names of persons and major topics. The opening chapters on the theological and philosophical background of design may be difficult for many adults, but the fascinating sections on the sciences are accessible to students who have mastered their high school science courses.

David Haddon, Writer, BS, UC Berkeley, JVP, Christianity Today, Redding, California


The music wars are but a symptom of a larger issue, namely “What is Worship?”. Horton’s book, A Better Way, seeks to answer this question. His thesis is that our current concepts of worship have been conditioned far too much by the world’s philosophies and far too little by the Scriptures. What we do in worship has been determined more by what will appeal to people today than by what God requires. It has become subject to the passing fads of the age, so much so that already many in the newest generation reaching adulthood are ceasing to resonate with what contemporary worship offers.

Horton acknowledges that he approaches the subject from a reformed viewpoint. He sees the weekly worship service as a covenant renewal ceremony, bringing to our consciousness the glorious drama of God’s works. He examines preaching, along with the sacraments of baptism and communion, all from the perspective that they highlight what God does for us. Along with this Horton critiques so much of what passes for worship today, but which majors on what we are doing for God. Other parts of worship, such as prayers, reading of Scripture, and singing hymns and songs should equally emphasize what God does, rather than what we want or feel. One of the most stimulating chapters, and most of them are such, compares the worship variations in churches with their eschatology.

The main thesis of this needs to be seriously considered by not only pastors but all involved in developing the worship traditions and practices in their churches. From that point of view it is a book to put in appropriate people’s hands or to use as a study project by the church board or music committee!

Rodney Stent, Former Missionary to Pakistan, Adult Sunday School Teacher. Dallous Oregon.


When Pagan Kennedy met William Henry Sheppard as a minor character in another book, she knew the story of this charismatic missionary-traveler-explorer needed to be told.

William Phipps, a professor at Davis and Elkins College, Elkins, West Virginia, was born in Sheppard’s home town, Waynesboro, Virginia and previously wrote The Sheppards and Lapsley (The Presbyterian Church, 1991), which chronicles the part played by these first two American Presbyterian missionaries to Congo in that country’s history.

Kennedy writes about the biographer of Sheppard’s wife “engaging in a kind of speculative biography” because of a dearth of sources, then confesses, “I find myself resorting to similar tactics.” The drawback of her speculative biography is that of having to “probably” distract from what is otherwise a fascinating telling of the life of an extraordinary man in Black Livingstone is this: it appears at times to be historical fiction.

Her inordinate use of such suppositions as “could have,” “might have,” “perhaps,” and “probably” distract from what is otherwise a
wonderfully told tale. A novelist, Kennedy has a
great flair for language and description, but she
attributes attitudes and feelings to some in the
story that cannot be corroborated. For example,
she states that the Presbyterian church would not
send William Sheppard to Africa without a
white missionary to accompany him and be in
charge. On the other hand, in William Sheppard,
Phipps documents the fact that the church would
not send any person alone to Africa.

When Samuel Lapsley volunteered in 1889, the
curch sent him and Sheppard as co-founders of
the American Presbyterian Congo Mission.
each missionary received the same salary and
and was expected to have an equal voice in mission
airs. Both men wrote of their close friendship.
Nevertheless, other writers (including Kennedy)
report that a substrata of racism existed, as
evidenced by Presbyterian church segregation in
the American South.

William Sheppard came to be respected and
loved in Congo; he became an expert hunter; he
discovered a lake, was invited to join the Royal
Geographical Society, and spoke in Exeter Hall
in London; he met with two American
presidents; he spoke to overflow crowds at
churches, schools, and halls throughout eastern
America, where he was dubbed Black
Livingstone; he stood up against human rights
violations and atrocities in Leopold’s Congo. He
also suffered hardships both in Africa and in his
racially segregated homeland.

When Sheppard confessed to marital infidelities
in Africa, he was “retired” to America in 1910,
and the denomination kept his failing quiet. In
1912 he became pastor of a small church in
Louisville, Kentucky, and renewed his traveling
and speaking engagements. He and his wife,
Lucy, ran a mission in a slum area for years,
holding classes and offering the same kinds of
services as they had in Africa.

Black Livingstone: A Tale of True Adventure is
notable for bringing the story of Sheppard to
light, but William Sheppard: Congo’s African
American Livingstone is recommended reading for
an authoritative biography.

