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Diccionario médico-biológico (histórico y etimológico) de helemismos Universidad de Salamanca Departamento de Filología Clásica e Indoeuropeo (<http://clasicas.usal.es/dicciomed/>).

A list of several other Spanish medical dictionaries can be found at *Links to 1,785 Medical Dictionaries* (www.interfold.com/translator/medlinks.htm#espanish).

If you want to look up a few medical terms, go to University of California's *Spanish/English Dictionary of Health Related Terms/Diccionario de Terminos de Salud* (www.ucop.edu/cprc/dictionary.pdf). You can also find several other Spanish language medical dictionaries online at *Allhealthnet. Com Medical Dictionary* (www.allhealthnet.com/meddict.htm). The *Dictionary of Occupational Safety and Health Terms English/Spanish* (www.cbs.state.or.us/external/osh/pdf/dictionary/english-spanish.pdf) is a handy reference guide.

There is an abundance of medical information out there on the web. Remember as you search to use common sense and consult with your own doctor or health care provider. If you don't understand something, get a professional opinion. If you can't afford a doctor, most states have a department of health and human services. To find the nearest state department of health and human services, go to *United States Department of Health and Human Services* (www.hhs.gov/SiteMap.html) or <http://63.241.225.79/es/govbenefits/benefits/state.jhtml>). To find out if you qualify for free help, go to *Gov.Benefits: Su Conexion con los beneficios* (<http://63.241.225.79/es/govbenefits/index.jhtml?locale=es>). Be sure to contact reliable people if you need help; while the Internet is a good starting point, it cannot take the place of an individual with the right training and experience.

Dr. Frank Alan Bruno is director of libraries at Uintah County (Utah) Public Library and the Internet/Electronic Products subject editor of *MultiCultural Review*; e-mail: tenbrunos@sbcglobal.net. 

Reviews

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

Literature

General Anthologies

15-2-0152

Swann, Brian, ed. *Algonquian Spirit: Contemporary Translations of the Algonquian Literatures of North America*. Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 2006. 532 pp. ISBN 0-8032-4314-6, \$75.00 (cl); 0-8032-9338-0, \$34.95 (pb).

The significance of this anthology of translated songs, stories, and oral tales from the original Algonquian language lies in the truths that Swann reveals, as with the example of the Walam Olum. The Walam Olum, a document that was accepted as a genuine record of the Delaware Indians, now is regarded as a hoax. The text conveys the ethical importance of translation of these works to preserve the voice, purpose, and intent of the Indian people. Such translations of the works are vital considering the crisis of diminishing Native language speakers. If the language is lost, these unique songs, tales, and stories will be lost forever. Thus Swann has endeavored to seek the contributions of Native Americans in best preserving and conveying the meaning of the original songs and stories. As a result, we have a valuable American Indian literary anthology that truly documents the voice of the Native

American people. Swann has organized the literary pieces into three parts, reflecting the Algonquian speaking tribes of the Eastern, Central, and Western parts of North America.

Readers will appreciate the informative pronunciation guides, definitions, notes, references, and suggested additional readings at the end of pieces of literature. Swann lists the contributors to the anthology at the end of the text.

–Heather K. Dial
North Carolina State Univ.

Fiction

15-2-0153

Alvarado, Lisa; Cardinal, Ann Hagman; and Coralín, Jane Alberdeston. *Sister Chicas*. New York: New American Library, 2006. 288 pp. ISBN 0-451-21770-5, \$12.95 (pb).

That this novel was written by three different people is already food for thought. In this day and age of tight budgets and timid publishers, it could very well announce a trend. On the other hand, it may also contribute to this particular novel's uniqueness. This time, the plurality of voice is real.

The voices belong to three different Latinas and personify each one of the authors. Taina is a young girl of Puerto Rican origin. Taina has been writing a poem about what she calls her sacrificial visits to Rosa's Beauty Salon, "hoping that it's good enough to print in the *Monitor's* poetry column, but it still has some kinks that need to be ironed out. Ha. Pun intended." Taina meets her friends, Graciela and Leni, every week at El Rinconcito del Sabor restaurant in Chicago. Graciela, in turn, is a Chicana majoring in English lit and early childhood education at the University of Illinois in Chicago. She is coming to grips with her ethnic identity, since people at the admissions office complimented her on speaking English so well—even though she was born and raised in Chicago. Leni, the rebel, who comes from a long line of O'Malleys and a long line of Diazes, yells at her mother, "I don't want to be an O'Malley or a goddamn Diaz! I just want to be me! Elena!"

Together, all three voices bring out a dimension of what it means to be young and Latina in the United States today.

–Beatriz Rivera-Barnes
Penn State Univ.

15-2-0154

Anaya, Rudolfo. *The Man Who Could Fly and Other Stories*. Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 2006. 199 pp. ISBN 0-8061-3738-X, \$19.95.

This new collection by the father of modern Chicano literature is a remarkable blending of legend, myth, magical realism, Bildungsroman, and meta-fictional narratives. Set in Mexico, stories such as "The Village That the Gods Painted Yellow," "B. Raven Is Alive and Well in Cuernavaca," and "Message from the Inca" explore the tenuous relationship between the past and the present, the mutable nature of time, and the conveyance of knowledge from one generation to the next through myth and legend. "Deer Devil,"

"Jeronimo's Journey," and "The Man Who Could Fly" transport the reader into the eerie realm of magical realism, where fantastic occurrences are rendered matter-of-factly and believably, though heavily freighted with symbolic meaning.

"Dead End" and "The Apple Orchard" are coming-of-age tales, the latter strongly reminiscent of Anaya's classic novel *Bless Me, Ultima*. "The Man Who Found a Pistol" and "A Story," two tales of meta-fiction, embed insights on craft in richly ironic contexts. "Absalom" and "The Captain" represent departures from what readers have come to know as familiar "Anaya territory." These narratives are set in the Israeli desert and in an undisclosed Shangri-la for Nazi officers near the end of World War II. Despite this, both are powerfully connected in theme and tone to the other works. Excepting the title narrative, all of the pieces collected here have been published in reputable journals over the past 30 years. This, and the imaginative range of the work, makes the collection an indispensable addition to any comprehensive library of Chicano literature.

–Lorraine M. López
Vanderbilt Univ.

15-2-0155

Azasu, Kwakuvi. *The Stool*. East Lansing: Ghana Univ. Press; dist. by African Books Collective and Michigan State Univ. Press, 2004. 373 pp. ISBN 9964-3-0311-4, \$14.95 (pb).

Kurfi, Ahmadu. *The Barons*. East Lansing: Spectrum Books; dist. by African Books Collective and Michigan State Univ. Press, 2005. 442 pp. ISBN 978-029-543-7, \$16.95 (pb).

Despite the movement for multiculturalism and diversity in the United States during the last two decades, Americans still exhibit ignorance toward nuances of other cultures, including those of Africa. Thus, any works that delineate such nuances are always welcome.

Azasu's work details the political images of power and prestige that are bestowed on a stool. *The Stool* is the story of two men named Agozi and Adi whose violent, bitter rivalry is premised on this symbolic item. This novel explores the just and less-than-just methods each man employs to win succession to the leadership office that the stool represents. Subplots include the less-than-favorable treatment of women who are wives to the men, with little or no choice on the woman's part; the violence among rival ethnic and other groups, also divided by geography, wealth, or class status; and ceremonial events, such as funerals. Beyond the political stake of leadership is the destiny of the people governed by who would sit in the stool: either freedom or slavery. And no matter how tragic the ending may seem, the insights into Ghana's political culture leave one more aware.

This reviewer had the same sense while reading *The Barons*. Kurfi's novel describes the exploits of politically powerful individuals from northern Nigeria who wield enormous influence over the traditional, socioeconomic, and political institutions in this country. The book's time line covers the 1980s and 1990s, during the time of President Shehu Shagari's lead-

ership. Inspired by the life of German Baron Munchausen, who lived in the eighteenth century, this screenplay-formatted story chronicles the exploits of Nigerians who represent their country's diverse ethnic, cultural, and religious groups. Discussions about elections, lawmaking, political rivalry, and the like are the highlights of this book. And while presented in a very bland style, the prose is overall informative about the politics of the respective barons involved, not to mention their political affiliations.

As such, these two novels are recommended for readers who yearn for treatments of the cutting-edge political and cultural realities of two of the African continent's leading nations.

—Sam Cacas
San Francisco, Calif.

15-2-0156

Bonucci, Silvia. *Voices from a Time*. Hanover, N.H.: Steerforth Press, 2006. 180 pp. Trans. from Italian by Martha King. ISBN 1-58642-098-4, \$12.95 (pb).

Bonucci's novel, which won the Zerilli-Marimó Prize when it was published in Italian in 2003, details the fall of a Sephardic Jewish family in early-twentieth-century Italy. The lives and deaths of three male characters—Marcello; his father, Sandro Levi; and his stepfather, Augusto Castaldi—are narrated from the points of view of three other characters—Marcello's sister, Dolores (Dolly); their mother, Gemma; and their younger brother, Giulio (Titti). Gemma, the wife and mother, occupies center stage. The daughter of a rich Trieste family, she marries Sandro for his position but proves to be a disengaged mother and unfaithful wife for both Sandro and Castaldi, the scion of a rising fascist family, whom she marries after Sandro's suicide. Her self-justifying narrative stands in contrast to Dolly's bitter tale of betrayal and fall, and Titti's account of how he tried in vain to keep everyone happy. The problems begin when young Marcello contracts meningitis and never fully recovers. Efforts to cure him lead the family to Sigmund Freud in Vienna, to a filthy hospital where Dolly steals morphine to alleviate his headaches, and to a sanitarium for drug addicts, where Gemma begins an affair with opium addict Castaldi.

Readers learn of the families and traditions of the centuries-old Sephardic community of Trieste, of the impact of World War I on Italy, and of the process by which peasant fascists came to replace the old aristocracy as the nation's elite following the war. There is much more to show about these events, particularly the rise of fascism, and the novel ends at what could be argued is its most interesting and exciting moment.

—Lyn Miller-Lachmann

15-2-0157

Bruchac, Joseph. *Foot of the Mountain and Other Stories*. Duluth, Minn.: Holy Cow! Press, 2005. 137 pp. ISBN 0-930100-62-X, 14.95 (pb).

Renowned storyteller and educator Bruchac (Abenaki) has added another volume to his already impressive list of

works. Here he balances tribal stories and fictions with short personal narratives. They vary from the timeless retellings of mythic plots and characters, to imaginative reconstructions, such as the opening story, "Sounds of Thunder," which places an Abenaki soldier alongside a Mohawk soldier in the U. S. Civil War. The stories sweetly and simply respect human connections to history, to the land and living objects.

Bruchac further illustrates those connections in his personal recollections. He recounts travels, learning to catch trout from his Abenaki grandfather, and deference for snapping turtles in the cycles of life. These latter stories seem more carefully crafted than the first section of the book. He states his purpose in telling stories: "to entertain so that [they] will be heard and to instruct so that [their] lesson will be remembered. Stories, the stories that come from the earth and the long memories of peoples and places, know more than we storytellers do." Bruchac accomplishes these goals in this collection.

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

15-2-0158

de Terán, Lisa St. Auban. *Swallowing Stones*. New York: HarperCollins, 2006. 528 pp. ISBN 0-06-078104-1, \$13.95 (pb).

This historical novel is as rich and enthralling as the subject: Venezuelan revolutionary and scholar Oswaldo Barreto Miliani, codenamed Otto. Barreto Miliani, now 70 years old, longs to dispel the numerous rumors that have plagued him since he was young. As he recaps his life, readers become intimate witnesses to historical events: Otto joining a secret Communist club at just 15 years old, helping Che Guevara smuggle arms into Latin America, listening to Fidel Castro read personal letters to him and 12 other revolutionaries for nine hours straight, and struggling to avoid capture in Chile's horrific coup in 1973.

De Terán's writing is precise and poetic, never tedious. Her intricate, realistic rendering of Venezuelan culture—food, smells, people—perfectly complements occasional dream sequences and tall tales. De Terán also masterfully pairs contradictions: fearful, ugly Oswaldo, born to brave, beautiful parents; the bully in the library reading Pablo Neruda's poetry and mentoring the teenage Oswaldo; and Barreto Miliani's hybrid beliefs of devout Catholicism and Leftist politics. In writing such a complete, complex character, the author beautifully captures the essence of being human, the simultaneous terror and joy of a life lived.

Swallowing Stones offers a gritty, provocative picture of Latin American political history—but with de Terán's departure from strict biography, it's also a compassionate portrait of a man with an extraordinary life.

—Jennifer Johnston
San Bernardino (Calif.) Public Library

15-2-0159

Diggs, Anita Doreen. *The Other Side of the Game*. New York: Dafina Books, 2005. 230 pp. ISBN 0-7582-1049-3, \$14.00 (pb).

In this intriguing novel, the focus is on an African-American woman, Asha, who had a negative experience with Dante in high school. He had sex with her and then dumped her. She got pregnant and had an abortion. Becoming callous and narcissistic, she is now determined to use rich men to support her lavish lifestyle. Another character, Saundra, is Asha's "Queen of the New Age" sister. They have different fathers and their mother has died. The sisters have extremely different values.

Saundra's father, Phil, is dating Evelyn but delays marrying her. After Saundra has a fight with her fiancé, Yero, she rushes home to find her father having sex with Hugo, a family male friend. She becomes hysterical and moves in with Asha. Asha visits her lover's family for Thanksgiving and finds them despicable. She breaks up with him, and he has a heart attack and dies. Sparks fly around this incident.

More sparks fly when Phil tells his girlfriend, Evelyn, that he is gay and on the "down low." In the end, Asha succeeds in getting Saundra married to Yero and forgiving her father. Asha also plans to settle down and get married.

-Maxine M. Agazie
North Carolina Central Univ.

15-2-0160

Foxx, Nina. *Marrying Up*. New York: Avon, 2005. 268 pp. ISBN 0-06-075045-6, \$12.95 (pb).

Paris Montague, an up-and-coming African-American lobbyist working with her stepfather, spends her days trying to prove herself an asset to his business. Successful, Paris begins to feel the pressure coming from her mother, Athena, that most 20-almost-30-something women do: It's time to settle down. However, Paris is enjoying Mr. Right-Now (Tyson), while her mother spends her time plotting Paris's marriage to Mr. Right.

Paris's cousin Alexis's troubled engagement to Walter has added fuel to Athena's fire. Paris has successfully resisted until her mother introduces her to Jabari Nolan, a man who looks good and should be good enough for her mother. While Paris is enjoying the wealth and status that a man like Jabari should have, she feels that there is something not right about him. Yet she forgets about Tyson, a good-natured brother who knows just what a woman needs in the bedroom, which is the only place Paris wants to see him!

Foxx does an excellent job of spinning this tale of betrayal, hurt, personal growth, and danger, all in the search for love. She reminds us to look deeper than the surface to find truth, understanding, acceptance, and true love.

-LaSaundra Lee
Roosevelt High School, St. Louis, Mo.

15-2-0161

Gordimer, Nadine. *Get a Life*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2005. 192 pp. ISBN 0-374-16170-4, \$21.00.

The Nobel Prize-winning author here offers a post-apartheid story of Paul Bannerman, a young ecologist afflicted with thyroid cancer, who must remain in isolation as part

of his treatment with implanted radiation. His parents offer to take him in because he cannot expose his wife and young son to radiation; they tell him that they have lived their lives. While confined to his childhood home, Paul contemplates his life and his work trying to preserve traditional lands against the depredations of mining companies, developers, and others.

The early part of the novel, which focuses on Paul's illness and recovery, develops slowly, and it is only when he leaves, and his parents realize that there is much more of their lives to live, that anything really "happens." This is above all a personal story, in contrast to Gordimer's apartheid-era novels that masterfully examine the intersection of the personal and the political. In Paul's organization, blacks and whites work side by side in easy collegiality; the only thing keeping them from touching or embracing is the radioactive iodine implanted in Paul's body. While not one of her exceptional works, *Get a Life* shows that in South Africa today, novel-worthy conflicts lie outside the realm of politics.

-Lyn Miller-Lachmann

15-2-0162

Guchu, Wonder. *Sketches of High Density Life*. East Lansing: Weaver Press; dist. by African Books Collective and Michigan State Univ. Press, 2005. 64 pp. ISBN 1-77922-031-6, \$14.95 (pb).

This unusual but intriguing book comprises a collection of tales or vignettes that capture diverse elements of life in twenty-first-century Zimbabwe. Like many writers from that country, Guchu uses language that is lovely but often poetic and elliptical. Each brief piece introduces a new character and a new incident and includes striking images; however, as the blurb on the back cover of the book indicates, his tales play around the edges of realism, often "leaving the reader to wonder, 'Did this really happen?'"

Most of the pieces are about families, personal relationships, or individual lives gone awry. Sadness predominates; most pieces involve death, beginning intensely with the first one. Themes of nostalgia, longing, and abandonment recur, but vivid cultural details keep the stories from being maudlin. The author is especially good at describing specific locations—as in titles such as "243rd Street," "Lunchtime in the Park," "The Wooden Bridge"—so one can see and feel each situation keenly. "High density" seems to be an apt description of difficult but never superficial lives in the townships of Harare. One learns a great deal in a short time from these sketches, but the lessons are problematic and saddening.

-Anne Serafin
Newtonville, Mass.

15-2-0163

Haslam, Gerald. *Haslam's Valley*. Berkeley, Calif.: Heyday Books, 2005. 320 pp. ISBN 1-59714-018-X, \$18.95 (pb).

This impressive collection from four decades of a career as novelist, short story writer, and essayist is convincing evidence that Haslam deserves to be ranked with other regional



California voices such as Steinbeck and Saroyan. Haslam is a native of Oildale, a working-class town near Bakersfield, and the recently retired professor of English writes about “all sorts of silly stereotypes” that he has encountered, first while growing up in the Central Valley community and later while living in Sonoma, California.

Through the 23 stories and 12 essays, Haslam adroitly employs a variety of styles and perspectives. Social satire marked by disarming humor, tongue-in-cheek hyperbole, and shrewd understatement are Haslam’s frequent tools as he chronicles the absurd cruelty of believing that “Okies were stupid; blacks were lazy; Chinese could sure do laundry; Mexicans excelled at knife fights; Japanese were natural gardeners; Jews were shysters . . . and on and on.”

In reading superb stories like “Two-Headed Man Hangs Self; One Head Depressed,” “The Great Kern Country Alligator Hunt,” and “The Trial of God,” and in savoring stimulating essays like “Reflections from an Irrigation Ditch,” “Death of an Athlete,” and “Voices of a Place”—as well as other selections in the highly recommended *Haslam’s Valley*—readers will encounter the effective voice of a skilled writer who speaks eloquently about intolerance and injustice and does it consistently with crisp prose, powerful characterizations, and provocative slice-of-life scenarios.

—Tim Davis
Univ. of West Florida

15-2-0164

Jensen, Kim. *The Woman I Left Behind*. Willimantic, Conn.: Curbstone Press, 2006. 204 pp. ISBN 1-931896-22-4, \$15.00 (pb).

Set in Southern California, this novel takes as its subject the stormy relationship between a Palestinian man and an Anglo-American woman. Jensen successfully illustrates the conflicts that arise between them due to their very different backgrounds—as well as the suffering that each has had to endure on their own—with compassion and understanding. The language she uses is lyrical and mystical, and if it does occasionally border on the pretentious, I suppose it can be excused by the fact that the two main characters are in their early twenties and artistically inclined. Khalid and Irene are perhaps overly romanticized, but then they are portrayed as they view themselves, and so in that sense it is realistic. In today’s world, where very few conflicts ever seem to get resolved, and optimism seems to have gone out of style, the conclusion is pleasantly uplifting.

The biggest fault I found with the book is that it is too short, and the story is moved along too quickly. The characters, including the minor ones, need to be fleshed out a bit more. I would like to have had a bit more history on Khalid and Irene, particularly descriptions of the former’s homeland and family and the struggles he was involved in. What Jensen

does give is very good, but there needs to be more of it.

—Michelle Looknanan
London, England

15-2-0165

Limón, Graciela. *Left Alive*. Houston, Tex.: Arte Público, 2005. 217 pp. ISBN 1-55885-460-6, \$14.95 (pb).

With journalistic precision, Limón’s latest novel updates the Mexican legend of La Llorona and the classical tragedy of Medea. She brings us death row inmate Rosario Cota, convicted of slaying three of her four children almost 25 years earlier one cold November night in Salinas, California. Elena Santos, a reporter for *The Register*, has grown tired of writing fluff and wants to tackle a big story. She lands an interview with Rafael Cota, the one child Rosario mysteriously spared. Rafael now fritters away his long, lonely days in a mental hospital staring off into space. Estranged from his father, Rafael desperately believes in his mother’s innocence even as he struggles with memories and nightmares of that horrible night. As Elena spends many hours interviewing Rafael, her rock-solid belief in Rosario’s guilt begins to wash away after each session. Could Rafael be correct that someone else, perhaps his own father, actually murdered his siblings?

Limón’s tale is rich in detail and draws us into Rafael’s tortured existence, including his years as a homeless wretch who lived a life of drugs and violence as he carried with him an unflinching faith in his mother’s innocence. But the true center of this page-turner of a novel may very well be the young and ambitious reporter, Elena Santos, who struggles with what the facts say and what her heart begins to tell her. As the narrative builds to its climax, very few will guess the resolution of this gripping and heartbreaking novel.

—Daniel A. Olivas
West Hills, Calif.

15-2-0166

Mallette, Gloria. *What’s Done in the Dark*. New York: Dafina Books, 2006. 290 pp. ISBN 0-7582-1157-0, \$15.00 (pb).

This fast-paced novel reads like a thrilling Saturday night network movie. The story is full of mystery and drama, with very strong African-American characters. The saga begins with two sisters, Celeste and Katrina. All through their lives, Celeste, the younger, wonders why her sister hates her so much. The relationship takes a turn for the worse after Celeste catches Katrina sleeping with her boyfriend. This bitterness carries into their married lives, as Celeste learns from past experience that Katrina’s goal is to make her sister’s life miserable, so they keep their distance.

This all changes when Celeste’s husband is enticed to meet his young mistress right before they were to go out of town to celebrate their anniversary. This will be the last time he and his mistress meet, because he is killed right in the middle of their sexual excursion. Instead of comforting Celeste during her husband’s humiliating death, Katrina viciously confronts her, blaming her for not being able to

satisfy her husband.

As Katrina is gloating in Celeste's misery, she also experiences her own drama when she is called by a stranger to come to the bedside of her comatose husband in another city. Within hours of her arrival, her husband dies. Katrina finds out at the hospital that her husband is unfaithful and is married to another woman. Celeste's parents plead with her to be there for Katrina. Reluctantly she goes to assist Katrina. This is the one time they actually fight on the same side. However, this scene is short lived, as pieces of the mystery behind Celeste's husband begin to unfold. What is done in the dark now comes to light for all to see.

—Charlene Maxey-Harris
Library, Univ. of Nebraska—Lincoln

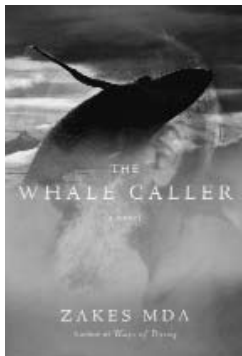
15-2-0167

McFadden, Bernice L. *Nowhere Is a Place*. New York: Dutton, 2006. 304 pp. ISBN 0-525-94875-9, \$24.95.

McFadden's latest novel tells the story of Sherry, who searches her family's past to reconcile who she is today. A pivotal event in the protagonist's childhood—a slap from her mother, Dumpling, for sitting on her uncle's lap—affects Sherry's life. She receives no explanation for the blow. As a consequence, their mother-daughter bond erodes. Sherry's life spirals into a cycle of dysfunctional relationships with men in which one eight-year relationship leads to a brutal end. Without telling Dumpling about the demise of another relationship, Sherry takes a sabbatical from her plight and heads to Mexico. As a result, she has an epiphany as to why her family's ancestral history holds the key to her troubling relationships with her mother and men. The key element is a family heirloom—a blue granite eagle necklace—that connects one generation's secrets to the next. The story of her family's past is revealed during a drive to a family reunion in which Dumpling accompanies Sherry. Consequently, Sherry heals the emotional wounds from her turbulent relationship with her mother.

McFadden's novel effectively evokes a feeling of great anguish for the plight of black families in slavery and its effects on present-day families. Furthermore, the emotions aroused by reading the novel highlight that courage, resilience, and resourcefulness are a few factors contributing to the female characters' survival. These reasons are why readers will find this novel compelling and true to life.

—Dora Love
San Francisco, Calif.



15-2-0168

Mda, Zakes. *The Whale Caller*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2005. 230 pp. ISBN 0-374-28785-6, \$23.00.

The Whale Caller is a meditation on life, love, belief, pride, obsession, penitence, sexuality . . . and whales. Mda, as always in his work, includes elements of myth and fantasy. In this

novel he negotiates between the two, adding enough realism to create engaging characters.

The lives of a man and a woman intersect in a coastal village of South Africa. Both are loners, but each possesses an addiction to love: the woman, Saluni, to a free-spirited life of wine, men, and song; the man, a self-styled Whale Caller, to an obsessive study of whales and a particular female Southern right whale, which he's named Sharisha.

The attempts of the human characters to fulfill each other's lives are largely unsuccessful. The heart of the novel, though, is the whale lore and beautiful sequences when the man calls and plays for his whale on his kelp horn.

Mesmerizing descriptions recur, such as a sexual dance between the Whale Caller and Sharisha; a supermarket visit where the impoverished characters feast with their eyes; the whale beaching herself. Sexuality infuses the story; the mating ritual of Southern rights is worth the price of the book. Mda, a painter as well as a writer, uses color brilliantly, creating memorable scenes.

While not historically grounded, *The Whale Caller* touches occasionally on politics and social change in post-apartheid South Africa, including a diatribe against politicians. A Mda novel often leaves one puzzled, but a reader is always engaged and challenged.

—Anne Serafin
Newtonville, Mass.

15-2-0169

Megged, Aharon. *Mandrakes from the Holy Land*. New Milford, Conn.: The Toby Press, 2005. 198 pp. Trans. from Hebrew by Sondra Silverston. ISBN 1-59264-057-5, \$22.95.

Beatrice Campbell-Bennett, a wealthy young English-woman and a member of London's Bloomsbury Group, travels alone to the Holy Land in 1906. A devout Christian as well as an artist, she intends to paint flowers mentioned in the Bible, viewing them as the physical and sensual manifestations of a higher power.

Beatrice is struggling with her unrequited love for a close friend, Vanessa Stephen, Virginia Woolf's sister. As she travels the country on horseback accompanied by an Arab guide (who later rapes her), its beauty and that of the holy places she visits arouse her both spiritually and erotically. She becomes preoccupied with a desire for "purification," while at the same time she seeks the mandrake flowers, or "dudaim," mentioned in the Bible and reputed to have aphrodisiacal powers.

Through Beatrice, Megged vividly describes the landscapes, towns, and settlements of Turkish-ruled Palestine. Arab inhabitants are mentioned, but Megged focuses on the Jewish settlers of the Second Aliyah (1904—1914), depicting their political/religious idealism combined with their determination to overcome physical hardships. Beatrice shares an English Christian version of that idealism; as the British consul remarks, "We were Zionists before the Zionists!" Beatrice's letters and entries from her diary make up the body of the book, having been collected and (very amusingly) analyzed in footnotes by Dr. Morrison, a psychologist dispatched by

her parents when she refuses to return home, possibly having gone mad. A compelling and multilayered novel by one of Israel's most renowned writers.

—Elka R. Frankel
Princeton, N.J.

15-2-0170

Miyabe, Miyuki. *Crossfire*. New York: Kodansha, 2006. 408 pp. Trans. from Japanese by Deborah Iwabuchi and Anna Hussan Isozaki. ISBN 4-7700-2993-4, \$24.95.

Miyabe has been called the “Stephen King of Japan,” and this book shows why. While not all of her mysteries involve the supernatural or paranormal, *Crossfire* features characters who have psychokinesis or pyrokinesis; they're capable of “pushing” people to their deaths or burning them to cinders.

Members of a gang suspected of preying on girls start turning up mysteriously incinerated. That is the start of the match of wits between two equally determined women: Chikako, veteran detective, and Junko, the beautiful and solitary crime avenger. Along the way, the Guardians, an established vigilante organization, track down Junko and ask her join them. Junko has always been a loner, set apart by her special powers. But then there is this handsome guy who also has paranormal ability. He also knows the alienation of being different and the urge to set things right. Will they form a dynamic duo?

Miyabe sees past the glitz of the Ginza to the gritty neighborhoods of Tokyo and their punks and criminals and taps a desire for justice underlying the Japanese façade of order. This adds a philosophical dimension to a page-turner without ever slowing the action or suspense. If some people do have special powers, should they use them? Is it right to cultivate those powers? Is it possible to go too far in the name of justice?

As in a proper mystery, there's crime, action, romance, and double-dealing. The philosophical musings are not just icing on the cake; they are the foundation.

—Al Hikida
Seattle Central Community College

15-2-0171

Miyamoto, Teru. *Kinshu: Autumn Brocade*. New York: New Directions, 2005. 196 pp. Trans. from Japanese by Roger K. Thomas. ISBN 0-8112-1633-0, \$22.95.

