

Volume XI, No. 4  
December 2006

# Christian Library



J O U R N A L





## *A Letter from the Editor*

Dear Readers,

We here at *CLJ* appreciate your interest in using book reviews to build and develop your library collection, whether at home, school, church, public library, or home school group. Your confidence in us is encouraging, especially when we grow weary with the work! Thanks!

For some time our concern has been that a number of people are giving time and talent to produce *CLJ* for a limited number of subscribers. While I work here in my home office to publish and edit the journal, many others work in their homes to write, edit, and help out in other ways. Our income from subscriptions covers office and web costs, but leaves nothing for promotion. Web statistics show that 35,000-40,000 people come to the website monthly, while only a few stay more than a minute or two. It's intriguing to think what might draw these visitors to use the reviews and articles fully. I'm sure some come to look for a specific title, while others are interested in the idea of books reviewed from a Christian point of view.

Free access to the journal will be available for a limited time, to see what effect this has on statistics. If enough interest develops through extended visits, we will pursue other avenues of finance. This will be to your advantage in the long run. Will you let your friends and colleagues know that they may visit *CLJ* for no charge for a limited time? And we'll see what develops!

May the Lord bless you as you continue to bless others with the selection of good reading material!

In Christ's love,



*Nancy L. Hesch*

Nancy L. Hesch

Editor and Publisher



The *Christian Library Journal* is published quarterly January through December by Christian Library Services. Subscriptions \$20 per year online. Back issues included. Indexed in *Christian Periodical Index*.

Address correspondence to *Info@ChristianLibraryJ.org*, or to Christian Library Services, 300 Chapel St., #1, Cashmere, WA 98815-1262. Copyright 2006 by Christian Library Services.

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The purpose of the *Christian Library Journal* is to provide readers with reviews from a Christian point of view of both Christian and secular library materials for the Christian reader. 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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Nancy Hesch Editor & Publisher

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## Mystery Writers Reviewed in CLJ

As the cold weather continues, settling down with a good mystery sounds good to me! Choose one of these writers for a good read. You can check out the reviews by searching for the author or series title in our [Index to Reviews](#).

### Adult fiction

Terri Blackstock	Newpointe 911	Rated 3-*5
Colleen Coble	Rock Harbor series	Rated 4
James Coggins	John Smyth mysteries	Rated 3-4
W.E. Davis	Gil Beckman mysteries	Rated 3-4
D.J. Delffs	Father Grif mysteries	Rated 5
Doris Elaine Fell	Seasons of intrigue	Rated 3-4
Robert Funderburk	Dylan St. John Novel	Rated 5
Alton Gansky	J.D. Stanton mysteries	Rated 3-*5
Linda Hall	Teri Blake-Addison mystery series	Rated 4-*5
Thomas Locke	Thomas Locke mystery series	Rated 3-4
Roy Maynard	Emerson Dunn mysteries	Rated 4
Lorena McCourtney	Ivy Malone mysteries	Rated 4
Lorena McCourtney	The Julesburg mysteries	Rated 4
Gilbert Morris	Dani Ross mysteries	Rated 4
Jane Peart	Edgecliffe manor mysteries	Rated 4
Patricia Rushford	Angel Delaney mysteries	Rated 5
Patricia Rushford	Helen Bradley mysteries	Rated 5

### Young adult fiction

Rick Acker	Davis detective mysteries	Rated 4
John Bibee	Home school detectives	Rated 4
Sigmund Brouwer	Accidental detectives	Rated 4-5
Sigmund Brouwer	Sports mystery series	Rated 3
Kathryn Dahlstrom	Good News Club series	Rated 3-4
Mark Delaney	Misfits, Inc.	Rated *5
Robert Elmer	The Young Underground	Rated 5
Frank Peretti	The Veritas project	Rated 4, Not recommended
Patricia Rushford	Jennie McGrady mysteries	Rated 4-5
Hilda Stahl	Amber Ainslie detective series	Rated 5
Lucille Travis	Apple Valley mysteries	Rated 3-4

### Children's fiction

David A. Adler	Cam Jansen adventures	Rated 3-5
Sheldon Arensen	The Rugendo rhinos series	Rated 3
Chris Auer	Mysteries of Eckert House	Rated 5
Linda Bailey	Stevie Diamond mysteries	Rated 4-5
Joan Rawlins Biggar	Megan Parnell mysteries	Rated 5
Vicki Berger Erwin	Elizabeth Bryan mysteries	Rated 3-5
E.W. Hildick	Felicity Snell mysteries	Rated 3-4
Milly Howard	Crimebusters Inc.	Rated 3-5
Lois Gladys Leppard	Mandie mysteries	Rated 3-5
Shannon Mason Leppard	Adventures of Callie Ann	Rated 4
Beverly Lewis	The Cul-de-sac kids	Rated 4-5
Jeri Massi	Peabody adventure series (Includes other types of adventure)	Rated *5
Janet Holm McHenry	Annie Shepard mysteries	Rated 3-4
Stacy Towle Morgan	The Ruby Slippers School	Rated 5
Elsbeth Campbell Murphy	Three cousins detective club	Rated 4-5
Bill Myers	Bloodhounds Inc.	Rated 3
Mary Carpenter Reid	Backpack mysteries	Rated 4
Lee Roddy	Ladd family adventures	Rated 4
Gertrude Chandler Warner	Boxcar children mysteries	Rated 3-5
Eric Wiggin	Hannah's Island	Rated 5

## Review Rating System

- \* **Outstanding quality**
- 5 Excellent quality**
- 4 Very good quality**
- 3 Good quality**
- 2 Fair quality**
- 1 Poor quality**

With fiction, this includes the quality of plot development/pacing, characterization, sense of time and place, mood and atmosphere, dialogue, depth of perception, sensitivity of writing, use of humor.

With nonfiction, this includes quality of the information, up to date, stimulates further inquiry, adds to the understanding of the topic, illustrations which are informative and appropriate.

A book may be outstanding from a literary point of view, but still have content that is objectionable in itself or in the way it is handled. Therefore, a high rating does not necessarily indicate that a book is recommended.

Recommended with caution (may be used with any of the above ratings)—Note reservations within the review.

Not recommended (may be used with any of the above ratings)—Note problems within the review.

### Commonly used abbreviations in CLJ reviews

**C** Canadian Library Cataloging  
Number

**ISBN** International Standard Book  
Number

**LCCN** Library of Congress  
Cataloging Number

**HBB** Hardbound book

**LGP** Large print book

**LIB** Library edition

**LLB** Loose-leaf binding

**PAP** Paperbound book

**PBB** Paper board book

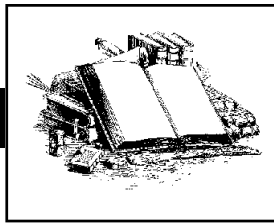
**SPR** Spiral bound book

**CAS** Audiocassette

**CDR** CD-ROM

**DVD** Videodisc

**VID** Videocassette



\*

**Freedom on the menu : the Greensboro sit-ins / by Carole Boston Weatherford ; paintings by Jerome Lagarrigue. LCCN 2002013226. New York : Dial Books for Young Readers, 2005.**

HBB, 0803728603, list price: \$16.99.

E. Civil rights demonstrations--Fiction; African Americans--Fiction; Greensboro (N.C.)--Race relations--Fiction. 1 v. (unpaged) : ill. ; 23 x 26 cm.

Grades K-3. Rating : \*5.

Connie is a young school-aged girl in Greensboro, North Carolina, in 1960. Everywhere she goes in town there are signs telling her what she can and can't do, based on color. She obeys them, but does not understand. Her family goes to hear Dr. King at a local church and Connie likes his booming voice but doesn't understand. One day while downtown with Mama she sees some of her brother's friends sitting at the forbidden lunch counter at Woolworths. She doesn't understand the point of the protests, and when she learns later that they waited four hours there, Connie remarks, "I'd be too hungry to wait that long for food." Her father gently explains to her what is going on. As the protests and pickets spread, Connie's horizons broaden. She makes signs for her older siblings who participate in the protests and learns to order things from the catalog rather than go shopping downtown. It is pretty scary when her sister is jailed for picketing, but she won't give in to Connie's plea to stop. The peaceful resolution is full of joy.

As adults, we see pivotal events in history through the adult eyes of those who participated in some way. But the viewpoint of a child involved in those same events is quite different and this lovely book *Freedom on the Menu*, by Carole Boston Weatherford captures what a grade school child might have

felt. The child doesn't really understand the prejudice underlying her world. The beautiful oil paintings by Jerome Lagarrigue evoke the dreaminess of Connie's young perspective as well as the hazy focus of looking back in time. This book is an excellent treatment of this historical event. An author's note at the end elaborates on the story.

Kelley Westenhoff

**Hare and the big green lawn / by Katharine Crawford Robey ; illustrated by Larry MacDougall. LCCN 2005027551. Flagstaff, Ariz. : Rising Moon, 2006.**

HBB, 0873588894, list price: \$15.95.

E. Animals--Fiction; Hares--Fiction; Suburban life--Fiction; Neighbors--Fiction; Meadows--Fiction; Lawns--Fiction. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 24 x 28 cm.

Grades PS-3. Rating : 4.

Katharine Crawford Robey's *Hare and the Big Green Lawn* is about a hare that dares to be different. He has an idea that others didn't understand, but he sticks to his plan. When Hare moves away from the country into a new home, he becomes a nuisance to his neighbors. Skunk, Raven, and Bobcat water and clip, clip and water their lawns to keep them nice and green while Hare rests in his hammock. The others are frustrated that Hare is content to watch his lovely, big, green lawn turn brown from the hot sun, and then turn to mud after a blinding rain. Straggly plants spring up and grow as high as Hare's ears, making his neighbors even more upset by the mess in his yard. Time passes until one day Hare leaps for joy to see that his messy, weedy, muddy lawn turn into a beautiful meadow full of sagebrush, bluestem and June grass. He finally feels at home.

His neighbors are astonished at the change, and leave their lawns to admire Hare's wildflower meadow that also

draws butterflies and bees. Together the friends all watch the sun set while fireflies rise and twinkle "like tiny stars."

Larry MacDougall's striking artistry draws the reader into a lush colorful meadow. From cover to cover, his mastery of watercolor is delightful for young readers. The illustrations alone make the book worthwhile. MacDougall studied and now teaches animation and illustration at Sheridan College.

Floss Craig

\*

**Jesus, the Word / by Mark Francisco Bozzuti-Jones ; illustrated by Shelly Hehenberger. LCCN 2004027870. Minneapolis : Augsburg Books, 2005.**

HBB, 0806651695, list price: \$16.99.

E or 232/.2. Logos (Christian theology)--Juvenile literature. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 29 cm.

Grades PS-3. Rating : \*5.

Mark Francisco Bozzuti-jones, an Episcopalian priest, explains the Word, as found in the first chapter of the Gospel of John. Jesus, the Word, tells the story of "how God redeemed all life through Jesus, God's Word in the flesh."

Jesus, the Word begins at creation, and continues with people through the ages. Then...

The Word came down from heaven,  
By the power of the Holy Spirit,  
He became a child  
Born of a woman named Mary.  
The Word was Jesus!

The Word lived among us, "mending broken hearts, wiping tears from crying eyes, feeding the poor with bread and hope." Jesus said, "I will set you free, I won't let you be anything but holy, good, and free." Yet, Jesus, the Word

died. He was buried, and rose from the dead on the third day.

Shelly Hehenberger splashes vivid color across illustrations that are more statements, than to-scale drawings. Many pages focus on one color, with hues and complementary shades. Each page is a panorama of appropriate scenes to delight the eyes, and explain what could be difficult theology. An ethnic mix of people fits the reminder, "The Word speaks through the ages for all people...just like you and me."

This title is highly recommended for both content and illustrations. *Jesus, the Word* encourages thinking about Jesus before He came to earth. An adult study of John 1:1-14 would fit well, before reading this book to boys and girls.

Roberta Lou Jones

\*

**The little house / story and pictures by Virginia Lee Burton. LCCN 79302678. Boston : Houghton Mifflin, 1978, c1942.**

HBB, 0395181569, list price: \$14.95.

E. City and town life--Fiction; Dwellings--Fiction; Caldecott Medal. 40 p. : col. ill. ; 23 x 25 cm.

Grades PS-2. Rating : \*5.

Virginia Lee Burton begins her classic *The Little House* with the words "Once upon a time there was a Little House way out in the country." Burton's illustrations and text reveal the effects of time on the little house. Beginning with days, months, and seasons, she goes on to show how the passing years bring horseless carriages, paved roads, and finally the bustling big city that surrounds the little house. It is "the great-great-granddaughter of the man who built her so well" that rescues the little house from the city and has her moved to a perfect hillside "way out in the country."

Using watercolors, her full-color pictures are characterized by varying curves and swirls that emphasize her theme of the cycle of time. She exploits white space as she incorporates the curving margins of her text into illustrations that spread across opposing pages. Burton personifies the little house through her purported thoughts and subtle changes in her appearance. Children will enjoy finding many delightful touches in the pictures: the "smiling" front steps, the yawning sun near sunset, the changing phases of the moon through the month, the big and little dippers in the starry sky. They wonder, "Is that the team of Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel [Burton, 1939] helping to build the new road?" The endpapers feature three strip panels depicting successive stages in fashion and transportation as people and vehicles pass by the little house. This exceptional 1943 Caldecott Medal book has been described as the child's first sociology book. This book is highly recommended for all libraries and homes with small children.

Donna W. Bowling

**Little one, we knew you'd come / by Sally Lloyd-Jones ; illustrated by Jackie Morris. LCCN 2005024661. New York : Little, Brown, 2006.**

HBB, 0316523917, list price: \$16.99.

E or 232.92 . Jesus Christ--Nativity. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 26 cm.

Grades PS-2. Rating : 4.

The birth of a child is an occasion of joy, and that is the celebration in this beautifully illustrated book. Nothing in the story specifically links it with Jesus' birth, though the illustrations depict Mary and Joseph and Baby Jesus.

The story is short with one or two lines to page. This universal hymn of anticipation and love from a parent to

child has some rhyme, though the text does not match the quality of the illustrations.

Watercolor and gold-leaf illustrations give a special feel to this book. Even the inside front and back covers in gold lend a feeling of specialness. Embellished with motifs from nature, e.g. borders with peacock feathers, flowers, and stars, a child would be drawn into the momentum.

School and public libraries adding this title will offer a work enhancing art appreciation. The story is one parent and child can easily share.

Dr. Leroy Hommerding

**Liu and the bird : a journey in Chinese calligraphy / written and illustrated by Catherine Louis ; calligraphy by Feng Xiao Min ; translated by Sibylle Kazeroid. LCCN 2005034729. New York : North-South Books, 2006.**

HBB, 0735820503, list price: \$16.95.

E. Voyages and travels--Fiction; China--Fiction. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 26 cm.

Grades 1-4; all ages. Rating : 5.

One of those wonderful picture books which defy classification, *Liu and the Bird* introduces its readers to the intriguing, narrative intricacies of Chinese calligraphy. Both fiction and non-fiction, this book demonstrates the true story of the evolution of Chinese writing by telling a little Chinese girl's fictional tale about traveling to her grandfather. All the principal words are illustrated with pictures that progress into modern calligraphic characters. Liu and the Bird ties this all together with an appendix containing several learning suggestions including games, and handicrafts.

A truly international effort, Liu and the Bird comes from China via France and

Switzerland. Author and illustrator Catherine Louis ably depicts her complex subject with a winsome story and beautiful, oriental flavored, vibrant linocut on dyed paper illustrations. Globally eminent Chinese/Parisian calligrapher Feng Xiao Min's pictographs and lettering brings this art form to fully understandable life. Here indeed is a book for all ages. Both children and adults will delight in the development of Chinese words. All genres of artists will appreciate it. Liu and the Bird provides exciting learning, food to nourish the imagination, and a lot of fun. And, to top it all off, there are some nice lessons concerning family, love, language usage, and enjoying your own creativity. Definitely this volume is recommended for all school, libraries, families, and individuals.

Donna Eggett

**Mama's going to heaven soon / by Kathe Martin Copeland ; illustrated by Elissa Hudson. LCCN 2005010457. Minneapolis : Augsburg Books, 2005.**

PAP, 0806651229, list price: \$9.99.

E. Death--Fiction; Heaven--Fiction. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 21 cm.

Grades PS-3. Rating : 4.

The death of a parent with young children leaves many adults at a loss for words. *Mama's Going to Heaven Soon*, by Kathe Martin Copeland, can help in these sad situations. Copeland's daughter-in-law died from breast cancer, leaving two tiny boys. The author wrote this book to help her grandsons cope. Copeland is donating some royalties to fight cancer.

One page reads, "You know, no matter how old you get, thinking about your mama--and about how much she loves you--will always make your heart smile." On another page, Daddy said, "I will

always be here if you want to talk about being sad, and so will all the other people who love you."

Elissa Hudson illustrates the book in bright colors, with child-friendly pictures of people and of an angel leading Mama to heaven. (Angels are prominent in the book; there is no mention of Jesus.) The background of some of the pages shows thin strips of newsprint with visible letters and words, though the words on the newspaper are unrelated to the story. Bright sequins, lace, and fabric trim adorn other pages.

A wonderful appendix, "How to Talk to Children About Death" is adapted from *Helping Children Grieve: When Someone They Love Dies*, by Theresa M. Huntley (Augsburg, 2002).

Roberta Lou Jones

**Only one you / by Linda Kranz. LCCN 2006007550. Flagstaff, Ariz. : Rising Moon, 2006.**

HBB, 0873589017, list price: \$12.95.

E. Conduct of life--Fiction. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 19 x 22 cm.

Grades )S-3. Rating : 5.

Linda Kranz addresses a common theme in *Only One You*--all parents want to give sound advice to their children. Kranz writes of Mama and Papa fish, who love little Adri. The mother and father "share some wisdom" with their son. Adri listens:

Always be on the lookout for a new friend.

Look for beauty wherever you are, and keep the memory of it with you.

Find your own way. You don't have to follow the crowd.

If you make a wrong turn, circle back.

Sit aside some quiet time to relax and reflect every day.

Finally, Mama fish kisses Adri on the top of his head and says, "There's only

one you in this great big world, make it a better place." Adri, knowing how to have a good life, swims off to meet his friends.

Each fish in *Only One You* is actually the picture of a hand-decorated rock. Kranz painted vivid fish and set each school in shimmering blue water with sparkling waves. The layout is really cute, and ideal to read either to a child, or for a small group. Provide rocks and paint for boys and girls to design their own fish! (Kranz also wrote *Let's Rock!: Rock Painting for Kids*, NorthWord, 2003.) Offer conversation about the benefits of wise decisions, as well as a great craft! This simple story gives both children and adults reasons to ponder the many paths in life.

Roberta Lou Jones

**The postman's dog / Lisa Shanahan ; illustrated by Wayne Harris. LCCN 2006297734. Crows Nest, N.S.W. : Allen & Unwin; dist. By Independent Publishers Group, 2006.**

HBB, 1741142520, list price: \$15.95.

