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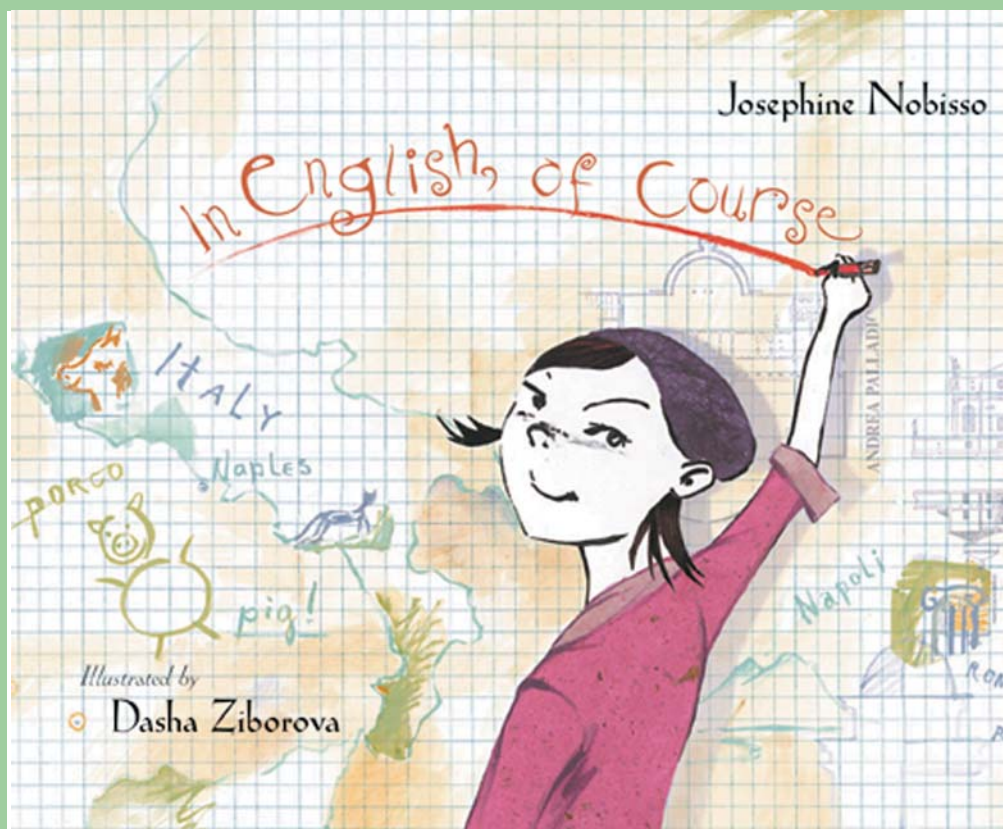
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This Issue Features:

- What You See... Fantasy
- Indians of the Northeast
- A Series of Unfortunate Events
- Rewards Are More Than Temporal
- In Defense of Series Books

The *Christian Library Journal* invites prospective reviewers and writers to write for information. The *Christian Library Journal* is published bimonthly January through December by Christian Library Services. Subscriptions \$20 per year online. Back issues included. Indexed in *Christian Periodical Index*. Address correspondence to nlhesch@harborside.com, or to Christian Library Services, P.O. Box 1309, Florence, OR 97439-0068. Copyright 2003 by Christian Library Services.

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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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What You See...Fantasy, part 1

by Donna W. Bowling

In his *Chronicles of Narnia*, C.S. Lewis observes that "what you see and hear depends a good deal on where you are standing; it also depends on what sort of person you are."

This truth is aptly demonstrated in Connie Neal's *What's a Christian To Do With Harry Potter?* A veteran church youth worker and speaker, Neal has experienced first-hand the disagreement and unhealthy tension in the Christian community about the best-selling Harry Potter fantasy series by J. K. Rowling. Neal uses Boring's well-known ambiguous drawing "My Wife and My Mother-in-law" to illustrate that the same work can be interpreted in different ways, depending on the viewpoint of the perceiver as affected by earlier experience. (The whole point of psychological experiments in the 1930s with Boring's ambiguous drawing--which can be perceived either as an old woman or as a young woman--is that individuals who were familiar with a similar drawing in which an "old woman" was obvious, tended to see an old woman in the ambiguous drawing, while individuals who were familiar with a slightly different similar drawing in which a "young woman" was obvious, tended to see a young woman.)

Neal's book presents the opposing positions on the Harry Potter series, beginning with objections to the series. She starts by explaining the origin of some negative rumors about Rowling or the series that are patently false. Neal points out that terms (e.g., "wizard") in any work of literature should be defined only by their use in that work, not by external definitions that are different. In Rowling's series, magical power possessed by some individuals is a feature of that imaginary world comparable to technology in the real world. Such abilities are not connected to any relationship with greater supernatural forces (either divine or demonic), but, like technology, can be used for good or evil. Harry Potter and his friends use their magical abilities developed at the Hogwarts

School of Witchcraft and Wizardry to combat evil. Neal suggests that the Harry Potter books can reasonably be placed in the mainstream of classic fantasy, and they may meet the heartfelt needs of children.

Neal addresses major legitimate concerns raised by opponents. In dealing with the amount of material which draws on or relates to mythology or historical and current occult sources, she points out that in past centuries experimental science was viewed as related to magic. She cites C. S. Lewis and classics such as *A Christmas Carol* by Dickens for examples of accepted literary use of mythological characters and such creatures as ghosts. Neal responds to ethical concerns about moral relativism in the protagonist's behavior by observing that child characters would not be credible if they were perfect. She also refers to biblical instances in which moral principles seem to override rules. (Characters in Rowling's fantasy series themselves make a distinction between "the law" and "school rules," which even school officials expect to be circumvented by creative students.) For adults concerned about age-inappropriateness of some episodes, Neal observes that a measure of violence in fantasy is a regular component of the conflict between good and evil, and that children normally enjoy occasional crude humor.

Because of their various backgrounds, committed Christians may have starkly differing views of the Rowling series. For example, Neal reports that a scholar who had previously been involved in Wicca expressed a negative reaction about Harry Potter. Likewise, a reason Richard Abanes, author of *Harry Potter and the Bible* [CLJ 6(4):64], is negative may be that he has studied and written more about the occult. Other people with less immediate knowledge of the occult in the real world may evaluate the series only in terms of the norms of that imaginary world. In view of these legitimate differences in perspective, Neal discusses Romans 14 and I Corinthians 8-10 at some length, insisting that the appropriate Christian attitude in this controversy is "Don't judge others." Individual Christians are responsible to

make decisions for themselves, but not for others.

In view of their major cultural impact, Christian parents with freedom to do so may choose to read and discuss the engaging Harry Potter fantasy books with their older children, taking this opportunity to emphasize the biblical warnings against occult practices in the real world. Neal points out that Rowling does not believe in the reality of the occult--which may cause her to discount the possible danger in her fantasy series. Neal also reports that some children have attempted to do spells, etc., as found in the series. In view of these potential dangers, Neal devotes two chapters to suggestions for preparing children with "armor"--rather than "walls" subject to failure--to protect them from real-world occult involvement (such as certain role-playing games, etc.). Neal's concluding chapter relates her evangelistic use of redemptive analogies from the series. She took incidents in the Harry Potter books open to such application as a springboard, then showed the need for salvation, and Christ's sacrifice to accomplish it. Using several scripture passages, she ultimately led unbelievers to faith in Jesus Christ.

Neal's endorsement of the Harry Potter series (at least through the first four books) is conditioned on (1) Christian liberty to do so after prayerful consideration, and (2) parents' reading with children and discussing issues of concern. In this context, reading these lively stories may serve as an opportunity to "inoculate" children against occult involvement. Neal does not recommend turning children loose on the series without parental supervision. Likewise, Gladys Hunt and Barbara Hampton (*Honey for a Child's Heart*, 4th ed., 2002; and *Honey for a Teen's Heart*, 2002) give the same guarded recommendation, suggesting that parents could profitably consider both Neal and Abanes before making such a decision. They use this issue to emphasize that Christians should evaluate all reading at all times in light of biblical teaching, whether from Christian authors with a Christian purpose or not. They also counsel concerned individuals against criticizing

books they have not read themselves.

Fantasy itself can be a volatile issue among Christians. In his 1993 *Christianity Today* article, "Does Peter Pan Corrupt Our Children?" Ron Habermas suggested that children's exposure to fantasy can contribute positively to their growth in faith. "Children whose imaginations are not nurtured may adopt their own version of sloganized faith. I've found that educators who refuse to value flights of imaginative fancy in children end up imparting mistaken perceptions to kids."

In a 1977 article in *Moody*, entitled "The occult in children's books," Pamela Urfer expressed no concern about such magical characters as Mary Poppins or Glenda of Oz. However, she did point out two possible dangers in some fantasy for children. One was the possibility that description of occultic practices in children's books would attract children to the power described. The other danger was denying the reality of the occult. She suggested two identifying features that would help in distinguishing between books about the occult that would be harmful and those books of fantasy that would not be harmful: "lack of contact with the real world and lack of desire for power and control." Hogwarts is no more connected to the real world than is Mary Poppins. Harry Potter and his friends use magical power to combat evil, not for personal control over others. (One possibly self-centered use by Harry--to compensate for his uncle's unreasonableness--is integral to the fight against the rise of the evil Lord Voldemort.)

In Sylvia Stopforth's 2000 article "What about Harry Potter?" in *Christian Library Journal*, she observes that the disturbing incident in the third book of the series, which involves an unusual trance utterance by the Divination teacher, is in a context of considerable skepticism of that teacher's predictions by more respected teachers at the school. Some have expressed the further concern that Rowling has invented many magical commands, spells or specialized curses, scattered throughout the series that the characters have occasion to use as the plot progresses. Some are humorous, but quantity does not mean that they are only gratuitous.

Readers may not agree with Neal on every issue. People without a problem with the magical elements in the series may have more concern about the situational ethics. Several incidents beg for serious discussion. Harry lies, to protect others or to deflect unduly prying questions. His friends steal supplies to be used for the conflict with evil. Harry cheats in a contest, with the encouragement of supervisors and several contributions from others, but he shares information with other contestants to level the odds. At the end of the fourth book, Harry and his friends use temporary spells on some bullies who were taunting them. This incident could be a simple teenage act of revenge. Or it could be an appropriate restraint against avowed partisans of the evil lord who rejoiced in the murder of a classmate and the prospect of more to come. In the books, hatred is often accepted as "deserved;" but mercy and cooperation, sometimes in spite of personal animosity, are necessary in the struggle against evil. Sacrificial love is a most potent defense. Harry and his friends demonstrate great courage, loyalty, and determined opposition to the evil lord.

In view of the complex issues in this controversy, Neal's emphasis on Christian graciousness is right on target. Dissension among Christians does not glorify God. Both Neal's book (pro) and the Abanes book (con) are recommended for all who are concerned about the Harry Potter series. Concerned parents, teachers, and librarians also could well read the Rowling books to avoid making evaluations based on ignorance. To protect the rights of parents to make decisions and give instruction for their own children, the Harry Potter series is not recommended for Christian school classrooms or libraries. Teachers may wish to be informed ahead of time if individual students offer book reports on them in class.

Another observation made by C.S. Lewis, a few paragraphs following the quotation at the top, seems relevant here. "Now the trouble about trying to make yourself stupider than you really are is that you very often succeed."

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Learning Native American Culture Through Children's Literature : Indians of the Northeast

by Jane Mouttet

The Indians of the Northeast (Maine to Virginia and west to Minnesota) are the ones the early American settlers came into contact with. As librarians we must ensure that our patrons move beyond the Disney stereotype portrayed in Pocahontas. Disney abandoned historical accuracy in favor of a New Age Pocahontas. The books I've chosen for this column portray a more accurate view of the Native Americans of the Northeast.

Many books about Native Americans will contain information about the traditional religion of the people. As a Christian, this is always something to consider before placing a book in your library. If you have Native Americans who have become Christians leaving traditional beliefs behind or those whom you are witnessing to, encouraging them to leave their traditional religious beliefs, you will certainly want to keep this in mind. I have tried to alert you to such information in my reviews.

PENACOOK

THE HEART OF A CHIEF by Joseph Bruchac. (Dial Books for Young Readers, 1998, 0-8037-2276-1, HB, \$15.99, 160 p.; Penguin Putnam Books for Young Readers, 2001, 014131236X, PB, \$5.99, 160 p.)

Gr. 5-7 His father is in an alcohol rehab center. His off-reservation school is insensitive to Native Americans. His people are in the midst of a controversy over a casino. Eleven-year-old Chris faces many of the same issues faced by Native Americans everywhere. Chris, a Penacook Indian descended from chiefs, becomes a leader in his school and among his Penacook people showing he has the heart of a chief. His sixth grade class, as the result of a class project, makes the community aware of how Natives feel about team names like Chiefs or Redskins. He is also able to suggest a compromise to the casino controversy that,

while not eliminating the idea, makes it less intrusive in the community. Author Joseph Bruchac chose to set *The Heart of a Chief* on a reservation that does not exist. While there is not federally recognized Penacook community, the Penacook are one of the Abenaki nations. Mr. Bruchac is an Abenaki who has worked with Indian students.

IROQUOIS

THE IROQUOIS by Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve, illustrated by Ronald Himler. (Holiday House, 1995, 0-8234-1663-X, HB, \$16.95, 32p.)

Gr. 3-5 *The Iroquois* by Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve is "A First Americans Book." Ms. Sneve grew up on the Rosebud Sioux Reservation. She opens the book with a retelling of the Iroquois creation story. She also includes history of the Iroquois people. Duties and lives of men, women, and children are explored. Traditional food,

You may wonder why I chose to exclude *THE SIGN OF THE BEAVER* by Elizabeth George Speare. While this Newberry Honor book is an excellent book and worthy of consideration for inclusion in your library, the Indian tribe is not identified. In his book *NATIVE AMERICANS IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE*, Jon Stott recommends several guidelines for choosing books about Native peoples. One of these recommendations is that the originating culture of a story should be identified as specifically as possible. I did not find *THE SIGN OF THE BEAVER* to meet this recommendation so I left it out of this list.

My favorite from this list is Joseph Bruchac's *THE HEART OF A CHIEF*. It brings up many issues today's native young people face: life in an Anglo world, alcoholism of a family member, casinos on tribal land, and the use of Indian terms for sports teams. Mr. Bruchac does an excellent job of telling the native side of these somewhat controversial issues.

spiritual beliefs and wampum are also explained. The book closes with a description of the Iroquois today. Romald Himler's illustrations will help students visualize unfamiliar concepts. If students need a reference book on the Iroquois, *The Iroquois* by Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve is a good choice.

MOHAWK

GIVING THANKS: A NATIVE AMERICAN GOOD MORNING MESSAGE by Chief Jake Swamp, illustrated by Erwin Printup. (Lee and Low Books, 1995, 1-880000-15-6, HB, \$15.95, 24p. Scholastic, Inc., 1997, 0-590-10884-0, PB, 24p.)

Gr. K-4 *Giving Thanks* is based on the traditional Thanksgiving Address of the Iroquois people. The thanksgiving prayer is addressed to Mother Earth, the animals, Spirit Protectors, the Great Spirit, and different parts of the creation; each for their

part in providing life as we know it. The book shows the Native American practice of worshipping the creation. Chief Swamp and Mr. Printup are both Native Americans and know their subject well. Chief Swamp has included the Mohawk translation of the book. Mr. Printup's acrylic paintings are bold in color and seem to accurately depict the text. *Giving Thanks* is a good example of a traditional Native American prayer.

THE MOHAWKS OF NORTH AMERICA by Connie Ann Kirk. (Lerner, 2002, 0-8225-4853-4, HB, \$ 48p.)

Gr. 2-6 *The Mohawks of North America* is part of Lerner Publications "First Peoples" series. The Mohawk people are part of the Iroquois League. Mohawk people traditionally lived in New York, Ontario, and Quebec along the St. Lawrence River. *The Mohawks of North America* is a reference book that would be useful to late elementary students. It contains information on the traditional lands of the Mohawk, their culture, their history and their life today. Author Connie Ann Kirk is a member of the Seneca Nation of the Iroquois League. The book ends with a glossary of terms and a list of books, videos, websites, and organizations that can provide additional information.

MOHEGAN

TURTLE CLAN JOURNEY by Lynda Durrant. (Clarion Books, 1999, 0-395-90369-6, HB, \$15.00, 180p.)

Gr. 5-7 *Turtle Clan Journey* is the sequel to Lynda Durrant's *Echohawk*. During the 18th century as many as 30% of Eastern Woodlands Native Americans were captives. Some were white captives, as was Echohawk. Others were captives from other tribes. Many had been taken captive to replace loved ones who had died. Echohawk and his Mohegan father and brother are the only members of their clan left. While traveling to better lands, they learn of the ransom being paid for white captives. Echohawk is captured and returned to his white aunt. He later escapes and returns to his Native family. *Turtle Clan Journey* is the story of the family's journey to a safer place to live. The reader learns how traveling Native Americans survived

and of the fierce practices of some Native tribes. Lynda Durrant has taken a portion of Native American history and written the story of one captive and his desire to remain Native.

NASHUA

A RIVER RAN WILD by Lynne Cherry. (Voyager Books/Harcourt, 2002, 0-15-216372-7, PB \$7.00, 40p.)

Gr. 1-4 This Reading Rainbow book is the environmental history of the Nashua River in Massachusetts. The Nashua River area was settled in the 1400's by people of the Pennacook Confederacy who became known as the Nashua Indians. *A River Ran Wild* tells the history of the Nashua River; how it started as a river so clear you could see the pebbles at the bottom to a smelly sewer and back to a clean river. The story of a place does not exist without the story of its inhabitants. *A River Ran Wild* tells the story of the Nashua Indians who first inhabited the area, the settlers who came in, the factory owners who destroyed the river, and descendents of both the Nashua people and white people who worked to restore the river. Lynne Cherry's text and illustrations show the research that went into this book. Her watercolor and colored pencil artwork show many aspects of life along the Nashua River.

A video adaptation of this book is available from California Department of Education Clearinghouse for Specialized Media and Technology 560 "J" Street, Suite 390, Sacramento, CA 95814.

OJIBWA/OJIBWAY/OJIBWE/CHIPPEWA

DREAMCATCHER by Audrey Osofsky illustrated by Ed Young. (Orchard Books, 1992, 0-531-05988-X, \$15.95, 32p.)

Gr. K-3 While the Ojibway baby sleeps in the cradleboard on his mother's back, big sister weaves a dream net to hang on baby's cradleboard. *Dreamcatcher* takes the reader through a day in the land of the Ojibway. Some of the daily activities of the people are described from the baby's perspective. The story also describes the bad dreams caught in the dream net before they can disturb Baby's sleep. Dreamcatchers do hold

CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS

The Heart of a Chief

Hold a class discussion on the use of Native terms and names by sports teams. Encourage your students to see the side of the Native Americans, especially if you have no Native Americans in your class.

Giving Thanks

Discuss the differences between the prayer depicted in this book and a prayer your students might say in their family.

Lee and Low publishers have a lesson plan for this book at their web site <http://leeandlow.com/teachers/guide12.html>

Another lesson plan can be found at http://www.ri.net/schools/Central_Falls/ch/heazak/thanks.html.

A River Ran Wild

Plan an environmental lesson that would show the students the effects of their actions on the environment.

The San Diego County Office of Education has a lesson plan for this book at their website <http://sdcoe.k12.ca.us/score/river/rivertg.htm>

Ininatig's Gift of Sugar

Make pancakes with your class and serve them with real maple sugar.

If you live in an area where maple sugar and candy are made, arrange a field trip after reading the book so that the class can witness it firsthand.

SkySisters

If you live in a part of the world where the Northern Lights are not available, you may want to research them with your class to learn more.

Thunderbird Gold

spiritual significance for Native Americans. Audrey Osofsky uses free verse to tell the story. Ed Young's pastel illustrations have a dreamlike quality.

GRANDMOTHER'S DREAMCATCHER by Becky Ray McCain, illustrated by Stacey Schuett. (Albert Whitman, 1998, 0-8075-3032-8, PB, \$6.95, 32p.)

Gr. 1-3 Kimmy is going to be staying at Grandmother's for a week without her parents. Her first night, before her parents leave, she has bad dreams. The next day Grandmother shows her a dreamcatcher and together they make one so that Kimmy will only have good dreams. Grandmother tells Kimmy the story of the first dreamcatcher. It caught all the dreams and sent them to the Great Spirit. The Great Spirit only allowed the sweet dreams to get to the owner of the dreamcatcher. Stacey Schuett's colored artwork depicts the story well, even showing the scariness of Kimmy's dream. Becky Ray McCain uses a modern-day story to explain the use of dreamcatchers. *Grandmother's Dreamcatcher* ends with instructions for making your own dreamcatcher.

ININATIG'S GIFT OF SUGAR by Laura Waterman Wittstock, photographs by Dale Kakkak. (Lerner Publications, 1993, 0-8225-2653-0, HB, \$ 48p.)

Gr. 1-4 The Ojibway call the maple tree Ininatig or the man tree. Author Laura Wittstock, a Seneca Indian, weaves traditional Ojibway stories about maple sugar in with the story of a modern sugarbush camp run by an Ojibway elder. The photographs of Dale Kakkak, a Menominee Indian, show the process of maple sugar making and the activities of the sugarbush camp. Students will learn how maple syrup, sugar, and candy are made while reading *Ininatig's Gift of Sugar*. This book is part of Lerner Publications "We Are Still Here: Native Americans Today" series. Native Americans are involved with the editing and illustrating of the series.

MORNING ON THE LAKE by Jan Bourdeau Waboose illustrated by Karen Reczuch. (Kids Can Press, 1997, 0-55074-373-2, HB, \$15.95, 32p.)

Gr. 1-3 *Morning on the Lake* is three stories about the relationship between an Ojibway grandfather and grandson, between man and nature. Mishomis, the grandfather, introduces Noshen to nature. In "Morning" the two travel out on a lake in the quiet early morning and see a family of loons. In "Noon" they hike through a forest and climb a steep cliff. They are rewarded by an encounter with an eagle. In "Night" Mishomis takes Noshen on a late night walk through the forest. Noshen is scared by wolves that come close. Author Jan Waboose is an Ojibway and well acquainted with the traditions of her people. Illustrator Karen Reczuch's realistic artwork vividly shows the setting of the story.

SKYSISTERS by Jan Bourdeau Waboose, illustrated by Brian Deines. (Kids Can Press, 2000, 1-55074-697-9, HB, \$15.95, 32p.)

Gr. K-3 It is wintertime. The two Ojibway sisters climb a high hill in order to view the Sky Spirits, the Northern Lights. The girls struggle to remember their grandmother's words, "Wisdom comes on silent wings." When they remember to be quiet they see a snowshoe rabbit and white-tailed deer. They also trade howls with a coyote. Some Ojibway beliefs are subtly included. References to Grandmother Moon, Mother Earth, and Sky Spirits are included in the text. Author Jan Waboose is an Ojibway who writes from her experiences growing up in Ontario. The oil paintings of Brian Deines beautifully illustrate the text.

THUNDERBIRD GOLD by Nat Reed. (Journey Forth, 1997, 0-89084-919-6, PB, \$ 154p.)

Gr. 3-6 Calvin's world seems to be falling apart. He's up north with his cousin Eric away from his parents while they try to work things out. His first morning he goes with Eric and Willis, an Ojibwa, to help some professors who are examining some local pictographs. The three solve the mystery of the pictographs with the help of Will's granddad. They compete with some treasure hunters to find the treasure the pictographs talk about. In the course of the story Will's granddad leads Calvin to Christ before he is killed by the treasure hunters. Mr. Reed intersperses chapters about Ojibwa

history into the modern day story. Mr. Reed spent time in a Native American community when he was growing up. He used those experiences in *Thunderbird Gold*.

TROUBLE AT FORT LA POINTE by Kathleen Ernst. (Pleasant Company Publications, 2000, 1-58485-086-8, PB \$5.95, 164p.)

Gr. 5 & up The daughter of a French voyageur and an Ojibwe woman uses her knowledge of both cultures to solve a mystery. The year is 1732. Suzette's father must pay his debt to the fur trading company or he will have to return to Montreal for the winter, leaving his family behind. His only hope is to win the trapper's competition. Unfortunately, someone steals some of the furs and Suzette's father is blamed. Suzette is able to solve the mystery and clear her father's name. Nominated for the 2001 Edgar Award for Best Children's Mystery, *à* is an excellent book. Kathleen Ernst shares Ojibwe life in the 1700's in this American Girl History Mystery. The reprinted illustrations clearly show what life might have been like.

Internet Information

ABENAKI INDIANS

www.cowasuck.org

The description at this web site reads "This web site is devoted to the American Indian heritage of the Cowasuck Band of the Pennacook-Abenaki People: Goals, language, traditional lifestyles, history, herbal medicine, newsletter, and web resources."

MOHAWK

www.wampumchronicles.com

The Wampum Chronicles is a website of Mohawk History.

MOHEGAN

www.mohegan.nsn.us/tribe/home.html

The page contains links to pages on the history, government, culture and religion and other aspects of the Mohegan tribe. There is also a link for students and teachers.

Books for the Middle Reader: A Series of Unfortunate Events

by Karla Castle

Lemony Snicket would undoubtedly say at this moment “Don’t read this column. Put it down immediately and back away or quickly turn to the next section of the journal. The books discussed herein are extremely unpleasant.” It is Mr. Snicket’s way and you should pay him no mind. I, on the other hand, will do whatever it takes to get you to read Mr. Snicket’s books, *A Series of Unfortunate Events*, even if it means coming to your house and reading them aloud to you.

A Series of Unfortunate Events chronicles the misfortunes of the Baudelaire children, fourteen year old Violet, twelve year old Klaus, and the infant Sunny. In the first volume they discover that while they were at the beach their parents have died in a house fire and they are now orphans. Mr. Poe of Mulctuary Money Management and a long time acquaintance of their parents becomes the executor of their sizeable inheritance, which apparently can’t be spent until Violet reaches eighteen. Until that time, the orphans are dependent on relatives who are willing to be their guardians. The first guardian is Count Olaf, a terrible man determined to get his hands on the Baudelaire fortune. His scheme is to marry Violet against her will. Violet is an accomplished inventor, Klaus is an avid reader and researcher, Sunny has four sharp teeth with which to bite and together they foil Count Olaf’s plan. Olaf escapes the authorities, so ends volume one.

In volumes two through seven, the Baudelaires are moved from guardian to guardian, with the exception of being sent to a boarding school in volume five. Each time Count Olaf appears in disguise with a scheme to kidnap the orphans, each time he is foiled by the inventing, researching, and biting skills of the orphans and each time he escapes the authorities. This pattern leads the reader to believe this is a formulaic series of books, but the formula dissipates at the end of volume seven and things get even more interesting.

There is an overarching mysterious storyline that involves the author, Lemony Snicket,

himself. Clues are dropped here and there along the way. Lemony knew the Baudelaires’ parents. Count Olaf had some hand in the death of Lemony’s true love, Beatrice. Mr. Snicket also seems to be a name dropper. One of Mr. Poe’s sons is named Edgar. Is this a reference to Edgar Allen Poe? In volume five the Baudelaires meet the two remaining Quagmire triplets (who have also been orphaned by a fire and are also heirs to a great fortune), Isadora, who writes poetry, and Duncan, who aspires to be a journalist. Is this a reference to Isadora Duncan, famed dancer, poet and social reformer of early 1900’s? Lemony’s adoration of his beloved, dead Beatrice smacks of the same devotion of Dante Alighieri for his beloved Beatrice. It is hard to tell what tidbits are relevant clues, which are red herrings and which are simply coincidental.

These books are cleverly written, and despite the terrible nature of the misfortunes of the orphans, are quite humorous. I was hooked upon reading the first volume because it was so much smarter and engaging than most children’s literature. Lemony does not write down to his readers. He expects them to be sharp people who want to be challenged. The vocabulary used is sophisticated and frequently explained or defined by the author in an amusing way. Lemony frequently uses idioms and slang metaphors and explains them creatively for the reader. The humor is dry, sly and sometimes punny.

The illustrations by Brett Helquist are pen and ink drawings with the same dark tone as the stories and the same cheeky humor. The illustrations are often somewhat cryptic until you read the chapter and see how it fits in. Most of the illustrations are small decorations at the beginning of the chapter. Occasionally, a full page illustration is called for. My personal favorite is the two black pages in the *Ersatz Elevator* (#6) that illustrate what the orphans saw after being pushed into the elevator shaft. The last illustration in each book contains some clue to the next book in the series. Each book

also ends with a communiqué from the author to his editor as to where he has hidden the manuscript for the next book and hints as to its content.

Audio editions of volumes 3-9 are available. The first three audio volumes are read by Lemony Snicket, himself. Volumes 6-9 are performed by Tim Curry. Usually it is preferable to have the author reading the work. However, a genius with the written word, Mr. Snicket’s oral interpretation could use some improvement. Initially his reading is sometimes very monotone and differentiation of character voices is inconsistent. Mr. Curry provides a much more consistent and lively reading.

The Unauthorized Autobiography of Lemony Snicket is also available. It is far more cryptic than the series books and should be read only after enough of the series has been read to provide some context for the seemingly random clues and red herrings. It is an autobiography designed to confuse rather than explain.

The summary on the back of each book, usually designed to entice the reader, warns the reader that the story within is unpleasant, unhappy, wretched, or miserable. “You have undoubtedly picked up this book by mistake, so please put it down. Nobody in their right mind would read this particular book...” (vol. 7)

Now, there are those who would actually be put off by books that don’t have happy endings where everything is worked out, that involve the misery of children who cannot rely on the adults around them for protection, that involve a truly evil villain, and that involve things like murder, deception and ethical questions. These people will miss the great benefit of good quality children’s literature while objecting to the things that make it great. Children love villains who are really villainous in books where evil is evil and good is good. The idea that life can always be neatly wrapped up with a happy ending is a great delusion. Sheltering children from reality only creates naiveté and increases their

chances of being deceived. What better place to face the possible harshness of life and ethical questions than in a fictional setting? The reader can safely and vicariously consider what he or she might do in the given circumstances.

These books are more than just entertaining stories or vocabulary building tools. There is more here than meets the eye. I strongly recommend these books and eagerly await the next volume myself. I am greatly curious to see how the story comes to a close, but will be saddened by the thought of not having another volume to look forward to.

If I haven't convinced you, visit www.lemonysnicket.com and see for yourself.

Books:

***Bad beginning* / Lemony Snicket; (A series of unfortunate events, #1) LCCN 99-14750. New York: HarperCollins, 1999. 0064407667, HBB, \$10.99. Middle school. Rating: 5**

F. Orphans – Fiction; Brothers and sisters – Fiction; Humorous stories. 162 p.

***Reptile room* / Lemony Snicket; (A series of unfortunate events, #2) LCCN 99-14751. New York: HarperCollins, 1999. 0064407675, HBB, \$10.99. Middle school. Rating: 5**

F. Orphans – Fiction; Brothers and sisters – Fiction; Humorous stories. 190 p.

***Wide window* / Lemony Snicket; (A series of unfortunate events, #3) LCCN 99-27262. New York: HarperCollins, 2000. 0064407683, HBB, \$10.99. Middle school. Rating: 5**

F. Orphans – Fiction; Brothers and sisters – Fiction; Humorous stories. 214 p.

***Miserable mill* / Lemony Snicket; (A series of unfortunate events, #4) LCCN 99-42695. New York: HarperCollins, 2000. 0064407691, HBB, \$10.99. Middle school. Rating: 5**

F. Orphans – Fiction; Brothers and sisters – Fiction; Humorous stories. 194 p.

***Austere academy* / Lemony Snicket; (A series of unfortunate events, #5) LCCN 00-24349. New York: HarperCollins, 2000. 0064408639, HBB, \$10.99. Middle school. Rating: 5**

F. Orphans – Fiction; Brothers and sisters – Fiction; Boarding schools – Fiction; Schools – Fiction; Humorous stories. 221 p.

***Ersatz elevator* / Lemony Snicket; (A series of unfortunate events, #6) LCCN 00-044950. New York: HarperCollins, 2001. 0064408647, HBB, \$10.99. Middle school. Rating: 5**

F. Orphans – Fiction; Brothers and sisters – Fiction; Humorous stories. 259 p.

***Vile village* / Lemony Snicket; (A series of unfortunate events, #7) LCCN 00-053511. New York: HarperCollins, 2001. 0064408655, HBB, \$10.99. Middle school. Rating: 5**

F. Orphans – Fiction; Brothers and sisters – Fiction; City and town life – Fiction; Humorous stories. 256 p.

***Hostile hospital* / Lemony Snicket; (A series of unfortunate events, #8) LCCN 2001024326. New York: HarperCollins, 2001. 0064408663, HBB, \$10.99. Middle school. Rating: 5**

F. Orphans – Fiction; Brothers and sisters – Fiction; Hospitals – Fiction; Humorous stories. 255 p.

***Carnivorous carnival* / Lemony Snicket; (A series of unfortunate events, #9) LCCN 2002008337. New York: HarperCollins, 2002. 0064410129, HBB, \$10.99. Middle school. Rating: 5**

F. Orphans – Fiction; Brothers and sisters – Fiction; Carnivals – Fiction; Humorous stories. 286 p.

***Lemony Snicket: the unauthorized autobiography* / Lemony Snicket, LCCN 2001051745. New York: HarperCollins, 2002. 0060007192, HBB, \$11.99. Middle school. Rating: 5**

F. Lemony Snicket – Juvenile fiction; Humorous stories. 212 p.

Audio-books:

***Wide window* / Lemony Snicket; (A series of unfortunate events, #3) New York: HarperCollins, 2000. 0694525421, CAS, \$20.00. Middle school. Rating: 5**

F. Orphans – Fiction; Brothers and sisters – Fiction; Humorous stories. 3 _ hours/3 cassettes, unabridged.

***Miserable mill* / Lemony Snicket; (A series of unfortunate events, #4) New York: HarperCollins, 2000. 069452543X, CAS, \$20.00. Middle school. Rating: 5**

F. Orphans – Fiction; Brothers and sisters – Fiction; Humorous stories. 3 _ hours/3 cassettes, unabridged.

***Austere academy* / Lemony Snicket; (A series of unfortunate events, #5) New York: HarperCollins, 2000. 0694525944, CAS, \$20.00. Middle school. Rating: 5**

F. Orphans – Fiction; Brothers and sisters – Fiction; Boarding schools – Fiction; Schools – Fiction; Humorous stories. 4 hours/3 cassettes, unabridged.

***Ersatz elevator* / Lemony Snicket, performed by Tim Curry; (A series of unfortunate events, #6) New York: HarperCollins, 2001. 0694525936, CAS, \$20.00. Middle school. Rating: 5**

F. Orphans – Fiction; Brothers and sisters – Fiction; Humorous stories. 4 hours/3 cassettes, unabridged.

***Hostile hospital* / Lemony Snicket, performed by Tim Curry; (A series of unfortunate events, #8) New York: HarperCollins, 2001. 0694526258, CAS, \$20.00. Middle school. Rating: 5**

F. Orphans – Fiction; Brothers and sisters – Fiction; Hospitals – Fiction; Humorous stories. 4 _ hours/3 cassettes, unabridged.

***Carnivorous carnival* / Lemony Snicket, performed by Tim Curry; (A series of unfortunate events, #9) New York: HarperCollins, 2002. 0060087811, CAS, \$20.00. Middle school. Rating: 5**

F. Orphans – Fiction; Brothers and sisters – Fiction; Carnivals – Fiction; Humorous stories. 5 hours/3 cassettes, unabridged.

