

Editor's Shelf

editor's shelf by Larry Shea

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

Deloria, Vine, Jr. *God Is Red: A Native View of Religion*. Golden, Colo.: Fulcrum, 2003. 352 pp. 30th anniversary edition. ISBN 1-55591-498-5, \$21.95 (pb).

This book by the Native American author of *Custer Died for Your Sins* (1969) was first published in 1972, with a revised edition appearing in 1992. (The text of this edition, and its bibliography, includes those 1992 updates.) This anniversary edition has new forewords by Leslie Marmon Silko and George E. Tinker. In Silko's words, Deloria attempts to explain "how Christianity is the root cause of this great weakness of the United States—the inability to respect or tolerate those who are different." A central feature of Deloria's analysis of the difference between native religions and Christianity is his concept of how space and time are regarded in each. He asserts that, from a Christian point of view, time is preeminent, with history regarded as essentially the story of Western Europeans fulfilling their destined role as guardians of the world. For Native Americans, space, in particular the natural spaces where one lives, is most important.

Among the many aspects of this far-ranging study are discussions of the origins of the Indian movement and the ways that Native Americans are regarded in American culture. One provocative idea Deloria expresses is that creation stories—from both Native American and other cultures—might not simply be attempts to explain the unimaginable origins of things, but may instead be collective memories of powerful events experienced in the distant past. This provocative work provides a framework for considering how both Native American and other religious traditions have viewed man's place in the world.

Dunaway, David King; and Spurgeon, Sara, eds. *Writing the Southwest*. Albuquerque: Univ. of New Mexico Press, 2003. 320 pp. ISBN 0-8263-2336-7, \$39.95 (cl); 0-8263-2337-

5, \$17.95 (pb).

First published in 1995, this volume considers the work of 14 prominent Southwestern authors. It developed from a series of radio documentaries featuring interviews that Dunaway conducted from 1986 to 1992. Subjects include Rudolfo Anaya, Tony Hillerman, Barbara Kingsolver, and Terry McMillan. This edition includes a 74-minute CD of excerpts from the programs; each is several minutes of authors speaking about their background and work, without any introductions or the voice of an interviewer. (In the copy received for review, 13 of the book's subjects, all except Kingsolver, are listed on the CD label, though the track with Linda Hogan is missing.)

The chapters on each author include a six-to-eight-page biography, a description of how each appeared during the original interviews, a few pages of interview excerpts (different from those on the CD), and several short excerpts of writings from significant works. At the end of the book, primary and secondary bibliographies are included for each author; these have been updated for this edition, as have the author biographies. As Anaya notes in a foreword about the authors selected here: "We write in English, yet our personal and cultural language is reflected in our stories." This volume expresses much of the variety to be found in recent Southwestern literature, as well as some of its common threads.

Isasi-Díaz, Ada María. *En la Lucha/In the Struggle: Elaborating a Mujerista Theology*. Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 2004, 276 pp. ISBN 0-8006-3599-X, \$22.00 (pb).

In this work first published in 1994, Isasi-Díaz develops a theology of liberation specific to the historical experience and everyday life of Hispanic women. (In an effort to be evenhanded, chapters in the book alternate between using the terms "Hispanic Women" and "Latinas.") As defined in the book's original introduction, "A *mujerista* is a Hispanic Woman who struggles to liberate herself not as an individual but as a member of a Hispanic community." A focus of the book is on the ways in which women whom the author refers to as "grassroot Latinas" can speak for themselves and their own moral decision-making process.

This tenth anniversary edition has updates at the end of each chapter, and a new introduction added to the original one. It is also virtually a bilingual edition, in that the introductory sections are followed by full Spanish translations, and all chapters are now followed by section-by-section Spanish summaries that are each at least half as long as the original chapters.

Wiarda, Howard J., and Mott, Margaret MacLeish, eds. *Politics and Social Change in Latin America: Still a Distinct Tradition?* Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2003. 324 pp. Fourth edition, revised and updated. ISBN 0-275-97033-

7, \$27.95 (pb).

In a preface to this volume, Wiarda states that what distinguishes it from other works on the same topic is its theme: In Latin America, in common with certain southern European countries, development has taken place in a different socio-political framework from that of northern Europe and North America. This difference, according to Wiarda, has meant that the most common models have not been able to explain the results in Latin America for socioeconomic development and democratization. The chapters contributed here from 13 scholars and writers (including the editors, Octavio Paz, Tina Rosenberg, and Donald E. Worcester) attempt to define the distinct Latin American situation in such areas as political culture, historical factors, social change, and foreign policy.

For this edition, the introduction, conclusion, and list of suggested readings have been updated, and new selections have been added (though it is not made clear which ones are new, or when any of the selections were written). Overall, this book presents an argument that Latin America may be following an alternative path to development from that of the United States, one that traditional analyses may not be capable of adequately describing.

REISSUES OF OUT-OF-PRINT WORKS

Brown, William Wells. *The Negro in the American Rebellion: His Heroism and His Fidelity*. Athens: Ohio Univ. Press, 2003. 290 pp. Introduction and notes by John David Smith. ISBN 0-8214-1528-X, \$24.95 (pb).

Brown (1814–1884) was a former slave and an abolitionist leader; in 1853 he published *Clotel*, considered to be the first novel by an African American. The present volume was first published in 1867, and it is a history of the role of blacks in the struggle for emancipation during the Civil War. Earlier chapters give some of the history of blacks, particularly in the military, during the American Revolution, the War of 1812, and up until Reconstruction. Brown also critically considers such topics as Lincoln's slowness to embrace liberation from slavery as a proper motivation for action in the earlier stages of the war.

In his introduction, new to this edition, Smith (who has published a book titled *Black Soldiers in Blue: African American Troops in the Civil War Era*) details Brown's deficiencies as a historian. He notes that Brown's work is "anachronistic, anecdotal, episodic, moralistic, partisan, poorly documented, thinly researched, sensational, sentimental, and repetitious." Much of the book is composed of unattributed accounts from newspapers and personal stories. However, Brown's work is significant not as reliable history in itself, but rather as a celebration of the role blacks played in their own liberation, from a perspective very close to the events it describes.

French, Albert. *Holly*. Pittsburgh: Univ. of Pittsburgh Press, 2003. 320 pp. ISBN 0-8229-5831-7, \$14.00 (pb).

French, Albert. *I Can't Wait on God*. Pittsburgh: Univ. of Pittsburgh Press, 2003. 256 pp. ISBN 0-8229-5832-5, \$14.00

(pb).

African-American author French served as a Marine during the Vietnam War, later worked as a photojournalist, and in the 1990s began his writing career. His first novel, *Billy*, was published in 1993, and his memoir *Patches of Fire: A Story of War and Remembrance* was based on his Vietnam experiences. The two above novels, lesser-known works, are now again available in print.

Holly (1995) is the story of Holly Hill, a young white girl in a small North Carolina town near the end of World War II. While waiting for her brother and other soldiers to return home, she becomes involved with a black painter. *I Can't Wait on God* (1998) is set in 1950 in a poor neighborhood in Pittsburgh, French's hometown. It tells the story of Willet and Jeremiah, two black men on the run after a murder. Both novels are narrated in the third person in a dialect as though they are being told by a storyteller similar to the characters. This is especially true for *I Can't Wait on God*, with sentences such as, "Folks could find their way through that dark dirty path leadin up in there real easy and kept goin up in there all night long, especially during them mill payday nights." French's novels give intense, closely observed portraits of both African-American and white characters caught up in difficult circumstances.