E. Dogs--Fiction; Human-animal relationships--Fiction; Letter carriers--Fiction. 1 v. (unpaged) : ill. ; 27 cm.

Grades PS-4. Rating : 4.

A reading treat from Australia, *The Postman's Dog* is a delightful picture book providing a winsome story and several important lessons. Charlie the Postman and the people and dogs on his route really like each other. One dreadful day Charlie's wife dies. All his customers talk him into getting a dog. But Bitsa Lucy, while quiet and sweet, does not like postmen. Every time Charlie dons his uniform Lucy starts growling and woofing. A nosy neighbor is most distressed. Finally, all of Charlie's customers help Lucy become a wonderful postman's dog.

What a delightful book! Adults will



want to read *The Postman's Dog* to the children, and children will want to read it for themselves. Winner of an Australian award for fine children's books, author Lisa Shanahan tells an interesting story, a kaleidoscope of people and dogs. Noted Australian children's book illustrator Wayne Harris matches her tale with vigorous, humorous, delicious digital illustrations full of international color and wonderful, wagging canines. A couple of Aussie terms and a dash of down-under color multiply the fun. Add to all this celebrations of friendship, unique nationalities, love from and for pets, and several other lessons, and you have a special book that will be appreciated by all libraries, schools, and families.

Donna Eggett

**La primera luna llena de Gatita / Kevin Henkes ; traducido por Osvaldo Blanco. LCCN 2005023972. New York : Greenwillow Books, 2006.**

HBB, 0060872233, list price: \$16.99.

E. Animals–Infancy–Fiction; Cats–Fiction; Moon–Fiction; Caldecott Medal. 1 v. (unpaged) : ill. ; 26 cm.

Spanish translation of *Kitten's First Full Moon* (CLJ, March 2005).

**Silent night, holy night : a song for the world / Werner Thuswaldner ; with pictures by Robert Ingpen. LCCN 2005047201. New York : Minedition, 2005.**

HBB, 0698400321, list price: \$16.99.

E or 782.28/1723. Gruber, Franz Xaver, 1787-1863. Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 30 cm.

Grades K-3. Rating : 4.

*Silent Night, Holy Night: A Song for the World*, written by Werner Thuswaldner and Patricia Crampton and illustrated by Robert Ingpen, is an in-depth look at the

story behind the time honored, well-beloved hymn, "Silent Night, Holy Night." One bleak winter during World War I, Joseph Mohr, a priest, and his friend, Franz Gruber, a teacher and organist, create a song to commemorate the birth of Jesus. Cannon fire and marauders have ravaged the village of Oberndorf, Austria. Winter's ice, subsequently followed by flooding, prevents the villagers from transporting the salt, or "white gold," that is their livelihood. Amidst the hopelessness of poverty and war, the villagers gather at the local church for a special treat, a holiday musical performance. Joseph and Franz play their guitars by candlelight, inspiring their audience with the catchy praise tune.

Pictures appropriately portray haunted, empty-eyed faces and dreary landscapes. Illustrator Robert Ingpen was awarded the 1986 Hans Christian Andersen Medal. His illustration of the war scene, where enemies temporarily drop their weapons to celebrate Christmas, is particularly poignant. Movement into a modern day depiction of carolers singing "Silent Night" beneath a Christmas tree adds a nice touch. Illustrations in parts of the story obscure the text, but are, overall, visually pleasing, in golden and smoky hues. Portions of the account are disjointed (i.e. author describes how Franz lost many of his children, but outlived Joseph). Recommended for school and public libraries.

Kim Harris

**Sophie and Sam : when to say "yes" and when to say "no" / by Tori Cloud ; illustrated by Becky Valentine. Nashville : Integrity Publishers, 2005.**

HBB, 1591452996, list price: \$16.99.

E or 248.82. Christian ethics–Juvenile fiction; Ethics–Juvenile fiction. 127 p. : col. ill. ; 25 cm.

Grades PS-3. Rating : 4.

Sophie and Sam are two young mice who, through their experiences with their friends, learn how to make right decisions. This rhyming picture book presents ten funny, lessons: Telling the Truth, Sharing, Whining, Respect, Cleaning-up, Meanies, Following the Rules, Manners, Arguing, and, Thanking God. Each lesson is taught through a relevant story, a suitable Bible verse, and cute, acrylic, pastel shaded, cartoon illustrations.

Teacher, business owner, and mother, author Tori Cloud presents this book as a practical application of another book, *Boundaries: When To Say Yes, When To Say No* (Zondervan, 2002), by her husband, Dr. Henry Cloud. Tori's melodic stories are delightful and instructive. Illustrator Becky Valentine's quaint illustrations happily amplify the text in this her first children's book. Sophie and Sam will be helpful to parents and enjoyed by children. With its ten lessons, this volume provides a series for Bible and Christian school classes, and in nursery and child-sitting situations. By the way, the lessons are as relevant for adults as they are for children.

Donna Eggett

**This is the lunch that Jesus served / by Dandi Daley Mackall ; illustrated by Benrei Huang. LCCN 2005010458. Minneapolis : Augsburg Books, 2006.**

PAP, 0806651180, list price: \$9.99.

E or 232.9/55. Feeding of the five thousand (Miracle)–Juvenile literature. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 26 cm.

Grades PS-3. Rating : 5.

In *This Is the Lunch That Jesus Served*, Dandi Daley Mackall writes, "These are the disciples beside the sea, who followed the man from Galilee, who blessed the dish, that carried the fish..."

reminiscent of “This is the House that Jack Built.” Mackall defines the humanness of Jesus with the phrase, “man from Galilee.” She notes His divinity with “God’s only Son.” The introduction explains, “This book is based on the true story of how Jesus fed a crowd of thousands with only five loaves of bread and two fish, offered to him by a young boy.”

Appealing illustrations by Benrei Huang include sheep, puppies, and friendly Jesus holding a child. The little boy who shared his lunch is prominently portrayed. The well-fed crowd looks happy on the hills around the Sea of Galilee.

John 6:1-13 (NRSV), about Jesus feeding the multitude, is printed in the final pages. Appendices offer: (1) Fun Fish Facts, (2) Bible Bread Facts, (3) Servant Ideas. The last appendix, Servant Ideas, encourages family ministry by, “God can use whatever you have to offer! Try talking with your family and coming up with new ways to show Christ’s love to people around you.” This book is diverse—a Bible story, cute pictures, practical ideas, and even history about the origin of the Ichthus (Greek for fish) symbol. Use this title for group story times and for one-on-one reading with preschool children. Young readers will also enjoy this very readable story.

*Roberta Lou Jones*

**What star is this? / Joseph Slate ; illustrated by Alison Jay. LCCN 2004004981. New York : G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 2005.**

HBB, 0399240144, list price: \$15.99.

E. Jesus Christ—Nativity—Fiction; Stories in rhyme; Comets—Fiction. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 24 cm.

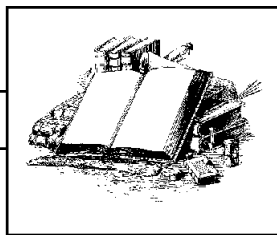
Grades PS. Rating : 4.

*What Star Is This?* is written by Joseph Slate, author of the Miss Bindergarten

series, and illustrated by Alison Jay, recipient of the Booklist starred review for her illustrations in *ABC: A Child’s First Alphabet Book* (Dutton, 2003). This picture book, intended for very young preschoolers, is about the star that spotlights Jesus’ birthplace. A tiny comet forms in deep space and grows into a star, passing through familiar constellations, like the bear, lion, and Orion the hunter. Planets, sporting nursery rhyme-like faces, watch the little star grow steadily larger. Narrowly missing meteors and planetary gravitational pull, it soars confidently toward Earth. All is quiet, except for the chosen few, who are privileged to witness the arrival of the King. Wise men follow the star, curious to unearth its mystery. Shepherds are mesmerized by angels, announcing the importance of the Star’s arrival. In the stable, plump, adoring farm animals join Joseph in worshipful concentration upon the haloed Christ child in Mary’s arms. Wise men and shepherds kneel reverently before Jesus’ manger.

Illustrations, rendered in Alkyd oil paint with cracked varnish, present an ancient texture. As the comet flies through space, images extend to fill pages, lending an enormity to the scene. As the star draws nearer to Earth, pictures become framed, as if zooming in from the star’s point of view. Softened colors and bulbous shapes of planets, constellations, animals and people blend with blunt lines of buildings to lend a primitive quality. Recommended for both school and public libraries.

*Kim Harris*



**Cuckoo feathers / by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor ; illustrated by Marcy Ramsey. (Simply Sarah.) LCCN 2005021126. Tarrytown, N.Y. : Marshall Cavendish, 2006.**

HBB, 0761452850, list price: \$14.95.

Fic. Neighbors--Fiction; Apartment houses--Fiction; Pigeons--Fiction; Chicago (Ill.)--Fiction. 88 p. : ill. ; 21 cm.

Grades 2-5. Rating : 4.

Naylor, author of more than 120 children titles, and Newbery Medal winner for *Shiloh*, brings to life a story that brings children of different backgrounds together. As a sequel to *Anyone Can Eat Squid* (Marshall Cavendish, 2005), Sarah, known for creative ideas, is out of ideas. She devises a way to attract pigeons to her family's window ledge and when she cannot control where they build a nest needs to come to terms with her own feelings and regard for others.

Those children new to chapter books will have a gentle entry into the reading. Full and half page pencil illustrations break up the text. The ink and wash drawings add visual appeal.

The assortment of multicultural city residents makes this a title for all audiences. The easy read, story-line that children can relate to, and attractive layout makes this a worthwhile title for all school libraries. Public libraries can add for its wide appeal and inviting blend of illustrations/drawings with text in a chapter book.

Dr. Leroy Hommerding

**Don Quixote and the windmills / retold and adapted by Eric A. Kimmel; from *The ingenious hidalgo Don Quixote de la Mancha* by Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra ; pictures by Leonard Everett Fisher. LCCN 2002067172. New York : Farrar Straus Giroux, 2004.**

HBB, 0374318255, list price: \$16.00.

Fic. Knights and knighthood--Fiction; Spain--Fiction. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 32 cm.

Grades 3-6. Rating : 4.

Eric Kimmel and Leonard Everett Fisher have combined their storytelling and illustrating talents to create an adaptation of an episode from Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra's sixteenth century novel, *The Ingenious Hidalgo Don Quixote de la Mancha*. The episode about tilting with the windmills is retold in detail. Sufficient background information is presented to introduce slightly quixotic and mad Don Quixote, his faithful servant Sancho Panza, and his bag-o-bones nag Rocinante. Quixote decks himself out as a knight in shining armor and takes off over the Spanish plateau to fight dragons and to fight for damsels in distress. When he encounters a series of windmills, which he sees as monsters on a hilly ridge, he does battle with the twirling arms only to need rescuing by Sancho. Leonard Everett Fisher's drawings cover full and partial pages. A brief "Author's Note" is appended.

What a delightful version of this four hundred year old tale! Imagine this reviewers delight to receive the title for review after just returning from a trip to Spain and being immersed in Spanish culture. Don Quixote appears as the central figure in one of Madrid's main squares, and small models of the knight and companion are visible everywhere. The reviewer also had the opportunity to actually see the windmills, which are now part of a bed and breakfast operation. The sixth and seventh graders who heard the travelogue also heard a reading of Don Quixote and chuckled throughout, gaining new meaning of terms like "quixotic" and phrases such as "tilting at windmills." Since Fisher has begun using more color rather than his scratchboard illustrations, his drawings are far

livelier. He was able to catch the humor of Quixote's situation, drawing a wild wide-eyed Quixote, a droopy-eyed horse, and a scruffy Sancho. Especially humorous is the illustration for the fight with the windmills; Quixote is caught up in the arms of the mill and is pictured floating sideways into the air. Kimmel and Fisher's version of the classic Spanish story would serve as an introduction to Spanish culture, language, and literature for upper elementary students.

Marion Mueller

**Kamishibai man / written and illustrated by Allen Say. LCCN 2005006319. Boston : Houghton Mifflin, 2005.**

HBB, 0618479546, list price: \$17.00.

Fic. Kamishibai--Fiction; Street theater--Fiction; Storytelling--Fiction; Japan--Fiction. 32 p. : col. ill. ; 29 cm.

Grades 2-5. Rating : 5.

*Kamishibai Man* is a story about a retired Japanese storyteller. Earlier in his life, he had made use of "paper theater," and given out homemade candies. One day, he decides to go out one more time to the place where he had formerly set up his story theater. No one comes when he calls, and he begins to reminisce. When he finishes, he finds a crowd of adults has gathered. They are the grown children who used to listen to his stories. The tale ends with the man coming out of retirement.

*Kamishibai Man* is a wonderful story about the lost art of Japanese storytelling. Because of some Japanese words and the way the narrative shifts from present to past to present again, it is a book best suited to a read-aloud context. The life-like illustrations enhance the story; every page has an illustration on one side and text on the other. The book is well written and the story flows. It ends on an encouraging

note, with the old storyteller feeling needed again. This book, written and illustrated by Allen Say, would make a good addition to a home-school library or classroom setting.

Pam Halter

**Looking for home / by Eileen M. Berry ; Maurie J. Manning, illustrator. LCCN 2005024319. Greenville, S.C. : JourneyForth, 2006.**

PAP, 1591664934, list price: \$7.49.

Fic. Neighborliness--Fiction; City and town life--Fiction; Homesickness--Fiction; Moving, Household--Fiction. 75 p. : ill. ; 22 cm.

Grades 1-3. Rating : 5.

Eileen M. Berry's *Looking for Home* offers both humor and thought-provoking moments. Liz and Micah move from a farm to a city apartment. The children must adjust to rules in the housing complex. They can't even make a tire swing, so they look for buried treasure. "Grandma Jan" is also adjusting...and missing her farm home. Micah and Liz attempt to cheer their elderly neighbor. Soon, Liz, Micah, and Grandma Jan become fast friends. She tells the children about the treasure of friendship, "The Lord has been showing me that there's treasure all around me here. The kind of treasure that lasts forever...people."

Scattered black and white drawings enhance the text, and show lively events as people adjust to changes. Boys and girls will identify with Maurie J. Manning's illustrations of a lost kitten, an escaped frog, and some interesting grasshoppers. The front cover of *Looking for Home* portrays Grandma Jan, Liz, and Micah in full color.

Large print and plenty of white space, makes this title attractive to children who are beginning to read chapter books. The suspense will also appeal to

slightly younger children, as they listen to an adult read. I highly recommend this title for children who are adjusting to changes in their lives. Liz and Micah left their home, friends, school, and lifestyle. They naturally feel sad, but learn to face the future with optimism.

Roberta Lou Jones

**Mrs. Frisby and the rats of NIMH / Robert C. O'Brien ; illustrated by Zena Bernstein. LCCN 74134818. New York : Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2003, c1971.**

HBB, 0689206518, list price: \$18.00.

Fic. Rats--Fiction; Mice--Fiction; Newbery Medal. 233 p. : ill. ; 23 cm.

Grades 5-8. Rating : 5.

In Robert C. O'Brien's book, Mrs. Frisby and the rats of NIMH help each other in crucial life-and-death situations. As the story begins, the field mouse widow of Jonathan Frisby is desperate. Her small son Timothy is too ill to make the long trip to their summer home. Plowing time is imminent, and her family's winter home inside a concrete block is in danger. A friendly owl recommends that she consult some special rats living beneath a large rosebush. These extraordinary rats devise a plan to move her home to a safe location nearby.

As she fulfills her part in the plan, she learns that the helpful rats face a danger of their own. For around three years, this group of rats and some mice had received special injections and training in the laboratory of NIMH. Finally, these rats and a few mice, including Jonathan Frisby, had managed to escape. During their travels in the next several months, they used their reading skills to learn how to become self-sufficient and obtained some tools to help make this possible. Eventually they established an elaborate home below a huge rosebush

on a farm. When Mrs. Frisby overhears a plan to exterminate the rats that live beneath the rosebush, her warning prompts them to begin immediately with their intended program to relocate to an inaccessible valley a safe distance away.

Robert Leslie Conly wrote for *National Geographic*, where outside writing by staff members was discouraged. So he adopted the pseudonym of Robert C. O'Brien for his children's stories, concealing his true identity until his death. In this animal fantasy with a science fiction premise, the author's details reveal his sensitivity to nature. While showing traits of their species, his individualized characters exhibit courage, compassion, and increasing moral concern. Zena Bernstein's realistic black-and-white drawings, sympathetic but without caricature, fit the story perfectly. This delightful Newbery Medal winner is highly recommended for all public, school, and home libraries.

Donna W. Bowling

**Spunky's camping adventure/circus adventure / Janette Oke. Worcester, Pa. : Vision Video, 1998.**

DVD, list price: \$12.99.

Fic. Camping--Fiction; Circus--Fiction; Dogs--Fiction. 1 videodisk (ca. 60 min.) : sd., col., stereo ; 4 3/4 in.

Grades PS-4. Rating : 4.

Spunky is a double-feature animation of two of Janette Oke's Spunky stories: "Camping Adventure" and "Circus Adventure."

In "Circus Adventure" Mark and his dog Spunky are excited at the chance to help at the Circus for a day, even though their job is picking up trash. They do their job well, then the ringmaster's daughter convinces Mark to go to the rides with her. Because of her negligence, the

monkeys get out and make a real mess. Initially, she lies about what happened, but in the end she learns to tell the truth. Children are exposed to this life lesson in a fun and entertaining way.

In "Camping Adventure" Mark's parents encourage him to make friends with a bully who is camping next to them. Several times, Mark has to take the blame for the bully's actions. At one point the bully gets Mark into a dangerous situation. It does all turn out for the best, with the bully becoming a better person, but some may be concerned with the idea of parents encouraging their child to befriend someone who gets him into illegal or dangerous situations.

The DVD is well done and young children will enjoy watching it.

*Jane Mouttet*

peace.

*David Rainey*

**Treasure hunt / Eunice Geil Smith. LCCN 2005036565. Scottdale, Pa. : Herald Press, 2006.**

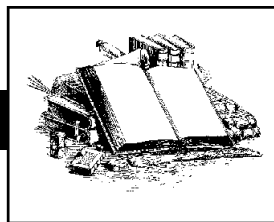
PAP, 0836193326, list price: \$9.99.

Fic. Diaries--Fiction; Mennonites--Fiction; Virginia--History--1775-1865--Fiction. 119 p. ; 21 cm.

Grades 4-8. Rating : 3.

Eleven-year-old Maggie Driver lives in a house that her family has occupied since before the Civil War. *Treasure Hunt*, Eunice Geil Smith's first novel, tells two stories: the story of Maggie finding a diary that belonged to her ancestors, and the story of what life was like for those ancestors who lived in the Shenandoah Valley during and after the Civil War.

