

reviews

GUIDELINES FOR REVIEWS: Reviews are arranged under broad subject categories, with subcategories where appropriate (for example, age-group categories for children's books). The categories are arranged roughly by field in the following order: humanities, biography, history, religion, education, social sciences, reference, juvenile works, and nonprint materials. Within each subject category, reviews are arranged in alphabetical order by author surname. Each review is prefaced by a three-part numbering system: a two digit volume number, with the first year of publication designated as 01; a one-digit issue number; and a four-digit review number that runs consecutively within each individual volume year. For example, 04-1-0024 refers to review number 24 in volume 4, issue 1. Individual review entries begin with a headnote, which indicates the review number and a full bibliographic citation. Audio materials, videocassettes, and computer software are reviewed in separate categories. The review section is followed by author, title, and subject indexes keyed to the review numbers described above. Thesaurus citations in the author index indicate relevant ethnic groups, races, religions, and, where appropriate, geographic regions. The review section concludes with a directory of the publishers cited in a particular issue. The cumulative index for each volume year appears in the December issue of that year.

Literature

General Anthologies

13-4-0415

Greenstein, Michael, ed. *Contemporary Jewish Writing in Canada: An Anthology*. Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 2004. 233 pp. ISBN 0-8032-2185-1, \$60.00.

Greenstein's book is rich in longing, identity, and paradox. Jews, whether displaced to or born in Canada, never really feel secure. Canada's icy environment appropriately alludes to frozen emotions, ones Jews wish could be thawed. Leonard Cohen's character Braverman is open to the beauty of the country, commenting on "the lights on the St. Lawrence...trees as fragile as the legs of listening deer," but his real subject is a search for self, his Montreal locale only a backdrop. In another story set in Montreal, Mordecai Richler's Barney determines that he "could play the nice middleclass Jewish boy."

Immigrants romanticizing countries where they have never truly belonged experience guilt for having survived. Anne Michaels's protagonist queries: "To survive was to escape fate. But if you escape fate, whose life do you then step into?" For Chava Rosenfarb's Sarah, "Only her concentration

camp memories stood out in her mind like an island...amid a sea of forgetfulness." Although Greenstein's introduction highlights rivers as an enduring metaphor for Canadian Jews, I suggest it is the duality, the limbo between two worlds, perhaps the place between the shore and the river that occupies both the writers and protagonists in the stories.

—Patricia F. Goldblatt
Toronto, Ont.

13-4-0416

Swann, Brian, ed. *Voices from Four Directions: Contemporary Translations of the Native Literatures of North America*. Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 2004. 619 pp. ISBN 0-8032-4300-6, \$70.00 (cl); 0-8032-9310-0, \$27.50 (pb).

As an extension to his previous collection, *Coming to the Light: Contemporary Translations of the Native Literatures of North America*, Swann has once again assembled a distinguished collection of traditional literatures. This anthology is organized by four geographic directions of North America, although the West is given more pages than the other three cardinal areas. The translators and presenters are generally among the most prominent scholars who have worked with indigenous peoples.

Swann's introductory essay raises some crucial issues about language, provenance, translation, and ethnopoetics. Each selection has an introductory essay with important critical information and helpful bibliographies that provide cultural and historical contexts. For example, "Coyote Stories" are introduced and told by Rex Lee Jim (Diné). Rather than academically discussing the selections, as many other introductions do, Jim uses his own coyote trickster story as prelude to his traditional tellings of Navajo/Diné coyote stories.

Hao Huang's introduction of a San Juan Pueblo (Ohkay Owingeh) ceremony carefully notes that this selection is a public performance. Other selections do not make such a distinction, which raises questions about intellectual property and whether or not these literatures are being published with tribal approbation. While some selections are clearly presented in collaboration with tribal peoples, others raise the troubling question of literary colonization. Swann's introduction is a vital backdrop to remind the reader of the complicated presentation of these literatures.

—P. Jane Hafen
Univ. of Nevada, Las Vegas

13-4-0417

Thurman, Wallace. *The Collected Writings of Wallace*

Thurman. Piscataway, N.J.: Rutgers Univ. Press, 2004. 544 pp. Edited by Amrijit Singh and Daniel M. Scott. ISBN 0-8135-3300-7, \$65.00.

Wallace Thurman is one of the lesser-known—if not forgotten—names of the Harlem Renaissance. His very short life (1902–1934) could very well have something to do with it. This definitive collection of his writings is an excellent opportunity to hear a voice that still needs to be heard. Thurman wrote letters, reviews, essays, poems, short stories, novels, and plays. In their insightful introduction to this volume, the editors point out that Thurman's life was characterized "by a desperation—amounting at times to despair—to achieve the high artistic standards he had set for himself." In this endeavor, he spares no one, not even himself, as shown in an excerpt from a 1929 letter he wrote to Langston Hughes: "Jessie Fauset should be taken to Philadelphia and cremated. You should write a book. Countee Cullen should be castrated and taken to Persia as the Shah's eunuch. Jean Toomer should be enshrined as a genius....Zora Hurston should learn craftsmanship and surprise the world....Bruce Nugent should be spanked....Eric Walrond ought to finish *The Big Ditch* or destroy it. I should commit suicide."

Obviously, this volume is a must for anyone wishing to delve deeper into the Harlem Renaissance. But it is also for everyone and anyone wishing to read prose written from the heart. It will make you cry, it will make you laugh, it will make you wonder about this exceptional person and his short life.

—Beatriz Rivera-Barnes
Penn State Univ.

Fiction

13-4-0418

Be'er, Haim. ***Feathers***. Lebanon, N.H.: Univ. Press of New England, 2004. 256 pp. Trans. from Hebrew by Hillel Halkin. ISBN 1-58465-371-X, \$26.00.

Feathers (Notzot), a coming-of-age tale set in an Orthodox Jewish community in Jerusalem, became a critically acclaimed bestseller after its publication in Israel in 1979.

Be'er's debut novel established his prominence in modern Hebrew literature and represented a departure in a literature that had been dominated by secular writing.

The stories take the form of a memoir narrated by a young soldier assigned to an army burial unit during the Yom Kippur War. He reminisces about his family and the assortment of appealingly offbeat inhabitants of the Orthodox Jewish neighborhood where he grew up during the fifties and sixties. Foremost among them is Mordechai Leder, a disciple of the nineteenth-century utopian philosopher Josef Popper-Lynkeus, who espoused rationalism, individualism, and the sacredness of life. Leder envisions a vegetarian utopian community based on Popper's ideas, while the narrator's father is obsessed with proving his improbable theory that it is the eucalyptus rather than the willow that is mentioned in the

Bible. Idealistic and seemingly oblivious to logic and impracticability, they personify the traditional archetype of the *luftmensch* ("air man") in classic Yiddish literature. Although writing in Hebrew, Be'er grew up among Yiddish speakers and the rich cultural heritage embodied in their language and their stories. Tragic and at times morbid, fanciful and comical, these stories with their vivid depiction of Jerusalem 50 years ago delightfully recreate a now vanished world.

—Elka R. Frankel
Princeton, N.J.

13-4-0419

Birchfield, D. L. ***Field of Honor***. Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 2004. 224 pp. ISBN 0-8061-3608-2, \$27.95.

Coldsmith, Don. ***The Pipestone Quest***. Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 2004. 272 pp. ISBN 0-8061-3612-X, \$24.95.

The Pipestone Quest is the latest book in Coldsmith's "Spanish Bit Saga," which explores Native American life and culture. As the title implies, this book deals with a journey of discovery, a "vision quest" to the pipestone (Catlinite) quarry near the Great Lakes. Beaver, the protagonist, an adolescent boy of the Plains Indian "Lone Dog People," encounters strange people and customs, love, death, and sacrifice on the journey. He is rewarded with a better understanding of himself and his place in the world.

While the story is satisfactorily told and the details of Plains Indian culture are accurately depicted, these details overlay a rather ordinary story of a youth becoming aware of the complexity and harsh realities of life. Also, the story, like many others that seek to educate, suffers from the author's interjection of details that, while important, interrupt the flow.

The Pipestone Quest is an interesting book that would be particularly useful as a way to introduce younger readers to Plains Indian culture.

Birchfield's *Field of Honor* is a very different novel, a surrealistic, almost unclassifiable blend of war story and fantasy, reminiscent of Heller and Vonnegut with a little of Lewis Carroll thrown in. The story centers on P. P. McDaniel, a Marine of Choctaw heritage serving in Vietnam who deserts in the face of the horrors of war, somehow finding himself in southeastern Oklahoma on the run from the Corps, which has come to reclaim its own. In his struggle to escape, McDaniel discovers a path to an underground Native American utopia comprised of the Choctaw culture and lost Cahokian and Natchez empires. There he learns two games, chess and lacrosse, and becomes the focus of two women, the voluptuous Elena and the nymphet Ejay. As he shifts among the various alternate realities he inhabits, he also learns the real reasons for the Vietnam War and the oil crisis of the 1970s.

Field of Honor is a comedic satire exploring what the southeastern American Indian culture might have been and what American culture has become.

Both *The Pipestone Quest* and *Field of Honor* have a place in

▼ continued fiction

library collections, the former for its attention to historic detail and the latter for its imaginative storytelling.

—Andy J. Deering
Central Wyoming College

13-4-0420

Bragado Breña, Reinaldo. *Night Watch*. Tempe, Ariz.: Bilingual Review Press, 2004. 152 pp. Trans. from Spanish by David William Foster. ISBN 1-931010-16-1, \$12.00 (pb).

When the great Cuban novelist Reinaldo Arenas contracted AIDS he blamed dictator Fidel Castro, a notion that prompted many critics to dismiss the assertion as the musings of a mind gone mad. What they missed was the very fact that Arenas felt that every action he had taken in his short life had been provoked, or even designed, by Castro, so complete was the dictator's power over the novelist.

The novel begins in Cuba when a novelist who has served time for writing an anti-Castro narrative links up with a duo of doomed poets and a Havana beauty who is addicted to sex and drugs in a Dostoyevskian gesture of seeking freedom. After the culture police arrest one of the poets for frequenting a café known to attract those dissatisfied with the revolution—mainly writers and gay men—the protagonist, the poets, and the femme fatale flee the island on a homemade raft. During the crossing, the poets perish and the protagonist is left alone with the young woman, with whom he's beginning to fall in love. The couple reaches Miami but tragedy awaits. The root of the tragedy is the sense of defeat, meaninglessness, and inaction that Castro has planted in their hearts and, as Bragado Breña sees it, in Cuban society as a whole.

The novel is essentially divided into two parts. The first part describes the machinations of cultural totalitarianism. The second part is closer to a retelling of the French classic *Jules et Jim*, where a woman who is unable to choose between two men kills herself and one of the men. The first part of the novel is compelling. The second is not.

—Danilo H. Figueredo
Bloomfield College Library

13-4-0421

Corpi, Lucha. *Under a Crimson Moon: A Brown Angel Mystery*. Houston, Tex.: Arte Público, 2004. 224 pp. ISBN 1-55885-421-5, \$12.95 (pb).

This is the fourth novel in what has become known as Corpi's Brown Angel Mystery series. However, Oakland, California, private investigator Gloria Damasco, the protagonist of the earlier novels, has only a minor role here. In *Crimson Moon*, Damasco's partner, Justin Escobar, is hired to find the grandfather of a seriously ill child in the hopes of a bone marrow match. But the client is lying—about many things. At the same time, P.I. Dora Saldaña is working her own missing-person case. The cases are related, and the investigators team up.

The investigation traces people and events back over 30 years to the Chicano civil rights movement and the student movements of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Several of the characters had participated in the Third World Student Strike in Berkeley in 1969. Two activists turn out to have been undercover FBI agents. During this period, there was also an active Chicano movement in Denver. Saldaña is introduced to the Crusade for Justice when she traces her missing person to Denver.

Corpi writes compelling detective fiction with social issues integral to the plot. In *Crimson Moon*, she gives readers a detailed introduction to the Chicano civil rights movement as well as a good story.

—Catherine Crohan
Siena College Library

13-4-0422

Dickey, Eric Jerome. *Drive Me Crazy*. New York: Dutton, 2004. 355 pp. ISBN 0-525-94790-6, \$23.95.

The Urban Griot (Omar Tyree). *Cold Blooded: A Hardcore Novel*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004. 181 pp. ISBN 0-7432-6190-9, \$12.00 (pb).

The works of Eric Jerome Dickey and Omar Tyree have always been marked by strong characters as evidenced by Charles, the schoolteacher in Dickey's *The Other Woman*, and diary writer/playgirl Tabitha Knight in Tyree's *Diary of a Groupie*. In their extreme but seemingly real-life situations, these characters achieve or don't achieve what they set out for. If their characters' recalcitrant yet personable mind-sets don't bind you, their dialogue, laced with urban contemporary slang, certainly will. No less is true in both authors' current tomes.

In *Cold Blooded*, the plot seems at first presumptive: a college coed, Janeia Goode, falls in love with a well-paid assassin, Molasses (also known as Warren Hamilton and Moe). And although he is dangerous (some unfortunate mark falls fatally seemingly every other day to his pistol), she finds him alluring, enigmatic, and sexy. But after finding him to be a hardcore player, her feelings for him turn to hatred and contempt. And Molasses pays for this dearly.

Drive Me Crazy also involves a ladies' man, Driver, who chauffeurs wealthy clients around Los Angeles—an honorable profession he has chosen as part of his redemptive life after a two-year prison term for a crime he did not commit. Attracted by a rich woman—one of many suitors of the opposite sex—who wants to leave her husband, Driver finds his life in jeopardy when he ultimately decides to turn down her offer to kill the husband after she has made a partial payment to him. In the meantime, Driver is hooked up in a scam involving Afro-Filipina beauty Arizona and her partner in crime, Pamela Quinones, whom Dickey readers will remember from *Thieves Paradise*. If that wasn't enough, Driver's brother Rufus adds his own personal drama and relationship conflicts to the mix. And a troubled couple, writer Thomas Marcus Freeman and his drinking girlfriend, Folasade Titilayo Coker, add to the complexity of this gritty novel. Set in the

mean streets of Los Angeles, this novel chronicles Driver's post-prison odyssey as a man whose search for redemption ironically leads to trouble deeper than his prison stint.

While characters like Driver and Janeia live for a better day throughout the plots of both novels only to find that a lesser fate awaits them, there are certainly enough plot twists in either story to draw a reader in continuously until the very last word of the last page. Both novels are highly recommended for readers who care to view slices of urban hardcore lives that are neither predictable nor presumptive in their storytelling.

—Sam Cacas
San Francisco, Calif.

13-4-0423

Dinh, Linh. *Blood and Soap: Stories*. New York: Seven Stories Press, 2004. 138 pp. ISBN 1-58322-642-7, \$16.00 (pb).

Born in Saigon, Linh Dinh moved to the United States in 1975, at the age of 12, and most recently has resided in Italy under the auspices of a writers' program. Like his earlier works, the pieces in *Blood and Soap* are brief, gnomic, provocative; some only a short paragraph in length, others tales of four to eight modest-sized pages. One piece is a collection of "One-Sentence Stories"; another consists of *TV Guide*-style plot summaries of imaginary movies.

Some of the stories may remind readers of parables by Franz Kafka or Italo Calvino in their mysterious, inconclusive, darkly humorous, or semi-abstract natures. Some pieces early in the book are set in Vietnam, some later ones in Italy, while several others have vaguely American cityscapes; a good many take place in some unnamed country—in a prison in a number of cases. Some stories are about language, as in the case of a prisoner who memorizes a foreign dictionary without understanding any of it except the cover word "dictionary"; in another, a Vietnamese soldier takes notes on a delirious American prisoner's English, and goes on to teach a largely fantasy "English" to others. Often, stories have endings that seem deliberately inconsequential rather than offering a startling revelation or pointed moral. Most of the characters in these sketches, including those who tell their own tales, lead absurd, self-deluded lives, but the author always seems coolly in control of his material.

—Joseph Milicia
Univ. of Wisconsin-Sheboygan

13-4-0424

Engel, Mary Potter. *Strangers and Sojourners: Stories from the Lowcountry*. New York: Basic Books/Counterpoint, 2004. 222 pp. ISBN 1-58243-264-3, \$23.00.

The connection among people within a community is beautifully illustrated in writer/theologian Engel's first short story collection, a series of 21 interconnected tales that dissect rural Coosawaw County, South Carolina.

Coosawaw is in the Carolina Low Country, the kind of place where Spanish moss drips from the branches of live oaks and the sandy soil hides prehistoric sharks' teeth. It's

both genteel and slightly ominous, and Coosawaw's denizens embody these traits as well. These characters battle such contemporary social ills as racial prejudice, child abuse, AIDS, and intolerance of all stripes. "There can't be no holiness without happiness," declares Sister Gloria, the clairvoyant narrator of "You Got to Learn How to Read Things Right," a story that appears early in the collection. Gloria seems to be speaking for most of Coosawaw's residents, who lurch toward their own brand of grace, however misunderstood or misguided they may be.

Engel offers a God's-eye view of things: The characters tell personal tales of love and loss, but the reader is always aware of the big picture unfolding with each new detail. One story's lead character will pop up as a minor player in another, and slowly a portrait of this Low Country community is revealed. Engel can be confounding, often relying on tired Southern clichés: The preachers are all fire-and-brimstone, the men are all cads, and the women (who clearly have not discovered *Oprah*) seldom find their voice. Yet Engel also surprises with her deep understanding of human nature. Coosawaw County isn't a microcosm of the world, but it is a window into the human heart.

—Lisa Zhito
Nashville, Tenn.

13-4-0425

Franco, Jorge. *Rosario Tijeras*. New York: Seven Stories Press, 2004. 172 pp. Trans. from Spanish by Gregory Rabassa. ISBN 1-58322-609-5, \$21.00.

Franco tells the story of a young assassin for hire from Medellin, Colombia. Writing in the first person, the narrator, Antonio, finds himself in the corridors of a hospital where Rosario is fighting for her life after being shot at point-blank range. There he reminisces about her life as a contract killer and her tumultuous relationship with his friend, Emilio. At a young age, she was raped. Later, she takes revenge on the perpetrator by using a pair of scissors (*tijeras* in Spanish), from which she gets "tijeras" as a nickname and a symbol of her identity. Victim of the violent underworld of drugs, Rosario gets involved in promiscuous love affairs, killing mercilessly, taking drugs and alcohol, until she herself succumbs, dying as violently as she had lived.

A subplot of the novel is the love triangle among Rosario, Emilio, and Antonio, the men enchanted by her intriguing personality. Antonio's silent love is the truthful one; he is with her during the last minutes of her life.

This novel is a profound metaphor for the violence in Colombia, where young people are victims of this sordid reality without hope. Writing in the social realist style (in contrast to his famous countryman, Gabriel García Márquez), Franco narrates a poignant story whose anti-hero, a mysterious and exotic young mestizo woman, symbolizes all the maladies of a fractured society. Gregory Rabassa's excellent English translation rounds out this work from an up-and-coming Colombian author.

—Rosita Chazarreta-Rourke
Duquesne Univ.

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13-4-0426

García, Ricardo L. *Brother Bill's Bait Bites Back and Other Tales from the Raton*. Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 2004. 118 pp. ISBN 0-8032-7111-5, \$14.95 (pb).

In this collection of 12 modern folktales, García tries to give a voice to a place and people who are generally ignored in American literature, the Raton region in northeastern New Mexico, and the Hispanos, coal miners, and cowboys who made a living there. He is only partially successful. His use of Western speech patterns in the ranch stories works, and his mixture of Spanish and English in the tales featuring Mexican Americans captures the flavor of regional conversations, but he always translates the Spanish, even when readers who don't speak Spanish could probably figure out the meaning from the context. García is good at monologue, but his dialogue is weak. Does anyone really speak like these two characters from "Feed Him Black Chickens"?

"Boo-hoo-hoo!" She clutched a handkerchief, sniffing and sobbing.

"You don't love me. You just married me to have a slave. Boo-hoo-hoo."

"Honey bun, I love you very much, but that's your job, to fix the bath, and meals."

These are minor problems, but they interfere with readers' ability to imagine themselves listening to old-timers on the front porches of their company-owned houses or in the barbershop, as García did.

García's love and respect for the Raton region and its people is evident in *Brother Bill's Bait Bites Back*, but for a more sophisticated use of New Mexico landscapes and folktales, read Rudolfo Anaya or Leslie Silko.

—Cynthia Taylor
Univ. of Southern Colorado

13-4-0427

Jeganathan, Pradeep. *At the Water's Edge*. New York: South Focus Press, 2004. 125 pp. ISBN 0-9748839-0-5, \$12.95 (pb).

Next time, South Focus Press might consider hiring a native speaker of English to proofread Jeganathan's work. The superior literary quality of his product demands the watchful effort of getting it typographically correct on the page.

In the present case, the seven short stories' conceptual subtlety, impressive economy, and sharp characterizations would seem to mark out this professional cultural anthropologist in Colombo for future literary renown. He's a careful, thoughtful, sensitive, and obviously caring craftsman. There may be a brilliant novel or two in his future, or perhaps more first-rate short stories like those in this debut collection. Either way, he's worth keeping an eye on.

Jeganathan's characters are easy to believe in, and he manages them deftly in relation to one another in taut, dramatic tableaux that elucidate and link the diverse social conditions and ethnic strifes of his native Sri Lanka to the hopeful

prospects of young Tamils living and studying in the United States. The distinctions, and the scenes, are clear and pointed and suggestive.

The stories are also unfailingly interesting. Readers will look forward to a sequel. Jeganathan's success is due as well to a strict attention to Edgar Allan Poe's admonition to make every word count. So it's okay to buy the book now. You can cherish these intelligent stories in the commuter train on the way to work.

—Leo J. Mahoney
Kafkas Univ., Kars, Turkey

13-4-0428

Joe, Yolanda. *My Fine Lady*. New York: Dutton, 2004. 217 pp. ISBN 0-525-94808-2, \$23.95.

The urban area between Baltimore and Washington, D.C., is the setting of this entertaining tale of making it to the big times. The plot centers on childhood dreams, family, and romance. Imani's dream of becoming a famous hip-hop diva starts when she is a young girl growing up without a mother. Reared by a down-on-his-luck father named Maceo who owns a not-so-prosperous nightclub, Imani is devoted to him. The men in her life are self-centered and domineering, men who use Imani's incredible talent to fulfill their own dreams. Her father uses her to fulfill the thwarted dream of his now dead wife—a death for which he was responsible. Taz, Imani's boyfriend since childhood, has visions of becoming a great record producer by recording her music.

Fate steps in when handsome Orenthal Hopson, a professor at one of the historically black universities, presents the hypothesis that given time, music has the power to change a person and his or her personality. To prove his theory (and without her knowledge), the professor entices Imani to become his assistant in the music department, where he attempts to recast her as a jazz singer. Imani struggles with her growing feelings toward the professor and her loyalty to Taz as she sets out to develop her own style and pay homage to a mother she barely remembers. Several subplots keep readers waiting for more.

—Hattie H. Vines
Duke Univ. Medical School Library

13-4-0429

Kanafani, Ghassan. *All That's Left to You*. Northampton, Mass.: Interlink, 2004. 144 pp. Trans. from Arabic by May Jayyusi and Jeremy Reed. ISBN 1-56656-548-0, \$12.95 (pb).

Mina, Hanna. *Fragments of Memory: The Story of a Syrian Family*. Northampton, Mass.: Interlink, 2004. 196 pp. Trans. from Arabic by Olive Kenny and Lorne Kenny. ISBN 1-56656-547-2, \$12.95 (pb).

These new translations of works written a few decades ago offer insights into both Arab society and Arabic literature of the twentieth century. Mina's is an autobiographical novel about the life of a young boy in the 1920s, years of unremit-

ting hardship, deprivation, and disappointment. Syria was just emerging from 400 years of Ottoman rule, only to be submerged under French colonial rule. In rural areas a harsh feudal system oppressed the peasantry.

Mina describes with poignant detail his family's migration from one town to another and eventually to a small, impoverished village where they live under a fig tree for a whole summer, lacking any other home. The boy observes his stalwart but always fearful mother, and their drunken, debauched neighbor Zanuba, who befriends and helps the family. Largely, however, it's the story of a son and his father. The boy—at least in retrospect—pities, condemns, and mourns this man who, driven by alcohol and lust, has no ability to make a living and no staying power; yet the family's yearning for him is a constant theme.

Every success is followed by disaster. The village people rejoice over a good harvest of silk—and the market suddenly vanishes, thanks to the invention of synthetic fabrics. Then come the grasshoppers, perennial hunger and illness, a peasant insurrection put down with brutal force. Yet however bleak the story, the author's narrative power pulls the reader along; we are deeply affected but not overwhelmed by sheer horror. While the ending is inconclusive, we know that the author, with a few years of elementary education, survived and became one of Syria's foremost novelists.

Kanafani, too, focuses on the small, sad, and helpless. A politically active Palestinian writer, he was assassinated by unknown enemies in 1972. These stories are not political but reflect the confused lives of people with little future. The title piece is about a young man who, dismayed by his beloved sister's sexual transgression and marriage to an unworthy man, sets out to walk from Gaza to Jordan to join his mother. It unfolds through three voices: the man, the sister, and the desert (neither friend nor enemy). Time is also an actor; the ticking of a clock in the young man's abandoned home seems to reinforce the inescapable fact that minutes can be critical in a desert.

Other stories are also told in a variety of narrative forms. One explores a young teacher's emotional response to a desolate boy from a refugee camp. In another, a boy lies semi-conscious after being struck by a car; he relives his relationship with his father, who lost his livelihood as a hired drummer when cars began to replace the traditional wedding procession. A man in a hospital makes up a story to explain the lonely death of another young man, only to learn subsequently how wrong he was—except for one startling detail.

Both books would be appropriate for college-level literature classes and, perhaps selectively, for older high school students.

—Elsa Marston
Bloomington, Ind.

13-4-0430

Lieu, Jocelyn. *Potential Weapons*. St. Paul, Minn.: Graywolf Press, 2004. 160 pp. ISBN 1-55597-397-3, \$15.00 (pb).

Lieu uses her Chinese-American ancestry as the fabric for stories about racism and the weapons people use to confront

it. In the title story, Abi Leong comes to grips with racism on a journey through backwoods Indiana to a Klan rally with her mother. Abi finally understands her mother's courageous use of laughter as a weapon that reduces bigotry to the level of absurdity it deserves. This laughter becomes a bond between them as they throw coins at Klansmen. Her mother wanted her to see how ordinary the "face of evil" really is. In this story, laughter and resistance become two sides of the same coin.

In "Always a Descendent," Mar Lau's loneliness draws her to Chinatown, where she buys a fortune scroll and discovers Pearl, an aunt who represents an extended family forbidden to her by her parents. Mar forms a clandestine relationship with Pearl and her own lost heritage, with some outrageous consequences to her love life, but also some insights into the strict moral code self-inflicted by her father's generation. These insights help her to understand Pearl's courage in resisting these rigid cultural expectations and strengthen her resolve to live her own life without feeling guilty.

Lieu effectively demonstrates that our individual reactions to racism are potential weapons that form our strongest resistance to hatred. This book would be useful for upper level high school students as well as an enjoyable read for general adult audiences.

—Joseph Ciccarelli
Ballston Lake, N.Y.

13-4-0431

Mangunwijaya, Y. B. *Durga/Umayi*. Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 2004. 224 pp. Trans. from Indonesian, with an introduction and afterword, by Ward Keeler. ISBN 0-295-98392-2, \$20.00 (pb).

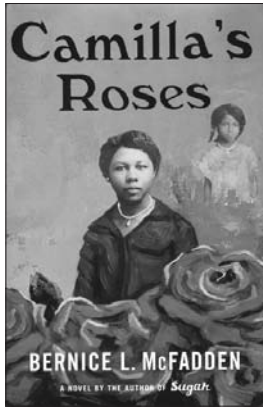
If America's enlightened revolutionaries had had a Y. B. Mangunwijaya to chronicle their anti-British antics, they'd never have set American exceptionalism on its early wobbly pedestal. Everyone, including the rebels, would've been too busy guffawing into their frilly cuffs. This zany, absurd, surreal, really magical, cleverly epigrammatic ("steadily increasing ranks of the envious," "with an Arab-Israeli reconciliation nose," "remained silent in a thousand languages"), tongue-in-cheek, heroine-ically multiple-charactered, stream-of-consciousness postmodern novel is a deliciously treasonable romp through Indonesia's postcolonial history as seen from the bottom up. En route, Mangunwijaya's joyously satirical darts target the World Bank, founding fathers, feminist ideologues, male chauvinism, the gospel of wealth, statist propaganda, racist anthropology, socialist realism, and other artistic and social movements of the twentieth century. He was often as right as he was funny.

Ward Keeler's brilliant translation of this 1991 Indonesian classic could not be a more impressively persuasive interpretation, especially since, as Keeler states, Mangunwijaya wrote a kind of "free indirect discourse" loaded with "grammatical adventurism" in which "language play runs riot on every page." *Durga/Umayi*—we might say "Bitch/Goddess"—is a beautifully crafted political satire whose poor housemaid/put-upon whore/art hatchet woman/convicted freedom

▼ continued fiction

fighter/global contractor-financier panjandrum, and all-too-human lover/heroine sees all, hears all, and considers-calculates-regrets-overcomes all with instinctive resorts to authentic, charitable, human values. For all that, she's disturbingly believable—a female Huckleberry Finn. Two thumbs up.

—Leo J. Mahoney
Kafkas Univ., Kars, Turkey



13-4-0432

McFadden, Bernice L. *Camilla's Roses*. New York: Dutton, 2004. 206 pp. ISBN 0-525-94796-5, \$23.95.

McFadden uses the rosebush as a metaphor for an African-American family's struggle with envy and thievery. The rosebush is stolen many times by neighbors but is always returned, wilted and dying. However, once replanted,

the rosebush becomes revitalized and flourishes. Like the rosebush, the family members do the same once they return home. McFadden uses this metaphor as a smooth transition from the past to the present to tell us a story of a deeply troubled woman who triumphs over adversity and sorrow. She takes us through a progression of stirring and powerfully written chapters riddled with troubled family issues.

Camilla, the protagonist, one day notices a lump in her breast. As she awaits the results of her test, she reflects on how she has kept her turbulent past a secret. It becomes more evident that she is unable to hide her fear of being found out. Consequently, McFadden takes us back to the world of Camilla's family and why she fears her past so much. As a result of Camilla's reconciliation with her bittersweet limitations of motherhood and mortality, she embraces her past and revitalizes her bond with her daughter.

McFadden uses haunting imagery, lyrical language, and a compelling voice to evoke compassion and empathy for Camilla and her family. This novel teaches us how we can prevail over misfortune and grief. The overall message evokes a celebration of the human spirit.

—Dora Love
San Francisco, Calif.

13-4-0433

Mda, Zakes. *The Madonna of Excelsior*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2004. 258 pp. ISBN 0-374-20008-4, \$23.00.

"Brilliant" describes Zakes Mda's newest novel. "Painful," also, with respect to the lives of women, particularly black women. "Complex," too, especially in the narrative structure and the social and political realities of post-apartheid South Africa.

Mda's book—as is typical for this writer—challenges the reader's imagination. Those familiar with Mda's work will see an amalgam of the fantasy of *Ways of Dying* and the histori-

cal data of *The Heart of Redness*.

Based on an apartheid-era scandal, the Excelsior 19 case, the novel focuses on one family—primarily one woman, Niki, and her "coloured" daughter, Popi—and the fallout from the notorious violations of the so-called miscegenation laws. Mda blends realistic depictions of daily life in a township shack with flights of glorious fantasy. And he sets his story in the context of Flemish expressionist-style painting by a white man, facetiously referred to as "the trinity": a priest, man, and painter. Each chapter (except some curious exceptions) begins with a tableau full of riotous color; then static images come to life as the story unfolds.

The book blends ironic, even humorous, observations, delivered in repetitively simple declarative sentences with mordant comments. The essence of Mda's approach is stated in Popi's gradual understanding of the painter's technique: "figures that were not distorted...were lacking in emotion." *The Madonna of Excelsior* is not an easy read, but it is powerful and memorable and an important book on the tenth anniversary of South Africa's independence.

—Anne Serafin
Newtonville, Mass.

