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BULLETIN OF THE CENTER FOR CHILDREN'S BOOKS

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EXPLANATION OF CODE SYMBOLS USED WITH ANNOTATIONS

- * Asterisks denote books of special distinction.
- R Recommended.
- Ad Additional book of acceptable quality for collections needing more material in the area.
- M Marginal book that is so slight in content or has so many weaknesses in style or format that it should be given careful consideration before purchase.
- NR Not recommended.
- SpC Subject matter or treatment will tend to limit the book to specialized collections.
- SpR A book that will have appeal for the unusual reader only. Recommended for the special few who will read it.

Except for pre-school years, reading range is given for grade rather than for age of child.

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Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO • GRADUATE LIBRARY SCHOOL

Volume 33

MARCH, 1980

Number 7

New Titles for Children and Young People

✓ Adams, Barbara. *Like It Is: Facts and Feelings About Handicaps From Kids Who Know*; illus. with photographs by James Stanfield. Walker, 1979. 79-2201. Trade ed. ISBN 0-8027-6374-X; Library ed. ISBN 0-8027-6375-8. 96p. Trade ed. \$8.95; Library ed. \$8.85 net.

Ad 4-6 With one exception each section of the book is a first-person narrative in which a child with a particular kind of handicap talks about his or her own problems and about children with related problems; the sections are on hearing and speech impairment, visual impairment, orthopedic handicaps, developmental/mental disabilities, retardation, and learning disabilities. Several examples of behavior disorders are described in the final section, in third person, with a first-person commentary by a school principal who is concerned and helpful. There have been so many books about the handicapped published for children in the last several years that this is hardly a breakthrough, but it does give a broad view of how children cope with various kinds of handicaps, the range of differences in disabilities, the special needs of handicapped children, and their feelings about how they would like to be treated by others.

✓ Adler, Carole S. *In Our House Scott Is My Brother*. Macmillan, 1980. 79-20693. ISBN 0-02-700140-7. 139p. \$7.95.

R 6-8 Jodi is thirteen, as is her new stepbrother Scott, and there is a wary truce between them when Scott and his mother Donna come to live in their home. Donna, beautiful and restless, dislikes Jodi's dog, wants to redo the house, and—Jodi suspects—wants to redo Jodi. The story is told with considerable vigor by Jodi, who copes nicely until she realizes that Donna is an alcoholic and Scott an inveterate liar and a petty thief. There are groundswells of conflict when Jodi's dog dies (she's sure that Donna had him put to sleep by the veterinarian) and when Scott frames Jodi as the culprit for his own theft, but the two children are brought together by their protective love for their parents. The writing style is fluid and the characterization has depth, but the outstanding facet of the book is in that protective love: Jodi tries hard to accept Donna because she knows how happy her father is in his second marriage, and Scott is so devoted and supportive toward his pathetic mother that he wins Jodi's respect despite his other traits. When Donna decides to walk out, Jodi weeps as she reads Scott's farewell note, signed "Your brother Scott." She's learned that people are lovable, and even forgivable, despite their weaknesses.

✓ Aesop. *Once In A Wood; Ten Tales From Aesop*; ad. and illus. by Eve Rice. Greenwillow, 1979. 78-16294. Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-80191-9; Library ed. ISBN 0-688-84191-0. 64p. (Read-alone Books) Trade ed. \$5.95; Library ed. \$5.71 net.

Very nicely adapted for young readers, these ten Aesop stories are simple, direct, and pithy with a good narrative flow and—in most cases—a rhyming conclusion that

R
1-3

helps point out the moral. The illustrations are gravely decorative, black and white pictures of flora and fauna, deftly textured and composed and resembling old lithographs in style and mood.

Astrop, John, illus. *The Jumbo Book of Board Games*. Elsevier/Nelson, 1979. 79-14365. ISBN 0-525-66646-X. 30p. \$11.95.

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5-

Although it is improbable that many libraries will wish to purchase this kind of book, it should be popular for group or family use. Very large, the book opens easily to lie flat; each page or double-page is a handsomely illustrated board game, with instructions for playing printed (unfortunately, in small type) below or at the side of the page. Although the brief introduction suggests that buttons or pebbles may be used as counters, one appended page provides press-out counters of heavy paper. In addition to such familiar games as backgammon and checkers, the book contains less familiar ones like palm tree, kono, space race, and asalto; the introduction points out those games that are most suitable for young children and differentiates between games that depend on luck and those that require using strategy.

Baker, Betty. *Latki and the Lightning Lizard*; illus. by Donald Carrick. Macmillan, 1979. 79-11197. ISBN 0-02-708210-5. 46p. \$7.95.

Ad
3-5

Latki, youngest of the woodcutter's four daughters, loves the red rock canyons of her mountain home, but her older sisters long for far places, ornaments, restaurants—all the pleasures of urban life. When the lightning lizard threatens the girls' father, he is forced to give the monstrous creature one of his daughters as housekeeper. It is Latki who rescues her sister, using magic tokens given her by some of the canyon's creatures; she turns herself into an ant, gets the magic egg that can kill the lizard, and avoids the stone animals, which come to life as the two girls are escaping, by turning herself into an eagle. The Lightning Lizard is no longer a threat; father retires and they all move to town; the other girls are happy, but Latki misses the canyon and often visits it by turning herself into an eagle. Carrick's pictures have a smudged, softened look that is more effective in the black and white illustrations than in those that are in color. The story is smoothly told, but it doesn't quite crystallize into an effective fantasy, perhaps because the town-oriented wishes of the sisters really has little to do with the plot about the lizard and Latki's conquest of him and his protective stone beasts; the most effective fantasy is usually meshed with reality, but here the realistic element and the fantastic element don't mesh.

Baxter, Lorna. *The Eggchild*. Dutton, 1979. 79-16223. ISBN 0-525-29155-5. 157p. \$8.50.

Ad
4-6

Each of the reigning Four Families of an imaginary land has a particular kind of magical power; in Rosemary's family they communicate with plants, in her cousin Jasper's they see through and control stone, etc. None has the power to control animals. When Rosemary comes across the Eggchild (at times a baby, at times an egg, it croons and gives off a golden glow when it is content and becomes silent when there is danger nearby) and realizes the evil Doppel the Enchanter will stop at nothing to get the Eggchild, she goes to Jasper's home for security, taking along the strange, small child they call Shrimp, who changes into any animal form at will. It's a long, complex story (although not intricate in the style of telling) at the end of which the Four Families unite, along with the separated, enchanted parents of the Eggchild and Shrimp, to bring to an end the terrible power of Doppel and to instate the Eggchild's parents as the Fifth Family, a family that will control the animal life of the land. There's nothing wrong with the well-worn good-versus-evil theme in fantasy, but Baxter, a promising new writer, has made her plot too contrivedly constructed and too elaborate in development, too often based on coincidence.

Beatty, Patricia. *The Staffordshire Terror*. Morrow, 1979. 79-21787. Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-22201-3; Library ed. ISBN 0-688-32201-8. 223p. Trade ed. \$7.95; Library ed. \$7.63 net.

R
5-7

Beatty has a message, the condemnation of dogfights, an illegal but flourishing business, but she doesn't let the message get in the way of the story. This hasn't the breezy humor of her Old West historical fiction, but it has just about everything else that makes a good story: believable and well-differentiated characters, a well-structured story line, a brisk pace, and a smooth writing style that includes natural dialogue. The pup that Cissie and her father found after its mother had been killed in a road accident proved to be a purebred Staffordshire terrier, a breed known for its fearlessness and belligerence. Cissie's uncle Cletus is the villain of the book, a coarse and brutal man whose timid daughter has left him; her escape had been engineered by Cissie and her cousin, so Cletus steals the dog—partly for revenge, partly to enter him in fights and make money. Cissie, with the cooperation of her family, tracks her dog down, calls in the police, and breaks up the local group who are sponsoring dogfights.

Benjamin, Carol Lea. *Running Basics*; written and illus. by Carol Lea Benjamin; illus. with photographs by M. Beth Brennan. Prentice-Hall, 1979. 78-31518. ISBN 0-13-783928-6. 48p. \$6.95.

R
5-8

Although this does not include advice on jogging as does the Lyttle book reviewed below, it otherwise covers much the same material: what to wear, how to warm up before running, running with companions, what causes ailments and what to do about them, tips on running techniques, and information about racing. The writing style is informal, the material well organized; some sources of information are included within the text, and an index is appended.

Bodelson, Anders. *Operation Cobra*; tr. by Joan Tate. Elsevier/Nelson, 1979. 79-16564. ISBN 0-525-66652-4. 121p. \$6.95.