Qian Zhongshu. *Fortress Besieged*. New York: New Directions, 2004. 416 pp. Trans. by Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K. Mao. ISBN 0-8112-1552-0, \$16.95 (pb).

This comic novel was first published in China in 1947, and then in an English translation by Indiana University Press in 1979. The present volume contains that same translation with the translator's introduction and notes (as well as the older style of Chinese transliteration, where the author's name is given as Ch'ien Chung-shu). A new introduction by Jonathan Spence has been added.

Qian (1910–1998) was born into a literary family in China, studied for two years at Oxford in the mid-1930s, and returned to teach at several Chinese colleges and universities. His first and only novel satirizes Chinese university life and the pseudo-intellectuals of the period before the Sino-Japanese War, as well as the unfortunate marriage of its hero, Fang Hung-chien, who obtains a teaching post with a fake degree from an American university. Qian's familiarity with Western and Chinese literary traditions makes the book an unusual early portrayal of Chinese intellectual life and its relationship to Western culture.

U.S. EDITIONS OF BOOKS PUBLISHED ELSEWHERE IN ENGLISH

Tadjo, Véronique. *Talking Drums: A Selection of Poems from Africa South of the Sahara*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2004. 96 pp. ISBN 1-58234-813-8, \$15.95.

First published in Britain in 2000, this volume collects 75 short poems selected (and in some cases translated) by

Tadjo, a poet, novelist, and illustrator originally from the Ivory Coast. Some of the poems are traditional, while most are from contemporary authors (an index divides them by country of origin and gives years of birth for the authors). The book's first five sections are poems on nature and the universe, animals, love and celebrations, people, and death. The seven poems in the section "Pride and Defiance" concern the struggle for independence from colonial rule; in the final section ("The Changing Times"), poets give perspectives on shifting social and political situations.

Interspersed among the poems are Tadjo's likable drawings, which reflect traditional African styles. The book ends with a map of Africa, an index of first lines, a short glossary, and the sources of original publication for many of the poems. This charming volume serves not as an academic introduction to African poets and poetry (it contains almost no analysis or biographical information), but rather as a poetic introduction to Africa and its people for readers in middle school and up.

NEW VOLUMES IN SERIES

African-American Leaders

Blakely, Gloria. *Condoleeza Rice*. Philadelphia: Chelsea House, 2003. 112 pp. ISBN 0-7910-7683-0, \$22.95.

D'Orio, Wayne. *Carol Moseley-Braun*. Philadelphia: Chelsea House, 2003. 112 pp. ISBN 0-7910-7684-9, \$22.95.

Kjelle, Marylou Morano. *Henry Louis Gates, Jr.* Philadelphia: Chelsea House, 2003. 112 pp. ISBN 0-7910-7687-3, \$22.95.

Wagner, Heather Lehr. *Benjamin Hooks*. Philadelphia: Chelsea House, 2003. 112 pp. ISBN 0-7910-7685-7, \$22.95.

One notable feature of this initial series of six biographies (the other two subjects are Eleanor Holmes Norton and Cornel West) is that each of the figures portrayed is living, and in several cases frequently in the news. Intended for students in grades six to twelve, the volumes provide straightforward narratives; each book contains about ten photos, almost all of the subjects, their families, or figures who influenced their careers. The books end with a chronology, a bibliography, lists of books and web sites for further research, and an index.

Of the above volumes, the one on Moseley-Braun ends its account early in the middle of her unsuccessful bid for the 2004 Democratic presidential nomination; the ethical questions that contributed to ending her Senate career are presented in a balanced way. The biography of Hooks demonstrates the influence of the work of Martin Luther King Jr. on his developing career; the volume on Gates manages to give a sense of academic life and the study of literature. The biography of Rice conveys well the family background that led to her intense drive for success in many different endeavors; the book's prose, however, includes some odd word choices and convoluted writing. Overall, this series will

give junior high students (its most appropriate audience) an understanding of what led these highly successful figures into their chosen fields and the challenges they encountered along the way.

Biographies

Nettleton, Pamela Hill. *Martin Luther King Jr.* Minneapolis: Picture Window Books, 2004. 24 pp. Illus. by Garry Nichols. ISBN 1-4048-0188-X, \$21.26.

Nettleton, Pamela Hill. *Pocahontas*. Minneapolis: Picture Window Books, 2004. 24 pp. Illus. by Jeff Yesh. ISBN 1-4048-0187-1, \$21.26.

These biographies for beginning readers tell the stories of their subjects with simple prose in large type. The biography of King hits all the high points of his life and the struggle for civil rights; it sidesteps the questions surrounding his assassination by simply stating that some people were angry at him for his ideas, and that he was shot and killed. The Pocahontas volume gives readers the frequently uncertain facts of her short life (she died in England at the age of about 22). A note at the book's end comments that the Disney version of her life "is a fun story, but much of it is made up."

The accompanying illustrations are colorful and large (each fills an entire spread); they are said to be rendered digitally and, particularly in the King volume, have the feel of computer animation. Each book ends with a time line, a "Did You Know?" list of facts, a glossary of six or seven words, and a short index. A resource page includes several books and web sites, a numerical code for finding more information on the "Facthound" web site, and a listing for a historical site related to the book's subject.

Celebrating Cultures

Foran, Jill. *Buddha Day*. Calgary, Alberta: Weigl, 2004. 24 pp. ISBN 1-59036-090-7, \$17.10.

Foran, Jill. *Christmas*. Calgary, Alberta: Weigl, 2004. 24 pp. ISBN 1-59036-091-5, \$17.10.

Foran, Jill. *Hanukah*. Calgary, Alberta: Weigl, 2004. 24 pp. ISBN 1-59036-092-3, \$17.10.

Foran, Jill. *Mardi Gras*. Calgary, Alberta: Weigl, 2004. 24 pp. ISBN 1-59036-093-1, \$17.10.

Foran, Jill. *Oktoberfest*. Calgary, Alberta: Weigl, 2004. 24 pp. ISBN 1-59036-094-X, \$17.10.

Foran, Jill. *Powwow*. Calgary, Alberta: Weigl, 2004. 24 pp. ISBN 1-59036-095-8, \$17.10.

Set of entire series: ISBN 1-59036-134-2, \$96.60.

The six volumes in this series, intended for students in grades two to four, relate the background, traditions, and meanings of different holidays. Each two-page chapter has

several color photos, two paragraphs of text, and a short holiday fact. Each book also contains a two-page spread with a map of the United States and describes four to six local traditions of celebrating the holiday. The volumes end with a short list of books and web sites for further research, definitions for about 15 “Words to Know,” a summary of facts learned, a page of additional facts, and a short index. One page in each book titled “Imagine If...” suggests ways to pretend you are celebrating the holiday at hand; these pages are good for allowing creativity, though they do not suggest many specific activities such as recipes or crafts.

Celebrating Cultures provides young students with a lot of background on these holidays, familiar and unfamiliar, mainly through the many photos of holiday celebrants and the many facts given (as one example: the largest Chicken Dance in the world, with 48,000 people, took place at Cincinnati’s 1994 Oktoberfest). One interesting note: the volume on Christmas takes care not to spoil any young reader’s belief in Santa Claus; it states, for example, that Santa Claus first began visiting children in Europe, and then began visiting the United States after Europeans settled here.

Contemporary American Ethnic Issues

Rosier, Paul C. *Native American Issues*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2003. 204 pp. ISBN 0-313-32002-0, \$45.00.