13-4-0434

Padilla, Genaro M., ed. *The Short Stories of Fray Angélico Chávez*. Albuquerque: Univ. of New Mexico Press, 2004. 159 pp. ISBN 0-8263-0950-X, \$14.95 (pb).

Chávez, born in 1910, is best known for his scholarly investigations into New Mexico's past. This volume is composed of 14 tales set in the pueblos of New Mexico from colonial times to the present. They tell about the everyday lives of the inhabitants—Indians, Spaniards, mestizos, and Americans—and their interrelations and prejudices.

The stories are clearly and amusingly written and paint a picture of small-town life that illustrates the simplicity and naiveté of the inhabitants, while revealing the beauty inherent in such. Chávez does not glorify his characters, so for instance, while most of the "Americans" look down on the "Mexicans," the "Mexicans" have their own pecking order, with pureblooded Spaniards at the top, Indians at the bottom, and people of mixed ancestry in the middle. Religious devotion is the central theme of the stories, and happy resolutions are generally found through some sort of divine intervention, or the application of typically Christian ideals.

While the apparent straightforwardness of the stories does mask a certain degree of social criticism, I would disagree with the editor when he says that "there is a complexity beyond the allegorical impulse." The symbolism is typically very simplistic, and a couple of the shortest stories did not have much of a point at all. The stories would be valuable for instilling social and religious values in children, but I can't imagine that most adults would get more than a fun read out of them.

—Michelle Looknanan
London, England

13-4-0435

Park, Yongsoo. *Las Cucarachas*. New York: Akashic Books, 2004. 220 pp. ISBN 1-888451-56-4, \$14.95 (pb).

Cockroaches infest the tenement apartment of Pete Kim, the 12-year-old narrator of Park's second novel, but the book's Spanish title is a bit of a mystery. Pete and his friends, all Korean Americans living in Queens in the mid-1980s, belong to what they consider a gang, but they name themselves the Warriors after the movie of that title. Pete's narrative is in the Holden Caulfield/Huck Finn mode of vernacular speech—disarmingly frank, sometimes amusingly naive—though, unlike his predecessors, Pete uses nonstop foul language and constantly makes venomous remarks about blacks, Puerto Ricans, Jews, Chinese, and even any Korean American who looks like an "ajussie" (off-the-boat Korean). Pete habitually tries to "psych out" the reader by describing his pals' kind or sensible response to a situation (like a child crying) and then reporting the actual reaction—cruel or even perversely self-damaging.

The story is confined to a very bad 24 hours in Pete's life, beginning with the burglary of his prized Atari set and continuing with brutal street encounters with both Puerto Rican kids and his own so-called friends. Matters are not helped by a fruitless conversation with his "loser" unemployed father, run-ins with other adults who consider him a hoodlum (not without reason), and the shocking violence of more than one older brother against a younger one. Although some of the dialogue sounds contrived, much of it is convincing. Though Pete may be intelligent and sensitive enough to lift himself out of a cycle of violence and despair someday (perhaps to become a novelist?), the hard shell of anger and hatred he is building around himself, fortified by the roughness of his slum neighborhood, offers us little hope for his future.

—Joseph Milicia
Univ. of Wisconsin—Sheboygan

13-4-0436

Rahman, Imad. *I Dream of Microwaves*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2004. 244 pp. ISBN 0-374-17401-6, \$23.00.

Rahman's debut collection of short stories about a wayward Pakistani youth in America is laced with an irreverent, devil-may-care sense of humor. The content of the stories reflects the author's experience as a "troubled" youth. He claims to have drifted into creative writing, accidentally discovering his talent for words.

Kareem Abdul-Jaffar, his affable protagonist, ambles through the desultory world of third-rate actors, porn stars, and other sidekicks barely making a livelihood. He impersonates criminals on the television show *America's Most Wanted* but loses his job due to his dubious ability to look evil. When mistakenly arrested for another criminal by bumbling authorities later, he teases an exasperated policeman by inquiring whether his performance was sufficiently menacing.

Eileen, his loopy girlfriend who is in a perpetual search for "causes," recruits him to impersonate a Bosnian refugee to

extract funds from her philanthropic grandmother for her latest fad. He also tries his hand at being a rental video repossessor, with all the zest of a bored soap opera star revived from his deathbed.

In the concluding story, Kareem acts as a pretend patient for a hospital video project. Ostensibly to add authenticity to his performance, he delivers an impromptu beating to the unsuspecting doctor whose role is to deliver bad news to him as the pretend patient. The video shoot promptly degenerates into chaos against a backdrop of sleazy doctor/nurse romances and alcohol and drug abuse among the staff.

Rahman's stories depict futility, transience, and failure in an urban culture where trivia is king. While this modern travelogue will amuse some readers immensely, it may leave others equally indifferent.

—Jaswinder Gundara
Coral Gables, Fla.

13-4-0437

Rizik, Marisela. *Of Forgotten Times*. Willimantic, Conn.: Curbstone Press, 2004. 215 pp. Trans. from Spanish by Isabel Z. Brown. ISBN 1-931896-00-3, \$14.95 (pb).

Set on an unnamed Caribbean Island during a time of political turmoil, *Of Forgotten Times* tells the story of its urban inhabitants and those of the remote village of La Costa, focusing on the women in two families. In both cases, Rizik's concern is with mother-daughter relationships amidst a turbulent and repressive socioeconomic background and romantic involvements. The women of the Parduz family—Lorenza, Herminia, and Sara—are descended from slaves who practiced voodoo in La Costa. Rolanda, Lorenza's mother, breaks her relationship with her daughter when the latter becomes a Christian and leaves the village. After the family rupture, Lorenza suffers from loneliness and abuse at the hands of a lover, Pedro Casals, from whom she conceives Herminia. Young Herminia is later forced to marry General Gutierrez, the island's cruel dictator, from which union comes Sara. Ultimately, Lorenza emerges with the strength, love, and wisdom to hold the family together.

In the city, Luisa Valverde and her daughter, Mercedes, similarly struggle to understand one another while trying to escape dire poverty. Without the approval of her mother, Mercedes becomes Gutierrez's mistress, until she is found unfaithful. Left for dead by the general's henchmen, Mercedes survives with the help of the compassionate Dr. Collado, whom she eventually marries. Mother and daughter find eventual reconciliation.

The narrative is well developed, with vivid and memorable characters, on an island rich in religious and mythic traditions that are skillfully captured. The novel is further enriched by the excellent portrayal of the social, cultural, and political life of the Caribbean. Isabel Brown's translation is excellent.

—Rosita Chazarreta-Rourke
Duquesne Univ.

▼ continued fiction

13-4-0438

Thomas-Graham, Pamela. *Orange Crushed: An Ivy League Mystery*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004. 288 pp. ISBN 0-684-84528-8, \$24.00.

Despite an obnoxious department head, Nikki Chase is still on track to become Harvard's first tenured African-American woman professor of economics. However, some people think she has recently spent too much time investigating murder, first at Harvard (*A Darker Shade of Crimson*, 1998) and then at Yale (*Blue Blood*, 1999).

Nikki travels to Princeton to present a conference paper, visit her graduate student brother, and connect with her mentor, Professor Earl Stokes. A leading member of Princeton's Economics Department, Stokes is also the chair of the university's African-American Studies Department. Rumors have him seriously considering an offer to accept a position at Harvard. Soon after Nikki's arrival, Stokes is murdered, his body found in the arson-destroyed remains of the new, only partially built African-American Studies building. Nikki's initial investigation ends when she must return to Harvard, but it continues when her brother becomes a suspect.

Thomas-Graham writes well and keeps the reader's interest throughout. She appears to have a good understanding of academic politics. Issues related to the leadership and direction of African-American Studies programs are addressed. One is reminded of the real-life academic headlines that occurred when noted scholar Cornel West left Harvard's Afro-American Studies Program for Princeton. Nikki Chase's romantic troubles continue in this novel, and there are some terrific supporting characters. This academic mystery is recommended for public library collections.

—Catherine Crohan
Siena College Library

13-4-0439

Tristam, Claire. *After*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2004. 194 pp. ISBN 0-374-10390-9, \$20.00.

Tristam's first novel is narrated by an unnamed woman still in shock a year after her husband's death at the hands of the terrorists responsible for the 9/11 tragedies. Her paralyzed emotional state prompts her to seduce a married Muslim man trying to forget the shooting death of his friend years ago at a demonstration against the Shah of Iran.

Their 24-hour tryst takes place in an isolated hotel on the California coast. Tristam was influenced, in part, by Alain Resnais's screenplay of *Hiroshima, Mon Amour*, which also uses a short, intense relationship as a catalyst for healing.

The woman is bewildered by her need to find a Muslim lover, whom she then forces to reenact the final moments of her husband's death. The loss of his friend caused him to become "the cautious, morbid sort of man he loathed in his youth." He wonders whether she had sensed in him his need to resolve his own tragedy.

Tristam examines stereotypes of Muslims and Americans and demonstrates them to be extraneous in this intimate

context. Indeed, these stereotypes need to be abandoned so that the characters can reclaim their individual identities. She skillfully uses intense eroticism and violence (in the form of sadomasochism) to enable them to tear away at their preconceived notions of one another. This intensity acts as a catalyst as the characters' feelings soon morph into tenderness and genuine caring and they come to understand one another as ordinary people.

—Joseph Ciccarelli
Ballston Lake, N.Y.

Poetry

13-4-0440

Berk, Ilhan and Otcu, Onder, eds. *Ilhan Berk: Selected Poems*. Jersey City: Talisman House, 2004. 92 pp. Trans. from Turkish by the editors. ISBN 1-58498-033-8, \$12.95.

Berk strikes readers with a distinctive way of writing Turkish poetry. His poems are surprisingly prose-like, with short sentences as in a typical modernist novel. Not only does this prose-like poetry subvert the basis of classical rhymed Ottoman poetry, but Berk develops a new fluidity in contemporary Turkish poetry. The prose-like form frees Berk to approach the "turbulent seashore" of human feeling.

These diverse poems remind us of John Donne's metaphysical poetry, as Berk not only defamiliarizes common objects—"love" becomes "a town" and "the garden" becomes "the muddy singer of the street"—but he also reveals his views in the form of dialogue. Secondly, Berk's poems are romantic in the sense that he strives to reconstruct life and reality within heightened imagination; yet meaning escapes him when "it looks at itself in the mirror three times a day." He thus seeks "face"—his idealized world, or love or "infinity" outside time—in view of the world's "repetition" and "the indifference of incurable words." Finally, Berk's individualistic modernist and postmodernist poems enjoy related uses of "plurality" and the image of the "market place" to subvert the "stagnancy" of coherent perspective, so that meaning is always "expansive" and in process of "renewal."

Berk's poems seem revolutionary and, as such, most valuable with regard to discussions about Turkish poetry. They represent his insight into human desire for an idealized meaning of life and suggest his deep yearning for a future of "long trips...of the poem at some sea shore."

—Ali Gunes
Kafkas Univ., Kars, Turkey

13-4-0441

Djafer, Ismael Ait. *Wail of the Arab Beggars of the Casbah*. Willimantic, Conn.: Curbstone Press, 2004. 70 pp. Trans. from French by Jack Hirschman. Bilingual (French-English) ed. ISBN 1-880684-96-9, \$12.95 (pb).

First published as a pamphlet in 1951, Djafer's stunning long poem has been newly translated from the French into English and released in this bilingual edition. It recounts the

brutal death of a nine-year-old beggar, Yasmina, at the hands of her starving father, and the violence attendant with abject poverty and starvation.

It is also a blistering critique of a society that prospers as its most unfortunate inhabitants, the beggars of the Casbah, starve. The poet's straightforward language and stark imagery immediately bring the reader into the pitiless world of both the starving and the prosperous. The poet not only draws us into this destitute world, one punctuated by songs of well-fed schoolchildren, but also lets us experience his rage at those who would grow rich: "I raise/My glass full of blood/to/the health of those in good health/I raise it/ and break it/furiously on the bar/of my anger."

The dichotomy between the rich and the poor is scathingly rendered by the poet's direct and vivid language and the story of the girl's tragic death. This is an astonishing poem in its imagery of the poor and hungry, whose hands are "long and thin and stretched like the roots/of potatoes," and of the society that perpetuates their condition.

—Marguerite María Rivas

Borough of Manhattan Community College, New York, N.Y.

13-4-0442

Gabbin, Joanne V., ed. **Furious Flower: African American Poetry from the Black Arts Movement to the Present.** Charlottesville: Univ. of Virginia Press, 2004. 318 pp. ISBN 0-8139-2252-6, \$59.95 (c); 0-8139-2253-4, \$19.95 (pb).

Gabbin's anthology emerges out of the Furious Flower poetry conference of 1994, which brought together African-American poets ranging from Gwendolyn Brooks to Kevin Young. The collection takes its title from Gwendolyn Brooks's 1968 poem, "The Second Sermon on the Warpland," which announces: "The time/cracks into furious flower. Lifts its face/all unashamed." This poem represents the "agonizing and beautiful rage" of the poets and poems.

Gabbin was guided by the poetry's commitment to "chronicling history" and promoting social change, and indeed, the collection offers a rich opportunity to explore the struggles and triumphs of African-American history through the poetic medium. In fact, this text would provide invaluable supplementary reading for American history courses. The poets are arranged chronologically by birth date.

Women poets are well represented, and while known luminaries like Amiri Baraka and Nikki Giovanni dominate, Gabbin rounds out the collection with selections from provocative, if lesser-known, emerging poets. Perhaps in part because of her intentional focus on "historical" and "political" poetry, Gabbin's selections from familiar poets are refreshing and not limited to the familiar anthologized pieces. While all decidedly activist in impulse, the poems in this collection are far from monotonous or univocal. These political critiques and visions weave together personal meditations on identity, culture, and ancestry with urgent calls to reclaim history and cultural agency. "after the cancer i was grateful to be alive./i am alive and furious," Lucille Clifton writes in her highly personal poem "Dialysis"; it is these twin

energies of celebration and fury that drive this powerful collection.

—Shealeen Meaney
Siena College

13-4-0443

Hospital, Carolina. **The Child of Exile: A Poetry Memoir.** Houston, Tex.: Arte Público Press, 2004. 96 pp. ISBN 1-55885-411-8, \$11.95 (pb).



Vázquez, Lourdes. **Bestiary: Selected Poems, 1986-1997.** Tempe, Ariz.: Bilingual Review Press, 2004. 200 pp. Trans. from Spanish by Rose Alcalá. ISBN 1-931010-20-X, \$17.00 (pb).

Arranged in chronological order, Vázquez's personal *Bestiary* is an account of the poet's inner exile, and this account is the primary focus of the text. The poet struggles with her own personal beasts by sharing an individual sense of exile and alienation, a reflection of her experiences with the "tangled roots" of her native Santurce, Puerto Rico. Crucial to an interpretation of the text is an understanding of the capricious nature of memory and the various uses to which the poet has put it. A collective representation of "the voices of women subjected to various levels of abandonment, betrayal, and confinement," Vázquez's work employs the motifs of identity, renewal, resistance, love, and maternity to bring together through memory a space of desire, "both intimate and social." Translator Alcalá sums it up best with her observation that Vázquez's characters "transform the language of despair, creating self-possession from vulnerability." It is indeed fitting for Alcalá to have interpreted the collection in these terms, since her English translation/interpretation works incredibly well with its Spanish counterpart to bring together the work of two very talented artists.

Hospital employs remembrances that bear specifically on the search for identity and the experiences of immigration and acculturation as strategies to reclaim a repressed past. She writes to the child she once was from the perspective of the child she can't remember. Hence, for Hospital, exile takes on psychological, cultural, and geopolitical characteristics. Having left Cuba with her parents in search of refuge in the United States, remembering takes on special importance for the poet as she traces her reluctant journey through her formative years as a Latina living in the United States. As her journey begins, at the core of her ambivalence is the amnesia, or perhaps repressed memories of her childhood past, and her denial of the painful nostalgia brought about by the memories she produces with her writing. As the collection comes to a close the subject's desire to write, and thus remember, wins out. Memory is vindicated and the reader is privileged to share the intimate details of one person's desire to belong.

▼ continued poetry

Life as poetry, as pleasing to the eyes as it is to the ears, is the way this reader experienced these two poignant and intellectually stimulating collections. While Hospital's selections deeply moved me with her wide range of conflicting themes and maternal metaphors, Vázquez's exotic/esoteric vignettes, and accompanying translations by Rosa Alcalá, took me to another level and challenged me to read beyond the surface of the text.

—Patrick O'Connell
Univ. of Central Arkansas

13-4-0444

Lee, Karen An-hwei. *In Media Res: Poems*. Louisville, Ky.: Sarabande Books, 2004. 88 pp. ISBN 1-932511-06-7, \$20.95 (cl); 1-932511-07-5, \$13.95 (pb).

In Medias Res contains a series of meditations on objects and ideas from A to Z. The objects of meditation range from physical things ("apricot") to abstract ideas ("the price of wisdom") to idiosyncratic fragments of language ("there is a buoy or a bird").

The entries vary significantly in form and content: Some are pizzicato-like and whimsical, some are lyrical prose poems, others are questions or evocations, still others are either actual definitions or wry variations thereof. Throughout these entries, Lee seems to revel in playing the linguistic guide, showing the reader an utter delight in the quirks and possibilities of language and of naming things. If this alphabetical listing of seemingly random experience implies in the poet a desire for some kind of external (even arbitrary) order to life, then it is not surprising that many of Lee's meditations fall on contemplating God and divine presence. Lee reveals her obsession with words and the Word, which reaches its most heavy-handed in the last stanza of the last entry, "Zoe": "We are made in His image./The angels have moved the stone./These words are translated as life."

—Linda Rui Feng
Columbia Univ.

13-4-0445

Liu, Timothy. *Of Thee I Sing*. Athens: Univ. of Georgia Press, 2004. 70 pp. ISBN 0-8203-2600-3, \$16.95 (pb).

Liu's ruminations in post-Patriot Act America are a far cry from the passionate and erotically tinged profession of faith in the *idea* of "America" concluding immigrant poet Li-Young Lee's Old Testament-inspired, Reagan-era love song. But neither are they a direct indictment of the blatant hypocrisy of the state's broad-reaching surveillance authority or license to "disappear" people at will, ostensibly terror's toll on freedom.

Instead, imagery like, "All the world day-trading suicide shares," "Drunken teens lighting up./Trapped inside an SUV plastered with American flags," and "needle stuck in the neck/of a woman giving head as a child/clings to her back, still sucking/on a pacifier," evoke something more like a metaphorical stench rising from the insidious internal decay

permeating a decomposing body waiting for release. The cumulative effect is that of a portrait of a corrupt and decadent society on the verge of imploding on itself like the late Roman Empire, a sense of impending doom presiding over imperial decline.

Liu's pointed imagery is rendered in meticulously metered verse, often in elegantly enjambed couplets or triplets or single end-stopped lines, with frequent references to art, music, and biblical or Greek mythology. His work evokes Rilke's and Rodin's contemplations of a fragmented, yet enduringly luminous and transformative sculpture of Apollo. The first section also includes a particularly ironic, yet resonantly poignant update on the original fall from grace in villanelle form. In fact, the poems in all three sections generally seem to explore tensions between morality and spirituality, reflecting a somewhat conflicted relationship with (the Christian) God.

—Lori Tsang
Washington, D.C.

13-4-0446

O'Hern, James. *Honoring the Stones*. Willimantic, Conn.: Curbstone Press, 2004. 72 pp. ISBN 1-931896-03-8, \$12.95 (pb).

O'Hern's remarkable first book of poems takes the reader on a spiritual journey from the poet's childhood on the Texas-Mexican border to his adulthood in Ireland as he searches for a sacred stone for his mother's grave. In the first section, "The Borderland," he artfully weaves mythology, spirituality, and reality in telling the story of his boyhood. On the borderland he was reared by a loving mother and a cruel father, and mentored by a Native friend. O'Hern's interweaving of Spanish, English, and Nahuatl invites us to become fully immersed in this world. Particularly memorable is "Prize Watermelon," in which the boy enters the "waking dream" of his spirit double, a rabbit, and lays claim to the spiritual world to which he is heir. The poet deftly communicates his reverence for this holy land.

In the book's second part, "The Search," the speaker travels to Ireland and to other lands on a quest for the stone. Through O'Hern's words we experience his journey profoundly. The title poem brilliantly ties together the book's themes—the speaker's mystical desert boyhood, his relationship with his father, and his quest for the "perfect stone" for his mother's grave. The search for the stone and its attendant mythology creates a unifying metaphor as the speaker searches for meaning in the past and for healing in the present.

—Marguerite María Rivas
Borough of Manhattan Community College, New York, N.Y.

13-4-0447

Thomas, Lorenzo. *Dancing on Main Street*. Minneapolis: Coffee House Press, 2004. 110 pp. ISBN 1-56689-156-6, \$15.00 (pb).

Largely a collection of previously published material, the poetry in Thomas's most recent book spans from the

Vietnam war to the tragedy of Amadou Diallo. Organized into five reflective poem series, these three decades of poems speak across historic, psychological, and geographic distances to examine the complexities of contemporary African-American cultural experience.

Best known for his involvement in the Black Arts and the Umbra movements, Thomas offers sharp critical readings of his world through poems that are emotionally intense and clear of didacticism. Coalescing around subjects from cultural displacement to the dim realities of the American Dream to crises of masculine intimacy, the series in this collection bespeak the frustrations and furies that plague all human relations in an unjust society.

Appearing simple in form and direct in voice, the poems are complex in their balance of narrative and lyric elements and their fluid integration of dialects from street to academy. These are poems that speak directly to the world without claiming authority over it: The speakers are down-to-earth, the stories real, and the expressions immediate. We may embrace or recoil from their expressions of rage, but their relevance and energy is undeniable.

—Shealeen Meaney
Siena College

Criticism

13-4-0448

Braham, Persephone. *Crimes Against the State, Crimes Against Persons: Detective Fiction in Cuba and Mexico*. Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 2004. 200 pp. ISBN 0-8166-4134-X, \$59.95 (cl); 0-8166-4135-8, \$19.95 (pb).

Cuban and Mexican writers started to cultivate the genre of detective fiction relatively late in the twentieth century. It was the rough-and-tough American detectives Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler who served as models for the detective story in Latin America. These writers rejected the British model because it was based on the assumption that governments and societies ran smoothly and that the criminal was an aberration; once the crime was solved, the world returned to its Victorian order and primness. The American version depicted a dark world of corrupt politicians and capitalists. The concept of a society that was slightly chaotic appealed to writers who had grown up in countries where the political system did not always work and where strong corrupt rulers proliferated.

Two types of detective narrative emerged in Cuba. The first were secret agent stories where the protagonist worked with a group of investigators consisting of policemen and spies to solve a crime or stop one from occurring. The nemesis was usually a CIA agent or a Cuban counterrevolutionary. Later, a second type evolved where the villains were not people outside of the revolution but often officials within the revolutionary government.

In Mexico, the detective novel became an avenue for criticism of the ruling power and the elite. The politicians and the aristocrats are the criminals, and the poor and the marginalized represent the forces of good.

Braham's volume is an epic study of this fascinating genre. It is easy reading for the prose flow, yet it abounds in critical, political, and even philosophical observations of a developing genre. As Holmes would say, this is an "elementary" study bound to satisfy all readers.

—Danilo H. Figueredo
Bloomfield College Library

13-4-0449

Karem, Jeff. *The Romance of Authenticity: The Cultural Politics of Regional and Ethnic Literatures*. Charlottesville: Univ. of Virginia Press, 2004. 256 pp. ISBN 0-8139-2254-2, \$55.00 (cl); 0-8139-2255-0, \$18.50 (pb).

Karem offers a valuable contribution to contemporary scholarly debates about regional and ethnic literatures. How is popular demand linked to regional and ethnic writers' abilities to convey "authentic" cultural material to readers? Contrary to contemporary notions that authenticity should be highly valued, Karem argues that it is a dangerously limited category of literary analysis that makes idols of a few authors and excludes other good writers. Drawing on an immense body of historical evidence to show how politics and economics often determine what literary works are considered authentic, he reveals how such forces restrict both what writers can publish and the ways that their works are judged.

Offering specific examples of his thesis, Karem focuses on the work of William Faulkner, Richard Wright, Ernest Gaines, Rolando Hinojosa, and Leslie Marmon Silko, and he explores how politics and economics determined which aspects of their works would be deemed authentic. If authors respond to the expectation that they act as cultural representatives, their works are celebrated. If they refuse, as Richard Gaines did, "politely" rejecting the role of "regional or racial representative," they receive a cold reception and relative obscurity. Leslie Marmon Silko, like the lesser-known Gaines, began with "an explicit disavowal of representative power, but she found herself singled out as a culturally representative author."

Karem states his dissatisfaction with the weight placed on ethnic or regional writers and with critics' limited view of seeing the text as "an organic outgrowth of the author and his or her culture rather than as a literary construction." Revealing the double standard of critics, Karem shows how subtleties are lost when authenticity limits the horizon of investigation. Instead, he opts for an approach that might examine "how these works transform one's concepts to permit the dialogism often celebrated but rarely practiced."

—Elaine R. Ognibene
Siena College

13-4-0450

Phillips, Carl. *Coin of the Realm*. St. Paul, Minn.: Graywolf Press, 2004. 256 pp. ISBN 1-55597-401-5, \$15.00 (pb).

Phillips's insightful and contemplating essays show us that the best art is art that forces us to examine ourselves, the

▼ continued criticism

world around us, and the space or gap that separates the two. What we learn is that the journey or exploration is the treasure and not the answer, because human examination is the key to human evolution.

Phillips makes use of a jazz form where he seamlessly moves between and intertwines Western and Eastern philosophies and is able to reconcile them under the notion that art is the bridge that all mankind uses to understand itself, others, and life. His essays transform literary criticism from cultural warfare to a way for humans to understand each other by exploring the art that each produces.

Phillips raises the exploration of alternative readings to an art, asserting that it is the best way to gain a fuller, more three-dimensional understanding of the world in which we live as opposed to the notion that one reading makes another reading invalid. In this, he affirms Barbara Christian's notion that writing is not a horse race but a way of making sense of the world. Phillips shows that understanding comes from a type of discourse that demands assertion based on research, exploration, and one's willingness to make a declaration and flexibility to examine one's own declaration. Conflict, especially in language, is natural and should be embraced as a way to grow. Ultimately, the job of the poet and critic is to help us understand, not denounce us for not understanding.

—C. Liegh McInnis
Psychedelic Literature, Jackson, Miss.

13-4-0451

Wright, Michelle M. *Becoming Black: Creating Identity in the African Diaspora*. Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 2004. 282 pp. ISBN 0-8223-3211-6, \$79.95 (cl); 0-8223-3288-4, \$22.95 (pb).

Wright provides an argument that produces a sense of history and privilege for black people across the globe that Western European conceptions of black identity have worked diligently to undermine. She offers a history of philosophical thought on the topic of race as it relates to black identity, in order to present a discursive "unity of diversity" that supports a diasporic conceptualization of black identity—that is, an understanding of black people in the world as a group that shares similar characteristics that are partially but not wholly defined by national identity.

The author starts with a consideration of the ways in which writers like Thomas Jefferson and Arthur Gobineau used the work of philosopher G. W. F. Hegel in order to "prove" the dominance of Western European culture and the "Otherness" of black people. However, Wright points out, Hegel's theory had a logical problem that was defined by Frederick Engels as "the negation of the negation." The majority of the text demonstrates how that fallacy is exploited in the works of black writers and philosophers Frantz Fanon, W. E. B. Du Bois, and Aimé Césaire. The works of these great black thinkers, Wright argues, is evidence that "peoples of African descent in the west might in fact possess their own body of sophisticated counter discourse" that constitutes more than just a negation of historical subjectivities

produced for and about them. This text is a sophisticated read, but well worth the work.

—Leslie Antonette
East Stroudsburg Univ. of Pennsylvania

Visual and Performing Arts

13-4-0452

Anderson, Henry Clay. *Separate, But Equal: Images from the Segregated South*. New York: PublicAffairs Press, 2004. 160 pp. Illus. with photos by the author. Essays by Shawn Wilson, Clifton Taulbert, and Mary Panzer. ISBN 1-58648-236-X, \$16.95.

This extraordinary volume chronicles the life work of H. C. Anderson, a professional photographer in Greenville, Mississippi. Although these are just some items from the collection, the photos capture life in Greenville, individuals and groups, the civil rights struggle, murders, weddings, and Coleman High School events. On a mission to locate a replacement photograph of his deceased mother, Shawn Wilson stumbled across a treasure trove of black-and-white photographs and negatives when he visited the photographer. Wilson took the entire collection with the understanding that he would, somehow, share it with the world.

During the time of Jim Crow laws in the South, Anderson photographed the elite black community of Greenville. The sharp, clear black-and-white images document a time, a place, the black people, and the events of an era gone by. In the midst of turmoil, hard times, and the never-ending oppression of racism, the photographer illuminates in pictures what black culture has lost: a sense of family and community, ethics and morals, and the style and grace of a proud "colored" community indicated in each photograph. This is sure to be the focal point of conversation when placed on any living room coffee table or in a library.

—Hattie H. Vines
Duke Univ. Medical School Library

13-4-0453

Bailey, Garrick and Swan, Daniel C. *Art of the Osage*. Seattle: St. Louis Art Museum in association with Univ. of Washington Press, 2004. 221 pp. Illus. Contributions by John W. Nunley and E. Sean StandingBear. ISBN 0-295-98387-6, \$40.00.

Without reserve, this is a valuable and timely book in the growing literature of Native arts. The American psyche is set with tribal names—Mohawk, Navajo, Apache, Sioux, Cherokee—but fails to understand that there are hundreds of distinctive nations, each with their own mythologies and life form expressions represented in their arts. The Osage nation is just one such complex culture.

Native nations, as broadly defined cultural and linguistic groups, often overlap, and often the art forms evolve as a

sharing among closely related tribes. Some, however, rise above their neighbors, in both style and technique. To say that the Osage excelled in beadwork and ribbonwork is an understatement, notwithstanding the influences and contributions of other nations. Like any great cultural art form, the Osage arts combined cross-cultural dynamics with tradition and movement, especially during times of political relocation and social upheaval.

Amazing examples of arts are brilliantly displayed in full color, and the writing is surprisingly readable—not the kind of dry, academic, Eurocentric anthropological hogwash designed to impress a doctoral committee. It is written for us, with charm and lightness, accessible to readers who have never heard of the Osage Nation. It is not superficial, however, but rather a meaningful exploration into a tribal cosmology that bursts into life with all the color and excitement of a fireworks display. I recommend this book highly for its sensitivity, beautiful presentation, and outstanding format.

—Joel Monture (Mohawk)
Montgomery Center, Vt.

13-4-0454

Benes, Rebecca. *Native American Picture Books of Change: The Art of Historic Children's Editions*. Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico Press, 2004. 176 pp. Illus. Foreword by Gloria Emerson. ISBN 0-89013-471-5, \$45.00.

All children's books, no matter what the content, contain certain assumptions about life and ways of seeing the world that are encoded—purposefully or not—into the text or subtext. From the 1920s through the 1940s, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) hired white linguists to create orthographies for what had been oral languages and asked white educators, writers, and ethnologists to mine traditional Indian stories for “folktales.” The result was a bilingual series called “Indian Life Readers”—new stories based on Indians' experiences as these cultural outsiders perceived them. Illustrated by young Indian artists who were going to school or living in communities and towns outside the reservations, most of the books nevertheless reflected more the Christian ethics of the BIA, the agency that oversaw their production, than the traditional values of the Indian children for whom they were intended. The prevailing theory of the time was that books with familiar images and languages could be used more effectively to acculturate this captive audience of children, most of whom attended BIA boarding schools. To some extent this was marginally successful, producing children who could read and write in two languages but who belonged to neither the white world nor the Indian one.

All of this seems to have escaped Benes. As an art collector and entrepreneur, she is very good at describing lines, brushstrokes, color, shading, and light, but she is abysmal at analyzing the content of these books. Of one of the very worst in the series, *Five Little Kachinas*, she writes:

In the story, when a little Hopi girl named Blue Flower goes to sleep, the five little carved kachinas

that are hanging on the wall come to life in her dreams. They are Mudhead, who because his head is made of mud has no sense at all, Deer, Eagle, Corn Tassel, and Squash Blossom. The kachinas, predictably led into trouble by the obstreperous Mudhead, literally fall into their adventures.... This book about diminutive kachina dolls is especially appealing. DeHuff skillfully combines elements of folklore and realism with whimsical tales of the playful kachinas.