R
5-7

In a suspense story set in a Copenhagen suburb, three classmates pool their wits to prevent a multiple murder attack planned by terrorists. The terrorists are planning to kill Henry Kreiser, U.S. Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, as well as whoever else is in the motorcade that's been announced. One of the three boys, Frederick, is being held hostage with the rest of his family, since his home is a convenient base for the operation. The other boys become suspicious and, in a ploy in which the older sister of one (whom they've convinced that their evidence is serious) participates, they stop the motorcade and foil the plan. The book is smoothly translated and, despite some irrelevancies that do not move the story along, very deftly constructed, as the bits of knowledge each boy has picked up are knit together and revealed as parts of a pattern. While this has a Danish flavor, it is an adventure story that should have universal appeal.

Bonham, Frank. *The Forever Formula*. Dutton, 1979. 79-11381. ISBN 0-525-30025-2. 181p. \$8.50.

R
7-10

Science fiction buffs will find the familiar device of revival after cryogenic storage used here as an interesting device for exploration of the problems that might be caused by having longevity as the controlling factor in a brave new world. Evan is thawed and revived in a hospital of the future where a doctor is determined to pull from the young man's brain the secret of eternal life; Evan had heard his father, a research scientist, refer to it before his death. Evan becomes involved in the struggle between the elderly (people over 150) who are in power and the underground network of people who are tired of the heaped garbage, deserted cities, depletion of oxygen,

infestation by rodents and insect pests, and other side effects of a civilization in which the majority of inhabitants are sitting about waiting (many of them, feeling bored and useless, hoping) to die. Bonham quite deftly works a love story (Evan and his cloned nurse) into a book with plenty of action and some provocative ideas.

✓ Branley, Franklyn Mansfield. *Age of Aquarius; You and Astrology*; illus. by Leonard Kessler. T. Y. Crowell, 1979. 78-22511. Trade ed. ISBN 0-690-03987-5; Library ed. ISBN 0-690-03988-3. 59p. Trade ed. \$6.95; Library ed. \$6.89 net.

R
4-6 Branley describes the origins of astrological belief in ancient times, and the role of the astronomers who also functioned as astrologers during the medieval era. His explanation of the origins of astrological signs and applications in horology are lucid, and he shows readers how they can cast their own horoscopes; he then discusses the facts from a scientific viewpoint, noting the effects that other bodies in our solar system do or don't have on earth and its people, and pointing out the fallacies of astrological beliefs. This should satisfy readers who are curious about astrology but it does not deviate from facts or encourage credulity. In sum, just what one would expect from Branley: directness, accuracy, and clarification in a text that is well-organized and clearly written.

✓ Burgess, Anthony. *The Land Where The Ice Cream Grows*; illus. by Fulvio Testa. Doubleday, 1979. 78-14714. Trade ed. ISBN 0-385-15022-9; Library ed. ISBN 0-385-15023-7. 30p. Trade ed. \$6.95; Library ed. \$7.90 net.

M
K-3 Burgess tells a story based on the concept of the illustrator, whose pictures combine simple forms, fantastic ideas, and spare compositions as they show the adventures of three bearded explorers in a land of giant cones, lakes of chocolate sauce, and alpine heights of vanilla, pistachio, and other delectable flavors. They discover there is an ice cream monster and some cannibalistic, cherry-topped mounds; tired of ice cream, they depart for a dinner of bacon, sausage, eggs and other nondairy foods. In the last picture, three small boys are shown in an ice cream parlor. The text is a bit coy, the practiced adult author apparently believing that one writes down to children. It ends with the comment of one of the boys to the effect that one day, when they are all old enough and rich enough, they'll go off and have just the adventure that's been described. "And if you don't believe my story," the book ends, "surely you'll believe my pictures?" Not quite, although the pictures are pleasant and the concept of an edible fantasyland may appeal to many children.

✓ Buchan, Stuart. *A Space Of His Own*. Scribner, 1979. 79-15745. ISBN 0-684-16282-2. 197p. \$7.95.

Ad
7-10 It isn't until after Michael has been released from the state farm and come to stay with his father and stepmother that he tells his father why he'd held up a drugstore: he had needed money to pay off the dealer from whom he'd bought the dope he was selling. The knowledge does nothing to improve his father's opinion of him, and Michael knows he'd better get a job. He does, doing landscaping for an old woman, but he loses it when he appears with Merriweather, the vagrant he's moved in with. The old woman, Granowska, who had been a famous actress, wanted both men off her property. And that's when Merriweather decided on burglary and wheedled Michael into helping; at the last moment, Michael backed out, brought his father with him to Granowska's, and they stopped Merriweather, but Michael's father was shot. So Michael, who has resented his stepmother and wanted to be on his own, learns that his father loves him, he belongs, and when you belong you don't need space of your own but already have one. Characterization is strong, writing style and dialogue are smooth, and plot believable if a shade melodramatic.

✓ Burnham, Sophy. *The Dogwalker*. Warne, 1979. 79-13157. ISBN 0-7232-6170-9. 151p. \$7.95.

M
5-7

Hired as walker for the dog belonging to the Secretary of State, Cocky Norton is appalled when the dog, Isabel, disappears. Cocky's already worried because she's sure she saw a man switch cases as the Secretary was taking off for the airport. It develops that the departure was a feint; Cocky stumbles on the Secretary and they have a serious (and highly improbable) talk in which he tells her his problems in negotiating peace and she helps him. Cocky and her boy friend Psi learn that the dognappers have attached a timed bomb to Isabel's collar; they warn the Secretary, find the dog, and Psi throws the bomb in the river. Both receive kudos, in a dramatic ending to a story that has too much coincidence and contrivance to be quite believable. Too bad, because the writing style is quite lively.

✓ Carlson, Natalie Savage. *The Night the Scarecrow Walked*; illus. by Charles Robinson. Scribner, 1979. 79-17320. ISBN 0-684-16311-X. 32p. \$6.95.

M
1-3

Eight-year-old Jeff and his younger sister think a scarecrow looks lonely, and they decide to show it their pumpkin on Hallowe'en. When they do, the figure approaches them; terrified, they run home. The next morning they see the battered hat and flapping coat on a figure going down the road, and as the man nears the porch, he raises his hat and says, "Caw, caw, caw." When they go to the field, there are crossed sticks but no clothes. Jeff thinks a tramp simply took the clothes, but little Libby is convinced it was the scarecrow they saw walking. "Maybe," Jeff agrees in conclusion, "I guess anything could happen on Hallowe'en." The story is insubstantial, the ending limply inconclusive.

✓ Cober, Alan E. *Cober's Choice*; written and illus. by Alan E. Cober. Dutton, 1979. 79-11882. ISBN 0-525-28065-0. 48p. \$9.95.

R
3-
*

Since this oversize book is important for the art rather than the text, it should be of interest also to children too young to find the minimal captioning of interest. Cober uses the space (single pages or double-page spreads, a few of which are marred by tight binding) admirably; at times his black and white drawings are set against lavish white space, at times they fill the page. And at all times they are marvelously textured, even when they have an unfinished look (as some do), and marvelous in their juxtaposition of sweeping line and tiny detail, in the contrast of solidity of body and lightness of fur or feathers. Cober's twenty-three animal drawings are accompanied by brief, patternless captions, some of which indicate whether he drew from life or used a stuffed animal, some of which give facts about species or simply comment on a personal reaction; there are also some scrawled personal notes in cursive writing, few of which are easily legible or particularly pertinent.

✓ Collins, Meghan. *Maiden Crown*. Houghton, 1979. 79-16201. ISBN 0-395-28639-5. 230p. \$8.95.

Ad
7-9

While some of the characters and much of the action in this novel are fictional, the main characters are figures in Danish history: the king and queen, and several of the members of their court. Sophie comes from her Russian guardian's home, at sixteen, for a politically arranged marriage to King Valdemar. She feels affection for Stig, the courier who escorts her to Denmark, but quickly forgets him in her love for Valdemar. The king, however, does not forget his beautiful mistress Tove, and the tragedy of the story occurs when Sophie (who has lost a child) is taunted by Tove (who is in her second pregnancy) and locks her in a bath house to die. The book ends with a reconciliation between the royal couple. While the setting has color and good period details, and the writing style is adequately smooth, the pace of the book is

slow; the focus on marital love and conflict leaves little room for other aspects of plot development or of life outside court circles in eleventh-century Denmark.

Colman, Hila. *Ellie's Inheritance*. Morrow, 1979. 79-19009. Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-22204-8; Library ed. ISBN 0-688-32204-2. 190p. Trade ed. \$6.95; Library ed. \$6.67 net.

