

The purpose of Editor's Shelf is to highlight the following: new editions of important previously published works; reissues of significant works that had been out of print; U.S. editions of works published elsewhere in English; additional volumes in a publisher's series that *MultiCultural Review* has reviewed; translations; previously published works that have been reissued in a new form, such as audiocassettes, audio CDs, floppy disks, CD-ROM, or DVD; and online reference sources. Paperback reprints are not included unless the reprint contains at least some new material. The initial releases in a publisher's series and works that have undergone major changes in the course of their republication in new edition or new media will receive full-fledged reviews in *MCR*. The Publisher Directory contains addresses and phone numbers of publishers whose works appear in Editor's Shelf.

NEW EDITIONS

Day, Frances Ann. ***Latina and Latino Voices in Literature***. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2003. 376 pp. ISBN 0-313-32394-1, \$55.00.

The first edition of this volume of biographies and bibliographies of Hispanic authors currently working in the United States was published in 1997 and the following year received the Denali Press Award for outstanding reference works on cultural diversity. This new edition adds 12 authors to bring the total to 35 and updates all the original entries. Among the authors included are Alma Flor Ada, George Ancona, Sandra Cisneros, and Gary Soto. Each author's entry has a small black-and-white photo; some biographical and contact information; a list of books published; a one-to-three-page biography; lists of books, articles, and entries in reference volumes on the author; and descriptions of several significant works. These descriptions of individual books indicate the appropriate grade levels for readers, any prizes received, and several subject keywords (such as "Gender Roles" or "Bronx" or "Short Stories").

The book's appendixes provide information on awards for Hispanic literature, 55 suggested classroom activities related to these books and authors, and a list of resources. Separate indexes are included for both titles and topics. *Latina and Latino Voices in Literature* is a thorough resource for exploring the lives and works of these writers and illustrators, some familiar and some lesser known. It would be extremely useful for librarians and teachers looking to broaden their knowledge of this area of literature.

Hine, Darlene Clark. ***Black Victory: The Rise and Fall of the White Primary in Texas***. Columbia: Univ. of Missouri Press, 2003. 296 pp. ISBN 0-8262-1462-2, \$34.95.

Black Victory tells the story of an important early success in the struggle for black voting rights in the South: the 1944 U.S. Supreme Court decision *Smith v. Allwright*, in which NAACP lawyers worked to end the exclusion of blacks from Democratic primaries in Texas. Hine gives a well-grounded account not only of the legal struggles involved in the case but also of the development of a national black leadership and a strong local black community that made the case possible.

The book was originally published in 1979; for this edition, Steven F. Lawson, Merline Pitre, and Hine have added introductory essays that discuss the significance of the book's publication on the historiography of the civil rights period and look back with new perspectives on the demise of white primaries. The book's text itself does not seem to be updated; none of the references cited are from after 1979, and the Afterword mentions "recent" court decisions from 1972 and 1977. The extensive bibliography also does not have any more recent entries.

Leckie, William H., with Leckie, Shirley A. ***The Buffalo Soldiers: A Narrative of the Black Cavalry in the West***. Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 2003. 336 pp. Revised edition. ISBN 0-8061-3523-9, \$29.95.

When first published in 1967, this book was a pioneering study of the role African-American cavalry soldiers played during and after the Civil War in the conquest of the West. In the introduction to this new edition, Leckie notes that, despite a generally positive reception, the main criticisms made of the first edition were that it did not have enough information in several areas: on other units besides the Ninth and Tenth Cavalries, on the social and family relations of the enlisted men, and on enlisted Medal of Honor winners. It also did not include enough photographs of the soldiers.

Leckie suggests that readers interested in other cavalry units can turn to Arlen Fowler's *The Black Infantry in the West, 1861 to 1868* (published 1971, reissued 1996). To answer the other criticisms, he has updated and expanded his work (now with Shirley A. Leckie as his coauthor) by using recent scholarship and available archives to give a more detailed picture of the lives of these soldiers.

This edition also includes an epilogue that takes the story after the 1880s and considers such topics as the lives of African-American soldiers after the Indian Wars, later developments in race relations that were influenced by their experiences, and their depictions and memorializations in contemporary film and art. *The Buffalo Soldiers* is a scholarly study (it contains extensive footnotes and a full bibliography) that gives a readable, straightforward narrative of the lives of these soldiers and their significance today.

Saxton, Alexander. *The Rise and Fall of the White Republic: Class Politics and Mass Culture in Nineteenth-Century America*. New York: Verso, 2003. 418 pp. ISBN 1-85984-467-7, \$23.00 (pb).

This study of the development of the ideology of racism and white supremacy throughout the nineteenth century was first published in 1990. Saxton, a professor of history at UCLA as well as a novelist, begins with these assumptions: that a theory of white racial superiority arose from justifications for slavery and for taking lands from non-white people; that it played a central role in the ideas used to legitimize power; and that these ideas were modified and adjusted throughout the period. To trace this development, he gives a detailed account of the politics, art, and culture of the century.

This edition contains a new foreword by David Roediger that discusses the impact of Saxton's work and its reception. Roediger notes that Saxton posed a challenge to accepted ideas of the subject (and was harshly criticized for it) because he did not simply discuss particular manifestations of racism but also "implicated the ruling political coalitions of the nineteenth century as well as popular culture and the American Federation of Labor."

Other than the added foreword, it is difficult to say to what extent the book has been updated since 1990; the extensive chapter notes do not seem to include any works of more recent scholarship. In any case, most references are to original sources, and Saxton's work remains a forceful synthesis of history, politics, and culture.