*Karla J. Castle, Public Services Librarian,
Warner Pacific College, Portland, Oregon*

Rewards Are More Than Temporal

by Mary McKinney

“An encouraging word”, is my theme to all those readers and writers who seek moral excellence within the work place and home. I just received my annual “Amy Writing Awards” booklet with the 2001 prize-winning entries included within its few pages. These “Amy Awards” are all about presenting moral integrity and truth to the world. The front cover sets the “tease line” of its content before ever turning a page. “If you continue in My word... you will know the truth and the truth will make you free.” John 8:31,32.

What does this have to do with you and why does this effect you personally? Let me explain. The Amy Foundation has been in operation since 1985. W. James Russell is the president and founder, determined to reward those who successfully speak to societal issues in light of God’s Word. To quote, “This annual program recognizes authors who apply biblical truth reinforced with scripture to issues that should concern every thoughtful and caring person.”

The few, simple rules require that the author present in a “skillfully written, thought-provoking manner the biblical position on issues effecting the world today.” The other requirement is that the article must appear in a “Mainstream, non-political publication.”

The exciting aspect here is that anyone who has felt compelled to respond to life issues, even through letters to the editor in a local newspaper, is eligible. The point being made is that it is important to care, and it is important to express your concerns to a world that seems to be quickly forgetting their life-given standards and beliefs.

I believe that the prizes offered are secondary to the fact that you have taken a stand for righteousness. However, the rewards are not small! The first prize is \$10,000.00, second prize \$5,000.00, and consecutively decreasing to ten \$1,000.00 awards. This generous offering fulfills another biblical standard in my thinking, “The worker is worthy of his hire.” I Timothy 5:18.

I congratulate those who boldly set forth their beliefs with heartfelt care and concern, and I applaud W. James Russell for his integrity and consistent generosity to those who do so. For more information you can visit the website, www.amyfound.org.

I challenge you to consider expressing your deep-felt beliefs rather than keeping them to yourself. With honesty and careful thought allow the Lord to speak through you, after all, are we not called to be the light of the world, and the salt of the earth? Let us all become that pleasing fragrance that brings hope and life to a hopeless, dying world.

In defense of series books

by Rosemarie DiCristo

Mildred Wirt Benson died in May, 2002. You might not recognize her name. Before the 1980s, few people knew she was Carolyn Keene, author of Nancy Drew. Most people, if they thought about it at all, assumed Harriet Stratemeyer Adams was Carolyn Keene, and they were right, and wrong. The facts behind Carolyn Keene’s identity are as complicated as a Nancy Drew plot. The short version? Benson created Nancy Drew in 1930 from outlines provided by Edward Stratemeyer, a famous (some would say infamous) producer of pulp fiction. Stratemeyer died in 1930, Adams, his daughter, provided Benson with the outlines after that, and Benson wrote twenty-three Nancy Drews. Adams became Carolyn Keene in the 1950s, later claimed sole authorship, and only a 1980’s court case revealed who wrote what.

Why mention this now? Partly to credit Benson for creating Nancy Drew, but mostly to reflect on a genre that’s still going strong.

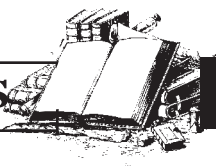
I love series books, although I didn’t read them in their Golden Age (the 1930s through the 1960s, when Judy Bolton, Trixie Belden, Cherry Ames, etc. were in print). I love series books, and consider them my favorite books. I love series books, despite their reputation as... well... trash. Poorly written. Ludicrously plotted. Unrealistic. Exploitative. We’ve all heard the accusations. But are they true?

Sometimes. Many series books are poorly written. Many are ludicrously plotted. But they have characters who are fiercely loyal to their friends. They have characters with integrity and honor. These are values we want our children to learn.

Series books are fun. They get kids reading, and reading passionately, often without stopping, often late at night, with a flashlight, in bed, hidden away beneath the covers. Can we really say the same about literary novels? I don’t think so, at least not at first. Kids have to want to read before they’ll read the classics. Kids who don’t like to read won’t read anything. Kids who love to read will read everything.

There are some terrific series in print right now. Do you know kids who like horses? The heroine of Dandi Daley Mackall’s Winnie the Horse Gentler is a horse crazy girl with an amazing way with horses, but unfortunately, she doesn’t understand people. Looking for good science fiction? Sigmund Brouwer’s Mars Diaries, skillfully written, sharp books with short chapters and constant action, are ideal for reluctant readers. Want to be scared senseless? Frank Peretti’s Veritas Project combines chilling plots with poignant, hurting characters to suggest Christian solutions to problems like bullying and low self esteem. For younger children there’s Robert Elmer’s AstroKids and Bill Myers’ BloodHounds, Inc., two wild, wacky, series that teach subtle lessons.

Oh, and don’t forget good old Nancy Drew, with 170 volumes and counting. That’s another reason to love series books: kids will read every volume. Now who can dislike something that gets a child to read 170 books?



Alphabeasts / Wallace Edwards. C20019036892. Toronto: Kids Can Press, 2002. HBB, 1553373863, \$19.95. Small children. Rating: 5

E. Alphabet. [28 p.].

Operating under the theory that you can never have enough good alphabet books in your school library, it is a thrill to report that Wallace Edwards' first picture book is a must have. Each letter gets a line of text (usually silly) and a painting. Each painting is a tapestry, luscious with color and texture down to the tiniest detail. The colors are so vivid and the content so interesting, children will delight in studying each page to find other words starting with the same sound. The paintings are also profuse with humor. Take the cat, reflecting on its self, seeing a tiger staring back. See a swan dancing with

glee, one ballet slipper on and one foot bare. There are also visual mysteries: Why is the bat is carrying a hammer? How on earth is the hippo going to play a violin? Children will feel their senses stimulated and their imagination stroked by the puzzles, challenges, and pure delight of this book. This will be a much loved volume in your collection.

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

Badger's new house / Robin Muller. LCCN 00013003. New York: Henry Holt, 2002. HBB, 0805063838, \$15.95. Small children. Rating: 5

E. Badgers--Fiction; Mice--Fiction; Dwellings--Fiction. unp.

Robin Muller wrote and illustrated this delightful story about a Badger with little confidence in his own abilities to fix up his cozy little abode. After a terrible storm Badger decides to pack up and move into a new, larger home he thinks is just perfect. Soon his oversized home finds him lonely in the vast space and he longs for his small comfortable cottage.

Grandmother Mouse moves into Badger's former little dwelling and soon invites him to tea, which he gladly accepts. Each time Badger is invited, Grandmother Mouse employs him to fix up the things she just can't do herself. Badger gains confidence with each task completed making his trips to the cottage enjoyable and rewarding.

R A T I N G S Y S T E M

- 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

LCCN Library of Congress cataloging number	HBB Hardbound book	CDR CD-ROM
C Canadian Library cataloging number	PAP Paperbound book	VID Videocassette
ISBN International Standard Book Number	LIB Library edition	LLB Loose-leaf binding
	LGP Large print book	
	CAS Audiocassette	

Badger learns many valuable lessons as will those children who enjoy the reading of this book. Muller's bright, watercolor illustrations enhance this terrific story and give much for little wondering eyes to feast upon. Badger's New House entertains and instills great morals we all need to remember. Highly recommended.

Robin Rusk, Freelance Writer, Susanville, California

The best single mom in the world : how I was adopted / written and illustrated by Mary Zisk. LCCN 2001033916. Morton Grove, Ill.: Albert Whitman, 2001. HBB, 807506664, \$14.95. Small children. Rating: 4

E. Adoption--Fiction; Single-parent families--Fiction. unip.

Full-page color illustrations accompany this story told in the first person by a child. *The Best Single Mom in the World* highlights how Mom went to an adoption agency and how the family came together. One item from each illustration appears on the following page. This ties the story together, drawing in the reader. Mary Zisk's story is simple and realistic, lending value to adoption, single moms, and family interaction. The little girl wishes she had a dad but the story focuses on the value of grandfather, and a friend's dad. The story is upbeat, reaffirming the integral place adopted children have in the family.

Teachers can use this with ease for classroom reading. School and public libraries can include the title for children, especially in collections on diverse families.

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

Bubba and Beau, best friends / Kathi Appelt; [illustrated by] Arthur Howard. LCCN 2001001987. San Diego: Harcourt, 2002. HBB, 0152020608, \$16.00. Small children. Rating: 4

E. Best friends--Fiction; Cleanliness--Fiction; Babies--Fiction; Dogs--Fiction. unip.

In *Bubba and Beau, Best Friends*, Bubba Junior's parents, Big Bubba and Mama Pearl, are Texans through and through, even their old pickup truck, Earl, is Texan.

Then there's Beau, the little hound dog who was born about the same time as Bubba Jr. They are best friends and do everything together, they even share Bubba's pink blanket. Trouble is, Mama Pearl decides to wash the blanket and suddenly it's soggy and doesn't smell right. Since Mama Pearl's in a washing mood, she washes Bubba and Beau using lots of soap. This creates a problem to a boy and his dog. In the end, however, the friends decide their blanket is okay because it smells just like them.

The prose is charming in its Texan tone, the pictures perfect. Large and whimsical, they are sure to captivate any child.

Kathi Appelt, a Texan herself, brings authenticity to both babyhood, and Texas; the illustrator, Arthur Howard, creates delightful cartoony characters in bright watercolors. Bubba and Beau is sure to be a popular series for parents as well as children.

Ginger McGrath, Freelance Writer, Leavenworth, Washington

Bullfrog at Magnolia Circle / by Deborah Dennard; illustrated by Kristin Kest. (Smithsonian's backyard.) LCCN 2001049691. Norwalk, Conn.: Soundprints, 2002. HBB, 1931465045, \$15.95; PAP, 1931465398, \$5.95. Small children. Rating: 5

E. Bullfrog--Fiction; Frogs--Fiction. 32 p.

From the Smithsonian's Backyard series, *Bullfrog at Magnolia Circle*, by Deborah Dennard, is the story of a young bullfrog's search for a place of his own where he can sing his croaking song to attract a mate. As he travels, he encounters dangers from predators and finds food for himself until he finds the special place he is looking for.

As with all the Smithsonian/Soundprints collaborations, this book combines lovely pictures, informative text, and an appealing story. Many facts are presented as the tale of the frog progresses, but in a way that encourages the reader to understand and care about nature. A glossary and factual notes are given at the end of the book.

Families and libraries would do well to add this and others of its series to their collection. The Soundprints books are well done, and this particular set is especially suited for elementary ages. It has many curriculum connection possibilities, a strong reader appeal (particularly at this animal loving age), and is a quality production. Many of the Soundprints books have animal plush characters to go along with them, something librarians may also want to investigate.

Betsy Ruffin, Librarian/Teacher, Cleburne, Texas

Chicken chickens / Valeri Gorbachev. LCCN 2001041047. New York: North-South Books, 2001. HBB, 0735815410, \$15.95; LIB, 0735815429, \$15.88. Small children. Rating: 3

E. Self-confidence--Fiction; Playgrounds--Fiction; Chickens--Fiction; Animals--Fiction. unip.

For any child who has found himself in the position of being a little apprehensive about trying new things, *Chicken Chickens* by Valeri Gorbachev can be a morale booster. Young children will appreciate the humor in being a chicken as the pen and watercolor illustrations

lead the reader around a busy playground. At each stop the two chicken chickens refuse to play. Finally, it's Beaver who eagerly offers his broad tail to the duo for a ride down the slide, transforming the chicken chickens into eager playground participants. Children will enjoy the details of the playground and especially the expressions on the chicken chickens' faces as they begin their rear-facing tail ride. This is an excellent book to introduce those new to day care, pre-school or kindergarten to recess activities on a playground.

Judy A. Driscoll, Teacher, Christ the King Academy, Poughkeepsie, Washington

Cow goes for a ride / Todd Aaron Smith. LCCN 2002001940. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2002. HBB, 0801045045, \$7.99. Small children. Rating: 4

E. Obedience--Fiction. unip.

Cow in the rain / Todd Aaron Smith. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2002. HBB, 0801045037, \$7.99. Small children. Rating: 4

E. Friendship--Fiction. unip.

Cow under the Big Top / Todd Aaron Smith. (New kids media.) LCCN 2002279484. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2001. HBB, 0801044855, \$7.99. Small children. Rating: 4

E. Cows--Fiction; Circus--Fiction. unip.

Cow gets into various misadventures and learns some valuable lessons in this delightful series by Todd Aaron Smith. In *Cow Goes For a Ride*, Cow learns why we have rules when she and the other animals take the farmer's tractor for a wild ride. Cow learns the meaning of true friendship in *Cow in the Rain*, as Dog rescues her from the rain even after Cow complained about him. A lesson in love is the subject in *Cow Under the Big Top* as Cow returns home when she discovers that life in the circus is not the fun she thought it would be.

Part of the Cow Adventure Series, Smith has created a very appealing character in Cow, the black and white star of these books. The humorous tales are fun to read and present their lessons gently. The farmer is a good picture of God and his love for all his fallible creatures. Colorful illustrations fill each page, bringing a light comedy, especially in Cow's expressions as she faces the results of her choices in each tale.

These books are a wonderful choice for preschool through the primary grades. Christian school and church libraries, as well as families, who would do well to add them to their collection, as would public libraries. The books are artistically appealing, nicely written, and valuable for the morals given. Pair them up with your own cow puppet and they will make a great addition to any story time.

Betsy Ruffin, Librarian/Teacher, Cleburne, Texas

The difference between babies and cookies / Mary Hanson; illustrated by Debbie Tilley. LCCN 00068412. San Diego: Silver Whistle, Harcourt, 2002. HBB, 152024069, \$16.00. Small children. Rating: 2

E. Babies--Fiction; Sisters--Fiction. unsp.

What does a preschooler know about babies? Some of the ideas are whimsically presented in *The Difference Between Babies and Cookies* in which a young girl learns what babies are really like. Mary Hanson's simple first person story relates how the unnamed girl tries to imagine what her mother means when she describes babies using analogies such as puppies (cuddly), bears (hungry), and fresh-baked bread (warm and soft). The big sister-to-be isn't at all certain that babies are anything like her mother says, as she gets drooled on and splashed with pureed peas, and as she dresses up her new sibling in a silly set of clothes. Artist Deborah Tilley's watercolor type illustrations fill the pages to give happy and concrete visual images of the single sentence texts.

The Difference Between Babies and Cookies is cute, colorful, and lighthearted. Most young children have an assortment of misconceptions about babies, often based on what they've heard adults say. The book could help a preschooler get a bit of a handle on what having a baby sibling may be like, and provides some giggles in the process for reader and listener alike. It's a fun book that would be cozy cuddle-up reading for parent and child in preparation for the arrival of new member of the family. Best suited to children three to five.

Karen Schmidt, Freelance Writer/Editor, Marysville, Washington

The first thing my mama told me / Susan Marie Swanson; illustrated by Christine Davenier. LCCN 00008447. San Diego: Harcourt, 2002. HBB, 0152010750, \$16.00. Small children. Rating: 3

E. Names, Personal--Fiction; Identity--Fiction. unsp.

Lucy's story begins with her mama naming her. As she grows up, each page shows her delighting more and more in the name that identifies her. For her first birthday Grandpa makes a cupcake with Lucy on it. When she's two Uncle David makes her a step stool decorated with her name. At three, she "writes" her name everywhere. (The mother in me cringed remembering that stage). Lucy's dad makes alphabet pancakes with her name when she's four. At five she takes the importance of her name with her to school and discovers the value of being able to identify her things with her name. When she is six her name is bigger than life, stomped in the snow. And now that she is seven, her mother gives her a special gift to use to light up the world with her name.

In our culture names are very powerful. We honor ancestors with names, we create new

names, and we choose names simply because they fit or seem right. No matter the reason for a name, the fact that a name belongs to a child gives it powerful magic to that child. Susan Marie Swanson captures that magic and wonder in this simple, yet eloquent book. The whimsical illustrations by Christine Davenier highlight the celebration of Lucy's name and the confidence it gives her. On a deeper level this book tracks the cognitive development of a child's self-awareness, beginning in the home and then moving out into society. More than just a picture book, this volume would be a great starting point for a discussion about the power of words, especially names.

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

Franklin says I love you / written by Paulette Bourgeois; illustrated by Brenda Clark. Toronto: Kids Can Press, 2002. HBB, 155337035X, \$10.95. Small children. Rating: 5

E. Turtles--Fiction. unsp.

Franklin thinks he has the best goldfish, the best stuffed dog, and the best of friends. But best of all is his wonderful mother. She plays catch even when she is busy, reads him two stories before bed, and bakes fly pie especially for him. When Granny tells Franklin that his mother's birthday is the following day, he plans to give her the very best present.

But all the coins in his piggy bank aren't enough to buy a special enough gift. When Franklin looks for help, Bear, Snail, Beaver, and Goose share their ideas for the perfect present for Franklin's mother. Still, none of them seem quite good enough. When the morning dawns, Franklin decides to use all of their ideas to make Mother's birthday the very best.

Like other books in the popular Franklin series, *Franklin Says I Love You* by Paulette Bourgeois is an engaging book whose story will entertain and teach at the same time. Building on topics like friendship, courage, generosity, and tolerance, the Franklin books present life challenges that a child might actually face. Children may relate to the difficulty of choosing just the right present for a loved one. While they will find many charming ideas on the gift-giving front, best of all is the underlying theme—to show your love everyday is a wonderful gift that doesn't cost a dime. Brenda Clark's illustrations are rich with activity, color, and whimsy. They support the narrative very well and model loving parent/child relationships. A nice little tale of some of the many ways to show love. Recommended.

Cathy M. Elliott, Freelance Writer, Anderson, California

Hedgehog haven : a story of a British hedgerow community / by Deborah Dennard; illustrated by Robert Hynes. (Soundprints wild habitat series.) LCCN 00063741. Norwalk, Ct.: Soundprints, 2001. HBB, 1568999879, \$15.95. Small children. Rating: 4

E. Hedgehogs--Fiction; Hedgerow ecology--Fiction; Country life--England--Fiction; Ecology--Fiction. 27 p.

Deborah Dennard's *Hedgehog Haven* follows a full nocturnal cycle, from waking to sleeping, in the life of a young hedgehog. Though it is a work of fiction, Dennard's tale of the bustling animal's activity is factual and offers an environmental primer of life in an English hedgerow.

Vibrant with the voice of the busy hedgerow community, the book realistically reports on the habits and habitat of the little hedgehog. He sniffs for food and explores a spring, is flung aside by the hooves of a draft horse and narrowly escapes the farmer's tractor wheels. He makes loud grunting noises of pleasure as he eats his favorite delicacies—insects. His day ends as he nests in the hedgerow under a moonlit sky.

The stunning watercolor illustrations by Robert Hynes push the work over the edge into excellence. His artwork is colorful and bold, teeming with story in pictures. A feast for the eyes. The images of animals are true to life, depicting them in their native settings, educating the reader.

Included in the book is a doubled-page, foldout picture glossary that might be used as a teaching tool or visual aid. Brief commentaries on both Great Britain and its hedgerow habitats serve to enhance the story, helping complete the picture. A world map with a star identifying Great Britain is also incorporated into the final pages. *Hedgehog Haven* will enlighten every young reader about hedgerows and their communities while it delights the eye and tickles the imagination. Recommended.

Cathy M. Elliott, Freelance Writer, Anderson, California

I love you this much : a song of God's love / by Lynn Hodges & Sue Buchanan; illustrated by John Bendall Brunello. Grand Rapids: Zonderkidz, Zondervan, 2001. HBB, 0310232686, \$14.99. Small children. Rating: 4

E. God--Love--Fiction; Animals--Infancy--Fiction. 1 vol., unsp.; 1 audio cassette.

"I love you this much," sing Adult Bear and Baby Bear as they spread their arms wide preparing for a hug. With book and accompanying CD before them, the beginning reader and preschool listener will learn to sing along with the Bears. Starting with the NIV wording of Ephesians 3:17 & 18, the words and pictures lead us through a whole day of love:

waking with a smiling face; learning about deep, wide love, and that it comes from God; praying to this trustworthy God; finally falling happily asleep with words of love ringing in their ears. The accompanying sing-along lullaby CD has two sections: 1. Words and music, with the music tailing into sleep; 2. music only, tailing into lullaby tones.

John Brunello's happy, colorful illustrations tell the story as much as do the engaging words written by Lynn Hodges and Sue Buchanan. A large book, *I Love You This Much*, easily spreads across two laps for cuddled up reading. Children will enjoy noting the dedication at the beginning of this book includes Billy, the illustrator's cat.

Donna J. Eggett, Freelance Writer, Radford, Virginia



***In English, of course* / [written by] Josephine Nobisso; illustrated by Dasha Ziborova. LCCN 2001002559. [Westhampton Beach, N.Y.]: Gingerbread House, 2002. HBB, 0940223078, \$16.95; PAP, 0940112086, \$. Small children. Rating: *5**

E. Schools--Fiction; Immigrants--Fiction; Domestic animals--Fiction; Italy--Fiction. unip.

It's difficult to say what is more appealing about *In English of Course*—the refreshing storyline or the graphic collage illustrations. Perhaps it is the blending of both that makes this book work so well. And cultural blending is what the author, Josephine Nobisso, conveys with fun and flair in her multicultural picture book.

Set in the 1950's, little Josephine, newly immigrated from Italy, finds herself doing more show than tell when it comes to class introductions. As different students tell a bit about their own background, Josephine quickly realizes she understands English more than she can speak it. Yet, with a little help from her teacher, Josephine is able to describe her visit to an Italian farm with flourish, despite her limited vocabulary. By the time she is done relating her adventures with a cow, a pig, and the river, it's obvious how misconceptions and misplaced stereotypes can get in the way of finding out who people really are.

Charming, delightful, and enlightening, *In English, of Course* is a book for those working with multilingual students, as well as one to introduce students to other cultures. Any child who has ever tried to tell a story, only to be misunderstood, will most certainly relate to Josephine's circumstance. Dasha Ziborova's vibrant illustrative approach marks her as an up and coming talent. It is clearly understandable why PBS recently choose *In English, of Course* as one of their four recommended titles on their Teacher Source pages.

Pam Webb, Freelance Writer, Sandpoint, Idaho

***Just like Mama* / Beverly Lewis; illustrated by Cheri Bladholm. LCCN 2002006132. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2002. HBB, 0764225073, \$14.99. Small children (Elementary). Rating: 5**

E. Mothers and daughters--Fiction; Farm life--Fiction; Amish--Fiction. 31 p.

Susie Mae is an Amish farm girl who wants to be just like her mama. The vivacious child makes every effort to follow her mother's example in milking, picking strawberries, collecting eggs, and preparing lunch. But she doesn't expect the cow to kick over the milk bucket, or for some of the eggs to break as she dashes around the chicken coop. Neither does she count on trying to prove herself under her older brother Thomas's eyes. By day's end Susie Mae realizes she is nowhere near being just like her mama. With love and understanding, her wise mother encourages her to keep trying so together they can become more like Jesus.

Beverly Lewis has skillfully and poignantly expressed a very life-like story with completely believable characters, motives, and feelings. I did find myself wishing for more interaction with brother Thomas. Lewis's understanding of Amish culture is well displayed in this excellent picture book. She uses realistic Amish juvenile dialogue in a delightful setting to clearly and succinctly give readers an analogy of every Christian's aim: to become more like Jesus.

Illustrator Cheri Bladholm's lifelike and playful paintings lift *Just Like Mama* from the level of a well-told story to that of a "must have" book. Myriad details give the pictures authenticity and charm, from the kitten that laps up the cream Susie Mae spills on the milking room floor to the inquisitive countenances of piglets eager for their morning feeding. A brief description of Amish ways and religious practices on the final page adds an educational value to the book, answering questions many readers will have after experiencing the story.

Karen Schmidt, Freelance Writer/Editor, Marysville, Washington

***Little Badger's just-about birthday* / written by Eve Bunting; illustrated by LeUyen Pham. LCCN 2001001153. San Diego: Harcourt, 2002. HBB, 152026096, \$15.00. Small children. Rating: 5**

E. Birthdays--Fiction; Parties--Fiction; Badgers--Fiction; Animals--Fiction. unip.

It's Little Badger's just-about birthday and Old Badger has planned a celebration. Not only is there a big, bristly, dry-as-dirt pinecone present waiting, but a party in the works. Little Badger delivers invitations to all his forest friends and the celebration begins.

Each animal brings a gift and a remembrance of when, just about this time of year, he also was born. Little Badger realizes that it is everybody's just-about birthday. He includes

everyone at the party and shares his bounty, sending each friend home with a different gift than the one he brought.

Little Badger's Just-About Birthday is the third offering in the Old and Little Badger series by award-winning author, Eve Bunting. Her text is simple and sweet. The story accurately represents nature and the time of year when all of the forest friends might have been born. LeUyen Pham portrays the appealing personalities of the badgers and their buddies in her colorful illustrations. A young reader might see signs of past adventures from previous tales upon close examination of particular pictures, providing continuity in the series.

Parents will appreciate the generous spirit that permeates the book and children will delight in Little Badger's newest furry tale. Highly recommended.

Cathy M. Elliott, Freelance Writer, Anderson, California

***Little Flower* / Gloria Rand; pictures by R. W. Alley. LCCN 00040982. New York: Henry Holt, 2002. HBB, 080506480X, \$15.95. Small children. Rating: 4**

E. Pigs--Fiction; Pets--Fiction; Accidents--Fiction. unip.

Little Flower is Miss Pearl's pet potbellied pig. Little Flower loves attention. To get it, she perfects her trick of rolling over and playing dead. But not everyone in the neighborhood appreciates her antics. It's not until Miss Pearl falls and needs help that Little Flower comes into her own by performing the trick in the middle of the street to attract the life saving attention necessary.

Comically expressive illustrations by R. W. Alley will entertain young readers and leave them begging for more tales of this unusual pot bellied Flower. With this book, author Gloria Rand has provided great entertainment for the primary classroom.

Judy A. Driscoll, Teacher, Christ the King Academy, Poulso, Washington

***Little Raccoon always knows best* / Kathe Recheis; illustrated by Pieter Kunstreich. LCCN 2001044265. Victorville, Calif.: Munchweiler Press, 2002. LIB, 079400010X, \$15.95; HBB, 794000096, \$14.95. Small children. Rating: 5**

E. Raccoons--Fiction; Brothers and sisters--Fiction; Competition (Psychology)--Fiction. unip.

Kathe Recheis's appealing story about a raccoon who thinks he knows the best for everyone reveals that listening is an acquired talent; one that Little Raccoon needs to learn. It also shows sibling rivalry leads to competition instead of cooperation. When Little Raccoon becomes a bossy know-it-all, his three siblings soon weary of his self-imposed leadership that always lands them in trouble.

From knowing the best ponds for fine dining to finding the best hollow for sleeping at night, Little Raccoon thinks he knows everything—until the unthinkable happens. This charming story teaches the value of listening and working together instead of acting like a bossy know-it-all.

Delightfully illustrated by Pieter Kunstreich, with wide-eyed raccoons sporting adorable bandit masks, and ring striped tails, the story of *Little Raccoon Always Knows Best* will bring charming grins to young children's faces. This wonderful picture book is best suited for elementary grades, although also appropriate for pre-school, and would be an ideal addition to any family, school or public library picture book collection.

Gail Welborn, Freelance Writer/Reporter, Sedro Woolley, Washington

Platypus / Chris Riddell. LCCN 00012377. San Diego: Harcourt, 2002. HBB, 0152164936, \$15.00. Small children. Rating: 3

E. Platypus--Fiction; Hermit crabs--Fiction. unip.

A young platypus finds an interesting curly shell to add to his collections in this likeable tale, *Platypus* by Chris Riddell. Platypus is seeking something special to add to his eclectic collection, and the curly shell he finds on the beach seems just right. However, the shell keeps disappearing. Looking for it again, he discovers not only the shell, but the hermit crab who was using it for a home. He lets the hermit crab scuttle off to the sea and finds himself a different shell, one that sounds like the sea.

This is a simple but pleasant story. *Platypus* should appeal to young ones, who will enjoy telling of their own finds and collections. The character is a good-natured happy youngster and the storyline straightforward and uncomplicated, just right for a good read with young listeners.

Libraries of all kinds, as well as families, should consider this book for their preschoolers. While not factual, it could be used as an introduction to the real animal, one with which many children will not be familiar. It also could be used in thematic units of Australia, collections, the beach, or vacations. Platypus's consideration for the hermit crab, once he discovers it, is also nice. The book should interest its intended audience with its simple charm.

Betsy Ruffin, Librarian/Teacher, Cleburne, Texas



The quiltmaker's gift / story by Jeff Brumbeau; pictures by Gail de Marcken. LCCN 99006547. New York: Scholastic, 2000. HBB, 0439309107, \$17.95. Small children (Elementary, Adult). Rating: *5

E. Quiltmakers--Fiction; Kings, queens, rulers, etc.--Fiction; Generosity--Fiction. unip.

Many wonderful picture books include quilts, among them *The Quilt Story*, by Tony Johnston (Putnam Pub Group, 1985), *Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt*, by Deborah Hopkinson (Random House, 1995), *The Dream Quilt*, by Celeste Ryan (Waterbrook Press; 1999), and *The Keeping Quilt*, by Patricia Polacco (Simon & Schuster, 1998), but none compare to Jeff Brumbeau's *The Quiltmaker's Gift*. With gorgeous watercolors by Gail de Marcken and a story that teaches that sharing, not material goods, make a person truly rich, this book will find many uses in any library. With gorgeous watercolors by Gail de Marcken and a story that teaches that sharing, not material goods, make a person truly rich, this book will find many uses in any library.

A selfish and greedy king isn't satisfied with a treasure house full of gifts given to him by his subjects and he orders his soldiers to search his kingdom for anyone who hasn't gotten him a gift. News arrives of a quiltmaker who makes marvelous quilts for the poor but she refuses to give the king one. The king becomes angry and tries to get one by force. After all of his schemes fail, she agrees to make him one if he will give away all that he owns. Does he want one of her quilts badly enough to give away all of his wonderful treasures?

Although God is not mentioned in the story, it has overtones of the rich young ruler's meeting with Jesus and of Jesus' story of the Good Samaritan. This book could be used as a jumping-off place for various areas of study, such as pioneer life (chronicled through quilt block names), the mathematics of quilting, a design-your-own-block art class, and community service (perhaps topped off by making quilts for a worthy cause).

As a bonus, the inside of the book jacket contains the double page illustration of the king's treasure house, from the story's beginning, and includes a list of 250 quilt block names deriving from items and blocks in the picture. Even a library can take advantage of it, by typing a list of the 250 names and gluing it onto one of the blank pages in the front or back of the book, where patrons can use it to look inside the book for the visual quilt puns that refer to each block.

The list alone could be used in a classroom setting to make word search and crossword puzzles or other word puzzles or as research material: how did each block get its name? Readers can also search in the story illustrations for the forty blocks represented on the book end papers.

Finally, the website mentioned in the back of the book offers readers more puzzles and games, quilting activities, contests, conversations with Brumbeau and de Marcken, and other quilt-

related goodies, including details of how the illustrations add another dimension to the story. This book, a treat for quilters and non-quilters alike, is also available as *The Quiltmaker's Giftbox* (ISBN 0-439-33729-1), which includes a copy of the book, a "fat quarter" of 100% cotton from Benartex, and a booklet of simple quilting projects.

Betty Winslow, Bowling Green Christian Academy, Bowling Green, Ohio

Rag Baby / Karyn Henley; illustrated by Susan Kathleen Hartung. LCCN 2001001286. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale Kids, Tyndale House, 2002. HBB, 0842354344, \$12.99. Small children. Rating: 3

E. Dolls--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction. unip.

Rag Baby by Karyn Henley is an allegory in which a little girl, Jessie, loses her cherished rag doll when he falls under the bed and is swept up and discarded by her mother. Jessie discovers her rag doll in a thrift store and trades her only winter scarf to buy him back.

The illustrations by Susan Kathleen Hartung are sweet and colorful, clearly communicating the story. The dust bunnies who live under the bed are especially fun.

The author clearly states that this story represents God's sacrifice to redeem mankind. This book is didactic and not intended solely for pleasure reading. Don't analyze the allegory too closely. *Rag Baby's* "fall from grace" is hardly an act of disobedience on his part. Trading a scarf hardly equates with the sacrifice of a son. Even so, this book will be useful in teaching very young children the basics of salvation.

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

Sixteen cows / Lisa Wheeler; illustrated by Kurt Cyrus. (Learn the Word series.) LCCN 2001096269. San Diego: Harcourt, 2002. HBB, 152026762, \$16.00. Small children. Rating: 5

E. Cowboys--Fiction; Cowgirls--Fiction; Cows--Fiction; Stories in rhyme. unip.

Sixteen Cows by Lisa Wheeler is the fun story of Cowboy Gene's eight cows and Cowgirl Sue's eight cows on neighboring ranches. After a tornado tears out the fence keeping the ranches separate, the herds get mixed and Gene and Sue just cannot get them sorted out. They solve their dilemma with a wedding in the fall at which there are sixteen cow bridesmaids.

The illustrations by Kurt Cyrus are fun, action packed, bright, and include a variety of perspectives. The cows are expressive while still realistic. The text is in sing-song poetry with A-A-B-B rhyme scheme that lends itself to being read with an accent. Be prepared to sing

the cattle call songs when reading aloud. Highly recommended for pure pleasure reading.

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

Small / Clara Vulliamy. LCCN 00011157. New York: Clarion Books, Houghton Mifflin, 2002. HBB, 0618194592, \$15.00. Small children. Rating: 4

E. Sleepovers--Fiction; Toys--Fiction; Mice--Fiction; Grandmothers--Fiction. unip.

Small by Clara Vulliamy is a stuffed animal version of *The Incredible Journey*. Tom sleeps over at Granny's house, but his favorite stuffed animal, a mouse named Small, is left at home by mistake. Small goes on a dangerous journey across town to rejoin Tom at Granny's house.

Both Tom and Small exhibit courage. Small braves city streets, cats, rain, wind, and dark woods in order to be reunited with Tom. Tom braves getting out of bed and creeping downstairs in the dark to find Small. Small is found on the floor under the mail slot in the front door. Granny thinks that Small was just dropped by Tom when he arrived. Only Tom knows that Small found him, not the other way around.

The illustrations by the author (which appear to be watercolor paintings) are delightful. Tom, with his bright eyes and tousled hair, could easily jump right off the page. This is a sweet story and will be enjoyed by all.

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



A story for Bear / Dennis Haseley; illustrated by Jim LaMarche. LCCN 2001002141. San Diego: Silver Whistle, Harcourt, 2002. HBB, 0152002391, \$16.00. Small children. Rating: * 5

E. Literacy--Fiction; Books and reading--Fiction; Bears--Fiction. unip.

A Story for Bear is a whimsical, gentle, earthy story I found myself reading to my children in a tender and soft voice. Jim LaMarche's illustrations embellish the words written by Dennis Haseley, and draw the reader (and listener) into Bear's world.

Bear is a curious creature who one day wanders beyond his normal boundaries, and finds a new and enticing place to explore. Day after day Bear returns to investigate this new place. Cautious at first, he becomes mesmerized by a woman absorbed in her books. He comes closer and closer to her at each visit.

Soon the woman and Bear become friends. He comes each day to listen intently to the stories she reads aloud to him. Bear senses the up and

down emotions of the characters in the books and experiences feelings not familiar to him.

The woman leaves her summer cabin to return home but leaves the books for bear. Bear begins his winter's sleep dreaming of the stories she has read, hearing her voice as he sleeps.