Though once the standard form, epistolary novels are now rarities. Miyamoto's novel takes a while to get used to, not just because of the exchange of long letters (between a divorced couple), but also because they are more literate and articulate than we would assume. Aki is the daughter of a wealthy businessman; Yasuaki is his father-in-law's employee, being groomed to take over the business.

But the novel quickly becomes captivating. Miyamoto uses the old form to good advantage, effectively having two first-person narrators. It has been ten since years since their

traumatic divorce, precipitated by Yasuaki's affair, when they meet again by chance. Aki, still wanting an explanation and needing to vent, follows up with a letter. Yasuaki replies, trying to explain how he became involved with a former classmate. Their yearlong correspondence starts off banal and angry or defensive, but it gradually gives Miyamoto the opportunity to explore a surprising array of themes: life, death, karma, and how Mozart's symphonies tie in. Another theme is how, in spite of Japan's patriarchal culture, women are stronger than men, as shown in their parallel lives.

Through their letters, as Aki and Yasuaki examine their choices and the consequences, they become honestly introspective and also surprisingly philosophical and tender. He is genuinely sorry that he has hurt her, while she is sorry that he has declined like one of Fitzgerald's “beautiful losers” and sincerely hopes that he can avoid repeating patterns of his past.

Miyamoto, famous in Japan, is virtually unknown in America. With *Kinshu*, his first novel translated into English, he is sure to become better known.

—Al Hikida
Seattle Central Community College

15-2-0172

Monteilh, Marissa. *Make Me Hot*. New York: Dafina Books, 2006. 226 pp. ISBN 0-7582-1120-1, \$14.00 (pb).

Make Me Hot is an intriguing story of the physical and emotional transformation of Morgan Bayley. This African-American woman is about to turn 40 and has always been frustrated with the way she looks. She has survived the ridicule of her childhood for being a teen mother and losing her own mother in an awful accident. Now, as an adult, she still encounters the painful stares, although those around her love her the way she is. Her controlling and opinionated boyfriend threatens to leave her if she changes anything.

Morgan's best friend, aware of her dissatisfaction with her self-image, enters her name into a network contest for a “total body makeover.” Morgan wins the makeover and agrees to publicly share her story with the world. Consequently, everyone in her family is apprehensive about her decision to go through with the surgery. Her boyfriend even breaks up with her. Right before the surgery, Morgan develops an online relationship with a mystery man she later finds out is a ghost from her past. While recovering from surgery, Morgan finds out the truth about who she is, as deep, dark secrets are revealed. Morgan not only receives a new makeover, but a new perspective on life.

—Charlene Maxey-Harris
Library, Univ. of Nebraska—Lincoln

15-2-0173

Ramsey, Gail. *Tick Tock*. Philadelphia: Sug Books, 2005. 220 pp. ISBN 0-9748392-0-5, \$12.00 (pb).

This first novel reads like part legal mystery, part romance novel. Philadelphia criminal prosecutor Spiegel Cullen switches sides to defend a friend from a murder charge.

Breanna Jordan is accused of causing the death of her lover while on vacation in Bermuda. That she fled the island before Sean's body washed ashore makes it look more like murder than a tragic accident. That Breanna is unstable and more than a little selfish makes the defense more difficult. The ensuing trial is high profile, partly because the defendant is the daughter of a United States congressman.

Spiegel must deal with interference from Breanna's older brother, James, who is also Spiegel's former longtime lover. Newly married, he tries to restart their relationship. She is still attracted but knows this is a no-win situation. There is also Spiegel's current boyfriend, Craig, who inexplicitly goes from a terrific guy to a cad in short time. Luckily for Spiegel, Breanna's psychologist is smart, kind, and single.

Much of the novel takes place in Bermuda. The final resolution of the trial is anticlimactic, reading like an afterthought. Spiegel faces two personal emergencies, one of which should have been left for Ramsey's next novel. Despite a few weaknesses, this is a promising debut for the African-American author.

—Catherine Crohan
Siena College Library

15-2-0174

Shankar, S. *No End to the Journey*. Hanover, N.H.: Steerforth Press, 2005. 272 pp. ISBN 1-58642-093-3, \$22.95.

No End to the Journey is steeped in comic irony in the beloved tradition of R. K. Narayan, who immortalized provincial life in India. Shankar's novel transpires in two locations: a southern Indian village and that grand metropolis, New Delhi. It holds up a fascinating mirror to family life.

It is a single-character novel. The story unfolds through the jaundiced eyes of Gopalkrishnan or Gopu, a retired civil servant in his sixties. After many years in the big city, he returns reluctantly to his ancestral village with his wife to take care of his widowed mother, a crone who trades shamelessly on her mortality. Needless to say, Gopu's return causes a stir in the village. But he prefers to remain aloof from the locals, wrapped in the mantle of cosmopolitanism. Enconced in his dusty study, he views the local society with ill-concealed contempt. His self-importance, in turn, provokes snide commentary and provides occasion for mirth amongst the neighbors.

The fastidious Gopu is not without his enjoyments, despite the crass annoyances that beset his day. Early mornings are precious to him, except when his lofty thoughts are rudely interrupted by noisy gargling emanating from next door.

He considers his life in flashback. His career began as a journalist in a undistinguished southern Indian town. Gopu's life remained mundane. His parents arranged a match, which resulted in a mediocre, lackluster marriage. Parvati was not exceptional in any way and gradually adapted to the foreign ways of Delhi.

Shankar has written a highly readable novel that is at once poignant and amusing.

—Jaswinder Gundara
Coral Gables, Fla.

15-2-0175

Smith, Zadie. *On Beauty*. New York: Penguin, 2005. 464 pp. ISBN 1-594-20063-7, \$25.95.

Smith's first novel, *White Teeth*, took the world by storm for its depiction of the ethnic and cultural diversity of late-twentieth-century England. *On Beauty* includes several racial groups—from both England and America—but the focus is on class, academic life, and personal relationships rather than on race. This novel is set at a New England college resembling several institutions near Boston. Two families intertwine, with both painful and positive results.

Smith attempts to trace the experiences of ten or so characters from the two families, making the tale somewhat diffuse and unwieldy. She is adept at descriptions with telling details, capturing a character's personality keenly and often humorously. Her understanding of the policies, complexities, tensions, and quirks of university life creates an effective critique and send-up of professors and students alike. The depiction of Kiki, an African-American university wife, is especially memorable.

Smith adds a further dimension by modeling much of the novel on E. M. Forster's *Howard's End* (1910). This homage adds an entertaining element as one charts similarities between the texts, beginning with the first name of the protagonist, Howard.

While not a well-focused or fully satisfying book, *On Beauty* is engaging and amusing. Moreover, it raises important questions regarding ethics, morality, and social policies in both private and public sectors. Notably, it "interrogates" (a term used repeatedly and satirically) vital issues such as affirmative action. *On Beauty* is not an absolute "beauty," but it is fascinating.

—Anne Serafin
Newtonville, Mass.

15-2-0176

Treviño, Jesús Salvador. *The Skyscraper That Flew and Other Stories*. Houston, Tex.: Arte Público, 2005. 219 pp. ISBN 1-55885-444-4, \$14.95 (pb).

It's not necessary to have read Treviño's first fiction collection, *The Fabulous Sinkhole*, to enjoy this short story cycle that references characters who are introduced and events that have transpired in the earlier volume, most notably the appearance of the mystical sinkhole. This collection stands well on its own, despite characterization that sometimes feels sketched in or abbreviated, likely in order to avoid redundancy for *Fabulous Sinkhole* readers. These stories testify to poet Alberto Ríos's claim that magical realism is not the exclusive property of Latin American nations in upheaval; rather, it "belongs to new geographies," such as this fictional town in Texas. In the context of ordinary events—the construction of a building, a forthcoming election, a wedding—the Latino inhabitants of Arroyo Grande experience fantastic, even miraculous happenings that expand on their understanding of self and others.

This series of stories is connected through characters and

setting. All are set in Arroyo Grande, except one of the most moving narratives, "Subway to the Future," which takes place in New York City but involves a former resident, who travels back to her hometown briefly during her magical ride. The characters, without exception, are affecting and memorable. Main characters Yoli Mendoza and Choo Choo Torres are middle-school students, which will make the stories attractive to young adult readers. *The Skyscraper that Flew* has the substance and wit to satisfy adults. In fact, this is a book for anyone who enjoys imaginative tales with a positive outlook on the human condition.

—Lorraine M. Lopez
Vanderbilt Univ.

Drama

15-2-0177

Castillo, Ana. *Psst . . . I Have Something to Tell You, Mi Amor: Two Plays by Ana Castillo*. San Antonio, Tex.: Wings Press, 2005. 76 pp. ISBN 0-916727-20-3 \$16.95 (pb).

The horrifying story of what happened to the American nun Sister Dianna Ortiz in Guatemala in 1989 is retold—transmuted into art—three times in this slender volume. Castillo's opening poem does not flinch from images of that horror even as it alludes to the reader's difficulty of comprehending how any government would allow innocent people to be kidnapped, tortured, and murdered. Indeed, Sister Dianna has made it her mission, as she explains in her preface, to convince the world of the reality of the nightmare so that torture will be abolished.

Besides the poem, Castillo wrote two plays that dramatize Sister Dianna's ordeal. Both are titled *Psst . . . I Have Something to Tell You, Mi Amor*, the words spoken by the man who abducted Sister Dianna from the convent garden. The one-act play for two actors is the more effective piece. In this version, one actress plays Sister Dianna, who addresses the audience "from the nether space of the perpetual torture chamber of her mind." The other plays several roles: a Mother Superior, a television anchorwoman, and, most poignantly, the woman who was raped alongside Sister Dianna. Both women are thrown naked onto dead and dying people in a pit. Dianna relives the moment when a guard jumps in, forces a machete into her hands, and, claspng his hands over hers, kills the other woman.

The second dramatization is a two-act play for eight actors, set in a hospice for survivors of torture. One of her torturers has been hired as a janitor in the hospice, and his presence lends an interesting ambiguity to her perception of reality.

—Felicia Hardison Londré
Univ. of Missouri—Kansas City

15-2-0178

Ogunleye, Foluke. *Nest in a Cage*. East Lansing: TTI Publishing/African Books Collective; dist. by Michigan State Univ. Press, 2005. 54 pp. ISBN 0-7978-0002-6, \$14.95 (pb).

Nest in a Cage is a cautionary tale in dramatic form that

delivers a decidedly Christian message. After reading the blurb on the back cover, I was not expecting to become involved in the story. Nevertheless, I found the play engaging. The dialogue is clear and carries one along rapidly while the characters are created vividly.

The story is told as a flashback when Dr. (Mrs.) Nike Adagunodo arrives to deliver a lecture to a classroom of high school girls. Most of the story takes place at the university in Nigeria where Nike has gone from her village to study medicine. She is initiated quickly by two female roommates into the world of "sugar daddies" and, despite warnings by another classmate, soon becomes the mistress of a rich man.

Nike gradually learns that her luxurious "nest" has become a "cage," and she is disowned by her family when they discover her lifestyle. When she becomes pregnant, she refuses to abort the fetus and leaves her lover. The morality tale ends quite happily, which is a surprising pleasure. The positive outcome might provide encouragement to young people to respect family, traditions, and moral values. In all, the play is a good "read" that I would like to see performed.

—Anne Serafin
Newtonville, Mass.

Poetry

15-2-0179

Alexander, Elizabeth. *American Sublime*. St. Paul, Minn.: Graywolf Press, 2005. 96 pp. ISBN 1-55597-432-5, \$14.00 (pb).

Alexander presents poetry as record/archive where the facts within the poems are manipulated to reveal deeper meanings by painting unique pictures that force us to see the history of Africans dislocated in America in a new way, pulling us in image by image, forcing us to see, smell, taste, and touch both the soiled and the sweet that is African-American history. Her poems are a mapping of events, objects, places, and people that she coordinates into an American quilt, filling the spaces with imagery so that we understand that *American Sublime* is the spirit and the hope of Africans who believed in themselves, their gods, and life.

Alexander layers the poems with objects and events impregnated with historical meaning. In "Cinque Redux," the speaker is a historical figure who has become a mythological figure because of what African people have needed him to be for their own survival and motivation. We find the historical figure attempting to separate fact from fiction to make some sense of his own meaning; yet the process becomes a way through which the present-day reader can understand the various uses of history and myth in our lives. The collection affirms poetry as a way to make meaning. As Alexander writes, "Many things are true," she is forcing the reader to recognize and address the objective and subjective layers of history and to recognize that to be an African dislocated in America is to be a being of conflicting emotions, to suffer from what Du Bois coined "double consciousness."

And yet, to be an American is a complexity when one realizes that the Land of the Free was stolen, and we all now benefit and grapple with this complexity.

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

15-2-0180

Blanco, Richard. *Directions to the Beach of the Dead*. Tucson: Univ. of Arizona Press, 2005. 96 pp. ISBN 0-8165-2479-3, \$15.95 (pb).

This is the second collection of poetry by Blanco, author of the acclaimed *City of a Hundred Fires*. Blanco has taught literature and creative writing in several American universities. Here he takes the reader on a splendid journey through time, love, family, and heritage in a quest for the perfect place, home. For Blanco, home is where the heart is. Home is also the warm memory of his father, “holding hands, secretly in love”—a distant city in Brazil where he wishes to “spend the rest of his life.”

All are pieces of this intimate but incomplete portrait. “So much of my life spent like this—suspended, moving toward unknown places and names or returning to those I know, corresponding with the paradox of crossing, being nowhere yet here.” It is nostalgia, a longing to reach, to finally arrive at the “desired” place. Blanco’s reminiscence of Cuba is a constant in his poetry. In “My Campo Santo,” he is the “arms of guajiros swinging machetes.” He is the sugarcane field. The poem evokes his yearning for a lost land felt only by memories. “For a moment everything is mine, and yet all I can keep is bare.” Blanco describes home as “a forgotten recipe, a spice we can find nowhere, a taste we can reproduce exactly.” This heartfelt collection of poems is an endless pursuit of what we hope to become.

–Andrés Amador
Borough of Manhattan Community College

15-2-0181

Coffee, Robin. *A Scar Upon Our Voice*. Albuquerque: Univ. of New Mexico Press, 2005. 112 pp. ISBN 0-8263-3629-9, \$23.95.

Coffee presents the empathetic voice of an American Indian poet whose autobiographical writings rail against the “second-class citizenship” the dominant society would place upon Native Americans. Concurrently, his writings also demonstrate the inner strength and hope necessary to prevail in the midst of oppression. Coffee is not a new writer. He is an award-winning poet who has written inspiring poems for more than a decade; this book collects his work from 1990, 1991, 1993, 1998, 2000, and 2003. Coffee’s poems, although autobiographical, emote a message that many people are able to identify with, whether Native American or non-Native.

The title poem, “A Scar Upon Our Voice,” conveys the pain of Coffee’s loss of his tribal language. He compares the use of English, a foreign language, to a scar upon the voice of American Indian people who have also lost their tribal languages. This scar, however, he declares, has not stifled his

voice. In fact, it fuels his desire to be heard and to tell his story. This is a fitting title for the book, because Coffee’s story is embodied in these poems.

–Heather Kimberly Dial
North Carolina State Univ.

15-2-0182

Curl, John, trans. and comp. *Ancient American Poets*. Tempe, Ariz.: Bilingual Review Press, 2005. 160 pp. ISBN 1-931010-21-8, \$16.00 (pb).

Poet John Curl immersed himself successively in the Nahuatl, Maya, and Quechua languages as part of his process of rendering into English poetry the oldest surviving song-poems of the Americas. Though all three languages are still spoken, they provide only a tenuous link to the pre-conquest cultures of their respective peoples. Curl worked from all of the available transcriptions, as well as various Spanish translations, but he acknowledges the translator’s necessarily interpretive role in creating accessible versions of such complex and ambiguous material. Nevertheless, each section resonates uniquely.

The “Nahuatl Flower Songs of Nezahualcoyotl” (Hungry Coyote) were composed in the early 1400s, and most of them revel in the sensory pleasures to be savored now, because flowers are lent to us only fleetingly before we go to the “Bodiless Place.” The Maya “Songs of Dzitbalche,” probably set down from earlier sources by Ah Bam in the seventeenth century, vary in subject matter and length, from lyric love poems to calendrical ritual incantations. The great fifteenth-century Inca leader, Pachacuti, composed the more uniform in tone “Sacred Hymns.”

Not only are all 38 poems presented with transcriptions of the original language on facing pages, but each section includes a guide to pronunciation and Curl’s lucid commentary on the language’s special features. Each section further includes substantial material on the cultural context for the poems, as well as what can be known about the life of the poet. A wealth of line drawings and bibliographies add to the interest and usefulness of this impressive work.

–Felicia Hardison Londré
Univ. of Missouri—Kansas City

15-2-0183

Gwiazda, Piotr. *Gagarin Street*. Washington, D.C.: Washington Writers’ Publishing House, 2005. 68 pp. ISBN 0-931846-80-3, \$12.00 (pb).

Poland is the land of poets: Milosz, Herbert, Szymborska. Gwiazda, who teaches at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, is a worthy successor to his Nobel-winning predecessors. Like theirs, his poetry is a passport to our understanding of an alien world much like ours. This, his first collection, was written in English. In the title poem the poet tries to go home again, but home has changed. Gagarin Street has been renamed Pilsudski Street. Ironically, even genuine Soviet heroes, like the famed Soviet cosmonaut, can have their celebrity revoked by order of a municipal subcom-

mittee. But not everything has changed. Better times “are as usual late for people at the bus stop.” It’s worse than not recognizing the city. The city doesn’t recognize him.

In “The Body Artist,” it is the poet himself who wishes to disappear, to excise passages from his body’s text, hoping one day to achieve complete self-erasure. Gwiazda is a poet of anaphora and antithesis. The persona of these plainspoken poems is a refugee who can’t find refuge in a world controlled by ominous but faceless authorities often referred to simply as “They”: “They called a meeting. They cancelled a meeting. / They met in the lobby. They met behind closed doors.”

Even love fails him in “The Refugee,” in lines that echo Philip Larkin: “For even you, when we returned last night / After the hairdresser’s party, surprised me with having nothing / left in your faithful, faultless body to surprise me, / your nakedness instantly recognizable, like my own.”

–Gene Damm
Albany, N.Y.

15-2-0184

Halman, Talat S., ed. *Nightingales and Pleasure Gardens: Turkish Love Poems*. Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse Univ. Press, 2005. 176 pp. Trans. from Turkish by the editor. Associate editor: Jayne L. Warner. ISBN 0-8156-0835-7, \$16.95.

Halman’s wonderful collection of Turkish love poems introduces the reader to diverse Turkish poetic culture from ancient times to the present. Within this diversity, it is possible to perceive how love has appealed to Turkish sentiment in different periods as being mystic, folkloric, classical, and religious. In fact, these assorted perspectives construct not only the richness of Turkish literary tradition, but also the multiple ways of looking at love and life.

Love may be categorized in three ways. First, the poems of Rumi and Yunus Emre are associated with divine love. Rumi sees love as “the water of eternal life,” and Emre views himself as burned by the divine love in which he finds himself: “Your love has wrestled me away from me, / you’re the one I need, you’re the one I crave. / Day and Night I burn.” The court love poems, particularly by Fuzuli and Nedim, suggest a sense of frustration and “loneliness,” as well as a view of platonic love, in which they desire more than to burn. Love also opens new windows for them with its intensity. Finally, the love poems written during the period of the Turkish Republic suggest the love of country, as in the poems of Nazim Hikmet and the Romantic views of creation, renewal, expansion, and transcendence in the poems of F. H. Daglarca and Ilhan Berk.

Halman’s anthology is most valuable for readers who wish to see what love means in different periods of Turkish society, and thus it contributes to studies in which Turkish literature and other world literatures are comparatively analyzed.

–Ali Gunes
Kafkas Univ., Kars, Turkey

15-2-0185

Handal, Nathalie. *The Lives of Rain*. Northampton, Mass.:

Interlink, 2005. 80 pp. Foreword by Carolyn Forché. ISBN 1-56656-602-9, \$15.00 (pb).

Handal’s poetry tells the story over and over of the pain of separation, the heartache of missed chances, and the tragedy of a displaced culture. Like many Palestinians, Handal has grown up far away from her homeland, yearning to go home, as reflected in titles of her poems like “Bethlehem,” “Jenin,” and “Gaza City.” It is a yearning to go back not just to a place, but a time: “I see Bethlehem, all in dust, empty / a torn piece of newspaper lost in its narrow streets. / Where is everyone? Graffiti and stones answer. / Where is the real Bethlehem—the one my grandfather came from?” Exile also has the result of internationalizing her perspective, manifested in the familiarity with many languages and homelands, and the turning of new phrases, such as “Habibti, que tal?” (a mixture of Arabic and Spanish).

Some of Handal’s poetry cannot be so easily deconstructed or understood analytically. Words are assembled to recreate the flavors of intimate, otherwise unspeakable emotions. At times, the essence of a particular poem is encrypted to the point of seeming more like a personal healing process; the meaning is too elusive. Still, the poems wash over the reader like music, and the reader becomes witness and heir to the senseless pain created in this world, experienced and transmitted by this poet.

–Dena El Saffar
Indianapolis, Ind.

15-2-0186

Kim, Geraldine. *Povel*. New York: Fence Books; dist. by Univ. Press of New England, 2005. 120 pp. ISBN 0-9740909-7-2, \$14.00 (pb).

A “povel” is a poem-novel, or as an evidently fictitious scholar proclaims in the introduction to this work, a “glorious new form” combining “confessional verse poetry, language poetry, the novel, and nonfiction . . . to hilarious and innovative ends.” Kim is a Korean-American graduate of NYU, currently living in San Francisco, though, according to the book jacket biography (which features a picture of her face pasted over George W. Bush’s), she attended Yale and is currently serving as U.S. president. If not “hilarious,” the book is certainly whimsical, with its deadpan tone and 14 pages of endnotes, one of which is a photo of Nick Nolte.

Povel may have an intricate overall design, but page by page it appears to be miscellaneous jottings about Kim’s siblings and parents, her ex-boyfriend, movies, high school days, pop singers, and video games, along with thoughts about sex and literature, among other topics. Brief anecdotes or friends’ remarks sometimes fill part of a paragraph, followed by a non sequitur or two; the only sustained narratives are to be found in the endnotes (such as a complete story of the author’s summer job as performer at a children’s party, “Hello Kitty has to go potty”). The technique is a cross between stream-of-consciousness and periodic entries in a writer’s notebook. The details are often amusing or grotesque, and we get a strong

sense of a young artist immersed in pop culture, with fleeting glimpses of her parents' Korean heritage. But more than 100 fine-print pages of artfully random musings will surely seem excessive to many readers.

—Joseph Milicia
Univ. of Wisconsin—Sheboygan

15-2-0187

Mikhail, Dunya. *The War Works Hard*. New York: New Directions, 2005. 80 pp. Trans. from Arabic by Elizabeth Winslow. Introduction by Saadi Simawe. ISBN 0-8112-1621-7, \$13.95 (pb).

What a rare pleasure it is to read the poetry of an Iraqi woman. These poems put such human feelings into events known all too well from the outside, namely the upheaval and turmoil of Iraq and the Iraqi people for the past several generations. In "The Cup," a woman using old-world divination reads tea leaves to communicate with her dead husband, and a story of war, massacre, and coping with loss unfolds. "An Urgent Call" is an angry reprimand of Lynndie England, a female participant in the Abu Ghraib scandal. One of the most chilling is "Bag of Bones," depicting the experience of recovering a loved one's remains from a mass grave: "A mouth, open like a chasm, / was not like that when he kissed her / there, quietly, / not in this place / noisy with skulls and bones and dust." Some poems reflect a sweetness that transcends boundaries and politics, like "Snowstorm," a poem reflecting her life in Michigan, where kids play in the snow: "And we, the snow-women, / kneaded in the children's sweet hands, / expand and smile / and when they attach our eyes/ we gaze gratefully."

A variety of styles avail themselves to this gifted writer, who fled from Iraq following increasing threats from Saddam Hussein for her writing. The poetry, not even in its original language but translated from the Arabic by Elizabeth Winslow, reveals the aesthetic and balance of a seasoned poet who skillfully unravels and reveals truths with her words.

—Dena El Saffar
Indianapolis, Ind.

15-2-0188

Ouzoomian, Amy, ed. *In the Arms of Words: Poems for Disaster Relief*. Santa Fe, N.M.: Sherman Asher, 2005. 116 pp. ISBN 1-890932-30-2, \$16.00 (pb).

This anthology started as a call for poems to memorialize victims of the December 2004 South Asian tsunami. After Hurricane Katrina it became subtitled "Poems for Disaster Relief."

Ouzoomian posted a call for submissions on the Internet, and poems poured in soon after from around the world. The result is a volume of poetic empathy and identity that also serves to raise money for those in need. Ouzoomian will divide the net proceeds among survivors of both disasters. A scheduled reading tour of various Northeast venues, to coincide with the publication, features authors from the anthol-

ogy and provides another opportunity for poetry lovers to help people affected by the tsunami and the hurricane.

Some poems in the anthology were published elsewhere, but most appear here for the first time to serve this project. Along with well-known poets like Marge Piercy, Naomi Shihab Nye, Marilyn Chin, and Lyn Lifshin are newcomers such as RM Engelhardt and Dale Edmands. Many of the poems are direct, immediate responses, not emotion recollected in tranquility. It will be interesting to see how many of these poems of witness and testament withstand the test of time to transcend the occasions, however harrowing, for which they were written.

—Gene Damm
Albany, N.Y.

15-2-0189

Rampersad, Arnold, ed. *The Oxford Anthology of African American Poetry*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2005. 432 pp. ISBN 0-19-512563-0, \$32.50.

Rampersad's inclusive and thematically arranged anthology begins with 17 writers addressing poetry in America, their alternating hurt, self-deprecating sarcasm, and playfulness beginning to define black selfhood against white culture's silence. Further sections form "a portrait of African-American life and culture." (E. Ethelbert Miller's wonderful, more portable *In Search of Color Everywhere* [1994], is also theme-based.) Three sections on shared history give voice to rage, weariness, and, on occasion, the survivor's dry humor: Fenton Johnson suggests letting "the white people's clothes turn to / dust and the Calvary Baptist Church sink to the bottomless pit" ("Tired"). But "Black poets should live—not leap" (Knight, "For Black Poets Who Think of Suicide"). Women are viewed from within and without, one voice afraid that "life will accuse me / of various treasons" (Clifton, "the lost baby poem"), while Quincy Troupe sings their strengths in "Old Black Ladies Standing on Bus Stop Corners #2." Black men are sometimes revered, sometimes accused of "make-shift manhood" (Sanchez, "a poem for my father") but not without context: "everyblackoneofus had his own / private lynching" (Aubert, "Blood to Blood"). Love, Rampersad says, is what blacks were seen as incapable of, so poets search it out: "But I have peeled away your anger / down to its core of love / and look mother / I am a dark temple / where your true spirit rises" (Lorde, "Black Mother Woman").

Rampersad's introduction identifies the tensions, dilemmas, and triumphs of the African-American experience and traces its poetry's history so thoroughly that it is another reason to acquire this book.

—Gail Howard
Norwalk Community College

15-2-0190

Robinson, Judith R.; Bauer, Joan E.; and Roy, Sankar, eds. *Only the Sea Keeps: Poetry of the Tsunami*. Calgary, Alberta: Bayeux Arts, 2005. 182 pp. ISBN 1-896209-69-6, \$14.95 (pb).

"Our need for them makes language," says Grace Cavalieri in "Day of the Dead," one of the selections in this anthol-

ogy of poems seeking to use words to evoke what cannot be named or contained by language—works that employ rhythm, imagery, and slanted rhyme schemes to console, grieve, heal, or question. Some search for answers, explanations, context, faith, hope, and solace.

These English-language poems, most by American authors writing from the perspectives of survivors, mourners, rescuers, tourists, witnesses, or consumers of news media, may be poignant, philosophical, or political. They are prayers or portraits, stories of salvation or devastation, reflections on the human condition. Some use established forms to give shape to deeply felt emotion; others move from image to image, seeking not rhyme, but reason.

The best of them range from Dick Allen's anguished prayer to Jenny D'Angelo's meditation on transcendence, from Joan Bauer's contemplation of human-induced suffering to Joseph Bruchac's affirmation of human generosity, from Cavalieri's thoughts on grief to Cathleen Calvert's sigh of relief, from David Ray's portentous warning against complacency to Nicholas Samaras's elegantly crafted call for compassion. The volume includes thoughtful and heartfelt ruminations on life, death, and mortality by David de Leon, H. T. Harrison, and George Wallace.

Some veer toward academic abstraction or the overly obvious, underscoring the limitations of language. Others more successfully explore the potential of words to delineate spaces where grief may find its proper voice. Yet all somehow arise from the wake of the wave, as expressed by Samaras as: "(u)tterance as grieving exhaled."

—Lori Tsang
Washington, D.C.

Criticism

15-2-0191

Allmendinger, Blake. *Imagining the African American West*. Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 2005. 166 pp. ISBN 0-8032-1067-1, \$49.95.