Shahrani, M. Nazif. *The Kirghiz and Wakhi of Afghanistan: Adaptation to Closed Frontiers and War*. Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 2003. 304 pp. ISBN 0-295-98262-4, \$22.50 (pb).

The author of this study, first published in 1979, is an Afghan anthropologist and a professor at Indiana University. The Kirghiz and Wakhi are peoples who live in the high-altitude Wakhan corridor region of Afghanistan. Shahrani wrote the study to explore both how and why these peoples (the number in each group is said to be only a few thousand) live in this remote, inhospitable area. Chapters discuss the "Wakhi high-altitude agropastoral adaptation," the "Kirghiz pastoral subsistence system," and the social and political systems and adaptations of both peoples.

The inspiration to reissue the book came from the U.S.-led war to remove the Taliban from power in Afghanistan. The new 20-page preface began as a speech the author gave in October 2001. At first the preface seems tied to that historical moment, but eventually it becomes a thorough summary of Afghani history for readers unfamiliar with the subject. A new 40-page epilogue updates the story of the two peoples; most of the Kirghiz, in fact, were relocated to Turkey in 1982 following the Soviet invasion and occupation. Other than the preface and epilogue, all of the material is the same as the 1979 edition. Its relationship to today's political situation may be somewhat indirect, but the book remains a very detailed and thoughtful ethnographic study of two peoples

in a region that is still poorly understood.

Willie, Charles Vert and Reddick, Richard J. *A New Look at Black Families*. Walnut Creek, Calif.: Altamira, 2003. 192 pp. Fifth edition. ISBN 0-7591-0241-4, \$70.00; ISBN 0-7591-0242-2, \$24.95 (pb).

The first edition of this study was published by Willie (who was then the sole author) in 1976. Through updated case histories, statistics, and numerous references to the literature on the subject, this work provides a contemporary look at the experiences of black families. Included with the scholarly analysis of the workings of black families are six case studies (two each of middle-class, working-class, and low-income black families) written by graduate students from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. One chapter also has several portraits of successful black men and women meant to serve as "maternal and paternal mentoring models."

The authors seek to refute or at least refine some common ideas about black families, particularly in the chapters titled "The Myth of Matriarchy" and "The Case for the Black Male." *A New Look at Black Families* provides a scholarly introduction to its subject in a generally accessible style and will give readers a framework for thinking about this important topic.

REISSUES OF OUT-OF-PRINT WORKS

Lattany, Kristin. *The Lakestown Rebellion*. Minneapolis: Coffee House Press, 2003. 320 pp. ISBN 1-56689-125-6, \$15.00 (pb).

Lattany has published numerous novels, including *God Bless the Child* (1964), *The Landlord* (1966), and, in 2003, *Breaking Away*. Her 1978 novel *The Lakestown Rebellion* takes a humorous but tough-minded look at what happens when a fictional all-black community in 1965 finds itself faced with destruction by a new highway scheduled to run through its neighborhood (and not that of nearby white families). The large and colorful cast of characters uses trickery to defeat powerful political and economic forces and save their town.

A new foreword for this reissue by Sandra Adell gives a detailed summary of Lattany's career and of the novel's plot and characters. (It is pointed out that in 1970 *The Landlord* became the first novel by an African-American woman to be adapted into a full-length film.) As Adell notes, *The Lakestown Rebellion* is a novel that "treats the serious subject of the effects of racism on the lives of black people in such a way that one cannot help but laugh."

Laviera, Tato. *AmeRícan*. Houston, Tex.: Arte Público, 2003. 96 pp. ISBN 1-55885-395-2, \$11.95 (pb).

The author of this collection of poetry lives and works in New York, where he was one of the early members of the Nuyorican poetry movement. *AmeRícan*, which first

appeared in 1985, was his third collection; a 1979 work, *La Carreta Made a U-Turn*, made him the first author published by Arte Público Press.

About half of Laviera's poems are written in English, about one-third in Spanish, and the rest are in a mixture of the two (no translations are provided). Some employ short lines of as little as one word each, and a number space words across the page in patterns. The poems are divided into three sections: "Ethnic Tributes," with titles such as "chinese," "cuban," and "mundo-world"; "Values," with a number of poems related to his Puerto Rican community in New York; and "Politics," with poems such as "commonwealth" and "socialista." Taken together, Laviera's poetry combines a lively portrait of his own cultural roots with an inclusive and multicultural message.

Lovelace, Earl. ***The Dragon Can't Dance***. New York: Persea, 2003. 242 pp. ISBN 0-89255-272-7, \$15.00 (pb).

Lovelace, born in 1935, is a novelist, playwright, and essayist in Trinidad. His novel *Salt* won the 1997 Commonwealth Writers Prize. *The Dragon Can't Dance* is a novel originally published in Britain in 1979, then in the United States in 1998, and is now being reissued with punctuation and spelling remaining in the English style. In the novel, Lovelace creates an original, strongly colored portrait of the inhabitants of a Trinidad shantytown and tells how the masquerade of Carnival frees some of them to act on their secret desires. The prose sometimes flows expansively (the first sentence of Chapter 1 has more than 200 words) and frequently reflects the thinking and diction of the varied cast of characters (Chapter 2 begins "Sylvia ain't have no man"). Lovelace's novel immerses the reader in the struggles and complexities of life in multiracial Trinidad.

Ronstadt, Edward F., ed. ***Borderman: Memoirs of Federico José María Ronstadt***. Tucson: Univ. of Arizona Press, 2003. 154 pp. ISBN 0-8165-2336-3, \$16.95 (pb).

In these memoirs first published in 1993, Fred Ronstadt (1868–1954) tells of the first 30 years of his life. Ronstadt grew up in Sonora, Mexico, the son of a German-born father and a Mexican mother. He moved to Tucson in 1882, where he struggled to establish himself and eventually became an important business and civic leader. He also was a musician who played weekly concerts with Club Filarmónica Tucsonense; his family's musical legacy continued to include his granddaughter Linda, the famous singer.

