Children & Libraries

the journal of the Association for Library Service to Children

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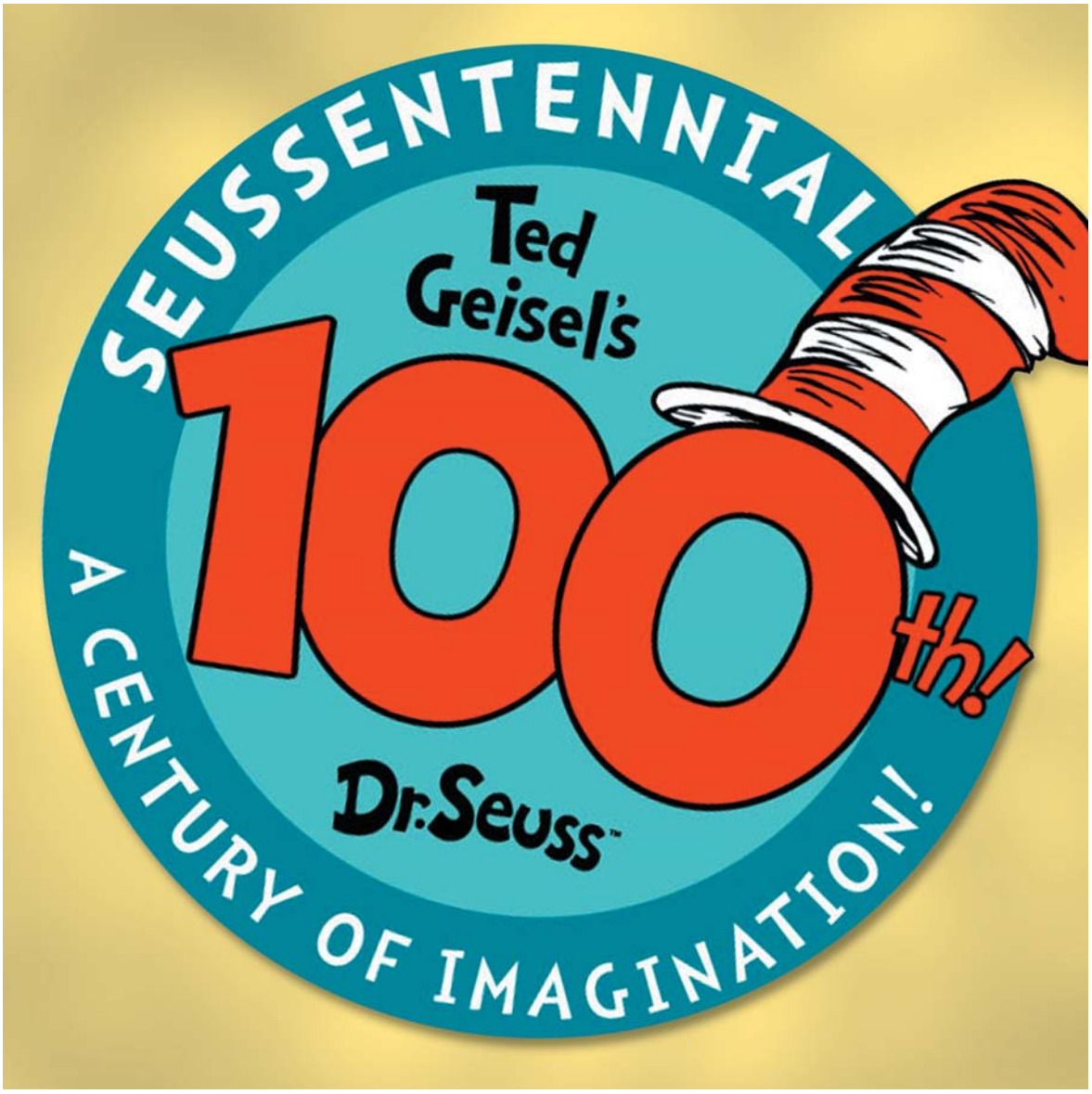

Celebrating Dr. Seuss' 100th Birthday • International Youth Library • Caldecott Capers • Batchelder Award

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ALSC
Association for Library Service to Children

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Editor's Note
What a Wubbulous Job!

Sharon Korbeck

I really love my job today;
It's time to write and edit, I mean, play!

It's the hundredth birthday of Dr. Seuss
And I'm ready, just turn me loose!

This issue is filled with stuff and such,
But I hope you love nothing quite as much

As our terrificulous tribute to the nonsense king
Who brought us all Sneetches and Horton and things

Oh, say can you say what this man has done?
Perhaps children's lit would never have been so fun!

We'll embrace his legacy in 2004
When publishers, librarians, teachers and more

Let out a yell in honor of the centenarian's day
Move aside, Lorax! We're on our way!

Read on to hear more on the celebration
In every corner of our nation.

This issue ends the inaugural year of our magazine;
Thanks for reading—we hope you like what you've seen! &

Executive Director's Note
Oh, The Places We've Gone

Malore I. Brown

Since *Children and Libraries* debuted in Spring 2003, ALSC has traveled far and wide. The premiere of our journal described the opening of the Eric Carle Museum in the spring—while in this issue, we celebrate the centennial of another Wilder Award winner, Theodor Geisel (a.k.a. Dr. Seuss). In the summer, *CAL* featured speeches from some of ALSC's distinguished award winners, and this issue continues that journey through this year's outstanding literature for children with the speeches of the 2003 Batchelder and Carnegie award winners. Finally, ALSC traveled "North to Canada" for the ALA Annual Conference this summer. With our colleagues in CACL, the Canadian Association of Children's Librarians, ALSC members presented innovative, challenging programs that highlighted the critical issues facing children's librarians—and children—north and south of the border. Brian Doyle's "Seeing the Light" highlights some of these issues. And the journey continues! We look forward to another year of traveling together, and to chronicling our endeavors and successes in the pages of our journal—*your* journal, *Children and Libraries.* &

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Statement of Purpose

Children and Libraries is the official journal of ALSC, a division of the American Library Association. The journal primarily serves as a vehicle for continuing education of librarians working with children, which showcases current scholarly research and practice in library service to children and spotlights significant activities and programs of the Association. (From the journal's draft "Policies and Procedures" document to be adopted by the ALSC board.)

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Manuscripts

Manuscripts and letters pertaining to editorial content should be sent to Sharon Korbeck, editor, E1569 Murray Lane, Waupaca, WI 54981; (715) 258-0369; e-mail: toylady@athenet.net. Manuscripts will be sent out for review according to the journal's established referee procedures. See the author guidelines in each issue for further information.

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Letters to the Editor

Letters Guidelines

Children and Libraries welcomes letters to the editor on topics of general interest to the profession or as comments on topics covered in our pages.

Letters should be no longer than 350 words and must be signed. The editor reserves the right to edit letters for clarity and space. Send letters to Editor Sharon Korbeck at toylady@athenet.net or via mail to E1569 Murray Lane, Waupaca, WI 54981.

Summer/Fall Issue Was Impressive

After receipt of the most recent issue of *Children and Libraries*, I felt that I had to send a note of appreciation. I am so very impressed with the breadth and depth of articles in this newly revamped publication! I think ALSC has created a class act with this new magazine.

Two articles from Summer/Fall 2003 have urged me to write you.

"Building a Future: KSU Inaugurates Children's Library Center . . .", which describes the new Reinberger Children's Center at Kent State University here in Ohio is one of them. I have had firsthand knowledge of the expertise and skill with which Greg Byerly and Carolyn Brodie have, over the years, promoted children's literature. They are tireless servants of the library world who have supported libraries of all types with their initiatives. The Reinberger Center will be particularly beneficial to school librarians, and, as a degreed school librarian, I am particularly appreciative of their work. Thanks ALSC for the wonderful article for two deserving professionals.

I was also very touched by Margaret Mary Kimmel's article, "A Rose for Fred." I served for three years as Library Director at Adams Memorial Library in Latrobe, Pennsylvania, and I had occasion to meet Fred Rogers. Indeed, he was the kindest person I have ever met.

During one of his visits to our newly renovated facility, he spun a tale about the scarab ring and I was positively fascinated. As a new director at Adams Memorial, I had heard many stories about Sarah McComb and knew her to be highly regarded and respected. My short, but fortunate, meeting with Fred Rogers instilled in me the value of place, the wonder of history, and confirmed for me the value of my chosen profession.

Ruth A. Metcalf
Library Development Consultant
State Library of Ohio

Call for Manuscripts

Got a story to share?

Children and Libraries is soliciting manuscripts for its 2004 issues. We'd love to feature practical advice, research theories, scholarly reviews, interview features, and "best practice" articles from children's librarians (and others involved in the field) from across the nation.

Do you have a scholarly paper or research manuscript you'd like to have published? Have you conducted research on a particular aspect of children's librarianship or library service? Any topics of interest and import to children's librarians are welcome.

Please contact *Children and Libraries* Editor Sharon Korbeck at toylady@athenet.net or (715) 258-0369 for more information on how to submit articles for consideration. **Visit our Web site at www.ala.org/alsc.**

Call for Referees

To make *Children and Libraries* a truly interactive publication, we're looking for ALSC members to serve as volunteer referees for journal articles. Unsolicited articles and those of a scholarly nature must be submitted to at least two referees to judge the submissions on accuracy, style, impact, importance, and interest. Specialists in particular genres (such as technology, literature, intellectual freedom, programming, etc.) are especially needed.

Referees make recommendations to the editor on whether or not manuscripts should be accepted for publication. Interested librarians should contact *Children and Libraries* Editor Sharon Korbeck at **toylady@athenet.net** or (715) 258-0369 for more information on the referee process.

The Seussabilities Are Endless

Dr. Seuss Centennial Celebrations

by Sharon Korbeck

Original drawing for *How The Grinch Stole Christmas,* 1957

Just how pervasive is the world of Dr. Seuss? Sure, everyone remembers *The Cat in the Hat* and *Horton Hears a Who.* But do you remember Esso's Motoraspus? The film *The 5,000 Fingers of Dr. T?* Jesse Jackson reading *Green Eggs and Ham* on *Saturday Night Live?*

It's rare that an author, especially in children's literature, can extend his legacy beyond his genre. But Dr. Seuss wasn't just any author or illustrator. He's one deserving of a major celebration, a Seussentennial to be exact, to celebrate the 100th anniversary of his birth.

March 2, 2004 marks the centennial of Theodor Seuss Geisel's birth, and few people will miss the year's worth of playfulness and glory befitting the master of nonsense verse and ridiculously marvelous illustration.

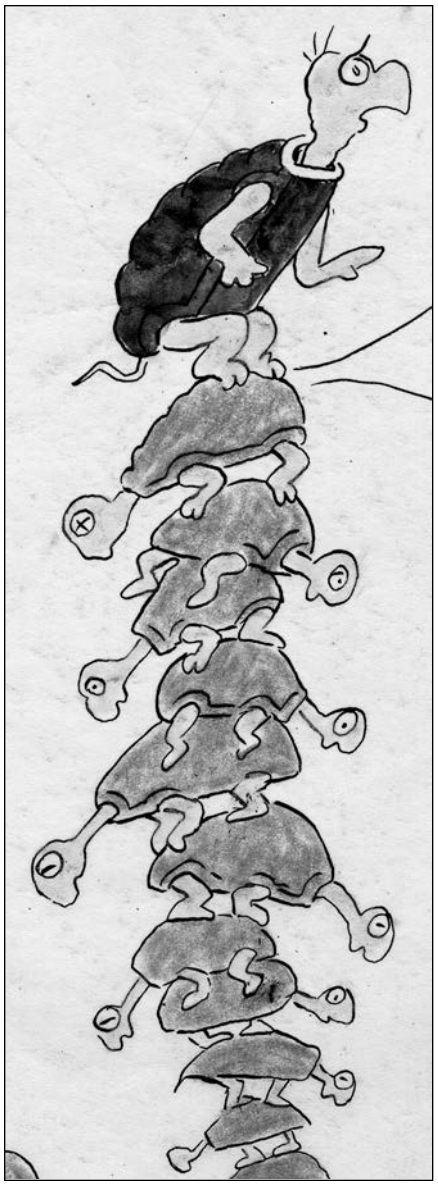
Lynda Corey Claassen has a front-row seat to it all. She's the director of the Mandeville Special Collections Library at the University of California–San Diego.

"The Cat in the Hat is loose at the library!" she said, speaking of the three-part, rotating exhibits the library will hold next year. Claassen is excited that the exhibits will be open during the ALA Midwinter Meeting in San Diego in early January.

"This will be the Dr. Seuss you didn't know," Claassen said of the first exhibit. "Many people are surprised that he had two successful careers (political cartoonist and advertising artist) before he wrote children's books."

The other two exhibits will feature never-before-seen Seuss drawings and cartoons from the Seuss archives and "Seussiana: Dr. Seuss as an American Icon."

Librarians can access more information about the UCSD Seuss collection at



(Above right) Detail of original sketch for *Yertle The Turtle, And Other Stories,* 1958. (Below left) Cartoon published in *PM,* June 3, 1942. (Below right) Cartoon published in *PM,* October 9, 1941.

www.orpheus.ucsd.edu/speccoll. "We have a lot of stuff online. They're wonderful teaching tools," Claassen said. She said librarians might find some of Seuss's non-children's work interesting as well.

"The political cartoons are as relevant today as they were in the 1940s when he drew them," she said.

The Seuss collection has been at UCSD since the mid-1990s and includes 10,000 drawings, tearsheets from magazines featuring Seuss's work, correspondence, sketches, editorial cartoons, advertising artwork, and more. The archives are not open to the public, but are available for research work.

"This is a man whose enthusiasm never flagged," Claassen said. "I think he has an enormous influence."

One of Claassen's particular pleasures at the library is working with Geisel's widow, Audrey, who lives in nearby La Jolla.

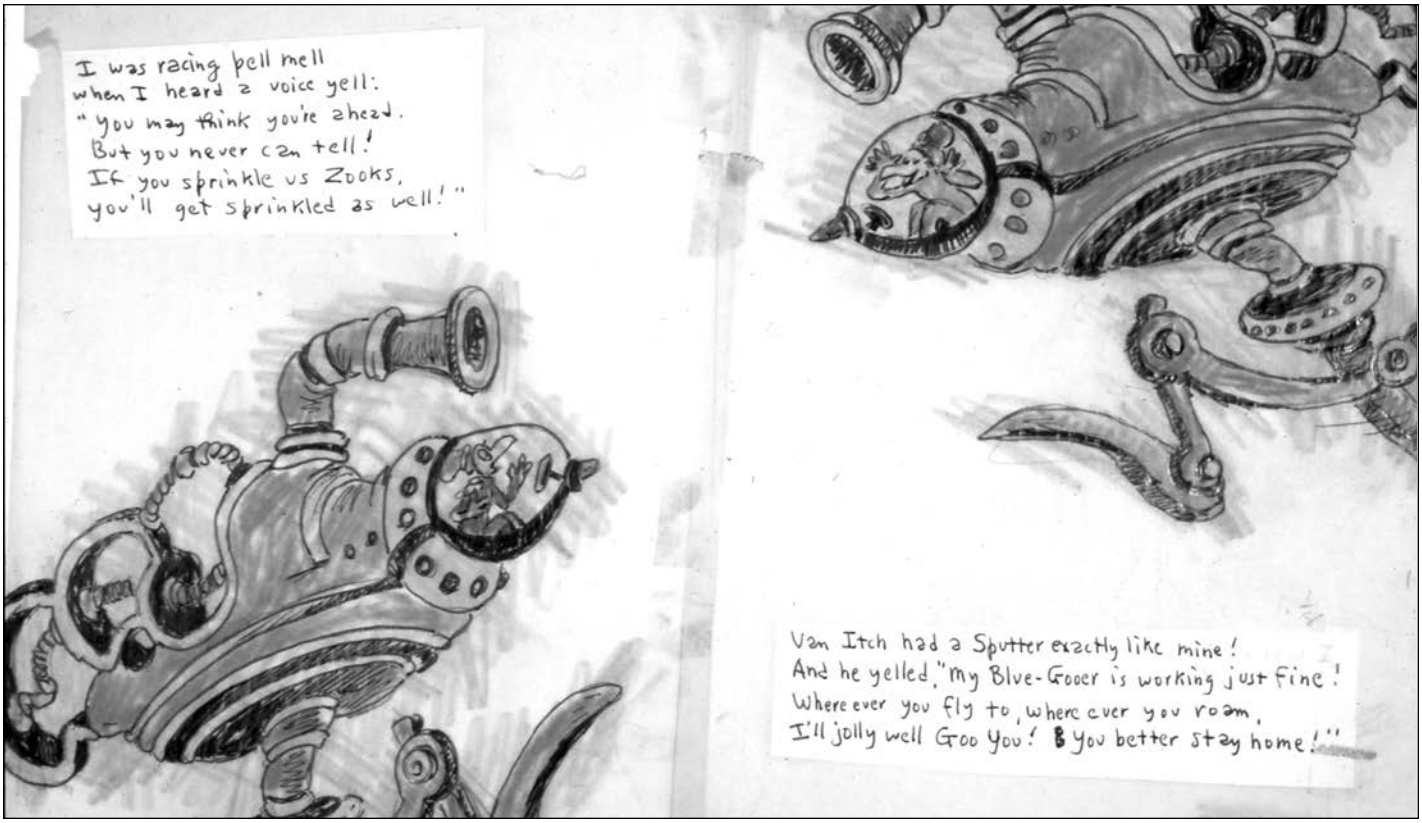
"Ted and I were married for more than twenty-three years, and sometimes when you are very close up, you do not have a broad perspective of the subject," Audrey Geisel said.