Allmendinger presents a fascinating look at the role played by African-American writers and settlers in the "civilization" of the American West. He argues that history and literature written about African-American experience in the United States focuses predominantly on the "North and South." However, a well-rounded historical consideration would include a consideration of the contributions to both the literature about and the settlement of the American West made by African-American authors and settlers.

Allmendinger explains that because the population of Mexican Americans and American Indians was higher than the population of African Americans in the West, the concept of "the color line" [that] referred to invisible barriers and social and legal distinctions between blacks and whites . . . was not used in the West." However, the phrase "frontier line" was used, and it had a similar meaning. "It referred to the border between . . . whites and indigenous peoples." There were, "until the frontier was secured . . . no laws or social codes governing black-white relations."

Allmendinger presents critical and insightful readings of little-known African-American authors who give fictional and autobiographical accounts of their own contributions to the development of the American West and telegraphed messages of possibility and oppression to African-American readers, and offers a history that runs from those texts to the portrayal of the "Black cowboy" in today's culture. This work is not just insightful and critically relevant, it is also well written and engaging.

—Leslie Antonette
East Stroudsburg Univ. of Pennsylvania

15-2-0192

Johnson, Kelli Lyon. *Julia Alvarez: Writing a New Place on the Map*. Albuquerque: Univ. of New Mexico Press, 2005. 180 pp. ISBN 0-8263-3651-5, \$32.50.

Though Alvarez has grown into one of the most well-known contemporary Latina writers, a book of criticism addressing all her works—adult novels, young adult fiction, and poetry—had yet to be published until Miami University professor Johnson's work.

Johnson does a wonderful job explicating the various literary theories that have already been applied to Alvarez and other postcolonial writers' works to better juxtapose her own "cartographic" theory. The result is a fascinating look into how Alvarez—a Dominican immigrant forced to come to the United States and thus "both but neither" Dominican Republican and American—uniquely utilizes genre, memory, language, and exile to "map a new country." Some of the techniques Johnson explores include Alvarez's creation of gendered spaces, places, and histories; manipulation of both language and silence to demonstrate power and control; and incorporation of *mestizaje* by mixing not only cultural identities and activities, but also genre and gender.

Students and scholars will find *Julia Alvarez* essential for its concise writing and expansive coverage; it will also serve as an excellent companion to Silvio Sirias's *Julia Alvarez: A Critical Companion* (2001), which analyzes four of Alvarez's novels.

—Jennifer Johnston
San Bernardino (Calif.) Public Library

15-2-0193

Katanski, Amellia V. *Learning to Write "Indian": The Boarding School Experience and American Indian Literature*. Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 2005. 288 pp. ISBN 0-8061-3719-3, \$24.95.

That literacy is related to power hardly needs defending today, yet it remains interesting and informative to notice various historical references that have contributed to this understanding. Especially in Native American boarding school experiences, Katanski demonstrates a serious struggle for power—and the power of Indian children against the structures that threatened to undo their heritage. The book praises the ingenuity of Native school children to appropriate the social and linguistic contexts into enduring imaginative writings (and other subversive acts), which have over

time contributed to the survival of indigenous Americans. The sovereignty of a people to determine their own linguistic references, to identify and conduct themselves after the ordinances of their history and culture, is at stake. The frankness of this open contest seems remarkable in one sense, but Katanski's close analysis is convincing. The ironic combination of learning to write in English, and using that newfound knowledge to subvert the very intentions of those teaching the English language as a means to end (or at least seriously alter) Native cultures, insisting in only this approach to cultural assimilation is tragic; yet it is in this context of using language (including English) that the stories of survival and identification have endured and remain widely available.

The casual reader might be surprised how much Indian literature has originated in and resulted from the boarding school enterprises throughout American history. With insightful analysis, Katanski explicates numerous passages from Native and other writers to demonstrate her claims. Her text is well documented and indexed and contains an impressive bibliography.

—Kenneth Hada
East Central Univ., Ada, Okla.

15-2-0194

Porter, Joy and Roemer, Kenneth M., eds. *The Cambridge Companion to Native American Literature*. New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2005. 343 pp. ISBN 0-521-82283-1, \$65.00 (cl); 0-521-52979-4, \$24.99 (pb).

Contributors to this collection of essays include some of the most prominent scholars in the field of Native American literature. The volume is divided into three sections: Historical and Cultural Contexts (three chapters), Genre Contexts (six chapters), and Individual Authors (eight chapters). The first two sections provide an overview of topics such as history, gender, prose, poetry, identity, and culture by cataloguing works and authors. Admittedly, the space given each topic does not allow for development of a critical methodology.

The section about individual authors is much more successful. Essayists observe trends and developments in criticism as well as the authors' works. Kathryn Shanley's essay on James Welch and Chadwick Allen's essay on N. Scott Momaday are particularly good discussions that embed the primary works in critical analysis.

Despite the unevenness of the essays, the work will serve as a basic resource and introduction for students of American Indian literatures. However, in his seminal essay, "Native American Literature in an Ethnohistorical Context," Michael Dorris argued for recognition of specific tribal literatures. Dorris's work was followed with significant studies by Robert Allen Warrior and Craig Womack, who are referenced by some of the authors in this collection. Nevertheless, cultural contexts remain general, genres impose artificial structures, and only a few of the individual essays understand the significance of distinctive tribal histories and literary traditions.

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

15-2-0195

Turner, Joyce Moore, with W. Burghardt Turner. *Caribbean Crusaders and the Harlem Renaissance*. Champaign: Univ. of Illinois Press, 2005. 336 pp. Introduction by Franklin W. Knight. ISBN 0-252-02996-8, \$55.00 (cl); 0-252-07241-3, \$25.00 (pb).

In the early decades of the twentieth century, New York City became a mecca for people of the African diaspora. In fact, in 1930 a quarter of Harlem's population was composed of African Caribbeans, including many writers and intellectuals. This book traces the history of some of the outstanding Caribbean émigrés whose works and speeches helped inspire and stimulate the burgeoning Harlem Renaissance.

Turner focuses her study primarily on the life of Surinam-born Otto Huiswoud, based in part on conversations with his widow, Hermie. The author details the attraction of the socialist and communist movements to Huiswoud and to many other young immigrant thinkers who had experienced the evils of colonialism in their home countries and racism in the United States. Much of the volume's documentation, drawn from the recently opened Russian archives, relates discussions of the "Negro question" at several Communist Party congresses in Moscow. The uneasy alliance with communism was often complicated by factionalism in the American contingent, as well as chauvinism and atheism on the part of the Soviets.

While a valuable historical document, this complex account is excessively detailed and at times tedious to read. Furthermore, overuse of the word *sic* to indicate simple typographical errors distracts the reader unnecessarily. Better editing, especially in the middle sections, would have made for a more clearly focused and readable book.

—Jayne R. Boisvert
Russell Sage College

Visual and Performing Arts

15-2-0196

Bogle, Donald. *Bright Boulevards, Bold Dreams: The Story of Black Hollywood*. New York: Ballantine/One World, 2005. 400 pp. ISBN 0-345-45418-9, \$26.95.

Bogle, known as the foremost authority on African-American films, lives up to his reputation and expertise in his new publication. Through interviews, films, photographs, and personal recollections, he is able to recreate an exhaustive history of the lives and experiences of those unknown and long-ignored heroes and heroines of African-American descent in the film industry. In his *Primetime Blues* (2001), Bogle focused primarily on "screen images" of blacks, whereas the focus of *Bright Boulevards, Bold Dreams* is placed on their social, personal, and political lives as they were trying to obtain quality roles and acceptance in Hollywood.

He parallels their story with that of mainstream Hollywood as he shares their experiences, hampered by racism, segrega-

tion, politics, and other barriers. Even though the barriers acutely existed, blacks were able to excel in spite of their circumstances. Through scholarly documentation, Bogle tells stories of individuals going as far back as the early 1800s and provides names little known to the public, such as Bridget "Biddy" Mason and Madame Sul-Te-Wan. Twenty-six of the founders of Los Angeles were of African-American descent. Bogle brings us current with the industry as it moves toward a difficult integration that parallels the wider society. This publication is an excellent resource for those interested in film entertainment and Hollywood history.

—Johnnieque B. Love
Library, Univ. of Maryland

15-2-0197

Daniels, Douglas Henry. *One O'Clock Jump: The Unforgettable History of the Oklahoma City Blue Devils*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2006. 278 pp. ISBN 0-8070-7136-6, \$27.50.

Majer, Gerald. *The Velvet Lounge: On Late Chicago Jazz*. New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 2005. 224 pp. ISBN 0-231-13682-X, \$27.50.

The authors present two groundbreaking works that should not be overlooked by jazz historians and aficionados. Majer and Daniels, in their own powerful renditions, recount the syncopation of jazz notes via reflections on the history of the Midwestern jazz scene. Majer concentrates his meditations on the Velvet Lounge, a hitting Chicago jazz locale in the mid-twentieth century, while Daniels chronicles the life span of the Oklahoma City Blue Devils, a widely respected jazz band with changing players.

In *The Velvet Lounge*, Majer injects himself into the late 1960s and early '70s Chicago jazz arena that heavily impacted his city. He employs the jazz emanating from clubs like the Velvet Lounge as a means for tackling the layers of ethical, social, and philosophical dilemmas of Chicago and the United States. Of noted interest is Majer's heavy comparison of jazz with science and science fiction. He also highlights musicians such as Jimmy Smith, Sun Ra, and Gene Ammons in his vivid dramatization of jazz in Chicago.

In *One O'Clock Jump*, Daniels illuminates the key players on the Oklahoma jazz front. He critically profiles the members of the popular 1920s jazz swing band the Blue Devils. By examining former members of the Blue Devils, like Henry "Buster" Smith, Oran "Hot Lips" Page, Jimmy Rushing, Count Basie, and Eddie Durham, Daniels celebrates the progress and the legacy of a community band that spawned successful careers for many young musicians. Daniels pioneers in exploring the lesser-known roots of many noteworthy jazz artists.

Masterfully crafted, both books deliver an uncompromised relishing for all things jazz. The narrative prose structure of the works provides an incredible pathos that buoys the reader to the fantastical realities of the jazz landscape. With artful decrescendos, the authors close out their new

sheet music for the world at large.

—Marsha Walker
Jackson State Univ.

15-2-0198

Kahn, Miriam and Younger, Erin. *Pacific Voices: Keeping Our Cultures Alive*. Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 2006. 200 pp. Illus. ISBN 0-295-98550-X, \$30.00 (pb).

This handsomely designed volume serves as a catalog for an exhibit of cultural artifacts at Seattle's Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture, but its printed materials are of equal interest. A chapter is devoted to each of 17 objects, ranging from a Vietnamese incense burner and a Maori cloak to Laotian, Japanese, and Hawaiian musical instruments and Northwest Native American canoe models and a wolf mask. Introduced by a large color photo of the object, each chapter features a transcribed oral narrative by a user of the object, along with historical and contemporary photos plus sidebars to provide extra information.

Thus the owner of the Laotian *khaen*, a bamboo instrument looking like pan pipes but played with a reed, tells movingly of the power its music has on him and the difficulty of finding other players in America or, for that matter, in Laos, where urbanites consider it to be quaintly out of fashion. A chapter on a Philippine Santo Niño (Holy Child doll) has a sidebar telling of Magellan's introduction of the original statue to Cebu in 1521. A Hawaiian hula instructor recalls her troubles getting her hand-carved drum onboard a plane. The idea of the exhibit and the book is to represent cultural treasures—not antiques but valued personal possessions—of Pacific Rim immigrants to, and original inhabitants of, the Seattle region, with each object having a story behind it. Full of surprising and touching insights, the book succeeds admirably.

—Joseph Milicia
Univ. of Wisconsin—Sheboygan

15-2-0199

Kun, Josh. *Audiotopia: Music, Race, and America*. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2005. 302 pp. ISBN 0-520-22510-4, \$50.00 (cl); 0-520-24424-9, \$19.95 (pb).

Filled with rich details, this clever and provocative book combines America's cultural fabric with that of its popular music. Kun weaves together songs, personalities, historical events, and ideas to reveal American music's diversity, pointing to its role in cultural identity and direction. For example, he covers the influence of Klezmer music on comedian Mickey Katz and his views of Jewish assimilation. And he meshes James Baldwin's themes of color and sex (especially in his novel *Another Country*) to the songs of blues singer Bessie Smith.

His theme is especially poignant when contrasting the cultural impacts of Whitman's view of America, found in his 1860 poem "I hear America Singing," to Langston Hughes's gritty portrayal in his 1925 poem "I, Too, Sing America."

Whitman's message finds ultimate voice in music, such as Sinatra, Crosby, and Waring's 1964 album "America, I Hear You Singing." But Kun demonstrates how much of America's rich tapestry such a portrayal misses or even denies.

Giving credit to Greil Marcus's *Mystery Train* (1975), a landmark study of popular music, Kun succeeds in creating fascinating links between racial and ethnic groups, their musical lives, and their views of life in America. He challenges the "national chorus" that most hear with the missing strains too often ignored. This book is part of a series called "American Crossroads," which contains 21 books exploring race and ethnicity in the United States. The volume contains extensive chapter notes, a discography, a bibliography, and an index.

—Mark S. Thompson

Library, Bergen Community College, Paramus, N.J.

15-2-0200

Ogunleye, Foluke. *African Video Film Today*. East Lansing: Academic Publishers/African Books Collective; dist. by Michigan State Univ. Press, 2005. 162 pp. ISBN 0-7978-2931-8, \$24.95 (pb).

This is a well-researched and important book. One contributor calls home video "Africa's newest art form," and writer after writer cites the pervasiveness and popularity of videos on the African continent. The editor, a Nigerian woman with strong academic and video-producing credentials, establishes the genesis and goals of the collected essays in a well-argued preface. She calls video a Cultural Revolution but remarks that there is a "dearth of literature" on the subject.

Each chapter explores a major area or aspect of video production and raises fascinating issues. Impressively, all nine contributors are African, and all but one currently teach and work within Africa. Six of the ten chapters focus on Nigerian video, which is a major industry, but the Lesotho Video Film Initiative receives excellent coverage, as does the booming video business in Ghana, albeit in only one chapter. Images of women, Christian-directed videos, and violence are examined by the professor-practitioners, and the educational thrust of many videos is documented and encouraged.

Since video is now a global phenomenon, this text can be appreciated by nonspecialists and non-Africanists. The writing is occasionally awkward; standard/Western English is not always reflected in word choice, phrasing, or sentence structures. Some of the political analysis is ardent but a bit naïve. Nevertheless, the book serves as a valuable introduction to the topic, and Ogunleye hopes it will spur further scholarship in the field.

—Anne Serafin

Newtonville, Mass.

15-2-0201

Stokes, W. Royal. *Growing Up with Jazz: Twenty-Four Musicians Talk About Their Lives and Careers*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2005. 242 pp. ISBN 0-19-515927-6, \$30.00.

Jazz as an art form has created its own community of followers: fans, casual friends, scholars, students, and both pro-

fessionals and amateur practitioners all around the world. For these reasons and others, Stokes, a writer, observer, and scholar of jazz music for well over three decades, explores the subject in a very creative and substantive way. Although a trained scholar in the classics, he has observed very close similarities in the classics and jazz. First, the two subjects are art forms that show the basis for democracy. Secondly, they both serve as forms of self-expression and collective improvisation among equals.

Through in-depth interviews, Stokes uses these same themes as a way of bringing together 24 jazz musicians and vocalists. From Art Blakey to Claire Daly to Don Byron, Stokes tells the personal stories of these artists and vocalists as they were candidly told to him. He explores their struggles, introductions to this music art form, major influences on their styles, and love for jazz as a form of self-expression. One of the major highlights is the author's treatment and integration of the women now in jazz; he introduces Jane Monheit, Lisa Sokolov, and Patrizia Scascitelli. He discusses how they have been denied opportunities in spite of their talents. Stokes also explores the importance of "experimental jazz" as a way for musicians to express the uniqueness of their talent. *Growing Up with Jazz* is an excellent tool for jazz fans who want to know more about artists and how they have succeeded in such a complex art form.

—Johnnieque B. Love

Library, Univ. of Maryland

15-2-0202

Thompson, Robert Farris. *Tango: The Art History of Love*. New York: Pantheon, 2005. 384 pp. Foreword by David Byrne. ISBN 0-375-40931-9, \$28.50.

Is tango a dance? Yes, it is. However, Thompson's in-depth study of the tango reminds us that it is a cultural phenomenon that was born, developed, and still lives in a social, multimedia context. The poetry of the tango song embraces love, loss, politics, and history. Blazquez, who provided poetry for composer Piazzolla, wrote: "I exist! A root in a country, kneaded with your clay, I'm the flesh and blood of an Italian which gave me my life and my day."

The evolution of tango is a textural fabric of traditions from the dances of the African Diaspora. Thompson presents drawings and descriptions of African continental dancing that contain elements of the tango: embodied percussion, clapping and body slapping, spatial formations, call and response dancing, foot rhythms. He traces the marriage of African dance with Spanish immigrant traditions and Argentine-born European social dance and music. Thompson leaves no stone unturned as he immerses the reader in the Argentinean musical masters and the Hollywood traces of a deep passionate art that tells history with its steps and sounds and form. *Tango* is a labor of love by Thompson, and it is a full meal with dozens of courses, meant to satiate and fill the palate. This book reminds us that dance is people and their times, and Thompson offers a complete excavation of an art form.

—Toni Smith

Troy, N.Y.

Biography/Autobiography

15-2-0203

Curtin, Philip D. *On the Fringes of History: A Memoir*. Athens: Ohio Univ. Press, 2005. 216 pp. ISBN 0-8214-1645-6, \$24.95.

As late as 1963 a scholar with the stature of H. R. Trevor-Roper could declare that the only history of Africa was the history of Europeans in Africa: "The rest is darkness." This is the autobiography of the man who proved Trevor-Roper not merely wrong, but spectacularly wrong. Curtin was a pioneer and a pathbreaker in developing the history of tropical Africa as an academic discipline. He grew up in West Virginia, entered Swarthmore in 1941, and served in the merchant marine in the final stages of World War II. As a Harvard graduate student, his training was essentially Eurocentric. Curtin, considering that too professionally narrow and intellectually limiting, spun his work where possible to emphasize Europe's impact on the rest of the world. As a junior professor at Swarthmore, then the University of Wisconsin, his interest in African history developed to a point where he traveled extensively in a continent in the process of emancipation from colonial rule.

The vignettes of his experiences and interactions enliven Curtin's discussion of the complex processes of introducing not merely isolated courses, but an entire new field, at a major research university. Wisconsin's programs were only the beginning of Curtin's contributions to African and world history. His broad-gauged scholarship earned him a spectrum of honors, including presidency of the American Historical Association. He emerges as an effective teacher, an energetic fund-raiser, and a skillful academic politician. Parlaying his commitment to Africa's inclusion in the mainstream of history into a distinguished career, Philip Curtin did good and did well simultaneously.

—Dennis E. Showalter
Colorado College

15-2-0204

Ford, Don Henry, Jr. *Contrabando: Confessions of a Drug-Smuggling Texas Cowboy*. El Paso, Tex.: Cinco Puntos Press, 2005. 240 pp. ISBN 0-938317-85-7, \$22.95.

In a country whose people elevate those with business acumen and entrepreneurship success to idol status, it is ironic that drug smugglers/dealers, who are often the most successful, are so despised. Ford tells his story of smuggling along the Texas-Mexico border and, in so doing, illustrates the challenges this country—so simultaneously capitalist and moralistic—places on people who seek economic success in certain areas.

Ford was born in west Texas and, after dropping out of college, quickly became a married man with a child, a farmer, and then a marijuana user. Smuggling was obviously a more lucrative business than farming in the hot, dusty fields of west Texas. Ford's life became one of working with people on both sides of the border—people of different cultures but

like him in striving to survive in a harsh world where making money muddies moral clarity.

Ethnicity, social class, and other differences become unimportant as Ford lives, deals drugs, goes to jail, and finally begins a new life free of smuggling. He and we learn two things. First the economic/political system, so full of contradictions, creates enormous suffering for individuals not lucky enough to succeed in "acceptable" fields of economic endeavor. Second, within the larger world, individuals still have a choice to love or to hate themselves and those around them. The meaning or message of Ford's book is not obvious, but it certainly serves to highlight the fact that our culture does not deal a fair hand to all individuals in it.

—Carol Ann Traut
Univ. of Texas—Permian Basin

15-2-0205

Franklin, John Hope. *Mirror to America: The Autobiography of John Hope Franklin*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2005. 402 pp. ISBN 0-374-29944-7, \$25.00.

Although many will not recognize the name of John Hope Franklin as a giant of the civil rights movement, his contributions were equally as important as many others whose names are broadcast on the anniversaries of major events celebrating that period. His life and work have been a long personal and professional struggle against the injustices of Jim Crow and more subtle forms of discrimination. At an early age, he, his mother, and his siblings were thrown off a train in Oklahoma because they dared sit in the front seats. When he moved to Brooklyn College to become the first African-American chairman of a department in a predominantly white college, he was met with discrimination in trying to secure housing.

The most important contributions made by Franklin lie in the intellectual sphere. He worked with Thurgood Marshall on a case against the University of Kentucky in 1949, and it was in response to another call from Marshall in 1953 that he participated as a historian on the team that argued the *Brown v. Board of Education* case.

Perhaps his most enduring contribution to American history—he regards himself as a historian of American history, not African-American history—is *From Slavery to Freedom*. First published in 1947, it is currently in its eighth (2000) edition and has served as *the* textbook in schools and colleges for decades. He has also written several other books and many journal articles and lectured around the world. He has been appointed to numerous official boards and committees. He has taught at several major American universities and been president of all the major historical associations. He also has had time to tend to his large collection of orchids.

This very well written testament is highly recommended for all collections.

—Sean P. Maloney
Siena College Library

15-2-0206

Guralnick, Peter. *Dream Boogie: The Triumph of Sam Cooke*. New York: Little, Brown, 2005. 736 pp. ISBN 0-316-37794-5, \$27.95.

Guralnick rebuilds the life of Sam Cooke, one of the most brilliant talents of our time. Although some may disagree, Guralnick describes Cooke as the one who laid the foundation for soul music and became the first African-American entrepreneur in the music industry. Born in Clarksdale, Mississippi, the fifth child of Reverend and Mrs. Charles Cook, Sam was the center of family attention. Having the natural gift of singing and writing, he was also endowed with a showman's charisma. Things just naturally came easy for him. Many say that was part of the reason for his untimely death at the age of 34.

Throughout these 700-plus pages, Guralnick painstakingly gives us the good, the bad, and the ugly of Cooke's life in a way that the reader finds it impossible to dislike him, and possible to admire him for his struggle to maintain control of his talent and success. Guralnick's style is elegant, thorough, and somewhat unbiased in his approach to exploring all of the dimensions of this gifted artist. Cooke's life and artistry unfolded at a time in our country's history when racism and segregation were at their highest.

The 1950s and 1960s brought on the civil rights movement, and Cooke's music provided a prophetic lift for its direction. This story is a must read for anyone who has an interest in Sam Cooke and his music, and the history of soul music. I would consider it to be one of the best current biographies written.

—Johnnieque B. Love
Library, Univ. of Maryland

15-2-0207

Letters of Love and Hope: The Story of the Cuban Five. New York: Ocean Press, 2005. 190 pp. Introduction by Alice Walker. ISBN 1-920888-23-3, \$16.95.

In October 1960, United States-Cuban relations were set when an economic embargo was established against Cuba that lasts until today. The following January, the United States broke diplomatic relations with the island nation. Thus began a historical journey that included the ill-fated Bay of Pigs invasion, the Cuban Missile Crisis, and continued American government mistrust of Cuba and its leader Fidel Castro. More than four decades later, archaic policies remain in place, including toleration of action by Cuban exiles in the United States against the Cuban regime.

An illustration of how these policies persist came in September 1998 when five Cubans living in Miami were arrested, charged with conspiracy to commit espionage and conspiracy to commit murder. The charges came out of their monitoring Cuban expatriates in Florida whose mission it is to bring the downfall of Castro. Tried in December 2001, the five men were found guilty and sentenced to long prison terms. One received two life terms plus 15 years. *Letters of Love and Hope* is a collection of the communication between these men and their families. Annotated with explanations, the letters, diaries, and poetry provide insight into the despair of prison life and the fervor of a cause. The slim volume concludes with a short summary of the trial by the defense attorney. Clearly intended to arouse and publicize

the circumstances of the subjects' incarceration, it is an interesting read but hardly balanced and objective.

—James C. Harrison
Siena College

15-2-0208

Liebman, Marcel. *Born Jewish: A Childhood in Occupied Europe.* New York: Verso, 2005. 182 pp. Trans. from French by Liz Heron. Introduction by Jacqueline Rose. ISBN 184467-039-2, \$25.00.

The main focus of this gripping volume is on a Jewish family (poor parents, three sons, including the author) from Belgium and their tragedy after the country's occupation by Nazi Germany (1940—1944): anti-Semitic legislation; elimination of Jews from the economy, professions, and education; the compulsory humiliating yellow star of David; the cruelty of German police; hunger; constant fear of being deported; changes of apartments to avoid arrest by the Gestapo; temporary separation of the three children from their parents; the death of one sibling in Auschwitz. Unfortunately, Jewish leaders (from the Judenrat) and informers collaborated with the German authorities and facilitated the deportation of thousands of Jews to the death camps of Auschwitz. On the other hand, Catholic priests and nuns sheltered Jewish children in boarding schools, day schools, rest homes for frail adolescents, and convents, saving them from deportation. In addition, underground resistance groups (Belgian communists and socialists, some Jewish left-wingers) also saved a few thousand Jewish children and adults.

In the post-Holocaust period, Liebman (1929—1986), although raised in a religious family, underwent a profound metamorphosis and became an atheist, a Marxist philosopher, and an author, opposing Stalinists and social democrats alike. He also criticized Israel and Zionism and embraced the cause of Palestinians. The fact that this English edition appears 28 years after the original French publication does not diminish the intrinsic value and relevance of the author's multifaceted and challenging memoir. Accompanied by useful footnotes and photos, it is recommended for Holocaust, Judaica, and European history collections.

—Vladimir F. Wertsman
Rego Park, N.Y.

15-2-0209

Martínez, Demetria. *Confessions of a Berlitz-Tape Chicana.* Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 2005. 174 pp. ISBN 0-8061-3706-1, \$24.95 (cl); 0-8061-3722-3, \$14.95 (pb).

This is an insightful, intelligent, provocative, and, at times, quite humorous collection of essays that reveals the author's perspective on the world around her. Each essay does, indeed, maintain a confessional tone. In the essay that gives the book its name, for example, she confesses that she belongs to that generation of Hispanics that grew up listening to the language but answering in English. This is what makes her a Berlitz-tape Chicana—she is forever working on her Spanish.

"Total immersion?" she asks herself. "No place like home."

Other themes Martínez explores include the difficulties in finding a name of choice for an ethnic identity. Now that the term Hispanic has long been rejected in favor of Latino, perhaps it is time to question the nomenclature Latino. Martínez writes that lately, when asked, she tends to say she's Mexican, because it makes so many people flinch.

Likewise, Martínez takes a stand when it comes to national security and the Bush administration. "Bush's problem is that he is waging war not on specific criminals, but with evil in general. And demonology makes for irrational military policy."

—Beatriz Rivera-Barnes
Penn State Univ.



15-2-0210

Pérez Firmat, Gustavo. *Scar Tissue*. Tempe, Ariz.: Bilingual Review Press, 2005. 120 pp. ISBN 1-931010-30-7, \$12.00 (pb).

The life of Pérez Firmat is an open book. His intellectual fascination with Caribbean humor prompted him to write the scholarly work *Literature and Liminality: Festive Readings in the Hispanic Tradition* (1986). His sense

of displacement after leaving Cuba as a youth was the inspiration for his collection of poems *Bilingual Blues* (1995). His famous work, the memoir *Next Year in Cuba* (2000), was an insightful and very funny exploration of what it meant to be a Cuban by birth, an American by choice, and a Cuban-American by cultural accommodation.

But his latest volume, *Scar Tissue*, is no laughing matter. This memoir, written as short paragraphs and impressionist poems, documents the author's recovery from prostate cancer and surgery. The poet-scholar compares the removal of his prostate to his removal from Cuba, finding himself once again in a new landscape and adjusting to a new exile, not political but physical. "Tethered to the collection bag / like a ship at anchor, / he makes the rounds . . . / In the bathroom he raises / his leg onto the side of / the toilet and flips the valve. / The bag decompresses like a lung."

Pérez Firmat details his day-by-day improvements, worrying whether or not he will enjoy sex with his wife as he did before (then discovering that there is a sex life after surgery and calling his sex life now "a work in progress"). By the end of his odyssey, Pérez Firmat knows he will survive, but that he will also be forever aware of the brevity and fragility of life, even admitting that the ancient Fidel Castro, his one nemesis, might still manage to outlive him, the way the dictator outlived Pérez Firmat's father.

—Danilo H. Figueredo
Bloomfield College Library

15-2-0211

Stabler, Hollis D. *No One Ever Asked Me: The World War II Memoirs of an Omaha Indian Soldier*. Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 2005. 182 pp. Edited by Victoria Smith. ISBN 0-8032-4324-3, \$24.95.