Secure in the everlasting arms / Elisabeth
Elliot. LCCN 2002000900. Ann Arbor,
Mich.: Vine Books, 2002. PAP, 1565552940,

Over her lifespan writer, radio teacher, and
popular speaker Elisabeth Elliot has traveled to
all manner of places and interacted with diverse
individuals. She relates snippets of these travels
and people and how they meshed with her
journey of faith in a semi-monthly publication,
The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter. Secure in the
Everlasting Arms is a compilation of many of
these articles, most no more than three pages
long. The range of experiences and faith lessons
Elliot accumulated makes for fascinating
reading, and then there’s the take-away value—
nuggets of eternal truth from Scripture,
sometimes quoted by verse and sometimes
filtered through other writers or persons. The 59
readings are grouped by general theme such as
joy and sorrow, finding contentment, missionary
travels, marriage, courtship and singleness, and
daily faith.

Secure in the Everlasting Arms is enjoyable and
productive reading. The short essays are quick
to read and usually contain deep or thought-
worthy ideas. Readers could use the book within
their daily devotions or as an inspirational
injection into their daily routines. Most lend
themselves to reading aloud for a family or
group, and the themes are all-encompassing
enough to interest most North American
Christians. Those who enjoy Elliot’s style or
writing will appreciate this book, and so might
those who’ve not yet discovered her distinctive
voice and insights. Compared to Elliot’s The
Music of His Promises (Vine Books, 2000; CLJ,
8:1), also a volume of short readings, these seem
to be more uplifting and inspiring, and also
interesting for the wide range of people and
places introduced.

Karen Schmidt, Freelance Writer/Editor, Marysville, Washington

The Scottish Covenanters / Worchester, Penn.: Gateway Films, 2002. VID,

The Scottish Covenanters introduces the viewer
to a seventeenth-century group of Scottish
people known as The Covenanters, hundreds of
whom died to secure their freedom to worship.
Following various prayers or commemorative
services in Scotland, along with documentary
footage or commentary, viewers become
familiar with the major personalities, incidents,
and complexities of this struggle to grasp why
the Covenanters acted as they did.

Those interested a historical picture of the
conflict between church and state, or reasons
why the roots of Scottish pride derive from
sometimes unfamiliar sources will find in this
story video a remarkable movement.

Church groups seeking to understand the
opposition of earlier religious will find this
insightful. Recommended for large public
libraries seeking to include a wide religion
collection including minority movements.

Loray Homanerding, Director, Fort Myers Beach P.L. District, Fort
Myers, Florida

Imagination & Spirit: a contemporary
Quaker reader / edited and introduced by J.
Brent Bill ; foreword by C. Michael
Curtis. Bill, J. Brent, LCCN 2002029953.
Richmond, Ind.: Friends United Press,
Rating: 5

This anthology offers quality writing from a
broad spectrum of Quakers, and there is no
comparable title to suggest. All writers included
have been published with a mainstream
publisher (not a religious house) or have sold
widely enough to be well known.

The short, easy-to-read fiction and non-fiction
essays seek to get at the mystery at the core of
all being. Even if the reader has not encountered
a particular writer before, the overview
impression offered by the writer appearing before the essay, offers a
wealth of material serving as a comprehensive
biographical sketch and an intimate glimpse in
how faith was lived out in the writer’s life.

Readers are treated to down-home spun tales
brining both tears and smiles as a couple’s cat
ends its ninth life, as well as direct hitting
commentary about the intensity of the
opposition to a committed Christianity.

Useful for prayer groups, for adult discussion
groups, and for retreat reflection. Imagination &
Spirit deserves a worthy place on congregation
and pastor shelves. Public libraries offering
contemporary storytelling yarns will delight a
host of readers by including this in the
collection.

Loray Homanerding, Director, Fort Myers Beach P.L. District, Fort
Myers, Florida

Clash of worlds / David Burnett. Grand
Rapids: Monarch, 2002. PAP, 1854245708,

291.2: Religions; Cults; Philosophy, Comparative;
Christianity and other religions; Missions--Theory.
252 p.

David Burnett provides us with an excellent
overview worldview studies from a Christian
perspective. His most notable contribution is his
treatment of a variety of decidedly non-
Christian worldviews. In a time when non-
Western religions and worldviews are growing
in popularity and acceptance, Burnett provides a
thoroughly Christian perspective which focuses
on the history, themes, and practical functions of
the competing worldviews.