"It is especially rewarding and gratifying for me to take a long view of the man I lived with, along with the rest of America, and marvel at his many facets by bringing Seussentennial to life."

More Seuss to Go

Another event targeted at educators in 2004 is a Read Across America program, sponsored by the National Education Association.

Original sketch for *The Butter Battle Book,* 1984.



Also, a crosscountry Countdown to Seussentennial tour, sponsored by Random House Children's Books, will begin in January. The tour will include book donations, costumed characters, readings, and imagination workshops.

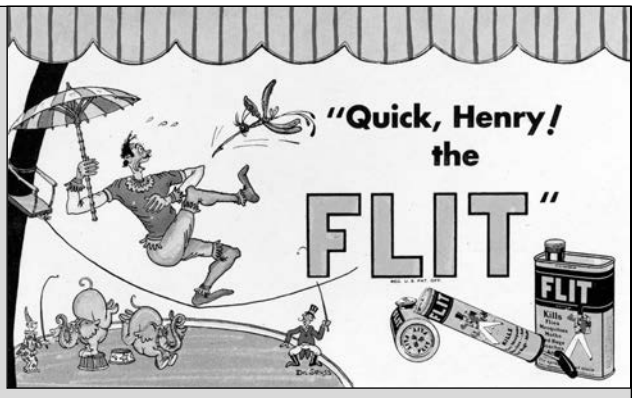
Other Seuss events to watch for include:

- "The Art of Dr. Seuss: A Retrospective Exhibition," a gallery tour sponsored by the Chase Group;
- an exhibit at the Children's Museum of Manhattan, July 2004;
- Geisel stamp introduced by the United States Postal Service, March 2004; and
- A & E *Biography* program, 2004.

You would not, could not, want to miss a celebration such as this! For more information on the year's worth of Seuss celebrations, visit www.seussentennial.com. &

Did You Know?

- Dr. Seuss coined the terms "nerd" and "grinch," which have become common to English idiom.



- His books have been translated into more than twenty languages and have sold more than five hundred million copies worldwide.
- Among his early illustrations were advertisements for Flit bug spray (see above) and Esso gasoline.
- Dr. Seuss's grandfather and father owned a brewery.

All images reprinted with permission of the Dr. Seuss Collection, Mandeville Special Collections Library, University of California–San Diego.

A Wild Seuss Chase

Want to learn more about Theodor Seuss Geisel? It won't take a wild Seuss chase—these two new titles will clue you in.

Cohen, Charles D. *The Seuss, The Whole Seuss, and Nothing But the Seuss.* New York: Random House, forthcoming, Feb. 2004. 192p. $35 (ISBN 0-375-82248-8).

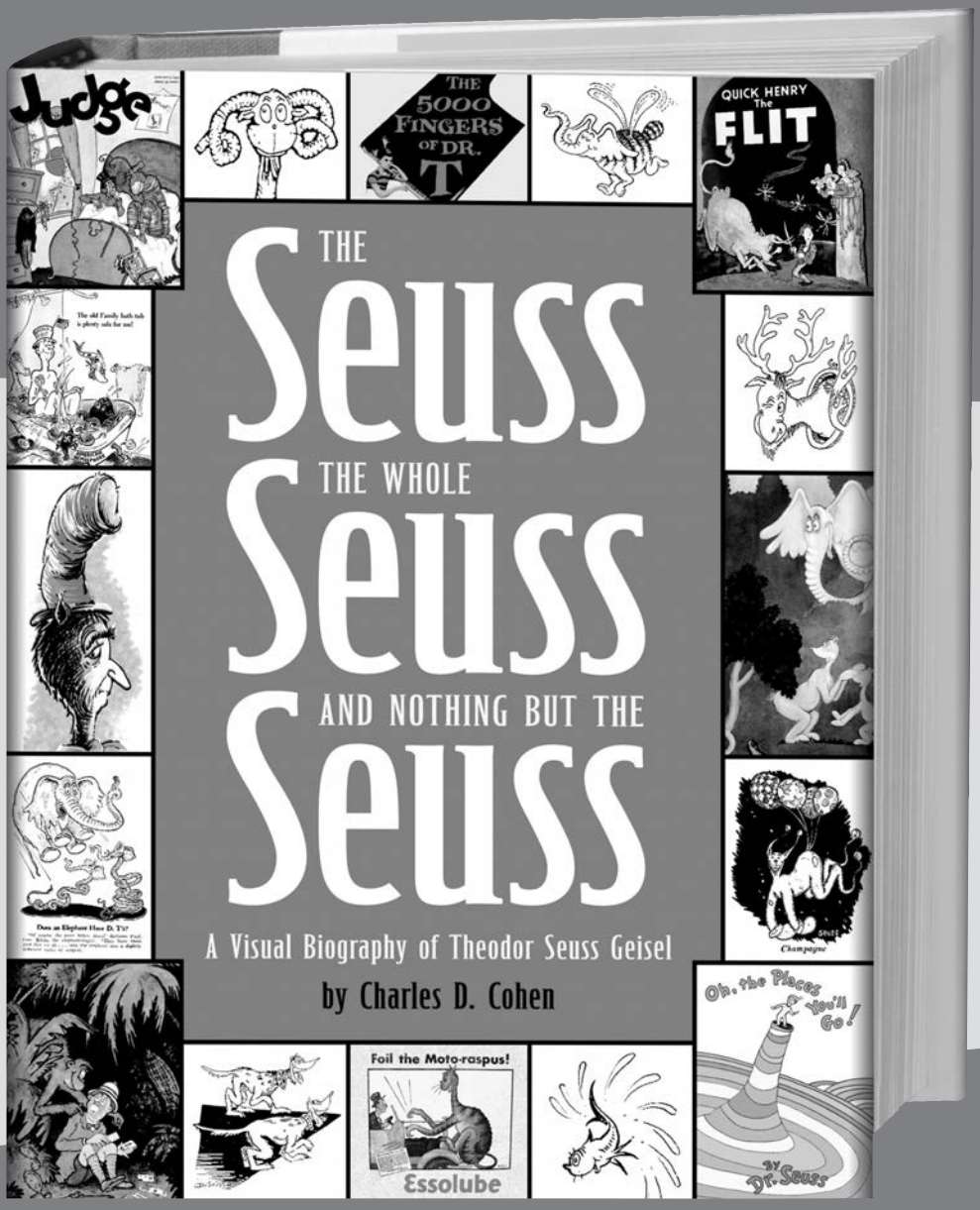
A visual biography of Seuss from his childhood on. Adult readers will learn the less familiar tales about the punster, like the jokes he made about Daylight Savings Time. They'll see family pictures and pictures of lesser-known Seuss work, like his early drawings for *Judge* and dozens of examples of how a playful goat kept cropping up in his work.

Krull, Kathleen. *The Boy on Fairfield Street: How Ted Geisel Grew Up to Become Dr. Seuss.* New York: Random House, forthcoming Jan. 2004. 48p. $16.95 (ISBN 0-375-82298-4).

Featuring mellow, evocative paintings by Steve Johnson and Lou Fancher, and designed for children ages 6–12, this book introduces readers to a young boy from Massachusetts who "feasted on books and was wild about animals." As a boy, Geisel was a funny, playful lad, with a stuffed dog named Theophrastus and a penchant for drawing horses with wings, flying cows, and creatures with nine-foot-long ears. Krull observes, "He just had this unusual way of looking at the world, and more often than not, this seemed like a bad thing to other people."

Oh, the Things He Could Think!

A Fascinating View of an Extraordinary Man



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SEUSSENTENNIAL Ted Geisel's 100th! Dr. Seuss A CENTURY OF IMAGINATION!

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This penetrating and comprehensive analysis of "all things Seussian" reveals the many hidden facets of the preeminent figure in children's literature, known to generations as Dr. Seuss.

Log on to www.seussentennial.com to learn more about the Seuss-a-bration across the nation!

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RANDOM HOUSE CHILDREN'S BOOKS

The Caldecott Capers

Good Books Make a Good Movie

by Megan Lynn Isaac

Strolling into the library as the familiar strains of Pachelbel's "Canon in D" float through the air, the eighteen students in Cheryl Paradis's third grade class at Hollis Primary School in Hollis, New Hampshire take their seats in anticipation of a fictionalized version of the annual Caldecott awards banquet. Chairs are politely pulled out, and linen napkins are unfolded. Adult waiters discreetly circle the table of young delegates filling their wine goblets with the best vintage Welch's produces. Suddenly one boy, realizing he has taken the wrong seat, pops up and scurries around the table. The music stops, everyone stands back up, and the entire cast and crew of *The Caldecott Capers* return to their marks to try again—is it take seven or take eight? Already they've begun to blur together.

This scene can be found in the bloopers and outtakes that follow the forty-minute film *The Caldecott Capers,* demonstrating the many hours of work Paradis's students put into their multifaceted study of Caldecott-winning books. Earlier in the year, Paradis and the school media generalist Judy Schibanoff filled the classroom with Caldecott Award–winning books. Together the class studied about fifty titles, and using the computer resources available in the classroom and the school's computer lab, the students began to research the Caldecott Award.

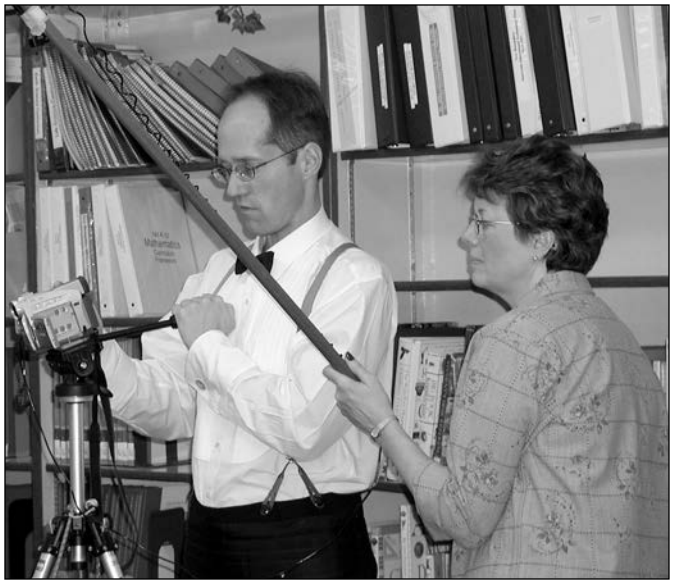
Where did the award's name come from? Who was Randolph Caldecott? If the award is made only to American illustrators or illustrators residing in the United States, why is it named for an English artist? How long has it been around? How do the judges make their decisions? Who are the judges? Who designed the medal? Can an artist win more than once? What seemed like simple questions quickly expanded in diverse directions.

For many students, however, the toughest part was choosing a favorite Caldecott winner. David Wiesner's flying frogs in *Tuesday* (1991) had to compete against his own bold porcines from *The Three Pigs* (2001). The terrible monsters of Maurice Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are* (1963) battled the winged menace in Margaret Hodges and Trina Schart Hyman's *Saint George and the Dragon* (1985). Would the canine Gloria with all the acrobatic talent she displays in Peggy Rathmann's *Officer Buckle and Gloria* (1995) be upstaged by the little girl featured in Emily Arnold McCully's *Mirette on the High Wire* (1992)? Eighteen students struggled with eighteen tough decisions, then moved on to study their illustrator's technique and creative process.

For Paradis, the decision to begin this project was a struggle too. Last year she also designed a film project, but after twenty-eight years of teaching, she hated to repeat herself. Working with the cameras, however, had been fun and this year she had the support of two wonderful colleagues, Schibanoff in the library and Bill Aldrich, the school system's computer technician. In Paradis's school district, two of the goals of the third grade curriculum are using technology and examining how to obtain meaning from reading. As Paradis explained, the project seemed like an ideal way to unite the two goals.

"I love children's books and picture books, and Bill thought we could use the new software to teach the kids to morph images and to use other techniques like stop-action photography," she said. It would also enhance writing skills. To present their research in a film format, students would have to figure out how to frame their discoveries as dialogue. Paradis commented, "Primary teachers are banging their heads over this skill all the time. I also don't know if these kids will ever look at a picture book the same way again. They have a range of experience and a vocabulary now that allows them to discuss the books in a more sophisticated way. Judy, especially, was able to help them focus on these illustrators in wonderful ways."

Together the three educators set up the framework for the film, designing a classic mystery plot to tie the many strands of the students' research together. In the movie Aldrich, as the maître d', eavesdrops on the conversation the children have during the awards banquet. Yet, they all notice that he seems at least as interested in asking prying questions about the award and whom this year's winner might be as in passing the fruit plate. Is he some sort of a spy or an undercover reporter?



Bill Aldrich and Judy Schibanoff film a scene.

Over the course of a very civilized dinner discussion, each student gets a chance to champion his or her favorite past winner. Finally, however, the award for 2003 is announced and everyone gathers to hear the winning book, Eric Rohmann's *My Friend Rabbit* (2002), read aloud. The celebration is completed when a cake, decorated like the cover of Rohmann's book, is served. The mystery of the nosy maître d' is also resolved. Decorating the cake was part of his job, and he needed to know the winner in order to get his work done.

The banquet cake honoring this year's Caldecott winner.

In addition to writing dialogue to showcase his or her chosen Caldecott book, each student used computer software to create special effects within the film. With Aldrich's help, students designed a number of clever methods to highlight the artistic merits of their favorite books. Izzy selected *The Golem* (1996) by David Wisniewski, a book that features illustrations constructed entirely from elaborately cut paper. To the inexperienced eye, this artistic method may look like something that it would be easy to imitate. But the film demonstrates the error in this conclusion. A sepia-toned sequence in *The Caldecott Capers* shows Izzy seated at a table intently snipping away at a piece of paper until she makes a mistake, crumples up her effort, and takes a new sheet to begin again. Using stop-action photography, viewers watch in amusement as the stack of discarded efforts grows and grows until Izzy is finally buried beneath a mountain of crumpled paper balls. Izzy explains, "It took about thirty minutes to film the scene, but my whole class helped make the paper balls; it took about a week."