This edition includes a new foreword by Ernesto Portillo Jr. on Ronstadt's life and legacy in Tucson, along with the original foreword by Bernard L. Fontana and original introduction by the book's editor, Ronstadt's son Edward. The volume also has 16 pages of family and period photos. This memoir is written in the simple style of a man who wishes to hand down stories to his family to explain their origins. It provides a vivid account of life on both sides of the border in the late nineteenth century.

Soto, Gary. ***Local News***. San Diego, Calif.: Harcourt, 2003,

1993. 156 pp. ISBN 0-15-204695-X, \$5.95 (pb).

Soto, Gary. ***Pacific Crossing***. San Diego, Calif.: Harcourt, 2003, 1992. 144 pp. ISBN 0-15-204696-8, \$5.95 (pb).

Soto, Gary. ***Taking Sides***. San Diego, Calif.: Harcourt, 2003, 1991. 164 pp. ISBN 0-15-204694-1, \$5.95 (pb).

These three examples of Soto's fiction for young readers (those around junior-high age) have just been reissued. In the 1991 novel *Taking Sides*, an eighth-grade Mexican-American boy, Lincoln Mendoza, faces conflicting loyalties when he must play basketball for his new junior high in a mostly white suburb against a team with some of his friends from the barrio he has just left. In 1992's *Pacific Crossing*, Lincoln and his friend Tony Contreras spend the summer in Japan living with host families. (Oddly, Lincoln is referred to in this book as a seventh grader, though the events follow those in *Taking Sides*.) *Local News* is a 1993 collection of 13 short stories about young people, such as a 13-year-old girl going trick-or-treating for perhaps the last time and a boy inspired by his fifth-grade teacher to help save the world by becoming a vegetarian.

Pacific Crossing ends with several pages explaining words and phrases in Japanese as well as several pages of Spanish terms; *Local News* has several pages that define Spanish words, while *Taking Sides* has no glossary. In these three books, Soto uses realistic language and situations to tell stories of the culture clashes and the everyday struggles with school, parents, friends, and more that his young characters face.

U.S. PUBLICATION OF BOOKS PUBLISHED ELSEWHERE IN ENGLISH

Langley, Lee. ***Distant Music***. Minneapolis: Milkweed, 2003. 332 pp. ISBN 1-57131-040-1, \$22.00.

Langley was born in India of Scottish parents and currently lives in England. She is the author of nine novels as well as several plays and television scripts. Her novel *Distant Music* was first published in Britain in 2001. It tells the story of two lovers, Esperança and Emmanuel, who meet in four different incarnations from the fifteenth century to today. The first story is set in Madeira in 1429, where Esperança is a 15-year-old Catholic peasant girl who falls in love with a Jewish youth from a ship anchored in the harbor. In 1489, Esperança is a Catholic noblewoman and Emmanuel a printer's apprentice, and the two later parts of the story are set in Lisbon in 1855 and in London in 2000. Besides being an intriguing love story, the novel makes the most of its background of Portuguese history, with a particular emphasis on the lives of Sephardic Jews throughout the centuries.

NEW VOLUMES IN SERIES

African-American Biographies (Enslow)

Lommel, Cookie. ***Mary Church Terrell: Speaking Out for Civil Rights***. Berkeley Heights, N.J.: Enslow, 2003. 112 pp. ISBN 0-7660-2116-5, \$20.95.

Wooten, Sara McIntosh. **Denzel Washington: Academy Award-Winning Actor.** Berkeley Heights, N.J.: Enslow, 2003. 112 pp. ISBN 0-7660-2131-9, \$20.95.

Recent volumes in this series for middle school students, which now has more than 40 entries, include ones on the lives of Dr. Charles Drew, Fannie Lou Hamer, and Richard Wright. These two new volumes each begin with a chapter describing a notable success in their subject's life. For Terrell, it is her 1950 work to desegregate restaurants in the District of Columbia; for Washington, it is, understandably, his 2002 winning of the Best Actor Oscar for his film *Training Day*. The following chapters in each book give a chronological account of their subject from childhood on, accompanied by a number of black-and-white photos. The volumes end with a chronology, chapter notes, lists of further reading and web addresses, and an index.

African-American Biographies (Raintree)

Bryant, Philip S. **Langston Hughes.** Chicago: Raintree, 2003. 64 pp. ISBN 0-7398-6871-3, \$28.56 (list); \$19.99 (library).

Bryant, Philip S. **Zora Neale Hurston.** Chicago: Raintree, 2003. 64 pp. ISBN 0-7398-6872-1, \$28.56 (list); \$19.99 (library).

Donovan, Sandra. **Marcus Garvey.** Chicago: Raintree, 2003. 64 pp. ISBN 0-7398-6876-4, \$28.56 (list); \$19.99 (library).

Donovan, Sandra. **Mary McLeod Bethune.** Chicago: Raintree, 2003. 64 pp. ISBN 0-7398-6868-3, \$28.56 (list); \$19.99 (library).

Healy, Nick. **Jack Johnson.** Chicago: Raintree, 2003. 64 pp. ISBN 0-7398-6873-X, \$28.56 (list); \$19.99 (library).

Healy, Nick. **Paul Robeson.** Chicago: Raintree, 2003. 64 pp. ISBN 0-7398-6874-8, \$28.56 (list); \$19.99 (library).

Manera, Alexandria. **Bessie Smith.** Chicago: Raintree, 2003. 64 pp. ISBN 0-7398-6875-6, \$28.56 (list); \$19.99 (library).