A Story for Bear is delightful, encouraging the passion and power of words. It is a great read. In trying to liken this story with others in my local library, neither I nor the librarian could find any comparable. A must have for every library. Highly Recommended.

Robin Rusk, Freelance Writer, Susanville, California

The way we do it in Japan / by Geneva Cobb Iijima; illustrated by Paige Billin-Frye. LCCN 2001004091. Morton Grove, Ill.: Albert Whitman, 2002. HBB, 0807578223, \$14.95. Small children. Rating: 3

E. Japan--Fiction. unip.

Gregory, a grade school child of a Japanese father and North American mother, moves with his family to Japan. He packs his favorite toys, practices using chopsticks on the airplane, and exchanges dollars for yen. The book's title, *The Way We Do It in Japan*, is a soon-familiar axiom as Gregory confronts a new culture: removing his shoes before entering his new apartment, sitting on floor cushions for meals, and watching classmates eat rice, fish, and fermented soybeans at lunch. Gregory's tried and true peanut butter sandwich, while tasty, seems odd to him in the new setting until fellow students decide to help their expatriate friend feel welcome.

The Way We Do It in Japan is sweet, full of intriguing details that appeal to the curiosity of elementary age children. Factual, yet written as fiction, the story helps children see some of the differences between their own culture and another. Geneva Cobb Iijima, whose own son lived in Japan for a time, presents a positive and affirming look into the lifestyle and rituals of Japan without giving readers an impression that one is superior to the other. Illustrator Paige Billin-Frye's animated-style art gives clues of Gregory's feelings and occasional confusion, as well as the reactions of Japanese acquaintances. The facial expressions of Gregory, his family, and the Japanese folks they encounter add to the upbeat mood of the book. Iijima incorporates an occasional Japanese word along with a phonetic pronunciation, making the reading more authentic and enjoyable. The last page includes non-fiction information about Japan that will add to children's knowledge of the culture and lifestyle which the story introduces. This book is fun, informative and well written. It's suited to primary and elementary readers.

Karen Schmidt, Freelance Writer/Editor, Marysville, Washington

What did you do today? / Kerry Arquette; illustrated by Nancy Hayashi. LCCN 00038230. San Diego: Harcourt, 2002. HBB, 152014144, \$16.00. Small children. Rating: 5

E. Domestic animals--Fiction; Animals--Fiction; Stories in rhyme. unip.

The bouncy rhyme of author Kerry Arquette's *What Did You Do Today?* and the fanciful and expressive illustrations by Nancy Hayashi make this a book that will dance in your brain long after it is put away. From the dog which answers "I wagged my tail and broke a cup. I tumbled with a neighbor pup. I chewed my master's slipper up. That's what I did today" to the child who "...climbed a tree and flew a kite...ran and jumped with all my might...bathed and brushed and curled up tight. Then told the golden moon 'Good night'" the reader and listener alike will delight in each page. A good bed time story to help review the day. Its repeating verse patterns could also be used in the writing classroom to inspire young verse writers.

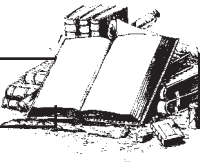
Judy A. Driscoll, Teacher, Christ the King Academy, Poulso, Washington

Where does Thursday go? / words, Janeen Brian; pictures, Stephen Michael King. LCCN 2001088539. New York: Clarion Books, Houghton Mifflin, 2002. HBB, 0618212647, \$14.00. Small children. Rating: 4

E. Days--Fiction; Bears--Fiction; Birds--Fiction. unip.

Bruno had a great birthday on Thursday...so great he didn't want it to end. That got him to questioning "Where does Thursday go before Friday comes?" Author Janeen Brian, with the aid of whimsical illustrations by Stephen Michael King, introduces us to Bruno the bear and his silent partner, an aviator bird named Bert in *Where Does Thursday Go?* Bruno and Bert begin searching the evening countryside, across the river, into the park, down by the lake, near a tunnel on the hill, and down to the ocean. Everywhere they find creatures and creations, but nowhere do they find Thursday. It's only when Bruno remembers the big round balloons and the shining candles from his party that he decides that the excitement of Thursday was just like the moon. As the moon slips away, Bruno and Bert call goodbye to Thursday and wait for the sun to bring Friday. Stephen Michael King's soft, gently-colored illustrations make this a good bedtime read.

Judy A. Driscoll, Teacher, Christ the King Academy, Poulso, Washington



***Adventures in Ancient Greece* / written by Linda Bailey, illustrated by Bill Slavin. Toronto: Kids Can Press, 2002. HBB, 1550745344, \$14.95. Elementary. Rating: 4**

F. Ancient Greece—Fiction. 48 p.

When will the Binkerton kids learn to avoid the Good Times Travel Agency? Wanting to travel forward in time to see the next Olympics, Emma, Josh, and Libby find themselves in 5 B.C. in the middle of a battlefield with armies on both sides. Just in time a truce is called for the Olympic games. And while they don't get their wish about seeing the future, they have some grand adventures along the way. Touring Athens with Demeas, a local boy, they get a sense of the Athenians' pride in their beautiful city. Trying to get a lift to the games, the children learn something about the origin of our modern word "spartan." Emma and Libby have to disguise themselves as boys as they learn that women in Ancient Greece weren't much more than personal property. Sneaking into the games Emma is embarrassed to discover the ancient Olympics were played in the nude! On their way home the kids accidentally board a trirreme headed for war. Time to punch out for 2002!

The latest in her highly successful Good Times Travel Agency books, Linda Bailey's *Adventures in Ancient Greece* presents a funny storyline that slips a lot of history into unsuspecting kids. Bill Slavin's pen and ink and watercolor illustrations move the story along in a comic-book style. The reader can't help but turn the page to see what misadventure is next. Because the story is driven by the guide book, the storyline is a little bit stilted, but this book is an excellent choice for the age group nonetheless. It is similar to Magic Tree House stories but better; this book is hardback with great illustrations. A good investment.

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

***Angelo* / David Macaulay. LCCN 2001039536. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2002. HBB, 0618168265, \$16.00. Elementary. Rating: 4**

F. Architecture--Conservation and restoration--Fiction; Pigeons--Fiction; Wildlife rescue--Fiction. 48 p.

With a variety of perspectives, muted colors, and poignancy, David Macaulay tells the story of Angelo, an aged master plasterer, as he rescues an injured pigeon while working on an old church and nurses her back to health. We see the care he gives from the first night, "Okay,

Just one night" which becomes more. In the illustration we see a makeshift hospital bed complete with traction for the broken leg. From there the story diverges: Angelo continues his work, growing close and closer to retirement, while Sylvia, the pigeon is just embarking on her career as a performer in the piazza. They part and then meet again when Sylvia encourages Angelo to finish his task of restoring the church. Reminiscent of de Paola's *Clown of God* (Harcourt, 1978) and Agee's art in *The Incredible Painting of Felix Closseau* (Farrar Straus Giroux, 1988), Macaulay's story of enduring friendship should not be missed.

Leslie Greaves Radloff, Librarian/Media Generalist, St Paul Public Schools, St. Paul, Minneapolis

***The birthday present mystery* / by Elspeth Campbell Murphy; illustrated by Nancy Munger. (Young cousins mysteries; 1.) LCCN 2001002769. Minneapolis: Bethany Backyard, Bethany House, 2001. PAP, 0764224948, \$4.99. Elementary. Rating: 4**

F. Cousins--Fiction; Birthdays--Fiction; Mystery and detective stories. 29 p.

***The sneaky thief mystery* / by Elspeth Campbell Murphy; illustrated by Nancy Munger. (Young cousins mysteries; 2.) LCCN 2001002770. Minneapolis: Bethany Backyard, Bethany House, 2001. PAP, 0764224956, \$4.99. Elementary. Rating: 4**

F. Cousins--Fiction; Ferrets as pets--Fiction; Mystery and detective stories. 31 p.

In each of these light-hearted adventures, cousins Sarah-Jane, Timothy, and Titus get a big surprise, initially when a singing gorilla shows up in the first book, and again when a favorite swimming medal disappears in the second.

Kids will read with interest to discover what's inside the gorilla's gift and who took the treasure. At approximately thirty pages each, these books make a satisfying read for children moving up to chapter books. Bright color illustrations keep the reader's attention and draw the child into the stories.

Elspeth Campbell Murphy helps children to discover the mysteries of God's Word as well with the scriptural themes for each title. In *The Birthday Present Mystery*, when an ape turns out to be messenger for a party service, and the mysterious birthday wishes are intended for someone named Sam, the cousins jump right on the case. Who is Sam? What does he get for his birthday? While Sarah-Jane and the two T's

scramble to find the owner of the gift, the reader is reminded that everything good comes from God, and every perfect gift is from Him (James 1:17a, ICB).

In *The Sneaky Thief Mystery*, Titus's neighbor gets a new pet ferret named Freddie, and things start to disappear. Any child (or parent) who has had experience with a mischievous pet will enjoy reading about Freddie's hide-and-stash antics. Searching for the ferret's hiding places is fun at first, but when a favorite swimming medal disappears, no one is laughing. When the young cousins search all the hiding places of the neighbor's pet for the medal and come up empty, their somber faces remind us of the admonition to "Let him who steals steal no more" (Ephesians 4:28a, ICB)

These illustrated chapter-books are a good choice for emerging readers.

Marilynn Griffith, Freelance Writer, Tallahassee, Florida

***The chalk drawings mystery* / by Elspeth Campbell Murphy; illustrated by Nancy Munger. (Young cousins mysteries; 4.) Minneapolis: Bethany Backyard, Bethany House, 2002. PAP, 0764224972, \$4.99. Elementary. Rating: 4**

F. Cousins--Fiction; Mystery and detective stories. 32 p.

Miss Mattie is a favorite art teacher of cousins Timothy, Sarah-Jane, and Titus. In *The Chalk Drawings Mystery*, Timothy and the other school children create chalk art on the sidewalk outside their school for Miss Mattie to see when she arrives each day. One day the cousins spot a chalk design unlike the others, and the mystery begins. First they decide how the drawing came to be on the sidewalk, and then tackle the question of why it's there and what it means. When the chalk drawing disappears, the mystery grows. Using good manners, their reasoning abilities, and God-given skills, the trio and a friend answer all the questions to find out that the chalk drawing is a marriage proposal for Miss Mattie.

Elspeth Campbell Murphy knows how to use children's imagination and curiosity in her simple stories. Though no biblical content is present in the book except for Proverbs 25:13 on the title page, the characters act in a manner that would please God and shows respect and concern for others. Murphy uses plentiful dialogue and typical kid language to carry the plot rapidly through to conclusion. *The Chalk Drawings Mystery* is fun and positive reading

for children almost ready for chapter books, and provides good reading practice. Nancy Munger's colorful illustrations bring the story alive, especially with regard to the chalk drawing, so readers can easily grasp the coded message.

Karen Schmidt, Freelance Writer, Marysville, Washington

***Ermine's new home* / by Stephanie Smith; illustrated by Robert Hynes. (Soundprints' read-and-discover.) LCCN 2001049687. Norwalk, Conn.: Soundprints, 2002. PAP, 1931465177, \$3.95; HBB, 1931465185, \$7.95. Elementary. Rating: 5**

F. Ermine--Fiction; Animals--Infancy--Fiction. 48 p.

***Lynx twins grow up* / by Stephanie Smith; illustrated by Robert Hynes. (Soundprints' read-and-discover.) LCCN 2001049688. Norwalk, Conn.: Soundprints, 2002. PAP, 1931465193, \$3.95; HBB, 1931465207, \$7.95. Elementary. Rating: 5**

F. Lynx--Fiction; Animals--Infancy--Fiction. 48 p.

***Gray wolf pup's adventure* / by Stephanie Smith; illustrated by Robert Hynes. (Soundprints' read-and-discover.) LCCN 2001049689. Norwalk, Conn.: Soundprints, 2002. PAP, 1931465134, \$3.95; HBB, 1931465142, \$7.95. Elementary. Rating: 5**

F. Wolves--Fiction; Animals--Infancy--Fiction. 48 p.

Written in connection with the Smithsonian Institution, the Soundprints' Read-and-Discover series is well done, each book presenting facts about an animal in story form. In *Gray Wolf Pup's Adventure*, a pup must be rescued when he wanders far from his pack. An ermine must find a den of his own in *Ermine's New Home*, and Lynx twins learn to care for themselves in *Lynx Twins Grow Up*. A glossary provides definitions for special words in the text, each set in bold type. Additional facts about each animal are supplied in endnote pages.

The Soundprints' books are both factual and appealing. Many sound facts are offered in the story, but in a way that makes the animal more real and brings it closer than a mere recitation of facts would do. Robert Hynes' illustrations are true-to-life without losing the charm the text lends the animals. The large type and chapter divisions make these books an ideal beginning chapter for readers.

Stephanie Smith's books will make a wonderful and delightful addition to any kind of library. They will bring science to life in schools, encourage respect for nature in the readers, and be a good addition to a parent-child or library story time. They will be of particular interest to primary readers, but will appeal to older elementary as well, as many at these ages love

animal books. This is definitely a line of books to remember.

Betsy Ruffin, Librarian/Teacher, Cleburne, Texas

***Escape underground* / Clint Kelly. (KidWitness tales; Heritage builders.) LCCN 2001003301. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2001. PAP, 1561799645, \$5.99. Elementary. Rating: 3**

F. Tolerance--Fiction; Christian life--History--Early church, ca. 30-600--Fiction; Persecution--Fiction; Jerusalem--History--Fiction. 117 p.

Mara's father is a leader in "The Way," a movement of Jews following the teachings of Jesus. While she agrees with her parents' beliefs, lately it seems that the meetings have been about everything but the Savior.

With the appearance of many new foreigners in Jerusalem claiming the same faith as Mara and the other Hebrews, trouble seems to be brewing everywhere. Surely God could watch over these strange Greek-speakers wherever they came from? Maybe then, things wouldn't be so out of control.

Along with Nathan, her rabbi-in-the-making brother, quiet Sarah, and husky Obadiah, Mara forms an exclusive club for Hebrew children only. As Jews, Mara and her friend enjoy special favor from God? Or do they?

When oppression from Saul and other enemies of the way is directed at all believers, Mara finds herself in need of help from Karis, a poor Caesarean believer. Although Karis is often ridiculed for her habit of wandering underground, her knowledge of King Hezekiah's tunnels is the children's only hope when a meeting is stopped by soldiers and their parents are taken away.

Mara soon sees a faith in Karis and her friend Akbar that surpasses her own. Could she be wrong about these Gentile believers? Before she can sort it all out, Saul and his men send the children scrambling under the city, only to find their parents and be chased out again. But things don't go quite as planned. Saul's men can be heard in the main tunnel. Will they make it out alive?

Through a narrow escape, Mara learns that not only are all followers of Jesus persecuted, but all believers are equal in God's sight. With Karis' and Akbar's help, a new club is formed, one where the only basis for membership is belief in Jesus Christ.

Mari Lynn Griffith, Freelance Writer, Tallahassee, Florida

***The giant chicken mystery* / by Elspeth Campbell Murphy; illustrated by Nancy Munger. (Young cousins mysteries; 3.) Minneapolis: Bethany Backyard, Bethany House, 2002. PAP, 0764224964, \$4.99. Elementary. Rating: 4**

E. Cousins--Fiction; Mystery and detective stories. 32 p.

One afternoon while enjoying fudge and books on a city street with her cousins Timothy and Titus, Sarah-Jane glimpses an incredibly large chicken crossing the road. The boys refuse to believe Sarah-Jane's sighting until they find a reddish-brown feather nearby...and just up the street sits The Little Red Hen Bakery. Voilà, the three cousins become entangled in *The Giant Chicken Mystery*. As they seek the origin of the big feather, they discover that the baker had a giant chicken costume in her back room, but it's gone missing. Step by step, the determined kids and the baker untangle the knot of the mystery to find out who was dashing across town dressed in a hen suit, and why.

Elspeth Campbell Murphy captures both humor and child-like suspense in this easy reader first chapter book. She's skilled at creating a whodunit tale and then taking the protagonists along in a logical manner to solve the mystery. Murphy uses enough detail and dialogue to keep readers' interest while moving the story ahead smoothly, and she understands the way kids think and what snags their attention. The story is without any overt Christian input, but the book portrays wholesome kids whom a parent would be happy to have befriend her own child. Nancy Munger's colorful art enlivens the story and helps readers visually get acquainted with the three main characters.

Karen Schmidt, Freelance Writer, Marysville, Washington

***Indian shoes* / by Cynthia Leitch Smith; illustrated by Jim Madsen. LCCN 2001039510. New York: HarperCollins, 2002. HBB, 0060295317, \$15.95. Elementary. Rating: 3**

F. Grandfathers--Fiction; Indians of North America--Fiction. 66 p.

Indian Shoes is Cynthia Leitch Smith's collection of stories about Ray Halfmoon, a Seminole-Cherokee boy living in Chicago with his grandfather. (Ray's parents were killed by a tornado years before). These are simple stories, gently written, about everyday occurrences: Ray trading in his own hi-tops so his homesick Grandpa can have a pair of genuine Indian moccasins; Ray and Grandpa rescuing a disappointing Christmas at home by feeding the pets of the neighbors who did manage to get away.

Ray and Grandpa take part in a church wedding—with the implication that church attendance is a regular occurrence in their lives—and they celebrate Christmas. More importantly, family

values, kindness, and a gentleness of spirit loom large on every page.

Ray is a quiet boy who is much more of a thinker than a doer. There's very little action, but Ray's adventures are funny enough and unpredictable enough to delight most youngsters.

Smith's straightforward prose will make it easy to tempt reluctant readers, while Jim Madsen's soft black and white illustrations add depth. The city setting and the fact that Ray is not yet another white Anglo Saxon child will be a plus in ethnic markets.

Rosemarie DiCristo, Freelance Writer, The Bronx, New York

The Klondike cat / written by Julie Lawson; illustrated by Paul Mombourquette. LCCN 20019034431. Toronto: Kids Can Press, 2002. HBB, 1553370139, \$16.95. Elementary. Rating: 4

F. Klondike River Valley (Yukon)--Gold discoveries--Fiction; Cats--Fiction. 32 p.

It's 1897 and gold fever has struck North America. As soon as spring comes, Noah and his Pa are heading for the Klondike. The adventure ahead promises hard work and excitement that Noah looks forward to until Pa tells him that Shadow, Noah's cat, will have to stay behind. Unable to part with his beloved pet, Noah disobeys his father and sneaks the cat aboard the steamer anyway. When they land in Alaska the cat is discovered. Noah promises his Pa that she'll be no trouble and Pa reluctantly allows her to go along. Noah cares for her and even carries Shadow when the going is too rough for her paws on the Chilkoot Trail. As their trek continues, Pa moves from tolerating the cat to defending her. Things seem to be going well until they arrive in Dawson to find all the good fields are taken. Faced with going back home, Noah and Shadow find the solution that will allow all three of them to go on for gold.

Klondike Cat captures all the excitement of the gold rush of 1898. By using the characters of Noah and Shadow, Julie Lawson tells the story of the many stages involved in such a difficult journey. This picture book is a good introduction to this important period in North American history, which was essential to opening up and settling the Western Canadian and Alaskan frontiers. The oil paintings by Paul Mombourquette are masterful in portraying the rough and tumble atmosphere of life on the trail. The historical note at the back of the book provides more facts for children inspired to find out more about the Klondike Gold Rush. If your collection suffers from lack of historical picture books, this would make an excellent addition.

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

Little Rat sets sail / Monika Bang-Campbell; illustrated by Molly Bang. LCCN 2001001959. San Diego: Harcourt, 2002. HBB, 0152162976, \$14.00. Elementary. Rating: 5

F. Rats--Fiction; Animals--Fiction; Fear--Fiction; Sailing--Fiction. unpag.

Monika Bang-Campbell and Molly Bang have created a lovely work in *Little Rat Sets Sail*. Delicate yet simple illustrations complement the writing perfectly. Little Rat has many fears. But her fear of sailing doesn't stop her parents from signing her up for sailing lessons over summer vacation, much to Little Rat's dismay.

In this charming chapter book, Monika Bang-Campbell and Molly Bang encourage children to face their fears; this theme is coupled with that of building up self-esteem in children who have many fears. Information is another strong point in this chapter book. Children will learn terms used in sailing like bow, jib, cockpit, mainsail, etc. Informative and fun, this is a highly recommended chapter book, and is apparently the first of a new Little Rat series.

Robin McCarley Rusk, Homeschooling Mother, Freelance Writer, Susanville, California

My life as a skysurfing skateboarder / Bill Myers. (The incredible worlds of Wally McDoogie; 21.) Nashville: Tommy Nelson, Thomas Nelson, 2002. PAP, 0849959926, \$5.99. Elementary. Rating: 3

F. Skateboarding--Fiction. 115 p.

Klutzy Wally McDoogie somehow bungles his way into participating in the Skateboard Championship of the Universe, and best friend, Wall Street, decides it's an excellent opportunity for her to make money. She gets Wally a personal trainer, an Arnold Schwarzenegger sound-alike whose conditioning regime only succeeds in mangling Wally in several different ways. Influenced by Wall Street's pep talks, Wally begins to want to win, by any means necessary. He neglects Leroy, the Big Buddy kid he's sponsoring, gets a "cheating machine" skateboard, and refuses to help other racers in trouble during the actual competition. It all seems worth it, at first. But Wally soon starts rethinking his priorities.

My Life as a Skysurfing Skateboarder, #21 in Bill Myers' The Incredible Worlds of Wally McDoogie series, is, as always, a fast, lively read filled with wacky, slapstick humor and cartoon-like accidents (no matter what peril befalls Wally, he's never really hurt). The book is simply written and swiftly paced, making it perfect for reluctant readers.

Some cautions: there's bathroom humor and a scene where Wally teleports himself. Also, the many jokes about how badly Wally is bullied may not seem funny to a child really being bullied. But lessons on winning not being

everything, and giving being better than getting, balance things out.

Rosemarie DiCristo, Freelance Writer, The Bronx, New York

Riddles from the hope chest / by Becky Freeman. (Camp Wanna Banana mysteries; 5.) LCCN 2002066374. Colorado Springs: WaterBrook Press, 2002. PAP, 1578563534, \$4.99. Elementary. Rating: 1

F. Secrets--Fiction; Conduct of life--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction; Mystery and detective stories. 86 p.

Ten-year-old twins Joy and Jake Bigsley live at a Christian youth camp with their parents and Joy's pet monkey. Their best friends, ten-year-old twins Maria and Marco, also live there. In this, the fifth and last book in the Camp Wanna Banana series, Joy and Jake Bigsley's Grandma Pearl has just gone to heaven. Joy particularly feels the loss of her adored Grandma. So when "Mopsy," a friend of Grandma's, shows up and becomes very close to the family, Joy's natural curiosity crosses the line to invasion of privacy.

Joy snoops in Mopsy's papers (reading a private letter and journal) and before she's finished, she and Maria are matchmaking for Mopsy as well. When Mopsy has a medical crisis and needs a new kidney, Joy has the information, due to her sneakiness, that can save Mopsy's life. If Joy keeps her sin to herself, Mopsy may die. If she tells the secret, she has to confess her sin and ask for forgiveness.

Becky Freeman has a wonderful gift for storytelling that will keep the pages of *Riddles From the Hope Chest* turning quickly. While the situation of welcoming a stranger completely into their hearts so quickly is a bit unrealistic, it sets the stage for the intensity of the emotions in the end. Because everyone loves Mopsy, Joy's conflict is more searing.

Unfortunately, the conclusion of the story rewards Joy's bad choice. Snooping, while seamy, turns out to be okay in this instance. While Joy does confess her sin and ask forgiveness, the lesson is still that the end justified the means. As this book is targeted for the second and third grade reading level, independent young readers may not have the maturity to sort out the situational ethics involved.

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

The same stuff as stars / Katherine Paterson. LCCN 2002003967. New York: Clarion Books, Houghton Mifflin, 2002. HBB, 0618247440, \$15.00. Elementary. Rating: 5

F. Family problems--Fiction; Brothers and sisters--Fiction; Great-grandmothers--Fiction; Self-reliance--Fiction. 242 p.

Once again Katherine Paterson focuses a well-told story on social issues that will touch many readers. Angel Morgan, almost twelve years old, understands rejection and abandonment. But after her mother, Verna, dumps Angel and her seven-year-old brother, Bernie on Great-grandmother Morgan, and later kidnaps Bernie, Angel "... was going to trust that Verna had turned over a new leaf and was starting out as a first-class mother." She hopes for a long time.

Angel must not only mother Bernie, but great-grandma, also. Worries over not eating properly, whether Welfare will catch up with them, and concern about the Star Man, who smokes, nearly overcome Angel. One bright spot, however, turns into two when she discovers Miss Liza, the librarian. She shows Angel books about the same stars the Star Man points out to her through his telescope late at night. Angel keeps the Star Man as "her wonderful secret" until near the end of the story.

Between the burdens of her father, Wayne, in jail, a mother and brother nowhere to be found, and catty remarks from kids at school, Angel grows close to her great-grandmother. Wayne shows up unexpectedly, causing Angel to make an important decision. Not everything turns out as Angel wishes, but Paterson concludes the story with hope.

Angel displays courage and resourcefulness as she deals with life's problems. She does not always tell the truth, and not always is she a girl with a steely backbone. Sometimes she dissolves into a little girl who can no longer carry the load by herself.

Readers will care about the primary characters in *The Same Stuff as Stars*. They are real, doing and saying what people in their situations might do and say. Even immature Verna makes readers like her, but not what she does, even as they feel sorry for her.

Readers learn much about stars, and as a bonus Paterson provides the names of the actual books that nourish Angel's soul and spirit.

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

***Snowshoe hare's family* / by Stephanie Smith; illustrated by Robert Hynes. LCCN 2001042364. Norwalk, Conn.: Soundprints, 2002. HBB, 1931465169, \$7.95; PAP, 1931465150, \$3.95. Elementary. Rating: 5**

F. Snowshoe rabbit--Fiction; Rabbits--Fiction; Animals--Infancy--Fiction. 48 p.

In the quiet of an arboreal forest, a snowshoe hare is starting a family. This well-written book opens with her searching for a nest site in spring. As the spring rolls into summer, the young family starts to emerge from its den. They learn about the danger of the snowy owl, the safety of camouflage and cover, and what to eat. Fall

brings a new coat in a new color. The change of season also brings a new predator—a lynx. The excitement of the lynx chasing one of the young hares turns out to have a happy ending... this time. The young hares are finally old enough to leave their mother in winter as now they are grown up enough to take care of themselves. Fully white, they leave the den to make their own families. The mother snowshoe hare finds a mate and begins the cycle again.

Snowshoe Hare's Family is excellent. Stephanie Smith presents the facts of the snowshoe hare's life cycle realistically. The rich illustrations by Robert Hynes are so good this could be used as a field guide. Categorized as Reading Level 2 in the Soundprints series, this chapter book will get a lot of action from kindergarten through second graders. With a glossary of specific scientific words in the back of the book, as well as some wilderness facts, this slim volume has all the necessary elements for a child's first book report. The last page even gives a list of other animals found in an arboreal forest. As this series focuses on animals and habitats unique to North America, the entire series would be an excellent investment for any library.

Kelley Westenhoff, Dominion Christian School, Oakton, Virginia

***Spider Storch, rotten runner* / by Gina Willner-Pardo; illustrated by Nick Sharratt. LCCN 2001049686. Morton Grove, Ill.: Albert Whitman, 2001. HBB, 0807575941, \$11.95. Elementary. Rating: 4**

F. Running--Fiction; Teamwork (Sports)--Fiction; Schools--Fiction; Friendship--Fiction. 83 p.

Have you ever known a child who has absorbed a lot of trivia but doesn't know when to stop sharing it? Meet Joey "Spider" Storch. The words just tumble out of his mouth; he corrects people when they're wrong and refuses to concede there is anything he doesn't know. In this, the sixth book in the series, Spider's unstoppable mouth has alienated his best friend Zachary. While Zachary is really irked at Spider, he is also delighted because he knows Spider's weakness will soon be revealed for the whole world to see.

The third grade Olympics is imminent, culminating in a grand relay race, and Zachary knows Joey's complete name should be Spider Storch, Rotten Runner. In the way that only best friends have, Zachary tweaks Spider's insecurity about looking like a fool in revenge for Spider's non-stop corrections of Zachary's facts. But something strange happens on the way to the final event. Ms. Schmidt's class members stop thinking of what they individually cannot do, and start thinking of themselves as a team. It no longer matters who, individually, is best or worst but how the team works together against the other third grade teams.

Gina Willner-Pardo must be a third grade boy! This book is hilarious and believable. The author has captured Spider's bravado about facts, insecurity about running, and disgust about most girls he knows, yet retained his innocence in a believable manner. He and Zachary easily move beyond their argument in a healthy manner. The illustrations by Nick Sharratt are cute and frequent enough to keep reluctant readers going. They won't have to be bribed though, because this book is truly appealing. What a thrill to know there are five more Spider Storch books to get for our library.

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

***Thee, Hannah!* / written and illustrated by Marguerite de Angeli. 2nd ed. LCCN 99052422. Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 2002. HBB, 0836192109, \$21.99. Elementary. Rating: *5**

F. Quakers--Fiction; Clothing and dress--Fiction; Slavery--Fiction; Philadelphia (Pa.)--Fiction. 99 p.

Hannah, a lively nine-year-old girl, lives in Philadelphia shortly before the Civil War. Because her family is Quaker, she must resist the temptations of the secular world. Sadly, this includes the lovely fabrics, colors, and sashes her best friend Cecily gets to wear. Worse, Hannah's bonnet has to be plain. She loves to visit with Cecily and play dress-up, and even wears one of Cecily's pretty gowns outside. Of course, she gets caught and suffers the consequences. Getting into one scrape after another as she seeks to follow the world's path, Hannah despairs of ever learning "Quaker ways." Yet, when the lives of an escaped slave and her child are at stake, Hannah learns that her bonnet is a testimony about her family and that 'different' is also very special.

Reading a re-issue of a Marguerite de Angeli book is like rediscovering an old friend—a welcome comfort. Seeing that the message of the story is relevant today is reassuring. *Thee, Hannah* illustrates the principle of learning to be in the world and not of it. For most contemporary Christians, the lines are not as clearly drawn as they are for Hannah, so the story provides a good example of what "set apart for God" means. The fact that this is a story based on truth will make it even more enchanting to young readers. It contains two kinds of equally outstanding illustrations. The black and white illustrations set the atmosphere for Hannah's world. The full color illustrations place the reader in the middle of the story as a "fly on the wall." This would be better if it were available in hardcover, as it will certainly circulate.

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

Trails above the tree line : a story of a Rocky Mountain meadow / by Audrey Fraggaloch; illustrated by Higgins Bond. LCCN 00056554. Norwalk, Conn.: Soundprints, 2002. HBB, 1568999410, \$15.95. Elementary. Rating: 2

F. Bighorn sheep--Fiction; Sheep--Fiction; Animals--Infancy--Fiction. 32 p.

A newborn bighorn sheep starts his life in the early summer in *Trails Above the Tree Line: a Story of a Rocky Mountain Meadow*. As the lamb grows and experiences the different seasons in his mountain home, the story describes the predators, natural environment, struggles, and development of the young sheep. Audrey Fraggaloch relates the basic facts of a wild animal's life with plenty of detail, describing the seasonal changes in the Rockies as the sheep herd prepares for winter, and as the cycle of life begins again with the advent of spring. Throughout the text, Higgins Bond's illustrations add visual appeal that help readers more fully enjoy the story and the grandeur of the setting. Bond's details—wildflowers, a hummingbird in the meadow, the arid landscapes of the high Rockies—lend a valuable life-likeness to the book.

Trails Above the Tree Line offers a factual and informative look at bighorn sheep in their natural environment. The book's strongest asset is its educational value. Animals and their habitats have a magnetic appeal for children, who will enjoy hearing or reading the book, and will gain new knowledge through the accompanying art.

From an adult viewpoint, the writing is not as original or fresh in style and word choice as it might have been. The double-page fold out at the back depicts a panoramic view of a Rocky Mountain meadow that invites a child's reviewing of newly acquired information. The picture glossary is a useful addition that augments learning.

This book would be well suited in a library, be it homeschool, Christian, or public school.

Karen Schmidt, Freelance Writer, Marysville, Washington

The weight of a mass : a tale of faith / Josephine Nobisso; illustrated by Katalin Szegedi. LCCN 2001004925. Westhampton Beach, N.Y.: Gingerbread House, 2002. HBB, 0940012094, \$17.95; PAP, 0940112108, \$. Elementary. Rating: 4

F. Mass--Fiction; Catholics--Fiction; Faith--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction; Kings, queens, rulers, etc.--Fiction. unpag.

Once long ago a king was to wed his new queen. Being a woman of faith she desired that the wedding be held in the kingdom's great cathedral, yet the hearts of the people had grown cold, and no great thought was given to the upcoming event.

Enter a ragged, penniless widow who pleads with a baker for a crust of bread, offering to say Mass for him in exchange. The baker only scoffs and sets out to prove her faith worthless. With cynical flair he writes "One Mass" on a tidbit of paper, sets it on his scale and then weighs it against a slice of stale bread. The Mass stays firm. In amazement the baker continues to load the scale with his wares, all to no avail. He even weighs the royal wedding cake against the Mass. The Mass remains. Truly a miracle has been witnessed and the people hurry to renew their belief as they attend their king's wedding.

Josephine Nobisso's *The Weight of a Mass* unfolds its message with solemn grace and purpose. Based on a true incident, this tale of faith has all the qualities of a fairytale, for there is the hard-hearted kingdom, a cynical antagonist, a meek central character, and a moral to be learned. All this is woven together with a lilting text and Katalin Szegedi's warm, romantic illustrations.

Pam Webb, Freelance Writer, Sandpoint, Idaho

What do you see when you see me? / written by Jeannie St. John Taylor; illustrated by Kathleen Hadam Kernly. LCCN 2001023944. Colorado Springs: Faith Kids, Cook Communications, 2002. HBB, 0781437334, \$7.99. Elementary (Small children). Rating: 3

F. Old age--Fiction; Nursing home--Fiction; Interpersonal relations--Fiction. 29 p.

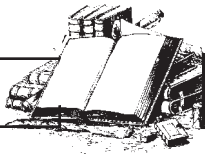
"What do you see when you see me?" shouts Old Agnes, a sharp-tongued, cane-wielding woman who lives in the nursing home where Katrina's grandmother lives. "Do you see a cranky old woman with a wrinkled face? Do you see twisted hands and skinny useless legs?" Katrina, already terrified of the fierce woman, doesn't know how to answer. But slowly, as Agnes describes her life as a child, and her romance, marriage, and widowhood, Katrina's fear dissolves and she starts seeing Agnes in a new way.

What Do You See When You See Me? a picture book by Jeannie St. John Taylor, is a tender and poignant lesson on learning to discover the beauty inside a person, despite what they look like, or how they may act. The third person narration is simple enough for children at the younger end of its four to seven-year-old age group, yet not too babyish for children at the older end. Even children aged eight or older could be enchanted by the book, which manages not to look "childish" despite its being a picture book.

Kathleen Kernly's colorful illustrations deftly capture the action and add a few surprises not explicitly stated in the text. There's no overt religious message, just a quick mention that Katrina and Agnes are Christians, but there's a

warmth in the story that will reach children in a way that strong preaching might not. Katrina is a black child, a plus in schools and libraries with ethnic populations. Recommended.