Abby chose Virginia Burton's classic tale *The Little House* (1942) and spends her moment in the spotlight at the banquet table explaining how the colors the artist chose reflect the developing mood within the story. In the book a happy rural home gradually falls into ruin when urban developments overwhelm it, but eventually the house is rescued, relocated, and restored to its cheerful original tones. Abby's sequence in the film uses pictures of her hometown, Hollis, and superimposes images of large shadowy buildings and dark industrial developments crowding the formerly picturesque scene to show viewers how important open spaces and bright colors are to their own landscapes.

Perhaps Ryan sums the experience up best, "I read just about all of the Caldecott books, even though some of them I didn't even have to read. Basically, I learned that if you put a lot of effort to make something, it turns out to be really good."

For adults the film project was also a valuable experience. Aldrich especially enjoyed the chance to work closely and at length with a small group of students. "I normally don't get to do much of that but once the kids see what can be done, they develop an interest in this sort of thing, and next time they do a report they can incorporate what they learned," he said.

Schibanoff particularly enjoyed the work that went into the preliminary stages of the project. "The whole month of March, I read to the kids from previous Caldecott winners. I pulled out all the books that we thought might win this year, and the final week we went over the ones we picked," she explained. She also took responsibility for the legal aspects of the project.

"Oops. Let's try that scene again." Drew, a Hollis Primary School student, enjoys his role.

"I thought," said Paradis, "that when you did something like this for educational purposes, you could just give everyone a copy of the film. Judy, with the help of a parent, took on the task of getting copyright permission from each publisher to use images from the books in the film. In a number of cases, the publisher has sold the film rights, so, for example, we had to go to Castle Rock to get permission to use *The Polar Express*. In a couple of instances, we needed to go back into the film and do some re-editing. We weren't able to use the three pigs from David Wiesner's book, so the boy who had selected it drew pigs of his own. Bill will replace the original art with the boy's pigs in our final version of the film."

In fact, for Paradis the legal issues were the most difficult aspect of the project. "The toughest part was telling the kids that they couldn't have their own copy of the film yet because of copyright permission problems. They have been keeping a list on the board of publishers, and every time they got a positive response back, they gave that title a star." It has, Paradis concedes, been a good, if unexpected, learning experience for everyone, including herself. The problems obtaining some permissions have given them all a chance to talk about how illustrators might feel about having their work used, and how they might feel if someone used or changed their hard work without consulting them.

The best parts of the project, however, have been the books and the people involved. "Judy sent the Caldecott books up to us from the library," Paradis explained, "and the room was humming with joy when it was filled with all of these beautifully illustrated books." Even more importantly, Paradis said, "Bill and Judy are just exceptional colleagues, and every child grew four extra feet tall when we screened the movie for their families. It was very well received."

The parents of Paradis's students couldn't agree more. One mother, Jennifer Starr, explained, "I know a lot of the kids, so seeing which book which child picked in the film was fascinating, because a lot of them mirrored who they are as people. And after the screening, Cheryl Paradis treated them like stars. They were the scriptwriters, the movie stars, and the producers. Cheryl Paradis called each student up and gave him or her a Caldecott Medal made out of chocolate. I could see how the kids' eyes lit up when their name was read."

Megan Isaac *is a freelance writer from Alabama.*

Books on Film

The following are the Caldecott-winning books featured in *The Caldecott Capers* and the year in which they won the award (they were each published in the previous year).

The Little House by Virginia Lee Burton, 1943

Many Moons by James Thurber, illustrated by Louis Slobodkin, 1944

Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak, 1964

The Fool of the World and the Flying Ship by Arthur Ransome, illustrated by Uri Shulevitz, 1969

Sylvester and the Magic Pebble by William Steig, 1970

Saint George and the Dragon by Margaret Hodges, illustrated by Trina Schart Hyman, 1985

The Polar Express by Chris Van Allsburg, 1986

Hey, Al by Arthur Yorinks, illustrated by Richard Egielski, 1987

Song and Dance Man by Karen Ackerman, illustrated by Stephen Gammell, 1989

Lon Po Po: A Red-Riding Hood Story from China by Ed Young, 1990

Tuesday by David Wiesner, 1992

Mirette on the High Wire by Emily Arnold McCully, 1993

Officer Buckle and Gloria by Peggy Rathmann, 1996

Golem by David Wisniewski, 1997

Rapunzel by Paul Zelinsky, 1998

Snowflake Bentley by Jacqueline Briggs Martin, illustrated by Mary Azarian, 1999

So You Want to Be President? by Judith St. George, illustrated by David Small, 2001

The Three Pigs by David Wiesner, 2002

My Friend Rabbit by Eric Rohmann, 2003

From Thieves to Hens

The 2003 Batchelder Award and Honor Books

by Sandra Imdieke and Monique leConge

Sandra Imdieke

Monique leConge

> We must wonder whether there are not many excellent foreign children's books of recent years that, translated and published in America, would further increase the opportunity for our children to share through stories some feeling of other cultures and people.[1]

Such were the sentiments of Mildred Batchelder, former executive director of the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC), who was committed to providing children from all countries access to literature from around the world. Out of her vision, and in her honor, came the establishment of the Batchelder Award in 1966, an award that would honor American publishers that brought books in translation to American and English-speaking readers.

Each year, the Batchelder committee chooses a winner and may choose one or more honor books, although the committee may also choose not to give an award if no books are deemed worthy. Nominated books must be published by an American publisher with offices in the United States, and the book must have a publication date in the year under consideration. The book's literary merit, the quality of writing, and the consideration of the potential appeal for a child audience are all judged during the review process, but the aspect of translation raises other issues different from those of similar award committees.

Batchelder raised this same issue when she described the unique demands of the translator. First, the translator must communicate the author's style and tone and maintain the author's original vision of the intended child audience. Secondly, translators must have intimate knowledge of the original language and a depth of understanding of the language of the original book.[2] Other aspects of translation, such as maintaining a flow of language when using different sentence structure or balancing the need to change terms or vocabulary to make it understandable for an American audience with the need to maintain the authentic tone of the book, are other challenges the translator faces.

However, when the translation excels, the potential for broadening cultural understanding occurs. Rudine Sims Bishop uses the concept of "mirrors and windows" to explain what transpires when a reader experiences literature.[3] For any book, some parts of the story will reflect the reader's experiences and thus affirm their world view and perspectives. For that same reader, other parts of a story may be more of a window, allowing the reader to glimpse inside another's perspective, thus stretching the reader's understanding of situations, emotions, and attitudes different from their own. And when more than one reader reads the same book, each may find different aspects of the literature, which serves as a mirror or a window.

Because the books chosen for this award have been translated from the original language, librarians, educators, and parents may want to consider how these books will be introduced to the child reader. For books outside of the reader's experience, introductions that help the reader make personal connections to the text may increase motivation and interest in the literature. As

the book is read, explanations of unfamiliar terms, references, or situations would also help some readers enter the story.

Both books chosen for the 2003 Batchelder Award provide readers with the opportunity to see themselves in engaging literature and at the same time experience new worlds. A description of each of the 2003 winners follows, along with suggestions for introducing the book to children or to expanding their experiences with the books through postreading activities.

The Thief Lord

The 2003 Batchelder Award was presented to The Chicken House, publishers of *The Thief Lord* by Cornelia Funke and translated from German by Oliver Latsch.

Unforgettable characters inhabit this magical adventure. The story opens in contemporary Venice, as readers are introduced to Victor, a self-absorbed private detective who is enamored with disguises. Victor is hired to find twelve-year-old Prosper and five-year-old Bo, brothers on the run from their aunt and uncle who only want to keep the younger child. Prosper and Bo find a safe haven in Venice with three other orphans, all under the protection of their leader, Scipio, the thief lord. An old abandoned movie theatre is their hideaway, and from there the children venture out into the city to find food and supplies, sometimes by stealing, sometimes by luck. Scipio, the mysterious ringleader, provides objects that can be sold to Barbarossa, a disreputable antique dealer. Early in the story, readers will begin to question Scipio's background. Is he an orphan like the others? Where does he go at night? As the adventure moves forward, the group is hired to find a wooden wing, the detective gets closer to finding Prosper and Bo, and a carousel magically makes riders older or younger, whichever they wish. All story elements converge for a conclusion that is both magical and satisfying.

And when more than one reader reads the same book, each may find different aspects of the literature, which serves as a mirror or a window.

Both young and old characters are searching—some for security, some for a new identity. Several use both literal and figurative masks. The detective Victor loves disguises, Scipio hides his identity from the others under a black, bird-like mask, and Barbarossa peers out at his customers through the eyes of a masked lady's portrait. Universal themes of the wish for independence, or belonging to a family and being cared for, transcend translation.

Funke, one of Germany's best selling authors, received the Zurich Children's Book Award (2000) and the children's book award from the Vienna House of Literature (2001) for the German edition of *The Thief Lord*.

Programming Ideas

Librarians might consider the following ideas to introduce *The Thief Lord* to readers or to generate discussion and follow up activities:

- Prepare a bulletin board or display case filled with pictures or objects related to the story. Because the element of setting is strong in this story, pictures of Venetian architecture with its carved figures, canals and gondolas, or carousels would provide a visual hint of story elements.

- Highlight the book's map which lays out Venice, the canals, the bridges, and other landmarks. Provide a bibliography of other books with maps.

- Create a display of masks, both commercially made and those made by readers.

- Connect or compare and contrast this book to other books about orphans, such as Johanna Spyri's *Heidi* (Scribner, 1946) or books about the orphan trains of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

- Strong characterization and lively dialogue make this book ideal for reading out loud or for reader's theatre. Perform in front of a starry, moth-eaten curtain, reminiscent of the curtain described in the Star-Palace movie theatre.

Henrietta and the Golden Eggs

The Batchelder committee selected one honor book, awarding publisher David R. Godine for *Henrietta and the Golden Eggs* by Hanna Johansen, illustrated by Käthi Bhend, and translated from German by John S. Barrett. The book was originally published in German under the title *Vom Hühnchen das goldene Eier legen wollte.*

Henrietta is the smallest of 3,333 chickens that live in a coop, never going outside or seeing the light of day. In their humdrum world of red, brown, yellow, and gray, the chickens are losing their feathers and coughing. Enter independent Henrietta, who believes she will lay golden eggs, even though the others laugh at her. Henrietta's desires to sing, to swim, and to fly, lead her to find a way outside, and to lead the other 3,332 chickens outside as well. When the farmer's workers finally cannot catch all of the chickens and return them to their coop, the chickens suggest changes that make them all healthy and happy, even if they do not lay any golden eggs.

Henrietta's story of persistence and youthful optimism is a familiar one, told here in a lovely format, with delightful illustrations that do more than just convey the story. The use of finely detailed endpapers, back cover art, and illustrations of tiny, spirited chickens for pagination are hallmarks of fine bookmaking.

Drawings of flies, feathers, and birds break out of the borders, and frogs slip over to the next page, creating motion and energy that extend the text and bring Henrietta and her cohorts to life. The size of the book itself has a European feel, and the text is ideal for early independent readers.

Johansen was born in Bremen, Germany in 1939. She studied in Marburg and Göttingen and spent two years in the United States. She now lives in Zürich. Johansen has published several children's books in addition to novels and collections of short stories.

Programming Ideas

- Librarians might consider the following ideas for introducing *Henrietta and the Golden Eggs* to readers:
- During story time, feature books, flannel board stories, and counting rhymes about chickens, or stories about persistence.
- Decorate eggs using dyes or other traditional methods. *The Reading Rainbow* episode featuring *Rechenka's Eggs* by Patricia Polacco shows the author using traditional Russian egg decorating techniques.
- Invite a local farmer, 4-H member, or agriculture group to present a program about the different breeds of chickens; set up a display showing the many varieties.
- Contact a feed store or petting zoo to help set up an incubation unit to allow children to watch chicks hatching.

Since its inception in 1966, the Batchelder Award now has been given to a total of forty-nine books originally published "in a foreign language in a foreign country and subsequently published in English in the United States."[4] Of the forty-nine award winners, there were thirty-five winners and fourteen honor books. The collection of awarded books represents an array of voices and perspectives, certainly helping to move the field of children's publishing forward in directions Batchelder intended. The two books most recently honored are excellent additions to the complete list of winners, which can be found at www.ala.org/alsc/batch.html.

Sandra Imdieke *is Professor at Northern Michigan University in Marquette.* ***Monique leConge*** *is Director of the Benecia (Calif.) Public Library. Members of the 2003 Batchelder Committee, Junko Yokota (chair), Susan Stan, Doris Gebel, and Carolyn Angus, also contributed to this article.*

Notes and References

1. Mildred L. Batchelder, "Children's Books in Translation," *The Five Owls* 2, no. 5 (May/Jun. 1988): 1–2.
2. Ibid.
3. Rudine Sims Bishop, "Mirrors, Windows, and Sliding Glass Doors," *Perspectives* 6 (1990).
4. Association for Library Service to Children, *Mildred L. Batchelder Award Selection Committee Manual*, (Chicago: ALA, May 1995), 2.

The Good, the Bad, and the Really Tough Parts

Comments from Batchelder Committee Members

What's it like to serve on the Batchelder committee? Here are some candid thoughts from some of the 2003 committee members.

Sandra Imdieke said, "Although I am extremely proud of the books our committee honored, I'm certain that many other books would, if translated, find an eager American audience. I hope publishers continue to meet this need."

Carolyn Angus added, "My greatest reward was working with committee members who share my passion for books that originate in other countries and commitment to the exchange of children's books around the world. Reading Cornelia Funke's fantastic *The Thief Lord* made me aware of how much we have missed by not having translations of other books by this popular German author. It also makes be realize how much richer the reading experiences of Americans would be if we could read books written in languages other than English."

Committee member Susan Stan had one lament: too few books to consider. "One criterion states that the English translation must be published in the United States either first or in the same year as it is published elsewhere. One book I would have loved to consider had been published in Australia the year before and so was ineligible," she said. "I don't recommend changing this requirement because I agree with its intent—to support the risk-taking that translation involves—but I would encourage publishers who are bringing out translations done in cooperation with other English-speaking countries to schedule them as simultaneous publication," she added.

Monique leConge said, "For me, the most challenging aspect of choosing a winner was the strong desire to find a book that would represent the original intent of the Batchelder Award. I think that books in translation are fascinating and have always looked forward to the announcement of the winner and any honor books. The more we can expose young readers to the wide variety of books that are available from other countries, the better off our own country will be. Fortunately, I think that the field was strong, and that our ultimate winner and honor book are excellent examples of children's publishing around the world."

Award Acceptance Speeches

Delivered at the American Library Association Annual Conference in Toronto, June 2003.

Life in the Chicken House

John Mason and Barry Cunningham for The Chicken House/Scholastic Publishing

The Thief Lord by Cornelia Funke, trans. by Oliver Latsch
The Chicken House
2003 Batchelder Award Winner

The following is a paraphrase of an informal preface to Barry Cunningham's acceptance remarks by John Mason, Library and Educational Marketing Director, Scholastic.—Ed.

In 1975, I left my first publishing job with Penguin Books in England and did some traveling, then moved to the United States. Meanwhile, I heard that my job at Penguin UK had been taken over by a very creative and energetic new marketing person named Barry Cunningham.

Over the years I heard about Barry occasionally, until he became the editor at Bloomsbury who acquired and published the first Harry Potter book from the then-unknown J. K. Rowling. Shortly afterward, he left Bloomsbury to found his own small independent publishing company, The Chicken House. Our paths crossed again when Scholastic in the USA became the American publisher of Chicken House books, which we launched as a "plucky" little new imprint of Scholastic.

