



SENATE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS

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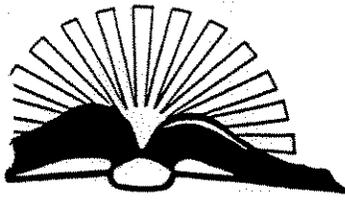
TO: All Senate Democrats
FROM: Senate Democratic Caucus
Date: 3/10/99
RE: Library System Budget

Senate Education Committee 3/10 Hearing – Senator Grobschmidt Chair

DPI-Division of Libraries Budget

Cal Potter, Sally Drew and Larry Dicks of the Division of Libraries discussed library funding in the Governor's proposed budget. They focused on 3 items:

1. **Public Library System Aid:** The Governor proposes no increase in library system aid in his budget. State statute requires funding the state's 17 public library systems at 13% of costs. Current state aid covers approximately 10% of costs. DPI requests additional funding of \$5,141,200 GPR in FY 00 and \$6,244,700 in GPR in FY 01.
2. **Library Service Contract:** DPI is requesting an additional \$38,300 in FY 00 and \$73,600 in FY 01 to cover increased contract costs for the Wisconsin Interlibrary Service. The program provides interlibrary loan services to local libraries.
3. **BadgerLink:** The Governor included no funding to continue this service in the biennial budget. BadgerLink is a searchable database providing links to full text of over 4,000 magazines and newspapers. This service is free of charge to all schools, libraries and Wisconsin residents with a Wisconsin based ISP. DPI requests \$836,000 in FY 00 and \$1.7 million in FY 01. Continued operation of BadgerLink would run about \$1.7 million per year. It is estimated that if all libraries in Wisconsin were to individually subscribe to this service it would cost over \$50 million per year.



Milwaukee County Federated Library System

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March 10, 1999

Senate Education Committee
State of Wisconsin
Capitol Building
Madison, WI 53707

Members of the Senate Education Committee:

The Milwaukee County Federated Library System (MCFLS) Board of Trustees supports the library system aid formula change, proposed in SB 66, with the modifications detailed below.

Under the proposed formula change, library system aid would be distributed based on three factors: area, population and equalization (based on the state shared revenues for municipalities and counties formula). 85% of the appropriation would be distributed to population and 7.5% distributed to both area and equalization. This change would not be effective until state aid to library systems equaled at least 11.25% of total library expenditures.

The MCFLS Board strongly supports modifying the current library system aid formula to incorporate equalization. The proposed formula moves in this direction. Other notable strengths of the proposed formula include the following:

- Eliminates expenditures as a factor of distributing system aid although it is the factor used to trigger a formula change
- Moves toward greater equity among library systems through the recognition of ability to pay/property wealth; i.e., equalization
- Recognizes local net tax effort
- Maintains the area factor to account for the cost of providing services over long distances
- Results in a small annual variance in aid distribution

Although the proposed formula incorporates an element of equalization, other factors in the formula have a disequalizing effect on the distribution of library system aids. Notable weaknesses of the proposed formula changes include the following:

- Too much emphasis on population with 85% of appropriation allocated to this factor
- Disproportionate emphasis on population negates the impact of equalization
- Use of the entire State Shared Revenue (SSR) formula as a means of achieving equalization:
 - Contains a per capita element which duplicates a factor that is already in the formula
 - Contains a utility component which is disequalizing
 - There have been no increases to the SSR formula for five years
 - Incorporates a 95% hold harmless provision which is an artificial adjustment to aid entitlements and is disequalizing
- Any formula change should be mutually exclusive of an increase in the system aid indexing level to 11.25%

As previously indicated, the Milwaukee County Federated Library System strongly recommends several modifications to the formula proposed in SB 66. These include the following:

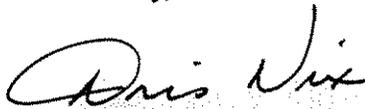
- Utilize only the aidable revenue component of the SSR formula – to minimize instability and unpredictability of this component, utilize multi-year rolling averages
- Increase percentage allocated for equalization while decreasing percentage allocated for population
- Grandfather formula change over time to minimize variance in aid distribution
- Formula change should be mutually exclusive of any increase in the system aids indexing level to 11.25%

There are obvious benefits to incorporating these modifications to the proposed library system aid formula. These changes would emphasize equalization and de-emphasize population for the distribution of aid. The aidable revenue component of the SSR formula, which reflects local net tax effort and property wealth, is a good measure of ability to pay. On the other hand, eliminating the SSR formula's per capita and utility components, as well as its hold harmless adjustment, would go far to reduce their disequalizing effects on the distribution of library aids.

The Milwaukee County Federated Library System requests consideration by the Senate Education Committee of these proposed modifications.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Doris Nix, Director
Milwaukee County Federated
Library System

Moen, Lisa

From: Douglas Baker [dbaker@kenosha.lib.wi.us]
Sent: Tuesday, March 09, 1999 6:23 PM
To: WIPUBLIB
Cc: Kenosha News; Sen.Wirch; Rep.Steinbrink; Starzyk, Samantha; Rep.Kreuser; Moen, Lisa; Rep.Olsen
Subject: Testimony to the Senate Education Committee

Below is a copy of the testimony I plan to give tomorrow at Senate Education. Feel free to use any part of it you would like for your communications with Legislators.

Testimony to the Senate Education Committee

On Behalf of the Wisconsin Library Association

March 10, 1999

I am Douglas Baker, Chair of the Wisconsin Library Association's Library Development and Legislation Committee. I am here today to speak in favor of the Wisconsin Library Association's 1999 Legislative Agenda, which is attached to this testimony for the record. Our Legislative Agenda includes support of a number of important programs, which are effectively summarized in the broad vision statement: "Access for anyone, from anywhere, at any time."

That vision statement is part of the Wisconsin Library Technology Strategic Plan, which was developed last year at the Library Technology Planning Conference, co-sponsored by the Department of Public Instruction and the Department of Administration. The issues addressed by our Legislative Agenda can all be linked in one way or another to carrying out this broad vision. Statewide support for our vision is demonstrated by the long list of Wisconsin organizations that have officially endorsed our Legislative Agenda. That list is attached to my testimony as a reminder that I come here before you to represent them.

Now, let me share with you our position on the Governor's biennial budget proposal and several bills that are before you for consideration.

The Biennial Budget

We believe that the budget proposal recently released by the Governor's Office missed an excellent opportunity to set good public policy for libraries in the state. We want to work closely with you and your colleagues on a number of significant issues to make a better budget for this coming biennium.

One of these issues is the continuation of the BadgerLink program. This exciting new electronic resource brings over 4,000 magazine and newspaper titles to Wisconsin citizens at their businesses, homes, schools, and libraries over the Internet. The cost effectiveness of this program is its best selling point, since subscriptions to this service on a library to library basis would be at least thirty times more expensive than providing it by the state. BadgerLink is a real winner for Wisconsin taxpayers, and the Department of Public Instruction's proposal to fund it at \$2,536,000 over the next biennium should be enacted.

A second issue is the critical and ongoing need to adequately fund Wisconsin's public library systems. Year after year of funding freezes have left

library systems without the resources necessary to effectively carry out the mission for which they were created. During the last session of the Legislature, a Legislative Council Study Committee found that significant increases in funding were required to make library systems strong and vital partners in the delivery of library services in this state. Failure to meet this demonstrated need has, over time, threatened the availability of open access to our public libraries; and failure to fix this problem now threatens the continued existence of this important program for the future.

Over the past several months, the Library Association and the Board of Regents have teamed up to fight for new funding in this biennium to build the print and electronic collections at UW libraries. The Governor's budget proposal acknowledges the importance of these specialized information resources, and supports advanced study and research in Wisconsin by approving a majority of the Regent's request. Funding for this purpose must continue at least at the level proposed by the Governor. This proposal for UW libraries does not include funding for the separate and equally important Badgerlink program, which expands the availability of electronic resources at public, school, and academic libraries across the state.

Initiatives in the Governor's budget proposal to improve the TEACH Wisconsin program are certainly praiseworthy. However, to continue to pay for this program with revenue from the Common School Fund robs our school libraries of the resources essential to their mission. As a state, we cannot continue to invest in educational technology with money that was meant to buy schoolbooks.

Equally troublesome is this budget proposal's failure to maintain adequate funding for statewide resource contracts with the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Wisconsin Interlibrary Services, Milwaukee Public Library/Interlibrary Loan, and the Cooperative Children's Book Center. These small, but vital, services need modest funding corrections to match their increased cost of doing business.

Senate Bills

The Wisconsin Library Association enthusiastically supports SB 59, SB 60, and SB 62; and we are very appreciative that they have been introduced in this session of the Legislature for your consideration.

SB 59 creates a library lending incentive aid program, which encourages public libraries to continue to make their collections available for loan to people who live outside their municipal boundaries. It has long been a matter of statewide concern to encourage this. To the inattentive eye, it may even seem that this system is working in Wisconsin. I am here today to tell you that Wisconsin municipalities are no longer in a position to stand by and allow their public libraries to give away library services to non-residents without fair compensation. This threatens the continuation of open access to public libraries in Wisconsin.

SB 59 addresses this issue directly. It is modeled on a bill developed by the Legislative Council Study Committee in the last session of the Legislature and passed by a majority of the Senate in that session. We strongly urge you to consider this bill favorably and report it out to the floor for action.

SB 60 recognizes that public library systems should be eligible to receive financial assistance under the TEACH Wisconsin program. Public library systems, in many parts of the state, are the agencies that are taking the lead in providing new technologies at their member libraries. This role of public library systems needs to be recognized under the TEACH program. SB 60 also fixes a problem for multi-branch public libraries, which are currently ineligible to receive TEACH assistance for the cost of telecommunications among branches. It just makes sense to correct these oversights in the

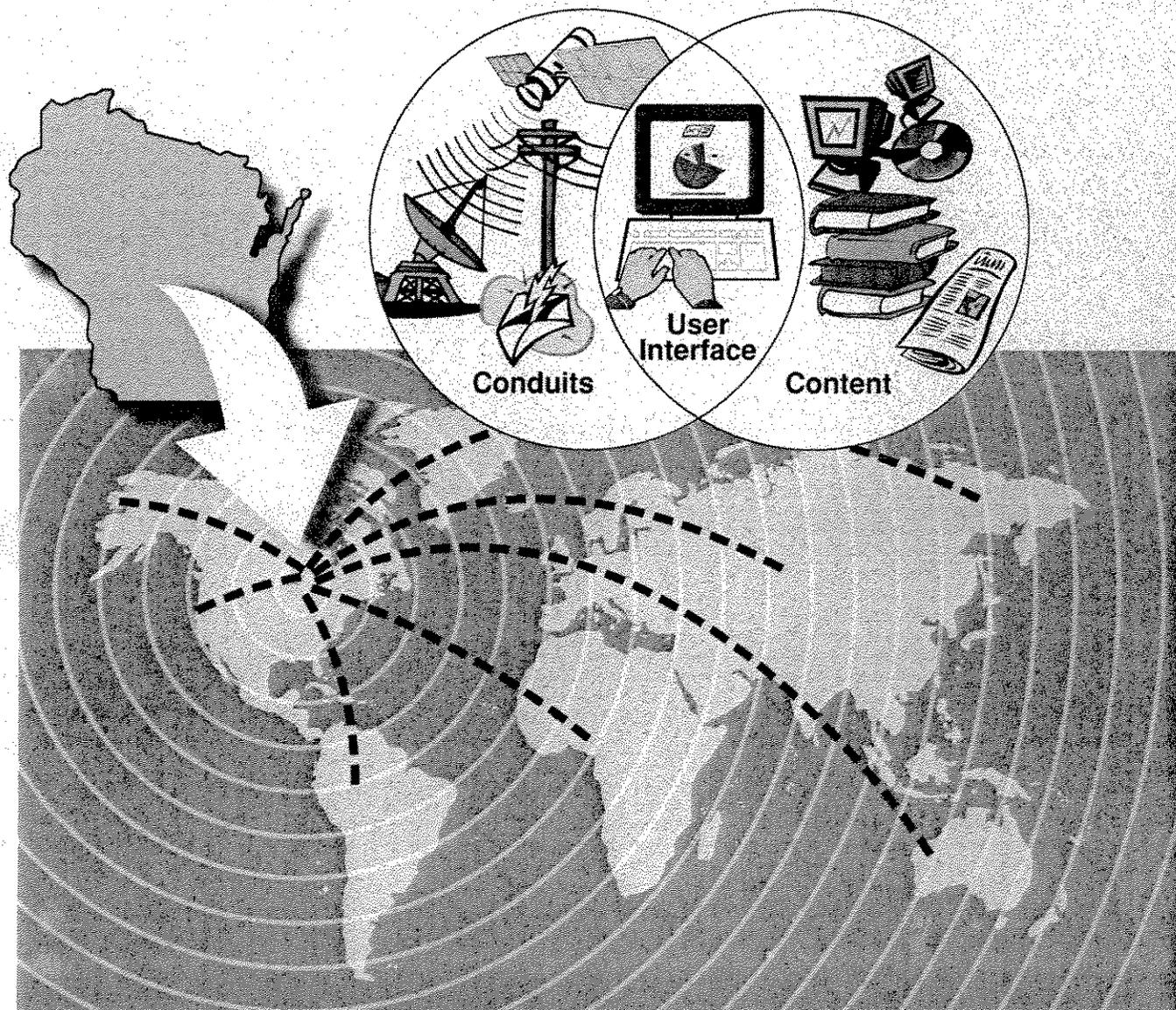
original TEACH legislation now.

SB 62 cleans up and clarifies the language passed in 1997 Wisconsin Act 150, so that it matches the original intent of the Legislative Council Study Committee. We strongly urge you to follow through with these corrections to current law.

In closing, I would like to assure you that the Wisconsin Library Association will work with you to mount an energetic effort to get a full hearing on these and other important issues that affect the success of Wisconsin libraries and the quality of life for all Wisconsin citizens.

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Wisconsin Library Technology Strategic Plan



**WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
DIVISION FOR LIBRARIES AND COMMUNITY LEARNING**

Wisconsin Library Technology Strategic Plan

The *Wisconsin Library Technology Strategic Plan* has been endorsed by the following organizations:

- Council on Library and Network Development (COLAND)
- Friends of Wisconsin Libraries (FOWL)
- System and Resource Library Administrators Association of Wisconsin (SRLAAW)
- Wisconsin Educational Media Association (WEMA)
- Wisconsin Health Science Library Association (WHSLA)
- Wisconsin Library Association (WLA)



Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
John T. Benson, State Superintendent
Madison, Wisconsin

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This publication is on the Web at <http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/dlcl/pld/techplan.html>. It is also available from the Division for Libraries and Community Learning, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, P.O. Box 7841, Madison, WI 53707-7841, (608) 266-2205. Bulletin No. 99071.

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Preface

The Department of Public Instruction is committed to using technology to foster resource sharing, and it supports continued development of statewide library networks to improve access to information resources for all Wisconsin residents. This plan reflects this commitment. The use of technology to promote greater access to information will be in cooperation and coordination with the Wisconsin library community. The ultimate vision of this plan is to ensure that:

All Wisconsin residents have equitable, convenient, and universal access to the information and knowledge resources they need to meet personal, work, educational, and community goals. This is facilitated by the participation of Wisconsin libraries in statewide networks linking library resources through appropriate technology and technology standards.

The goals and objectives outlined in this plan will help make this vision a reality.

John T. Benson
State Superintendent

1. Introduction

Access:

- **For Anyone**
- **From Anywhere**
- **At Any Time**

These three phrases characterize our vision of a Wisconsin library and information network. Today, librarians in Wisconsin know that by working together with library advocates and other information professionals they can help the residents of Wisconsin achieve a level of information access only dreamed of fifteen years ago.

This strategic plan for using technology is the product of a process which began long before the Library Technology Planning Conference held February 23-24, 1998. It started with the first beehive OCLC terminals and the first Apple microcomputers. It started with the first conversions of card catalogs to online catalogs. It started with the first WISCAT on microfiche. It started with the first online searches of ERIC. Wisconsin libraries have developed a substantial technology base which has enabled us to construct a strategic plan that will benefit all our citizens.

A strategic plan should be set forth in broad terms. It includes goals and objectives but does not include specific details on how the vision will be achieved. The next step will be to develop implementation plans. Implementation plans will be living documents; they will need to be continually reviewed to reflect changes in technology and changes in the information needs of the state's residents.

This strategic plan reflects the division's statutory commission to promote cooperation among all types of libraries and to coordinate the development of networks to foster resource sharing. The Department of Public Instruction's Division for Libraries and Community Learning is committed to continuing to bring together the Wisconsin library community for the benefit of all Wisconsin libraries and, more importantly, for the benefit of all Wisconsin residents.

Although leadership for the development of this plan was provided by the Division for Libraries and Community Learning, it is hoped that other library organizations and agencies will find common ground with the vision, goals and objectives contained in the plan. The division acknowledges the involvement of the Library Technology Conference Steering Committee, the participants in the conference and preceding forums and input from other interested parties. More information on the Library Technology Conference is in Appendix C and on the conference Web site at <http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/dlcl/pld/techconf.html>.

2. Statutory Framework for Library Networking

The legislature has long recognized the importance of libraries and library networking in the state. This recognition is incorporated in chapter 43 of the state statutes, which charges the Department of Public Instruction and the Council on Library and Network Development with a variety of responsibilities and tasks related to libraries, library networking and interlibrary cooperation. In addition, the Department of Administration, as outlined in chapter 16 of the statutes, has a variety of responsibilities in the areas of technology, technology planning and telecommunications. These legislative declarations and the areas of responsibilities are outlined below.

The legislature recognizes

- The importance of free access to knowledge, information, and diversity of ideas by all residents of this state
- The critical role played by public, school, special and academic libraries in providing that access
- That the most effective use of library resources in this state can occur only through interlibrary cooperation among all types of libraries and through the effective use of technology
- The major educational, cultural and economic asset that is represented in the collective knowledge and information resources of the state's libraries

The legislature declares

- That it is the policy of this state to provide laws for the development and improvement of public libraries, school libraries and interlibrary cooperation among all types of libraries

The legislature directs the Department of Public Instruction to

- Promote cooperation and resource sharing among public libraries, school libraries, other types of libraries and related agencies
- Plan, coordinate, evaluate and set statewide priorities for the development of networks to enable library cooperation and resource sharing within this state
- Maintain a statewide database (WISCAT) of library materials
- Accept, on behalf of the state, grants from the federal government

The legislature directs the Department of Administration to

- Be responsible for statewide information technology planning
- Develop and maintain a statewide long-range telecommunications plan
- Provide (in coordination with the TEACH Wisconsin program) Wisconsin's public and nonpublic schools, postsecondary institutions and public libraries with an affordable telecommunications network for the transmission of voice, video and data

3. Building a Statewide Library Network

Each library must determine its level of participation in the evolving statewide library network. The development of a statewide library network will build on the substantial networking infrastructure already in place. This infrastructure can be generally divided into conduits and content. The conduits consist of the networking infrastructure, which includes local area and wide area networks, the public/private telecommunications networks and the host of protocols that allow linkages between these networks to facilitate the flow of information. The content is the information that is accessed and transported by the network conduits to the end user. The information may reside in the patron's local library or halfway around the world. The conduits and content come together for the library patron in the form of a graphical workstation with high-speed Internet access. For examples of the constituent parts of the conduits and content, see Appendix A.

The term "statewide library network" is used only in the conceptual sense. The evolving network will *not* be a single structure. Such a structure is neither feasible nor desirable in the age of decentralized and distributed networks or at a time when repositories of information are similarly decentralized and distributed. Rather, a statewide library network will be an interconnected network of local, regional and statewide networks. The degree of interconnection will be highly dependent on the technology used—which will, in turn, be determined by commonalities of

- Service
- Governance
- Geography
- Or a combination thereof

For many libraries these commonalities are already well defined. A state library network can enhance existing service structures and assist in developing new service structures for resource sharing as changing needs and demands warrant.