Rosemarie DiCristo, Freelance Writer, The Bronx, New York



Jonah and the whale : a story from the Bible / retold by Rosemary Lanning; illustrated by Bernadette Watts. LCCN 2001034533. New York, North-South Books, 2001. HBB, 0735815011, \$15.95. LIB, 073581502X, \$15.88. Elementary. Rating: 2

224.9209505. Jonah (Biblical prophet); Bible stories. O.T. unsp.

In this simple retelling of the story, Jonah flees unsuccessfully from God's command that he preach to the people of Nineveh. "Why me?" he thinks. "Nineveh is no concern of mine." A violent storm at sea and three days in the belly of a whale convince him that he must obey God. The book ends with the people's repentance and their escape from God's punishment. Rosemary Lanning makes no mention in her retelling of Jonah's displeasure at God's mercy or the lesson he learns from the growth and destruction of a sheltering vine. As a result, this version might be most satisfying to younger listeners just wanting the basic story.

Bernadette Watt's illustrations sweep across the pages and there is a nice one of Jonah praying in the belly of the whale. The scenes involving the whale are by far the most interesting. The people look somewhat stiff and have an American primitive look to them. With only a few lines of text on each double page spread, *Jonah and the Whale* makes a nice choice for reading aloud to a young audience. If demand warrants another volume about Jonah, this one is worth considering.

Lillian Heytvelt, Public Librarian, Denny Ashby Memorial Library, Pomeroy, Washington

What difference does it make? : faith answers for kids / Debi Little Brazzale. Illustrated by David Sullivan. Colorado Springs: Faith Kids, Cook Communications, 2002. PAP, 0781437016, \$6.99. Elementary (Middle school). Rating: 4

230. Theology, Doctrinal--Popular works. 160 p.

Based on Paul Little's *Know What You Believe* (Scripture Press, 1970) and *Know Why You Believe* (Scripture Press, 1967) books, but adapted by Deborah Brazzale to be more kid friendly, *What Difference Does It Make?* is written for children trying to better understand their friends' faith, their parents' faith, or their own faith.

Twelve chapters cover topics such as the Bible, the Holy Spirit, Suffering and Evil, and Things to Come. Issues discussed include the nature of

God, why we are different from animals, and if miracles are possible. Sticky issues are handled delicately. For instance, it's acknowledged that some Christians disagree over how long a day was in Genesis. The Big Bang Theory is compared to what might have happened when God spoke the earth into existence. "Evil" words in the Bible are explained by saying they are true pictures of some people's words and circumstances.

Questions and answers, sidebars, bulleted lists, and many illustrations break the text into readable chunks. Each chapter has a "Where Did You Find That?" section listing scripture verses that support the chapters' points. A Rewind feature sums up points made in previous chapters.

The book is advertised for ages nine and up but its illustrations may make it seem babyish to teens, and some concepts may be too complex for the youngest readers. Also, the book's flat statement that Jesus can return "today" may frighten some children. The quirky, kid-friendly language used may not seem so funny to some adults, as when, in stating that Jesus was either a liar, wacko, legend, or was telling the truth, Brazzale assures readers Jesus was a normal human being and "all his ducks were in a row." This book is fine for children needing to know more about Christianity and it would make a great addition to most libraries.

Rosemarie DiCristo, Freelance Writer, The Bronx, New York

Mother Holly : a retelling from the Brothers Grimm / by John Warren Stewig; with illustrations by Johanna Westerman. LCCN 2001034541. New York: North-South Books, 2001. HBB, 1558589260, \$15.95; LIB, 1558589252, \$15.88. Elementary. Rating: 4

398.2'0943'02. Fairy tales; Folklore--Germany. unsp.

Having fallen down a well, the lovely Rose, who is often mistreated by her step-mother, finds her way into another realm; here she is richly rewarded for her compassion and industry. For Mother Holly, a kind but enigmatic figure who causes snow to fall on earth every time she shakes her feather bed, showers her with gold before sending her on her way back home.

Greedily hoping for a similar reward, step-sister Blanche also makes her way to Mother Holly's abode, but her natural laziness quickly asserts itself, and for her trouble, she is showered not with gold, but with burrs and barbs.

Mother Holly is a retelling of the timeless folktale, "Frau Holle," first recorded and published by the Brothers Grimm in 1812. For the most part, writer John Stewig remains faithful to the original folktale, but he does take a few liberties, in order to make the story a little less "grim" (pun intended, I'm afraid). In the original, for example, Blanche is showered with tar or pitch, which, we are told, will never come off, and the story simply ends there. In Stewig's version, Rose takes the prickly and miserable Blanche back to Mother Holly, and she is given an opportunity to redeem herself. As she learns to work without complaining, her burrs begin to fall out, and in the end, both sisters are showered with gold.

Johanna Westerman's illustrations provide a lush counterpoint to the straightforward narrative. Her vivid and incredibly detailed paintings, alive with butterflies, flowers, and birds, are reminiscent of those Renaissance paintings in which the central figures are placed within a larger landscape of streams, hills, and valleys, which fade into the distance. A lovely picture book for any fairytale collection.

Sylvia Stopforth, Librarian, Trinity Western University, British Columbia, Canada

Weird friends : unlikely allies in the animal kingdom / Jose Aruego and Ariane Dewey. LCCN 98031290. San Diego: Gulliver Books, Harcourt, 2002. HBB, 0152021280, \$16.00. Elementary. Rating: 5

577.8'5. Symbiosis. unsp.

How does a near sighted Rhinoceros keep lions away from her calf? Via a Cattle Egret Lookout. Who baby sits the caterpillar of the Large Blue Butterfly? Red ants, of course. What company sees to the insect extermination needs of the Forest Mouse? None other than Beetles, Inc. Written and illustrated by multiple award winning artists Jose Aruego and Ariane Dewey, *Weird Friends* introduces children and their mentors to a wide range of symbiotic friendships, from Clown Fish and Sea Anemones, to Water Thick Knees and Crocodiles.

Unique among animal picture books, *Weird Friends* serves a plurality of purposes: an intriguing introduction to the science of symbiosis; a primer on the facets of friendship; a bright, appealing picture book that will hold little eyes (and bigger ones) captive for a long, interested while; a portfolio of scenarios for play activity. As individual as each symbiotic

relationship, the illustration media include pen and ink, gouache, watercolor, and pastel. Simple and colorful, they will encourage little artists, as well as mentors looking for new display ideas. The scientifically correct, uncomplicated data is presented from a child's viewpoint, encouraging further study into the field of symbiosis. *Weird Friends* concludes with a brief summary of the countries in which the subject animals live, thus becoming an introduction to geography. Recommended to anyone working with young children: Christian school to public school to home school.

Donna J. Eggett, Freelance Writer, Radford, Virginia

***Under the ice* / Kathy Conlan; [photographs by Louise Dickson]. (A Canadian Museum of Nature book.) C2001904240X. Toronto: Kids Can Press, 2002. HBB, 1553370015, \$16.95. Elementary (Middle school). Rating: 5**

578.77'09163'2. Marine pollution--Polar Regions; Marine biology--Polar regions; Marine biologists--Biography; Conlan, Kathy. 56 p.

Under the Ice is the science book by which all other science books should be measured. Starting at the beginning, the author shares her early life and interests, thus becoming a real person to the reader. From there she moves to her early work in the Arctic studying ice scour—a fascinating glimpse at one of the forces shaping the ocean floor. The real prize and focus of the book, of course, is the trip to McMurdo Station in Antarctica. From 1991-1998, Dr. Conlan was part of a seasonal team studying the effect of pollution from Mactown on the ocean environment. To do that, they had to dive under the ice. Then their job was to “play with the garbage.” In a self-deprecating manner, Kathy Conlan climbs down from the “scientist” pinnacle as she describes her team's reputation as the dirtiest, smelliest, grossest one because of their work.

From early Antarctic exploration, to the actual diving and work, to penguins and seals, and to real danger she faced, Kathy Conlan covers every detail a child would want to know about her work. To find a book that describes a hostile but enticing environment so clearly that the reader wants to strap on scuba gear and brave bone-chilling water is to find victory in our search for good science books. Sit next to a warm heater as you read it because Conlan's description of the cold, combined with the awesome photographs, is authentically chilling. Dr. Conlan has since returned to Antarctica as part of more studies. We can only hope she'll publish another book this good.

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

***Leaving home* / Sneed B. Collard, III; illustrated by Joan Dunning. LCCN 2001039252. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2002. HBB, 0618114548, \$15.00. Elementary. Rating: 5**

591.5. Animals--Infancy; Animals--Habits and behavior. un p.

For the young child who worries about having to grow up and leave home, Sneed B. Collard III has addressed the fear with fact in *Leaving Home*. This book is a double bargain; actually being two books in one. Kindergarteners will be satisfied with the simple matter-of-fact but reassuring story at the top of each animal decorated page. Those in first through third grades will be more interested in the second story appearing at the bottom of each page chock full of scientific information about the animal presented and how and when it leaves home. Children, parents, and teachers alike will enjoy hours of searching through the detailed and precise watercolor illustrations of Joan Dunning and discussing the text. From jaguars to sharks and flying lizards to penguins, each animal of the twenty-five creatures is presented in its habitat to enhance the text of both stories. An excellent choice for the primary classroom or library.

Judy Driscoll, Teacher, Christ the King Academy, Poulso, Washington

***The butterfly* / by Diana Noonan. (Life cycles.) LCCN 2002000028. Philadelphia: Chelsea House, 2003. HBB, 079106963X, \$13.95. Elementary. Rating: 5**

595.78'9. Butterflies. 32 p.

The Butterfly is an excellent example of non-fiction for young children. It presents an introduction to the physical characteristics, behavior, and life cycle of the butterfly, each subject covered in a page or two. Many terms are defined and any words in bold text are included in the glossary located at the rear of the book. Vivid pictures demonstrate each subject, with a captioned color photo on every page.

Preschoolers could learn from this colorful book as it is read to them and early elementary students would be able to read and learn about butterflies for themselves. *The Butterfly* will be a well used addition to any school or public library collection of easy non-fiction, as would the other titles in the series.

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

***Hansa: the true story of an Asian elephant baby* / Clare Hodgson Meeker; with photographs from Woodland Park Zoo; illustrations by Linda Feltner. Seattle: Sasquatch Books, 2002. PAP, 1570613702, \$12.95; HBB, 1570613443, \$16.95. Elementary. Rating: 4**

599.67'6. Asiatic elephant; Elephants; Animals--Infancy; Zoo animals; Endangered species. 48 p.

Hansa, The True Story of an Asian Elephant Baby, by Clare Hodgson Meeker, is lavishly illustrated, with good-quality color photos on nearly every page. It's geared to children aged six to ten and describes, in an age appropriate way, the birth and babyhood of Hansa, the first elephant born at Seattle's Woodland Park Zoo. Also described are the pregnancy of Chai, Hansa's mother, and the potentially dangerous jealousy of the other female elephants.

In addition to the photos, there are several illustrations by Linda Feltner as well as sidebars and diagrams to break up the text. These include information about the differences between Asian and African elephants, how elephants communicate, and how zoo elephants spend a typical day. There are also enough fun facts (how quickly Hansa gains weight; that her feet are ticklish) to keep children interested.

Some possible cautions: it's stated with certainty that the woolly mammoth, a close relative of elephants, roamed earth two million years ago, and descriptions of Hansa nursing from her mother's breasts are perhaps a bit too detailed, but Chai's attempts to get pregnant, the birth, and the pregnancy itself are handled subtly yet with enough honest detail to answer a child's questions. Potentially troubling for the book's youngest readers are passages about some elephants trampling their newborns and statistics stating that at least one elephant keeper is killed each year.

Hansa is a quick and interesting read, especially for children curious about how zoos work. Enough information is given to make veterinary or zoo keeper careers seem intriguing, yet the more serious aspects of these careers aren't glossed over. A nice choice for schools, libraries, and children who love animals.

Rosemarie DiCristo, Freelance Writer, The Bronx, New York

***Zzz... : the most interesting book you'll ever read about sleep* / written by Trudee Romanek; illustrated by Rose Cowles. (Mysterious you.) Toronto: Kids Can Press, 2002. HBB, 1550749447, \$14.95; PAP, 1550749463, \$6.95. Elementary. Rating: 5**

612.8'21. Sleepovers--Fiction. 40 p.

ZZZ... covers the marvels of sleep using a mix of facts, amazing anecdotes, and suggested activities to test out the factual information. For example, what happens when one doesn't get the sleep needed, with an accompanying anecdote about Rip Van Winkle. The story of the fairy-tale princess who slept poorly because of a pea under her mattress is followed with suggestions like placing a tennis ball under your brother's back while he's sleeping.

Color illustrations, varied type headings, brackets and blocks encasing information, and

contrasting colors make it easy for children to read pages without counting the steps.

A must title for public library collections to make reading interesting, and a title school libraries can use for children to read straight-through or one or two pages at a sitting. Parents might add this timeless title to home shelves for the content is sure to intrigue children and adults.

Trudee Romanek is a children's book editor and author of *The Technology Book for Girls and Other Advanced Beings* (Kids Can Press, 2001). Rose Cowles, with awards for illustration and design, has illustrated titles in the Baa! Burg! And Hum! Series (Kids Can Press, 2001).

Leroy Hommerding, Director, Fort Myers Beach Public Library District, Fort Meyers, Florida

***Dig dig digging* / Margaret Mayo; illustrated by Alex Ayliffe. LCCN 2001001500. New York: Henry Holt, 2002. HBB, 0805068406, \$14.95. Elementary. Rating: 4**

629.225. Motor vehicles. unip.

Margaret Mayo's book about heavy equipment, *Dig Dig Digging*, is a celebration of color and sound in illustrations and word poems. Bulldozers, tractors, fire engines, helicopters, transporters, and more engage in activity on each page. The text supports and mimics the motions of the equipment, bumping across the page as they accomplish their heavy-duty tasks. The poetry will appeal to little ones with its repetitive rhythms: "Diggers are good at dig, dig, digging, scooping up the earth and lifting and tipping." The bold, blocky print is easy to see against the strong colors of the artwork, the words sometimes climbing over a mound or spilling as if from a hose, and each poem concludes with the statement. "They can work all day."

The wonderful illustrations by Alex Ayliffe are perfectly suited to the subject matter—huge, heavy equipment set against a backdrop of a work site with lighted buildings in the distance. The people in his illustrations look like toy figures, giving the book a sense of whimsy that will attract children. Parents and teachers will enjoy reading the light verses and find plenty of opportunity to imitate the sound of each piece of equipment as the pages turn.

As the work wraps up, even the busiest machines must get some down time and the book ends with quiet colors: "They can rest all night." The vehicles, busy all day, are now enjoying a well-earned breather. Highly recommended.

Cathy M. Elliott, Freelance Writer, Anderson, California

***How our house works* / Larry Burkett; illustrated by Ed Letwenko. (Larry Burkett's how things work.) LCCN 2001040251. Colorado Springs: Faith Kids, Cook Communications, 2002. HBB, 0781437237, \$14.99. Elementary. Rating: 3**

643. Buildings; Dwellings--Design and construction; Dwellings--Maintenance and repair; Housekeeping. unip.

Children will enjoy *How Our House Works*, a colorfully illustrated picture book that "slices open" the average home to expose its inner workings and construction secrets to the reader. Fire blocks, circuit breakers, drain traps, gutters, and furnaces are among the many features diagrammed and explained by Andy Mann, a fictional construction site foreman who leads a tour of five suburban homes. (Although no city dwellings are shown, the families portrayed are white, black, Hispanic and Asian). Included are lessons on responsible finances (author Larry Burkett is a famous financial guru). A secondary theme, showing stewardship for God's gifts to us, is emphasized in the text and in a special parent's page, which gives tips on how to teach a child good stewardship.

While the text is perfectly suited to the book's seven and up age group, there are some problems. The topics covered are tied together through Andy Mann's rhyming verse; the rhymes are rather forced, although a child probably won't notice. Of more concern: the "how the house works" portion of the book will fascinate its readers, as will illustrator Ed Letwenko's lively full-color drawings, but at least half the book concerns how to run a home in a fiscally wise way. Recycling is always a hot topic, but will children really be interested in advice on clipping coupons or shopping for bargain clothing?

These are minor concerns. The book should be fine for a child's personal use as well as for most libraries, although its emphasis on stewardship of God's blessings may limit its appeal to church and religious school libraries.

Rosemarie DiCristo, Freelance Writer, The Bronx, New York

***Sun song* / Susan Scott Sutton; illustrated by Sally Randall. LCCN 2001023416. Colorado Springs: Faith Kids, Cook Communications, 2002. HBB, 0781435617, \$13.99. Elementary. Rating: 3**

782.4215'82'0268. Lullabies; Children's songs; God--Songs and music; Songs. unip.

Written by Susan Scott Sutton, *Sun Song is like Goodnight Moon* (Margaret Wise Brown, Harper, 1947), told in rhyme, of a little girl's acknowledgment of the beauty in the sun, wind, and rain, and her recognition that God's hand is in the creation of all three. It ends with the touching assurance that God and his angels watch over us at night.

Children should enjoy the repetition of the verses. The rhyme is both simple enough for the four to seven year old age group *Sun Song* is geared to, and profound enough to delight an older child (or an adult reading the book aloud). Sally Randall's dreamy, delicate illustrations suit the text. The CD that comes with the book sets Sutton's words to music by Lynn Hodges. Two versions of the song, one with a little girl speaking the words and the other with an adult woman singing them, allow a child to read along with the text if an adult isn't available. A third song is an instrumental-only version of Hodges' lovely, lyrical music.

The book's final page is a parenting guide suggesting ways adults can help their children appreciate God's creation by taking walks through a lovely neighborhood, park, country lane, or shoreline. It's a bit more suited to suburban or rural households than urban ones, but the little girl who is the book's heroine, with her dark hair, skin, and eyes, will give *Sun Song* added appeal in the ethnic markets that are sometimes neglected by mainstream Christian books.

Rosemarie DiCristo, Freelance Writer, The Bronx, New York

***Storm Run : the story of the first woman to win the Iditarod Sled Dog Race* / Libby Riddles; illustrated by Shannon Cartwright. LCCN 2001020966. Seattle : Paws IV, Sasquatch Books, 2002. PAP, 1570612935, \$9.95; HBB, 1570612986, \$16.95. Elementary. Rating: 3**

798.8'3'092. Riddles, Libby; Iditarod (Race); Musers--Alaska; Women musers; Musers; Sled dog teams. 46 p.

Storm Run is written by Libby Riddles, the first woman to win the Iditarod Sled Dog Race. Its picture book size and feel as well as its many illustrations, photos, and graphs suit Riddles' simple yet detailed recounting of her training and the race itself. Riddles covers her move to Alaska as a young girl, her struggles to train dogs for mushing, and what's needed to live bush-style in Alaska in an honest way, yet she never exaggerates or exploits the details. There's a throwaway line about Riddles "cursing" the sixty below zero cold, and one line mentions that male and female racers bunk in the same building. Also, Riddles' attempts to finish the race despite seriously life threatening conditions may seem too reckless a choice to some adults even though the book portrays it as admirable. But *Storm Run* is suitable in all other aspects for its six to ten year old audience.

For the youngest readers there's a chance the repetition involved in describing a 1,100 mile race may make *Storm Run* seem too dull, and there's a chance older readers may rebel at its picture book look. But Shannon Cartwright's illustrations nicely break up the text, and the story is told with a tension that holds up throughout. *Storm Run* isn't a fully-detailed

biography of Riddles, chock-full of facts and footnotes. It focuses more on one event in Riddles' life. But it has enough fascinating detail about that event and on dog racing in general to make it a worthwhile purchase, especially for children interested in animals or in sporting events like the Iditarod. It's also a good choice for readers interested in women's achievements.

Rosemarie DiCristo, Freelance Writer, The Bronx, New York

***Wings on the wind : bird poems / collected and illustrated by Kate Kiesler.* LCCN 2001031832. New York: Clarion Books, Houghton Mifflin, 2002. HBB, 061813333X, \$14.00. Elementary. Rating: 4**

811.008'03628. Birds--Poetry; American poetry--Collections; English poetry--Collections. 40 p.

Wings on the Wind: Bird Poems, a collection of serious and humorous poems about birds, is sure to delight children. Poems from Eleanor Farjeon, William Sargent, Carl Sandburg, Lee Blair, and Elizabeth Shane open a child's world to many perspectives on birds. Topics include birds hunting for a house, specific birds like the blackbird, robin, barn-swallow, or pelican, and birds flying south. Traditional yarns include Mrs. Hen and Magpie. A generous number of anonymous poems add both humor and interest.

The color illustrations in every page make this a journey a child can take by just paging through the book and following the different birds. It also gives parents/grandparents a lot to share as they read the interesting sounding poems, e.g., "Magpie, magpie, flutter and flee, turn up your tail and good luck come to me." Layout of the dreamy paintings is varied and unobtrusive, letting each poem have its place.

Kate Kiesler has illustrated an earlier anthology, *Fishing for a Dream* (Clarion Books, 1999), and several of Kristine O'Connell George's books such as *The Great Frog Race* (Clarion Books, 1997), and *Toasting Marshmallows* (Clarion Books, 2001).

Excellent for school and public library shelves, as well as a title for home shelves.

Leroy Hommerding, Director, Fort Myers Beach Public Library District, Fort Myers, Florida

***Henry David's house / Henry David Thoreau; edited by Steven Schnur; illustrated by Peter Fiore.* LCCN 2001002610. Watertown, Mass.: Charlesbridge, 2002. HBB, 0881061166, \$16.95. Elementary. Rating: 4**

818'.303. Thoreau, Henry David, 1817-1862; Authors, American. unsp.

The quote from Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Every spirit builds a house, and beyond its house a world, and beyond its world a heaven," begins

Henry David's House, a book about Thoreau and how he built his cabin in the woods near Walden Pond. Readers follow him through the year it took to build the house, sensing the slowness of life's pace and quiet contemplation as Thoreau observed his surroundings, writing in his notebooks. (Editor Steven Schnur has excerpted parts of Thoreau's *Walden (Ticknor and Fields, 1854)* for this book).

Peter Fiore's watercolors and oil paintings aptly capture the moments being described. An Editor's note tells readers what happened to Thoreau's cabin in the orchard near town, the fight to save it from development, and the debt we owe Thoreau for reminding us all of Nature's importance and how we should think about Nature.

Younger readers will appreciate this title even more if used with *Henry Hikes to Fitchburg* (Houghton Mifflin, 2000).

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

***The Wright brothers : a flying start / written by Elizabeth MacLeod.* Toronto: Kids Can Press, 2002. HBB, 1550749331, \$14.95. Elementary. Rating: 4**

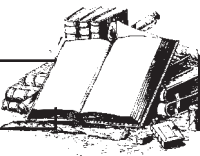
921 (629.13'0092273). Wright, Orville, 1871-1948; Wright, Wilbur, 1867-1912; Aeronautics--United States--Biography. 32 p.

An intimate portrayal and an engaging profile sure to help children remember the lives and efforts of Will and Orv Wright. *The Wright Brothers : A Flying Start* offers full color photos and illustrations that keep the story moving. Each two pages offers commentary amidst pictures or illustrations/captions/subtitles explaining the photos. The easy moving prose gives both the human side of the inventors (struggles, feelings, thoughts) and an idealism that kept the Wrights moving. Includes two timelines, one of the brothers' lives, and one on the history of flight. An index helps locate pertinent items.

School and public libraries can add this to collections needing people and places in history, and for collections where children research and browse. Homeschoolers will find the commentary a self-guide, and teachers might use the book for small group reading.

Elizabeth MacLeod, a children's author and editor, has written *What Did Dinosaurs Eat?* (Kids Can Press, 2001) and *Gifts to Make and Eat* (Kids Can Press, 2001).

Leroy Hommerding, Director, Fort Myers Beach Public Library District, Fort Meyers, Florida



The Book of Dragons / E. Nesbit; with illustrations by H.R. Millar; afterword by Peter Glassman. LCCN 2001034420. New York: Seastar, North-South Books, 2001. HBB, 0158171058, \$14.95; PAP, 0158171066, \$9.95. Middle school. Rating: 5

F. Dragons--Fiction; Short stories. 180 p.

It seems that islands, particularly those that are somewhat remote, often produce unique animal species, which, over time, have adapted in surprising ways to their isolated environments. Consider the flightless birds of New Zealand, or any of the diverse chameleon species of Madagascar.

One beast peculiar to the islands that make up the United Kingdom is the Very English Dragon. These creatures tend to be long-lived, and are notoriously unpredictable, although they can exhibit—on occasion—a certain flair for the domestic niceties.

E. Nesbit, beloved author of such children's classics as *The Railway Children* (Macmillan, 1906) and *The Story of the Treasure Seekers* (Frederick A. Stokes, 1899), composed eight delightfully scaly tales just over one hundred years ago. First published in book form in 1900, *The Book of Dragons* has recently been re-issued, complete with original black and white illustrations by H.R. Millar.

It would be difficult to imagine a more richly varied assortment of dragons. Nesbit introduces us to dragons that spring from the pages of a magic book, to Prussian-blue ice dragons, and to dragons “just the right size for eating little boys and girls.” Some are awe-inspiring, a few are alarming, and others are quite simply a nuisance.

Nesbit's delightful and understated sense of humor infuses these stories with an airy charm, but her young protagonists are often called upon to find within themselves stores of bravery and strength they never knew they had, in order to save the day. Somehow, the author manages to achieve the perfect blend of magic, engaging characters, and wit.

These stories, each approximately twenty pages in length, would make for an entertaining read-aloud session; best of all, the teachers (or librarians) will enjoy the stories every bit as much as their spellbound listeners.

Sylvia Stopforth, Librarian, Trinity Western University, British Columbia, Canada

Braving the fire / John B. Severance. LCCN 2002003630. New York: Clarion Books, Houghton Mifflin, 2002. HBB, 061822999X, \$15.00. Middle school (High school). Rating: 3

F. United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Fiction. 148 p.

Jem Bridwell, a husky fourteen-year-old, wishes he could be part of the Civil War like his Pa, a soldier in the Union army. He and his best friend, Hank Dawson, talk about “the glory of war.”

When Pa returns to soldiering, going to war mounts in Jem's mind, but he promises Granddad to help care for the farm. However, he puts the promise aside when he and Hank run away to join the Union army.

“When does the glory begin?” they wonder. The war becomes endless marching, bad food, heavy labor, bloody battles, stinking trenches, death, and destruction. They march by night and fight by day. As soldiers, Jem and Hank discover the glory of war was “...a fool's dream.”

Then Jem is injured. When the unthinkable happens, his mind is tormented. He returns home burdened with guilt. The story closes as he sets his sights beyond the farm and the life he knew before the war changed everything.

John B. Severance bases *Braving the Fire* on stories he heard from older relatives as a child visiting his father's hometown in Maryland. His able writing brings the Civil War to life. When Jem asks himself hard questions, such as “Was such hellish destruction fair?” the reader automatically considers the matter of war in general.

The slow-paced story remains interesting and contains a strong sense of place. Jem and Hank are characters with whom the reader feels comfortable. Severance's other characters give the story added depth. School libraries could use *Braving the Fire* as a resource for the Civil War.

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

Cave of the Inca Re / Jeanette Windle. (The Parker Twins series; 1.) Grand Rapids: Kregel, Kregel, 2001. PAP, 0825441455, \$5.99. Middle school. Rating: 4

F. Adventure and adventurers--Fiction; Brothers and sisters--Fiction; Twins--Fiction; Mystery and detective stories; South America--Fiction. 146 p.

Justin and Jennifer Parker, thirteen-year-old twins, are invited to accompany their Uncle Pete to Bolivia during summer vacation. When they arrive, they are introduced to Pedro, a young Bolivian boy who will be their guide. As the twins become acquainted with the culture, Pedro spins tales of temple treasures with an ancient curse that drives men insane.

The twins also notice two Americans from their hotel. The Americans seem to be up to no good and warn the children to keep out of their way. When Justin and Jennifer suspect the men are after priceless artifacts, they decide to investigate. Their exploration takes them deep into danger, and into the cave of the Inca Re where only God can protect them.

Cave of the Inca Re is the first in the six-book Parker Twin series by Jeanette Windle. The story has just enough adult supervision in Uncle Pete to keep it real while allowing the twins and their sidekick, Pedro, plenty of time to find adventure. History and geography are such an integral part of the setting and story—kids won't even realize they are learning.

Justin and Jennifer share their Christian faith with Pedro near the beginning of the book and through the adventure, he witnesses the saving strength of their God. Windle, who grew up in South America as the child of missionaries, handles the subject well as Pedro sorts out his doubts about Christ. The relationship between the kids seems natural, not preachy.

A nice read for middle school children that will keep them turning pages and anxious for book two. Recommended.

Cathy M. Elliott, Freelance Writer, Anderson, California

Comeback Cagers / Clair Bee; updated by Randall and Cynthia Bee Farley. (Chip Hilton sports series; 21.) LCCN 2001035737. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2001. PAP, 0805421009, \$5.99. Middle school (High school). Rating: 4

F. NCAA Basketball Tournament--Fiction; Basketball--Fiction; Sportsmanship--Fiction; Universities and colleges--Fiction. 177 p.

Even though State's basketball team hasn't been mathematically eliminated, the NCAA selection committee won't consider them for the National Tournament because, as the third place team, the tiebreaker game they may force would cause havoc with the tournament schedule. Chip's pal Soapy starts a letter writing campaign that changes the committee's mind: State can make the tournament if they win their conference

championship. But to win it, they must win all three remaining games, against their toughest opponents.

There's a lot at stake in *Comeback Cagers*, volume 21 in the Chip Hilton series, and the State-as-underdog theme is appealing. The basketball action is exciting and detailed. A subplot of Chip helping a classmate's father seems weak, and the religious passages (added to the revised volumes) seem tacked on. The long descriptive passages may put off reluctant readers, but probably won't matter to Chip Hilton fans.

At twenty-four volumes, Chip Hilton may be expensive for smaller libraries, but it's a good role model series. Chip and his teammates don't just want to win, they want to be worthy of winning, which comes as much from hard work as it does from talent. They make mistakes, but always learn from them.

The original books influenced youngsters in their careers and in life, judging from the testimonials printed in each new volume. It's a tradition Randall and Cynthia Bee Farley hope to carry on. This series is highly recommended for church and school libraries, and for Big Brother type programs looking to make a difference in kids' lives.

Rosemarie DiCristo, Freelance Writer, The Bronx, New York

***The Diary of a Chickabiddy Baby* / Emma Kallok. Berkeley: Tricycle Press, Ten Speed Press., HBB, 1883672872, \$14.95; PAP, 1883672902, \$4.95. Middle school. Rating: 1**

F. Diaries--Fiction. 128 p.

Prudence Brinker's fictional diary gives the reader a close up view of the action packed summer of her eleventh year. It includes a visit from the grandparents, Pru's budding interest in boys and her first love triangle, friendship with the new neighbor girl, summer reading, and two weeks vacation at the lake.

The amazing author of this book is ten-year-old, Emma Kallok who shows a sophisticated understanding of human interaction. The complicated family and friend relationships ring true. However, there are some things to be aware of before choosing this book. Prudence uses the euphemisms "Oh, Deity!" and in one case slips and uses "Oh, God!" Her Aunt Cathy spends the summer at a nudist colony, which is only mentioned in passing, and then finds true love through a newspaper personals ad.

Pru's mother is Catholic and her father is Jewish. They have chosen to not raise their children in either tradition with the idea that the children will choose a religion on their own. These concerns aside, the book is well written. For children aged five to seven.

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

***The Mayflower adventure* / Colleen L. Reece. (The American adventure series.) LCCN 98007226. Philadelphia: Chelsea House, 1998. HBB, 0791050416, \$18.55. Middle school. Rating: 4**

F. Mayflower (Ship)--Fiction; Pilgrims (New Plymouth Colony)--Fiction; Voyages and travels--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction. 135 p.

You won't find John and Sarah Smythe in history books or even on the passenger list of the Mayflower. Yet they are real in the sense that the author, Colleen Reece, created them to represent the brave children and teenagers who fled with their parents from England and Holland almost four hundred years ago.

John and his ten year-old-sister, Sarah, have lived in Holland all of their lives, but now are setting off on a grand adventure to America. John couldn't be more excited, filled with anticipation for the New World. Sarah is not so convinced but John tries to treat her gently, as his mother cautions, and encourages his little sister that all will be well; that the adventure will be worth the sacrifices they are making.

The Smythe family is convinced God will go with them as they travel but what they can't anticipate are the storms that try to tear their ship apart, sailors with hateful attitudes toward the Pilgrims, and sickness among their friends and relatives. Some won't even survive to see their new home.

The Mayflower Adventure is good children's historical fiction, giving the reader a fair idea of the perils and trials experienced by those who fled to the New World. It is written for elementary and early middle school readers and according to the author's note, the events are real or based on real happenings. Young people that read this book may be interested in reading the sequel, *Plymouth Pioneers*.

Ceil Carey, Public Librarian, LTA College of DuPage, Plano, Illinois. Credit: Today's Libraries

***Photo perfect* / Beverly Lewis. (Girls only (GO!); 7.) LCCN 2001001325. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2001. PAP, 1556616422, \$5.99. Middle school (Elementary). Rating: 4**

F. Weight control--Fiction; Ice skating--Fiction; Brothers and sisters--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction. 124 p.

When Heather Beck, a twelve-year-old ice dancer, falls during a lift, her knee isn't the only thing injured. Her confidence is bruised as well. How could Kevin, her brother and skating partner, drop her on a variation of a move they'd done so many times before?

"If you weren't so heavy..." Kevin explains to his sister in a moment of anger. Scrutinizing

every inch of her frame against the pin-thin models in a teen magazine, Heather begins to wonder if her brother is right. She embarks on a plan to become "skinny." With friends from the Girls Only club, she compiles a healthy cookbook. Determined to reach her goal, she adds extra exercise to her already grueling routine. A modeling agency is in town screening girls. Can she have the look they want in time? What about the new boy who suddenly seems interested? Surely no one sees how great thinness can be. When a friend explains the grave dangers of anorexia, Heather reflects on her weakened physical condition. 1 Timothy 4:8 keeps recurring in her spiritual life. Is God trying to tell her something?

This book tackles the tough subject of body image in a powerful way. Strong, ambitious girls like Heather may be pressured into overlooking their health to measure up to the unrealistic standards of the media. Girls are reminded that "godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come."

Marilynn Griffith, Freelance Writer, Tallahassee, Florida

***Strike two* / Amy Goldman Koss. LCCN 00038365. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, Penguin Putnam, 2001. HBB, 0803726074, \$16.99. Middle school. Rating: 4**

F. Strikes and lockouts--Fiction; Softball--Fiction; Cousins--Fiction. 134 p.

Gwen and Jess are cousins and best friends who have played on the same baseball team for years. This year they hope to win the series and the baseball championship. Their fathers work for the Press Gazette, the sponsor of the girl's baseball team. When the newspaper goes on strike it divides labor and management, along with Gwen and Jess' dads and their families, and games are cancelled, which ends their dreams of a championship year.

As the strike progresses Gwen accompanies her dad to headquarters, enjoying the activity. She marches in the picket line, babysits the toddlers, eats donuts, and talks with the coolest guy in town. When the strikers become violent and Gwen's dad talks about getting another job, Gwen becomes frightened. She is tired of going to Gram's family dinners where the two families treat each other with the politeness of strangers. She befriends Vicky, a girl from the old Press Gazette team, who helps out at Strike Headquarters but dislikes not having a best friend to share her feelings.

When she sees Jess with another friend and the management girls resurrecting the old baseball team, she knows something must be done. Through wit and sensitivity she conveys a message of making new friends and preserving loyalties. Gwen can't stop the strike but she organizes a plan only the kids know about and

shows the adults what is happening in their town.