Like many young Midwesterners in 1939, Stabler had no job and no prospects. Joining the army meant three meals and a paycheck. In September 1939 he became a trooper in the 11th Cavalry. But Stabler was also an Omaha Indian. His childhood was a mix of acculturation to the white world and identification with his Indian heritage. The dualism persisted during his World War II service as a tanker in North Africa, Sicily, Italy, and finally southern France. Stabler emerges as a young man with an outgoing personality and a sense of humor that served him well in an environment not so much racist as racially shortsighted. Like many Indians, he was nicknamed "Chief" and presumed to be a natural warrior.

He was by any standard a good soldier. Stabler was overseas almost three years and wounded twice. He fought alongside the elite rangers and the First Special Service Force. He saw more combat than should be anyone's lot. "I was no hero," Stabler says of himself, "but I knew what to do when things happened." He is particularly fortunate in his editor. Victoria Smith, professor at the University of Nebraska—Lincoln, economically and perceptively contextualizes Stabler's experiences as an Indian who was a soldier and a soldier who was an Indian.

—Dennis E. Showalter
Colorado College

15-2-0212

Stephens, Don. *Ships of Mercy*. Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson, 2005. 220 pp. ISBN 0-7852-1156-X, \$19.99.

Stephens had a vision that oceangoing ships could become hospitals providing medical care to the poorest people in the world. He desired to follow the example of his parents in treating people with respect.

Twenty-five years ago, after meeting Mother Teresa, Stephens started an organization called Mercy Ships. To get the association up and running, Stephens held fund-raisers around the world. With the purchase of the *Victoria*, a former luxury liner built in 1953, he began his charitable group to provide medical care to those in need. After four years of rehabilitation, the *Victoria*, renamed the *Anastasis*, was ready to sail.

Mercy Ships began by providing disaster relief services to countries before expanding into medical care. Their health care primary focus is eye, orthopedic, gynecological, and plastic surgeries for those living in Africa and the Caribbean. Volunteers pay for the privilege of providing health care and other services while serving on board ship.

Throughout the book are touching stories of those whose lives have been changed by Mercy Ships. Besides providing medical care to the world's poorest of the poor, Mercy Ships coordinates community development services, agricultural enterprises, clean water projects, and a land-based clinic in Sierra Leone providing health services to African women. Over five million people have received care since 1978.

This poignant book is for those interested in humanitarian groups bringing justice throughout the world. Mercy Ships truly lives up to its name—bringing mercy to those in need.

—Judith Klamm
Kansas City Public Library

15-2-0213

Sultan, Cathy. *A Beirut Heart: One Woman's War*. Minneapolis: Scarletta Press, 2005. 264 pp. ISBN 0-9765201-1-7, \$15.95 (pb).

The Lebanese war of 1975—1990 produced a torrent of writing by women. Rather than battles and politics, most of these writers focused on what they and their families were going through physically and emotionally. Cathy Sultan, an American married to a Lebanese doctor, provides an account that can't be surpassed for its straightforward reporting and vivid detail.

As a young woman in the peaceful late '60s, she loved living in Lebanon; she refers to Beirut almost mystically as her "lover." Suddenly, that world exploded into one of the most protracted, pointless, confusing, destructive, and vicious wars of the century. The Sultans, with two young children, lived in a particularly dangerous part of Beirut, and some of the author's descriptions of dodging bombs are hair-raising. Yet there were many lulls, during which Cathy and other Beirut civilians tried to restore the normal rhythms of life. Redecorating the bomb-blasted apartment, taking the kids to school, dinner parties, picnics at the beach, vacations on Cyprus . . . deliberately she went on trying to hold family and life together, always aware that the snipers and rockets could start firing again. When the family finally decided to move back to the United States, in 1983, the psychological ravages of the preceding eight years nearly undid their relief at being safe at last.

Besides the immediacy and compassion of her story, Sultan's honesty in analyzing her reactions and attitudes is noteworthy. This book, with its minutiae of daily life interspersed with passages on the political background and events, is a solid contribution to literature about war's effect on civilians.

—Elsa Marston
Bloomington, Ind.

15-2-0214

Zabor, Rafi. *I, Wabenzi*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2005. 470 pp. ISBN 0-86547-583-0, \$26.00.

Gen Xers who want to know what it's like to be stranded in the '60s can find out by reading jazz drummer and music critic Zabor's first volume of his projected four autobiographical tomes. Sizable portions of Zabor's loquacious memoirs might also interest Freudians and ethicists. The account of Zabor's upbringing is an excruciating tale of an attenuated guilt trip. Zabor's mother, he and his father say, loved him, but Zabor's tedious relation of marks of her esteem isn't persuasive. Then, before *Roe v. Wade* (1973), he took his first lover to Tokyo for an abortion. Serious stuff, but it's the girl, after all, who underwent the surgery.

No matter. Zabor spent the next decade on his old man's money trying to figure out how to live without sin in hokey Gurdjieff-cum-Sufiesque-type communes in California and England, helped along by people called Wotan, Reshad, and Shing Tao-Mao. Koren (the new name taken by this sensi-

tive middle-class Brooklyn Jewish boy) picked up collective canards of self-hallucinogenic and highly dubious versions of authentic Islamic culture like the Knot of Manifestation, zikrs, and Arabi sessions. Don't ask. Enron and Tom De Lay make much better sense.

"I wanted to find, or invent out of whole sackcloth [!], if need be, a new form of consciousness, objective, clear, uncolored by the hallucination of subjective [?] psychology beyond the bubble of the self." Me too.

Zabor's first autobiographical installment is, as he puts it, a "total buzz of mystagogic foofaraw." By the way, he uses words like nacreous and coppice a lot. So watch yourself.

—Leo J. Mahoney
Mohave Community College, Kingman, Ariz.

History

15-2-0215

Banner, Stuart. *How the Indians Lost Their Land: Law and Power on the Frontier*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 2005. 344 pp. ISBN 0-674-01871-0, \$29.95.

O'Toole, Fintan. *White Savage: William Johnson and the Invention of America*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2005. 402 pp. ISBN 0-374-28128-9, \$26.00.

If readers want specific and thorough information about cross-cultural relationships between white and Native populations from colonial America to the present, these two books are must reads. Each author judiciously records his findings with careful documentation and measured inference. Each provides a wealth of bibliographical and historical information from multiple perspectives to once again remind us that the truth of any given situation is always governed by context and mixed motives.

The overriding fact of history is simple: Native Americans, as separate groups and as a collective whole, lost the great majority of their land and thus lost their lifestyle in the process. Banner's work, however, documents the process from colonial times forward, showing that much of this process of losing land was accomplished through legal means. Of course, the legal means were not always moral, especially when the more powerful group determined the claims of legality (and morality) in the process. Both authors recognize well-meaning individuals and groups who believed they had the best interest of Indians in mind, despite the prevailing majority opinion, which did not. Unfortunately, however, even good intentions often undermined the health and dignity of native populations.

William Johnson is the most prominent figure who sympathetically understood Indian culture. He also practically understood that a respectful relationship with indigenous peoples was good for white cultures. Despite the story of his fascinating life dramatized here by O'Toole, his views were fated to eventually be lost in the white lust for red land. Johnson's involvement is finally tragic. As ambassador of colonial Great Britain, he at least was an unwitting conspira-

tor of imperialism, the inertia of which, once put in motion, not only dwarfed his good will concerning a peaceful coexistence with indigenous peoples, but also squelched his own personal ambition for peace and prosperity. Of his many fine chapters, O'Toole's final, titled "The Afterlife," is worth the price of the book itself. In it he masterfully recognizes how the archetypal character of a frontier hero outgrows its own origins, setting in place the very agency that would serve to destroy Native life in the succeeding decades. As the myth of the American hero grows, so does the fervor of demonizing Indians, their supposed grotesque nature ironically at odds with Johnson's own views, which gave rise to the American mythical hero to begin with.

Banner's research is clearly laid out in fascinating detail. He fairly represents the multiple viewpoints involved during two-plus centuries of land transaction, but toward the end of his work, he necessarily admits that each attempt to regulate white/Indian land relationships always ends similarly: The Indian situation is worsened, the white situation is bettered. Banner's book provides accessible information for students who want to see a less-than-flattering side of several prominent Americans who took advantage of the indigenous view of land. His research leads to the uncomfortable, ironic conclusion that the legal, contractual, memorializing, documenting, civilizing process itself has often been problematic, if not outright malicious.

—Kenneth Hada
East Central Univ., Ada, Okla.

15-2-0216

Carretta, Vincent. *Equiano the African: Biography of a Self-Made Man*. Athens: Univ. of Georgia Press, 2005. 436 pp. ISBN 0-8203-2571-6, \$29.95.

Scott, Rebecca J. *Degrees of Freedom: Louisiana and Cuba After Slavery*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 2005. 365 pp. ISBN 0-674-01932-6, \$29.95.

These are two focused, well-researched, and gripping histories of African descendants who, shorn of their shackles of slavery, sought to reclaim a lost identity, reinvent themselves as free people of color with family and guaranteed constitutional rights, and through voice, challenge the residuals of slavery, such as white racism, in order to protect the very essence of their humanity. The stories they tell impinge and intertwine on that common theme of the indefatigable nature of the human spirit.

Carretta has told a remarkable analytic story of Equiano the African, who truly was a self-made man of the eighteenth century. The word analytic is used because a significant part of Carretta's methodology is an analysis of Olaudah Equiano's 1789 classic, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African*. It was his autobiography, along with many of his earlier writings, that not only gave Equiano the voice he so long sought, but also identified him as "the first Anglophone writer of African descent to use the definite article to refer to himself." The *Narrative* puts emphasis on Equiano's "consciousness of

being both African and British."

The reader is constantly captivated at how Equiano, an apparently talented individual, was quite skillful at reinventing himself during his enslavement, as well as after he had purchased his freedom. Besides being a first-class mariner who, at the age of 28, was a member of the crew aboard a ship on its voyage to the North Pole, Equiano also managed a West Indian plantation and was an African voice for the antislavery movement in England.

Degrees of Freedom also speaks to an African voice and the reinventing of personae as two post-emancipation African-descendant peoples in Louisiana and Cuba struggle to hold on to a fragile freedom confronted by a vicious strain of white supremacy. Author Scott, in her comparative approach, demonstrates both the parallels and differences that confronted the two post-emancipation societies. The book explores "two worlds of sugar plantations and their neighboring farms and towns, tracing the achievement of freedom and the exercise of political voice."

In both Louisiana (1868) and Cuba (1898), African descendants acquired constitutionally guaranteed rights after participating in the struggles to end slavery. The freedmen joined together in labor groups to pressure management and government for fair wages and humane treatment, and exercised their electoral privileges. But that is where the parallels end. With the collapse and/or overthrow of Reconstruction in Louisiana, blacks were politically and economically marginalized, something sanctioned by both state and federal authorities. In Cuba, white supremacy, as it existed under Spanish rule prior to emancipation and with elements of it evident during U.S. occupation after the Spanish-American War, was unable to flourish as strongly as it did in Louisiana.

As a work of comparative history, *Degrees of Freedom* sets a high mark for excellence. The two books are suitable for students at the high school and college levels.

—A. J. Williams-Myers
State Univ. of New York at New Paltz

15-2-0217

Dembowski, Peter F. *Christians in the Warsaw Ghetto: An Epitaph for the Unremembered*. Notre Dame, Ind.: Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 2005. 176 pp. ISBN 0-268-02572-X, \$40.00 (cl); 0-268-02573-8, \$18.00 (pb).

This informative and well-documented book by a University of Chicago emeritus professor focuses on the lives and fate of about 5,000 Jewish Christians (baptized Jews) from the Warsaw Ghetto during World War II. This category of Christians—mostly intelligentsia organized in three Catholic churches—included both recent converts to Christianity and descendants of older generations of converts, but in the eyes of German authorities, conversion to Christianity was irrelevant—all Jews (believers in Moses or Christ, or atheists) had visible white armbands with the Star of David. At the end (1943), all were sent to the Treblinka death camps.

In addition, there is information on how the Jewish Christians were viewed by the rest of the Jewish community

(over 300,000), the motivations of conversion (opportunistic or sincere belief), the problem of anti-Semitism, and the conduct of Polish priests in the churches of Jewish Christians. The book is a combination of the author's autobiography (he lived in the Warsaw Ghetto and took part in the Warsaw uprising against the Germans), with scholarly research of archival materials (Polish, Yiddish, Hebrew), as well as other writings, several not translated yet into English. Also helpful is an extensive bibliography and a general index. Recommended for Holocaust, Judaica, and other subject (Catholic religion, European history) collections.

—Vladimir F. Wertsman
Rego Park, N.Y.

15-2-0218

Gregory, James N. *The Southern Diaspora: How the Great Migrations of Black and White Southerners Transformed America*. Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2005. 464 pp. ISBN 0-8078-2983-8, \$59.95 (c); 0-8078-5651-7, \$19.95 (pb).

It is well known that many blacks in the United States moved from the South to the North to find jobs and a better life. However, fewer realize that many whites moved to the North and West, too. According to Gregory, from 1900 to 1980, 20,000,000 Southerners moved to the northern and western United States in search of a better life for themselves and their families. This improved life consisted of expectations for both economic and social improvement. As a result, the cultures of the northern and western United States received input from the new migrants, and thus often improved for the better. The migration was not just of poor people with limited skills, but people with their own cultural styles, which they brought to their new homes and thus influenced these new places.

This book does an excellent job of not only providing historical data but also making the reader see the migration as that of real people. Thus, we get a sense of the people who moved: laborers, politicians, musicians, and much more. Nine chapters cover such areas as Success and Failures, The Black Metropolis, Leveraging Civil Rights, Re-figuring Conservatism, and more. Illustrations, figures, and maps deal with such people and subjects areas as Jess Unruh, Robert Moretti, and Willie Brown; The Beverly Hillbillies; Southerners living in other regions; poverty rates of Southerners; and more. Gregory has done a fine job of providing meaningful data in a readable book. This should be a very useful book to those concerned with the issues discussed.

—Russell Eisenman
Univ. of Texas—Pan American

15-2-0219

Ingersoll, Thomas N. *To Intermix with Our White Brothers*. Albuquerque: Univ. of New Mexico Press, 2005. 450 pp. ISBN 0-8263-3287-0, \$39.95.

One of the most prevalent, but least studied and acknowledged, characteristics of Native American populations is that

of mixed blood. From the earliest instances of European exploration of the New World, intermarriage between Indians and Europeans has occurred.

Ingersoll explores the ambivalent and sometimes contradictory reaction of encroaching white settlers to mixed-blood people, and how different European cultures approached the occurrence. Early French colonial leaders sometimes encouraged the practice, not because they recognized cultural equality, but because they assumed that Native people would recognize the superiority of French culture and submit to its legal and religious authority. In other cases, intermarriage was officially discouraged or even forbidden, while the inevitable reality of its occurrence was tolerated for political or economic reasons. Still, in general, white-Indian unions were seen as taboo. Ingersoll suggests that one of the key motivations for the Jacksonian-era Indian removals was the desire for racial purity. The many Americans who proudly celebrate their mixed-blood heritage demonstrate just how unsuccessful this policy was. While Ingersoll focuses on the 1600s to the mid-1800s, he also documents changing attitudes toward white-Indian unions in more recent times.

Some effort is required of readers of this scholarly text; the effort will be repaid, however, with a wealth of interesting facts and a greater understanding of the complexity of American history. Included are illustrations of notable Americans of mixed-blood ancestry, copious notes, and an exhaustive bibliography. Recommended for academic and larger public libraries.

—Andy J. Deering
Central Wyoming College

15-2-0220

Kirwin, Bill, ed. *Out of the Shadows: African American Baseball from the Cuban Giants to Jackie Robinson*. Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 2005. 226 pp. ISBN 0-8032-7825-X, \$17.95 (pb).

Out of the Shadows supports the notion that education is never complete; just when you think there's nothing left to learn about the development of and contributions by African Americans to the national pastime, a book such as this comes along to prove otherwise.

Kirwin, a professor emeritus at the University of Calgary-Edmonton and editor of *NINE: A Journal of Baseball History and Culture*, has compiled a dozen essays, considering such diverse topics as the "real" reason Branch Rickey challenged baseball's color line; the Negro Leagues; and the challenges to black athletes as personified by Don Newcombe, a pitcher for the Brooklyn Dodgers, and Richie Allen, who played in a less racially harmonious Philadelphia setting.

As is often the case in such a collaborative effort, the contributions seem a bit uneven. A collaborative effort on "Mr. Branch Rickey and Mr. Jackie Robinson's Plea for Affirmative Action" appears more suited for a juvenile audience that could never conceive of a time when men of color were excluded from the sport.

Most of the issues have been dealt with in much greater depth. Biographies have been written about Effa Manley, the

female owner of the Newark Eagles in the 1930s and 40s. And, of course, books on Robinson are practically a genre unto themselves. But *Out of the Shadows* does the service of offering a sampling of the difficulties faced by black athletes. The notes following each chapter are an excellent resource for additional further study.

—Ron Kaplan
Montclair, N.J.

15-2-0221

LeBeau, Patrick Russell. *Rethinking Michigan Indian History*. East Lansing: Michigan State Univ. Press, 2005. 215 pp. Illus. Includes CD-ROM with educator resources. ISBN 0-87013-712-3, \$29.95 (pb).

This supplementary text provides a welcome perspective. LeBeau is a Native American historian/writer and enrolled member of the Cheyenne River Sioux. His text engages the reader in critically examining the historical sources of information. A notable aspect of this book is a pretest for examination of what is known about American Indians, contemporary and historical.

Readers are guided through four lessons with activities wherein they may create their own understanding of American Indian history in Michigan. Specifically, readers can reject or confirm four hypothetical conclusions in the lessons that LeBeau provides: (1) stereotypes of Indians in Michigan are well known, (2) Michigan Indian treaty rights are upheld by the U.S. Constitution, (3) contemporary views of Michigan Indians vs. Indians as artifacts of the past, and (4) Michigan Indian culture is adaptable and not frozen in time.

Lessons are composed of three sections: a narrative providing relevant information and terminology/definitions, activities and exercises to apply and explore ideas presented, and appended resources, which are reproducible handouts, to supplement discussion. These handouts are included on the enclosed CD.

Although this text is geared toward Indian history in general in Michigan, it provides relevant information concerning American Indians and encourages a critical view of history that is universal to any region in the United States. The lessons approach that LeBeau provides makes this an excellent resource for educators in teaching American Indian history. His method also provides necessary guidance to those unsure of how to incorporate and teach American Indian history.

—Heather Kimberly Dial
North Carolina State Univ.

15-2-0222

Loewen, James. *Sundown Towns: A Hidden Dimension of American Racism*. New York: The New Press, 2005. 562 pp. ISBN 1-56584-887-X, \$29.95.

“Sundown towns” are communities from which African Americans or other minorities are excluded. The term is taken from signs once prominently displayed at city limits warning, “Nigger, don’t let the sun go down on you in our town.”

Employing census data, historical documents, and inter-

views with local residents, Loewen reveals that this racial exclusion was far more pervasive than previously acknowledged. Surprisingly, most sundown towns are not in the South, but in the Midwest, especially Illinois and Indiana. African Americans were not the only group targeted. In the West, Chinese, Japanese, and sometimes Native Americans were banned. In the Southwest, Mexican Americans faced similar barriers. A more recent variation is the all-white suburb, such as the Levittowns, constructed in Long Island and Pennsylvania in the postwar building boom, where blacks were not allowed to purchase homes. This practice was abetted by federal agencies that refused to guarantee home loans in integrated neighborhoods.

One of the communities cited by Loewen, Grosse Pointe, Michigan, was home to this reviewer from 1956 to 1966. Our all-white enclave was maintained by local real estate agents using a point system to screen potential homebuyers. Not only were blacks excluded, but also Asians, Jews, and even Caucasians deemed to be too “swarthy.”

Loewen not only chronicles the neglected history of these towns but also exposes the forces that led to their creation and the lasting consequences of residential segregation. He concludes with a series of practical suggestions for ending this national disgrace.

—Paul T. Murray
Siena College

15-2-0223

Mann, Charles C. *1491: New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus*. New York: Knopf, 2005. 465 pp. ISBN 1-4000-4006-X, \$30.00.

What did the Western Hemisphere look like before the arrival of Columbus? Was it largely unspoiled wilderness, broken by occasional small settlements? Or was it populated by numerous large and complex societies? The former is the picture that history books have presented to American schoolchildren for generations. The latter, according to Mann, is the view emerging from anthropological and archeological research.

In this far-ranging survey, Mann skips from the Wampanoag confederation of Massachusetts to Cahokia in southern Illinois to the Inca empire in the highlands of modern Peru. At each stop he describes how scholars are rewriting our understanding of these diverse civilizations. Although the stories differ greatly, one theme is common to all—the disastrous impact of European diseases on native populations. When white explorers first contacted Indian nations, they often saw only the remnants of communities recently devastated by influenza, measles, or smallpox. A second theme is the interaction between humans and the environment. Mann contends that, to an extent not previously appreciated, Native Americans actively manipulated their natural surroundings. He also points out that the exchange of plant and animal species between the old and new worlds had profound economic, social, and environmental consequences for both.

Mann acknowledges that much of what he describes is not universally accepted. He reports scientific controversies over

newly discovered evidence and its interpretation. Nevertheless, readers of *1491* will be forced to rethink many of their beliefs about life in America before Columbus.

–Paul T. Murray
Siena College

15-2-0224

Myler, Patrick. *Ring of Hate: Joe Louis vs. Max Schmeling: The Fight of the Century*. New York: Arcade, 2005. 246 pp. ISBN 1-55970-789-5, \$25.00.

Arguably the most famous sporting event of the twentieth century was the world heavyweight championship fight held on June 22, 1938, between Joe Louis, a black American, and the German, Max Schmeling. Although not the making of these two men, the fight came to symbolize the period's larger struggle between national political ideologies and race. For Louis, personally, it was a more important opportunity to avenge his only loss, which had come against Schmeling two years earlier. Adding to the legendary status of the 1938 fight was Louis knocking out Schmeling 124 seconds into the first round. Myler, the author of a number of books on boxing, has crafted an excellent double biography on the two fighters and the fight. He examines how each man came to boxing and the difficulties they confronted on their journey to that fateful Wednesday night, especially the racism faced by Louis. Myler's analysis reveals character flaws in both boxers but counters this with a clear indication of their innate goodness despite prejudicial perceptions created to stir up interest in the fight and the coloring of World War II that would break out the following year.

Myler, however, does not end the story with Louis's victory. He continues to trace the careers of the two boxers through World War II and into retirement. Perhaps most importantly, the author tries to rehabilitate the reputation of Schmeling as a Nazi. The result of Myler's effort is an exciting and highly readable book for the general public. Scholars, however, will find nothing new here and will be disappointed by the lack of any documentation, though there is an excellent bibliography.

–James C. Harrison
Siena College

15-2-0225

Painter, Nell Irvin. *Creating Black Americans: African-American History and Its Meanings, 1619 to the Present*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2005. 480 pp. ISBN 0-19-513755-8, \$35.00.

Painter continues her string of excellent history monographs—*Sojourner Truth* (1996), *Exodusters* (1977)—with this lavishly illustrated record of African-American successes and failures from the first days of the Atlantic slave trade to today's economic and social prominence of athletes and entertainers. Designed for maximum accessibility to those with little or no knowledge of African-American history and accomplishments, Painter's new work is extremely evenhanded in its approach, revealing not only the horrors of slavery and the repression of black civil rights but also the continuity of

another black America of free landowners, entrepreneurs, and groundbreaking performers. Even individuals who think they know everything about African-American history will come away with new knowledge, and Painter backs up her themes with statistics and solid examples.

The 148 gorgeous full-color reproductions of works by African-American artists should attract an audience not accustomed to reading standard histories, and the biographical guide to these artists that concludes the volume is most welcome. Although Painter makes only minimal efforts to relate the art to the milieu, that does not detract from the overall effectiveness of her work. An extraordinarily well-done work that would make an excellent textbook for undergraduate history classes but also should be a prime addition to all public and academic history collections. Highly recommended.

–Anthony J. Adam
Library, Prairie View A & M Univ.

15-2-0226

Perbi, Akosua Adoma. *A History of Indigenous Slavery in Ghana: From the 15th to the 19th Century*. East Lansing: Sub-Saharan Publishing; dist. by African Books Collective and Michigan State Univ. Press, 2004. 231 pp. ISBN 9988-550-32-4, \$25.95 (pb).

In all societies, ancient and modern, the rich and powerful have found others to do low and menial tasks for them. Africa, the continent that has suffered the worst fate in terms of the horrendous trade in human cargo, has had its own indigenous slavery, which undoubtedly facilitated the transition to the trans-Atlantic slave trade to the Americas. Professor Perbi's book focuses on the institution of slavery and its multiple dynamics, characteristics, and nuances in precolonial Ghana (formerly the Gold Coast). She has focused on a subject that "continues to fascinate our historical imagination" and has great relevance to world and African history.

The book examines indigenous slavery in Ghana from its beginnings to its gradual abolition. The author presents the material in clear, readable prose, with subdivisions within the chapters that allow the reader to follow her narrative while analyzing the different component themes. Among the distinct insights that emerge from the work are the qualitative differences between Ghanaian domestic slavery and New World slavery and other slave systems, placing the study in a very significant comparative mode.

This book fills a gap as stated by the author: "Indigenous slavery has not received detailed attention in the historiography of Ghana." Using multiple methodologies, including oral testimonies, archival materials, significant secondary sources, and an extensive bibliography, Professor Perbi succeeds in producing a text that is very good reading for undergraduates and all interested persons who seek to discover new knowledge on old subjects.

–Robert Nii Nartey
Siena College

15-2-0227

Whitaker, Matthew C. *Race Work: The Rise of Civil Rights in the Urban West*. Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 2005. 382 pp. ISBN 0-8032-4821-0, \$35.00.

Race Work documents the struggle for African American civil rights in Phoenix, Arizona, during the post—World War II era. It focuses on the careers of Lincoln and Eleanor Ragsdale, who for four decades were leading figures in nearly every important battle for racial equality. Lincoln came to Phoenix with the Army Air Corps after completing pilot training at Tuskegee Institute in 1945. He met and married Eleanor Dickey, a schoolteacher from Philadelphia. Together they operated a funeral home that was the foundation of their numerous business ventures.

The Ragsdales soon became leaders of the relatively small African-American community in Phoenix. They pressed local government to lower barriers to black progress. They scored a major victory when a superior court judge struck down Arizona's school segregation law a year before the Brown decision. Over the next 35 years they tackled numerous other issues—employment discrimination, residential segregation, passage of a statewide public accommodations law, creation of a state holiday to honor Martin Luther King, and ending exclusion from country clubs. Sometimes they formed coalitions with other community groups, but Whitaker points out that they were unsuccessful in forging an enduring alliance with Phoenix's large Mexican-American population.

Lincoln Ragsdale was the more visible and outspoken half of this couple. His wife was more conciliatory, often working quietly behind the scenes. Both were staunch believers in the importance black enterprise. Their public and private careers combined Booker T. Washington's self-help philosophy with the militant insistence on full civil rights epitomized by W. E. B. Du Bois.

—Paul T. Murray
Siena College

15-2-0228

Williams, Robert A., Jr. *Like a Loaded Weapon: The Rehnquist Court, Indian Rights, and the Legal History of Racism in America*. Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 2006. 312 pp. ISBN 0-8166-4709-7, \$56.95 (cl); 0-8166-4710-0, \$18.95 (pb).

The complex and often disturbing history of Indian rights in the United States as dictated by the Supreme Court is tackled in this impressive work. Williams, professor of law and American Indian Studies at the University of Arizona, explores the history of Indian rights, beginning with colonial policies and continuing to the present day. This text carefully examines the basis of monumental legal decisions regarding Indians in the United States; it includes endnotes and an index.

After dissecting individual legal decisions, Williams describes the impact each decision has had on individual Indians and on future legal decisions. Moving beyond single legal decisions, Williams identifies larger trends such as the type of language used by Supreme Court justices in legal

documents. Specifically, Williams tackles the question of whether the United States is a racial dictatorship. Indian rights are placed in a larger context by this work. Williams analyzes larger legal movements such as the civil rights movement, and identifies unique circumstances faced by Indians. Careful attention is paid to several popular stereotypes of Indians, such as the “noble savage” and the “barbarian.”

Overall, this is a highly recommended work that provides a thorough analysis of the legal history of Indian rights in the United States.

—Kristin Whitehair
Kansas State Univ. Libraries

Religion

15-2-0229

Cha, Peter; Kang, S. Steve; and Lee, Helen, eds. *Growing Healthy Asian American Churches*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2006. 204 pp. ISBN 0-8308-3325-0, \$16.00 (pb).

The images of “the household of God” from the Bible and of “growing healthy” churches frame the articles in this book on Asian-American churches. While these images may be inclusive and neutral, there is a tendency for them to become strictly Bible-based. What happens is that deeply ingrained Asian ways and Confucian influences such as honor/shame relationships, saving face, and filial piety are reshaped to the Gospel message in order to mold Asian churches into strong American Evangelical Christian churches.

