

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

NEW EDITIONS

Anaya, Rudolfo. ***Tortuga***. Albuquerque: Univ. of New Mexico Press, 2004. 208 pp. ISBN 0-8263-3624-8, \$17.95 (pb).

For the noted Chicano writer Anaya, the 1979 novel *Tortuga* was the third entry in what has been called his New Mexico trilogy; the first two were *Bless Me Ultima* (his most well-known work) and *Heart of Aztlán*. All three novels drew on experiences from Anaya's childhood and adolescence. *Tortuga* is written from the point of view of an adolescent boy who (as once happened to Anaya) is seriously injured in a diving accident and must spend several months in a hospital for crippled children.

Tortuga is the Spanish word for turtle, and in the novel it refers both to the name of a nearby mountain and to the nickname given the novel's narrator, who must emerge from his shell both metaphorically and in the literal sense of losing the cast that encases him. Anaya captures well the relationships among the boys in the hospital and their sometimes crude talk. In a new afterword to this edition, he notes that the novel encapsulates some elements found throughout his work, such as the use of dreamlike narrative (included here in stories told by a boy named Salomón) and the importance of the geography and traditions of New Mexico.

Meyer, Karl E. ***The Dust of Empire: The Race for Mastery in the Asian Heartland***. New York: PublicAffairs, 2004. 272 pp. ISBN 1-58648-241-6, \$15.00 (pb).

As a background for understanding some crucial parts of today's world, this recent study considers the British and American experiences of empire before delving into the history of six areas—Russia, Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan,

the Caucasus, and Central Asia. The treatment is both historical and cultural; a section on Russia's relations with other nations, for example, incorporates Sergei Eisenstein's film *Alexander Nevsky* and a poem by Alexander Blok into its discussion. For this paperback edition, the author has added an introduction (dated April 2004) titled "On America After Iraq" that considers the justifications for the Iraq war and how recent American policies compare to earlier examples of nations dealing with their preeminent status in the world.

REISSUES OF OUT-OF-PRINT WORKS

Bosse, Malcolm. ***Tusk and Stone***. Asheville, N.C.: Front Street, 2004. 256 pp. ISBN 1-886910-74-X, \$8.95 (pb).

This 1995 novel by Bosse (1927–2002), the author of numerous works of fiction both for adults and for young readers, tells a story set in medieval India. Arjun is an adolescent boy from a proud Brahmin family who narrowly escapes when bandits capture the caravan he is traveling in and kill many of its members. Arjun resolves to search for his nine-year-old sister Gauri, whom the bandits have taken off to be sold into slavery. Almost immediately, though, Arjun is himself sold into a life of servitude in an army. He eventually becomes a great warrior before becoming captured and enslaved once more. Working in a quarry, Arjun learns the art of stone carving and finds spiritual fulfillment in it. The social conventions of the period and the religious precepts its characters follow are incorporated into the story without much explanation; for some younger readers this may make the story harder to follow, but most should find it an interesting immersion into a time and place that are seldom explored.

Burke, James Lee. ***The Lost Get-Back Boogie***. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 2004. 242 pp. ISBN 0-8071-3032-X, \$24.95.

In 1987 the first of the novels that Burke is best known for, those featuring the Cajun detective Dave Robicheaux, was published. The year before, his sixth work of fiction, *The Lost Get-Back Boogie*, had appeared. In a foreword to this new edition from its original publisher, Christine Wiltz writes that the book had endured nine years of submissions (with 111 rejections) before playing an important role in the resurgence of its author's career.

The novel is narrated by Iry Paret, a war veteran and musician who leaves a Louisiana state penitentiary on parole after serving two years of a sentence for manslaughter. Paret moves from Louisiana to Montana to get a new start in life by working on a ranch. "The Lost Get-Back Boogie" is the name

of the song he hopes to write to recapture his more innocent youth before his time in the Korean War and prison. As with much of Burke's work, this is the story of a man in difficult, sometimes violent, circumstances struggling to do what is right.

Pratt, Richard Henry. *Battlefield & Classroom: An Autobiography*. Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma, 2004. 416 pp. Edited by Robert M. Utley. ISBN 0-8061-3603-0, \$24.95 (pb).

Near the end of his life, General Pratt (1840–1924) dictated his memoirs of his time as a U.S Army field officer during the Indian campaigns of the 1860s and '70s and his founding of the Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania, which he directed from 1879 to 1904. Pratt believed that American Indians were savages, but only because of the environment they grew up in. He asserted that educating Indians off their reservations in Western manners and culture would assimilate them into American society. His dictum was "Kill the Indian, save the man," and the school he founded played an important role in the development of Indian education in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Yale University Press published an edited version of this autobiography in 1964, with a number of explanatory footnotes. This new edition includes a foreword by David Wallace Adams that assesses the influence of Pratt's ideas and his school. The autobiography itself gives a very detailed account of Pratt's experiences and includes a number of pieces of correspondence that add further detail (though they don't do much for the narrative flow). The book contains a number of pages of period photos and illustrations, some of which are simple drawings done by Indian prisoners from Pratt's time as a military commander.

Quiroga, Horacio. *The Decapitated Chicken and Other Stories*. Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 2004. Illus. by Ed Lindlof. Selected and translated from Spanish by Margaret Sayers Peden. 166 pp. ISBN 0-299-19834-0, \$15.95 (pb).

In the original 1964 introduction to this collection of 12 stories by Quiroga (1878–1937), it is mentioned that a 1917 collection by him was titled *Cuentos de amor, de locura, y de muerte* (Stories of Love, Madness, and Death), and that this phrase could describe his entire body of work. Quiroga's stories have been compared to those of Edgar Allan Poe for their macabre details and twist endings. "The Feather Pillow" tells of a gruesome creature that sucks the lifeblood out of a young bride, and "Sunstroke" is a story from the point of view of five dogs who can see Death approaching to take their cruel master away. Other stories here contain more psychological terror and unease; some, like "Juan Darién," a story of a tiger who grows up with the appearance of a man until his true nature is discovered, have the nature of a folktale. (This last story was the basis of a theater piece by Julie Taymor, the director of the musical *The Lion King*.)

Quiroga was born in Uruguay and spent most of his life in Argentina; at times, his fiction reflects both the years he spent as a pioneer on the Argentine frontier and the many

violent incidents (accidental deaths and suicides, including eventually his own) that marked his life. The one new element to the book since its original publication is a foreword by Jean Franco, which provides background to understand Quiroga's life and fiction. Each story is accompanied by a drawing evoking its theme (done in a style that evokes the 1960s). The translation seems flowery and somewhat stilted at times, though this may reflect the melodramatic nature of much of Quiroga's writing.

U.S. PUBLICATION OF BOOKS PUBLISHED ELSEWHERE IN ENGLISH

Ty-Casper, Linda. *The Stranded Whale*. Quezon City, Philippines: Giraffe, 2002. 286 pp. ISBN 971-188-3267-X, \$17.50 (pb).

Originally trained in international law, Ty-Casper is a Filipino author (though she has lived in Massachusetts for a number of years) who has set out to tell the story of her people through historical fiction. Her 14 books (the first of which appeared in 1963) have been based on such subjects as the eighteenth-century British occupation of Manila and the growth of Ferdinand Marcos's dictatorial power. *The Stranded Whale*, set in 1898–1901, is the third novel depicting the period when the Philippines was ceded from Spain to the United States and tried unsuccessfully to gain its independence.

Historical detail permeates the book; its first sentence, for example, reads, "Entering Dr. Pedro Claro's cistern in Santa Cruz, Blas Viardo [the novel's main character] found the men arguing that the Revolution of 96 had been betrayed by the signing of the Pact at Biac-na-Bato, just the past December." The novel's language includes a number of curious comparisons ("flame-colored like an errant thought") and sentences written with unusual syntax. The book's back cover mentions some difficulties encountered in typesetting the book; this may be reflected in some of the text's problems with spacing, line breaks, and punctuation.