Maybe one would have to be Hopi to know the intense pain and shame this reducing of their deities to diminutive little troublemakers—this mockery of their spiritual traditions—inflicted on the Hopi children.

The cultural outsiders working for the BIA may have meant well. The books are beautiful to look at, and the talent of several young Indian artists won public recognition. They later became mentors for a new generation of Indian artists. Yet while the books have meaning and worth in a historical sense, there needs to be an acknowledgment of the great damage that they caused. Emerson's beautifully written, insightful foreword about indigenous languages and story, her own experiences as an artist and educator of Diné heritage, and the differences between the BIA programs and the Indian-directed language projects that came after ought to be developed into a book.

—Beverly Slapin
Oyate, Berkeley, Calif.

13-4-0455

Chasteen, John Charles. *National Rhythms, African Roots: The Deep History of Latin American Popular Dance*. Albuquerque: Univ. of New Mexico Press, 2004. 257 pp. ISBN 0-8263-2941-1, \$22.95.

What does an English teacher and eventual history professor find in Cali, Colombia? Actually, it was the dance that found Chasteen, who three decades later returned the favor by meticulously researching Latin neo-African dance forms of the 1800s.

National Rhythms, African Roots is a testament to a bounty of under-utilized nineteenth-century resources that were meticulously scoured for information on the dance that evolved from the African diaspora in South America. The book leaps from Buenos Aires to Havana, Paris, and Africa, tracking a nonlinear matrix of influences that were filtered by indigenous people, colonizers, and slaves in Latin America. This fusion founded dance styles that celebrated hip articulation, intimate contact, and contrapuntal rhythms. The cacophony of proximal diverse cultures infused social dancing that was described as “furious, infernal, unrestrained.” Chasteen has found the genome of today's salsa, tango, samba, and rumba, and his Nobel for world dance research is sure to follow.

—Toni Smith
Troy, N.Y.

▼ continued visual and performing arts

13-4-0456

Farrington, Lisa E. **Faith Ringgold**. Petaluma, Calif.: Pomegranate Communications, 2004. 128 pp. Illus. Series: The David C. Driskell Series of African American Art, Volume III. ISBN 0-7649-2761-2, \$35.00.

Ringgold, the African-American artist, has been making art for 50 years. Although she is now recognized by the art world, it was not always so. As a black woman concerned with both race and gender issues, she faced many hurdles. Farrington tells the facts of Ringgold's life while examining the different periods of the artist's oeuvre. Ringgold first became known during the 1960s for her frankly political American People Series. Paintings from the series, such as "The Flag is Bleeding," "Die," and "Cocktail Party," have become iconic. Ringgold was an activist in the emerging black arts movement, demonstrating at the Whitney Museum in 1968 for its omission of black artists in an exhibition of 1930s works.

The women's liberation movement also drew her attention. After seeing Tibetan thangkas (paintings on silk bordered in brocade), Ringgold began exploring the use of fabrics to comment on the role of women and political events. Working with textiles, traditionally a woman's medium, satisfied Ringgold, whose mother had been a designer. She created masks and dolls, incorporating beads, raffia, and even gourds in some. Her story quilts, for which she is best known, combine paint, writing, and pieced fabrics. They weave together the stories of everyday people with historical figures and events.

Farrington's formal examination of Ringgold's art is a valuable addition to art collections. Read in conjunction with Ringgold's 1995 autobiography, *We Flew Over the Bridge*, it provides a rich picture of an important American artist.

—Betty Kaplan Gubert
New York, N.Y.

13-4-0457

Gabbard, Krin. **Black Magic: White Hollywood and African American Culture**. Piscataway, N.J.: Rutgers Univ. Press, 2004. 336 pp. ISBN 0-8135-3383-X, \$62.00 (cl); 0-8135-3384-8, \$19.95 (pb).

Thanks to the work of Eric Lott (*Love and Theft*, 1993) and others, we know white culture routinely absorbs elements of black culture with no sense of obligation. Gabbard's study of Hollywood's use (and abuse) of black culture continues this observation, arguing that "Black music and black masculinity, both of which are seldom directly acknowledged in these movies, are crucial obsessions among filmmakers and audiences, driving the plots of films much more than is immediately apparent."

Gabbard is at his best when revealing the power of black musical artists to shape films about whites, such as the jazz soundtracks to *The Bridges of Madison County* and *The Talented Mr. Ripley*. In the former, perpetually repressed whites are sexually freed by the strains of black jazz singer Johnny

Hartman, and in the latter whites achieve cool through knowledge of black artists. Gabbard also convincingly argues that "jazz acting" of the late Marlon Brando—his sullen, emotional, violent demeanor—was a conscious adoption of behaviors associated with African-American culture. He argues also that the unusual number of films featuring black magical figures that help whites (*The Green Mile*, *The Legend of Bagger Vance*) reflects a white fantasy that "even if African Americans are in fact judging us, they nevertheless find us to be worth saving. If only it were so." At times the text is frustrating; Gabbard, a self-described jazz aficionado, takes self-reflexivity to new heights as he weaves copious autobiographical detail, particularly about jazz collecting, into the main text itself. Still, it is an interesting read.

—Karen Ward Mahar
Siena College

13-4-0458

Hill, Grant; Wardlaw, Alvia, ed. **Something All Our Own: The Grant Hill Collection of African American Art**. Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 2004. 192 pp. Illus. ISBN 0-8223-3306-6, \$49.95 (cl); 0-8223-3318-X, \$24.95 (pb).

Grant Hill, a six-time NBA All-Star, is also an art collector. In 1990 he began collecting art like his parents, Calvin and Janet Hill. Hill concentrated on African-American artists, both established and upcoming. Forty-six paintings, lithographs, and sculptures have been selected to travel, ending in November 2005 at Duke University, Hill's alma mater.

The distinguished artists Romare Bearden and Elizabeth Catlett are represented by 13 and 21 selections, respectively. Other noted artists include Hughie Lee-Smith, Phoebe Beasley, John Biggers, Arthello Beck Jr., Malcolm Brown, John Coleman, and Edward Jackson. Each color plate has commentary by Alvia J. Wardlaw, the art historian, and by Hill.

The eclectic group of essayists includes the Hills, father and son, as well as historian John Hope Franklin, sports writer William C. Rhoden, and coach Mike Krzyzewski. Wardlaw contributes a generous historical overview of collecting African-American art. Equally valuable are the essays on Bearden and Catlett by Elizabeth Alexander and Beverly Guy-Sheftall, respectively.

Hill is firmly in the tradition of generations of black collectors who always sought to vanquish prejudice by highlighting the accomplishments of blacks other than "singing, dancing and dunking." Introducing this book to sports-minded teenagers would help Hill attain his goal. He and his father, both superstars, are clear that sports are only one part of life. Of course the catalogue is recommended for art collections, as well as for young adults.

—Betty Kaplan Gubert
New York, N.Y.

13-4-0459

Kasprzycki, Sylvia S. and Stambrau, Doris I., eds. **Lifeworlds—Artscaapes: Contemporary Iroquois Art**.

Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 2004. 92 pp. Illus. ISBN 3-88270-409-8, \$22.50 (pb).

—Toni Smith
Troy, N.Y.

This exhibition of contemporary Iroquois art originated in Frankfurt, Germany, in May 2003. It will travel to Zurich, Switzerland, and to Ontario, Canada, ending in March 2005. Conceived to complement an exhibition of Native Americana collected over two centuries, it gives modern artists the opportunity to voice their concerns about being Iroquois. The 12 artists featured are Richard Glazer Danay, Katsitsionni Fox, Kelly Greene, Tom Huff, G. Peter Jemison, Peter B. Jones, Alan J. Michelson, Shelley Niro, Roger Parish, Ryan Rice, Jolene Rickard, and Jeffrey M. Thomas.

For each artist there is a biographical sketch with photograph, exhibition history, selected readings, as well as many illustrations in color of their work. Included are the artists' own statements of their artistic and philosophical concerns. A common theme is the relation of past to present, or "having a foot in two canoes," as Jones puts it. Land and landscapes are also a repeated theme, which, given early colonial history, is no surprise. In fact, land continues to play a large role in the life of the Iroquois.

The essays are by the curators and other scholars, as well as by four of the artists. The essays examine the history and folk mythologies of the Iroquois, and they offer insight into the emotional and creative lives of the artists profiled here. Recommended for collections of American art.

—Betty Kaplan Gubert
New York, N.Y.

13-4-0460

Lemon, Ralph. *Tree: Belief/Culture/Balance*. Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan Univ. Press, 2004. 280 pp. Illus. ISBN 0-8195-6699-3, \$34.95 (pb).

Lemon, a remarkable dancer and gifted choreographer, has found a literary voice that transcends the ephemera of the fleeting performance. Setting out with pad and pen, he travels to India, Indonesia, China, and Japan, the route of Buddha, recording his experiences. Organized by date and photographs, *Tree* is a poignant diary that possesses glimmers of insights questioning race, tradition, and the meaning of life: "If you don't seek, you can see everything....One must wait until the last moment because things will inevitably change. It is the culture." On completing his journey, Lemon returns to the studio with collaborators from his own art world and visiting artists from other nations to create a performance work that makes Lemon himself stretch as conductor of movement and ideas. The content of the dance is determined by its participants, ancient literature, and questions: "Narration presupposes the loss of the reality narrated—it makes no sense to tell a story to someone who has witnessed, but when the real has slipped away in space and time—all that is left is a dark room where words ring in the ear."

This book is a performance in itself, tossing the reader from moment to moment, making us question and affirm everything we ever felt to be a truism.

13-4-0461

Manning, Susan. *Modern Dance, Negro Dance: Race in Motion*. Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 2004. 296 pp. ISBN 0-8166-3736-9, \$34.95.

Why did Martha Graham and Doris Humphrey soar to the top of the modern dance field as opposed to Helen Tamiris, who was Jewish, or Edna Guy and Pearl Primus, who were African American? Could it be that opportunities favored the white ruling class in the new art of modern dance? Did Katherine Dunham transcend the placement of the black dancer in cameo movie roles (Bill Robinson)? Did ideas, such as presenting an all-male cast (José Limón) or dance without meaning (Merce Cunningham) take the higher ground in birthing contemporary dance?

Manning tells us the whole story: the choreography that shaped the twentieth-century dance world, the passion and expression that was forged from each artist, and how the world responded. For decades to come, dance scholars and teachers will thank Manning for her research and analysis, which puts this history down in one book. Prior to *Modern Dance, Negro Dance*, we had to assemble fragments of texts and articles to tell this story.

—Toni Smith
Troy, N.Y.

13-4-0462

Orovio, Helio. *Cuban Music from A to Z*. Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 2004. 248 pp. ISBN 0-8223-3212-4, \$24.95 (pb).

A loud and collective sigh of relief is in order from serious scholars of Cuban music. Though long overdue, yes, it is finally here. This handy and much anticipated compendium in English about Cuban music is an invaluable resource for scholars with research interests in multicultural music, especially with emphasis on Cuban music. The book not only contains photographs and alphabetized biographical sketches of selected major Cuban musicians, but also provides descriptions and pictures of some musical instruments associated with Cuban music. It is broad in its scope; the content of the book covers both classical and nonclassical musicians and music, thus making it an adequate initial one-stop research handbook.

Its publication in English at this time is quite critical, especially as scholarly interest in multicultural musicology is on the rise. It is particularly noteworthy that this handy encyclopedia also presents selected and representative lists of compositions by major composers. The appendix lists over 60 musical instruments, Cuban music magazines, orchestras, bands, and theaters.

While no book could ever be everything to everyone, *Cuban Music from A to Z* comes quite close. It is a must-have book for enthusiasts of Cuban music whether scholarly or casual.

—Paul Konye
Siena College

▼ continued visual and performing arts

13-4-0463

Pacini Hernández, Deborah; Fernández L'Hoeste, Héctor; and Zolov, Eric, eds. **Rockin' Las Américas: The Global Politics of Rock in Latin/o America**. Pittsburgh, Pa.: Univ. of Pittsburgh Press, 2004. 432 pp. ISBN 0-8229-4226-7, \$60.00 (cl); 0-8229-5841-2, \$24.95 (pb).

This compilation of 17 essays on the rock music cultures of Latin America and Latin communities in the United States identifies the study of Latin/o rock as an unfortunate gap in music scholarship, a gap that has led to a general belief that rock is solely a North American and European expression. The articles address such topics as rock as an expression of Latin American nationalism; race, class, and gender issues; and an identification of salient features that make Latin American rock unique.

Readers will recognize the name of famous rock historian Reebee Garofalo. Other authors include sociologists, ethnomusicologists, historians, anthropologists, and two practicing Latin American rock musicians. This volume spans a wide geographical area, with the Caribbean, Mexico, Central and South America, and the United States represented.

As with many global studies where scholars are asked to condense their findings of what could easily have been a full-length book into a shorter article, the essays here are intense and may be difficult to read for those unacquainted with Latin/o rock. As an introduction to the field, first read the afterword, "A Changeable Template of Rock in *Las Américas*" by George Yúdice; it is very readable and extremely helpful. The editors include a clearly labeled map of the cities they cover, copious endnotes, and a decent bibliography. Perhaps the bibliography would have served us better if each essay contained its own.

For those readers interested in obtaining the global Latin rock picture, a time line spanning 1940-2000 may perhaps be of some use, though it is not comprehensive.

—Christine Condaris
Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts

13-4-0464

Petridis, Constantine. **South of the Sahara: Selected Works of African Art**. Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 2004. 128 pp. Published in collaboration with the Cleveland Museum of Art. ISBN 0-940717-79-4, \$45.00 (cl); 0-940717-76-X, \$30.00 (pb).

Those of us who can never see enough African art owe the Cleveland Museum of Art an excited thank-you for this catalogue. The museum published it to celebrate the opening of its collection of African art in a new gallery. Some works were collected as early as 1915, a year before the museum opened.

The curator, Constantine Petridis, introduces the collection, focusing on history and the role that African aesthetics have played in Western art. Acknowledging that Europeans and Africans look at African art objects differently, he challenges art institutions to include many more "native voices" in future exhibitions of non-Western art.

Nevertheless, Petridis has selected 42 works of art for their "sheer beauty," his words. Each is shown in a full-color photograph and described. Included are provenance and suggestions for further reading. For some objects, additional photographs show their use in ceremonies. There is also a map with the location of the 30 different ethnic groups whose art is represented.

A sampling of the selected pieces includes a Nok (Nigeria) terra cotta head, which has been dated between 600 B.C. and A.D. 250; an elaborately and delicately carved antelope head-dress (Mali); a Brancusi-like serpent headdress (Guinea); and an exquisite wood and bead comb (Congo). Recommended for all collections of African art as a valuable scholarly addition.

—Betty Kaplan Gubert
New York, N.Y.

13-4-0465

Ramírez, Mari Carmen, ed. with Theresa Papanikolas. **Questioning the Line: Gego in Context**. Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 2004. 193 pp. Illus. Bilingual (Spanish-English) ed. ISBN 0-89090-119-8, \$29.95 (pb).

Questioning the Line makes a valuable addition to that niche in recent art criticism that exposes and examines the work of noteworthy creators whose work was executed outside the geographical epicenters of modernism and postmodernism, lending these artists' contributions a greater anonymity than their vitality warrants. The Venezuelan artist Gertrud Goldschmidt (1912–1994), known as Gego, is given extensive attention in the form of individual essays by five different authors, all but one an expert on Latin American art. Editor Ramírez champions Gego's "outstanding contribution to the deep-seated interrogation of art's nature and function." What follows is a serious and scholarly examination of the artist's relationships to and uniqueness from that major vein in modernism—broadly grouped under the heading of geometric abstraction—that runs from the Constructivists, through Paul Klee and Mondrian, to the likes of Eva Hesse. The Ramírez essay reveals both the essential strengths and weaknesses of the book taken as a whole. Her enthusiasm for Gego's work is always genuine and sometimes engaging, yet the aura of boosterism strikes me as heavy-handed. Only Guy Brett's closing essay strikes the proper balance between unabashed wonder and restrained rationality.

The illustrations of Gego's work printed in this handsomely designed book whet the appetite for more. So too does the connection with innate elements of the Latin American and Venezuelan culture, a key component that is overwhelmed by the dense and labored postmodernist language that tries too hard to carve out an intellectual space for an artist whose work deserves more.

—John Caputo
Siena College

13-4-0466

Rous, Laura Samsom and Samsom, Hans. **Tree of Forgetfulness**. Sterling, Va.: Stylus Publishing/KIT, 2004.

unp. Illus. with photos by the authors. ISBN 90-6832-536-1, \$33.95 (pb).

Dutch photographers Laura Samsom Rous and Hans Samsom have collaborated to produce an unusual book. Following the last part of the route of the transatlantic slave trade, stretching from Senegal to Angola, they have photographed the present-day people and landscapes of Ouidah, Benin. Ouidah was a major port from which African captives were deported. The brief text (in English, French, Dutch, and Sranan) tells the story of the trade in humans that continued for 300 years.

Other photographs are portraits of the descendants of Africans now living in Surinam (a former Dutch possession) and the Netherlands, as well as panoramas of these countries. From Africa to Surinam the migration was forced, but the one to the Netherlands occurred after Surinam's independence in 1975. Surinam's population is 450,000, and Surinamese in the Netherlands number about 315,000.

The brilliant photographs of Benin, Surinam, and Amsterdam are beautiful and evocative of the slave trade, often assisted by the kings of Dahomey (now Benin). The direct looks of the subjects of the portraits resonate with their history of disruption and migration. For further information there are Internet addresses and a brief note about slavery in the world today. For collections of photography, history, and Africana.

—Betty Kaplan Gubert
New York, N.Y.

13-4-0467

Scott, Georgia. *Headwraps: A Global Journey*. New York: PublicAffairs, 2003. 210 pp. Illus. with photos by the author. ISBN 1-58648-109-6, \$35.00.

Many of us have seen headwraps, but how often have we asked ourselves about their cultural significance? *New York Times* art director Scott's fascinating travelogue features beautiful and often stunning photographs, insight, and sometimes humor. It is also a historical account of the way humans have fashioned their sense of identity through both aesthetic and practical choices.

Scott traveled across five continents and 32 countries to document headwraps and discovered that the traditions of headwraps are disappearing or changing as increasing numbers of people adapt to more Western codes of dress. In some instances, head coverings can reflect strict traditional guidelines of style. In others, independent and unique designs appear.

The photographs exhibit profound respect, showing the innate dignity and sense of pride of the wearers. Some take time to construct their turbans carefully because, ultimately, they are reflections of the person. As one man in India stated, "There's no excuse for a sloppy turban." Sometimes traditional headwrap styles are influenced by the events of war or colonial domination; they may be banned or used as symbols of resistance to oppression.

Although Scott strives to respect the people she encounters, occasionally her intentions appear to be at odds with

the subject's cultural frame of reference.

Headwraps is a fascinating transcontinental sweep through time in search of the common as well as distinct features of aesthetic adornment that are important parts of the fabric of human experience.

—Stephen Tyson
Siena College

Biography/Autobiography

13-4-0468

Al-Zayyät, Montasser. *The Road to Al-Qaeda: The Story of Bin Laden's Right-Hand Man*. Sterling, Va.: Pluto Press, 2004. 137 pp. Trans. from Arabic by Ahmed Fekry. Introduction by Ibrahim M. Abu-Rabi. Series: Critical Studies on Islam. ISBN 0-7453-2176-3, \$65.00 (cl); 0-7453-2175-5, \$19.95 (pb).

Egyptian Islamist lawyer al-Zayyät's fascinating book offers an insider's view into the original ideological and spiritual underpinnings that led to the eventual cooperation between Egyptian Islamist groups and Al-Qaeda. Zayyät, one of the more influential members of the Egyptian Gama'a al-Islamiyya, an Islamist organization that advocated and carried out militant attacks against the state of Egypt during the 1980s and 1990s, once embraced the idea of militant resistance to unjust rule.

Zayyät describes the impact of torture he and others suffered in Egyptian prisons following the assassination of former Egyptian military strongman Anwar al-Sadat in 1981. In particular, he focuses in on bin-Laden's second in command, Ayman al-Zawahiri, a man Zayyät met in an Egyptian prison at that time. Zayyät's detailed insights offer the reader an analysis of al-Zawahiri's path to becoming the strategic planner behind the September 11, 2001, attacks on the United States. Critically examining Al-Qaeda's objectives and strategies, Zayyät provides the reader with insights into al-Zawahiri's choices and forcefully condemns the attacks on the United States as a product of angry and vengeful Islamists who never cared about the consequences of their acts, nor bothered to take into consideration the impact those acts would have on Muslims worldwide. Zayyät appropriately faults Al-Qaeda for having marginalized all Islamist movements today, even those he considers purely spiritual and mainstream, which now also face a struggle for their survival within their own states because of the actions taken by radicals.

—Vera Eccarius-Kelly
Siena College

13-4-0469

Awret, Irene. *They'll Have to Catch Me First: An Artist's Coming of Age in the Third Reich*. Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 2004. 326 pp. Foreword by Walter Laqueur. ISBN 0-299-18830-2, \$26.95.

▼ continued biography/autobiography

Lerner, Bernice. *The Triumph of Wounded Souls: Seven Holocaust Survivors' Lives*. Notre Dame, Ind.: Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 2004. 312 pp. ISBN 0-268-04227-6, \$65.00 (cl); 0-268-03365-X, \$28.00 (pb).

Saidel, Rochelle G. *Jewish Women of Ravensbrück Concentration Camp*. Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 2004. 268 pp. ISBN 0-299-19860-X, \$29.95.

This trio of captivating and multifaceted writings is devoted to Holocaust survivors from several European countries: their lives and sufferings during the Holocaust years in Nazi concentration and death camps, how they survived, and their fates in the post-World War II years after most of them left Europe and emigrated to the United States and Israel.

Awret's book is a moving autobiography of a German Jewish portrait artist who was confined to a Gestapo-run transit camp (Mechelen) in Belgium, but spared deportation to Auschwitz (unlike the majority of her fellow inmates) due to her artistic talent; she was assigned to a painters' workshop where she painted numbers that prisoners wore around their necks and on linen armbands. This is the first book that gives a full, firsthand account of the Mechelen transit camp, from which 24,906 Jews (men, women, children) and 351 Gypsies were sent to Auschwitz extermination camp; only 335 survived. As a gifted narrator, with an artistic keen eye for detail and a good sense of humor, the author vividly describes her life in Germany, as a refugee in Brussels after Hitler came to power, her arrest, and camp detention. The book also offers dozens of black-and-white and color illustrations representing the author's collection of drawings and paintings from the time she was imprisoned.

Saidel's book focuses on the large and overcrowded Ravensbrück concentration camp, where 132,000 women from 23 countries were imprisoned during the period 1939-1945, and only 15,000 victims survived. Jewish women represented about 20 percent of the total prison population; they were held with political prisoners, Jehovah's Witnesses, prostitutes, lesbians, Gypsies, criminals, and prisoners of war. The camp served as a vast arena for murdering by overcrowding, exhausting slave labor, starvation, torture, shooting, medical experimentation, lethal injections, and gassing. The lives and fate of the Jewish women are described based on the author's very thorough research (it lasted 20 years): hundreds of interviews with survivors and witnesses in the United States, Israel, Canada, Brazil, Hungary, Sweden, Australia; archival materials; oral histories; photos; drawings; and numerous books mentioned in the bibliography. The experiences of the Jewish women are presented in the context of the entire female population of the camp, including lives before and after the Holocaust, the struggle to survive, problems specific to women, hygiene issues, friendships, fears of rape, hopes, mutual help, Bible studies, art, and other activities to lift the spirit.

Lerner's volume consists of seven fascinating essays on two women and five men who were Holocaust survivors from Germany, Hungary, Poland, Latvia, the Netherlands, and France. All were traumatized children during the Holocaust years; they endured terror and torture and enormous obsta-

cles, and after World War II, they immigrated to the United States. They found inner energies not only to learn English and make up for the years of lost education, but also to pursue academic careers, becoming successful college and university professors. The essays also reveal the social backgrounds, distinct personalities, religious and philosophical orientations, and moral strengths of each survivor, and the possibilities for transcendence. In the introduction, the author, himself a child of Holocaust survivors, points out that "stories that rise from deep suffering can provide the most potent remedies for past, present and even future ills."

Given the intrinsic value of the books under review, plus their moderate prices, they are fully recommended as timely and useful additions to any library collection of Holocaust literature.

—Vladimir F. Wertsman
New York, N.Y.

13-4-0470

Eubanks, W. Ralph. *Ever Is a Long Time: A Journey into Mississippi's Dark Past*. New York: Basic Books, 2003. 234 pp. ISBN 0-7382-0570-2, \$24.95.

Born in 1957, Eubanks was too young to experience personally the civil rights movement that rocked Mississippi in the early 1960s. His middle-class parents protected him from the worst indignities of the Jim Crow system. His first direct encounter with racism came in eighth grade when he entered a previously all-white school as part of a sweeping court-ordered integration plan. After finishing high school he attended the University of Mississippi, graduating in 1978. He then left the state with no intention of returning.

Ever Is a Long Time is a memoir prompted by the discovery of his parents' names on a list of suspected civil rights activists compiled by the Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission. His quest to learn why this agency, dedicated to the preservation of white supremacy, identified his parents as possible troublemakers brought him back to his native state. After poring over Sovereignty Commission files, he revisited Mount Olive, his hometown, and interviewed some of the people mentioned in the files. He discovered that the grandfather of one childhood friend had been a spy for the commission, and the superintendent of schools had been a member of the KKK. Eubanks's account of his return to his boyhood home is a moving testament to the enduring power of place and memory. Delving into Mississippi's sordid history forced him to confront and resolve conflicting feelings about his heritage.

—Paul T. Murray
Siena College

13-4-0471

Hart, Armando. *Aldabonazo: Inside the Cuban Revolutionary Underground*. New York: Pathfinder Press, 2004. 390 pp. ISBN 0-87348-968-3, \$25.00 (pb).

As the fiftieth anniversary of the Cuban Revolution approaches, there will surely be an increase in books analyzing

the event. None could be more important to the historian than *Aldabonazo* (aldabonazo is a warning knock on the door). The author was part of the revolutionary movement from its beginning, joining the Revolutionary National Movement (MNR) following the coup of Fulgencio Batista in March 1952. As the revolution heated, Hart was one of the organizers of the July 26 Movement's urban underground, which became known as the Llano (plains). This network was vital not only for giving aid and information to Fidel Castro in the Sierra Maestra Mountains, but also for carrying out propaganda and sabotage as well as organizing workers and students.

At the conclusion of the revolution, Hart was appointed to various positions, including minister of education (directing a mass literacy campaign), minister of culture, and the council of state (a position he currently holds). Clearly an insider, his observations represent the views and ideas of the revolution, though at times his rhetoric (and that of the three prefaces) seems to be bent on justifying the revolution at a time when Marxist-Leninist communism and communist regimes have failed. Nevertheless, the book is artfully divided into chapters, with Hart's commentary followed by selected documents. To the reader, it becomes very apparent that the revolution was a two-sided affair not limited to the military activity of Castro in the mountains. *Aldabonazo* is recommended to anyone interested in the Cuban Revolution and compliments nicely Julia Sweig's *Inside the Cuban Revolution* (2004).

—James C. Harrison
Siena College

13-4-0472

Macintyre, Ben. *The Man Who Would Be King: The First American in Afghanistan*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2004. 351 pp. ISBN 0-374-20178-1, \$25.00.

Josiah Harlan, the first American to enter Afghanistan, was a Pennsylvania Quaker and an unlikely adventurer, but he ultimately proved a most colorful soldier of fortune and general opportunist. His adventures in Afghanistan took place in the early nineteenth century and will be familiar, in rough outlines, to fans of either the Kipling story or the feature movie with the same title as Macintyre's book, since Harlan is reputed to be the inspiration for those stories.

Harlan's story would be exciting in the clumsiest of hands, but Macintyre conveys it with the panache of an adventure novelist. This book is eminently suited to a general audience and includes a number of illustrations and maps for those unfamiliar with the region. It is thoroughly researched, by a journalist who has covered Afghanistan extensively, and is a gripping book that would appeal even to those with a strong aversion to most works of history.

I strongly recommend this book to anyone wanting to learn more about the history of Westerners in Afghanistan, or to those who simply want a ripping yarn with which to while away the hours. Either way, *The Man Who Would be King* is bound to both please and enlighten.

—Elizabeth Redkey
Siena College

13-4-0473

Marley, Rita. *No Woman, No Cry: My Life with Bob Marley*. New York: Hyperion, 2004. 224 pp. ISBN 0-7868-6867-8, \$22.95.

Rita Marley's memoir brings to the forefront her family, youth, friendship with, and marriage to the famous reggae singer Bob Marley. Her story documents her personal contributions to the world of reggae music as well. One also gains perspective on the Rastafarian religion and culture.

Bob and Rita Marley became close friends, and he took to heart her baby daughter Sharon. From this solid friendship grew a lifelong love, leading to their marriage in 1966 at the ages of 21 and 19. Rita Marley shares her struggles, from getting Bob's music to the media, singing in the "Wailing Wailers," to opening her Queen of Sheba Restaurant. Even though Bob's affairs created hardship in their tempestuous marriage, she remained steadfast in the relationship because he was a good and loving father. Many, including her aunt, who raised her, advised Rita to divorce Bob. She states, "Even though I was in so much pain, I said no, he's still my husband and I don't want to lose my husband."

Rita Marley's story serves as a tribute and an important vehicle for understanding Bob Marley as artist, husband, and loving father. She remained with Bob Marley and was singing to him as he passed away in her arms from cancer in 1981. The reader is able to see Rita's transformation from an impoverished girl abandoned by her parents to a determined woman of dignity, one who uses her life experiences as an uncompromising teacher.

—Johnnieque B. Love
Univ. of Maryland

13-4-0474

Smith, Mona Z. *Becoming Something: The Story of Canada Lee*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux/Faber & Faber, 2004. 411 pp. ISBN 0-571-21142-9, \$26.00.

Canada Lee is one of our more unjustly forgotten African-American actors, and Smith's highly readable biography fills a great gap in the history of multicultural performance in the United States. Best known perhaps for his work in such films as *Lifeboat* and *Cry, the Beloved Country*, Lee was also at various times a boxer, violinist, stage actor, and civil rights activist who insisted on portraying his characters without Hollywood stereotype gimmickry. But after being branded a Communist by HUAC, roles became harder to get and he died penniless in 1952, only 45 years old.

Using numerous letters and obscure sources, Smith has reconstructed a life that bears reexamination not only by film historians but also by the general public. Smith tells a good story, and the personality parade in Lee's life ranges from erotic author Anaïs Nin and Tallulah Bankhead to Ed Sullivan and Orson Welles. An excellent parallel biography to Duberman's *Paul Robeson* (Knopf, 1988) and numerous other works charting the rise of blacks in film and theater, this book is highly recommended for all public and academic libraries.

▼ continued biography/autobiography

—Anthony Adam
Library, Prairie View A & M Univ.

13-4-0475

Steinberg, Ellen FitzSimmons. ***Irma: A Chicago Woman's Story, 1871-1966***. Iowa City: Univ. of Iowa Press, 2004. 256 pp. ISBN 0-87745-896-0, \$49.95 (cl); 0-87745-894-4 (pb), \$19.95.

This marvelous book, which is taken from the diaries and other writings of a woman, spans a lively and interesting period of Chicago history. Irma Rosenthal Frankenstein's life goes from the time of the Great Chicago fire to the 1960s. She lived through wars, depression, and the rapidly changing world of the post-WWII era. More than that, though, it is a warm and loving story of a German-Jewish family and the interrelations between individuals and generations. Steinberg has taken parts of Irma's writings and put them into a context that makes them even more relevant. It is the life of someone not famous, but very much alive and part of her city and her times.

We are taken along to experience Irma's feelings and activities as a mother and wife, but also as someone active in the cultural life of her city. We see her views on education, religion, social welfare, and literature. We feel with her the anxieties of the young wife and mother, the joys and pain of her middle years, and the reduction in activities in her old age. In her fascinating book by and about an interesting woman, Steinberg brings all this to life as if it were happening now and as if her voice and Irma's are inseparable.