The contributions of the Asian people are diminished in this discussion. It seems that to be accepted in America, Asians need to become even more Christian and American than their American Christian counterparts. The consideration of other Asian religious communities that have balanced both Asian and American identities would have been beneficial to this work.

The articles consider only mainline Protestant denominations, to the exclusion of the growing Asian Catholic communities and smaller Christian denominations. The inclusion would have offered a better perspective on the rather varied Asian-American Christian population. The concentration only on Chinese, Japanese, and Korean communities missed the opportunity to include other Asian groups that also comprise complex, healthy Christian congregations, such as Filipinos, South Asians, and Vietnamese. The articles do focus on intergenerational conflicts that highlight the complexity of identity building. This book may be helpful as a starting point for further study of these growing Asian-American Christian Churches.

—Linh Hoang
Siena College

15-2-0230

Mehrotra, Rajiov, ed. *The Essential Dalai Lama: His Important Teachings*. New York: Viking, 2005. 352 pp. ISBN 0-670-03444-4, \$24.95.

Hundreds, even thousands of people attend the Dalai Lama's public teachings, wherever he travels throughout the world. With this book, many more have access to the breadth of his teachings from these public talks and writings.

Compiling the various teachings of different times, places, purposes, and levels of audience certainly had its challenges, and only rarely is a discontinuity to be seen, unfortunately distracting a reader. Overall, the book successfully synthesizes the essential teachings into a coherent topology of Buddhist ideology and practice. Such a distillation to the essential, however, leaves some of the more difficult concepts inaccessible to the beginning student or intellectual tourist.

Certainly the most difficult concepts are not going to be readily accessible or reducible to a comprehensible essence, which is why students spend years or lifetimes of practice pursuing understanding. The book offers a comprehensive bibliography of the Dalai Lama's writings. Mehrotra has allowed the Dalai Lama's humor and simplicity of speech shine through the book, so that the reader has a real sense of the compassion and kindness of His Holiness.

Most interesting in this book is the framework in which it is couched: The Buddhist concepts and practice sections—the bulk of the book—are preceded and followed by sections exploring the universal human condition, tolerance, and commonalities across cultures and societies. Those chapters on ethics and society, science and spirituality, and harmony among religions are presented in such a fresh way that Westerners will find them stimulating and thought-provoking.

—Rinchen Yutso
Prospect Harbor, Me.

15-2-0231

Sacks, Jonathan. *To Heal a Fractured World: The Ethics of Responsibility*. New York: Schocken, 2005. 288 pp. ISBN 0-8052-4241-4, \$25.00.

Rabbi Sacks addresses questions concerning our responsibility to others, to society, and to humanity. Noting the difficulty in defining our responsibility to something as “amorphous as humanity” or “inanimate as nature,” he suggests that religious responsibility may prove “more cogent than secular alternatives.” Religious responsibility, which sees “life as God's call to responsibility,” provides a central theme of the book. Sacks reflects on this divine call to responsibility by examining Jewish social ethics, which he sees as “refreshingly down-to-earth. If someone is in need, give. If someone is lonely, invite them home. . . . the [Jewish] sages called this ‘imitating God.’” Such ethics build on the idea that God has faith in us to imitate God and participate in the healing of a fractured world. In this sense, Sacks writes as “a Jewish voice in the conversation of humankind” regarding questions about the meaning of and duty in life.

The book is lucid and well written. In order to present Jewish social ethics to his readers, Sacks brings Jewish law, theological reflection, biblical interpretation, and anecdotal evidence into conversation with each other in a very readable fashion. Part One examines key concepts in Jewish social ethics, including justice, charity, love-as-action, sanctifying

God's name, the “ways of peace,” and “mending the world.” Through these ethical concepts, Sacks presents Judaism as a “religion of protest” rather than simply “the opium of the people.” Part Two explores the theology of responsibility that gives rise to these concepts. Part Three reflects on the difference they make in the way one lives.

—Jeremy Schipper
Siena College

15-2-0232

Smith, Efrem and Jackson, Phil. *The Hip-Hop Church: Connecting with the Movement Shaping Our Culture*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2006. 192 pp. ISBN 0-8308-3329-3, \$14.00 (pb).

Most people think of hip-hop and rap as one. Not so, state pastors Smith and Jackson, who have written a unique book to clarify the differences, and at the same time have created, in an easy-to-read format, a dynamic and engrossing book on the subject of hip-hop. It is a new generation, and most churches are facing a decline in youth attendance. This book focuses on the decline and provides practical solutions of returning our youth to church with a hip-hop ministry. Readers are in the authors' debt for this comprehensive and clearly composed book on a subject about which not much has been written.

Smith and Jackson define many unique elements in the hip-hop culture. They present models for hip-hop ministry, but what is so absorbing about this work is the historical information of our black churches and the church's relationship with music and musicians. Pastors, youth ministers, and parents will understand the background, the differences, and the similarities between hip-hop and rap music, soul music, the blues, and more, and its connection to the church. Practical tips, from marketing the hip-hop ministry to styles of worship services, are given in detail, as well as ways to embrace youths, from the teenage mother to the local drug pusher on the corner. *The Hip-Hop Church* will enlighten readers on essential steps to bringing in the hip-hop youth of today and keeping them there. Hip-hop—it is a way of life, and this book is a must read for all church leaders of every denomination, as well as parents who are seeking additional information to help understand their teenagers.

—Ida D. McGhee
Univ. of Rhode Island

Education

15-2-0233

Kohl, Herbert. *She Would Not Be Moved: How We Tell the Story of Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott*. New York: The New Press, 2005. 144 pp. ISBN 1-59558-020-4, \$22.95.

“One of the policemen asked me if the bus driver had asked me to stand and I said yes. He said, ‘Why don't you stand up?’ And I asked him, ‘Why do you push us around?’ He said, ‘I do not know, but the law is the law and you're under arrest.’”

(Henry Hampton and Steve Fayer, *Voices of Freedom* [1990]).

These words by the late Mrs. Rosa Parks 50 years ago, December 1, 1955, started what has come to be known as the modern civil rights movement. Kohl presents Parks more realistically and in depth for young readers. In contrast to past portrayals, he points out that she wasn't some tired, poor lady who on the spur of the moment decided not give up her bus seat to a white man. She was fully aware that her actions could result in dire and dangerous personal consequences. Also, he informs the reader that the 381-day bus boycott that followed her arrest had been in the planning for a year. It was not an emotional, impulsive happening.

Kohl's book is an instructional tool that will allow teachers to work with their students to carefully analyze racism both past and present in the United States. He gives many examples of how the Rosa Parks story is typically portrayed and then offers his perspective on how it should be more accurately told. There is some redundancy in this book, but overall it is a worthy "add to" teaching resource for upper elementary and middle school students.

-Henry C. Griffith, Sr.
Dublin (Ohio) City Schools

15-2-0234

Osler, Audrey, ed. *Teachers, Human Rights, and Diversity*. Sterling, Va.: Trentham Books; dist. by Stylus Publishing, 2005. 184 pp. ISBN 1-85856-339-9, \$29.95 (pb).

Eight authors have contributed to a timely work examining the problems and issues schools in democratic nation-states experience when their primary goal is to provide thought-provoking and action-oriented education for students, an education that helps students become effective within schools and societies stratified by race, social class, and religious separatism. Through case studies, the chapters provide insights and findings from England, Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, and the United States. While some essays focus on examples of teachers and teacher educators who practice democratic teaching and enhance student learning, others offer encouraging empirical findings indicating that a democratic curriculum has positive effects on student attitudes toward out-group members. Every case offers important implications for all democratic societies where the central goal of schools is to educate participating democratic citizens who are committed to social justice, human rights, and civic action.

The authors also make it clear that teachers and schools must practice democracy and human rights in order for these ideals to be internalized by students. This informative and practical work advances both theory and practice about ways to educate citizens in multicultural societies who are able and willing to work collaboratively at transforming their communities, nations, and the world into humane places where all people can live. This work is highly recommended for those in the educational enterprise as well as mainstream and marginal groups who desire to collaborate and create a more just world.

-Linda Rhone
Shepherd Univ.

Science, Technology, and Medicine

15-2-0235

Roughgarden, Joan. *Evolution's Rainbow: Diversity, Gender, and Sexuality in Nature and People*. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2005. 474 pp. ISBN 0-520-24073-1, \$27.50 (c); 0-520-24679-9, \$17.95 (pb).

Biologist Roughgarden is ambitious. She wants to reform ecology, molecular biology, medicine, anthropology, sociology, and theology, actually science in general, and not just science, but scientific attitudes, and not just theology, but religious attitudes. She believes science denigrates sexual and gender diversity, and it is Darwin's fault. She suggests that "Science" does not tell us about animal sexual models that are different from human models, that "Medicine" sees any variation from the prevailing model as disease.

Evolution's Rainbow is full of often fascinating information on science, history, and all fields related to sexual and gender diversity. The writing is clear, breezy, and casual, with down-to-earth examples, and never heavy, despite detailed scientific information. It is brashly opinionated.

The section on animal diversity presents theories about diverse sexual behavior, then deftly demolishes them (from her point of view) and presents her own more tolerant theory. She is particularly interested in showing the benefits of transgender behavior, set against explanations that see such behavior as both deviant and evidence of incapacity. She objects to biased scientific vocabulary that helps scientists "sneak gender stereotypes into the primary scientific literature and corrupt its objectivity." The next section covers human diversity, with master premises that variety is not deviation from an ideal norm and that genes alone do not control development. A final section presents cultural information, primarily about societies with accepted categories of transgendered behavior. She concludes with U.S. "Trans Politics," followed by a series of policy recommendations. This is lively and challenging reading, but the reader must swallow some polemical pummeling.

-Carol B. Gartner
Purdue Univ. Calumet

Social and Political Sciences

15-2-0236

Behdad, Ali. *A Forgetful Nation: On Immigration and Cultural Identity in the United States*. Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 2005. 212 pp. ISBN 0-8223-3606-5, \$74.95 (c); 0-8223-3619-7, \$21.95 (pb).

This impressive work persuasively argues that the cultural identity of the United States historically excludes immigrants. Behdad, professor of English and comparative

literature at the University of California, Los Angeles and respected author, reasons that the creation of the culture of the United States as a nation is the product of “historical amnesia” rooted in nativism. Through exploration of public sentiments, rhetoric of political leaders, writings by academic scholars, and legal evidence, Behdad demonstrates how patriotism from early U.S. history to the present is rooted in nativism. Reaching beyond the basic concept of “us” versus “them,” Behdad paints a clearer picture of how and why the United States has crafted its narrative of national identity excluding immigrants.

By examining numerous texts by scholars specializing in fields such as psychology and philosophy, Behdad places the constructed myth of immigration in a historically accurate context. Connecting various cultural movements reveals the true impact of “historical amnesia” on the national identity and the perception of immigrants. For example, Behdad describes how the emergence of germ theory in medicine allowed the government to create powerful health regulations. These regulations became the basis for objection to immigration and for the development of invasive medical procedures practiced on immigrants. Behdad combines theoretical concepts with personal experiences. This readable work includes a bibliography, notes, and an index. Overall, this is a highly recommended study.

–Kristin Whitehair
Kansas State Univ.

15-2-0237

Ellis, Clyde; Lassiter, Luke Eric; and Dunham, Gary H., eds. *Powwow*. Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 2006. 314 pp. ISBN 0-8032-2960-7, \$45.00 (c); 0-8032-6755-X, \$19.95 (pb).

Perhaps no other phenomenon symbolizes modern Native America as much as the powwow. This tradition is explored in detail in an anthology of scholarly but accessible essays. The book opens with several essays related to the origins and evolution of the powwow, including “The Sound of the Drums Will Revive Them,” by Clyde Ellis, which examines some of the more controversial aspects of the powwow often overlooked in the grand spectacle. For example, the powwow is seen by some as a unifying force, a triumph of tribal tradition over government attempts to suppress Native ceremonies and dances. Others see powwows as denatured, “safe” versions of Indian ceremonials—in effect, modern-day “Wild West” shows. Other essays in this section include personal reminiscences and the history of powwow celebrations of a specific band of Winnebago Indians.

The second section, “Performance and Expression,” deals with presentation and theatrical details, including essays on songs, dress, the linguistics of powwows, and “Powwow Princess” contests.

The final section, “Appropriations, Negotiations and Contestations,” deals with the powwow in relation to non-Indian and nontraditional Native societies. Essays in this section explore “Two-Spirit” powwows of gay, lesbian, and transgender Indians; non-Indian powwows in Europe (par-

ticularly Germany); and “New Age” adaptations and appropriations of the powwow tradition.

Powwow is a fascinating look at an important modern Native American ceremony. Recommended.

–Andy J. Deering
Central Wyoming College

15-2-0238

Geron, Kim. *Latino Political Power*. Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005. 247 pp. ISBN 1-58826-000-3, \$59.95 (c); 1-58829-321-5, \$22.50 (pb).

Geron focuses on political power outside the traditional white European perspective. The author also excludes Asian and Mideast populations in the United States. This obviously leaves “Latinos,” a broad and overinclusive term for people with Hispanic surnames or originating in Latin American countries. Geron then connects Latinos with the issue of race throughout the book, although he admits that race and “Latino” are not necessarily connected. To his credit, Geron has carried out a lot of historical and analytical research that illuminates the progress of various, and more specific, groups with Hispanic surnames. As the United States changes demographically, this book informs the reader of political changes that are to come.

Geron recognizes that his book is only a small piece of the United States puzzle of diversity. Moreover, as “Latinos” assimilate into the broader United States life (that is, as the socioeconomic and political conditions of individual Latino groups vary), the past and current alliances of Latinos will change. “Latino” is not a very satisfactory term because there is little evidence that individuals have a cohesive identity as Latin Americans. The value of this book is that Geron has carefully analyzed the success of individual groups. His data and anecdotal information provide fascinating pictures of the varied groups categorized as Latino. More immediately important, demographic changes have coincided with increasingly hostile rhetoric toward immigrants, generally Mexican. Hopefully, Geron and other researchers will continue to provide information on Latin American groups who individually alter the way we see politics.

–Carol Ann Traut
Univ. of Texas—Permian Basin

15-2-0239

Grewal, Inderpal. *Transnational America: Feminisms, Diasporas, Neoliberalisms*. Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 2005. 288 pp. Series: Next Wave: New Directions in Women’s Studies. ISBN 0-8223-3532-8, \$79.95 (c); 0-8223-3544-1, \$22.95 (pb).

Transnational America explores how “America” is a global nationalism operating between states in the migration of people, goods, and rights claims. Challenging a dominant view that globalization is about the deterritorialization of nation-states, Grewal focuses instead on the ways in which new territorializations are made. America emerges as hegemonic in the “transnational connectivities” in the arenas of migration, neoliberalism, and feminisms. To trace these

connectivities, Grewal focuses her attention on how the middle-class Asian Indian became an effect of American nationalism.

Although Grewal is interested in both disciplinary power and resistance, *Transnational America* is more at home in tracing how disciplinary power operates. In revealing how “America”—as cosmopolitan or multicultural ideal, the American dream of economic success, America as the land of freedom—covers over dangerous anti-egalitarianism in the quest for economic, political, and moral superiority, Grewal demonstrates well how gender, race, ethnicity, religion, and class are intertwined. Drawing on novels by Indian/South Asian authors, the marketing of Mattel’s Barbie outfitted in a sari in India, and women’s human rights as the logic of rescue from male violence, Grewal shows how powerful America is as a nodal point in transnational movements. Two of the most powerful chapters, on refugees and post—9/11 shifts in race and gender, are especially clear and persuasive about transnational America as a typically unquestioned hegemonic power. Grewal gives us valuable insights useful in studies of postcolonialism, ethnicity, gender, culture, and society.

—Laurie E. Naranch
Siena College

15-2-0240

Honnighausen, Lothar; Frey, Marc; Peacock, James, ed.; and Steiner, Niklaus, eds. *Regionalism in the Age of Globalism, Vol. 1: Concepts of Regionalism; Vol. 2: Forms of Regionalism*. Madison, Wis.: Center for the Study of Upper Midwestern Cultures, 2005. 584 pp. in two vols. ISBN 0-924119-13-6, \$49.95 set.

This set is based on two social sciences conferences: one held at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the other at Universität Bonn in Germany. The essays by various international scholars provide a multidisciplinary approach to using the dynamic of “region” to study and analyze society. As globalism weakens the nation-state, regional units, above and below the level of the official country, are emerging. For example, both the inter-state groups of the European Union, and local territories such as Bosnia, have emerged as the power units in today’s Europe. The theoretical essays (vol. 1) and case studies (vol. 2) explore region-ness in various guises: geographic units, social systems, organized cooperation, and civil society.

The interdisciplinary approach provides useful discussions on ethnic identity, assimilation, and place as community, among other topics. The aim of the conferences was to assemble various viewpoints on how and why factors of regionalism are so powerful today. Despite the variety of viewpoints represented, the set does succeed as a whole. Set out in the theoretical essays, regionalism is successfully explained in terms of three core dynamics. Regional formations can be examined as driven by either institutional forces, official dictates, or informal networks. Through the case studies, the set provides specific studies that explain how regionalism has impacted the changing character of communities, influenced local conflicts, and increased fragmentation. Despite globalism’s presence, new regional identities

are rapidly changing and re-forming people groups in rather dramatic ways.

The case studies in volume 2 provide recent scholarship on regionalism as a factor in specific geographic areas and specific cultural issues across time. The separate essays by some 23 international scholars provide research on a wide range of topics, including: linguistics (regional dialects), literature, anthropology, political science, education, and labor. Although focused on the last half of the twentieth century, some of the essays cover earlier time periods as well. Especially well done are the three detailed profiles of German-American groups in the Midwestern part of the United States. These essays include carefully documented research on the dynamic changes seen in local ethnic celebrations, the role of women, and the use of language in the home. The essays contain extensive footnotes that provide further insights into social science theories; and quotes from original documents from the time period.

The essays include scholarship on regions besides the American Midwest, such as the Pacific Northwest and the South; studies of regions in Eastern Europe and Canada are also to be found.

Useful as a reference tool, this set provides many strong contributions to the reexamination of the local versus global influences on communities. The volumes were created through support of the University of Wisconsin and the German-American Council and the Ministry of Education and Research (Federal Republic of Germany).

—Mark S. Thompson
Library, Bergen Community College, Paramus, N.J.

15-2-0241

Jackson, John L., Jr., ed. *Real Black: Adventures in Racial Sincerity*. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2005. 312 pp. ISBN 0-226-39001-2, \$50.00 (cl); 0-226-39002-0, \$20.00 (pb).

What are the benefits of “keeping it real” in today’s urban African-American community? Duke University cultural anthropologist Jackson follows up his fine *Harlemworld* (2001) with an exploration of the Harlem most outsiders don’t see: a world of biracial neo-Nazis, conspiracy theorists, numerologists, and a fascinating variety of subculturalists. Jackson argues that the efforts of African-Americans in seeking “authenticity” in black culture caricatures individuals, turning them into racial objects rather than people. Instead, he proposes a search for “racial sincerity,” a personal measure that grants the individual more authority in constructing his or her own identity.

But the author’s philosophic arguments take second place to his firsthand accounts of the beliefs of some of Harlem’s citizenry, which many mainstream readers will find hard to fathom. Jackson’s new work thus can be read equally profitably on two levels: a thoughtful piece on the relationship between individuality and community, and a highly entertaining and extremely readable study of one African-American culture in flux. Compares favorably with other recent Harlem-based ethnographies, including Paul Stoller’s *Money Has No Smell* (2002) and Monique Taylor’s *Harlem*:

Between Heaven and Hell (2002). Highly recommended for all public and academic library collections.

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

15-2-0242

Jensen, Robert. *The Heart of Whiteness: Confronting Race, Racism, and White Privilege*. San Francisco: City Lights, 2005. 124 pp. ISBN 0-87286-449-9, \$12.95 (pb).

Jensen purports to investigate white privilege and the society it has spawned. Instead of an in-depth, academic analysis, the reader is subjected to an extended polemic seething with the author's rage and guilt. Jensen believes that American society has been built on a steady foundation of white supremacy.

The problems in chapter two ("Facing the Truth") are symptomatic of the book's faults. Here Jensen examines America's "three racist holocausts" (the European destruction of Native Americans, African slavery, and the continued expansion of the United States) in order to "come to terms with [our] racist past." Two problems emerge: He uses only a few questionable sources, and he fails to contextualize his findings. For his "conservative" statistics on the number of Indians in America prior to 1492 he relies solely on Ward Churchill. Churchill may be many things; conservative is not one of them. Jensen uses Thomas Paine to demonstrate an eighteenth-century "alternative" to the racism of the day. The author fails to mention that Paine was a supporter of the radical French Revolution and was well outside the mainstream of American thinking on the subject.

If Jensen's intention was to write a polarizing tract, he has succeeded, but if he wanted to produce a serious scholarly examination of a lingering social problem, he failed. Any book that claims to study the historical antecedents of racism without mentioning Winthrop Jordan's seminal *White Over Black* is guilty of false advertising.

—Ryan Staude
State Univ. of New York, Univ. at Albany

15-2-0243

Kraidy, Marwan M. *Hybridity, Or the Cultural Logic of Globalization*. Philadelphia: Temple Univ. Press, 2005. 232 pp. ISBN 1-59213-143-3, \$68.50 (cl); 1-59213-144-1, \$22.95 (pb).

The book logically progresses through a series of theoretical arguments and supporting rationale to arrive at a body of work that deserves our time and attention. Chapter One defines the concepts and lays the foundations of the "contrapuntal" methodology used with spectacular results. The next chapter is a cogent and thorough review of the extant body of work in the areas of globalization and culture. Chapter Three traces the roots of the term "hybridity," from its origins in the natural sciences (biology) to its use in social sciences and, more specifically, in sociocultural theory. The next two chapters are devoted to the role, impact, and consequences of cultural hybridity on contemporary media. The author provides case studies as evidence of his thesis and

finally concludes with his proposal and analysis of "critical transculturalism."

In the contemporary world, the mere mention of the term "globalization" evokes a variety of reactions—often at odds with one another. Kraidy walks away from the bipolarity of reactions with an objective viewpoint befitting a scholar of his stature and proposes "hybridity as the cultural logic of Globalization." While the author focuses on media and globalization, this reviewer is struck by the applications of this sociocultural study in other aspects of human learning as well.

—Raj Devasagayam
Siena College

15-2-0244

Leslie, Jacques. *Deep Water: The Epic Struggle over Dams, Displaced People, and the Environment*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2005. 352 pp. ISBN 0-374-28172-6, \$25.00.

Large dams often provide power and fresh water for large population centers. They also degrade the environment and cause the displacement of whole communities. During the last century, 45,000 large dams were built in 140 countries. Leslie's well written and impressively researched book discusses the impact of dams on man and the environment.

Leslie intertwines three powerful and thought-provoking stories of individuals involved with dam projects and their effects. The first, and most poignant, is the story of Medha Patkar, an Indian activist who has been fighting the dam project on the Narmada River for decades. Patkar's use of a range of tactics to prevent the dam's construction, from pressuring the World Bank to withdraw financing to chaining herself to a piece of ground and waiting to be drowned by the rising waters, shows the passion and concern that dams generate. Thayer Scudder, an anthropologist and the "world's leading dam resettlement expert," discusses his experiences with the communities relocated by dam construction in Africa. Don Blackmore shares his struggle to keep Australia's Murray River a "healthy, working river," despite the increasing salt level in the water caused by the dam. Leslie also points out that, despite their imposing size and power, dams carry with them the seeds of their own destruction. The silt from the rivers they block will in time build up and cause them to breach, or they will simply outlive their intended purpose.

—Sean Conley
Siena College

15-2-0245

Meital, Yoram. *Peace in Tatters: Israel, Palestine, and the Middle East*. Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005. 253 pp. ISBN 1-58826-362-2, \$52.00 (cl); 1-58826-387-8, \$22.00 (pb).

In July 2000, the Camp David peace summit, convened by President Clinton with Israel's Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian chairman Arafat, ended unsuccessfully. Hopes for an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement were dashed, and vicious acts of violence by both sides would result in thousands of deaths over the next few years. Deeply

disappointed by the summit's failure, Clinton blamed Arafat and the Palestinian Authority (PA) for the breakdown in negotiations, supporting Barak's claim that Israel had "no partner" for peace. The oft-repeated narrative of Arafat's refusal of Israel's "generous offer" of land for peace before launching a violent uprising against the Israelis became the conventional wisdom in Israel and the United States. But what really happened at Camp David, and what led to that historic fiasco? Meital, senior lecturer in the Department of Middle East Studies at Ben-Gurion University, examined an extensive body of writings in Hebrew, Arabic, and English, and his conclusions are highly critical of much that has been written about the summit and its aftermath in the popular media in Israel and the West.

Meital concentrates his analysis of the summit on actions by Israel and the PA in the months prior to it, rather than on the failed negotiations themselves. He presents fresh and revealing insights into this and the role of Arab and Israeli media discourse in the demonization of the other, as well as the impact of 9/11 on U.S. policy in the Middle East. Hopefully, this excellent work will receive the attention it deserves.

—Elka R. Frankel
Princeton, N.J.

15-2-0246

Nussbaum, Stan. *American Cultural Baggage: How to Recognize and Deal with It*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2005. 160 pp. ISBN 1-57075-625-2, \$15.00 (pb).

Nussbaum, who's been around, has confected a handy guide to major cultural values and traits of American life and outlook. He intends it to serve as a useful, face-saving heads-up for gallivanting Americans, and as a convenient introduction to puzzling aspects of America's Enlightenment-style secular modernity for those in the rest of the world who have to deal with Americans—that is, everybody.

Nussbaum's is a literally proverbial approach. Beginning with his intelligent choices of ten commandments of American culture—success, self-esteem, shopping, toleration, independence, opportunism, and so on—he constructs chapters based on popular American proverbs about them. One of his American cultural proclivities is the value of time, and the chapter "Time and Change" explicates the practicable meanings of 28 popular adages on that theme: time is money, now or never, haste makes waste, a new broom sweeps clean, and so on.

Each chapter thoughtfully includes pointed questions for non-Americans to ask Americans in order to find out what they're thinking: "What is a 'good loser'? Should I try to be one?" is a dandy example. For Yanks, there are symbols of dynamite bundles here and there to warn of impending cultural dangers in the expression of certain American attitudes as viewed by people abroad. "What is the proper relationship between religion and politics?" is one such hot issue for Americans in the Middle East to ponder these days. Two thumbs upish.

—Leo J. Mahoney
Mohave Community College, Kingman, Ariz.

15-2-0247

Poulson-Bryant, Scott. *Hung: A Meditation on the Measure of Black Men in America*. New York: Doubleday, 2005. 224 pp. ISBN 0-385-51002-0, \$22.95.

Poulson-Bryant shows the black penis as the symbol of DuBois's "Double Consciousness," because the black penis is the focal point of the myth of the primitive and savage black, which, for black men, is the image with which they are constantly wrestling. Poulson-Bryant creates a multifaceted discussion where anxieties and desires surrounding the black penis become components to understand America's race problem and the African American's struggle with identity. *Hung* takes an objective look at black men who embrace the stereotype, which he shows does as much harm as the projecting of the stereotype by whites onto African-American men.

Poulson-Bryant is also unflinching in his ability to trace the schizophrenia of African-American double consciousness to the contradicting and schizophrenic obsession that many whites have toward the black body. Thus, to engage this issue of the black supersexual myth is to engage the bowels of America's history of othering and oppressing, which allows us to reveal the trinity of ignorance, fear, and avarice at the center of prejudice and racism. The work is didactic in nature, attempting to help black men come to grips with the varying and conflicting issues surrounding our topic. The one flaw of this work is that it speaks to males over 21 more readily than to males under 21. As the anecdotes prove, this is a discussion that needs to be directed to African-American males between the ages of 12 and 18 so that they do not have their lives controlled by America's myths and perverse expectations of them.

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

15-2-0248

Rappoport, Leon. *Punchlines: The Case for Racial, Ethnic, and Gender Humor*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood/Praeger, 2005. 200 pp. ISBN 0-275-98764-7, \$44.95.

The author's hypothesis is that racial, ethnic, and gender humor (called here "stereotype humor") can serve a positive social function. He maintains that stereotype humor acts as a powerful force against prejudice when used to ridicule stereotypes and slurs. He begins by responding to arguments of those critical of racial, ethnic, and gender humor—arguments he considers to be based on misconceptions.

The author then proceeds to a brief overview of the study of humor, a history of specific stereotypes and derogatory terms, and a description of how stereotype humor has changed over time in the United States. Rappoport also focuses on the role of Jews and African Americans in American comedy. He believes common social and psychological factors led first Jews, then African Americans, to dominate American humor.

Gender humor is slighted. The author basically explains that the principles he has laid out in regard to racial/ethnic

humor also apply to gender humor (the traditional “battle of the sexes”) and humor by and about homosexuals. Even while neglecting that topic, the book includes a somewhat tangential, if interesting, chapter on the process a stand-up comedian typically goes through in order to achieve success as a professional comedian.

While the case the author makes for the social value of stereotype may not be entirely convincing, this book is recommended for the information it provides on the history of this type of humor.