The entries in this series for students in high school and above (and, it is said in a series foreword, teachers and general readers) aim to present a balanced look at the background and current state of issues facing various ethnic and racial groups. Other volumes are on African Americans, Asian Americans, Latino Americans, Jewish Americans, and Muslim Americans. A chapter on each issue begins with its historical background, then presents its pros and cons, various viewpoints, legal cases related to it, 15 to 20 discussion questions, and several pages of resources for further study.

In the present volume, the issues covered are the use of Native American sports mascots and team names, treaty rights (particularly rights for hunting and fishing), land claims, the recovery of ancestral remains and sacred objects, gaming and casinos, and the conflict between development and the environment. The book does not present its topics in a very dynamic way (it has about eight black-and-white photos and fairly dense text) but it will give students and others a balanced, well-grounded understanding of these important subjects.

Contemporary World Issues

Aguirre, Adalberto, Jr. *Racial and Ethnic Diversity in America*. Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 2003. 292 pp. ISBN 1-57607-983-X, \$50.00.

LeMay, Michael. *U.S. Immigration*. Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 2003. 304 pp. ISBN 1-85109-543-8, \$50.00.

The dozen volumes in this series for high school students provide background and analysis for such subjects as (besides

those above) gay and lesbian issues, media and politics in America, and consumer culture. (Though the series title refers to world issues, most volumes seem to be focused on the United States.) Both of the above titles begin with three chapters setting out the history of the topic; in the immigration volume, these are titled “U.S Immigration Policy Since 1965,” “Domestic Policy,” and “Global Issues.” A chronology and a series of biographical sketches follow. In the book on racial and ethnic diversity these short bios are of noted scholars in the field. A substantial section of each book collects the text of important laws and court decisions. The final chapters are made up of annotated lists of organizations and resources in the field, including books, journals, films and videos, and web sites.

The volumes conclude with a glossary and an index. With their thorough coverage and dry style (including facts, figures, and original documents), the books are useful resources for students investigating these topics for reports or debates.

Countries and Cultures

Englar, Mary. *Afghanistan*. Mankato, Minn.: Capstone, 2004. 64 pp. ISBN 0-7368-2174-0, \$25.26.

Haberle, Susan E. *Dominican Republic*. Mankato, Minn.: Capstone, 2004. 64 pp. ISBN 0-7368-2177-5, \$25.26.

Lassieur, Allison. *Ethiopia*. Mankato, Minn.: Capstone, 2004. 64 pp. ISBN 0-7368-2175-9, \$25.26.

Lassieur, Allison. *Peru*. Mankato, Minn.: Capstone, 2004. 64 pp. ISBN 0-7368-2176-7, \$25.26.

These are four of the 24 volumes in this series for students in the middle elementary grades. The books each have five chapters: an introduction, followed by chapters on land, climate, and wildlife; history and government; the economy; and people, culture, and daily life. Each chapter begins with a “Fast Facts” box of information, and most spreads have one half-page or full-page color photo. The design of these books is clear and easy to follow, as is their prose.

Each book contains three maps featuring different aspects of the country. Five full-page sidebars in each describe a native animal, money and currency, a few words and phrases in the country’s language, a recipe for a traditional dish, and national symbols. (In a helpful touch, the table of contents includes separate sections for these maps and sidebars.)

The books end with a time line, a glossary, a list of books for further reading, and a few embassy and consulate addresses. For related web sites, students are directed to go to www.facthound.com and type in a code given in the book.

Country ABCs

Heiman, Sarah. *Australia ABCs: A Book About the People and Places of Australia*. Minneapolis: Picture Window Books, 2003. 32 pp. Illus. by Arturo Avila. ISBN 1-4048-0018-2, \$22.60 (list); \$16.95 (school/library).

Heiman, Sarah. *Egypt ABCs: A Book About the People and Places of Egypt*. Minneapolis: Picture Window Books, 2003. 32 pp. Illus. by Todd Ouren. ISBN 1-4048-0019-0, \$22.60 (list); \$16.95 (school/library).

Heiman, Sarah. *Germany ABCs: A Book About the People and Places of Germany*. Minneapolis: Picture Window Books, 2003. 32 pp. Illus. by Jason Millet. ISBN 1-4048-0020-4, \$22.60 (list); \$16.95 (school/library).

Heiman, Sarah. *Japan ABCs: A Book About the People and Places of Japan*. Minneapolis: Picture Window Books, 2003. 32 pp. Illus. by Todd Ouren. ISBN 1-4048-0021-2, \$22.60 (list); \$16.95 (school/library).

Heiman, Sarah. *Kenya ABCs: A Book About the People and Places of Kenya*. Minneapolis: Picture Window Books, 2003. 32 pp. Illus. by Arturo Avila. ISBN 1-4048-0022-0, \$22.60 (list); \$16.95 (school/library).

Heiman, Sarah. *Mexico ABCs: A Book About the People and Places of Mexico*. Minneapolis: Picture Window Books, 2003. 32 pp. Illus. by Todd Ouren. ISBN 1-4048-0023-9, \$22.60 (list); \$16.95 (school/library).

Schroeder, Holly. *China ABCs: A Book About the People and Places of China*. Minneapolis: Picture Window Books, 2004. 32 pp. Illus. by Jeff Yesh. ISBN 1-4048-0180-4, \$22.60 (list); \$16.95 (school/library).

Schroeder, Holly. *Israel ABCs: A Book About the People and Places of Israel*. Minneapolis: Picture Window Books, 2004. 32 pp. Illus. by Claudia Wolf. ISBN 1-4048-0179-0, \$22.60 (list); \$16.95 (school/library).

Series of 12: ISBN 1-4048-0177-4, \$271.20 (list); \$203.40 (school/library).

In these books for students in the lower elementary grades, full pages are devoted to each letter of the alphabet, with a word related to the country, a large drawing of that object, and a paragraph describing its meaning and significance. In the Australia volume, for example, the words preceding the inevitable “kangaroo” are didgeridoo, eucalyptus, flag, the Great Barrier Reef, Harbour Bridge, island, and jackaroos and jillaroos (ranch workers). Most entries in the series get past the scarcity of “X” words by listing the country’s eXports; the one exception is the description of Lake Xochimilco in the Mexico volume.

For each book, the colorful drawings are done in a different style that attempts to suggest the country’s visual tradition; this is even true for the three books with the same illustrator, which have very distinct appearances. The books end with a craft project with detailed instructions, a few words in the native language, a page of facts, a few resources for further reading, a short glossary, an index, and (as in the Countries and Cultures series reviewed above) a directive to enter a code at www.facthound.com for relevant, verified web sites.

Cultures of the World

DuBois, Jill, and Rosh, Mair. *Israel*. New York: Benchmark/Marshall Cavendish, 2003. 144 pp. ISBN 0-7614-1669-2, \$25.95.

Hassig, Susan M.; and Al Adely, Laith Muhmood. *Iraq*. New York: Benchmark/Marshall Cavendish, 2003. 144 pp. ISBN 0-7614-1668-4, \$25.95.

Janin, Hunt, and Besheer, Margaret. *Saudi Arabia*. New York: Benchmark/Marshall Cavendish, 2003. 144 pp. ISBN 0-7614-1666-8, \$25.95.

Pateman, Robert, and El-Hamamsy, Salwa. *Egypt*. New York: Benchmark/Marshall Cavendish, 2003. 144 pp. ISBN 0-7614-1670-6, \$25.95.