Ad
7-9

In a sequel to *Rachel's Legacy*, in which Rachel's daughter Ellie looks back to her mother's proud and energetic life, Ellie continues her search for some way to improve her own life. Living in poverty with her father, a victim of the 1930's depression, Ellie takes an office job and leaves it to work for the League Against War and Fascism. Through her group of left-wing friends, she's become interested in the fight against fascism; she's also in love with Lionel, who spurns his family's money, is an activist, and goes to Spain to fight and die. Ellie goes to work in the garment district and becomes engaged to a German Jewish refugee. While this gives a quite vivid depiction of one segment of society in a turbulent period, it drags here and there as a narrative because of its uneven pace, and perhaps in part because the focus seems to be on what it was like in that place at that time rather than on the protagonist.

Culin, Charlotte. *Cages Of Glass, Flowers Of Time*. Bradbury, 1979. 79-14460. ISBN 0-87888-157-3. 316p. \$8.95.

Ad
6-9

Claire Burden is fourteen, living with an alcoholic, abusive mother and deserted by her father. Her father's mother had willed her fortune to Claire; her venal mother's mother (who had been abusive to Claire's mother) was trying to get Claire to live with her. Despite the blows and burn scars inflicted by her mother, Claire wanted to stay with her and feared her Grandmother Simmons. Because she hated her husband, an artist, Mom wouldn't let Claire draw—and it was the one thing Claire loved. She did make three friends: an elderly black neighbor, a gentle boy in her class, Clyde, whom she grew to love, and her art teacher. The book has strong characterization, and a fluent writing style; in first person, it expresses the ambivalent feelings of a battered child with insight and conviction. It is slowed in pace, however, by many sequences that halt rather than expedite the forward movement of the plot, which ends with Claire living with her art teacher and understanding for the first time the whole sequence of family events that have shaped other people's actions and her own confused feelings of love, hate, guilt, and apprehension.

Curley, Daniel. *Hilarion*; illus. by Judith Gwyn Brown. Houghton, 1979. 79-11749. ISBN 0-395-28268-3. 87p. \$6.95.

Ad
5-7

The time, as inferred from the illustrations, is early in the century; the place is a large city in the United States; the protagonist is a variant of Billy Budd; the plot is episodic, albeit adequately linked together; the writing style is cheerful, humorous, and uneven; the book as a whole is a slightly repetitive, slightly sentimental, often amusing but not quite a fantasy and not believable as realistic fiction. Hilarion walks in, newly arrived from his home town of Linsk, to brighten the lives and change the fortunes of four unhappy men, also immigrants from Linsk; they are despondent failures who fear they can never earn enough to send for the families, but through one blandly heroic deed after another, Hilarion makes them (and himself) secure and prosperous.

Davies, Andrew. *Conrad's War*. Crown, 1980. 79-2-8289. ISBN 0-517-54007-X. 128p. \$7.95.

R
5-7

Winner of the 1978 Guardian Award, this amusing borderline fantasy depicts the sustained imaginative play of a boy who is infatuated with war games, a young English Walter Mitty. Davies makes fun of war novels and war movies in the spoofs of stereotyped German officers, heroic deeds of the cool, indomitable Conrad, and

the ineptness of his father (known as The Great Writer) who humbly participates as a bungling disciple; in depicting the father, Davies pokes fun at himself as absent-minded, inept, bald, and corpulent. The heavy emphasis on war sequences may weigh on some readers, as Conrad imagines himself taking part in World War II in his homemade tank, but taken with a grain of salt this is a very funny book.

✓
Davis, Edward E. *Into The Dark; A Beginner's Guide to Developing and Printing Black and White Negatives*. Atheneum, 1979. 78-11284. ISBN 0-689-30676-8. 210p. illus. \$9.95.

R
6- Despite the author's claim, in his introduction, that "It avoids the fault of trying to teach the beginner too much," this text does seem to contain an enormous amount of advice and information. However, the material is logically organized and the advice specific; the writing style is clear and not too formal, and instructions are given in a careful step-by-step form at those points where explanations of a procedure are needed. Davis gives suggestions for what to buy (and not to buy) in the way of cameras, film, light meters, lenses, and all of the equipment needed for developing and printing film, and includes suggestions for buying some pieces of equipment secondhand. Sources of information are given, although the list is not extensive, in an appended note; a bibliography and an index are appended.

✓
Edmonds, I. G. *Other Lives; The Story of Reincarnation*. McGraw-Hill, 1979. 79-14689. ISBN 0-07-018987-0. 152p. \$7.95.

NR
7-9 Although Edmonds, in a prefatory note, explains that he will present opinions of those who support and those who reject belief in reincarnation, his apparent bias in support of it pervades the book. He cites unsupported evidence, chiefly from those who claim that they have existed in previous incarnations, to a great extent while there are few supportive comments by scientists who have done research in the field. He states that the human "egg and later the body are just the shell that carries the real life, which is our souls." The writing is choppy and repetitive, the material not always logically arranged. Much of the text focuses on the place of theories of reincarnation in various religious beliefs, and there are many quotations from such randomly chosen supporters as (in order) Benjamin Franklin, Pythagoras, Henry Ford, George Patton, and Ovid. A glossary and a rather canted bibliography are appended.

✓
Ellison, Lucile Watkins. *Butter on Both Sides*; illus. by Judith Gwyn Brown. Scribner, 1979. 79-15808. ISBN 0-684-16281-4. 150p. \$7.95.

Ad
4-6 This comprises, in three sections, cozy, homespun stories of an Alabama farm family in the early 1900's. Lucy, fifth of six children, is the protagonist, and the stories have to do with a steamboat excursion, Daddy's illness, and a July celebration of Christmas, held because Daddy had been away for medical help at Christmas time. The book gives a pleasant picture of farm life and of the affection within an extended family, but it's written almost completely at one level, so that it offers little contrast, and it is slow-paced.

✓
Facklam, Margery. *From Cell to Clone; The Story of Genetic Engineering*; by Margery and Howard Facklam; illus. with diagrams by Paul Facklam; illus. with photographs. Harcourt, 1979. 79-87515. ISBN 0-15-230262-X. 128p. \$7.95.

R
7- Like Langone's *Human Engineering* (reviewed in the September, 1978 issue) this discusses the research and experimentation that have achieved plant and animal cloning, artificial insemination, and other medical and biochemical marvels that have stirred controversy on legal, ethical, and medical grounds. Whereas Langone's emphasis is on the controversy for which he gives background information, the

Facklam's emphasis is on the long centuries of accrued knowledge, the contributors to that body of knowledge, and the research, with a good discussion of the potential hazards and benefits of applications of genetic engineering. Both books are excellent. *From Cell to Clone* is lucid in describing the research that advanced frontiers of medical knowledge, it has accurate information that is logically arranged, and it is imbued with objectivity in discussing such topics as cloning. A glossary, a bibliography, and a relative index are provided.

✓
Fine, Joan. *I Carve Stone*; illus. with photographs by David Anderson. T. Y. Crowell, 1979. 79-63798. Trade ed. ISBN 0-690-03985-9; Library ed. ISBN 0-690-03986-7. 55p. Trade ed. \$7.95; Library ed. \$7.89 net.

R
3-6 A sculptor explains how she works and how she feels about her work in a simple written text that follows—as do the photographs—each step of the process of making a stone sculpture. Fine begins with a 350 pound block of Vermont marble, describing the way she plans her work and begins the carving, discussing the tools she uses, and expressing her satisfaction as the polished, fluent figure emerges after months of hard work. The account concludes with a list of things a beginning sculptor needs. Succinct and informative.

✓
Fogel, Julianna. *Wesley Paul, Marathon Runner*; illus. with photographs by Mary S. Watkins. Lippincott, 1979. 78-23649. Trade ed. ISBN 0-397-31845-6; Library ed. ISBN 0-397-31861-8. 40p. Trade ed. \$7.95; Library ed. \$7.89 net.

R
3-5 Most of the photographs are action shots and are therefore repetitive, but they combine effectively with the quiet, understated tone of Wesley's commentary. Nine years old, he has run in seven marathons and in one (New York City) broke a record for his age, running the marathon distance (over 26 miles) in just under three hours. Wesley describes the way he trains, the hopes and apprehensions he has before a race, and the way he feels while running. Direct and simple, the book conveys Wesley's enjoyment in a way that may well create interest on the part of readers.

✓
Foreman, Michael. *Winter's Tales*; illus. by Freire Wright. Doubleday, 1979. 79-1862. Trade ed. ISBN 0-385-15460-7; Library ed. ISBN 0-385-15461-5. 32p. Trade ed. \$7.95; Library ed. \$8.90 net.