*Treasure Hunt*'s fast pace and historical foundation make this short novel both interesting to read and educational. Plot and characterization are fine but beg to be expanded. This enjoyable story offers a subtle message of courage and



**The genesis of it all / Luci Shaw ; illustrations by Sr. Huai-Kuang Miao and Sr. Mary Lane. LCCN 2006015995. Brewster, Mass. : Paraclete Press, 2006.**

HBB, 155725480X, \$17.95.

222/.1109505. Creation--Biblical teaching. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 32 x 24 cm.

Grades K-6. Rating : 5.

Well-known poet and essayist Luci Shaw presents a poet's-eye view of the Genesis story of creation. Benedictine sisters Miao and Lane do a lovely job of portraying the text. The first two days of creation are illustrated in black and white. Vibrant color appears on day three along with all growing things.

In 1997 Walter Wangerin, Jr. also wrote a children's book about the creation story. His book, *In the Beginning There Was No Sky*, links creation to God's love for each child, whereas Shaw's emphasis is on God the artist in the process of creation. She highlights the mystery and grandeur of creation, using repetition to make her point with such phrases as "it wasn't easy," "we don't know how God did it," and "we weren't there to see." It is obvious that Shaw wants her readers to see God as both creator and artist. She helps us imagine God's joy at the results of his creation. He is "excited" and "delighted;" he bends, twists, squeezes, pulls, and flings as he works.

The sentence, "Ex nihilo is working well, I've made something out of nothing," will obviously require an explanation to the child who reads or hears it, but overall the language is lively and lyrical. The reader will be surprised at how God takes his rest in Shaw's story and her observation when "God's work is done."

Jeanette Hardage

**The Gospel of Matthew. (The illustrated International**

**Children's Bible.) LCCN . Nashville : Tommy Nelson, 2006.**

PAP, 1400308127, list price: \$6.99.

226.2. Bible. N.T. Matthew--Juvenile literature. 99 p. : ill. ; 19 cm.

Grades 2-7. Rating : 5.

Tommy Nelson's *The Gospel of Matthew* resembles a comic book. This title is, however, a Bible with catchy pictures and the exact words from the *Illustrated International Children's Bible*. Dialogue boxes show biblical characters speaking. Footnotes explain words such as Herodians, Nineveh, and blasphemy. Two maps offer geographical insights about Egypt, Nazareth, the Sea of Galilee, and the Jordan River. Old Testament quotations are highlighted in separate boxes, and clearly show the fulfillment of prophecies about Jesus Christ.

The *Illustrated International Children's Bible* notes that Mary was "...pregnant by the power of the Holy Spirit." An angel spoke to Joseph and he "...did not have sexual relations with Mary until after Jesus was born." Just prior to His crucifixion, Jesus pled, "My Father, if it is possible, do not give me this cup of suffering, but do what you want, not what I want." Illustrations appear authentic. John the Baptist is determined: the lad who shared his lunch is happy. Even the plants are realistic in the parable of the weeds and the good plants.

Because of the inexpensive cost, Sunday School departments may be able to give copies to each boy and girl. I also recommend *The Gospel of Matthew* for adult literacy programs, individuals whose second language is English, and anyone who simply enjoys extra visuals. Check [www.tommynelson.com](http://www.tommynelson.com) for updates on other New Testament titles in this series.

Roberta Lou Jones

**In the beginning / Dandi Daley Mackall ; illustrated by James Kandt. LCCN 2005014246. Nashville : Tommy Nelson, 2005.**

HBB, 140030525X, list price: \$17.99.

231.7/65. Creationism--Juvenile literature. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 26 cm.

Grades PS-8. Rating : 3.

Dandi Daley Mackall wrote *In the Beginning*, using Genesis 1:1, John 1:1-3, and Colossians 1:16 as background Scripture. These quotations from the *International Children's Bible*®, New Century Version®, are printed on beautiful silver paper. The author wrote in rhyme, and concluded, "And that's how the earth was begun, When God made the world with His Son."

James Kandt, the illustrator, drew interesting natural objects—twinkling stars, jungle flowers, assorted animals, and emerging light. The layout is attractive, and enhances the text. Some illustrations are more representative of God's creative work than actually the way things grow. For instance, a solitary tree holds apples, oranges, bananas, and pears.

In one place, Mackall stresses creation from nothing. She wrote, "With nothing but darkness, the Lord shouted, "Light!" And out of pure nothing, God made day and night." Yet, in contrast, "A hot ball of fire, God flung into space, a silvery moon shining down on this place." Adam's love for Eve is apparent. The Creator "...touched man's heart, as he took out one bone..." After naming the animals, Adam saw Eve. He cried, "Eve's the one!" This page could promote a positive discussion of men and women, as well as marriage.

Sturdy binding makes this book suitable for any high-use situation. Large pictures will enhance story times with groups of children. Further, the attractive presentation page suggests a gift book.

Roberta Lou Jones

**The case for faith for kids / Lee Strobel with Rob Suggs. LCCN2005034022. Grand Rapids : Zonderkidz, 2006.**

PAP, 0310711460, \$7.99.

239. Apologetics--Juvenile literature. 90 p. : ill. ; 22 cm.

**The case for Christ for kids / Lee Strobel with Rob Suggs. LCCN 2005034269. Grand Rapids : Zonderkidz, 2006.**

PAP, 0310711479, \$7.99.

232.9/08. Jesus Christ--Person and office--Juvenile literature; Apologetics--Juvenile literature. 93 p. : ill. ; 22 cm.

Grades 3-9. Rating 5.

Lee Strobel is known for his excellent defense of the Christian faith. These recent works, *The Case for Faith for Kids* and *The Case for Christ for Kids*, continue Strobel's tradition of scholarship meshed with interesting writing.

*The Case for Faith for Kids* tackles "five big-time questions." One example is, "Why Would a Good God Allow Bad Things?" Strobel mentions recent events, such as Hurricane Katrina and the 2004 tsunami. He also references the ancient Greek philosopher Epicurus. We are reminded that faith is "like a muscle that just becomes stronger the more we put it to work."

I especially enjoyed the chapter, "How Do You Make Sense of Jesus?" A sidebar notes that "God has always existed. He never had a beginning, so he doesn't need a cause to exist." The author quotes Ravi Zacharias in answering a question about people who have not heard of Jesus.

*The Case for Christ for Kids* contains eight chapters, some asking a question. Who Did This Guy Think He Was? Was Jesus Out of His Mind? Messiah:

Did Jesus Fit the Picture? Coming Back From the Dead? Obviously, this books intends for the reader to think, to reflect, and to wade right into any theological quandary! Strobel mentions Gary Collins, the author of a popular Christian counseling book, and makes us laugh about "Elvis sightings."

Both books offer colorful covers, comic book-like drawings, and layouts that are easy to read. Sidebars hold much variety--questions, definitions, Scripture, and comparative charts. Related books are *The Case for a Creator for Kids*, and *Off My Case for Kids*.

Roberta Lou Jones

**All about Braille : reading by touch / Laura S. Jeffrey. (Transportation & communication series.) LCCN 2003017617. Berkeley Heights, N.J. : Enslow Publishers, 2004.**

LIB, 076602184X, list price: \$23.93.

411. Braille, Louis, 1809-1852; People with visual disabilities; Blind; Braille. 48 p. : ill. (chiefly col.) ; 24 cm.

**All about sign language : talking with your hands / Felicia Lowenstein. (Transportation & communication series.) LCCN 2003026608. Berkeley Heights, N.J. : Enslow Publishers, 2004.**

LIB, 0766020282, list price: \$23.93.

419. Sign language; Sign language--History. 48 p. : col. ill., map ; 24 cm.

Grades 2-5. Rating : 5.

Many students like to learn about other languages and means of communication. These titles will allow students to explore on their own and enjoy assigned research. In engaging text and interesting photographs, the writers draw students' attention. The text explains people who used Braille or ASL as well as demonstrates the uses of the language. The photographs

communicate well the technology used in each, people using the language, and the languages themselves. The quality of photographs is excellent. Of course, historical ones are black and white, others are colorful. All are selected well for portrayal of action when necessary.

As an intermediate nonfiction text, the format is predictable and useful. There is a concise table of contents, timeline, glossary, list of further reading and websites, and an index. Each title has added extras that also increase the series' accessibility. For example, page numbers are also listed in the featured language. Interesting comparisons are made about the similarities of words in sign language depending on hand placement. Small children and current personalities are portrayed using each language.

This series will have wide appeal as the other titles range from rescue vehicles to wireless communications.

Carol M. Jones

**An egg is quiet / by Dianna Aston ; illustrated by Sylvia Long. LCCN 2005012090. San Francisco : Chronicle Books, 2006.**

HBB, 0811844285, list price: \$16.95.

591.4/68. Eggs; Embryology. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 29 cm.

Grades PS-5. Rating : 5.

Dianna Aston's *An Egg is Quiet* is clever and educational, but Sylvia Long's ink and watercolor artwork adds awe and wonder to the words. Eggs are, indeed, quiet. They may be sat on in a nest, held on top of a father's feet (Emperor Penguin), or buried by a sea turtle. Eggs are tiny (blue crab), and large (ostrich): oval (Ladybird beetle) or tubular (dogfish). Leopard frogs lay gooeey eggs, while cassowaries and emus produce rough eggs. Eventually, an egg is not quiet! Fluffy black-necked stilt

nestlings cheep and prance around on the broken shells of their eggs.

*An Egg is Quiet* will add an interesting dimension to the science shelves of public libraries and elementary schools. Church libraries can use this excellent non-religious book to teach about the wonders of God's creation. Two points are worth comparing to your theology: (1.) An egg "...does not want to be eaten by a raccoon or a snake..." Although eggs do not think about danger, that line explained camouflage in eggs and their surroundings. (2.) Fossilized eggs are from "creatures that lived millions of years ago...scientists believe all dinosaurs hatched from eggs." I will read this title to my little granddaughters, as I also discuss Colossians 1:14-17 and the Creator who designed these exquisite eggs!

More information is available at [www.chroniclebooks.com](http://www.chroniclebooks.com)

Roberta Lou Jones

**The human body / Anna Claybourne. (Science in focus.) LCCN 2006006534. New York : Chelsea House, 2006.**

HBB, 0791088588, list price: \$27.00.

612. Body, Human; Human physiology; Environmental protection. 47 p. : ill. ; 30 cm.

Grades 5-9. Rating : 4.

Popular series Science In Focus captures the essence of the human body, its parts and working systems. Science information is clear, concise, and logically organized for the beginning anatomy student. Excellent diagrams, illustrations, and photographs unravel the complexities of the main body tissues and organs. Our bodies are made up of more than 200 bones, 400 muscles, 5 quarts of blood, and 14 billion brain cells. Reproduction section identifies the fetus as a developing baby and the chapter conveys species propagation science without explicit parental genital

illustrations. Focus boxes with unique facts, histories, and evidence for physiological function provided in each of the 16 anatomical sections.

Supplementary divisions, at the end of text, provide additional articles about the health-disease equilibrium, timeline of health discovery milestones, and a small glossary of major terms. Includes bibliographic references and index. This book is a perceptive presentation of a sometimes awkward subject or difficult concepts for young children. It would be a great addition to middle school libraries or science classes.

Rebecca Cress-Ingebo

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**Beneath the streets of Boston : building America's first subway / written & illustrated by Joe McKendry. LCCN 2004016418. Boston : David R. Godine, 2005.**

HBB, 1567922848, list price: \$19.95.

625.4/2/0974461. Subways--Massachusetts--Boston--History. 1 v. (unpaged) : ill. ; 28 cm.

Grades 2-6. Rating : \*5.

In 1840, Boston's population exploded as Irish immigrants fleeing the potato famine flooded the city. A steady stream of hungry and desperate Germans, Italians, and other Europeans added to these numbers and by the 1890's, traffic problems appeared because of a population growth of 135,000. By 1895 traffic jams were a daily nuisance. A crush of four hundred trolley cars competed for space with private cars, a flood of carriages, horse-drawn cabs, and commercial wagons. A chaotic and frustrating convergence of vehicles.

*Beneath the Streets of Boston* tells how Boston faced its traffic problem in a groundbreaking way. With narrative and illustrations this book describes the century-old subterranean world built

beneath the streets of Boston by men who dug miles of tunnels with picks, shovels, and sweat. It details the innovative methods used to burrow beneath the Boston Harbor, under Beacon Hill, the Old State House, and the Charlestown Bridge. These concise, yet detailed facts are based upon original architectural drawings, newspaper clippings, and old construction photographs.

Joe McKendry aligns the book according to the stages of development. Cut-and-Cover Tunnel, the Elevated Railway and Bridge, the Underwater Tunnel, and the Deep-Bored Tunnel. McKendry's magnificent watercolor illustrations from a combination of old photographs, architectural drawings, and newspaper clippings create an appealing background for the twenty-three years of construction. Content is easy to understand and the watercolor illustrations of antique browns give the book an intense charm.

In addition to the middle reader, this coffee-table book would be a wonderful addition to an engineer's office, an engineering student, or anyone interested in Boston.

Maxine Cambra

**Horse crafts / written and illustrated by Linda Hendry. (Kids can do it.) Toronto : Kids Can Press, 2006.**

HBB, 1553376463, list price: \$12.95.

745.5. Horses; Handicraft. 40 p. : col. ill. ; 26 cm.

Grades 2-6. Rating : 5.

What a fun book! Combining the love of horses with the love of crafting, Linda Hendry has created a book right up the alley of many young girls grades 2 through 6. By using simple techniques, found items, and clear illustrations, the author shows even the least courageous budding artist that she can accomplish



great things. Designs like the CD stable, the pasture pillow, and the sock horse, if executed carefully, could provide items for sale. Pony pencil pals and the keepsake box would make nice Christmas gifts for girls on limited budgets. Even the seventh grade girls who saw this book were enchanted with the ideas presented. Reproducible patterns in the back make this book reusable.

Kelley Westenhoff

**Tour America : a journey through poems and art / by Diane Siebert ; illustrated by Stephen T. Johnson. LCCN 2005027125. San Francisco : Chronicle Books, 2006.**

HBB, 0811850560, list price: \$17.95.

811/.54. United States--In art: United States--Poetry. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill., map ; 25 x 27 cm.

Grades 2-6. Rating : 4.

Over a period of ten years author Diane Siebert and her husband toured the continental United States of America by motorcycle. This adventure provided the basis for this wonderful book of poetry and art. The features are not all the "standard" sight-seeing venues that one might expect. Sure, they cover the Golden Gate Bridge, Niagara Falls, and the Gateway Arch in St. Louis. But they also cover Roswell, N.M., a Cadillac Ranch in Texas, and the Las Vegas Strip.

Most locations get a two-page spread encompassing a poem about the location and artwork that depicts or suggests that place. Using a variety of media, illustrator Stephen T. Johnson captures the essence of each feature. For example, an oil painting of the U.S.S. Constitution suggests shimmery movement. Chicago's El gets an electrified looking collage on paper. The Aurora Borealis is shown through a

composition using photography, collage, pastel, watercolor, gouache and charcoal and the effect is breathtaking. Each feature is accompanied by a map showing its location in the country as well as the state, and a small box of facts about that feature. The excellence of the artwork and the accessibility of the poetry make this book a very good addition to any collection.

Kelley Westenhoff

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**A family of poems : my favorite poetry for children / [selected by] Caroline Kennedy ; paintings by Jon J Muth. New York : Hyperion Books for Children, 2005.**

HBB, 0786851112, list price: \$19.95.

808.81/0083. Children's poetry. 143 p. : ill. ; 27 cm.

Grades PS-8. Rating : \*5.

Poetry captures life's vignettes in quick-read time. In just a few words, a poem can paint a picture that touches the emotions. Poetry can show how we, as humans, wherever we dwell, have so very much in common. *A Family of Poems: My Favorite Poetry for Children*, edited by Caroline Kennedy, is a compilation of poems designed to bring out laughter and sighing, wonder and amazement, playfulness and thoughtfulness in the reader. Meet a precocious preschooler, wild animals, and cuddly pets. Laze by the sea shore or warm your feet in colorful socks. Admire an armored bee on his trusty fire-fly steed. Remember how left out it feels to have to go to bed early on a bright summer's eve. Snowy lanes, geese overhead, and a visit from St. Nicholas mix with roses and moon beams and a red wheelbarrow. Selections range from the Bible to Shakespeare, from J.R.R. Tolkien to

Walt Whitman, and even an Iroquois prayer. Poets include Nikki Giovanni, Robert Frost, William Blake, Carl Sandburg, and others.

Combined with Jon J. Muth's full page, vivid watercolor illustrations, encompassing a see-through quality that invokes imagination and dreaming, each poem is a delight to read and to share with children of all ages. Special section included to present foreign poems in their original language. Index of first lines. Engaging style, font, and layout. Poetry encourages self expression and a better understanding of the world around us. As Caroline Kennedy states, "poets put into words the feelings that all of us have." (p. 10) Highly recommended for school and public libraries, as well as academic libraries that house children's literature collections.

Kim Harris

**Space : exploring the moon, the planets, and beyond / by Olivier de Goursac ; illustrated by Pascal Laye. LCCN 2006008999. New York : Abrams Books for Young Readers, 2006.**

HBB, 0810957191, \$18.9.

919.904. Astronautics; Outer space--Exploration. 75 p. : col. ill. ; 32 cm.

Grades 3-5. Rating : 4.

*Space : Exploring the Moon, the Planets, and Beyond* provides a general overview of space exploration for young readers. Olivier de Goursac begins with a personal message to children that shows how movies and inventions utilized in people's homes makes learning about space an adventure with infinite possibilities.

Lavishly illustrated by Pascal Laye, this 75 page oversized hardbound book with reinforced binding depicts a particular aspect of space discoveries every two pages. Some areas of study touch on

sending animals into space, exploring asteroids, and the requirements necessary for astronauts to investigate Mars in the future. The illustrations extend over three-fourths of the two pages while text comprises only one-fourth.

This book is a good introduction to space investigation for the young elementary student interested in learning about rockets, astronauts' weightlessness, responsibilities in space, the moon landing, and how discoveries are made about planets.

Dianne Woodman

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**The forbidden schoolhouse : the true and dramatic story of Prudence Crandall and her students / Suzanne Jurmain. LCCN 2004026554. Boston : Houghton Mifflin, 2005.**

HBB, 0618473025, list price: \$18.00.

B or 370/.92. Crandall, Prudence, 1803-1890--Juvenile literature; Women educators--Connecticut--Biography--Juvenile literature; African American women--Education--History--Juvenile literature. 250 p. : ill. ; 24 cm.

Grades 5-8. Rating : \*5.

With reports of school shootings and violence ringing in our minds, *The Forbidden Schoolhouse* provides engrossing historical reading and important learning. In 1832, the people of Canterbury, Connecticut, threw rocks, polluted the well, screamed terrible epithets, and took up iron cudgels against their own Prudence Crandall, a white teacher, because she had opened a school for colored children. Facing arrest, jail, and bodily harm, Miss Crandall stood firmly for what she knew was right. *The Forbidden Schoolhouse* tells this story simply, gut-wrenchingly. The historical photos evocatively illuminate the text. Further research is aided by the appendices.