Part One of the text begins with two
introductory chapters that outline the nature of
worldviews and the Christian’s need to explore
those worldviews. Part Two of the book treats
six “traditional worlds” in brief chapters. Here
are the historical overviews of secularism,
theism, Hinduism, Buddhism, the traditional
Chinese worldview, and Islam. The five
chapters that follow explore the issues involving the changes that must and do occur as a dominant worldview is replaced with another. The New Age movement is treated here, for instance.

Part Four includes three chapters that outline the biblical worldview and explores how worldviews are transformed and communicated.

The intellectual study of worldviews issues has increased significantly in the evangelical Christian church. This book should be included in the basic library of anyone who is engaging in that study for the first time. Likewise, those who have a long-time interest in worldview studies will benefit from Burnett’s reasoning and the endnotes he provides at the end of each chapter.

The book has a decidedly academic flair. There are limited graphics and a functional index included.

Daniel S. Brown, Ph.D., Professor of Communication, Grove City College, Grove City, Pennsylvania


The first chapter of Islam at the Crossroads quotes the prayer used by Muslims five times a day wherever they are. The book explains the five Pillars (practices) of Islam and its six Principles (beliefs), as well as the three types of Islam. The question of jihad (holy war) is also explored, and the authors distinguish between the violent expressions of this belief and that of moderate Muslims who believe that jihad “has to do with an inner struggle for perfect conformity with the will of Allah.”

Of the hundreds of new books on Islam, Islam at the Crossroads stands out as an excellent brief primer on a religion about which many Americans are woefully ignorant. It contains a brief history from Islam’s beginning to the present time; it includes a chronology and a chart of differences between some Christian and Islamic beliefs, with reference to an internet source for further comparisons. The authors point out the historic second-class-citizen status of Christians and Jews under Islam, wherein they were required to wear identifying clothing (reminiscent of the Jews under the Nazis) and pay extra high taxes.

The three well-qualified authors point out several common misconceptions about terrorists: Most of them are not struggling to better their lot in life. They are well-educated and often wealthy individuals. Violent attacks are not about domination by the West (much as extremists hate the West) but against all who stand in the way of extremist Islam. Neither are terrorist attacks about U.S. policies toward Israel and Palestine; they are about religion. Extremists “explicitly name and target Christianity, Judaism, and moderate Islam.”


Jeanette Hardage, Freelance Writer, Charleston, South Carolina


297. 246. Jesus Christ—Person and offices; Jesus Christ—Islamic interpretation; Koran—Relation to the Bible. 1 video, color, 154 min.

The dynamic interactive exchange presented in this film is sure to draw in the viewer of Who Is the True Jesus? Ally, a Muslim and president of the Islamic Information and Da’wah Center in Canada, and Smith, a Christian with a wide background on Islam and the historicity of the Qur’an, both give meaning and challenge to their side of the issue under consideration. The two-hour debate includes presentations by each with rebuttals and lively exchange. Their dialog is challenging but seasoned with cordiality and humor. Answers to questions submitted by the audience add to this comparative analysis of the Jesus of the Qur’an and Jesus of the Bible.

At a time when interest in Islam is high, this video is sure to be informative for many. The delightful and active discussion will help to keep viewers attention. Public libraries can add to comparative religions or history collections. Congregations could make this available for adult resource shelves. Adult study groups could use this lively debate for discussion for it lends itself to probing specific passages in the Bible and the Qur’an, as well as comments and views about the person of Jesus.

Leroy Hommerding, Director, Fort Myers Beach P.L. District, Fort Myers, Florida


Parents of college-bound students will appreciate Frank Brock’s new edition, An Educated Choice. Although Brock, President of Covenant College, starts out a bit stodgy and academic, by book’s end his philosophical wisdom will win readers. Better yet, it will inform and assist parents in their objective—matching their student to a college.

Brock’s use of charts, graphs, along with his personal experiences with his own children and students at Covenant College, lend credibility to this volume. He begins by proclaiming the virtues of college (hint: bigger is not necessarily better) and many chapters later, ends by citing his worries of college criteria. In between these chapters parents will discover their role in this phase of their child’s life, how to evaluate a college, and how to help their child get ready and involved in the process during their high school years. Further, he includes a good but rather disturbing chapter on teen lifestyles at college.

Brock has found a necessary niche in the literary marketplace. In researching Amazon.com only 6 of the 32 results under “choosing a college” were comparable to Brock’s book; and in ChristianBooks.com only 4 of the 22 results were comparable. Considering that 80% of high school students enter college, this type of book is an important tool for both parents and students.