Terrill, Richard. **Duke Ellington.** Chicago: Raintree, 2003. 64 pp. ISBN 0-7398-6869-1, \$28.56 (list); \$19.99 (library).

Though this new series published by Raintree has the same title as the series from Enslow reviewed above, it is intended for a younger audience—students in grades three to five, rather than middle school. (Students in grade five, depending on their reading level, might be interested in either series.) This series, compared with Enslow's, has slightly larger volumes with larger type and simpler sentences. About 15 words are bolded in each book's text and defined in a glossary. The photos included are mostly black-and-white, with a few contemporary color ones. One nice feature here is the sidebars with tinted background that describe related subjects or other persons from the same period; in the vol-

umes on Hughes and Hurston, these are effective spaces for presenting poems and story excerpts.

The volumes end with the glossary, a list of three books for further reading, the addresses of several related organizations to write to for further information (though no web addresses or phone numbers), and a short index.

African-American Contributions

Ferry, Joe. **The History of African-American Civic Organizations.** Philadelphia: Chelsea House, 2003. 120 pp. ISBN 0-7910-7270-3, \$22.95.

Peltak, Jennifer. **The History of African-American Colleges & Universities.** Philadelphia: Chelsea House, 2003. 120 pp. ISBN 0-7910-7269-X, \$22.95.

The other volumes in this series for middle and high school students on aspects of African-American life are on the histories of blues, jazz, and the Tuskegee Airmen, and on the role blacks have played in film and television. The new book on colleges and universities traces the origins and goals of black colleges, noting that their early mission was to educate a people often with little or no schooling, and thus was different from that of traditional white colleges. The author also draws a distinction between "historically black colleges and universities" (HBCU) and "predominately black" schools. (One minor problem: The figures given in the text on the numbers and the state locations for each are not always consistent with the numbers of schools listed in an appendix.)

The African-American civic organizations described in the other new volume are generally social organizations that help to distinguish and to make connections between members of the black elite. Such organizations include Jack and Jill, various Greek fraternities and sororities, the Boulé, the Links, and others. The author details the positive values and results of these organizations. He does note that for a number of organizations, it is difficult to join without a close connection (such as one's parents being members), and that this may contribute to excluding those African Americans not already on the inside from moving up socially.

Each book contains black-and-white and color photos, a chronology, lists of further reading and web sites, a bibliography, and an index. The bibliography for the volume on colleges lists more than 40 sources, while that on civic organizations gives only three.

The American Girls Collection

Welcome to Kaya's World 1764: Growing Up in a Native American Homeland. Middleton, Wis.: Pleasant Company, 2003. 64 pp. ISBN 1-58485-722-6, \$16.95.

As a companion to the numerous American Girls fictional tales about Kaya, a young Nez Percé girl, this book for students in the middle grades gives a well-illustrated portrait of the history and culture of the Nez Percé. The large-format

book includes chapters on the history of the people and on many aspects of daily life, not only of the Nez Percé but of other tribes as well. Thus, there are a variety of dwellings depicted such as tepees and longhouses; a survey of Indian tribes' relationship to horses and other animals; childhood, play, and learning; clothing and adornments; and more. Color drawings, archival photos of Native Americans, photos of everyday objects (such as a stick and ball used for "shinny," a game like field hockey), and several maps are all combined in a lively design of short text elements and side-bars.

Several Nimípuu (the traditional name for the Nez Percé) legends are told in the book. The later sections of the volume tell of the final military defeats of the Nez Percé (culminating in Chief Joseph's famous statement of "From where the sun now stands, I will fight no more forever") and describe the current state of the tribe's people and culture. Other than in its introduction and its final page, this book is not specifically tied to the experience of Kaya, or to the year 1764; this allows it to be a broad combination of information and illustration that could be appreciated by those students (including boys, for example) interested in Native American life who are not drawn by the connection to the American Girls Collection of stories, dolls, and so on.

The Bluford Series

Langan, Paul. ***The Bully***. West Berlin, N.J.: Townsend, 2002. 206 pp. ISBN 0-944210-00-7, \$4.95 (pb).

This novel for middle and high school students is the fifth in a series set at Bluford High, a largely African-American high school in Los Angeles. This entry focuses on Darrell, a 15-year-old who moves with his mother from Philadelphia one November and begins attending Bluford. Darrell is very short and thin for his age (about 100 pounds), and he soon becomes the victim of a gang of bullies. Tyray, the leader of the bullies, demands that Darrell give him all his weekly lunch money each Friday and also thwarts a growing friendship between Darrell and an attractive cheerleader named Amberlynn.

Eventually, all turns out well: Darrell is inspired by a concerned teacher to join the wrestling team, he stands up to and defeats Tyray in a lunchroom confrontation, and he wins the affection of Amberlynn. The novel does a good job of making the reader understand the difficulties of moving someplace new and the way young people can feel completely trapped by circumstances. It does seem, though, that nearly every thought Darrell has through the first half of the novel is related to feelings about his small stature, and that his transformation from being completely friendless and bullied, which takes place from November to early January, includes a few implausible turns along the way.

Cities of the Imagination

Dutta, Krishna. ***Calcutta: A Cultural and Literary History***. Northampton, Mass.: Interlink, 2003. 274 pp. ISBN

1-56656-488-3, \$15.00 (pb).

Dutta grew up in Calcutta and is now a translator and writer in London. In this volume, she seeks to give readers a full portrait and a better understanding of the complexities of this city, renamed Kolkata in 2001. As a "cultural and literary history," the book describes the achievements of noted figures such as the writer Rabindranath Tagore and the filmmaker Satyajit Ray and offers a broad yet detailed account of the historical development of the city and its image in the West.