Wood, Frances. *The Silk Road: Two Thousand Years in the Heart of Asia*. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2004. 272 pp. ISBN 0-520-24340-4, \$19.95.

This extremely well illustrated book was first published in 2002 in Great Britain by the Folio Society; its author is the head of the Chinese section of the British Library. The "Silk Road" was a series of routes stretching from China through Central Asia that served for more than two thousand years to link East and West. Much of the area the Silk Road passed through was desert, and a number of remarkable towns and cities grew in the oases that travelers would stop in along the way.

Wood takes a mostly chronological approach to telling the story of the civilizations that rose and fell along these routes. Some chapters focus on topics such as Buddhism on the Silk Road; travelers like Marco Polo; and conflicts between nations, such as the nineteenth-century competition largely between Britain and Russia known as "the Great Game." The text gives many intriguing stories and details,

but much of the book's appeal is in the numerous photos and illustrations; these include paintings, statues, and other cultural products; photos taken by explorers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; and some contemporary photos of people and places. One curious omission: The book has no maps. It would be a good idea to read *The Silk Road* along with an atlas, which could help locate such places as the remarkable city of Samarkand, in what is now eastern Uzbekistan.

NEW VOLUMES IN SERIES

American Voices

Sirimarco, Elizabeth. *American Voices from the Civil Rights Movement*. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark/Marshall Cavendish, 2004. 158 pp. ISBN 0-7614-1697-8, \$23.95.

This compilation of primary source materials on the civil rights movement, intended for middle-school students, stretches from the Supreme Court's 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision allowing segregation on up to the 1965 Voting Rights Act. A short epilogue tells of developments since then and includes a section of Martin Luther King Jr.'s 1963 "I Have a Dream" speech. Among the documents excerpted here are letters, official statements, newspaper articles, court decisions, and poems. The illustrations—mostly period black-and-white photos with a few color drawings and paintings—serve as historical documents as well. Each document has a short introduction by the author to place it in historical context and is followed by one to three "Think About This" questions.

The book ends with a time line, a glossary, lists of books and web sites, and an index. Other volumes in the series concern topics such as the Great Depression and the Vietnam era. *American Voices from the Civil Rights Movement* provides students with numerous relatively short and well-explained examples of the raw materials that make up the history of this dramatic time.

At Issue in History

Barth, Kelly, ed. *The Rise and Fall of the Taliban*. San Diego, Calif.: Greenhaven, 2005. 126 pp. ISBN 0-7377-1987-7, \$29.95.

Fisanick, Christina, ed. *The Rwanda Genocide*. San Diego, Calif.: Greenhaven, 2004. 142 pp. ISBN 0-7377-1986-9, \$21.25 (pb).

The volumes in this series provide students of high-school level or above, as well as general readers, with a number of viewpoints on controversial historical issues. Other entries include ones on the outbreak of the Civil War, the JFK assassination, and the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Each is composed of writings from a dozen different viewpoints; these include book excerpts, magazine and journal articles, speeches, and an interview from a PBS documentary.

The three sections of the Rwanda volume consider the disputed origins of the massacre, the reasons for a lack of an international response to stop it, and what Rwanda has done and must do to recover from it. The four articles on its causes discuss the political, social, and economic reasons for the massacre. The three articles on the international response all directly blame the United Nations and the United States government for their unwillingness to label a clear case of genocide as such; this would have compelled them to intervene to stop it, at some possible cost to themselves. The last of the articles in this chapter is by Samantha Power, the author of the book *"A Problem from Hell": America and the Age of Genocide*. Her devastating assessment of the weak response of the Clinton administration to the tragedy is ironically followed by the first entry in the final chapter, an excerpt from a 1998 speech by President Clinton to survivors of the massacre that promises that the international community will work together to rebuild Rwanda.

The volume on the Taliban also contains three parts. Four articles address why the Taliban came to power, with one defending the group and another describing how the United States initially endorsed the regime. The four articles in the section "Life Under Taliban Rule" focus on the position of women and whether the Taliban's imposition of order and stability justified its extreme limitations on the freedoms of the Afghan people. The final section features five articles on the 2001 war that brought down the Taliban—whether or not that war was justified and whether the Taliban were effectively defeated.

The Rwanda book concludes with a list of some important figures from the period, and both volumes feature a chronology of events and lists of books, articles, and web sites for further research.

The Changing Face of North America

Aykroyd, Clarissa. *Refugees*. Broomall, Pa.: Mason Crest, 2004. 112 pp. ISBN 1-59084-692-3, \$24.95.

Barnett, Tracy L. *Immigration from South America*. Broomall, Pa.: Mason Crest, 2004. 144 pp. ISBN 1-59084-687-7, \$24.95.

Corrigan, Jim. *Filipino Immigration*. Broomall, Pa.: Mason Crest, 2004. 112 pp. ISBN 1-59084-684-2, \$24.95.

Ferry, Joe. *Vietnamese Immigration*. Broomall, Pa.: Mason Crest, 2004. 112 pp. ISBN 1-59084-682-6, \$24.95.

Gaines, Jena. *Haitian Immigration*. Broomall, Pa.: Mason Crest, 2004. 104 pp. ISBN 1-59084-691-5, \$24.95.

Gelletly, LeeAnne. *Mexican Immigration*. Broomall, Pa.: Mason Crest, 2004. 112 pp. ISBN 1-59084-680-X, \$24.95.

Hernández, Roger E.. *Cuban Immigration*. Broomall, Pa.: Mason Crest, 2004. 112 pp. ISBN 1-59084-681-8, \$24.95.

Hernandez, Romel. ***Immigration from Central America***. Broomall, Pa.: Mason Crest, 2004. 112 pp. ISBN 1-59084-688-5, \$24.95.

Honovich, Nancy. ***Immigration from the Former Yugoslavia***. Broomall, Pa.: Mason Crest, 2004. 112 pp. ISBN 1-59084-690-7, \$24.95.

Lingen, Marissa K. ***Chinese Immigration***. Broomall, Pa.: Mason Crest, 2004. 112 pp. ISBN 1-59084-694-X, \$24.95.

McDaniel, Jan. ***Indian Immigration***. Broomall, Pa.: Mason Crest, 2004. 112 pp. ISBN 1-59084-683-4, \$24.95.

Noonan, Sheila Smith. ***Immigration from the Middle East***. Broomall, Pa.: Mason Crest, 2004. 112 pp. ISBN 1-59084-695-8, \$24.95.

Noonan, Sheila Smith. ***Korean Immigration***. Broomall, Pa.: Mason Crest, 2004. 112 pp. ISBN 1-59084-693-1, \$24.95.

Rinker, Kimberly A. ***Immigration from the Dominican Republic***. Broomall, Pa.: Mason Crest, 2004. 104 pp. ISBN 1-59084-689-3, \$24.95.

Staeger, Rob. ***Asylees***. Broomall, Pa.: Mason Crest, 2004. 112 pp. ISBN 1-59084-685-0, \$24.95.

Staeger, Rob. ***Deported Aliens***. Broomall, Pa.: Mason Crest, 2004. 104 pp. ISBN 1-59084-686-9, \$24.95.

The Immigration Act of 1965 significantly affected the numbers and national origins of immigrants to the United States, partly through eliminating elements of the quota system that had long favored immigrants from Western Europe and limited those from Asia and other regions. The volumes in this new series for students in junior high and above reflect the changes in U.S. immigration since then, but they also take a more comprehensive look at immigration and at different communities of hyphenated-Americans. Addition-ally, as the series title refers to "North America," some sections discuss immigration to Canada (though not to any other North American countries).

Thirteen of the entries consider specific countries or regions of origin. Chapters describe the country or region, give a history of immigration from there, and describe the culture of the immigrant communities in the United States and Canada and the challenges they face. Three of the volumes take on more general topics: deportation, the granting of asylum, and refugees. All end with a glossary, resource lists, and an index. All, except for the ones on asylum and deportation, also have a list of famous Americans and Canadians originally from that country or region; the refugee volume has a list of notables who came to the United States and Canada, such as Albert Einstein, Madeleine Albright, and Gloria Estefan.