Noted historical researcher and author Suzanne Jurmain felt the story of *The Forbidden Schoolhouse* must be told. This stringent bit of America's racial history is, indeed, important for all to read. Our past is never far from our present. Prudence Crandall leaps fully alive from these pages. Her heroism, as well as that of her friends and scholars, provides an important example for us today. The story does not stop at Crandall's

school, but continues on to tell of her further life and battles. It is well to note that Connecticut now considers Crandall one of their heroines.

Written for grades 5 thru 8, *The Forbidden Schoolhouse* speaks to readers of all ages. It will find a place in secular and religious schools and libraries.

Donna Eggett

**The journey that saved Curious George : the true wartime escape of Margret and H.A. Rey / by Louise Borden ; illustrated by Allan Drummond. LCCN 2004001015. Boston : Houghton Mifflin, 2005.**

HBB, 0618339248, list price: \$17.00.

B or 813/.52. Rey, Margret--Juvenile literature; Rey, H.A. (Hans Augusto), 1898--Juvenile literature; Authors, American--20th century--Biography--Juvenile literature; Refugees, Jewish--United States--Biography--Juvenile literature; Jewish authors--United States--Biography--Juvenile literature; Curious George (Fictitious character)--Juvenile literature; Children's stories--Authorship--Juvenile literature. 72 p. : ill. (some col.) ; 29 cm.

Grades 4-8. Rating : 5.

*The Journey That Saved Curious George* gives George's fans a look at his history. Starting with the childhoods of Margret and Hans and their lives between the world wars in Germany and abroad, Borden shares with readers just how Curious George came to be. Because the Reys were Jews, life in France where

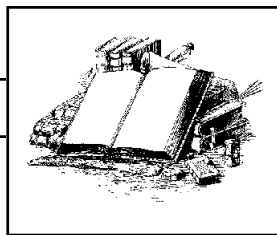
they lived became impossible as Hitler gained power. They fled first through France on bicycle, into Spain and Portugal by bicycle and train, by ship to Brazil, and finally by ship to New York.

Borden consulted many of the Rey's personal papers and interviewed people who knew them in preparation for writing *The Journey That Saved Curious George*. Her determination to include accurate details is evident throughout the text. Borden uses a poetic verse style to tell the story.

The book is illustrated with photographs, copies of documents, reproductions of the Rey's illustrations, and watercolors of Drummond. The style of the watercolors, while not a copy of the Rey's style, blends well with it. They add a visual dimension to the text and make the book more palatable for younger readers.

Those who enjoyed the adventures of Curious George as young children will appreciate learning more about how the stories actually came to print.

Jane Mouttet



**Eva underground : a novel / Dandi Daley Mackall. LCCN 2005004195. Orlando, Fla. : Harcourt, 2006.**

HBB, 0152054626, list price: \$17.00.

Fic. Poland--History--1945-1980--Juvenile fiction; Poland--History--1945-1980--Fiction; Fathers and daughters--Fiction; Grief--Fiction; Coming of age--Fiction; Communist countries--Fiction. vii, 239 p. ; 22 cm.

Grades 7-10. Rating : 5.

Against her wishes, Eva's father moves her to Poland before the fall of the Iron Curtain. He is going to help with the underground movement. Before she even reaches her destination, Eva begins plotting her return to Chicago. While working on her plan, Eva, begins to feel at home in this communist nation. A young Pole, who works as a translator for the underground because he needs the money, wins her heart as well. When her father is detained and deported, he makes arrangements for their return to Chicago. Eva discovers, however, that maybe it's not really what she wants after all.

This coming-of-age romance, *Eva's Underground*, tells the story of the underground movement in Communist Poland. Readers will be surprised by who informants are and who actually gets involved in smuggling prohibited equipment. The characters are well-developed and believable. Dandi Daley Mackall, makes use of dialogue, memories and letters from home to tell the story of Eva's life in Chicago. Mackall experienced the setting first hand when she lived in Communist Poland during the time period represented in the book.

Jane Mouttet

**New found land : Lewis and Clark's voyage of discovery / Allan Wolf. LCCN 2003065254. Cambridge, Mass. : Candlewick**

**Press, 2004.**

HBB, 0763621137, list price: \$18.99.

Fic. Lewis and Clark Expedition (1804-1806--Fiction; Overland journeys to the Pacific--Fiction; West (U.S.)--Discover and exploration--Fiction. 500 p. ; 24 cm.

Grades 10-12 (Adult). Rating : 4.

First time novelist Allan Wolf has created a large collection of poem thoughts about thirteen members of the Lewis and Clark Corps of Discovery. All of the characters mentioned in the text are historic personalities, with the exception of Split Feather, a Shoshone brave, and Seaman's (the dog's) alter ego Oolum. Wolf invents names for a few minor characters that history has left nameless. The title is a play on words: *New Found Land*, meaning the newly explored lands of the Louisiana Purchase, and Seaman the Newfoundland dog belonging to Meriwether Lewis.

Shoshone Indian guide Sacagawea begins the story with her kidnapping at age eleven, then it progresses to the correspondence and conversations between President Jefferson and his personal secretary Meriwether Lewis, establishing the Corps in 1803, and ends with the Corps' return in 1806. A final segment takes Lewis on his final journey back to Nashville, and the characters mentally review their experiences. Appended are notes about what happened to the members of the Corps, a list of American Indian nations which were encountered, miscellaneous facts, a bibliography (including Internet resources), and a glossary. Map sketches introduce each section of the book.

This reviewer read the fictional account alongside a nonfiction account. Wolf was able to make the characters multi-dimensional and come alive within the early nineteenth century persona. Thus, even the nonfiction narrative had life. His four years of research were evident,

for the historic facts matched the nonfiction account. The maps were a frequent source of reference for both books. Wolf manages to keep each of the characters true to their voice and perspective throughout the book. At times the reviewer would go back to refer to the previous thoughts of an individual, for it can be difficult to keep all of the characters in perspective. Adult history buffs will relish this unique novel. However, the publisher claims it to be for middle school and young adult. Most middle school students would not undertake this massive volume, nor would they come with sufficient background to grasp the nuances of the characters. From a Christian perspective, the spiritism of Oolum is disconcerting. Yes, we all know that dogs don't think or talk, but the mysticism of Oolum's connection to his ancestry and understanding of Native American ways even in a novel overpowers the story.

Marion Mueller

**Regina Silsby's phantom militia / by Thomas J. Brodeur. LCCN 2005002443. Greenville, S.C. : JourneyForth, 2005.**

PAP, 1591663857, list price: \$7.49

Fic. Grandfathers--Fiction; Cousins--Fiction; Disguise--Fiction; Boston (Mass.)--History--Colonial period, ca. 1600-1775--Juvenile fiction; Boston (Mass.)--History--Colonial period, ca. 1600-1775--Fiction; Ghosts--Fiction. 287 p. : maps ; 22 cm.

Grades 7-10. Rating : 5.

Rachel Winslow's family escaped to Philadelphia from Boston after the Redcoats discovered their involvement in the fight for freedom from under England's rule. However, her brother, a member of the Sons of Liberty, had been left behind in the confusion. In *Regina Silsby's Phantom Meditation*, Rachel, her grandfather, and her cousin, Sarah, have now returned to Boston in search

of the boy. Disguised as the ghost of Regina Silsby, her long-dead great-aunt, Rachel spies on the British soldiers and haunts them with her grotesque masked face. Even more terrifying, they quickly realize this time Regina Silsby has not come back alone!

*Regina Silsby's Phantom Militia*, a young adult fiction novel, sees Regina Silsby's ghost return to haunt Boston's streets during the pre-Revolutionary War. In this outstanding sequel to *Regina's Silsby's Secret War*, Thomas J. Brodeur thrills readers with an engaging mystery adventure sure to keep them engrossed for hours. This faith-based novel will inspire teens to follow God's leading as they read of Rachel's reliance upon God as she makes many important decisions throughout the story. This fast-paced historical sequel is quite realistic with its heart-pounding action and dangerous situations, making it an excellent choice in reading material for teens.

Sherri Myers

**The strange intruder / Arthur Catherall. LCCN 2005932200. Bathgate, N.D. : Bethlehem Books, 2005.**

PAP, 1883937973, list price: \$11.95.

Fic. Shipwrecks-Fiction. 151 p. : 22 cm.

Grades 6-10. Rating : 4.

*The Strange Intruder*, originally published in 1964, is a tightly-plotted, suspenseful novel, although young people may consider it wordy by today's standards.

It is set in the Faroes Islands off the coast of Iceland and its hero, sixteen year old Sven, is upset because he isn't old enough to help with the fowling-hunting sea birds with nets while perched on the island's steep cliffs. One day, when all the islanders except Sven, four elderly men, and several women

and children are out hunting whale, a polar bear washes ashore and it's up to Sven to help keep them safe. The polar bear hasn't eaten in weeks and it smells food, (actually, the islanders). It will stop at nothing to feed itself. Sven and the islanders use their wits to outpace the bear, as one thing after another goes wrong. A ship, grounded off shore, adds to the suspense. If the men aren't rescued soon, the waves will tear the ship to pieces killing all on board. Yet the fierce waves prevent rescuers from getting close.

Arthur Catherall's characters in *The Strange Intruders* are well drawn: Sven, his father, and grandfather. It is understandable that Sven, likeable and brave, desires to prove his worth and save his family and friends. The women of the town, far from being helpless, take part in most of the action. Even the polar bear, although feral and ruthless, is portrayed sympathetically.

The book seems best for readers aged twelve and up. Its lack of dialog may be a turn-off, but Arthur Catherall is a talented writer, and his tense action scenes, plus the near impossibility of the islanders surviving, should hold a reader's attention.

Rosemarie DiCristo

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**Yellow star / by Jennifer Roy. LCCN 2005050788. New York : Marshall Cavendish, 2006.**

HBB, 076145277X, list price: \$16.95.

Fic. Jews-Persecutions-Poland-Juvenile fiction; Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)-Poland-Juvenile fiction; Jews-Poland-Fiction; Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)-Poland-Fiction; Family life-Poland-Fiction; Poland-History-Occupation, 192309-1945-Fiction. 227 p. ; 19 cm.

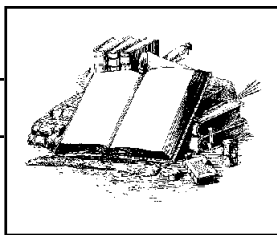
Grades 6-10. Rating : \*5.

Syvia Perlmutter is four and one-half years-old when the Nazis invade Poland,

and nearly ten years-old when they are defeated. *Yellow Star*, by Jennifer Roy, is an historical fiction account of real life events that transpired during the Nazi occupation of Poland's Lodz ghetto. Punctuated by brief, factual notes, Roy describes, in vividly poetic form, the Holocaust through a child's eyes. Fearful of the developing tension surrounding the Jews, Syvia's family flees to Warsaw in a futile attempt to find help. Upon their return, persecution awaits. Along with more than 200,000 Jews, they are banished to the Lodz ghetto. Silently they watch family and friends taken away by train, crammed together like cattle, never to be seen or heard from again. As a young child, unable to work, Syvia remains hidden from the Nazis. She quietly endures long hours devoid of light, fresh air, playtimes, and food. Of the 800 Jews to come out of Lodz, Syvia is one of only 12 children who survive.

Similar in format to Karen Hesse's *Out of the Dust*, the quality of writing in *Yellow Star* will appeal to a wide range of ages and contains subject matter suitable for discussion groups. Jennifer Roy, a former teacher, has written more than 30 books for children and teens. This account of the Holocaust is taken from interviews with her aunt, one of the 12 children who survived the Lodz ghetto. Highly recommended for both school and public libraries.

Kim Harris



**Can you keep your faith in college? / Abbie Smith. LCCN 2005035657. Sisters, Ore. : Multnomah Publishers, 2006.**

PAP, 1590526694, list price: \$12.99.

248.8/34. College students--Religious life.; 208 p. : 21 cm.

Grades 9-12 (Adult). Rating : 5.

Is it possible to find a personal relationship with Christ while immersed in the collegiate world? Abbie Smith believes in "God's Surprise Encounters" when students seek an adventure-based journey during college. Her perspective in constructing this collection of college chronicles is down-to-earth and real. She was raised in a loving home but not including the concept of a personal relationship with Christ. In her freshman year at Emory University, Smith accepted Christ as her personal savior. Early on, this commitment ignited her passion for campus ministry, writing, and discipleship. She notes research that states from 75 to 90% of high school seniors have the opposite experience, abandoning their faith for dating, studying abroad, Greek life, and other extracurricular activities. Instead of building a faith that defines them as Christ-driven leaders, the transition to college often whittles away the graduates' convictions.

With courage and focus, Smith shares the everyday trials of students as they adjust to the classroom, dorm life, sports, peer pressures, and potential barriers to faith. Smith's experiences and these testimonies of good and bad, resonate with readers providing an excellent platform for Bible study in this population. Parents, teachers and guidance counselors alike can use this book as a tool to provide encouragement to Christian students setting out for the college experience. Recommended for anyone working with our concerned about young adults.

Rebecca Cress-Ingebo

**Making it home : real-life stories from children forced to flee / with an introduction by Beverley Naidoo. LCCN 2005045904. New York : Puffin Books, 2005.**

PAP, 0142404551, list price: \$6.99.

305.23/086/914. Social conflict--Juvenile literature; Forced migration--Juvenile literature; Children and war--Juvenile literature; Refugee children--Case studies--Juvenile literature. 117 p. : col. ill., maps ; 20 cm.

Grades 5-8 (Grade 3-Adult). Rating : 4.

Children with settled lifestyles may not identify with the young authors in *Making it Home: Real Life Stories from Children Forced to Flee*. Therefore, share this book with your favorite boys and girls. In the introduction, Beverley Naidoo writes, "The young people... have all had their childhood cut short by some terrible conflict. They tell their stories in a straightforward, simple way. Don't be deceived. These are not simple stories." Indeed, the tales are complicated and thought-provoking about places such as Kosovo, Bosnia, Iraq, Congo, and Burundi.

A center section shows colored photographs of the children. They are pictured in a deserted school, going to school, and as occupants of refugee camps. I would have enjoyed a picture with each story. That is a minor point, however. You may prefer the pictures together! Each story is child-written. All are interesting, but some articles are better written than others. Frankly, I am glad the publisher retained the words of the young authors.

William Toe fled Liberia's civil war. He wrote, "We left at night when there was a lot of shooting and fighting. It was scary. The soldiers' took all of my parents things, which made me angry... Now my home is inside these fences, in the transit center. I like it here because I

live well. For lunch I usually eat bread."

Roberta Lou Jones

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**The real McCoy : the true stories behind our everyday phrases / Georgia Hole. LCCN 2005054700. New York : Oxford University Press, 2005.**

HBB, 0192806114, list price: \$19.95.

422. English language--Etymology; English language--Terms and phrases. 200 p. : ill. ; 21 cm.

Grades 7-12 (Adult). Rating : \*5.

We go back to square one when we need to start over. We bite the bullet when we have to do something unpleasant. And we take forty winks when we are tired. But why? Why use these expressions and not simply state our intentions? These expressions, figures of speech, and allusions are what make our language so colorful and interesting. There is a history to each of them, yet for the most part most people don't know the history of mad as a hatter, bury the hatchet, or spinning a yarn. Georgia Hole has taken on the task of explaining and enlightening readers to the "why we say" to hundreds of idioms found in the English language.

The book comes with whimsical illustrations and is arranged alphabetically. There are special inserts on specific themes such as animals, biblical expressions, legends and myths, and Shakespeare. For further ease of reference a thematic index is included. Students and scholars will find this little book a pleasant aide to their studies. For those who enjoy trivia with meaning, or for those who are looking for a whimsical gift that has lexical worth, then *The Real McCoy* is a real fun find.

Pam Webb

**Space and astronomy : an illustrated guide to science / the Diagram Group. (Science visual resources.) New York : Facts On File, 2006.**

HBB, 0816061688, list price: \$49.50.

520. Space sciences; Astronomy. 208 p. : col. ill. ; 29 cm.

Grades 6-12. Rating : 5.

Offering 1,000 plus full-color illustrations, charts, graphs, and maps, *Space and Astronomy* features detailed illustrations and extensive captions geared to the understanding of students in grades 6 to 12. The Diagram Group, responsible for this tool, has been producing high quality graphic and text content for more than 450 reference titles for over 40 years and that specialization adds depth to this resource.

Clear organization, a comprehensive glossary, and index aid to present scientific topics in an integrated fashion. The opening chapter (p.10) attributes the beginnings of the universe to the big bang theory. The volume seeks to illustrate the essential elements of space and astronomy with parallel text providing key definitions and step-by-step explanation.

Both public libraries and school libraries will find this an easy-to-use resource and one which facilitates concentration on specific aspects of space and astronomy. Those having the *Firefly Encyclopedia of Astronomy* (2004) will find more in-depth coverage of topics here, and those familiar with the *Encyclopedia of Space & Astronomy* (Facts on File, 2006) will find this work easier for grades 6 to 9 to grasp.

Dr. Leroy Hommerding

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**Exploring the solar system : a**

**history with 22 activities / Mary Kay Carson. LCCN 2005028284. Chicago : Chicago Review Press, 2006.**

PAP, 1556525931, list price: \$17.95.

523.2. Astronomy--Study and teaching--Activity programs; Outer space--Exploration. vii, 168 p. : ill. (mostly col.) ; 22 x 28 cm.

HBB, 081605195X, list price: \$37.50.

Grades 5-8. Rating : \*5.

Abundant with color and black and white photographs plus interior illustrations by TJ Romero, *Exploring the Solar System* educates young people about space expeditions from prehistory through future missions to Mars.

Mary Kay Carson chronicles the launching of the space program with succinct biographies of space pioneers, inventions such as airplane and rocket development, the space race contest between the Soviets and Americans, missions to the moon, and the planets utilizing space probes, orbiters, and spacecrafts. One scientist depicted in the book was involved in the Mars Viking Project to satisfy his curiosity about how life originated on earth.

The 22 activities enhance older elementary and middle school students learning about a planet's orbit, telescopes, spectrosopes, rocketry, comets, and space probes, though the activities can only be located by flipping through the book for pages framed in blue. Also shown in one activity is a silhouette of a naked man and woman--an illustration of the plaque aboard both Pioneer spacecraft.

In the front of this 168 page softcover book is a table of contents and a time line of noteworthy space discovery dates. In the latter part of the book is a section that includes details of the sun, the moon, the nine planets, comets, and asteroids, with a time line of exploration, a short glossary, and an index. Also is a resource section with websites and

books to read for further research.

Dianne Woodman

**Living mountains : how and why volcanoes erupt / Jacques Kornprobst and Christine Laverne. LCCN 2005025736. Missoula, Mont. : Mountain Press, 2006.**

PAP, 0878425136, list price: \$18.00.

551.21. Volcanoes--Popular works; Volcanic eruptions--Popular works. 99 p. : col. ill. ; 24 cm.

Grades 7-10. Rating : 4.