Rajendra, Vijeya; Kaplan, Gisela; and Rajendra, Rudi. *Iran*. New York: Benchmark/Marshall Cavendish, 2003. 144 pp. ISBN 0-7614-1665-X, \$25.95.

This is the fifth group of titles published in the second edition of this series for middle school students. The first edition was published in 1990, and the second edition now totals 30 titles. Each volume has chapters on geography, history, government, economy, environment, the country’s people, lifestyle, religion, language, arts, leisure activities, festivals, and food. Most pages contain one color photo of the country’s people and places. Numerous sidebars cover various topics, such as, in the Saudi Arabia volume, coral reefs in the Red Sea, the life of Muhammad, and Bedouin jewelry. The Iraq volume is updated to the end of 2003 and the beginnings of the post-Saddam Hussein period; it also includes sections on body language, table manners, and other cultural practices.

The books each include several maps; a time line; a glossary; a list of books, web sites, and videos for further study; a short bibliography; and an index. The volumes provide well-illustrated and broadly ranging introductions to these countries.

Discovering Cultures

De Capua, Sarah. *Colombia*. New York: Benchmark/Marshall Cavendish, 2003. 48 pp. ISBN 0-7614-1715-X, \$17.95.

De Capua, Sarah. *Russia*. New York: Benchmark/Marshall Cavendish, 2003. 48 pp. ISBN 0-7614-1716-8, \$17.95.

Gordon, Sharon. *Great Britain*. New York: Benchmark/Marshall Cavendish, 2003. 48 pp. ISBN 0-7614-1717-6, \$17.95.

Gordon, Sharon. *Greece*. New York: Benchmark/Marshall Cavendish, 2003. 48 pp. ISBN 0-7614-1718-4, \$17.95.

Murphy, Patricia J. *South Africa*. New York: Benchmark/Marshall Cavendish, 2003. 48 pp. ISBN 0-7614-1719-2, \$17.95.

Roy, Jennifer Rozines. *Israel*. New York: Benchmark/ Marshall Cavendish, 2003. 48 pp. ISBN 0-7614-1720-6, \$17.95.

With the publication of these six titles, this series of country guides for students in the lower elementary grades now has 18 volumes. (This series is most appropriate for students from grades 2 to 5, while *Cultures of the World*, the above-reviewed series also from Benchmark, would be more suited for grades 5 to 8.) Each volume has chapters on the country's geography, people, daily life, schools, leisure activities, and holidays and celebrations. Full-page sidebars cover such topics as, in the *Israel* volume, a recipe for falafel and the letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

The end of each book includes sections on counting in the native language, a short glossary, a two-page spread of "Fast Facts," three short biographies of notable people, a page of resources, and an index. Many country series are available for middle school students, but *Discovering Cultures* offers a presentation that is full of information and well suited, with its easy-to-read text and lively design, for students a few years younger.

Early Civilizations

Deady, Kathleen; and Dubois, Muriel L. *Ancient China*. Mankato, Minn.: Capstone, 2004. 48 pp. ISBN 0-7368-2466-9, \$23.93 (list); \$17.95 (school/library).

The three other titles in this series for students in the middle elementary grades are on ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome. This volume on China begins with the remarkable story of the thousands of life-size clay figures, including soldiers and horses, found in 1974 in the tomb of the first Emperor of Qin, who died in 210 B.C. The story then goes back to the earliest origins of Chinese civilization, about 8,000 years ago, and takes the reader through its various dynasties and cultural developments and inventions (silk, paper, acupuncture, and more). The book's many color illustrations are mostly photos of artifacts or original paintings and drawings.

The book ends with a time line, short biographies of six cultural figures, a glossary, a list of several books for further reading, directions (with a special code) for going to the Facthound site for selected web sites on the subject, and several addresses (two of them in China) to write for more information. This volume does a good job of clearly presenting a number of aspects of Chinese culture—including philosophy, technology, and politics—although the sheer scope of the subject, and the numerous unfamiliar

Chinese names, may make it more suited to students a little older than the third-grade reading level for which the book is written.

Ethnic Diversity Within Nations

Bumsted, J. M. *Canada's Diverse Peoples: A Reference Sourcebook*. Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 2003. 384 pp. ISBN 1-57607-672-5, \$55.00.

Gordon, April A. *Nigeria's Diverse Peoples: A Reference Sourcebook*. Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 2003. 318 pp. ISBN 1-57607-682-2, \$55.00.

GOD BLESS THE CHILD

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Illustrated by Caldecott Honor winner Jerry Pinkney

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—Starred Review / Kirkus Reviews

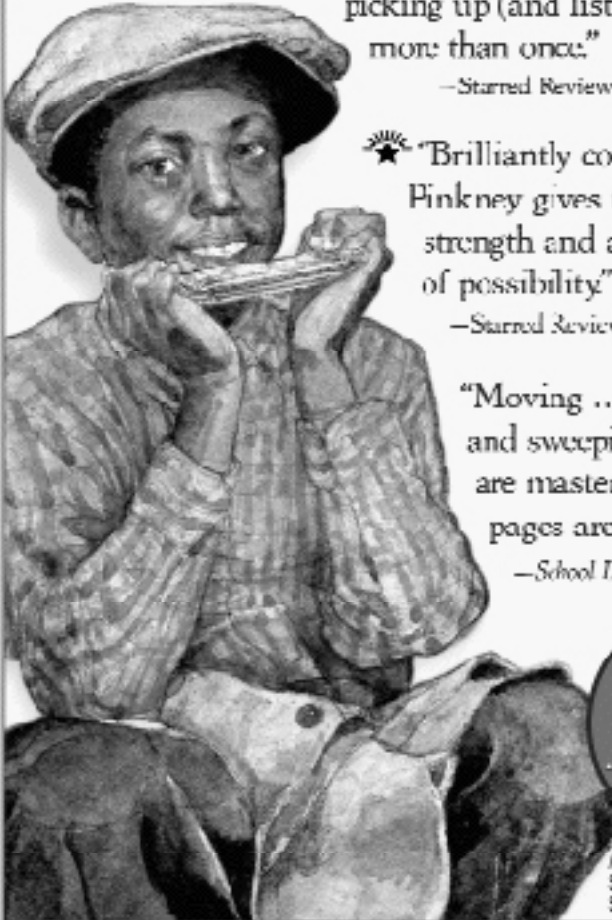
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These two volumes for readers high school age and above tackle two complicated subjects. Africa's most populous country with more than 120 million people, Nigeria contains at least 250 ethnic groups. Besides describing the most significant of these groups, this volume considers such topics as the Atlantic slave trade, colonialism, the Biafra civil war, and political developments up to the present. The volume on Canada focuses on the earliest groups of indigenous peoples, the English, and the French, and on the immigration and ethnic policies the country has had over the last several centuries. The final two chapters consider Canadian immigrants who have come since 1967 from countries all around the world, and possible future developments in such issues as Quebec separatism, indigenous rights, and co-existing with the United States.

In both books, each chapter concludes with a time line; an alphabetical list several pages long of significant people, places, and events; and a bibliography. The Canada volume also includes in each chapter a section of relevant historical documents. Each book is illustrated by occasional black-and-white photos and several maps. Rather than being simply "reference sourcebooks," they provide fairly detailed accounts of the history and development of various groups within each country and of the conflicts and issues that have arisen and that persist today.

Facets

Nash, Peter T. *Reading Race, Reading the Bible*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003. 86 pp. ISBN 0-8006-3633-3, \$6.00 (pb).