—Ruth G. Becker
Forest Hills, N.Y.

13-4-0476

Weinberg, Marjorie. ***The Real Rosebud: The Triumph of a Lakota Woman***. Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 2004. 101 pp. ISBN 0-8032-4808-3, \$19.95.

While in recent years Native Americans have attained positive roles in American popular culture, earlier instances of this are rare. One such distinguished Indian spokesperson was Rosebud Yellow Robe.

Rosebud was born in Rapid City, South Dakota, in 1907, the granddaughter of Chief Yellow Robe, an important Sioux leader during the traumatic final struggle of the Sioux Nation against the United States cavalry. Her father, Chauncey Yellow Robe, was strong in his cultural heritage, but also well adapted to white society. Her mother, Lillian, was a white woman. Chauncey Yellow Robe was an educator and an advocate for the positive portrayal of Native American culture. He spoke out against the exploitation of Indians in shows such as Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show and acted in *The Silent Enemy*, the first movie that accurately depicted Native American life and culture.

Rosebud began her public appearances as a lecturer and teacher for Jones Beach State Park near New York City. As her

popularity grew, she was invited to appear on *Aunt Susan*, a CBS children's radio show. Until her death in 1992, Rosebud continued to be a spokesperson for her people.

The Real Rosebud is an interesting biographical sketch of a notable Native American woman, but at only 52 pages (exclusive of photos and notes), it is a marginal purchase for most libraries.

—Andy J. Deering
Central Wyoming College

History

13-4-0477

Alexander, June Granitir. ***Ethnic Pride, American Patriotism: Slovaks and Other New Immigrants in the Interwar Era***. Philadelphia: Temple Univ. Press, 2004. 304 pp. ISBN 1-59213-251-0, \$64.50 (cl); 1-59213-252-9, \$22.95 (pb).

The subtitle of this study is misleading: Alexander focuses entirely on the Slovak community, with no discussion of the experiences of other immigrant groups. Concerned with giving voice to the community from "within," she quotes extensively, if not always usefully, from English- and Slovak-language newspapers as well as from the records of fraternal organizations, Slovak Days commemorations, communications with national organizations, and organizational almanacs. She concludes that, for the immigrants from Slovakia and their second- and third-generation descendants, identity always included pride in their ancestral heritage, even if, as she shows, this feeling had at times to be primed by the creation of community and national events and stoked by rivalries with other Slovak communities and ethnic groups.

Could this pride have been a reaction to allegations of inferiority thrown at Slovaks by Americans of northern stock? What about the tensions between the attachment to the ancestral homeland and the allegiance to the new country? Alexander does not confront these questions directly, although she documents the various Slovak communities' activities in reaction to restrictive immigration laws and the trauma of Slovakia's alliance with Nazi Germany during World War II. Nor does she make explicit the ways in which her methodology differs from that of historians who use degrees of "whiteness" as a template in their studies of immigrant groups, an approach she rejects. Alexander's study, long on statements by anonymous people, would make more compelling reading had she illustrated it with examples drawn from the lives of named individuals.

—Eva Martin Sartori
Granby, Mass.

13-4-0478

Charnon-Deutsch, Lou. ***The Spanish Gypsy: The History of a European Obsession***. University Park: Penn State Univ. Press, 2004. 288 pp. ISBN 0-271-02359-7, \$39.95.

The unknown origins of the Gypsies, or the Roma/Romany people as they prefer to be called (did they originally come from Egypt? from India? by way of Turkey or Syria?), their habit of isolating themselves from their "host" countries, and their particular customs have provided a screen on which writers, musicians, artists, historians, anthropologists, and sociologists have projected their own as well as their cultures' fantasies and anxieties. The myths and stereotypes of the Spanish Gypsy elaborated by the dominant cultures of the West are the subject of Charnon-Deutsch's exhaustive review of texts, images, and music. She retraces the evolution of the myth beginning with Cervantes' *La Gitanilla* (1613), through its incarnation in the Romantic imagination (familiar to all in the many variations on the Carmen theme as well as in the representation of the "bohemian" artist) and the slanted and "fabulous" accounts of the British traveler George Borrow and the many northern Europeans who followed him.

The Spanish themselves, she argues, have used the Gypsies, their association with the Andalusian region and with the art of flamenco, in the process of what she refers to as "self-exoticization" and the creation of a national identity. She concludes that until very recently all representations of the Spanish Gypsies have been reductive and judgmental and have obscured the abysmal conditions under which they have lived and the discrimination to which they have been subjected.

—Eva Martin Sartori
Granby, Mass.

13-4-0479

Dorfman, Ariel. *Other Septembers, Many Americas: Selected Provocations 1980-2004*. New York: Seven Stories Press, 2004. 272 pp. ISBN 1-58322-632-X, \$14.95 (pb).

Taibo, Paco Ignacio II. '68. New York: Seven Stories Press, 2004. 140 pp. Trans. from Spanish by Donald Nicholson-Smith. ISBN 1-58322-608-7, \$12.95 (pb).

These two books delineate aspects of recent political oppression and violence in the world, one in relation to the year 1968, the other to the date September 11. In '68 the Mexican detective novelist recounts his experience as a 19-year-old student participating in the turbulent events of that year in Mexico. These culminated on October 2 with the massacre of over 400 students at Tlatelolco. He offers a personal narrative, recalling the mounting cycle of tensions and confrontations from midsummer on that emanated from the campus of the national university in Mexico City and reverberated throughout the country. Retracing his steps across campus offices and departments, he recounts the ad hoc strategies, vernacular rhetoric, and tense debates, along with the hasty diets and even faster affairs, of those heady days.

First published in Mexico in 1991, '68 anticipated an inquiry two years later by a national commission charged with identifying those culpable for the massacres. That investigative work resulted in neither indictments nor pun-

ishment. In reissuing '68, now in English, Taibo unravels the mystery to a wider audience, but probably with no more consequence.

Other Septembers, Many Americas brings together a selected collection of nearly four dozen newspaper, journal, and web publications from 1980 to 2004 by Chilean author (now at Duke University) Dorfman. A member of the Marxist government of President Salvador Allende, Dorfman went into exile in 1973 when General Augusto Pinochet overthrew Allende, backed by President Richard Nixon and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. The book incorporates a counterbalancing parallel, made previously by the author, between the bombing by the U.S.-fortified Chilean air force of the presidential palace on September 11, 1973, and the destruction of the World Trade Center towers on September 11, 2001. The articles cover a range of topics but focus primarily on the arbitrariness and contradictions of U.S. cultural, military, and political dominance, principally in the Western Hemisphere and the Middle East.

The book, however, very disturbingly ignores certain events. Outspoken against standard brutes such as Saddam Hussein and Donald Rumsfeld, it is echoingly silent on the massacre of 2,000 Palestinians in the Lebanese refugee camps of Sabra and Shatilla during September 1982. Its instigator, Ariel Sharon, repeated the massacre 20 years later in 2002, murdering hundreds of refugees in the Palestinian camp of Jenin. No mention of these U.S.-supported, financed, and armed atrocities appears in this book.

The accusation of "terrorist" flies now with ever-mounting and mindless frequency. Increasingly the charge seems actually to describe the desperate violence of the weak against the entrenched violence of the mighty, the ancient dance of death between oppressors and oppressed. Could we not be dating the eve of an Armageddon, the confrontation of globalization's haves and have-nots?

—Edward A. Riedinger
Ohio State Univ. Libraries

13-4-0480

Drennen, William M., Jr.; Jones, William T. (Kojo), Jr.; and Johnson, Dolores, eds. *Red, White, Black, and Blue: A Dual Memoir of Race and Class in Appalachia*. Athens: Ohio Univ. Press, 2004. 220 pp. ISBN 0-8214-1535-2, \$44.95 (cl); 0-8214-1536-0, \$17.95 (pb).

This book is based on a great idea. Take two people who grew up in West Virginia in the 1950s, one white and one black, and see what their lives were like. Had they been the same race, they may well have become friends. So how do race and class affect people and keep them apart? This book provides some good insights along with good stories.

Among the 10 chapters are ones entitled "Growing Up Black," "Growing Up White," "Living Class," and "Living Race," among others. These chapters help explain why the two men, who met again as adults, had different perspectives on the world and on life, which made becoming friends diffi-

▼ continued history

cult. There are also black-and-white photographs that help the reader see things visually, and that definitely add to the book.

The black person was intimidated by the police while serving in the U. S. Air Force in Germany. Two police officials arrested him, took him away, questioned him, searched his locker, read all his personal letters from home, and found nothing. But people who observed him being taken away thought he must have done something wrong. He felt that he would not have been treated so harshly but for the fact that he was black, which justified, in the minds of the police, treating him as a criminal.

This excellent book deals with important topics of race, class, and American society.

—Russell Eisenman
Univ. of Texas–Pan American

13-4-0481

Dubois, Laurent. *Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 2004. 357 pp. ISBN 0-674-01304-2, \$29.95.

In this year of unrest and upheaval in Haiti, people of that Caribbean nation are also commemorating 200 years of independence. This timely book documents events surrounding the Haitian Revolution in what was once the most productive French colony in the world. The title alludes to a fictitious statue of a black man who, like the slaves in Haiti, gets revenge for centuries of imposed servitude.

The work begins by contrasting various modes of life found in eighteenth-century Saint-Domingue, as the island colony was then called. Wealthy whites enjoyed Molière's plays and *cabinets littéraires* (literary salons) while their slaves labored on sugar, indigo, and coffee plantations. Order in the colony was disturbed by sporadic poisonings and slave insurrections; discriminatory laws promulgated in France served to divide so-called "free-coloreds" from white colonists. In 1791 a concerted series of rebellions broke out in the northern provinces leading to the rise of such Haitian heroes as Toussaint L'Ouverture and Jean-Jacques Dessalines. Eventually, aided by yellow fever, which decimated many of Napoleon's 80,000 or so troops, Haitians proved victorious and proclaimed their independence in January 1804. The world's first successful slave revolt would go on to inspire slaves in other New World countries to do the same.

Associate professor of history at Michigan State, Dubois has produced a well-researched chronicle of a very complex period in Caribbean history. Written in a clear and precise way, this detailed account may well become the predominant source on the Haitian Revolution.

—Jayne R. Boisvert
Russell Sage College

13-4-0482

Fugita, Stephen S. and Fernandez, Marilyn. *Altered Lives, Enduring Community: Japanese Americans Remember Their World War II Incarceration*. Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 2004. 288 pp. ISBN 0-295-98380-

9, \$45.00 (cl); 0-295-98381-7, \$24.95 (pb).

This fascinating book is an interesting and informative comprehensive study of a Japanese-American community. The book interprets data from Seattle's Densho, which began as an oral/video history project of former WWII relocation camp internees and draws on excerpts from the taped interviews. Much of the data is available at the organization's web site: www.densho.org, which offers a wealth of internment-related material.

While the focus is the effect of the internment, the book begins with a history of Seattle's Japanese-American community: the arrival of the Issei, the immigrant generation; the rise of the Nisei, the focus group of the Densho project; the war and incarceration; and the postwar resettlement. The book examines the effects of the community's prewar social and economic structures (the community was tight-knit partly by choice and partly because of discrimination) on the community's wartime experience and postwar readjustment. It also analyzes the internment's socioeconomic effects on individuals, as well as its psychological effects.

One of the most traumatic aspects of the internment was the conflict that arose between those who decided to serve in the U.S. Army and those who resisted the draft; in 1943, the government reversed its earlier decision to reject all Japanese Americans from military service. Therefore, an especially interesting section examines the postwar experiences of veterans and non-veterans.

This book will be of interest not only to social scientists and historians but also to anyone interested in a the effects of a life-changing experience on a community.

—Al Hikida
Seattle Central Community College

13-4-0483

Kashatus, William C. *September Swoon: Richie Allen, the '64 Phillies, and Racial Integration*. University Park: Penn State Univ. Press, 2004. 260 pp. ISBN 0-271-02333-3, \$29.95.

Historian and newspaper journalist Kashatus is a well-known observer of the Philadelphia sports scene. As is the case with all Phillies fans, he was traumatized by the National League team's unprecedented collapse in the waning days of the 1964 baseball season. The Phillies had been in first place with a comfortable lead when the team proceeded to lose ten straight games. The result was a second place finish and a place in baseball lore.

Rather than concentrate on a typical sports story of success and failure, Kashatus describes the season as a case study in race relations, both of the Phillies as well as in the city of Philadelphia. The 1964 Phillies were the first truly integrated team in the franchise's history and included an enigmatic rookie African-American player named Richie Allen. Allen was young and immature and quickly became a lightning rod for white fans' frustration. While the book would cer-

tainly have benefited from more extensive interviews with the players, the author has done a commendable job in mining newspaper accounts. The awful September of pain for the Phillies and their followers will be of interest to sports fans and to students of sports and society alike.

—John R. Vallely
Siena College Library

13-4-0484

Martin, Patricia Preciado. *Beloved Land: An Oral History of Mexican Americans in Southern Arizona*. Tucson: Univ. of Arizona Press, 2004. 150 pp. Illus. with photos by José Galvez. ISBN 0-8165-2409-2, \$35.00 (c); 0-8165-2382-7, \$17.95 (pb).

The first-person accounts of growing up Mexican American in Arizona are very much worth reading and give one a sense of an interesting lifestyle. The pictures help a lot too and are enjoyable to look at. Many of the storytellers are now old and recount how they grew up on farms, ranches, or in large land areas, where they and their parents worked as farmers, cowboys, and ranchers. It is a lifestyle that has either disappeared or, if not entirely gone, is reduced in many cases, due to economics, changes in agriculture, urbanization, and other causes.

The reader gets a sense of hardworking people with their own specific cultural and religious practices and their own understanding of sex roles, economic necessities, and how life should be lived. Within that structure, people seemed to know their duties and tried hard to fulfill them and help their family. Family comes across as very important for these Mexican Americans. Each story is different, which is also a value of this book.

Overall, the work is filled with good stories and good pictures that can help readers understand the history and culture of Mexican Americans in Arizona.

—Russell Eisenman
Univ. of Texas–Pan American

13-4-0485

Melvern, Linda. *Conspiracy to Murder: The Rwandan Genocide*. New York: Verso, 2004. 358 pp. ISBN 1-85984-588-6, \$25.00.

Ten years after the Rwandan genocide, Melvern has published a detailed and well-documented exposition of the preparation for and the implementation of genocide against the Tutsi people and reformist Hutus of Rwanda. The appendices provide maps, a chronology, a copy of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, and an extensive list of sources, including reports from the UN, governments, and human rights groups. The book concentrates on the rise of the “Hutu Power” faction of the military, government, and political parties, which planned and orchestrated the genocide.

Melvern demonstrates that the killings actually began in 1990, and how the conspirators were able to use the Presidential Guard to openly establish a nationwide network of armed militias to do their bidding and to galvanize the country under the anti-Tutsi propaganda of Radio-Télévision Libre des Mille Collines. There were politicians and bureaucrats who wanted to move the country toward democracy and tolerance, but they were no match for the extremists and many were assassinated. She points out the inadequacy of the UN response and the indifference, mistakes, and sometimes complicity of the international community, with special criticism for France, Belgium, the United States, and the United Kingdom. This is a good book for understanding how genocide continues to be a threat and the need for the international community to follow through on its obligation to humanity.

—Jean M. Stern
Siena College

13-4-0486

Roy-Féquièrre, Magali. *Women, Creole Identity, and Intellectual Life in Early Twentieth-Century Puerto Rico*. Philadelphia: Temple Univ. Press, 2004. 328 pp. ISBN 1-52913-230-8, \$72.50 (c); 1-52913-231-6, \$24.95 (pb).

This extremely well-documented, in-depth study of intellectual life in early twentieth-century Puerto Rico, which encompasses not only women and creole identity but also men, is a valuable contribution to Puerto Rican scholarship. It looks at the different discourses of Puerto Rican national identity. Hoping to make sense of the country's problems, thinkers mapped out the Puerto Rican personality with the axiom that racial heterogeneity was at the root of all evils.

After having presented such discourses, the author proceeds to reinterpret them through the lens of a feminist analysis. An interesting and insightful examination of a 1956 essay by Margot Arce, “Las Raíces,” points out that, in her attempt to share her vision of Spain, Arce turns Spain into a quasi-mystical experience. Spain becomes a pilgrimage of sorts, a requirement that will lead the Puerto Rican to self-recognition. The author reminds us that this essay was published during the booming years of economic development under Muñoz Marín and that Arce countered this moment of transition with what she considered to be the permanent values of Spanish culture.

Other chapters show how the suffragist movement gave women access to the power structure, consider Pedreira's *Insularismo*, analyze Emilio Belaval's witty short stories *Los Cuentos de la Universidad* in an effort to “look for clues regarding male reaction to women's challenge of the gender system,” focus on Arce's propagation of the negrista poetry of Palés Matos, and question “whether negrismo contributes to the stereotyping of people of African descent and the demotion of Afro–Puerto Ricans.”

—Beatriz Rivera-Barnes
Penn State Univ.

▼ continued history

13-4-0487

Scolnick, Joseph M., Jr. and Kennedy, N. Brent, eds. ***From Anatolia to Appalachia: A Turkish-American Dialogue***. Macon, Ga.: Mercer Univ. Press, 2004. 130 pp. ISBN 0-86554-751-3, \$40.00 (cl); 0-86554-776-9, \$18.95 (pb).

Most Turks, including university dons, can't afford to spend time in Cesme (chesh-may), a posh resort town on Turkey's Aegean coast. That's why the American embassy annually coughs up cash for a conference there—or at some other ritzy venue—for the American studies chatterati of Turkey. So it's a little amusing that Wise, Virginia, capital of America's Melungeon history research, and Cesme, the Santa Barbara of Turkey's snooty set, are sister cities; especially as, in the mayor of Wise's words, the historical ties depend on "some missing sailors" who may have been displaced Turkish POWs in the sixteenth century.

The thesis is old: That olive-skinned, black-haired, shovel-toothed Appalachian Melungeons are somehow descended from Turks, Portuguese, Arabs, Jews and—one in ten—Native or African Americans. Possibly. All kinds of things happen in the woods, say William Faulkner, Cormac McCarthy, and Little Red Riding Hood, especially in a country without systematic immigration records until the 1880s.

Melungeons used to be told that they were of Scots-Irish descent. Yeah, well, you could study Edwin Black's recent *War Against the Weak* (2004) for evidences of Nazi-style racism in Virginia in the 1930s, or you could chew on this: If you are a dark-skinned person in Appalachia before the 1960s, it's not surprising that your kinfolk say you're Scots-Irish. Cesme looks pretty good by contrast.

—Leo J. Mahoney
Kafkas Univ., Kars, Turkey

13-4-0488

Sullivan, Paul. ***Xubxub Must Die: The Lost Histories of a Murder on the Yucatán***. Pittsburgh, Pa.: Univ. of Pittsburgh Press, 2004. 272 pp. ISBN 0-8229-4230-5, \$29.00.

Xuxub (shushub) is a plantation on the Yucatán peninsula of Mexico that was run by American Robert Stephens, who was murdered by Maya Indians in 1872. Although the study by Paul Sullivan begins and ends with Stephens and the American consul Alphonse Lespinasse, the real story is the plantation and conditions in Yucatan in the nineteenth century. Europeans came to Mexico in the early sixteenth century, but as late as the middle of the nineteenth century the Maya still were not completely subdued. Using the Stephens murder as a point of departure, Sullivan is able to examine adroitly the conditions of the Maya, their relationship with white men, and the workings of representatives of the Department of State at lonely outposts. Having sifted through both Mexican and American resources, Sullivan paints a vivid picture of conditions on the Mexican frontier where law and lawlessness lived side-by-side in a convoluted form. Power ruled, whether it be the activities of the Mayas or the landowners. As Sullivan expertly demonstrates, Stephens had

little power and the consul Lespinasse even less.

Although the introduction is a little tedious, this is a well-written study that sheds light on conditions in Mexico in the second half of the nineteenth century and provides insight into the mundane, generally unaccounted activities of lowly consuls in faraway places. The book should appeal to anyone with an interest in the history of the Yucatan or the workings of the U.S. State Department.

—James C. Harrison
Siena College

Religion

13-4-0489

Breger, Marshall J., ed. ***Public Policy and Social Issues: Jewish Sources and Perspectives***. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood/Praeger, 2003. 281 pp. ISBN 0-275-98165-7, \$49.95.

One key assumption underlying this collection of 11 essays by various authors is that the commonality underlying Jewish faith, which was responsible for the long-term survival of the Jewish people despite genocide and living most of their existence in some unwelcome diasporas, can be identified and can serve as a useful moral guide to policy choices. That these principles are closely aligned with the more traditional ("rabbinic") interpretations of Jewish theology is not acknowledged by the author, whose political and policy biases are clearly served by assuming a greater solidarity of communal acceptance than warranted by the reality of divisions among Jewish belief systems.

That most of the solutions offered to policy problems fall closer to the conservative ideological axis is not a coincidence given these assumptions. This leads to another assumption that conservative thought is ideologically cohesive, generating a consensus understanding and interpretation. Breger's introduction states, "Normative Judaism can justly be said to fit more comfortably on the political Right than on the Left...particularly along the lines of traditionalists like Edmund Burke." Burkean conservatism is but one, and not the most popular, modern form of conservatism. Particularly jarring about this quote is the fact that, when polled, most American Jews have viewpoints on all the issues discussed closer to the liberal side of the political spectrum, and their voting behavior is more distinctively Democratic than many other ethnic/religious groups. The latter facts suggest that Breger's depiction of the policy implications of his conception of Jewish theological values is not as unambiguous or unified as he would posit.

—Leon Halpert
Siena College

13-4-0490

Griffin, Mark and Walker, Theron. ***Living on the Borders: What the Church Can Learn from Ethnic Immigrant Cultures***. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Brazos Press, 2004. 208 pp.

ISBN 1-58743-066-5, \$19.99 (pb).

Griffin and Walker look at what they see as the crisis of the American churches—the failure to provide a scripture-based critique of a society and culture whose most fundamental value is individualism and whose most fundamental social expression is consumerism. The authors feel that the churches have, in their traditions, the elements needed for such a critique but lack a paradigm or model to tap those traditions. They suggest that the experience of various ethnic minorities, which are navigating the narrow strait between assimilation and tribalism, can provide such a useful paradigm or model. Their analysis is heavily weighted toward Latino culture, in several varieties.

Paradoxically, although the overwhelming majority of Hispanics are Catholic, their model seems more applicable to Protestant megachurches and to the Evangelicals than to the Catholic Church, and the authors do not take into account the specifically Catholic component of the “peace and justice” tradition in papal teaching, which has played a more and more central role in the Catholic Church since the mid-twentieth century. However, as a study of the problems and possibilities of various ethnic minorities as they try to avoid assimilation by redefining the melting pot and affirming their power to make a more tasty brew, the book is valuable.

—John C. Dwyer
Siena College

13-4-0491

Kottler, Jeffrey and Carlson, Jon, with Bradford Keeney. ***American Shaman: An Odyssey of Global Healing Traditions***. New York: Routledge, 2004. 256 pp. ISBN 0-415-94822-3, \$16.95 (pb).

Partridge, Christopher, ed. ***New Religions: A Guide: New Religious Movements, Sects and Alternative Spiritualities***. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2004. 445 pp. Foreword by J. Gordon Melton. ISBN 0-19-522042-0, \$40.00.

These two volumes represent contrasting approaches to the phenomena of new religious movements at the beginning of the twenty-first century. One (*New Religions: A Guide*) is a scholarly attempt to catalog and categorize new religious movements that have become prominent during the twentieth century. The other (*American Shaman*) is an expression of one of these movements (Neo-Shamanism) centered in the personality of Bradford Keeney.

New Religions: A Guide is a scholarly encyclopedia in one volume of a wide variety of new religious movements ranging from the Christian “New Church” to the Chinese “Falun Gong.” However, this volume goes significantly beyond a mere listing of movements, their histories and beliefs, arranged in alphabetical order. In a brilliant (and daring) move, the editor attempts to organize the movements according to a system of classification that roots them in the classical religious traditions that underlie them: Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Zoroastrianism, Indian Religions, the

Religions of East Asia, Indigenous and Pagan Traditions, Western Esoteric and New Age Religions, and Modern Western Cultures. Each section is preceded by an introduction to the major classical tradition and the whole follows an excellent foreword by the well-known scholar of new religions, J. Gordon Melton, and a fine introduction by the editor. The “new” of new religions refers to “a religion, sect or alternative spirituality that emerged or rose to prominence during the 20th century.” Interspersed throughout the volume are featured essays on topics that relate to these movements, such as “African Independent Churches,” “The Anti-cult Movement,” “Prosperity Spirituality,” “Kabbalism,” “Contemporary Sufism,” “Tantric Spirituality,” “Japanese New Religions,” “Shamanism,” “Postmodern Spirituality,” “Feminist and Eco-feminist Spirituality,” and “Fundamentalism.” These essays are well crafted and informative in understanding many of the movements under discussion. By my count 174 separate movements are discussed in articles ranging from a couple of paragraphs to two or three pages. This is an essential tool for anyone interested in new religions.

American Shaman, on the other hand, will appeal primarily to those who buy into the range of religious movements that are referred to as “Neo-shamanism” or who have an academic interest in such movements. Keeney, a self-styled shaman and student of world shamanism, is presented as a shaman “who has not only blended East with West, but North with South, and the 21st century with practices that have been in continuous use since prehistoric times.” Keeney’s roots lie in the popular therapy movements of the 1970s and 1980s, but he has left academic life to pursue the practice of shamanism in association with several “indigenous” shamans. Essentially a figure in the New Age tradition (despite his denials), he claims shamanism to be a unified phenomenon practiced in various cultures. This assertion is highly questionable in light of the cultural specificity of shamanic practice and myth. Shamanism, in his portrayal, is a kind of “spiritualized” therapy. This confusion of shamanic practice and popular therapy deeply flaws the book. As a source on Neo-shamanism it might be worth a read. As an insight into the real phenomenon of shamanism, it is not recommended.

—James S. Dalton
Siena College

13-4-0492

Suh, Sharon A. ***Being Buddhist in a Christian World: Gender & Community in a Korean American Temple***. Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 2004. 256 pp. ISBN 0-295-98378-7, \$35.00.

Suh has succeeded in crafting the story of a single Korean-American Buddhist temple (Sa Chal in Los Angeles) and drawing an engaging portrait of Buddhism lived “on the ground” as a path to self-identity by Korean Americans. Their “Christian world” is both American and Korean at the same time. Suh further addresses the question of how Buddhism plays in the experience of Korean women and men. Korean men, in her study, see Buddhism as primarily an intellectual

▼ continued religion

rather than an emotional outlet as, in their view, Korean women do. However, contrary to this male-centered and Confucian-influenced understanding of Buddhism, Suh argues that Korean women find in Buddhism a source of strength and identity providing “a socially recognized tool with which to interpret life events.”

Through the Buddhist (primarily *Chogye* or Zen) effort at “finding and knowing one’s mind,” Korean women at Sa Chal reinterpret their difficult and often subordinate lives in light of the Law of Karma and the Buddhist notion of impermanence. This is both an emotional and an intellectual response not recognized by most Korean Buddhist men. Under pressure from Korean-American Christians, Buddhist women and men see the independence and self-reliance of Buddhism as more in tune with American individualism.

In essence, Korean-American Buddhists, especially woman, live Buddhism as a way of confronting and transforming their concrete lives, not as a monastic effort to attain final enlightenment. This is an important book for those interested in seeing the immediate social implications of religious practice for a community under pressure.

—James S. Dalton
Siena College

Education

13-4-0493

Brisk, Maria Estela; Burgos, Angela; and Hamerla, Sara Ruth. ***Situational Context of Education: A Window into the World of Bilingual Learners.*** Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2004. 246 pp. ISBN 0-8058-3946-1, \$24.50 (pb).

I am always looking for new texts to extend my students’ awareness regarding bilingual/bicultural learners, in the native language methods course I teach. When I received this text, I was thrilled! It integrates so many of the concepts that bilingual teachers need to incorporate in their teaching practices in a tightly structured format. The text provides a thorough introduction illustrating the important role that situational context plays in the education of children from diverse linguistic/cultural backgrounds and goes on to delineate the various factors and how they impact students’ learning experiences. Each of the five chapters is laid out in a predictable manner, with a theoretical overview followed by well-developed lesson plans that can be adapted. (The lesson plans were originally developed and implemented for use with a fifth-grade Spanish/English bilingual class in the Boston public schools.)

The beauty of this text is that the reader can focus on any of the situational contexts described, but is not required to follow any specific sequence or have any prerequisite knowledge in order to implement the detailed lessons included. A series of appendixes offer an annotated bibliography, directions for implementing the instructional strategies described in the text, an explanation regarding scoring the rubrics presented in the lessons, and a potential staff development proj-

ect to assist educators in developing a clearer understanding of the impact of situational context on multicultural/multilingual learners.

—Melanie Pores
Albany (N.Y.) City School District

13-4-0494

Cochran-Smith, Marilyn. ***Walking the Road: Race, Diversity, and Social Justice in Teacher Education.*** New York: Teachers College Press, 2004. 224 pp. ISBN 0-8077-4434-4, \$54.00 (cl); 0-8077-4433-6, \$25.95 (pb).

If I could assign all teacher educators one book this year, this would be it. Cochran-Smith brings clarity and leadership to a field in crisis, unflinchingly exposing government policies and agendas. By co-opting the language of social justice (who can be against “leaving no child behind?”), the current administration keeps off the table discussion of “the brutal inequities of opportunity, resources, and possibility in our society.”

The essential questions are crystal clear: Is the purpose of school to train workers for a global economy? Or is the purpose of school, as Cochran-Smith thinks it is, “to prepare all people for meaningful work and for free and equal civic participation in a democratic society”? Answering “yes” to the first question allows our secretary of education to “instantaneously” turn “unqualified teachers into qualified ones,” flying in the face of research on high-quality teachers and ensuring that, frequently, the children of the wealthy get the qualified teachers and the children of the poor get less prepared teachers.

Cochran-Smith does not let universities and teacher educators off the hook. We must take stands as “public intellectuals” and we must know what our conceptual frameworks are. Here, Cochran-Smith provides welcome guidance. John Dewey thought each generation would have to articulate for itself and the next generation what knowledge is of most worth. Cochran-Smith has undertaken this task for today’s schools and colleges of education. How we respond is critical for the nation’s 63 million children and for the teachers who teach them.

—Jane M. Gangi
Sacred Heart Univ.

13-4-0495

Ginwright, Shawn A. ***Black in School: Afrocentric Reform, Urban Youth, and the Promise of Hip-Hop Culture.*** New York: Teachers College Press, 2004. 160 pp. ISBN 0-8077-4432-8, \$46.00 (cl); 0-8077-4431-X, \$21.95 (pb).

In this case study of the failing McClymonds High in Oakland, California, Ginwright does a number of things well. He thoughtfully presents the complexities of urban education and provides a clear sense of Oakland’s rich history and a careful explanation of the McClymonds High collapse. The most interesting feature centers on his rather contented historical analysis and critique of Afrocentrism, as

well as the impact it had on reform efforts at McClymonds. Many of the points Ginwright makes prove compelling.

There are aspects of the book, however, that leave its true promise unfulfilled. The problems experienced at McClymonds High and in urban schools (generally) are multi-layered and byzantine. Ginwright claims that Afrocentric reform is a failure, especially as it played out at McClymonds. He attributes the failure to Afrocentrism's refusal to critique poverty and consider positions other than race, its seeming incompatibility with the day-to-day realities of student lives and urban communities, and its inability to deliberate on its own efficacy as it relates to alignment with the needs and desires of a hip-hop generation.

School failures are multitudinous in nature. Present levels of chaos have been spurred by decades of neglect and exploitation. Based on the information provided by Ginwright, reform efforts at McClymonds were doomed to failure from the start whether or not Afrocentrism served as a central component of the effort. *Black in School* is a thought-provoking and informative read, but its central premise is unconvincing.

—Dierdre Glenn Paul
Montclair State Univ.