Each volume begins with an introduction from Senator Edward M. Kennedy and forewords from a U.S. historian and

a Canadian diplomat. These are identical in each volume and take up about eight pages. Also, a chapter in each book on the history of U.S. and Canadian immigration has a section about ten pages long of text that is identical throughout the series, usually with the same photos. Multiplied over 16 volumes, this is a large amount of repetition. It is also true that American students might not find the pages on Canadian immigration that relevant to their studies, though it is interesting to see a series that takes a broader perspective than almost all others of this type.

The Cheetah Girls

Gregory, Deborah. ***The Cheetah Girls: Growl Power Forever. Books 9–12***. New York: Jump at the Sun/Hyperion, 2004. 602 pp. ISBN 0-7868-5163-5, \$9.99 (pb).

A recent movie on the Disney Channel featured the adventures of this teen singing group. In the four novels collected here, originally published in 2000 and 2001 (*Showdown at the Okie-Dokie; Cuchifrita, Ballerina; Dorinda Gets a Groove; and In the House with Mouse!*), the girls—Galleria, Chanel, Dorinda, and the twins Anginette and Aquanette—are around 14 years old. They are working to get a big break and move beyond doing a song or two as an opening act for some of their pop-music idols (Mariah Carey makes an appearance in Book 12).

Each of the four novels is narrated by a different Cheetah Girl, though their voices are fairly similar except for the sprinkling of Spanish used by the Dominican-American Chanel in *Cuchifrita, Ballerina*. Each of the girls (especially Galleria in the first book here) tells her story in a slangy style that is only partly translated by the Cheetah Girls Glossary that ends each novel. Readers who have followed the story through Book 1 to 8 probably have an advantage here in understanding what is being narrated, as do those who are familiar enough with current pop music to know which singers and groups are being referred to or parodied. It is obvious that the real-life group Destiny's Child is reflected in the group "Karma's Children" found here, and the star singer "Chutney Dallas" has some things in common with Whitney Houston.

Children and Youth: History and Culture

Tong, Benson, ed. ***Asian American Children: A Historical Handbook and Guide***. Westport, Ct.: Greenwood, 2004. 284 pp. ISBN 0-313-33042-5, \$55.00.

This volume on the experiences of children and families of Asian origin in the United States has two distinct parts: essays and documents. The Essays section begins with an introduction from the editor on the worldview of Asian-American children, followed by seven academic articles. Some are on very specific topics ("Representations of Asians in *St. Nicholas Magazine*, 1888–1910") and others are somewhat broader ("Race, Generation, and Culture Among Japanese American Children During the Internment Era").

The Documents section compiles 28 examples of letters,

diaries, interviews, memoir excerpts, historical documents, and other materials related to the experience of young Asian Americans at various points in history. The documents include a part of a 1945 U.S. government report on the effectiveness of the schools set up at internment camps and a 1987 article on how one Chinese-American student applying to University of California at Berkeley may have been rejected because of a quota on the number of Asian students. As with the essays, these documents do not give a comprehensive survey of the historical experience of young Asian Americans but instead provide a number of examples of viewpoints. The volume ends with a lengthy bibliography divided by subject and an index.

Cities of the Imagination

Smith, Michael Llewellyn. ***Athens: A Cultural and Literary History***. Northampton, Mass.: Interlink, 2004. 272 pp. ISBN 1-56656-540-5, \$15.00 (pb).

As noted in the foreword of this wide-ranging study, Athens is both a very ancient city and a modern one—but with very little in between the two. After its glorious era, Athens spent a number of centuries as more of a village than a great city, up until 1836 when it became the capital of the new Kingdom of Greece. Much of what had been built up during the city's long period of domination by other cultures (such as the Byzantine and the Turkish) was obliterated in the nineteenth century, which is why most of Athens today seems to be either less than 100 or more than 2,000 years old.

The author is a historian and a former British ambassador to Greece; he ranges from an evocation of the sights and sounds of an Athenian market today to a discussion of the excavated remains of the ancient Agora, and from a short history of the modern Olympics to a description of a stroll past many of the notable sculptures on view in the city. Smith writes from a British point of view (when he says that football is one of the two most popular sports in Athens, he is not referring to the NFL), and he includes the perspectives of some famous visitors to the city, such as Lord Byron, Herman Melville, Mark Twain, and Sigmund Freud.

Compass Point Early Biographies

Levine, Michelle. ***Rosa Parks***. Minneapolis, Minn.: Compass Point, 2004. 32 pp. ISBN 0-7565-0792-8, \$21.26.

Shea, Kitty. ***Cesar Chavez***. Minneapolis, Minn.: Compass Point, 2004. 32 pp. ISBN 0-7565-0793-6, \$21.26.

With these entries, this series of biographies for beginning readers has 25 books; other persons profiled include Eleanor Roosevelt, Frederick Douglass, and Pocahontas. These two volumes use easy-to-understand text in large type, accompanied by black-and-white and color photos, to give an account of the lives of these pioneers in the struggle for the rights of minorities and workers. One thing that the two figures

have in common, besides their humble origins, is that their most notable accomplishments happened after years of hard work. Parks was a 42-year-old seamstress at the time of the Montgomery bus boycott that she helped to start; Chavez did not become a national figure until the 1965 grape boycott, when he was 38.

Each book ends with a chronology, a glossary, a short list of resources, an index, and page of facts titled “Did You Know?” We learn in the Chavez book, for example, that he attended more than 30 elementary and middle schools while growing up as a child of farm workers. A few of the photos in the Parks volume are dated from 1995 and possibly were related to the fortieth anniversary of her arrest on a Montgomery bus. When the fiftieth anniversary of the event arrives on December 1 of this year, her story is likely to receive renewed attention.

Cornerstones of Freedom

Good, Diane L. ***Brown v. Board of Education***. New York: Children's Press, 2004. 48 pp. ISBN 0-516-24225-3, \$25.00.

Kent, Deborah. ***Hawaii's Road to Statehood***. New York: Children's Press, 2004. 48 pp. ISBN 0-516-24241-5, \$25.00.

Landau, Elaine. ***The Abolitionist Movement***. New York: Children's Press, 2004. 48 pp. ISBN 0-516-24202-4, \$25.00.

Landau, Elaine. ***Sacco and Vanzetti***. New York: Children's Press, 2004. 48 pp. ISBN 0-516-24237-7, \$25.00.

Landau, Elaine. ***The Wounded Knee Massacre***. New York: Children's Press, 2004. 48 pp. ISBN 0-516-24244-X, \$25.00.

Petersen, Christine. ***The Iran-Contra Scandal***. New York: Children's Press, 2004. 48 pp. ISBN 0-516-24228-8, \$25.00.

The six volumes in this second group of a series for students in the middle elementary grades cover some seemingly disparate topics. What the books have in common—besides each being, as the books' back covers say, about “a dramatic and defining moment in American history”—is that in each case a basic principle of what America is supposed to be is not followed, at least for a time. In *Brown v. Board of Education*, it is equal opportunity; in *The Iran-Contra Scandal* it is the rule of law over the actions of elected officials; and in *Sacco and Vanzetti* it is the right to a fair trial. The early sections of the book on Hawaii's path to statehood, for example, describe how the non-native residents (the “haole”) unfairly dominated the native Hawaiians in the period around Hawaii's 1898 annexation by the United States.

The books are visually interesting, with an attractive mix of type styles and a variety of tints of their mostly period photos and illustrations. Several manage to tell fairly involved stories in an understandable way. The often-murky details of the Iran-Contra affair are put forward clearly; and the various crimes, evidence, and trials of the Sacco-Vanzetti case now read like a particularly complicated episode of *Law and Order*.

The volumes each end with a time line, a glossary of about 15 words, a short list of books and web sites, and an index.

Current Controversies

Balkin, Karen F., ed. *Civil Rights*. San Diego, Calif.: Greenhaven, 2004. 188 pp. ISBN 0-7377-1178-7, \$23.70.