One day, Barry was approached by the ten-year-old daughter of one of his staff whose husband was German. The daughter had been raised bilingual and read children's books in both English and German. She demanded to know why Barry didn't publish Cornelia Funke, who, she said, was "just as good as J. K. Rowling." Upon investigation, Barry found out that Cornelia Funke was the third-bestselling children's book author in Germany. (The first was J. K. Rowling, the second R. L. Stine; Cornelia Funke was right behind them—she was the number-one best-selling author in Germany of children's books written in German!) Barry acquired *The Thief Lord,* had it translated into English, loved it, and published it. The book won many awards in Europe. After it was published in America, it became a *New York Times* bestseller and a favorite of U.S. children's librarians and booksellers.

One day, Barry Cunningham was approached by the ten-year-old daughter of one of his staff whose husband was German. The daughter had been raised bilingual and read children's books in both English and German. She demanded to know why Barry didn't publish Cornelia Funke, who, she said, was "just as good as J. K. Rowling." Upon investigation, Barry found out that Cornelia Funke was the third-bestselling children's book author in Germany. The first was J. K. Rowling, the second, R. L. Stine.

So that's my personal bit of background about the publisher, The Chicken House, and the book, *The Thief Lord.* And now I am pleased to read to you the following words from

Barry Cunningham, publisher of The Chicken House, who unfortunately could not be with us today.

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

John Mason has kindly agreed to read these few words from us all—and in what, at least to us back in the UK, is his fake British accent.

For The Chicken House, our author, Cornelia Funke, and our translator, Oliver Latsch, it is a great honor to receive the Batchelder Award for *The Thief Lord,* and we thank Junko Yokota, Chair, and all the other members of the 2003 Batchelder Committee deeply for that honor. Part of our mission at The Chicken House is to publish books and authors from different countries, and to show that they can be enjoyed and loved by children everywhere. Language should not be a barrier to good storytelling. Books in translation can give children access to stories from around the world—stories that act as ambassadors to different cultures, while revealing, as they invariably do, the universal things we share in common.

For Cornelia Funke, the English translation of *The Thief Lord* gave her a wider vocabulary—the colloquial power of our language opened up the possibility of investing her already colorful characters with new expressions and nuances. And we, as her publishers, discovered more about a wonderful writer with a talent for classic storytelling—a tradition greatly in need of encouraging and nurturing for today's children and the readers of tomorrow—and with the English language edition have been enabled to share this wonderful discovery with a much wider audience.

And with the book's publication in America, Cornelia Funke also discovered the joy of knowing that a whole new continent of children are able to enjoy the adventures of Scipio and his gang. Your support and recognition of her work has helped make all this possible. Thank you.

Now we look forward to this fall when Cornelia Funke's new book, *Inkheart,* will also be published both in German and English. It's a book about what everyone in this room believes in—the power of storytelling and imagined characters to change our lives. But in *Inkheart,* the villains really do come alive. Watch out.

Scholastic's John Mason accepts the 2003 Batcheldor Award for The Chicken House, an imprint of Scholastic, during the ALSC Awards Ceremony at the ALA Annual Conference.

Thank you again for this great honor, for The Chicken House, for Scholastic, and for Cornelia Funke, and for everything you do to help bring the widest possible variety of good books to the largest possible audience of young readers. &

From Pages to Video

Paul R. Gagne and Melissa Reilly/ Weston Woods Studios

So You Want to Be President?
Weston Woods
2003 Carnegie Medal Winner

Paul Gagne and Melissa Reilly of Weston Woods were the recipients of the Carnegie Award for 2003 for the video So You Want to Be President? *Linda Lee, vice-president of Weston Woods Studios, spoke on behalf of Paul R. Gagne:*

You may wonder why I am up here, and there are two reasons—Paul Gagne was extremely disappointed he could not be here today to accept his share of this medal, so I am going to make a few remarks on his behalf. Paul had family obligations and anyone who knows Paul well, knows that first and foremost he is a family man and for that we all highly respect him.

Secondly, I ask you to look at it like this. Consider me the warm-up band for the real act to follow. All of us at Weston Woods are absolutely thrilled that Paul and Melissa have won the medal this year for *So You Want to be President?,* and on behalf of all of us, extend our gratitude for your recognition.

Paul has worked at Weston Woods for twenty-five years, and I have worked with him for fourteen of those twenty-five years. He has an unerring sensibility about just what it is that makes a book come alive in a way that pays tribute and homage to the book itself. And as lovers of books, I know that most of you in this audience know that this is very often not something tangible and certainly not formulaic.

Over the years, I've loved watching Paul work and seeing the sense of wonder and inventiveness he brings to each new project. Each time he wins an award, he is surprised and overjoyed because I've never seen him work to win anything, only to do the absolute best job that he can to help children fall in love with books. When this effort is recognized and validated with an award such as this, it just inspires him more for the next project.

Paul has asked me to read the following statement on his behalf:

> I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Barbara Genco, the members of the 2003 Carnegie Medal committee, the American Library Association, and ALSC for an honor that is just as thrilling the fourth time as it was the first. This award is extra special to me because I am sharing it with my dear friend and colleague Melissa Reilly. Melissa started at Weston Woods in 1991, and it has been a pleasure to watch her grow and flourish over the years. Melissa first started as an assistant in the production department, and

Paul R. Gagne and Melissa Reilly of Weston Woods Studios, producers of *So You Want to Be President?,* are the 2003 recipients of the Andrew Carnegie Medal for Excellence in Children's Video.

really had more of a technical background with very little experience in children's books or producing and directing.

At the outset of this project Melissa came to me indicating a strong desire to become more involved in the creative aspects of a project and asked for the opportunity to make this one her own. She truly rose to the occasion, and I am so very proud of the way she handled the direction and creative design of this production. You can be sure that you'll be seeing more of her in the years to come.

In addition to the people Melissa will no doubt be thanking in a moment, I'd like to make special mention of our production staff at Weston Woods, who are really like an extension of our families. Steve Syarto, our sound editor, did a superb job mixing the voice, music, and sound effects for the film, as well as doing one of the best Ronald Reagan impressions I've ever heard. Leigh Corra, our associate producer, did an equally superb job editing the voice and contributed her enthusiasm and many terrific ideas throughout the production. I'm proud to work with both of you. I would also like to thank Dick Robinson and our family at Scholastic for their continued support.

But now, I'll let her tell you that story. Hopefully I've done my job and warmed you up for the real act, Melissa herself, and one that I'm sure you're going to see a lot of in the years to come.

Melissa Reilly:

Good morning. Where do I start? I guess I should go back to the beginning and let you know from the minute I saw an F&G of this wonderful book created by Judith St. George and David Small, I knew it had to be adapted as an animated video. There was only one problem. The book is not our typical style for animation, and I was not sure how we could go about adapting David's fine art style.

Coincidentally, around the same time that I was acquiring the rights to this book, Gary McGivney, an old colleague of Weston Woods resurfaced. Gary had directed and animated a few films for Weston Woods back in the 1980s, but we hadn't collaborated in years. He informed me that he had just purchased an animation company in New Zealand and wanted to work with us again. Gary showed us a reel of their latest work, including samples of a technique in which the same 3D animation software used for movies like *Shrek* was applied to two-dimensional art to create the digital equivalent of paper puppets. It immediately clicked that this was the perfect way to animate David Small's artwork. So, thank you, Gary, for showing up just when we needed you.

Another challenge was inherent in the relationship between the text and illustrations in the book. There are relatively few illustrations to visually represent everything described in Judith St. George's wonderfully rich text. We were very lucky because in March 2001, David Small was going to participate in the Rabbit Hill Literature Festival being held in Westport, Connecticut. I immediately arranged a meeting where we all could sit down and discuss our ideas for the film adaptation of this book. It was during my initial phone conversation with David that he told me of the several additional pieces of artwork that never made it into this book. I asked that he bring everything with him to the meeting, and what a gold mine it turned out to be. Although the additional illustrations were very useful, we realized we still needed more. So over the next six months, David drew approximately thirty additional illustrations for us. So thank you David for all your additional support and amazing illustrations.

Now that the animator had all the art material he needed, we were well on our way when we realized the ending of the book was incomplete—not because Judith St. George forgot to write an ending, but because the 2000 election had taken place after the book's publication. We felt that we had to get the historical controversy over the close vote count in Florida into the film. So I contacted Judith about writing an epilogue, and she obliged. Thank you, Judith, for finishing this book a second time.

At Weston Woods, we are very lucky to work with not only the best children's books but also the best talent. When we started to discuss who would narrate this story, I felt that we needed a woman's voice. I had always been a big fan of Stockard Channing, and now she was playing the president's wife on the TV show *The West Wing*, so I thought it was the perfect fit. Thank you, Stockard, for doing such an amazing job bringing Judith St. George's words to life with just the right touch of dry humor.

Four Weston Woods films have now had the honor of receiving the Andrew Carnegie Medal. Three of these have featured the impressive musical talents of Scotty Huff and Robert Reynolds. Paul Gagne was amused and inspired when David Small's sons got up to play "Hail to the Chief" on kazoos at the start of his acceptance speech for the Caldecott Medal in 2001, and instructed Scotty and Robert to use variations on "Hail to the Chief"—including a kazoo version—as

the main theme for the score. Thank you, Scotty and Robert, for your inventiveness, and for creating music that perfectly reflects the book's quirky blend of respect and irreverence.

Paul Gagne has been a large influence in my life. In the past thirteen years, he has given me his support, direction, guidance, and friendship. We have been through it all. We have celebrated together, laughed together, gotten mad at each other, and even shed a tear or two together. Without him, I would not be standing here in front of you today. So thank you, Paul, for everything. I am extremely honored to share this award with you.

I am also very lucky because I get to work with one of my best friends, Kim Hayes, our operations manager. Kim helps us stay on the straight and narrow so that we have not only artistic successes, but also financial ones. Thank you, Kim, for all that you are to me.

Our vice president and general manager, Linda Lee, has also been a great role model for me. She is a great leader and has given me the opportunity to flourish by helping not only to build on my strengths, but also to improve on my flaws. I have learned so much from her and appreciate her not only as a boss, but also as my friend. So thank you, Linda.

This year at Weston Woods, we are celebrating fifty years of bringing great books to life. This would have not been possible without Morton Schindel and his vision. I feel honored to have worked along side Mort, and only hope that I can continue to be a part of what he started fifty years ago. He has touched all of our lives and I thank him for giving me the opportunity to be a part of it.

I need to thank my sisters who are the best seven girlfriends a girl could ask for. To Paul Langella, we have been best friends for the past eight years, but being together this past year has been an amazing journey of love. I only hope and wish that everyone has that much love and support in their lives.

Finally, a thank you to my parents and family, who have given me so much in my life, especially the wings and support to be the best I can be. For this I am truly grateful.

But most importantly I stand here in front of you all with my deepest gratitude. On behalf of Paul Gagne and myself, I would like to thank Barbara Genco, Malore Brown, Silvia Kraft-Walker, the members of the Carnegie Medal committee, the American Library Association, and ALSC for honoring us with such a prestigious award. Without a doubt, receiving your recognition will inspire us long into the future to work harder then ever to bring books to life for children everywhere. &

Urban vs. Rural

The historic, bustling city of Philadelphia has 1.5 million residents.

The pastoral, off-the-beaten-path village of Iola, Wisconsin, has 1,100.

Should library service to children in these diverse areas be the same?

Children and Libraries would like to feature librarians in urban and rural areas, and share their practices, tips, and views for creating a comfortable, useful haven for children.

Does your city or urban library offer special programs for latchkey kids? Does your country or rural library enhance its services with delivery or bookmobile programs? Can some city-specific programs and offerings be altered to work in the country, or vice versa? What gives your urban or rural library its personality?

If you'd like to share your library's uniquely urban or rural processes, procedures, or personality in this regular column, contact editor Sharon Korbeck at toylady@athenet.net or E1569 Murray Lane, Waupaca, WI 54981.

Photo from *Lucky Song* by Vera B. Williams. Used with permission from Greenwillow Children's Books.

Imagination and Inspiration

Hans Christian Andersen Award Nominees Lois Lowry and Vera B. Williams

by Ginny Moore Kruse

Vera B. Williams

Vera B. Williams is the U.S. nominee for the 2004 Hans Christian Andersen Illustrator Award. This prestigious, highly competitive, international award conferred every two years by the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) honors an artist of books for children who by the outstanding value of his or her work is judged to have made a lasting contribution to literature for children and young people.

GMK: *When did your life as an artist and writer begin, and how did it develop?*

VBW: I believe I began to be an artist as a child, that I was born as an artist. I've always gotten a great deal of pleasure from my eyes, from the colors of things.

I was encouraged by my parents. I always drew a lot at home. My mother brought home bags of paper, little pieces of paper left over from the printer, so there was always paper. After school I would go to Bronx House, a settlement house in the neighborhood. I've learned Ashley Bryan also went there as a boy, but not at the same time. Though my family moved at least four times while I was a child, I always went there after school. There were WPA classes there, and we painted, did all kinds of crafts, sculpture, writing.

And I learned that people who can read and write are important. One day my teacher at school asked me to write my name on the blackboard, and after I did that, she said, "It's perfect."

When I was about eight, I was invited by Florence Cane to go to a special art school on Saturdays. She did not believe in the same approach to art as the schools had then.

You either could or couldn't draw. She had many ways to get access to our imaginations even if when we arrived we didn't feel like drawing or painting. She had huge pieces of paper for us and all the supplies we wanted.

Once a little painting I did at Bronx House was chosen for a nationwide exhibit at the Museum of Modern Art. Mrs. Roosevelt came to see the exhibit. I was given a membership in MOMA, and I kept this membership well into high school. I went to a Music and Art High School, a new type of public school then, and we had three periods of art or music a day.

GMK: *And after high school?*

VBW: I wanted to go to St. John's, but St. John's didn't take women then. They suggested Black Mountain College near Asheville, North Carolina. Black Mountain College no longer exists, but at that time we had one-third liberal arts courses, one-third arts courses, and one-third of what we did was the practical work that made everything else happen. You name it, and we did it. I was a student of Josef Albers, a well-known artist and teacher, and I graduated in graphic arts.

After that I studied at the Boston Museum School where I

Vera B. Williams

Books Illustrated by Vera B. Williams

With the exception of *Hooray for Me!*, all of the books cited below were edited by Susan Hirschman and published by Greenwillow Children's Books. *Hooray for Me!*, paintings by Vera B. Williams with text by Remy Charlip and Lilian Moore, was published by Parents Magazine Press in 1975 and Tricycle Press in 1996.

It's a Gingerbread House: Bake It, Build It, Eat It!, 1978

A Chair for My Mother, 1982

Something Special for Me, 1983

Music, Music for Everyone, 1984

Cherries and Cherry Pits, 1986

Stringbean's Trip to the Shining Sea, text and paintings by Vera B. Williams and additional paintings by Jennifer Williams, 1988

"More More More," Said the Baby: Three Love Stories, 1990

Scooter, 1993

Lucky Song, 1997

Amber Was Brave, Essie Was Smart, 2001

became devoted to learning about etching, wood cuts, linoleum cuts, engravings, Japanese calligraphy, and brush painting.

GMK: *Were you active as an artist during the years before you created your first children's book?*

VBW: Oh, yes. I did many drawings and brush paintings, and other things, too. For about seven years I created covers for the magazine *Liberation.* I would take some artwork in black-and-white to David Dellinger, and we would decide which pieces would work as magazine covers.

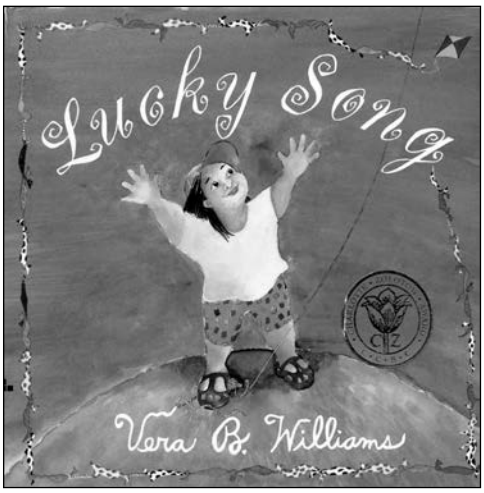
GMK: *You collaborated with Remy Charlip to create your first children's book* Hooray for Me!, *an innovative celebration of a child and almost countless ways someone can have or be a family. Like your later books,* Hooray for Me! *packs an emotional wallop. How did you happen to do the artwork for this highly original first book?*

VBW: Remy Charlip was a good friend of mine. I went to see him and showed him some of the things I'd been doing. He was very busy in his career at that time, and there were some projects he hadn't gotten around to doing. He asked if I wanted to work on one of them, and I did. It was *Hooray for Me!* He laid it all out and designed it.