A statewide library network will seek to enhance the network conduits and access to content for libraries already networked. This will allow these libraries to experiment with more advanced networking topologies and protocols and various methods for delivery of content. A statewide library network will also seek to provide some degree of access for libraries now isolated from the networked world, ensuring them a basic level of both network participation and access to information.

4. Vision Statement

Access for anyone, from anywhere, at any time:

All Wisconsin residents have equitable, convenient, and universal access to the information and knowledge resources they need to meet personal, work, educational and community goals. This is facilitated by the participation of Wisconsin libraries in statewide networks linking library resources through appropriate technology and technology standards.

This vision statement served as a keynote for participants at the February 23-24, 1998, Library Technology Planning Conference. A vision is just that: it is a vision. It is a statement of where one hopes to be at a future date and it does not wholly reflect the current environment. A considerable amount of work must be done in the coming years to make this vision a reality for our state's libraries and citizens. The second sentence of the vision describes, in general terms, how technology can help move the Wisconsin library community closer to making this vision a reality. This is explained in more detail in section 3, "Building a Statewide Library Network."

5. Goals and Objectives

As befits a strategic plan, the goals and objectives listed on the following pages are broadly stated. More specific implementation processes will be developed to accomplish the goals and objectives. As indicated in the introduction, the goals and objectives focus primarily on the Department of Public Instruction's statutory commission to promote and develop networks to foster interlibrary cooperation and resource sharing among all types of libraries. It is hoped, however, that all types of libraries will find common ground with many of these goals.

The goals and objectives below are based on the following assumptions.

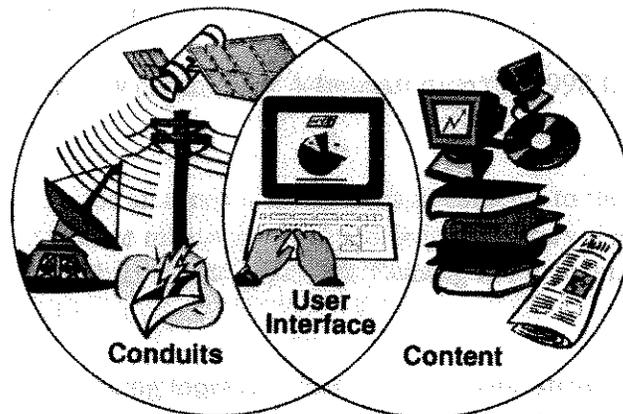
- 1) Participation in the evolving statewide library network is voluntary. The level of library participation will vary and be determined by various factors including size of library, type of library and the library's mission.
- 2) The evolving library network will not be a single entity. It will build on existing networks, assist in the creation of new networks and facilitate library access to these networks.
- 3) Collection development is primarily a local responsibility. Individual library collections are, and will remain, a critical element in meeting the information needs of the state's residents. The use of technology to enhance access to remote information resources augments local collections. Technology is not a substitute for well developed and supported local library collections.
- 4) Much information, including many popular materials, will be available only in print format for many years.

Goal	Objectives
<p>All residents have access to a statewide library network which provides access to information from libraries and other locations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All libraries in Wisconsin will have direct Internet access to facilitate participation in the network. • Electronic library information systems are linked to the network, including shared and individual automated library systems and interlibrary loan systems. • Through the BadgerLink program, the state assists in funding full-text databases and information resources available in electronic format to all Wisconsin libraries and residents. • The state union catalog, WISCAT, is linked to the network and facilitates access to library resources. • The division establishes and maintains the BadgerLink Website. • Value-added Web sites are linked to the BadgerLink Website. • Key publications, particularly government materials and rare historical materials, are digitized and accessible via the network.
<p>Libraries have collections that meet the needs of their primary clientele and are also available to other Wisconsin residents through a statewide library network.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The state funds and manages contracts to assist with the sharing of materials statewide. • The state facilitates the development of shared automated systems to facilitate resource sharing. • Automated interlibrary loan, which incorporates appropriate policy and technical protocols, is an integral part of the network.
<p>A comprehensive materials delivery system supports the sharing of library materials throughout the state.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An advisory committee for the existing intersystem delivery service is established and provides guidance as the delivery system develops. • Public library systems continue to develop delivery services to meet the needs of their members. • Contracts and agreements facilitate the participation of all types of libraries as the delivery system develops. • Electronic delivery options are explored and built into the statewide library network as they become service- and cost-effective.

Goal	Objectives
<p>Training for library staff and patrons is incorporated at every level of a statewide library network.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training will be provided by a wide variety of organizations including public library systems, Cooperative Education Service Agencies, libraries, and other educational institutions and organizations. • Technical training is developed and implemented across the state for all features of a statewide library network. • The Division for Libraries and Community Learning coordinates training for accessing specific information resources that it supports (e.g., WISCAT, BadgerLink full-text databases, interlibrary loan). • The Division for Libraries and Community Learning assists schools and libraries in applying for, and using, TEACH Wisconsin staff development grants funds. • Strategies for ensuring technical expertise at local and regional levels are developed. • User groups are organized to ensure ongoing support and feedback for all aspects of the network.
<p>The Division for Libraries and Community Learning takes the lead in facilitating implementation of a statewide library network.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The division establishes ongoing communication and interaction with all types of libraries, library groups, the education community and other organizations in the state to implement various aspects of a statewide library network. • Reports on implementation of this plan are included in the mandatory biennial reports of the division to the Council on Library and Network Development and shared with other interest groups and the public. • The division develops specifications and bid documents and contracts for services to enhance development of a statewide library network and access to content via that network. • The division facilitates network development and access via projects funded by the Library Services and Technology Act. • The division continues to advocate for funding to assist libraries with their technology needs. • The division collaborates with other libraries and library organizations in developing a public relations effort to raise public, legislative and gubernatorial awareness of the benefits of a statewide library network and to promote support for it.

Appendix A. Features and Components of a Statewide Library Network

The conceptualization of the evolving statewide library network is shown below. The conduits, as previously noted, provide the network connectivity and access. The content is the information provided directly or indirectly over the networks. The user interface is at the intersection of these two key segments. It provides access to information for library staff and patrons through a networked workstation with access to the Web.



The main components or features of the above three segments are listed below. (Acronyms are defined in Appendix D.)

<i>Conduits</i>	<i>User Interface</i>	<i>Content</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Programs facilitating Internet access</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BadgerNet • TEACH Wisconsin • E-rate • Library Services and Technology Act • Technology Literacy Challenge Fund • <i>Linking automated systems</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local • Regional • State • <i>Interlibrary Loan</i> • <i>Document delivery</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronic • Physical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Networked workstation</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graphics-based • Text-based • <i>Different levels of</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User interaction • Access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For staff • For patrons • <i>Cross platform support</i> • <i>Training</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TEACH Wisconsin • Technology Literacy Challenge Fund • <i>Technical support</i> • <i>Interface defined by local library</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Physical collections</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print • Multimedia • <i>Electronic collections</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Popular, full-text databases • Specialized databases • <i>Web resources</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer reviewed sites • Local/regional sites • <i>Library online catalogs</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local • Regional • State (WISCAT) • National • <i>Government documents and resources</i>

Appendix B. Technology-related Activities of the Department of Public Instruction and the Department of Administration

Listed below are several key activities and programs of the Department of Public Instruction's Division for Libraries and Community Learning and the Department of Administration for 1998-99. These activities will help achieve the vision, goals, and objectives of the Wisconsin Library Technology Strategic Plan.

Department of Public Instruction:

- Cosponsored with the state Department of Administration the 1998 Library Technology Planning Conference.
- Provides statewide access for all types of libraries and residents to the BadgerLink full-text periodicals and other reference materials. Will use federal Library Services and Technology Act funds for this access through 1999 and seek state funding in the biennial budget to continue the program.
- Will develop a model for linking together WISCAT, local and shared automated library systems, government information, full-text information, and other electronic resources.
- Continues and improves the online (Web) version of WISCAT. Allows library staff to update holdings and create interlibrary loan requests using appropriate software and the Internet.
- Maintains the QuILL interlibrary loan management system and explores ways to link various interlibrary loan systems.
- Continues to manage the federal Technology Literacy Challenge Fund program and award grants to school districts.
- Continues to manage the federal Library Services and Technology Act program and award grants to libraries and library systems.
- Assists schools and public libraries to participate in the state TEACH Wisconsin and BadgerNet programs and the federal E-rate program.
- Uses state and federal programs and funding to help the Department of Public Instruction reach its goal, adopted in 1994, that "by the year 2,000 every PK-12 school and library in Wisconsin will have full, direct (not dial-up) access to the Internet."
- Implements information and technology literacy standards for schools.
- Improves access to and preservation of state government information in electronic form. Manages a shared online catalog and circulation system for state agency libraries.

Department of Administration:

- Manages BadgerNet, the state's telecommunication network for the transport of voice, video and data.
- Provides statewide acquisitions and contract management for a variety of technology hardware, software, and network services.
- Provides financing options for some network acquisitions.
- Directs Wisconsin state government information technology planning.
- Assists in making state government information available via the Web by, among other things, overseeing state agency Web development.
- Works closely with the TEACH Wisconsin program, providing necessary technical assistance and general program administration.

Appendix C. The Library Technology Planning Conference (February 1998)

Overview and Background Information

In April 1997 the state Legislative Council's Special Study Committee on Public Libraries recommended that the Department of Public Instruction, in cooperation with the Department of Administration, hold a Library Technology Planning Conference with participation by all types of libraries. The DPI fully supported this recommendation, and in September 1997 State Superintendent John Benson appointed a statewide steering committee to help plan the conference.

The conference, sponsored jointly by the Department of Public Instruction and the Department of Administration, was held on February 23-24, 1998. This was an invitational conference with eighty-four participants. The participants represented academic, public, school, and special libraries, library organizations and other key stakeholders. More detailed information, including the conference report, is on the conference Web site at <http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/dlcl/pld/techconf.html>.

Conference Partners

To fulfill its statutory directive, the Department of Public Instruction has long supported the use and advancement of technology in the state's libraries. For example, WISCAT, the state library catalog, represents the department's largest investment in a cooperative statewide library technology project. Over 1,100 libraries of all types now participate in WISCAT. The DPI has also allocated funds, primarily in federal Library Service and Technology Act (LSTA) dollars, for a variety of other technology-related projects. The department has negotiated contracts for access by all libraries, educational institutions and Wisconsin residents to full-text periodicals in electronic format and to other databases. The department has allocated \$2.1 million in federal funds to pay for access through December 1999.

The Department of Administration led the development of an enterprise-wide vision of information technology for state government. In addition, the DOA is responsible for BadgerNet, the state's telecommunications network. BadgerNet is available to all state PK-12 schools, public libraries and academic institutions. With access to information increasingly dependent upon access to a robust and affordable networking infrastructure, the DOA plays a key role in development of education and information networks. The department is also responsible for the TEACH program, which funds technology access and use in our state's PK-12 schools, institutions of higher education and public libraries.

Conference Goal

The Library Technology Planning Conference goal was to develop a consensus in the state's library community on the strategic direction for further development of library automation and information technology. This consensus was attained through the conference workgroup sessions that identified top priorities in such areas as features of a state library network, training issues and funding. The strategic direction that evolved from this consensus served as a basis for developing this plan and will serve as a basis for developing any legislative package submitted as part of the 1999/2001 biennial budget.

The Process and a Summary of Conference Results

The conference participants addressed five issues through group processes and priority setting exercises. In the first session, all participants worked together in developing ideas and priorities in connection with the major issue, under the program heading "Features of Statewide Electronic Library Networks." Participants then divided into smaller workgroups to consider four other issues: (1) training, (2) technical assistance, (3) document delivery, and (4) educating decision makers. Follow-up sessions by all participants developed priorities for training, technical assistance and document delivery. There was broad agreement on the need to educate decision makers; no priorities were developed for this issue. The information below summarizes the workgroup sessions and the preferences from the priority exercises. This information is extracted from the conference report, which includes much more information.

Features of Statewide Electronic Library Networks: There were more than 400 individual comments related to this topic. The top priorities can be summarized under the categories of network access, the user interface, and access to content. Network access priorities include Internet access for all libraries, linking automated systems, flexible interlibrary loan, and statewide delivery of electronic as well as print resources. User interface priorities include a GUI (graphical user interface) based Web interface, different levels of use, cross platform support, and training. Content priorities include access to library collections, statewide licensing of full-text and other databases, and developing a list of quality Web resources.

Training Issues: Some of the needs identified by these workgroups included methods for training staff and patrons, use of distance education (e.g., videoconferencing), use of computer-based training (CBT), and training focused on topical issues (e.g., licensing, copyright, policy development).

Technical Assistance Issues: The top recommendations in this area included setting a base level of funding to provide adequate hardware / software / high-speed Internet connections in every public library, and a state-defined minimum standard for hardware/software and network access. Also mentioned was the need for a hierarchy of state and regional level specialized personnel in such areas as technology implementation, Web page design, network design/administration, training and security.

Document Delivery Issues: The major findings from the workgroups on this issue were the need for all libraries to have access to effective delivery services, the need for multiple or flexible delivery options, direct electronic access to content, and direct delivery to patrons.

Educating Decision Makers: There was general consensus on this critical need, and this workgroup did not conduct a priority setting exercise. Some of the key issues discussed included the need for regular communication with key stakeholders and other groups and the need to demonstrate linkages among networks and show how a statewide library network is dynamic, not static. Another key theme was the need for a coordinated state lobbying effort by the library community, emphasizing how the network will benefit all libraries and citizens.

Appendix D. Program Descriptions

Below are brief descriptions of some of the key programs referenced in this plan.

BadgerLink: BadgerLink is a project of the DPI's Division for Libraries and Community Learning. Its goal is to provide Wisconsin residents with increased access to information resources in cooperation with the state's public, school, academic, and special libraries. BadgerLink focuses on content by providing access to information resources using existing telecommunication networks (e.g., BadgerNet) and Internet connections. The concept of BadgerLink was a key topic discussed at the February 1998 Library Technology Planning Conference. BadgerLink represents an initial attempt to implement the technology plan's first goal, to provide access to information. For more information, see the BadgerLink Web site at <http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/badgerlink>.

BadgerNet: BadgerNet is the state's next generation of voice, data and video networks and communication services. It serves all state, regional and local units of government, public libraries, K-12 schools, institutions of higher education and any entities eligible for the TEACH Wisconsin program. BadgerNet is part of the Department of Administration. For more information, see the BadgerNet Web site at <http://www.state.wi.us/statewide/badgernet/>

E-rate: The E-rate (Education-rate) is a federal program designed to provide K-12 schools and public libraries with discounts from 20 to 90 percent on costs related to telecommunications, Internet and internal connections. For more information, see the DPI's E-rate Web site at <http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dlcl/pld/erate.html>.

TEACH Wisconsin: TEACH (Technology for Educational Achievement) Wisconsin is a major state educational technology program that provides support for educational technology and for telecommunications access by eligible organizations. The program is designed to accelerate the use of technology by libraries, K-12 schools and institutions of higher education. For more information, see the TEACH Wisconsin Web site at <http://www.teachwi.state.wi.us/>.

Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA): The LSTA program is a federal grant program administered by the Division for Libraries and Community Learning. Several key purposes of the LSTA program are to establish or enhance electronic linkages among or between libraries, to assist libraries in accessing information through electronic networks, and to encourage libraries to establish consortia and share resources. For more information, see the DPI's LSTA Web site at <http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dlcl/pld/lsta.html>.

Technology Literacy Challenge Fund (TLCF): The TLCF program is a federal grant program administered by the Division for Libraries and Community Learning. The key purpose of the TLCF program is to support the national technology goals that teachers have the training and support needed to help students learn through technology, that all students and teachers have modern computers in their classrooms, that every classroom be connected to the Internet and that effective software and online resources be integrated with the curriculum.

Cooperative
Children's
Book
Center

A Library of the
School of Education
University of Wisconsin-Madison



ISBN 0-931641-98-5

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Choices
1998

CCBC

Choices

1998

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School of Education
University of Wisconsin-Madison

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CCBC Choices was produced by University Publications, University of Wisconsin-Madison. Cover design: Lois Elbert

For information about other CCBC publications, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Cooperative Children's Book Center, 4296 Helen C. White Hall, School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 600 N. Park St., Madison, WI 53706-1403 USA. Inquiries may also be made via fax (608/262-4933) or e-mail (ccbcinfo@natl.uwmadison.wisc.edu). See the World Wide Web (<http://www.uwmadison.wisc.edu/ccbc/>) for information about CCBC publications and the Cooperative Children's Book Center.

Acknowledgments

Thank you to Friends of the CCBC member Tana Elias for creating the index for this edition of *CCBC Choices*. Thank you also to Friends member Lois Ehlers, who created the cover design four years ago.

We value the responses and insights of participants in CCBC Book Discussions throughout 1998.

Cheers to all participants in the annual CCBC Award Discussions of books published during 1998: the Mildred L. Batchelder, Randolph Caldecott, John Newbery, Corera Scott King Author and Corera Scott King Illustrator award discussions during November and December, 1998. Special thanks to Madge Klais, who coordinated Madison Metropolitan School District staff participation in the Corera Scott King discussions and the American Award Discussion, held in March, 1999.

Many thanks to participants in the *CCBC-Net* community for sharing comments about some of their favorite books of the year and outcomes of regional or local award book discussions.

Great appreciation to the individuals with specialized interests and expertise who—at our request—evaluated or volunteered their comments about one or more books, especially Anne Alshuler, Julie Causton, Tzu-chang Chang, Jami Davis, Joseph Elder, Lia M. Frink, Kristen Hartman, David Herrmann, Marie Horning, Margaret Jensen, Helen Julius, John Kruse, Heidi Olliverson, Jeanne Audrey Powers, Debbie Reese, and Jean Reinbold.

CCBC student staff members John Neumann and Stephanie Steinwiedel assisted with the meticulous job of proofreading.

The Friends of the CCBC, Inc., is a membership organization that sponsors programs to develop public appreciation for children's literature and supports special projects at the CCBC. Membership is open to all. Information about membership can be found in Appendix V.

The Friends of the CCBC undertook the professional design, typesetting, layout, printing and binding of *CCBC Choices 1998*. Members of the 1998-99 Friends of the CCBC, Inc. Board of Directors are: President Mary Petersen, Vice-President Kate Odabowski, Recording Secretary Renée Hostie, Treasurer Julie Fingerson, and Directors-at-Large Tana Elias, Margaret Jensen and Pamela Wright. Committee chairs include Nancy Beck, Don Cray and Kathy Tassar (1998). The *Newsletter* editor is Tana Elias.

We appreciate the Friends' ongoing commitment to providing university students and faculty, teachers, school library media specialists, public librarians and others with an attractive, easy-to-use edition of this publication. All of our reading, selection and writing for *CCBC Choices* occurs during evenings and weekends throughout the year. In this respect, the three of us created *CCBC Choices 1998* as members of the Friends of the CCBC, Inc.

Kathleen T. Horning, Ginny Moore Kruse and Megan Schliesman

Introduction

Many perspectives on books for children and young adults are available to those associated with the Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC), a library of the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Additional information about the CCBC can be found near the end of this publication.

We created *CCBC Choices* within the environment of the Cooperative Children's Book Center. As a book examination center and research library, the CCBC receives review copies of almost all of the trade and alternative press books published in English in the United States for children and young adults during the year. Each week during 1998, we examined newly published books. We subsequently read many of them. We discussed hundreds formally or informally with other librarians and educators in Wisconsin and elsewhere in the nation, and many were discussed on *CCBC-Net*, the national electronic book discussion group moderated by the CCBC.