An Educated Choice is a must read for parents of college-bound kids.

Educating Your Gifted Child can help. It also asks parents to reflect on why they do what they do. It shows how to merge Judeo-Christian beliefs with what experts in the field are saying, and urges parents to take into account the spiritual needs of children as educational challenges of gifted children are reviewed.

Caruana has a master’s degree in gifted education and taught both gifted and learning-disabled children in public schools before deciding to home school her two sons. The stories from her own experience, and extensive appendices on resources and support groups, are sure to offer encouragement and guidance as parents make educational choices.

Recommended in public library education and parenting collections, and in private schools offering parents resources for review.

Leroy Hommerding, Director, Fort Myers Beach P.L. District, Fort Myers, Florida


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An Educated Choice is a must read for parents of college-bound kids.

664'7/8. Mate selection; Dating (Social custom); Man-woman relationships. 201 p.

In the light of statistics on marriage, it doesn’t look good for singles looking for longevity in relationships. Dr. Neil Clark Warren, clinical psychologist and relationship counselor, tries to sweeten the odds with his pre-marital guide Date—or Soul Mate? Dr. Warren admonishes readers to know themselves first before they try to get to know potential marriage partners. So many people, he says, marry out of desperation, convenience, or even out of superficial attractions, then later regret their decision.

Most of this compact book contains chapters on compiling lists for qualities and even though it almost seems like creating a dating shopping list, there is value in deciding what a person desires, and cannot tolerate in a mate. Warren goes so far as to indicate that a person can decide whether or not to pursue a relationship after the second date.

Another aspect of the book is Dr. Warren’s website www.eharmony.com, which gives participants the opportunity to take a personality test. The site is an extension of the book, and provides counseling, pastors, and those seeking pre-marital advice.

Pam Webb, Freelance Writer, Sandpoint, Idaho


Lynn and Jeremy Miner, active in seeking grants, are partners in a consulting group specializing those involved in the process of grant writing. Public and private organizations both can find much of use in this step-by-step guide. Specifics include finding public grant funds at the national and state level, and private funds via foundations. Practical leads are offered by helping grant seekers become aware of directories, databases, web sites, and resources to explore to locate a government or private program for funding requests.

One chapter offers letter proposals for contacting private and corporate foundations, and several chapters concentrate on writing government proposals. The closing section deals with writing and editing techniques, and grant review decisions.

Donna W. Bowling, Graduate Institute of Applied Linguistics Library, Dallas, Texas


658.4'092. Leadership, Williams, Pat. 237 p.

Williams writes a power-packed leadership book with so many athletic, business, and leadership experts a reader will be exhausted after the first chapter. Williams’ unabashed dedication to Jesus Christ is clear on almost every page. His straightforward, unblinking look at what real power is, using the life of Christ, is invigorating. While he quotes people who are not Christian he uses them to demonstrate his points regarding leadership. His quotes of Maxwell, another leadership teacher, are never too many and the mutual fan club is not distracting.

In the introduction Williams explains to the reader that they will be using the greatest leader of all, Jesus Christ. He informs the reader he is a Christian but that one doesn’t have to be a Christian to follow the leadership examples of Christ. Williams has a premise that there are seven paradoxes to leadership exemplified by Christ. The paradoxes are seeing what isn’t there, daring to be a fool, daring to be weak, dying to live, encouraging failure, embracing crisis, and being a servant. Then, weaving in powerful examples and quotations, he goes on to explain the apparent paradox. He isn’t afraid to be vulnerable. He talks freely about his failures and shortcomings in professional and private life. He has accomplished much but he also recognizes it cost him. The choice to be a leader is not presented as an easy decision for the reader. Williams references Stephen Covey, a Mormon, as well as other non-Christian individuals.

Blanca Elliott, Educator, Linwood, Kansas


745.5. Patchwork—Patterns; Quilting—Patterns. 144 p.
Jeff Brumbeau’s book *The Quiltmaker’s Gift* (Pfeifer-Hamilton, 2000), a wonderful picture book about a quiltmaker who teaches a king about what is really important in life, inspired this book, *Quilts From the Quiltmaker’s Gift*, by Joanne Larsen Line and Nancy Loving Tubesing. It not only offers patterns and instructions for twenty of the quilt blocks from the original book, but it also provides visual glossaries which show the anatomy of both quilt blocks and quilts, “Wellness for Quilters” (ergonomic and safety tips for quilters), a chapter on quilting basics (including tools & techniques, color & fabric selection, cutting & piecing/pressing, settings & assembly, and borders & finishing), and a list of resources (suggested reading, Internet resources, including one that was inspired by the original book itself, and addresses for quilting organizations and professional quilters).