Amy Goldman Koss' credible characters capture the preteen world in language, action, and innocence. *Strike Two* is a good story for athletes.

Maxine Cambra, Freelance Writer, Anderson, California

***Thunderstorm in church* / Louise A. Vernon; illustrated by Allan Eitzen. LCCN 74005009. Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 2002. PAP, 0836117409, \$7.99. Middle school. Rating: 5**

F. Luther, Johannes, 1526-1575--Fiction; Luther, Martin, 1483-1546--Fiction. 133 p.

Kids who have famous parents have difficult times escaping their parent's shadow. But what if their father took on the entire religious hierarchy of the day—and split its very core? How would they feel? Young Hans Luther's famous father is always busy and their house is continually full of extra people. Worst of all, everyone asks Hans if he is going to grow up to be like his father. Through a variety of experiences such as fights, a wedding, and the plague, Hans begins to mature. By the end of the story he finally discovers that he is who God made him to be and that he does not have to be like his father when he grows up.

Thunderstorm in Church, written by Louise A. Vernon, is a fictional biography of Martin Luther seen through the eyes of his son, Hans. It was originally published in 1967. Used as curriculum by many Christian schools, the book stands the test of time. The flow of the book is not as smooth as it could be but it covers a great deal of information about Luther and his family. The chapters were written to stand alone, the common thread of Hans' confusion ties them together.

Placing the reader in the center of the story through Hans, it is still the best fictionalized biography of Martin Luther available for children or adults. If it were available in hardcover, I'd order five copies.

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

***The two princesses of Bamarre* / by Gail Carson Levine. LCCN 00047953. New York: HarperCollins, 2001. HBB, 0060293152, \$15.99. Middle school. Rating: 5**

F. Princesses--Fiction; Wizards--Fiction; Magic--Fiction; Sisters--Fiction; Self-confidence--Fiction. 241 p.

The two princesses of Bamarre are Meryl, who is strong and courageous, and Adelina, who is timid and shy. The sisters are inseparable and love each other deeply. A strange disease, the Gray Death, plagues their land, but no one can find a cure for it. Unfortunately, Meryl becomes

ill and Addie must summon the courage to find a cure. She embarks on an amazing adventure, taking on a dragon for the sake of her sister, and finding the cure that eliminates Gray Death from the land.

Bamarre is an imaginary land where there are dragons, dwarfs, and elves. A major character is a wizard and Addie is given several magic gifts to aid her on her adventure.

Gail Carson Levine is the author of *Ella Enchanted* (HarperCollins, 1997), a 1998 Newbery Honor Book. This is a marvelous story of devotion, courage, and duty. Highly recommended.

Karla Castle, Freelance Writer/Editor, Marysville, Washington

***Wild thing* / Dandi Daley Mackall. (Winnie the horse gentler; 1.) Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale Kids, Tyndale House, 2002. PAP, 0824355421, \$5.99. Middle school. Rating: 3**

F. Horses--Fiction. 171 p.

***Eager Star* / Dandi Daley Mackall. (Winnie the horse gentler; 2.) Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale Kids, 2002. PAP, 082435543X, \$5.99. Middle school. Rating: 3**

F. Horses--Fiction. 181 p.

Readers familiar with Dandi Daley Mackall's Horsefeathers series (Concordia, 2000) will find many similarities in *Winnie the Horse Gentler*. Winnie, an introspective girl with an amazing ability to gentle horses, is nearly identical to Sarah Coop from *Horsefeathers*; other characters in the series are similar, too.

In *Wild Thing*, twelve-year-old Winnie Willis blames herself for her mother's death in a car crash two years ago where only Winnie survived. Neither Winnie nor her father have gotten over the tragedy and both have turned away from God. They have moved five times and now Winnie's in a new town with the chance to buy the horse of her dreams... but her father wants to move again.

Eager Star has Winnie facing a new challenge. She wants to be a horse gentler but her only client is her best friend. She'll get a second client if she can gentle his horse in one week's time. No problem. Winnie is confident in her ability with horses. It's her ability with boys she doubts, and the horse's owner is Grant, the cutest, most popular boy in school.

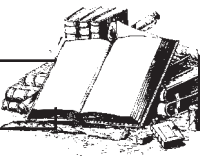
Mackall's a fine writer. The book's first person narration will easily draw in readers touched by Winnie's loneliness and lack of self-esteem. Her struggles to fit in are poignantly balanced with her growing realization that compromising herself to do so is not a solution.

Winnie may suffer a bit too much from teen angst, sometimes rebels against authority, and

has a rocky relationship with her father, but she's a caring, intensely honest girl who ultimately tries to treat everyone in a godly way. (Her faith wavers, but she's learning to trust God again.)

Middle school girls should enjoy both books. Winnie's sister, Lizzy, is spunky and likeable. There's a hint of romance and the interplay between the snobby Spidell siblings and plain, poor Winnie is a plot trick that's been delighting girls for generations. The only caution: the secondary characters are types rather than well-rounded individuals.

Rosemarie DiCristo, Freelance Writer, The Bronx, New York



Dinosaurs : exploring the scientific mystery of God's creation / Michael and Caroline Carroll. (Exploring God's world with Michael and Caroline Carroll.) LCCN 00708755. Colorado Springs: Faith Kids, Cook Communications, 2000. HBB, 0781433665, \$15.99. Middle School (Elementary). Rating: 4

567.9. Dinosaurs; Fossils; Paleontology. 47 p.

Are dinosaurs in the Bible? Are dinosaurs reptiles or are they birds? How are fossils formed? *Dinosaurs*, by Michael and Caroline Carroll, answers these and other questions by combining what science reveals about dinosaurs with what the Bible says about how God created the world. Topics covered include what dinosaurs looked like and what they are called, how they lived and what they ate, how they killed their prey, and why they became extinct.

For adults wondering how the authors combine science and the Bible, Christian scientists' opinions are given and a Christian worldview is used. The authors frequently state that science and the Bible don't have to contradict each other, that God's truths are found in the Bible and in His creation, and that issues such as whether the earth was created in six twenty-four hour days or six longer "days" don't matter as much as that the world was lovingly designed by a wonderful creator who sent His son Jesus to take away our sins.

The book is advertised as being for ages eight to twelve. Its simple style and many photos, sidebars, and illustrations break up the text, but some pages are still wordy and some of the technical detail might confuse a younger reader. Its picture-book size may turn off older readers. But a child truly interested in the subject would find it fascinating.

Dinosaurs is beautifully produced and illustrated, with glossy pages and a solidly-constructed, full-color cover that will hold up through many readings. Other features of interest: a detailed glossary and three lists: the seven "great dino vacation spots in the U.S.," the top five dino web sites for kids, and what dinosaur names mean (that pterodactyl, for example, means "winged finger"). A "Dinosaur Habitat" playset, with plastic dinosaurs, scenery and backdrop, can be purchased separately.

Rosemarie DiCristo, Freelance Writer, The Bronx, New York

The inside-out beauty book : tips and tools for girls like you / by Sandra Byrd. LCCN 2002002712. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2002. PAP, 076422493X, \$7.99. Middle school. Rating: 4

646.7'046. Grooming for girls; Girls--Health and hygiene; Beauty, Personal; Grooming; Health; Christian life. 117 p.

One hundred twenty pages of beauty tips and godly advice, this book is aimed at eleven to fourteen year olds (tweenagers). Well-balanced between preaching the gospel and dispensing health advice, *The Inside-Out Beauty Book*, written by Sandra Byrd, stresses beauty from the inside out. The ten short chapters on hair, make-up, nails, manners, and other similar topics are interactive and reader-friendly.

Each chapter features:

- Scripture or an appropriate quote
- Eye-catching graphics
- One girl's personal story
- Questions from readers
- Tips on using beauty tools
- Try It At Home
- Did You Know?

Some chapters contain diagrams such as how to French braid, or a sample thank-you note. A fun book to read, most girls will learn something new about the way God made their bodies.

Anita Goldman Homing, Parent/Teacher/Writer, Lawrenceville, Georgia

Exploring ancient cities of the Bible / Michael and Caroline Carroll. (Exploring God's world with Michael and Caroline Carroll.) Colorado Springs: Faith Kids, Cook Communications, 2002. HBB, 0781436958, \$13.99. Middle school (High school, Elementary). Rating: 4

939'.4. Cities and towns--Middle East--History.; Middle East--History--To 622. 47 p.

Kids will enjoy this friendly, informative book. *Exploring Ancient Cities of the Bible's* authors, Michael and Caroline Carroll, cleverly use Bible quotes and history as well as details of past and current archeological discoveries to explain what life was like in Bible cities such as Jericho, Babylon, Jerusalem, and Rome. Trivia, photos of strange objects the reader must identify, and bonuses like how to fix a Bible dinner enliven what could be dry subject matter, as do the liberal use of illustrations, graphs, sidebars, and

captions. Topics range from the basic (what does an archeologist really do?) to the esoteric (was the tower of Babel a ziggurat or a round tower?). Quirky details (how did the Romans keep clean?) mixed with a cheeky humor (mummification is likened to being placed in a Ziploc bag; Joseph and Jacob are labeled "portable patriarchs" because they were mummified and carried back to their homeland) will keep kids reading. A nice touch for parents and librarians: the book is beautifully produced, with full-color illustrations and photos, and should hold up through many readings.

The text takes a neutral stance on explaining certain Bible events (mentioning, for instance, that Noah's flood "likely" happened or that "some people" believe God used an earthquake to topple Jericho's walls). But there's a definite Christian point of view, as seen in the sidebar stressing the good news of Jesus being raised from the dead.

The age group for the book is advertised as nine and up. The text may be a bit too detailed for the youngest end of this group, but it will appeal to middle school children as well as preteens and high schoolers. A terrific choice for most libraries. (A related trivia game, Ark of the Covenant casting kit, and dig-for-artifacts toy are available for separate purchase).

Rosemarie DiCristo, Freelance Writer, The Bronx, New York

The middle road : American politics, 1945-2000 / by Christopher Collier and James Lincoln Collier. (Drama of American history.) LCCN 2001025615. New York, Benchmark Books, 2001. 0761413189, HBB, \$20.95. Level: Middle school. Rating: 4.

973.92. United States--Politics and government--1945-; United States--Politics and government. 95 p.

Written by authors of *My Brother Sam Is Dead*, the brothers Collier have generated a helpful series called *The Drama of American History*. This particular title covers the national political situation the later half of the 20th century. The authors are clear regarding their goals and biases in this series. They seek to strip history down to its essential core. They hope to bring out the themes of American history and what they mean to citizens now. They refer to what is accomplished as "citizenship education." The series is a stand alone, thematic historical system. With little repetition the authors seek to create an understanding of the situation and time

discussed in each book. The additional goal of when a student reads the book he or she will have the story explained in such a way the use of additional materials is unnecessary.

Written in short, powerful paragraphs with many helpful photographs or maps the student will learn about the presidency from 1945 to 2000. The chapters themselves present the period and an analysis of the presidents and the people who ran against them. Issues such as corruption and misuse of power are not avoided nor over glamorized. There are personal assessments made periodically in the text but they do not overwhelm the benefits of the text. Overall, there is an even handedness to the view of the presidency by these men. The bibliography is divided into materials for students and teachers. The index is complete and useful. As the text is only ninety-five pages it is a nice addition to a library reference section.

Bianca Elliott, Educator, Linwood, Kansas

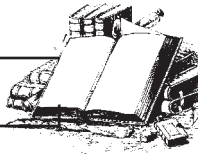
Born to be a cowgirl : a spirited ride through the old West / Candace Savage.
LCCN 00061559. Berkeley: Tricycle Press, Ten Speed Press, 2001. PAP, 1582460205, \$9.95; Middle school. Rating: 5

978. Cowgirls; Frontier and pioneer life--West (U.S.); West (U.S.)--Social life and customs. 64 p.

Photographs, quotes, illustrations, and rodeo posters give us a glimpse into the lives of cowgirls in the early American West in *Born to be a Cowgirl*. Their love of horses and hard work are clear in the writings of these women. Annie Oakley and Calamity Jane are included, but other lesser known women carry the majority of this book.

This is an aspect of frontier history that is often overlooked. Candace Savage has provided us with a fitting tribute to these courageous women.

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



Ashes of roses / Mary Jane Auch. LCCN 2001002666. New York: Henry Holt, 2002. HBB, 0805066861, \$16.95. High school (Middle school). Rating: *5

F. Triangle Shirtwaist Company--Fire, 1911--Fiction; Immigrants--New York (N.Y.)--Fiction; Irish Americans--Fiction; Emigration and immigration--Fiction; New York (N.Y.)--History--1898-1951--Fiction. 250 p.

Set in 1911 New York City, Rose Nolan along with her family seeks to have a fresh start in this new country. Emigrating from Ireland, Rose and her family arrive at Ellis Island with much stress and confusion. There it is discovered that her little brother Joseph has trachoma and isn't allowed into the country. This forces the father to get back on the ship to return to Ireland with the child while his wife and daughters go on to establish themselves. The women go to the only family they have in New York, a brother to the father, Uncle Patrick, but the rest of his family is not so happy. Rose's family is treated so poorly that plans are made to leave as soon as they have enough money to move out. Rose gets a job in a rough part of town but when she is almost raped she looks for another place to work. She is befriended by Gussela Garoff, a Jewess, who not only sees to it that she and her sister move in with her and her father, but she also gets her a job at the Triangle Shirtwaist factory atop the Asch Building. The top three floors are where women sew for long hours under unsafe conditions. This becomes evident when the building catches on fire and one hundred forty-six people die. After this, the garment industry changes a little regarding how they work their employees, and the conditions they work under.

Told in such a manner that one feels all the emotions of each situation, *Ashes of Roses* takes the reader into one person's life. Discoveries are made regarding the similarities of people no matter what heritage they have. Fictionalizing a true story is difficult, but Mary Jane Auch does a wonderful job intertwining fact and fiction. The reader is compelled to continue reading to see what will happen next. Strong dialogue and descriptive words capture the essence of the story. The fire scenes are graphic without being disrespectful. The style appeals to those in upper middle school and high school students. The level of interest should be relatively high and is a wonderful asset to public and private libraries.

Bianca Elliott, Teacher, Linwood, Kansas

Borderlands / by Jennifer Owings Dewey. LCCN 2001047025. New York: Marshall Cavendish, 2002. HBB, 0761451145, \$14.95. High school. Rating: 2

F. Suicide--Fiction; Emotional problems--Fiction; Family problems--Fiction. 160 p.

No longer able to face the lifelong abuse by those close to her, seventeen-year-old Jamie enters the borderlands of madness, attempting suicide. She is admitted to a psychiatric ward, which gives her the space for putting back together the jigsaw puzzle of her life. With aching honesty, Jamie narrates her own story. Slowly revealing her desperate secrets, sentence by sentence, reticent to face her past, full of shame, Jamie pulls her audience into the intricacies of her personal horror story. Seeing much of her life as beyond sense, Jamie illustrates her story with effective quotes from *Alice in Wonderland*. Several caretakers and a demented boy, Adam, help her to move towards health. Not meant to be a book of answers and only an episode in Jamie's life, the story ends as her life moves away from the psychiatric ward and starts, perhaps, a more profitable time in her life.

Borderlands is award winning natural history author Jennifer Dewey's first foray into this type of fiction. An item to note about this book: Jamie values a magic talisman given by her grandfather, but the actual talisman is the loving words given with it. The caregivers do act and sometimes speak in accordance with Judeo/Christian morals. *Borderlands'* strength lies in its ability to engage the reader, draw empathetic responses, and start discussions. Suicide is not romanticized: life is presented as the better choice. Jamie's problems are extremely real. Abuse victims will identify with her.

Donna Eggett, Freelance Writer, Radford, Virginia

Fiery fullback / Coach Clair Bee; updated by Randall and Cynthia Bee Farley. (Chip Hilton sports series; 24.) Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2002. PAP, 0805423958, \$5.99. High school. Rating: 4

F. Football--Fiction. 196 p.

Fiery Fullback begins like a typical Chip Hilton story. A surly player damages his team's chances of winning by insisting on playing fullback even though he's not the best player. But there's a twist. Usually the surly player despises Chip. This one, Greg Hansen, likes him. Greg befriends Chip, and even introduces him to his family. Greg's mother is a sweet

woman. His father is a sullen, wheelchair-bound man who hates football. Yet it's obvious Greg worships him. What does this have to do with Greg's attitude towards playing football, and what can Chip do to help?

Clair Bee wrote *Fiery Fullback* in the 1960s, but the Chip Hilton series ended before it could be published. His daughter and son-in-law had the original, unedited manuscript published in 2002. It's a warm, well-written story, which, like all Chip Hiltons, stresses loyalty, honesty, and family values. Chip likes Greg as much as Greg likes him, despite his teammates' hostility to Greg. Chip also realizes Greg's father's aloofness is behind most of Greg's problems. This subplot works out a bit too neatly (a misunderstanding caused the problem, not any real antagonism between father and son) but it does clearly show the importance of a loving father figure in a young man's life.

A plus for football fans: the sports action takes up about two-thirds of the book. Every detail of the games is recounted, including much of the strategy involved in football. That can be a minus for reluctant readers, however; large portions of the book are pure description with little dialog. But Chip Hilton fans will enjoy the book. Football fans will, too. And adults who read the original series may be especially pleased to find there's a new volume waiting for them to discover.

Rosemarie DiCristo, Freelance Writer, Bronx, New York

When lightning strikes / Hugh Allen Smith. LCCN 98017230. Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 2001. PAP, 0836191641, \$12.99. High school. Rating: 4

F. Hutterite Brethren--Fiction; Boys--Fiction; Russians--United States--Fiction; Immigrant children--Fiction; Russia--Emigration and immigration--Fiction. 180 p.

Set in Russia during the 1870s, twelve-year-old Paul Wipf, a Hutterite, makes difficult choices and carries hurt in his heart over his parents' death in a freak lightning strike. Now Paul must decide if he should stay in Russia or go to America to pursue his dreams. Paul decides to go to America with his Hutterite community but there is a problem; Hannah, another Hutterite child goes with him everywhere. He doesn't want to be responsible for anyone other than himself, and yet she doesn't want to leave his side. Through many adventures and perils, the Hutterite band arrives in America where the land is cheap and they can practice their religion freely. Arriving in Nebraska, the band must face disease and disaster repeatedly. Paul decides to

run away and goes aboard a steamboat. There he learns things about himself, and comes to peace and eventually returns home.

Short, moving chapters keep the story and emotions riding high. The reader is immediately absorbed not only into Russia, but also into the Hutterite manner of living and worshipping. The strong religious emphasis is developed throughout the book through Paul's thoughts and decisions. The addition of Hannah to the story gives stability to Paul and makes him confront issues from a Christian point of view. The maps showing the routes traveled will help the reader visualize the trip taken by Paul. A glossary of Hutterite German facilitates not only the understanding of the story, but also teaches a new language. There is also a brief notes section for readers to consider for more information. Hugh Alan Smith is more than qualified to write this book as he is not only a teacher, but he works in a Hutterite community. This is his first novel and would be a good addition to a public or private library.

Bianca Elliott, Teacher, Linwood, Kansas

White water / Linda I. Shands. LCCN 2001047187. Grand Rapids: Fleming Revell, Baker Books, 2001. PAF, 0800757726, \$5.99. High school. Rating: 4

F. Single-parent families--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction; Ranch life--Oregon--Fiction; Oregon--Fiction. 165 p.

White Water is a young adult novel strongly reminiscent of Patricia Rushford's Jennie McGrady books (Bethany House), (but without the mysteries) or Lauraine Snelling's Golden Filly (Bethany House) and High Hurdles (Bethany House) books (without the shows, races, or competitions). It's a gently written, simple story of a girl and her horse, her friends, and their day-to-day adventures. There's a twist, though: Wakara is half Native American.

Wakara (she's usually called Kara) is fifteen. She loves horses and wants to be a vet, but she isn't a horse gentler like girls in recent horse books. She lives with her widowed father, her older brother Greg and her seven-year-old brother Ryan on a ranch in Lariat, Oregon. Also living with them is strong, silent, sexy Colin, a nineteen-year-old ranch hand. He and Wakara fall in love, much to Mr. Sheridan's dismay.

Although Linda I. Shands' writing is quiet and introspective, the plot has rapid-fire action. There's a white water rafting accident that nearly kills Ryan. Ryan gets lost in the woods. He, several other characters, and their horses are nearly killed by bears. There's a "screaming girl" cover (showing the point where little Ryan falls overboard) and a back cover blurb promising enough twists for seven novels. Yet the book is surprisingly realistic.

There are scenes of prayer, of resting in the comfort of God's peace, and a subplot stressing Wakara's need to forgive someone who has hurt her. The mystery is weak (what is the truth about Wakara's grandmother?) and is barely mentioned, but since *White Water* isn't marketed as a mystery, that shouldn't be a problem. The book is nicely done, and its characters are engaging. Recommended for teen and preteen girls, especially girls who are strong readers.

Rosemarie DiCristo, Freelance Writer, Bronx, New York

Who I am, by Caitlin O'Conner / Melody Carlson. (Diary of a teenage girl; 3.) LCCN 2001007013. Sisters, Ore.: Multnomah, 2002. PAF, 1576738906, \$12.99. High school. Rating: 4

F. Teenagers--Fiction; Diaries--Fiction. 254 p.

On my own, by Caitlin O'Conner / by Melody Carlson. (Diary of a teenage girl; 4.) LCCN 2002002723. Sisters, Ore.: Multnomah, 2002. PAF, 1590520173, \$12.99. High school. Rating: 5

F. Christian life--Fiction; Universities and colleges--Fiction; Interpersonal relations--Fiction; Conduct of life--Fiction; Diaries--Fiction. 172 p.

Caitlin O'Conner continues her diary writings as she concludes her senior year in *Who I Am*, moving on to college—in life in *On My Own*. In diary format, author Melody Carlson is able to cover important, relevant topics for teens such as commitment, dating, family, and future plans. Caitlin is a vivacious, often emotional teen who is making the frequently painful transition into adulthood. She learns that leaning on God's wisdom and not her own is the best way to cope with all the situations she encounters in the process. Readers familiar with the other two books will want to continue Caitlin's story, and libraries will want to make room for this refreshingly honest, thought-provoking series.

Who I Am—it's finally senior year, and it is almost busier than Caitlin can cope with. She can almost see where she wants to go, and begins to see how far she has come. There are still moments, though, when she realizes how much more there is to learn when faced with issues like racial prejudice, teen suicide, and putting her own plans on hold.

On My Own—perhaps the best of the whole series, as we find Caitlin off to college. But college is not what she thought it would be at all. For one thing she is not at the private Christian college with her friends like she hoped, and longtime friend Josh has transferred to another school. And then there is her roommate, whose manic mood swings make life fairly unbearable. Without friends and family nearby Caitlin begins to see that the best way to look up is to start from the inside out. She takes a good inward look at herself and realizes she has leaned on her friends and family far too much, for far too long. With clarity and insight not

revealed to her before, Caitlin realizes God does have her best interests in mind, and as her year concludes things turn out far better than she thought they possibly could.

Pam Webb, Freelance Writer, Sandpoint, Idaho

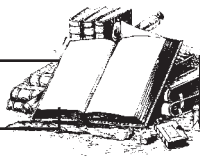
Winter's secret / Lyn Cote. (Northern intrigue.) LCCN 2001005375. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, 2002. PAF, 0842335560, \$9.99. High school (Adult). Rating: 4

F. Nurses--Fiction; Sheriffs--Fiction; Wisconsin--Fiction. 268 p.

Winter's Secret by Lyn Cote is the first in the three-book Northern Intrigue series. In this book a string of burglaries shatters the quiet town of Steadfast, Wisconsin. As Sheriff Rodd Durand investigates, he finds a similar MO in each case. Each elderly victim has a sudden medical emergency that leaves the victim's home vacant overnight. The only clues in each case are snowmobile tracks and the involvement of Wendy Carey, the emergency nurse. Rodd and Wendy join together to investigate. Although attracted to each other, each faces personal problems and reputations that hamper their relationship. Can they solve the mystery and protect the elderly? Can they overcome the undercurrent of fear and nastiness that hides in the town?

Lyn Cotes' main characters are believable and well drawn. The relationships and interaction of the people within the town indicates the author's understanding of small town intrigue, gossip, and feuds. Besides the main romance, the author chronicles the growing love of a younger sister and her boyfriend as well as an elderly couples' devotion. All the characters show positive growth and acceptance of each others' differences. Each of the characters learn to give problems to the Lord, and His input is an important aspect of their lives.

Paula Stewart Marks, School Principal, Bend, Oregon



Revelation for teens / Daymond R. Duck; [edited by] Larry Richards, Ph.D. LCCN 2001001228. Lancaster, Pa.: Starburst Publishers, 2002. PAP, 1892016559, \$14.99. High school. Rating: 5

228'.07. Bible. N.T. Revelation--Criticism, interpretation, etc.. 256 p.

The first ever commentary for teens on the book of Revelation in the Bible is easy to use, and includes emphasis on areas of particular relevance to teens. Its chapter divisions correspond to the chapters of Revelation and include the entire text of the book of Revelation.

Chapters make use of sidebars, icons, bullets, illustrations, definitions, study questions (with answers in back), and index. Some adults will enjoy using the ease-of-use, and will be drawn to the book by the key symbols highlights and explained, e.g., The Great City, Seven Heads, Seven Angels.

Teen Bible study groups have a natural guide here. The verse-by-verse study makes it a must title for church and Christian school libraries. The use of the New International Version and the many illustrations make this a title for public library collections, both in Young Adult collections and in the general Bible section for some adults are sure to delight in the easy guide.

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

Real life to the extreme : finding God's will for your life / Bruce & Stan. LCCN 2001003127. Ann Arbor, Mich.: Vine Books, Servant Publications, 2001. PAP, 1569552002, \$12.99. High school (Adult). Rating: 4

248.8'3. Teenagers--Religious life; Teenagers--Conduct of life. 161 p.

Bickel and Jantz (known better by their first names, Bruce and Stan), authors of twenty-five some books, offer this fourth title in the Real Life series for single adults. This follows *Real Life Begins After High School* (Vine Books, 2000) (life after leaving home), *Real Life Is a Contact Sport* (Vine Books, 2000) (building relationships), and *Real Life Has No Expiration Date* (Vine Books, 2001) (overcoming the fear of failure).

In probing what it means to find and follow God's will, they offer the young adult a blend of practical insight and challenging perspective. Strength in the writing is a natural knack for including examples that enable the reader to relate from life experiences. Scripture is

interwoven into the discussion, making it seem that with God, one enters the world of the supernatural, part of an extreme world.

Frequent examples will encourage teens to continue reading. The discussion is so seamless one may not notice the frequent references. For example, 'living life is like floating on water in a boat' (followed with examples of rivers versus lakes in terms of steering on water) or 'action movies where the hero saves the world and gets the girl in less than two hours but that's not real life' (followed with examples of what to do in relationships).

School and public libraries can add this in YA collections for the language is current, and gives teens a chance to think about growing up issues without being preached at. Youth groups can use this as a basis for fruitful discussion. As a gift, *Real Life To The Extreme*, is sure to find a place in back packs.

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



Sex as God's gift / featuring Mary Ronan. Vision Video, . VID, 1563644673, \$79.99. High school. Rating: *5

613.907. Sex education for children; Teenagers--Sexual behavior; Sex--Religious aspects--Christianity; Sexual ethics; Christian life. 3 videocassettes, 150 min.

Vision Video, a division of Gateway Films, provides educational resources for families, schools, and churches. Add to the list their new video series targeting younger teen students who are learning about the role of sex and romance in their relationships.

Mary Ronan's video series entitled *Sex as God's Gift* is a welcome addition for students and their parents. Ronan, a registered nurse who specializes in reproductive health issues, presents six brief sessions taped before a school-aged audience. The sessions are packaged in three videotapes. Each session is less than thirty minutes long making them ideal for use in an educational setting where questions or discussion might follow.

Included along with the Ronan video set is a workbook with re-producible pages for each program. A fairly extensive bibliography of resources is included here as well. A separate production, a stand-alone video, "Raising Your Children in an Ungodly World," is also included. This aims to help parents of teens think through the issues their students are

facing. A book by the same title accompanies this video.

Ronan's work is impressive. She is articulate, lively, credible, and clever as she relates to a roomful of young teens. She cites credible sources, including her own experiences as a health educator. She emphasizes making wise decisions rather than focusing on avoiding the physical act (and its consequences) that is so often the emphasis in this genre. Her discussion of sexually transmitted diseases is clinical, but may strike some viewers as being graphic. The entire package is presented in good taste with a thoroughly Christian perspective. This series would be an important addition to family, school, and church libraries.

Parents of teens : here's what you need to know / featuring Ellen Marie and Jason Evert. Vision Video, VID, 1563645408, \$19.99. High school. Rating: 4

613.907. Sex education for children; Teenagers--Sexual behavior; Sex--Religious aspects--Christianity; Sexual ethics; Christian life. 1 videocassette, 87 min.

Teen relationships and sexual pressure / featuring Ellen Marie and Jason Evert. Vision Video, VID, 1563645378, \$19.99. High school. Rating: 4

613.907. Sex education for children; Teenagers--Sexual behavior; Sex--Religious aspects--Christianity; Sexual ethics; Christian life. 1 videocassette, 65 min.

Hard questions, straight answers : for guys only / featuring Jason Evert. Vision Video, VID, 1563645386, \$14.99. High school. Rating: 4

613.907. Sex education for children; Teenagers--Sexual behavior; Sex--Religious aspects--Christianity; Sexual ethics; Christian life. 1 videocassette, 25 min.

Hard questions, straight answers : for girls only / featuring Ellen Marie. Vision Video, VID, 1563645394, \$14.99. High school. Rating: 4

613.907. Sex education for children; Teenagers--Sexual behavior; Sex--Religious aspects--Christianity; Sexual ethics; Christian life. 1 videocassette, 29 min.

The second group of video lectures from Vision Video is disappointing. Ellen Marie and Jason Evert independently lecture about sex and relationships within a Christian context. Collectively, they have released four videotaped presentations. They speak to groups of students and their parents on a regular basis. In the present series of individually marketed tapes, Marie and Evert combine their efforts, taking turns speaking before a live audience in both "Parents of Teens" and "Teen Relationships and Sexual Pressure." The message of these two single speakers is positive: rather than preaching pre-marital abstinence, they advocate the merits

of chastity. The message is upbeat as they encourage teens to embrace the physical, emotional, and relational benefits of purity.

The two additional video lectures feature Evert speaking on *Hard Questions, Straight Answers: For Guys Only* and Marie speaking on *Hard Questions, Straight Answers: For Girls Only*. There is nothing in either video presentation that is distasteful or inappropriate for students of either sex to view. Each session features the respective speaker answering previously submitted questions from their audience. The impromptu responses address the issues of “how far is too far?” oral sex, and masturbation. Recovering from the emotional damage of pre-marital sexual activity is also addressed. Ultimately, the videos provide a message of hope in the context of the Gospel message.

The Ellen Marie and Jason Evert video presentations are largely anecdotal; they are weak on systematic or technical evidence. On occasion, statistics are cited that are unbelievable (“Guys who get married as virgins—their divorce rate is 71% lower than those who wait until marriage.”) or irresponsible (“Couples who do not use contraception in marriage...have a divorce rate 1000% lower” than those who do. Presumably, this is a negative divorce rate.) “The Internet” is cited as a source more than once. Evert touts the virtues of natural family planning and eschews the use of all contraception underscoring the (now-disavowed) “fact” that links contraceptive use with a dramatic increase in breast cancer. It is unfortunate that a resource bibliography for further study is not included. Such an addition would have added to their credibility as well.

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



***Lectures on the Pilgrim's progress.* LCCN 93014663. Grants Pass, Ore.: SAT Publications, , 2000. HBB, \$16.00. High school (Adult). Rating: *5**

828. Bunyan, John, 1628-1688. *Pilgrim's progress.* 279 p.

During the late eighteen-hundreds, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* captured the sanctified imagination of a dedicated pastor, Rev. G. B. Cheever. An all time best seller, *Pilgrim's Progress* still captures the imagination. Similarly, this facsimile reproduction of Cheever's *Lectures on the Pilgrim's Progress* (Wiley and Putnam, 1844), captures the reader's interest, raising and answering many important questions. Using pertinent quotes from Bunyan's book, some of Bunyan's own problems, and scripture references, Cheever weaves his insights and comments throughout an abridgement of the *Pilgrim's Progress*. In these ten non-sectarian lectures, the author aims to honor only his Lord, and to activate readers toward self-application of the lessons. The last lecture fittingly ends with a plea to become a

pilgrim, taking God as your strength and portion for ever.

Producing calm, the rhythm of this quaint, innovative book is slower, the wording more involved than that produced today. The essential ideas, expressed in readily understandable yet scholarly phrasing, are engaging, clear, and thought provoking. Useful as both a study and a research aid, the Table of Contents gives a brief but thorough overview of each lecture. Coming from an earlier, less familiar era, this facsimile reproduction catches the eye. When opened by the hand that can't refuse its antique delight, it also catches the mind. Anyone mature enough to read and understand the *Pilgrim's Progress* will enjoy these lectures. *Lectures on the Pilgrim's Progress* makes a valuable addition to the home, the church, the school, and the public library.

Donna J. Eggett, Freelance Writer, Radford, Virginia

***Black potatoes : the story of the great Irish famine, 1845-1850* / Susan Campbell Bartoletti. LCCN 2001024156. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2001. HBB, 0618002715, \$18.00. High school. Rating: 5**

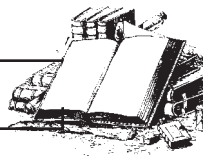
941.5081. Ireland--History--Famine 1845-1852. 184 p.

Black Potatoes by Susan Campbell Bartoletti presents the context, contributing factors, effects, and consequences of the potato famine in Ireland 1845-1850. This is an excellent work that clearly explains how this tragedy occurred, what made it unnecessarily worse, and what impact it has had, not only on Ireland, but also on England and America.

Illustrations include three maps and a multitude of illustrations from the English and American newspapers during that time period.

Other children's books on this topic are available, such as *Feed the Children First* (Atheneum Books for Young Readers, c2002), which is a picture book containing many of the same illustrations in *Black Potatoes*. *Black Potatoes* is the only children's book this reviewer has found with the in-depth coverage that students will need. No library history collection should be without this work. Anyone studying nineteenth century history should read this book. Highly recommended.

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



All the way home / by Ann Tatlock. LCCN 2002002470. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2002. PAP, 0764226630, \$11.99. Adult. Rating: *5

F. Japanese Americans--Evacuation and relocation, 1942-1945--Fiction; Japanese American families--Fiction; Women journalists--Fiction; Race relations--Fiction; Racism--Fiction; Mississippi--Fiction. 447 p.

When Augusta Schuler's father dies in a preplanned accident, her unstable world becomes even more precarious. Her mother, in grief and desperation, buys bus tickets and travels unannounced from San Bernardino to Los Angeles to inform her brother Finn of his duty to take her and her children in. Augie, the youngest of six children, feels unwanted, unloved, and unattached to her now expanded family. By chance she meets Hatsune "Sunny" Yamagata, an American girl of Japanese descent. Sunny and her family slowly weave Augie into their own family, and Augie not only feels wanted, she feels the love and belonging she has been craving her few short years. When Pearl Harbor erupts, her beloved Yamagatas are whisked off to an internment camp. The injustice devastates Augie, as she is torn from what she feels is her true family. Separated by the war and her Uncle's hatred of the Japanese, Augie does not find the Yamagatas until nearly twenty years later when she is doing an undercover article on civil rights in the race-torn state of Mississippi. Racial differences still face Augie, but as she gathers material for her magazine she uncovers a love once lost and a new love discovered.