GMK: Hooray for Me! *looks like a Vera Williams book because of the abundance of primary colors and because of its sophisticated, spirited images rendered in watercolor paintings. For someone who had been working in black-and-white quite a while, where did all of this come from?*

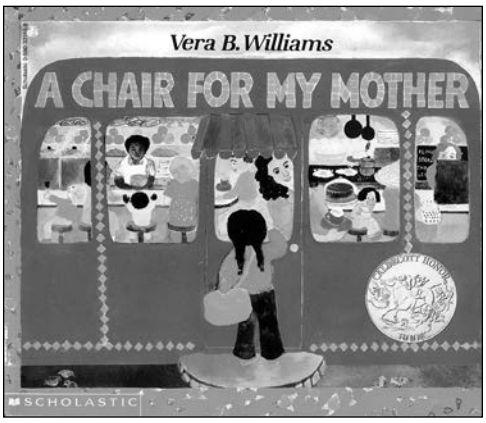
VBW: I don't know why I decided to use watercolor. I hand-lettered it and I taught myself to do that for this book.

GMK: *You later hand-lettered* "More More More," Said the Baby, *which later became a Caldecott honor book.*



Lucky Song by Vera B. Williams

"More More More," Said the Baby by Vera B. Williams



A Chair for My Mother by Vera B. Williams

VBW: Yes, every page is a complete piece with lettering. I like *More More More* so much because it's a combination of spontaneity and all the techniques I've learned and because it celebrates the joys of children. It comes from the calligraphy training and from Black Mountain where we did all kinds of inversions and studies in color. I developed a very sure hand.

I also hand-lettered *Stringbean's Trip to the Shining Sea.* Many things in *Scooter* are hand-lettered with a brush, or they're there because of my experience in working with black-and-white and in calligraphy.

Lucky Song isn't hand-lettered. The type was set, and then dropped out. Ava Weiss, my Greenwillow art director, helped me figure out how we could do this. I made watercolor panels and fit them behind the places where the text belonged.

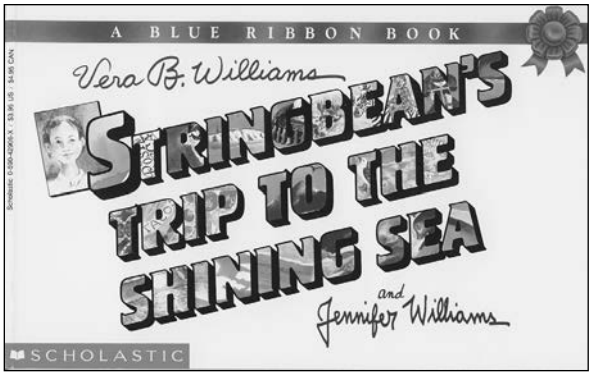
GMK: *How did you happen to create unusual borders, such as those in* More More More *and* A Chair for My Mother, *for example?*

VBW: I have a strong interest in design. I can't explain all of my interests.

As a child I had a love of books. I went to the 42nd Street Public Library in New York and read books. I was inside the community of readers. I could imagine myself in every story. I loved *The Little Princess* and *The Secret Garden.* I loved the story "The Poppyseed Cakes" and little pictures in books with lots of designs, little pictures.

I've always been very fond of miniatures, of drawing very tiny pictures, such as the borders and the little pictures in *Stringbean.* The artwork for the little postcard pictures is the same size as it is in the finished book.

GMK: *Why did you make yet another bold choice, i.e., using colored pencils for the artwork in* Amber Was Brave, Essie Was Smart, *your recent, somewhat risky, album-book of poems?*



Stringbean's Trip to the Shining Sea by Vera B. Williams and Jennifer Williams

VBW: The writing needed the drawings to become a complete book. A pencil is a child's tool, and so perhaps using pencils evoked earlier years. The pictures emerged out of the shadows, because what was happening in the writing was not something I exactly wanted to look at myself. The colors in the backgrounds aren't realistic. They represent feelings.

GMK: *The Zolotow Award-winning book* Lucky Song *suggests what every child needs: food when she's hungry; a home and bed when she's tired; clothing when she wakes up in the morning; time and a place to play and someone to watch; family love; a song and someone to sing it as many times as a child wants. I've heard about a father who finally stopped reading this circular story one night at bedtime after fulfilling seventeen requests to read it again.*

VBW: Lucky Song *is another celebration of a child, something like* More More More *but more basic. It's about how wonderful it would be if a child had all the elements it needed. "Birthright" was the title in my head while I was working on this book. It's about how things should be, but aren't, so the actual title refers to luck.*

Every page expresses something about one of these basics. Little Evie and her belly button are as close to the middle as possible on every page. I left out anything I didn't need, such as furniture. There's only the floor and the wall when she's inside. I used heavier than usual watercolor paper and aniline ink. I painted each colored background. I have such a love of color.

GMK: *You received the Boston Globe–Horn Book Award for* A Chair for My Mother, *a book about a family having the necessities, and that means respite and beauty are basic needs, as well as food, shelter, clothing, and health. It also features one of the few diners in children's books. You refer to it as your "Bread and Roses" book, a reference to U.S. labor union history.*

VBW: The bread and roses idea wasn't what I was thinking about when I wrote and illustrated *A Chair for My Mother,* but that's certainly the feeling I had about it. I wanted the story to be about a family of three women: a little girl named Rosa, her mother, and her grandmother. Much later I referred to *A Chair for My Mother* as being about "Bread and Roses."

In the other two books, Rosa goes from being a child who worries about her mother to someone who gives music to the community.

It's possible to put people into the world of books who have usually been left out of that world. In thirty-two blank pages an artist can decide who gets to sit next to whom, who can live next door, that waitresses can have a life worthy of attention in literature, that a three-generation family of women is a family.

USBBY: What's It All about?

The United States Board on Books for Young People (USBBY) is a national section within an international network of twenty-six nations and people who care about children, literacy, and books for children and teenagers. That larger global organization is the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) founded exactly fifty years ago to promote international understanding and good will through books for children and teenagers.

Through ALSC, the American Library Association is one of four continuing U.S. patron members of USBBY. This year, ALA is represented by Joan Atkinson and Caroline Ward.

All are welcome to join USBBY. Members receive an occasional newsletter containing articles about international literature for young readers and a bibliography of translated books published in the U.S. Members receive notices about USBBY programs held before or during annual conferences of three patron organizations: American Library Association, www.ala.org; International Reading Association, www.reading.org; and National Council of Teachers of English, www.ncte.org. Officers and at-large members of the USBBY Board are elected by the USBBY membership. The Children's Book Council, www.cbcbooks.org, is the other patron organization, each of which appoints two delegates to serve on the USBBY Board.

In 2004 IBBY will hold a Congress in Cape Town, South Africa. USBBY is raising money to partially underwrite Congress expenses of delegates from other African nations who otherwise have no way of participating in the 2004 Congress. If you wish to be part of this effort, send a check payable to USBBY to: Kent Brown, c/o USBBY South Africa "Twinning Project," P.O. Box 1017, Honesdale, PA 18431-1017.

You can find out more about IBBY, and keep up-to-date about USBBY projects, at www.usbby.org.

I never knew there was a heart in the painting of the chair. Children showed me that heart about two or three years later.

GMK: *Do you identify with one or more of your characters?*

VBW: Oh, yes. Little Guy in *More More More* and his desire to run and move. Stringbean, because of expanding yourself through art and travel. Look at the sign painter in that book. I identify very much with Amber and her story. I identify with Elana Rose Rosen in *Scooter.* In *Cherries and Cherry Pits,* Bedemmi is me in her desire to talk and draw, in her uses of something bright and red, and of her wish to make a gift of art to her community. Bedemmi doesn't look like me, and I don't look like Bedemmi, but she is me.

GMK: *How did you and your longtime Greenwillow editor Susan Hirschman get together?*

VBW: While standing in a movie line, I happened to meet Janet Schulman through a friend. Janet later showed Susan my work. Susan said, "bring me everything you have!" My first Greenwillow book was *It's a Gingerbread House*. Susan edited all the rest of my books, too.

GMK: *How does it feel to be the U.S. nominee for the 2004 Hans Christian Andersen Illustrator Award?*

VBW: I was completely surprised when I found out about this nomination. It's truly satisfying to be nominated for the Hans Christian Andersen Award because I've always had a huge respect for an international approach. When I was a child using the 42nd Street Public Library, I found a section of books from other countries and I greatly enjoyed those books. Take a look at the last postcard in *Stringbean's Trip to the Shining Sea.* There is a watercolor painting of planet Earth with the words, "Home Sweet Home." That's how I feel.

GMK: *You said that Florence Cane helped you and the other children at Bronx House to gain access to your imaginations. You leave room in your books for children to complete them in their minds, no matter who that child is, or where that child lives. Your books often show a child as part of a larger community and that people can get along with each other. Do you consciously create books with such a universality of appeal, books that assist children to be open to others, as well as to their own imaginations?*

VBW: Interesting question. I think it all goes back to Florence Cane. After school we'd be tired, small-minded, wanting to make comics, or do something else. She'd have ways of helping us express ourselves using color and form. No matter what you think you know about what you do and its origins, there is considerable mystery about creating both stories and pictures.

And the Winners Are . . .

Previous Hans Christian Andersen award winners include:

Award for Writing

1956	Eleanor Farjeon	UK
1958	Astrid Lindgren	Sweden
1960	Erich Kästner	Germany
1962	Meindert DeJong	USA
1964	René Guillot	France
1966	Tove Jansson	Finland
1968	James Krüss	Germany
	José Maria Sanchez-Silva	Spain
1970	Gianni Rodari	Italy
1972	Scott O'Dell	USA
1974	Maria Gripe	Sweden
1976	Cecil Bødker	Denmark
1978	Paula Fox	USA
1980	Bohumil Riha	Czechoslovakia
1982	Lygia Bojunga Nunes	Brazil
1984	Christine Nöstlinger	Austria
1986	Patricia Wrightson	Australia
1988	Annie M. G. Schmidt	Netherlands
1990	Tormod Haugen	Norway
1992	Virginia Hamilton	USA
1994	Michio Mado	Japan
1996	Uri Orlev	Israel
1998	Katherine Paterson	USA
2000	Ana Maria Machado	Brazil
2002	Aidan Chambers	UK

Award for Illustration

1966	Alois Carigiet	Switzerland
1968	Jirí Trnka	Czechoslovakia
1970	Maurice Sendak	USA
1972	Ib Spang Olsen	Denmark
1974	Farshid Mesghali	Iran
1976	Tatjana Mawrina	USSR
1978	Svend Otto S.	Denmark
1980	Suekichi Akaba	Japan
1982	Zbigniew Rychlicki	Poland
1984	Mitsumasa Anno	Japan
1986	Robert Ingpen	Australia
1988	Dusan Kállay	Czechoslovakia
1990	Lisbeth Zwerger	Austria
1992	Kveta Pacovská	Czech Republic
1994	Jörg Müller	Switzerland
1996	Klaus Ensikat	Germany
1998	Tomi Ungerer	France
2000	Anthony Browne	UK
2002	Quentin Blake	UK

Lois Lowry

Lois Lowry is the U.S. nominee for the 2004 Hans Christian Andersen Award. This prestigious, highly competitive, international award conferred every two years by the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) honors an author who by the outstanding value of his or her work is judged to have made a lasting contribution to literature for children and young people. Lowry was named by the IBBY jury as an author finalist for the Hans Christian Andersen Award in 2000.

GMK: *The writer's craft or creativity in general is honored in many of your books. Why are you attracted to developing protagonists who yearn to tell stories?*

Lois Lowry

LL: I think this does come from my own young self. I was a child fascinated by language and other forms of creativity, and this trait reappears in many of my fictional characters, starting with Meg Chalmers, who learns to reveal and express herself through photography in my first book, *A Summer to Die.* I think of Rabble Starkey, whose most treasured possession is a thesaurus because of the world of language it opens up to her; she is not all that different from the more urban, more urbane Anastasia, who fills notebooks with her own attempts to sort out her own life by writing it down. And all of them so much like me at the same age.

Gooney Bird Greene is a classic example of the writer re-writing her own history. I was such a painfully introverted child. How I envied those children like Gooney Bird who are able to command the center stage! I could tell vivid stories in my own imagination, but in reality I was more like her classmate Felicia Ann, who looks at the floor and mumbles.

GMK: *You're so accomplished in writing both humorous and serious contemporary fiction, as well as fictional series or books in sequence, historical fiction, speculative fiction, and memoir. Each book you write is an excellent example of its particular genre. What causes you to be interested in a variety of genres?*

LL: I am not a person who is easily bored by repetition. I see favorite movies more than once, and I read favorite books over and over. And, in fact, sometimes when I am captivated by a particular piece of music I will play it over and over again; currently it is the Elliot Goldenthal score to *Frida* because I like the feeling of being saturated by it. But I have never wanted to write one kind of book exclusively. I'm attracted to different genres, as a reader as well as a writer, and to me it's exhilarating to try different things.

GMK: *You return occasionally to the fictional characters Anastasia and Sam. Amidst all of the situations you've created for each of them and for their family, what do you wish you could now change?*

LL: Ah, when I wrote the second book about the Krupnik family, *Anastasia Again!,* I moved them out of their Cambridge, Massachusetts, apartment into a suburban house. I lived in Maine when I wrote it, so when I decided to explore problems wrought by a family's move, it didn't matter much to me where the Krupniks lived.

But now I live in Cambridge myself, and it is such a unique, vibrant city that I find myself wishing the Krupniks had not moved away. I love their old Victorian house, filled with books and paintings and music. There are houses like it in my own neighborhood. And I wish that Anastasia's family lived down the street. Her father could walk to work, for pete's sake! Harvard professors walk—or bike—past my window every morning.

But of course I've already done the Krupnik-family-moves book, and I can't do it again in reverse without a better reason than my own self-indulgence.

GMK: *School is important to the development of Gooney Bird Greene's story, and also in books featuring Anastasia and Sam Krupnik. Where did these classroom scenarios originate?*

LL: I have never been a teacher, so any school or classroom scenes come from my own memories of school days updated by schools I have visited as an author in recent years. The classroom forms such a large part of a child's life, and the complex social interactions there are so important. I remember every teacher . . . and most of my classmates . . . from first grade on, with great clarity: the individual personalities, and how they worked together to give each year of school a particular personality.

GMK: *In your light-hearted stories, you never create humor at the expense of your characters. How do you manage that?*

LL: It is because I am so much a part, personally, of the books' characters. I place myself so comfortably into the mind and heart of a child that there is no way I could patronize or laugh at

Books by Lois Lowry

The following books, to which reference was made, were all first published by Houghton Mifflin Children's Books, Boston, Massachusetts.

A Summer to Die, 1977
Find a Stranger, Say Goodbye, 1978
The Anastasia books, including *Anastasia Krupnik,* 1979
Autumn Street, 1980
Rabble Starkey, 1987
The Sam books, including *All about Sam,* 1988
Number the Stars, 1989
Your Move, J.P.!, 1990
The Giver, 1993
Stay! Keeper's Story, 1997
Gathering Blue, 2000
Looking Back: A Book of Memories, 1998
Gooney Bird Greene, 2002
The Silent Boy, 2003

a character who is, essentially, the deepest part of my own self.