13-4-0496

Suárez-Orozco, Marcelo M. and Qin-Hilliard, Desiree Baolian, eds. ***Globalization: Culture and Education in the New Millennium***. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2004. 290 pp. ISBN 0-520-24123-1, \$50.00 (cl); 0-520-24125-8, \$19.95 (pb).

Globalization is not your typical compilation of academic essays. With the goal of helping all stakeholders understand how education needs to adapt in a global era, renowned scholars from diverse fields came together to exchange ideas on the impact of globalization on both culture and education. The resulting revised papers comprise ten chapters that do not disappoint.

The contributing authors—psychologists, neuroscientists, economists, anthropologists, historians, and educators—address why precollegiate education must change to serve learners in nations that are increasingly interdependent. While recognizing the arguments against globalization, the scholars refreshingly reveal the positive nature of it. They offer many proofs for our ability to adapt to and work within a framework of diverse cultures and multiple identities.

Although the array of topics covered is dizzying, the chapters are easy to read and flow seamlessly together. The definition and history of globalization are well explained, as is education's link to the global economy. One section, "Why Education Is More Important than Ever," neatly sums up the opportunities and threats posed by global integration. Readers will enjoy and learn from chapters on pop cosmopolitanism, formulating identity, and youth culture, while "Globalization in Asia" fascinates the reader with innumerable examples of globalization's effects on culture. Cultural competence and its accompanying cognitive flexibility are not only significant, but absolutely necessary for

students and nations to succeed.

—Alicia M. Bartol-Thomas
Nokomis, Fla.

13-4-0497

Thompson, Gail L. ***Through Ebony Eyes: What Teachers Need to Know But Are Afraid to Ask About African American Students***. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004. 352 pp. ISBN 0-7879-7061-1, \$24.95.

Thompson deals with issues important to teachers and students. She raises such questions as: (1) Are certain students left behind in the classroom? (2) Is the cultural divide making it impossible for teachers to relate to their students of color, and vice versa? (3) Can the gap between African-American students and their teachers be bridged before it's too late? Thompson's responses to these questions are grounded in research, yet she uses a conversational style to appeal those who are thinking about teaching—preservice teachers who are enrolled in teacher education programs—and teachers who are interested in effectively teaching all students, particularly African-American students. She offers useful information on the underachievement of African-American students, effective instructional practices for African-American students, why some students misbehave in class, how teachers often unwittingly contribute to their misbehavior, and effective classroom management strategies. Thompson does not tiptoe around issues that are sensitive for most educators, such as the controversy over Ebonics versus Standard English, and the continued controversy surrounding the use of the "N word" by African-American students.

This work is a vital resource for teachers and researchers—particularly researchers of color—who are involved in similar work. It also includes personal stories drawn from Thompson's more than 14 years of experience teaching in public junior high and high schools. For those teachers, researchers, and administrators who want to deal with culturally sensitive issues, this is a very important tool.

—Linda Rhone
Shepherd College

Science, Medicine, and Technology

13-4-0498

Rajagopal, M. R., ed. ***Pain and Palliative Care in the Developing World and Marginalized Populations: A Global Challenge***. Binghamton, N.Y.: Haworth Press, 2004. 249 pp. ISBN 0-7890-1555-2, \$59.95 (cl); 0-7890-1556-0, \$39.95 (pb).

This book is intended as a call to action, based on the belief that palliative care is possible and imperative world-

▼ continued science, medicine, and technology

wide. Articles are not limited to the developing world, although Hong Kong, Chile, and the United States certainly have marginalized populations lacking appropriate care.

A strong foreword stresses culturally specific approaches and cost, attacking commercial pressure from pharmaceutical companies to push expensive medications. Each of the wide-ranging contributions, some largely descriptive, others evaluative as well, is preceded by a summary and followed by a commentary. Subjects include successful programs, as in Uganda and Malaysia; other place-specific initiatives such as efforts in India; ethical and spiritual issues; specific populations like AIDS patients and prisoners; and more theoretical topics like "Eastern versus Western Models" and the case for research.

An article about efforts to change laws in India to make inexpensive morphine available for terminally ill patients in pain shares its authors' frustrating fight to get pain relief for their dying mother. They continue the fight even after her death, but are blocked by national policies seeking to control addiction and doctors and hospitals unwilling to confront the government. Other overall themes are lack of knowledge about palliative care and lack of support by the medical community and policy makers. An excellent study of a more advanced situation in Argentina targets similar difficulties.

—Carol B. Gartner
Purdue Univ.—Calumet

Social and Political Sciences

13-4-0499

Ard, Michael. *An Eternal Struggle: How the National Action Party Transformed Mexican Politics*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood/Praeger, 2003. 248 pp. ISBN 0-275-97831-1, \$64.95.

Mizrahi, Yemile. *From Martyrdom to Power: The Partido Acción Nacional in Mexico*. Notre Dame, Ind.: Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 2003. 224 pp. ISBN 0-268-02867-2, \$45.00 (cl); 0-268-02870-2, \$20.00 (pb).

The victory by Vicente Fox and the Partido Acción Nacional (PAN) in 2000 (winning 43 percent of the vote) sent shockwaves throughout the Americas. Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) had ruled Mexico and the presidency without interruption since its inception in 1929. Until 1989, the PRI controlled all state governments and an overwhelming majority of local governments. With only a brief exception in 1988, the PRI controlled both houses of Congress until 1997. Clearly such a monumental change in Mexican politics necessitates examination. Ard and Mizrahi provide excellent complementary overviews and analyses of contemporary Mexican politics and the development of the PAN. Their approaches and emphasis, however, are different, as are their visions of the future consequences of the PAN victory.

Ard, Second Secretary, Political Section, U.S. Embassy,

Caracas, Venezuela, examines the PAN as a party based on Catholic social doctrine and the 2000 victory as the end of a long process that finally reconciles Mexico's Catholic tradition with its Revolutionary politics. The result, he argues, is a new national consensus that can reshape Mexico. While his analysis is excellent, it would seem far too early to determine if the PAN's success is the beginning of a new Mexican politics or simply a "bump in the road" as the PRI reassesses and redefines itself.

Mizrahi, an affiliate of the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars, likewise examines the development of the PAN. Through 15 years of research that includes countless interviews with members of the party, government officials, and surveys of public opinion, she has developed a keen insight into why the PAN was successful and how it made changes. Nevertheless, Mizrahi is critical, as the title of her book suggests, of the ability of the PAN to transition from being the perennial opposition to that of the fountain of power. Throughout its history the PAN was a survivor against the more powerful PRI and had learned how to persist in such a relationship. Then, in 2000 with the victory of Vicente Fox, the PAN suddenly was thrust into the leadership position without knowing how to be a leader, knowing only how to be a martyr. The PAN's slowness to adjust to its newfound fortune jeopardizes its ability for future electoral expansion. Both books are excellently argued and presented, thereby making them essential to anyone wanting to understand the current political climate of Mexico.

—James C. Harrison
Siena College

13-4-0500

Barsamian, David. *Louder Than Bombs: Interviews from The Progressive Magazine*. Cambridge, Mass.: South End Press, 2004. 180 pp. ISBN 0-89608-725-5, \$16.00 (pb).

Barsamian, known for his radio show "Alternative Radio," draws from his rich collection of interviews. This volume features scholars and authors—from A, as in Eqbal Ahmad, to Z, as in Howard Zinn, plus many others from the left side of the political spectrum—to talk about all the issues one is not able to read or hear in mainstream media. Whereas some of the interviewees are well known for their political standpoints, such as Noam Chomsky, Kurt Vonnegut, Ralph Nader, or Vandana Shiva, others are less known; for example, the actor Danny Glover has as much to say about America's political environment.

Due to the fact that the book covers interviews from 1997 to 2003, it is a piece of political opinion reflecting important historical events. In addition, this collection shows that there is no "mainstream liberal" but instead human beings from different cultures with one thing in common, a deep moral understanding and concern about what is wrong with politics in America and around the world. The book features a total of 21 interviews, each one briefly introduced by Barsamian. This collection is an important contribution and

can spark interesting discussions among students in political science and sociology at the undergraduate and graduate levels, and it may give students the desire to read more about and by the people with whom Barsamian speaks.

—Astrid Eich-Kroh
State Univ. of New York at Albany

13-4-0501

Bernard, Shane K. *The Cajuns: Americanization of a People*. Jackson: Univ. Press of Mississippi, 2003. 208 pp. ISBN 1-57806-522-4, \$48.00 (cl); 1-57806-523-2, \$18.00 (pb).

Gaudet, Marcia and McDonald, James C., eds. *Mardi Gras, Gumbo, and Zydeco: Readings in Louisiana Culture*. Jackson: Univ. Press of Mississippi, 2003. 176 pp. ISBN 1-57806-529-1, \$48.00 (cl); 1-57806-530-5, \$18.00 (pb).

Cajuns have a very interesting culture, definitely worthy of more study than they usually receive. They originated in Canada, where they were French-Canadians, but were driven out by the British. Many settled in south Louisiana.

These two books go a long way toward helping us attain a better understanding of Cajuns and their culture. *The Cajuns* has five major chapters, a small number of black-and-white photographs, and one map. The chapters are “Cajuns During Wartime,” “Atomic-Age Cajuns,” “Cajuns and the 1960s,” “From Coonass to Cajun Power,” and “Exploitation and Revitalization.” Each chapter has several notes at the end of the book, and there is an index. There is much fascinating information in this book, such as the violence that sometimes occurred between blacks and Cajuns, the punishment of Cajun children in school for speaking French, and how Cajun culture was once considered backward but eventually became chic. This book makes an important contribution to understanding Cajun culture.

Mardi Gras, Gumbo, and Zydeco is an edited volume that likewise makes an excellent contribution. Mardi Gras is a major festival and Louisiana holiday, gumbo is a soup with a mixture of different ingredients and often now means “a mixture,” and zydeco is a music from Louisiana that features blues music qualities and seems heavily inspired by blacks. This work features many chapters about festival celebrations, which are a major part of Cajun culture. It also has chapters on witch riding, anticlerical humor, and food. The last chapter deals with the distinction between Cajun and Creole, which is an important point, since many people in Louisiana are Cajuns, but some are better identified as Creoles. At least in part, Creoles have a French or Spanish background, although Cajuns were originally French Canadians, so they have a French background, too, if you go far back enough.

At the end of *Mardi Gras, Gumbo, and Zydeco*, there is a “Questions and Topics for Classroom Discussion and Writing Assignments” section. There are a few questions for each chapter, and also, for each chapter, two “Topics for Writing and Research.” Some of the questions are: What is the myth of White supremacy and social Darwinism?, Should the

Houma Indians seek recognition as a tribe?, How did the media help create a myth around Charlene Richard (a Cajun girl who died of leukemia and is regarded by many in south Louisiana as a saint)?

Both books make very important contributions to our knowledge of and understanding of Cajun culture. And both are enjoyable and easy to read.

—Russell Eisenman
Univ. of Texas—Pan American

13-4-0502

Blackman, Margaret B. *Upside Down: Seasons Among the Nunamiut*. Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 2004. 206 pp. ISBN 0-8032-1335-2, \$27.95.

In this ethnographer’s memoir, the seasons of indigenous life challenge the categories of Western disciplinarity and normalcy itself. As the night becomes day and the day becomes night, the conventions of Western social organization of the formal and informal dimensions of life and relationships are disturbed in ways from which Blackman cannot escape. Blackman comes into intimate contact with the pre-modern, the pre-disciplinarity that requires a deep interrogation of the very foundations of her professional life and the personal meanings that underpin it, even unto her motherhood. The autoethnographic reflections of her apprenticeships in the academic and indigenous communities emerge. As she moves toward and away from the Northern landscapes, she more clearly sees herself in the bas-relief of the Nunamiut people and land.

The most important aspect of this work would seem to be Blackman’s reflections on her thoughts over a period of more than 20 years of personal, professional, and community development. The reciprocity between the anthropologist and the objects/subjects of her work are anchored in human relations in seasons of the land that cannot be “just written” away or captured in text but in are evidenced in spirit, such as her daughter Meryn’s desire to return to the place of her sojourner childhood after she visits Rome in her own quest for place and meaning. Blackman’s voice rises above her subject, speaking to the professional sojourner of the self-consciousness that is developed in the process of “prying into other people’s lives” and seeing oneself and the meanings that has for the lives of the subjects and of one’s own children.

—Marlene Atleo
Nanaimo, B.C.

13-4-0503

Bolton, Kenneth and Feagin, Joe. *Black in Blue: African-American Police Officers and Racism*. New York: Routledge, 2004. 288 pp. ISBN 0-415-94518-6, \$27.50.

Braman, Donald. *Doing Time on the Outside: The Hidden Effects of Incarceration on Families and Communities*. Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press, 2004. 272 pp. ISBN 0-472-11381-X, \$29.95.

▼ continued social and political sciences

These books break new ground in analyzing the intersection of racism and the criminal justice system. Braman leverages the categories of family and community to expose the fault lines of criminal sanctions. Case studies of families located in impoverished communities coping with the incarceration of a primary member are presented to bring out the aggravation inherent in criminal sanctions.

The author presents the public debate regarding the construction of a new correctional facility in Ward Eight in the District of Columbia. Though the policymakers support the construction of the new facility, local residents see it as reinforcing prevalent stereotypes of Ward Eight as a dysfunctional community. The book presents the problem of crime and punishment in its structural context, demographic shifts, economic trends, and policy biases.

The problem of incarceration is dealt with specifically in terms of its effects on family and relationships, the economic difficulties it entails, and the prejudices plaguing the families. Braman's study departs from earlier research initiatives, since it addresses the concerns of the families of prisoners. Many of Braman's respondents' family members are incarcerated for drug-related offenses. The author argues for a high quality drug treatment with the help of family members. Finally, he argues that rather than focusing on long-term mandatory sentencing without treatment, policymakers should focus on larger structural issues like impoverished neighborhoods, public housing programs, and employment opportunities in low-income neighborhoods.

Bolton and Feagin address an issue that has often been neglected in criminological literature—racism against black police officers. *Black in Blue* is a qualitative analysis of experiences of 50 veteran black police officers in the South. In addition to providing the history of American policing, this book makes one realize that the “white policing syndrome” (negative treatment of black citizens) has penetrated the institutional setting of policing. Bolton and Feagin explore day-to-day racism as experienced by black officers. This takes various forms: sexism against black women officers, intimidating work atmosphere, politics of promotions, subjective evaluations by white superiors, and denigration of black culture and knowledge.

Black officers become victims of deeply entrenched stereotypes, expressed in the language and actions of white police officers. It is interesting to note the dual experience of racism and sexism faced by black women officers. As Bolton and Feagin cite, “being black and female creates a distinctive and often negative set of experiences.” Many of the respondents discuss white accusations of black language deficiency.

Most of these officers do not remain passive recipients of white subordination. They exercise agency in various forms—open questioning of discrimination, collective response through supportive networks with other black police officers, and legal remedies. One of the first steps toward equality in policing would be to develop strong black leadership.

Focusing on the effects of incarceration on the families and the racism inherent in the police workplace, both these

books introduce a host of issues and sensibilities to rethink the criminal justice system in terms of race, gender, and class.

—Suvarna Cherukuri
Siena College

13-4-0504

Brett, Rachel and Specht, Irma. ***Young Soldiers: Why They Choose to Fight***. Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2004. 192 pp. ISBN 1-58826-285-5, \$45.00 (c); 1-58826-261-8, \$17.95 (pb).

The UN estimates that there are over 300,000 child soldiers today. *Young Soldiers* studies a subset of this group, adolescents between 15 and 18 years old who volunteer to fight. The authors' research consisted of interviewing 53 youths who volunteered before the age of 18 to fight in 10 conflicts in Afghanistan, Colombia, Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Northern Ireland (both paramilitaries and British soldiers), Pakistan, Sierra Leone, South Africa, and Sri Lanka.

The purpose of the research was to determine what factors led adolescents to voluntarily join armed groups or national armies by talking with the soldiers themselves, and to determine whether the choice was really voluntary. The authors also sought to use the results of their research to guide the development of demobilization and reintegration programs for youth.

From their interviews, Brett and Specht identified five key factors: war, family, education and employment, poverty, and peer groups. While the authors caution against generic solutions, the key factors that they identified were markedly similar for young people across all 10 conflicts. The value of this research is threefold. It provides insights from the adolescents themselves. It focuses on the special situation of the adolescent soldier, a group too often overlooked in the literature and in rehabilitation programs. Last, it tries to separate out those who “volunteer” to fight from those who are forced to fight and to speculate on the consequences of this distinction.

—Jean M. Stern
Siena College

13-4-0505

Bynoe, Yvonne. ***Stand and Deliver: Political Activism, Leadership, and Hip Hop Culture***. Brooklyn, N.Y.: Soft Skull Press, 2004. 209 pp. ISBN 1-932360-10-7, \$13.95 (pb).

Bynoe examines whether or not the Hip Hop generation is taking its place in the continuum of black liberation/civil rights struggle. She provides an objective definition of leadership and then attempts to evaluate how Hip Hop artists and patrons meet this definition. Bynoe's study of the historical structure of black leadership allows her assertions to be more objective and insightful. The Hip Hop generation represents the first time that both blacks and whites turn more to artists/entertainers than to people and organizations

skilled in addressing economic, educational, and political concerns. Thus the Hip Hop generation, as does all of black culture, suffers from not being able to differentiate between a spokesperson and a leader. Bynoe eventually shows that Hip Hop should be rated as a culture that has the ability to create leaders, and that it is unfair to judge it as a sociopolitical movement.

Bynoe asserts that activism is about doing, not talking. While Hip Hop certainly has a tradition of talking about the injustices suffered by black people, it has no history of work or agenda to address these injustices. A final strength of Bynoe's work is her ability to define and articulate abstract terms and concepts, as well as her ability to show the necessity of understanding these terms. The Hip Hop generation is nothing more than Amiri Baraka's "changing same" of black people adapting to new circumstance. By placing Hip Hop in a historical context, Bynoe is allowing for a discourse that is more open to answers than to blame.

—C. Liegh McInnis
Psychedelic Literature, Jackson, Miss.

13-4-0506

Cook, Catherine; Hanieh, Adam; and Kay, Adah. ***Stolen Youth: The Politics of Israel's Detention of Palestinian Children***. Sterling, Va.: Pluto Press, 2004. 198 pp. ISBN 0-7453-2162-3, \$65.00 (cl); 0-7453-2161-5, \$22.50 (pb).

When I lived in the West Bank in the early eighties, a word often heard in conversations among Palestinians was "sijin" (prison), as many Palestinians had relatives and friends imprisoned by the Israeli authorities. Since 1967 over 600,000 Palestinians have spent time in Israeli prisons. In this detailed examination of Palestinian juvenile political prisoners and Israeli incarceration practices in the OPT (Palestinian Occupied Territories), the authors argue that the occupation is a system of control pervading all aspects of Palestinian life, with prisons a critical component.

Like curfews, closures, home demolitions, and land confiscation, prison is a form of collective punishment aimed at demoralizing and eventually defeating the Palestinian population. Hundreds of those arrested and detained each year are under 18. Minors can be held in administrative detention up to six months without trial or specific charges, interrogated and subjected to beating, handcuffing in uncomfortable positions for long periods, food and sleep deprivation, being forced to sign confessions, pressure to serve as collaborators and other forms of abuse and torture that violate international law. Although Israel recognizes international standards of human rights, it denies their applicability to the OPT, justifying these policies as necessary for its own security. The authors worked for the Defense for Children International between 1999 and 2003, and they base their analysis on reports by human rights organizations, as well as on interviews and testimonies of children, lawyers, and families. Well-researched and documented, *Stolen Youth* makes a

strong case against the occupation and the systematic abuse of Palestinians forced to live under it.

—Elka R. Frankel
Princeton, N.J.

13-4-0507

Dohan, Daniel. ***The Price of Poverty: Money, Work, and Culture in the Mexican American Barrio***. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2003. 296 pp. ISBN 0-520-22756-5, \$60.00 (cl); 0-520-23889-3, \$24.95 (pb).

Dohan's thorough and well-written sociological analysis of the impact of poverty, and the social institutions created by residents in largely Mexican immigrant communities in San Jose and East Los Angeles, is based on his experiences and data collected while he lived in the two areas. Dohan offers an intriguing account of how residents related to low-paying jobs, welfare, and illegal and illicit work. His study provides a sophisticated analysis of how cultural attitudes and social institutions influenced income generation in the two barrios.

In San Jose, Dohan found that Mexican immigrants worked low-income jobs and emphasized saving money to send to family in Mexico. Frequently, immigrants viewed their jobs as temporary before returning home to Mexico. Immigrants went on public assistance only as a last resort, and their illegal work in the underground economy was necessitated by either their own illegal status or the lack of other job prospects for legal immigrants. Illicit activities appeared work-related, like fake ID cards that got little notice from the police.

By contrast, in Los Angeles, residents valued work over any other form of income generation, but American-born Mexican Americans had higher income expectations and less willingness to accept low-paying jobs if there appeared no opportunity for advancement. Because one gang dominated the barrio, East Los Angeles residents tolerated illicit drug activity and other criminal behavior and they did not trust the police. Reluctantly, local residents also rationalized public assistance as a form of income generation. This study is an excellent comparison of immigrant Mexican and Chicano neighborhoods in California.

—Harvey J. Strum
Sage Colleges of Albany

13-4-0508

Elligan, Don. ***Rap Therapy: A Practical Guide for Communicating with Youth and Young Adults Through Rap Music***. New York: Dafina Books, 2004. 256 pp. ISBN 0-7582-0396-9, \$15.00 (pb).

Although music has been used in traditional therapy and counseling for many years, Elligan incorporates rap music within the therapeutic alliance in order to counsel more effectively youth and young adults who view rap and the hip hop culture as important and relevant aspects of their lives.

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Elligan divides his book into four sections. The first part explores basic concepts of adolescent development, parenting styles, the use of music with young adults, and the various types of rap music. A brief history of the different styles of rap music is presented, along with the major artists associated with each genre—gangsta, materialistic, political/protest, positive, spiritual, and unspecified rap. This section concludes with an inspection of hip hop culture.

Part Two discusses the theory of rap therapy, which is embodied as a five-step model: assess and plan, build alliance, reframe thoughts and behavior, reinforce through writing, and maintain the change. Part Three discusses rap therapy in action and the ways that it enhances the therapeutic session, using cases in which rap therapy is employed with various clients. The final section includes ten appendices that provide valuable information on implementing rap therapy, such as sample curricula, online resources, and illustrations of pro-social rap songs.

This book is exciting and contributes significantly to multicultural literature by underscoring the need for mental health professionals, teachers, and other caregivers to be culturally aware, knowledgeable, and competent when counseling clients from different backgrounds.

—Ann L. Carter-Obayuwama
Howard Univ.

13-4-0509

Fullilove, Mindy. ***Root Shock: How Tearing Up City Neighborhoods Hurts America, and What We Can Do About It***. New York: Ballantine/One World, 2004. 304 pp. ISBN 0-345-45422-7, \$25.95.

Fullilove is professor of clinical psychiatry and public health at the New York State Psychiatric Institute at Columbia University. Her third book contains groundbreaking insights about the emotional lives of people whose homes were bulldozed from the 1950s to the '70s as part of the misguided government policy called urban renewal. The title evokes the image of an uprooted tree in order to reinvigorate a powerful truth—we are all interconnected. Fullilove demonstrates that we as a society ignore this truth at our peril.

Detailed interviews and observations of destroyed communities reveal that it was not simply African-American and poor neighborhoods that became targets of the bulldozer. Almost all the neighborhoods were mixed, not only racially, but also in terms of class. Poorer people lived alongside those who were relatively better off, and community members provided crucial ongoing support for one another. Urban renewal broke up these sustaining networks.

Fullilove demonstrates that psychology is not solely individual. Each of us is located in a community, and the myriad events and people we come to depend on and love day by day are essential to our well-being. She shows that the grief and rage African Americans and others felt, and continue to feel, as a result of the loss of their homes and communities

has led directly to illegal drug trade, addiction, family breakdown, and crime. Fullilove makes us understand that our entire nation is meaner as a result.

—Carolyn Steinhoff Smith
Brooklyn, N.Y.

13-4-0510

Greenberg, Steven. ***Wrestling with God and Men: Homosexuality in the Jewish Tradition***. Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 2004. 284 pp. ISBN 0-299-19090-0, \$35.00.

Judaism is arguably the most welcoming to gays/lesbians of all major religions; yet while lesbian and gay Jews are successfully adapting to and influencing the shape of Jewish institutions, there are tensions. *Wrestling with God and Men* challenges entrenched scriptural interpretation and religious identity. It is preceded by titles such as *Judaism Since Gender* (1997); *Unheroic Conduct* (1997); *Powers of Diaspora* (2002); *Queer Jews* (2002); *The Zohar* (2003); *The Jewish Study Bible: Tanakh Translation, Torah, Nevi'im, Kethuvim* (2004); and *Queer Theory and the Jewish Question* (2004).

Readers may recognize Rabbi Greenberg's name from *Trembling Before G_d*, the documentary film that revealed the struggles of gay and lesbian Orthodox and Hasidic Jews. *Wrestling with God and Men* discusses homosexuality in religious Jewish texts, namely the prohibitions in Leviticus. It also speaks to evidence of homosexuality in Jewish history, from David and Jonathan to homoerotic tales of the rabbis, to medieval gay love poetry. Greenberg notes that, as was so for many centuries of Jewish biblical and rabbinical discourse, lesbianism is not mentioned at all.

Jewish tradition admonishes Jewish people to be a "light unto nations." As Greenberg states, scriptural "verses have never been understood, because gay and lesbian people haven't been at the table to interpret them and give their testimony."

This book will appeal to all clerics and lay people struggling to resolve their faith with a desire to make their communities more progressive and welcoming to gay and lesbian members.

—Elsa Bruguier
Union County (N.J.) College

13-4-0511

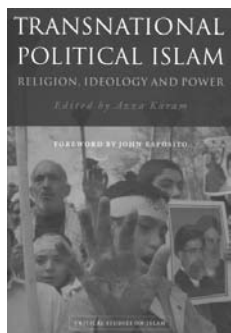
Grosfoguel, Ramón. ***Colonial Subjects: Puerto Ricans in a Global Perspective***. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2003. 268 pp. ISBN 0-520-23020-5, \$55.00 (cl); 0-520-23021-3, \$21.95 (pb).

Examination of the modern world by social scientists has led not only to reinterpretation of our present world but also to a reevaluation of the components that contribute to the world-system. Grosfoguel, associate professor of ethnic studies at the University of California, Berkeley, examines Puerto

Rico and its people in a global perspective of persistent colonialism and capitalism. He further examines this subject within a framework of migration and its effects and consequences. Grosfoguel notes in the introduction that his conceptualizations and interpretations are historical in nature, drawing from the inspiration of Immanuel Wallerstein.

A lengthy introduction explaining methodology and racism in his construct is followed by three parts that examine Puerto Ricans and those from the Caribbean in a global context. The first is an assessment of the political economy of the island, where Grosfoguel examines not only colonialism but also the question of an independent or dependant Puerto Rico. It is in this setting that he makes an interesting comparison between Miami and San Juan. In the second part, he examines Puerto Rican migration and the Caribbean diaspora to the United States. In the last part, Grosfoguel looks at Caribbean migration to Europe as well as to the United States. Throughout, the author documents both his theories and facts, supplementing them with a detailed bibliography and numerous tables. Although narrow in focus, this is an excellent book for those interested in the world-system and most especially in the modern Caribbean and Puerto Rico.

—James C. Harrison
Siena College



13-4-0512

Karam, Azza, ed. *Transnational Political Islam: Religion, Ideology, and Power*. Sterling, Va.: Stylus Publishing, 2003. 158 pp. Foreword by John Esposito. ISBN 0-7453-1626-3, \$69.95 (c); 0-7453-1625-5, \$19.95 (pb).

Six analytical and convincingly argued essays evaluate the influence of religious and political variants of Islam

on Europe. The overarching view among the contributors proposes that political Islam has failed to take root among Muslim communities in Europe, at least so far, because second- and third-generation immigrants easily mix with and adapt to local cultures.

Organizations like Al-Qaeda lack the established spiritual connections in Europe that they readily found in Kashmir, the Palestinian territories, and Afghanistan. Militant Islamists appear to operate at the periphery in Europe, utterly disconnected from the experiences of the majority of Muslim immigrants in France, Germany, Sweden, and the Netherlands. Muslim political refugees who immigrated to Europe consider the region a safe haven after escaping oppressive regimes in Northern Africa or the Middle East. According to the authors, few indications exist that countries such as Sweden or the Netherlands have become political targets of highly structured, aggressive, vanguard Islamist groups.

The challenge European governments face is to further

public awareness and education campaigns that encourage citizens to distinguish between violent Islamist organizations and groups that pursue moderate political Islam in the Diaspora. In fact, the contributors come to the debatable conclusion that moderate Islamist voices, in cooperation with European officials, can raise the profile of the diverse perspectives that exist in European Muslim communities to encourage discourse leading to the eventual isolation of militant groups.

—Vera Eccarius-Kelly
Siena College

13-4-0513

Lewis, Bernard. *From Babel to Dragomans: Interpreting the Middle East*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2004. 438 pp. ISBN 0-19-517336-8, \$28.00.

Lewis's status as an authority on the Islamic Middle East, exponentially enhanced by the events of 9/11 and afterward, deserves to rise even higher with the publication of this anthology. Its 51 essays, written over a half-century, range from previously unpublished works, through others that appeared in specialized academic journals, to a number of occasional pieces prepared for periodicals like *The New York Review of Books* and *The Wall Street Journal*. Lewis's 1990 analysis of "The Roots of Muslim Rage," demonstrating why that rage reflects a clash of civilizations as opposed to a set of particular grievances, almost justifies the book by itself. His concluding comments on "Occidentalism and Orientalism" brilliantly evaluate their origins, critiquing the limited perspective of too much contemporary discussion of the concepts.

Lewis is a scholar for the working day as well as a magisterial commentator on the Islamic world and its relationship to the West. The essays published here address subjects ranging from the emergence of Israel and the significance of the Gulf War to the significance of monarchy in the Middle East and the impact of Fatimid rule on Egypt's position in the Middle East. What they have in common is an urbane, erudite world-view that rises above polemics and is supported by a lifetime's worth of learning worn lightly. In this Bernard Lewis sets standards for us all.

—Dennis Showalter
Colorado College

13-4-0514

Moosnick, Nora Rose. *Adopting Maternity: White Women Who Adopt Transracially or Transnationally*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2004. 175 pp. ISBN 0-275-97812-5, \$54.95.

Moosnick utilizes adoptive mothers' narratives to explore the factors that impact their experiences with transracial or transnational adoption. The discussion uses feminist theory and social constructivism as grounding frameworks. In addition,

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tion to race, ethnicity, gender, class, and religion, additional factors such as the characteristics of the birth mother and her role in the process are explored. The two main chapters focus on two “stages” of the adoption process—the process of “Becoming a Mother” (dealing with infertility, deciding to adopt, and the adoption process itself) and “On Being a Mother” (the arrival of the child, interactions with the adopted child, and the reactions of others). The final chapter is based on the premise that “a magnified inspection of adoptive mothers’ narratives of their lives can offer insights into broader social relations” while pointing out opportunities to challenge race, gender, and class hierarchies.

The book provides a fascinating look into the experiences of this group of women and a glimpse into the experiences of the birth mothers. Moosnick acts as a mediator between the “identity talk” and experiences of the adoptive mothers and the scholarly literature that exists on adoption. While use of the same narrative passages became repetitive to this reader, it was necessary within the structure of the book to allow exploration of the various factors that influence transracial and transnational adoption situations. This exploratory work has wisely utilized existing literature and sets the stage for additional research on an important but politically and socially charged issue.

—Carla J. Sofka
Siena College

13-4-0515

Ochoa, Gilda L. *Becoming Neighbors in a Mexican American Community: Power, Conflict, and Solidarity*. Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 2004. 312 pp. ISBN 0-292-70210-8, \$55.00 (cl); 0-292-70168-3, \$21.95 (pb).

While writing a much-needed study of the interaction between Mexican Americans and Mexican immigrants, Ochoa, a sociologist, flounders in the dense ideological and sociological style underlying her analysis. The sociological terminology, studies cited, and the feminist/neo-Marxist perspective makes the work ideal for academic libraries and college courses in sociology and Chicano Studies. However, it will leave the general reader bored and troubled by having to wade through the sociological and ideological jargon.