Ann Tatlock is proving herself to be a writer of distinction. Her characters are vibrantly drawn out, her subject matter enthralling, and her writing is without reproach. Her portrait of how a wounded spirit finds solace in the long journey homeward speaks loudly of how resilient the human heart really is. Augie's pilgrimage through abuse, separation, loneliness, reconciliation, and forgiveness has the reader rejoicing when Augie finds the courage to go against Thomas Wolfe's admonition, and find her way back home. Readers looking for solid writing, and Christian fiction with impact, will be on the lookout for Tatlock's books.

Pam Webb, Freelance Writer, Sandpoint, Idaho

Cape Light / Thomas Kinkade & Katherine Spencer. LCCN 2001052936. New York: Berkley Books, Penguin Putnam, 2002. HBB, 0425183378, \$22.95. Adult. Rating: 3

F. City and town life--Fiction; New England--Fiction. 359 p.

Home song: a Cape Light novel / Thomas Kinkade and Katherine Spencer. LCCN 2002074425. New York: Berkley Books, Penguin Putnam, 2002. HBB, 0425186245, \$22.95. Adult. Rating: 3

F. Birthmothers--Fiction; Mothers and daughters--Fiction; New England--Fiction. 377 p.

When Boston-based Jessica Warwick comes home to care for her ailing mother, she does not expect to find love in Cape Light, the small seaside town. Though her budding romance with Sam has Jessica's heart jumping, Mother is not pleased. She does not consider him to be the kind of man who is good enough for the Warwick clan.

Emily, the town mayor and Jessica's sister, finds that she has political competition from Charlie Bates. As she works together with Jessica to help their convalescing mother, she also readies for the upcoming election. In an intriguing subplot, the mayor does not know that her daughter, who was given up for adoption twenty years before, is working as a waitress at the Bates's Clam Box, the local eatery.

Cape Light is the first in the trilogy of the same name by Thomas Kinkade and Katherine Spencer. Written in the fashion of a folksy Mitford tale, it opens with too many characters and little conflict. Because the cast is so numerous, it is difficult to keep them straight or care about their woes. However, if the reader can stay with the book, the plot thickens and gives a surprisingly pleasant read. One might expect that venturing into new territory, a novel co-written by the famous Painter of Light, might turn out a less than sterling effort. But the book is nicely written with a strong, if predictable, spiritual theme. Folks who choose to read *Cape Light* will enjoy it, but should expect to read the next in the series as well. It is not a stand-alone novel.

Readers of *Cape Light*, the first in the trilogy by Thomas Kinkade and Katherine Spencer, will find more of the same in the second offering by the duo, *Home Song: A Cape Light Novel*. Picking up the thread of the previous story, Jessica's wedding plans are under way and only making her mother furious. Lillian knows that her daughter can do better than Bible-thumper,

Sam Morgan, and is not afraid to make her opinion known to any who will listen. Any veil of family harmony is ripped away as Lillian threatens to boycott the wedding.

Emily Warwick, Jessica's sister, is facing a heated election challenge from Clam Box owner, Charlie Bates. Sara, the daughter Emily gave up for adoption after the death of her husband over twenty years ago, wonders if the time is right for her to reveal her identity. New arrival in Cape Light, Luke McAllister, sets up a halfway house for troubled teens and also whips the town into turmoil over whether or not to accept these misfits into the community.

Kinkade and Spencer deal with issues such as tolerance, friendship, and forgiveness. While their approach may be fairly simple, the concepts are there and give some take-away to the story. New characters are introduced, but it is not difficult to keep them straight if the reader has already become familiar with the little seaside town's inhabitants. Again, this is not a stand-alone book and, for the most satisfaction, should be read after the first book in the series. Fans of *Cape Light* will enjoy a pleasant, if predictable, read in *Home Song*.

Cathy M. Elliott, Freelance Writer, Anderson, California

The Darwin conspiracy: the confessions of Sir Max Busby / James Scott Bell. LCCN 2001006386. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2002. PAP, 0805425004, \$12.99. Adult. Rating: 4

F. Evolution--Fiction; Creation--Fiction. 264 p.

An unusual work by one of my favorite fiction authors, James Scott Bell has written himself into this novel, by his own definition, "part satire, part historical fiction, part essay—a hybrid ..." As you might suspect from the title, this story is about Darwinism, and the perception of the author that attempts to persuade that evolution is more than a theory took some conspiring.

Sir Max Busby is purely fictional and a character you love to hate. But even Sir Max cannot withstand the power of love and power of prayer. Busby's fictional manuscript is the centerpiece of the novel, but Bell has cleverly inserted a contemporary mystery (featuring himself) full of danger, intrigue, and even an interchange with Geraldo Rivera into the mix.

Anyone who still waivers in their belief that our earth was created, or that it evolved will learn from this novel. Those who enjoy a friendly

poke at evolutionary “theories” will cackle with joy at Bell’s tongue-in-cheek presentation. Bell uses endnotes to clarify Busby’s manuscript—many of them reveal the truth behind some of the outlandish theories that continue to be presented as fact in American classrooms.

This book is an easy and delightful read. Families should read and discuss it together, clearing up any questions their children might have about how the “theory of evolution” came to be.

Helen Hunter, *Freelance Writer, Church Librarian, Cedar Rapids, Ohio*

***The distant beacon* / Janette Oke & T. Davis Bunn. (Song of Acadia; 4.) LCCN 2001005676. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2002. PAP, 0764226002, \$11.99; HBB, 0764226010, \$15.99; LGP, 0764226037, \$15.99; CAS, 0764226029, \$15.99. Adult. Rating: 4**

F. Acadians--Fiction; United States--History--Revolution, 1775-1783--Fiction. 271 p.

This sequel to *The Birthright* and book four of the Song of Acadia series takes the reader into the world and times of the American Revolution. Nicole Harrow, the Viscountess, must leave England to attend to her uncle’s estate in America. Helping her to reach the estate is a British Captain Gordon Goodwind. With courtliness and wile, Gordon avoids many troubles as he takes Nicole to her estate, only to find it in shambles because of the pending war. With his hand chosen men, Gordon continues to help Nicole in her struggle for her estate. Nicole is torn between her feelings of responsibility to her heritage, the war, and her heart. She then must further decide her allegiance when her “father” is shown to be an evil man.

This book may be enjoyed on its own but the reviewer felt left out because she has not read the previous books. Reading the previous books helps the reader to understand the intricacies of the story line. There are many twists and turns in the story such as the relationship between Nicole and Anne, as well as the political situation at that time in history. The plot with its main story line and the many subplots can be a little confusing if the book is read alone. Good dialogue and graphic word pictures help the reader to feel the ocean spray or smell the gunpowder. One can almost hear the horses on the cobblestones of Boston. The pair of Oke and Bunn have once again created a world between two book covers. The book would do well in a public library or as a gift to a woman.

Bianca Elliott, *Educator, Linwood, Kansas*

***Embrace the dawn* / Kathleen Morgan. LCCN 200200070. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, 2002. PAP, 0842340971, \$12.99. Adult (High School). Rating: 5**

F. Mothers and sons--Fiction; Scotland--History--17th century--Fiction; Highlands (Scotland)--Fiction. 399 p.

Fighting for her life Killian Campbell flees her abusive husband, only to be caught by him in the Scottish forest. Killian is rescued by Ruarc MacDonald, but she accidentally kills her husband in the struggle. Ruarc is captured by the Campbell clan, who believe he is the killer. Desperate to save his life in return for his good deed to her, Killian declares that she wishes to marry him, not kill him, even though the MacDonald clan and the Campbell clan are in the midst of a fierce feud.

Ruarc and Killian marry, but their relationship is quite troubled, both by the baggage of Killian’s violent first marriage, and by the baggage of Ruarc’s first wife, who played the harlot, and was eventually murdered. As the two of them struggle through issues of love, trust, and political unrest, Killian finds her strength in the Lord. Plunged into the midst of the feud, she finds herself uniquely positioned to plant seeds of forgiveness that grow to reconciliation and healing, not only between Ruarc and herself, but between Ruarc and his stepmother, between the two Scottish clans, and ultimately between Ruarc and God.

Kathleen Morgan has written a powerful novel of forgiveness in *Embrace the Dawn*. Filled with historical people and events, Morgan’s novel skillfully intertwines the fictitious with the real, and creates a captivating story that powerfully illustrates important biblical truths played out in the difficult situations of her characters’ lives. Her characters learn the importance of total submission to God—trusting Him even when it seems hard or nonsensical—knowing that while the night may be long, joy will come in the morning.

Sherrri Beeler, *Teacher, Cascade Christian High School, Medford, Oregon*

***The faded flower* / Paul McCusker. LCCN 2001026582. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001. HBB, 0310235545, \$12.99. Adult. Rating: 4**

F. Adult children of aging parents--Fiction; Fathers and sons--Fiction; Nursing homes--Fiction; Unemployed--Fiction. 144 p.

Frank Reynolds’ well-organized world comes crashing down in a day. His schedule at the Bradley Publishing Company, up until 4:45 PM that day, is routine. He has worked for the company twenty-two years and pictures the rest of his career at the same office. His boss calls him in and explains that the publishing house who bought them out, despite their promises, is laying Frank off. When Frank arrives home, his worries about how to share this news with his wife, Colleen, are sidetracked by a letter from Aunt Minnie. Frank’s father, Pap, has Alzheimers. Aunt Minnie wants them to come down for Pap’s birthday and convince him to move to The Faded Flower nursing home.

These events set Frank, Colleen and their two children, Greg and Vicki, for a life change none of them would have imagined. Frank is forced to either accept God’s control over circumstances or to focus his bitterness toward God, isolating himself from his family.

Paul McCusker uses an interesting choice of voice in *The Faded Flower*. The book begins more objectively in third person. The last third of the book, however, switches to first person, allowing greater understanding into the heart of Frank, who narrates it. Although the book deals with serious, lifelike situations, McCusker weaves humor throughout, making the novella enjoyable to read and the characters realistic and enduring.

Katy R. Pent, *freelance writer, Redding, California*

***Hidden gifts* / Rick Hamlin. LCCN 2001002500. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2001. PAP, 0764223275, \$10.99. Adult. Rating: 2**

F. Singers--Fiction. 314 p.

Hidden Gifts by Rick Hamlin gives an insiders’ look at the music industry and the demands placed upon those in the limelight. Roger Kimmelman takes a break from his hectic performing schedule as a popular singer/musician to fly back to his old church, First Church, in California, to give a benefit concert for the church. Reuniting with his old church choir director, pastor, and a classmate gives Roger pause as he considers the value of their lives and the validity of his work. Unsure if he wants to continue the frenetic pace as a performer, Roger re-evaluates his life and comes to conclusions sure to change his destiny.

Involved in this soul-wrenching journey is a budding love interest with his former classmate who now works at the church directing the junior choir and children’s choir. When laryngitis forces Roger to bow out of his benefit concert, Leslie, the love interest, is forced to perform with her two choirs. Meanwhile, Roger seeks medical attention for his throat problems and winds up being healed through the prayers of a faith-filled church member. Remaining mute, Roger allows Leslie to follow through with her performance. Through a few twists and miscommunications, Leslie and Roger agree to pursue their relationship; Roger decides to quit the music industry and seeks a job at First Church helping his old choir director.

Hamlin takes an interesting concept but fails to deliver strong character development or plot development. It’s obvious the author has firsthand knowledge of the inner workings of the music industry, which does lend credibility to the plot. However, it isn’t enough to draw readers into the novel itself.

Eileen Zygarcic, *Freelance Writer, Grand Forks, North Dakota*

Home of the brave / Allen Say. LCCN 2001005862. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2002. HBB, 061821223X, \$17.00. Adult (High school). Rating: 2

F. Japanese Americans--Fiction; Indians of North America--Fiction; World War, 1939-1945--Evacuation of civilians--Fiction; Indian reservations--Fiction. 32 p.

Home of the Brave, for all practical purposes, looks like a picture book for children. It numbers 32 pages, has the format of a picture book and is written by well-known children's author, Allen Say.

The book itself is almost surrealistic in its content. In dreamlike sequence, a man symbolically confronts the trauma of incarceration in an internment camp. He begins his journey in a kayak and after an accident, seems to experience the feelings of Japanese children interned during World War II. According to the flyleaf, the author's intention is to capture "the confusion, desolation, and helplessness those prisoners must have felt."

The illustrations are haunting and well-done but the content of the book is surely beyond the understanding of a child of the usual picture book age. This must certainly be written for children in middle school and above, yet might truly not be fully understood by some adults.

Say's hope for a future when Americans will be seen as one people is an honorable one. His book, I'm afraid, will only have a limited audience because the presentation of his ideas will be puzzling to most readers.

If purchased, *Home of the Brave* would of necessity be placed in the collection in an area for older readers. It is appropriate for a public or school library.

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

In this mountain / Jan Karon. LCCN 2002000969. New York: Viking, 2002. HBB, 0670031046, \$25.95. Adult. Rating: 5

F. Mitford (N.C.: Imaginary place)--Fiction; City and town life--Fiction; North Carolina--Fiction; Christian fiction; Domestic fiction. 382 p.

Reading *In This Mountain* is like going back home and finding old friends, including the winsome animals, Barnabas and Violet, still hanging around. Everyone has the familiar foibles, and can be counted on to react in the same loving, harsh, or humorous manner. Connecting once more with retired Father Tim Kavanaugh and his beloved Cynthia takes readers into Mitford, the peaceful, yet lively rural village.

George Gaynor, the Man in the Attic, returns to Mitford after his eight years in prison. His presence brings hope to more than one resident. Edith Mallory, still rich and obnoxious, is generous with her dollars. While Cynthia is

away on the whirlwind author's tour, Edith purposefully places Tim in a compromising situation.

Emma Newland pushes Father Tim into the twenty-first century when she insists that he buy a computer, which he does. His e-mail notes serve to keep readers informed about various interests in his life.

Tim's desire to find Dooley Barlow's brothers runs throughout the story. Dooley, the priests' adopted son and now a handsome college student, isn't sure at first about his feelings when Tim finds one brother, Sammy.

A sense of restlessness overcomes Father Tim. What should they do now that he is fully retired? A diabetic, his health comes into question. A serious accident that affects more than himself follows his failure to pay proper attention to his body's warning signs. A slow recovery plunges him into physical weakness and emotional darkness. Then, at last, with the help of others, he reaches "... the mountaintop after a long trek through a parched valley."

Jan Karon has written another engaging story filled with characters common to small town life everywhere. *In This Mountain* is the seventh in the Mitford series, yet readers who have not been there before will enjoy this book. Her skillful way of holding the story threads keeps readers in continual touch with the entire village population and their reaction to present events.

Not only does Karon guide readers alongside Father Tim in his dark days, she includes Scriptures that help him find his way to good health. She also shows one character the way of salvation. Even readers who do not ordinarily turn to inspirational reading will find *In This Mountain* significant.

Story threads left dangling leave readers hopeful that Mitford #8 will soon follow this satisfying #7.

Betty M. Hockett, *Freelance Writer, Teacher, Speaker, Newberg, Oregon*

Jabez : a novel / Thom Lemmons. LCCN 2001046798. Euless, Tex.: WaterBrook Press, 2001. HBB, 1578565634, \$10.95. Adult. Rating: 4

F. Jabez (Biblical figure)--Fiction; Bible. O.T. Chronicles--History of biblical events--Fiction; Bible. O.T. Judges--History of biblical events--Fiction; Jews--History--To 586 B.C.--Fiction. 129 p.

Jabez from the very essence of childhood was separated from others. His name, his identity, meant "pain." And this was his distinction, to suffer because he had caused suffering to his mother. Jabez longs to be a joy to his mother; however, he can see his existence causes her grief. Speculations of him being another's man child separate him from his brothers and peers alike, shaping him to become distant, yet seeking to close the gap somehow. Jabez

receives the opportunity to transform his identity when he returns from war, released as impressed soldier. His prize is the knife given to him by his captor, a man who is strangely woven into Jabez's life history. Granted, owning a knife, possessing metal, elevates Jabez' status in his poverty-worn village, yet the more outstanding prize is having the companionship, trust, and even friendship of a warrior. This sudden status catapults Jabez into a prominent position. When the truth of how his mother came to name him comes forth, Jabez is released from an emotional prison. His freedom inspires him to pray to God, who no longer is the distant and nameless god of the desert stories. And from his lips, his heart and soul, Jabez so inspires generations later. Truly his territory has been enlarged.

Who was Jabez? Considering how little there is of him in the Bible, the man has reached through the centuries and has impacted our Christian culture. For those familiar with *The Prayer of Jabez*, this compact little book of Thom Lemmons, simply entitled *Jabez*, should be considered a complement or a companion reading. Although Lemmons manages to bring Jabez to life, and does so thoughtfully, basing his storyline on historical research, the story is still a fictional rendering. And this is an important aspect to reflect on—how far should we go in fictionalizing biblical passages? Lemmons is a talented storyteller, yet there is a concern how supposition can overlay fact. This is a purchase to consider if other fictionalized Bible accounts are part of the collection, or for those interested in further considerations of *The Prayer of Jabez*.

Pam Webb, *Freelance Writer, Sandpoint, Idaho*

The long trail home / Stephen Bly. (Fortunes of the Black Hills; 3.) LCCN 00060821. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2001. PAP, 0805423567, \$12.99. Adult. Rating: 4

F. Black Hills (S.D. and Wyo.)--Fiction. 257 p.

Stephen Bly writes a humorous Old West, historical novel, centered on the 1880's in the Oklahoma Territory. Sam Fortune, recently released from prison, travels with his Indian sidekick, Kiowa, trying to avoid trouble, and make a reasonable living. As they travel and help out old friends, Sam finds himself breaking horses, having his boss shot, needing to deliver a note for over twenty-thousand dollars, overcoming deception, delivering a baby, having a whole town become family, and finally meeting a girl who believes in him.

Bly's writing has a quirky humor, and his main character is pure fun. Sam, throughout the book, runs from God, but constantly consults and talks to God in his thoughts. In the end, Sam has to decide whether he can commit himself to other people and follow God's best for his life. As a

former outlaw and gunslinger, is his own presence too dangerous for the people he cares about? Or does God know how to work out everything? Each book in the Fortunes of the Black Hill Series can be read independently.

Paula Stewart Marks, School Principal, Bend, Oregon

***A name of her own* / Jane Kirkpatrick. (Tender ties historical series; 1.) LCCN 2002008686. Colorado Springs: WaterBrook Press, 2002. PAP, 1578564999, \$13.99. Adult. Rating: 3**

F. Dorion, Marie, 1786-1850--Fiction; Overland journeys to the Pacific--Fiction; Women pioneers--Fiction; Northwest, Pacific--Fiction. .

Marie Dorion, a member of the Ioway Indian nation: daring, determined, courageous, strong, wise, dedicated to her husband and children. In *A Name of Her Own*, Jane Kirkpatrick, already an award-winning writer, tells Marie's story, one of survival. She calls it "a true story imagined."

Pierre, Marie's husband of mixed-blood, signs on as interpreter for an expedition heading west. She, however, cannot bear to stay behind for the two or three years it will take him to travel the round trip. What would she, five-year-old Baptiste, and Paul, a toddler, "who learns at his own stuttering pace," do without Pierre?

She forms a plan and speaks it, shaming her husband. He then can do nothing but negotiate with Wilson Price Hunt, the expedition leader. Hunt agrees to allow Marie and the boys to go along. Soon after the journey begins, Marie's plan turns against her. Many times from St. Louis to Astoria, she wonders if she has the right to subject her sons to the hardships and deprivations. She gives birth to their baby girl, who dies, and Marie's guilt grows.

She also must deal with her husband's moods and his love of whiskey. Soon after the expedition arrives in Astoria, Marie finds strength and wisdom to subdue his volatile nature. Even at the end of the trail, she continually faces decisions. As long as she has her hair comb and the knife Sacagawea gave her, she has hope and a way to provide for her family.

In July 1813, Pierre and Marie decide to head back east. They know that means "... entering into a winter of risk." On that journey Marie faces the biggest challenges yet, but through the life changes that happen, she gains self-esteem, meaning a name of her own.

Kirkpatrick's research for *A Name of Her Own* is impressive. Readers learn much about Indian ways and about the white traders, also. Anyone interested in that era will find this first book in the Tender Ties Historical Series valuable reading.

With a long list of historical figures, Kirkpatrick needed only to add five fictional characters to

round out the story. Sometimes the large number of people becomes confusing, although she provides an identification list. Her descriptive writing draws the reader into the setting and into Marie's feelings. The story moves slowly at times, while at other times fully engages the reader's interest.

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

***Prelude* / by B.J. Hoff. (American anthem; 1.) LCCN 2002006156. Nashville: W Publishing, Thomas Nelson, 2002. PAP, 0849943892, \$12.99. Adult (High School). Rating: 3**

F. Immigrants--Fiction; Singers--Fiction; Opera--Fiction; Blind--Fiction; New York (N.Y.)--Fiction. .

Prelude, by B.J. Hoff, is book one in her newest series, *American Anthem*. As is typical of her style, Hoff weaves together the lives and storylines of a wide variety of characters, including such notable figures as D.L. Moody, Ira Sankey, and Fanny Crosby. As the title indicates, music is the theme that threads its way through the story and ties the characters together.

Michael Emmanuel is a brilliant composer and conductor, who has given up singing in the opera after losing his sight, and later loses his wife in a mysterious carriage accident. Susanna Fallon, his deceased wife's sister, has come from Ireland to care for Michael's daughter, Caterina, and to find out the truth about her sister's death. Dr. Andrew Carmichael and Dr. Bethany Cole join forces in an unexpected partnership as they share a medical practice in an immigrant district of New York City. And the struggling MacGovern family, seeking a better life in America than they found in Ireland, embarks on a journey with an unexpected addition to their family in tow: Renny Magee, a rag-tag street urchin with thieving ways, a silver tongue, golden voice, and a warm heart.

The story gently unfolds with intriguing characters, and the sound of music, which Hoff manages to make fly off the page with her glorious and passionate descriptions. As the title suggests, this story is the prelude to the books that will follow, and leaves readers tantalized and hanging until *Cadence* is released in the spring of 2003.

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

***The prodigy : a novel of suspense* / Alton Gansky. LCCN 00054992. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001. PAP, 0310235561, \$12.99. Adult (High School). Rating: 4**

F. Extrasensory perception--Fiction; Boys--Fiction. 340 p.

The Prodigy, by Alton Gansky, begins rather mysteriously with the birth of a child that seems

somehow ominous and full of portent. Leaving that storyline, Gansky tantalizes the reader by switching between several other characters, describing a pair of tornado chasers, the host of a radio talk show about the paranormal, a wealthy businessman riddled with cancer, a brilliant but searching theology student, and his professor. Weaving these unlikely characters together, Gansky creates a provocative story somewhat reminiscent of Peretti's *The Visitation*.

The child, Toby, is a true prodigy, and also has miraculous powers which allow him to heal anyone. At first it is not clear if this gift is heaven-sent, or demonic. Toby knows nothing of God or the Bible, yet his gift is unmistakable. As he and his mother are exploited by a "get rich quick" opportunist, Toby becomes increasingly terrified of the "Shadowman" who seems to manifest himself whenever evil is being done, and who even assumes possession of people's bodies and minds. Led to the truth about Christ, Toby becomes the center of a cosmic struggle between good and pure evil. The novel builds to a riveting, if violent, climax of spiritual warfare that is battled ferociously in the physical realm, but won with heavenly strength.

The Prodigy is an arresting book. In one scene, two men are bound hand and foot and thrown into the ocean to drown; their struggle to unbind themselves and survive is described in such detail, one would think Gansky himself had lived through such an experience. Readers should be cautioned, however, that the climax is equally descriptive in the final spiritual battle played out violently in the physical realm. However, those who are familiar with Gansky's style from his other novels will enjoy this book equally well.

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

***The sacrifice* / Robert Whitlow. LCCN 2002016724. Nashville: W Publishing, Thomas Nelson, 2002. PAP, 0849943183, \$14.99. Adult. Rating: 4**

F. Mock trials--Fiction; High school students--Fiction; Christian fiction; Legal stories. 400 p.

As a novice lawyer, Scott Ellis gets his first criminal trial case—a teen arrested for shooting wildly at a crowd assembled for an outdoor baptismal service. Simultaneously, Kay, his high school sweetheart, re-enters his life again when he volunteers to advise high schoolers in a mock trial program. As he works his way through the pre-trial investigation, Ellis encounters racial prejudice and spiritual questions. A variety of characters—lawyers, rednecks, students and a Vietnamese immigrant working—all come into play as the story progresses. Suspense weaves occasionally into *The Sacrifice* until the climax where everything seems to happen at once and Ellis reconsiders his attitudes towards teenagers, God, and Kay.

As with Robert Whitlow's previous two novels—*The List*, *The Trial*—individual and group prayer plays a role, though not as vital, in the plot. The theme of school violence is handled realistically, the racial attitudes of characters are authentic and believable. However, Ellis's character lacks an emotional side, and the character of Tao Pang, the Vietnamese immigrant, is disappointingly underdeveloped. Despite its heavy subject matter, *The Sacrifice* does deliver meaningful messages about the significance and outcomes of prayer. Compared to *The Trial*, this book doesn't show off Whitlow's writing skill as well. However, in the Christian fiction genre, Whitlow is still an author well worth reading.

Karen Schmidt, Freelance Writer/Editor, Marysville, Washington

Sadie's song / Linda Hall. LCCN 13148. Sisters, Ore.: Multnomah, 2001. PAP, 1576736598, \$10.99. Adult. Rating: 5

F. Women detectives--Maine--Fiction; Missing children--Fiction; Maine--Fiction. 301 p.

Sadie and Troy's marriage shows troublesome aspects within the first couple of chapters. This fast-paced read reveals that abuse happens in homes where both the husband and wife are churchgoing Christians. I found myself urging Sadie to "get out" when it was clear that abuse affected not only Sadie, but four of her five children. One child expressed deep anger by throwing things and hurting small animals; one sucked her hair when she was afraid and constantly whined "I can't", twin girls turned completely to each other, shutting out the world of pain in which they lived. Only the still nursing baby was yet immune to the daily tumult in this chaotic home.

Prior to her marriage Sadie, an accomplished student of both the piano and oboe, had pursued a dream of a music degree. Forced to give up her dream because of the demands of her large family, her piano sits unused. To keep the pages turning, Linda Hall weaves into the story the mysterious disappearance of a young girl and an unknown melody that Sadie hears in times of distress. In addition, both male and female characters knowledgeable about spousal abuse are cast in friendship roles with Sadie and Troy.

Sadie is a sympathetic heroine—one you will cry with and cheer for as she struggles to admit that Troy abuses her and the children, and as she seeks a holy path out of an unholy situation.

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

Second opinion / Hannah Alexander. (The healing touch; 1.) LCCN 2001005681. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2002. PAP, 0764225286, \$11.99. Adult. Rating: 4

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

Continuing on from an earlier Christian medical series (*Sacred Trust*, *Solemn 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.

Pam Webb, Freelance Writer, Sandpoint, Idaho

The secret life of bees / Sue Monk Kidd. LCCN 2001026310. New York: Viking, Penguin Putnam, 2002. HBB, 0670894605, \$24.95. Adult. Rating: 4

F. Teenage girls--Fiction; African American women--Fiction; Maternal deprivation--Fiction; Race relations--Fiction; Beekeepers--Fiction; Sisters--Fiction; South Carolina--Fiction. 301 p.

White, fourteen-year-old Lily Owens tells her own poignant, emotional, and enthralling story set in South Carolina in the summer of 1964. Her remembrances begin the day her mother died ten years earlier: the open suitcase, frantic actions, her father's approaching footsteps, yelling, and the shot when Lily picks up the gun.

A plucky, determined, deceitful girl, Lily leads Rosaleen, their colored help, to safety after an injurious racial encounter. The picture of a black Mary, mother of Jesus, which had belonged to Lily's mother, guides them to Tiburon, South Carolina. Lily lies about herself and Rosaleen, and they end up at the pink house of black beekeepers, August, May, and June Boatwright.

With nothing more than the picture in hand, Lily feels certain her mother had once lived here. Toward summer's end, she discovers the surprising truth. In spite of guilt over her mother's death, fear that she and Rosaleen will be found out, and racial prejudice from others, Lily revels in life and friendship with the

calendar sisters. August teaches her many things, including the secret life of bees, "... just like the one I was living." Lily learns to say the Hail Marys in front of the black wooden Mary with the sisters and their friends. By the end of the summer Lily trades in a "pack of lies for a pack of truths," and life at last offers hope for Lily and Rosaleen.

While probably not for many Protestant church and school libraries, *The Secret Life of Bees* has much to commend it. Sue Monk Kidd draws readers into Lily's story, even from the first page, with pictorial writing. The diction, including swear words, remains appropriate to the place, time, and Lily's age. Each character exhibits a distinct, engaging personality. Questions that concern Lily throughout her story eventually concern readers, who willingly turn pages to find the answers. Kidd resolves the knotty problems in convincing ways. She uses the right touch of humor in otherwise humorless situations.

The story pictures racial prejudice and the hurt it brings. Kidd also allows Lily new insight into her father, whose actions originally aroused only hate.

Rather than showing Lily seeking comfort in God, Kidd writes that Mary, mother of Jesus, in both the picture and the black wooden carving, gives solace to Lily. Information about bees adds unusual interest to the story.

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

Spring rain / Gayle Roper. (Seaside seasons; 1) LCCN 2001000992. Sisters, Ore.: Multnomah, 2001. PAP, 1576736385, \$11.99. Adult. Rating: 3

F. Single mothers--Fiction; Mothers and sons--Fiction; Ex-convicts--Fiction; Christian fiction; Domestic fiction, 348 p.

Leigh Spenser has just received a package from the prison where her late father was incarcerated. Wanting nothing to do with Johnny's things, she sets it aside, much to the chagrin of her ten-year old son, Billy. Soon Clay will arrive and Leigh is filled with thoughts of how best to avoid this man from her past. Trouble is, she lives in the garage apartment of his mother Julia's home and is involved in caring for his twin, Ted, who is dying from AIDS.

As soon as Clay arrives, Leigh begins getting mysterious and threatening phone calls from a stranger. However, the daily struggles of single motherhood, dealing with a fatal illness, and coping with unrequited love are well developed through the story, interwoven with suspense and possible danger.

Complex relationships explored within the book's pages are perceptive and provocative, allowing the twists and turns to be a vehicle for

promoting God's design for marriage, dating, and sexuality in healthy ways that will reach teens and adults alike.

In *Spring Rain*, Roper holds true to biblical teaching regarding sin, repentance and forgiveness without preaching. She also deals compassionately with the issue of AIDS, while clearly expounding the message that homosexuality is wrong. Abstinence for all outside the biblical confines of marriage is found throughout the book, yet Roper is able to show that romance need not be avoided.

Well-written, but somewhat predictable, this book will be an enjoyable read for adults and teens who like a little drama with their romance.

Laurie Woolery, Freelance Writer, Cottonwood, California

***Sunrise on Stradbury Square* / Doris Elaine Fell. LCCN 2001051896. Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, Baker Books, 2002. PAP, 0800757505, \$11.99. Adult. Rating: 4**

F. Teacher-student relationships--Fiction; Women college teachers--Fiction; Leukemia--Patients--Fiction; Reunions--Fiction; Psychological fiction. 304 p.

The third book in the Sagas of a Kindred Heart Series continues the story of Rachel McCully, university English professor, and a number of her former students. Fell skillfully weaves in memories and characters who have appeared in the previous stories, filling in blanks for readers who have not read the first two books in the series.

McCully discovers that she has leukemia and that the treatment provided in the United States isn't doing her any good. In an effort to take control of her life, she heads for London where an unorthodox form of treatment is taking place. Readers who love England will enjoy the sights and sounds of the Cotswolds and the Cumberland where Wordsworth and Coleridge wrote some of their famous poems.

The book is filled with mystery, romance, broken relationships, the theft of valuable art and artifacts, all carefully interwoven with Rachel McCully's Christian testimony. As relationships grow and develop, some of the outcomes seem predictable and in a couple of instances the lives of characters are left dangling. This, of course, leaves the door open for another book in the series. Still it is a lovely story of God's redemptive grace, all set in a beautiful spot in His creation.

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

***The touch* / Patricia Hickman; based on the painting by Ron DiCianni. LCCN 2002000235. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, 2002. PAP, 0842340173, \$12.99. Adult (High School). Rating: 4**

F. Parent and adult child--Fiction; Fathers and daughters--Fiction; Children of clergy--Fiction; City and town life--Fiction; Abused wives--Fiction; Clergy--Fiction. 178 p.

Patricia Hickman's novella *The Touch* is based on the painting by Ron DiCianni, which illustrates the woman who suffered a lifetime of hemorrhaging reaching out to touch the hem of Jesus' robe for healing. The contemporary setting of Hickman's story encompasses a broader view of this biblical story as she describes a pastor's daughter on the run from an abusive husband. Feeling like she has never been able to measure up to her father's expectations, Sydney is too ashamed to call home and ask for help.

Pastor Wade, notified of their plight by a secret phone message left by his young grandson, attempts to track them down to bring them safely home. What starts out as a journey to right the wrongs in Sydney's life, and show her what poor choices she made in marrying such a loser turns out to be a heart-changing event for Wade. He is mugged, injured, and spends the night on the streets where he is mistaken for a drunkard; in this sorry state he endures the judgmental stares of people like himself, who assume the worst. Shown kindness by a homeless man who gets him the help he needs, Wade prays that if he is able to find his daughter, she will be willing to forgive him for all the judgmental hurts he inflicted on her over the years with his disappointed silences, and disapproving stares.

Desperate, Sydney cries out to the Lord, metaphorically reaching out to touch the hem of his robe for healing—and he hears her cry and delivers her, and restores her relationship with her father. For such a slim volume, *The Touch* avoids being trite and cliché; the book contains an amazing amount of substance in both the storyline and character development, as well as its illustration of the relevance of biblical truth.

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

***True honor* / Dee Henderson. (Uncommon heroes; 3.) LCCN 2002007206. Sisters, Ore: Multnomah, 2002. PAP, 1590520432, \$11.99. Adult (High School). Rating: 4**

F. Intelligence officers--Fiction; Terrorism--Prevention--Fiction. 350 p.

The events of September 11 occurred during the writing of *True Honor*, book three in Dee Henderson's Uncommon Heroes series, and, as a result, became part of the author's healing process as she struggled to come to terms with the tragedy. Her story allows her readers to benefit as well, as her characters grapple with the aftermath of preventing more terrorism before it happens. Darcy St. James, a retired CIA spy, is called into service just prior to September 11, to make contact with Sergey, a trusted Russian spy who makes a shocking

attempt on her life. How this event, and the death of two other CIA agents tie in to the events of September 11, and what follows is the basis for Henderson's story.

As Darcy works to unravel the clues of money transfers and the murder of a rogue sniper, she begins to put together the puzzle that will allow her team to track down Luther, one of the key players involved in terrorist activities. Assisted by SEAL sniper Sam "Cougar" Houston and his team, and a surprise appearance by Sergey, Luther is taken down and a massive shipment of explosives intended to blow up a United States oil refinery and gas pipeline is intercepted.

True Honor allows readers to more fully appreciate the frustrating, time-consuming, and often dangerous work being done behind the scenes daily in order to keep our nation—and our world—safe. Darcy and Sam's intensely captivating story reminds us that God is in control, whether or not we understand the big picture, and that we should trust him, endure, and fight the good fight against all that is evil.