The CCBC receives daily requests for information about contemporary and historical books for children and young adults. We know firsthand from teachers and librarians, from university faculty, and from students who are studying to become teachers and librarians that they want to find books with accurate information on matters important to the young people in their classrooms, schools and libraries. The people we meet know that today's children and young adults have many questions and need information in order to better understand the society in which they live, the people they know and even themselves. Our colleagues are looking for books that are commended for these reasons.

Our criteria are uncomplicated: an excellent book is both interesting and accurate. The way in which these criteria are realized is as varied as the books themselves.

Book discussion is an important factor in our choosing books for *CCBC Choices*. We hold monthly discussions, open to any adult who would like to attend, to look critically at some of the new books we have received at the CCBC. Generally these books are so new they have not yet been reviewed in the professional journals. We strive through discussion to articulate our first critical responses to the books in question, using CCBC Book Discussion Guidelines (see Appendix III).

In addition to these monthly discussions, we host annual award discussions, using the criteria for eligibility and excellence established by national book award committees. The award discussions provide an opportunity to look critically at some of the year's outstanding children's books. In late 1998 we held discussions of books eligible for the Batchelder Award, the Caldecott Medal, the Coretta Scott King Award, and the Newbery Award. We discussed books eligible for the Americas Award for Latino literature early in 1999, but this discussion was held too late for the outcome to be included in *CCBC Choices 1998*.

In *CCBC Choices*, we bring a wide range of books to our colleagues' attention. We hope everyone who uses this publication is aware that every book recommended here is not necessarily for every child or every classroom or every family. We are confident, however, that everyone using *CCBC Choices* will find a significant number of books that will delight, inform or stimulate the innate curiosity of many of the children and young teenagers for whom our colleagues have some level of professional, academic or career responsibility.

Results of the CCBC Award Discussions

CCBC Batchelder Award Discussion

(Translated book published in the United States)

Thanks to My Mother by Schœckhana Rahmonov; Translated from the German by James Skofield; U.S. edition: Dial, 1998.

Secret Letters from 0 to 10 by Susie Morgenstern; Translated from the French by Gill Rosner; U.S. edition: Viking, 1998.

Honor Book:

CCBC Caldecott Award Discussion

(Distinguished illustration by a U.S. citizen or resident)

Snow illustrated and written by Uri Shulevitz; Farrar Straus Giroux, 1998.

Winner:

John Willy and Freddy McGee illustrated and written by Holly Meade; Marshall Cavendish, 1998.

Honor Books:

Lucy Doer illustrated by Leonard Gore; Written by Janice del Negro; DK Ink, 1998.

My Name is Georgia: A Portrait illustrated and written by Jeanette Winter; Silver Whistle/Harcourt Brace, 1998.

CCBC Coretta Scott King Award Discussion: Author

(Distinguished writing by an African American author)

The Skin I'm In written by Sharon G. Flake; Jump at the Sun/Hyperion, 1998.

Winner:

Amirah: A Long Road to Freedom written by Walter Dean Myers; Dutton, 1998.

Honor Books:

Duke Ellington: The Piano Prince and His Orchestra written by Andrea Davis Pinkney; Illustrated by Brian Pinkney; Hyperion, 1998.

From Slave Ship to Freedom Road written by Julius Lester; Illustrated by Rod Brown; Dial, 1998.

Black Cowboy, Wild Horses: A True Story illustrated by Jerry Pinkney; Written by Julius Lester; Dial, 1998.

CCBC Coretta Scott King Award Discussion: Illustrator

(Distinguished illustration by an African American artist)

Duke Ellington: The Piano Prince and His Orchestra illustrated by Brian Pinkney; Written by Andrea Davis Pinkney; Hyperion, 1998.

Winner:

Black Cowboy, Wild Horses: A True Story illustrated by Jerry Pinkney; Written by Julius Lester; Dial, 1998.

Honor Books:

From Slave Ship to Freedom Road illustrated by Rod Brown; Written by Julius Lester; Dial, 1998.

CCBC Newbery Award Discussion

(Distinguished writing for children by a U.S. citizen or resident)

Holes written by Louis Sachar; Frances Foster Books/Winner; Farrar Straus Giroux, 1998.

Winner:

Bar 6 written by Virginia Everet Wolff; Scholastic, 1998.

Honor Book:

The Charlotte Zolotow Award

The Charlotte Zolotow Award is given annually to the author of the best picture book text published in the United States in the preceding year. Established in 1997, the award is named to honor the work of Charlotte Zolotow, a distinguished children's book editor for 38 years with Harper Junior Books, and author of more than 65 picture books, including such classic works as *My Rabbit and the Lonely Present* (Harper, 1962) and *William's Doll* (Harper, 1972). Ms. Zolotow attended the University of Wisconsin in Madison on a writing scholarship from 1933 to 1936, where she studied with Professor Helen C. White.

The award is administered by the Cooperative Children's Book Center, a children's literature library of the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Each year a committee of children's literature experts selects the winner from the books published in the preceding year. The winning author receives a cash prize and a bronze medal designed by UW-Madison Art professor Philip Hamilton, based on an original drawing by Harriet Barton of HarperCollins. The award is formally presented in October, prior to the annual Charlotte Zolotow Lecture on the UW-Madison campus.

Any picture book for young children (birth through age seven) that is first published in the United States and written by a U.S. citizen or resident is eligible for consideration for the Charlotte Zolotow Award. The book may fall into any genre of writing (fiction, nonfiction, poetry, or folklore) as long as it is presented in a picture book format and aimed at an audience of young children. The committee works with a shortlist of titles, selected by the CCBC professional staff. Committee members may suggest additional titles they think should be included on the shortlist; however, all titles are subject to the approval of the CCBC professional staff. Books written by Charlotte Zolotow are not eligible for the award.

In addition to choosing the award-winning title, the committee may select up to three Honor Books, and up to ten titles to be included on a Highly Commended list that will call attention to outstanding writing in picture books. Authors of these books will receive a certificate citing the honor.

The selection committee is comprised of members of the Friends of the CCBC, Inc. Members are appointed to a two-year term by the CCBC professional staff, based on an individual's knowledge of children's books; a demonstrated ability to evaluate children's books and discuss them critically; and/or direct experience working professionally with children from birth through age seven.

Members of the second annual Charlotte Zolotow Award Committee were: Margaret Jensen, chair (1st and 2nd grade teacher, Haegel Elementary School, Madison, Wisconsin); Patricia Bakula (children's librarian, retired, Glendale, Wisconsin); Geri Ceci Caprey (librarian, Madison Public Library, Madison, Wisconsin); Helen Julius (preschool teacher, Luther Memorial Church Child Development Center, Madison, Wisconsin); Megan Schlissman (librarian, Cooperative Children's Book Center, UW-Madison); Joan Thron (assistant professor, Department of Curriculum & Instruction, UW-Green Bay); Lauren Yoshino (librarian, Midvale Elementary School, Madison, Wisconsin); and Kathleen T. Hornung, ex officio (librarian, Cooperative Children's Book Center, UW-Madison).



The 1999 Charlotte Zolotow Award

Winner: Uri Shulevitz for *Snow*. Farrar Straus Giroux, 1998.

Honor Books:

Holly Meade for *John Willy and Freddy McGee*. Marshall Cavendish, 1998.

William Steig for *Pete's a Pizza*.

Michael di Capua Books/HarperCollins, 1998.

Highly Commended:

Denise Fleming for *Mama Can Ha Three Kittens*. Henry Holt, 1998.

Kevin Henkes for *Gracie Days*. Illustrated by Dan Yaccarino. Greenwillow, 1998.

Bill T. Jones and Susan Kuklin for *Dance*. Photographs by Susan Kuklin. Hyperion, 1998.

Lynn Reiser for *Little Clem*. Greenwillow, 1998.

Sephanie Stuve-Bodden for *Elizabeth's Doll*. Illustrated by Christy Hale. Lee & Low, 1998.

Observations about Publishing in 1998

How Many Books Were Available for Sale During 1998?

The most recent edition of *Children's Books in Print* (R.R. Bowker, 1999) states that there are 138,850 books from 8,050 U.S. publishers currently available for purchase in the United States. This number represents an increase of 12,250 books and 550 publishers from one year ago. The 1990-91 edition of *Children's Books in Print* (R.R. Bowker, 1990) cited a total of 66,268 books in print, which means there are 72,582 more books available now than nine years ago.

Clearly there is an abundance of books written, edited and published especially for children and young teenagers available for the youth of this nation, and an abundance of choices for individuals seeking out books for the young, whether for personal or professional reasons.

How Many Books Were Published During 1998?

As we look back at the calendar year of 1998, we estimate that at least 4,500 to 5,000 new trade books were published in the United States for children and young adults, a number similar to the estimate we've made during each of the past five years.

The number of new books always varies from source to source, according to who is counting and which new books are included in the total. CCBC estimates are typically conservative, in that we do not include reprints, paperback editions of titles published earlier, large print books, book club editions, novelty books and other categories often reflected in the numbers provided within the book industry, most or all of which are included in the 138,850 books currently available for purchase. Additionally, the CCBC number represents the work of 75 to 100 trade book and alternative press publishers, nowhere near the 8,050 publishers represented in the *Children's Books in Print* statistic. As a result, our estimate for the number of new books has remained steady in recent years.

Collections of children's and young adult literature at the CCBC generally do not include books published for adults, even though some books published for adults do appeal to (and occasionally are claimed by) teenagers.

How Many Books Are in CCBC Choices 1998?

There are 298 books listed in *CCBC Choices 1998*. Of these, 16 represent the first published works of 16 authors and 10 illustrators; 31 were originally published outside the United States or simultaneously in the United States and their country of origin, three of which are translations; 11 were published by four small, independently owned and operated publishers; 10 our knowledge, 179 of the books we recommend in *CCBC Choices 1998* did not appear on any of the other nationally distributed lists of the year's best books as of February 3, 1999.

Most of the books in *CCBC Choices 1998* are published for an audience ranging in age from infancy to fourteen years, the upper age in the definition of "children" used by the book awards committees of the Association for Library

Service to Children of the American Library Association (ALA). A few of the books in this edition of *CCBC Choices* are recommended for older ages as well.

As we comment on some of the books published in 1998, please note that not every book we discuss has been selected as a 1998 *CCBC Choice*. Books that are not recommended in this edition of *CCBC Choices* are designated by the inclusion of publisher information after their titles.

Searching for Multicultural Literature

Currently there is no agreement in the children's literature community on a single definition for the word "multicultural," nor is a single definition necessary. At the CCBC we designate books by and about people of color as multicultural literature.

Multicultural literature continued to be highly visible in 1998 in terms of overall numbers. For the eighth consecutive year, many children's book publishers published new books by and about people of color and one publisher has started an imprint devoted to this type of publishing. However, the special flyers, catalogs and mailings so common earlier in the decade have almost vanished, and it is important to realize that these numbers still represent only a very small percentage of the total number of new books published for children and young adults each year. Still, we are hopeful that publishers recognize that the continued creation of high-quality multicultural literature is important for all children, and that the Coretta Scott King, Americas and Pura Belpré awards (and their honor books and commended lists) are formal acknowledgments of excellence in multicultural publishing that certainly matter to teachers, librarians and parents.

Most of the literature journals, book review magazines and other professional publications concerning education, librarianship, books for children and young adults, and/or reading featured reviews, interviews, bibliographies, and articles about multicultural literature, continuing a trend of the 1990s. We continue to worry, however, that the collective interest of American teachers, librarians, parents, publishers and booksellers who are outsiders to specific cultural and ethnic groups is moving away from multicultural literature. It is critical that multicultural literature be viewed as a substantial component of children's book publishing, rather than a passing fad or some kind of so-called "politically correct" type of book publishing, buying and reading. Only then will its past be honored and its future be guaranteed as an integral part of all children's and young adult literature.

If individuals and groups within the children's and young adult literature community begin to operate under the premise that they have all the multicultural books they need, the publishing of excellent new books will dwindle, new writers and artists will not be nurtured, and the perspectives on multicultural experience in our country will be lost in time. The continued—and increased—publication of a wide range of voices from a wide range of cultural perspectives will help ensure that all children and young teenagers will find validation in the books available to them to read, as well as a stronger understanding of what it means to be a citizen of their community, their nation and the world.

Books by and about Africans and African Americans

The number of books created by Black authors and illustrators in 1998 was only slightly higher than the number published during 1997. (The designation "Black" indicates that CCBC statistics include book creators from the Caribbean, England, and other countries whose works are published by U.S. publishers. Some books

with themes and topics related to Caribbean countries are also designated as Latino). CCBC statistics also include books by Black book creators regardless of whether or not the theme or topic of a book contains cultural substance. Of the roughly 4,500 to 5,000 books published in the United States for young people in 1998, the CCBC documented 96 that were created by Black authors and/or illustrators. (The CCBC documented 88 in this category in 1997, 92 in 1996, 100 books in 1995, 82 in 1994, 74 in 1993, 94 in 1992, and 70 in 1991.) The 96 titles represent the published work of 85 individual authors and illustrators.

Approximately 188 books specifically about African and/or African American history, culture and/or peoples were documented at the CCBC during 1998, compared to 216 in 1997, 172 in 1996, 94 in 1995 and 166 in 1994.

Of the books by Black book creators published in this nation during 1998, 10 books were published by three small, independently owned publishing companies: Children's Book Press, Just Us Books, and Lee & Law.

Six new titles were published by Hyperion's exciting new imprint, Jump at the Sun, which is under the direction of editor Andrea Davis Pinkney and "celebrates the African-American experience." Four of the authors published on Jump at the Sun's inaugural list are new to the field of children's books. We applaud Hyperion's efforts to find and publish new voices in African American children's literature. One of these, Sharon Flake, won the CCBC's Coretta Scott King Author Award Discussion for her outstanding first novel, *The Skin I'm In*. Flake's skill at re-creating the ambience of the junior high school social world through outstanding characterization and realistic dialogue makes her a promising newcomer in young adult literature. We hope to see many more books from her in the years to come.

We did not note many other new African American authors or illustrators entering the field in 1998, but we were happy to see two established writers expanding into genres beyond those for which they are best known. Angela Johnson, who has made a name for herself writing picture books and novels, published *The Other Side: Shorter Poems*, an outstanding collection of poems based on her growing-up years in a small-town African American community in Shreve, Alabama. Meanwhile, Nikki Grimes, best known as a poet, wrote a novel featuring a sensitive teenage girl who is frequently inspired to write poetry by the things she sees and experiences in her Harlem neighborhood. We were also glad to see author Virginia Hamilton, who has produced several wonderful collections of folklore in recent years, return to writing novel-writing with *Second Cousins*, a sequel to *Cousins* (Philomel, 1990).

Another longtime favorite, Pat Cummings, successfully tried her hand at a board book with the delightful *My Aunt Came Back*, a rollicking rhyme that's sure to please toddlers. Author/artist Ken Wilson-Max, who is originally from Zimbabwe and now lives in London, has pleased plenty of toddlers with his dynamic books about trucks, trains and planes. He will now catch the attention of their older siblings with an engaging book that introduces Zulu words in a story about a budding friendship. Closer to home, Gavin Curtis and E.B. Lewis's tender story of a father-son relationship, *The Bat Boy and His Vahls*, is set during the waning days of Negro League baseball.

In general, African American fiction for any age level, whether in novel or picture book format, was hard to find in 1998, but we did choose many outstanding nonfiction books dealing with African American history. Among these, the McKissack's absorbing biography of Lorraine Hansberry, *Young Black and Determined*, introduces young readers to the life of this gifted playwright while

the Pinkneys' jazzy picture book *Duke Ellington: The Piano Prince and His Orchestra* is likely to have young children dancing in their semicircles. Joyce Hansen uncovers history that's been obscured for centuries in *Breaking Ground, Breaking Silence: The Story of New York's African Burial Ground*.

Perhaps the most daring and thought-provoking book of the year is *From Slave Ship to Freedom Road*, in which Julius Lester's text speaks directly to readers, encouraging them to look closely at Rod Brown's paintings of slavery times, and to confront their own racism. And in response to the continuing demand for more information about the *Amistad*, two outstanding histories for children were published in 1998: *Amistad: A Long Road to Freedom* by Walter Dean Myers and *Freedom's Song: The True Story of the Amistad Mutiny* by Suzanne Jurmain. We have chosen both volumes for the 1998 edition of CCBC Choices.

Books by and about Latinos

At the CCBC, we try to keep track of all that is published for young people and to notice trends and changes, often a greater challenge for us than one might expect. Typically, we have not been able to provide reliable documentation about the number of books by other racial or ethnic groups that is comparable to that which we can provide on Black book creators.

However, an increased number of books by Latinos and about Latino themes and topics since 1993 encouraged us, beginning in 1994, to make a concerted effort to document the number of such titles. In 1998, we counted 73 new titles by Latinos and/or about Latino themes in topics. In 1997 there were 88 titles, in 1996 there were 103, in 1995 there were 70, and in 1994 we counted 90 Latino titles.

It is discouraging to see this number decrease significantly for the second year in a row, especially since fewer than half of the titles we counted in 1998 were produced by Latino authors and artists. Additionally, we would expect that the two awards established in the 1990s to draw attention to outstanding Latino books for children and young adults would be encouraging publishers to seek out works to add to this important body of literature. The Américas Award, with its mission to provide visibility for excellent books about Latin America and Latinos in the United States, was established in 1993 and is administered through the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee's Center for Latin America. The Pura Belpré Award was established by RFL-OLVA, a unit of the American Library Association, to formally acknowledge outstanding writing for youth by a Latino writer. This biannual award was first given out in 1996.

Of the small number of Latino books published in 1998, we were especially happy to see *La Mariposa*, a picture book written by Francisco Jiménez and illustrated Susán Silva. Jiménez came to the attention of the children's book community last year when his stunning collection of autobiographical short stories, *The Circuit* (University of New Mexico Press, 1997), won both the Américas Award and the Boston Globe-Horn Book Award, and was named an Honor Book in the Jane Addams Children's Book Award process. It is our hope that this marks the beginning of a long career in children's books for Francisco Jiménez.

Another newcomer, Amelia Lau Carling, fictionalizes her childhood experiences in the self-illustrated picture book *Mama and Papa Have a Sore*. Written from the perspective of a child of Chinese immigrants living in Guatemala City, her story reminds readers that all of the Americas are comprised of nations of immigrants. We were also happy to note second and third books by Hector

Vivrona Lee (*Get Set! Samba!*) and Leyla Torres (*Liliana's Grandmother*), respectively. Both are promising new voices in Latino literature for the young.

Books by and about American Indians

The overall growth in the number and quality of new books about contemporary Native people since 1992 represents a welcome change. Unfortunately, the rate of that growth has been declining over the past several years. In 1998 we documented 55 books on American Indian themes and topics, down from the 64 we counted in 1997. In 1996 we counted 50 books, and in 1995 we found 83 that fell into this category.

The overall quality of the books that are published continues to improve, however. Source notes and specificity about a book's content is always an aid in the evaluation of books of information; they are especially valuable in books by American Indians and about American Indian themes and topics. An increasing number of books now designate the specific Indian nation from which a tale or subject comes or about which a story is told. More books are also recognizing the importance of nomenclature and are using the names by which specific American Indian peoples refer to themselves. We are optimistic that such specificity will continue to be seen in future books of fiction, information and folklore concerning American Indian themes and topics, and we are hopeful that the number of such books will increase again in future years.

Our records cite 24 specific Indian nations represented among the 55 books about American Indian themes and topics documented at the CCBC during 1998. Thirty-seven specific Indian nations were noted in the 64 books published in 1997; 22 were represented in the 50 books documented in 1996; and 32 were noted in the 83 books documented in 1995.