*Living Mountains: How and Why Volcanoes Erupt* is an English translation of a book published in France in 2002. Although only one hundred pages long, it is dense with detail on all aspects of volcanoes. Its explanations of the more technical aspects of volcanoes are reasonably clear, although the book's vocabulary in general is fairly complex.

Christine Laverne's full color illustrations of volcanoes, as well as her colorful diagrams of the parts and workings of volcanoes, complement her and Jacques Kornprobst's text. All aspects of volcanoes are covered, including the different types of lavas and magmas, great detail on the types of eruptions, clear explanations on the varying types of volcanic rock, and even information on how scientists work towards predicting eruptions.

Kornprobst and Laverne explain volcanoes as products of plate tectonics. Here, and in many other places in the text, are found references to volcanic events occurring ten to hundreds of million years ago. The authors theorize that volcanic eruptions may have led to the extinction of dinosaurs "65 million years ago." But they also state that climactic change from volcanic activity at Santorini in 1500 B.C. may be the explanation for the seven thin cows of

the Old Testament.

The book has a five page glossary and a five page index. Its small size, use of color illustrations, and easy to read typeface should make it appealing to younger readers, although the text can be a bit difficult to understand, as well as a little dry.

Rosemarie DiCristo

**Geysers : what they are and how they work / T. Scott Bryan. LCCN 2005016748. Missoula, Mont. : Mountain Press, 2005.**

PAP, 0878425098, list price: \$12

551.2/3. Geysers. vii, 69 p. : col. ill., maps ; 23 cm.

Grades 6-10. Rating : 4.

*Geysers: What They Are and What They Do* is clearly written, giving its readers a thorough understanding of geysers, including how they relate to other geysers, how they differ from each other, and how human activity can change them. The book is copiously illustrated with black and white and color photos of geysers and geyser locations; each photo has a detailed caption.

Author T. Scott Bryan, a retired professor of geology who spent fourteen summers working in Yellowstone National Park, focuses his book on Yellowstone, "where there are more geysers than anywhere in the world." The book's small size, liberal use of illustration (there are often at least three photos per full page spread), and easy-to-read typeface makes it non-threatening for a school child to pick up; its simple language makes it easy for upper-elementary school students and older to understand.

The book briefly mentions that geysers are "young" geologically, and that they evolved "early in Earth's history." There are also brief mentions of plate

tectonics, and that some geyser systems are 250,000 years old.

*Geysers* contains a chart with the location and description of all known geyser fields, a two page glossary, and a one page bibliography. Difficult or unfamiliar words are defined in the text.

Rosemarie DiCristo

**Injeanuity / written by Ellen Warwick ; illustrated by Bernice Lum. (Planet girl.) Toronto : Kids Can Press, 2006.**

HBB, 1553376811, list price: \$12.95.

746.9/2. Denim; Textile crafts. 80 p. : ill. ; 19 cm.

Grades 6-12. Rating : 5.

Sewing and crafting have stepped up a level in this new book from the author of *Stuff for Your Space*. Appealing to the instinct to improve upon so-called designer styles, this book calls young ladies to use their imagination along with some good sewing skills to personalize their clothing and surroundings. As many girls this age are outgrowing the length of their jeans before their love of same, Ellen Warwick gives them a way to extend the life of their favorite items. Sewing on denim is not for the fainthearted, so this is definitely an older-child book. It encourages creativity while at the same time showing the need for measuring accurately and consistently as well as working slowly and patiently.

My seventh grader said "ugh" at the halter top pattern, but loved the other designs and patterns including the skirts, purse, crazy cuffs, and book cover. One of the great strengths of the book is the quirky illustrating by Bernice Lum, clear but cute. Photographs of finished products give the "artists" an ideal to shoot for.

Kelley Westenhoff

**Presenting Miss Jane Austen / May Lamberton Becker. LCCN 2005939019. Bathgate, N.D. : Bethlehem Books, 2006.**

PAP, 9781932350074, list price: \$13.95.

823.7. Austen, Jane, 1775-1817; Novelists, English --19th century --Biography. 179 p. : ill. ; 22 cm.

Grades 6-10. Rating : 3.

Originally published in 1952 but republished by Bethlehem Books in 2005, *Presenting Miss Jane Austen* is a lively biography of the English author that reads almost like one of Austen's novels. As a fact-driven biography suitable for a serious school report, it is somewhat lacking, since it doesn't provide much in the way of hard facts. But it's a wonderful way to get an overview of the flavor and excitement of Austen's life from birth to death, as well as a way to get a good feel for what Austen herself must have been like.

Author May Lamberton Becker is clearly a fan of Jane Austen, and just as clearly has spent much time researching Austen's life and times. (She also spent time in England researching the places Austen lived and visited). She quotes liberally from Austen's personal letters and the Austen family papers, providing a clear picture of 18th Century life, how Austen and her family fit into their time, and how all of this influenced Austen's novels. Through it all Becker provides much detail about the novels themselves, making them seem lively "must reads" for today's generation--and considering the number of Austen novels made into popular movies, *Presenting Miss Jane Austen* would probably interest many modern readers, although Becker's somewhat flowery style and her occasional wordiness might cause them to skim certain sections.

The book is illustrated with black and white drawings by Edward Price, which seem to reproduce actual photos of

Austen, her family, and the places they encountered.

Rosemarie DiCristo

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**Dear Miss Breed : true stories of the Japanese American incarceration during World War II and a librarian who made a difference / by Joanne Oppenheim ; foreword by Elizabeth Kikuchi Yamada ; afterword by Snowden Becker. LCCN 2004059009. New York : Scholastic, 2006.**

HBB, 0439569923, list price: \$22.99.

940.53/1773. Breed, Clara E.—Correspondence; Japanese American children—Correspondence; World War, 1939-1945—Children—United States; World War, 1939-1945—United States; World War, 1939-1945—Japanese Americans; Japanese Americans—Evacuation and relocation, 1942-1945. 287 p. : ill. ; 27 cm.

Grades 5-9 (Grades 10-Adult). Rating : \*5.

After the attack on Pearl Harbor during World War II, the Japanese Americans on the West Coast were incarcerated in concentration camps. This engrossing book, *Dear Miss Breed*, tells how one San Diego children's librarian sent her love via letters, books, and necessities to her imprisoned young patrons, and wrote articles to awaken the American public to the tragedy. This story is based on those letters and the students' answering mail, as well as eye-witness testimony given during the 1981 congressional hearings into the incarceration of Japanese Americans during WWII. Also included are interviews with many of the adults who were Miss Breed's children. Maps, photos, and drawings from that era, documents, newspaper items, and other illustrations add immeasurably to the narrative. An interesting sidelight is the author's translations of government double talk into understandable American — much is relevant for today.

Child development expert and award winning children's author Joanne Oppenheim builds *Dear Miss Breed* carefully, accurately, captivatingly. Her research is fully annotated with interesting footnotes, and an alluring bibliography. Many books have been written on this subject, but *Dear Miss Breed* stands above most others. Not only does it tell of how the Japanese children fared; it also tells of many people who helped, as well as those who didn't. The numerous letters with their accompanying photos pull the reader right into the situation. Interesting side issues are included, for example the replications of racially discriminating WWII cartoons, and the many references to helpful churches and incarcerated Japanese Christians.

Historically important, *Dear Miss Breed* is relevant to much of what is happening to today. Mentors will want to be ready to answer hard questions after students read this volume. It leaves us wondering if it can happen again, and to whom. But *Dear Miss Breed* is not just for students; older readers will also find it engrossing. I heartily recommend this book for all school, public, and church libraries — for all thinking people.

Donna Eggett

**East Asia / Douglas A. Phillips. (Modern world cultures.) LCCN 2005010041. Philadelphia : Chelsea House, 2005.**

HBB, 0791081486, list price: \$30.00.

950. East Asia. vii, 128 p. : ill. ; 24 cm.

**South Asia / John E. Benhart and George M. Pomeroy. (Modern world cultures.) LCCN 2005012085. Philadelphia : Chelsea House, 2005.**

HBB, 0791081478, list price: \$30.00.

954. South Asia. vii, 120 p. : ill. ; 24 cm.

**Southeast Asia / Douglas A.**

**Phillips. (Modern world cultures.) LCCN 2005010043. Philadelphia : Chelsea House, 2005.**

HBB, 0791081494, list price: \$30.00.

959. Southeast Asia. vii, 129 p. : ill. ; 24 cm.

**Africa south of the Sahara / Joseph Oppong. (Modern world cultures.) LCCN 2005010039. Philadelphia : Chelsea House, 2005.**

HBB, 079108146X, list price: \$30.00.

967. Africa, Sub-Saharan. vii, 124 p. : ill. ; 24 cm.

**Australia and the Pacific / Elizabeth J. Leppman. (Modern world cultures.) LCCN 2005010040. Philadelphia : Chelsea House, 2005.**

HBB, 0791081508, list price: \$30.00.

994. Oceania; Australia. vii, 118 p. : ill. ; 24 cm.

Grades 6-12. Rating : 4.

In the Modern World Culture series, ten culture regions are presented. Charles F. ("Fritz") Gritzner, a geography professor at South Dakota State University, is the series consulting editor, but an authority on each particular area of the world has edited specific titles. Although chapter titles may vary, each book includes information about the following: an overview, natural landscapes, history, population, culture, government, economics, and the future. Charles Gritzner ties the series together with an introductory essay, which defines geography, culture, and region. Each book is complemented with colored photos and maps. Extensive bibliographic reference materials are appended for websites, timelines, and further reading. A detailed index is also included.

This series provides an overview of a particular world region, which has been determined by one or more unifying



elements: language, religion, or economic activity. This is regional coverage, not specific country coverage. Most useful for school research, the series is well written, not encyclopedic. The information presented is factual and accurate. Some small editing errors occur in legends for some maps: capital letters are missing in several labels, and an inconsistency of middle initial of an author on a cover and title page. There are geologic and human development references to thousands of years. Bold headings in red or green or blue add to the usefulness for research. The strengths of the series are its being current (mentions the late 2004 tsunami); its willingness to include tough topics such as overpopulation, poverty, religious and ethnic conflicts; and its presentation of multi-faceted positions. The final chapter, about the future of the region, its problems, challenges, and the role in a global society, is especially thoughtful. Very useful for school and home school readers doing reports.

*Marion Mueller*

**Understanding the Holy Land : answering questions about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict / Mitch Frank. LCCN 2004014973. New York : Viking, 2005.**

HBB, 0670060321, list price: \$17.99.

956.9405. Arab-Israeli conflict. 152 p. : ill., maps ; 23 cm.

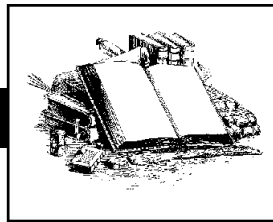
Grades 6-10. Rating : 5.

Using direct questions, Mitch Frank, a *Time* magazine reporter, asks tough questions to get straight answers to the ongoing conflict between the Palestinians and the Israelis. He points out that the conflict is an ethnic and religious conflict that is older than the modern state of Israel. In 1947 the United Nations split Palestine into two nations: one for the Jews and another for

the Palestinians. The Jews claim Israel is their ancestral home, but few were living there until the new nation was created. Palestinians were the main inhabitants, and they moved to Palestine in the seventh century. Christians, Jews, and Muslims claim Palestine as a holy area. Frank asks about the beginning of the conflict, the founding of Israel, and Arab reaction to the founding. He identifies the PLO, Intifada, and the Oslo peace process; he wonders what it is like to be an Israeli or a Palestinian today, and what the world thinks of the conflict. Lastly he asks why peace is so hard. Black and white photographs and maps illustrate the book. A timeline beginning in 1900 B.C.E. extending through July 2004 is appended. Also included are a glossary, bibliography, and appendix.

This title should be required reading for classes dealing with contemporary Israel. Or, anyone pontificating about the conflict should read this book before voicing uninformed opinions. Church Bible study groups could benefit also. Mr. Frank clearly and lucidly answers each of the questions he poses, and presents a many-faceted answer, not favoring any of the parties. The only negative, the coverage stopped before some of the more recent events: Arafat's death, the election of the Hamas government by the Palestinians, and Sharon's illness and replacement. But, then, it is the background to the conflict, not the immediate events that are most helpful. Very deserving of the awards it has received: Best Books for Young Adults, Notable Children's Books, and Notable Social Studies Books.

*Marion Mueller*



**Among the gods / Lynn Austin.**  
**(Chronicles of the kings ; 5.)**  
**LCCN 2006008821.**  
**Minneapolis : Bethany House,**  
**2006.**

PAP, 0764229931, list price: \$12.99.

Fic. Manasseh, King of Judah—Fiction; Bible.  
 O.T. Kings—History of biblical events—Fiction;  
 Israel—Kings and rulers—Fiction. 347 p. ; 22  
 cm.

Adult. Rating : 4.

When evil King Manasseh desecrates the Promised Land, Joshua, along with 300 priests and Levites, escape to the Egyptian island of Elephantine where they establish an alternate Israel "Among the Gods." While many accept their exile as God's will, Joshua rails at God and strives for revenge against Manasseh to the detriment of his personal peace and relationships with those closest to him. As Israel falls to Assyria and Manasseh is taken away in chains, Joshua discovers that if he is to ever be reconciled to Israel, God, and family, he must sacrifice the anger that drives him toward that very goal on the altar of God's mercy and grace.

This historical novel transports the reader 2700 years in the past to Israel during the time of King Manasseh's reign. In a masterful stroke, Lynn Austin uses the archaeological discovery of Jewish activity in Egypt on Elephantine Island as a backdrop for dealing with big issues, like anger, forgiveness, family, and faith in God through difficult trials. Her characters are well-developed, and her scenes are vivid, but action is often interspersed by lengthy sections of narrative summary that sometimes seep into scenes and compromises the sense of immersion in the past, as do occasional lapses into modern vernacular, such as when Nathan responds to his friend Saul, "Yeah, so what."

Overall this is a great novel written with a strong, spiritual voice that will satisfy

the reader with biblical themes and lessons that touch the heart and have the capacity to produce a better understanding of faith and enrich their relationship with God. The novel is one in the series "Chronicles of the Kings," but can be read separately as a complete novel. It will certainly tempt one to read the other books.

*William Patrick Davis*

**Child of the mist / Morgan,**  
**Kathleen. (These highland hills ;**  
**1.) LCCN 2004020704. Grand**  
**Rapids : Revell, 2005.**

PAP, 080075963X, \$12.99.

Fic. Highlands (Scotland)—Fiction; Scotland—  
 History—16th century—Fiction; Love stories;  
 Christian fiction; Historical fiction. 332 p. ; 22  
 cm.

Adult. Rating : 4.

*Child of the Mist*, a historical fiction story by Kathleen Morgan, takes place in sixteenth century Scotland. To end the feud between MacGregor and Campbell clans, Alastair MacGregor arranges for his daughter Anne to be handfasted to Niall Campbell for a year in a kind of "trial marriage." Because of Niall's mourning his first wife and Anne's principles, they keep their relationship pure but gradually grow to love one another as they lose their prejudices. Many in the Campbell clan are suspicious of Anne and her herbal healing, calling her a witch. Niall, informed of a traitor, is suspicious of his cousin Iain, who is attracted to Anne. Truth is revealed as the story unfolds.

The story is suspenseful as many obstacles arise, causing friction between Niall and Anne, Anne and the other Campbells, and Niall and Iain. Both Niall and Anne have the fiery and bold temperaments associated with the Scots and Irish. While their tongues sometimes get them into trouble, they also have the ability to stand

unwaveringly to their principles and ideas. The dialogue shows the old Scottish manner of speech; the reader can almost hear a brogue.

Although there are many intermittent references to God and faith, the Christian message is subtle, none of the characters showing significant growth. The development of the romance places a lot of emphasis on physical attraction. Although it is clear that recognizing character plays some part in the romance, a little more emphasis on tenderness and friendship would have enhanced it.

*Susan Joy Clark*

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**Crusade of tears / C.D. Baker.**  
**(The journey of souls ; 1.) LCCN**  
**2004008421. Colorado Springs :**  
**RiverOak, 2005.**

PAP, 1589190092, list price: \$14.99.

Fic. Children's Cursade, 1212—Fiction;  
 Historical fiction; Christian fiction. 632 p. ; 22  
 cm.

**Quest of hope / C.D. Baker. .**  
**(The journey of souls ; 2.) LCCN**  
**2005275479. Colorado Springs :**  
**RiverOak, 2005.**

PAP, 1589190114, list price: \$14.99.

Fic. Children's Cursade, 1212—Fiction;  
 Historical fiction; Christian fiction. xiii, 496 p. ;  
 22 cm.

**Pilgrims of promise / C.D. Baker.**  
**(The journey of souls ; 3.) LCCN**  
**2005021567. Colorado Springs :**  
**RiverOak, 2005.**

PAP, 1589190149, list price: \$14.99.

Fic. Children's Cursade, 1212—Fiction;  
 Historical fiction; Christian fiction. xii, 500 p. ;  
 22 cm.

Adult. Rating : \*5.

In the year 1212, children across Germany and France leave their homes and travel towards Jerusalem. These children believe that through their

innocence and purity they can rescue the holy city from its Muslim captors. The Journey of Souls series follows the family of Heinrich of Weyer through their adventures, tragedies, and joys.

*Crusade of Tears* focuses on siblings Wil, Karl, and Maria as well as those who joined them when they left Weyer, Germany, for Jerusalem. Pieter, a former priest and wanderer, sees Wil's small band of crusaders and gently tries to turn them back home. Failing that, he joins the crusaders and tries to help them survive the journey. The tattered group braves various trials with resilient dispositions and determination.

*Quest of Hope* is Heinrich of Weyer's story. When Heinrich chooses to put his conscience above the law, his community and the Catholic Church harshly punish him. As Heinrich finds that no amount of penance makes him feel forgiven, he ends up on a crusade of his own that takes him far from Weyer. However, though the journey takes him far, he ends up closer to his family than he imagined.

*Pilgrims of Progress* concludes the Journey of Souls series by C.D. Baker. After a narrow escape from slavery, Wil, his band of crusaders, and a group of crusaders wishing to return home join Heinrich and Pieter in Genoa, Italy. Before the weary children can travel north, they must find a place to rest, heal, and pass the winter. Once again, the children accompanied by Heinrich and Pieter encounter various adventures, meet once again with tragedy, and greet tragedy's wake with hope and determination.

C.D. Baker's series, The Journey of Souls, progresses slowly at first as Baker introduces characters and unfolds their backgrounds. Extensive details enrich the setting and paint a detailed portrait of the joys, trials, and tragedies of medieval times. Joyful moments

provide respite from the stress endured by the very well developed characters. A splattering of medieval words sometimes slows the otherwise well-paced, natural dialogue, but Baker includes a glossary of unfamiliar terms at the end of each book. Occasionally characters say, "Mein Gott," as an expression of surprise or dismay. Baker sensitively deals with what prompts the character's actions and writes masterfully about the hope that lifts the soul in the midst of lives sabotaged by tragedy. "It would seem our miseries were but heavy labors of a worthy Gardener, working and kneading God's soil into our hard, barren hearts." p. 438

*Kristina Wolcott*

**The election / Jerome Teel. LCCN 2006048566. West Monroe, La. : Howard Books, 2006.**

PAP, 1582295778, list price: \$12.99.