Ad
K-3 An oversize book contains some Christmas stories, illustrated with paintings that are imaginatively conceived, handsome in their use of tonal shadings and touches of the grotesque or the humorous. In the first tale, a scarecrow is happy when he's covered with snow and is visited by the birds who'd hitherto left him lonely; in the second story, Mrs. Santa Claus takes over the delivery of presents after Santa makes a few errors (not turning left at Norway, giving a policeman a navy blue dress to match his cap) and in other stories a beetle feasts on Christmas sweets, an ogre gets the Christmas spirit, a village celebrates around a decorated tree in the forest, and a mouse finds the perfect present for his wife. The occasional bits of humor lift the writing, but several of the stories lack focus, or fade away into a nebulous ending.

✓
Fortunato, Pat. *When We Were Young: An Album Of Stars*. Prentice-Hall, 1979. 79-21544. ISBN 0-13-956482-9. 64p. illus. with photographs. \$8.95.

NR
4-6 Fortunato has pulled together some photographs and facts about an assortment of people, most of them television personalities, and shows how they looked as a child (or, in one case, as a kitten) and how they look now. In addition to birth date, birthplace, and astrological sign, there are a few paragraphs about what each person was like as a child, and something about his or her career. On most pages, the

sketchy text ends with a question: what is somebody's favorite game, what was somebody afraid of when she was small, what is somebody's nickname, etc. Answers are given at the back of the book, which is written in a coy, breezy style: "Is Michael Young just another pretty face. No, he isn't. (That's not the question. Here it comes now. Are you ready?) He also plays an instrument and (Hint! Hint!) in a strange way, it has something to do with his smile." Dross.

Galbraith, Kathryn Osebold. *Come Spring*. Atheneum, 1979. 79-12311. ISBN 0-689-50142-0. 198p. \$8.95.

Ad 4-6 A dreamer and drifter, Reenie's father is always sure the next job will be a better one, and that's why the family moves from place to place. Now they are in a new town and a new house, and Reenie is fiercely determined to stay there; it's some comfort to learn her mother shares her longing, but—realistically—the book ends with the possibility that they'll move again. Meanwhile, Mama takes a job at Kresge's so that she can fix up the house; she even, albeit reluctantly, lets Reenie keep a stray dog. There's no strong story line, but there's a good balance of interests in home, school, friends, and neighbors (especially the small boy who establishes himself as Reenie's friend) and the characterization and dialogue are competently handled.

Gilbert, Nan. *The Strange New World Across The Street*. Avon, 1979. 79-52066. ISBN 0-380-45922-1. 167p. \$1.50.

R 4-6 An original paperback, this is told by eleven-year-old Robbie, who has recently come to live with his father after being with his grandparents for years. Asthmatic, self-absorbed, and self-protective, Robbie is amazed by the busy life style of his friend Janet and her family, who live across the street. They are so cheerful. They can do so many things. It is Janet's influence that helps Robbie tackle getting jobs to help pay for a wounded puppy they've found and that sets an example for a new self-reliance, but it is his growing insight that helps him see that he and his father (each of whom is shy and wary) have been acting like polite strangers while wanting to be loving and open with each other. The writing style is brisk but smooth, with good if not deep characterization, dialogue that is convincing save for a bit of gee-whiz gushiness from Janet, and a steady, credible growth of understanding in the protagonist.

Goffstein, M. B. *Natural History*; written and illus. by M. B. Goffstein. Farrar, 1979. 79-7318. ISBN 0-374-35498-7. 30p. \$6.95.

R 3-6 yrs. Goffstein's familiar line, simple and uncluttered, is for the first time combined with watercolor, giving more richness to pictures that are in harmony with her theme of earth's natural abundance, and our obligation to use resources with care and to cherish other people and all life with peaceful love. The writing is gentle and direct, a quiet flow of tender concern: "Every living creature is our brother and our sister, dearer than the jewels at the center of the earth. So let us be like tiny grains of sand, and protect all life from fear and suffering! Then, when the stars shine, we can sleep in peace, with the moon as our quiet night-light."

Gordy, Berry. *Movin' Up; Pop Gordy Tells His Story*. Harper, 1979. 78-22493. Trade ed. ISBN 0-06-022053-8; Library ed. ISBN 0-06-022054-6. 144p. illus. with photographs. Trade ed. \$7.95; Library ed. \$7.89 net.

Tape-recorded, this is the autobiography of the father of the founder of Motown records; the recordings were completed in 1978, before Pop Gordy died at the age of

Ad
6- ninety, a beloved friend and advisor to many in the entertainment world. Son of a slave, Gordy became an important businessman in Detroit's black community; hard-working, gentle but strong, he was determined that he and his family would succeed both in that community and in the white world in which it was set. Gordy's reminiscences are a bit rambling and occasionally repetitive, but his warmth and shrewdness give the book vitality.

✓ Greenberg, Jan. A *Season In-Between*. Farrar, 1979. 79-17997. ISBN 0-374-36564-4. 150p. \$8.95.

Ad
5-7 Carrie Singer, twelve, tells the story, which focuses on her father's illness (cancer) and her confused feelings when he comes home to die, and on his death and on the ways that she and her mother cope with grief. The story moves along smoothly, with enough conflict (Carrie is a thorny character and resents many of her friends and family) and character development to give it substance, but it has little impetus, being more a slice-of-life study than an evolving novel. As such, it lacks contrast, having a monotone quality. It isn't macabre although it's serious, and it ends on an encouraging note, as Carrie and her mother adjust to bereavement and to a new relationship with each other.

✓ Hamilton, Virginia. *Dustland*. Greenwillow, 1980. 79-19003. Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-80228-1; Library ed. ISBN 0-688-84228-3. 192p. Trade ed. \$8.95; Library ed. \$8.59 net.

R
7- In a sequel to *Justice and Her Brothers*, in which eleven-year-old Justice discovered that she had supersensory powers and found that her friend Dorian and her twin brothers, Thomas and Levi, also had them, the story moves to another time and place. The four children, whose combined power is called "the unit," are psychically in a land of dust inhabited by strange creatures, several of which communicate telepathically with them. This does not begin, as the first book did, with a realistic base; the children come back to Earth at the close of the book. Their bodies have been sitting, it is then disclosed, under a tree, hands linked, while they were in *Dustland*. While there are encounters with *Dustland* creatures, most of the true action/conflict is in the power struggle between Justice and Thomas, the brother and sister who have never had an amicable or easy relationship. Thomas, for example, breaks away from the others and weakens the power of the unit, even endangering the life of his twin in order to resist the superior powers of Justice, "the Watcher." This isn't easy to read; it calls for total immersion by the reader and for no small degree of comprehension of concept and appreciation of style, but the style is outstanding and the fantasy wholly conceived—and fiction of such depth, for children or adults, never is easy to read.

✓ Holland, Barbara. *Prisoners at the Kitchen Table*. Houghton, 1979. 79-11730. ISBN 0-395-28969-6. 122p. \$7.50.

Ad
4-6 Polly, whose parents buy her almost anything she wants, is showing off a new fishing rod to her classmate, Josh, when the friendly couple show up and announce they're Aunt Verna and Uncle Bill; they remind Polly of the toy they gave her years ago, and tell her they've been sent by her mother to bring her home. They also offer Josh a ride. And that's how the two children are kidnapped, held in an isolated, deserted farmhouse for ransom. It's timid Josh who takes the initiative, when the opportunity offers, to threaten "Aunt" Verna while her colleague is away, and to lead a frightened Polly through dark woods to safety. The writing style is not distinguished, but Holland creates a real sense of suspense, her characters are well-defined, and the children solve their problem in a believable fashion.

Holland, Isabelle. *Now Is Not Too Late*. Lothrop, 1980. Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-41937-2; Library ed. ISBN 0-688-51937-7. 160p. Trade ed. \$6.95; Library ed. \$6.67 net.

R
5-7 Cathy, eleven, is the first of her family to come to the island where Granny lives; her father and stepmother are in Europe, her stepbrother at camp, and she misses them all. She's especially looking forward to Andy's arrival, her stepbrother being her favorite person. But by the time Andy arrives, there have been changes; he's thirteen, he brings a friend with him, and both boys ignore Cathy. The other change is that Cathy has been posing for an artist who's visiting the island, an odd but likable woman whose friendship she has kept secret. A trip to the mainland brings disaster, for Andy's friend insists on crashing an AA meeting, and one of the members is Cathy's friend, the artist. Holland builds clues into the story, structuring it deftly so that Cathy's discovery that the artist is her mother (her embittered father had told Cathy her mother was dead) will come as no surprise to the reader. Because Holland writes with polish and perception, the crux of the story is not that the discovery is made but how Cathy will react, for her emotions and especially her feelings about those she loves have been explored deeply. Running throughout the book are some wonderfully intelligent conversations with Granny (a fine character) who helps Cathy see that it is possible to compromise with life and still maintain principles and dignity, that "Now is never too late for good things to happen."