Readers should focus on the examples Ochoa cites to gain an appreciation for the complex continuum of relationships between native-born Mexican Americans and recent Mexican immigrants that lead to conflict or group solidarity. The author interviewed residents of a working-class suburb near Los Angeles. This community went from a primarily “white” population with a Mexican-American minority in the 1950s to a heavily immigrant community today with few whites and a population that is of Mexican-American and immigrant Mexican origin. Ochoa interviewed local residents in 1994–96 and 2000–2001. She provides an intriguing account of Mexican-American attitudes and the factors that shaped their views of Mexican immigrants.

Unfortunately, Ochoa’s emphasis on oppression studies

and her lack of understanding of American immigration history result in her failure to draw comparisons with other immigrant/ethnic groups. She appears surprised that some Mexican Americans are embarrassed by immigrants and keep their distance from recent arrivals. German Jews did the same in the 1880s when Yiddish-speaking Eastern European Jews arrived. Ochoa’s work would have been more sophisticated and nuanced if she had relied less on sociological studies that reinforced her ideological biases.

—Harvey J. Strum
Sage Colleges of Albany

13-4-0516

Patterson, David and Roth, John K., eds. *After-Words: Post-Holocaust Struggles with Forgiveness, Reconciliation, Justice*. Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 2004. 296 pp. ISBN 0-295-98371-X, \$35.00.

The members of the Pastora Goldner Holocaust Symposium, an international interfaith group that meets biennially to discuss the moral, theological, and cultural after-effects of the Nazi years, are committed to dialogue. Each article on the three major themes of forgiveness, reconciliation, and justice is followed by three brief responses by other symposiasts. It is clear that the main points of divergence, unsurprisingly, lie between those who approach the Holocaust from a Jewish tradition and those who are Christian. Patterson, in particular, both in commentary and in his paper, “G-d, World, Humanity: Jewish Reflections on Justice after Auschwitz,” is especially blunt in his criticisms of Christianity and its core teachings concerning the sinfulness of the world and the criminality of those who, like the Jews, do not accept Christ. These contributed to the genocidal slaughter of Jews by the Nazis. Other writers strive to draw from Christian teaching and contemporary philosophy conceptual resources for overcoming the resentment and animosity that continue to fester in new generations of Jews, Germans, and Arabs.

This book is recommended for those who already have a basic historical knowledge of the Holocaust and are acquainted with memoirs like those of Elie Wiesel and Primo Levi. The articles are very well written and relatively jargon free. But they too often indulge in abstract theological speculation that seems remote from the brutal horror of mass extermination. Since the theme of this volume concerns the possibility of justice, forgiveness, and reconciliation in the aftermath of the Holocaust, it is surprising that more attention was not devoted to more recent genocidal atrocities in Bosnia, Cambodia, and Rwanda. Overall, however, this is an excellent book composed by scholars who are not only experts in their field but who seem also to be very decent human beings.

—Paul Santilli
Siena College

13-4-0517

Sarich, Vincent and Miele, Frank. ***Race: The Reality of Human Differences***. Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 2004. 287 pp. ISBN 0-8133-4086-1, \$27.50.

This is a non-rigorous scientific examination of race that largely relies on 40-year-old work. The thesis of the book is that race accounts for significant differences among humans, including intelligence.

While medically and culturally race has meaning, in terms of biology it is not generally considered to be a relevant attribute of an organism. To use biological data as these authors do, and to ignore so much biological work that has touched on the issue of human racial differences over the past 40 years, calls into question the conclusions made here.

Racists throughout modern history have used science to justify their prejudices. It appears that this is another such instance. The authors' conclusion is that society should be set up to be a straight "meritocracy." But their interpretation of what that would actually mean is strongly hinted at when Sir Francis Galton, one of the founders of eugenics—which spawned decades of institutional racism and genocide in the twentieth century—is referred to as "Charles Darwin's smarter younger cousin," and when a dubious postulate such as "the mean sub-Saharan African IQ is 70," is argued for even though it makes no sense. How could a continent of functionally retarded people survive? They completely ignore the facts that (1) IQ tests measure only limited aspects of intelligence, and (2) societal factors often affect test outcomes.

The authors claim that they do not mean to advance racist views, but then they refer repeatedly to works such as *The Bell Curve*, *IQ and the Wealth of Nations*, and *Taboo: Why Black Athletes Dominate Sports and Why We're Afraid to Talk About It*, each of which has been criticized for doing just that.

—Sue Ann Gardner
Univ. of Nebraska–Lincoln

13-4-0518

Seligman, Adam B. ***Modest Claims: Dialogues on Tolerance and Tradition***. Notre Dame, Ind.: Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 2004. 232 pp. ISBN 0-268-04106-7, \$40.00 (cl); 0-268-04107-5, \$19.00 (pb).

Seligman addresses the meaning of tolerance and then asks, "Is tolerance enough?" The answers are spread throughout this tidy text in the form of three dialogues and two extended essays. Chapter Five, on the language of tolerance, is the best one, and his introduction to the book is a must read if the reader wishes to have a base to come back to during the sometimes tangential dialogues. The dialogues are reconstructed from a series of talks and discussions that took place in Vienna in 1999 among some leading scholars of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

Part of Seligman's thesis is that secular traditions have spoken about tolerance as a civic virtue often enough, but

the point of view of a religious mind-set has not been at the forefront of the conversation. So, in the words of Peter Berger, Nasr Abu Zayd, Suzanne Last Stone, Claire Wolfteich, and others, Seligman has crafted a series of conversations on tolerance with these living faith traditions. At times the discussion flows brilliantly and one finally feels what it is like to be the proverbial fly on the wall in a room filled with great minds discussing great ideas. In other places the discussion wanes and the reader is left to reread the opening section to reconnect with the current theme. In the end, however, the reader will wish to continue the conversation with others. More one could not hope to ask from a text.

—Peter Ellard
Siena College

13-4-0519

Shapiro, Thomas M. ***The Hidden Cost of Being African American: How Wealth Perpetuates Inequality***. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2004. 238 pp. ISBN 0-19-515147-X, \$28.00.

Shapiro has written a detailed and compelling account of the racial wealth gap in American society, focusing on the wealth disparity between middle-class African-American and white households. The study is based on interviews with families in Los Angeles, Boston, and St. Louis from January 1998 to June 1999, and it included a cross-section of families from poor to upper-middle-class. Much of the analysis points out the hidden costs of racial differences between middle-class blacks and whites based on trans-generational family assets. Shapiro's empirical evidence provides greater depth, integrity, and sophistication to the conclusions drawn from the interviews and personal data gathered. What emerges is an intriguing sociological study of social stratification and racial inequality behind the American Dream.

Wealth ownership provides the key to understanding the difficulty of African Americans with equal jobs and education bridging the resource gap with whites of the same income and education. Disparity begins with white middle-class families inheriting greater resources than black families, providing whites with advantages in education and housing. This also gives whites a cushion against the loss of middle-class status during periods of temporary unemployment. Shapiro is not sanguine about the reduction of racial inequality in American society. His suggestions for new public policies aimed at countering the racial inequality in asset redistribution run counter to the tax, education, and income distribution policies of President George Bush and the Republican majority in Congress and would require middle-class whites to support a proactive public policy. Shapiro's conclusions, ideological perspective, and policy suggestions will be as popular in conservative circles as a screening of *Fahrenheit 9/11*.

—Harvey J. Strum
The Sage Colleges of Albany

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13-4-0520

Shields, David. *Body Politic: The Great American Sports Machine*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004. 208 pp. ISBN 0-7432-4774-4, \$23.00.

The author attempts to relate sports to American cultural values, so this is more than just a collection of sports stories. For example, the book discusses sports clichés, by which ideas and excuses are explained. Also, it relates famous sports announcer Howard Cosell's prediction that many Americans would dislike him because he was Jewish. There is also an interesting description of St. Louis Cardinals pitcher Rick Ankiel, a high school national player of the year, who developed an inability to throw strikes. The author seems to believe that too much thinking is involved, which fits in with what some high-performing players believe: You can't think and play at the same time. Actually, players do think and play at the same time, but many skills become automatic or quasi-automatic, thus requiring limited thinking.

Many other sports stories are told in a very readable book. There is writing about fans, East Coast vs. West Coast, basketball coach Phil Jackson, baseball star Ichiro, and much more. By relating the sports stories to cultural values and beliefs, this work becomes a commentary on American life in general.

—Russell Eisenman
Univ. of Texas–Pan American

Reference

13-4-0521

Discovering World Cultures: The Middle East. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2004. 5 vols., 720 pp. ISBN 0-313-32922-2, \$200.00.

Here's an excellent choice for school and library reference on the Middle East, arguably the region where Americans are most in need of accurate and unbiased understanding. Each of the five volumes discusses three or four different countries separately and includes a cumulative index. Turkey, Cyprus, and the Gulf nations are covered along with Iran and Israel, but aside from Egypt, not the Arab countries of North Africa. An introduction to each volume covers some terminology and background information on religions, particularly Islam. Other useful features for each country are a sidebar of "Fast Facts," a time line starting in prehistory, a characteristic recipe from the cuisine, and a regional map showing the location of the country.

The books follow a standardized arrangement: the people (ethnic and religious groups), geography, major cities, climate, natural resources, flora and fauna, history from ancient times through the first half of 2003, economy, media, religion(s), family life, education, recreation, food, holidays, and finally, traditional crafts, music, and literature. Problem areas—social and political issues (particularly those affecting

women) and religions (rise of militant Islam)—are usually treated in the context of the above-mentioned topics, rather than receiving separate attention.

The writing is careful and for the most part accurate; this reviewer found few questionable statements. While the presentation admits little "drama" and the overall effect is somewhat bland, the sober tone inspires confidence. References to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict are well handled; while factual and dispassionate, they may encourage further thought. For instance, the section on Israel discusses the "refuseniks," young men who refuse to serve in the Israeli army units that control the Palestinian territories. It's regrettable that a section on Palestine could not be included, as the accomplishments of Palestinians and the culture of historic Palestine are distinctive.

Photos, in black and white, are well chosen and captioned, with few exceptions, such as one purportedly of Egyptian women in "traditional dress." These women are actually wearing extreme Islamic covering (faces covered), a very rare sight in Egypt. A nineteenth-century illustration of Muhammad should have been rejected in deference to Muslim belief that the Prophet should never be depicted.

Sidebars offer additional information on a variety of interesting and pertinent subjects. The words "Did you know?" are irritating, however, as they usually precede very obscure facts. Each volume includes a bibliography, which would be easier to use if the printed references were separated from the online sites.

Teachers might consider excerpting sections on modern history for study units, which could make Middle Eastern political history—and U.S. relations with the Arab world—more comprehensible. For instance, the history of Saudi Arabia is particularly relevant and important, as is the discussion of events leading up to the 2003 war in Iraq; nineteenth-century European intervention in Egypt and the Lebanese war (1975–1991) are also well explained. The authors and editors of these volumes are to be commended for distilling a huge amount of information into succinct, useful introductions to this rich, complicated, and turbulent region.

—Elsa Marston
Bloomington, Ind.

13-4-0522

Lowery, Charles D.; Marszalek, John F., eds.; Upchurch, Thomas Adams, associate ed. *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of African-American Civil Rights: From Emancipation to the Twenty-First Century*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2003. 2 vols., 704 pp. ISBN 0-313-32171-X, \$175.00.

The goal of this revised edition of *African American Encyclopedia of Civil Rights: From Emancipation to the Present* (1992) is to update to September 2003 information on the continuing progress in the march toward equal rights for black Americans. Almost all of the original essays have been revised, and there are 60 new articles. There has been a spe-

cial attempt to revise the bibliographies so that readers can further their research with the most recent information, and many web sites (barely getting underway when the first edition was published), are included. The ample use of cross-references within the articles helps to pull the set together.

Most of the 250-plus contributors are from colleges and universities. Some of the entries are too brief. For example, the article on Robert Moses concludes with his leaving the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and a brief statement about his foreign travels and return to school at Harvard. It does not mention his work in Southern and inner cities to improve the state of mathematics education through his Mathematics Project, an effort detailed in his 2001 *Radical Equations: Math Literacy and Civil Rights* (not listed in the bibliography), in which he continues to improve the lives of African Americans through education.

The scope of the work is to cover topics that “made a significant positive contribution to the advancement of black civil rights.” One of its strengths is that it summarizes many legal documents—Executive Orders, civil rights laws, and court cases on all levels—placing them into context and giving some idea as to their lasting impact.

The articles are alphabetically arranged, and there is a detailed index. It would have been helpful to have a classed index so that, for example, all the court cases, all the biographical pieces, all the organizations, could have been pulled together for systematic research. The chronology lists events through the Supreme Court’s 2003 University of Michigan affirmative action decision.

The inclusion of primary documents (comprising about a quarter of the text)—some complete, most abridged—will be very helpful to students. Some are overly shortened, Martin Luther King’s important statement of his mission, “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” for example; the web address given to access the complete text has changed slightly.

Despite some caveats, this set is highly recommended, especially for those libraries not possessing the first edition.

—Sean P. Maloney
Siena College Library

13-4-0523

Meier, Matt S. and Gutiérrez, Margo. *The Mexican American Experience: An Encyclopedia*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2003. 400 pp. ISBN 0-313-31643-0, \$79.95.

The authors of this one-volume encyclopedia have compiled a “guide for those seeking basic information about the Mexicano, mainly in the Southwest, but also beyond, from 1848 to the present...including all persons, places and events of more than local importance.” It was written by Meier, formerly a professor at USC Santa Clara, who died in 2003, and Gutiérrez, a librarian at the University of Texas, Austin; they are coauthors of the *Encyclopedia of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement* (2000).

The entries are arranged alphabetically, but there is an

important “Guide to Related Entries” that enables the reader to browse the volume for articles on any one of 37 topics, ranging from “Administration, Academic” and “Civil Rights,” through “Performing Arts” and “Terminology.” This last category has about 45 words that are not only defined but also give some idea as to whether they are considered strongly or mildly pejorative; for example, terms such as *agabachado* and *gringo*.

The “Further Reading” suggestions (found only at the end of most articles; there is no comprehensive bibliography) are current and helpful. However, there are no web sites listed, even when they would be especially helpful, such as for the United Farm Workers, Joan Baez, or the American G.I. Forum.

One bad typo gives the year of the Bear Flag Revolt as 1946 rather than 1846. Nonetheless, this will be a valuable addition to public and academic libraries.

—Sean P. Maloney
Siena College Library

13-4-0524

Porter, David L., ed. *Latino and African American Athletes Today: A Biographical Dictionary*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2004. 448 pp. ISBN 0-313-32048-9, \$85.00.

Purporting to be “the first comprehensive, multi-sport biographical resource that concentrates exclusively on notable African American and Latino American athletes,” this admirable collection features medium-sized profiles of some of the most prominent current and recently retired sports figures.

Dozens of well-known athletes (113 African American and 61 Latino) such as Derek Jeter, Michael Jordan, Michael Vick, Shaquille O’Neal, and Venus and Serena Williams get their due. But what’s more welcome is the attention paid to representatives of games that don’t always make it to the highlight films that are a staple of news and cable programs. In fact, if it weren’t for this book, many might not even be aware of the contributions made by minority athletes to such sports as auto racing, speed skating, softball, horse racing, wrestling, and even bobsledding.

The dictionary is, thankfully, short on statistics and long on narrative explaining the significance of each honoree. Porter does not overwhelm the reader with the columns of numbers that are so prevalent in books of this type. The volume might seem more attuned to younger readers, but it is a useful reference for all ages. Each profile includes a brief bibliography citing books and articles, but they are so skimpy as to be practically useless. In addition, the quality of the entries is somewhat uneven, given that several different writers were used for the project. Despite these minor flaws, *Latino and African American Athletes Today* will make a welcome addition to school and local libraries, as well as the sports fan’s bookshelf.

—Ron Kaplan
Montclair, N.J.

▼ continued reference

13-4-0525

Smead, Robert N. *Cowboy Talk: A Dictionary of Spanish Terms from the American West*. Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 2004. 224 pp. Illus. by Ronald Kil. Foreword by Richard W. Slatta. ISBN 0-8061-3594-2, \$29.95.

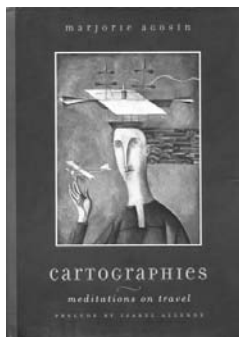
For linguists, the quest for the origin or etymology of words can be a gratifying experience. Those who study languages take pride in ferreting out the connections in their second and sometimes third language in relation to their mother or native tongue. Smead's text is just such an adventure for linguists exploring the origin and incorporation of Spanish, and to a lesser degree Native American or indigenous terms, into the English language commonly spoken in the American West.

Cowboy Talk is a unique dictionary in that it explores terminology not often utilized outside the context of the world of the cowboy or ranchero. It is useful for those who seek to further develop their understanding of Spanish as used by ranch hands, as well as individuals interested in learning about "palabras prestadas" or borrowed words. The text ends with a resource section that includes bibliographies of sources in English and in Spanish.

The illustrations in the text are simple yet effective. Ronald Kil has attempted to capture the subtlety of the 16 objects he has portrayed and does so in an almost caricature-like style.

—Melanie Pores
Albany (N.Y.) City Schools

Travel



13-4-0526

Agosin, Marjorie. *Cartographies: Meditations on Travel*. Athens: Univ. of Georgia Press, 2004. 160 pp. Trans. from Spanish by Nancy Abraham Hall. ISBN 0-8203-2629-1, \$22.95.

Reading Agosin's words takes you on an extraordinary voyage, hearing "the murmur of the road" and feeling that her words are heavy, sensual messages of beauty. Although you recognize the stages of preparation, trepidation, longing, arrival, reflection, and return, you are grateful that she has been your guide as you experience the wonder of flapping colored ribbons, twinkling stars, small flames, phantoms, faeries, and sprites. There is a loose, shifting shape to her stories as she recreates the presence of her heroes: St. Teresa in Avila, President Kennedy in Dallas, beloved lost relatives in Terezin, decapitated children in Croatia whose silent echoes weigh on your sensibilities. Like the weavers of Charleston, Agosin braids together the tales of diverse countries, recreating their ghosts, saturating them in her tactile response, bearing witness as does Julia, the silent keeper of Rhodes's synagogue.

Paradoxically, there is the feel of words, "longing and nostalgia," light with no shadows, illuminations in darkness. "Like a veiled woman," mystery surrounds these pilgrimages as she suggests sensually rather than delineating.

Agosin has had no choice but to travel, presenting stories, songs, and fables as poetic offerings, keys to memory. She "rocks back and forth" between places, time, herself as dancing child and sober woman "yearning for what had gone in vain, things forsaken, lost or never found." Restless, alone, pondering and exiled, she pauses, records, but ultimately is driven to move on, searching for "deep vein[s] of hope and love that run counter to hatred and violence."

—Patricia F. Goldblatt
Toronto, Ont.

13-4-0527

Kadushin, Raphael, ed. *Wonderlands: Good Gay Travel Writing*. Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press/Terrace Books, 2004. 276 pp. ISBN 0-299-19754-9, \$19.95 (pb).

Kadushin (humanities editor at the University of Wisconsin Press) has included himself in an anthology that joins it with others in the gay travel writing category, but *Wonderlands* departs markedly from the "sex in exotic places" stereotype under which the genre is so often constructed and marketed.

"Most of the gay travel anthologies I'd seen were just erotic—about going to the Caribbean and sleeping with the pool boy," states Kadushin. The worlds of *Wonderlands* are much more expansive. Nuanced entries make it a thinking man's gay male armchair traveler. Its characters plumb a literal and figurative place in the world. The book features 19 stories and essays by newcomers and prominent authors such as Edmund White, Philip Gambone, Edward Field, and Colm Tóibín. The entries in *Wonderlands* unfold against a backdrop of intersections among homo-social, homosexual, at home, and abroad locations such as Alaska, Nashville, a French farmhouse, Morocco, and Syria.

Wonderlands joins the University of Wisconsin Press's Living Out series, co-founded by Kadushin seven years ago. All royalties earned on its sale will be used to support this series. Recommended for all collections.

—Elsa Bruguier
Union County (N.J.) College

13-4-0528

Lago, Don. *On the Viking Trail: Travels in Scandinavian America*. Iowa City: Univ. of Iowa Press, 2004. 288 pp. ISBN 0-87745-892-8, \$27.95.

Initially needing details about his family's surname, Lago traveled to where his father emigrated from, Sweden. This journey began an intensive personal study of Swedish immigrants in America in an effort to replace his father's memory loss with information he gathered on his own. Lago's father had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, bringing a crit-

ical urgency to this work. Most interesting to this reviewer were the many tidbits included in the text, such as Eero Saarinen, born and raised until age 12 in Finland, who was responsible for the Gateway Arch of St. Louis, a stellar work in its own right. The geometry and natural materials included in that project are stunning to all who bear witness. A plethora of Icelandic, Danish, Finnish, Swedish, and Norwegian surnames, with appropriate background notes, are described at some length. “Tidy Scandinavian towns in Minnesota” are visited several times in the text, each time bringing a smile to this reviewer. Swedish names such as Celsius and Peterson are noted, as are their individual accomplishments.

Lago has a background in history and in writing; he has published in magazines and journals such as *Orion*, *Astronomy*, *Sky and Telescope*, *Smithsonian*, *Science Digest*, and the *Antioch Review*. He has penned essays on nature, science, and history, and this volume speaks well of his research skill. A four-page bibliography will assist the curious reader. A delightful text.

—Renee I. Rude
Library, St. Cloud State Univ.

13-4-0529

Munier, Gilles. *Iraq: An Illustrated History and Guide*. Northampton, Mass.: Interlink, 2004. 232 pp. Illus. with photos by Erick Bonnier. Trans. from French by David Stryker. ISBN 1-56656-513-8, \$18.00 (pb).

Offering a historical guidebook of Iraq to an American audience at a time of war seems counterintuitive, yet this title may correct some preconceived notions about that country and its people. Readers are invited to imagine a future in a peaceful Iraq that welcomes visitors, who explore the country’s ancient archeological sites and its beautiful landscapes. Munier, president of the Franco-Iraqi Institute for Economic Cooperation, introduces readers to Iraq’s 4,000-year history and culture without overwhelming them with facts and dates. He offers intriguing details about important historical figures and takes a journey through the country by visiting Iraqi cities, markets, mosques, and historical landmarks. The well-organized text is accompanied by beautiful color photographs depicting life in Iraq before the war.

The chapters provide historical overviews of Iraq from the days of Sumer to World War II and explore the difficult experiences of Iraqis from the 1958 Revolution to the Gulf War. Munier also incorporates sidebars with statistics and charts to show the human toll of United Nations sanctions in terms that effectively put the current lawlessness into a larger historical perspective. The most significant archaeological sites, monuments, and landmarks of all of Iraq’s regions receive attention, but Munier focuses on Baghdad and other major cities.

Readers with an interest in learning about Iraqi history, architecture, and archeology beyond the dreadful daily news snippets will find this book and its gorgeous photographs enlightening.

Juvenile

Primary (Gr. P-3)

13-4-0530

Benatar, Raquel. *Isabel Allende: Recuerdos para un cuento/Memories for a Story*. Houston, Tex.: Piñata Books, 2004. 32 pp. Illus. by Fernando Molinari. Bilingual (Spanish-English) ed. Trans. from Spanish by Patricia Peterson. ISBN 1-55885-379-0, \$14.95.

Benatar, author of *Gabriel García Márquez and His Magical Universe* (2002), offers another tantalizing glimpse into a major writer’s formative years—but again, for what audience? Beginning with Isabel’s grandmother, “a kind and eccentric woman who believed in spirits,” the author introduces Isabel’s family (though mentioning her assassinated uncle Salvador only in passing), then goes on to portray her as a lonely child with an active imagination and a mischievous streak, who loved listening to her grandparents’ stories and grew up to turn them into stories of her own.

Benatar mentions only *House of Spirits* in the narrative text but lists a selection of Allende’s other works, up to 2002’s *City of Beasts*, in a closing time line. Easily digestible blocks of the original Spanish text are placed on each verso page over Petersen’s smooth translation; on opposite pages, though adult figures in Molinari’s evocative paintings tend to be shown in static poses, Isabel’s sparkling eyes and mobile features vividly capture the lively, humorous mind within. But young readers who develop a yen to read her books will have to wait for several years, as, aside from a few early forays into children’s literature, Allende’s books are decidedly for adults or young adults. Unless she intends to go back to writing for children (and there’s no indication of that here), this picture book biography will have more relevance for literacy or ESL students than general child readers.

—John Peters
New York Public Library

13-4-0531

Brammer, Ethraim Cash. *The Rowdy, Rowdy Ranch/Allá en El Rancho Grande*. Houston, Tex.: Piñata Books, 2004. 32 pp. Illus. by D. Nina Cruz. Bilingual (English-Spanish) ed. ISBN 1-55885-409-6, \$14.95.

de Anda, Diane. *Kikiriki/Quiquiriquí*. Houston, Tex.: Piñata Books, 2004. 32 pp. Illus. by Daniel Lechón. Bilingual (English-Spanish) ed. ISBN 1-55885-382-0, \$14.95.

Kikiriki/Quiquiriquí is a delightful bilingual children’s story about a rooster that a grandmother has bought for a measly 50 cents and brought home for Sunday dinner for her family. Unknowingly, her granddaughters have befriended Kiki/Quiqui, as they have nicknamed him, and they have set

▼ continued primary (gr. p-3)

about to hide him to protect him from his fate. Early one morning, Kiki/Quiqui sneaks out and does what any healthy rooster would do—he crows at the top of his lungs! Mom and Dad and Grandma come running and seek an explanation for why the rooster has taken up residence in the girls' room. When the girls explain their affection for their new friend, their dad chooses to spare him and takes him to live at a friend's ranch, and he too comes to regard Kiki/Quiqui as the special rooster he is.

This is a beautifully written story, well developed, using rich descriptive language in both Spanish and English. Readers can feel the author's sentiments and feel as if they too were a part of this special family's tale. The illustrator has also done an excellent job of capturing the sentiment of each moment in the lively illustrations. He has chosen vivid colors and has successfully presented a sense of action and movement.

The *Rowdy, Rowdy Ranch/Allá en El Rancho Grande* is also a heartwarming family story. The tale is told through the eyes of a grandson and reflects his grandfather's farm and the special memories he recalls from his adventures. I loved the author's description of how the grandfather bought the farm for a song and the grandmother's explanation about where the chicken tree got its name, or his aunt Chalia's tale about the boy who cried tears of chocolate. All the characters are wonderful storytellers. The story reveals just how different but cherished our memories of our youth can be, and it wraps us up in a wonderful serape of love and warmth.

This bilingual text in Spanish and in English does not lose its sentiment in either language. On the contrary, it is not clear which language it was originally written in, as both the text in English and the text in Spanish are well developed. I liked they way the author chooses to code-switch or weave Spanish phrases into the English sections of the text.

The illustrations by D. Nina Cruz are bright and cheerful. They also convey a sense of warmth and belonging. What a wonderful feast for readers' eyes and hearts!

—Melanie Pores
Albany (N.Y.) City School District

13-4-0532

Chan, Arlene. *Awakening the Dragon: The Dragon Boat Festival*. Toronto: Tundra Books, 2004. 32 pp. Illus. by Song Nan Zhang. ISBN 0-88776-656-0, \$15.95.

Park, Linda Sue. *The Firekeeper's Son*. New York: Clarion, 2004. 40 pp. Illus. by Julie Downing. ISBN 0-618-13337-2, \$16.00.

Dragons have always been held in high esteem by Asian cultures. Unlike Western dragons, which breathe fire and have to be fought by brave knights, Asian dragons preside over various aspects of life: the mountains, the rivers, the rain, the clouds. The emperor even has a special dragon—the yellow one with five toes, which may be portrayed only in connection with the imperial household. In *The Firekeeper's*

Son, the dragon is embodied in the undulating hills of Korea. Each hill is a hump of the dragon's back. On top of each hump a fire is lit every night. First comes the one by the sea, then the next one and the next, until the emperor in his castle can see them and know that all is right with the land. The historical system of signals indicated where danger was coming from and how many enemy soldiers might be attacking.

Song Hee's father is the one responsible for lighting the coastal fire, the first one that gets lit every night. If that fire is not lit, the others will not be lit, and the emperor will send soldiers to fight, thinking there is danger on the coast. Song Hee would like to see the soldiers, tall and impressive. But when his father is unable to light the fire one night, Song Hee must run and light it himself. Reminiscent of other beacon fire stories, such as the Western one, *Keep The Lights Burning, Abby*, this is the story of a young child acting nobly to save lives. Tender and delicate watercolors portray qualities of life in old Korea, and an author's note at the end clarifies the historical significance of the beacon fires.

The subject of *Awakening the Dragon* is the river dragon. Every June there are boat races on the rivers in China. Boats long and narrow, like the dragons themselves, are filled with strong rowers. These energetic races were originally said to bring fertility and plenty to the land. Later, in the Han Dynasty (206 BC-220 AD), they became connected with Qu Yuan (Chu Yuan), a statesman so disillusioned with the politics of the day that he threw himself into the Mi Lo River and drowned. Local people raced in boats to save him, but were too late. Many customs are connected with Dragon Boat Festival, including special foods, good luck pouches, the five colors representing the five elements, the five poisonous creatures who fight off illness, and the demon slayer, Zhong Kui, whose fierce image adorns walls in households to ward off danger and evil. Colorful, lively, and photographically accurate paintings by Song Nan Zhang add greatly to the attraction of this picture book.

—Ginny Lee
Syracuse, N.Y.

13-4-0533

Crum, Shutta. *My Mountain Song*. New York: Clarion, 2004. 32 pp. Illus. by Ted Rand. ISBN 0-618-15970-3, \$16.00.

Whether it is chickens cackling or screen doors swishing, "in the mountains down south, morning is musical." While Brenda Gail spends the summer on her grandparents' farm, she learns more about Southern sounds when her grandfather sings and describes his mountain song. This unique song comprises all the special memories and people in one's life. Soon Brenda Gail is reflecting on the people and events from the summer she will include in her own mountain song, such as Big Ma's breakfast and the family chicken.

Told in regional speech from the Kentucky mountains, this sentimental tale highlights intergenerational relationships. Illustrator Ted Rand weaves quintessential Appalachian elements—a fiddle, a log cabin, and scenic mountains, creeks, and valleys—into his expressive watercol-

or paintings. Educators looking for regional literature or family stories will find this title a boon to their collections. After reading it aloud, they will want to encourage children to make up their own mountain songs.

—Angela Leeper
Wake Forest, N.C.

13-4-0534

Demi. *The Greatest Power*. New York: Simon & Schuster/McElderry Books, 2004. 32 pp. Illus. by the author. ISBN 0-689-84503-0, \$19.95.

Here is an elegant picture book, another of Demi's signature works. A boy emperor seeks a new prime minister. Because he admires the heavens, he allows the heavens to decide who it will be. He calls in all the children and tells them that the wisest of them will take the position. He poses this question to each applicant: "What is the greatest power?" Some children think the answer lies in weapons and force. Others (girls) favor beauty. Some consider technology, some wealth. But one little girl notices the force of life in a lotus seed. She offers the empty space in a seed as the beginning of life, the greatest power on earth. She gets the job.

This tale is full of Western obsessions with technology, money, and beauty. It is beautifully decorated with a Chinese veneer—a tale that pretends to be philosophical, but doesn't quite mean anything. The story has nothing to do with China. It is neither traditional nor authentic, but is from the imagination of the author. A few details in the illustrations ring true. There are depictions of Chinese inventions, the character on the frontispiece does indeed mean "eternity," and Guan Yu is the God of Wealth. But the children are dressed in Japanese *hapi* coats, the girls invent fanciful costumes, and the creatures on the page of coins are not found on actual coins. The illustrations are contained in large full-page circles on delicately patterned paper. They are elegantly drawn and colored in royal purple, Chinese red, and gold paint—very attractive, but not accurately Chinese. Except for the names and a comment on Chinese inventions, the story without the illustrations could take place anywhere and is not illustrative of Chinese culture at all.

—Ginny Lee
Syracuse, N.Y.