Fic. Suspense fiction; Legal fiction. iv, 364 p. ; 21 cm.

Adult. Rating : 3.

Vice President Edward Burke has steadily risen through the political ranks and will stop at nothing to become president. Opposing candidate, Mackenzie Foster, Christian and Senate majority leader, labors to run an honest political race, while protecting his family from the media. Jesse Thompson, a wealthy business man who owns everything in the small town of Jackson, Tennessee, from cattle to most of the judges, is killed by an assassin's bullet. Jed McClellan, an everyday African American citizen of Jackson who is swindled by Thompson, is blamed for his murder. Jake Reed, McClellan's attorney, is torn between Christian values and the struggle for money and power. Claudia Duval, resident of Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, and her lover, a questionable

real estate developer, are being investigated by the FBI. Randolph Winston, Pierce Montgomery, and Milton McAdams, of lower Manhattan, form a conglomerate that shares worldwide controlling interests in the Internet, media, and banks, as well as an indomitable lust for ultimate power.

*The Election* by Jerome Teel is a Christian legal thriller. Teel's first novel is a successful start. Despite the plethora of characters and location changes that make it difficult to follow the plot, he presents an intriguing narrative. Teel effectively shows the high powered, political lifestyle, both fast-paced and passion driven. Rapid scene changes, reminiscent of news clips that quickly zoom into and out of the lives of the characters, intimate depth, yet miss a three dimensional representation. At times, dialogue is stiff. Recommended for public libraries.

*Kim Harris*

**Flight to Eden / Douglas Hirt. (Cradleland chronicles ; 1.) LCCN 2004024088. Colorado Springs, Colo. : RiverOak, 2004.**

PAP, 158919053X, list price: \$14.99.

Fic. Noah (biblical figure)—Fiction; Eden—Fiction; Fantasy fiction; Christian fiction. 507 p. : map ; 22 cm.

**Quest for Atlan / Douglas Hirt. (Cradleland chronicles ; 2.) LCCN 2005019676. Colorado Springs, Colo. : RiverOak, 2005.**

PAP, 1589190440, list price: \$14.99.

Fic. Noah (biblical figure)—Fiction; Eden—Fiction; Fantasy fiction; Christian fiction. 506 p. : map ; 22 cm.

**The fall of the Nephilim / Douglas Hirt. (Cradleland chronicles ; 3.) LCCN 2005910802. Colorado Springs, Colo. : RiverOak, 2005.**

PAP, 1589190459, list price: \$14.99.

Fic. Noah (biblical figure)—Fiction; Eden—Fiction; Fantasy fiction; Christian fiction. 512

p. : map ; 22 cm.

Adult (Grades 9-12). Rating : 5.

Douglas Hirt's *Cradleland Chronicles* blends myth, legend, fairytale, and biblical truth to create a fascinating post-Fall, pre-flood world, where already man has drifted from the true knowledge of the Creator, and Satan spreads his lie of making men into gods. *Flight to Eden* begins the tale with Lamech and his wife Mishah, descendants of Seth, boldly proclaiming the truth of the Creator in the city of the Oracle (Satan). For this offense Lamech is imprisoned and sentenced to years of hard labor building the temple of the Oracle. Mishah, pregnant with Noah, must flee the Oracle and protect her unborn son through whom will come the Redeemer and the salvation of mankind.

In book two, *Quest for Atlan*, Noah, sheltered for a time by the Creator in the Garden of Eden, must find refuge now on the island of Atlan. The island, however, is ruled under the iron fist of the evil Zorin; Rhone, the rightful ruler, must fight to take back Atlan and restore it to a place of peace, safety, and the truth of the Creator so that Noah might be protected from the Evil One as Noah builds the ark. Meanwhile, the Oracle continues his quest to deceive all of mankind into thinking they can become gods. Knowing that the Redeemer will be born of a pure and godly woman, the Oracle's goal is to pollute the entire human race with his own blood through his "children," and thus prevent the birth of the Redeemer. The Oracle begins breeding his offspring from fallen angels and the daughters of men, producing the gigantic Nephilim, the next race of mankind.

By book three, *The Fall of the Nephilim*, almost everyone's family line has been tainted in some way with Neph blood. Only a few of the true believers remain untouched. The Oracle knows that the

destruction of mankind—and his offspring—is imminent in the Flood, and only Noah stands in the way of his plan. By providing the Nephilim with a secret technology, the Oracle begins evacuating the Nephilim to the safety of the moon. Noah battles his way through disobedience and spiritual struggles, but by command of the Creator remains untouched by the Oracle and completes the ark, preserving his family. The planet Rahab is cleft to the core, and the ensuing break-up pummels the moon and the earth, effectively destroying the Nephilim, altering the protective veil around earth, and breaking up the fountains of the deep, causing the Flood.

Although speculative in nature, Hirt's trilogy is based on many verses in scripture, and he offers a substantive list of study questions at the end of each book, requiring the reader to consider the story from a biblical perspective. Hirt presents an anti-Darwinian, anti-caveman view of creation. Hirt's premise is that having come so recently from the hand of his Creator, man is at the peak of his intelligence. The series illustrates how man's slow devolution in strength, intelligence, creativity, and length of life, along with degradation of creation, is a result of sin.

This substantive series gives plausible explanations for obscure Bible verses, and the origin of many myths, world religions, astrology, and the like. Although fictional, Hirt creates a world that is convincing and believable—a world that is both familiar to us, and yet delightfully foreign. His characters are well developed and the story is full of adventure, suspense, and intriguingly described spiritual warfare. Readers who have read the scriptures and been tantalized by the "what ifs" will definitely enjoy this series which is grounded in biblical truth, yet inventive in scope.

Sherri Beeler

**The hammer of God / by Bo Giertz. LCCN 2004025013. Minneapolis : Augsburg Books, 2005, 1960.**

PAP, 080665130X, list price: \$17.99.

Fic. Christian fiction. 335 p. ; 22 cm.

Adult. Rating : 4.

Presented in three novellas, *The Hammer of God* presents the dilemma of three separate Swedish Lutheran pastors serving in the same area of Sweden in three different time periods. Each pastor has to personally deal with his shortcomings as a Christian, while dealing with the complexities of serving people who are looking for answers, but not necessarily willing to follow God's truth and way. What could have interesting, yet perhaps a little didactic, if presented as non-fiction, the book's theme is instead presented as compelling fiction. Translated from the original Swedish, this revised edition includes a newly translated chapter, which is somewhat biographical of the original author, Bo Giertz, who also struggled with his perceived inadequacies as a Christian and pastor.

By no means is this book light reading—it is thought provoking, as it presents the material how God shapes his people into his chosen vessels. God hammer, as the novellas reveal, relentlessly works away at the stony ground of our hearts, eventually clearing away the hardness so his word may flourish in the soil of our soul. This book speaks about the regeneration of faith, and speaks to anyone who has struggled with his or her walk of faith. There is an index of subjects, along with introductory notes on each novella's theme, plus extended biography notes on the author.

Pam Webb

**A hilltop in Tuscany / Stephanie Grace Whitson. (Sequel to: A garden in Paris.) LCCN 2005032032. Minneapolis : Bethany House, 2006.**

PAP, 0764229362, list price: \$12.99.

Fic. Americans-Italy-Fiction; Mothers and daughters-Fiction; Widows-Fiction; Tuscany (Italy)-Fiction. 301 p. ; 22 cm.

Adult (Grades 9-12). Rating : 3.

Liz Davis is a woman who knows what she wants, and she'll do anything to get it. It is this attitude that has gotten her everything she ever wanted. But her world begins to unravel when she discovers incriminating files on her father's computer. Then her fiancé Jeff wants to accept a promotion that would require they leave the world that she has so carefully built. When Liz is notified that her mother has been injured in Italy, she gets on a plane without thinking. While in Italy, Liz is forced to come to terms with who she is and who she wants to be.

*A Hilltop in Tuscany* is a classic tale of redemption and forgiveness. Stephanie Grace Whitson breathes new life into this ageless story and never leaves the reader feeling bored or as if the story is predictable. Whitson brings her characters to life with easy dialogue and her words paint a picture in the mind's eye that leave you able to clearly see everything the characters see. Woven into nearly every page is the theme of redemption and that there is nothing that the cross won't cover if you only come to Christ. By the end of the novel, the reader is left feeling blessed and built up by the changes that occur in the lives of the characters.

Amanda Ottaway

**Interior motives / Ginny Aiken. (Deadly decor mysteries ; 3.) LCCN 2006007967. Grand Rapids : Fleming H. Revell, 2006.**

PAP, 0800730461, list price: \$12.99.

Fic. Women interior decorators-Fiction; Mystery fiction. 271 p. ; 22 cm.

Adult (Grades 10-12). Rating : 4.

Third in the Deadly Décor Mystery series, *Interior Motives* by Ginny Aiken places the protagonist, Haley Farrell, in the path of yet another slippery, nefarious crook. While managing the antiques auction house she inherits from a friend, Haley finds her true niche as an interior designer. During one of her designing sessions, she meets Darlene, the dignified owner of an elegant Victorian mansion, in desperate need of restoration. When Darlene asks Haley to interview for the job, she eagerly accepts. Haley arrives at the mansion early, full of enthusiasm and grandiose ideas, only to find that her prospective client has just died. Previously diagnosed with terminal cancer, Darlene's death appears sadly natural. Although the police find no signs of foul play, Haley is convinced that Darlene's death was, in actuality, a murder. Haley's "helpers" include Bella, a clumsy, but loveable private investigator neighbor; Bella's two feisty cats; Lila Tsu, karate cop extraordinaire who seems bent on constant confrontation with Haley; and Dutch, the building contractor whose teasingly abrasive manner is chipping away at her heart. Despite discouraging setbacks, Haley manages to investigate two greedy, indolent sons; a kindly nurse, who inherits the entire estate; a devious doctor, a femme-fatale psychotherapist; and the husband with Alzheimer's. Her gift for snooping proves that things aren't always as they first appear. Puns abound in this slapstick cozy mystery. Plot, despite intermittent fractures, moves fairly seamlessly. Dialogue is entertaining and believable. Recommended for public libraries.

Kim Harris

**Light from heaven / Jan Karon. (The Mitford years ; 8.) LCCN 2005043479. New York : Viking, 2005.**

HBB, 0670034533, list price: \$26.95.

Fic. Clergy-Fiction; Episcopalians-Fiction; Church membership-Fiction; Mitford (N.C. : Imaginary place)-Fiction; North Carolina-Fiction; Christian fiction. xii, 384 p. ; 24 cm.

Adult (Grades 9-12). Rating : 5.

In the final installment of Jan Karon's At Home in Mitford series, the reader is once again swept away into this idyllic community. Referring to Mitford as "home" is an apt description to the many loyal followers, fond of this literary hamlet. Here problems aren't as insurmountable, the pace of life is slower, and it's easy to imagine yourself as a resident intermingling with friends and neighbors at the supermarket, gas station, or church.

The same endearing storyline and affable characters that readers have grown to love throughout Karon's works return in *Light From Heaven*. Father Tim and Cynthia have agreed to spend the summer at Meadowgate Farm, house sitting for Hal and Marge Owen while they are gallivanting and seeing the world. Biding their time before taking a long, overdue trip to Ireland, the fresh perspective of farm life inspires Cynthia to begin a new Violet project and Father Tim agrees to rejuvenate a fledgling mountain parish. While at first dubious of who will arrive to attend services at the small, but well-maintained house of worship, he is once again surprised by the way God works and soon pours himself into his new flock. His quest to encourage the weary, witness to lost souls, befriend the friendless, and care for the needy, further endears readers to this kind-hearted minister of the gospel.

Throughout *Light From Heaven*, the loose ends left undone from previous installments are finally tied together cohesively, leaving the reader with the

feeling that all is right in the world. Fiction lends itself to reality when Karon's characters show the need for a Savior, the necessity to display trust and forgiveness, to be faithful in prayer, and rejoice in blessings and answers to prayer.

This work of contemporary fiction brings a breath of fresh air and a new perspective for all those needing to escape from the cares of this world and find themselves in the pages of Mitford.

*Sarah Jo Burkhead*

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**Madman / by Tracy Groot.**  
**LCCN 2005032108. Chicago :**  
**Moody Publishers, 2006.**

PAP, 0802463622, list price: \$12.99.

Fic. Bible. N.T.—History of biblical events—Fiction; Mystery fiction. 314 p. ; 22 cm.

Adult. Rating : \*5.

Tallis, a philosopher's servant, sets out to discover why a promising Greek academy seems suddenly to have disappeared. His inquiries, met by residents with fearful suspicion, reveal that one teacher has been murdered, one has committed suicide, another has joined a local cult, and one of the students has become a madman. Tallis stays in a small inn, near the Sea of Galilee, where the innkeeper, his daughter, and a young servant boy hold secrets that could unlock the truth Tallis seeks. He is plagued by past nightmares and frequent run-ins with the demoniac who haunts the town graveyard.

*Madman* by Tracy Groot is a suspenseful, historical fiction account of the Gerasene demoniac written about in Mark chapter 5 of the Bible. In her third novel, playwright and novelist Tracy Groot uses corresponding archival documentation to weave in accounts of the atrocities committed by devout

Maenad followers of Dionysus' Bacchanalia religion, sacrifices, and festivals. Expressing the horror of demon possession with authority and great sensitivity, Groot paints a vivid picture of a man, as well as his surrounding community, consumed by demonic oppression. Although some readers may take offense at the characters' penchant for swearing by the local deities, these colloquialisms also contribute a flavor of authenticity. Writing style is lyrical, appropriately intense, and uses dialogue that effortlessly moves the story forward. Highly recommended for both public libraries and Christian fiction collections.

*Kim Harris*

**On the run / Lorena McCourtney.**  
**(An Ivy Malone mystery ; 3.)**  
**LCCN 2005016515. Grand**  
**Rapids : Fleming H. Revell, 2006.**

PAP, 0800759567, list price: \$12.99.

Fic. Women detectives—Fiction; Organized crime—Fiction; Older women—Fiction; Oklahoma—Fiction; Christian fiction. 317 p. ; 22 cm.

Adult (Grades 10-12). Rating : 4.

Little old lady (LOL) Ivy Malone is on the loose with another mystery, but in her third book she is more or less on the run. Lorena Mc Courtney has her intrepid LOL sleuth camped out in an RV as a caretaker of an empty house and a lot of emus. Helping her is Abilene, a young woman who is running away from her abusive husband. Together they accidentally discover an apparent double suicide when they go inquire about work at the reclusive Northcutts. But did the Northcutts commit suicide, or did someone commit murder? Ivy Malone, with the help of new friend Abilene, will attempt to find out, that is in between searching for gold coins and hatching emu eggs.

Move over Mrs. Pollifax, you've got company in the unpredictable and resourcefulness department of sleuthing. For those who appreciate a mystery, and like their characters real, with a bit of charm and quirk thrown in, then Lorena McCourtney's Ivy Malone mystery series is one to investigate. The writing is lively, and definitely not formulaic. While the plotline works off the other books, the gaps are filled in along the way, and the reader looks forward to the next book to find out if the Braxtons or Boone catches up with Ivy and Malone. McCourtney's references to other mystery writers almost seems self-promoting at times, though it seems to work, since Ivy is art imitating art. The references to faith are handled well and don't detract from the pacing too much, making this a read mystery lovers, especially those of LOL sleuths, should enjoy.

*Pam Webb*

**A perilous proposal / by Michael Phillips.** **(Carolina cousins ; 1.)**  
**L C C N 2 0 0 5 0 0 5 2 3 5 .**  
**Minneapolis : Bethany House,**  
**2005.**

PAP, 0764200410, list price: \$12.99.

Fic. Reconstruction (U.S. history, 1865-1877)—Fiction; Women plantation owners—Fiction; Female friendship—Fiction; Plantation life—Fiction; Race relations—Fiction; Young women—Fiction; Racism—Fiction; North Carolina—Fiction. 347 p. ; 22 cm.

Adult. Rating : 5.

Jake was eight when his father left the plantation. The overseer tells Jake that his daddy left because he couldn't stand the sight of Jake any more. Later, he and his mama are sold to a new master. When Jake is twelve he delays in following his master's order and his mama tries to cover for him. In doing so she puts herself in harm's way. When Jake discovers the danger, he kills the white man who is trying to rape his

mama. After his mama dies from her injuries, Jake runs away. He eventually joins up with a unit from the Northern army during the Civil War. When he decides to quit running, he goes looking for his father, whom he eventually finds. They reconcile.

Near the town where Jake's father lives there is a young white girl who has come to trouble of her own. She is trying to keep a plantation together with the help of a couple freed female slaves. Her parents have been killed by marauders, but Katie is determined to keep that information a secret. Jake and his father help the girls, and Jake falls in love with Mayme, one of the freed slaves. The unlikely group becomes like a family until night riders threaten their security and Jake's budding love for Mayme.

Phillips combines historical fiction and romance in *A Perilous Proposal*, which is Book 1 in the Carolina Cousins series. The reader will feel Jake's emotions—his hurt, his hatred, and his love. Phillips deals sensitively with the difficult issues of rape, murder, and the injustices surrounding being a freed black following the Civil War. The reader will feel involved in the lives of Jake and the other characters in this hard-to-put-down book.

Jane Mouttet

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**Reluctant burglar / Jill Elizabeth Nelson. (To catch a thief ; 1.) LCCN 2006010874. Sisters, Ore. : Multnomah Publishers, 2006.**

PAP, 1590526864, list price: \$12.99.

Fic. Art thieves—Fiction; Art museums—Security measures—Fiction; Security systems—Fiction; Fathers—Death—Fiction; Romantic suspense fiction. 342 p. ; 21 cm.

Adult. Rating : \*5.

Desiree (Desi) Jacobs has an unusual job. She steals priceless artifacts from

clients; then returns them, revealing flawed security systems. Desi works for her father, Hiram Jacobs, an art expert and owner of a world renowned security company. During an out-of-town business trip, Hiram is murdered. FBI Special Agent Tony Lucano, an obnoxious man determined to prove that Hiram is an art thief, arrives to break the news to Desi. Although all of his instincts tell him that Desi must be a criminal, like her father, Tony's traitorous heart proclaims her innocence. After Desi's house is broken into, she discovers a crate of stolen paintings and a journal left by her father. Disillusioned by this obvious fall from grace of the strongest Christian man she has ever known, Desi tries to save Hiram's reputation by secretly returning the paintings to their rightful owners. In his journal, Hiram tells her to trust no one, except the one man she despises, Tony.