Dutta works to refute some Western portrayals of Calcutta, such as Louis Malle's documentary *Calcutta* and Günter Grass's *Show Your Tongue*, which is described as a "trite and inconsequential book." An early section considers the conflicting stories about the Black Hole of Calcutta, involving a 1756 incident in which most of 146 British inhabitants of India were said to have died of suffocation after being confined to one relatively small cell by Indian soldiers.

The text is accompanied by some small black-and-white photos and illustrations and several maps. Particularly when Dutta tries to convey the particular flavor of literature written in Bengali, *Calcutta* succeeds as an opinionated inside account of a city known in the West mostly through a few images of poverty and despair.

The Collected Works of Langston Hughes

Hughes, Langston. ***The Collected Works of Langston Hughes: Volume 16. The Translations: Federico García Lorca, Nicolás Guillén, and Jacques Roumain***. Columbia: Univ. of Missouri Press, 2003. 284 pp. Edited with an introduction by Dellita Martin-Ogunsola. ISBN 0-8262-1435-5, \$29.95.

This is the next-to-last volume of Hughes's works published by the University of Missouri Press; the final volume, 17, is a bibliography of his varied career. Included here are Hughes's translations of the following works: Lorca's 1933 play *Blood Wedding* (*Bodas de sangre*); a collection of poetry by the Cuban writer Nicolás Guillén published in 1948 in English as *Cuba Libre*; and a novel by the Haitian writer Jacques Roumain, first published in French in 1944 as *Gouverneurs de la rosée* and in translation in 1947 as *Masters of the Dew*.

In the introduction, Martin-Ogunsola describes the origins of these translations and relates them to Hughes's other work. (One note indicates that permission was not received to reprint the translations Hughes made of poems by Gabriela Mistral here.) *Blood Wedding* is presented here in a 1994 adaptation of Hughes's translation by Melia Bensussen, and the Guillén and Roumain translations were done in collaboration with other writers. It is completely fitting that a volume at the end of the collected works of Hughes, who traveled to many countries and wrote in many genres, includes works of drama, poetry, and fiction written in Spanish and French by authors from Spain, Cuba, and Haiti.

Great Achievement Awards

Bankston, John. *Coretta Scott King and the Story Behind the Coretta Scott King Award*. Bear, Del.: Mitchell Lane, 2003. 48 pp. ISBN 1-58415-202-8, \$19.95.

This new series, intended for students in grades four to eight, presents the life stories of people who have had prizes named after them. Other subjects of the series include Alfred Nobel, Joseph Pulitzer, and three others who, like King, are the namesakes of awards for children's and young adult literature: Randolph J. Caldecott, John Newbery, and Michael J. Printz.

This biography of King is a very readable account of her early life, ambitions for a singing career, meeting of and marriage to Martin Luther King Jr., and work in the civil rights movement both before and after her husband's death. Her story is illustrated with black-and-white and color photos, and it includes a good level of personal detail beyond the historical facts.

The ending of the book tells of the naming of the award for African-American authors and illustrators of children's literature after King by the American Library Association. The author notes that some feel an award restricted to African Americans is not as necessary today as when it was first given in 1970. An appendix lists the winners of the award in various categories from 1999 to 2003; readers are directed to a web site for earlier winners. The focus of this book, however, is not really on this award or on children's literature, but on the inspirational person after which it was named.

Greenwood Biographies

Bowman-Kruhm, Mary. *Margaret Mead: A Biography*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2003. 180 pp. ISBN 0-313-32267-8, \$27.50.

As stated in a series foreword, this biography is specifically designed for high school students; others in the broad range of figures included are J. K. Rowling, Stephen Hawking, and Al Capone. Students will find here a thorough account of the life of Mead (1901–1978), including her publication in 1928 of *Coming of Age in Samoa*, her three marriages and divorces, and her increasing presence as a world figure, with the occasional controversies that went along with it. The author gives an evenhanded account of the reaction to Mead's works and opinion both at the time and today, and a concluding chapter considers a variety of issues and asks "What Would Margaret Mead Say Today?"

The book includes a chronology, a glossary, a bibliography, and an index; it also has four black-and-white photos of Mead.

Greenwood Guides to Historic Events 1500–1900

Postma, Johannes. *The Atlantic Slave Trade*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2003. 200 pp. ISBN 0-313-31862-X, \$44.95.

This series from Greenwood for high school students focuses on the developments that led to the creation of the

modern world. Although the period of 1500 to 1900 may appear extremely broad (other volumes cover topics from the Reformation to the American Civil War), in this case the span seems justified; a time line in the book indicates that the first African slaves were taken to Hispaniola in 1502, and that slavery was not abolished in Brazil until 1888.

In six chapters taking 85 pages, the author details the origins of the slave trade, the horrors of the journey across the "Middle Passage," the statistics and consequences of the slave trade, the struggle to end it, and its legacy. The remainder of the book is composed of several sections: 7 pages of illustrations of the period; 17 one-page biographies of significant persons in the slave trade; about 50 pages of primary documents; a short glossary; a substantial annotated bibliography; and an index. *The Atlantic Slave Trade* gives students a thorough account and an extensive resource of information on an important topic.

Greenwood Guides to Literature

Shannon, Sandra G. *August Wilson's Fences: A Reference Guide*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2003. 220 pp. ISBN 0-313-31880-8, \$49.95.