Most of the entries in the Facets series consider the relevance of Biblical texts to contemporary social issues, in several cases from an African-American perspective. Other titles include Vincent Wimbush's *The Bible and African-Americans: A Brief History* and Martin Luther King Jr.'s *The Measure of a Man*. The volumes are long essays in a compact paperback form, and they could be used as springboards for more general discussions on their topics.

The author of the present volume is a professor of religion and the research coordinator for the project "Blackness in the Bible and the Church." His first chapter, "Talking about Race," considers the history of the concept of race itself, and the way in which it is relevant not as an anthropological concept, but only as a social one. In the chapter "Race and Religion," Nash discusses the rise of alternative forms of theology, such as Black theology, with various viewpoints and premises from traditional European theology. The final chapter, "Race and the Bible," suggests that traditional methods of interpreting Biblical texts and the culture they arose from have excluded the possibility of African influences. Nash discusses several passages and general approaches that could include this perspective. This essay gives a general framework for thinking about how people have viewed the Bible and points the way toward new avenues remaining to be explored.

Fact Finders Biographies

McFarren, Kathleen. *Vasco da Gama*. Mankato, Minn.: Capstone, 2004. 32 pp. ISBN 0-7368-2491-X, \$22.60 (list); \$16.95 (school/library).

Streissguth, Thomas. *Francisco Pizarro*. Mankato, Minn.: Capstone, 2004. 32 pp. ISBN 0-7368-2488-X, \$22.60 (list); \$16.95 (school/library).

Streissguth, Thomas. *Hernán Cortés*. Mankato, Minn.: Capstone, 2004. 32 pp. ISBN 0-7368-2489-8, \$22.60 (list); \$16.95 (school/library).

The Great Explorers part of this biography series for students in the lower elementary grades (the reading level is at grades 2-3) includes the three above explorers along with Columbus, Magellan, and Marco Polo. Each book begins with a short chapter relating a significant moment in the explorer's life (for da Gama, it is his expedition's 1498 arrival in Calicut, India). The explorers' life stories are then told in straightforward text, accompanied by black-and-white and color illustrations (generally from older sources) along with a map of significant expedition routes. The books also each include a page of facts, a time line, a glossary, a list of several books for further reading, and directions to the Facthound web site for approved links.

These biographies don't leave out the less positive aspects of this age of exploration. After noting that Cortés had told Montezuma that he had come as a friend, not as a conqueror, the author simply states, "Cortés was lying." Pizarro is described as going back on his word when he accepts a huge ransom in gold for the Inca emperor Atahualpa and then has him killed anyway. The series will give young readers much information on the background and motivations of the most notable explorers of the period.

Fun Holiday Crafts Kids Can Do!

Gnojewski, Carol. *Kwanzaa Crafts*. Berkeley Heights, N.J.: Enslow, 2004. 32 pp. ISBN 0-7660-2203-X, \$17.95.

A brief introduction to this volume of holiday crafts tells the origins of Kwanzaa and the meaning of its seven days. (Other volumes in the series are on Christmas, Hanukkah, St. Patrick's Day, Halloween, and Valentine's Day.) Ten crafts are then presented; each has a sentence on its significance to the celebration of Kwanzaa and to African culture, followed by a list of supplies, step-by-step instructions, and color photos of the craft in one or two stages of being made along with the finished product. Crafts include a Seven Candles Game (a version of pick-up sticks), a Storytelling Stick, and a Strip-Quilt Mkeka (mat).

In the relative difficulty of the crafts and the reading level of the text, this book is best suited for students in grades three and four. The book ends with a list of generally positive "Words to Know" (such as "self-determination"), a list of several books and web sites on Kwanzaa, and patterns to be enlarged for some Kwanzaa symbols (the meaning of the pineapple symbol is given as "no pain, no gain").

Great Trials of the Twentieth Century

Scheppler, Bill. *The Mississippi Burning Trial: A Primary Source Account*. New York: Rosen, 2004. 64 pp. ISBN 0-8239-3972-3, \$31.95.

Scheppler, Bill. *The Scottsboro Boys Trial: A Primary Source Account*. New York: Rosen, 2004. 64 pp. ISBN 0-8239-3975-8, \$31.95.

These volumes present highly detailed accounts of two landmark legal cases in the history of the civil rights movement. (Other volumes in this eight-book series cover such cases as those of Leopold and Loeb, the Lindbergh baby kidnapping, and the Chicago Black Sox.) The "primary sources" included are largely the many original photographs, along with occasional other elements such as an editorial cartoon, a newspaper clipping, and a document listing some of the many fees incurred for the defense of the Scottsboro boys.

The two books do a thorough job of reconstructing the crimes and the trials; this is particularly true of *The Mississippi Burning Trial*, which includes much detail on, for example, the background of the Klan members accused of murdering three civil rights workers in 1964. It should be noted that the type size and the design of these books appear to be aimed at a fourth or fifth grade level, but that the reading level of the text and the graphic nature of the crimes (in particular the description of the investigations of the supposed rapes in the Scottsboro case) may make them appropriate for students in junior high or high school.

Greenwood Biographies

Steins, Richard. *Colin Powell: A Biography*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2003. 150 pp. ISBN 0-313-32266-X, \$27.50.

The biographies in this series are designed for high school and undergraduate students who are doing research projects on (or who have a strong interest in) a range of historical and contemporary figures, including Margaret Mead, the Dalai Lama, and J. K. Rowling. They are intended to be of a reasonable page length (though with relatively small type, and, in the present volume, only two pages of black-and-white photos).

The first chapter of Powell's biography provides three vignettes from his life: his first day of college at the City College of New York in 1954; his introduction to brutal combat in Vietnam in 1964; and his mission in October 2001 as Secretary of State to enlist the help of Pakistan in the fight against al-Qaeda. The book then tells his story from his childhood in the Bronx as the son of Jamaican-born parents up to the summer of 2003. The book includes a time line, a bibliography, an index, and a few chapter notes (mostly from Powell's autobiography).

The Greenwood Histories of the Modern Nations

Rector, John L. *The History of Chile*. Westport, Conn.:

Greenwood, 2003. 334 pp. ISBN 0-313-31759-3, \$45.00.

In a series foreword, the editors of these volumes for students in high school and above state that this is the first attempt at a systematic group of national histories since the 1960s. The author of this entry is a professor of history at Western Oregon University; in his preface he notes that Chile is "a country of historians and poets." The book begins with a lengthy time line of Chilean history; the first chapter is a geographical survey of Chile and its people. The second chapter takes the story all the way up to 1750, and succeeding chapters discuss further Chilean history in 15- to 30-year slices. The book concludes with one-paragraph biographies of about 50 notable people in Chilean history, a glossary, and a chapter-by-chapter bibliographical survey that suggests further reading on the country. This history includes much solid information in a readable form, though it has only one map and no illustrations.

Headlines from History

Vierow, Wendy. *The Assault on Fort Wagner: Black Union Soldiers Make a Stand in South Carolina Battle*. New York: Rosen/PowerKids Press, 2004. 24 pp. ISBN 0-829-6223-7, \$19.95.

One of six titles in this series for students in the lower elementary grades, this book tells the story of the 54th Massachusetts Regiment, the first Union regiment of black soldiers from a Northern state during the Civil War. In August 1863, the regiment attacked and very briefly held a Confederate fort in Charleston, South Carolina. (This event was also the basis of the movie *Glory*, which is not mentioned in this book.) The book's short (mostly two-page) chapters give the background of the Civil War and the role of African Americans in it along with the story of the assault on the fort and its later capture by other Union forces.