Dialogue is fresh and filled with lively interchanges. Plot is fast-paced. Action and suspense form the backdrop to an upbeat story with solid Christian values. *Reluctant Burglar*, a novel by Jill Elizabeth Nelson is the first book in the To Catch a Thief series. Nelson crafts believable, enjoyable characters who welcome reader scrutiny. Included is a meaty Reader's Guide, as well as an exciting lead-in to Desi and Tony's next adventure together. Highly recommended for public libraries.

Kim Harris

**The secret life of Becky Miller / Sharon Hinck. LCCN 2006007826. Minneapolis : Bethany House, 2006.**

PAP, 0764201298, list price: \$12.99.

Fic. Mothers—Fiction; Wives—Fiction. 298 p. ; 22 cm.

Adult. Rating : 5.

Becky Miller, though not the corporate

success her sister is, works on her teaching degree; is involved in her local church; has a wonderful husband; happy, healthy children, and supportive friends. For years she has volunteered to develop outreach programming at her church that leadership now recognizes merits a salaried position. Becky is even being interviewed by a local, prestigious magazine for a feature article on how she balances the challenges of family, work, and personal development. When the church's Board of Elders decides to interview for the job of women's program director from a list of applicants, not including Becky, life takes a jagged turn. The family computer breaks down and her seven-year-old son toasts Becky's only backup for a lengthy research paper, forcing her to take an incomplete in the class. Becky's husband loses his job and decides to trust God to show him the right job, even when cupboards, finances, and tempers are stretched thin. Becky's nine-month-old gets a severe ear infection, requiring surgery they can't afford.

*The Secret Life of Becky Miller*, a novel by Sharon Hinck, is Christian dramatic fiction that highlights many of the issues faced by today's homemakers and mothers in the church. In a heart-warming, real-life style, Hinck draws the reader into Becky's world of laughter, tears, and a growing submission to God's plan for her life. Interspersed with entertaining daydream adventures, Becky's tale resonates with authenticity and the human need to find reason and self-worth. Recommended for public libraries and all Christian fiction collections.

Kim Harris

**Stranded / Lorena McCourtney. (An Ivy Malone mystery ; 4.) LCCN 2006017014. Grand**

**Rapids : Fleming H. Revell, 2006.**

PAP, 0800731387, list price: \$12.99.

Fic. Older women—Fiction; Women detectives—Fiction; Malone, Ivy (Fictitious character)—Fiction; Mystery fiction. 318 p. ; 22 cm.

Adult. Rating : 4.

Retired librarian Ivy Malone is on the run from the vicious Braxton clan, who want her dead for her involvement in the incarceration of one of their murderous members. She, Koop, her cat, and Abilene, a young friend escaping from a vindictive, abusive husband, are headed out West in their motor home. When the RV's engine freezes on the outskirts of the small mining town of Hello, Colorado, they are stranded until repairs can be made. Chatting with one of the local gossips reveals that Hiram McLeod, resident entrepreneur with a shady past, has recently been murdered. Kelli, Hiram's niece and locals' most likely murder suspect, offers shelter for Ivy and Abilene until their vehicle is restored. The women eagerly accept, only to find they will be staying in the rickety, old Victorian in which Hiram was murdered.

Amid a comical theatrical production, mysterious arson, budding romances, and a trail of decorating disasters left from several of Hiram's failed marriages; spirited, tenacious Ivy becomes increasingly convinced that the list of murder suspects is anything but brief. Christian cozy mystery, *Stranded* by Lorena McCourtney, is the fourth book in the Ivy Malone Mystery series. McCourtney skillfully develops endearing characters that, in true red herring style, may or may not have committed the murder. Dialogue is believable and entertaining, lacking gore, with just enough intrigue to ensure reader involvement. Recommended for public libraries.

Kim Harris

**When the day of evil comes : a novel of suspense / Melanie Wells. LCCN 2004029822. Sisters, Ore. : Multnomah, 2005.**

PAP, 1590524268, list price: \$12.99.

Fic. Spiritual warfare—Fiction; Christian fiction. 317 p. ; 21 cm.

Adult. Rating : 4.

**The soul hunter : a novel of suspense / Melanie Wells. (Day of evil series ; 2.) LCCN 2006004900. Sisters, Ore. : Multnomah, 2006.**

PAP, 1590524276, list price: \$12.99.

Fic. Suspense fiction; Christian fiction. 319 p. ; 21 cm.

Adult. Rating : 4.

In *When the Day of Evil Comes* by Melanie Wells, psychology professor Dylan Foster is taken out of her comfort zone in a big way. She is caught in the middle of spiritual warfare involving a malicious gift-bearing demon named Peter Terry and at least one very discreet guardian angel. The suspense in the story builds steadily, but is balanced by a fun sense of humor interspersed throughout which totally catches one off guard. For example, when Terry infests Dylan's house with huge flies, Dylan comments that each of the creatures is the size of a small Volkswagen. "I could have painted daisies on it and sold rides to small children."

Dylan's character is well developed and endearing although it seems someone with a seminary degree should be just a little more knowledgeable about the Bible—especially in Book 2 *The Soul Hunter*. The supporting characters, which are basically the same in both books, are unique and unforgettable: a pale, hairless demon with a huge slash across his back, a suave charming funeral director boyfriend, a neurotic colleague, a clairvoyant little girl who talks to angels, just to name a few.

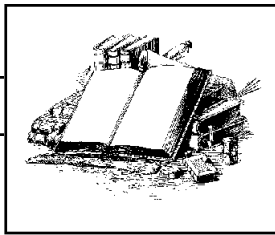
The moments of victory could have been stronger. Twice in Book 1 there are major spiritual victories that are glossed over to the point of being obscure. It also would have been good to have seen more spiritual growth in Dylan. She goes through incredible experiences and comes out pretty much the same as when she started.

The plot in both books may have been strengthened by having the spiritual beings hidden from the mortals, making the story more realistic.

However, all in all, the books are suspenseful, fun (in a creepy sort of way), thought provoking, and a general good read.

Heather MacInnis





**Cataloging correctly for kids : an introduction to the tools / edited by Sheila S. Intner, Joanna F. Fountain and Jane E. Gilchrist. 4th ed. LCCN 2005018838. Chicago : American Library Association, 2005.**

PAP, 0838935591, list price: \$32.00.

025.3/2. Cataloging of children's literature--United States. ix, 136 p. 23 cm.

Adult. Rating : 4.

For librarians, walking the fine line between user-friendly children's services and systematic cataloging and classification guidelines is becoming increasingly more difficult. It is crucial that young library users become acclimatized to basic cataloging tools that will aid them in locating useful information throughout their lives. *Cataloging Correctly for Kids: An Introduction to the Tools*. 4th ed. by Sheila S. Intner, et. al., is an updated guideline targeting children's special service concerns. Various professional committees, including Section's Cataloging of Children's Materials Committee, have contributed to this compilation of articles.

Subjects featured are: directory of vendors and how to employ them as cataloging resources for children's materials; fine tuning the automation of children's catalogs to improve their searching experience (i.e. spell checker, increased graphics, and kid-friendly search engines); cataloging a variety of children's non-book items (i.e. maps, puzzles, games, audio, and video); Library of Congress (LC) classification through application of the Annotated Card (AC) and Cataloging-in-Publication (CIP) programs, as well as Machine-Readable Cataloging (MARC) records; properly utilizing alternate classification systems, such as Sears List of Subject Headings and the Dewey Decimal Classification to customize

cataloging for specific collections; and tips on how to create a catalog that will benefit not only children, but also parents, teachers, and other adults who work with them. Includes brief biographical sketches of article authors, index, bibliography, and glossary of acronyms. Writing styles of concise, information packed articles are dry, but technically sound. Recommended for librarians working with beginning automated catalog users of all ages.

Kim Harris

**Mounce's complete expository dictionary of Old & New Testament words / William D. Mounce, general editor. LCCN 2006005245. Grand Rapids : Zondervan, 2006.**

HBB, 0310248787, list price: \$29.99.

220.3. Bible--Dictionaries; Greek language, Biblical--Dictionaries--English; Hebrew language--Dictionaries--English. xxvi, 1316 p. ; 24 cm.

Adult (Grades 10-12). Rating : 5.

*Vine's Expository Dictionary* has been a staple book on lay people's Bible reference shelves for decades. But the sciences of linguistics and interpretation have made advances over time, and a new work using those advances--and expressly created to replace *Vine's*--is now available from Zondervan. William Mounce's name is well recognized in American evangelicalism because his Greek textbooks are among the most popular available, so Zondervan approached him about producing this work. The new *Vine's*, then, is called *Mounce's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old & New Testament Words*.

Readers should be sure to read carefully through Mounce's valuable introduction and his word study instructions. He mentions some common interpretive fallacies that Bible interpreters must

avoid. Though he wrote the introductory material, busy professor Bill Mounce guided a large group of his Ph.D. students in completing the work. These advanced degree candidates have done a good job making their work accessible to those not trained in the biblical languages. That was the whole point of *Vine's*, and is the point of Mounce's as well.

The main dictionary is organized by English words. Underneath each English word is generally a definition and brief discussion of the Hebrew and Greek words which most commonly underlie it (often just one word from each language). That brief discussion often merely surveys the usage of the word, quoting examples from the Bible text and helping readers build up their own understanding of individual words. The work also includes a dictionary organized by Hebrew words, then a dictionary organized by Greek words. Goodrick-Kohlenberger and Strong's numbers are provided throughout for easy cross reference.

The typesetting is neat and the pages are thin like those of many Bibles, taking away from what would have given Mounce's an imposing heft.

Mark L. Ward

**The Baker encyclopedia of Bible people : a comprehensive who's who from Aaron to Zorishaddai / edited by Mark Water. . (.) LCCN 2006018462. Grand Rapids : Baker Books, 2006.**

PAP, 0801066042, list price: \$16.99.

220.9/2 or B. Bible--Biography--Encyclopedias. 492 p. ; 23 cm.

Adult. Rating : 5.

*The Baker Encyclopedia of Bible People: A Comprehensive Who's Who from Aaron to Zorishaddai* is much more than just a collection of

biographical sketches on the more than 2,000 people mentioned by name in the Bible. Mark Water has edited the book into a user-friendly format that gives the reader the option of quickly looking up a name to find its scriptural location, or spending time on a more in-depth study of some of the more significant people.

The book is divided into three parts. Parts One and Two cover people in the Old and New Testaments, respectively. Water groups people by topic, such as The First Humans, Job and His Comforters, Egypt: Arrival, Living and Exodus, King David and His Circle, and Israel's Kings. New Testament groups include Jesus' Enemies, The Apostle John and His Circle, Paul's Friends and Converts. Each grouping begins with a brief introduction and then each member's entry explains his or her significance, family connections, the meaning of the name, and an overview of the person's biblical record. A Bible study outline at the end of each entry provides the scriptural location of various aspects of the subjects' life.

Part 3 begins with a listing of all the names in the Bible. Water gives a very brief sentence about them, the meaning of their names, and a few Bible references about each one. This lets the reader quickly find a name and its location if that is all that is needed. The book can be used either as a basic reference or a bible study guide, and is written in an easy-to-read style.

Jeff Friend

**A Biblical case for an old earth / David Snoke. LCCN 2006009543. Grand Rapids : Baker Books, 2006.**

PAP, 0801066190, list price: \$14.99.

231.7/652. Bible and geology; Earth—Age. 223 p. : ill. ; 22 cm.

Adult. Rating : 4.

David Snoke, a physics professor at the University of Pittsburgh, says that studying science has led him to believe the earth is not young. His book, *A Biblical Case for an Old Earth*, seeks to show that an ancient earth is compatible with both the scientific evidence and a conservative, orthodox interpretation of the Bible. Snoke begins by questioning certain assumptions about biblical interpretation. Next, he lays out the scientific proof for an old earth. Then he wrangles with the thorny issues of animal death (was there death before Adam's fall?) and the flood of Noah (was it local or global?). Snoke then gives his interpretation of Genesis 1 and 2 and (in the appendix) his own literal translation of Genesis 1:1-12:7.

The scientific evidence Snoke presents for an old earth is very convincing, but his day-age interpretation of scripture has its own weaknesses. The writing is clear, and the tone is mild and never contentious. Still, for many readers this book may be quite a bombshell since it departs so radically from young earth creationism. This is a book to inspire much thought and discussion.

David Rainey.

**The great Jesus debates : 4 early church battles about the person and work of Jesus / Douglas W. Johnson. LCCN 2005032684. St. Louis, Mo. : Concordia Pub. House, 2005.**

PAP, 0758608624, list price: \$14.99.

232.09/015. Jesus Christ—History of doctrines; Church history—Primitive and early church, ca. 30-600. 187 p. ; 21 cm.

Adult (Grades 10-12). Rating : 5.

Thoughtful Christians want correct theology concerning the person, work, and life of Jesus Christ. Early Christians shared these same concerns. Present day heresies are frequently similar, or identical, to ancient false doctrines.

Study the Christological controversies of the young church, and better defend your faith today!

*The Great Jesus Debates: 4 Early Church Battles about the Person and Work of Jesus*, by Douglas W. Johnson, makes Christian history relevant to modern biblical error. Four chapter titles are: (1) The Gnostic and Marcionite Controversies: Irenaeus, (2) The Trinitarian Controversy: From Nicaea to Constantinople, (3) The Christological Controversy (4) The Controversy over Grace: Augustine and Pelagius. Two additional chapters summarize the technical terms, and apply them to your life today. The author notes the "...sifting process that winnowed out a host of varying false opinions...done on the basis of salvation by grace in Jesus Christ...." This study will help us "...come to grips with parallel questions in our own day."

Johnson mentions smile-worthy tidbits. For instance, during the Protestant Reformation, "...both sides claimed Augustine—but only a part of him." Emperor Constantine named a city, "...called, understandably, Constantinople." Early church father Irenaeus fought theological battles with the Gnostics, who "...seemed to grow up like mushrooms."

I appreciated the Glossary of Terms and references for each chapter. The former helps a novice student. The latter allows anyone to check the author's conclusions. All Christians should seriously study this topic. *The Great Jesus Debates* is a little book, with a big message!

Roberta Lou Jones

**Ten things I wish Jesus never said / Victor Kuligin. LCCN 2005035777. Wheaton, Ill. : Crossway Books, 2006.**

PAP, 1581347758, list price: \$14.99.

232.9/54. Jesus Christ—Teachings; Bible.  
N.T.—Gospels—Criticism, interpretation, etc.;  
Christian life—Biblical teaching. 297 p. ; 22 cm.

Adult. Rating : 4.

In *Ten Things I Wish Jesus Never Said*, author Victor Kuligin chooses ten “hard sayings” of Jesus—ten teachings that seem impossible to follow—and dissects them, not so that readers can better understand these teachings, but so that they can better apply them in their lives. Kuligin, a professor and author serving with the African Inland Mission in Namibia, portrays the Christian walk as a potentially difficult one, seeing his book as a necessary antidote to the modern church’s tendency to preach “Jesus lite.”

As might be expected from the book’s title, Kuligin writes bluntly, never muting his opinions or his hope that his book will be as provocative to readers today as Jesus’ teachings were to his original audience. (Kuligin’s first title, which he says Crossway voted down, was *Ten Things I Hate About Jesus*).

The bulk of the book covers what Jesus really meant when he commanded his followers to do such outrageous things as become poor in spirit, gouge out an offending eye, love their enemies, take up their cross daily, etc. Some topics may be controversial, including whether it is biblically correct to “ask Jesus into our hearts,” what the three misunderstandings about unlimited forgiveness are, and the various ways “do not judge” has been misunderstood and misapplied (including whether Christians are ever meant to judge). But Kuligin’s clear writing and his passion for his topic make his book a valuable must-read. Readers new to Christianity will be able to easily understand his points; long-time Christians should come away with new takes on familiar topics.

Rosemarie DiCristo

**The invisible war : what every believer needs to know about Satan, demons, and spiritual warfare / Chip Ingram. LCCN 2005025954. Grand Rapids : Baker Books, 2006.**

HBB, 0801012880, list price: \$19.99.

235/.4. Devil—Christianity; Spiritual warfare.  
189 p. ; 24 cm.

Adult. Rating : 3.

The author, Chip Ingram is a pastor and CEO of Walk Thru the Bible. This book on spiritual warfare is an attempt by the author to bridge the intellectual issues and the experiential issues vis-à-vis an exposition of the “armor of God” passage in Ephesians six. A stated attempt is also made to strike a balance between ignoring and over-emphasizing spiritual warfare. Many references are made to the Ingram’s experience with the supernatural in California. These are used to support the idea that verbal commands to demons can bring about deliverance.

With regard to spiritual warfare, Ingram believes that: there is an invisible world, Christians are involved in an invisible war, Satan is formidable, Christians should respect but not fear Satan, and Christians fight Satan from a position of victory won by Jesus.

This book is appropriate for personal study or for a small group and it is designed to be used in conjunction with a Bible. The book is only 189 pages because many biblical passages are given by reference only. The exposition of biblical passages is unencumbered by technical jargon or ancient languages. Each chapter has stimulating questions at the end which can aid group discussion.

David H. Wenkel

**The second coming : signs of Christ's return and the end of the**

**age / John F. MacArthur. LCCN 99030666. Wheaton, Ill. : Crossway Books, 2003, c1999.**

PAP, 158134757X, list price: \$14.99.

236/.9. Eschatology. 239 p. ; 23 cm.

Adult. Rating : 3.

John MacArthur, pastor of the Grace Community Church in California and prolific author, has written a straightforward study of the key biblical texts regarding the second coming of Christ, using a verse-by-verse analysis of the Olivet Discourse to show how it relates to Christ’s returning bodily to earth. MacArthur writes a clear sober book that fully addresses the topic without indulging in the sensationalism of some writings about the end times.

*The Second Coming* opens with an overview of the various viewpoints regarding the second coming, then clearly states—and backs up—MacArthur’s belief that premillennialism is the correct view, that the entire church will be raptured before the Tribulation, and that the seven year Tribulation must occur before Christ’s final, glorious return.

Topics include why Christ must return, whether his return is imminent (and what “imminent” means), what believers should do while they wait for the second coming, and the danger of foolish expectations. An entire chapter examines the judgment of the sheep and goats; two chapters pay special attention to the various signs of Christ’s return, focusing principally on the books of Daniel and Revelation.

MacArthur’s writing is simple enough to appeal to the average reader, although persons coming to the book looking for a sensationalistic treatment of the signs and pointers of the end times will be disappointed. The book includes a five page glossary and an eight page Scripture index.

Rosemarie DiCristo

**Overcoming sin and temptation : three classic works by John Owen / edited by Kelly M. Kopic and Justin Taylor ; foreword by John Piper. LCCN 2006015124. Wheaton, Ill. : Crossway Books, 2006.**

PAP, 1581346492, list price: \$19.99.

241/.3. Christian life—Puritan authors; Temptation; Sin—Christianity. 462 p. ; 23 cm.

Adult (Grades 10-12). Rating : 5.