13-4-0535

Demi. *The Hungry Coat: A Tale from Turkey*. New York: Simon & Schuster/McElderry Books, 2004. 32 pp. Illus. by the author. ISBN 0-689-84680-0, \$19.95.

A charming addition to any shelf of folktales from the Middle East, Demi's latest book will provide as much food (for thought) as a certain puzzled host once provided for his guest's coat. In this engaging story, wise old Nasrettin is late to a fancy dinner party because he has taken the time to

catch a naughty goat loose in the marketplace. Unable to freshen up, he finds himself snubbed because of his shabby appearance. He slips away, goes home, gets all spiffed up in a splendid new coat, and returns to the party. This time, he has a surprise for his host and the other guests.

The sight of Nasrettin stuffing food inside his coat will delight children considerably younger than the suggested age range of six to ten. The point his "hungry coat" makes will stimulate discussion about what's really important: a person's attractive appearance or basic goodness. Demi's illustrations, reminiscent of Persian miniatures, also incorporate art motifs drawn from Middle Eastern carpets, tiles, and manuscripts; they breathe with a gentle yet rollicking good humor.

The tale is inspired by a real folk figure, Nasrettin Hoca, who lived in Turkey in the thirteenth century and is still celebrated for stories that convey a moral in a humorous but telling way.

—Elsa Marston
Bloomington, Ind.

13-4-0536

Edmonds, Lyra. *An African Princess*. Cambridge, Mass.: Candlewick Press, 2004. 32 pp. Illus. by Anne Wilson. ISBN 0-7636-2595-7, \$15.99.

At school, the kids laugh at Lyra and tell her she's silly when she tells them she is an African princess. After all, she has freckles and lives in the city on the tenth floor. Though her mama assures her of her heritage, soon Lyra begins to worry that Mama is wrong. Mama cuddles her close and tells her, "We'll see."

A family airplane trip to visit African princess Tante May banishes Lyra's doubts. On a hot, wet Caribbean island, Lyra meets Tante May in a small, brown house on stilts on a hill covered with guava and sapodilla trees. No palace stands on this hill, and there's no crown or fine robes. But Tante May tells Lyra of their big family tree that has scattered African princesses to different shores all around the world. "Be proud of who you are," Lyra is told. And once she returns home, she does just that. "I walk tall and say, I'm Lyra. I'm an African princess. That's me."

Based on the author's own life and her mixed heritage, this story is illustrated with Anne Wilson's boldly patterned, richly textured art. Together this team has created a work of inspiration and comfort and of family life and differences. A sure winner!

—Bettye Stroud
Univ. of Georgia

13-4-0537

English, Karen. *Hot Day on Abbott Avenue*. New York: Clarion, 2004. 32 pp. Illus. by Javaka Steptoe. ISBN 0-395-98527-7, \$15.00.

The ultimate meaning of true friendship is at the heart of

▼ continued primary (gr. p-3)

this book. It's a hot scorching day, and Kishi and Renée, two African-American girls, are not speaking to one another—all because of a dispute over a blue flavored Popsicle. Two neighbors, sensing the tension between the two, try to get them involved in playing chess or weeding a garden. Kishi and Renée refuse their neighbor's suggestions, but find it hard to resist the lure of the "chanting sounds and humming ropes" of their friends jumping double Dutch. Before long, the girls are jumping rope and reciting the words to their favorite jump rhymes like "Miss Mary Mac." Neighbors in the community even pause to listen to the pleasant sounds. When the ice cream truck visits the neighborhood for the second time that day, Kishi, Renée, and their friends rush to purchase the popular blue flavored Popsicle. The girls use the moment to learn about the importance of sharing and forgiving.

English has written a fun and enjoyable story for young readers. Steptoe's colorful collage illustrations are stunning. His use of found objects, crepe paper, and other materials makes the pictures seem to leap off the page. *Hot Day on Abbott Avenue* combines text and art in a whimsical and eye-appealing way.

—Valerie A. Canady
Johnston, R.I.

13-4-0538

Gershator, Phillis. *The Babysitter Sings*. New York: Henry Holt, 2004. 32 pp. Illus. by Mélisande Potter. ISBN 0-8050-7199-7, \$16.95.

Just about all children experience the longing for an absent parent even when they are in the care of a devoted baby-sitter. The bedtime lullaby is one tool used by both caregivers and parents alike to provide comfort for children in nations all over the world.

The Babysitter Sings is a delightful picture book told entirely in rhyme and inspired by traditional lullabies from Africa, Spain, and the Caribbean islands. A baby-sitter sings a variety of these "slumber-songs" to calm a small child crying for parents who are away from home:

Mama's coming home.
Papa won't be long.
Hush little bird.
I'll sing you one more song.

The baby-sitter sings lullabies for comfort, play, and eventually peaceful sleep. By the time the parents return home, the child is indeed fast asleep.

Mélisande Potter expertly uses ink and gouache on watercolor paper to create the attractive, brilliantly hued illustrations. Her dynamic use of color and line make this book visually appealing to readers as well.

Both Gershator and Potter should be commended for this loving, reassuring compilation of multicultural lullabies.

—Gail S. Taylor
Old Dominion Univ.

13-4-0539

Hébert-Collins, Sheila. *Jean-Paul Hébert Was There/Jean-Paul Hébert Était Là*. Gretna, La.: Pelican Publishing Co., 2004. 32 pp. Illus. by John Bergeron. Bilingual (French-English) ed. French translation by Earl Comeaux, Laura Morin, Marguerite Maillet, and Barbara Hébert. ISBN 1-56554-928-7, \$15.95.

Thomas, Wes. *Down the Crawfish Hole*. Gretna, La.: Pelican Publishing Co., 2004. 32 pp. Illus. by the author. ISBN 0-58980-163-6, \$15.95.

A whimsical fairy-tale adventure story, *Down the Crawfish Hole* combines fantasy with Cajun culture. The main character, a young boy named Maurice, goes down a crawfish hole and meets new friends while having amazing adventures. Cultural terms relating to food, animals, and Cajun culture are intertwined into the text, yet are not specifically defined or provided in a glossary format. The book might serve as a starting point for lessons about Cajun culture and French influence in the United States. The full-page illustrations are superbly crafted, and might serve as inspiration for art lessons and activities depicting Cajun culture.

Jean-Paul Hébert Was There/Jean-Paul Hébert Était Là is a first-person narrative of one boy's experience as a French-Canadian (Acadian) who was relocated to Georgia and later moved to Louisiana, as a pioneer member of the Cajun settlements. The story is vivid and detailed as to the difficulties Acadian families faced during their forced relocation by the British in the mid 1700s. It presents the Acadian perspective of the French settlement of Canada and eventual move to Louisiana. The illustrations are vibrant, and there are many well-depicted maps of the United States and Canada, which highlight the locations of Acadian and Cajun settlements. Written in both English and Cajun-French, this story not only teaches children about Cajun history, but also presents it in its native dialect. Read aloud, this story serves as a piece of oral history, teaching new generations about Cajun history and heritage.

—Michèle Pollard
Academy of the Holy Names, Albany, N.Y.

13-4-0540

Howe, James. *Kaddish for Grandpa in Jesus' Name Amen*. New York: Simon & Schuster/Atheneum, 2004. 32 pp. Illus. by Catherine Stock. ISBN 0-689-80185-8, \$16.95.

The Jewish child and her Catholic grandfather love each other enormously and have a happy and congenial friendship. Year by year they find new things to do together, and the bond between them grows. When he gets ready to read to her, she is in charge of finding his glasses for him. When she is five, the grandfather dies. She experiences the Catholic rites, which are new and strange to her, and the Jewish ones, with which she is more familiar. Yet the love she feels is expressed in several ways and transcends any differences. The

grandfather is still with her in her memory and emotions. With his glasses case that she holds with love as she falls asleep at night, she still feels his presence.

This book touches on several very important things that young children encounter for the first time. It addresses the death of a loved one, the needs of children of mixed marriages, and the meaning of love and memory. The title is taken from the Jewish and Christian rites that the girl has experienced. Observing both rites shows the love she feels and is her way to honor her grandfather.

—Ruth G. Becker
Forest Hills, N.Y.

13-4-0541

Lewis, J. Patrick. *Freedom Like Sunlight: Praisesongs for Black Americans*. Mankato, Minn.: The Creative Company, 2003. 40 pp. Illus. by John Thompson. ISBN 1-56846-163-1, \$17.95.

Shange, Ntozake. *Ellington Was Not a Street*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004. 32 pp. Illus. by Kadir Nelson. ISBN 0-689-82884-5, \$15.95.

Shange and Nelson have crafted a beautifully written and illustrated picture book. The little girl who, in the illustrations, narrates the story recalls a home graced with influential visitors and the love of the black community. While on the surface the poem at the book's center appears to be about Duke Ellington, his importance and influence, it is actually about a number of "men who changed the world." From W. E. B. DuBois's dignity to Dizzy Gillespie's playfulness, Nelson captures the personalities of these men magnificently. In addition, Nelson peppers the pages with a visual "who's who" of the African-American musical, literary, and political world of the first half of the twentieth century. For example, he reproduces notable African-American art on the walls of the home. As a bonus, biographies, accompanied by illustrations, of the men discussed in the text are included at the end of the book. Also, the poem entitled "Mood Indigo," in homage to one of Ellington's most famous songs, is printed in its entirety on the last page of the book. The text and illustrations are full cultural references that many older readers might enjoy, while the protagonist's memories of a home filled with love will capture any reader.

Freedom Like Sunlight is a collection of 13 poems that highlight the lives of notable African-American artists, athletes, and human rights activists. Each poem covers the most prominently known accomplishments of its subject. For example, the poem about Arthur Ashe discusses his novelty as a black man in the world of tennis and his battle with AIDS. The poems vary only slightly in form. Most of the illustrations Thompson chooses to accompany the poems are famous images and may be readily recognizable except on two accounts: the cover illustration of Malcolm X and the image of Harriet Tubman. The cover and back page have illustrations of Malcolm X's mug shot. Thompson puts the frontal image of Malcolm X on the front cover and the profile on the back. For

most, the obscurity of the image may prevent many from recognizing it as Malcolm X, but Thompson's charcoal drawing of an older Malcolm X used to accompany the poem is recognizable as the subject. As for the illustration of Harriet Tubman, it simply does not resemble any of the photographs of her. That said, the poems are well written, the subjects worthy of notation, and the illustrations well chosen. Although considerable background knowledge is needed to comprehend the poems fully, Lewis offers biographical notes in the back of the book to explain the aspect of the life of the subjects that he references in the text.

—Laretta Henderson
Central Michigan Univ.

13-4-0542

Lin, Grace. *Fortune Cookie Fortunes*. New York: Random House Children's Books/Knopf, 2004. 32 pp. Illus. by the author. ISBN 0-375-81521-X, \$15.95.

A young Chinese-American girl, whose name is not mentioned, narrates this story about her fortune cookie adventure. The family of five eats at a Chinese restaurant, and each shares the message inside his or her cookie.

Jie Jie, older sister, says that fortunes don't come true, but our young heroine starts to observe and, as she follows family members, there is evidence—often revealed in the lovely, colorful illustrations—that circumstances occur to reflect the predictions. Looking for the evidence is an effective way to involve the reader/listener of this picture book.

The final pages are filled with fortune cookie fortunes and will surely prompt children to create their own good luck/good fortune sayings.

A history of fortune cookies is included on the last page, and the endpaper reveals an open cookie with this note, "You have just read a good book." Yes, it is a good book to share at home, at school, and in the library, just to celebrate the fun of fortune cookies.

—Mary J, Lickteig
Univ. of Nebraska—Omaha

13-4-0543

Moss, Peggy. *Say Something*. Gardiner, Me.: Tilbury House, 2004. 32 pp. Illus. by Lea Lyon. ISBN 0-88448-261-8, \$16.95.

There is always a child in school or at play who is picked on by the bullies for a variety of reasons. The child may be racially or physically different or the group might just be having fun at someone's expense. The other children ignore the teasing or bullying—even if they feel sympathy. Although they are good kids and wouldn't do these things themselves, they fear becoming victims too.

The protagonist sees another girl victimized by bullies on the bus daily. One day this unnamed narrator finds herself in the cafeteria, eating alone. A group comes over and in due course starts to tease her and laugh at her. She is hurt and tears come to her eyes. The cafeteria is full of people who feel sorry for her, but no one comes to help or comfort her.

▼ continued primary (gr. p-3)

The girl then realizes that pity isn't enough to help someone who is being hurt. Someone must speak up and act—and she does. The next day she sits next to the girl on the bus who is the butt of laughter and teasing. We see that one person can make a big difference to the victim and to the atmosphere of the whole school.

After the story there are questions and suggestions for the young reader. Both the story and the activities are very helpful without preaching.

—Ruth G. Becker
Forest Hills, N.Y.

13-4-0544

Ravishankar, Anushka. *Tiger on a Tree*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2004. 48 pp. Illus. by Pulak Biswas. ISBN 0-374-37555-0, \$15.00.

Ravishankar's picture book follows a tiger as it journeys through adventure and mishap. Tiger, symbolic of free-spirited youth and innocence, dares to explore his wide world. He spans sea and shore in search of fun. Man, in the story, confronts the dilemma of capturing Tiger and turning him into Man's servant or letting him roam free as Nature's son.

Paired with striking illustrations, *Tiger on a Tree* is a delight for children of all ages. The orange, black, and white colors catch the eye and support the story. The language is simple and songlike, and therefore perfect for reading aloud. And the story is packed with morals and lessons that are great for children.

This beautiful story reads like a simple nursery rhyme, yet is packed with complex symbolism and meaning. Ravishankar holds us with nuggets of inspiration that stick. Should we take risks? What are the consequences? Should we speak our minds, as controversial as our opinion may be? How will it be received? And what is the value of freedom in our society? To what extent should we protect it? Ravishankar addresses these questions and more. I recommend this book to all who have a child's sensibility left in them.

—Nishi Langhorne
Fairfax, Va.

13-4-0545

Ripley, Marion. *Private and Confidential: A Story About Braille*. New York: Dial, 2004. 32 pp. Illus. by Colin Backhouse. ISBN 0-8037-2900-6, \$16.99.

Everyone gets mail except Laura. Her mother even gets letters marked "Private & Confidential." Then Laura learns about a teacher in Australia who wants pen pals for his class. Laura is very excited about writing and getting mail. All the Australians are boys, but after a bit of hesitation she chooses Malcolm to be her correspondent. She tells him all about herself and asks him to write back and send a photo. Soon a letter with a photo arrives from Malcolm in Australia. She writes back and tells Malcolm to "Write back SOON!" She waits and waits, but no letter comes. She is very disappointed. Finally a

letter arrives, but it is from Malcolm's sister.

Malcolm's sister explains that he is visually handicapped and that he is in the hospital for an eye operation. However, this doesn't seem the most important thing about him. A friend's aunt has a Braille typewriter. With a Braille alphabet card, she can type a message to Malcolm. The letters between Malcolm and Laura are now truly "Private & Confidential." Laura's clever resolution will inspire children to see differently abled peers in a new light and to seek creative ways of reaching out to others.

—Ruth G. Becker
Forest Hills, N.Y.

13-4-0546

Singer, Marilyn. *Block Party Today*. New York: Random House Children's Books/Knopf, 2004. 32 pp. Illus. by Stephanie Roth. ISBN 0-375-82216-X, \$16.95.

A block party is a very happy and much-anticipated part of a New York summer. Everyone is free to enjoy the smell of the cornbread, cookies, and all the other good things to eat; the music; the games; and the relaxed neighborliness that goes with a beautiful summer day. There are no cars to interrupt. The main and only business is enjoyment.

Lola, Yasmin, and Sue are usually friends and would have spent the day together, but Lola is angry at the other two girls and at the world. The other girls wouldn't let her jump first at double Dutch. She won't go to the party. By withholding herself, she will show them how she feels. She watches the festivities first from her room and then from the stoop of her house. Finally, after Lola and Yasmin have played in the open hydrant, the three make up, and they can all enjoy the day.

Both the text and the illustrations show the joy and all the grand things of a block party. Probably the best is how all sorts of people from different backgrounds can enjoy festivities and each other.

—Ruth G. Becker
Forest Hills, N.Y.

13-4-0547

Snook, Randy, comp. *Many Ideas Open the Way: A Collection of Hmong Proverbs*. Fremont, Calif.: Shen's Books, 2004. 32 pp. Illus. with photos by the compiler. ISBN 1-885008-23-6, \$16.95.

Although one's instinct is to approach this book to learn something of Hmong culture, the artist's note suggests one must understand some of the culture and nature of the proverbs first to appreciate them more fully. He offers a little historical and cultural background in his page of notes, but he never clearly attributes a source for the 20 Hmong proverbs or their translation into English, nor does he supply a key to the phonetic representation of the Hmong language. He does, however, offer thanks to two Hmong families for unspecified assistance, and very graciously thanks the child in most of the clever photographs as well as the collector of the beautiful

Hmong needle crafts worn by the child and others.

The illustrations for this collection are its saving grace, because they are so fresh and thought-provoking. They make this book more than a simple addition to a folklore collection. These proverbs would also be wonderful to compare and contrast with some of the other children's books in this vein, such as the classic Biblical proverbs in Johanna Hurwitz's *A Word to the Wise and Other Proverbs* (Morrow Junior Books, 1994) or some of the other Shen's Books collections: Chinese proverbs in Yong-sheng Xuan's *The Dragon Lover and Other Chinese Proverbs* (1999) or Korean proverbs in Daniel D. Holt's *Tigers, Frogs, and Rice Cakes: A Book of Korean Proverbs* (1998).

—Suzanne Li
Queens College, City Univ. of New York

13-4-0548

Torres, Leyla. ***The Kite Festival***. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2004. 32 pp. Illus. by the author. ISBN 0-374-38054-6, \$16.00.

I am always looking for books and other resources that expand cultural awareness for dual language learners, and *The Kite Festival* provides a wonderful opportunity to broaden this knowledge base for bilingual youngsters. Torres provides a window for bilingual students to see and learn about family experiences and collaboration with a "Sí se puede"/"Yes you can" attitude.

The story begins with a family's Sunday afternoon outing. The dynamics among the family members are heartwarming as three generations set out for a picnic and suddenly find themselves in the midst of a local kite-flying contest. The family members work together and show that there is no limit to one's imagination and that, together, we can achieve what we set ourselves to do. We feel the creative and happy feeling that this family enjoys together as we join them on their adventure.

The watercolor illustrations are subtle and appealing. The use of gently muted colors is both attractive and effective in conveying the personalities of the characters in the story. The images of the kites are varied and reflective of the ingenuity of the artist. As an added bonus, Torres provides a simple set of directions for constructing a hexagonal kite using household items that children can easily make with the assistance of an adult.

—Melanie Pores
Albany (N.Y.) City School District

13-4-0549

Young, Ed. ***The Sons of the Dragon King: A Chinese Legend***. New York: Simon & Schuster/Atheneum, 2004. 32 pp. Illus. by the author. ISBN 0-689-85184-7, \$16.95.

Young has done magnificent dragons in previous books: papercuts for Jane Yolen's *Emperor and the Kite* (World, 1967) and vivid pastels for Margaret Leaf's *Eyes of the Dragon*

(Lothrop, Lee & Shepard, 1987). This time he uses ink washes as well as papercuts, pairing these styles in his story in which the Dragon King visits his nine sons upon hearing criticisms about them. In each case he discovers that the negative observation can be put to good use, such as the son who stares into the distance becoming a sentinel.

The book opens with the classic calligraphy used for "chops" for the names of the nine sons. Each is repeated in the corner of the two-page spreads allotted for each son's story. The ink wash illustrations of each son wonderfully sprawl across the pages, with the papercuts of their new roles set more sedately on the second page. The final page takes all the papercuts and reduces them to fine line illustrations of the dragon's symbol on doors, weapons, and other art objects, along with their names, mostly in Pinyin phonetics. The text itself is a little stiff, but the visual rendering of it is magnificent. This would be a superb book to share before a museum field trip, real or "virtual," especially with objects chosen to match the book.

—Suzanne Li
Queens College, City Univ. of New York

Intermediate (Gr. 4-6)

13-4-0550

Cheng, Andrea. ***Honeysuckle House***. Asheville, N.C.: Front Street Books, 2004. 136 pp. ISBN 1-886910-99-5, \$16.95.

Kadohata, Cynthia. ***Kira-Kira***. New York: Simon & Schuster/Atheneum, 2004. 242 pp. ISBN 0-689-85639-3, \$15.95.

Both of these middle school novels address the issues of an Asian-American teenager trying to fit into a primarily white society. Although the one deals with Japanese Americans and the other with Chinese Americans, the voices of the two are similarly youthful, recounting daily life with parents, siblings, and schoolmates. A few racial encounters are mentioned, but generally the events, emotions, and invented games are those of children everywhere, and after a while we forget about race and just enjoy the characters. The voices are those of the young people themselves, complete with turns of phrase that indicate youth in mostly grammatical and very simple writing.

In *Honeysuckle House*, Sarah is Chinese American but doesn't speak Chinese and has not been to China. A few vestiges of the culture lie about the house, but for getting on with her life, she is American. Ting has just come from China. She speaks only a little English. She wants badly to fit in with her classmates but does not quite know how. They taunt her because she is different. She turns to Sarah, feeling a kinship that Sarah does not feel. Sarah does not want people to think that Ting is her sister—or, worse, her twin, so she cuts off her long hair to emphasize the difference between them. Alternate chapters allow us to enter the thoughts, preoccupations, problems, family relationships, and presence of the

▼ continued intermediate (gr. 4-6)

two cultures, first of Sarah, then of Ting. As they become friends, their attitudes change toward each other, toward their own culture, and toward the culture of the other. This is an easy and delightful read.

In *Kira-Kira*, two sisters, Lynn and Katie, grow up as American children with Japanese ancestry. When Katie is five and Lynn is a few years older, the family moves from Iowa to Georgia for economic reasons. Here the girls try with minor success to fit into the social ambience in their school. Racial prejudice is encountered but is not the main theme of the book. Lynn is a genius by her own admission, industrious in school and delightfully creative in games. Katie adores her. At 14, Lynn develops a degenerative disease that, after debilitating her for several years, is finally diagnosed as cancer. The main thrust of the latter half of the story is dealing with her illness and death, grieving, recovering, and moving on. *Kira-Kira* means “twinkly” or “glittery.” Katie remembers Lynn’s uplifting spirit, always finding things in life that are “glittery”—the chirping of crickets, the whistling of the wind, people’s eyes, and the waves in the sea. This is another easy and thoughtful read.

—Ginny Lee
Syracuse, N.Y.

13-4-0551

Kaplan, Kathy Walden. *The Dog of Knots*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdman’s Books for Young Readers, 2004. 131 pp. ISBN 0-8028-5259-9, \$15.00.

This book is a story about a nine-year-old girl living in Israel during the Yom Kippur War in 1973. Having lost her father in the Six-Day War of 1967, Mayim has to make even more adjustments when her mother takes a new job and they have to move to northern Israel.

A friendly girl with a gift of perception and caring for others, Mayim soon makes friends with local merchants, neighbors and, most importantly, a stray dog. The dog is known by various names, as each person considers the dog in a different way. However, the dog does not fully respond to any of these names.

Amidst the difficulties and food shortages of war, Mayim seeks to help others to cope and tries to feed the stray dog. Through her travels and contacts with others, she finds out about a soldier who died in the war and left behind a dog who meets the description of the stray dog. As she tries out the name he had previously known, the dog responds with great affection and brings tremendous joy to everyone, especially Mayim.

The Dog of Knots is a fictional work that demonstrates the courage of civilians, who, like soldiers, have to deal with hardships of war. Although not an overly exciting novel, it is easy to read and comprehend, allowing the reader a glimpse of life in Israel during one of the many difficult times in the country’s short history.

—Hannah M. Heller
Baltimore, Md.

13-4-0552

Kim So-un. *Korean Children’s Favorite Stories*. North Clarendon, Vt.: Tuttle Publishing, 2004. 96 pp. Illus. by Jeong Kyoung-Sim. ISBN 0-8048-3591-8, \$16.95.

Kim So-un retells 13 Korean folktales, stories he heard in his childhood. It is appropriate that the first tale is “The Story Bag,” about a boy who begins to collect stories and continues until he is a young man. He keeps his stories in a bag, which is securely fastened so the stories cannot escape. But in a series of events, he learns a lesson: Stories are not meant to be hoarded, but shared.

As in folktales from all over the world, these stories contain many lessons and shed light on human foibles as well as on human wisdom, courage, and selflessness. In them there is magic, good deeds are rewarded, the proud and selfish are punished, and the meek outwit the strong.

Here is a collection of good stories “peopled” with tigers, snakes, ants, and rabbits, as well as human beings. They are perfect for reading aloud or alone and provide an interesting glimpse into Korean culture.

The text is a reissue of a 1955 edition. The colorful illustrations, done for this 2004 issue, complement the text well. Part of a series, other collections include stories from other Asian countries. This is a nice addition for library and classroom use.

—Mary J. Lickteig
Univ. of Nebraska–Omaha

13-4-0553

Medina, Jane. *The Dream on Blanca’s Wall/El sueño pegado en la pared de Blanca: Poems in English and Spanish*. Honesdale, Pa.: Boyds Mills Press, 2004. 48 pp. Illus. by Robert Casilla. Bilingual (English-Spanish) ed. ISBN 1-56397-740-0, \$16.95.

This is a powerfully expressive collection of poems that strikes at the heart of the immigrant experience. The poems are woven together to convey a lifelike portrayal of a young woman’s experiences, so much so that readers instantly feel they are there with this young woman, experiencing what she is experiencing. This is a must read for classes studying immigration and what it means to be an immigrant.

The author has provided us with a window into the minds of some of the young students with whom she has worked over the years and has done so using a rich lyrical style and tone. The poems she has chosen to include reflect a broad spectrum of experiences that immigrant children, and Spanish-speaking children in particular, are forced to confront on a daily basis—from teacher attitudes to balancing family and school and more.

Casilla’s illustrations capture the timeless beauty of children and the important people in their lives—their teachers, family, and community members. He has chosen charcoal-like drawings that portray a stunning subtlety. The illustrations mirror the emotions that one feels while immersing

oneself in this moving collection of poetry.

—Melanie Pores
Albany (N.Y.) School District

13-4-0554

Rodman, Mary Ann. *Yankee Girl*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2004. 217 pp. ISBN 0-374-38661-7, \$17.00.

When eleven-year-old Alice Ann Moxley moves from Chicago to Jackson, Mississippi, in the summer of 1964, just after the bodies of three civil rights workers are found in a dirt dam, she worries about her family's safety. Her daddy is an FBI agent assigned to protect black people registering to vote.

Alice's goal is to make friends, but the cheerleaders, stereotypically shallow and mean, immediately label her "Yankee Girl." Alice's isolation worsens when Valerie Taylor, the first black student to integrate their school, rebuffs Alice's efforts at friendship. Alice, confused, does everything necessary to become a popular cheerleader, including joining in plots to harass Valerie.

When Valerie's father, a reverend and colleague of Martin Luther King Jr., is murdered, Alice realizes the importance of "doing the right thing." The only white person on the bus, she rides across town to bring Valerie flowers.

Though the characters and plot are predictable, the book has value because of its historical context. The title of each chapter is a fictional headline from the Jackson *Daily Journal* that will introduce readers to the civil rights movement, integration, and the Ku Klux Klan. Rodman uses references of the time including the Beatles, the Supremes, ID bracelets, and Dippity-Do, a nice touch to create the historical setting. I recommend the book, with reservations, as a first exploration of the civil rights movement for ages nine to twelve.

—Robyn DeSantis Ringler
Ballston Lake, N.Y.

13-4-0555

Siegelson, Kim L. *Trembling Earth*. New York: Putnam/Philomel, 2004. 152 pp. ISBN 0-399-24021-7, \$17.99.

Siegelson knows how to weave an interesting and riveting historical novel. She researched swamp life during the Civil War period and even canoed through and camped in the Okefenokee Swamps of Georgia.

Set against the shadowy world of Georgia's Okefenokee during the turbulent years of the Civil War, *Trembling Earth* recounts the story of a young boy who learns about himself and the greater truths of life and people. In 1864 Hamp, who lives a marginal existence in the swampy backwaters with his parents and younger sister, struggles to feed the family. His father has been changed physically and mentally after losing his leg at the bloody battle of Shiloh. Hamp's father went to war for the Confederacy, although the family never owned slaves.

Hamp learns that a runaway slave has killed his owner and is loose in the swamp with a bounty on his head. Hamp

has two encounters that teach him greater lessons of life. First, he and his sister help to free a family of fugitive slaves imprisoned by a neighbor, then he encounters the runaway and they have a series of adventures together that change Hamp's view of things.

The author relates a fast-moving story in a lyrical style that makes the sights and smells of the swamps almost real. Her character development and description of the adventures are down-to-earth and meaningful. This book is highly recommended for its literary style and great adventure.

—Michael Russert
Cambridge, N.Y.

13-4-0556

Wishinsky, Frieda. *Just Call Me Joe*. Victoria, B.C.: Orca Books, 2003. 102 pp. ISBN 1-55143-249-8, \$4.99 (pb).

Having arrived with his sister from an oppressive Russia to start a new life with his aunt, Joseph is surrounded by new and strange ways. His sister goes to work. In school he is an outsider. His lack of language puts him in a grade with younger children. Boys his own age shun him because of this. Joseph is a "greenie"—a newcomer to America, but he knows that this will be his new home and he will soon be a regular American. While sitting on the stoop of his house, he has an encounter with another boy named Sam, who takes him under his wing. Sam plays hooky from school and entices Joseph into doing the same and exploring New York with him.

Meanwhile, the teacher takes an interest in him, as does one of the boys in school. Joseph must decide which way to go. He sees that the road for his future lies in going to school. He chooses the better way to become an American and starts by wanting to be called Joe. Although this story takes place long ago and to a Russian Jewish immigrant, I think it would resonate with new Americans in today's world. The details may vary, but the fears, feelings, and choices are very similar.

—Ruth G. Becker
Forest Hills, N.Y.

Young Adult (Gr. 7 and up)

13-4-0557

Adoff, Jamie. *Names Will Never Hurt Me*. New York: Dutton, 2004. 186 pp. ISBN 0-525-47175-8, \$16.99.

On the one-year anniversary of the shooting death of Jake Stiles, one of their classmates, the local TV station comes to suburban Rockville High to conduct on-site interviews with students to find out how the tragedy has impacted their lives. The story focuses on four Rockville High students who relate their ongoing struggles with the many pressures of school. Tisha, a constant target of bullying for being biracial, struggles to find a sense of racial identity. Ryan, a star football player, finds his life crumbling when he sexually assaults a

▼ continued young adult (gr. 7-up)

girl. Kurt, labeled a “freak,” is ostracized and endlessly harassed to a breaking point at which he is ready to lash out violently toward himself or others. The overweight Floater is able to escape bullying because he is the principal’s snitch.

Speaking in short bursts of anger, hurt, and frustration, the four students convey their disturbing experiences and perceptions in passages interspersed with reporters’ interviews and the cynical musings of the principal. The administrators and teachers, depicted as shady, manipulative characters interested only in their own agendas, are indifferent to the cruelties students inflict on one another. The only adult figure sympathetic to the students and making a genuine effort to help them is the guidance counselor. Despite an unrealistic ending, Adoff creates a powerful, complex novel featuring believable characters who struggle with many problems with which teen readers will be able to empathize.

—Edward Sullivan

Hardin Valley Elementary School, Knoxville, Tenn.

13-4-0558

Apeles, Teena. *Women Warriors: Adventures from History's Greatest Female Fighters*. Emeryville, Calif.: Seal Press, 2004. 144 pp. Illus. ISBN 1-58005-111-1, \$14.95 (pb).

More a consciousness-raiser than a reference resource, this breezy compendium introduces, with widely varying levels of detail, dozens of female warriors, from Joan of Arc and Boudicca to Vietnam’s Trung Sisters and India’s Lakshmi Bai—plus such unlikely roster entries as the Powerpuff Girls and Buffy the Vampire Slayer. Apeles is often vague about dates and places, but she writes with an appealing informality—tallying many of her subjects’ “fave” weapons, for instance, and titling a side essay on the Amazons, “Did They Really Cut One Off?”—that will snag and keep the interest of less eager readers. Furthermore, she identifies examples from every inhabited continent except Australia, and broadens her scope even further with thumbnail profiles of Golda Meir, Mia Hamm, and other such non-sword-wielding “warriors.”