The text, in very large type, is accompanied by photos of figures from the story (such the two sons of Frederick Douglass who were part of the 54th), maps, and drawings (including some Currier and Ives prints) of the events. Sixteen words and terms are bolded throughout the story and defined in a glossary; readers are directed to a web page with links to more information on related topics.

Historical Atlases of South Asia, Central Asia, and the Middle East

Khan, Aisha. *A Historical Atlas of India*. New York: Rosen, 2004. 64 pp. ISBN 0-8239-3977-4, \$30.60 (list); \$22.95 (school/library).

Ray, Kurt. *A Historical Atlas of Kuwait*. New York: Rosen, 2004. 64 pp. ISBN 0-8239-3981-2, \$30.60 (list); \$22.95 (school/library).

Romano, Amy. *A Historical Atlas of Israel*. New York: Rosen, 2004. 64 pp. ISBN 0-8239-3978-2, \$30.60 (list); \$22.95 (school/library).

Romano, Amy. *A Historical Atlas of Jordan*. New York: Rosen, 2004. 64 pp. ISBN 0-8239-3980-4, \$30.60 (list); \$22.95 (school/library).

Skahill, Carolyn M. *A Historical Atlas of Lebanon*. New York: Rosen, 2004. 64 pp. ISBN 0-8239-3982-0, \$30.60 (list); \$22.95 (school/library).

The volumes in this series for junior high and high school students go beyond atlases to be fairly thorough histories of these countries. The text in each book begins in antiquity and ends with current issues. A number of maps from various historical periods are included along with some colorful maps created for these books. The books are also illustrated by some photos of artifacts, historical figures, and original documents; overall, the maps and illustrations here have very detailed captions that describe well their origins and significance.

In the countries of this region, particularly Israel, the emphasis this series places on shifting borders and developments over the centuries should help students better understand both the past and the situation they face today. The volumes each conclude with a time line, a glossary, a list for further reading, a bibliography, direction to the publisher's web site of related links, and an index.

Indigenous Peoples

Marshall, Diana. *Aboriginal Australians*. Calgary, Alberta: Weigl, 2004. 32 pp. ISBN 1-59036-121-0, \$18.20.

Strudwick, Leslie. *Inuit*. Calgary, Alberta: Weigl, 2004. 32 pp. ISBN 1-59036-122-9, \$18.20.

Webster, Christine. *Polynesians*. Calgary, Alberta: Weigl, 2004. 32 pp. ISBN 1-59036-123-7, \$18.20.

Webster, Christine. *Yanomani*. Calgary, Alberta: Weigl, 2004. 32 pp. ISBN 1-59036-124-5, \$18.20.

Set of 4: ISBN 1-59036-149-0, \$68.80.

Each volume in this series for middle school students is well illustrated with numerous color photos and several maps and illustrations. The format of two-page chapters for each book is identical; topics include each group's geographic location, stories and legends, history, social structure, legal system, art and culture, dress, food, and inventions and developments. The final two chapters in each book take a quick look first at the issues the peoples face (such as, for the Yanomami, the effects of mining on their homeland in the Amazon basin) and then at what the future may bring. The volumes end with a page of "Fascinating Facts," a list of two books and two web sites for further research, a glossary, and an index.

With the range of topics covered, and particularly with the many photos of the peoples themselves, these volumes would serve to give students an accessible introduction to some very unfamiliar societies and lifestyles. In a few places,

cultures extremely different from our own are described in a remarkably straightforward manner; in the volume on Aboriginal Australians, for example, the "Food and Fun" chapter includes a recipe for preparing grubs that requires students to have the roots of some acacia bushes, ashes to cook in, and a willingness to eat grubs.

Latinos in American History

Bankston, John. *Fray Juan Crespi*. Bear, Del.: Mitchell Lane, 2004. 48 pp. ISBN 1-58415-199-4, \$19.95.

Bankston, John. *Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo*. Bear, Del.: Mitchell Lane, 2004. 48 pp. ISBN 1-58415-199-4, \$19.95.

Roberts, Russell. *Bernardo de Galvez*. Bear, Del.: Mitchell Lane, 2004. 48 pp. ISBN 1-58415-197-8, \$19.95.

Zannos, Susan. *Octaviano Larrazolo*. Bear, Del.: Mitchell Lane, 2004. 48 pp. ISBN 1-58415-181-1, \$19.95.

Some of the 20 figures whose lives are described in this series for middle school students are fairly widely known, such as Cesar Chavez and Hernando de Soto. Most of them, including the four profiled in the above volumes, are not. Crespi was an eighteenth-century Franciscan missionary to California; Cabrillo was a fifteenth-century Spanish soldier and explorer; Galvez was the Spanish governor of Louisiana during the American Revolution (the city of Galveston, Texas, was named after him); and Larrazolo was a governor of New Mexico and in 1928 became the first Hispanic to serve in the U.S. Senate.

Each biography opens on a dramatic moment in the life of its subject and then gives an account that includes some background on the time in which the person lived. The volumes include a number of color illustrations and a few photos and maps. (The cover of the volume on Cabrillo rather oddly shows a wax-museum figure of the explorer.) Each ends with a chronology of the subject's life, followed by a time line of contemporaneous historical events, a list of books and web sites for further reading, a glossary, and an index. All of these figures lived through dramatic historical periods, and the books try to give a sense of some of that drama. For students, these life stories will fill in some of the gaps of the periods involved; these figures often interacted with more well known figures (Crespi with Junipero Serra, and Cabrillo with such conquistadors as Cortés) but each has an interesting story of his own.

The Legendary Past

World of Myths. Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 2003. 424 pp. Introduced by Marina Warner. ISBN 0-292-70204-3, \$35.00.

Published in cooperation with the British Museum Press, this volume combines five books that have been published separately in paperback on Greek, Roman, Norse, Egyptian, and Celtic myths. (The series has six other titles on such topics as Persian, Inca, and Russian myths that are not collected

here.) The five books have different authors, and they are tied together with a general introduction on mythology and a glossary of terms from all five traditions.

The books compiled here offer highly detailed and fairly scholarly (though with no footnotes) accounts of the mythology of these cultures. Each contains numerous black-and-white photos, mainly of artifacts, that give the volume the feeling of an encyclopedia or museum catalog. Each of the five authors ends with a bibliographic essay on further reading. Readers at the high school level and above will find fairly thorough introductions here to the myths of these traditions.

Let Freedom Ring

Keller, Kristin Thoennes. *The Slave Trade in Early America*. Mankato, Minn.: Capstone, 2004. 32 pp. ISBN 0-7368-2465-0, \$23.93 (list); \$17.95 (school/library).

This series for students in the middle grades (the text is at a third to fourth grade reading level) explores various topics in American history; the Colonial America part of the series also includes books on the Jamestown Colony, Plymouth Colony, and the Salem witch trials. The present book begins with the story of the capture into slavery in 1756 of 11-year-old Olaudah Equiano in Nigeria (we are told that Olaudah later wrote a book about his experiences, but are not given any excerpts from or further information about this memoir). The book then describes the Triangle of Trade that shipped slaves between Africa, the West Indies, and North America; the terrible conditions aboard ships; and the rise and eventual elimination of slavery in the United States. The book is illustrated with numerous period drawings and a few photos of such objects as slave chains and a handwritten copy of the Emancipation Proclamation.

The book concludes with a time line, a glossary, a list of books for further reading, several addresses of organization, and directions to the Facthound web site for related links. Students from grades three to six will learn about many facets of the course of slavery in the United States from this clearly organized book.