Shannon's work provides analysis from several perspectives of Wilson's Pulitzer Prize-winning 1987 play. The book's chapters have titles such as "Content," "Texts," "Contexts," "Ideas," "Art," and "Reception." The second chapter, "Content," provides a detailed 20-page synopsis of the play, which is helpful, but it is unlikely that many readers would be interested in this book unless they were already quite familiar with the play. As the author notes in her preface, this book can serve as "a helpful companion" to those entering the dramatic world of the play, and as "an introduction to the playwright's creative process." This is particularly true in chapters such as the one titled "Art," which considers the influence of the work of the painter Romare Bearden and the use of a storytelling tradition in creating the play's characters.

The book ends with a bibliographical essay on other writings and scholarship regarding *Fences*, a list of works cited, and an index.

Masters of Music

Reef, Catherine. *William Grant Still: African-American Composer*. Greensboro, N.C.: Morgan Reynolds, 2003. 112 pp. ISBN 1-931798-11-7, \$21.95.

In the eclectic group of composers, performers, and educators included in this series for students in the middle grades are George Gershwin, John Coltrane, Shinichi Suzuki, Bix Beiderbecke, and Still (1895–1978), composer of approximately 200 works, including his *Afro-American Symphony* (1930).

Still's story begins with his boyhood in Little Rock, Arkansas, and continues throughout his work as a composer of relatively traditional and melodic music, including

symphonies, operas, and music for ballets. A number of his works were dedicated to African-American themes, such as his tribute to the Tuskegee Airmen titled *Fanfare for the 99th Fighter Squadron*. Much of his later career was spent composing operas (he was said to have been crushed by the critical reception of his 1949 opera *Troubled Island*). The book includes a list of major compositions, notes on sources, a bibliography, and a list of web sites.

Mythology

Altman, Linda Jacobs. *African Mythology*. Berkeley Heights, N.J.: Enslow, 2003. 112 pp. ISBN 0-7660-2125-4, \$20.95.

This volume for middle school does not attempt to give an overview of all of its large and varied subject, other than in a preface about Africa, its people, and its myths. Instead, the book presents seven mythological stories from the traditions of seven different peoples, including the Yoruba of Nigeria, the Chaga of Tanzania, and the Ashanti of Ghana. Among the tales are ones on a great flood, the discovery of fire, and why people die.

Each story includes an introduction about the people and the particular tale, followed by a four-to-six page story, a set of questions and answers about it, and an "Expert Commentary" giving some interpretations of the story from scholars and other writers. The stories themselves are told in simple language and are each accompanied by one or two full-page drawings. The questions and answers may be of limited use, because the answers immediately follow the questions, and students might not pause to think of the answers on their own. The commentaries help to place each tale into a mythological tradition. The book ends with chapter notes, a list of books and web sites for further research, a short glossary, and an index.

Routledge Historical Biographies

Ling, Peter J. *Martin Luther King, Jr.* New York: Routledge, 2002. 392 pp. ISBN 0-415-21665-6, \$15.95 (pb).

The books in this series (with nearly 20 published so far) are intended to give students and general readers an accessible biography from an explicitly historical perspective. The series is also published in Britain, and most of its authors appear to be British. Ling, for instance, is a senior lecturer in American Studies at the University of Nottingham. However, spelling and most punctuation are American, and the author takes an objective, though not too distanced, approach to American history and culture.

Ling begins by stating that in some ways he agrees with the views of certain scholars that King was not truly the originator of the early successes of the civil rights movement, and that he had very few victories after the passage of the Voting Rights Act in 1965. However, Ling asserts that one may consider King to have been an even greater man closer to his death than he had been earlier; in the years after 1965, King is said to have followed his convictions in the face of

blacks who thought he was not militant enough as well as many whites upset by his speaking out against the Vietnam War. King is portrayed here as a great mobilizer, though not as successful an organizer of a sustained movement.

The biography includes a year-by-year time line comparing events in King's life, national events, and international ones. It also has an eight-page guide to further reading, a lengthy bibliography, and an index. With more than 300 pages of small type, this is not a quick and easy introduction to King's life, but it does provide a well-balanced portrait of the complexities of King and of the movement in which he took part.

Teen Life Around the World

Mahdi, Ali Akbar, ed. *Teen Life in the Middle East*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2003. 288 pp. ISBN 0-313-31893-X, \$55.00.

This volume is one of five regional surveys that study life for teens in various countries around the world. The book begins with two series forewords, followed by a general introduction from the book's editor, who notes that the very concept of *teen*, as a Western construct, has not long been a part of the thinking of most Middle Eastern cultures. The 11 chapters on Middle Eastern countries follow the overall series format: a geographic and historical introduction followed by sections on a typical teen's day, family life, food, schooling, social life, recreation, entertainment, religion and culture, and a conclusion followed by notes and a resource guide. This guide includes lists of books and articles, works of fiction, informational web sites, and a few web sites for finding teens from that country to be a pen pal or chat with.

Among the countries in the book are Iran, Iraq, Israel, Lebanon, the Palestinian territories, and Saudi Arabia. Most of the articles are written by scholars, journalists, or graduate students from that particular country, which allows them to include information that only a resident would know (such as the increasing popularity of billiards among teens in Syria). Despite the different authors, the prose is standard and readable, and is interspersed with some block quotes from the teens themselves. With its somewhat repetitive format and fairly small black-and-white photos, *Teen Life in the Middle East* is not a volume that will quickly catch the eye of its young audience, but it does give a wealth of interesting and certainly relevant information for high school students seeking to learn about life in these countries.

U.S. Wars

O'Connell, Kim A. *The Mexican-American War*. Berkeley Heights, N.J.: Enslow, 2003. 48 pp. ISBN 0-7660-5131-5, \$19.95.