Of the books we documented in 1998, very few are written or illustrated by Native authors and artists. Of these, Joseph Bruchac continues to contribute the bulk of authentic Native literature. This year we were especially appreciative of *Heart of a Chief*, Bruchac's middle-grade novel that takes on timely issues such as Indian mascots and casino gambling, written from the point of view of a sixth-grade Penacook boy growing up on a reservation. On a more whimsical note, Dougrib writer Richard Van Camp teams with Plains Cree artist George Littlechild to create a surprisingly funny and profoundly moving picture book about varied poems of view in *What's the Most Beautiful Thing You Know about Horses?*

Books by and about Asians and Asian Americans

This year we counted 52 books published for children about Asian and Asian American themes and topics. In 1997 there were 66 books, in 1996 there were 49, in 1995 there were 91, and there were 65 in 1994. As in previous years, the majority of these books deal either with war or folklore and, were it not for the few photodocumentary books, and the few novels published each year by writers such as Laurence Yep, Lemmy Namioka and Marie G. Lee, contemporary Asian and Asian American children and teenagers would be virtually invisible in the world of children's books. As it is, we are once again hard-pressed to find more than a handful of picture books featuring contemporary Asian children.

Among the books we especially recommended are two published by the small, independent press Lee & Low: *Good Molecules—Fare to Fongsi!* by Matthew Gehlb and Karuko G. Some, a marvelously creative introduction to the life and habits and poetry of Issa; and *Journey Home* by Lawrence McKay, Jr., a picture book about a child returning to her mother's birthplace in Vietnam to search for family. Sherry

Garland's *My Father's Boat*, illustrated by Ted Rand, also involves a Vietnamese American child.

Books of International Interest

Every one books first published in the United States in English after having been translated from other languages were documented at the CCBC during 1998. Of these translated books only nine were of substantial length. Three translated books were selected for this edition of *CCBC Choices*. We especially enjoyed the humor (a rare commodity in translated books) of Susie Morgenstern's novel *Secret Letters from 0 to 10*. Set in Paris, this delightful story is about a friendship between a boy and a girl who couldn't be more different from one another. Also from France, *And If the Moon Could Talk* is a gentle, understated bedtime book by Kate Banks and Georg Hallensleben, the same pair who created 1997's much-lauded *Baboon* (U.S. edition: Frances Foster/Farrar).

Participants in the CCBC's annual Bruchac/Award Discussion selected *Thanks to My Mother* by Schooshtana Rubinovici, translated from the German by James Skohfeld, as the outstanding translated book of the year. This memoir about a Jewish child's survival in a Nazi death camp provides a powerful tribute to the strength and courage of the mother who kept her alive.

This edition of *CCBC Choices* contains 28 books published elsewhere in English before being published in the United States or before becoming available here through distributors specifically promoting them in this nation. One of the books we especially appreciated in this category is Kerena Marchant's *Del-El-Fin*, which familiarizes readers with this joyful Muslim celebration marking the end of the holy month of Ramadan. Marchant's book was originally published in Britain. Another British book, the delightful fantasy novel *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* by J.K. Rowling, is a runaway hit in that country and is already proving to be immensely popular here as well.

The Warranovs is an eerie, ominous picture book for older readers featuring the combined talents of Australian writer Gary Crew and illustrator Steven Woolman. Canadian writers show their mastery of the short story form in *What If...?*, a thought-provoking collection of short stories edited by Moneta Hughes that is part fantasy, part science fiction, and all conjecture about the past, present and future of the human race. A version of a Persian folktale, *The Snow: A Persian Legend of the Magic*, written by Diane Hofmeyr with illustrations by Jude Daly, was first published in South Africa.

Outstanding Nonfiction

It was an exemplary year for books of information. From Barbara Lehn's singular *What Is a Scientist?*, which describes scientific discovery in terms young children can easily grasp, to Herman J. Viola's *Warrior Artists*, a book for middle- and high schoolers that examines the 19th-century ledger art of two Plains Indians artists and discusses the U.S. government's forced removal of Plains Indians nations from their homelands, to the unusually high number of excellent biographies for children and young adults alike, there were outstanding nonfiction books for young people of almost every age. These fine books not only inform young readers but engage their hearts and minds.

Among the books we especially appreciated were two outstanding exposés on child labor, Susan Kuklin's *Imbel Mash* and *The Crusaders against Child Slavery and Listen to Us: The World's Working Children* by Jane Springer. These volumes

document the tragic, ongoing exploitation of children around the world as well as some of the efforts to end such exploitation.

Voices from the past recount harrowing experiences during the Holocaust in Milton Neuwasm's *Kindertages* and Michael Lepranz's *Witness to War*, while young people today express hope for a brighter future in post-Apartheid South Africa in Tim McKee's uplifting collection of interviews, *No More Shanters Now*.

Artistic Profiles

It was the year of the artist with regard to biographies published for children and young adults, with many dynamic and inspiring portraits and self-portraits of individuals involved in the visual, literary, and performing arts. Elizabeth Partridge's unparalleled biography of photographer Dorothea Lange, *Resides Spirit*; Jan Greenberg and Sandra Jordan's fascinating profile of a distinctive contemporary painter in *Chuck Close Lip Close*; Russell Freedman's flowing, energetic portrait *Martin Gaitano: A Dancer's Life*; Jeanette Winter's amazing picture book that captures the spirit and the essence of Georgia O'Keeffe's life and work, *My Name Is Georgia*; and Patricia and Frederick McKissack's moving look at the life of playwright Lorraine Hansberry in *Young Black and Determined* are among the finest examples of literature for the young, biographical or otherwise.

Mary E. Lyons has let the artist speak for herself in *Talking with Ted: Clementine Hunter, Memory Artist*, in which Lyons compiled and edited oral and written interviews with the self-taught African American artist who never missed words or images, when it came to portraying the hardships of life for poor Blacks in the southern United States. Lois Lowry also speaks for herself in *Looking Back*, a compilation of photographs, reminiscences and commentary that reveals how her storymaking evolves from events and experiences formed and reformed in her mind.

The Immigrant Experience

The experiences of those who leave their homelands are among the most dramatic and compelling to be found in literature for the young. When done well, such books challenge readers to understand more about the world, and to empathize with those whose experiences may be very different—or similar—to their own.

This year we especially appreciated Carol Bierman's *Journey to Ellis Island*, in which she tells the harrowing story of her own father and his family, who escaped from Russia during the Revolution and eventually made their way to America. Frances and Ginger Park's haunting tale based on their mother's escape from North Korea, *My Freedom Trip*, is also noteworthy.

An immigrant's journey is not over once he or she has reached the destination; the experiences of newcomers to a nation are an important part of the chronicle. Alibi details how a small girl who cannot speak English uses art to communicate her feelings in *Painted Word: Marianne's Story*. Marianne's gradual grasp of the English language eventually enables her to tell her classmates the story of her past in the companion story bound in the same book, *Spoken Memories*.

These and other nonfiction books included in this edition of *CBCR Choices* represent a high standard for nonfiction writing and publishing for children and young adults. We are appreciative of the efforts of the writers and artists, as well as publishers who understand that high-quality books of information for young readers should not only be well-researched and well-documented but lively and compelling as well.

Picture Books for Children of All Ages

It was a great year for picture books! In fact, *CBCR Choices 1998* includes nearly 70 books in this category. In an attempt to make these selections a bit more accessible for users, we have for the first time divided picture books into two sections: those for younger children, which includes titles recommended for children up through age seven and those for older children, age seven and older. We were glad to see many excellent original board books being published once again for babies and toddlers, thanks largely to Harper Growing. Here, a new series from HarperCollins. Exciting books in this new series include *Zoom City* by Thacher Hunt, *My Aunt Came Back* by Pat Cummings and *Do You Know Near?* by Jean Marzollo. This year also marked the reissue of all eight of Rosemary Wells' original board books about Max and Ruby in newly illustrated, larger-sized editions.

Many of the picture books we chose show children engaged in imaginary play. A resourceful child substitutes a good-sized, solid rock for a doll in the marvellously original *Elizabeth's Doll*, a first book by Stephanie Stone-Bodden. And a young boy actually becomes the object of his passion in *Five Truck* by Peter Sis. In both *Can't Can't Fly* by David Milgrom and *Show* by Uri Shulevitz, child characters find wonder in play, undaunted by adults who don't see what they see. But grown ups are not immune to play; even the parents get involved in the fun in books such as *Cowboy Baby* by Sue Heap, *Little Claim* by Lynn Reiser and *Papa's Pizza* by William Steig. In Melrose Cooper's *Centin through Thursday*, it's Mama who sets the scene with her imagination so the family can have a party on the day before payday.

Humor was also easy to find in the year's outstanding picture books. The perilous journey of two guinea pigs through the long, dark tunnels of a pool table provides visual and verbal humor in *John Willy and Freddy Mice* by Holly Meade. In another household, a young boy has roasty problems of a different kind in Peggy Rathmann's *10 Minutes till Bedtime*, in which a group of enthusiastic hamster tourists shows up at an inopportune time. David Martin and Susan McDougall present an amusing context for the well-known baby's toe-wiggling rhyme in *Five Little Fingers*. For more (but not too much more) sophisticated tastes, Jan Scieszka and Lane Smith send up Aesop in *Squids Will Be Squids*, providing some very contemporary fables for children of our times. Squid, Mosquito and Piece of Toast notwithstanding, perhaps the most unusual set of characters to appear in a children's book in many years can be found in Laurie Keller's *The Stumbled States of America* starting—you guessed it!—the entire United States. Here the 50 states see what it would be like if they all changed places for a while, with hilarious results!

Fiction for Children and Teens

Fantasy, adventure, history, humor and contemporary realistic stories all were among the excellent fiction published for children and teens in 1998.

Included among our favorite flights of fancy are Dick King-Smith's *The Water Horse*, which gives the origins of a beloved contemporary legend an original and delightful twist; *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* by J.K. Rowling creates a richly realized world of wizardry and wandery for children, while *The Dark Lord of Darkness* by Diana Wynne Jones casts its own spell for young adults.

One of the most riveting adventure stories of the year is surely Iain Lawrence's *The Wrackens*, about a boy who is the sole survivor of a shipwreck off

the coast of Cornwall. He washes ashore in a village where citizens can't help their livelihood off of shipwrecks, but they cannot claim their bounty if anyone survives.

Understanding historical fiction published in 1998 includes Virginia Eauer Wolff's *Bar 6*. This novel set in 1949 is skillfully told in more than 20 voices as the girls on two opposing softball teams tell of events that led to a Japanese American player on one team being attacked during a game by a player on the other team whose father died in the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Set during the Civil War, Gary Paulsen's *A Soldier's Story* gives teens an uncompromising look at the horror of war and its devastating after-effects on the life of a young soldier. A welcome, wholly engaging book of historical fiction for younger readers is Rosemary Wells's wonderful *Mary on Horseback*, three stories about Mary Breckentidge and the Frontier Nursing Service she started in Appalachia in the 1920s.

It is hard to find a book in 1998—funny or otherwise—that matches Louis Sachar's *Holes* for deft, intricate plotting. That this witty, outrageous story that is somewhere outside the bounds of reality also features highly memorable characters and emotional resonance makes it all the more amazing. Other truly funny books with warm hearts include Richard Peck's *Long Way to Chicago* and Susie Morgenstern's *Serve Laters from 0 to 10*. For young readers, *Mary Poppins*, *Private Eye* is a wholly engaging addition to the newly independent reader scene and we hope to see more of this delightful poet-detective who can't resist a good rhyme in the service of crime (detection that is).

Harry Mazur's *The Wild Kid* is an unusual portrait of a boy with Down syndrome—unusual because it is respectful and feels authentic. Other notable examples of realistic fiction for children published in 1998 include Theresa Nelson's *The Empress of Bizenware*, with its intriguing characterizations, and the version-driven *While No One Was Watching* by Jane Leslie Conly. Virginia Hamilton's powerful storytelling voice resonates in the lively and moving *Second Cousins*, in which Cammy Coleman, whom readers first met in the earlier *Cousins* (Philadelph, 1991), discovers unsettling truths about her family, while Karen Hesse's quiet, graceful *Just Juice* tells of a young girl's struggle to learn to read.

Among the contemporary realistic fiction for teens is *Smack* by Melvin Burgess, a chilling portrait of heroin addiction. Sharon G. Flake addresses issues of self-esteem and skin color in her stunning debut novel, *The Skin In In*, while Jacqueline Woodson exposes societal racism and tender hearts in *If You Come Softly*.

Whether they are writing stories of hard hitting, haunting realism, delightfully zany escapades, thrilling adventures or intriguing explorations of the past, the writers of these and other fine novels for young people in 1998 all have something in common: their books reflect the knowledge that children and young adults deserve the best that literature can offer.

Book Publishing and Book Buying: So Many Choices

The increase in the number of books published during the 1990s represents decisions made by U.S. publishers to invest in children's books. Such investments are made with the expectation that in all parts of the nation people are eager and ready to buy books for the young. Indeed, much evidence continues to indicate that the bookstore sales of children's books supports much of the children's and young-adult book publishing industry, as well as book publishing for adults within several publishing houses, in the United States at this time.

The increase also represents an overwhelming number of choices. These choices begin with publishers, who decide which manuscripts to publish, which illustrators to employ, which books to advertise heavily, which authors to send on tour, and so on. Book industry representatives make decisions about paperback editions and reprintings with specific consumers in mind. All of these decisions have an impact on the book-buying public; they determine what books we will ever see in print and, once books are published, which ones most book buyers are likely to hear about. At the same time, the book industry must expect that potential consumers will buy more than the best-sellers or the most heavily promoted, highly visible books or the most familiar authors or series; otherwise they would not invest in the hundreds and hundreds of other titles that they produce. Commercial sales in bookstores are driven by parents and other adults, and by young people themselves in the case of some popular culture and series books that older children are often eager to obtain for their own recreational reading. The other significant group of children's book consumers is the so-called institutional market—the public librarians, school library media specialists, classroom teachers, child care providers and academic librarians responsible for collections of literature for the young. Individuals within these groups select and purchase books for use by more than one child, family or student. Institutional sales most often utilize public funding and are responsible for building collections that represent the diverse needs and interests of their users.

No matter who is buying what books for whom, consumers of books for the children and young adults have the luxury—and difficulty—of making choices because of the large number of titles available. Whether their decisions are spontaneous and unplanned or based upon complex judgments, total amount of money available for book buying, comparisons, special interests and unique needs, the fact that choices do exist cannot be overvalued among those who are committed to seeking out high-quality books for the young.

The Cooperative Children's Book Center offers an environment for discovery and learning, for making up one's own mind about the new books published each year and for making comparisons to books from other years and decades. We create *CCBC Choices* to identify the outstanding titles of the current publishing year in the hope that it will provide librarians, teachers, parents and others with assistance in navigating the wide and exciting array of choices available to them.

CCBC Choices is a guide, not a rule book. While we certainly have made an effort to find as many of the outstanding books of the year as possible, inevitably, in the course of the coming months and years, other books will come to our attention that we will have wished we'd included. Likewise, as mentioned earlier, not every book is for every child. The purpose of *CCBC Choices* is to offer a wide variety of books for a wide variety of individuals. We have attempted to compile a guide that provides something of high quality for everyone, not a core selection for all.

The
Choices

The Natural World

Amnosky, Jim. *All about Turkeys*. Scholastic Press, 1998. 28 pages. (0-596-48147-9) \$15.95

Have you ever wondered what makes turkeys gobble or why they have warts? You'll find the answers here. As he does in his other books in the "All About" series, Amnosky gives a basic introduction to the species, providing details concerning the wild turkey's physical and behavioral attributes. The text is concise and the detailed watercolor paintings include frequent references to scale, so that young readers can see exactly how big a turkey is in reality. (Ages 4-8)

Amnosky, Jim. *Watching Desert Wildlife*. National Geographic Society, 1998. 32 pages. (0-7922-7304-4) \$15.95

Jim Amnosky turns his keen eye and talented artistry to painting and writing about desert wildlife of the southwestern United States. Amnosky tells readers in the short introduction that the desert, which is so different from the landscape of his northeastern United States home, has held a fascination for him for years. Only recently did he make his first trip, however, and here he captures with both words and watercolors some of the birds, animals and reptiles that survive on this arid land. Amnosky writes with his usual friendly style, sharing memories from his journey and facts about desert wildlife. The detailed paintings are colorful, large and dramatic, giving readers an up-close view of these creatures of the natural world. (Ages 7-10)

Bonnars, Susan. *Why Does the Cat Do That?* Henry Holt, 1998. 32 pages. (0-8050-4377-2) \$15.95

The basics of cat behavior are presented in a story about a man who takes care of his friends' cat while the family is away for the weekend. Bob's questions about Molly the cat—why she can sleep through the noise of a jackhammer on the street outside but awakens the minute Bob opens a packet of cookies—are answered in framed explanations concerning feline behavior in the wild, and how that translates into the way a domestic cat behaves. (Ages 4-8)

Branley, Franklin M. *Day Light, Night Light*. Illustrated by Stacey Schaefer. Newly illustrated edition. HarperCollins, 1998. 32 pages. (0-06-027294-5) \$14.95

Branley makes a clear distinction between light from the sun and reflected light, and explains the meaning of light sources in an easy introduction to a topic of interest to many preschool and early elementary-school-aged children. Originally published in 1975, this edition has new illustrations by Stacey Schaefer, who has created realistic full-color acrylic paintings that show children in everyday situations to demonstrate Branley's points: blowing out birthday candles, shining flashlights, and roasting marshmallows. (Ages 3-7)

Hooper, Meredith. *The Drop in My Drink*. Illustrated by Chris Coakly. U.S. edition. Viking, 1998. 32 pages. (0-670-87618-6) \$16.99

Beginning with a boy standing at a kitchen sink, filling up his water glass, the lyrical first-person text describes all the places a single drop of drinking water has been: inside ancient plants and dinosaurs, in underground caves and on

icebergs, in rainstorms and river currents. As the drop is traced through time, young readers will gain an understanding of the water cycle on our planet and will no doubt marvel at all the places an ordinary drop of water has been. Dramatic pastel paintings extend the narrative by zeroing in on specific details to illustrate the droplet's journey. (Ages 6-10)

Lasky, Kathryn. *Shadows in the Dawn*. Photographs by Christopher G. Knight. Galliver Green/Harcourt Brace, 1998. 63 pages. (0-15-200258-8) \$18.00. Pbk. (0-15-200281-2) \$9.00

This compelling look at the lives of a troop of ring-tailed lemurs on Madagascar follows a small group of researchers led by primatologist Allison Jolly as they track the lemurs' movements and interactions over a period of several days, watching both small and large dramas unfold. Lasky also writes about what has been conjectured about how this island became the only place in the world where lemurs, as well as certain plants, are found. A short profile of Jolly and how she became a primatologist is also included in this information-packed volume that ends with a warning about the pending ecological crisis on this island, where the lemurs' habitat is vanishing, and how Jolly's work will hopefully help the Malagasy government on Madagascar promote a sustainable environment for humans and lemurs alike. Christopher G. Knight's rich color photographs profile the lemurs, as well as Jolly and the researchers, in action. (Ages 8-11)

Powryk, Joyce A. *In Search of Lemurs: My Days and Nights in a Madagascar Rain Forest*. National Geographic Society, 1998. 44 pages. (0-7922-7072-X) \$17.95

No one knows exactly how lemurs got to Madagascar over 40 million years ago but today the world's fourth largest island is home to the greatest number of lemur species. Biologist Joyce Powryk spent several months in the rain forest, observing different species of lemurs in the wild, and painting what she saw. To create this book for young readers, she combined descriptions of her day-to-day life in the wild with her exquisite watercolor paintings. Throughout, she provides us with a science context, information about each of the species she sees, a pronunciation guide, and a sense of what the life of a working scientist is like. (Ages 8-12)

Robbins, Ken. *Autumn Leaves*. Scholastic Press, 1998. 39 pages. (0-590-29879-8) \$15.95

After a brief introduction in which the author guides young children through some of the things to look for when identifying species of leaves (shape, size, edges), he devotes a double-page spread to each of the following trees: smoke tree, birch, gingko, lindens, sassafras, hickory, red oak, fern leaf, beech, cherry, dogwood, yellow poplar, and maple. While the right-hand side of the page shows the entire tree in full autumn color, the left-hand side shows a life-size color photograph of its corresponding leaves, also as they appear in autumn. The stark white background of each page brilliantly sets off the fall foliage, so that the trees and leaves pictured here are as artistically beautiful as they are in real life. Each page also includes a few lines of text that give some additional information about the particular species of tree or leaf. We learn, for example, that the gingko tree was around in the time of dinosaurs and that the hickory tree has compound leaves, with five or more leaflets making up each leaf. All in all, a treat for young readers, be they budding artists, scientists, or both. (Ages 4-8)

Wright-Peterson, Virginia. *An Island Scrapbook: Dawn to Dusk on a Barrier Island*. Simon & Schuster, 1998. 32 pages. (0-689-81563-8) \$16.00.