You expect wonderful color photos on slick, glossy paper in a quilting book, and this book has them, too, but what takes it from “just another quilting book” to “gotta have it” is the extras that are offered: details about the blocks (alternate names, earliest publication date, bits of history); watercolors from the original book, along with an “Artist’s Secrets” sidebar for each block, written by the illustrator, Gail de Marcken; a “Quilter’s Design Challenges” sidebar for each block, filled with ideas to make it your own original design; and photos of at least two different quilts made with each block, along with information about the quilters who produced them. This book is worth a look, even if you’ve never read *The Quiltmaker’s Gift* or quilted a day in your life.

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**900’s—Geography, History, & Biography**


Filmed live at the Ultimate Comedy Night in Houston, Texas, Kenn Kington shares a message about the various ways life seems confusing to him. Public library collections offering self-help and motivational videos can add this with confidence, as adults will relate to the everyday realities as they laugh along with Kington.

The program lends itself to being viewed in one setting or broken up into segments. Also included on the tape is a musical comedy by Los Pollos Hermanos.

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In 1991 this book was published by Wolgemuth and Hyatt, with the sub-title “The Roots of the Middle East Crisis.” This was about the time of the first Gulf War. Much has happened since then and it was necessary to update the book in the light of these developments, culminating in the events of September 11, 2001. The main changes are additions to chapters one and two and a new chapter between the former chapters two and three. The additions in the first two chapters reflect the increasing number and intensity of questions arising out of actions and words proceeding from Muslim sources. The new third chapter gives a good summary of Islam, with special reference to whether or not it is a religion of peace.

The new sub-title “Understanding the Historic Struggle Between Islam and Western Civilization” accurately conveys what the book is about. The main thrust of the first two chapters is that we in the West are failing to heed the lessons of history. This naturally leads on in the second part of the book to a consideration of those aspects of history that relate to the Muslim world and to the interactions between that world and other empires. Included is a whole chapter analyzing the religious wars (jihadis) waged by Muslims in the past. Also there is a chapter showing how various rulers of predominantly Islamic lands are seeking to revive their glory, for which purpose they are not adverse to adopting pre-Islamic, pagan elements. Iraq’s Saddam Hussein is a notable example.

In the third part of the book Grant is concerned to show that the West, in general, underestimates the Middle Eastern and Muslim mind-set. He exposes the fallacies in many of the peace initiatives, based as they are on a false optimism concerning the reasonableness of everybody deciding to live in peace. This leads to the last main chapter, the ninth, in which American policy towards the Middle East is summarized by reviewing the foreign policies of two related presidents, Theodore Roosevelt and Franklin D. Roosevelt. Although this seems somewhat dated, the main point is that the right approach must be based on a true fear of the Lord.

Anyone wishing to understand why Muslims and the Middle East are the way they are will greatly profit from Grant’s presentation. The book has a useful glossary, mainly of Muslim terms, and a substantive bibliography.

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On September 10, 2001, the United Nations called an emergency meeting of foreign relief workers in northern Afghanistan to discuss evacuation plans. A suicide bomber killed General Masoud, leader of Northern Alliance forces against the Taliban, the day before, and many expected the Alliance to collapse.

News of the terrorist attacks on the United States reached Afghanistan the night of September 11. The next morning John Weaver, a leader of relief and development programs for Christian relief organization Shelter for Life, and a few of his co-workers were surprised by the sound of UN planes taking off. They had not been notified of the evacuation.

Ten days after accompanying co-workers to the Tajikistan border, Weaver returned to his post, determined not to desert a needy people. He recounts the sorrow, anger, and embarrassment at the attacks expressed by Muslims who told him, “We don’t believe that evil suicide bombers, who kill innocent people in the name of Allah, go to paradise as a reward for their wickedness.”

Shelter for Life workers, including native Muslims, found themselves distributing relief materials and funds for governmental and other organizations that had fled the country. Grain-for-work programs have improved living conditions for the many victims of war, drought, and earthquakes, through the building of roads and latrines, the reopening of schools, and other public works projects.