This book for students in the middle grades is part of the MyReportLinks.com series, which is intended to be used as a resource for reports on various subjects. For further resources, *The Mexican-American War* begins with descriptions of about

30 web sites with information related to the war, such as a history and virtual tour of the Alamo and a biography of General (later President) Zachary Taylor. A code is given for students to access these sites through www.myreportlinks.com, with a promise that links will remain up for at least three years after the book's publication. This listing of web resources is a useful feature, though the book's refusal to give any direct web address information for the web pages it describes is somewhat annoying. (An experienced Googler might be able to find many of the sites on his or her own, though.)

The rest of the book continues the Internet theme with each spread surrounded by a border imitating a computer window, cursor arrows pointing to titles, and many of the historical photos appearing as if popping up in a web page. The book's account of the 1846–47 war is thorough and easy to read, with consideration given to the conflicting accounts of who was responsible for the war's beginning, and the reasons why the Americans met with nearly constant military success in the face of larger numbers. Though the assorted bells and whistles of this series threaten to overwhelm the information at times, the book will enable students to learn much about a mostly forgotten conflict.

Visual Geography Series

Behnke, Alison. ***Afghanistan in Pictures***. Minneapolis: Lerner, 2003. 80 pp. Revised edition. ISBN 0-8225-4683-3, \$27.93 (\$20.95, school and library).

Braun, Eric. ***Canada in Pictures***. Minneapolis: Lerner, 2003. 80 pp. Revised edition. ISBN 0-8225-4679-5, \$27.93 (\$20.95, school and library).

Hamilton, Janice. ***Nigeria in Pictures***. Minneapolis: Lerner, 2003. 80 pp. Revised edition. ISBN 0-8225-0373-5, \$27.93 (\$20.95, school and library).

Streissguth, Tom. ***Argentina in Pictures***. Minneapolis: Lerner, 2003. 80 pp. Revised edition. ISBN 0-8225-0372-7, \$27.93 (\$20.95, school and library).

Taus-Bolstad, Stacy. ***Czech Republic in Pictures***. Minneapolis: Lerner, 2003. 80 pp. Revised edition. ISBN 0-8225-4680-9, \$27.93 (\$20.95, school and library).

Taus-Bolstad, Stacy. ***Vietnam in Pictures***. Minneapolis: Lerner, 2003. 80 pp. Revised edition. ISBN 0-8225-4678-7, \$27.93 (\$20.95, school and library).

Taus-Bolstad, Stacy. ***Pakistan in Pictures***. Minneapolis: Lerner, 2003. 80 pp. Revised edition. ISBN 0-8225-4682-5, \$27.93 (\$20.95, school and library).

Zuehlke, Jeffrey. ***Germany in Pictures***. Minneapolis: Lerner, 2003. 80 pp. Revised edition. ISBN 0-8225-4681-7, \$27.93 (\$20.95, school and library).

These volumes join eight earlier ones in the revised second edition of this series for students in the middle grades.

For this edition, authors are named, information and maps have been updated, and added features include a list of famous people and sights to see from each country. The new design of the books is meant to resemble a computer screen, particularly in the captions, which have highlighted key words and an attached cursor arrow. As part of the computer and Internet theme, students can go to a web site at www.vgsbooks.com for more recent information and additional material on each country.

The books contain a large amount of detailed text on five subject areas: the land, history and government, the people, cultural life, and the economy. Chapters are illustrated with numerous color and black-and-white photos and several maps. Sidebars cover such topics as, in the book on Germany, the Volkswagen Beetle and the proper use of umlauts. Material at the end of each book includes a time line, information on flags and currency, reading lists, a glossary, a bibliography, and an index. Not merely a set of visual travelogues, the Visual Geography Series is a solid source of information for middle school students studying these countries.

We Are America

Hall, Margaret C. ***Irish Americans***. Chicago: Heinemann, 2003. 32 pp. ISBN 1-40340-734-7, \$24.22 (\$16.95, library).

Hall, Margaret C. ***Polish Americans***. Chicago: Heinemann, 2003. 32 pp. ISBN 1-40340-736-3, \$24.22 (\$16.95, library).

Hall, Margaret C. ***Vietnamese Americans***. Chicago: Heinemann, 2003. 32 pp. ISBN 1-40340-738-X, \$24.22 (\$16.95, library).

Peterson, Tiffany. ***Cuban Americans***. Chicago: Heinemann, 2003. 32 pp. ISBN 1-40340-733-9, \$24.22 (\$16.95, library).

Peterson, Tiffany. ***Korean Americans***. Chicago: Heinemann, 2003. 32 pp. ISBN 1-40340-735-5, \$24.22 (\$16.95, library).

Peterson, Tiffany. ***Russian Americans***. Chicago: Heinemann, 2003. 32 pp. ISBN 1-40340-737-1, \$24.22 (\$16.95, library).

These six volumes for students in grades three to five (six other volumes have been published previously) each begin and end with the story of a typical real-life immigrant to the United States. *Vietnamese Americans*, for example, tells of Nan Thi Nguyen, a woman who secretly left Vietnam with her son on a boat in 1982, eventually reunited with her husband, and now lives happily in Florida. The other chapters in these books describe the history of each immigrant community, with some information on the elements of the national culture each has maintained in America.

The series features a colorful page design, with several varieties of large type and numerous color photos. Each book ends with a chart of immigration from the country by decade, a short list of books to read, a glossary of the words bolded in the text, and an index. The lively look of the pages

and the information about everyday people and everyday life make *We Are America* a good choice for younger students seeking to learn more about their own national background or that of their classmates.

TRANSLATIONS

Ehlert, Lois. *Día de mercado: Una historia contada a través del arte popular*. San Diego, Calif.: Libros Viajeros/Harcourt, 2003. 36 pp. Trans. by F. Isabel Campoy and Alma Flor Ada. ISBN 0-15-216814-1, \$7.00 (pb).