GMK: *You write for such widely different ages of young readers. What makes this feat possible?*

LL: I write for young readers by putting myself back into my own childhood and looking out through the eyes of my young self. This is a process that comes easily and naturally to me, and I can re-create the feelings I had when I was five as easily as the ones that were part of me at fifteen. So it is simply a matter of becoming, in a way, the age of each protagonist.

Yet at the same time, I am not really recreating myself, because each character is new to me, and unique. Their voices are not mine, but rather voices that speak through me in an intuitive way. Rabble Starkey's voice is from a geography and a culture that was never part of my own past. Yet I could hear it, quite clearly, and she was as real to me during the writing as if I had been writing my own autobiography.

GMK: *Some readers notice that* Autumn Street *and* The Silent Boy *have a similar feeling. Did you think about* Autumn Street *while writing* The Silent Boy*?*

LL: Actually, the two books are set in the same unnamed town. Autumn Street is autobiographical and takes place in the small Pennsylvania college town where I spent my childhood. It was the town where my mother had grown up and where my grandparents still lived when I was young.

The character named Katy in *The Silent Boy* is modeled on, and even named for, my mother, who was born in 1906. Her picture appears in the book (page 150) and the Thatchers' house is the same house my mother often described to me from her own childhood when she reminisced.

GMK: *Did the creation of* Looking Back *have something to do with your use of the antique photographs in* The Silent Boy*?*

LL: I so love photographs! And I have a vast collection of them from my own family. When I was putting together those I used in *Looking Back,* I needed to set aside the ones that weren't relevant to the theme of that book: the evolution into fiction. I almost felt as if they were children not invited to a birthday party! And some of them were from the distant past: the time of my mother's own childhood. So they were there, in my mind, after *Looking Back* was done and published. In addition, the very haunting photograph of the boy . . . the one used on the cover of *The Silent Boy* . . . was here on my desk for several years. He was not part of my family, and I don't know who he really was, or why my great aunt had photographed him . . . but I knew he had a story to tell.

GMK: *How did your long-time editor at Houghton Mifflin Children's Books, Walter Lorraine, respond when you proposed the manuscript that became* The Giver *(a Newbery Award winner)? Did it, or any other, substantially change the way you and he collaborate?*

LL: I think the way Walter and I work together is very likely unique in terms of my insufferable independence and his amazing tolerance of it. I have never proposed a book idea to him, and he has never seen a book in progress. I write a book all alone, never showing it to anyone, never talking about it to anyone—including the editor—until it is finished. The first time Walter knew about *The Giver* was when I gave him the completed manuscript.

We have worked together that way from the very start and somehow turned out thirty books using this strange method. Our way of doing this has not changed over the years.

I value Walter's willingness to sit back and wait. I also value enormously the intelligent reading that he gives to the product he receives: his perceptive suggestions, his keen insights, and also his respect for the writing—and the writer.

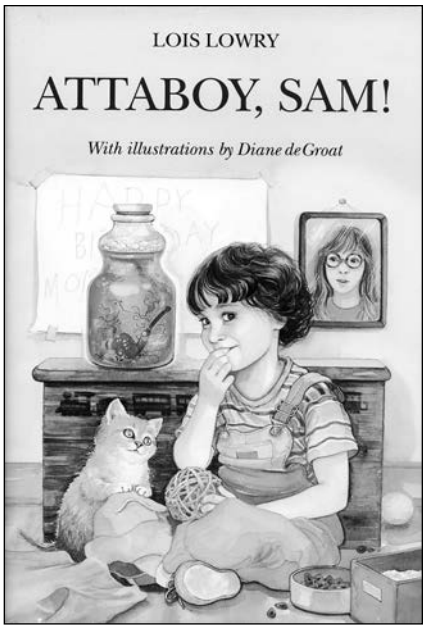
GMK: *Your books have been published in other English-language nations and translated into more than ten other languages. Do you know how translation affects your texts?*

LL: With the exception of the French. . . . for which I call forth my four years of high school inadequate French . . . I am not able to read any of my books in translation. Years ago, the late Ilse-Margret Vogel, a German-born children's author living in the USA, wrote me a letter to tell me that she had read *Autumn Street* in German; then, intrigued by the book, she had read it in

English as well. She wanted me to know what a beautiful translation it was into German. And I was glad to hear that.

But for most of them, I simply have to hope that the translator has been true to the intent of my words and has found ways to convey that truth and at the same time retain whatever lyricism is possible in a different language.

I know there are particular difficulties when I indulge in any kind of word play as I frequently do. I remember that the Finnish translator, whom I met once, told me that she viewed the Anastasia books as a real challenge because of Sam's frequent literal misinterpretations of language, and of scenes like one in which Anastasia teaches Sam, age 3, to play Scrabble, and he loves the word "sex" because he has an "x"—worth many points. Not easy to translate into any other language, but especially hard into Finnish!

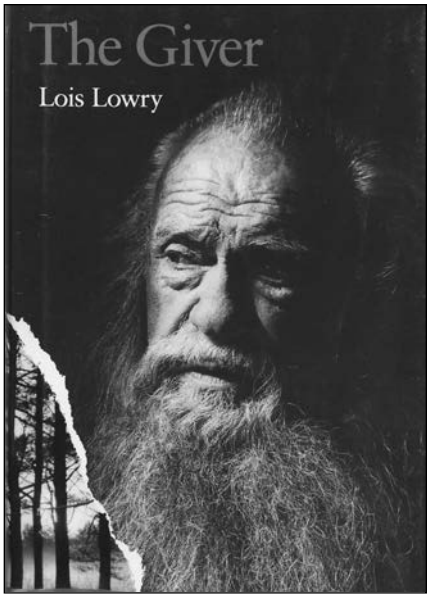


Attaboy, Sam! by Lois Lowry

A Japanese translator once contacted me with some questions about cultural references that she didn't understand. One was a song called "One-ball Reilly!"

And I remember as well a translation into French that used footnotes, one explaining that American teenagers were not legally allowed to buy alcohol. This was in *Find a Stranger, Say Goodbye* in which some teenagers talked a local derelict into buying them some beer.

So it is clear that there are pitfalls inherent in translation. But over the years, as the influence of television more and more impacts us globally, I think adolescents in other countries don't need to have American quirks explained.



The Giver by Lois Lowry

I find it a little sad to see the young people of the world become so homogenized.

GMK: *You receive letters from young readers in other nations. How do they generally respond to your books?*

LL: It's interesting. I think that young people in other countries have the same responses to those books as their American counterparts. It seems that beneath the cultural differences—whatever those might be—still live the same issues of identity, the anguish of separating from parents, of making their own way and forming their own behaviors. Even at their most adolescent and—let's say it, most obnoxious—there is, underneath, an integrity to young people, an innocence, and such an idealism. Their responses and questions are never simple or superficial.

The book I hear about most often from kids around the world is *The Giver.*

Not long ago, for example, I had an e-mail from an Israeli teenage boy who had read *The Giver.* It is published in Hebrew, but he may have read it in English; he didn't say. It spurred him to write me about his own increasing discomfort with his parents' rigid orthodoxy, and the isolationism he felt it imposed. Of course I can't, and shouldn't—and my books can't, and shouldn't—answer such difficult questions for young readers. But I think the fact that they raise the questions is good. I hope young people will question things again and again and again—even the values that their parents have given them. Every dogma, in my opinion, should be held up for scrutiny periodically, to be strengthened or modified or discarded. And at their best, I believe that is what books do.

Teenagers in Germany (where it is published in German but also in a special annotated English edition for use in the schools where kids are studying English) find in *The Giver* a way of looking at their own country's sad history: a glimpse into the seduction of totalitarianism.

Number the Stars seems to have a universal appeal because of its theme of personal integrity in the face of national cruelty. Young people still believe in inherent goodness, and they feel their belief confirmed in *Number the Stars.* Whatever their nationality, they test themselves against the circumstances in the book: what would I have done? Invariably they come down on the side of taking the risk, the possibility of self-sacrifice.

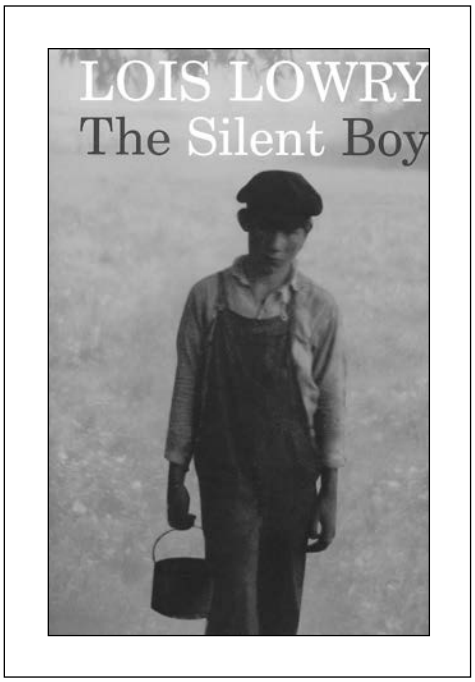
I have always felt that the world of story-telling, on a personal or professional level, is a way of rehearsal for things one has yet to grapple with in real life. Actually, it is what Ann-Marie was doing when she comforted herself with an old fairy tale.

The frustrating letters and e-mails are the ones I simply can't read: the ones in Serbo-Croatian, for example, or Russian. But I'm acquiring a stable of amateur translators; my own daughter-in-law for German; the woman who runs my dry-cleaners for Korean; and my Brazilian cleaning lady is my Portuguese expert.

GMK: *Your German granddaughter has read some of your books in German. What has she noticed?*

LL: My German granddaughter is nine years old, about to enter fourth grade. Though she is proficient in English as well as German, she attends a German school and learned to read in that language. It came as a surprise to her that the quirky phonics made English more difficult.

Mostly she is amused at some translation oddities: why, for example, did the dog named Keeper in the English version of *Stay!* become, suddenly, Oscar in German? She tells me no self-respecting German would name a dog Oscar, by the way. And she finds it amusing that the boy J.P. in a book called *Your Move, J.P.!* is Phil in the German edition.



The Silent Boy *by Lois Lowry*

GMK: *If any young readers of* Number the Stars *here, or in other nations, have detected your brilliant reference to the Little Red Riding Hood tale, what have they said about discovering that tale from their own younger years within this taut Holocaust novel? Is this comforting, or does it heighten the tension?*

LL: It is a little surprising to me, but not a single young reader has ever mentioned the Little Red Riding Hood reference. My guess is that the story is so pervasive a part of every childhood that it lives there unnoticed, and so the weaving into a contemporary setting doesn't startle them.

GMK: *What have readers of* Gathering Blue *observed about the passage ". . . Ravaged all Bogo tabal Timore toron Totoo now gone . . ." in which specific cities are cited? Have they asked you about that, or about the images Kira found it difficult to imagine and then stitch? You wrote ". . . though tiny in size, as each embroidered scene was, it was a complicated portrayal of tall buildings in shades of gray, each of them toppling, against a background of fiery explosions. . . ." Those words and what follows after them can be astonishing to read in any language.*

LL: I wrote that book in 1999, two years before the 9/11 tragedy. Yes, readers have pointed out that second sadly prophetic passage, but as time passes there is less awareness that the writing pre-dated the events.

I remember becoming aware of it myself on 9/11, a day that I happened to be on a train crossing Canada. When I saw the first photographs, I instantly saw in my mind the image from *Gathering Blue* and was a little spooked by the similarity and what almost seemed precognition.

GMK: The Giver *was selected recently in several communities across this nation as a Community Book to be read and discussed during the same period of time, often by people of all ages having little experience with books written now for young readers, or with young people today. Does something unique happen for readers of* The Giver *in the environment of a Community Book program?*

LL: I think everyone who reads *The Giver* brings to it a set of values and then finds those values sometimes reaffirmed, sometimes frighteningly challenged, by the book. That is true when a community . . . I believe there have been twelve or thirteen towns or cities now . . . uses it as a "community read." The difference, I think a wonderful difference, is that when a town or city uses it, the readership becomes cross-generational. And the amazing thing is that the questions, the discussion, the arguments are the same . . . but now between 80-year-olds and 8-year-olds, and everything in between.

GMK: *When you hear that in your books you explored what it means to be human, or the price of safety, for example, how does that feel?*

LL: I tried to tell a compelling story in *The Giver.* The fact that it raises such large questions came as something of a surprise to me. It is true that the questions are there, but to be honest I was not aware of the depth of the book when I wrote it. I think if an author attempted such a feat it would have become a didactic or contrived piece of fiction. I think the issues that have so captivated the audience arose quite naturally and implicitly from the story itself.

And indeed all good stories throughout history have probably raised serious and provocative questions about their world.

The thing that sometimes troubles me is when people think the author has any larger wisdom than the reader. For me . . . as I've said earlier . . . the role of the author is to present the questions, to provoke thought . . . and the questions are there for me, as well as anyone else. &

Ginny Moore Kruse *chaired the 2003 Hans Christian Andersen Award Committee for USBBY. She is Director Emeritus of the Cooperative Children's Book Center, School of Education, University of Wisconsin–Madison.*

A Castle of Books

Visiting the International Youth Library

by Susan Stan

Blutenburg Castle, home of the International Youth Library since 1983.

Imagine a place—a castle, even—where many languages are understood and spoken, and where the universal subject is children's literature.

A dream? No, it's the International Youth Library (IYL) in Munich, Germany, where for the past fifty years, children's books from all over the world have evolved into a unique and valuable resource not just for Germans but for children's literature professionals worldwide.

The library was the brainchild of founder Jella Lepman, who has become legendary both at the library and also among members of the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY), an organization that grew out of the International Youth Library. Americans and Canadians can belong to IBBY through their national sections, USBBY and IBBY Canada, respectively. It was through USBBY that I first learned about this library, and on a trip to Europe in 1992 I made a special detour to see it in person. I knew then that one day I would like to revisit the library to learn about the collection and meet the staff. In February 2003, assisted by a Fulbright research grant and a stipend from the library, I arrived for a six-month stay.

Munich comes alive in the summer, with its outdoor cafes and beer gardens . . . The city's public transportation system got me almost anywhere within a half an hour for a reasonable price and taught me my favorite German word, pünktlich, *meaning punctual, or exactly on time.*

The library is housed in a fifteenth-century castle, Schloss Blutenburg, in the northwestern part of Munich. Sightseers, not just book lovers, are often seen wandering the grounds and peeking into its historic chapel. On one side of the castle is a large pond, complete with a pair of swans worthy of Hans Christian Andersen, and along the other side is the swift-moving Würm river, visible from my study desk in the large reading room.

One corner of the building houses the administrative and editorial offices, and in another corner is the lending library, which attracts an assortment of bicycles and strollers, along with their owners, from nearby neighborhoods. The noncirculating collection of children's books is shelved by country in an underground storage area below the courtyard; users view the books from the reading room. The castle contains several exhibition spaces, some with permanent installations and others with temporary, changing displays.

The library grew out of the aftermath of World War II, and its mission then, as now, was to further international understanding through children's books. From the beginning, American organizations played a pivotal role in the library's evolution. Although Lepman herself was German, her work under the aegis of the U.S. Army after World War II led to this collection of books. Prior to the war, Lepman, a widow with two children, had worked as a journalist in Stuttgart until she was dismissed for

being Jewish. In what was a prescient move, she left for London and began her journalism career anew.

Nine years later, she was invited by the American occupation forces to help with Germany's cultural reconstruction as the adviser for women and youth affairs. In conversations with Germans, Lepman realized that spiritual nourishment was as necessary as the care packages they were receiving from abroad, and that what was needed most of all were children's books that were free of propaganda. "There aren't any of those left whatever," a bookseller friend told her.

Thus began Lepman's odyssey to procure books for a traveling exhibition. Allied forces had no money for such an undertaking, so Lepman convinced her superiors to allow her to write letters to the governments of other countries to ask them to donate books. This was a gutsy move, since only six months earlier these countries were at war with Germany.