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

***Valley of the shadow* / Stephanie Grace Whitson. (Dakota moons; 1.) LCCN 00046571. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000. PAP, 0785268227, \$12.99. Adult. Rating: 4**

F. Women missionaries--Fiction; Dakota Indians--Fiction; Minnesota--Fiction. 295 p.

***Edge of the wilderness* / Stephanie Grace Whitson. (Dakota moons; 2.) LCCN 2001030395. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2001. PAP, 0785268235, \$13.99. Adult. Rating: 4**

F. Women missionaries--Fiction; Dakota Indians--Fiction; Minnesota--Fiction. 263 p.

***Heart of the sandhills* / Stephanie Grace Whitson. (Dakota moons; 3.) LCCN 2001054370. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2002. PAP, 0785268243, \$13.99. Adult. Rating: 4**

F. Women missionaries--Fiction; Dakota Indians--Fiction; Minnesota--Fiction; Married people--Fiction. 298 p.

Author Stephanie Grace Whitson tackles the difficult topic of treatment of Native Americans in her historical fiction series *Dakota Moons*. In the first book, *Valley of the Shadow*, the reader is introduced to Ellen and Simon Dane, missionaries to the Dakota Indians in Minnesota. Struggling for over ten years among the Dakota with no fruit for their labors, Simon grows even colder and more distant. Ellen, rears her children without the input of her husband, assisted by their new boarder and friend, a part French, part Dakota named Genevieve LaCroix. The strained relationship is put to the test as Ellen endures a high-risk pregnancy. The family and Gen return east to Ellen's home where she finally dies in childbirth. Simon, despondent,

withdraws even more from his children as he flagellates himself over his poor treatment of his wife. Through a conversation with Gen, Simon comes to terms with his past and determines to right his behavior in the future.

The family returns to the frontier only to become enmeshed in the Minnesota Sioux Uprising. Gen and the children, Aaron and Meg, are captured and taken prisoner. Through the bravery of their friend, Daniel Two Stars, the trio are rescued and taken to safety.

In book two, *Edge of the Wilderness*, Simon and his family are reunited, and learn of the death of their friend Two Stars. Gen, secretly in love with Daniel, mourns his death as Simon mourned Ellen's. Simon, however, decides to propose to Gen. Through a series of internal struggles, Gen finally agrees to the proposal.

With the uncertainty of the Indian situation, Simon is confronted by his brother-in-law, Elliot, about the wisdom of remaining with the children in such hostile territory. He wants to take Meg and Aaron back to New York with him so they can become well educated. Elliot, facing his own fears from Antietam and his lost hand, pushes his point. A fellow missionary teacher, Miss Jane, takes on Elliot and his prejudices and forces him to reconsider his request. The journey west changes Elliot and helps him see the value of the work among the Indians, and the change in Simon.

Gen settles into married life with Simon and grows to love him. However, Simon works incessantly, wears himself out and catches pneumonia. The family returns east to New York so Simon can recuperate, but instead he dies. However, before passing away, Simon asks Elliot and his new wife Jane, to become guardians of his children so Gen can find Daniel Two Stars, whom Simon has known to be alive for some time. Two Stars is an Army scout; Gen returns to the west where she is reunited and married to Two Stars.

Book Three picks up with Daniel and Gen attempting to make a life for themselves among the whites in the area where they once lived. Daniel and his friend Robert live on the land of a sympathetic white and the two become farm laborers and carpenters. However, neighbors complain about the presence of Indians and one in particular tries to rile the others into taking action to route the Indians. Faced with escalating violence and unhappy as a farmer, Daniel decides to rejoin the Army as a scout, with the hope of eventually moving to the reservation in Nebraska.

Meanwhile, Elliot has become a champion for Indian causes in Congress and works tirelessly to bring about positive changes in the treatment and handling of the Indian population. On a trip west to meet with Indian chiefs and gain peace accords, Elliot is joined by Aaron, now

seventeen, who dreams of joining the Army and serving in the Indian territory. They meet up with Daniel and the small Army contingent and begin to travel to various tribes documenting their findings and encouraging the chiefs to sign peace accords.

Encountering more Sioux uprisings and battles, Two Stars fights with resolve, wanting nothing more than a peaceful existence with his wife and soon-to-be-born child. In a freak accident, Two Stars is seriously hurt and tended to by a "healing" Indian, Two Moons. She takes Two Stars to her Lakota village where finally he mends and is reunited with his wife. The Two Stars family journeys to Nebraska where they become ranchers and live a full life.

Whitson takes a difficult topic, Indian treatment during the Civil War, and presents it from the Indian point-of-view. She rights misconceptions and forces the reader to confront wrong ideas on this topic. Strong character development and a plot filled with twists leave no room for predictability in these stories.

Eileen Zygarlicke, Freelance Writer, Grand Forks, North Dakota



Written on her heart / Alan Maki. LCCN 2001037850. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2002. HBB, 0805424881, \$14.99. Adult. Rating: 2

F. Disfigured persons—Fiction; Women teachers—Fiction; First loves—Fiction; Veterans—Fiction. 152 p.

Thirty years have passed and Molly Meyers remains broken-hearted by the memory of her sweetheart, James Wade, who lost his life in the Vietnam War. Molly is single still, and teaches at an elementary school in Montana. Molly's loyal friend, Stephanie, comes for a visit. While placing her belongings in a drawer Stephanie discovers some old love poems written by James to Molly many years past. Some of these same poems are found in a book that Stephanie has purchased as a gift to Molly. The book, however, shows the author to be Jonathan Roseland. Questions begin to form. Has Jonathan Roseland somehow stolen the writings of James Wade? Or is it possible that James Wade is still alive?

James Wade is alive and has kept it a secret for thirty years. Molly and James meet again. Molly is angry for the pain he has caused her and the years that are lost. She struggles with these feelings while Stephanie serves as friend and counsel. James has his own suffering that he must face. As the story concludes fate brings Molly and James together again in dramatic fashion.

Author Alan Maki has offered the reader a glimpse into some of the pain war and its repercussions can impose on people. He has also portrayed the struggle of forgiveness when

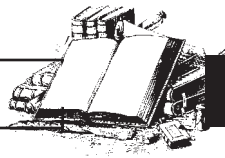
a loved one breaks trust. In addition, a vital spiritual message prevails. When the road is long and the days are tough we need someone greater than ourselves to see us through. God is that strong refuge and the One who is able to help us through the storm.

The backdrop of the story brings an informative and interesting account of a destructive fire sweeping its way through the forest and towards Molly's home. Towards the last pages of the story Maki carries the reader through a fire being swept over an occupied house.

The central story lacks strength in a few areas. Molly seems to never shift from the same droning sound of complaining. The dialogue lacks spark and all the pieces fall into place far too easily.

This book is for adults and possibly may be of interest to those who must face life with a disfigurement or disability.

Karen Cranfill, Freelance Writer, Cottonwood, California.



***Israel in crisis : what lies ahead?* / David Dolan. LCCN 2001048621. Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, Baker Books, 2001. PAP, 0800758048, \$12.99. Adult. Rating: *5**

220.1'5. Bible--Prophecies--Jews; Bible--Prophecies--Palestine; Arab-Israeli conflict; Eschatology--Biblical teaching; Israel--History--Prophecies. 184 p.

The best way to summarize the content of *Israel in Crisis* is by its sub-title: "What Lies Ahead." David Dolan presents pertinent information which will instruct the reader, both in terms of current events and in biblical knowledge. He has an entertaining, easy to read way of presenting lots of historical, political, biblical, and current events material—using a question and answer format to introduce the contents of each chapter. Following the introduction, new and relevant information is given to provoke further thought and study.

His unique credentials include having been a secular newscaster, a long term involved resident of Jerusalem, a Hebrew speaker and scholar, and a Bible student of pre-millennial persuasion. He is up to date, but able to relate to ancient facts and events in a startling way. He answers those questions that come to your mind as you read or listen to the daily news—the ones you feel it not quite politically correct to ask in today's intimidating culture. This book is a handy reference guide—not one you will read once and shelve but one you will want to keep at hand plus have a few copies to share with your friends of all political and religious persuasions to add veracity and factual material to your discussions.

For those interested in prophecy, must-read chapters include "Israel's Next War," "The Son of Thunder," and "The End Time Temple." I appreciated the humble way of offering his ideas, the biblical way of defending his convictions, his intimate sharing of God's speaking to him, his courage in offering out of the mainstream interpretations of biblical passages (see his understanding of the holocaust in the Psalms), and his take it or leave it sharing of his more surface hypotheses. If Dolan does err, it is in a somewhat repetitious way he reminds readers of his qualifications: but that is somewhat understandable when taking into consideration the topics and views covered. I highly recommend this book for Christian as well as public and church libraries. It is one of the best considering the plethora of hastily written books on these subjects.

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



***The story of the New Testament : men with a message* / by John Stott; revised by Stephen Motyer. Rev. ed. of: *Men with a message*. LCCN 2001046121. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2001. HBB, 0801012317, \$16.99. Adult (Middle school, High school). Rating: *5**

225.6'1. Bible. N.T.--Introductions. 157 p.



***The story of the Old Testament : men with a message* / by Alec Motyer; revised by John Stott. Rev. ed. LCCN 2001037931. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2001. HBB, 0801012309, \$16.99. Adult (Middle school, High school). Rating: *5**

221.6'1. Bible. O.T.--Introductions. 191 p.

First published during the 1950's, *The Story of the New Testament* by noted Bible scholar John Stott is worth reading again, or for the first time, in this revision. Re-worded slightly for today's readers, with supplementary information, the stress still rests on the New Testament's wonderful message and the men who wrote it down. Arranged in time sequence, each of the nine chapters presents an individual writer, his unique background and personality, and the distinctive and appropriate truth he conveyed under the Holy Spirit's inspiration. Stephen Motyer revises *The Story of the New Testament* with a light, contemporary hand, and a deep respect for John Stott. Both authors aim to exalt Jesus Christ. *The Story of the New Testament* will interest scholars from middle school through adult.

The Story of the Old Testament turns the tables. Alec Motyer, Stephen Motyer's father, originally wrote this book. John Stott is the reviser. The main body of this book begins with Jesus' view of the Old Testament; followed by an introduction to the content of the Old Testament. The next sixteen chapters present the individuals who, under the superintendence of the Holy Spirit, wrote out the unique messages that still impact our lives today. Both John Stott and Alec Motyer convey deep love for the Bible, winsomely urging the reader towards this love. Written in Stott's own analytical style, *The Story of the Old Testament* will also be of interest to scholars from high school through adult.

In both of these books, sidebars tie characters together, give interesting additional data, and illuminate history. Relevant, eye catching photos and maps appear on every page. All chapters end with a list for further reading. The prefaces at the beginning of each book pique interest, and the indices at the end help the reader follow up resultant thoughts. Both books will serve many purposes, for example: research tool, teacher's aid, intriguing Bible study courses, personal study, church leader's tool. These books are recommended for all libraries, home schooling, family and church use, and as coffee table picture books.

Donna Eggett, Freelance Author, Radford, Virginia

***A faith for all seasons : historic Christian belief in its classical expression* / Ted. M. Dorman. 2nd ed. LCCN 00048628. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2001. PAP, 0805423982, \$24.99. Adult. Rating: 5**

230. Theology, Doctrinal. 374 p.

Ted M. Dorman revised his textbook, *A Faith for All Seasons* (Broadman & Holman, 1995), in response to questions asked by his theology students at Taylor University. This new edition contains additional information on Martin Luther and Eastern Orthodox traditions. The fifteen chapters are arranged systematically. Some of the subjects Dorman covers are the doctrines of scripture, God, creation, Christology, salvation, and last things. Dorman begins each chapter with a basic explanation of the topic, which is followed by a detailed discussion of how the various denominations agree or disagree and how they arrived at their present belief.

Each chapter is followed by a list of questions designed to help the student master the material. This valuable section helps the reader to focus on the important parts of the chapter. Dorman uses charts to help the student find important information quickly. The reader can see at a glance the comparisons being presented. There are a few selected photographs and maps. At the back of the book are extensive endnotes, an excellent glossary of theological terms, and a bibliography of books cited.

The structure of the book and presentation of the discussions make it obvious that the author is from a Protestant Reform, Calvinist background. This book could easily go beyond the university classroom and be used in a church adult Bible study class or for individual study.

Barbara Bryden, Freelance Writer, Olympia, Washington

The quest of the historical Jesus / Albert Schweitzer. 1st complete ed. / edited by John Bowden, 1st Fortress Press ed. LCCN 00049032. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, Augsburg Fortress, 2001. PAP, 0800632885, \$33.00. Adult. Rating: 5

232.9'08. Jesus Christ--Biography--History and criticism; Jesus Christ--Historicity. 562 p.

This book not for the faint of heart nor is it for the weak of faith. It is a challenge from start to finish. It is huge: 562 pages total, 74 pages of detailed notes; it is difficult: complex beyond the ability of all but the most dedicated readers; and it is challenging—it is a book which will call into question the most essential element of Christianity, the life and nature of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. It will also come to a conclusion rejected by conservative Christians, namely that “Jesus...who came forward publicly as the Messiah, who preached the ethic of the kingdom of God, who founded the kingdom of heaven upon earth, and who died to give his work its final consecration, never existed” (478). And it says that the image of such a Jesus was created through a complex process over time and that the image was “not destroyed from outside; it has fallen to pieces, split and shattered by...concrete historical problems...” (478).

But it is also a book which should be in every Christian library. In it are included seemingly innumerable amounts of information on the nature and implications of higher criticism. In it is a synthesis of that criticism which, when digested, will give readers as thorough overview of the subject as they could want.

The Quest of the Historical Jesus will be a challenge for every reader. While many will not understand its complexity, they will understand its importance. This book is an indispensable resource for every field of biblical study.

Dr. Raymond E. Legg, Chair, Dept. of English, Bryan College, Dayton, Tennessee

The path to holiness / Andrew Murray. LCCN 2001003783. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2001. PAP, 0764225618, \$8.99. Adult. Rating: 3

234'.8. Holiness. 222 p.

What R. C. Sproul and his Ligonier Ministries seek to do for this present generation in declaring God's holiness as central to Scripture and all of Christian living, Andrew Murray did for his generation. A thorough comparison of R.C.'s original book, *The Holiness of God* (Tyndale House, 1985), might suggest that Mr. Murray wrote more theologically in depth because his target audience were more adept in this realm.

Beginning with the preface dated November 16, 1887, the book takes many of the occurrences

of the word 'holy' in their biblical chronological usage and explores them in context. The author's stated goal is to “discover in what sense God uses the term so that it may mean to us what it means to Him.” Applications are numerous and deliberately and forcefully stated. The many and varied elements of true holiness are shown while emphasizing its unity and simplicity as centered in the person of Jesus. To even partially apprehend all the written material is to be led in worship, longing, and awe repeatedly. The lasting impressions are that the revelation of God, “I am holy” becomes the command “Be holy” and ultimately the gift of “You are holy in Christ.” Churches from all sides of the holiness debate will find the book greatly beneficial, Scripturally accurate, and constantly challenging for thought and action.

This edition, complete with a beautiful and thought provoking cover is truly a reborn classic, and is meant to contain the essence of the original. The problem is knowing exactly what the processes of updating and editing actually do to the original text. A word of explanation from Bethany House would have been helpful in this regard.

Rosalee Stent, Retired Missionary, Church Librarian, Avid Reader, Dallas, Oregon



A covenant to keep : meditations on the biblical theme of justice / James W. Skillen. LCCN 37892. Grand Rapids: CRC Publications, 2000. PAP, 1562125443, \$12.50. Adult. Rating: *5

241'.622. Christianity and justice; Justice--Biblical teaching. 219 p.

A Covenant to Keep presents seventy-five meditations on the biblical theme of justice. James W. Skillen asks the reader to explore with him biblical justice and how it fits into today's world. Convinced doing justice is not optional, he stresses the point that humans either act justly or unjustly. Skillen draws from scripture to prove his point. Beginning with the Genesis account of creation he moves to God's covenant with Israel, Jesus birth, Paul, and Christ's second coming in Revelation. In each he brings out aspects of the story seldom discussed and challenges the reader to put Christian justice into action.

The book is divided into five sections of fifteen meditations each. Each section begins with an essay that discusses how justice is required, restrained, administered, assured, or fulfilled. All of the meditations end with two topics for reflection and a suggestion for living out justice. One suggestion is to make a change in your Christmas celebration, so it becomes a time of looking forward to Christ's return. Another idea is to pick a public official and either pray for that person for a week or write a note of encouragement.

Skillen has designed the book to be used in small groups or by the individual. Written in a clear easily understood style, *A Covenant to Keep* challenges readers to rethink what they believe the scriptures say and encourages them to make the changes necessary to live a life based on justice. Information on The Center for Public Justice is included.

Barbara Bryden, Freelance Writer, Olympia, Washington



Passion and purity : learning to bring your love life under Christ's control / Elisabeth Elliot. 2nd ed. LCCN 2002018977. Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, Baker Books, 2002. PAP, 0800758188, \$11.99. Adult (High school). Rating: *5

241'.66. Elliot, Elisabeth; Sex--Religious aspects--Christianity; Christian life. 191 p.

Many treasures can be found in this slightly altered edition of *Passion and Purity* by Elisabeth Elliot, which is presented with a new cover, a more contemporary format, and a new forward by Joshua Harris, author of *I Kissed Dating Goodbye* (Multnomah Books, 1997).

Perhaps not as easy to comprehend as the modern abstinence books, it is written so readers will be delighted and enchanted. Rich and eloquent language peppered with godly wisdom is a special gift in this Bible-based book of love.

Elisabeth Elliot reveals the passion it takes to be pure, not only in love but also in relationship to God. In *Passion and Purity*, she shares personal details of her love for a man but an even deeper love affair with her Savior.

Practical sound advice is shared with those longing for purity in a world where innocence becomes hard to protect.

Quotes and scriptures are interwoven with intimate and impassioned diary entries and letters written between Elisabeth and her husband Jim. During the long years before marriage, these record reveals a rich love story where each person's relationship with Christ and ultimate purity was the goal, and it can be used to encourage readers by sharing stories of temptations and victories Elliot faced in her own life while waiting upon the Lord.

Meant for those seeking purity in love while unmarried, the principles used are applicable for anyone wanting an intimate journey with Christ, and it will be especially helpful for ministering to young adults. Any library wanting to encourage passion and true passion in our society should carry this book.

Robin McCarley Rusk, Homeschooling Mother, Freelance Writer, Susanville, California

Finding God's peace in perilous times / [compiled by Tammy Faxel]. LCCN 2001006452. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, 2001. HBB, 0842370609, \$10.99. Adult. Rating: 5

242'.4. September 11 Terrorist Attacks, 2001; Terrorism--Religious aspects--Christianity--Prayer-books and devotions--English. 179 p.

Kenneth Taylor, Chairman of the Board of Tyndale House Publisher sets the stage for *Finding God's Peace in Perilous Times* in his prologue to this collection of meditations. "This book is intended to offer hope, encouragement, and spiritual guidance to those facing conflicting thoughts and feelings about this national disaster."

While the focus is on the 9-11 disaster, the thrust of the meditations makes this book useful to any victim facing the aftermath of calamity. Lined spaces following the meditations allow the readers to personalize the book with their own thoughts. Tucked in the back cover is a CD of music contributed by eight well-known artists.

Twenty-four Christian authors combined their efforts into thirty meditations on the 9-11 disaster to produce this written memorial. All proceeds from the sale of the book go to the Salvation Army's Special Victim's fund for 9-11 disaster relief. The size and style of the book make it an excellent choice as a gift book. The length of the selections is well-suited for those looking for a short devotion to begin church programs and meetings.

Judy A. Driscoll, Retired Teacher, Poulsbo, Washington

The music of his promises : listening to God with love, trust, and obedience / Elisabeth Elliot. LCCN 00032079. Ann Arbor, Mich.: Vine Books, Servant Publications, 2000. PAP, 1569552169, \$10.99. Adult. Rating: 3

242'.5. God--Promises--Biblical teaching. 211 p.

In her typically succinct, blunt prose, Elisabeth Elliot expounds promises God has given believers. These brief readings present a wealth of promises such as God's constant presence, His protection, his attention to our prayers, and the end results of suffering. Elliot draws from Scripture both obscure personalities such as Eleazar and Shammah who fought with David, as well as popular verses and the writings of many classic authors and songwriters. In each reading she deals with a specific issue, problem, or need believers confront in their walk with Christ, and poses a rhetorical question or provides a dose of encouragement. By the end of the book, readers will have encountered an array of Christian virtues and a refresher on the character qualities of God, receiving hearty spiritual meat to chew on meditatively. Although only a portion of the segments contain Scripture verses, the book could be used as a devotional supplement.

The Music of His Promises isn't about music, though the title and cover art of a violin on an open Bible could lead one to expect a musical theme. However, as Elliot promises, her writings do supply "grace notes for your Christian life." Her trademark straightforward, sometimes severe writing style is again evident. The content of the readings is best appreciated by mature believers and those ready to grapple with harder truths of the Christian life. Readers familiar with Elliot will observe topics she is fond of discussing, but all the readings in this book are new. Taken as a vitamin for spiritual growth and health, *The Music of His Promises* can be a little tough going down at times, but will prosper the earnest reader who needs a boost—or maybe a boot—of God's promises.

Karen Schmidt, Freelance Writer, Marysville, Washington.

Visual faith : art, theology, and worship in dialogue / William Dryness. (Engaging culture.) LCCN 2001037487. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, Baker Books, 2001. PAP, 0801022975, \$21.99. Adult. Rating: 5

246.17. Christianity and art. 188 p.

Another in the Baker Books "Engaging Culture Series," *Visual Faith* tackles the complex issue of the relationship between art, theology, and worship, issues which have been in tension throughout the history of the Church. With chapters arranged chronologically from the earliest days of the Christian Church through the Middle Ages, Reformation, and into the 20th century, *Visual Faith* "aims to extend and enrich a Christian conversation on the visual arts" (9). Important here is that the book, like others in the series, is meant to engender conversation about the arts in hopes of providing Christians with knowledge, skills, and desire to engage modern culture and the debate about the nature of truth and beauty—to provide a grid through which readers can begin to look at their relationship with the arts.

It is this last point that may be most helpful for readers of *Visual Faith*. Among the first purposes of the book is to suggest that there is a crucial link between worship and the arts which needs to be addressed in the Church. In a climate of critical assessment about the nature and structure of worship, Dyreness says that discussion of these matters "is not only appropriate today, but it is more urgent now than ever before" (9). He says this urgency grows out of the "uneasy tension" that exists over what kind of art should be included in the life of the Church.

Sensitive to varying perspectives on the arts within the Church, *Visual Faith*, does not pretend to give all the answers to questions which grow out of a discussion like this. What it does do is present Christians with useful suggestions for building a perspective on them

which can be constructed and articulated in a culture full of opinions on what constitutes art. This book is a must-read for anyone interested in engaging and changing modern culture.

Dr. Raymond E. Legg, Chair, Dept. of English, Bryan College, Dayton, Tennessee

The God catchers : experiencing the manifest presence of God / Tommy Tenney. LCCN 00067563. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2001. HBB, 0785267107, \$19.99. Adult. Rating: 4

248. Spiritual life--Christianity. 207 p.

In his previous book *The God Chasers* (Destiny Image, 1998), Tommy Tenney encouraged readers to go beyond a set standard of worship to pursue God. The result has affected how millions of readers embrace and value God's presence. Now in this sequel, Tenney challenges readers to go and grow beyond the chase and encounter God.

Relying heavily on the analogy of a father playing "hidey-face" with his children, Tenney draws parallels how a father delights in being pursued almost as much as children delight in pursuing their father. Tenney believes God delights in our pursuit of Him, yet he really desires being found. The book underlines how when we seek God, we will find him.

With simple clarity, woven with humorous fatherly insights, Tenney encourages readers to go beyond the thrill of pursuing, and to revel in the finding, the reunion of finding what was being sought—in this case, God's presence. Tenney's ministry is based just on this very idea, of living everyday in God's presence, of not being satisfied with a one-time meeting. For those who have decided to go beyond the chase and desire a deeper fellowship with God, and especially for those who read his first book, Tenney's current offering is worth pursuing.

Pam Webb, Freelance Writer, Sandpoint Idaho

Forever ruined for the ordinary : the adventure of hearing and obeying God's voice / Joy Dawson. LCCN 2001030126. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2001. HBB, 0785266828, \$19.99. Adult (High school). Rating: 3

248.4. Christian life. 195 p.

God does speak personally to ordinary individual believers today! This is the message Joy Dawson so ably brings to the notice of the reading public; citing Scripture references, God's character, and experience as proof. If readers want to hear God speaking, this is a basic primer describing conditions Scripture sets, steps to take when God seems silent, how to avoid deception, etc. to make it happen. The material in the book could even be called "how to live with God." It is all based on Scripture, practical, and full of insight into prayer,

guidance, and obedience. The theology presented is consistently applicable to those who are diligent seekers after God. It is capable of creating such a hunger and thirst for God that just in reading one is led on to holy desire and left dissatisfied with the ordinary.

The informal, friendly sharing of instruction, illustrated by experience, is well suited for those anywhere from pre-teen to any stage of adulthood. There is something here for every pilgrim and it leaves a taste for more, much more, of the same. There are those who might be a little uncomfortable with some of the experiences she narrates from her ministry in YWAM, but this is her story and she tells it with humility and Godly reverence. There is need for caution in nay-saying how God chooses to relate to His children, especially those who consistently bring others to know, love, and serve God.

Appendix A is beneficial for those readers who may not as yet have secured salvation or those seeking a printed sequence of evangelistic points. Appendix B is for those who have believed and yet need their feet set upon the fundamentals of discipleship.

Rosalie Stent, Retired Missionary, Church Librarian, Avid Reader, Dallas, Oregon

***If you want to walk on water, you've got to get out of the boat* / John Ortberg. LCCN 47714. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001. HBB, 0310228638, \$16.99. Adult. Rating: 4**

248.4. Bible. N.T. Matthew XIV, 22-33--Criticism, interpretation, etc.; Trust in God--Christianity. 212 p.

Peter's walking on water is an allegory of living life as Christ's follower in *If You Want to Walk on Water, You've Got to Get Out of the Boat*. John Ortberg inspires the reader to say "yes" to God by describing the common experiences of individuals choosing brave lives. Because fear is the enemy of bravery, he counters the fear of failure by explaining failure's effectiveness in the natural learning process. Ortberg also describes the consequences of the cowardly existence; he is humorous and poignant simultaneously, sneaking the Holy Spirit's conviction in while the reader is still smiling.

John Ortberg does not encourage traversing waters Jesus has not first welcomed one to, so he illuminates in a refreshingly sober way "God's calling." Also noted is the great work accomplished in the soul while waiting for God, not only when receiving from Him. The majority of the book inspires God-given dreams, but, reminiscent of Ortberg's *The Life You've Always Wanted* (Zondervan, 1997), it also invites the reader to use particular spiritual disciplines as modes to becoming brave.

Saturated in inspiration, John Ortberg's book gives the reader courage to grasp opportunities

to live life fully. *If You Want to Walk on Water...* would be useful in many adult and college small groups because all that is necessary to follow his appeal is life-experience. Both new and practiced followers of Christ can use this book toward growth. While questions at the back of each chapter encourage genuine communication, they are broad enough that individuals have the freedom to disclose feelings and experiences to the degree comfortable to him or her. With the voice of an insightful friend, John Ortberg delivers insights in conceptually simple ways, giving him access to a varied audience, without forfeiting an intelligent and compelling vision of the courageous life.

Paula R. Carrigan, History Teacher, Covenant Christian School, Brea, California



***Woman of confidence: wisdom for achieving with integrity* / Pam Farrel. LCCN 2001039357. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2001. PAP, 0830822488, \$9.99. Adult. Rating: *5**

248.8'43. Christian women--Religious life; Success--Religious aspects--Christianity; Confidence--Religious aspects--Christianity. 176 p.

Pam Farrel speaks directly to issues that challenge every woman seeking to be the woman God created her to be. Organized in short chapters with titles like Priorities, Risk, Peace, Focus, Endurance, and Perspective, with an appendix on accountability, Mrs. Farrel uses the stories of many women who have been challenged in each area with an outcome of growth and achievement with God's guidance. In the chapter on risk, a broadcaster with integrity tells how she achieves her dream God's way. John Hunter's words "for this I have Jesus," help tell the story of the author's own crisis when her five-year-old boy was lost. Knowing that life is under God's control was her only peace. Joni Erickson Tada reminds us that to endure, "Faith isn't the ability to believe long and far into the misty future. It's simply taking God at His word and taking the next step." One couple does that and gets through the red tape of adoption in Rumania. In this effort as in all of the stories, readers are reminded that God doesn't expect us to be alone. We are to function as a body, calling on many to pray for and with us. In any pursuit of God's will, "breaking barriers is not for the faint of heart or the uninformed." Usually as we change perspective to keep focused on God, we break the enemy's power.

In every chapter, the author encourages with scripture examples, probing questions and insightful directives. She disciplines readers to focus on the "winning words" and actively "winning ways" that keep us better in tune with our God. That is where confidence is. There are many points to meditate on, to draw out the

creative energy that God would have us use to do His will. "God has set the point of destination. We need to set our sights above what we know or see."

If we define "exhortation" as called alongside to bring out the best in another, Pam Farrel does so with compassionate encouragement, "putting the right thoughts into the minds of others."

Carol B. Taylor, Freelance Writer/Certified Social Worker, Poulsbo, Washington

***A woman's high calling* / Elizabeth George. LCCN 2001024086. Eugene, Ore.: Harvest House, 2001. PAP, 0736903275, \$9.99. Adult. Rating: 5**

248.8'43. Christian women--Religious life. 296 p.

***A woman's high calling : growth and study guide* / Elizabeth George. Eugene, Ore.: Harvest House, 2001. PAP, 0736904948, \$6.99. Adult. Rating: 4**

248.8'43. Christian women--Religious life--Study and teaching. 132 p.

In a practical treatise on becoming a woman of God, George outlines ten essentials for godly living from Titus 2:3-5. They are wisdom, godly speech, love of husband, love of children, ministry to other women, purity, personal discipline, goodness, godly behavior, and love of home. Each chapter addresses one of these principles, asking even the most mature hard-hitting questions like "Are all my thoughts true, noble, just, pure, lovely, good, virtuous, and praiseworthy?" or "What is the cause of your gossiping tongue--an evil heart, hatred, foolishness, or idleness?"

At a time when some books for Christian women pursue a "do the best you can" approach, this book and its accompanying study guide urge readers to grow in wisdom, purity, and character through practical steps and study questions.

Women's ministry leaders looking for a good book for a Bible study group won't be disappointed. In the Growth and Study Guide, George outlines keys for a successful discussion group.

Women looking for practical guidelines for growing in Christ will find George's book a great source of inspiration with a quiet time calendar, twelve weeks of study, and great insight into God's Word.

Marilyn Griffith, Editor: Word Praise Ezine, Tallahassee, Florida

***Growing through conflict* / Erwin Lutzer. LCCN 2001002948. Ann Arbor, Mich.: Vine Books, Servant Publications, 2001. PAP, 156955319X, \$9.99. Adult. Rating: 4**

248.8'6. Conflict management in the Bible; Conflict management--Religious aspects--Christianity. 182 p.

David—can any more be usefully written about him after we have been given so many classic studies about the shepherd boy made king? Yes, and Erwin Lutzer does it by a simple study of the conflicts he faced from his earliest days. Writing with uncomplicated style and scriptural notes, he gives us practical biblical wisdom for life among fallen humanity. Each chapter contains a case study of an instance of conflict, then goes on to a series of lessons. With dry, sly humor and short pointed remarks we are left with the sword stuck in our hardened hearts, piercing and softening for attitude and action makeovers. Some are still as sharp as Goliath's sword when used for beheading, so read with caution! Watch out for such punch-lines as, "Unbelief said that Goliath was too big to hit; faith said he was too big to miss!" and "Saul's fatal flaw was seeing the kingdom as belonging to himself and not God" among others.

Did these hit their mark? From early childhood to deathbed, David's conflicts are scrutinized with humility and grace, and in the end God calls him, David my servant!

Readers will find that they cannot help but sharpen their servanthood through this study. It will be time well spent. Just deciphering the cover design is a parable. Of particular interest to me was the epilogue which answered a question for me of long standing concern in Matthew 22:42-45 and Christ's 'punch line': "If David then calls Him 'Lord,' how is He his son?" I would like to see a similar book by the same author covering Jesus' expert handling of the conflicts he had with the Pharisees and Sadducees. This is the first book I have read by Dr. Lutzer but it will certainly not be the last!

Rosalee Stent, Retired Missionary, Church Librarian, Avid Reader,
Dallas, Oregon

***Getting along with people @ work : a guide to building better relationships on the job* / Mary Whelchel. LCCN 2001004951. Ann Arbor, Mich.: Vine Books, Servant Publications, 2001. PAP, 156955241X, \$10.99. Adult. Rating: 3**

248.8'8. Employees--Religious life; Christian life--Biblical teaching. 210 p.

Love thy neighbor... But that certainly can't mean the fellow worker who just told the boss a lie about you, can it? Or the boss who just believed that lie? Want to go home from work without a headache, smiling? *Getting Along With People @ Work* gives the answers to these and other questions of the same nature. Career woman, leader in several women's ministries, Mary Whelchel knows what she is talking about. Facing difficult work mates, she finds in the Bible the answers for coping victoriously. Chapter one deals with setting boundaries as Jesus did. The reader then learns the biblical principles for coping at work: empathy, love, listening, dependability, confrontation, willingness, integrity. The last few chapters deal

with working with difficult people and bosses and the joy of improved relationships.

Part of a prolific genre, *Getting Along With People @ Work* stands out from like volumes for several reasons. Pertinent scripture references and illustrations drawn from Whelchel's own life as well as that of her friends provide an intimate, believable tone, encouraging readers to apply the principles. Each chapter in this guidebook presents the principle, problems, remedies, application, and a personal review for judging growth in this area. The easy to understand presentation clearly illuminates the subject matter. With a little imagination, the reader will be able to apply these principles to many troubled relationships at home, at school, in the classroom, anywhere. *Getting Along With People...* is recommended for all libraries and will be helpful for individual study, for group study, as a business class text book, as well as for those first entering or returning to the work arena.

Donna J. Eggett, Freelance Writer, Radford, Virginia



***King came preaching : the pulpit power of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.* / Mervyn A. Warren; foreword by Gardner Taylor. LCCN 2001039356. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2001. HBB, 0830826580, \$20.00. Adult. Rating: *5**

251'.0092. King, Martin Luther, Jr., 1929-1968; Progressive National Baptist Convention--Sermons; Preaching--United States--History--20th century; Sermons, American--African American authors; Sermons, American--20th century. 223 p.

Mervyn Warren presents an eloquent, fresh study on Martin Luther King in this slim volume. Beginning with a homiletical biography (that is, a biography focusing on the making of the preacher), the author sets the stage for what is to come: a close analysis of what made King the powerful, effective orator he was.

The bulk of the narrative focuses on the historical context of King's speeches, his generalized audience, and the content of the speeches themselves. Warren includes one chapter on the speaker's character and another that treats the speaker's ideas and emotional proof. Rather than focusing exclusively on the speaker's text and message, however, this analysis focuses on the convergence of circumstance and the social times with Dr. Martin Luther King's formidable persona. Warren does not overlook King's ethos, his pathos, and his logos. Each is treated extensively. Separate chapters also treat King's sermon themes, his language choices, and his "sermon design, preparation, and delivery." The full transcripts of four lesser known and utilized King speeches are included as appendices.