–Patricia Markley
Siena College Library

15-2-0249

Sakwa, Richard, ed. *Chechnya: From Past to Future*. Sterling, Va.: Stylus Publishing, 2005. 300 pp. ISBN 1-84331-165-8, \$25.00 (pb).

The 13 essays in this anthology combine for a comprehensive scholarly analysis of a war that has primarily been the subject of reportage and polemics. The contributors are Russian, Chechen, and British; none are likely to be familiar to nonspecialists. Their work addresses such controversial specific issues as the legitimacy of Chechen secession; human rights in an environment where violence has replaced politics; and the Russian army’s problems in coping with the insurgency.

The volume is not merely an exercise in microhistory. Chechnya’s changing world image in the context of 9/11 and the framework of international terrorism is comprehensively covered. So is the challenge the war poses to democracy’s sustainability in both Chechnya and Russia. Lord Frank Judd, formerly the Council of Europe’s rapporteur on the conflict, concludes the work by speaking of the need to relieve suffering, to establish the rule of law, to institute a functioning political process. He calls for “a new spirit of openness.” And he ruefully concedes that these good things cannot be imposed. The balance of the text, unfortunately, combines to suggest that the prospects for community initiatives strong enough to create a peace belonging to everyone, Chechen and Russian, are at best extremely limited.

–Dennis E. Showalter
Colorado College

15-2-0250

Schwartzberg, Susan. *Becoming Citizens: Family Life and the Politics of Disability*. Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 2005. 136 pp. Illus. with photos. ISBN 0-295-98519-4, \$19.95 (pb).

This is an effective work of historical photojournalism by artist-photographer Schwartzberg, working with 13 Seattle families who kept their disabled children out of institutions and worked to educate them. Children had disabilities from causes such as Down Syndrome, brain damage, and cerebral palsy. Family efforts, particularly those of four mothers, led to Washington state legislation, and ultimately to a national law, bringing educational rights to every disabled person in the United States. This effort began just after World War

II and culminated in the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975.

The story is told through personal narratives, mainly from the mothers, quoted dialogues, pictures from family collections, and historical summaries and time lines, as well as commentary by Schwartzberg. The extended and extensive work leading to legislation is related in a dense but eminently readable narrative by the participants. The book is divided into sections about the children, education, legislation, and “citizenship,” that is, how disabled children could become situated in the community.

This is an effective and moving contribution to disability studies for educators, parents, political activists, and any other interested readers. The family-activist political story is particularly important now, when children with disabilities are indeed educated and stimulated in the schools until the age of graduation, which varies according to state law, but is usually in the early twenties. Then most are left with few if any resources beyond the family for continued stimulation and learning, or, when possible, productive lives.

–Carol B. Gartner
Purdue Univ. Calumet

Reference

15-2-0251

Min, Pyong Gap. *Encyclopedia of Racism in the United States*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2005. 3 vols., 900 pp. ISBN 0-313-32688-6, \$249.95.

The editor (professor of sociology at Queens College, CUNY), claims that this is the first “comprehensive encyclopedia covering racial victimization for all racial and ethnic minority groups in the United States.” The preface explains that in planning the project, the choice of what to include was organized by six broad categories: social science terms and concepts; historical and contemporary events, people, and organizations; racial prejudice and discrimination; the reactions of minorities against discrimination; governmental affairs; major books. Specific articles within these areas were assigned word limits, some having as many as 3,000 words. Most of the entries have brief bibliographies. Helping to pull the set together are cross-references at the ends of the 447 alphabetically arranged articles.

The racial and ethnic groups addressed in the encyclopedia are Native Americans, African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos, Asian American/and Pacific Islanders, Muslims, Arabs, and Middle Easterners, white ethnic groups (Jews, Italians, Irish), immigrants, and ethnic groups.

The introduction makes some rather sweeping statements regarding the history of racism, such as indicating that racism did not exist prior to the expansion of European power into the rest of the world.

Each of the three volumes contains almost 70 pages of identical front matter, including the preface, acknowledgments, and introduction, an unnecessary duplication and waste of space that could have been cut, allowing the set to

be published in two volumes at less cost. Some of the entries, such as the March on Washington Movement and Lynching, could have been expanded. Other front matter includes a chronology, list of entries, and a very helpful guide to related entries that provides a thematic approach to the set. In the third volume there is a selected bibliography (quite extensive) and detailed index. Almost all of the contributors are faculty at colleges in the United States.

The primary documents and original writings included in volume three are readily available elsewhere in print or online and add nothing to the set.

—Sean P. Maloney
Siena College Library

15-2-0252

Moskowitz, David V. *Caribbean Popular Music: An Encyclopedia of Reggae, Mento, Ska, Rock Steady, and Dancehall*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2006. 346 pp. ISBN 0-313-33158-8, \$85.00.

While the title implies coverage of the entire Caribbean—or at least the region’s Anglophone countries—the focus is almost entirely on the music and musicians of Jamaica. Of course, an encyclopedia on Jamaican music since the 1960s (and its diaspora to the United States and the United Kingdom) could fill an even larger volume than this one. Moskowitz conveys the reach and dynamism of this island’s musical scene. The world-popular reggae genre grew out of ska (the Jamaican adaptation of American rhythm and blues) and mento (Jamaican folk music) via rock steady in the early and mid-1960s. Reggae, combined with hip-hop, in turn gave rise to dancehall, the genre most popular on the island today. (Dancehall has also served as a principal inspiration for the Latin hip-hop genre reggaetón, though Latin American influences and derivatives are not covered here.)

Moskowitz does a capable job of defining the various genres, instruments, and elements of Jamaican popular music and identifying artists both well known and obscure. Also covered are the recording labels and key venues for live performance. Cross-indexing and indexes in front and back make the book accessible. Unfortunately, Moskowitz does not place the artists and their music in a wider social and political context, despite the overtly political nature of the music. For instance, many of the “hits” of dancehall, like Buju Banton’s “Boom Bye Bye,” have been banned from radio in the United Kingdom and the United States because they advocate killing gays and lesbians. A comprehensive reference source of this type needs to address homophobia and violence in the music and the aggressive sociocultural environment that gives rise to them.

—Lyn Miller-Lachmann
(with assistance from Jon Thompson, Emory Univ.)

15-2-0253

Nelson, Emmanuel S., ed. *Encyclopedia of Multiethnic American Literature*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2005. 5 vols. ISBN 0-313-33059-X, \$499.95.

The publication of this encyclopedia is worthy of celebration. An ambitious project, it “is the first reference work that seeks to offer a comprehensive introduction to a spectacularly diverse range of ethnic American writing.” The editor and contributors live up to that statement. The represented ethnic literatures include African American, Amish, Chinese American, Jewish American, Native American, and Vietnamese American, among many others. There are over 1,100 signed entries, of which approximately 1,000 are on individual authors. Entries run in length from one to several pages and are followed by a list of suggested readings.

The diversity of genres and literary formats studied is impressive. For example, the multiple entries related to Italian-American literature include the topics autobiography, film, gay literature, humor, lesbian literature, the novel, poetry, and stereotypes. The encyclopedia discusses major contributions to detective fiction and science fiction. Seminal texts (for example, Zora Neale Hurston’s *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, and Rudolfo Anaya’s *Bless Me, Ultima*) have their own entries. Historical events are included, as well as entries for prominent individuals such as Rosa Parks, who are not known primarily as writers but who wrote autobiographies or memoirs. Such “general topics” as “Anti-Semitism,” “Eurocentrism,” “Immigration,” and “Pedagogy and U.S. Ethnic Literatures” receive attention.

Gay literature and lesbian literature are represented throughout with entries tied to African-American, Italian-American, Jewish-American, Mexican-American, and Puerto Rican literatures. Drama, theater, and musical theater are well represented. Included, as expected, are playwrights Arthur Miller, August Wilson, Larry Kramer, Suzan-Lori Parks, Moss Hart, and George S. Kaufman. I was pleasantly surprised to find entries for Comden and Green (Betty Comden and Adolph Green), and Arthur Laurents, all known primarily for their work in musical theater as well as for being screenwriters. David Henry Hwang is covered in the entry on Chinese-American drama, but his play *M. Butterfly* rates a separate entry. There are many references to film.

No matter how inclusive the scope of an encyclopedia, some topic will be missing. Most authors I looked for, I found. The notable exception is Chicana poet and novelist Lucha Corpi. She is mentioned only in passing in the entry on the publisher Arte Público Press. Her contribution to contemporary detective fiction alone warrants an entry.

Each volume opens with an alphabetical list of entries for the entire encyclopedia. This is followed by a “Guide to Related Topics,” which groups entries by the appropriate ethnic culture and includes a listing of more general topics. The index is extensive, with multiple points of access to most topics. There is more than adequate cross-referencing.

Boldface print provides cross-referencing within the entries. A selected bibliography of important secondary sources is also included.

The more than 300 contributors are mostly academics, including graduate students and doctoral candidates, but most are faculty with strong publishing and teaching experience. The editor has written or edited numerous works about ethnic and international literature. The advisory board is

similarly qualified.

Highly recommended, this is an essential work for high school, college, and public libraries.

–Catherine Crohan
Siena College Library

Travel

15-2-0254

Al-Rawi, Rosina-Fawzia. *Midnight Tales: A Woman's Journey Through the Middle East*. Northampton, Mass.: Interlink, 2006. 303 pp. Trans. from Arabic by Monique Arav. ISBN 1-56656-558-8, \$15.00 (pb).

This book is a wonderful chance for Western readers to better know the women of the Arab world, who too often are shrouded in mystery and misperception. Through the window of a woman's perspective, Al-Rawi uniquely weaves together many strands into a tapestry that reveals beauty and complexity. The text reads enjoyably, like a series of character studies and artistic, insightful vignettes, but it also teaches the reader about many aspects of life in the Middle East.

History, she demonstrates, is touching, real, and personal. Events and characters of antiquity are brought to life; the adventurous travels of Sindbad, the selfless dedication of the female mystic Rabi'a al-Addawiyya, and the exploits of Harun Al-Rashid and, more importantly, the women in his life. She also succeeds in informing the reader of little-known cultural facets, such as the magical songs of pearl divers who labored dangerously in the United Arab Emirates before oil was king, or the old Baghdadi tradition of sleeping on flat roofs under starry skies on the hot nights of summer. She gives time to women of all walks of life: rich, poor, old, young, intellectual, Christian, Muslim, mystic, agnostic, traditional, progressive. She does not dwell too long on the wars and other aspects of unrest in the region; her viewpoint is optimistic and trained toward the beautiful and mysterious things in life. *Midnight Tales* is engaging, uplifting, and hard to put down.

–Dena El Saffar
Bloomington, Ind.

15-2-0255

Carney, Timothy and Freeman, Michael. *Sudan: The Land and the People*. Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 2005. 328 pp. Illus. with photos. ISBN 0-295-98533-X, \$60.00.

Imagine a thick and gorgeous coffee-table book filled with the type of colorful documentary photography that has come to be synonymous with the esteemed publication *National Geographic*. Add a trio of essays, each authored by an expert on aspects of the history of Sudan and its inhabitants, one that stretches back from the pages of today's newspaper headlines to the quarter-million year mark of humankind's past. Top it off with a preface from the humanitarian ex-president Jimmy Carter.

Whether this recipe sufficiently satisfies depends on the demands the user brings to it. I could hardly use the term "reader," as the percentage of text in this lush book is disappointingly small. The words provide useful and informative

context concerning the conflicts that have plagued this part of Africa. Yet I found myself yearning for more.

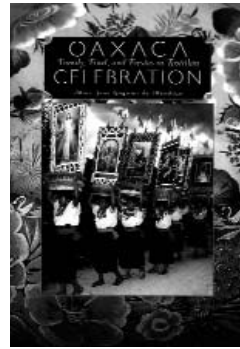
This is essentially a picture book, and in the vision of photographer Michael Freeman, that in itself is not a bad thing. The photographs are as satisfying as the array of deserts served during high tea at Harrods of London. Yet it is that very association that provides a clue to the sanitized and positive spin this book places on the present. Clearly, the world is a better for the peace agreement signed in Sudan in January of 2005. But who is served by a tasty assortment of visual treasures that slides past the politics of social strife and economic disparity?

Sudan: The Land and the People strikes me as the kind of book one places in one's home to persuade others that one's conscience is clear, while that conscience has barely been tapped.

–John Caputo
Siena College

15-2-0256

Gagnier de Mendoza, Mary Jane. *Oaxaca Celebration: Family, Food, and Fiestas in Teotitlán*. Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico Press, 2005. 160 pp. Illus. with photos. ISBN 0-89013-445-6, \$24.95 (pb).



In 1985, a 25-year-old Canadian came to Teotitlán in the state of Oaxaca, Mexico. She met, fell in love with, and married a local artist. She also fell in love with the area and

its people. Teotitlán is a layered place. Words from before the Aztec conquest still abound, post-Aztec but pre-Hispanic ruins dot the area, and Hispanic Catholicism, interwoven with pre-Hispanic threads, dominates the annual calendar. Taking advantage of her natural interpretive position (an English-speaking North American, but not just an outside visitor), Gagnier de Mendoza produced this portrait of a place still rooted in traditional ways. She writes the text not as an anthropologist, but as a community member-observer. She describes the celebrations, discusses the preparations (women spend lots of time cooking), and even provides recipes.

The book, a lovely, glossy text filled with pictures, is organized around key celebrations marking the year: Christmas, Fiesta of the Black Christ of Esquipulas, Wedding and pre-Wedding rituals, Lent and Holy Week, *La Danza de los Viejos* (masked visitors who, just after Easter, represent deceased ancestors who returning from the dead), Celebration of Patron Saints, and, closing a cycle that began with a birth, the Day of the Dead.

The volume resembles what would be the catalogue for an exhibition of the photographs included. Although Gagnier de Mendoza is listed as having organized exhibitions, there is no indication that the collection of photos that make up the book were part of an exhibit.

–Raymond Boisvert
Siena College

Juvenile

Primary (Gr. Preschool—3)



15-2-0257
Campbell, Nicola L. *Shi-shi-etko*. Toronto: Groundwood, 2005. 32 pp. Illus. by Kim LaFave. ISBN 0-88899-659-4, \$16.95.

In just four days, young Shi-shi-etko (“she loves to play in the water”) will have to leave everything she loves and everything she knows—to go to an Indian residential school, where, among other things, her name, language, and identity will be taken away. Until recently, this was the law and the harsh reality for Native children in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States. “Can you imagine a community without children?” the Salish/Metis author writes in a brief foreword. “Can you imagine children without parents?”

As the child counts down the days, her large extended family—cousins, aunties, uncles, and Yahyah—fill her with their love, memories, and the strength to endure what they know will happen and what they are powerless to prevent. With her mother, a morning prayer in the creek. With her father, a paddle song in the canoe. With her yahyah, a visit to the woods. A sprig of hemlock, cedar, and pine placed into a small deerskin bag.

Too soon, it is time. The cattle truck is waiting. With a prayer and an offering of tobacco, Shi-shi-etko tucks her deerskin bag inside the roots of a big fir tree, to wait for her return. She takes in everything one last time—“tall grass swaying to the rhythm of the breeze, determined mosquitoes, working bumblebees . . . each shiny rock, the sand beneath her feet, crayfish and minnows and tadpoles.”

LaFave’s rich and evocative digital illustrations, on a palette of mostly reds, complement this sad and gentle story. What happens to Shi-Shi-etko at residential school is not told here. It does not have to be. After this book, read to children Larry Loyie’s *As Long as the Rivers Flow*, then Maddie Harper’s *Mush Hole: Memories of a Residential School*, then Judith Lowry’s *Home to Medicine Mountain*, then Shirley Sterling’s *My Name is Seepeetza*—all of these that they may know a shameful part of history that must never be repeated.

—Beverly Slapin
Oyate, Berkeley, Calif.

15-2-0258
Carabello, Samuel. *Mis papitos/My Parents: Heroes de la cosecha/Heroes of the Harvest* Houston: Piñata Books, 2005. 32 pp. Illus. by Obed Gómez. Bilingual (Spanish-English) ed. ISBN 0-55885-450-9, \$14.95.

This delightful and reflective children’s book full of rhythm and warmth captures a delightful beat both in Spanish and in the English translation. Carabello’s prose

evokes a warm sensation as we experience the love and devotion he feels towards his hard-working parents, who are migrant farmworkers. Carabello’s use of diminutive words in Spanish truly conveys the love he feels for his parents.

The illustrator, Obed Gómez, has done a fine job of capturing the cultural nuances of his native Puerto Rico in his artwork. His lively images serve to personify the fruits and vegetables of the harvest. Together, their efforts have yielded a special children’s book that honors the labors of migrant farmworkers and their families.

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

15-2-0259
Coates, Jan. *Rainbows in the Dark*. Toronto: Second Story Press, 2005. 32 pp. Illus. by Alice Priestley. ISBN 1-896764-95-9, \$14.95.

While Abby is shopping with her mother, she encounters a sightless person, Joanna, with a guide dog, Charlie. A boring time, waiting for mother, turns into fun, a learning experience, and a new friendship.

Abby learns what is acceptable in helping a blind person and what can make the situation more difficult. A guide dog is a working being and not to be treated as a pet while on duty. This is a lesson many adults need to be taught as well.

Abby helps her new friend choose clothes by colors, which Joanna cannot do. She also becomes aware how accomplished a person with disabilities can be. Joanna can tell a lot about the items chosen by the touch and smell of them. Later, Abby finds out that her new friend is a concert musician. The colors of the world lie within for Joanna. Abby is thrilled to see Joanna wearing the clothes they chose together at Joanna’s concert.

Because of its subject matter, this is a very important book. Unfortunately, neither the author nor the illustrator does the subject justice. Something in both the telling of the story and in the pictures is joyless, lacking in what could have been a wonderful and touching lesson. This missing element might lose the reader.

Ruth G. Becker
Forest Hills, N.Y.

15-2-0260
Cole, Heidi and Vogl, Nancy. *Am I a Color Too?* Bellevue, Wash.: Illumination Arts, 2005. 32 pp. Illus. by Gerald Purnell. ISBN 0-9740190-5-4, \$15.95.

Cole and Vogl have cowritten an inspiring story told from the perspective of a young and curious interracial boy. With a white mother and a black father, he ponders whether he should be considered a color as well. In his quest to determine if he, too, is a color, he is surrounded by more than a dozen shoe boxes labeled “black,” “mulatto,” “mixed,” “white,” and “biracial.” He opens one box labeled “human being” and, interestingly enough, the shoe box features rainbow colors. He notes the similarities between his parents, who share the same last name and have smiles on their faces.

He looks at the “brightly colored rainbow” of people’s faces around him and notes that people think, dream, love, and feel in every color. He realizes that he is just a human being like everyone else, “not a color, not a word.” His observations help him look beyond color to see the inner traits, values, and beauty of others.

The mother and daughter authors say this feel-good story, told in poetic verse, was inspired by Cole’s son, Tyler, when he was three years old and began hearing people referred to as colors. Purnell’s colorful and soft, lush illustrations help to capture the beauty of people of all ethnicities, through their smiles, the way they wear their hair, their lips, and laughter. Young readers will delight in this charming story.

–Valerie A. Canady
Johnston, R.I.

15-2-0261

Cunnane, Kelly. *For You Are a Kenyan Child*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2005. 32 pp. Illus. by Ana Juan. ISBN 0-689-86194-X, \$16.95.

After living many years in Lelboinet, Kenya, Cunnane has returned to the United States to share her experiences. In her first children’s book, she focuses on daily life among the Kalenjin of rural western Kenya.

Boys typically rise with the rooster’s crow and breakfast on porridge before taking the cattle to the pasture. However, this nameless boy finds other things to do and see. Readers learn about village life and practice some Swahili as the boy visits several shops.

“Una taka . . . ?” In a good oral narrative format, Cunnane repeats this line as she introduces the reader to different people and things: chief’s wood carvings, grandmother’s milk, friend’s termites, and friend’s soccer game. Since the boy has wandered away from his duties, grandfather shepherds the cows home. Although the boy is not punished, he knows that he made a mistake. The day ends in peace.

Ana Juan uses acrylic paints and crayons to illustrate the warm tones of the landscape. The people and animals in her illustrations show humor and promote discussion. She unifies the story with the boy’s pet as his alter ego.

Readers need to be cautioned about the generalized references to “Africa” when the author is actually describing a particular Kenyan location, and about some of the pejorative terminology such as “hut” and “tribe.” Despite these limitations, this book is recommended.

–Patricia S. Kuntz
Madison, Wis.

15-2-0262

Dwight, Laura. *Brothers and Sisters*. Long Island City, N.Y.: Star Bright Books, 2005. 32 pp. Illus. with photos by the author. ISBN 1-887734-80-5, \$15.95.

This delightful picture book includes photos, along with text, to describe and discuss disabilities. Six disabilities are discussed, and children from different racial backgrounds are used to describe each disability. Congenital amputation,

Asperger’s syndrome, blindness, Down syndrome, deafness, and cerebral palsy are presented in everyday terms. The explanations of the disabilities come from the siblings of the children. Instead of focusing on what cannot be done, the book focuses on what can be accomplished by each of these children. The explanations are given in such a way that the children are not strange or different; their disabilities are just a fact of life.

The author uses pictures of the children completing everyday tasks that all kids could do, which helps allow children to become comfortable with disabilities. The glossary explains the disabilities in terms that children can understand. The use of multicultural pictures allows children to find someone who looks like them and relate to children with disabilities. Children of all ages will gain much from this book.

–Miriam Guttman
Mount Mary College, Milwaukee, Wis.

15-2-0263

English, Karen. *The Baby on the Way*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2005. 32 pp. Illus. by Sean Qualls. ISBN 0-374-37361-2, \$16.00.

Jamal, a young African-American boy, is picking tomatoes with his grandma in their rooftop garden when a question comes to mind. “Were you ever a little girl?” he asks. When Grandma answers, “Why yes, I was a little girl—once,” Jamal asks another question, “Were you a baby, too?” So begins an intergenerational discussion between the two. Grandma explains that she was even once “the baby on the way.” She explains that she was her mother’s tenth and last child. She tells how her big sister ran to the field to get Papa when Mama’s time came. She tells of Papa leaving his plow in the field, running to the house, and giving instructions to go bring Aunt Nannie, who birthed all of the children.

While Jamal and Grandma make a fresh salad, Grandma explains old African-American practices and ceremonies surrounding the birth of children. When Grandma was born, she said, she was carried around the house seven times, people sang and prayed, and Mama’s clothes were burned in an effort to help her get her strength back. Grandma also explained that these practices probably had been passed down through slavery times.

Jamal asks if Grandma thinks anyone will ask him someday if he was ever a baby. “Yes, sweetheart. If you should live so long—one day your grandchild will say, ‘Grandpa Jamal, were you ever a baby?’ And what will you tell ‘em?” “That I was once the baby on the way?”

Newcomer Qualls’s earth-toned illustrations are full of expression, intimacy, and sharing. A good choice for discussion of family and customs.

–Bettye Stroud
Univ. of Georgia

15-2-0264

Friedman, Carol. *Nicky the Jazz Cat*. New York: Power House Books, 2005. 32 pp. Illus. by the author. ISBN 1-57687-248-3, \$16.95.

A delightful book. Nicky the black cat gets to groove

with Quincy, sing with Lena, and swing with some of the biggest names in jazz. Photographer, author, and illustrator Friedman has written a short and sweet tribute to Nicky, who sits, lounges, struts, and purrs alongside jazz giants Lionel Hampton, Gerry Mulligan, Quincy Jones, and others. Friedman intersperses her fabulous photographs with light-hearted text that complements the clearly playful interaction between musician and cat:

Hi Nicky
It's Lena
Thought I'd give you a ring
Quincy just told me,
Lena this cat can swing

Bright blue, turquoise, red, and yellow are effectively used to offset the use of black (Nicky, the musicians' clothes, and big, bold text). The author's use of jazz slang, such as jamming, bebop, gig, and sassy, creates a musical text that will appeal to children and parents. The book can also be a child's first introduction to some of the biggest names in jazz, their instruments, and the art form.

Friedman's adoration of her subjects and of the coolest cat in town is evident in a colorful tribute to the spirit of friendship, art, and cat.

—Linda Fiore
Philadelphia, Pa.

15-2-0265

Huggins, Peter. *Trosclair and the Alligator*. Long Island City, N.Y.: Star Bright Books, 2006. 32 pp. Illus. by Lindsey Gardiner. ISBN 1-932065-98-9, \$15.95.

Trosclair and his dog, Ollie, enjoy time with their cousins on Bayou Fontaine in Louisiana. The pair's other pastime is gliding in their pirogue out to Bee Island Swamp. Although the swamp is the best place to hunt turtle eggs, Trosclair has been warned by his father not to visit it since a rogue alligator, Gargantua, has moved in and begun attacking pets. "That alligator eat you and Ollie so fast . . . he won't even stop to burp," adds the boy's father.

Trosclair cannot resist his love for the swamp, however, and he continues to paddle his way through it until a large oak tree catches his eye. Using a log as a stepping stool, the boy and his dog climb the tree, where they find no turtle eggs, but rather a swarming beehive. As they are about to eat some honey, the log below moves, and Trosclair realizes that it is none other than Gargantua. When the hungry alligator demands to eat Ollie, Trosclair cleverly offers up his faithful dog in exchange for the alligator not eating the beehive. Of course, Gargantua demands the beehive and receives his just deserts.

Eye-catching, multitextured illustrations accompany this predictable Cajun trickster tale. Young children may take delight in the adorable boy and his escape. For older children who need a more imaginative story, try Candace Fleming's *Gator Gumbo: A Spicy-Hot Tale* instead.

—Angela Leeper
Wake Forest, N.C.

15-2-0266

Krishnaswami, Uma. *The Happiest Tree: A Yoga Story*. New York: Lee & Low, 2005. 32 pp. Illus. Ruth Jeyaveeram. ISBN 1-58430-237-7, \$16.95.

The author deftly knits the story of Meena, the protagonist, and the story of yoga into an intricate fabric. The author brings to readers the benefits of yoga and yogic exercises. Meena is a creative girl who loves activities that allow her to think outside the box. Her creative instincts are, however, dampened by her clumsy disposition. If only Meena could overcome knocking off things, spilling stuff over, stumbling over things, and be the perfect tree in her class play, she would be so happy!

Help comes to Meena in form of a yoga class. Once Meena joins the class, she learns the techniques of controlling not just her body but also her mind. Yoga helps build Meena's self-confidence so that she can address her problems and solve them. Meena ends up being the best tree in the play put on by her class.

—Aliveni Akella
Simsbury, Conn.

15-2-0267

Lachtman, Ofelia Dumas. *Pepita Packs Up/Pepita empaca*. Houston: Piñata Books, 2005. 32 pp. Illus. by Alex Pardo DeLange. Bilingual (English-Spanish) ed. Spanish translation by Gabriela Baeza Ventura. ISBN 1-55885-431-2, \$14.95.

Pepita, like most children, is not excited about moving. In fact, she is very sad. She tries to maintain a positive attitude by not saying "good-bye" to all the people she knows and loves. Instead, she finds different ways to say it so that it won't hurt. She ends up saying "I'll be seeing you," "go with God," or "until tomorrow." To Pepita, "good-bye" is not a nice word.

Once Pepita moves, she immediately gets excited to see a new friend. Good positive attitude toward change, but she sure got over it quickly. For me it was a little too soon. I remember moving as a child. It took a while to move on, and it usually does.

Overall the story is one familiar to children, although Pepita's way of thinking is not. Her refusal to say good-bye forever can make kids see that moving does not mean you will never see your home or friends again. It really is just a "so long."

The story is told both in English and Spanish, with English on top. The Spanish is not printed in a separate font, which makes it difficult for children to read and thus discourages the use of Spanish. Both DeLange's illustrations and Lachtman's writing are clear and direct, however, making this a book that can be read over and over again.

—Kena Sosa
Dallas, Tex.

15-2-0268

Lee, Huy Voun. *In the Leaves*. New York: Henry Holt, 2005. 32 pp. Illus. by the author. ISBN 0-8050-6764-7, \$16.95.

In the wake of renewed interest in China there have been, in the last decade or so, a number of picture books that present the Chinese writing system. There is no alphabet. Each character represents a word. The notion of beautiful picture books for children that explain the pictorial concept of the Chinese written language is a wonderful endeavor. This book succeeds in that it presents a handful of Chinese characters along with the pictorial derivation of each. The summary of the ten characters on the two end pages are clearly and beautifully presented, although the offered pronunciations can easily be misconstrued. The author has written three other books about Chinese characters, which, along with this one, present the four seasons.

But the story is not a story. Children go to visit a farm in the autumn. Suddenly it is spring in order to introduce the word “sprouts.” There is an unexplained bonfire in the field in order to introduce the word “fire.” The author is an artist, but not a storyteller. The words are merely sound bites in which to couch the presentation of the writing lessons. However, the author has made some beautiful pictures of children in bright, colorful clothes and geometric patterns, which are likely to appeal to small children. Because it stimulates an interest in the written Chinese character, it will appeal to parents, teachers, and librarians looking for something about different languages or different writing systems. But it is not about China, and these days anything will pass as a story.

—Ginny Lee
Syracuse, N.Y.