Another series from Greenhaven that is reviewed above, "At Issue," provides a variety of viewpoints on specific historical topics. "Current Controversies" does something similar, except that it mostly considers larger political and social topics, such as abortion rights, censorship, and racism. The four chapters in the present volume each pose a question related to current issues in civil rights: "Are Threats to Civil Rights a Serious Problem?"; "Should Civil Rights Protections Be Increased?"; "Is Affirmative Action Beneficial?"; and "Do Efforts to Prevent Terrorism Threaten Civil Rights?" Each question is immediately followed by a section of three or four essays by different authors that answer "Yes" to the question in various ways. These authors take what are generally considered liberal positions; for example, the "Yes" essays on affirmative action argue that it reduces discrimination, it encourages educational diversity, it is necessary to build a black middle class, and it helps American business to be more competitive.

The "Yes" essays are followed by a series of "No" essays that take the opposite position (a more conservative one). One thing to note is that these articles—taken from a variety of magazines, journals, newspapers, and reports, and mostly published from 1999 to 2002—were not written in response to one another as it may appear here. As is mentioned in the series foreword, the titles of the articles have been changed to highlight their main topics and to set up opposing viewpoints.

Because of the variety of sources and styles (some articles are more academic, others more personal), the authors of the essays are not engaged in a true dialogue. However, students reading the opposing essays on each subtopic will get a good sense of at least some of the most prominent arguments employed by both sides on issues such as gay marriage, racial profiling, affirmative action in education, and about a dozen more.

Ethnic Diversity Within Nations

Minahan, James. *The Former Soviet Union's Diverse Peoples: A Reference Sourcebook*. Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 2004. 408 pp. ISBN 1-57607-823-X, \$55.00.

The Soviet Union was dissolved in 1991, but the effects of decades of Soviet rule (and, in many areas, centuries of imperial rule before that) can still be seen in the nations and the various peoples that were formerly part of that country. The ten chapters of this book divide the history of this area into parts, with sections that describe each major ethnic group present during each period. The first chapter, for example, is "Prehistory to A.D. 1500," and the last is "The Russians

and the Loss of Empire, 1986–2004." Most chapters contain two or three maps, illustrations, or black-and-white photos; all of them end with a time line, a page or two defining "Significant People, Places, and Events," and a bibliography. A few chapters also include a short historical document.

This series also includes volumes on the diverse peoples of Canada, Nigeria, and the former Yugoslavia. As in those countries, much of the history and current state of the parts of the Soviet empire can be better understood by knowing about the often difficult coexistence of its various ethnic groups. When studying topics such as the struggles between Russia and Chechnya, or the role of Islam in Central Asian countries, students may find this book to be a useful source for historical background.

Festival Time

Zucker, Jonny. *Fasting and Dates: A Ramadan and Eid-ul-Fitr Story*. Hauppauge, N.Y.: Barron's, 2004. 24 pp. Illus. by Jan Barger. ISBN 0-7641-2671-7, \$6.95 (pb).

Zucker, Jonny. *Lighting a Lamp: A Diwali Story*. Hauppauge, N.Y.: Barron's, 2004. 24 pp. Illus. by Jan Barger. ISBN 0-7641-2670-9, \$6.95 (pb).

In these entries in a series for beginning readers, a young girl describes (with one or two sentences per spread) how her family celebrates the holiday in question. The text is accompanied by colorful, cartoonlike drawings, with one fully covering each spread. Other volumes are on Rosh Hashanah, Chanukah, Passover, Purim, Chinese New Year, and Easter.

Young children should easily be able to follow the charming drawings, though some of the terms used in the text may be hard for them to read aloud or understand (particularly in these less familiar Muslim and Hindu holidays). Each book ends with a two-page discussion of the background of the religion and the particular holiday; this is aimed at a higher reading level. A parent or teacher should be sure to read this section along with the child to be sure that he or she really grasps the meaning and practices of these holidays.

The Gallup Youth Survey: Major Issues and Trends

Marcovitz, Hal. *Teens and Race*. Broomall, Pa.: Mason Crest, 2004. 112 pp. ISBN 1-59084-721-0, \$22.95.

Snyder, Gail. *Teens, Religion, and Values*. Broomall, Pa.: Mason Crest, 2004. 112 pp. ISBN 1-59084-726-1, \$22.95.

Though the books in this series are partly based on various surveys from the Gallup organization (and they each feature an introduction from pollster George Gallup), most of their interest comes from discussions of issues, not from statistics. Each book has chapters on seven or eight topics of current concern. *Teens and Race*, for example, discusses the struggle against segregation, interracial dating, growing up biracial, immigrant communities where little English is spoken, young Muslims in America, and affirmative action.

These issues are put forth with general discussion, historical background, real-life examples, and color photos as well as statistics from surveys. Some of these statistics make strong points; for example, in the volume in religion it is noted that teens ages 13 to 17 who attend church are evenly split on whether cohabiting before marriage is acceptable, while non-churchgoers think it is okay by a margin of 85 to 15 percent. Some statistics don't seem that remarkable, and the various numbers can be hard to follow in the text (though some surveys are represented by pie charts). It is also not always clear if some statistics not directly attributed to the Youth Survey are instead taken from the opinions of adults.

The books include glossaries, lists of resources, and indexes. Other volumes in the series are on teens and alcohol, family issues, sex, and suicide. One note about the volume on religion and values: The first chapter is a detailed recounting of the 1999 Columbine High School shootings, focusing on those students who professed their religious faith and were killed. This seems a rather odd way for the book to begin its discussion of teens and religion.

Great Life Stories

Mara, Wil. *Thurgood Marshall: Champion for Civil Rights*. New York: Franklin Watts, 2004. 128 pp. ISBN 0-531-12058-9, \$29.50.

Seidman, David. *Cesar Chavez: Labor Leader*. New York: Franklin Watts, 2004. 128 pp. ISBN 0-531-12319-7, \$29.50.

For students at a middle school reading level, these two books offer a detailed and in-depth account of the lives of these two heroes in the struggle for basic human rights. The well-written main text is accompanied by archival photos (including one of Marshall, then called by his original name of "Thoroughgood," at age one) and by sidebars on various topics. The Chavez volume, for example, has sidebars on the 1943 Zoot Suit Riots, a Jack London essay on strikebreakers, and Gandhi's principles of nonviolence.

Other volumes in the series include ones on Fidel Castro, George W. Bush, J. R. R. Tolkien, Condoleeza Rice, and Dian Fossey. The books end with time lines, lists of resources, and an index. Each also has "A Note on Sources," where the author discusses what books and articles had been most helpful and instructive in understanding the book's subject. The engagement that the authors show with their subjects throughout these two books is a large part of what makes them worthwhile for young readers.

Great Speeches in History

Rackers, Mark, ed. *The Arab-Israeli Conflict*. San Diego, Calif.: Greenhaven, 2004. 234 pp. ISBN 0-7377-1649-5, \$34.95.

This volume collects 20 speeches from important figures in the history of the conflict. The speakers include Israeli prime ministers (Ben-Gurion, Meir, Begin, Rabin, and

Sharon), world leaders (Churchill, Eisenhower, and Carter), Arab leaders (Nasser, King Hussein, and Sadat), Palestinian leaders (including three speeches by Yassir Arafat), and a few others. For each speech, the book's editor provides a description of its historical context; he also contributes an introduction that gives a history of the conflict, a time line, and biographies (some fairly extensive) of all the speakers.

None of these speeches rise in memorability or power to anywhere near to the level of Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech, which is quoted in the series foreword here—though few speeches do, of course. (Among the other 14 volumes in this series are ones on the civil rights struggle, the Civil War, and the Vietnam era.) What is of particular interest here is the way that readers can see how the speeches were influenced by the time and circumstances of their delivery. For example, a 1947 speech by Churchill to the House of Commons on why Britain should pull out of Palestine (and leave the problems there for the Arabs and Israelis to deal with) is strongly affected by the British politics of the postwar period. This book is a good source for seeing what positions historical figures were taking in this conflict in the middle of making history themselves.