King Came Preaching is a breath of fresh air: a dignified, academic treatment of the religious and social oratory of one of the greatest American speakers. And it is presented in a format accessible to general readers. Even though this work was originally written as a doctoral dissertation, the reader finds no encumbering scholarly jargon. In addition to showcasing the development of Dr. King as a great speaker, the book serves as a model for scholars of oratory who wish to present their research to a broader audience.

The author's neo-Aristotelian approach to a great speaker is well chosen as it provides insight to those who never heard Dr. King speak. It also provides reminders of his power to those who have heard Dr. King speak.

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

***Helping kids include kids with disabilities* / Barbara J. Newman. LCCN 2001023690. Grand Rapids: Faith Alive, CRC Publications, 2001. PAP, 1562127772, \$19.95. Adult. Rating: 5**

259'.44. Church work with children; Developmentally disabled children--Religious life. 95 p.

Helping Kids Include Kids with Disabilities speaks directly to the church community. Author Barbara Newman brings years of experience in special education in the Christian school context to give guidance to leaders in church ministry to children. To address the issue of effective inclusion of special needs children in church ministries, Newman starts by illustrating the problem through anecdotal reports.

The first few chapters offer information and suggested guidelines for churches. In the heart of the book, the author deals with several specific impairments, followed by other mild impairments, and then severe impairments in general. For each impairment she provides in layman's language: (1) a basic fact sheet about the impairment, (2) an age-appropriate suggested lesson plan for use with children—using a variety of props, and (3) an adaptable letter to families. The latter part of the book includes patterns for use with the lesson plans, two weeks of suggested devotions for families, and a bibliography of additional resources on the various disabilities.

Newman's understanding of the Christian community as a body mandates the loving inclusion of individuals with special needs. Her goal is that "each child understands that he or she is a unique image bearer of God." To accomplish this effectively she suggests that, as part of each church's children's ministry program, some individual should coordinate ministry to special needs children, providing continuity and consistency from one level to

another. Newman's lesson plans point out that normally developing children benefit themselves as they contribute to encouraging development in children with special needs. The understanding and cooperation of all parents is a crucial part of the process. Highly recommended to all leaders in church Christian education programs, this book also provides both summary information and a needed perspective to educators in Christian day schools and to concerned parents.

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

***Somebody cares : a guide to living out your faith / Doug Stringer.* LCCN 2001031737. Ventura, Calif.: Regal Books, Gospel Light, 2001. PAP, 0830728600, \$10.99. Adult. Rating: 3**

267'.13. Somebody Cares (Organization); Evangelistic work. 154 p.

Somebody Cares is an intense and heartfelt book on service ministry and evangelism. Author Doug Stringer draws his examples from his own extensive and intensive work in the Gospel harvest. When Stringer says what it will take to get involved in this type of ministry, he speaks from first hand knowledge.

The work's greatest strength and potential weakness is the focus on Doug's personal experiences. His calling to begin and expand the Somebody Cares network is obvious. I wonder why the experiences of others from the network were not source for material.

This work is pointedly about serving others and saving souls. Still Doug spends the last 3-4 chapters speaking to current or potential salvation workers. How to get and keep your head and soul in Kingdom work is as important as the work itself. It will not do to lose the harvesters.

Well written and intense, this book can serve as a primer for "street ministry." I strongly recommend it for anyone who feels the call to direct and intimate service ministry and evangelism.

Kirk Hunt, *Instructor, Pima County Community College-Business & Industry Division, Tucson, Arizona*

***Fresh wind, fresh fire : what happens when God's Spirit invades the heart of his people / Jim Cymbala with Dean Merrill.* LCCN 96050966. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, Zondervan, 1997. HBB, 310211883, \$18.99. Adult. Rating: 5**

269. Brooklyn Tabernacle (New York, N.Y.); Church. 188 p.

***Fresh faith : what happens when real faith ignites God's people / Jim Cymbala with Dean Merrill.* LCCN 99035508. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, Zondervan, 1999. HBB, 310230071, \$18.99. Adult. Rating: 5**

243. Faith. 219 p.

***Fresh power : experiencing the vast resources of the Spirit of God / Jim Cymbala with Dean Merrill.* LCCN 00049993. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, Zondervan, 2001. HBB, 031023008X, \$18.99. Adult. Rating: 5**

231'.3. Holy Spirit. 204 p.

Published in 1997, *Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire* is a deeply moving book. After reading it I remember wanting everyone I knew to read it too. Cymbala, assisted by Dean Merrill, tell the story of the sorry, shabby Brooklyn Tabernacle Church that in 1972 could draw barely twenty people to a worship service. Until, that is, they humbled themselves, got on their knees, and began to pray.

In their twenties, Jim Cymbala, without any pastoral training, and Carol Cymbala, with a love for music but no formal training to either read or write music, turned this city center Brooklyn church into a mega ministry, and a fledgling music group into the Grammy award winning Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir.

Ironically, though, the size of the church and the popularity of the music is of the least importance. It's the prayer—prayer that transforms and that reaches God. Cymbala transparently shares anecdotes from the church's prayer time—the most poignant is the story of his and Carol's daughter who strayed from the Lord at the age of sixteen and who was "labored" over in prayer by this church family. A great read!

In Cymbala's second book, the topic is faith. What has happened to our first love—that first love for Jesus? That voracious appetite for God's Word? Oh, sure, we still go to church. But the passionate love for the Lord has waned. Pastor Cymbala says, "It's not too late. The zeal and love for Christ you once had can be recovered."

Is your packed-out church a sign of church health? "No," says Cymbala, "but how active and vibrant their faith is in the God they serve." It is their faith level that is God's concern—not how full the church is. The faith-filled, true stories combined with the hallmark prayers of the Brooklyn Tabernacle believers make this another page turner.

In the third book in the "Fresh" series, Cymbala tackles the issue of power. The answer is in the power of the Holy Spirit. What is the question? Why are we trying to solve the hard cases we as Christians face today with only human methodology? We give up when our problems

seem hopeless—marriage under siege, wayward kids, spiritual weakness. The answers won't come from attending another seminar or in submitting the problem to a committee, but in calling on God and asking Him through the power of the Holy Spirit to intervene.

Cymbala makes the point loud and clear that Christianity is hopeless (and helpless) without the person and work of the Holy Spirit. There have been numerous other books that present the same message. Cymbala's writing, though, is so clear because he uses a great balance between narrative, scripture, and personal anecdotes which illustrate exactly what he is trying to get across.

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

***Prayer evangelism / Ed Siloso.* LCCN 00055281. Ventura, Calif.: Regal Books, Gospel Light, 2000. PAP, 0830723978, \$12.99. Adult. Rating: 3**

269'.2. Evangelistic work; Prayer—Christianity; Cities and towns—Religious aspects—Christianity. 252 p.

Prayer Evangelism by Ed Siloso packs a two-part punch. The first half of the book explains his philosophy—prayer, and the second half of the book describes his goal—evangelism. The philosophies are good, although readers may find his scriptures stretching to fit some of his ideas. His strategies are fascinating.

Siloso's plan, which he calls prayer evangelism, will inspire readers. He intersperses true stories from the many prayer fairs that resulted from this strategy. This makes the reading easier and the authenticity clearer. Scripture principles and parables are used as well to exemplify his ideas.

Similar to Jerry Cook's *Love, Acceptance, and Forgiveness* (Regal Books, 1979), this book mandates that and more in the language of the new millennium. Cook called the church a force; Siloso calls the church a movement. Cook's ideal was one person at a time through friendship evangelism; Siloso's ideal is to sweep cities on a large scale, uniting pastors and communities. His four-step method is: speak peace (they will feel it), fellowship (to develop trust), pray for their felt needs (to be a bridge between their need and the One who can solve it), and bring the Kingdom of God to them. This is easy on a one-to-one basis. When preparing for a city-wide effort, it's radical but doable as verified by Siloso's testimonies.

A methodology of paradigms, doctrines, unity, intercession, and much more comprise *Prayer Evangelism*. It's a huge bite for a community to chew. But it's worth the effort. Just as *Prayer Evangelism* is worth wading through for pastors and church leaders.

Ginger McGrath, *Freelance Writer, Leavenworth, Washington*

Keep coming, Holy Spirit : living in the heart of revival / Melinda Fish. LCCN 2001047210. Grand Rapids: Chosen Books, Baker Books, 2001. PAP, 0800793823, \$12.99. Adult. Rating: 2

269'.24. Revivals. 206 p.

If you are interested in Pentecostal-type revival, this well-written book will answer many questions for you. Melinda Fish, editor of *Spread the Fire* magazine, speaks to questions and concerns about revival, especially the type seen in Toronto, Canada.

This easy to read book is based on the doctrinal foundation of such things as being drunk in the Spirit, slain in the Spirit, or laughing in the Spirit. The author speaks to many other spiritual needs and areas of revival. Mrs. Fish uses Scripture, church history, and firsthand accounts to make her points and illustrate the flowing river of revival. She speaks passionately from her own experience as a pastor's wife and one who has encountered all that she writes of. Libraries of Pentecostal churches and others interested in this subject should purchase this book.

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

Praying for America / Dutch Sheets. LCCN 2001048314. Ventura, Calif.: Regal Books, Gospel Light, 2001. PAP, 0830728953, \$9.99. Adult. Rating: 2

277.3'083. Christianity and culture--United States; Christian life--United States; United States--Religion--1960-. 142 p.

"We can either watch history being made or we can make it," asserts Dutch Sheets, senior pastor of Springs Harvest Fellowship in Colorado Springs. Sheets makes a good case for this time in our country's history as the time for revival and renewal. He points out that we may be blind to the current invitation that God is giving us to repent and return to His ways.

In *Praying for America*, Sheets says that every generation must choose whether it wants God's blessings, to cross over into the land of God's promises, or experience another forty years of moral downward slide. He urges that it is only through prayer, fasting, sacrifice, repentance, and being willing to stand up against public opinion that we will change America. He also explains the process of "crossing over" into God's promises for us. He encourages us by saying that God will pass before us, that our enemies will be terrified, that those who do cross over are in covenant with God. Sheets gives the best in-depth explanation of what repentance is and how we achieve it.

Praying for America will inspire readers to examine their lives and their choices in respect to America's Christian future.

Cynthia Washington, Review Columnist for *Christian News Northwest*, Puyallup, Washington

John Stott : a biography / Timothy Dudley-Smith. 2 vol. LCCN 99021813. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1999-2001. [HBB, v.1, 0830822070, \$24.99]; HBB, v.2, 0830822089, \$24.99. Adult (High school). Rating: 3

283'.092. Stott, John R.W.; Church of England--Clergy--Biography; Anglican Communion--England--Biography. 2 v.

A Global Ministry is noted author and hymn writer Timothy Dudley-Smith's eagerly awaited second volume of the life of one of the world's most pivotal and respected evangelical clergyman, Anglican John Stott. The first volume covered Stott's early life. This second volume covers the years from 1960 through 2000. A close friend and confidante of Stott, Dudley-Smith uses a large variety of data, including Stott's own diaries, friends' reminiscences, articles and editorials, and critics' appraisals. Decade by decade, the audience learns the intimate details of Stott's life and the rise of contemporary evangelical Christianity. Highlights include Stott's involvement with strategic Christian groups; organizations he founded; books he wrote; confrontations with other notable Christian leaders; glimpses of private life; correspondence from both great and small admirers. The introduction links the two volumes. Each section opens with a well presented summary of the events and atmosphere of that decade. The book closes with a useful notes section, an exhaustive bibliography, and a practical index.

Dudley-Smith encourages the reader who has not read volume 1, *The Making of a Leader*, to peruse its introduction. A good substitute for this introduction can be found by researching volume 1 on www.gospelcom.net. All readers will constructively enjoy the later half of the life of this good and godly man. The author uses a maximum of history and a minimum of analyses, allowing the audience to deduce for themselves. Scholarly, yet comprehensible by all, A Global Ministry presents a very real person as a friend should, with some warts, and a lot of love. Arranged by decade, two sections of photos provide interest. This book will be useful in the high school, university, and public library. All interested in evangelicalism will be interested.

Donna J. Eggett, Freelance Writer, Radford, Virginia

The many faces of faith : a guide to world religions and Christian traditions / Richard R. Losch. LCCN 2001040274. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2001. HBB, 080283910X, \$19.00. Adult (High school). Rating: 4

291. Religions; Christian sects; Christianity and other religions. 192 p.

In *The Many Faces of Faith*, Richard Losch sets out to familiarize the reader with the main customs and beliefs of the major world religions

and major Christian denominations. Trying to anticipate questions readers might have, he has succeeded in his attempt and answered those questions.

The individual religions are arranged chronologically (a helpful feature) according to the time at which each faith originated or developed into its current form. World religions include Hinduism, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, Taoism & Confucianism, Buddhism, Islam, Mormonism, Baha'i, Jehovah's Witnesses, Neopaganism, Unitarian-Universalism, and the benign cults, Unification Church and Hare Krishna. The faces of Christianity include the Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Anglicans, the Reformed Churches, Mennonites, Presbyterians, Baptists, Quakers, Methodists, Disciples of Christ, United Church of Christ, the Holiness & Pentecostal Movements, Adventists, and Christian Scientists.

Public libraries will find this a natural addition for Losch provides a readable and concise amount of information in a short space. High school libraries can utilize the informative study to help students read straight or as reference tool for looking up particular faiths.

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

Love extravagantly / Marita Littauer, Chuck Noon. LCCN 2001002253. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2001. PAP, 0764222767, \$11.99. Adult. Rating: 3

306.85'0973. Marriage--United States; Marriage--United States--Religious aspects--Christianity; Remarriage--United States. 221 p.

Love Extravagantly is a "how-to" book for Christian marriage. Authors Marita Littauer and Chuck Noon use stories, personality theory, and Scripture to counsel married couples through this book. For spouses willing to do the hard work, this work could go a long way to strengthening a marriage.

The eighteen chapters are broken into five major sections: Career, Financial, Ex-Spouses, Step Families, and Personal. Within each section, there are chapters covering specific issues. Starting with an illustrating story, various counseling and therapy professionals give multiple suggestions or strategies for resolving the situation. At the end of each chapter is a series of questions or exercises designed to move the couple toward a healthy and biblical solution.

Avoiding dogmatic, one-size-fits-all solutions, Littauer and Noon draw on a wealth of input sources. They help families develop a unique yet healthy solution for their situation. In certain areas, the authors even direct readers to local counseling for issues/situations likely to need "hands on" therapy.

This work respects that all healthy families don't look the same. Struggles may come, but the liberal use of love can help smooth the waves. Using flexibility without appearing uncertain or unprincipled, this book could help you find a way.

Kirk Hunt, Instructor, Pima County Community College-Business & Industry Division, Tucson, Arizona

The name of the game : making a lasting connection with your kids / Steve Schall; [foreword by Dennis Rainey]. LCCN 99069242. [Green Forest, Ark.]: New Leaf Press, [2001]. HBB, 0892214929, \$12.99. Adult. Rating: 3

306.874. Parent and child; Parenting; Parenting--Religious aspects--Christianity; Fatherhood. 96 p.

Steve Schall, state representative of the Arkansas General Assembly, is a tall (seven foot) man with a big heart. His main emphasis in *The Name of the Game* is helping people find ways to connect with their children. What are the most important aspects of the parenting game? What aspects solidify relationships? How do unreal expectations damage the best relationships? How can parents make time spent with their children count for eternity?

Schall suggests that parents need to evaluate their own parenting style, then adapt to their children's needs. Schall, as a former player, uses the analogy of basketball, and putting together a winning team as a means of putting together a winning parenting game. Honesty, discipline, practice, time, and follow through are all important aspects of basketball and parenting. Special pictures throughout the book capture vignettes of family life and emphasize the collage of items that makes family life really work. *The Name of the Game* is written for all parents, but focuses especially on a Dad's need to connect with his children in their formative years and keep that connection open.

Paula Stewart Marks, School Principal, Bend, Oregon

Reel spirituality : theology and film in dialogue / Robert K. Johnston. (Engaging culture.) LCCN 00041358. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, Baker Books, 2000. PAP, 080102241X, \$16.99. Adult. Rating: 5

791.43'682. Motion pictures--Religious aspects. 236 p.

I enjoy all of the classes I teach. Each one presents unique challenges and each is geared toward better equipping enrolled students to make the most of their educational experience at the college. But there are some classes which students seem to like more than others. Among one of the most popular is the Medium of Film class wherein we view films from all eras, encouraging students to look critically at the making, meaning, and, especially, the message of the movies. To those ends, *Reel Spirituality*

will be very helpful not only for students in the class, but also for anyone who has ever struggled with how to interact with this very powerful medium of communication.

Part of Baker's "Engaging Culture" series, *Reel Spirituality* is arranged in the most useful way. Beginning with chapter 1, "The Power of Film", and continuing through chapters on "Becoming a Film Critic" and "Responding to Movies Theologically" Johnston has given readers a very helpful set of criteria by which to engage and interact with films and the film industry. Noting the power and popularity of film, Johnston says that he has written this book to facilitate "Conversation" (his word) with and about movies in the Christian community.

As if to address critics from the start, Johnston acknowledges that much of how we interact with movies will be a matter of Christian maturity, and that there are some for whom movies should be avoided. But, he says, for the rest of the Christian community, his book is intended to be tool for helping movie goers become critics of an industry that has come to have great influence on nearly every area of modern life. According to Johnston, *Reel Spirituality* is more about "seeing" than it is about "looking." It is about understanding the images and making proper assessment of them.

Reel Spirituality is a book that will be of benefit to everyone that reads it. With examples galore, extensive endnotes, and easy reading format, this book will be one to which readers return time and time again. They may not agree with all Johnston says about movies, but they will have to respond to it—at the very least it will make them think.

Dr. Raymond E. Legg, Chair, Dept. of English, Bryan College, Dayton, Tennessee

The invisible child : on reading and writing books for children / Katherine Paterson. LCCN 2001032447. New York: Dutton Books, Penguin Putnam, 2001. HBB, 0525464824, \$24.99. Adult. Rating: 5

808.06'8. Children's literature--Authoring; Children--Books and reading. 266 p.

Katherine Paterson first began to write books in 1964, and since then has become an award-winning author. "The chapters in this book, most of which originated as speeches, are like stepping-stones across those years," says Paterson in the introduction to *The Invisible Child*. The sub-title, On Reading and Writing Books for Children, prophesies the contents.

In this collection, Paterson shows herself as a real person, one who sometimes struggles to get the words right, yet one who clings tenaciously to her characters. More than writing about a character, she feels she is getting to know a person. Paterson identifies her writing philosophies, also. When she writes a book, she

asserts, it's not to teach virtue. "I am trying to tell a story..." She aims to help a child "...first discover what books can do that nothing else does quite as well."

Readers see Paterson's spirit as she speaks/writes passionately about books and their importance for children. She believes readers bring themselves into the story. "...each character in a novel has a visible self and an invisible self...novels allow...that invisible self to be open and available to the reader."

These speeches, some of which appeared previously in *Gates of Excellence* (Elsevier/Nelson Books, c1981) and *The Spying Heart* (Lodestar Books, c1989), display Paterson's sense of humor. Readers discover the fabric of her life that makes her a caring and compassionate writer. She answers questions readers often ask, and explains why some of her characters behave as they do.

The Invisible Child is a treasure chest, where writers find jewels for the taking. It is the sort of book worth keeping on the desk to reread or simply refer to often. Librarians will reap encouragement. Parents of young children will find Paterson helpful as they seek books to nourish their children.

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

Mission possible : Paul Williscroft's epic Christian struggle against Nazi and communist oppression / Gladys L. Williscroft. LCCN 99071746. Enterprise, Ore.: Biography Press, 1999. PAP, 0091524377, \$12.50; order direct: Biography Press, PO Box 398, Enterprise, OR 97828. 541-426-6095. Adult (High school). Rating: 3

921 (266). Williscroft, Paul, 1913-1986; Missionaries--Germany; Missionaries--Poland. 414 p.

At times riveting, at times disturbing, Gladys Williscroft shares the events, feelings, and challenges that she and her husband, Paul Williscroft, experienced as they set out to be missionaries in Europe from 1938 to Paul's death in 1968. Her focus on husband, Paul, gives testimony to a story of personal risk, trust, and joy that is found in dedication to the Lord.

Each chapter keeps the reader moving forward as events take place that seem plausible and yet very risky. At countless steps along the way, the ingenuity of those who persevere is shown. A moving biography, this book also serves to personify the ways God engages a life dedicated to Him. Though it reads like a novel for those interested learning about Nazi and Communist oppression, it will also be helpful for those who seek strength to respond to God's call.

Recommended for adult reading shelves in church libraries and for prayer groups seeking

evidence of God's activity in the world. Public libraries can add for historical, first-hand accounts of life under oppression, and for biography shelves.

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

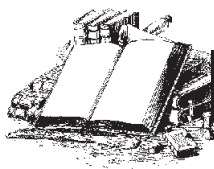
A life displaced : a Mennonite woman's flight from war-torn Poland / by Edna Schroeder Thiessen and Angela Showalter. (Mennonite reflections; 3.) LCCN 00304636. Scottsdale, Pa.: Pandora Press, Herald Press, 2000. PAP, 0968554326, \$20.00. Adult (High school). Rating: 4

940.53'086'91. Thiessen, Edna Schroeder, 1926-; World War, 1939-1945--Personal narratives. Polish; World War, 1939-1945--Refugees--Biography; World War, 1939-1945--Mennonites; Women refugees--Poland--Biography; Women refugees--Canada--Biography. 217 p.

What is it like to become the enemy when you are not the enemy? *A Life Displaced* tells us in straightforward, riveting detail. Polish Mennonite Edna Thiessen was labeled with the degrading epithet "German" in Poland during World War II and the period just after. Hard and frightening under the German occupation and resultant fighting, life became agonizing after World War II when those who could be named as 'security risks' effectively became slaves in their own Polish homeland. The horrific experiences Thiessen underwent kept her mute for decades. Now, in her words, we begin to learn the history of this significant, little known part of that era. This book is divided into four sections: several prefaces that give interesting information; the main body, Thiessen's very personal story spanning the decade 1939-1949; personal photographs; relevant documents from that era. We learn of her family's disintegration, her own physical and mental hardships, the people who came to help her but were hindered by government regulations, her nearly 1000 mile walk to freedom, and the welcome shelter she finally found in Canada.

Angela Showalter wisely edits Thiessen's narrative of *A Life Displaced* only enough to add coherence and grammatical regularity. The rhythm of Thiessen's accent remains as she tells her multi-faceted story. Her deep faith illumines the whole account. A useful map section is included. Interesting and full of important peripheral data, the opening prefaces tend to be academic. Relevant to the account, the black and white photos add their own dimension. This book will interest many readers from high school through adult, including history enthusiasts and teachers, young adult girls, students who want to do an unusual book report, leaders in church, homeschooling, public and private schools. All libraries will want this one.

Donna Eggett, Freelance Author, Radford, Virginia



Good news : thematic bulletin boards for Christian classrooms / Barb Hilliard; illustrated by Sandy Trimble. (School library media series; 22.) LCCN 2001032775. Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow Press, 2001. PAP, 0810840790, \$29.95. Reference. Rating: 5

268'.635. Bulletin boards in Christian education. 229 p.

As a teacher, I am always looking for resource materials which will enrich the classroom experience for students in my classes. As teacher of future teachers, I am especially anxious to compile resource materials which they can use to make their transition into the teaching profession an easy one. To that end, I was drawn to Barb Hilliard's *Good News: Thematic Bulletin Board* text.

Among the features that make *Good News*, is the fact that its arrangement in themes makes it easy for teachers to locate material for specific needs, and it is biblically based. Also, the instructions are simple and straightforward, making them especially attractive for those with limited time and/or resources.

Beginning with "September Days" (the beginning of the school year) through "June Days" and "Summer Days," Hilliard has compiled ideas which can be adapted in a number of ways to suit the needs of nearly any classroom setting (especially younger grades). Included in the book are chapters on the 3 Rs as well as social studies and science. Interesting, too, are Hilliard's chapters on Behavior Modification (Bible lessons, not psychology), and Bible and Sports Heroes which all work together to provide a good resource from which to create interesting bulletin boards for the classroom. The ideas can be copied directly or used as springboards for other ideas (depending upon the creativity of the teacher).

This will be a good resource for teachers in Christian schools or, possibly, to accompany Sunday School themes throughout the church year.

Raymond Legg, Bryan College, Dayton, Tennessee

Judaism / by Martha Morrison, Stephen F. Brown. Rev. ed. (World religions.) LCCN 2002023633. New York: Facts on File, 2002. HBB, 0816047669, \$30.00. Reference. Rating: 3

296. Judaism. 144 p.

Tracing Judaism from its earlier origins, Morrison and Brown discuss the various ways

Judaism is practiced throughout the world today. Designed to appeal to both students and general readers, the text enables junior high students and older to grasp the early history of the Jews and Judaism, the Hebrew Bible, the branches of Judaism, the impact of Judaism, and the challenges facing Judaism in the future.

Public and private school libraries can include this title for world religions, and public libraries for Young Adult collections. Some black-and-white photos help to add clarity to the text. A glossary and index enable the reader to locate and review specifics.

Morrison specializes in the history of and literature of the ancient Near East, and has excavated in Israel. Brown teaches theology and has written several books on medieval philosophy and theology.

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

The encyclopedia of weather and climate / Michael Allaby. (Facts on File science library.) LCCN 2001023103. New York: Facts on File, 2001. HBB, 0816040710, \$150.00. Reference. Rating: 4

551.6'03. Meteorology--Encyclopedias; Climatology--Encyclopedias. 2 v.

If we are to make informed decisions about climate change and our human influence, we need to know something of the way the atmosphere works, and of how our weather is produced. *The Encyclopedia of Weather and Climate* addresses this succinctly. Among the nearly 3,000 entries, the reader finds simple definitions, short essays, 300 illustrations, and tables. High school juniors and seniors, and the general adult reader can understand most of the entries. The detail provided enables college students and adults probing processes such as cloud formation, atmospheric phenomena such as rainbows, or techniques and instruments used to study the atmosphere, to have adequate details and cross-references in capital letters for deeper probing.

Allaby's text and scope of topics lends itself for inclusion in small and medium sized high school and public libraries. Appendices provides a chronology of disasters, chronology of discovery, tornadoes of the past, web sites related to the topics, and a helpful thirty-four page index making cross-referencing and location of more minor aspects of this subject easy.

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

Timetables of world literature / George Thomas Kurian. LCCN 2002003891. New York: Facts on File, 2003. HBB, 0816041970, \$65.00. Reference. Rating: 4

809'.002'02; Literature--Chronology. 416 p.

Who wrote what when? Want to place authors and their works in the context of their times? *Timetables of World Literature* is a chronicle of literary works from the seventh century B.C. through 2000 A.D. For every year after 1500, Timetables provides annual chronologies.

Kurian is an experienced hand at compiling reference books, having worked on library and trade reference books, and encyclopedias for Facts on File, Congressional Quarterly, Henry Holt, Macmillan, Oxford, and M.E. Sharpe.

Medium and large size public libraries can provide this comprehensive in scope tool for students and researchers, and browsers. Each of the seven sections begins with a brief discussion of literary developments of the age and the relationship of literature to the general political and social climate. This relationship is a welcome asset for Christian libraries and teachers who seek to encourage students and researchers to recognize the context and ability to separate the wheat from the chaff.

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

Atlas of medieval Europe / Angus Konstam; [maps, Roger Kean]. LCCN 00030004. New York: Checkmark, Facts on File, 2000. HBB, 0816044694, \$35.00. Reference. Rating: 1

911'.4. Civilization, Medieval--Maps; Geography, Medieval--Europe--Maps; Europe--Historical geography--Maps; Atlases. 192 p.

The *Atlas of Medieval Europe* by Angus Konstam appears to be misnamed; it functions more like a series of essays than as an atlas. Oversize at nine by twelve inches, most of the maps are no more than four by four inches, and at that they are somewhat less than adequate for a book that styles itself an atlas, serving to advance the text rather being a prime focus in themselves.

Organized into ten main categories each with about seven or eight subtopics, the text is annoyingly repetitive if read straight through. For example, information on the Moors in Spain is found in the first section on the "Recovery of

Europe" and again in the fourth section, entitled, "God Wills It—the Crusades. Similarly information on people such as Urban II, Pope Gregory VII, Eleanor of Aquitaine, etc. is interspersed throughout several categories. Each subtopic within a category has a two-page spread, some of which also provide a timeline across the bottom of both pages. A chronological approach would have been much easier on the reader and facilitated reference use of the maps.

The book is profusely illustrated with color maps, photos, and art reproductions. There are genealogical tables of rulers and a list of popes included, as well as an index. The typeface of the text is small, probably no more than eight point.

Although the text appears to be competently written and is current with modern scholarship, it lacks a bibliography. The writing is accessible to most interested laypersons, if not exactly lively. An editorial error indicated the birth and death dates of Pope Alexander II as being one hundred years earlier than they actually were.

David W. Rash, History Instructor, Everett Community College, Everett, Washington

African-American social leaders and activists / by Jack Rummel. (A to Z of African Americans) LCCN 2002007915. New York: Facts on File, 2003. HBB, 0816048401, \$44.00. Reference. Rating: 4

920'.009296073. African Americans—Biography; African American social reformers—Biography; African American political activists—Biography. 246 p.

African-Americans in science, math, and invention / Ray Spangenburg and Kit Moser. (A to Z of African Americans) LCCN 2002008763. New York: Facts on File, 2003. HBB, 0816048061, \$44.00. Reference. Rating: 4

920 (509.2)273. African American scientists—Biography; African American scientists—Directories. 254 p.

African-American Social Leaders and Activists, and *African-Americans in Science, Math, and Invention* are part of the A to Z of African Americans ten volume collection of biographical dictionaries. Written for students and general readers in clear and cogent prose, the stories profile 160 individuals in each volume and contribute to understanding both the individual and their accomplishment.

Each entry provides a biographical profile, significant events in that person's life related to his or her accomplishments, and a reading list for further information.

The expertise of the authors is evident, with Rummel having worked as a writer and editor for more than twenty years, and Spangenburg and Moser as science journalists and authors who have coauthored more than fifty books

primarily on the history of science and technology.

Recommended for public library reference collections where demand for African American biographies, and research on social issues, calls for concise and inclusive coverage. Small libraries can add a single volume and feel confident that fields are well covered.

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

Encyclopedia of the Roman Empire, rev. ed. / Matthew Bunson. (Facts on File library of world history.) LCCN 2001053253. New York, Facts on File, 2002. HBB, 0816045623, \$75.00. Reference. Rating: 4

937'.06. Rome--History--Empire, 30 B.C.-476 A.D.—Encyclopedias. 636 p.

The *Encyclopedia of the Roman Empire* is an updated version of an earlier 1994 edition. This one volume encyclopedia covers all aspects of Roman history, including people, terms, and geographical locations from the time of Julius Caesar in 59 B.C. to the fall of the empire in A.D. 476. Numerous names and places relevant to church history and New Testament history are also covered. For example, there are articles on Antioch, Corinth, Ephesus, Philippi, Thessalonica, Galilee, Herod Antipas, Agrippa I and II, Pharisees, Sadducees, Athanasius, Eusebius, and others. (It is difficult to understand, however, why the author would include articles on James, the brother of Jesus and Paul of Tarsus, but nothing on Jesus). Most articles range in length from a few lines to a full column, though some are longer—the article on Jerusalem, for example, is over two full pages in length. The encyclopedia contains fourteen maps, over seventy illustrations or pictures, and some articles that include lists of suggested readings.

The *Encyclopedia of the Roman Empire* is an excellent source of information on ancient Roman history as well as information relevant to New Testament and church history. The articles are well written and appear to be geared for high school and college students. According to the introduction, this work "remains the only comprehensive A-Z reference to the more than 500-year period of Roman imperial civilization." This may be a little misleading. While *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* (Oxford University Press, 3rd ed. 1996) covers more than just Roman history, it provides a much more scholarly and extensive treatment of Roman history. And while the *Encyclopedia of Roman History* was written by only one author, dozens of scholars contributed to *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*. For high schools and colleges that need a good basic encyclopedia of Roman history, the *Encyclopedia of Roman History* is highly recommended. For colleges and graduate schools that want a more in-depth

and scholarly treatment, *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* is to be preferred. For schools on a tight budget, Matthew Bunson also has a more compact *Dictionary of the Roman Empire* in paperback for \$21.50 (Oxford University Press, 1995).

Dennis Ingolfsland, M.A., M.A.L.S., D.Phil., Director of Library Services, Associate Professor of Bible, Crown College, St. Bonifacius, Minnesota

The history of Europe : from ancient civilizations to the dawn of the third millennium / [John Stevenson]. LCCN 2002027125. New York: Facts on File, 2002. HBB, 0816051526, \$75.00. Reference. Rating: 4

940. Europe--History; Europe--Civilization.

What has it meant to be a European through the ages? Charting the broad sweep of history, this well-written, clear archive explores the politics and influential people of each era which gives a helpful answer to the question, from the perspective of being a European, and from that of being outside Europe. By offering a variety of articles written by a team of experts, the reader is provided an objective and authoritative insight into the society and culture of the time in this volume. From ancient Greece (2500 BC) to a United Europe (2001), both students and readers are able to see how Europe spread its values across the world.

It provides an illustrated timeline that accompanies each of the major eleven sections, making a quick grasp of the section possible, and complimenting the 320 colorful photos and illustrations and twenty maps that appear throughout the book. A colorful block in the lower right corner of each page highlights the period and year being considered.

Those familiar with *The Longman Handbook of Modern European History, 1763-1997* (Longman, 1998) will recognize the touches of historian and editor, Stevenson. This work lends itself for use in high school public and private school libraries, and is a timeless addition for public library history collections.

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

American political leaders / by Richard L. Wilson. (American biographies.) LCCN 2002001293. New York: Facts on File, 2002. HBB, 0816045364, \$65.00. Reference. Rating: 3

973'.099. Politicians; Statesmen; United States--Biography; United States--Politics and government.

Providing students and general readers with a concise guide to more than 250 present and past leaders in U.S. politics, *American Political Leaders* is an authoritative and readable guide by Richard Wilson. Profile and black & white portraits or photographs for sixty of the

individuals included were chosen based on a review of the most important political leaders mentioned in secondary and college textbooks in U.S. history and political science. Those not widely mentioned in textbooks but often mentioned in newspaper and media files were also included. Profiles are indexed by categories of offices held and by the decade in which they were born. Each alphabetical entry concludes with references for further study.

This serves as a helpful resource for high school, college, and public libraries where biographies are in heavy demand, and where a review of political personages is done.

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

***Cold War America, 1946-1990* / Ross Gregory. (Almanacs of American life.) LCCN 2001051136. New York: Facts on File, 2002. HBB, 0816038686, \$105.00. Reference. Rating: 4**

973.92. Cold War--Social aspects--United States; United States--History--1945-; United States--Social conditions--1945-. 670 p.

Gregory, professor of history, examines aspects of life in the United States during the years 1946 to 1990 with precision and interest. Of particular value to high school students (and teachers) is the careful blending of tabular arrangements of statistics with introductions, essays, and personal profiles. Archival photographs visually document various events and statistics and invite public library users to browse through the volume.

The comprehensive scope of *Cold War America* chronicles changes in the economy, trends in entertainment, politics, the growth of telecommunications, the course of religion (encouraging that religion is seen and viewed as part of the regular course of events), and vital statistics and health care. A forty-five page index enables general readers and students to find information with ease. A fifteen page list of tables gives a quick overview of the many statistics offered.

Recommended for small and medium public and private school libraries, and for public libraries seeking to offer easy access reference material.

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

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