On their last full day of vacation on the island, Amy and her artist mom rise before dawn so they can enjoy all the natural wonders it has to offer, as well as reminisce about their island experience. Both mother and daughter keep a scrapbook of sketches and paintings they've made and their observations about nature. Their last day is filled with new experiences to add to their scrapbooks and, best of all, they are present when the baby sea turtles hatch and head for the ocean. An outstanding design combines watercolor paintings, adult and child sketches, and hand-written notes to give the book the appearance of a scrapbook. (Ages 7-11)

Zoefteld, Kathleen Weidner. *What Is the World Made Of? All about Solids, Liquids, and Gases*. Illustrated by Paul Meisel. (Let's-Read-and-Find-Out-Science) HarperCollins, 1998. 32 pages. (0-06-027143-4) \$15.95.

An excellent easy science book clearly explains the three natural states of matter, and how water easily changes from one state to another, all in terms young children can easily understand. Zoefteld's conversational style and frequent use of second person point of view will immediately engage the youngest readers. Her clear explanations use examples that are easily within the realm of early childhood, and she gives realistic suggestions of things children can do to see water in action: holding an ice cube in your hand, for example, or watching steam rise as water boils in a saucepan on the stove (with plenty of warnings about having an adult present). The book concludes with the step-by-step outlines for three easy science activities involving matter. (Ages 4-7)

See also: *Anthology for the Earth: Circle of Days: Cool Melons—Turn to Frog!*; *Counting on the Woods: Forest: Grand Canyon: Prehistoric: Light Shining through the Mist: Little Clam: Morning on the Lake: Snowflake Beauty: Talking with Adventures: Turtle Spring*

Seasons and Celebrations

Arnold, Karyn, reteller and illustrator. *The Adventures of Snowwoman*. Based on a story by V. Sutev. Holiday House, 1998. 32 pages. (0-8234-1390-X) \$15.95.

The children have decorated the neighborhood—all but a tree. No real? Undrinkable. After writing a letter to Santa, they create Snowwoman using an abundance of the white stuff plus seven shiny apples (necklace), a carrot (long nose), and a snowpot (hat). Snowwoman is an unlikely emissary to carry their letter, but smiling benevolently she accepts the mission and sets off into the scary woods with buddy the dog. During a blizzard they become "lost as lost could be." A quarreling Rabbit and Fox become part of the frigid ensemble's adventures. The intrepid little band is joined by Magpie and then by Bear, who leaves liberation to help deliver the letter. According to Arnold's background note, her lively reworking of Vladimir Sutev's story "The Conifer" shifts the traditional Russian tree running from New Year's Eve to December 24. She writes that Snowwoman and other characters from the popular Snow family of Russian folklore appear in Russian stories and films and even in Ruzsky-Korsakov's opera "The Snowmaiden." Sutev was a

successful Russian artist, writer and movie director who released the first of more than 30 animated films in 1931. Arnold is a Moscow-schooled artist now living in New Jersey whose affection for Sutev's story is evident in the broad strokes of her full-color images, her energetic child characters, her zany woodland cohort, and—most of all—her heroine. Snowwoman is an unforgettably cheerful, brave, bumbling, and likeable heroine who gets the job done with a little help from her many friends. (Ages 3-6)

Bauer, Marion Dane. *Christmas in the Forest*. Illustrated by Diane Dawson Hearn. (Holiday House Reader) Holiday House, 1998. 48 pages. (0-8234-1371-3) \$15.95.

The children have forgotten to put a gift under the tree for Cat. They've neglected to scratch and brush her and to feed Cat her flaked tuna. Cat decides she'll punish these Santa-happy children by depriving them of her company, but the children don't even notice when Cat runs away into the snowy woods. A miserable Cat meets little Mouse, who's never heard of Christmas and seems naive regarding the appetites of cats. Knowing that Cat won't talk and eat simultaneously, Squirrel, Bird and Rabbit appeal to her vanity by imploring her to tell about Christmas, about "special foods, shining trees... presents." Cat's report about "the baby" and the insight that "all babies are special" saves Cat from the threat of Bear. Hearn's full-color illustrations perfectly portray feline vanity. Bauer is a genius at creating real plots and genuine characterizations in stories for newly independent readers. In this six-chapter beginning reader, she's managed a minor miracle: a completely believable, sensible, anthropomorphic story grounded in the mix of holiday excitement, cat behavior and maternal love. (Ages 5-7)

Bible. *The Gospels of Matthew and Luke from the King James translation. The Christmas Story*. Illustrated by Connady Spirit. James Bible, Henry Holt, 1998. 32 pages. (0-8050-5292-5) \$19.95.

Thirteen exquisite tempera, watercolor and pencil illustrations of passages from the Gospels of Matthew and Luke comprise this extraordinary visual rendering of the traditional Christmas Story. Three glorious two-page spreads have no text: the Annunciation, the Heavenly Host, and the Adoration of the Magi. Additional paintings serve as borders for the textual excerpts from scriptures, for which each chapter and verse is noted within the page design. A two-page lay commentary opens the book serving to summarize the perspective of each Gospel. Spirit's note at the end mentions the dates on which Christmas observances are held today. Although Spirit now lives in New Jersey, his classical art training in Moscow and Orthodox heritage informed his meticulously developed paintings that are reproduced here in a handsomely designed 11 1/4 x 11 1/8" volume. (Age 5 and older)

Carmy, Margaret. *At Grandpa's Sugar Bush*. Illustrated by Janet Wilson. U.S. edition: Kids Can Press, 1998. 32 pages. (1-55074-341-4) \$15.95.

The steps involved in harvesting maple syrup from more than one hundred trees in Grandpa's sugar bush are related by a young grandson with a February week of school vacation. First Grandpa drills holes on the southeast sides of the trees, and then the boy cleans out the wood shavings with a twig. They tap spikes into the holes, and before long the sap begins to drip into the buckets they've hung on each spike. That's only the beginning. Grandpa predicts that the sap will begin to run on the day they hear the first robin.

and it does. This is more than expository writing on the origin of maple syrup; it's a real story. The boy is a genuine help throughout the process, although adults will guess that Grandpa has his hands full in more than one way. This kind, knowing man most certainly realizes that the outcome of their companionship and the satisfaction they share in creating something special by hand can be as sweet as the tastiest syrup in the country. Canoy is acquainted with the maple woods of her husband's family farm in Ontario, Canada. Wilson's beautiful oil paintings illustrate the man at work, the snowy vista, and some of the wildlife. (Ages 4-7)

Gelman, Rita Golden. *Queen Esther Saves Her People*. Illustrated by Françoise Scholastic Press, 1998. 40 pages. (0-590-47025-6) \$15.95

According to an opening note, the scriptural story of Esther takes place more than 2,500 years ago in the ancient Persian Empire and is a "story of good and evil, of caring and callousness, and of the extraordinary courage of one young woman." The Jews living in Persia at that time spoke Persian and dressed like their Persian neighbors, even though they still practiced the Jewish religion in their homes. Without knowing Esther was Jewish, King Ahasuerus chose her to be his queen. All but one of the traditional elements of this Purim story from the scriptures is in place: Gelman included Mordchai's bravery and the treachery of the wicked Haman (sic), but she omitted Queen Vashti's reason for refusing to appear at one of the king's parties. Lessen's unique, lovely visual suggestions of Persian cultural details were created using gouache. (Ages 5-9)

Cechshar, Phillis. *When It Starts to Snow*. Illustrated by Martin Marie. Henry Holt, 1998. 32 pages. (0-8050-5404-9) \$15.95

"What if it starts to snow? / What do you do? / Where do you go?" Brief rhymed responses within a pattern of repetition hint at what some creatures do: mouse, cat, black crow, sparrow, geese, beaver, fish, pig, cow, hen, rooster, worm, snail, frog, deer, bear. At the end we see what a bat, snake, raccoon, squirrel, mole, rabbit, wolf and chipmunk do, too. What does a child want to do? Go out to play! Despite the large roster of creatures introduced in Cechshar's short text, Marie's crisp lines and generous uses of white energize the simple idea. (Ages 2-4)

Holmner, Dianne. *The Snow: A Persian Legend of the Magi*. Illustrated by Jude Daly. U.S. edition: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1998. 32 pages. (0-374-37198-9) \$16.00

According to Marco Polo, in Savoh, Persia, he saw the three domed tombs of the Magi: Balhazar, Melchior, and Jasper. In this rendition of the story, three stargazers—magicians, possibly, or maybe healers or holy men—first noticed a bright star from a tower near Savoh. After searching through scrolls, they discovered an ancient legend about a baby whose birth would be announced by a star, an infant destined to become a king who would bring justice, healing, and peace to the world, and they set off on a journey to find him. When they do, the child presents them with the gift of a stone which miraculously burns into flames, and the Magi realize that they must believe with a faith that is as strong as the stone for peace and healing to be brought to the world. According to Marco Polo's writings—which, to a certain extent, may also be legend—he was given this story of the Magi while his 13th century travels to the court of Kublai Khan. This particular version, richly

told and illustrated, was first published recently by a small press in South Africa. Holmner's wondrously written retelling is illustrated by Daly's dramatic, spare full-color artwork. Holmner grew up in Gordon's Bay, South Africa, and now lives in London. Daly resides in Capetown, South Africa. (Ages 7-12)

Hoyt-Goldsmith, Diane. *Celebrating Chinese New Year*. Photographs by Lawrence Magdale. Holiday House, 1998. 32 pages. (0-8234-1393-4) \$16.95

Elements of the traditional two-week observance of the Chinese New Year are interpreted and shown in a photo-essay featuring ten-year-old Ryan Leong and his family. General information about families with a Chinese heritage in San Francisco as well as details about Leong family preparations and activities are part of the mix. The Leong's shopping list and New Year's menu are pictured, there is a glimpse of the Chinatown Flower Festival, and readers can see a calligrapher at work painting a poetic saying for the Leong home. While reading how ancestors are honored during this time, readers also learn that Ryan's grandfather was the first Asian American to receive a Purple Heart for bravery during World War I. Ryan attends public school, and also Chinese school on a regular basis. The animals of the Chinese Zodiac are pictured with their dates and special qualities, and the Chinese calendar is briefly explained. There are photos of the Lion Dance and parade, and the role of the red envelopes of money is clarified. A glossary and index are helpful. *Gong hay fat choy* = May you prosper! (Ages 7-10)

Hughes, Langston. *Carol of the Brown King: Nativity Poems*. Illustrated by Ashley Bryan. A Jean Karl Book/Abnercum, 1998. 32 pages. (0-689-81877-7) \$16.00

Five poems written by the famous African American poet Langston Hughes receive the gift of fresh visual interpretation by the artist and performer who so frequently introduces them to audiences in the United States and beyond. Along with the title poem, Bryan's paintings, rendered in tempera and gouache, are for "Shepherd's Song at Christmas," "On a Christmas Night," "On a Pallet of Straw," "The Christmas Story," and an anonymous verse translated from a Puerto Rican Christmas card. This handsome full-color volume has strong child appeal for all and a particular pleasure for the children of color who read and see "Three Wise Men, / One dark like me / Part of His / Nativity." Bryan has set the traditional story somewhere in the Middle East or Africa, while the final poem pictures a contemporary dark-skinned elder woman reading the Bible to a young girl and on another page, a similar setting with a man and boy. Thoughtful readers will realize that the Brown King can refer both to the Christ Child and one of the Magi. Observant viewers will notice Bryan's various uses of star images and discover other ideas, as well, about which to reflect and celebrate. (Ages 2-8)

Hurd, Thacker. *Santa Mouse and the Reindeer*. HarperCollins, 1998. 32 pages. (0-06-027694-0) \$14.95

Rosie Mouse helps trim the tree, and knocks it over while putting the star on top, but this is nothing compared to the problems Santa Mouse is having with his departure from the Mouse North Pole. Who would have thought he was such a procrastinator, or that his reindeer were such gumblers, or that they would crash land in the middle of nowhere? Who but Rosie Mouse would have dreamed that the lost reindeer would appear at her front door?

Who could imagine a Santa Mouse as oblivious to disaster as this gutless red-suited rodent? Thatcher Hurd imagined this jolly trip from one crash landing to another and from one of Rosie Mouse's angelic smiles to the next. There's scant need for the Mouse Prayer on the final page, nor for the "knock knock" joke at the very end, but unnecessary, inexplicable gifts are part of the season, too. "On Blunder! On Basher! On Louay and Loopy and Buggy and Twarzlebum!" Hor chocolate, anyone? (Ages 2-6)

Joseph, Lynn. *Jump Up Time: A Trinidad Carnival Story*. Illustrated by Linda Saport. Clanton, 1998. 32 pages. (0-395-65012-7) \$16.00

"It's party time, is jump up time / Oh yeah! Trinidad Carnival is here." Lily hears these lyrics on the radio while her older sister, Christine, stands on a chair so Mama can drape and pin shimmering red and green costume cloth around her. Christine insists on dressing as a hummingbird for her first Carnival, because Trinidad is the Land of the Hummingbird. Mama tells Lily, "When you start school next year, you can wear any costume you want. Little Lily," and she rubs Lily's head. But it's hard to wait, to hear your baby name, and to watch Christine dancing all over the house in her Carnival costume. After the family arrives at the Savannah and the last steps to array Christine in her hoop and feathers have been taken, she becomes nervous. Very nervous. Confusion and excitement reign. Someone is dressed as an Arawak Indian princess, and others are giggling tadpoles, laughing pouncettas, and dancing mango trees. Lily suggests a way for Christine to overcome her stage fright. Christine responds to the situation and to Lily, Saport's warm parrots glow in picturing Joseph's affectionate family story replete with cultural details and a suggestion of regional speech. (Ages 5-9)

Little, Jean. *Emma's Magic Winter*. Illustrated by Jennifer Plecas. (An I Can Read Book) HarperCollins, 1998. 64 pages. (0-06-025389-4) \$14.95

Reading out loud at school was out of the question. Emma was that shy. However, once Emma saw that Sally also had red boots, Emma became brave enough to venture into imaginative winter play with her friendly new neighbor. Before long Emma was reading to Sally's little brother. Due to the red boots, which the girls pretended were magic, their good times outdoors in the snow, and Sally's encouragement, Emma became brave enough to take the big step of reading aloud in class. Little offers a genuine story about shyness and the delight of imaginative play in only seven brief chapters. Plecas's colored pictures show Emma and her family to be high-skinned, while Sally and her family have dark skin. (Ages 4-6)

Lusenn, Nancy. *A Gift for Abuelita: Celebrating the Day of the Dead = Un regalo para Abuelita: En celebracion del Dia de los Muertos*. Illustrated by Robert Chapman. Rising Moon/Northland, 1998. 32 pages. (0-87358-688-3) \$15.95

Rosita loved being with her *abuelita* (grandmother) each day. She loved "the soap scent of Abuelita's everyday dress... and the strong warmth of her grandmother's arms." She loved what they did together, such as preparing *torrijas*, making up songs, and weeding the *chiles* in the garden. One day Abuelita taught Rosita how to braid a strong cord from three overlapping strands. After Abuelita's illness and death, Rosita became heartbroken. As the family prepared for the annual Day of the Dead observances by cooking, carving, weaving, and gardening, Rosita couldn't seem to think of an appropriate *ofrenda* (gift for the family altar) to create in Abuelita's memory. The harder

Rosita tried the more difficult it was for her to sense Abuelita's presence, until she remembered the cord Abuelita had taught her to braid. Chapman's muted mixed media illustrations on cast paper suggest three dimensions in an affectionate bilingual story about the endurance of family memory. (Ages 6-9)

Marchant, Kerena. *Id-ul-Fitr*. U.S. edition: Millbrook Press, 1998. 32 pages. (0-7613-0963-2) \$20.90

The most joyous festival in the Muslim calendar is Id-ul-Fitr, which breaks the Ramadan fast. This celebrative time of new beginnings can involve serious and merry aspects: prayers at a mosque, family visits to the cemetery, *zakat* (welfare gifts on behalf of the general community), family gifts, parties, special songs and foods. Id cards featuring calligraphy, and—in some regions—polo and horse or camel races. Following the section about the month of Ramadan, there is a two-page spread interpreting how the new moon of Id is determined locally (by sighting) and officially (in Mecca). Helpful brief material includes information about other Muslim festivals, a bibliography, eight website addresses, a glossary, and an index. Marchant's valuable book bears a consistent global perspective and is replete with full-color photographs and facts rarely available to most American children, families and teachers, even though the United States has a Muslim population of considerable size. (Ages 8-12)

Moore, Clement. *The Night Before Christmas*. Illustrated by Jan Brett. Putnam's, 1998. 32 pages. (0-399-23190-0) \$16.99

Moore's rhyming story about the "right jolly old elf" who delivered toys using a sleigh pulled by eight reindeer appeared in print for the first time with the title "A Visit from St. Nicholas" in 1823, in a newspaper in Troy, New York. Many editions have been published since then. Pleasing elements of this cheerful version include Brett's abundant uses of bright reds, blues, and greens, and her carefully developed images of the famous reindeer, here marvellously decked out in fancy blankets and bell-trimmed harnesses. Fox-Scandinavian-garbed St. Nicholas hands "with a bound" safely down the chimney, which is when observant preschoolers can begin noticing specifics about the gifts he delivers. They'll find the first names of dozens of boys and girls on gift tags scattered throughout Brett's border designs. They'll enjoy trying to identify the toys, and most will be ones about which their elder relatives can tell. "Merry Christmas to All, and to All a Good Night." (Ages 2-5)

Nerlove, Miriam. *Shabbat*. Albert Whitman, 1998. 24 pages. (0-8075-7324-8) \$13.95

"I love Shabbat! It comes each week / a time to rest and play. / We like to be together on Shabbat, my favorite day!" These opening sentences signal an uncomplicated narrative for very young children in a picture book explaining the Jewish Sabbath, which begins every Friday at sundown. The book's strengths rest in Nerlove's pleasant full-color illustrations showing weekly Shabbat preparations: candles, *challah* (bread), blessings, and time at the synagogue. A reliable background note for adults appears at the end. Despite the text's somewhat forced rhymes and the omission of a Hebrew translation for the two Sabbath blessings traditionally offered in Hebrew, this easy picture book has a fresh, accessible, contemporary aura that both Jewish and non-Jewish families can appreciate. (Ages 2-5)

Podwal, Mark. *The Menorah Story*. Greenwillow, 1998. 28 pages. (0-688-15759-9) \$15.00