The Library of American Lives and Times

Edwards, Linda McMurry. *George Washington Carver: The Life of the Great American Agriculturist*. New York: Rosen/ PowerPlus Books, 2004. 112 pp. ISBN

0-8239-6633-X, \$31.95.

Fleming, Alice. *Frederick Douglass: From Slave to Statesman*. New York: Rosen/ PowerPlus Books, 2004. 112 pp. ISBN 0-8239-6624-0, \$31.95.

This series of biographies written for students at the middle school level has an appropriately historic appearance through its use of old-fashioned type styles for headings and its numerous period photos, illustrations, and pictures of historical objects and documents. Included in the Carver volume, for example, are photos of a student's wooden-framed piece of slate and the actual decision from the 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* Supreme Court decision. Each book's text provides a straightforward, even-handed account of its subject's life;

Tundra - Where the Good Books Are

<p style="text-align: center;">A history of the dragon boat festival – from ancient China to today</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Awakening the Dragon: The Dragon Boat Festival By Arlene Chan Illustrated by Song Nan Zhang Ages 6 to 9</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">An introduction to the amazing people who made the Underground Railroad</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">I Came as a Stranger: The Underground Railroad By Bryan Prince Ages 10 and up</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">A book about cars for kids who can't wait to arrive</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Car Smarts: Hot Tips for the Car Crazy By Phil Edmundson and Maureen Sawa Ages 10 and up</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">A crazy mirror, a cryptic message, and a family secret waiting to be revealed</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Naomi and the Secret Message By Giles Tito Translated by Susan Durian Ages 6 to 9</p>

TUNDRA BOOKS www.tundrabooks.com

Carver's biography, as an example, includes a balanced discussion of the different attitudes and interpretations various groups, black and white, had of his achievements and his relationship to white society.

Each book ends with a time line, a glossary, a short list of resources, a bibliography, and an index. The thoughtful text and particularly the variety of historical illustrations make this series a good choice for students to learn much about the lives of these men, along with something about their eras. The other 11 volumes in the series include biographies of figures such as George Washington, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Eli Whitney, and Benedict Arnold.

The Library of the Civil Rights Movement

Miller, Jake. *The Little Rock Nine: Young Champions for School Integration*. New York: Rosen/PowerKids Press, 2004. 24 pp. ISBN 0-8239-6252-0, \$19.95.

Miller, Jake. *The Montgomery Bus Boycott: Integrating Public Buses*. New York: Rosen/PowerKids Press, 2004. 24 pp. ISBN 0-8239-6251-2, \$19.95.

Miller, Jake. *The March from Selma to Montgomery: African Americans Demand the Vote*. New York: Rosen/PowerKids Press, 2004. 24 pp. ISBN 0-8239-6254-7, \$19.95.

The entries in this series for younger elementary students cover important episodes or topics in the struggle for civil rights of the 1950s and '60s. (Other volumes are on the 1954 *Brown v. Board Education* case, the 1963 March on Washington, and a general volume on sit-ins and freedom rides.) Each volume has ten chapters to tell the background and events related to its topic; most of these include one page of a large black-and-white photo from the period facing a page of text. Though this text is in large, clear type and is written at a second- to third-grade level, each page contains more words than is typical of many books at this level. This allows for a more detailed account of an unfolding series of events such as the Montgomery bus boycott of 1955–56.

The books conclude with a glossary (the words in it are bolded throughout the book's text) and a brief index. One book (on the bus boycott) lists two web links, while the other two refer readers to the PowerKids web site. A "Primary Sources" page has worthwhile information for students willing to read the fine (or at least finer) print; it gives source information and more specific dates for the photos included. One error in the Little Rock Nine volume, though, may confuse readers; after earlier stating correctly that the Central High School enrollment crisis happened in September 1957, a chapter describes events as occurring on "September 4, 1952." In general, however, this series will give younger students a clear and fairly thorough account of the significant events of this period.

Many Cultures, One World

DeAngelis, Gina. *Pakistan*. Mankato, Minn.: Blue Earth/Capstone, 2004. 32 pp. ISBN 0-7368-2169-4, \$23.93.

Delzio, Suzanne. *Ethiopia*. Mankato, Minn.: Blue Earth/Capstone, 2004. 32 pp. ISBN 0-7368-2449-9, \$23.93.

Englar, Mary. *Dominican Republic*. Mankato, Minn.: Blue Earth/Capstone, 2004. 32 pp. ISBN 0-7368-2453-7, \$23.93.

Knox, Barbara. *Afghanistan*. Mankato, Minn.: Blue Earth/Capstone, 2004. 32 pp. ISBN 0-7368-2448-0, \$23.93.

Knox, Barbara. *Peru*. Mankato, Minn.: Blue Earth/Capstone, 2004. 32 pp. ISBN 0-7368-2450-2, \$23.93.

Yanuck, Debbie L. *Spain*. Mankato, Minn.: Blue Earth/Capstone, 2004. 32 pp. ISBN 0-7368-2451-0, \$23.93.

Written at a third-grade reading level, the entries in this series of country studies provide some geographical and historical information, but their emphasis is on everyday life and culture. Each book contains chapters on geography, city and country life, seasons, family life, laws and customs, pets, and sights to see. The books also tell a traditional national legend, and they have several elements that may encourage participation from young readers: instructions for a game, a craft to make, and a recipe. Readers are directed to these features from the table of contents, which has magazine-style small photos and page references. In the Afghanistan volume, for example, the contents page has teasers for a marble game called *bojol baazi*, a recipe for a raisin drink, and instructions on making a melon-seed necklace.

The text of these books is clear and informative, but the greater appeal, besides the elements mentioned above, comes from the numerous interesting color photos of each country's people and places. The volumes end with short glossaries, lists of other books, and useful addresses.

Meals Around the World

Gregoire, Maryellen. *Morning Meals Around the World*. Minneapolis: Picture Window Books, 2004. 24 pp. ISBN 1-4048-0280-0, \$21.26 (list); \$15.95 (school/library).

Zurakowski, Michele. *Evening Meals Around the World*. Minneapolis: Picture Window Books, 2004. 24 pp. ISBN 1-4048-0282-7, \$21.26 (list); \$15.95 (school/library).

Zurakowski, Michele. *Midday Meals Around the World*. Minneapolis: Picture Window Books, 2004. 24 pp. Illus. by Jeff Yesh. ISBN 1-4048-0281-9, \$21.26 (list); \$15.95 (school/library).

Zurakowski, Michele. *Snack Time Around the World*. Minneapolis: Picture Window Books, 2004. 24 pp. ISBN 1-4048-0283-5, \$21.26 (list); \$15.95 (school/library).

Entire series of 4: ISBN 1-4048-0279-7, \$85.04 (list); \$63.80 (school/library).

Each volume in this lively series for students in the lower

elementary grades describes and illustrates what one might typically eat at a particular time of day in about ten different countries from around the world. A world map at the start of

the volume highlights the countries and foods that will be discussed. Each country included has a page or two with several sentences of engaging text and illustrations of the food and often some children and families enjoying a meal or snack. The book on morning meals, as an example, tells about crepes in France; *Pfannkuchen* (a pancake with jam, sugar, and lemon slices) in Germany; and scrambled ostrich eggs in Namibia.