This picture book for children ages three to seven was first published in 2000 as *Market Day: A Story Told with Folk Art*. Ehlert (the author of *Snowballs* and *Eating the Alphabet*, among others) employs folk art dolls and sculptures, baskets, fabrics, and other objects to tell about a trip to the market and what one can do there. The Spanish text has a few words per page in very large type, but the colorful and imaginative collages are the main focus here. A two-page guide at the end of the book contains small photos of the individual objects used in the book, with a note on the country of origin and materials used for each. This exuberant work serves as an introduction to a variety of folk art styles as well as an example of an unusually creative way to tell a story.

ORIGINAL FOREIGN LANGUAGE PUBLICATION

Betancourt, Ramón. *Salsipuedes*. Houston, Tex.: Arte Público, 2003. 128 pp. ISBN 1-55885-381-2, \$12.95 (pb).

This debut collection of short stories in Spanish was the winner of the University of California at Irvine's Chicano/Latino Literary Contest. Betancourt was born in Tijuana, Mexico, and he currently teaches in the Department of Electrical Engineering at San Diego State University. The 16 stories in this volume are mostly set in the Latino communities in California that are close to the border with Mexico. In the title story (translated by the publisher as "Get Out While You Can"), a young boy and his family scavenge landfills for food until tragedy strikes. Throughout the collection, characters seek to escape from circumstances through their dreams and plans for the future, while they manage to cope with poverty and the pull of tradition.

Pérez, Ramón "Tianguis." *Diario de un mojado*. Houston, Tex.: Arte Público, 2003. 256 pp. ISBN 1-55885-345-6, \$12.95 (pb).

This memoir was originally published by Arte Público in 1991 in an English translation as *Diary of an Undocumented Immigrant*. (Another book by the author, *Diary of a Guerrilla*, was put out by the same publisher in 1999.) The present volume is the original Spanish version of Pérez's story of how he entered the United States illegally in the 1980s and stayed for several years, working in one menial job after another, before eventually returning to Mexico. He now lives with his wife in Xalapa, Veracruz, where he works as a photographer. In this book, Pérez provides a personal story of the tense drama of

illegal border crossings and of the difficult life faced by the immigrants who make them.

NEW EDITIONS IN OTHER MEDIA

Ancient & Modern Cultures. Part 1: Ancient Man. ABC News Classroom Edition. Elk Grove, Ill.: Disney Educational Productions, 2003. One videocassette, 18 min. ISBN 0-89625-911-0, \$19.95.

Ancient & Modern Cultures. Part 2: Mayan Civilization: A Case Study. ABC News Classroom Edition. Elk Grove, Ill.: Disney Educational Productions, 2003. One videocassette, 18 min. ISBN 0-89625-912-9, \$19.95.

Ancient & Modern Cultures. Part 3: Global Culture. ABC News Classroom Edition. Elk Grove, Ill.: Disney Educational Productions, 2003. One videocassette, 18 min. ISBN 0-89625-913-7, \$19.95.

This series intersperses various ABC News reports from recent years with narrated segments that use maps and other graphics to give quick summaries of these very large topics. In the tape on ancient man, the news segments include reports on two anthropologists seeking to establish that Ice Age humans used woven fabrics much earlier than had been thought; the discovery of four underwater cities off the Egyptian coast; and a recently unearthed mummy in southern Russia. Understandably, the narrow selection of topics was largely determined by what was available in the ABC archives. But the connecting segments do give a solid (however brief) overview of the development of humans, and the news reports will at least introduce students to some good examples of how scientists work to study ancient humans.

The filmed segments in the tape on Mayan civilization are all taken from a 1998 report by Hugh Downs that follows the fieldwork in Mexico of an American anthropologist. The third tape, on how today's world has a more unified culture, suffers from a broad topic and seemingly arbitrary segments; it contains reports on a Japanese fad of restaurants meant to resemble jails, the international opera star Luciano Pavarotti, and the worldwide release in 2000 of the fourth Harry Potter book.

Families of the World

Families of Egypt. Cincinnati, Ohio: Master Communications, 2002. Videocassette, 30 min. ISBN 1-888194-41-3, \$29.95.

Families of France. Cincinnati, Ohio: Master Communications, 2002. Videocassette, 30 min. ISBN 1-888194-40-5, \$29.95.

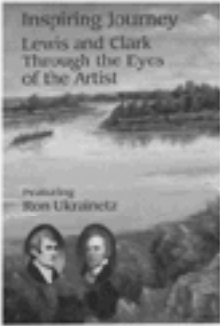
With these two additions, this series of videos for students in the lower to middle elementary now provides day-in-the-life portraits of children from 16 different countries. Each volume follows two children through a typical day from waking up to going to bed. The Egypt tape follows a six-year-old boy named Hesham, as well as Jasmine, a seven-year-old girl.

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Hesham's family lives in a more rural area; we see scenes of an outdoor market with large baskets of grains and of a man making bricks from clay. Jasmine lives a more urban and prosperous life; she goes to an English-language school and her mother shops in a modern supermarket. The tape on French children also features a city/country contrast with Camille, a nine-year-old who lives in a farmhouse in a Beaujolais village outside Lyon, and Emilien, a ten-year-old in Lyon who takes a city bus to school.

The narration for each sequence is provided by an American child purporting to be the child pictured; this is distracting at first but does help to make it easier for students to understand what is happening. (However, a few occasions where the narrators impart economic and cultural facts they have supposedly learned from their parents do ring a little false.) The great value and interest of all the videos in this series, though, is the opportunity to see the many scenes of daily life, family celebrations, meals, classrooms, city streets, and more that will give young viewers a sense of what life is like for their counterparts around the world. 



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