"God tried many times to reach Moses how to make a menorah. But whenever Moses set about making one, he couldn't remember what it was supposed to look like. God even drew a picture of a menorah on Moses's palm and told him to copy it. Still Moses could not do it. . . . This intriguing legend opens a brief narrative. An unusual juxtaposition of background information and legend comments this appealingly laid-back yet fully serious picture book with an abundance of crisp white space and an overall pleasing design. The somewhat abstract brightly colored illustrations created with gouache and colored pencils will probably catch adult eyes more quickly than those of the young. A very short author's note and bibliography appear on an opening page. (Ages 5-9)

Santiago, Emeralda and Joe Davidson, editors. *Las Christmas: Favorite Latino Authors Share Their Holiday Memories*. Illustrated by José Ortega. Knopf, 1998. 198 pages. (0-375-40151-2) \$22.00

In 1996 the editors of *St* magazine invited prominent Latino fiction writers to submit brief pieces to the magazine for a Christmas issue that was meant to celebrate the different ways the December holidays are observed in the various Latin American countries and by Latino families in the United States. They were so overwhelmed by the number and tenor of the submissions that the editors decided to compile them into a book, and the result is this collection of 24 original short stories and essays, based on the authors' memories of childhood Christmas celebrations. Although the stories are intended for an adult audience, mature teenagers will appreciate the reminiscences, sometimes poignant and often humorous, that deal with the elevated sense of emotion and family strife holidays often bring. Many teenagers will recognize names familiar in young adult literature, such as Judith Ortiz Cofer, Victor Martinez and Gary Soto; others will be happy to discover authors such as Julia Alvarez, Denise Chavez, Sandra Cisneros, and Michael Nava. Recipes for favorite Christmas dishes and the lyrics to traditional songs, remembered from childhood, are interspersed throughout the book. (Age 14 and older)

Shulevitz, Uri. *Snow*. Farrar Straus Giroux, 1998. 32 pages. (0-374-37092-3) \$16.00

"The skies are gray. The rooftops are gray. The whole city is gray / Then... one snowflake." Using verbal understatement and perfect pacing, Shulevitz creates a sense of the season's first snowfall, beginning slowly and softly, and gradually leading up to a blizzard of words that expresses a child's delight with snow. Throughout the story, a small boy and his dog revel in the transformation of the gray city into a winter wonderland. He relies completely on his own observations, as his grandfather and the people he meets on the street insist that the snow is insignificant. Here the adults put their faith in news reports which dully predict "no snow." But the child knows better, as he sees with all his senses, as well as with his imagination. That the snow works its magic on ordinary city streets is further enhanced in the illustrations that show Mother Goose characters coming to life and emerging from a book shop window to dance through the snowy streets with the boy and his dog. *Winter, 1999 Chamberlain Zolnow Award*. (Ages 3-7)

Siddals, Mary McKenna. *Millions of Snowflakes*. Illustrated by Elizabeth Sayles. Clarion, 1998. 25 pages. (0-395-71531-8) \$13.00

A preschool girl with the suggestion of Asian facial features enjoys playing in new snow. "I laugh / I jump / I run. / I spin." She's wearing brightly colored winter clothes as she counts snowflakes: one, two, three, four and—oh yes—the snowflakes. Too many to count but not too many to enjoy. A brief rhyming text suits this cheerful, uncomplicated 7 1/4 x 7" book for the youngest. (Ages 18 months-3 years)

Slate, Joseph. *The Secret Snow*. Illustrated by Felipe Davalos. Miles Cavendish, 1998. 32 pages. (0-7614-5027-0) \$15.95

On the night of the Three Kings, Pepe and Sila are tucked under a warm star quilt, one on either side of their grandmother. There are no stars outside tonight because of the rain and then the ice. The children worry: How will the Kings be able to ride through such weather? Can they find the family's Baby Manger, hay box and figs? Will they bring toys, maybe just a little *pinata*, or leave something tucked in their shoes? Grandpa's soothing voice transforms her into a large bird with the star quilt for wings. She guides the children to see stars everywhere. Together they look at the frost covered garden flowers, a spider's nest, a fish and frog under the ranch pond, the rooster Rayo and the hens in the chicken coop, a deer at the barn, and the mule Placido. The strong images and deep colors in Davalos's illustrations were created using acrylics to portray the loving Latino family of Slate's story set somewhere in New Mexico. (Ages 4-8)

Summers, Susan, reteller. *The Fourth Wise Man*. Based on the story by Henry Van Dyke. Illustrated by Jackie Morris. U.S. edition: Dial, 1998. 32 pages. (0-8037-2312-1) \$16.99

"The Story of the Other Wise Man" by Henry Van Dyke was first published in 1895 and is one of the most enduring fictional accounts of a fourth wise man or woman who searched for the infant Jesus. According to Summers's adaptation, Arathan is a Persian "follower of the faith of Zoroaster" when he and three colleagues in astrology—"Caspas, Melchior, and Balthazar—observed a new star one night. The men discerned that the star signified the birth of a great teacher who was to be born among the Jews. They decided to locate the baby, but by the time Arathan secured three precious jewels to present to the infant King of Kings, his companions had gone ahead, traveling alone. Arathan spends years trying to find the child, giving one of the jewels to help a dying man and the second jewel to save a male infant from Herod's mass slaughter along the way. As years passed, Arathan continued his search for the teacher, all the while healing sick people, visiting those in prison, and feeding the starving. Thirty-three years later Arathan found himself outside of Jerusalem near the site of a crucifixion, and at that time he gave his last jewel to ransom a woman being sold into slavery. According to a note, this fictional good man practiced the teachings of Jesus, "dedicating himself to a life of service as he searched for the King of Kings and not discriminating against people belonging to different races or holding different belief systems from his own." Morris created powerful, compassionate full-color paintings to accompany Summers' effective, abbreviated version of Van Dyke's classic work. Her painted map on the end papers offers an aesthetically pleasing opening and closing for this lovely 9 1/4

x 11" picture book. Summers lives in England where, as a teacher, she has used this story with her students for years. (Ages 6-10)

Willey, Margaret. *Thanksgiving with Mr. Willey*. Illustrated by Lloyd Bloom. A Laura Cevinger Book/HarperCollins, 1998. 32 pages. (0-06-027113-2) \$14.95

"Sit down, Mother, and tell me again. / When are my uncles coming? / When / All of your uncles will be here soon; / they promised to be here by afternoon." An impatient fair-skinned girl and her mother are aproned for the visit of six adult uncles. There will be a "tower of biscuits, a hoosh of peas, / a tub of potatoes, a wheel of cheese, / a dozen pies, a barrel of juice, / cranberries, plums, / and a Thanksgiving goose!" The child wants to be reminded about Cory and the time he "sang louder than the morning crows," and Fred, "who couldn't see past his nose," and Darcy, Joe, Henry, and Will. She wants to hear the vigorous family tales about her rollicking, singing, dancing relatives. Bloom's always memorable elongated figures perfectly envision Mother's long-legged brothers when they were teenagers: Cory, the singing daydreamer, and Fred, with his nose in a book, and the other four. Mother reminds her daughter that they will "eat like wolves and lions and bears... Oh, the kitchen will quake, / the oven will roar, / the music will flow / from window and door!" Bloom's images painted with oils and reproduced in full color perfectly complement Willey's rhyming text to embrace the rural men who gathered for a reunion, the little girl who remembers them so affectionately, and her mother, who nurtures those memories. (Ages 3-6)

See also: *Autumn Leaves: Bear's Hiccups: Bunny Who Found Easter: Christmas Tree in the White House: Fizza Fireworks: Gaudin Thanksgiving: Prairie Town: Snowflake Bonfire: Turtle Spring*

Folklore, Mythology and Traditional Literature

Aylesworth, Jim, reteller. *The Gingerbread Man*. Illustrated by Barbara McClintock. Scholastic Press, 1998. 32 pages. (0-590-97219-7) \$15.95

A roasting fire burns in the fireplace, recaysps can be seen on end tables, a framed portrait hangs near the mantle where lovely flower arrangements and decorative plates are placed, and a cat plays with a ball of yarn from a knitting basket when a little old woman stopped reading and suggested making a gingerbread man. "Yes, let's do!" said a little old man whose reading has been interrupted by that sudden possibility. Wearing their aprons this general pair "shaped the little arms, and they shaped the little legs...with raisins they made the little eyes and the little nose...then with sugar glaze, they dressed him in a fancy suit of clothes." This is no ordinary retelling of a familiar cumulative tale but rather a handsomely designed, full-color version printed on heavy creamy paper with hand-lettered display type. It's not too fancy to catch the fancy of the preschoolers who will enjoy Aylesworth's spirited oral style. There's enormous child appeal in the cookie chase involving McClintock's wonderfully consumed butcher with a knife, a black-and-white cow, and a muddy old sow. All wind up staring sadly at the fox. He hadn't left a single crumb for anyone." The artwork was rendered in watercolor, sepia ink, and gouache. (Ages 3-6)

Babbitt, Natalie. *Ouch!* Illustrated by Fred Marcellino. Michael Di Capua Books/HarperCollins, 1998. 32 pages. (0-06-209066-4) \$14.95

When a fortune-teller foresees that the newborn child of a commoner will grow up to marry a princess, the king isn't happy. No royal daughter of his is going to marry "nobody special." The king's attempts to outwit fate are hilariously subverted in this snappily told story that is one of the lesser known tales from the Brothers Grimm. The lack of specific source information for this rendition of the tale is puzzling. But Natalie Babbitt's witty text and Fred Marcellino's amusing full-color illustrations that mock the king while casting the young hero, Marco, in an aura of goodness are a winning combination. (Ages 7-10)

Del Negro, Janice. *Lacy Dove*. Illustrated by Leonard Gore. A Melanite Kreupa Book/DK Ink, 1998. 32 pages. (0-7894-2514-9) \$16.95

Lacy Dove is both a sly and witty story about a woman who is no one's fool and an eerie, haunted tale that will set hairs rising. When a rich land is told that a pair of trousers sewn by the full moonlight in the graveyard of St. Andrew's Church will bring him good fortune, he offers a sack of gold to anyone who will make them. But the graveyard is rumored to be haunted by a "fearsome thing," and only aging seamstress Lacy Dove takes him up on the offer. "Lacy Dove could use that sackful of gold, having recently been sacked from the lady's own household." On the night of the full moon, Lacy takes her sewing to the abandoned churchyard and sets to work. Soon an awful smell assails her: "It was the smell of dampness and decay. It was the smell of graves and corruption. It was the smell of death, without the promise of eternity to redeem it." Janice Del Negro's imaginative and evocative prose paints a richly embroidered story of evil that is humorously outweighed by a quick-thinking, table-turning heroine in this riveting story featuring an original character in a setting based on traditional Celtic tales. Leonard Gore's superb acrylic paintings escalate the drama and tension of the fine prose. His textured, darkly luminous palette and chilling, haggard images haunt the pages of this delicious tale. *Honor Book, 1998* CCBC *Children's Award Discussion*. (Ages 7-11)

Gershator, Phillip, reteller. *Zazzy! Zazzy! A Horrid Tale*. Illustrated by Theresa Smith. Orchard, 1998. 32 pages. (0-531-09523-1) \$15.95

A marvelous introduction opens this lively tale: "In the days when all things came together to make the world as it is, when roost married trunk and trunk married branch, when sun married day and moon married night, so it was for the animals too. That is why Mosquito flew around looking for someone to marry." Buzzing sounds are featured in this retelling, as Mosquito visits Ear, Arm, Chest, Leg, and Hip—first to woo each and then to sting them. Mosquito's final words remind each body part that she's still nearby, buzzing and stinging. Smith's artwork features strong colors and bold shapes and was created in pencil and crayon. (Ages 3-6)

Harber, Frances. *The Brothers' Promise*. Illustrated by Thor Wildstrom. Albert Whitman, 1998. 32 pages. (0-8075-0900-0) \$15.95

Chayin was a rich farmer, and he was a good one, too. "Rows of beet leaves, fat cabbages, potato plants, and sun-kissed wheat filled his fields." He was a wise person who taught his two sons that everything on earth has its own

season. When Chayim was on his deathbed, he made his sons promise to divide the land and the work exactly in half and to always take care of each other. They promised. Keeping the promise became almost impossible for Yankel and Josef. They were that different from each other. When hard times came—and they did come—Yankel and Josef each figured out an anonymous way to help the other out. That made each brother's anger even greater. Their eventual reconciliation became an occasion for the angus to weep tears of joy, just as their father had said it could be. Wickstrom chose to set Harber's vigorous version of this moving story from the *Talmud* in Eastern Europe during the late 19th century. His powerful artwork was created in oil on board. (Ages 5–9)

Hausman, Gerald. *Doctor Bird, Three Lookin' Up Tales from Jamaica*. Illustrated by Ashley Wolfe Philemel, 1998. 32 pages. (0-399-22744-X) \$15.99

According to the source note for these three unusual tales, the Doctor Bird is the national bird of Jamaica and is found only in that country. A stream-rattled hummingbird, it is held in great esteem by the Jamaicans and is believed by many to have the power to heal and the power to cast a spell. In these three entertaining tales, "How Doctor Bird Taught Mongoose a Lesson that Mongoose Never Remembered," "How Doctor Bird Taught Mouse to Look Up When He Was Feeling Down," and "How Doctor Bird Taught Brother Owl That It's Better to Be Who You Are Than Who You're Not," Doctor Bird also proves to be a funny, principled, compassionate, party-loving character who dispenses advice and punishment with equal charm as he flies among the members of Jamaica's bird and animal kingdom. Ashley Wolff's bright, bold illustrations done with black gesso and gouache are vivid accompaniments to these tales, which are told in standard English, and for which the author credits the principal storytellers from whom he originally heard them. (Ages 5–10)

Holden, Robert, reteller. *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*. Illustrated by Drabos Zak. U.S. edition: Walter Lorraine Books/Houghton Mifflin, 1998. 32 pages. (0-395-89918-4) \$15.00

The Czech-born illustrator of an arresting retelling of an old tale of retribution and revenge has a style that's uniquely his own. The long slender volume (8 1/2 x 12 3/4") immediately gives readers a sense of the medieval village depicted within; its tall vertical shape is echoed both in the architecture and in the imposing figure of the stranger who comes to town, promising he can solve their rat problem. Zak makes the townspeople, rather than the piper, look crazed in this version, suggesting that perhaps the children who follow the piper will be better off. His detailed pen-and-ink illustrations are washed with bright touches of color in places he wants readers' eyes to fall; elsewhere they are left as black-and-white line drawings to provide background. The tight rhyming verses of Holden's retelling are similarly unadorned, providing a pared-down text that leaves space for the imagination. (Ages 7–10)

McCully, Emily. *Beautiful Warrior: The Legend of the Nuus Kang Fu*. Arthur A. Levine Books/Scholastic, 1998. 40 pages. (0-590-37487-7) \$16.95

When Mingyi, a distressed peasant girl, approaches the great warrior nun Wu Mei, upset because her father has told her she must marry the bandit Soong Ling to save his business, Wu Mei decides she will try to teach the excitable

girl kung fu. "Tell Soong Ling, you will marry him if he can beat you at kung fu," she directs Mingyi. Wu Mei then offers Mingyi a "crash course." "It will take a year," she tells her. During that year Wu Mei teaches Mingyi how to make her mind calm, how to be like the water and follow the path of least resistance, how to bend with suppleness and face like bamboo, and how to maintain balance like the stately crane. "Hah! I better learn to fight," asks a worried Mingyi. "You are learning," the serene Wu Mei replies. Emily Arnold McCully's original story is based on the legendary Chinese character Wu Mei. Her light-filled, graceful paintings illustrate the story, which is told in a relaxed style that incorporates contemporary English vernacular. An author's note for this story set in 17th century China provides background information on *kung fu*, which, the author notes, means "human effort" and is a discipline of lifelong study that goes far deeper than the martial arts image often conveyed in western popular culture. (Age 5–8)

MacDonald, Margaret Read. *Picking Peas*. Illustrated by Pat Cummings. HarperCollins, 1998. 32 pages. (0-06-027235-X) \$14.95

Little Girl planted a garden of peas, but oh, my, were those peas in for trouble! "Come July, those peas got ripe and ready to eat. Little Girl went out in her garden. Started going down the row. Picking peas. Started singing..." She leaves the "little busy" peas to grow some more, but that's only because she hasn't met up yet with Mr. Rabbit. Little Girl thinks she's finally gotten the best of that rabbit, but one of the best pages shows him busily "picking peas...and handin' on his knees!" Little Girl is a contemporary kid dressed in boldly colored summer clothes with her hair in ribbons and sunglasses in place on her face. Cummings' wonderful large-size images of this determined brown-skinned gardener and her pecky adversary fairly leap from sun-filled illustrations. MacDonald combined southern written sources dated 1897 and 1922 to create this enjoyable picture book version for which she offers her own tune and directions for retelling the story with movements or acting it out. (Ages 3–8)

McKissack, Patricia and Fredrick McKissack. *Let My People Go: Bible Stories Told by a Freeman of Color*. Illustrated by James E. Ransome. An Anne Schwartz Book/Atheneum, 1998. 134 pages. (0-689-80856-9) \$20.00

In a beginning note important to understanding the whole book, the McKissacks write about a former Sunday school teacher, "a masterful storyteller, who mesmerized us with narrations about ancient biblical characters and African American historical figures simultaneously." They used this technique in retelling some of the *Bible* stories so important in their slave ancestors' lives. Another decision involved the time and setting, which is early 19th century Charleston, South Carolina, a city that "played a major role in the American slave trade and was home to a large community of free blacks." The McKissacks' 12 "Old Testament" favorites are retold in the "distinctive voice of a fictionalized free black abolitionist, Price Jeffries," a character loosely based upon the actual Denmark Vesey. The narrator of the overarching 19th century narrative is Price Jeffries' daughter, a character modeled after Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, an "unsung 19th century abolitionist, feminist, and poet." The daughter's speech is that of a well-educated woman of her time, while conversations she recalls from childhood echo her parents' speech. The authors challenged themselves as writers, and so did the artist who illustrated this handsome 11 1/4 x 8 7/8" book. Ransome

also provides an introductory note, pointing out that his oil paintings for the Bible stories feature brown-and-olive-skinned Semites and lush colors, while he limited his palette for artwork illustrating early 19th century happenings. This unique, compelling volume offers opportunities for pleasure, information, and insight all on more than one level and all because the authors and artist envisioned it so. (Ages 7 and older)

Paterson, John and Katherine Paterson. *Images of God. Illustrated by Alexander Koshkin. Clarion, 1998. 112 pages. (0-395-70734-X) \$20.00*

Interpretations of the "word pictures" of God from 23 passages from the Bible are explored here by two Patersons: Katherine, a former Christian missionary and internationally acclaimed writer for children, and her husband, John, an ordained Protestant clergyman. Using the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, they developed historical-critical commentaries on these scriptures. The organization of their interpretations is innovative: (1) All Nature Sings—Images from the Created World (Light, Water, Wind, Fire, Rock, Cloud, Dove, Eagle and Hen, Man and Woman); (2) To Earth Come Down—Images from Ordinary Life (Mother, Father, Housewife, Visitor, Host, Wrestler, Bread); and (3) With a Mighty Hand—Images of Wrathfulness and Creation (Landscape, Gardener, Potter, Shepherd, Judge, King, Architect). A listing of Biblical references and an index complete a volume illustrated with 35 paintings executed in watercolor, tempera, and gouache by Koshkin, a Russian-born artist. Earlier the Patersons collaborated on *Consider the Lilies: Plans of the Bible* (Crowell, 1986; Clarion, 1988); *K. Paterson and Koshkin's other joint work is The Angel and the Donkey* (Clarion, 1996). (Ages 11 and older)

Paterson, Katherine. *Parzival: The Quest of the Grail Knight. Loebstar/Dutton, 1998. 127 pages. (0-525-67579-5) \$15.99*