Hurmence, Belinda. *Tough Tiffany*. Doubleday, 1980. 79-6979. Trade ed. ISBN 0-385-15082-2; Library ed. ISBN 0-385-15083-0. 139p. Trade ed. \$7.95; Library ed. \$8.90 net.

R
5-7 Tiffany is eleven, a sensitive, curious child who likes to think she's tough; she is tough in the sense of having courage and stamina, but she's also charitable and loving. Youngest child of a large family, she is fascinated by the stories her grandmother tells of slave ancestors and local lore; she's worried about her mother's extravagance and eternal indebtedness; she's upset because an older sister is pregnant. Hurmence uses enough dialect to flavor the dialogue without burdening it; her characterizations are sharply drawn, and she has—in a fine first novel—used every situation in the book to develop and extend her characters, particularly the redoubtable Tiffany.

Hutchins, Pat. *One-Eyed Jake*; written and illus. by Pat Hutchins. Greenwillow, 1979. 78-18346. Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-80183-8; Library ed. ISBN 0-688-84183-X. 32p. Trade ed. \$7.95; Library ed. \$7.63 net.

Ad
K-2 Using more color, more movement, and more detail than in most of her illustrations in other books, Hutchins depicts vivid, comic scenes of piracy in double-page spreads that extend the rather simple story line of the book. The three members of One-eyed Jake's crew are a cook who wishes he were working on a passenger ship, a bosun who yearns to steer a cargo boat, and a small black cabin boy who'd prefer to work on a small fishing boat. All are afraid of their pirate commander, and each is delighted as—one by one—Jake tosses them into just the kind of vessel he's dreamed about, in order to lighten the load of the pirate ship. Jake is almost sinking from the weight of his plunder, and his watery end is brought about when the cabin boy tosses him a key—just enough added weight to sink Jake's ship. Not a staunch story line, but adequately told and illustrated with bouncy bravado.

Jacobs, Joseph, ad. *The Stars In The Sky*; illus. by Airdrie Amtmann. Farrar, 1979. 78-11718. ISBN 0-374-37229-2. 25p. \$6.95.

One of the stories from the Jacobs collection, *More English Fairy Tales*, is presented in a single-tale edition that is illustrated by pictures in fine-line ink drawings;

R
3-5 gravely romantic, with touches of the grotesque, they are reminiscent in mood and technique of Sendak's pictures in *The Juniper Tree*, having the same textural quality although not as polished in detail or composition. The story tells of a wee lassie whose quest for all the stars in the sky, which she wanted as playthings, led into a series of fantasy adventures, her final, desperate fall into the depth of the sea culminating in finding herself on the floor beside her bed, awakened from her dream. The illustrations and page design are attractive, and the lovely lilt of Jacobs' style is appealing as ever it was, both for independent readers and for reading aloud to younger children.

✓ Kaatz, Evelyn. *Race Car Driver*; written and illus. with photographs by Evelyn Kaatz. Little, 1979. 79-14766. ISBN 0-316-47751-6. 55p. \$6.95.

Ad
6-8 A narrative framework is used to describe some of the basic skills of race car driving, the rules, signals, and forms used for recording times in a race. Greg takes a three-day course in driving a Formula Ford, learning how to turn and becoming familiar with the feel of the car and especially its width. He gains further experience when he enters a race; he comes in fifth but is sure he'll do better next time. The text gives accurate information and gives it adequately, but the writing style, particularly in dialogue, is stiff and awkward.

✓ Kuskin, Karla. *Herbert Hated Being Small*; written and illus. by Karla Kuskin. Houghton, 1979. 77-25029. ISBN 0-395-26462-6. 32p. \$6.95.

R
K-3 Bright line and watercolor pictures illustrate a book that presents a concept of comparative size, identifies a problem which many children have, tells a satisfying story, and is written in free, fluent rhyme. Herbert, dismayed because everything and everybody around him is too big (Who likes to be called "shrimp"?), runs off with his bear and some candy to find people his size. Philomel, who lives in another place where she towers over everything and everybody, packs some candy and her bear and runs off to find people as big as she is. (She was tired of hearing "How's the air up there?") They meet, find they are the same size, realize that big or small depends on what size other objects or people are, and are comforted.

✓ Lee, Beverly Haskell. *The Secret of Van Rink's Cellar*. Lerner, 1979. 79-52909. ISBN 0-8225-0763-3. 174p. \$7.95.

M
5-6 The historical background for an adventure story, New York City during the Revolutionary War, has some authentic details, but the plot seems contrived, the characterization is minimal, and the writing style is pedestrian, particularly in the dialogue, which is erratic in its appropriateness for the period. ("Now stop being a spoilsport. . . .") Sarah is eleven, her brother two years younger; they have come with their widowed mother to work on the household staff of Lady Deborah, whose husband is British. Ma is using the cellar of the house, which had once belonged to a Dutch colonial named Van Rink, to leave messages whenever she picks up bits of military gossip above stairs. When Ma becomes ill and is sent away, the children carry on. The plethora of hints and cues robs the story of much of its suspense.

✓ Levitin, Sonia. *A Sound to Remember*; illus. by Gabriel Lisowski. Harcourt, 1979. 79-87522. ISBN 0-15-277248-0. 32p. \$6.95.

Ad
3-4 Softly drawn pencil sketches illustrate a tender but subdued story of loving-kindness that happened "long ago, in the distant land of our fathers," in a Jewish community. None of the villagers could believe the rabbi really meant to choose Jacov, awkward and stuttering, for the honor of blowing the ram's horn on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. When, on the first holy day, poor Jacov blew so in-

effectually, they were sure that he would not be permitted to repeat his disappointing performance. The rabbi thought of an ingenious way to solve Jacob's problem, however, and on Yom Kippur, the congregation heard a beautiful performance from a happy Jacob—and also heard a gentle reminder from the rabbi of the fact that the boy had performed with love, and should be so accepted, for "Love for each other and for God is more important than ritual." Static, but effective in its gentle piety.

✓ Lim, Sing. *West Coast Chinese Boy*; written and illus. by Sing Lim. Tundra Books, 1979. 79-67110. ISBN 0-88776-121-6. 64p. \$12.95.

R
4-7

Illustrated with brisk line drawings in pen and with monotype paintings, this is one of a series of Tundra books designed to bring children autobiographical accounts by members of Canada's ethnic minorities. Lim's childhood was spent in the Chinese section of Vancouver; although the concluding pages bring the book up to date, most of the text is devoted to the author's childhood, as he writes about his family, his attendance at Chinese school, summer work on a farm, and the many holidays, feasts, customs, local characters, and cultural events of the community. He speaks candidly of the prejudice from which Chinese suffered, but he speaks of it with stoicism rather than bitterness, and he concludes by saying that, when asked recently how he had survived the treatment of Chinese Canadians, "By laughing. It is the sense of humor of the Chinese that help us to live through the unlivable." That humor is evident in his lively story.

✓ Lyttle, Richard B. *Jogging and Running*; illus. with photographs by Richard B. Lyttle. Watts, 1979. 79-10598. ISBN 0-531-02949-2. 62p. \$5.90.

R
5-9

A particularly good book for the beginner, this gives sensible advice on starting slowly (alternating running and walking until one can run easily) and not running when ill, on shoes and other items of clothing, on good exercise programs for runners, on whether to run alone or with a group, and on the various merits of jogging, running, or racing. Lyttle also discusses the benefits of running and jogging to general health and gives suggestions for techniques in jogging and running. In addition to the index, some suggestions for further reading and two sources of further information are included.

✓ Macdonald, George. *Sir Gibbie*; ed. by Elizabeth Yates. Schocken Books, 1979. 79-64123. Hardcover ed. ISBN 0-8052-3730-5; Paper ed. ISBN 0-8052-0637-X. 270p. Hardcover ed. \$9.95; Paper ed. \$4.95.

R
7-9

This sentimental story of a ragged Scottish orphan who inherits a title and a fortune is a reprint of the edition published by Dutton in 1963, when it was abridged and edited by Elizabeth Yates. The book was first published in 1878, and it abounds in pious utterances and stock characters; Gibbie, mute and angelic, who is always kind and ever pure in heart, and the motherly farmwife Janet, or the curmudgeon Galbraith, the martinet father of Sir Gibbie's bride. Still, the rags-to-riches theme will appeal to many readers, there are some passages of fine (if intricate) writing, and the book should interest any Macdonald fans simply because of its authorship.

✓ Mangurian, David. *Children of the Incas*; written and illus. with photographs by David Mangurian. Four Winds, 1979. 79-12186. ISBN 0-590-07500-4. 73p. \$8.95.