The books each end with two recipes from different countries, one very simple (as in “Cut up the pita bread and spread with hummus”) and one that would usually require adult help to make (the most difficult being *hâchis parmentier*, a French dish of mashed potatoes and ground beef). The last page of each book packs in several Fun Facts, definitions for a few food terms, a reference to the Facthound web site, a short list of books to read, and a brief index. The information about food and daily life in other countries presented here will certainly be interesting to young students. One problem is that, although the illustrations are bright and colorful and show happy eaters from a number of different cultures, their broad cartoonlike style is not ideal for depicting food. Without a caption, the German pancake with strawberry jam would be hard to distinguish from a pizza topped with tomato sauce, and some other dishes, such as an Italian fish dinner, are not very identifiable (or appetizing in appearance) at all. In this series, it is more the descriptions than the drawings that might make young readers interested in trying some often unfamiliar foods.

Meeting Famous People

Fine, Edith Hope. *Rosa Parks: Meet a Civil Rights Hero*. Berkeley Heights, N.J.: Enslow, 2004. 32 pp. ISBN 0-7660-2099-1, \$17.95.

This biography tells the story of the civil rights heroine in clear, large-type text written at a third-grade level. Besides a number of mostly black-and-white photos of Parks, the book includes several striking photos from the era, including one of a bus interior with “White” and “Colored” sections clearly marked, and another of two hooded Klansmen, one of whom holds a baby also in a Klan outfit. The book ends with a list of seven words to know, lists of other books and web sites about Parks, a time line, and an index. Other titles in the series include biographies of Muhammad Ali, Amelia Earhart, and Sacagawea.

Photo-Illustrated Biographies

Knox, Barbara. *Jackie Robinson*. Mankato, Minn.: Bridgestone/Capstone, 2004. 24 pp. ISBN 0-7368-2224-0, \$18.60.

This series for students in the lower elementary grades now

includes 40 titles, including ones on such figures on Cesar Chavez, Walt Disney, Chief Joseph, and Theodore Roosevelt. In this volume, Robinson’s story is told in nine two-page chapters; each has a full-page photo of Robinson and a page of large type about a stage of his life (“Early Baseball Years,” for example). Most chapters also have a boxed quote from Robinson, such as “There’s not an American in this country free until every one of us is free.”

Three pages at the back of the book include a few “Fast Facts,” a brief time line, seven “Words to Know,” a list of five other biographies of Robinson for young readers, two addresses to write for information, directions to the Facthound site for related web links, and a short index. Students at a second- or third-grade reading level will find this book to be an easy-to-understand, fairly comprehensive, and well-illustrated account of the life of this American hero.

Smart About . . .

Driscoll, Laura. *George Washington Carver: The Peanut Wizard*. New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 2003. 32 pp. ISBN 0-448-43243-9, \$5.99 (pb).

The approach of this book for students in the middle elementary grades is that it is actually a school report by a fictional elementary student named Annie Marcus. Given an assignment by her teacher, Ms. Brandt, to do a report on a famous scientist and include a scientific experiment within it, Annie then composes this work on Carver, including many intentionally simple illustrations (some with cartoon-style speech balloons), historical black-and-white photos, and some color photos (including one of Annie’s experiment in growing bean plants). The design is lively and varied, and each page includes a paragraph or two of text on Carver’s life, or such related items as a recipe for a chocolate peanut butter smoothie.

The “report” ends with a note from Ms. Brandt to Annie pointing out that even after he was famous, Carver couldn’t go to many hotels and restaurants merely because he was black. The book has no resources or back matter, and it sticks pretty closely to its “school report” style. The main appeal of this volume, besides its colorful design, is its unusual format. Once young readers get past how unlikely it is that any of their peers could create such a fantastic report (and how unusual it is to learn from another student’s report and not from an adult authority), they will learn a lot about Carver’s life and work, and they may see this as an example of how to explore historical subjects on their own. Most of the other published volumes in the series are about artists such as Monet, Picasso, and Cassatt, with a few on subjects such as the Negro Leagues and the Wright brothers’ first flight.

Women Hall of Famers in Math and Science

Alagna, Magdalena. *Mae Jemison: The First African American Woman in Space*. New York: Rosen, 2004. 112 pp. ISBN 0-8239-3878-6, \$18.75.

Cooperman, Stephanie H. *Chien-Shiung Wu: Pioneering Physicist and Atomic Researcher*. New York: Rosen, 2004. 112 pp. ISBN 0-8239-3875-1, \$18.75.

One of the striking features about Jemison that young people will find in this biography is that, although she dreamed from a young age of her eventual experience as an astronaut, her life can be defined in a number of other ways as well: as a scientist, a doctor, a Peace Corps volunteer, and currently as a promoter of science education. The book, for middle school students, is illustrated with a number of color photos and tells her story in detail. Numerous anecdotes are included, in a number of cases with references to Jemison's own autobiography. Many of these give a sense of Jemison as an ordinary person, one who didn't immediately study as hard as she should have in school and who liked to have fun. A few bits of information included (such as that she went to see the James Bond film *Moonraker* while on an internship in Kenya) are perhaps not essential. One nice feature, though, is the attention paid to Jemison's numerous role models and heroes (such as Linus Pauling, Paul Robeson, the astronomer Fred Hoyle, and

Tanzanian president Julius Nyerere) while at the same time presenting her as someone both down-to-earth and driven to achievement who can inspire young people.

Like some of the other women profiled in this series, the Chinese-born physicist Chien-Shiung Wu is not as well known as Jemison (though parents will probably be familiar with the last name of one of the other biography subjects: the physician Virginia Apgar, inventor of the Apgar score for newborn evaluation).

Wu's biography tells of her upbringing in China, her move to the United States, and her scientific career, including her work on the Manhattan Project and her later research. Developments in physics throughout the period are explained in a manner accessible for young readers. Both of these books end with a time line, a glossary, a list of books for further reading, an index, and a reference to the links available on the Rosen web site.

NEW EDITIONS IN OTHER MEDIA

Hesse, Karen. *Aleutian Sparrow*. New York: Listening Library/Random House Audio Publishing, 2003. 1 audiocassette; 1 hour, 45 minutes. ISBN 0-8072-1966-5, \$12.99.

This young adult novel is written in unrhymed verse. Its narrator is Vera, a girl whose entire village of Aleutian Islanders—along with other villages and, essentially, an entire culture—is forced by the U.S. government to relocate to camps in southeastern Alaska from 1942 to 1945 after the Japanese attack the islands during World War II. Vera's father, a fisherman who died at sea, was white; her mother, an Aleut, turns her back on the traditional ways, but Vera embraces them throughout the novel. Her story is filled with the longing she and the other Aleuts feel for their homes on the treeless islands 1,000 miles away from the heavily forested camp where they are now compelled to live. Often, the story is told from the point of view of "we," the displaced Aleut people.

The language of the story is frequently metaphorical and poetic; at one point Hesse describes how "the fierce wind played the grass like a tempest of green violins." Each short section of the text is given a title. This poetic, fractured narrative is Hesse's effort to convey the idea that Vera has been influenced by the stories of her people. It also means that much of the book does not seem to be narrated by a young girl. A personal voice does come out somewhat more strongly when Vera must deal with the death of a close friend and when she first falls in love.

The book focuses on the difficult, unfair conditions that the Aleuts lived under and the destructive effects of imprisonment on their people and culture. A few moments of celebration and of kindness toward the Aleuts occur, but they are overwhelmed by the mournful tone of most passages.

In an interesting afterword to this tape edition, an Aleut woman whose family was evacuated from one of the islands in 1942 when she was five tells her story. Her words reveal historical facts that are still unknown to the majority of Americans. 