"Be killing sin or it will be killing you," says John Owen in one of the works collected in *Overcoming Sin and Temptation*. John Owen was probably the greatest theologian of the Puritans, but his work is far from being irrelevant to readers almost 400 years later because believers of every age must "be killing sin." Owen was immensely concerned with daily holiness, and humbly submits his work for God's use in that regard. Holiness should be high on the list of priorities for all professing Christians, and this edition collecting a few of Owen's works on that topic is very useful in pursuing that priority.

*Overcoming Sin and Temptation* collects three of Owen's works, *Of the Mortification of Sin in Believers*, *Of Temptation: The Nature and Power of It*, and *Indwelling Sin*.

*Overcoming Sin and Temptation* is not exactly an abridgment, because none of the content has been changed or dropped—beyond helpful modernizations of spelling, usage ("you" for "thee," etc.), and punctuation. The addition on many pages of contemporary English glosses for archaic English terms is very much appreciated. Perhaps the biggest help for reading Owen is the modern paragraphing and typesetting (including headings supplied by the editors). The work also contains helpful introductions, a glossary, and subject and Scripture

indices. The editors also include outlines of Owen's included works, and these can be downloaded from the Internet and printed out.

All these reading helps cannot change the fact that Owen can be a difficult read. And yet he can be surprisingly direct, memorable, even witty: "He that is appointed to kill an enemy, if he leave striking before the other ceases living, does but half his work." But a consistent theme of the introductions is simply this: reading Owen is worth the effort.

Mark L. Ward

**Spiritual birthline: understanding how we experience the new birth / Stephen E. Smallman. LCCN 2005032715. Wheaton, Ill. : Crossway Books, 2006.**

PAP, 1581347626, list price: \$12.99.

248.2/4. Conversion—Christianity. 171 p. ; 22 cm.

Adult. Rating : 3.

Stephen Smallman has written *Spiritual Birthline* with two goals: to help readers better understand what it means to be born again, and to help them become "spiritual midwives"—learning to help others come to a Christian faith.

As opposed to books that focus on a biblical or theological understanding of new birth, Smallman addresses what conversions look like in the lives of real people, using personal experience stories as well as the Bible ("our divinely-given 'text book' for understanding how God works in the souls of those he calls to himself"). Among the points discussed: the difference between new birth and conversion; that being born again is a process that can take moments or decades; that only God can cause the "conception" of a new belief; what is the Holy Spirit's role in a person's "being saved;" and that a "conversion experience" is not as important as

evidence of a changed life.

There's a detailed study of Jesus' encounter with Nicodemus in John 3:1-8 as well as of Paul's teachings in 1 Corinthians 1. Smallman fully discusses his own nearly-thirty-year ministry in the Washington, D.C., area and his work with Charles Colson's Prison Fellowship. However, more than half the book concerns the "spiritual midwives" concept of helping others through the process of new birth.

This short book is clearly written, although it may confuse new Christians or casual Christians reading it on their own, as it sometimes slips into Christian-ese and it is heavy on Christian theory. Smallman says one of his audiences is youth workers, and the textbook tone—as well as the lesson plans for six-week and twelve-week classes using the book—seem to bear this out.

Rosemarie DiCristo

**The crime of living cautiously : hearing God's call to adventure / Luci Shaw. LCCN 2004029841. Downers Grove, Ill. : InterVarsity Press, 2005.**

HBB, 0830832807, list price: \$14.00.

248.4. Risk-taking (Psychology)—Religious aspects—Christianity. 140 p. ; 22 cm.

Adult. Rating : 3.

This book presents the author's personal reflections on living a life without fear and guided by God's promptings. Shaw stresses the need to take risks in life to break free of ruts and limitations. The book includes some of the author's poetry and includes questions for reflection and discussion at the end of each chapter.

There is no doubt that the author is a risk taker and an adventurer and thoroughly enjoys the challenges. Those who are seeking encouragement in tackling their fears will find inspiration in Shaw's

personal musings. The author also provides many biblical examples and scriptural references to reinforce her points about risk taking and overcoming fear.

While the author does caution readers to use discernment in risk taking ventures, she is zealous in her encouraging others to overcome risk and does not offer practical advice or guidance in overcoming fears. Overall, the book will provide a gentle nudge to those readers who are hovering on the verge of change, but afraid to do so.

*Shirley Copeland*

**Spiritual CPR / by Todd Phillips.  
LCCN 2004027329. Colorado  
Springs : NexGen, 2005.**

PAP, 0781442036, list price: \$14.99.

248/.5. Witness bearing (Christianity). 252 p. ; 22 cm.

Adult (Grades 10-12). Rating : 4.

Todd Phillips is an "expedition leader" through this Bible study book designed to help Christians critically understand private stumbling blocks to sharing the gospel. As an accountability guide, questions are posed for the readers to evaluate their own Christian development, devotion, cover-ups, and joys. The book also provides practical steps to developing a personal evangelism approach are reveal to the reader through the hidden power of each individual's story. Throughout this journey of "exploring excuses," the book highlights the "why" of our faith and it discusses different approaches to evangelism leading the reader to find an authentic influence for Christ.

Two helpful appendices full of resources, tips, and a reader's guide pull together all the evangelism information found in the body of this book. The text has compelling connections that will lead Christians to be better preachers,

teachers, and baptizers in the spirit. Recommended for readers wanting to ignite a passion in their lives for the witnessing the Gospel of Christ to unbelievers.

*Rebecca Cress-Ingebo*

**A mind for God / James Emery  
White. LCCN 2006004127.  
Downers Grove, Ill. : InterVarsity  
Press, 2006.**

HBB, 0830833927, list price: \$12.00.

261. Christianity--Philosophy; Thought and thinking--Religious aspects--Christianity. 125 p. ; 19 cm.

Adult. Rating : 4.

In *A Mind for God*, James Emery White makes a distinction between two "minds." One mind is naturalistic and godless. The Christian mind, however, is "a mind that operates under the belief that there is something outside of ourselves that we must take into account." White, the president of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, shows the importance of thinking in today's society. He also shows that thinking is a biblical thing to do. Books are required, so White talks about how to make time to read, how to discipline the mind, and how to instill a love of reading in children.

*A Mind for God* is a pleasure to read. The stories that the author tells are interesting; the statistics are current. The book is brief, but White manages to introduce a number of great thinkers and writers. The first appendix contains three helpful book lists. The second appendix offers a variety of resources for learning.

*David Rainey*

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**What has Christianity ever done  
for us? : how it shaped the**

**modern world / Jonathan Hill.  
LCCN 2005012103. Downers  
Grove, Ill. : InterVarsity Press,  
2005.**

HBB, 0830833285, list price: \$24.00.

270. Church history; Christianity and culture; Civilization, Western; Christianity--Influence. 192 p. : ill. (some col.), col. map ; 25 cm.

Adult. Rating : \*5.

Scholar and author Jonathan Hill succeeds overwhelmingly in his endeavor to present a detailed and objective articulation of Christianity's contributions to Western culture. Hill's intention is to concentrate on "the positive heritage of Christianity," forgoing an emphasis on or rationalization of the historical missteps of Christians. Examining areas of Christian influence including education, art, architecture, and social justice, Hill insightfully highlights the historical events and innovations that modern citizens, regardless of religious affiliation, can be grateful for.

While Hill discusses figures and events that may be familiar to most readers, he also sheds light on happenings many may not have realized were tied to Christianity. For example, in the chapter "Culture and Thought", Hill details how Martin Luther's draft of a German New Testament essentially produced the written and spoken language known today as modern German.

Covering both ancient and recent developments in a fresh and descriptive manner, Hill mixes scholarship and style in a way that preserves both the significance and the humanity of the events and people he discusses. A host of detailed, colorful illustrations from a variety of sources prove valuable companions to the text and are often accompanied by witty captions that also prevent the work from appearing needlessly serious.

Whether read for aid in serious research

or to satisfy a measure of curiosity, Hill's book is a highly informative and entertaining read that serves to give appropriate credence to the impact of Christianity on the Western world.

Aarik Danielsen

**Fundamentalism and American culture / George M. Marsden. LCCN 2005053920. New York : Oxford University Press, 2006.**

PAP, 0195300475, list price: \$16.95.

277.3/082. Christianity and culture—United States; Fundamentalism—United States. xvi, 331 p. ; 24 cm.

Adult (Grades 10-12). Rating : 5.

Many evangelicals have gained widespread respectability in the academic world, and Notre Dame historian George Marsden is certainly among the foremost of those scholars. His works have distinguished themselves as evenhanded, insightful, and well-written. *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, a recognized classic in the field, is no exception. This second edition adds to the 1980 original just one chapter, though a lengthy one, on developments in fundamentalism between 1980 and 2005—focusing especially on the way “fundamentalism” has exploded into American politics.

Marsden's book is not about “fundamentalism” as it is commonly referred to today, a narrow subculture within American Protestant evangelicalism. Neither does it concern the fundamentalisms in other religions which have received that name—and so much media attention—in the last several years. “Fundamentalism” in Marsden's book is the broader coalition of anti-modernists from the time surrounding the turn of the century (5). Marsden is respectful toward fundamentalism. He views it “not as a temporary social aberration, but as a genuine religious movement or tendency with deep roots

and intelligible beliefs” (5-6). He reaches back into the history of American evangelicalism/fundamentalism, focusing on the way Darwinism constituted an important watershed for the movement in the 19th century. American Protestantism split, with some rejecting Darwinism and the scientific establishment while others rejected the unity of truth and placed religion and science in separate spheres (very much like Schaeffer's higher and lower stories).

Marsden ties fundamentalism, as his title indicates, to the cultural influences which helped shape it, though he takes pains to disprove the once prevailing idea that fundamentalism was the product of social forces, people left behind in an era of change in a movement which would die out after a time (199ff.). His pages are filled with insight.

This book is truly essential for any Christian library. Marsden's book is mentioned quite often in related and even popular periodical literature.

Mark L. Ward, Jr.

**The little book of restorative discipline for schools : teaching responsibility, creating caring climates / Lorraine Stutzman Amstutz and Judy H. Mullet. (The Little books of justice & peacebuilding.) LCCN 2005018011. Intercourse, Pa. : Good Books, 2005.**

PAP, 1561485063, list price: \$4.95.

371.5. School discipline; Conflict management; Restorative justice; Teacher-student relationships. 87 p. ; 22 cm.

Adult. Rating : 4.

*The Little Book of Restorative Discipline for Schools* is long in title, slim in size, yet it is concentrated in its purpose: discipline that teaches responsibility and

creates a caring climate. The backbone of restorative discipline lies in this quote from the book "When we rely on rules rather than on relationships to guide our responses to harm, everyone loses." p.42

Both of the authors, Lorraine Stutzman Amstutz and Judy H. Mullet lend their expertise throughout the book, citing case examples to demonstrate how restorative discipline can make a difference in the school climate. This form of disciplinary action centers on communication with all those involved, from both sides of the issue, to the teacher and administration, to the school community and beyond. Through well-defined, and easy to understand applications, schools can apply these approaches to bullying, truancy mediations, and other troublesome school issues. A helpful selected resources section follows the endnotes.

School personnel are the target audience; however, any group could benefit from the applications, since they are based on non-controversial communication that builds relationships. This book could also be adapted for parenting skills.

Pam Webb

**Countryside cooking and chatting : traditional recipes and wisdom from the Amish \* Mennonites / contributed by readers of Die Botschaft and compiled by Lucy Leid. LCCN 2005036308. Scottdale, Pa. : Herald Press, 2006.**

SPR, 083619327X, list price: \$19.99.

641.5/66. Cookery, Mennonite; Cookery, Amish. 379 p. : ill. ; 22 cm.

Adult. Rating : 5.

*Countryside Cooking and Chatting: Traditional Recipes and Wisdom from the Amish and Mennonites*, compiled by

Lucy Leid, contains recipes, anecdotes, poems, and spiritual encouragement from North America's "Plain People." Contributors consist of readers of *Die Botschaft*, a weekly newspaper for Amish and Old Order Mennonite communities. Included are recipes for breakfast casseroles, breads and muffins, main dishes, soups, salads, desserts, beverages, as well as laundry and household remedies. Recipes are easy to read with understandable instructions. The majority comprise basic ingredients found in most kitchen cupboards. Main dishes generally feature dairy products, home-grown vegetables, and pork, poultry, or beef, with some flexibility for substitutions (i.e. Macaroni Casserole calls for "1 pound of any kind of cubed meat").

Particularly charming are the anecdotes about praising the Lord, despite the poor potato crop, or the pet crow getting into the breakfast left to cool until after chores; "Food to Prepare for a Barn Raising" enough to feed 180 men; and the "Plain Woman's Recipe for Weight Loss and Maintenance" that includes a recipe for "Slenderizing Soup." Although illustrations are limited to black and white pencil-style sketches, overall affect is warmly welcoming to beginners, as well as more seasoned cooks. Index included. Recommended for public libraries and as a foundation for personal cookbook collections.

Kim Harris

**In the kitchen with Mary & Martha : a cookbook featuring oodles of inspiration, recipes & tips.** Uhrichsville, Oh. : Barbour Publishing, 2005.

SRL, 1693108788, list price: \$19.95.

641.5973. Cookery, American. 213 p. : ill. ; 24 cm.

**In the kitchen with Mary & Martha : one dish wonders.**

**Barbour Publishing, 2006.**

SRL, 1597890111, list price \$14.97.

641.8/2. Casserole cookery; One dish meals.

224 p. : col. ill. ; 24 cm.

Adult (Grades 8-12). Rating : 3.

Simple, favorite recipes are the meat and potatoes of Rebecca Germany and Kelly Williams' cookbooks: no intricate gourmet delicacies or foreign-sounding dishes reside here. *In the Kitchen with Mary & Martha : A Cookbook Featuring Oodles of Inspiration, Recipes and Tips* contains the typical array of appetizers, beverages, breads, sweets, salads, soups, and entrees. *In the Kitchen with Mary & Martha : One Dish Wonders* focuses on snacks, slow-cookers, five ingredients or less, easy side dishes, and food on the run (fried bologna sandwiches, family size gyro, Amish peanut butter spread). Interspersed with the one-per-page, easy-to-read recipes are Scripture verses and tips like cleaning mixer beaters, presenting food as gifts, and accepting less-than-perfect results with grace. Both books have indices by name of recipe, substitution guides, and a one-page weight and measure table. The writing style is friendly and positive.

For beginning cooks, those who like popular homemade recipes like monkey bread, slush punch, hobo stew and chicken nuggets, and those who want quick, basic edibles, these cookbooks will serve well. Health considerations are scarce. Middle schoolers and up who know how to use a spatula and an oven will feel comfortable with most of the recipes.

Karen Schmidt

\*

**Peace child / Don Richardson. 4th ed. LCCN 2005013901.** Ventura, Calif. : Regal Books, 2005.

PAP, 0830737847, list price: \$15.99.

B or 266/.009951. Sawi (Indonesian people)—Missions. 256 p. : ill., maps ; 23 cm.

Adult (Grades 9-12). Rating : \*5.

In 1962, Don Richardson traveled across the world to share the gospel with the Sawi people of New Guinea. This cannibalistic jungle tribe had never heard of Christianity. With his young wife and infant son, Richardson lived with this tribe and learned their language and customs. He was shocked to find that betrayal was a virtue among these people. When he told them the gospel they honored Judas instead of Christ! Not until he discovered the ancient custom of the peace child was he able to communicate their need for Christ. The tribe was transformed. Murder, revenge, and treachery among these people was transformed to forgiveness, peace, and love.

Besides being a missions classic, this book offers a vital lesson in cross-cultural ministry. I recommend it only for high school and up because of the violence depicted. This new fourth edition adds an epilogue entitled "Thirty years later: an update on the Sawi tribe."

David Rainey

**The legacy of sovereign joy : God's triumphant grace in the lives of Augustine, Luther, and Calvin / John Piper. (The swans are not silent ; 1.) LCCN 20679.** Wheaton, Ill. : Crossway Books, 2000.

HBB, 1581341733, list price: \$14.99.

B or 270/.092/2. Augustine, Saint, Bishop of Hippo; Luther, Martin, 1483-1546; Calvin, Jean, 1509-1564. 158 p. ; 24 cm.

**The hidden smile of God : the fruit of affliction in the lives of John Bunyan, William Cowper, and David Brainerd / John Piper. (The swans are not silent ; 2.) LCCN 11665.** Wheaton, Ill. :

**Crossway Books, 2001.**

HBB, 1581342470, list price: \$14.99.

B or 270.7/092/2. Bunyan, John, 1628-1688.; Cowper, William, 1731-1800.; Brainerd, David, 1718-1747. 175 p. ; 24 cm.

**The roots of endurance : invincible perseverance in the lives of John Newton, Charles Simeon, and William Wilberforce / John Piper. (The swans are not silent ; 3.) LCCN 2002005324. Wheaton, Ill. : Crossway Books, 2002.**

HBB, 1581348142, list price: \$17.99.

B or 283/.092/242. Newton, John, 1725-1807; Simeon, Charles, 1759-1836; Wilberforce, William, 1759-1833; Church of England—Clergy—Biography; Legislators—Great Britain—Biography; Abolitionists—Great Britain—Biography. 174 p. ; 24 cm.

**Contending for our all : defending truth and treasuring Christ in the lives of Athanasius, John Owen, and J. Gresham Machen / John Piper. (The swans are not silent ; 4.) LCCN 2005029262. Wheaton, Ill. : Crossway Books, 2006.**

HBB, 158134676X , list price: \$17.99.

B or 270.7/092/2. Athanasius, Saint, Patriarch of Alexandria, d. 373.; Owen, John, 1616-1683.; Machen, J. Gresham (John Gresham), 1881-1937. 186 p. ; 24 cm.

Adult (Grades 10-12). Rating : 5.

John Piper pastors the large and historic Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota, where he has ministered to his congregation by preaching hundreds of expository messages since the early 1980s. He is best known beyond the twin cities, however, for his writing. *The Pleasures of God* and *Desiring God* (to be read in that order, he suggests) are two—among many other—works which have proved enduringly popular and helpful to evangelical Christians.

Piper also reaches out to pastors, having begun an annual pastors conference in 1988. Each year he selects one figure in church history and preaches (there's no

better term to use) his way through that figure's life. Piper began with his greatest theological influence, Jonathan Edwards. Since then he has chosen Simeon, Brainerd, Lloyd-Jones, Cowper, Machen, Owen, Luther, Calvin, Augustine, Bunyan, Paton, Newton, Wilberforce, Judson, Mueller, Athanasius, and Tyndale.

And he has turned twelve of those addresses into four books, three each per book. Piper knows how to read up on his subjects and he knows how to write, so his "The Swans Are Not Silent" series is informative as well as spiritually challenging. The obscure title for the series comes from a comment made by Augustine's successor as bishop of Hippo and refers to the fact that despite the passing of many years, the influence of the men whose lives Piper mines has been very great.

This is spiritual biography at its best—not hagiography, those these men were truly saints. Piper explores their God-graced successes as well as their sometimes glaring flaws. Piper is applying well the admonition given in Hebrews 13:7, "Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith" (ESV).

*Mark L. Ward, Jr.*



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