R
4-6

In the photodocumentary style for which the Gidal books were a prototype, Mangurian uses one member of the family he visited, an extended family in the Peruvian highlands, as the speaker. Framed by the author's notes and background information gleaned on two visits, the text is based on tapes made by Modesto, the oldest child in the family. Neither in the text nor in the photographs is there an attempt to evade or

embellish: Modesto's town is drab, he finds the people dull and longs to live in the city, he comments almost contemptuously on the local officials. He is candid, as are the pictures; it is clear that life is a continuum of hard work that has not led the family much above the poverty level.

✓ Marangell, Virginia J. *Gianna Mia*. Dodd, 1979. 79-52047. ISBN 0-396-07732-3. 224p. \$6.95.

M
7-9 Gianna, the protagonist in the story of an Italian-American family, is thirteen at its start; an amiable, curious child, she adores her ebullient and hardworking father, her rather taciturn but equally hardworking mother, and her older brothers and sisters. The story ends near the close of World War II, when Gianna is seventeen (there's a brief postscript set in 1953), by which time one son has been killed, two of the children have married non-Catholics (accepted, after the initial shock and resistance, by Mr. and Mrs. Dellesanto) and several grandchildren have been born. The book is written in pedestrian style, but it gives a picture of the warmth within the immediate family and the importance of the extended family in an Italian-American community in a city neighborhood that has little ethnic mix.

✓ Mays, Lucinda. *The Other Shore*. Atheneum, 1979. 79-10448. ISBN 0-689-30717-9. 223p. \$8.95.

Ad
6-9 The story is set in an Italian-American community in Manhattan in 1911, where Gabriella is a shocked observer of the famous Triangle Shirtwaist fire; it then moves back to her early childhood in Italy, where she and her mother lived in abject poverty while they waited for Papa, in America, to send transport money and where her mother is raped. Back to New York, where the focus is on Gabriella's friendship with a non-Italian boy, on her winning of a college scholarship, and on her father, who confesses that he had delayed a year in sending for his family because of his devotion to a friend who was a labor leader. This first novel shows high potential: firm characterization, good evocation of setting, and a competent writing style; it suffers, however, from the common fault of many first novels, which is the author's tendency to include too much.

✓ Mazer, Harry. *The Last Mission*. Delacorte, 1979. 79-50674. ISBN 0-440-05774-4. 182p. \$7.95.

R
7-10 Jack Raab was only fifteen when he volunteered for military service in World War II, bringing his older brother's birth certificate to validate his claim that he was old enough to enlist. This is a taut, dramatic story that shows in convincing fashion the gradual change from a zealous, idealistic would-be hero to a tough, tired veteran who had seen enough of death and destruction to feel that "War is one stupid thing after another." That's one of the things Jack says after he's back at his Bronx high school, asked by the principal to say a few words at an assembly. There's no glorification of war, but there are moments of elation, of comradeship, and of the satisfaction of achievement as well as times of grim despair and desperate fear. It is on Jack's last mission that his plane is hit, and he is taken prisoner after a parachute drop; the details of the story have an authentic quality that makes it clear that they are based on Mazer's own experience as a gunner and a prisoner of war; there is rough language used among the soldiers; there's little moralizing, but the book is an indictment of war as well as a vivid story.

✓ Modell, Frank. *Seen Any Cats?* written and illus. by Frank Modell. Greenwillow, 1979. 79-11607. Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-80229-X; Library ed. ISBN 0-688-84229-1. 32p. Trade ed. \$6.95; Library ed. \$6.67 net.

The scrawly, expressive line and the humor of *New Yorker* cartoonist Modell's work is happily effective in illustrating a brisk, casual story about two enterprising

R
3-6
yrs. boys. Marvin and Milton, in order to earn money to go to the circus, decide to put on their own circus with cats they hope to train; all their stray felines escape when the boys attempt to put them on vehicles or a tightrope, or get them to jump through a hoop. Undaunted, the boys put up a sign: five cents to pat a kitten (they have quite a few) and fifteen to hold one; fifty cents to take a kitten home. The next, and final picture: Marvin and Milton watching the circus. Great fun.

✓
Mother Goose. *If Wishes Were Horses And Other Rhymes*; illus. by Susan Jeffers. Dutton, 1979. 79-9986. ISBN 0-525-32531-X; 31p. \$9.95.

R
3-5
yrs. Jeffers has chosen nursery rhymes about horses to illustrate with softly colored but strongly composed pictures in mixed media: line drawings in ink, colored by ink and pastel pencils. The result is effective, combining black and white people, slightly comic, with nicely textured and modeled animals.

✓
O'Dell, Scott. *The Captive*. Houghton, 1979. 79-15809. ISBN 0-395-27811-2. 211p. \$8.95.

R
7-9 The protagonist and narrator is a young, idealistic seminarian in sixteenth-century Spain, Julian, who is pressed into a voyage to the new world by his mentor, Don Luis. Julian, detesting the then-common practice of enslaving Indians, hopes that he can convert and save the natives he will meet. He is appalled by the rapacity of Don Luis, by his hunger for gold and his harsh treatment of the Indians; when the ship hastily sails away from their first island stop, laden with gold, it encounters a storm. Shipwrecked, Julian lives like Crusoe, helped by a Mayan girl who appears on what he had thought was a deserted island. The story, taut and dramatic, has a surprising ending, for Julian is himself the captive, enslaved by his own lust for power. The writing is fluid and trenchant, giving both a vivid picture of the Mayan culture and a moving picture of the fervent young man who is trapped by circumstance and his own unsuspected weakness.

✓
Parry, Marian. *I Am A Big Help*; written and illus. by Marian Parry. Greenwillow, 1980. 79-16638. Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-80250-8; Library ed. ISBN 0-688-84250-X. 32p. Trade ed. \$7.95; Library ed. \$7.63 net.

Ad
4-6
yrs. Small-scale pictures, many in cartoon-style frames, are in pastel colors and lively line that is reminiscent of Berson's work. The text doesn't tell a story, but is really about being tidy, industrious, helpful, etc. A very junior book of etiquette and behavior, in fact. The bouncy little mice who describe the ways in which they clean their rooms, take care of pets, do the dishes, help with the baby, and so on, are cheerful and appealing, and the setting has details that are familiar to small children, but it's a one-idea book and the one idea may make some listeners feel inadequate.

✓
Peyton, K. M. *Marion's Angels*; illus. by Robert Micklewright. Oxford, 1979. 79-40676. ISBN 0-19-271432-5. 152p. \$9.95.

R
6-9
* Everyone in the village thought Marion was a bit batty, a young girl like that spending all her time and energy in caring for a deserted church. But her widowed father understood how much she loved St. Michael's and the beautiful carved angels below its roof. When the church is used for a concert, Marion is stunned by the playing of the pianist, Pat Pennington (hero of several earlier Peyton books) and becomes his friend; she and her father are equally impressed with Pat's wife Ruth. Marion, a believer in miracles, is sure that the famous American violinist who enthusiastically arranged a series of benefit concerts to save the church has come in answer to her prayers. She is torn with misgiving about his invitation to Pat to come to the States, torn because she feels on the one hand that it may mean the end of the marriage of Pat and Ruth, since the latter is already unhappy at how Pat's musical

career has encroached on their time together, and on the other hand that it may bring happiness to her father, who has fallen in love with Ruth, whom she also loves. It's all settled, in a highly dramatic final sequence, by what Marion is convinced is another miracle. This is one of Peyton's best: perceptive, beautifully constructed, serious in its concerns but lightened by a gentle humor, and outstanding in characterization and dialogue.

✓ Ross, Louis. *In the Peanut Butter Colony*; illus. by Margot Apple. Elsevier-Dutton, 1979. 79-51982. Trade ed. ISBN 0-525-69022-0; Library ed. ISBN 0-525-69023-9. 20p. Trade ed. \$1.95; Library ed. \$5.95 net.

NR
K-2

An oversize book with harshly colored, sprawling pictures has a slight text, all of which devolves upon a child's imaginary adventures as he eats his lunchtime peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. Mother calls from another room but is never seen. "How did it go at school this morning, sweetheart?" The boy calls back "Okay, Mom," but continues, "Doesn't she know that school is almost always yucky and boring?" He then describes the monsters and the foods (emphasis on peanut butter, more peanut butter, and still more peanut butter) they bring him, some of which is delightful gobs of p.b. and some of which is sticky, slimy, lumpy jelly and jam. All the monsters are his subjects, some of them hostile. Mother's voice warns that it's time to go back to school. "After an action-packed hour in the Peanut Butter Colony it's a relief to get back to good, old, boring school." Contrived and superficial.