15-2-0269

Look, Lenore. *Uncle Peter's Amazing Chinese Wedding*. New York: Simon & Schuster/Atheneum, 2005. 32 pp. Illus. by Yumi Heo. ISBN 0-689-84458-1, \$16.95.

Uncle Peter is marrying Stella in a traditional Chinese wedding—but in America. Coupled with the colorful cartoon-like illustrations are the (very real) mixed emotions of Jenny, for her Uncle Peter has always been her best buddy; she feels, with some justification, that he is being taken away from her. Jenny's own description of the wedding day is complete with bargaining for the bride, who appears in a long red Chinese dress (red is the lucky color for weddings), *hung bao* (red envelopes filled with lucky money), tea served for good luck with special foods, the banquet with many changes of clothes for the bride, and the bed-jumping ceremony, with candies and treats for the children.

Throughout are Jenny's own misgivings and jealousies, which she finally manages to pour out on her mother's lap. After the ceremony and the banquet and all the traditional customs, Stella offers a box to Jenny to open as the finale, saying to her, “I hope you know I love you.” The box is filled with butterflies that emerge in a great cloud and flutter away, a breathtaking sight that, along with the attention and love given directly to Jenny, changes her feelings to acceptance. A sweet, attractive picture book, this can also serve as a springboard for talking about feelings.

—Ginny Lee
Syracuse, N.Y.

15-2-0270

Muse, Daphne, ed. *The Entrance Place of Wonders: Poems of the Harlem Renaissance*. New York: Abrams Books for Young Readers, 2005. 32 pp. Illus. by Charlotte Riley-Webb. ISBN 0-8109-5997-6, \$16.95.

The Harlem Renaissance, often referred to as a cultural explosion, helped to transform culture in this country through music, literature, poetry, and art during the 1920s and 1930s. Muse features 20 poems of the Harlem Renaissance by such notable leaders of the movement as Claude McKay, Langston Hughes, James Weldon Johnson, and others. Self-empowerment and pride are some of the underlying themes of the poems.

Muse's introduction discusses how Harlem became the cultural center of the black world through the arrival of blacks from all points of the South and the Caribbean. Harlem became a sprawling neighborhood at the northern end of New York City, one filled with magic, history, and culture. The book includes such poems as “And This From Bruin Bear,” by Countee Cullen, and “Children of the Sun,” by Madeline G. Allison. In William Stanley Braithwaite's poem “Rhapsody,” he writes, “I am glad for my heart whose gates apart are the entrance-place of wonders.” Hughes's poem “Dream Variations” concludes with a reaffirmation of black pride, “Night coming tenderly Black like me.”

Biographical information on each of the featured poets is included. Riley-Webb's bold, vivid colors and images of children help to capture the beauty and significance of this cultural movement. This book presents a wonderful introduction for young readers to celebrate the Harlem Renaissance.

—Valerie A. Canady
Johnston, R.I.

15-2-0271

Reich, Susanna. *José! Born to Dance: The Story of José Limón*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2005. 32 pp. Illus. by Raul Colón. ISBN 0-689-86576-7, \$16.95.

Reich's moving painting, for the child's eye to share with a listener or reading adult, tells the story of a boy from a small Mexican village who is led through a life of experiences that enable him to emerge and mature into a great dancer and choreographer. Biographical, yet a story, this oversize picture book arranges its words as rhythm on the tongue, and the swirling, lush painted illustrations by Raúl Colón are warm and inviting.

Young readers will be inspired as they are told of the many challenges brave young José encountered: the hardships of learning a new language, being without friends in a new land, trying to master the art of painting, and encountering dance as an adult. As political refugees, his family was forced to find a new life in a new land, and José, as a teen, was faced with his mother's death and the need to support his family. A “must buy” for all children's libraries, this book will make young readers feel comforted and understand the importance of seeking what they love and working to master what they find.

—Toni Smith
Troy, N.Y.

15-2-0272

Ruurs, Margriet. *My Librarian Is a Camel: How Books Are Brought to Children Around the World*. Honesdale, Pa.: Boyds Mills Press, 2005. 32 pp. Illus. with photos by the author. ISBN 1-59078-093-0, \$16.95.

A catchy title, a colorful cover photograph, and an intriguing theme for librarians cannot quite make up for the lack of interest that children may bring to this topic. Thirteen countries from around the world are featured, with the less traditional bookmobiles being, besides camels, elephants, donkeys, boats, horses, and wheelbarrows on a beach in England. Each two-page spread includes photographs (not always illustrating the text), and a boxed sketch of the country, population estimate, languages spoken, and cultural background.

Says one book mobile librarian from Australia, "some stories leave children with something to think about . . . others bring laughter or tears." More interesting is a quote from a child in Pakistan, Afshan, 13, who says, "I didn't know what a library looked like before! This bus is magic." Perhaps useful as an addition to a geography curriculum, librarians may have to be persuasive to get this into circulation. For children eight through twelve, and librarians of any age.

—Mary Jo Maloney
West Sand Lake, N.Y.

15-2-0273

Santamaria, Benjamin. *Tales of the Monkey King*. Toronto: Tundra Books, 2005. 32 pp. Illus. by Brian Deines. ISBN 0-88776-684-6, \$15.95.

The "Mountain of Flowers and Fruits" splits open and a monkey is born. He is made of stone but, mysteriously, is able to run and jump and play with real monkeys that inhabit the mountain. They accept him as their leader because he is the only one brave enough to pass through a menacing waterfall. He secures a stone palace for them to inhabit, and later lays the path for them to cheat the "King of Death."

Santamaria does not provide adequate source informa-

tion, except to say "stories I had learned from a wise man, who had heard them from another wise man, on a day no one can remember," and that the tale originally came from ancient China. Feeling obligated to give something to the children of his culture, "los chavos de la calle, the street children of Mexico City," to lighten their burden so they can sleep at night, Santamaria attempts to customize the tale. They wanted a scary, bloodcurdling story, and even though the story is neither, the illustrations are quite dark.

Deines's paintings reflect the text beautifully, both in texture as well as interpretation, but as the story becomes more ambiguous, so do the illustrations. Yet somehow, cloaked deep within this contemporary version of the ancient tale, the mixture of text and illustration imparts important lessons that make the children rest easy. The children learn that bravery reaps reward, size is meaningless if one prepares oneself for challenges, and, most important, knowledge and perseverance are valuable weapons against the inequities of life.

—Wanda Meyers-Hines
Meyershines Consulting, Huntsville, Ala.

15-2-0274

Sockabasin, Allen. *Thanks to the Animals*. Gardiner, Me.: Tilbury House, 2006. 32 pp. Illus. by Rebekah Raye. ISBN 0-88448-270-7, \$16.95.

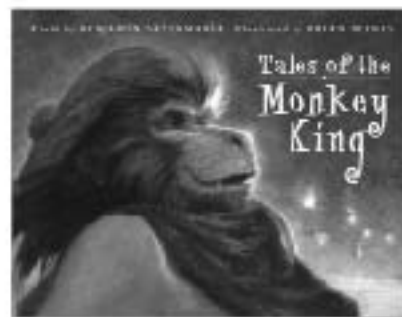
Winter arrives as a Passamoquoddy family prepares for the trip north to the deep woods of Maine, their winter home. Everyone helps as they dismantle their house and tie down the cedar logs and everything else they need—canoe, food, clothing, baskets—on the bobsled, making sure there is enough room for the children to ride on the back. As Papa Joo Tum drives the horses and Mama and the older children settle in for the long ride, nestling together in the warmth of their sealskin coats and patchwork blankets, they don't notice that little Zoo Sap has tumbled off the sled.

Alerted by Zoo Sap's cries, the animals of the forest—large and small—come together to keep him warm until Papa Joo Tum comes to get him. Joo Tum thanks the animals, one by

TALES OF THE MONKEY KING

by Benjamin Santamaria
with paintings by Brian Deines
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hardcover picture book
for ages 6 to 8

An inspiring story about
the power of one little
monkey to give desperate
children strength and
courage.



"A story of great sweetness and charm."

—June Callwood

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one, and carries little Zoo Sap—none the worse for wear—back to his family. This quiet, gentle tale, from a Passamoquoddy storyteller, is enhanced by the warm watercolor-and-ink paintings, my favorite of which shows Zoo Sap contentedly and “safely sleeping in a great pile of warm animals.” *Thanks to the Animals*, with Passamoquoddy names for the animals in the back, is a perfect bedtime story.

—Beverly Slapin
Oyate, Berkeley, Calif.

15-2-0275

Stampler, Ann Redisch. *Shlemazel and the Remarkable Spoon of Pohost*. New York: Clarion, 2006. 32 pp. Illus. by Jacqueline M. Cohen. ISBN 0-618-36959-7, \$16.00.

This is a delightful and entertaining children’s story with a hidden message. Shlemazel, known as the laziest man of his village, sits outside all day, watching other people work. He claims that he is not a lazy person, but rather just an unlucky one. He says that he can’t work because bad things would happen to him if he left his porch. Most of the people in the little town feel that getting Shlemazel to budge from his laziness is next to impossible.

One day Moshke approaches Shlemazel with a big spoon and tells him that it is a lucky spoon. Shlemazel wants to know where to take this special spoon to find his luck. Moshke pretends to listen to the spoon and tells Shlemazel that his luck can be found by plowing the *poretz’s* (wealthy landowner’s) field. The *poretz* is so grateful and amazed that Shlemazel is helping him that he gives Shlemazel a bag of coins. Shlemazel still is not satisfied; he wants luck, not coins. Moshke sends Shlemazel on more meaningful missions. He sends him to the bakery to help the baker’s daughter, then other people want to hire him and give him gifts because he has helped them. While he realizes that he doesn’t have luck, he understands that he now has meaning and purpose in his life and that he can be happy without feeling lucky.

An author’s note describes the origins of the story, and a mini-glossary explains the Hebrew words. Readers come away with the message that in order to be successful, a person does not need to be lucky, but needs to have self-confidence and be willing to help others.

—Hannah M. Heller
Baltimore, Md.

15-2-0276

Stewart, Whitney. *Becoming Buddha: The Story of Siddhartha*. Berkeley, Calif.: Stone Bridge Press/HEIAN, 2005. 32 pp. Illus. by Sally Rippin. Foreword by the Dalai Lama. ISBN 0-89346-946-7, \$16.95.

From the outset, the reader is in a different world. The novel physical orientation of the text and illustrations on the page immediately evoke the world of unbound texts, the *pechas* found in the ancient libraries of the East. Indeed, the rich, colorful detail and plot turns are sure to capture the interest of the juvenile reader. Although simplified, the tale is a historically accurate retelling of how the boy Siddhartha

abandoned his royal upbringing and wealth to become the Buddha, seeking to end for all the suffering inherent to life.

The basic Buddhist tenet of the Four Noble Truths, at the heart of recognizing and dealing with all suffering, is a concept that adults might grapple with. Yet Stewart successfully presents suffering in a way both appropriate for preadolescents and comprehensible to their experience. Importantly, the presentation empowers young readers with something they, like the Buddha, might do to develop compassion for others and alleviate suffering. It is no mere courtesy that His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, has participated in this book, bracketing the story with a substantial introduction, then simple instruction on how to meditate, written—even with humor—for the young reader. As His Holiness says in the introduction, rather than attempting to increase the number of Buddhists, this book shows a way everyone might pursue to contribute to global peace and the increase of happiness.

Kudos to illustrator Rippin, whose imagination contributes substantially to the fabric of the exotic Eastern world woven in the story.

—Rinchen Yutso
Prospect Harbor, Me.

15-2-0277

Villaseñor, Victor. *Little Crow to the Rescue/El Cuervito al rescate*. Houston: Piñata Books, 2005. 32 pp. Illus. by Felipe Ugalde Alcántara. Bilingual (English-Spanish) ed. Spanish translation by Elizabeth Cummings Muñoz. ISBN 1-55885-430-4, \$14.95.

For as long as parents have been teaching their children about the world, they’ve relied on animal fables to illustrate life’s lessons. This is certainly true within Mexican culture, where the oral tradition is strong. In this delightful book, award-winning author Villaseñor relies on this tradition when a farm boy asks a simple question of his father: “Why do the crows always fly off when I try to catch them?” The boy notes: “As usual, Papá answered with a story.”

Papá tells the story of Father Crow and his son, Little Crow. Father Crow must teach his son to be wary of humans, who will try to throw stones at them. Father Crow explains that even though “those creatures” do many things for crows such as plant corn, they don’t appreciate crows or even the “best songs” that crows offer in thanks. Father Crow impresses his son with a vast knowledge of humans and their ways. He explains that humans must be tricky because “of all the animals in the world, humans are the most defenseless and awkward.” In particular, he teaches Little Crow to fly off just a few seconds before a human throws a stone. But Little Crow improves on his father’s lesson when he comes up with a better plan to avoid a flying stone.

With vibrant illustrations and a faithful Spanish translation complementing the English text, this is a delightful fable that teaches children not only the value of their parents’ lessons, but also the validity of their own inventiveness.

—Daniel A. Olivás
West Hills, Calif.

15-2-0278

Young, Ed. *Beyond the Great Mountains: A Visual Poem About China*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2005. 32 pp. Illus. by the author. ISBN 0-8118-4343-2, \$17.95.

This looks like a picture book for children, but actually it belongs on the art shelves of the adult section. It is a beautiful, artistic coffee-table book. Or perhaps it belongs in the Dewey Decimal 400s with books on language. It gives a clear and graphic presentation of a handful of ancient Chinese characters, the pictorial writing system as it first began, and how those first pictures developed into the representations of words as they are written in modern Chinese. It does not belong in the 800s with poetry because, although it calls itself a poem, it really consists of beautiful impressions of nature, both in art and in a line of description, in which to couch the offering of 26 Chinese characters. It does not belong in the 900s with books on China. From the beautiful graphics alone, one might recognize nature—mountains, water, rain, birds, trees, stones, sun, moon—but not specifically China.

The very abstract combination of collage and paint is presented in the format of pages of increasing size so that the line of words on the bottom of each page appears all at once. The graphic artistry portraying a scene from nature corresponds beautifully with a character or two for each page. The end page at the back of the book lists all the 26 characters, both in the old script and in the modern written form. This handsome book will certainly appeal to adults with an eye for artistic beauty and also to those intrigued with the Chinese writing system. But it is not a book likely to appeal to small children.

—Ginny Lee
Syracuse, N.Y.

Intermediate (Gr. 4-6)

15-2-0279

Banerjee, Anjali. *Rani and the Fashion Divas*. Renton, Wash.: Mirrorstone, 2005. 140 pp. Series: Star Sisterz. ISBN 0-7869-3782-3, \$5.99 (pb).

The spelling bee competitions, the trivia teams, and the brain bowl teams mark Rani Sen's world. She does what her parents expect her to do, but as a high school freshman, she also wants to be more than just a brain. She wants to fit into the most popular high school group. She gets her chance when she is selected to be a part of the fashion show. As the fashion show fever grips Rani, she imagines herself to be a true fashion diva. She makes sure she hangs out with cool friends and avoids being seen in the school with geeks or the likes of "Weird" Wendy. However, her weird tryst with Weird Wendy leads her to spend some time at a local retirement home. Rani goes through a lot of soul searching before she finally comprehends what her priorities are, who she really is, and what really makes her happy.

Rani's enriching story tells the readers how well she tries to strike a balance between the pressures at home and at school. Her story is spiced up brilliantly by her tenaciously

academic parents and descriptions of complex Indian food recipes. The frequent glimpses of India brought to the reader by her grandmother add a multicultural fragrance to this coming-of-age story.

—Aliveni Akella
Simsbury, Conn.

15-2-0280

Boles, Philana Marie. *Little Divas*. New York: HarperCollins/Amistad, 2006. 166 pp. ISBN 0-06-073299-7, \$15.99.

Flood, Pansie Hart. *Sometime Friend*. Minneapolis: Lerner/Carolrhoda, 2005. 124 pp. ISBN 1-57505-866-9, \$15.95.

The main characters, African-American preteen girls, share much in common in these stories about adolescence, family, and friendships. The girls live with relatives while both their mothers travel elsewhere. They have similar struggles with new schools, friendships, boy crushes, and fitting in. In *Sometime Friend*, the setting is South Carolina, it's 1978, and 10-year-old Sylvia is staying with her great-grandmother, Miz Lula Maye. Fitting in at a new school is challenging enough, but when the kids at the new school start to tease Sylvia about her friendship with Miz Lula Maye, who is 100 years old, she feels ashamed. Miz Lula Maye also happens to be Sylvia's very "bestest friend in the whole wide world." Meanwhile, Sylvia's mom travels to Florida in search of her own relatives. Sylvia misses her mother but looks forward to her phone calls. On the first day of school, no one joins Sylvia while she sits in the cafeteria. While Sylvia treasures her friendship with Miz Lula Maye, she is uneasy when someone at school slips her a note calling her great-grandmother a witch.

A big fall carnival is approaching, and Sylvia wants to enter the poetry contest. By the time the carnival arrives, she begins to learn what true friendship really means, and even joins Miz Lula Maye in creating and wearing a special costume. *Sometime Friend* is the sequel to *Sylvia & Miz Lula Maye*, but even if readers have not read the first book, they will still enjoy reading about this special relationship. Marshall's charming black-and-white drawings further enhance the story.

In *Little Divas*, 12-year-old Cassidy's parents have recently divorced, and she's spending the summer just before the start of seventh grade with her father, a musician, while Mom travels to Africa. Cassidy's best friend, her outspoken and brash cousin, Rikki, and Golden, a neighbor, form the trio of little divas. The divas have distinct personalities and attitudes: Cassidy is considered the "good one," while Rikki, clearly the leader, is considered the "bad one." Her parents are very strict and overprotective. Her father is a minister, and she often bumps heads with her older sister. Golden is the "new" girl on the block, who's not shy about discussing family issues or the fact that she's seen a therapist.

Cassidy learns that her father may be sending her to a private school instead of to the public school her cousin and Golden will attend. She finds comfort through the regular letters she writes her mother, where she occasionally vents

her frustration about potential changes in her life. Rikki has a boyfriend, and Cassidy tries to fight her own crush on a kid named Travis, who is clearly smitten with her. The trio's many secrets and adventures include covering for Rikki's sister whenever she sneaks out with her boyfriend and attending a friend's swim party that they haven't mentioned to their parents. *Little Divas* is a fun read.

–Valerie A. Canady
Johnston, R.I.

15-2-0281

Bruchac, Joseph. *Geronimo*. New York: Scholastic, 2006. 240 pp. ISBN 0-439-35360-2, \$16.99.

It is 1908, more than 20 years after Geronimo's final surrender to the White Eyes, and the grouchy, once-fearsome old man is looking for his hat. When his adopted grandson, whom he once called "Little Foot," flicks his eyes up and then respectfully looks away, the old man discovers his hat—on his head.

As narrated by a younger Little Foot coming of age during the captivity years, the life of the man history has come to call "Geronimo" and the lives of the Ndee people, who have come to be called "Apache," are rich with cultural and historical markers and a litany of broken promises. As Little Foot observes, "Lies from the mouths of the White Eyes seemed as certain as the sunrise each morning in the east. Even when they wrote their promises down on paper, they still did not keep them. Paper lies are even easier to burn."

There is humor here too, as when Little Foot attempts to describe the thing called "cement" and as Nana opines in the humid Alabama weather, "Perhaps it would be better of us to sign a treaty with the mosquitoes. If they become our allies, together we can defeat all the White Eyes."

Chronicling the years from 1886 to 1894, each short chapter begins with a historical third-person record that offers a counterpoint to Little Foot's narrative. Through Little Foot's interpretation, middle readers will come to know the great spiritual leader as a man who loved his wives and many children, had an infectious sense of humor, and was an astute businessman besides.

Geronimo is a story of resistance and survival, courage and sacrifice, and, above all, the fight to maintain land, culture, and community. Told from the perspective of the people themselves—with a refreshing absence of words such as "renegades" and "raiders"—Bruchac's work is an antidote to the many toxic volumes, fiction and so-called nonfiction, that portray Geronimo and his people as savages.

–Beverly Slapin
Oyate, Berkeley, Calif.

15-2-0282

Budhos, Marina. *Ask Me No Questions*. New York: Simon & Schuster/Atheneum, 2006. 176 pp. ISBN 1-4169-0351-8, \$16.95.

This is a poignant story of a Bangladeshi Muslim family, narrated by Nadira, the young teenage daughter of the family. Like millions of other families across the United States, Nadira's

family lived an invisible life in New York City on expired tourist visas, until they suddenly become visible to the law after 9/11. As they learn that many men from their community are being rounded up and imprisoned, they try to flee to Canada and seek asylum there. Turned away by the Canadian authorities, the family faces its biggest crisis when their father is arrested at the U.S.-Canadian border. Their mother refuses to leave their father until he gets bail, and she decides to stay in a local shelter, while the girls return to New York City.

Forced to pretend at school that everything is normal, the girls face a deluge of emotional and physical insecurities. At the same time, their situation urges them to overcome their insecurities and discover new strengths. Nadira evolves from the shadows of her older sister, Aisha, to take charge of her life and the lives of those she loves. Aisha's valedictorian speech shows the exemplary courage of the family. The story is a true testament of "what does not kill you makes you stronger." Interwoven into these tense situations are the some bittersweet memories of the land of their forefathers, Bangladesh. The book helps readers understand the difficult times faced by Muslim communities across the United States after 9/11.

–Aliveni Akella
Simsbury, Conn.

15-2-0283

Clinton, Cathryn. *Simeon's Fire*. Cambridge, Mass.: Candlewick Press, 2005. 116 pp. ISBN 0-7636-2707-0, \$15.99.

There is a clash of cultures in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, between the Amish, who attempt to maintain the "old ways," and the dominant American culture. Using a sprinkling of Pennsylvania-German terms to enliven her novel, Clinton has written a compelling story about an Amish family living in contemporary America.

Focusing on the Zook family, Clinton explores their lives, especially of the three sons—Sylvan, Simeon, and Elam. As reflected by the title, Simeon is the central character, while the plot centers on a series of fires that are destroying Amish barns in the surrounding area.

Middle grade students will find *Simeon's Fire* an exciting and very readable novel. Clinton has researched Amish life in Lancaster County, where she and her husband presently reside. The addition of snippets of Amish life and regional vocabulary create an authentic portrait of their struggles to adjust to an encroaching world. A parallel theme of animal appreciation is woven throughout the narrative.

Simeon's Fire is recommended for its depiction of an oft misunderstood and uniquely different aspect of modern American life. The depiction of Amish life is presented in the guise of a tale of mystery, as arson strikes the community along with veiled prejudice.

–Michael Russert
Cambridge, N.Y.

15-2-0284

de Guzmán, Michael. *The Bamboozlers*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2005. 170 pp. ISBN 0-374-30512-9, \$16.00.

Albert can't understand why his mother wants nothing to do with the grandfather with whom he has recently become acquainted—until he learns his grandfather is a con man. Wendell, who totes a mysterious Stradivarius violin case with him everywhere, insists he is an “ex-con man,” and Albert, who is not as experienced as his mother with Wendell's escapades, can't help but believe him. Soon Albert and Wendell are off on a sightseeing adventure that will bring them to Seattle, Washington, meeting a slew of interesting characters (including a three-legged dog named Hollywood) on their way.

During the course of their adventure, however, Albert learns from his grandfather that they are out to do more than just sightsee. They are out to con another con man. Both Albert and Wendell are warm, likable characters, and Albert's longing to be close to his grandfather is handled sensitively and with an understanding of a young man's desire to know his family. The story is both funny and heartwarming, and it is easy for the reader to get caught up in a chuckle with Wendell and his “final” con. While the ending may leave readers wanting more answers regarding the futures of Wendell and Albert, this story is a fun, charming read with interesting, memorable, multiethnic characters who are easy to imagine and may be hard to forget.

—Jennifer Ogradowski
Guilderland (N.Y.) Public Library

15-2-0285

Marsalis, Wynton. *Jazz A-B-Z: An A to Z Collection of Jazz Portraits*. Cambridge, Mass.: Candlewick Press, 2005. unpaginated. Illus. by Paul Rogers. ISBN 0-7636-2135-8, \$24.99.

This is a thoughtful and beautifully designed book. The clever design inside the front cover, a faux vinyl record and sleeve, is just the beginning of an alphabetic encyclopedia of poetry, jazz history, and artwork. The poetry, written by Marsalis, often while on the road, pays homage, in catchy, rhythmic verse, to the mentors of jazz, with each letter of the alphabet as a starting point for a word-clever lesson in musical style and character:

Armstrong's amazing artistry astonishes audiences of all ages!

Sultry Sarah Vaughan. Her voodooed stew of varied windswept songs I gladly taste.

Illustrator Paul Rogers has designed a portrait of jazz musicians in a style that reflects their sound and a point in time, from Fats Waller in the 1930s to Ornette Coleman in the 1960s. Even readers without extensive knowledge of jazz history will be able to identify an era because of Rogers's detailed interpretations. He references song titles and artifacts that reflect the personalities of each featured musician, from Billie Holiday's trademark white gardenia to Count Basie's “blues” in shades of blue. Rogers's artwork is reminiscent of a collection of concert poster announcements and album covers and captures the style of an era, from its

color palette to details such as marquee signs for the Apollo Theater and the Village Vanguard. Look closely at the detail on each page, as there are many that indicate a musical style and historical era.

In collaboration with jazz historian Phil Schaap, there are musicians' biographies and a comprehensive glossary of poetic forms at the end of the book, from abstract to beat and free verse.

—Linda Fiore
Philadelphia, Pa.

15-2-0286

Osundare, Niyi. *Early Birds: Poems for Junior Secondary Schools, Book One*. East Lansing: Spectrum Books; dist. by African Books Collective and Michigan State Univ. Press, 2004. 91 pp. Additional materials by Ayo Banjo. ISBN 978-029-451-1, \$9.95 (pb).

Osundare is a prominent Yoruba writer. Although he is known for his books and essays concerning African literature, this collection of poetry (one of three volumes) for young Nigerian students, equivalent to middle school level in the United States, is a surprise. Osundare has taught African literature at the graduate level in New Orleans and Wisconsin, as well as in Ibadan, Nigeria. His collaborator, Ayo Banjo, is also a recognized Nigerian literature teacher. Banjo has written the commentaries and suggestions for additional activities. The 46 poems in this book (and its sequels) address a variety of topics. Some deal with Yoruba traditions, while others focus on Nigerian or world topics. Osundare does not categorize the poems by themes; however, some poems appear in groups such as trees, insects, famous people, or cities. Osundare seeks to encourage youth to write poetry as expressions of their lives.

Both men are writing for a Nigerian audience and therefore make assumptions about the reader that may not be true in the U.S. context. Osundare uses British English spelling and grammar, which may require some explanation for U.S. readers. Likewise, the Nigerian publisher did not produce the kind of slick, glossy, illustrated collection to which U.S. readers are accustomed.

The series could be utilized in a social studies or English class to expand the multicultural scope of the curriculum. However, using this and subsequent volumes will require additional research into the history and traditions of Yoruba, Nigeria, and Africa in order to understand the essence of the poems.

—Patricia S. Kuntz
Madison, Wis.

15-2-0287

Spring, Debbie. *The Righteous Smuggler: A Holocaust Remembrance Book for Young Readers*. Toronto: Second Story Press, 2005. 160 pp. Series: Holocaust Remembrance. ISBN 1-896764-97-5, \$5.95 (pb).

Whiteman, Dorit Bader. *Lonek's Journey: The True Story of a Boy's Escape to Freedom*. Long Island City, N.Y.: Star Bright Books, 2005. 142 pp. ISBN 1-59572-021-9, \$15.95.

Childhood, for many people, may be reminiscent of school and carefree vacation days. For children in Europe during World War II, however, childhood was a struggle for survival. Amid the mass destruction of Jews and others throughout Europe, there were courageous people who reached out to save lives. The authors of these two books describe the actions of two young men who showed great determination to survive these dark times.

In *The Righteous Smuggler*, Hendrik, a non-Jewish boy, is greatly saddened when the Nazis prevent his Jewish friends from attending school. He is disillusioned with the Nazi propaganda they are teaching and the restrictions they are placing on the Jews. As he misses his many Jewish friends, Hendrik persuades his father to use his fishing boat to help many of them escape from Holland. Not only does he provide transportation, but he also organizes plans to help people complete the journey to freedom. When he grows up, gets married, and has a family of his own, he names his daughter for one of his Jewish friends who was killed by the Nazis.

Lonek, a Jewish boy in Jaroslaw, Poland, narrowly manages to escape from the Nazis together with his parents and his younger brother. Their freedom, however, is short lived. They arrive in Russia, only to be arrested by Russian soldiers and taken to Siberia, to a bitterly cold prison camp. When Lonek's father becomes too sick to work, Lonek must assume more responsibility to feed his family. Reluctantly, Lonek eventually agrees to go to an orphanage in order to improve his chances of survival, while his mother tries to care for her husband and younger son. Eventually, Lonek is able to escape to Israel with many other children and to build a life there. While his parents and his brother survived the war, they were imprisoned in Russia for several years before they were allowed to join Lonek in Israel. Throughout his journey, Lonek remembers his father's words, "We must never give up hope."