"These children carry no responsibility for this war, and that is why books for them should be the first messengers for peace," Lepman argued. She won, and the exhibition opened in Munich in July 1946 in the very building Adolf Hitler once used to showcase "degenerate" art. Soon Lepman was overseeing exhibitions in Stuttgart, Frankfurt, and Berlin as well.

By 1947, Lepman was already dreaming of a permanent home for the exhibition. American aid helped out, this time in the form of the Rockefeller Foundation, which had sent two emissaries on a fact-finding trip through postwar Europe.

"We've seen the International Children's Books Exhibition in Berlin," one noted. "It's one of the best things we've seen on our trip. Tell us more about it." In 1948, they invited her to come to the United States on a lecture tour to speak about international understanding through children's books.

One important stop on the tour was ALA Headquarters, where she met Mildred Batchelder, executive secretary of the Division of Libraries for Children and Young People, ALSC's forerunner. Batchelder embraced Lepman's mission and its underlying philosophy so thoroughly that some time later she created an award to encourage traffic of children's books in the opposite direction, from Europe to the United States. The Mildred Batchelder Award, sponsored by ALA, is given annually to the publisher of the translated children's book deemed best in a given year.

Ultimately the Rockefeller Foundation came through with a two-year grant to establish the library, and Lepman found a location in a city mansion in Munich. At Lepman's request, ALA sent Margaret Scoggin to help with the daunting prospect of devising a cataloging system for books in so many different languages. The International Youth Library opened in 1949 as a true cultural center, offering in addition to the books themselves story hours, book discussion groups, author readings, painting classes, language classes, and other activities for children and their parents. The library eventually outgrew its space and moved to Schloss Blutenburg in 1983.

Hello, Dear Enemy

An Exhibition of International Picture Books for Peace and Tolerance Tours the World

Part of the mission of the International Youth Library is outreach, and what better ambassadors could there be than the library's own books?

An exhibition of fifty-five titles from twenty countries, organized in 1998 and first shown at the International Youth Library in Munich, has traveled more than most of us will in a lifetime. Supported by a grant from the Goethe Institute Inter Nationes, the exhibition has been seen in one hundred places worldwide, from Berlin and Bratislava to New Delhi and Nagasaki. It has been in North America since 2002, and is currently at the Skokie Public Library in Skokie, Illinois.

Living in a culture of peace requires understanding and tolerating unfamiliar ideas and people. As Dr. Barbara Scharioth points out in the exhibition's introduction, tolerance is a learned habit rather than an inborn trait. Many of the books in this collection rely on animal characters to convey their lessons. In Max Velthuijs's *Kikker en de vreemdeling* from the Netherlands (1993), published as *Frog and the Stranger* in the U.S., Frog and his friends learn to discard stereotypes when they become friends with Rat, who turns out to be an interesting, entertaining storyteller rather than the filthy, dirty thief they assumed him to be.

Actual historical events form the basis for other books in the exhibition, including *Ede yomu Hiroshima no*

Today the International Youth Library is maintained by a foundation funded primarily by the German government, the Bavarian government, and the city of Munich. One condition of this funding is that the library also be supported by the international children's book community. That support comes primarily through donations of children's books, a result of "the enlightened willingness of publishers to support the institution," as former IYL staffer Jeffrey Garrett once said. Other than book donations from American publishers, the library has received no systematic American funding to speak of since 1957, when the Rockefeller grants ended. The Children's Book Council discontinued its annual gift of ALA Notable Books for the Margaret Scoggin Collection sometime in the early 1980s.

gembaku (Hiroshima: A Tragedy Never to Be Repeated) from Japan (1995), a comprehensive look at the atom bomb and the proliferation of nuclear weapons since World War II. *El robo de las aes (The Theft of the A's)* (1983), set somewhere in South America, uses story effectively to emphasize the dangers of censorship and the importance of freedom of speech.

The exhibition includes two classics of peace education: Munro Leaf's *The Story of Ferdinand,* first published in the United States in 1936, and Erich Kästner's *Die Konferenz der Tiere (The Animals' Conference),* published in Switzerland in 1949. Leaf's book about the bull who refused to fight was prompted by the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War and reprinted on newsprint as a Christmas gift for the children of Germany in 1946. Kästner's tale of how the animals brought peace to the world was a response to World War II and emerged out of conversations between Erich Kästner and Jella Lepman. Neither story has lost its potency or, unfortunately, outlived its usefulness.

For information about bringing this exhibition to your library or community, see www.ijb.de (click on the British flag for the English language version, then "Calendar of Events" and "Traveling exhibitions"), or e-mail info@ijb.de.

Books that come into the library are cataloged and reviewed by lectors, each a specialist in youth literature of a particular language or group of languages. Books they find especially noteworthy might end up in *The White Ravens,* an English-language catalog of the year's best books. *The White Ravens* is put to a variety of uses—publishers read it to find books from other countries they might like to publish, literature specialists read it to learn about new international books and translations, librarians use it as a selection tool. Since 1996, this annotated list is also available online at the library's Web site (www.ijb.de).

I came to the International Youth Library with the intention of researching trends in the young adult novel but only a vague idea of how to do so, given my limited fluency in languages other than English. *The White Ravens* proved to be the perfect starting point for finding books that might indicate an incipient trend, and these books then became the basis for follow-up conversations with the lectors, who read extensively in their language areas.

Reading and selecting books for The White Ravens is only one of the lectors' many tasks. They keep up with the periodicals in their fields, respond to questions from outside the library (researchers needing information, for instance), generate ideas for the many exhibits created each year out of the library's holdings, and generally represent the library in an infinite number of ways throughout the year. The library receives more than 280 journals from around the world, and browsing through the shelves of current issues reminded me of the important scholarship that, because of language differences, is usually off my radar screen.

In addition to the regular flow of German students and scholars who come to the library to research topics and authors, several international visitors came during my stay, including at least five Americans. Ann Carlson Weeks of the University of Maryland arrived in February to describe a project currently underway to create a digital library of international children's books and to discuss ways in which the library can take part; colleague Jane White made a follow-up trip in June. Marianne Carus, Cricket magazine's founder, sits on the IYL board and came for a meeting in April. Barbara Lehman and Pat Scharer, editors at *Bookbird,* the IBBY journal, also came in April to make a presentation on *Bookbird*'s editorial procedures.

It is the stipend program, however, that is most responsible for the ongoing mix of international guests. Each year, thanks to funding from the Federal Republic of Germany's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as many as fifteen applicants receive scholarships that help underwrite their expenses while spending time at the library. These competitive scholarships for stays of up to three months are open to any non-German with an interest in children's literature.

As I arrived, a teacher from Russia was just ending her stay, and an Italian illustrator was in his second month. After his departure, another American professor arrived, followed by a Latin American writer living in New Zealand, a Greek graduate student working on her dissertation, an Ecuadorian school librarian/author, and an author from Spain. After I left, six other stipend holders with equally diverse credentials were scheduled to arrive. Their interaction with each other as well as with the IYL staff leads to an experience rich in perspectives, concerning not only children's literature but everything else as well. This is surely what Lepman had in mind so long ago.

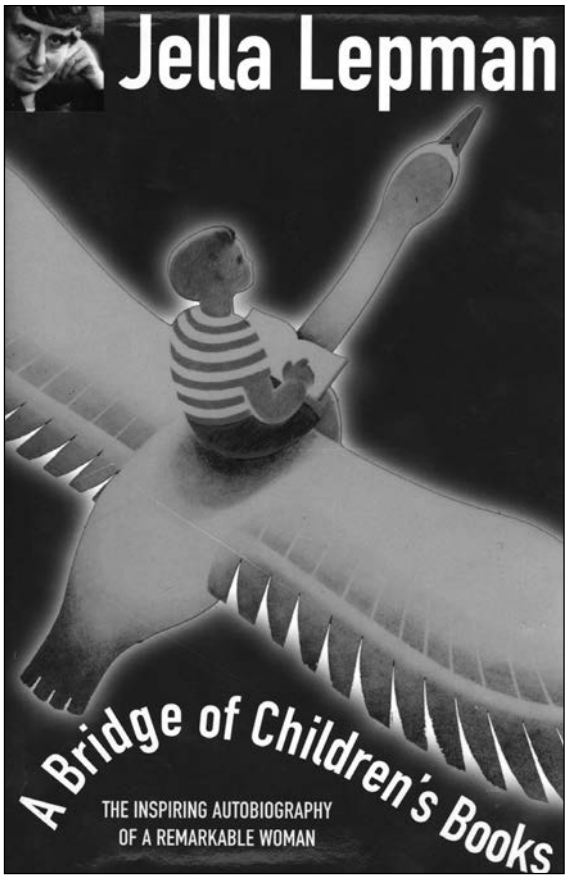
Of course, living in another country, even for six months, provides plenty of opportunities for crosscultural interaction and insights. Munich is a city made for walking, and at every turn there is an historical marvel—statues, churches, graves, fountains, and public gardens all have a story behind them (and most of the time, this being Bavaria, the stories connect to King Ludwig I or II). The Germans' strong sense of history does not

mean they are "stuck in the past," as one American government official recently claimed, but the Germans I met did see themselves within a context of time and place in a way that few Americans do. Conversely, I got the impression that Germans often view Americans, with our great mobility, as rootless.

Each day on my way to and from the library, I took particular delight in seeing the number of mothers with prams on daily outings—good weather and bad—making sure their children had fresh air. Munich comes alive in the summer, with its outdoor cafes and beer gardens. Bicycles rival cars as a form of transportation and often have their own paths next to pedestrian walkways. The city's public transportation system got me almost anywhere within a half an hour for a reasonable price and taught me my favorite German word, *pünktlich,* meaning punctual, or exactly on time.

Like so many people whose work involves books, when not in the library I often ended up in bookstores, new and antiquarian. In the antiquarian bookstores, I hunted for picture books by German illustrators whose work I had come to love. In the process, I discovered other treasures. In the new bookstores, I marveled at the number of books I recognized—not just *Heidi* and *The Neverending Story* and the *Harry Potter* series, but books by Jerry Spinelli, Brock Cole, Megan McDonald, and other American writers. At the same time, books by beloved German authors like Michael Ende, Otfried Preussler, and Erich Kästner continue to be featured alongside new titles.

The gothic town hall in the center of Munich overlooks Marienplatz, a favorite meeting spot for visitors and residents.



Jella Lepman's compelling story is told in her autobiography, *A Bridge of Children's Books,* reprinted in 2003 by O'Brien Press in association with IBBY Ireland and USBBY.

I learned later that up to 30 percent of the children's and young adult books published in the German language each year are translations coming from Scandinavia, France, the Netherlands, and the rest of Europe as well as the U.S., the UK, and Australia. Furthermore, the major book prizes in youth literature (counterparts to our Newbery, Caldecott, Prinz, and Sibert) are not restricted to books originally written in German but are also open to translations. Thus from an early age German children are reading the world's authors right along with their own.

The International Youth Library was born out of war, and Lepman's vision of children's books as a bridge leading to lasting peace is as relevant today as it was fifty-five years ago. The fact that wars still occur does not mean this idea is faulty but simply that there is much work left to do, and the International Youth Library has taken a proactive stance in this regard. Realizing that not everyone can come to the library, the library staff looks for ways to bring its collection to the public—virtually, via its Web site and its publications, and physically, via traveling exhibitions (see sidebar) and displays at international conferences and book fairs.

Internationalism as a world view goes in and out of fashion, but the International Youth Library carries on steadfastly to ensure that its collection of books is representative and relevant, current and comprehensive. In some countries, certain artists or cultural institutions have been designated national treasures. If the same were true on a global scale, the International Youth Library would surely be designated a world treasure. &

Susan Stan *is Associate Professor of English at Central Michigan University in Mount Pleasant, where she teaches several children's literature courses. She is the editor of* The World through Children's Books *(Scarecrow, 2002), reviewed in the spring 2003 issue of* Children and Libraries.

Someday You'll Go to the Moon

Musings on Children's Nonfiction

by Sharon Korbeck

Books on topics such as careers or timely news events often remain in libraries even after the information they contain goes out of date.

Series books are often one of the only choices librarians have when it comes to filling a subject gap in nonfiction.

Children's fiction can do so much—it can drive the imagination, shake hands with new friends, and inspire excursions beyond one's means. How can nonfiction—the literature of fact (as Pulitzer Prize-winner John McPhee described it)—compete with that? That's the conundrum children's librarians face daily, and it's the topic ALSC chose for its preconference program at the ALA Annual Conference in Toronto in June.

In one of the sessions, panelists addressed the task librarians face when selecting appropriate nonfiction. Budgetary restraints notwithstanding, the selection process has become challenging at best, problematic at worst. Ken Setterington of the Toronto Public Library, however, said, "It's an exciting time for nonfiction, and the quality keeps getting better. Specifically, he noted that Canadian publishers are developing more nonfiction lines to reach out to young male readers—a notoriously reluctant crew. "The awards [such as the Robert F. Sibert Award in America] for nonfiction create more awareness," Setterington said.

Deborah Stevenson, editor of the *Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books, (BCCB)* agreed. She noted that having several recent nonfiction Caldecott Award winners (including the 2001 winner, *So You Want to Be President?* by Judith St. George, illustrated by David Small) has elevated the attention publishers place on the quality of nonfiction. Often, librarians are forced to purchase series nonfiction—some selections, the panel emphasized, are better than others. "We're stuck," said Kathleen Baxter, a columnist who covers nonfiction for *School Library Journal*. Nina Lindsay, a youth services librarian at Oakland Public Library, agreed. "We desperately need these books at our library," she said, although many of the series books can be dry.

Take a topic like llamas, for example. It's not a topic that might be covered that frequently by publishers, so when a book appears on the topic, at an appropriate age level, librarians must weigh the need for the book versus the quality of the book. Need to cover that subject matter often wins out and a substandard book might end up in a collection.

Reviewing sources like the *BCCB* do what they can to alert librarians to the best and worst nonfiction. But that task is daunting, Stevenson said. "We receive five thousand books a year. We review nine hundred. We're trying to evaluate the strengths against the weaknesses," she said.

The most pressing question regarding nonfiction—accuracy—remains a painful thorn in the side of many nonfiction titles. "When I was a kid, fictionalizing [nonfiction books] was the norm," Baxter said. Today, there's more accountability, she said. The panel shared frighteningly funny (and somewhat shocking) examples of how inaccurate or simply out of date nonfiction still lives on library shelves today. Panel moderator Ginny Moore Kruse spoke of her favorite example—finding a book titled *Someday You'll Go to the Moon* still sitting on shelves in the 1970s. Setterington displayed a dated book on airline stewardesses, describing the job's expectations. And one panelist recalled seeing just a few decades ago a 1930s craft book which used asbestos as a substitute for clay in children's art projects.

But even weeding these books isn't easy—librarians can't be subject specialists in everything. "The danger is leaving something inaccurate on the shelf," Lindsay said. So how then do children's librarians select and evaluate nonfiction? Stevenson suggested, "Approach the books with questioning minds." Aside from that, consult reference sources for guidance, such as Kathleen T. Horning's *From Cover to Cover*.

Finally, what's missing (and what's overdone) in the slush pile of nonfiction? Baxter is tired of the glut of books on the *Titanic;* she'd like to see more books on how to make soapbox derby cars. Lindsay said she could do without seeing another book on animal

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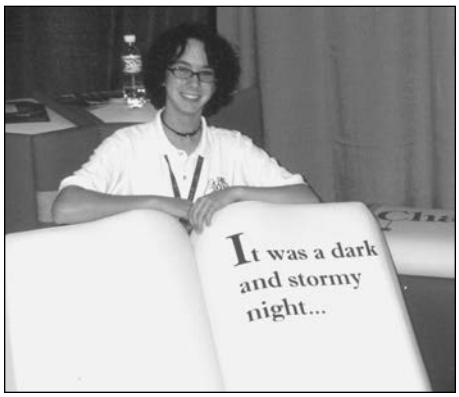
NORTH TO CANADA

ALA Annual Conference in Toronto, Ontario, June 2003

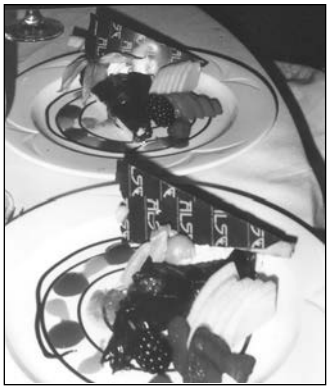
Susan Campbell Bartoletti and James Cross Giblin, recipients of the Robert F. Sibert Medal for 2002 and 2003, respectively.