✓ Buckman, Ivy. *Melba the Brain*; illus. by Ruth Van Sciver. Westminster, 1979. 79-19326. ISBN 0-664-32655-2. 132p. \$7.95.

M
4-6

This fantasy about a fifth-grade genius who, by her computations, discovers how to get to another planet and also manages to bring the inhabitants of that planet to earth gets off to a good start with a realistic sequence about Melba's problems in getting along with her classmates, but it moves more and more into slapdash exaggeration, animals that talk slang, cloning (including another Melba) in the animal-ruled planet, and so on. The writing tends to be gushy and permeated with exclamation marks; there is no characterization to speak of; the ending (Melba gives an impassioned speech on the golden rule and kindness to animals and conservation of endangered species) that wins instant peer approbation seems flat and contrived. Still, the writing gives a hint of unfulfilled potential, and the double appeals of lots of action and animal characters should hold some readers.

✓ Sampson, Fay. *The Watch on Patterick Fell*. Greenwillow, 1980. 79-20840. ISBN 0-688-80261-3. 160p. \$7.95.

R
6-9

A suspense story, set in northwest England, that could be happening now or set in the future, combines a nicely-constructed, lively plot with some smoothly integrated discussions of the pros and cons of the operation of nuclear power plants and the problems of storing radioactive waste. Characterization is deft; the final episodes of the book are taut and dramatic, if not wholly credible, but the powered structure of Sampson's writing is such that one almost believes in the solution. Roger reveres his father, director of the Patterick Fell installation where nuclear waste is buried and where the staff is working toward safer means of disposal. He understands the importance of Dad's work (and that of their mother, who also works at the site) but his younger sister does not. Elspeth is thirteen, and angry about the dangers of the site; she joins a protesting mob. Still, when Dad sends his family away to live in the safety of false identities and thus escape the wrath of the evergrowing protest move-

ment, it is Elspeth who runs away to return to Patterick Fell—and thus puts them all in danger.

✓ Scott, Jack Denton. *The Submarine Bird*; illus. with photographs by Ozzie Sweet. Putnam, 1980. 79-18297. ISBN 0-399-20701-5. 64p. \$8.95.

R One of the oldest of bird species, the cormorant is a superb swimmer and diver,
5- some having been caught more than two hundred feet below the surface of the sea. The text describes courting, mating, nesting, the habits and care of the young, the first flights at about six weeks, and the social habits and appearance of nestlings and adult birds. Most interesting to the majority of readers may well be the section that describes the way the cormorant, with its keen eyesight and aquatic ability, spots and dives for prey, a talent used by Oriental fishermen to help them gather fish. The pictures, especially those of the birds diving or in flight, are excellent. In all, an informative book, broad in coverage and written in a graceful but vigorous style.

✓ Scarry, Richard. *Richard Scarry's Best First Book Ever!* written and illus. by Richard Scarry. Random House, 1979. 79-3900. Trade ed. ISBN 0-394-84250-2; Library ed. ISBN 0-394-94250-7. 46p. Trade ed. \$4.95; Library ed. \$5.99 net.

M Oversize, its pages crowded with print and pictures, this book is intended to teach
3-5 colors, the alphabet, counting, shapes and sizes, good manners, and months of the
yrs. year, and parts of the body. Plus other things: there are double-page spreads entitled "At School," "At the Supermarket," "Farmer Pig's Farm," etc. All of the figures are animals, although they aren't always easily recognizable (the yak on the alphabet page is standing upright, wearing shirt and pants, and looks like a pig with horns, or perhaps an irritated buffalo) and the text is sprinkled with coy remarks like "Mommy waters the flowers in her garden. Watch what you're doing, Mommy." On some of the pages there are only captions, on some there are bits of narrative, and everything is (on some pages) in random arrangement with only an approximation of scale. The book is cluttered in appearance and the pictures are not always clear ("talking" pig and "looking" pig look remarkably alike) and while the young child may find this a good source for the repeated pointings and labelings that lead to identification, this can't compare with the many books that are constructed to teach the alphabet or teach counting, and that function better to achieve their purposes and are at the same time illustrated by art rather than by cartoon figures.

✓ Segan, Ann. *One Meter Max*; written and illus. by Ann Segan. Prentice-Hall, 1979. 79-15150. ISBN 0-13-636076-9. 41p. \$7.95.

NR Intended to explain the metric system, this seems likely to confuse the reader,
2-3 since the text is embellished by jazzy little jingles that often do not rhyme or scan, and that are spoken by such characters as Minnie Millimeter and Gracie Gram. Each responds to a series of questions; Kid Kilogram has introduced himself with "Hey, short-stuff. Do you know what I do? I help weigh heavy things, like you. . . ." and is asked "Exactly how heavy are you?" His answer begins, "I weigh as much as a box of diapers, That has not been opened yet, As much as the first aid kit, Or the plant on the cabinet." The pages are crowded with roughly-drawn, cartoon-style line drawings, often several to a page, through which the text is dispersed; at times they are out of scale, as when a butterfly is larger than the head of the person examining it. Endpapers show metric conversion charts for size, volume, and mass (or weight) and give the only clear message of the book.

Sharmat, Marjorie Weinman. *The Trolls of Twelfth Street*; illus. by Ben Shecter. Coward, 1979. 78-31788. ISBN 0-698-30716-X. 64p. Break-of-Day Books. \$6.29.

R Every hundred years or so, Eldred wondered what it was like at ground level in
1-3 New York, and this time he coaxed his family into leaving their cave under the Brooklyn Bridge. Were there other creatures as stupid and ugly? ("I wish you wouldn't brag. . . ." Ma says.) "Pretty please with ointment on it," Eldred had begged, and Pa reluctantly agreed, "We can't stay more than a few hundred years." So they found a nice, dank basement and confronted human beings—and that's where the series of misunderstandings starts. Easy to read, very funny in just that nicely awful way small children enjoy, and illustrated with appropriately scruffy characters in the humorous pencil drawings.

Shdb, Elizabeth. *Seeing Is Believing*; illus. by Rachel Isadora. Greenwillow, 1979. 78-12378. Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-80211-7; Library ed. ISBN 0-688-84211-9. 64p. (Read-alone Books) Trade ed. \$5.95; Library ed. \$5.71 net.

R Net folk tales are nicely adapted for beginning independent readers; in both stories,
1-3 Tom is the hero, a young man who lives in County Cork and meets leprechauns and pixies in "The Leprechaun's Trick," an Irish folk tale and in "Pisky Mischief," a tale from Cornwall. Nobody else believes in these little people, but when Tom is outwitted by a leprechaun and almost led astray by some piskies, he knows they exist. Shub's style is direct, simple but flavorful; the illustrations have the same sturdy quality and have a humor and texture that show a new facet of the versatile Isadora's art.

Slote, Alfred. *Love and Tennis*. Macmillan, 1979. 79-14914. ISBN 0-02-785870-7. 163p. \$7.95.

R Both of Buddy's parents play tournament tennis, but his father is relaxed about
7-9 Buddy's prowess, while his mother (divorced, and tense about it) urges him to pull any trick he can, anything to win a match. She even, to Buddy's dismay, arranges a three-week stint at a tennis school, and he dislikes intensely the bitter rivalry, the whole milieu of steely indifference to anything but the game. "Pity has no place in tennis," says the coach, "Love is only a score." Permeating the tough-tennis theme is the problem Buddy has with his girl, who's just as avaricious as his mother, and the confusion he feels about his parents' varying attitudes. Although his father predicts he'll be back, Buddy decides, at fifteen, that he'll quit tournament tennis. This is probably the best of the few tennis stories that have been written; no formula plot here, but a realistic and perceptive account of the pressures of the game and the conflicts they can cause. The characters are rounded, and there are logical connections between what they're like, what they do, and how they react to each other.

Thompson, Jean. *Don't Forget Michael*; illus. by Margot Apple. Morrow, 1979. 79-16637. Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-22196-3; Library ed. ISBN 0-688-32196-8. 64p. Trade ed. \$6.95; Library ed. \$6.67 net.

Ad Four stories about a quiet child who's the youngest in a large and obstreperous
2-3 family are written in a rather staid style; there is little depth in characterization and only a modicum of forced humor. The incidents may appeal to primary grades readers because of their everyday life quality: Michael is left behind on a big family reunion picnic, but is missed and retrieved; he startles an aunt who sees him covered with tomatoes and thinks it's blood; he thinks of a way to find a key that's fallen down a porch crack when his older siblings can't; he and his sister catch his grandmother's pet parrot when it escapes. Run of the mill, but easy to read.