Headline Court Cases

Fireside, Bryna J. *The Trial of the Police Officers in the Shooting Death of Amadou Diallo*. Berkeley Heights, N.J.: Enslow, 2004. 128 pp. ISBN 0-7660-2166-1, \$26.60 (list), \$19.95 (schools and libraries).

This account of the 1999 death of the African immigrant who was shot at 41 times by four white New York City policemen takes on some of the characteristics of a newspaper account (Chapter 1 has the dateline "Bronx, NY," for example), but it is generally a thoughtful history of the incident itself, its background, and the trial that followed—in which all officers were acquitted of all charges. The book, which is written at a junior high level, is particularly good at making some legal issues clear (such as why attorneys have some witnesses labeled as "hostile" in order to be allowed to ask them leading questions in cross-examination) and at presenting various views on the credibility of some of the witnesses and evidence.

The book includes black-and-white photos of many of the principals in the case. It ends with a list of five questions for discussion, a chronology, chapter source notes, a glossary, and an index. Other trials covered in the series include those involving Charles Manson, the Chicago "Black Sox," O. J. Simpson, and the "Mississippi Burning" civil rights case.

Heroes and Villains

Koopmans, Andy. *Nelson Mandela*. San Diego, Calif.: Lucent, 2004. 112 pp. ISBN 1-59018-426-2, \$28.70.

Woog, Adam. *Anne Frank*. San Diego, Calif.: Lucent, 2004. 112 pp. ISBN 1-59018-349-5, \$28.70.

These two biographies written at a junior high level provide clear and thorough accounts of the lives of their subjects. The main text is accompanied by black-and-white photos, maps and diagrams, and numerous sidebars that are mostly excerpts from primary sources, other biographies, and histories of the period. The books end with chapter notes, suggestions for further research, and a list of works consulted; the Mandela biography also has a chronology of his life.

The other entries in this series are, on the “Heroes” side, Frederick Douglass, Martin Luther King Jr., Oskar Schindler, and (curiously) King Arthur. The “Villains” side includes Al Capone, Adolf Hitler, Saddam Hussein, and Josef Mengele. A series foreword states that part of the aim of this series is to see how we can tell, through examining some people’s lives, what turned them toward evil or toward good. It seems unlikely that a student reading these books will know exactly why Al Capone and Martin Luther King Jr. turned out so differently, but even without considering the “hero/villain” dichotomy, the two books reviewed here are good examples of biographies for young people.

Hispanic Civil Rights

Cárdenas, Gilberto. *La Causa: Civil Rights, Social Justice and the Struggle for Equality in the Midwest*. Houston: Arte Público, 2004. 220 pp. ISBN 1-55885-425-8, \$28.95.

Jourdane, Maurice “Mo.” *The Struggle for the Health and Legal Protection of Farm Workers: El Cortito*. Houston: Arte Público, 2004. 192 pp. ISBN 1-55885-426-6, \$34.95 (cl); 1-55885-423-1, \$16.95 (pb).

Sepúlveda, Juan A., Jr. *The Life and Times of Willie Velásquez: Su Voto es Su Voz*. Houston: Arte Público, 2004. 384 pp. ISBN 1-55885-419-3, \$27.95 (cl); 1-55885-402-9, \$16.95 (pb).

These books tell the stories of struggles to improve the situation of Hispanic Americans in three different regions of the United States. *La Causa* is a collection of nine articles by different authors (with an introduction by the editor) that discuss aspects of the development of Hispanic community involvement in various parts of the Midwest. One article, for example, is titled “Latinos Struggle for Equality: A Case Study of Nebraska’s Latino Community.”

The second book is an anecdotal memoir by Jourdane of the years he spent in the 1960s and ’70s working as a lawyer for the California Rural Legal Assistance organization. The final new volume from this series is a highly detailed account of the life and work of Velásquez, who struggled tirelessly to increase the political participation and education of Latinos until his death from cancer in 1988 at the age of 44.

Historical Dictionaries of Peoples and Cultures

Stern, Pamela R. *Historical Dictionary of the Inuit*. Lanham, Md: Scarecrow, 2004. 242 pp. ISBN 0-8108-5058-3, \$55.00.

This is the second volume in this series; the first, also published in 2004, was on the Kurds. The heart of the volume is an alphabetical list of descriptions (each is one to several paragraphs long) of concepts, organizations, events, objects, and people important to the history and culture of the Inuit people. The book’s front matter includes a series of maps indicating Inuit settlements in Alaska, Canada, and Greenland; a lengthy and detailed historical chronology; and an introduction that defines who the Inuit are and briefly outlines their history. The back matter includes a list of relevant web sites and an extensive bibliography of materials organized by subject. Because of the way topics are organized, this book does not really serve as an introduction to the Inuit, but it is a thorough resource for anyone whose reading and research touches on this subject.

Introducing Islam

Hodges, Rick. *What Muslims Think and How They Live*. Broomall, Pa.: Mason Crest, 2004. 112 pp. ISBN 1-59084-702-4, \$22.95.

Kavanaugh, Dorothy. *Islam, Christianity, and Judaism*. Broomall, Pa.: Mason Crest, 2004. 112 pp. ISBN 1-59084-698-2, \$22.95.

Marcovitz, Hal. *Heroes and Holy Places*. Broomall, Pa.: Mason Crest, 2004. 112 pp. ISBN 1-59084-704-0, \$22.95.

Mir, Anjum. *The American Encounter with Islam*. Broomall, Pa.: Mason Crest, 2004. 112 pp. ISBN 1-59084-699-0, \$22.95.

Sears, Dr. Evelyn. *Muslims and the West*. Broomall, Pa.: Mason Crest, 2004. 112 pp. ISBN 1-59084-700-8, \$22.95.

Whitehead, Kim. *Islam: The Basics*. Broomall, Pa.: Mason Crest, 2004. 112 pp. ISBN 1-59084-697-4, \$22.95.

Whitehead, Kim. *Islamic Fundamentalism*. Broomall, Pa.: Mason Crest, 2004. 112 pp. ISBN 1-59084-703-2, \$22.95.

As is mentioned in this series for students in junior high and above, Muslims make up about one-fifth of the world’s population (second in numbers only to Christians); and contrary to the image most have, the four countries with the largest numbers of Muslims—Indonesia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and India—are neither Arab countries nor located in the Middle East. The volumes in the series cover the basic principles and history of Islam, the relationships Muslims have with the United States and the West, and the current lives and status of Muslims around the world. The well-written text is accompanied by a number of color illustrations and photos. One striking photo, referring to a controversial ruling of an Islamic cleric that was later overruled, depicts a cell phone’s text messages being used to deliver the three statements of *talaq* (the intention to divorce).

The series includes discussion of the many controversial issues facing Islam today, such as the Palestinian question and the rise of Islamism. The authors present a fairly balanced view, though one mostly positive from a Muslim point of view; one example is the discussion of the place of women in Islam, which acknowledges some differences from the West and certain difficulties but paints an overall rosy view of women's status.

The books contain the same series foreword, and each volume has its own time line, glossary, list for further research, and index. This attractively designed series should provide students with substantial background on the history of Islam and the issues it faces today.

Let's See: Holidays

Nobleman, Marc Tyler. *Cinco de Mayo*. Minneapolis, Minn.: Compass Point, 2004. 24 pp. ISBN 0-7565-0768-5, \$19.93 (list), \$14.95 (school/library).

Nobleman, Marc Tyler. *Kwanzaa*. Minneapolis, Minn.: Compass Point, 2004. 24 pp. ISBN 0-7565-0647-6, \$19.93 (list), \$14.95 (school/library).

Rosinsky, Natalie M.. *Passover*. Minneapolis, Minn.: Compass Point, 2004. 24 pp. ISBN 0-7565-0772-3, \$19.93 (list), \$14.95 (school/library).