An Arabic speaker who said, “We Christians are often lousy examples of what we say we believe,” inspired the author to be a different kind of helper in Afghanistan. John Weaver accepts the fact that, as a Christian, he cannot proselytize. He insists, however, that what we can do speaks more loudly than what we can say.

Among the deluge of 9/11 books, *Inside Afghanistan* provides genuine insights on conditions, people, relief and development programs, and the character and faith of one young man who would rather be there than anywhere else. He tells poignant stories of courage and terror, with history, humor, and faith thrown in for good measure.

Jeanette Hardage, Freelance Writer, Charleston, South Carolina
BOOK REVIEWS

300's—Social Sciences


Festivals of the World presents 150 full color photos, thirty original artworks, and twenty full color maps plus tables and information boxes. This illustrated guide is sure to be of help to high school students and adults seeking insights into the celebrations, customs, events and holidays of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Taoism, Jainism, Rastafarianism, the Bahá’í Faith, Zoroastrianism, and Shinto. Layout of the text invites easy reading.

394.2. Festivals; Fasts and feasts.

Of particular significance is the recognition given to the adaptations and variety the cycle of festivals witnesses, e.g. festivals in Buddhism have separate sections for the Southern Buddhist, Eastern Buddhist, and Northern Buddhist calendars, or for the differences and divisions of Christianity.

Each of the authors offers strengths, e.g., O'Brien in comparative religion and near Eastern religions, Palmer in Chinese and Japanese studies, Breuilly in language, and Marty on religion in North America.

This is a title sure to see wide use in public libraries, and an important edition for high school public and private school libraries.

Leroy Hommerding, Fort Myers Beach P.L. District, Fort Myers, Florida

500's—Natural Sciences & Mathematics


512. Algebra—Study and teaching—Activity programs.
1 v. (various pages).

Math on File is a collection of units aimed for the collaborative high school group work. Those reviewing algebraic concepts may find the levels enable some junior-high students to handle them with comfort, and are of infinite value to remedial level college students. Over 250 illustrations help to visualize the basics, and 155 problem sets can be used in class or for individual out-of-class assignments.

Within each unit, explicit reference is made to the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics standards. Also included is an index listing the Standards, and identifying the units addressing them.

James Alexander presents reproducible units which are divided into basic number manipulations, basic algebraic manipulations, functions, grouping, patterns, data, and matrices. The variety of level, style, and subject matter, prepared by a team of people, can be used as supplements to algebra courses or as calculus preparation. Recommended for teacher resource shelves in both public and private high schools, and in public library collections with heavy algebraic review demand by students and those reviewing basics for various tests.

Leroy Hommerding, Fort Myers Beach P.L. District, Fort Myers, Florida


551.3'.97. Asteroids; Comets; Meteorites. 256 p.

Erickson starts this fascinating treatise with a discussion of the origin of the solar system and its role in the formation of Earth. After an examination of impacting meteorites and comets in the first 500 million years of Earth's history, he explores the different impact craters on other planets.

Students and general readers will learn about different asteroid belts, along with the possibility and consequences of large meteorites and comets hitting Earth. Finally, he outlines some of the possible defenses we might mount against any future asteroid or comet collisions.

The photographs and drawings in Asteroids, Comets and Meteorites enable the reader to visualize the issues. A chapter-by-chapter bibliography steers a course for future research.

Recommended as a highly accessible reference book in geology and earth science for high school students and teachers, and for public library science collections serving high school researchers and general readers.

Leroy Hommerding, Fort Myers Beach P.L. District, Fort Myers, Florida


551.4'.08. Submarine geology; Marine biology. 317 p.

Erickson explores theories about the origin of the earth, and gives insightful ideas about the role of oceans and water in the development of plate tectonics in his volume, Marine Geology. He looks at different ocean basins, covering both earlier history and changing life forms in these basins. By using knowledge gathered from ocean currents and dredging operations, he uses the idea of continental divide to explore mid-ocean ridges, deep-sea trenches, and submarine volcanoes.

The photographs and drawings make it easy for the reader to appreciate geological wonders. A glossary helps students and readers understand terms like albedo, diatom, and tephra. This reference work can be used by high school students, and offer community college and beginning earth science students a quick overview of current theories and past discoveries. Public libraries can add for both the earth science student and adult readers intrigued about how the earth developed.