"In the ancient days, when Arthur was a king of Britain, there lived a boy who had never heard of the great son of Pendragon or of his bold knights. The only home the boy had ever known was a cottage in the wilderness of Soltau, and the only parent he had ever known was his mother. He was never called by his proper name; indeed, he didn't even know that he had one." So begins Paterson's briskly paced retelling of an 800-year-old legend about the Grail Knight who, as a lad innocent of his true station, set forth to find the symbol of hope and eternal life. An annotated cast of characters titled "The People" precedes the adaptation in this handsomely designed, 7 x 4 1/4" volume numbering only 127 pages. The Parzival legend is a perfect vehicle for Paterson, because she flawlessly incorporates powerful characterizations, cleverly developed humor, and snappy dialogue within her fiction and she understands how to incorporate a Christian subtext without imposing doctrine. This legend is not new to Paterson's published works—it's central to her contemporary novel, *Parli Quest* (HarcourtCollins, 1989), which is filled with references to it. In both *Parli Quest* and *Parzival*, Paterson's native hero sets forth, bumbling past various obstacles and figuring out for himself how to name the answer that will end his pilgrimage. Because of Paterson's *Parzival*, fans of *Parli Quest* can return to that novel to discover other meanings. Young medievalists will enjoy this compressed version of a tale inspired by a 25,000-line epic poem, for which Paterson provides a brief background. Katherine Paterson is the 1998 recipient of the Hans Christian Andersen Award given by the International Board on Books for Young People

(IBBY). *Parzival* is a wonderful addition to the marvelous body of work for which this accomplished author has been formally acknowledged in many other ways, as well. (Ages 9-13)

Prose, Francine. *You Never Know: A Legend of the Lamed-va-mech. Illustrated by Mark Podwal. Greenwillow, 1998. 24 pages. (0-688-15807-2) \$14.95*

"According to Jewish tradition, there are at every moment, in every generation, 36 righteous individuals living in secret throughout the world," but their presence is known only when there is some threat to the community. "If the generation is worthy, one of these thirty-six hidden saints will become the Messiah." The threatened disaster in Plotchink explores that idea in picture book form. For 40 days and 40 nights no rain has fallen in Plotchink. Even Schmucl's prayer did matter, because it rained—for forty days the prayers of such a forgetful village, one who can't even read, be of help? Even though people remember that Schmucl once saved everyone from a fierce bear, no one really cares whether or not this man offers a prayer. Readers know Schmucl's prayer did matter, because it rained—for forty days and forty nights—and they also see that another of his prayers causes the rain to stop. It takes a dream for the rabbi to realize that Schmucl is one of the holy Lamed-va-mech, and to connect him to the 36 times a menorah is lighted. Schmucl vanished after he could no longer live in secret, but he's been seen in quite a few places since then. "And someone saw him in your town, fixing your shoes and forgetting to charge you." It's best to be kind to everyone, no matter how poor. After all, you never know." According to an end-note "Lamed-va-mech" refers to the number "thirty-six" in Hebrew. Greenche and colored pencils were used for the pleasing full-color art illustrating this warm, appealing version of the legend. (Ages 4-8)

Sauv, Robert D. *Candillon: A Caribbean Cinderella. Illustrated by Brian Pinkney. Simon & Schuster, 1998. 40 pages. (0-689-80668-X) \$16.00*

This tale loosely based on a French Creole version of *Cinderella* is set in the Caribbean among people of African descent and is uniquely told from the point of view of the fairy godmother, in this case a poor washerwoman who has inherited a wand of magic from her mother. "Three eggs will change one thing into another... But only for a short time. And the magic must be used to help someone you love." Candillon is the washerwoman's goddaughter in this version of the tale, which is seasoned with Creole words and phrases that are defined in a short glossary. Brian Pinkney's brightly colored, swirling illustrations lend an added sense of richness to the story. (Ages 6-8)

Van Lann, Nancy. *The Magic Bean Tree: A Legend from Argentina. Illustrated by Beatriz Vidal. Houghton Mifflin, 1998. 32 pages. (0-395-82746-9) \$15.00*

A tale from the Quechua-speaking peoples of South America tells a legend about a great drought suffered by the First People on earth. After a summer with no rain, brave Topoc goes out in search of water and learns from the oldest carob tree that the Great Bird of the Underworld has perched in her branches, blocking the gods' view of earth. Topoc returns to his people and together they manage to figure out a way to frighten the Great Bird away. Argentinian artist Beatriz Vidal's stylized gouache paintings use golden hues to illustrate the parched earth, a lush stack of green for the carob tree, and deep blues and purples to portray the Great Bird of the Underworld. (Ages 4-8)

Van Laan, Nancy. *So Say the Little Monkeys*. Illustrated by Yumi Heo. An Anne Schwartz Book/Athenium, 1998. 32 pages. (0-689-81038-5) \$16.00

A hitting, rap-like rhythm and witty, engaging art combine to retell an energetic folktale that comes originally from the Indians of Brazil in which a band of monkeys would much rather play all day than build a home to protect them from thorny tree perches and the rain that inevitably falls each night. Each time they huddle together in the rain trying to stay warm, the monkeys declare they will build a home, but as soon as the sun comes out, "They swing WHEEE over here. The swing WHEEE over there. They sing, 'Jibba jibba jibba,' as they jump and run.... Try, tiny monkeys having fun!" This refrain grows increasingly long and more involved as it is repeated throughout the story, and children will not be able to resist a little jibba-jibba-jabbering and WHEEING of their own as they listen to the delightful sounds of the story. Even the rain (PLINKA PLINKA) and wind (WOOVAWOOVA) are infused with the delight. Yumi Heo leads her singular and distinctive style to the book with artwork that shows the monkeys in all their exuberance and all their restraint, with paintings that depict monkeys swinging wildly and joyfully across one page and huddling pathetically in the rain on another. And if you can get children to hold still long enough to look closely at the illustrations, they will have noticed the baby monkey that appears over and over again throughout this joyfully noisy volume. (Ages 4-7)

See also: *Abdley Binawi: African Tales*, *Lib-Hab: Queen Esther Sings Her People: The Stone: To Every Thing There Is a Season: Women of the Bible*

Historical People, Places and Events

Bierman, Carol. *Journey to Ellis Island: How My Father Came to America*. Hyperion/Madison Press Books, 1998. 48 pages. (0-7868-0377-0) \$17.95

When war came to Perser, Russia, in 1916, Rachel Weinstein decided it was time to move her young children, Yehuda and Esther, to a new home in America. But their journey on foot across war-torn Russia was treacherous. Along the way they got caught in a crossfire and Yehuda's hand was badly wounded. Even after he fully recovered at a hospital in Kiev, the family worried they would be turned back at Ellis Island, in spite of the fact they had an older son waiting for them in New York City. This highly visual account of the experiences of one Jewish immigrant family is told from the point of view of 11-year-old Yehuda, the author's father. His realistic worry that his weakened arm will be a problem, along with his anticipation about meeting an older brother he has only heard about, add dramatic tension to an already compelling story. Family pictures, documentary photographs of Ellis Island immigrants and artifacts, and original bronze-colored drawings illustrate Yehuda's story. (Ages 7-12)

Borden, Louise. *Good-bye, Charles Lindbergh*. Illustrated by Thomas B. Allen. Margaret K. McElderry, 1998. 32 pages. (0-689-81536-0) \$16.00

A widely recognized international hero by 1929, Charles Lindbergh was known to land his biplane in remote, out-of-the-way places when he traveled in order to escape media attention. Even so, when Call, a Mississippi farm

boy, was out riding his white horse across a field near his home, he couldn't believe his eyes when he saw Lindbergh land his plane near Mr. Meade's big hay shed! After landing, Lindbergh happily chatted for awhile with the few onlookers who joined Call in the field, but when Mr. Meade offered the hero a bed for the night, he politely declined, indicating that he preferred to pitch his tent and sleep outside, next to his plane. Although his family doesn't believe his story that night at dinner, Call talks his sister into getting up early the next morning to see Mr. Lindbergh off. This fictionalized picture book, based on a true childhood story the author heard from 83-year-old Harold Ray Gilpin, is illustrated with soft colors and hazy lines that enhance the historical setting. (Ages 5-9)

Burleigh, Robert. *Home Run*. Illustrated by Mike Wimmer. Silver Whistle/Harcourt Brace, 1998. 32 pages. (0-15-200979-1) \$16.00

"He always had this swing. This easy, unpretentious swing. This pretty swing, not caught by any coach. One day the Babe just swung—and it was there. It was his." That is an example of one of Burleigh's two narrative styles interpreting the life and times of Babe Ruth, and on most pages it's printed in a large typeface placed within a large amount of white space. The other is printed in a very small typeface within a make-believe vintage baseball card, such as #251, "Babe on the Mound," relating facts about the Babe's pitching—yes, pitching—record between 1914 and 1933. Wimmer's illustration on the opposite side of the same page shows three early 20th-century boys, all looking at the same unseen thing high and far away; one has just swung at a pitch, one is a catcher, and one is another player. Young George Herman Ruth apparently "had this swing" early on, fourteen such double-page spreads are organized in this engaging way, making it possible to read what is almost two books in one. Children can find repeated ways to enjoy this exciting tribute to the "babe in the woods," which they'll read as the origin of the famous nickname. (Ages 7-11)

Carlson, Laurie. *Boss of the Plains: The Hat that Won the West*. Illustrated by Holly Meade. A Melanie Kroupe Book/DK Ink, 1998. 36 pages. (0-7894-2479-7) \$16.95

The creation of the Stetson, the hat that took the west by storm, is the subject of this delightful picture book history. A hattermaker in the East, John Stetson headed toward the West he'd always longed to see when poor health forced him to quit his work. His health improved in the clear western air and he joined the quest for gold in the Colorado hills. The scorching sun convinced him that he needed a better hat than the one he'd brought with him—something that would keep the sun from his eyes and the rain off his back. Something "big and picturesque" he declared, perhaps thinking of the western landscape itself. When a cowboy later offered him a five dollar gold piece for his high-crowned, wide-brimmed creation, the idea was planted for what would eventually become the "Boss of the Plains," the most popular hat west of the Mississippi, and the inspiration for the John B. Stetson hat company, which has gone on to make hats in many styles. Colorful artwork spanning the two-page spreads, a photograph of Stetson with a brief historical note detailing the popularity of his hats and the rapid growth of his Missouri factory, and a bibliography citing the author's sources provide the crowning touches for this volume. (Ages 7-10)

Cornelissen, Cornelia. *Soft Rain: A Story of the Cherokee Trail of Tears.* Delacorte Press, 1998. 115 pages. (0-385-32253-4) \$14.95

In May, 1838, countless Iselagi people were forced by agents of the U.S. government to leave their land in what is now known as North Carolina and three other Southern states. Men, women and children of all ages and health situations were forced to be relocated to "lands set apart for them in the West" in what the U.S. government officially called "the Cherokee Removal." The journey lasted many months, including a severe winter season. That tragic history unfolds here in a third-person narrative. A plucky nine-year-old girl, Soft Rain, is the main character. She reads and writes English, as well as the language created by Sequoyah and written on "Talking Leaves." Other memorable characters also earn a place in this historical novel, including Soft Rain's younger brother Hawk Boy, and their parents, grandmother, and courageous Aunt Kee. The author incorporated much dialogue along with cultural details into her story, making her novel fairly easy for young children to read, despite the harsh history she recounts fictionally. The evidence about the Cherokee Nation provides a factual context for the novel. Cornelissen's great-grandfather was about ten when he endured the Trail of Tears. (Ages 9-12)

Deem, James M. *Bodies from the Bog.* Houghton Mifflin, 1998. 42 pages. (0-395-85784-8) \$16.00

The nature of most peat bogs causes them to be a perfect preservative for bodies that were buried thousands of years earlier. Occasionally in recent times across Europe, such bodies have been found in peat bogs. Archaeologists call this type of mummy a "bog body." One such bog body discovered in 1952 near Grauballe, Denmark, is known as the Grauballe Man. Experts surmise that he died about 55 BCE, no doubt as a human sacrifice of Iron Age people. Deem discusses the methods utilized by scientists to reconstruct when and how each individual might have lived and died. The book contains archival photographs of skulls and mummified bodies that will fascinate young readers, but Deem does not disrespectfully sensationalize an admittedly quite sensational subject. (Ages 9-14)

Fleming, Candace. *The Harnaker's Sign: A Story by Benjamin Franklin.* Illustrated by Robert Andrew Parker. Orchard, 1998. 32 pages. (0-531-36075-7) \$15.95

Thrilled with his completion of the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson can't wait to show it to the Continental Congress. "Every word rang. Every sentence sang. Every paragraph flowed with truth." But when the inevitable arguing begins among the delegates over deleting this word here, that sentence there, Jefferson is crushed, and so his good friend Benjamin Franklin tries to console him with a story. The story is about a harnaker who drafts a sign for his shop and shows it to various family members and friends. Everyone has a suggestion to make about something to cut, and by the time the harnaker has arrived at the signmaker's shop, his sign is blank. Candace Fleming first discovered this story by Franklin in *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, in which Jefferson wrote, "Dr. Franklin perceived I was not insensitive to Congress' mutilation of my document, and tried to reassure me by whispering a parable." She frames her retelling of the amusing parable with a fictionalized recreation of the Jefferson-Franklin encounter in this delightful picture book illustrated with Robert Andrew Parker's full-color paintings in watercolor and ink. (Ages 8-11)

Geisert, Bonnie. *Prairie Town.* Illustrated by Arthur Geisert. Walter Lorraine Books/Houghton Mifflin, 1998. 32 pages. (0-395-83967-7) \$16.00

A grain elevator connected to the outside world by the sky and a pair of railroad tracks has homes, a few businesses, a school, a post office, a couple of churches, a cemetery surrounding it. This small town located somewhere in the Great Plains of North America during the mid-20th century has all that—and there's more, much more. Evidence of people's routines is everywhere. They do indoor and outdoor work, run their machines, handle errands, and raise seasonal crops. There are occasional changes: a house fire, painting of the water tower, and modifications to a tree house. Puppies are born. The water tower is repainted, a new tobacconist appears, and the school playground gets improved. There's a weekly livestock sale, and—sometimes—a visiting carnival. The weather dominates just about everything that happens: winter can be particularly fierce, and the summers are sensational. Both Geisert did the thinking and planning for this unusual glimpse of one community and some of its happenings. Bonnie did most of the writing. Arthur created detailed views of the town in 21 remarkable full-color etchings, ten of which are double-page spreads. Children can look at length to make comparisons and notice differences as the seasons roll past. This affectionate summary of life in a particular small town all year round is a tribute to that way of living for examination from several perspectives. Why did it develop? What has changed? Ask someone who grew up in a similar town, or lives in one now, to respond to this fascinating sequence of images about community. (Ages 5-9)

Gerstein, Morticia. *Victor: A Novel Based on the Life of the Savage of Aveyron.* Frances Foster Books/Farrar Straus Giroux, 1998. 258 pages. (0-374-38142-9) \$17.00

Morticia Gerstein was inspired by François Truffaut's 1970 film *The Wild Child* about the boy known as the Savage of Aveyron, to research the story of the child who was found living wild in the Aveyron district of France in 1800 and taken to the Institute for Deaf-Mutes in Paris before French physician Jean-Marc Itard took a special interest in him. Gerstein has now created two books for young readers, the young adult novel *Victor* and the picture book *The Wild Boy* (see next entry). In *Victor*, Gerstein writes a detailed and fascinating portrait of this boy and of the efforts of Itard and his housekeeper, Madame Guézin, to teach him how to behave like other human children. For Victor, who had no sense of his own humanness, for Dr. Itard, whose great patience sometimes snapped, and for Madame Guézin, who lavished the boy with love, there were moments of understanding and success, and moments of failure, especially with regard to teaching Victor how to speak. There were other difficulties as Victor grew, especially with regard to his burgeoning sexuality. Ultimately, Itard, whose work with Victor, the author explains in an afterword, is believed by many to have been the start of special education, admitted he had failed Victor. In focusing on trying to teach him how to talk, as he did with the deaf children he worked with at the Institute, he ignored the possibilities of sign language and denied Victor a form of communication that might have come, if not naturally, then much more easily than the speech that he never learned. Gerstein has interspersed his compassionate third-person narrative with brief sections immersed in Victor's point of view that brilliantly illuminate his emerging sense of self and sensitivity, which was always limited by his restricted understanding of the larger world. Victor lived with the loving and nurturing Madame Guézin until he died in 1828. (Age 14 and older)

Gerstein, Mordkai. *The Wild Boy*. Frances Foster Books/Farrar Straus Giroux, 1998. 39 pages. (0-374-38431-2) \$16.00

A tender depiction for younger readers of the life of the child who was discovered living wild in the Aveyron district of France in 1800. *The Wild Boy* will also be of interest to those who encounter *Vivian*, the book that Gerstein has written for older readers (see previous entry). *The Wild Boy* is a sensitive picture book about this feral child who could not speak and who did not know what it was to be human. What the child did know, as the story opens, is how to live in the woods and how to survive; he knew hunger but also joyful abandon in the falling snow and the feel of the wind. Gerstein has masterfully and movingly related this story and these feelings in both text and stirring art. This child who had never known a caressing touch until physician Jean-Marc Itard and his housekeeper, Madame Guérin, began to care for him came to adore Madame Guérin and to trust the doctor, but he would never learn all that Itard hoped he would and his mind and his memories would always remain a mystery. Gerstein's expressive artwork is so emotionally charged that his visual images alone powerfully convey the essential elements of this superbly written story. (Ages 7-10)

Hansen, Joyce and Gary McGowan. *Breaking Ground Breaking Silence: The Story of New York's African Burial Ground*. Henry Holt, 1998. 130 pages. (0-8050-5012-4) \$17.95

In 1991, while excavating beneath the streets of lower Manhattan, archaeologists unearthed the remains of a male of African descent. It turned out to be the start of a rich discovery of great historical, cultural and spiritual significance—the 18th century African burial ground used by Manhattan's earliest black residents to lay members of their community to rest. As the excavation of this site unfolds in the pages of this moving and important volume, the authors trace the history of this community and examine the ways in which the discoveries in the burial ground can illuminate the lives of individuals, even when their names aren't known, giving voice to a lost past. Artifacts and burial practices become a means of connecting remains back to a specific African culture, or determining defiance in the continuation of burial practices forbidden by Dutch, and later English, governments of the region. The history of Africans and African Americans in the region and the social and political conditions under which they lived is traced chronologically as the narrative progresses, beginning with the first known arrivals early in the 17th century, who came as slaves of the Dutch, and continuing through the mid 1800s. Black-and-white photographs of burial remains and artifacts along with archival drawings illustrate this volume. An epilogue documents efforts to preserve and protect the burial ground and its remains and the overwhelming significance of this discovery to the African American community, and to us all. (Ages 12 and older)

Haskins, James and Kathleen Benson. *African Beginnings*. Illustrated by Floyd Cooper. Lothrop, Lee & Shepard, 1998. 48 pages. (0-688-10256-5) \$18.00

The golden tone of Floyd Cooper's lush illustrations convey the rich history of ancient cultures on the African continent, beginning with Nubia in 3800 BCE, which traded in gold, ebony, cattle, and ostrich feathers, and may have been the first culture to advance the idea of divine rulers, and ending with the Empire of the Kongo, which dated from the 14th century to 1641, when its rulers were defeated by Portuguese armies. Arranged in

chronological order according to the years each culture flourished, Haskins and Benson introduce young readers to these subjects, as well as Egypt, Kush and Meroe, Jenné-jenno, the spread of Islam, Ghana, Mali, Songhay, Timbuktu, Benin, and Great Zimbabwe. Each subject is accorded a double-page spread that includes a brief text and a detailed landscape or city scene that gives a sense of time and place. (Ages 9-12)