✓ Walker, Barbara Muhs. *The Little House Cookbook; Frontier Foods from Laura Ingalls Wilder's Classic Stories*; illus. by Garth Williams. Harper, 1979. 76-58733. Trade ed. ISBN 0-06-026418-7; Library ed. ISBN 0-06-026419-5. 240p. Trade ed. \$8.95; Library ed. \$8.79 net.

R Although this contains many recipes for foods mentioned in the Wilder books, and
5- the recipes have clear instructions, this goes far beyond the usual cookbook, for the recipes are prefaced and accompanied by interesting discussions of the ways in which pioneer families of the late nineteenth century depended on store-bought staples, of the limitations of the cooking and food storage facilities, and of the foods they garnered from their own planting or tending as well as those they found. A glossary, a metric conversion table, and an extensive index are appended to this well-written book; the index uses boldface to refer to recipes.

✓ Walker, Mary Alexander. *To Catch a Zombi*. Atheneum, 1979. 79-11968. ISBN 0-689-30725-X. 193p. \$8.95.

M Vance's father is a runaway slave, in this story set in Louisiana in 1784, while
7-9 Vance and his mother and brother, who are "free-persons-of-color," remain in the bayou. Maman is credulous, spending what little money they get to pay the voodoo *hougan* to protect or help them. All of them believe in the zombi, the spirit of a dead man. Vance goes to New Orleans to earn money, becomes fond of the honey-colored, elegant Quenelle who goes mad when her white lover announces his marriage; he returns home to help a slave girl who was a dear friend, and who has run away, and he buys her baby to save the child from slavery. By now Vance has had some education and lost his superstitious ways, and he exposes the "zombi" as a costumed colleague of the mercenary *hougan*. The book gives a picture of New Orleans life and bayou culture of the period, but it gives only some facets of these; the characters are colorful but not drawn with depth, and the plot seems both contrived to show black-white relations and contrived in a literary sense, with a bit of voodoo here and a dramatic snake-hunt there so that a series of incidents with stock figures makes a series of points about customs, superstition, slavery, et cetera rather than telling a meaningful story.

✓ Watanabe, Shigeo. *How Do I Put It On?* illus. by Yasuo Ohtomo. Collins, 1979. 79-12714. Trade ed. ISBN 0-529-05555-4; Library ed. ISBN 0-529-05557-0. 28p. Trade ed. \$6.95; Library ed. \$6.91 net.

R The first book in a series called "I Can Do It All By Myself," this is very brief,
2-4 very simple, and nicely gauged for the young child. Clean crayon and watercolor
yrs. pictures of a small bear are based on the wrong way/right way approach: "This is my shirt. Do I put it on like this? No! I put my shirt over my head." There is one sentence per page, and the text doesn't get into problems of front vs. back or left shoe vs. right shoe, but relates each garment to its location. Shirt, pants, shoes, and cap on, the bear trots off saying, "I got dressed all by myself." The lap audience should enjoy the triumphant expressions on the bear's face, as each problem is solved, as much as they enjoy the exploration of one of the big problems—and accomplishments—in their lives.

✓ Yeoman, John. *The Wild Washerwomen*; illus. by Quentin Blake. Greenwillow, 1979. 78-32147. ISBN 0-688-80219-2; Library ed. ISBN 0-688-84219-4. 32p. Trade ed. \$8.95; Library ed. \$8.59 net.

This isn't a very substantial story, but it's told with such abandon and illustrated with such vigor and humor that it's an engaging tall tale. Blake's scrawly, energetic

R
K-3

line takes full advantage of the harum-scarum plot and its excesses, as the seven washerwomen rebel against their hard-driving employer and go on a rampage that includes upsetting market carts, bashing hats in a hat shop, spraying passersby with mud as their goat-cart careens through the town pond, etc. Seven woodcutters hear of the rampage, try to teach the obstreperous women a lesson and end by being scrubbed, soaked, pounded, rinsed, wrung out, and put in the sun to dry like laundry. As any reader might foretell, they all pair off, and then the seven woodcutters' wives live bucolically ever after. Not sensible, but fun.

Yoo, Edward Yushin, ed. *Bong Nam and the Pheasants*; illus. by Demi. Prentice-Hall, 1979. 79-15749. ISBN 0-13-079657-3. 22p. \$7.95.

M
3-4

In a small book, tinted line drawings, restrainedly embellished with strong but delicate details, illustrate a retelling of a traditional Koren tale. An edition in which the pages fold out, accordion style, into a continuous strip, is also available. Bong Nam saves some baby pheasants who are being threatened by a snake. Some time later, he is on his way home from the village market, when a lovely young girl invites him to dinner and informs him that she is really the snake he chased away, and that she will eat him if he cannot make a distant temple bell ring at midnight. When the hour comes, she changes into a snake and he expects to die, but the bell rings. Later he finds two wounded pheasants (the parent birds, apparently, although the text does not so state) and a bloodied bell. He brings the birds home, tends them, and is happy to see them fly. That's the end, and an abrupt one, of the story. The connection is implied, but may not be understood by all readers. The story is flatly retold, not too smooth or appealing as it is, but it could, with embellishment, be used for storytelling, and there is little available from Korea.

York, Carol Beach. *When Midnight Comes . . .* Elsevier/Nelson, 1979. 79-18617. ISBN 0-525-66676-1. 121p. \$6.95.

M
5-7

Mrs. Bridgeport and her three children lived in amity and comfort, and she felt compelled to invite her dumpy, awkward niece Wilma to visit them because she was so conscious of how much more fortunate her own children were. Stolid and silent, Wilma irritated all of them, but their attitudes were even more affected by all the mysterious things that began to go wrong with Wilma's advent: the illness of one child, the restless insomnia of Mrs. Bridgeport, the disappearance of the family pet, the inexplicable ticking of a clock that didn't work. Wilma is sent home, but nothing changes; the story ends with a real estate agent showing the house to prospective buyers, the Bridgeports having left. In other words, York builds mood and tension and then drops the story, although there is a hint that the clock is the evil power. The writing style is competent despite a recurrence of shifting viewpoint, and the characters are well developed, but the plot moves at a deliberate pace to a weak ending.

Errata in the November issue:

The error in the phonetic spelling of "pheromones," mentioned in the review of Dorothy Van Woerkom's *Hidden Messages* (Crown), was in the prepublication review copy. A correction was made in the bound books.

The review of the revised edition of *Indians* by Edwin Tunis (Crowell) noted that the reviser's name was not provided. The name is printed on page twelve.

READING FOR LIBRARIANS

To order any of the items listed below, please write directly to the publisher of the item, not to the BULLETIN of the Center for Children's Books.

Bagnall, Norma. "Profile: Theodore Taylor: His Models of Self-reliance." *Language Arts*, January, 1980.

Chall, Jeanne S., et al. "Blacks in the World of Children's Books." *The Reading Teacher*, February, 1979.

Children's Book Council, comp. and ed. *Children's Books: Awards & Prizes*. Children's Book Council, 1979. 202p. Paper. \$8.95. Available from: Children's Book Council, 67 Irving Place, New York, N.Y. 10003.

Cohen, Adir. "Children's Literature in the Work of Leo Tolstoy." *Journal of Reading*, January, 1979.

Commire, Anne, ed. *Something About the Author*. V. 17. Gale Research, 1979. 282p. \$30.00. Order from Gale Research Co., Book Tower, Detroit, Michigan 48226.

DeSalvo, Louise A. "The Uses of Adversity: Robin Brancato's Novels as Patterns for Adolescent Coping." *Media & Methods*, April, 1979.

DeWit, Dorothy. *Children's Faces Looking Up: Program Building for the Storyteller*. American Library Association, 1979. 156p. \$11.00.

Higgins, Judith and Kellman, Amy. "'I Like Judy Blume. It's Like She Knows Me.'" *Teacher*, 1979. An informal survey of reading tastes.

Hunt, Peter. "The Mayne Game: An Experiment in Response." *Signal*, January, 1979.

Sherman, John Lee. "Storytelling with Young Children." *Young Children*, January, 1979.

AWARDS

Newbery Medal: Joan Blos, *A Gathering of Days, A New England Girl's Journal 1830-32*. Scribner's.

Newbery Honor Book: David Kherdian, *The Road from Home, The Story of an Armenian Girl*. Greenwillow.

Caldecott Medal: Barbara Cooney, illustrator, *Ox-Cart Man*, by Donald Hall. Viking.

Caldecott Honor Books: Rachel Isadora, *Ben's Trumpet*. Greenwillow. Uri Shulevitz, *The Treasure*. Farrar, Chris Van Allsburg, *The Garden of Abdul Gasazi*. Houghton.

Regina Medal: Beverly Cleary.

Laura Ingalls Wilder Award: Theodore Geisel (Dr. Seuss).