Leroy Hommerding, Fort Myers Beach P.L. District, Fort Myers, Florida

900's—Geography, History, & Biography


948.022. Vikings.

Who were the Vikings? Why did they venture outside Scandinavia? These questions and many others are covered in this coverage of the Viking Age spanning almost 300 years (starting around 790 AD) in an easy-to-read format accompanied with 160 full color illustrations and seventy maps. The Table of Contents and Index add to ease of locating specifics, and the Appendix listing Viking & Anglo-Saxon kings make digesting the material practical and understandable.

Drawing upon the latest archaeological discoveries and Norsage sagas and mythology, the Vikings come alive. Coverage in the Historical
**Atlas of the Viking World**, includes the first Viking settlements and Norse society, Norse mythology, the Viking ships (and of course, Viking warrior), their colonization efforts, and Vikings in popular culture and legacy.

Konstam’s command of the subject makes the presentation compelling. His earlier works include *Historical Atlas of the Crusades*, *Atlas of Medieval Europe*, and *Historical Atlas of Exploration*. As a museum professional with degrees in history and archaeology, he gives the topics, e.g. Viking stone sculpture, Viking skalds, and the Icelandic sages, relevance and meaning.

Recommended for high school libraries, and for public library history collections.

Leroy Hommerding, Fort Myers Beach P.L. District, Fort Myers, Florida


Designed as a reference to the most important individuals, events, and topics in U.S. history, ten volumes cover the 15th century to the present. The *Encyclopedia of American History* is written for secondary and college students, and for the general public. Volume 11 offers a comprehensive index to each volume. The ten volumes’ easy-to-read text is enhanced by 750 photographs and 200 maps.

The chronology and major topics addressed follow the architecture of The National Standards for U.S. History. Of particular note for Christian schools and for public libraries seeking to include balanced treatment in the collection, is the place given by general editor, Gary Nash, to religion in the development and life of America.

Leroy Hommerding, Fort Myers Beach P.L. District, Fort Myers, Florida
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>130 questions children ask about war...</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abanes, Richard</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abounding love series</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abram's daughters</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African-American faith in America</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ajmera, Maya</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcorn, Stephen</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The alley cat's meow</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The American Heritage student science...</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angel of mercy</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another great achiever</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another Sommer-time story</td>
<td>13, 16, 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answers to prayer</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appetit, Kathi</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apples here!</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archives of Anthropos</td>
<td>28, 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arterburn, Stephen</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asteroids, comets, and meteorites</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autumn's shadow</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azarian, Mary</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back to school</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batten, Mary</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battle before time</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bauer, Marion Dane</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beck, Andrea</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Becky the brave</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bee, Clair</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believing the dream</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bell, James Scott</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benjamin Franklin, you know what to say</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benton, Gail</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A better way</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birthday zoo</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Livingstone</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black, Sabrina D.</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The blood of the moon</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bloody Jack</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bloom, Harold</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bloom's biocritiques</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boase, Susan</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boice, James Montgomery</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bond, Higgins</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowers, Tim</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The boxcar children mysteries</td>
<td>17, 20, 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bravery soup</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break a leg!</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breuilly, Elizabeth</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brewer, Paul</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brides of Culdee Creek</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brillhart, Julie</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brock, Frank A.</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broken feather</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bruner, Kurt D.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budwine, Greg</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burnett, David</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Byars, Betsy</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The candy factory mystery</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Card, Michael</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carter, Abby</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caruana, Vicki</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character matters!</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child of promise</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chip Hilton sports series</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chorao, Ray</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clark, Mindy Starns</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clash of worlds</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cocoa-Leffler, Maryann</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooper, Elisha</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copeland, Lori</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cote, Lyn</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couchman, Judith</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling in African-American...</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courage</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The covenant</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cullinan, Bernice E.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cundiff, Meg Michele</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The curate of Glaston</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cushman, Doug</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The dark lord's demise</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date-- or soul mate?</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dave Dravecky</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davis, Jimmy H.</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day, Robert</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>de Marcken, Gail</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dear Ichiro</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DeJohn, Marie</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DeMoss, Bob</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DeMoss, Robert G</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denney, James D.</td>
<td>26, 49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designer universe</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The disappearing staircase mystery</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discovery of poetry</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doherty, Berlie</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doing time online</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominguez, Kelli Kyle</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doorway to doom</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dowdie, Mary</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duncan, Lois</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CHRISTIAN LIBRARY JOURNAL 53 APRIL 2003
INDEX