Each of these books for beginning readers poses nine questions about the holiday it describes: "What Is Kwanzaa?", "Why Was Kwanzaa Created?", and so on. Each two-page spread answers one question with three short paragraphs in large type on one page, faced with a full-page illustration (most often, a color photo of people celebrating the holiday). The back matter in the books includes a glossary of those words that have been bolded in the text, three "Did You Know?" facts, a page of resources, and an index. With these three entries, the Holidays series has 18 volumes that cover all the major holidays, as well as a few not very often covered in series of this type, such as Earth Day.

The Lucent Library of Historical Eras

Uschan, Michael V. *The 1960s: Life on the Front Lines: The Fight for Civil Rights*. San Diego, Calif.: Lucent, 2004. 112 pp. ISBN 1-59018-387-8, \$28.70.

In this series for middle school students, several volumes are devoted to different aspects of various historical eras. The other three titles on the 1960s are on arts and entertainment, the Great Society, and Vietnam and the Cold War. (This book's foreword mentions that another group of four books in the series explores Elizabethan England.)

The chapters in the book discuss the role of black ministers, sit-ins and protests, freedom riders, voter registration efforts, the rise of the Black Power movement, the white backlash against civil rights, and development of black pride.

Each chapter has several black-and-white photos and two or three sidebars that provide excerpts from primary sources. The book ends with chapter notes and annotated lists of books for further reading and works consulted.

Lucent Overview Series

Loonin, Meryl. *Multicultural America*. San Diego, Calif.: Lucent, 2004. 112 pp. ISBN 1-56006-766-7, \$28.70.

This series for students in junior high and above has more than 50 entries on such varied topics as bigotry, eating disorders, health care, rap music, women's rights, and the U.S. presidency. The present volume on multicultural America alone covers a lot of ground, as it introduces students to the points of controversy surrounding such issues as racial profiling, affirmative action, bilingual education, and multiculturalism in education.

The evenhanded text is accompanied by black-and-white photos, a few maps and charts, and some editorial cartoons on the issues under discussion. The book includes chapter notes, a list of organizations to contact, and lists of resources for further study and works consulted.

The Matt the Rat Series

Liberto, Lorenzo. *Matt the Rat and His Magic Cloud: A Day at School/Ratón Mateo y Su Nube Mágica: Un Día de Escuela*. Fairacres, N.M.: Harvest Sun Press, 2004. 40 pp. Illus. by Irving Torres. ISBN 0-9743668-1-1, \$20.00.

Liberto, Lorenzo. *Matt the Rat and His Sister Maggie: When I Grow Up/Ratón Mateo y Su Hermana Maggie: Cuando Yo Crezca*. Fairacres, N.M.: Harvest Sun Press, 2004. 40 pp. Illus. by Irving Torres. ISBN 0-9743668-1-1, \$20.00.

Intended for students in the lower elementary grades, these are the first two entries in a series of bilingual picture books. Each page has the same text in both English and Spanish; the signs and words shown in the illustrations are sometimes in English, sometimes in Spanish. In the first book here, Matt imagines a friendly magic cloud coming down to spend the day with him as he goes through various school activities. All the text is written with rhymes in both English and Spanish. The story is intended to promote an appreciation of the power of imagination—at the book's end Matt asks the reader what he or she would do with a magic cloud—but it is hard not to think that children might well imagine a more exciting companion than a cloud.

In the second book, Matt and his sister Maggie go into the basement and find an old trunk that is a souvenir from their grandfather's days as a circus clown. A bilingual sheet of instructions with the trunk tells them to say some magic words and reach into the trunk. When they do, they magically disappear into scenes where they experience what it might be like to grow up and work in various professions (soccer player, marine biologist, computer technician, and

many others). In this story, only the sections of imagined professions are done in rhyme. The names of the professions are scattered throughout the illustrations, so the book might serve as a good bilingual introduction to a number of careers.

The No-Nonsense Guides

Black, Maggie. *The No-Nonsense Guide to Water*. New York: Verso, 2004. 144 pp. ISBN 1-84467-509-2, \$10.00 (pb).

Seabrook, Jeremy. *The No-Nonsense Guide to World Poverty*. New York: Verso, 2004. 134 pp. ISBN 1-85984-566-5, \$10.00 (pb).

van der Gaag, Nikki. *The No-Nonsense Guide to Women's Rights*. New York: Verso, 2004. 140 pp. ISBN 1-84467-502-5, \$10.00 (pb).

The pocket-sized books in this British series present fairly detailed explanations of a variety of issues from a progressive point of view. The well-footnoted text in each book is accompanied by boxes that have anecdotes and facts, or tables and graphs of statistics; the books have no photos.

The books each end with a list of organizations to contact, a short bibliography, and an index. This series is British in its spelling and punctuation, but it does take a wide-ranging international look at these issues that will be of interest to those who share at least some of the liberal views that inform the presentation here.

People's History

Greene, Meg. *Into the Land of Freedom: African Americans in Reconstruction*. Minneapolis: Lerner, 2004. 112 pp. ISBN 0-8225-4690-6, \$26.60.

After a brief description of the institution of slavery and the beginnings of the Civil War, this history for students in middle school and above describes the situation of blacks in the United States from the Emancipation Proclamation through the postwar period. The well-written text is accompanied by a number of black-and-white photos and illustrations, and topics covered include the limits to freedom for newly freed blacks, the emergence of blacks in politics, and the development of black religious and educational institutions.

The voices of African Americans of the period are heard in many quotes from writings and interviews. (A note at the beginning of the book mentions that the original spelling of these quotes, which often tried to reproduce dialects, has been kept, as has use of "the now outdated term negro.") The book ends with a time line and the text of several important documents, such as the Emancipation Proclamation and the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments. One thing to note: A number of the other titles in this series, listed on the jacket flap and back cover here, cover intriguing topics not often seen in books at this level—for example, "The History of American Road Travel," "The Arts of the Great Depression," and "What Americans Wore 1620–1970."

Pioneers of Modern U.S. Hispanic Literature

Yglesias, Jose. *An Orderly Life*. Houston: Arte Público, 2004. 192 pp. ISBN 1-55885-383-9, \$12.95 (pb).

This novel, originally published in 1968, is the eighth work of fiction that Arte Público has published in recent years by the Cuban-American author Yglesias, who died in 1995. *An Orderly Life* is narrated by Rafe Sabas, a successful executive in his early forties working in a Manhattan corporate office. The novel begins in 1963, about a week after the Kennedy assassination, when Rafe runs into an old friend named Jerry at a restaurant near his office. Jerry has recently separated from his wife, Gloria, and the two men spend the afternoon at Jerry's apartment with two call girls (the novel has a number of fairly explicit sexual scenes).

The story then jumps back to the early 1940s, where we learn that Rafe had betrayed his friend by having a brief relationship with his then-girlfriend, Gloria; the novel then winds its way back to the present, with some surprising revelations along the way. Some references are made to Rafe's Hispanic background (he visits Cuba in 1959 and receives letters from an impoverished cousin living there), but it is Rafe and Jerry's involvement in radical politics in their younger days and their tangled personal relationships that are the focus of this story of a man who is suddenly forced to face all the choices he has made in life.

Rebel Lives

Davis, John, ed. *Sacco & Vanzetti*. New York: Ocean Press, 2004. 128 pp. ISBN 1-876175-85-0, \$11.95 (pb).

The purpose of this series is to collect writings that illuminate the lives of several figures (some famous, others not) whose radical thinking may not be sufficiently known. Other entries include ones on Helen Keller and Albert Einstein, and an upcoming book on Ho Chi Minh. Part One of the present volume contains a number of letters and statements from Sacco and Vanzetti from the period between their 1920 arrests for a robbery and double murder and their 1927 executions. Parts Two and Three collect a number of statements made on their behalf at the time from such figures as John Dos Passos, Eugene Debs, Upton Sinclair, Felix Frankfurter, and H. G. Wells. A final section has several writings on their legacy as martyrs considered to be wrongly executed, largely for their anarchist beliefs.