Capped by a solid, multimedia source list, illustrated with a mix of old and recent portraits, plus decorative spot art, this small, square, brightly colored volume makes a promising addition to libraries—though, considering its lack of organization or an index, a secondary one behind the likes of Newland’s *Women Warlords* (Blandford, 1989) or Mayer’s *Women Warriors* (Morrow, 1999).

—John Peters

New York Public Library

13-4-0559

Beardslee, Lois. *Rachel's Children: Stories from a Contemporary Native Woman*. Walnut Creek, Calif.: AltaMira Press, 2004. 147 pp. ISBN 0-7591-0689-4, \$69.00 (cl); 0-7591-0690-8, \$22.95 (pb).

The story of “Rachel”—Beardslee’s story, actually—comes to us in the voice of a fictional non-Native interviewer who

wants nothing from her but her knowledge, her stories, and a piece of her spirit, and who observes this Ojibwe woman’s life with the sense of superiority that comes from profound ignorance.

Rachel is frighteningly intelligent, and she brings the interviewer and the reader face to face with what it is to be an Indian woman in twenty-first-century America, what it takes to live with the land and not off it, and the courage and unremitting determination required to confront this country’s social system and survive it. Rachel is scarred, but still alive.

Nothing is exaggerated: not the prejudice, not the hatred and deliberate cruelty, not the sheer stupidity that stunts Native lives. But there is also the beauty of true things: the way the pollen comes off the evergreens in the spring, “a great yellow cloud” borne on the wind, sweeping up and out, new life. And there is the intensity of Rachel’s love for her children and her husband, and they for her.

—Doris Seale (Santee/Cree)

Oyate, Berkeley, Calif.

13-4-0560

Cowley, Joy. *Hunter*. New York: Putnam/Philomel, 2004. 154 pp. ISBN 0-399-24227-9, \$17.99.

Crossing centuries, *Hunter*, a slave to a Maori tribe, reaches out to Jordan, a young girl in need of help. Through a connection Jordan cannot quite understand, she is given insight and assistance when she needs it most. Stranded after a plane crash that has left her and one of her two brothers injured, Jordan must find a way to help herself and her brothers survive. While hoping all the while for rescue, the siblings face challenges that are overcome by the aid of the wisdom Jordan is given through her connection with Hunter. While Hunter cannot physically touch these visions that he sees of Jordan and her brothers, he knows that he must help them to live, even if it means that he will risk his own life and freedom in doing so.

While the story begins with an interesting plot, it falls short of being a must-read novel. The author does introduce bits of information about Maori culture and some vocabulary, adding elements of historical fiction to this tale of adventure. Unfortunately, the dialogue and language used by the siblings is sometimes unrealistic and unconvincing, and the novel ends somewhat abruptly and almost too neatly. Larger libraries may want to add this novel as it does represent a culture not often seen in fiction. Smaller libraries may want to wait.

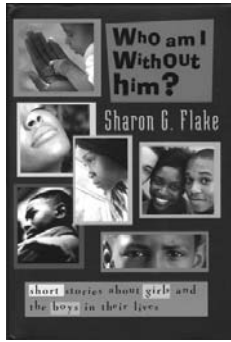
—Jennifer Ogradowski

Albany (N.Y.) Public Library

13-4-0561

Davidson, Dana. *Jason & Kyra*. New York: Hyperion/Jump at the Sun, 2004. 330 pp. ISBN 0-7868-1851-4, \$16.99.

Flake, Sharon G. *Who Am I Without Him? Short Stories About Girls and the Boys in Their Lives*. New York:



Hyperion/Jump at the Sun, 2004. 167 pp. ISBN 0-7868-0693-1, \$15.99.

Flake, award-winning author of *The Skin I'm In*, brings us a fascinating collection of short stories that depict African-American youngsters, mostly girls and young women, as they each try to satisfy the demands of self-esteem and self-acceptance by the acquisition of a boyfriend or girlfriend.

In "The Ugly One," Asia Calloway, an "A" student considered ugly by classmates, resorts to a world of fantasy to have the love and companionship of someone from the opposite sex. A high school girl in "So I Aint No Good Girl" ignores her boyfriend's physical abuse and obvious infidelity to keep him. In "Don't Be Disrespecting Me," E, a boy from the other side of the tracks, steals money for clothes and other things money can buy to make himself desirable to a girl and her parents. These and other stories are written in the natural language of the young people depicted and with a riveting intimacy. In "A Letter to My Daughter," perhaps the most touching piece in the collection, a father gingerly gives advice and warnings to his daughter about boys after being out of her life for quite a few years. *Who Am I Without Him?* is skillfully written, rings true, and is highly recommended.

While most of the main characters in Flake's collection are needy and struggling with identity, the main characters in Davidson's *Jason & Kyra* know who they are and what they want. These high school juniors—Jason, a popular student, successful point guard on the school's basketball team, and academic achiever, and Kyra, an earthy and ambitious over-achiever with a rich family to boot—have fallen in love. Of course there are obstacles to their complete happiness. Jason's ex-girlfriend is conniving to get him back, Kyra is a virgin and is worried that Jason, not a virgin, is going to get tired of waiting, and Jason's father, a frustrated, overworked drinker, is making Jason's life less than bearable. Davidson clearly likes Jason and Kyra a lot and with good reason: They always smell nice and are never badly dressed. Jason is handsome and sensitive, and Kyra is strong and self-accepting. Both are wholly likeable, and their romance is often charming and touching. While Davidson's book is less edgy than Flake's and depicts young African Americans of the upper middle class, both books successfully reveal the issues that surface in the lives of African-American young people living and moving within African-American society, issues relating to differences in color, physical attributes, and class.

—Jyna Scheeren
Troy (N.Y.) Public Library

13-4-0562

Gallo, Donald R., ed. *First Crossings: Stories About Teen Immigrants*. Cambridge, Mass.: Candlewick Press, 2004. 240 pp. ISBN 0-7636-2249-4, \$16.99.

Ten stories about teenage immigrants to the United States illustrate how their struggles with identity, family, love, and friendship intensify the normal confusion of adolescence. Taken as a whole, the collection also demonstrates that while each situation is unique, there are stages of emotional adjustment to a new home. Pam Muñoz Ryan's title story describes a boy's frightening and humiliating illegal border crossing from Mexico. Dian Curtis Regan explores a daughter's reluctance to leave her home, friends, and culture despite political unrest and hardship in Venezuela. Jean Davies Okimoto's teens are eager to adapt to a more permissive society than that of their Kazakh parents.

In an amusing story by David Lubar, a teen from Transylvania plays along with his new friends, who are excited to think they have met a real vampire. Elsa Marston tells of a talented Palestinian-American high school football player's struggle between his parents' desire for him to keep a low profile after 9/11 and his natural desire to succeed. Stories by Alden R. Carter and Marie G. Lee articulate tensions and prejudices within immigrant communities. In Rita Garcia-Williams's story, a girl insists that her friend value their shared Haitian customs and language while identifying herself as a black American. Minfong Ho's story reveals the ache of remembering those who have been left behind.

An introductory sentence sets the tone for each story, and a concluding page of information about the author adds depth.

—Jendy Murphy
Albany (N.Y.) Public Library

13-4-0563

Hoobler, Dorothy and Hoobler, Thomas. *In Darkness, Death*. New York: Putnam/Philomel, 2004. 195 pp. ISBN 0-399-23767-4, \$16.99.

In old Japan, the merchant class was considered the lowest in society. They were only interested in making money. They saw no value in practicing the skills that were the making of a samurai—archery, swordsmanship, writing poetry, flower arranging, and being able to conduct a formal tea ceremony. Usually, it was impossible to move outside one's own class. Seikei had been born into the merchant class, but his dream was to become a samurai.

In a previous novel by the Hooblers, Seikei leaves his merchant family, is adopted by Judge Ooka (an actual historic figure serving the Tokugawa family, who ruled Japan 1717–1744), and is being trained as a samurai, helping the judge to solve mystery cases. In this novel, Lord Inaba has been murdered stealthily, in the night, by a mysterious person who "must have been a ninja because no one saw him. He must have been invisible." Finding himself traveling in the company of an inexplicable person, Seikei learns what it really means to be a ninja. Seikei's notion of samurai honor is also modified: "If you think your honor demands that you kill every dog who barks at you," said the judge, "you will only find yourself spending all your time chasing dogs. There is no honor in that." Through a series of deft Sherlock

▼ continued young adult (gr. 7-up)

Holmesian deductions, the judge teaches Seikei tactics for solving crimes and also for looking into people's hearts. This riveting historical novel, the third in this series, is sure to hold the attention of mystery lovers.

—Ginny Lee
Syracuse, N.Y.

13-4-0564

Kurtz, Jane. *Memories of Sun: Stories of Africa and America*. New York: HarperCollins/Greenwillow, 2004. 263 pp. ISBN 0-06-051050-1, \$15.99.

This anthology of poems and short stories tells the stories of young people from both Africa and America. Divided into three sections, the first part has stories about growing up in Africa. The second section focuses on Americans living in or visiting Africa. The third section has stories about African immigrants living in America. Each section is introduced with a poem.

The authors include well-known authors like Nikki Grimes, Angela Johnson, and Sonia Levitin, as well as lesser-known voices from both the United States and various regions of Africa. The stories, with diverse settings—ranging from the streets of Chicago to the wilds of Tanzania—explore the conflicts and connections between cultures. Elana Bregin's "Ella's Dunes" tells the story of Bushmen trying to adapt to a world in which they can only be tourist attractions. In "Her Mother's Monkey," Amy Bronwen Zesmer tells the sad story of a girl's father who is mostly unsuccessful at treating injured animals during their yearlong stay in Africa. Editor Kurtz, who also contributes a story, writes an interesting introduction in which she discusses growing up in Ethiopia as the daughter of Presbyterian missionaries and how strange it was returning "home" to the United States for her formal education. This nicely balanced collection offers provocative insight into contemporary Africa and its young people.

—Edward Sullivan
Hardin Valley Elementary School, Knoxville, Tenn.



13-4-0565

Lewis, Richard. *The Flame Tree*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004. 278 pp. ISBN 0-689-86333-0, \$16.95.

Its potential to arouse controversy is all the more reason for *The Flame Tree* to be read. But caveats are in order. Although the main character is only 12, this is emphatically a book for much older readers. It should be

discussed in its entirety, ideally in classroom settings where difficult subjects can be dealt with in as open-minded, dispassionate a way as possible.

Isaac has been enjoying life in a small city in Indonesia, where his parents, American missionaries, run a much-needed hospital. A militant Islamic movement is growing, along with hostility toward foreigners and converted Christians.

Amid riots, most of the Americans are rescued by helicopter. When his helicopter crashes, Isaac is captured and treated brutally by Muslim fanatics, who plan to make propaganda of him: an infidel American who chooses Islam. The denouement is both satisfying and disturbing.

Although unusually bright and courageous, Isaac is no superhero. He cries; he nearly breaks under pressure. We can feel ourselves in his place. The Christian mission that drives his parents is handled skillfully with sympathy but no hint of "preaching." The dominating theme of the book, however, is the religious fervor that grips these Muslims, ranging from appalling cruelty to a reasoned, compassionate acceptance of others—underlain by the conviction that Islam must ultimately prevail. This image of a dangerously militant Islam might have been softened by more indication that the situation in parts of Indonesia, fueled by social, economic, and political factors, is not typical of all predominantly Muslim countries but rather an extreme expression. Injecting "balance," however, might have taken the book too far beyond the author's intentions.

Rich in detail and setting, as well as the theme of cultural clash, this powerful book deserves serious attention as both multicultural literature and a means to religious inquiry.

—Elsa Marston
Bloomington, Ind.

13-4-0566

McDonald, Joyce. *Devil on My Heels*. New York: Random House Children's Books/Delacorte, 2004. 263 pp. ISBN 0-385-73107-8, \$15.95.

Set in rural Benevolence, Florida, in 1959, this story of racism centers on Dove Alderman, the 15-year-old daughter of an orange farmer. Dove's carefree, happy teenage life of hanging out with girlfriends and flirting with boys is shattered when she witnesses an act of racism while visiting town. When Dove sees Gator, a young black picker who works for her father, attacked for speaking to a white girl, the daughter of some other pickers who work for her father, she becomes conscious of the racial hatred and tension that permeates her hometown. When a barn is struck by lightning and set afire on Dove's farm, the local Ku Klux Klan begins circulating stories that the fire was an act of arson by the black and Mexican pickers who work for her father to further inflame racial tensions, which results in more violence. Determined to discredit the claims of the KKK, Dove eventually discovers the truth about the racially motivated murder of her black housekeeper's husband.

Although at times melodramatic, this well-written, engrossing novel offers a powerful, vivid portrait of racism in the civil-rights-era Deep South. Dove's determination to not sit idly by as adults let their fear and hate guide their actions makes her an endearing, inspiring character.

—Edward Sullivan
Hardin Valley Elementary School, Knoxville, Tenn.

13-4-0567

Newbery, Linda. ***Sisterland***. New York: Random House Children's Books, 2004. 384 pp. ISBN 0-385-75026-9, \$15.95 (cl); 0-385-75035-8, \$17.99 (rlb).

Hilly Craig, an English teenager, finds her life turned upside down when her grandmother Heidigran, suffering from Alzheimer's disease, comes to live with her family. As the disease ravages Heidigran's mind, fragmented memories begin to emerge. Her behavior becomes bizarre and unpredictable. She says hateful things to Hilly's gay friend Reuben. She fears the police. She keeps referring to a mysterious girl named Rachel. Hilly suspects that Heidigran is remembering some hidden past. When Hilly finds a photograph of a mysterious girl, she stumbles onto a secret in her family history. Hilly discovers that Heidigran was a member of the Kindertransport, the mass relocation of young Jewish children from Germany when Hitler rose to power and started persecuting Jews. Heidigran left Germany for a new life in England, leaving behind her older sister, her parents, and her Jewish identity. Repressed for decades, Heidigran's fragmented memories of her childhood are brought to the surface by Alzheimer's.

The author's attempt to address a wide range of complex issues such as homosexuality, the neo-Nazi movement, Palestinian-Israeli relations, prejudice, and sexual awakening tends to overwhelm and distract from the main plot, which is intriguing enough. The problem with trying to address so many themes in one story is that all get less attention than they deserve.

—Edward Sullivan

Hardin Valley Elementary School, Knoxville, Tenn.

13-4-0568

Ortiz Cofer, Judith, ed. ***Riding Low on the Streets of Gold: Latino Literature for Young Adults***. Houston, Tex.: Piñata Books, 2004. 198 pp. ISBN 1-55885-380-4, \$14.95 (pb).

"I was raised better than to laugh at the poor, but I wasn't laughing because he was poor. I was laughing because there was no way this humped, scrubby boy in clumsy clown clothes and hard-soled shoes had a chance to win against me." In Mike Padilla's short story "Carrying Sergei," 14-year-old Margarita Navarrete describes her opponent in a race up 364 steps near her school in Tijuana, Mexico. After the race and in the coming weeks, young Margarita will learn much more about her opponent—more than she may ever have imagined.

Ortiz Cofer's anthology brings together a variety of stories and poetry from Latino authors both past and present. Each work focuses on various aspects of life unique to both young adulthood and Latino culture. Issues including language barriers, sibling rivalry, growing pains, and friendship are addressed. Young characters face challenges throughout and overcome obstacles, learning valuable life lessons in the process.

Riding Low on the Streets of Gold is a positive addition to any young adult collection. It contains a blend of 22 stories

and poems that bring to life growing up, including the isolation, difference, and awkwardness young adults may experience, highlighting bilingualism and biculturalism. Overall, the authentic view of Latino culture presented by this anthology is truly a unique and valuable perspective in young adult literature today.

—Will Takach

Albany (N.Y.) Public Library

13-4-0569

Reuter, Bjarne. ***The Ring of the Slave Prince***. New York: Dutton, 2004. 372 pp. Trans. from Danish by Tina Nunnally. ISBN 0-525-47146-4, \$22.99.

This epic, swashbuckling adventure set in the early seventeenth century has plenty to keep readers engaged. Set in the Caribbean, the story centers on Tom O'Connor, a teenager of mixed Irish and Spanish heritage living an impoverished existence with his mother and sister in indentured servitude to an innkeeper. O'Connor's adventures begin when he goes in search of the treasure of a recently sunken Spanish galleon. One evening during his search, O'Connor rescues a shady, suspicious character named Ramon who has with him a slave he claims is an African prince named Boto and worth a fortune. Boto disappears and O'Connor, dreaming of making a fortune by returning Boto to his African chief father, pursues him.

The most interesting episode in his adventures comes when O'Connor goes to work for a British-owned plantation in Jamaica and becomes an overseer. The physical brutality and other horrors of plantation slavery are vividly depicted. A chapter depicting the branding of slaves is particularly graphic. Sickened of the brutality, O'Connor frees the slaves and flees the plantation for his life. He escapes to a pirate ship, where he finds himself at the mercy of a murderous captain.

Engrossing and exciting, the story, with its many larger-than-life characters, bold escapes, chance encounters, and thrilling action, often strains credibility but it works well and will capture the imagination of readers. The historical detail is vivid and expertly integrated into the story. A fine example of outstanding historical fiction.

—Edward Sullivan

Hardin Valley Elementary School, Knoxville, Tenn.

13-4-0570

Singer, Marilyn, ed. ***Face Relations: 11 Stories About Seeing Beyond Color***. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004. 222 pp. ISBN 0-689-85637-7, \$17.95.

The authors of these short stories on diversity issues, whether the topic is weight, color, or culture, present compelling fare that leaves the reader wanting more. The narratives are refreshing because of the different perspectives on common themes.

▼ continued young adult (gr. 7-up)

“Epiphany,” written by Ellen Wittlinger, takes a look at black and white issues from both sides. This story discusses black high school students’ desire to sit with other black students and not with white students. The ending surprised this reader and will delight many.

Powerful, inspiring, rousing, and commanding, this collection offers atypical options for diversity topics and allows readers to think out of the box and look for new, untried solutions. The life lessons learned from these stories suggest that while not every situation has a happy ending, each can be dealt with in an appropriate manner.

Face Relations has a variety of stories that would interest young adults. It belongs in school and classroom libraries.

—Miriam Guttman
Mt. Mary College, Milwaukee, Wis.

13-4-0571

Thurlo, Aimee and Thurlo, David. *The Spirit Line*. New York: Viking, 2004. 215 pp. ISBN 0-670-03645-5, \$15.99.

Crystal Manyfeathers, a 15-year-old Diné (Navajo), is outspoken in her disdain for all the traditions in which she has been brought up. Yet Crystal, who is “the most talented weaver on the reservation,” must prepare for her kinaaldá, her womanhood ceremony, because that is what her deceased mother would have wanted. Although her best friend, Henry Tallman, is a traditionalist studying to be a hataalii (healer), she decides to rebel, to weave a rug without the traditional “spirit line.” When she dreams about Spider Woman and the unfinished rug is stolen just before her kinaaldá, she must figure out what to do. As is typical of this formulaic subgenre, the protagonist exhibits behaviors opposed to those of her own culture, the question of what could cause her to feel so disconnected is not addressed, and the culture itself is depicted in a way that makes no sense.

Some obvious problems: A young Diné woman raised traditionally would not consider her home “the middle of nowhere,” nor would she feel “suffocated by her father’s traditional culture.” This is her world. There are many traditional weavers living and working on Dinétak [Diné land] who have been learning from and teaching each other for a long time. A 15-year-old would still be learning from her elders. “Most talented” is not a Diné concept; it implies that the art of weaving is natural rather than learned and that there is competition to be the “best.” A kinaaldá is a blessing and an honoring, and physically rigorous, not to mention expensive. A young woman’s female relatives would not go through all the work and expense if the ceremony “didn’t mean that much to her,” nor would they have one if she weren’t ready or if they couldn’t afford it. At home, Diné know each other as Diné (the people), not Navajo, a word used with outsiders. It’s inappropriate for a Diné to discuss spiritual matters with an outsider, especially a trader. It’s not the role of Diné men, even healers-in-training, to talk to a young woman about weaving. Not weaving in a “spirit line” would make the rug less, not more, valuable. And nobody,

not even a gang member, would steal from a medicine man.

While young white middle-class readers will readily identify with the young protagonist, they are not getting an authentic story. With the critical writing that Indian authors and reviewers have been doing for years, there is no longer any excuse for ignorance.

—Beverly Slapin
Oyate, Berkeley, Calif.
(The reviewer would like to thank Linda Baldwin,
Gloria Grant, and Linda Lilly.)

13-4-0572

Wein, Elizabeth E. *The Sunbird*. New York: Viking, 2004. 184 pp. ISBN 0-670-03691-9, \$16.99.

The Sunbird continues the events of the sixth-century history of today’s Ethiopia and Eritrea introduced in Wein’s *A Coalition of Lions* (2003). Telemakos, the grandson of two nobles—one from Aksum and one from Britain—is the focus of this novel. He has the habit of hiding among adults to listen to their discussions. In so doing, he learns of a scheme created by traders to benefit from high prices as a result of a plague outbreak. His British aunt, Goewin, becomes concerned with the health and economy of the Kingdom of Aksum, and she asks Telemakos, the Sunbird, to identify the traitor within the court. Being a child, he will not be suspected for such a mission. His sleuthing as a mute and then blindfolded prisoner nearly results in his death. Although his eyes are glued shut, his nails removed, and his throat dry, he focuses on his goal.

This novel portrays the interconnectivity among Britain (Europe), Aksum (Ethiopia), and Himyarite (Yemen). The salt trade was so important, even being used as a currency, that traders risked contracting the plague in order to make shipments. The novel also illustrates the network of embassies created in various African countries that led to intermarriages and multicultural societies. Most of the characters speak several languages (Greek, Latin, Ge’ez, Amharic, Noba, or Tigrinya) to show the cosmopolitan nature of empire. Finally, the novel provides glimpses into the early Ethiopian Christian Church. Although the work is fictional, it contains important familial, political, and economic issues about that period and ones appropriate for today.

—Patricia S. Kuntz
Madison, Wis.

13-4-0573

Whitesel, Cheryl Aylward. *Blue Fingers: A Ninja’s Tale*. New York: Clarion, 2004. 252 pp. ISBN 0-618-38139-2, \$15.00.

Set in Japan in 1545, this tale of a farm boy captured by the legendary secret Ninja clan also portrays the universal themes of shame and redemption, the need for love and belonging, the fear of not being good enough, and the growth of character that comes from trying and failing and

having the strength to try again and finally to succeed.

Koji and Taro are twins. In feudal Japan this was considered unlucky. Koji had always felt that Taro was the brother more greatly loved, more skillful, more talented. When Taro saves the life of a master dye maker, the man in gratitude offers to take him on as an apprentice. But, mysteriously, Koji is sent instead of Taro. Fumbling every task, Koji is finally sent home in disgrace. Too ashamed to face his parents, he escapes to hide in the mountains, where his father has warned him not to go, for fear of the "tengu," the ugly, evil trolls who capture and kill trespassers. But the tengu turn out to be ninja, the almost mythical, magical beings who can appear and disappear at will.

Training hard and desperately wanting to prove his worth, Koji begins to be recognized as one of the clan. When he finally meets his twin again, he is rather astonished to find that Taro had always felt second to Koji. Ah, how our assumptions lead us astray in the hour of our uncertainty. A long historical note, an ample glossary, a bibliography (including fiction and nonfiction), and a list of references for this novel appear at the end. Gracefully written with a fine sense of detail and accuracy to the Japanese character and history, this book illuminates the mythical ninja in an engrossing story.

—Ginny Lee
Syracuse, N.Y.

13-4-0574

Whitney, Kim Ablon. *See You Down the Road*. New York: Random House Children's Books/Knopf, 2004. 188 pp. ISBN 0-375-82467-7, \$15.95.

The protagonist in this young adult novel, Bridget Daugherty, finds herself at a crossroads in her life. As a member of a Travelers family, a group who make their living by traveling and doing odd jobs, often taking advantage of their customers, Bridget has known a hard life. The Travelers have certain traditions and rules, including marrying within their own group, and Bridget has been "promised" to a young man named Patrick Murphy from another Travelers family. Only 16, Bridget questions her parents' choices, and she has to decide if the Travelers' life is right for her.

The novel is well written and presents a compelling story about family devotion and individual choices. The language is sometimes very graphic, and the story does delve into some sexual dilemmas as well. Mature teenagers would relate to the authentic portrayal of young love and the many decisions that teenagers face as they grow up. This book would be recommended only for mature young adults because of the use of obscenities.

This novel gives readers an interesting look at life on the road. The questions that Bridget grapples with throughout the novel keep the reader engrossed until the final resolution.

—Ellen Loughney
Academy of the Holy Names, Albany, N.Y.

13-4-0575

Woods, Brenda. *Emako Blue*. New York: Putnam, 2004. 124 pp. ISBN 0-399-24006-3, \$15.99.

Emako Blue was supposed to be a star, but talent and determination aren't always enough when you're growing up African American in the tough inner city of South Central Los Angeles. Woods, author of the Coretta Scott King Honor Book *The Red Rose Box*, tells the story of a young woman with the dream of becoming a famous singer so she can get herself and her family into a safer environment, a place safe from gang activity, drugs, and hopelessness. In two more years she'll finish high school and launch her singing career. But two years can be an eternity in South Central, and anything could happen. Her brother's involvement with gangs guarantees that "anything" can't be anything good.

Written in the various voices of those acquainted with Emako, this book is a quick read that rings true in dialogue and point of view. However, its spareness offers little by way of emotional involvement with the characters and leaves readers with no lingering thoughts or new insights.

—Jyna Scheeren
Troy (N.Y.) Public Library

Audio

13-4-0576

Darling, David and the Wulu Bunun Singers. *Mudanin Kata*. London, U.K.: World Music Network, 2004. CD. 57 minutes. \$16.98.

In this fine recording, cellist Darling combines with singers from Taiwan in a mixture that incorporates an Austronesian language with a good selection of traditional music. Darling is classically trained on the cello. He has arranged much of the music and alternately plays solo, but then takes a musical back seat when appropriate. His playing fits the style of the singers, adding elements of folk music, classical music, and jazz at various times.

Vocals are multi-part, resulting in a splendid indigenous blend of homophony. Rhythm is stable, suited well to the text or lyrics. Melody and harmony are modal, bordering on tonality at times. Form is well suited to the vocal music in a supportive manner.

Categorically, this pleasant music is meditative, expressive, and based often on sights and sounds of nature. Life in the mountains is aurally pictured, with a wide variety of detail. A sample of song titles includes "Malas Tapag," "Wulu Dream," "Pasibutbut," "Bunun Tuza," and "Malkakiv Malvanis." These are island people, singing what comes naturally to them. There is an accompanying informative booklet as well. The CD package is recommended for its beauty.

—Geary H. Larrick
Stevens Point, Wis.

▼ continued audio

13-4-0577

Tarantelle & Canti d'Amore: The Songs of Allessandra Belloni. Franklin, Tenn.: Naxos of America, 2003. 70 minutes. CD. \$9.98.

Belloni provides a noteworthy musical addition to the phenomenon of such "old age" practices as Tai Chi and homeopathy. Of the 15 titles on this compilation, two are original compositions by Belloni, while the bulk of songs were collected throughout southern Italy. In addition to preserving the musical practices of these regions, this compilation also preserves such ancient languages as Gricanico. The succinct program notes describe the use of the selection in the ancient life, the source or location from which the work was collected, and translations of the text.

The life blood of the CD, however, transcends scholarly collection and documentation. The pulsating performances of these ancient songs—themselves often hybrids of multiple cultures—springs from the fusion of southern Italian, Brazilian, and Indian styles. Belloni has handily fulfilled her objective: "to bring this ancient cure of wild dancing to all women who have known the anguish and desperation of feeling trapped in a mythical spider web, so they may free themselves and find true expression." Not a part of the New Age niche that plays in the background of massage therapists' offices, this recording is one in which the artist fully participates in and revives a musical tradition that has been out of our reach for many years. She combines inspired performance as a vocalist and percussionist and erudite research, with delightful results.

—Ellen Burns
Siena College

Video

13-4-0578

Feinbloom, Sarah. **What Do You Believe? American Teenagers, Spirituality and Freedom of Religion.** Harriman, N.Y.: New Day Films, 2003. VHS. color. 49 minutes + 28-page curriculum guide. \$185.00 (universities); \$95.00 (high schools and nonprofits).

This well-done video asks teenagers of various faiths questions about their viewpoints on religion and spirituality. In-depth commentaries focus on teenagers raised with Catholic, Buddhist, Jewish, Muslim, Christian, Native American, and Pagan beliefs. The teenagers are brutally honest about their values and how their religious experiences have shaped their lives.

The documentary brings important questions to the surface, and it could be used in a variety of settings to discuss the importance of tolerance and acceptance of different religious beliefs in America today. The video does an excellent job of explaining what some of the different religions believe and why. The teenagers are straightforward in their responses to the questions posed, and their honesty clearly shows the wide diversity of beliefs that young people have. The video discusses the many questions that young people have about their

faith, prayer, the afterlife, and even suffering and death.

A 28-page guide for teachers is provided, which includes a variety of worksheets and icebreaker activities to be used in conjunction with the video presentation. This video is particularly suited for the high school audience, but could be appropriate in the university setting as well.

—Ellen Loughney
Academy of the Holy Names, Albany, N.Y.

13-4-0579

Giving Voice: Today's Teens Get Real About Bias. Princeton, N.J.: Films for the Humanities & Sciences, 2004. VHS or DVD. color. 2 films, 25 min. + 43 min. and teachers guide. \$89.95 (VHS); \$99.95 (DVD).

This two-piece video documentary set created by the Shoah Foundation discusses the problems of racism and violence as seen through the eyes of seven teenagers. These teenagers' problems are interwoven with the experiences of seven Holocaust survivors.

The teenagers discuss their personal thoughts and experiences with prejudice in a 25-minute documentary, and this is paired with a 45-minute documentary, in which seven survivors of the Holocaust tell their stories and feelings about their experiences with hatred and violence.

The set comes with a teacher's guide created by the Shoah Foundation to be used in conjunction with the video presentations. Through the oral testimonies in these videos, young adults can relate their own lives to those of an older generation and learn how to overcome prejudice and bigotry.

—Ellen Loughney
Academy of the Holy Names, Albany, N.Y.

13-4-0580

We Sign: Fun Time. Orange, Calif.: Production Associates, Inc., 2004. VHS. color. 30 minutes. \$14.95.

We Sign: Play Time. Orange, Calif.: Production Associates, Inc., 2004. VHS. color. 30 minutes. \$14.95.

Production Associates has recently added to its American Sign Language collection Say, Sing and Sign with the publication of a new series of delightful videos called We Sign. The first two videos in the new series are designed for the young child and preschooler with *We Sign: Play Time* for children 9 months to four years and *We Sign: Fun Time*, appropriate for the child two years old and up. Both videos feature American Sign Language vocabulary and popular children's songs and rhymes such as "Wheels on the Bus," "When You're Happy and You Know It," "Old MacDonald," and "Row, Row, Row Your Boat."

The We Sign videos support research findings of the advantages of combining sign with singing. This interaction has proven to increase and improve verbal communication, vocabulary retention, and developing motor skills in children. Families can actively participate with their children as

they sing, move, and sign and have fun together while helping their children develop an enthusiasm for learning.

In both the videos, each song is performed by groups of children in a group setting or within the context of the song or rhyme. At the beginning of each song, children introduce the basic sign vocabulary. Since the sign vocabulary is introduced as name signs and not finger spells, there can be easy transition of the signs to other songs and languages. Teachers of WLOE (World Languages Other Than English) will find these videos a great resource for signs to use as gestures in the language class and for TPR (Total Physical Response) activities. Music teachers will also find the We Sign collection an excellent library of songs to use at school concerts and events.

—Michèle Pollard
Academy of the Holy Names, Albany, N.Y.

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(800) 545-2433

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(713) 743-2841

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(E) Children's Press
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Minneapolis, MN 55401
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Random House Children's
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