Hermann, Spring. *Seeing Lessons: The Story of Abigail Carter and America's First School for Blind People*. Illustrated by Ib Ohlsson. Henry Holt, 1998. 163 pages. (0-8050-5706-4) \$15.95

A blind child growing up in the United States could not get a formal education during the 1820s. A medical student from Boston found out about a school for blind pupils in Paris and then worked to develop such a school in New England. That person was John Fisher, the first teacher of his school was Dr. Samuel Howe, and his first pupils included Abby Carter and her sister Sophia. According to a note at the end of this fictionalized story, Abby Carter became one of the best students at what was later called the Perkins Institution for the Blind in Boston, and as an adult she and her sister Sophia traveled to advocate for the rights for all visually handicapped people at state legislatures. Abby became a teacher at Perkins, and later during her life she taught instrumental, vocal and choral music in her home town of Andover, Massachusetts. Hermann drew upon many records to create a story quite easy to read and featuring amazing actual individuals and a significant milestone in the history of education in the United States. (Ages 9-12)

Hines, Gary. *A Christmas Tree in the White House*. Illustrated by Alexandra Walker. Henry Holt, 1998. 32 pages. (0-8050-5076-0) \$15.95

A fictional story loosely based on actual events describes at times in the White House when President Teddy Roosevelt, ever the mindful conservationist, said no to having a Christmas tree. Determined not to miss out on a tree, his two youngest children conspire with their aunt, Anna Roosevelt. When Roosevelt discovers the boys are hiding a tree in their bedroom closet, he takes them to his friend Gifford Pinchot for a lesson in conservation. But it turns out the President has something to learn about conservation from the chief forester as well in this warm and amusing story. The details are not all true; the author points out in a note at the end in which she clarifies what is known fact in addition to providing information on Roosevelt and his family, but she has filled in the outline of a few actual events with the exuberant relationship that Roosevelt had with his children in a story that is illustrated with charming, folk-like, full-color art. (Ages 7-10)

Johnson, Dinah. *All Around Town: The Photographs of Richard Samuel Roberts*. Henry Holt, 1998. 32 pages. (0-8050-5456-1) \$15.95

Richard Samuel Roberts, a self-trained studio photographer, was known around Columbia, South Carolina, for his distinguished photographs of the African-American citizenry in the 1920s and 1930s. In addition to weddings, graduations, and family portraits, he photographed baseball teams, magicians, school children, and musicians. Whatever the occasion, the people captured in these photos taken by Mr. Roberts look serious, hopeful and, above all, proud. Dinah Johnson has skillfully arranged the images so that young readers will see them not as a random assortment of old photos, but as one man's life work and legacy. Her brief accompanying text encourages

children to study these mostly anonymous faces and to wonder why they were and what their lives were like. Like an old family photo album, this is a book we want to return to again and again. (Ages 4-12)

Josses, Barbara. *Lewis & Papa: Adventure on the Santa Fe Trail*. Illustrated by Jon Van Zyle. Chronicle Books, 1998. 32 pages. (0-8118-1959-0) \$14.95

When an old traveler spends the night at Lewis's family's cabin near the Wisconsin River, he fills their heads with stories of adventure and the profits to be made in Santa Fe by selling goods from the East. After giving it some thought, Lewis's father decides to fill up his own wagon with goods such as mules and calves, and head west on the Santa Fe Trail to sell them. And, best of all, he decides Lewis is old enough to be of help. Much as he misses Maria and his Wisconsin home, Lewis loves the time he gets to spend with Papa and the other traders in their wagon train. Every other double-page spread includes a small map that shows their progress, as the wagon train faces challenges such as heat, river crossings and a buffalo stampede. Through it all, Lewis and Papa grow closer in this story of a warm father-and-son relationship. While children's books about westward movement generally deal with settlers, Josses's story is unusual for its focus on the trade route, and will be a welcome addition to elementary studies of American history. (Ages 5-9)

Jurmain, Suzanne. *Freedom's Sons: The True Story of the Antislavery Mutiny*. Lothrop, Lee & Shepard, 1998. 128 pages. (0-688-11072-X) \$15.00

In only 77 pages, Jurmain brings the famous *Amistad* mutiny and resulting series of imprisonments and court cases alive for young readers in a way unlike any other account of these events and the people involved. The final one-third of the volume contains information about what is known about what happened to each of the captured Mende men, women and children after they were "freed" to return to West Africa. Detailed source notes and an extensive bibliography of primary and secondary sources distinguishes this history. (Ages 11-16)

Lanber, Patricia. *Painters of the Caves: National Geographic Society, 1998. 48 pages. (0-7922-7095-9) \$17.95*

In December, 1994, three people went searching for caves in the limestone hills near Avignon, in southeast France. Following an ancient mule path up a cliff, they noticed a passageway that they crawled into one at a time. At its end they discovered a cave. This was no ordinary cave. They had discovered one in which Stone Age paintings of animals had been preserved. More than 300 such paintings were later documented in what is now named Chauvet Cave after one of the explorers who discovered the long-hidden art created some 32,000 years ago in black, red, and yellow on those rock walls. Thought to be a hoax for a time after it was first discovered, Chauvet Cave is thought to be the oldest record of that type of human creativity found to date in Europe or elsewhere. Lanber writes about what is now known about Stone Age artists and cave art. She clarifies what is generally understood about the first early modern humans and compares them with what is known about the Neanderthals. The book contains full-color photographs of the extraordinary prehistoric animal images in Chauvet Cave. Other photos of artifacts, a helpful map, and information about carbon 14 dating make this subject accessible to young readers. (Ages 9-14)

Lester, Julius. *Black Cowboy, Wild Horses: A True Story*. Illustrated by Jerry Pinkney. Dial, 1998. 40 pages. (0-8037-1787-3) \$16.99

Bob Lemmons was a former slave, known to history as a cowboy who was extremely skilled at herding wild horses. In this picture book based on his working life, we follow Bob and his horse, Warrior, as they track down a herd of mustangs, slowly gain their trust, and then lead them back to a corral on the ranch. Jerry Pinkney's dynamic watercolor paintings bring the horses to life with specific, accurate details showing the Great Plains in an earlier era. Julius Lester's exquisitely written text characterizes Bob as a wise and patient man with an instinct for horses. *Honor Book, CBC/Corretta Scott King Award Discussion: Illustrator*. (Ages 7-9)

Lester, Julius. *From Slave Ship to Freedom Road*. Illustrated by Rod Brown. Dial, 1998. 40 pages. (0-8037-1893-4) \$17.99

Julius Lester was invited to write a narrative to accompany 21 of Rod Brown's disturbing paintings of scenes from African American history. He was a perfect choice, given his earlier writings about the "slave experience" for young people: *To Be a Slave* (1968), *Long Journey Home* (1972), and *This Stranger New Feeling* (1982), all published by Dial. Lester himself made a perfect choice by creating multilayered narratives requiring responses from the viewer/reader. By shaping the book as he did, Lester assumed a basic amount of prior historical knowledge on the part of his readers, whoever they are. He wanted to challenge them to realize they bring their own perspective to the ideas and images in the book. Racism is real, and so is its legacy, just because this is complicated doesn't imply that young people should not think about it. To encourage interaction with the book's content, Lester developed provocative "imagination exercises." Some are addressed to white people (it's their history, too), and others to African Americans. As readers of all backgrounds are confronted by the paintings, exercises, and other narratives, they react, because it's difficult, if not impossible, to maintain any emotional distance while handling this provocative volume. Lester writes, "Freedom. It's like a promise we are still learning how to keep." *From Slave Ship to Freedom Road* provides a challenging itinerary for one part of a supremely important journey. It's well worth the cap. *Honor Book, 1998 CBC/Corretta Scott King Award Discussion: Author, Honor Book, 1998 CBC/Corretta Scott King Award Discussion: Illustrator*. (Ages 11-15)

McCully, Emily Arnold. *An Outlaw Thanksgiving*. Dial, 1998. 40 pages. (0-8037-2197-8) \$15.99

During 1896, Clara and her mother are traveling by train from New York State almost across the continent. Clara's mother worries about "germs, strangers, and train wrecks." During one of the stopovers Clara sees a poster offering a \$4,000 reward to the person who turns in Butch Cassidy, an outlaw wanted for train robbery, cattle rustling, and bank robbery. She hears from a train newsboy that Butch Cassidy is "no worse than the robber barons who run these railways" and, furthermore, he's said to be "awfully good-hearted." Gives some of what he seals to needy folks. . . . Somewhere near the Utah border the train becomes snowbound. Nearby ranchers with sleighs rescue the stranded passengers, some of whom are taken to a small hotel where preparations have been made for Thanksgiving dinner. Clara recognizes one of the friendly cowhands hosting the surprisingly elegant

dinner as the man whose picture she saw on the "wanted" poster. According to the author's note, a Thanksgiving dinner with those particular hosts was documented by a former Browns Hole resident who attended it. McCully is particularly adept at writing an appealing story involving a young protagonist with a believable personality and in creating visual historical settings with carefully chosen characters and environments in which they interact with many others. Her lovely artwork for this splendid story was made using watercolor and tempera. (Ages 5-9)

Myers, Walter Dean. *Amistad: A Long Road to Freedom*. Duran, 1998. 99 pages. (0-525-45970-7) \$16.99

Much has been written about the people who were captured in West Africa and sent as part of the slave trade to Cuba, where a new ruling actually made this inhumane commerce illegal. That is why these Menard people were transferred to a ship called *Amistad* where their mutiny, subsequent imprisonment in the United States and ultimate court-won freedom was so important to American abolitionists in the early 1840s and later. Written accounts vary in their emphases and uses of documents about this complicated history, but all feature a young man, Sengbe Feh, known to have been a rice farmer in the village of Mani in Mendeland before he lost his freedom. This man came to be known in America as Cinque, and it's Nathaniel Jocelyn's famous portrait of him on the front cover of this most Afrocentric *Amistad* account. Sengbe's history is documented, which is why he is well known today. The people of the *Amistad* are known because of the precedent-setting court cases ultimately involving former U.S. president John Quincy Adams and other prominent attorneys and politicians of that time, and because of the final Supreme Court decisions affecting the basic human rights. Myers' point of view is crucial and essential, and he writes with arresting style. There is much archival visual information, a list of further readings and an index. *Honor Book, CCBC Coretta Scott King Award Distinguished Author*. (Ages 11-16)

Park, Frances and Ginger Park. *My Freedom Trip: A Child's Escape from North Korea*. Illustrated by Debra Reid Jenkins. Boyd's Mills Press, 1998. 32 pages. (1-56397-468-1) \$15.95

A young girl describes her journey from North to South Korea in this haunting picture book that achingly reveals a small child's fear of leaving what is loved and familiar behind and of journeying into the unknown. Soo's friends have already been disappearing one by one from school, fleeing with their families in the night to the freedom of the south on the eve of the Korean War. When her father tells her that he, too, will be leaving, Soo begs him to stay but he promises her his guide, Mr. Han, will return for her soon, and then for her mother. One by one, he tells her, they will take their freedom trips. When the guide does return for Soo, she must go with this kind stranger into the night, leaving her mother behind and trusting that her father will be waiting at the end of her journey. The authors based the unforgettable story on their own mother's childhood. Their prose is as hushed and tense as a child in fear as Soo and Mr. Han move through the dangerous darkness, and Debra Reid Jenkins soft, somber-toned paintings underscore the emotional weight of the story. A key is provided to the Korean words used in the text and the Korean characters that appear as part of the design of each quiet, elegant two-page spread. (Ages 8-10)

Pfendelhir, Julia. *Freedom Train North: Stories of the Underground Railroad in Wisconsin*. Illustrated by Jerry Butler. Living History Press (7426 Elmwood Avenue, Middleton, WI 53562), 1998. 116 pages. Pbk. (0-9664925-0-1) \$12.00 (\$10.00 for schools and libraries)

A history of Wisconsin's involvement in the underground railroad perfect for fourth grade readers but of interest to many others as well draws on extensive research to present real-life stories of African Americans who sought refuge in Wisconsin during the time of slavery or who passed through the state on their way to freedom and individuals in the state, both black and white, who helped them. Pfendelhir emphasizes the intense desire for self-determination among African Americans that fueled the abolitionist movement and makes it clear that these were people intent on freeing themselves, although the assistance of white and black abolitionists became critical once an individual made the decision to run. Drawing an important distinction between what is known and what must be conjectured about the individual lives and events she describes, she explains in her introduction that "when a story includes spoken words, those words were actually said or written by these people many years ago. Thoughts and feelings described were also recorded by the people who experienced them. However, when personal accounts were not recorded you may be asked to imagine how people felt and thought." *Underground Railroad activity in Wisconsin was not nearly as common as in states farther south and east, but Pfendelhir has re-created events that happened across the eastern and central part of the state, from Beloit to Green Bay, Madison to Milwaukee, in towns both small and large. Specific communities mentioned in the stories are pictured on a map at the beginning of the book. Black-and-white reproductions of powerful paintings by Jerry Butler that depict scenes from a number of the stories, and black-and-white photographs of historical pictures and documents, bring added interest to each of the stories detailed. This singular volume also includes an extensive bibliography of sources and a chapter-by-chapter list of suggested books and web sites where readers can learn more about the specific events and the underground railroad in general. One copy of the book, which was funded by the Wisconsin Sesquicentennial Commission, has been distributed to each public and most private elementary and middle schools in Wisconsin, and to every Wisconsin public library. (Ages 9-14)*

Pringle, Laurence. *One Room School*. Illustrated by Barbara Garrison. Boyd's Mills Press, 1998. 32 pages. (1-56397-583-1) \$15.95

In 1944 Miss Schackleton taught all subjects to all in the eight grades in School 14 somewhere in rural New York State. Some grades had as many as five pupils, and the third grade that year had only one. Basing this account on his boyhood experience in that one room school, Pringle writes, "She taught us all to read and write and multiply. She taught us the history of New York State, where we lived, and about the war that troubled the world at the time." Older children helped younger ones. Everyone had to concentrate while others were taught, and it could be interesting to listen, too. That fall Miss Schackleton read a long book aloud to the entire school. On days when the weather was too severe for recess, she conducted contests such as spelling bees. It wasn't unusual for a teacher to meet out individual punishment with a ruler in those years. A bookmobile, doctor, and dental hygienist made occasional visits to the school. There was always a Christmas pageant for which each pupil learned a poem or song. As an adult, Pringle writes books about nature for young people. He

attributes, "the roots of his concern about nature" to the chances he had to observe, enjoy and learn about the natural world in his former one room school. Today's young readers will point out ways in which their classrooms are like that one room school and also how they are different. Carrison's note explains how she created the full-color illustrations placed on each page to simulate pictures from a 1940s photo album; they are collagraphs (i.e., collage-graphics), a type of etching. (Ages 5-9)

Rubin, Susan Goldman. *Teatiers, Toasters, and Telephones: The How and Why of Everyday Objects*. Illustrated by Elsa Warnick. Browder Press/Harcourt Brace, 1998. 132 pages. (0-15-201421-7) \$20.00

How often do we think of a toiler or refrigerator or even a pen as a feat of engineering? How about as a work of art? As the author of this intriguing volume notes in her introduction, "Every day people use toasters, sinks, toothbrushes, clocks, telephones, TVs, refrigerators, ovens, toasters, trash cans, vacuum cleaners, hangers, paper clips, zippers, safety pins, pencils, and pens. These objects are so familiar we take them for granted, but how did these things come to look the way they do?" Susan Goldman Rubin's fascinating exploration of the history of many of these now common, everyday objects reveals that some of them have gone through enormous changes over decades, and sometimes centuries, to arrive at the way they look and function today. They are the product of what we now call industrial design, the marriage of form and function. Rubin's book is a delightful, eye-opening look at how industrial design has come to embrace not only ever-changing technological discoveries, but also shifting aesthetic sensibilities with regard to shape, color, line and other aspects of the decorative arts. Her colorful narrative documents some of the major changes in the development of various items in addition to chronicling how the way they are used has changed over time. Black-and-white photographs and drawings of the items illustrate each chapter, and while more of these would have been welcome, this is still a unique book with broad appeal that will be of special interest to students with an interest in art, engineering, or fact-collecting. (Ages 12-16)

Santiago, Chiori. *Home to Medicine Mountain*. Illustrated by Judith Lowry. Children's Book Press (246 First Street, Suite 101, San Francisco, CA 94105), 1998. 32 pages. (0-89239-155-3) \$15.95

This picture book recounts one experience of the many endured by children who were made to attend a boarding school for Indian youth. This one took place during the 1930s in California. That was not the only place or time in which Indian children were separated from their families and made to attend U.S. government-operated schools hundreds of miles from their homes. The basis of this picture story rests in the actual life events of Lowry's father and uncle as boys Stanley and Benny Len, who were completely cut off from their people, birth language, and value system. They were punished if they forgot to speak English, and the punishment was probably more harsh than the wooden ruler pictured here. When these boys learned that they had no way to get home for the summer and, instead, would have to stay at school and work, they used their ingenuity and courage to come up with a way to get home. A color photo of Lowry's father and uncle as men today concludes the story of how these two boys from the Mountain Maidu tribe actually did ride on the top of a railroad car all the way to Medicine Mountain in order to

return home. The story for younger children only touches lightly on the surface of the Indian boarding school experience, an experience that inflicted deep pain and lifelong trauma on thousands and that is sometimes referred in other accounts as an attempt at genocide. (Ages 6-9)

Tarbesca, Edith. *Annushka's Voyage*. Illustrated by Lydia Dabecovich. Clarion, 1998. 32 pages. (0-395-64366-X) \$15.00

Annushka and her little sister, Tanya, are traveling alone to America. Their father has sent them their tickets for passage and waits for them in New York. Excitement mingles with sadness as they say goodbye to their grandparents in Russia, and then it is up to Annushka to take care of them both as they make their way to Holland by train and then board the great steamer that will take them across the ocean. This story of two young Jewish sisters making the long journey to a new land is based on the experiences of the author's mother, who fled the persecution of Jews in Russia during the late 1800s when she was 13 years old. The full-color illustrations, rendered in pen-and-ink, acrylic and colored pencil, heighten the sense of what it might have felt like to be so small and alone among so many unknown people and in so many unfamiliar places on a journey that joyfully reunites them with their father but takes them far away from others whom they love. (Ages 7-10)

Viola, Herman J. *It Is a Good Day to Die: Indian Eyewitnesses Tell the Story of the Battle of the Little Bighorn*. Crown, 1998. 100 pages. (0-517-70912-0) \$18.00

For more than 100 years, the Battle of Little Big Horn has been perplexing to white Americans who felt that their military power was far superior to that of Lakota and Cheyenne warriors. How could General George Custer and his troops have been so soundly defeated? To provide some answers and to recount the battle from a distinctively Native point of view, Herman J. Viola has compiled recorded first-person accounts from 13 Native warriors, and has arranged the 36 brief passages in chronological order, so that one gets a strong sense of the battle as a whole by reading the entire narrative. In addition to the reports of Lakota and Cheyenne witnesses, Viola has also included occasional accounts from Crow and Archaic scouts who served in Custer's cavalry unit to describe actions on the American side. He also includes a clear introduction and epilogue, black-and-white photographs of some of the people involved, short biographical passages for each of the narrators, a chronology of events, and more on his sources. (Ages 11 and older)

See also: *Bar 6: Bad Boy and His Yo-Yo: Choosing Up Sides: Discovering the Inca Ice Maiden: Duke Ellington: Fire, Bell, & Bone: Gib Ryder Home: I see thehythm: Journey Home: Katuruh: Kinderlager: Larriasse: Let My People Go: Pioneer Girl: Shakespeare Sadder: Smokeylake Bentley: Soldier's Heart: This Land Is Your Land: Warrior Artists: Witnesses to War: entries in section on Biography/Autobiography*