An entry in the Cornerstones of Freedom series reviewed above (intended for middle school students) focuses on the events and evidence of the Sacco-Vanzetti case. This volume, for general readers and students in high school and above, concentrates on the firestorm that their case provoked and on the voices of Sacco and Vanzetti themselves. The two men are most often known as radical symbols, but it is very affecting to read what they wrote with deep feeling (and in their imperfect English) to their supporters and family.

Religions of the World

Naden, Corinne J. and Blue, Rose. *Mormonism*. San Diego,

Calif.: Lucent, 2004. 112 pp. ISBN 1-59018-452-1, \$28.70.

The entries in this series for middle school students cover eight major world religions. This volume on Mormonism, the fast-growing religion that is still mysterious to many Americans, begins with a recounting of the remarkable story of its founding in the nineteenth century from revelations made to Joseph Smith. Succeeding chapters discuss the religion's doctrines (including the origins of its controversial policy of polygamy), its successful establishment in Utah under the leadership of Brigham Young, and the state of the Church of Latter-Day Saints today.

The text is accompanied by black-and-white photos and illustrations; the book ends with chapter notes, lists of resources and works consulted, and an index. The authors note at one point that "even the highly organized Catholic Church seems loosely organized in comparison to the tight structure of the Mormon Church," and they make that organization and the other facets of the religion understandable for young readers, for whom much of it will be quite unfamiliar.

What Makes Me a . . . ?

George, Charles. ***What Makes Me a Buddhist?*** San Diego, Calif.: KidHaven, 2004. 48 pp. ISBN 0-7377-2269-X, \$23.70.

George, Charles. ***What Makes Me a Hindu?*** San Diego, Calif.: KidHaven, 2004. 48 pp. ISBN 0-7377-2267-3, \$23.70.

Woog, Adam. ***What Makes Me a Catholic?*** San Diego, Calif.: KidHaven, 2004. 48 pp. ISBN 0-7377-2268-1, \$23.70.

Woog, Adam. ***What Makes Me a Jew?*** San Diego, Calif.: KidHaven, 2004. 48 pp. ISBN 0-7377-2266-5, \$23.70.

These books for students in the middle elementary grades present the origins, beliefs, practices, and holidays for four major religions. The volumes on Buddhism and Judaism also have chapters on the state of the religion in the world today, and the one on Judaism has a chapter on Jewish dietary law. All include a number of color photos and illustrations, some of them historical and some of people practicing the religion today.

The volumes include lists of books and web sites for more research and an index. One note: Although the book titles and the chapter titles (such as "How Is My Religion Organized?") seem as though they might be addressed just to young readers who belong to each religion, all the rest of the text in these books is written as a general explanation of the religion for anyone to read.

Willimena Rules!

Wesley, Valerie Wilson. ***How to Fish for Trouble.*** New York: Jump at the Sun/Hyperion, 2004. 96 pp. ISBN 0-7868-1807-7. \$3.99 (pb).

Wesley, Valerie Wilson. ***How to Lose Your Class Pet.*** New York: Jump at the Sun/Hyperion, 2004. 96 pp. ISBN 0-7868-

1322-9, \$3.99 (pb).

In this new series for readers ages seven to ten (from the author of adult mystery novels featuring Tamara Hayle), Willimena—also known as Willie—Thomas is an African-American third grader who tells of the scrapes she manages to get herself into and out of. The series title has a double meaning; the word "rules" also refers to the way the chapter titles are steps to follow in getting into the problem stated by the book's title. (Actually, this is more likely a triple-entendre, as Willie writes her story on the "rules" of her notebook.) In *How to Lose Your Class Pet* (described on the cover as "Rule Book #1"), the necessary steps include "Never Tell *Anyone* Your Secret Plan," "Agree to Bring Your Class Pet Home," and, finally, "Get Over It and Eat Ice Cream." As it turns out, the story does not end as one might expect—with a miraculous finding of Lester, the class guinea pig. Instead, Willie must deal with the consequences of being involved in his running away, which results in her developing a better relationship with her initially fearsome third-grade teacher, Mrs. Sweetly.

The text in each book is accompanied by cartoon-style illustrations every few pages by Maryn Roos that will help young readers visualize Willie and the other characters. Occasional asides—such as ones on Willimena's hero Harriet Tubman and on the habits of guinea pigs—impart some educational information in the middle of the storytelling. Willie is an engaging character, and her relationships with others (such as with her "perfect" older sister) are believable. The language she uses is not that distinctive, and some expressions here seem to come more from the author than from an eight-year-old. But young readers are likely to enjoy the general series format of getting into everyday trouble and learning to find your own way through it.

The Women's Hall of Fame Series

Ball, Heather. ***Great Women Leaders.*** Toronto, Ontario: Second Story, 2004. 100 pp. ISBN 1-896764-81-9, \$7.95 (pb).

The ten women profiled in this volume for middle school students are diverse in just about every sense. (The other three volumes in this series—on female physicians, athletes, and scientists—are more narrowly focused.) The first woman here is Hatshepsut, who became an Egyptian Pharaoh in the fifteenth century B.C.; the last is Roberta Jamieson, who was born in 1953 and is an activist for Canada's indigenous peoples. The book is from a Canadian publisher, and three other women profiled are Canadian. The other women include the Israeli leader Golda Meir, the Nobel-Prize-winning Kenyan environmental activist Wangari Maathai, and the human rights activist from Burma, Aung San Suu Kyi, also a Nobel Laureate.

Each profile seeks to relate the accomplishments of the woman to the concerns of young students, and each is accompanied by several small black-and-white photos. The book ends with a sources section that lists four to eight books, videos, and web sites on the lives of each woman.

A World View of Social Issues

Toro-Morn, Maura I., and Alicea, Marixsa (eds.). ***Migration and Immigration: A Global View***. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2004. 288 pp. ISBN 0-313-33044-1, \$49.95.

The entries in this series compare the way that a single issue has developed in up to 15 countries around the world. Other topics that have been covered include child abuse, HIV and AIDS, substance abuse, and women's rights. The 14 chapters here follow a strict format. (Their authors are professors and graduate students from the United States or the country being studied, along with one novelist from Ireland.) Each chapter begins with a country profile; a story of one or two immigrants or emigrants from that country; discussions of the political, social, and economic dimensions of the issue; and a look at what the future may bring.

Tables of statistics (though no photos) are included in some of the chapters, and each ends with a bibliography. An introduction from the editors gives an overview of the history of human migration and how it has played out in different regions of the world. The text is generally a little dry, and some readers may not have the background knowledge or interest to want to delve into the histories and current situations of all of these countries. Taking a look at the similarities and differences in how other countries besides the United States (which is studied in the last chapter here) are dealing with the issues of immigration seems to be a useful and productive exercise, however.

TRANSLATIONS

Alvarez, Julia. ***Antes de ser libres***. New York: Random House Children's Books/Dell, 2004. 192 pp. Translated from English by Liliana Valenzuela. ISBN 0-375-81545-7, \$5.99 (pb).

This translation of Alvarez's *Before We Were Free*, a young adult novel published by Random House Children's Books in 2002, portrays 12-year-old Anita de la Torre, a girl living in the Dominican Republic in the early 1960s. Many of her cousins have fled with their families to the United States to escape the brutal dictatorship of General Rafael Trujillo, but one uncle has disappeared and her father is receiving mysterious death threats. Beyond the normal trials of young adolescence, Anita has to watch what she says in school and with her friends; following an assassination plot engineered by her father and uncle, she, her mother, and her siblings must go into hiding, where she keeps a diary not unlike that of Anne Frank.

This novel, based on the lives of Alvarez's cousins who remained in the Dominican Republic after her family emigrated, received the Pura Belpré Award in 2004. The award is given to outstanding works of writing and illustration for children by authors of Latino heritage.

Andrews-Goebel, Nancy. ***La vasija que Juan Fabricó***. New York: Lee & Low, 2003. 32 pp. Illus. by David Díaz. ISBN 1-58430-230-5, \$7.95 (pb).