Goodell, Jon 10  James, J. Alison 12  The Little Red Train 13
Gooney Bird Greene 18  James, Kennon 13, 16, 19  Little raccoon 19
The gospel according to Harry Potter 3  Janeczko, Paul B. 6  Little Whistle’s medicine 13
Grant, George 50  Jasper’s day 12  The living earth 51
Graves, Donald H. 6  Jesus on trial 41  Living loud 31
Grayboy 18  Jewish faith in America 31  Livingston, Myra Cohn 6
Green cat 12  Jocelyn, Marthe 27  Lone star journals 15
Green, Roberta 48  June, Lee N. 45  Look what you made, God! 23
Greene, Stephanie 17  Just right 12  Lowry, Lois 18
Grieving a suicide 45  Kalman, Maira 25  Lucado, Max 19
Gunn, Robin Jones 39  Karesh, Sara K. 31  Lucky Boy 13
Hardy, LeAnne 30  Kay, Verla 24  The lucky sovereign 13
Hayashi, Nancy 21  Keels, Steve 32  Lyon, Tammie 14
The healer 35  Keeper of the doves 19  MacDonald, George 35
The healing touch 38  Keith, Doug 17  Mail order bride series 36
Heard, Georgia 6  Kennyington 50  The man who laid the egg 28
A heart after God 44  Kennedy, Dorothy M. 6  Marine geology 51
A heart for God 44  Kennedy, Pagan 46  Martinez, Sergio 19
HeartQuest 34, 37  Kennedy, X.J. 6  MaryLou’s FlipFlop Shop 12
The heavenly fugitive 36  Khalsa, Dayal Kaur 12  Mary’s prayers and Martha’s recipes 44
Heights of delight 43  Kinsey-Mannock, Natalie 11  Marzano, Lisa 43
Heitzmann, Kristen 39  Kirkpatrick, Jane 43  Max and Jax in second grade 13
Henderson, Dee 35  Knock at a star 6  Max and Jax 13
Hey, Daddy! 24  Knopf, Christopher 41  McElmeel, Sharron L. 6
Hindu and Sikh faiths in America 31  Konstam, Angus 51  McKissack, Pat 18
His redeeming love 43  Kreeft, Peter 4  McPhail, David M. 15
Historical atlas of the Viking world 51  Krenina, Katya 11, 15  Meyer, L.A. 26
Hoekstra, Elizabeth M. 44  Kurisu, Jane 15  Million dollar mysteries 37
Holden, Joseph 31  Lacy, Al 36  The mind siege project 28
Home run feud 27  Lacy, JoAnna 36  Miner, Jeremy T. 49
Hopkins, Anthony 41  Laleye, Tim 27, 28  Miner, Lynn E. 49
Hopkins, Lee Bennett 6  Lamut, Sonja 32  Minshull, Evelyn White 11
Hopkinson, Deborah 21  Langley, Jonathan 14  Missing Rabbit 14
Horton, Michael 46  Langley, Karen 14  Molly rides the school bus 14
Hough, Stan 41  The last dance 27  Monnier, Miriam 12
The House of Winslow 36  Learning to share 12  Moore, Beth 40
How to write poetry 6  Lear, Laurie 10  Moore, Cyd 14
Hsu, Albert Y. 45  Lees, Stuart 13  Moore, Lilian 19
Hubbell, Will 24  Lessin, Roy 49  Morgan, Kathleen 34
Hungry hurler 27  Let there be light 36  Morris, Gilbert 36
Ice cream 24  Levert, Mireille 16  Munsinger, Lynn 11
If only I had a green nose 19  Lewis, Beverly 34  Murphy, Elspeth Campbell 23
Imagination & spirit 47  Lewis, Deborah Shaw 24  Myra, Harold Lawrence 15
Inside Afghanistan 50  Lewis, Gregg 24  The mystery of alligator swamp 20
The invisible enemy 27  Lewis, Jim 23  The mystery of the mummy’s curse 20
The iron sceptre 28  Life messages of great Christians 43  The mystery of the spider’s clue 20
Is there meaning in evil and suffering? 45  Light in the shadow of jihad 42  The mystery of the star ruby 20
Islam at the crossroads 48  Light your candle 19  Mystery on Blizzard Mountain 20
Islamic faith in America 31  Line, Joanne Larsen 49  Nash, Gary B. 52
It’s a kid’s world 23  The little land 12  Neal, Connie 3
Ivanko, John D. 23  Little Pig is capable 12  Nichols, Linda 36

APRIL 2003  54  CHRISTIAN LIBRARY JOURNAL