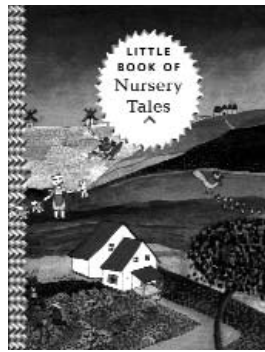
These books represent eyewitness accounts of the trauma experienced by young children during the Holocaust. As a reader, I became more aware of the difficulties faced by non-Jewish children during this time period. The youth were under great pressure from the Nazis to either become murderers or risk their own lives to help the Jews. They suffered the loss of their Jewish friends and the realization that if they did not conform to the Nazi rules, they were at risk to suffer the same fate as that of the Jews. Jews under Stalin did not fare much better than Jews under Hitler. Many did not survive Siberia and other prison camps. After the war ended, large numbers of Jews could not leave Russia to join their families.

These two stories of survival focus on the effects of the Nazi reign of terror on non-Jews and on Jews in Russia, a country not under Nazi rule. They depict young people who demonstrated great courage and helped others to realize the importance of never giving up hope.

—Hannah M. Heller
Baltimore, Md.

15-2-0288

Uribe, Veronica. *Little Book of Nursery Tales*. Toronto: Ground-wood, 2005. 104 pp. Illus. by Carmen Salvador. Trans. from Spanish by Susan Ouriou. ISBN 0-88899-673-X, \$8.95.



Uribe's small collection of stories and nursery rhymes contains several familiar works: "The Little Red Hen," "The Three Bears," and "The Three Little Pigs." These stories from the classic European tradition, sources for Disney cartoons and other popular media, are great for young readers just beyond picture books, besides being handy for adults reading bedtime stories to children. Several stories from

Latin American sources, such as "Half a-Chick," may already be familiar to children from these cultures, but they can also be something new and fun to complement the tried-and-true material. Most are cumulative stories, full of the repetitive phrases that little children find delightful.

In addition to the stories and rhymes themselves, Uribe adds source notes for each of the stories—although none for the rhymes—that are intriguing as well. There one finds out that Goldilocks started out as a fox visiting the three bears in the early Scottish version, and that the three little pigs were three geese in the 1813 English version. Not only are these points interesting, but they can also encourage discussions about the stories and more variants from a child's imagination. Uribe concludes with a bibliography of all her sources, both Spanish and English, some being Spanish translations of Bruno Bettelheim and the Brothers Grimm. In all, a pleasant balance between reading pleasure and literary scholarship.

—Suzanne Li

Queens College, City Univ. of New York

Young Adult (Gr. 7 and up)

15-2-0289

Adoff, Jamie. *Jimi & Me*. New York: Hyperion/Jump at the Sun, 2005. 330 pp. ISBN 0-7868-5214-3, \$15.99.

As a "boomer" reading *Jimi & Me*, I found the plot obvious after the first 20 pages; it is about this young boy's journey from childhood to adulthood as a fatherless man. For young readers, especially those enamored with Jimi Hendrix's musical genius, the story of Keith's coming of age, told in the style of beat poetry and spoken word, will move even the most jaded reader.

The plot is familiar: African-American boy loses revered father through a senseless act of violence; mother moves them out of the city to the unwelcoming arms of suburban racism; boy discovers father's secret life; boy falls for girl of different race; and boy meets half brother and shares love of music.

For any young reader who has lost a parent and suffered a second loss of leaving the only home he or she has known, Keith's story tugs at the heart. He finds hope in the similarities that parallel Jimi's life, his father's, and his own—being left-handed, sharing a pinch of Cherokee blood, and untimely death. The cold grief that engulfs Keith's every day is beautifully conveyed:

Dad hugging me tight . . .
Telling me not to give up hope.
Sometimes I wake up crying.
Sometimes I wish I didn't wake up at all.

There's never a happy ending when a child loses a parent, but Keith is a survivor. Through the discovery of his father's other life and that of a musical brother, Keith stands tall for himself, his family, and Jimi's legacy.

—Linda Fiore
Philadelphia, Pa.

15-2-0290

Alphin, Elaine Marie. *The Perfect Shot*. Minneapolis: Lerner/Carolrhoda, 2005. 360 pp. ISBN 1-57505-862-6, \$15.95.

Brian Hammett, captain of the high school basketball team, has forced himself to think of little else but the game since his girlfriend, Amanda Daine, her mother, and her young brother were shot dead the previous summer. As Michel Daine, Amanda's father, is standing trial for their murder, Brian and Todd Pollian are working on their history project—the Leo Frank murder case in Atlanta, Georgia in 1913—in which a witness fails to come forward and a great injustice is done. Brian, meanwhile, remembers the jogger in the “gray sweatsuit” who passed by his driveway about the time the murders were committed.

Alphin parallels well the trial of the Frank case with Brian's growing conscience about doing the right thing. Because this is more than a murder mystery, suspense is sometimes lost in a novel into which Alphin has packed so much: the victimization of Todd, who is gay; the cruel treatment of Julius, a brilliant African-American basketball player picked up by police for no just reason; the play-by-play of the games. Yet the concept of justice is approached from different angles as Brian realizes that things are not “black and white” but, rather, played out in “shades-of gray.” The characters of Todd and his lawyer brother tend to be used to symbolize justice and integrity.

Details of the Frank case and other miscarriages of justice, provided in an author's note, contribute toward making this an interesting book for discussion. It is also a good read.

—Hilary S. Crew
Kean Univ.

15-2-0291

Chater, Patricia. *Streetwise*. East Lansing: Weaver Press/African Books Collective; dist. by Michigan State Univ. Press, 2005. 114 pp. ISBN 1-77922-029-4, \$12.95 (pb).

Chinodya, Shimmer. *Tale of Tamari*. East Lansing: Weaver Press/African Books Collective; dist. by Michigan State Univ. Press, 2005. 68 pp. ISBN 1-77922-026-X, \$12.95 (pb).

These two books are timely, dealing with a part of the world where young people face serious obstacles and are often forced to grow up quickly. Both authors have done a great job capturing the touching stories of youth in

Zimbabwe, while also providing a realistic and rich context. In *Tale of Tamari*, the problems come from being orphaned by an illness that has ravaged the area, and in *Streetwise*, the problems come from the instability in the area that allows young people to be abducted and used as porters.

In *Tale of Tamari*, 14-year-old Tamari has lost both her parents and lives with her 13-year-old brother Kuda. The two of them live in one room of their four-room house. The other rooms are rented out to lodgers. Life presents many challenges to the young orphans. Tamari is resourceful and sells fruit and vegetables at a street corner after school. She looks after her brother well. She's also blessed with the love and support of her friend, Linda, and Linda's mother. Tamari's uncle, who collects rent money, has his own designs to profit from the house rather than using it for the benefit of the orphaned children. The uncle's ungenerous schemes are thwarted by the intervention, on the children's behalf, of people in the community, including Tamari's school principal, social workers, the court officials, and their aunt who comes from Mozambique.

This book is peopled with vivid characters who bring the story to life in a real world that is peopled by bad characters. Fortunately for the protagonist Tamari, good people do not allow injustices to go unchallenged. The author has rendered all the characters with sympathy.

In *Streetwise*, seven young Zimbabwean boys from a village near the border are abducted and used as porters to carry things into Mozambique. They travel a long, difficult journey on foot. After some adventures, they return home safely. Tapiwa and Ben are sent to live with their uncle, where they will be safer. Not too long after, their mother dies. Their uncle is arrested for dealing illegally in ivory. Circumstances force the boys to end up fending for themselves as street children. They do become streetwise. They do not forget their dreams. This is a well-written story. The reader is made to understand the struggles of these courageous characters and to sympathize with them. We cheer along when at the end they get an opportunity to get off the street and live a more stable life.

Both authors successfully deal with serious issues in a style that is light but exciting, in a way that is not overbearing or overly sentimental. In both stories we are left with hope that these young people will survive and possibly even thrive in that tough environment. We see not only the bleakness of the situation and people who take advantage of the young people, but the warmth and support of the community as well. Young people are sure to enjoy these stories, and they are strongly recommended.

—Lesego Malepe
Wheaton College, Mass.

15-2-0292

Davidson, Dana. *Played*. New York: Hyperion/Jump at the Sun, 2005. 235 pp. ISBN 0-7868-3690-3, \$16.99.

To be part of the underground group known as FBI, eleventh-grader Ian Striver must win a dare: get plain Kylie Winship to give up her virginity to him within three weeks. The genuine but unlikely attraction that develops between

responsible Kylie and player Ian creates literary tension: will Ian choose popularity or love? Written in contemporary, third-person language that shifts between Kylie and Ian's points of view, the story reflects middle-class African-American high school and family life.

Although the teens' sexual encounter is described in detail, the book spares the reader from a preachy message about the dangers of teenage sex. Instead, a tender love story with appeal for both males and females develops after Ian betrays Kylie's trust by giving too much information to his FBI boys. Wise older sister Kim Striver encourages the separated Ian and Kylie to be honest about their identities and feelings. Nevertheless, Ian's attempts to earn back Kylie's trust, including walking away from FBI, fail until he discovers that he loves Kylie. Like the main characters, the dialogue and narrative style also mature as the chapters progress. While readers may hope for a happy ending, Ian's slow emotional growth leaves them guessing until the final pages.

—Julie Ranelli
Episcopal Children's Center, Washington, D.C.

15-2-0293

Flake, Sharon G. *Bang!* New York: Hyperion/Jump at the Sun, 2005. 298 pp. ISBN 0-7868-1844-1, \$16.99.

Rabin, Staton. *Black Powder*. New York: Simon & Schuster/McElderry Books, 2005. 246 pp. ISBN 0-689-86876-6, \$16.95.

Although the authors of these two young adult novels differ drastically in their approaches, both have chosen to tackle the red-hot issue of gun violence among African-American youth.

In *Bang!* Flake chooses to confront gun violence head-on. The novel is written in the voice of the main character, Mann; it is a blunt, straightforward style that spares no words. In her matter-of-fact way, Flake brings Mann's hidden emotions to the surface. She reveals that at the age of 13, he witnessed the shooting of his seven-year-old brother, Jason. Jason's death tears Mann's family apart; his father becomes abusive, his mother quits her job and spends her days crying in her bathrobe, and Mann turns to drugs to escape his own pain. Mann's father, who believes that Jason was killed because he was weak, becomes obsessed with the idea of toughening Mann up. Inspired by an African coming-of-age ritual, he drops Mann and his best friend, Kee-lee, off in the woods of the Deep South to find their own way home. The trip hardens the boys. When they return, they resort to violence and more drugs. Disturbing images and random acts of violence pervade the rest of the novel, though it is at times inexplicably funny and touching. The ending is so gut-wrenchingly sad that the reader has trouble getting through it. The novel is completed in inner-city vernacular, in the clear voice of Mann. Overall, it is a realistic portrayal, capturing the poignancy, hardships, and laughter. Flake deserves to be commended for her skillful storytelling. The novel is recommended enthusiastically for high school students and adults. However, the extreme violence that is portrayed in the novel makes it unsuitable for most middle school students and younger teens.

Black Powder presents a high contrast to Flake's potent storytelling. The novel tells the story of Langston Davis, a boy who has a talent for science that is unappreciated in his neighborhood. When Langston's best friend, Neely, is shot and killed, Langston becomes obsessed with destroying guns forever. He hatches a plan to commandeer his science teacher's time machine; he wants to go back to the thirteenth century to convince Dr. Roger Bacon, the leading scientist of his time, to destroy the formula for gunpowder. In *Black Powder*, Rabin tries to approach the issue of gun violence in a new way. However, her plot is weak. In trying to use too many elements of the fantastic, she makes the novel far-fetched and unbelievable. She further discredits her story by trying too hard to employ urban slang. Rabin's unsuccessful plot is slightly redeemed by the lovable character of Langston. However, in trying to make Langston original, she has merely reversed the stereotype of a black inner-city teenager. Overall, the novel is ineffective.

—Lily Ann Ringler
Shenendehowa High School, Clifton Park, N.Y.

15-2-0294

Gavin, Jamila. *The Blood Stone*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2005. 340 pp. ISBN 0-374-30846-2, \$18.00.

This historical novel is a children's adventure set in the seventeenth century. Filippo's family lives in Venice. Owing a precious diamond, the Ocean of the Moon, brought back by Filippo's grandfather from India, is a highly guarded secret in this jeweler family household. Drawn by the magnificence of the land of diamonds, Filippo's father, too, had gone away to visit the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan's court in Delhi even before Filippo was born. Now, after 12 years, the family receives news of Filippo's father. The family is apprehensive about the credibility of the news bearer, Signor Khan. Their misgivings are overshadowed by the news that Filippo's father is being held a prisoner by an Afghan warlord for a huge ransom. The family decides to send Filippo with the Ocean of the Moon imbedded in his skull to free his father. Along with Signor Khan, Filippo then undertakes the harsh journey through rough seas and desert storms from Venice to India and then to Afghanistan. The opulent land of diamonds also exposes Filippo to some cruel political plots and dangers. Filippo is finally able to free his father.

The story also brings to readers glimpses of Venice and the Indian subcontinent, the lifestyles of people, and an understanding of women's positions in each of these societies over 300 years ago.

—Aliveni Akella
Simsbury, Conn.

15-2-0295

Lehman, Carolyn. *Strong at the Heart: How It Feels to Heal from Sexual Abuse*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2005. 156 pp. Illus. with photos. ISBN 0-374-37282-9, \$18.00.

"One long-term positive effect of what I went through is that I've learned how to deal with the tough things in life. I can cope better, I've become a stronger person." This state-

ment by a young man, sexually abused as a child, is representative of a major theme that runs through the interviews of nine teens and adults interviewed by Lehman. The interviewees, male and female, speak frankly and with sensitivity about their different experiences of sexual abuse (including incest, abduction, and rape), the effects the abuse had on their lives, how they felt emotionally, how they coped, and the various healing processes that helped them regain their esteem and take back control of their lives.

Lehman, acknowledging that she herself was a victim, writes knowledgeably about the subject and, best of all, lets her interviewees, who are from different racial and ethnic and socially diverse communities, speak at length from their various perspectives. Their personal stories can bring powerful and positive messages of hope to teens who have suffered abuse. In the final chapter, three young people tell how they work as activists for Survivors and Allies for Education on Childhood Sexual Abuse and Incest on the Smith College campus. The book concludes with excellent resources: fiction, nonfiction, films, self-help books, organizations, hotlines, and web sites, some of which are organized under topics such as abuse, date and acquaintance rape, resilience, and activism.

This is a highly useful and well-presented book that belongs in all young adult collections.

—Hilary S. Crew
Kean Univ.

15-2-0296

Selvadurai, Shyam. *Swimming in the Monsoon Sea*. Toronto: Tundra Books, 2005. 280 pp. ISBN 0-88776-735-5, \$18.95.

Set in the flourishing lush tropical backdrop of Sri Lanka, *Swimming in the Monsoon Sea* is the story of Amrith, a young boy. A fatal accident takes Amrith's parents away from him, though in reality his father had been consumed by alcohol long before the accident. Amrith now lives with his guardians: Auntie Bundle, his mother's close friend, and her husband, Uncle Lucky. Along with their two daughters, this fam-

ily leaves no stone unturned to make Amrith feel at home. For most part, Amrith's life seems normal, though there are those dark times when his heart struggles to keep alive a few of the memories and erase others from his past.

Most of Amrith's thirteenth summer is characteristically marked by boredom. Neither the school play nor the typing sessions hold his attention. The monsoon arrives, characteristically pushing away the doldrums and bringing along with it a windfall of emotions. Amrith's cousin, Niresh, arrives from Canada. Amrith finds that Niresh means more than a friend and a blood relative to him. Amrith becomes aware of his sexual orientation. This coming-of-age story also brings to readers rich glimpses of multicultural Sri Lanka in the 1980s, its art, architecture, social life, and the lifestyle of its elite.

—Aliveni Akella
Simsbury, Conn.

Audio

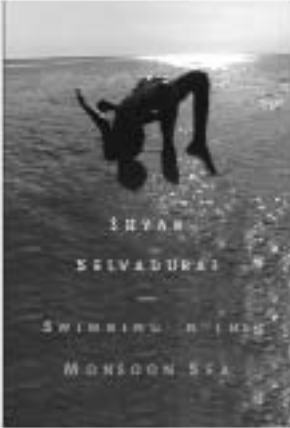
15-2-0297

The Caribbean. New York: Putumayo World Music, 2006. CD. 46 minutes. \$16.98.

The 12 pieces in this enjoyable and exhilarating collection, from musicians representing various islands are steeped in African traditions that have transformed their European heritages. The CD presents a wide range of Caribbean music and Creole languages, depicting the diversity of cultures with their distinct rhythms and styles. The creativity of these musicians is heightened by the mixing and fusing of their own styles with those of other islands.

Zouk, compas, and chouval bwa are typical styles of the French-speaking islands of Martinique and Haiti. Kali, with his rendition of "Aline Volé," Marcé and Toumpak with "Bon Tché," and Mika with "Bél Fanm," exemplify these styles. From the Spanish-speaking islands, Jandy Feliz sings "Los Amores" to a merengue rhythm, and Waldo Mendoza sings "Pasa un Tiempo Viejo" in Cuban pop.

The rhythms typical of the English-speaking islands are



SWIMMING IN THE MONSOON SEA

"As lush and languid as its Sri Lanka setting ... Selvadurai, who wrote so gracefully for adults ... now does the same for teens."
—Booklist, Starred Review

by Shyam Selvadurai
0-88776-735-4
A novel
for ages 13 and up

"A coming-of-age story that transcends labels and deserves to be called literature, plain and simple ... *Monsoon Sea* puts the standard American 'teen issue' novel to shame."
—The Washington Post

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the Jamaican mento in “Sam Fi Man” by Stanley Beckford, and the ska in “Freedom Sounds” by the Skatalites; soca is the style from Trinidad and Guyana in “Hot and Groovy” by Millitant (Bryan Paton), and in “Thundah” by Coalishun (Lord Shorty). “Rev It Up” gives a taste of Trinidadian Carnival by the group Jab Jab.

Tambu, tamba, and seu are the rhythms of the Dutch-speaking islands; Claudius Philips from Aruba sings in Papiamentu (an Arubian language) “Overtime (Nami Chens Pa Mi Biba),” in a style that fuses many of the Caribbean sounds.

This CD will excite learners in classes on Caribbean history/culture and should inspire music lovers to start their own Caribbean collections.

–Diana Budhai
College of St. Rose

15-2-0298

Espada, Martín. *Now the Dead Will Dance the Mambo*. Wellfleet, Mass.: Leapfrog Press Audio, 2004. CD. 80 minutes. ISBN 0-972898-43-3, \$15.95.

Latino author Espada is known as a poet—most recently of *Alabanza: New and Selected Poems, 1982-2002* (2003)—and as the editor of *Poetry Like Bread* (2000), an anthology of works by Latino/a and other poets. In this CD, Espada reads several of his poems, including “Jorge the Church Janitor Finally Quits,” and “Federico’s Ghost.” Listening to Espada crisply deliver the closing lines of “Jorge the Church Janitor Finally Quits” is a treat: “maybe the mop/will push on without me, / . . . /like a crazy squid/ . . . /They will call it Jorge.”

The CD is ideal for those interested in experiencing a poetry reading in the comfort of a private space, as well as for educators including Espada’s work in their classes. The delight of hearing Espada read his own work, with his own inflections and pauses, adds a new dimension to an appreciation of these works. Espada’s voice is mellow and sonorous, and adds a gravitas, especially to his political pieces, such as “When Songs Become Water,” and to poems that share insight into his personal life, including “Because Clemente Means Merciful,” about the illness of his son. These readings were recorded both in a studio and in front of live audiences. The CD insert includes liner notes penned by Espada himself, which provide some context for each piece. This CD is highly recommended for aficionados of Espada’s poetry, as well as for those who would like to hear an acclaimed Latino poet read his own work.

–Lisa Nevárez
Siena College

15-2-0299

French Playground. New York: Putumayo World Music, 2005. CD. 34 minutes. \$14.98.

Swing Around the World. New York: Putumayo World Music, 2005. CD. 40 minutes. \$14.98.

Putumayo World Music has truly performed a service to language and culture educators by creating high-quality,

authentic, and timely collections of world music. *French Playground* and *Swing Around the World* are fun and uplifting CDs showcasing upbeat songs from both the Francophone and international swing music communities, respectively.

French Playground features happy, catchy songs with positive lyrics that include word play and alliteration. Younger listeners will be attracted to the quick tempos and fun sounds, yet many of the chorus lyrics are of a higher language level than many young learners might be capable to fully comprehend or repeat. Lessons structured around sing-alongs with the songs would be appropriate for more advanced French students, perhaps fourth or fifth grade level or middle school. Elementary, kindergarten, and pre-K students will benefit from listening to the authentic music and dancing to the various rhythms. Some of the chorus’s lyrics will lend themselves to instructional sing-alongs at the elementary level, but they should be chosen carefully as not to frustrate young learners. *French Playground* is an excellent accompaniment to any craft or group classroom activity and is sure to result in children tapping their toes and humming or singing along with the choruses.

Swing Around the World is the perfect accompaniment to a global-themed dance party or lesson. This CD is an excellent example to relate to children the concept that music is an international language that many cultures interpret and contribute to. Not only does swing music have an American influence, but it is performed by people in Canada, Greece, France, Italy, and Africa. The upbeat rhythms are irresistibly danceable, and this CD would be an excellent choice to play in the classroom during an informal party, a dance-based language lesson, or music class. Compared to *French Playground*, the lyrics of *Swing Around the World* are more advanced and representative of authentic swing vocals. Approximately half of the songs are performed in English, with roots in Canadian, Hawaiian, and American swing.

Both of these CDs affirm the consistent excellence of Putumayo compilations.

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

15-2-0300

Papua New Guinea Stringbands and Brozman, Bob. *Sounds of the Volcano*. London, U.K.: Riverboat/World Music Network, 2005. CD. 72 minutes. Includes DVD documentary. \$16.98.

Prominent guitarist Brozman traveled to Papua New Guinea to record this album with the Tolai people of Rabaul, East New Britain. The 16 songs on the album are performed by Brozman and five island stringbands composed of 50 musicians. The people of Rabaul have suffered devastating losses due to an eruption of the Tavurvur volcano more than ten years ago. The recovery from the eruption has been very difficult and slow, but music provides hope and joy to the community.

The music is lively and well performed, with a Hawaiian or Pacific island feeling. There are no English translations of the lyrics; therefore it is not known what the songs are about.

However, the melodies are very catchy, and you may find yourself humming along and tapping your foot to the beat. The CD is accompanied by a compelling DVD documentary of the making of the album. Hearing the story of these people and seeing them perform the music makes the CD even more enjoyable. There is an obvious sense of community among the band members, which comes through in the music.

The DVD is very good, although at times it is difficult to understand what the members of the bands are saying when there are no subtitles. Brozman is very talented and extremely generous with the musicians. Each musician will receive royalty payments from the sales of the CD, which will go a long way in helping improve the economy of Rabaul.

—Heather Courtney

15-2-0301

Ulloa, Juanita. *Paz y alegría*. Oakland, Calif.: Ulloa Productions, 2005. CD. 43 minutes. \$17.00.

It's always exciting when you find something you're looking for at the right time, and *Paz y alegría* was just what I hoped it would be! It is a delightful mix of holiday tunes in Spanish and English. It has songs associated with Christmas, and it even includes a song associated with Hanukkah, "Ocho Kandelikas," which was written in Ladino, the language spoken by Sephardic Jews.

This rich blend of holiday songs is presented with an upbeat rhythm and is easy to sing along with or just to listen to. This is truly a nice remix of many of the most popular songs of the season. It is appropriate for both young and old. If you are looking for a compilation of holiday songs in Spanish, English, and Ladino, then you will really appreciate this CD.

—Melanie Pores

Albany (N.Y.) City School District

Video

15-2-0302

Adventures in Storytelling: Keys to Imagination. Indianapolis: StoryWatchers Club/Sax Media Group, 2006. DVD. 45 minutes. Color. \$19.98.

Smiling multiracial kids on the cover of this title will entice prospective viewers. The DVD's photography and sound are for the most part professionally done, minus two seconds' worth of unexplained blackout and an introductory song that is awkwardly lip-synched.

Seven white American storytellers entertain a small audience of attentive elementary-aged children seated on low bleachers. The background is totally plain, thus eliminating distraction. Some of the presenters successfully use props, songs, and audience participation. Others use only their voices and body expressions. All do a serviceable job at presenting their stories.

Between presentations are skits featuring multicultural Muppetlike puppets that encourage children to use their imaginations, yet the scripts could be more imaginative. The puppeteers are not always adept at synchronizing mouth movement with vocalizations.

The special features section includes autobiographical presentations by the storytellers that will be lost on children, as these sketches are meant for an adult audience. A kid-friendly feature shows children telling stories. The sing-along music video section is inaccessible, for unknown reasons. A "behind-the-scenes" portion does not go into enough detail, nor would it interest children.

Including presenters of color who present multicultural stories would improve this DVD, as would a more consistently age-appropriate program. This selection is suggested for large collections only.

—Jennifer Ward

Albany (N.Y.) Public Library

2005–2006 Cumulative Publisher Directory

The following is a directory of all the publishers whose books, recordings, videos, or software have been reviewed in *MultiCultural Review* during 2005 and the first half of 2006. The publishers have been organized by type, as follows. Adult Books: Alternative/Regional/Ethnic/Literary Publishers, Religious Publishers, Scholarly/Professional/University Presses, Trade Publishers; Juvenile Books: Alternative/Regional/Ethnic Publishers, Educational Publishers, Trade Publishers; Internet Publishers; and Audio/Video/Software Publishers. Those publishers whose materials have been reviewed in this issue are starred. Those publishers whose materials appear in this "Editor's Shelf" are indicated with an (E), and publishers who have materials in both "Editor's Shelf" and the regular review section are indicated with a (+)

ADULT BOOK

PUBLISHERS

Alternative/Regional/ Ethnic/Literary Publishers

African American Images
1909 W. 95th St.
Chicago, IL 60643
(773) 445-0322

* African Books Collective
Dist. by Michigan State
Univ. Press
1405 South Harrison Rd.,
Suite 25
East Lansing, MI 48823
(517) 355-9543

Akashic Books
P. O. Box 1456
New York, NY 10009

Alyson Publications
6922 Hollywood Blvd., Suite
1000
Los Angeles, CA 90028
www.alyson.com

Amber Communications
1334 East Chandler Blvd.,
Suite 5-D67
Phoenix, AZ 85048
(480) 460-1660

Angel Island Association
P. O. Box 866
Tiburon, CA 94920
(415) 435-3522

Archipelago Books
25 Jay St., #203
Brooklyn, NY 11201
(718) 852-6134

Arsenal Pulp Press
341 Water St., Suite 200
Vancouver, BC
V6B 1B8 Canada
(604) 687-4233

(+) Arte Público Press
University of Houston
4800 Calhoun, 2-L
Houston, TX 77204-2090
(713) 743-2841

(E) Applause Books
19 W. 21st St., Suite 201
New York, NY 10010
(212) 575-9265

Aunt Lute Books
P. O. Box 410687
San Francisco, CA 94141
(415) 826-1300
* Bayeux Arts Press
119 Stratton Crescent SW
Calgary, AB T3H 1T7
Canada
(403) 249-2477

* Beacon Press
25 Beacon St.
Boston, MA 02108-2800
(617) 742-2110

* Bilingual Review Press
Hispanic Research Center
Arizona State University
Box 872702
Tempe, AZ 85287-2702
(602) 965-3867

Black Heron Press
P. O. Box 95676
Seattle, WA 98145
(206) 363-5210

Black Sparrow Books/David
R. Godine Publishing
9 Hamilton Place
Boston, MA 02108
(617) 451-9600

John F. Blair, Publisher
1406 Plaza Dr.
Winston-Salem, NC 27103-
1470
(800) 222-9796

Caxton Press
312 Main St.
Caldwell, ID 83605
(208) 459-7421 /
(800) 657-6465

* Cinco Puntos Press
2709 Louisville
El Paso, TX 79930
(915) 566-9072

* City Lights
261 Columbus Ave.
San Francisco, CA 94133
(415) 362-8193

Clear Light Publishing
823 Don Diego
Santa Fe, NM 87508
(505) 989-9590

Coffee House Press
27 North Fourth St., Suite
400
Minneapolis, MN 55401
(612) 338-0125

Crandall, Dostie & Douglass
245 West Fourth Ave.
Roselle, NJ 07203
(800) 679-6119

* Curbstone Press
321 Jackson St.
Willimantic, CT 06226
(860) 423-5110

Fulcrum
16100 Table Mountain
Pkwy., Suite 300
Golden, CO 80403
(303) 277-1623 /
(800) 992-2908

Genesis Press
P. O. Box 101
Columbus, MS 39703
(877) 422-3665 (orders)

Giraffe Books
Kabayan Central
P. O. Box 2055
Manila-CPO
1060 Philippines
www.kabayancentral.com

* Graywolf Press
2402 University Ave., Suite
203
St. Paul, MN 55114
(651) 641-0077

Haymarket Books
P. O. Box 180165
Chicago, IL 60625
(773) 583-7884