This picture book is a Spanish translation of *The Pot That Juan Built*, which was originally published in 2002. A note at the front of the book explains that its author met a highly skilled potter named Juan Quezada in Mexico in 1995 and decided to tell his story in picture-book form. Each two-page spread here is covered by a vibrant illustration that is accompanied, on one page, by a rhyming story about Juan that builds on itself and grows longer in the method of "The House that Jack Built." The other page in each spread has a longer, non-rhyming explanation of aspects of Juan's life and work.

A five-page epilogue discusses Juan's work in greater detail and features a number of small color photos of Juan and the stages in the making of a highly decorated work of pottery.

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

The Spanish-language edition of *The Kite Festival* (2004) is composed in a way that easily captures the richness of the Spanish language while appealing to young and older readers alike. The story is presented in clear yet lyrical Spanish. The reader is exposed to the unique flavor of the *sancocho*—flavorful stew—of the language by the book's introduction to the myriad of names for kites found in Spanish-speaking countries throughout Latin America.

The author/illustrator of this picture book grew up in Colombia, and the story recalls her own enjoyment of the colorful Kite Festival.

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

NEW EDITIONS IN OTHER MEDIA

Brain Quest: Hispanic America. New York: Workman, 2004. Two card decks. ISBN 0-7611-3181-7, \$10.95.

This set of two card decks for students aged nine to twelve includes six questions each on 150 cards (each of these is followed by an answer card) for a total of 900 different questions on the culture of Hispanic America. Questions ask about famous Hispanic people in the Americas ("Who was the first European to see the Mississippi River?"), geography ("What is the only country in South America whose name ends with the letter 'u'?"), the Spanish language ("If something is tall, is it *alto* or *corto*?"), and more. The cards can be used by one or two students or by several teams. Children throughout this age group, as well as adults, can learn a number of facts about Hispanic culture from this set. (Answers: Hernando de Soto, Peru, and *alto*.)

Cameron, Ann. ***Colibrí***. New York: Listening Library/Random House, 2004. 3 audiocassettes; 4 hours, 46 min. Read by Jacqueline Kim. ISBN 1-4000-8535-7, \$25.00.

This novel (for ages nine to twelve) is narrated by a twelve-year-old Guatemalan girl called Rosa; ever since she was four, she has been traveling about the country's highlands with

a man she knows as “Uncle,” whom she believes saved her from abandonment. Uncle, who is a suspicious character in every sense of the word, has been told by a fortune-teller that Rosa (whose actual name is Tzunún) will lead him to a great treasure. When Uncle and a friend plan to steal a church statue, Rosa goes to the church’s pastor to stop him. Eventually, after a dramatic confrontation, Rosa is reunited with the family from which she was kidnapped. Among the strengths of this unusual story are the voice of its strong-willed heroine and the evocation of its Guatemalan setting.

Discoveries...Spain: Mediterranean. Issaquah, Wash.: Bennett-Watt HD Productions, 2003. One DVD; 70 minutes. Color. ISBN 1-932068-43-0, \$24.95.

Discoveries...Spain: Pilgrim Route. Issaquah, Wash.: Bennett-Watt HD Productions, 2003. One DVD; 70 minutes. Color. ISBN 1-932068-37-6, \$24.95.

Discoveries...Spain: Southwest. Issaquah, Wash.: Bennett-Watt HD Productions, 2003. One DVD; 70 minutes. Color. ISBN 1-932068-45-7, \$24.95.

This series on different areas of Spain consists of a total of seven DVDs. Each DVD includes six or seven segments on different facets of that part of the country. The *Mediterranean* disc has pieces, for example, on Costa Brava and Costa del Sol, and one on a chef showing how to make large pans of paella

over an open wooden fire. The *Pilgrim Route* DVD includes several segments showing people walking along roads on the journey to the supposed burial place of the apostle James in northwestern Spain; it also has some lengthy interludes of people fly-fishing. The DVDs in this series provide views and descriptions of a wide variety of places throughout the country. No added DVD features are included, with the exception of previews of other DVDs in the Discoveries series, most of them on Ireland, Argentina, and a few other topics such as cooking.

Families of Vietnam. Master Communications, 2004. 1 videocassette; 30 min. ISBN 1-888194-45-6, \$29.95.

The latest entry in this delightful series gives a day-in-the-life view of two young girls in Vietnam. Le Thi Thanh Hong is a nine-year-old girl living in Ho Chi Minh City, and Tran Ngoc Anh Thu is a four-year-old girl whose family lives on a farm near the Mekong River; her father and other family members work on a boat that sells produce and other items (including live ducks) to boats and ships passing on the river.

As with other videos in this series, it is captivating to see all the many details that are different from the life of a typical American child. These include such things as green-skinned oranges, noodle soup for breakfast, brushing teeth after lunch at school, and, for the younger girl, taking off shoes when entering school because (as she says) it is always

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warm in Vietnam. Equally of interest are those things that seem quite familiar, such as playing “monkey in the middle” in the schoolyard, going bowling, or cooling off on a hot day by jumping in a river. The narrations for the two parts of the video are done by American girls pretending to be the young girls pictured, and it may or may not be that the two girls chosen here are representative of typical lives in today’s Vietnam. But this video does give young American students a glimpse into the lives of their counterparts in a very distant country that seems a little closer to our own than one might expect.

Johnson, Angela. ***The First Part Last***. Listening Library/Random House, 2004. 1 audio CD; 1 hours, 45 min. Read by Khalipa Oldjohn with Kolé Kristí. ISBN 1-4000-9065-2, \$19.99.


Bobby, the narrator of this Coretta Scott King Author Award-winning book, is an African-American boy who finds on his sixteenth birthday that his girlfriend, Nia, is pregnant. The book begins when his baby, whom he calls “Feather,” is eleven days old. Chapters alternate between “Now” and “Then,” describing Bobby’s life with Feather and his life before the baby was born. Bobby’s parents have told him that he will be the one who cares for the baby, not them, and that he will now have to become a responsible parent.

Eventually, we learn why it is that Bobby must be the one who cares for Feather, and not Nia. The voice of Bobby—both in Johnson’s writing and in the narration on this CD—is a

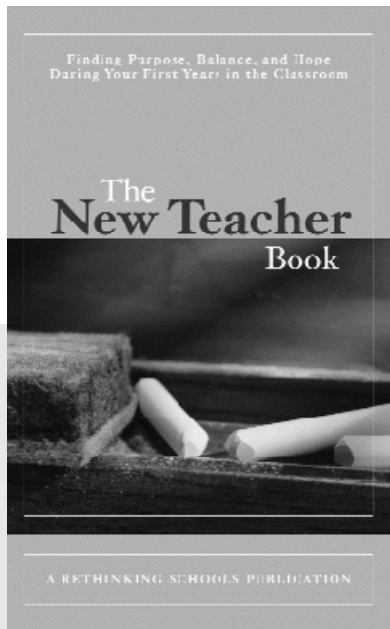
convincing and touching example of a young person whose life is transformed by his love for his daughter.

Wiencek, Henry. ***An Imperfect God: George Washington, His Slaves, and the Creation of America***. New York: Audio Renaissance/Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2003. 6 compact discs; 7 hours, 30 minutes. Abridged. Read by Rick Adamson. ISBN 1-55927-927-3, \$34.95.

This book by the historian who previously wrote *The Hairstons: An American Family in Black and White* considers the evolution of George Washington’s thinking about the institution of slavery. In his will, Washington stated that his slaves should be set free upon his wife’s death—an uncharacteristic act for the time that was opposed by his family members. Through close study of Washington’s will, private papers, and other evidence, Wiencek concludes that Washington had gradually grown to become a strong if quiet opponent of slavery. (However, he did not free his slaves during his lifetime, and he did not publicly oppose slavery in a way that might have affected national policy at the time.)

Wiencek also investigates the claim that Washington was the father of a child with a slave owned by his brother, and he holds that this is unlikely. For one thing, Washington never had any children with his wife Martha, and he may well have been sterile. The book also includes accounts of the lives of slaves of Washington’s time and interviews with some descendants from Washington’s family. 

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