Lindsay Olofson of California was proud to display her family's line of plush, comfy book furniture at the convention exhibits.

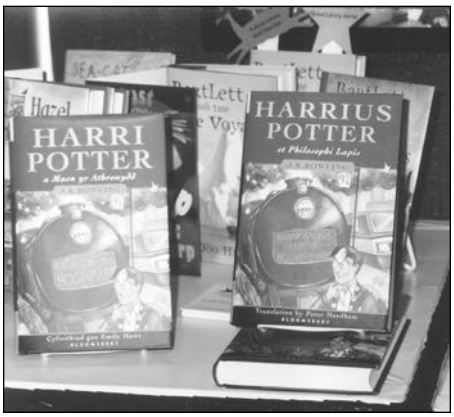
ALSC Executive Director Malore I. Brown with Caldecott Award winner Eric Rohmann, left, and Newbery Award winner Avi.

Children and Libraries editor Sharon Korbeck (right) was pleased to meet Nancy Garden, author of the groundbreaking *Annie on My Mind*.



Didn't get to go to the Newbery/ Caldecott banquet? Not only did you miss out on great speeches and camaraderie, but you missed this elegant ALSC-branded dessert! Now that's sweet!

Authors Robin Pulver, left, and Ellen Stoll Walsh, toured the publishers' booths at the convention center.

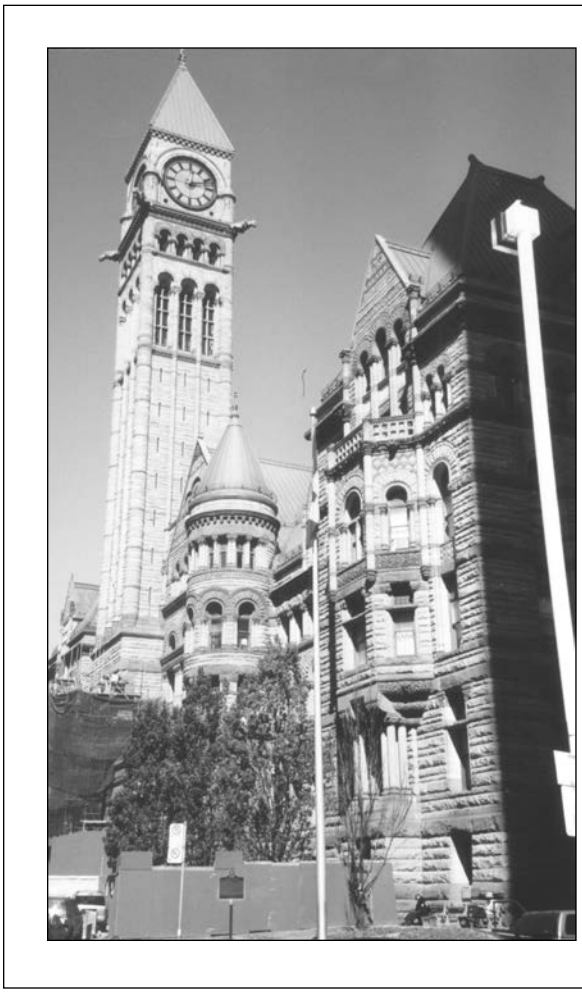


Harry Potter was all the rage during the convention since the fifth book in the J. K. Rowling series was released during the ALA Annual Conference weekend. Bloomsbury USA had these unique editions on display. At far left is a Welsh language edition; the one on the near right is in Latin. Coming in 2004 will be ancient Greek and Irish language editions.

Canadians do it bigger! This larger-than-life woodpecker statue made a permanent perch outside the Metro Convention Centre.

Rosemary Wells was pleased to show off her latest, greatest dog—McDuff—at the booth of her publisher, Hyperion Books for Children.

Who doesn't like free stuff? From underwear and dictionaries to galley proofs and plush animals, convention exhibitors offered it all!



Downtown Toronto was full of spectacular architecture, including this old city hall building.

All photos by Sharon Korbeck

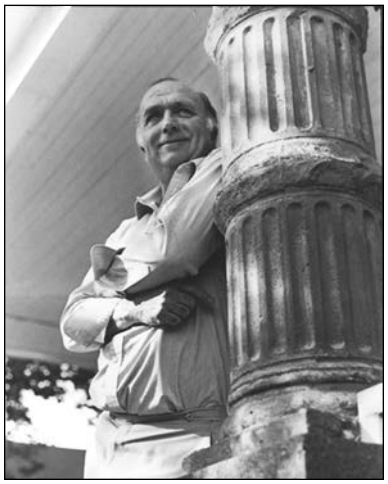
Seeing the Light

A Tribute to Ethel Macmillan and Librarians Everywhere

by Brian Doyle

The speech that follows was delivered by author Brian Doyle during the program "By the Red Maple," hosted by the ALSC International Relations Committee and held during the 2003 ALA Annual Conference in Toronto.

I start in the winter dark on Rideau Street, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, in this century's gloomiest year, 1943. I don't know it, but I'm about to meet somebody who will change the course of my life. All I know is that for some reason, the whole world is at war, I'm blocks from home in Lowertown, and I'm cold.



Brian Doyle

And I'm eight years old. But I don't know that. What that means, I mean. Henry James, in his 1897 introduction to his story "What Maisie Knew," said:

> Small children have many more perceptions than they have terms to translate them; their vision is at any moment much richer, their apprehension even constantly stronger than their ability to express it. Their feelings can be complex even when their language is not.

I can say I'm eight if somebody asks me. How old are you, boy? I can say "eight." But I can't say what I sense, what I feel. Why I'm out this late, in the after-supper dark.

Remember W. B. Yeats's poem "Long Legged Fly"? About how absolutely quiet are the moments that change history? Yeats spoke of world history. He dealt with Caesar, Helen of Troy, Michelangelo in the poem and how,

> Like a long legged fly upon the stream
>
> The wind moves upon silence.

But he also spoke of tiny history-individual moments, silent as the long-legged fly upon the stream, when the direction and motion of an individual life is altered; I'm as quiet as the long legged fly upon the stream when I think of the moment of cold silence I spent, hesitating, outside of 377 Rideau Street, the public library, kicking my own feet, my head encircled by my breath. Should I go in here and get warm?

Shhh. Don't make a sound.

I go in.

On that cold night, the librarian there, in 1943, looking out at me, out my way, down my way from the desk. And through the thick glass ball of the falling snow of memory I see her, the strong nose, the tilted head, the high hair, the intelligence and wit in the curtained eyes, the sure hands, the frilly blouse, the posed majesty.

Her name is Miss Ethel Macmillan—I've since looked it up. She was there for years, although I didn't know that until some recent research. I saw her four times that winter and though I never saw her again (we moved) she's been living in my mind ever since. She read to me, that night, the story of Cronus.

Cronus, whose symbol is the scythe, Lord of the Universe (which I thought was Lowertown, Ottawa), was married to his own sister, Rhea (I never even blinked at the idea), was worried about his new son Zeus. He'd been told that one of his children would steal his power, so he'd been swallowing each one as they'd been born. Rhea hid Zeus and gave her husband a great stone in swaddling clothes which he, of course, swallowed. When Zeus grew up, he forced his father to cough up the stone

plus all the other kids he'd swallowed which led to all kinds of activity on Mount Olympus.

I went home and looked at my father who was drunk, asleep. Did I have more brothers and sisters than I realized? I looked at my father's heaving belly. There was certainly room enough.

On the next visit, Miss Ethel read to me about Jonah. This was news to me. We didn't know about Jonah in Lowertown for some reason. (I hear, though, that they know about him now.) Jonah ran away from the Lord and took off on a ship and there was a big storm which was, of course, his fault. Jonah told the sailors "It's my fault, throw me in, sacrifice me, and the sea will be calm." So they did, and then a whale swallowed him, and the Lord, after three days and nights, made the whale cough him up on shore so that he could go about his work snitching on sinners.

Not much later, she read me part of *Little Red Riding Hood* and then sat me somewhere to read the rest on my own. I'd heard it before; the girl, grandma, the wolf, the swallowing, the huntsman cutting open the wolf, Granny and girl alive, the stones as replacements and then the sewing up, the stones dragging down the doomed wolf—how dark it is inside a wolf—but it all sounded so different somehow this time than when I first heard it.

At that moment, I knew something I didn't know (oh my God!)—as silent as the long-legged fly upon the stream. Miss Ethel taught me, showed me, inoculated me with what I was to realize years later intellectually—that these tales had strange echoes of one another, echoes across time and continents, across cultures, world, ancient preliterate Greek, Old Testament, nineteenth-century Europe, and now Rideau Street and Lowertown and me. Thousands of years apart coming through Miss Ethel Macmillan.

My life was changed forever. And in that change, so were some other lives—I don't know how many—for I became a life-long teacher and writer and tried to pass on that gift—that free and priceless gift that Miss Ethel Macmillan gave to me.

I don't know, nobody knows, how many lives are changed by librarians across North America every day but my experience as a child and as a teacher and as a writer and as a visitor and reader and performer in hundreds of libraries across the land makes me guess this: That every minute or so across North America a person's life is changed by a librarian.

I've been north and south and I've seen it. I've been to Holman Island, which is not that far from the Magnetic North Pole—is it the northernmost settlement in the world with a qualified librarian on hand? I don't know—could be. The librarian there, and I, as partners, as a team, changed some people's lives right in front of our very own eyes.

I wish there were a method—they could invent one—to track the instances of people's lives being changed by librarians up and down and across this wonderful continent. A light board of some kind.

You see the great map—the tiny lights flashing all over the vast board—the hero librarians doing their natural work. A board lit up like Christmas—I'd love to be the person monitoring the board. There's another and another—there goes five. Oh, look—a whole cluster—somebody's hit a vein.

And I'd think of what Miss Macmillan did for me and my little light. She opened up my head; sent me on a search I'm still on regarding the wondrous connection of all things. You've seen it—every one of you here has done it time and time again.

From Holman Island to Key West—the lights are flashing, twinkling all over North America each time someone's brain is changed, a door is opened, somebody goes through it in a new direction, somebody's mind altered forever, somebody discovers reading, somebody has been awarded the gift of his own limitless brain—a librarian has blinked another light on the big board.

Thank you Miss Ethel Macmillan, wherever you are, and God bless everybody in this assembly here today!

Brian Doyle *is a well-loved Canadian author of fiction for young people. He picked up a love of storytelling growing up in the Gatineau Hills north of Ottawa, the ancestral home of his father. Doyle's first book was published in 1978. He has received several Canadian awards, including the Canadian Library Association's Book of the Year for Children (twice) and the Mr. Christie Book Award (twice). He was shortlisted as the Canadian entry for the Hans Christian Andersen Award in 1998.*

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www.ala.org/alsc
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Dogs and Dinosaurs, Hobbies and Horses

Age-Related Changes in Children's Information and Reading Preferences

by Brian W. Sturm

The interests of children have been the object of extensive research in library science, education, and child psychology. Studies date back to the late nineteenth century and employ a variety of methods, including interviews, recorded free-sharing time, reading log analysis, circulation transactions, terms used to search online public access catalogs (OPACs), and the most often used technique, surveys. Surveys have used preselected categories or genres that children then rank in order; they have used questions requesting specific titles that children have read, which are then categorized and rank ordered; they have included open-ended questions to which children express their own interests; and some have merged two or more of these methods in an effort to minimize the influence of the research method on the results.[1]

Most of this research is geared toward understanding the interests of children (ages six through eleven) or adolescents (ages twelve through eighteen), and many of these studies explore the effect of age and gender on the responses children provide. "There are two common findings from the considerable research into factors affecting children's reading interests. These two findings are that the child's age and gender influence the types of books that interest children."[2] People who work with children know that young children prefer certain topics more than others, and these interests change as the children grow older. Young boys between the ages of five and nine, for example, enjoy dinosaurs and transportation (cars, motorcycles, trucks), while young girls of a similar age often show an interest in horses. As the children grow older, these interests change.

Perhaps the best method to assess these changing interests is to conduct a longitudinal study following the same children over time; this is immensely time consuming and has never, to this researcher's knowledge, been done. The longitudinal studies that have been completed focus on collecting data within a particular age or grade range for a period of months or years or in replicating a prior study and comparing the results.[3] A second method is to conduct a study that is not longitudinal and that gathers data from a range of ages during one query interaction; the researcher then looks for trends across ages. The studies that follow are of this type; while they do not follow the gradually changing interests of specific children, they do help shed light on the ways in which interests vary across different ages. Still, there has not been any definitive evidence that would enable children's librarians and educators to know how children's interests change over time. One reason for this is that all children are unique, and their individual interests often do not conform to the trends portrayed in the research. Determining the needs or interests of a specific child at a specific time and place is best left to the librarian's reference interview, the experienced teacher, or the thoughtful psychologist.

Of what use, then, are studies that explore children's interests in general and their age-specific interests in particular? General trends are useful to librarians for designing and managing age-appropriate collections, for marketing and publicizing their collections, and for providing interesting and entertaining programming. Teachers can use children's interests to help garner or focus children's attention on a lesson, and to plan examples and strategies to help children learn and grow. Child psychologists can use this information to help establish a rapport with their young patients and to construct more effective therapeutic interventions by aligning their treatments with what children enjoy.

This study is meant to further the understanding of how children's

information and reading preferences are related to age by examining eighteen hundred children's responses to the question, "What would you like to know more about?" which was included in a reading incentive program conducted by the State Library of North Carolina in 2000. The research questions were: 1) What are the expressed interests of children when they enter the library? and 2) What are the trends in children's preferences across ages and do these trends differ by gender? This study can provide a sense of when children's interest peaks in a particular subject, and when that interest begins to wane; it shows the differing preferences of boys and girls and how these differences change across ages; and it leads to speculation of possible reasons for these changes.

Literature Review

Studies of children's reading interests and preferences have been conducted since the late 1800s, and despite the more than three hundred studies that have occurred, there is still no definitive understanding of what children like and when those tastes develop. Research contradicts itself as each new study is conducted. Part of this may be due to the changing methods employed, and part is certainly due to the differing decades in which the studies were conducted, and the age groups, gender distributions, geographic locations, ethnic distributions, and social and intellectual distinctions among the children in these studies.[4] While there remains no definitive conclusion, trends can be seen among these studies.

Most research on children's reading interests and preferences has been conducted to assess age-specific interests and gender differences. Very few studies have addressed the changes in those trends across ages. Mauck and Swenson conducted a study in 1949 of children's voluntary reading choices in grades four through eight in the midwestern United States.[5] Three sets of fifty-seven books were made available to the children in their homerooms. When children took a book to read, they were asked to record their names and the number of pages read on the book circulation cards. Of the 171 books, 72.5 percent were fiction titles, which biases the results in favor of this type of book. Still, the changes over grade level are interesting. Reading in general declined as the grade level rose, with a mean number of pages read declining from 674.45 in grade four to 97.89 in grade eight. Fiction reading remained the highest overall and was one of the few categories to increase in popularity with the older children, while history (though rated the easiest in terms of reading difficulty) was the least often read topic. Younger children also read considerably more broadly than did older children.

The following year, McCarty conducted a study of 4,814 reading records of students in grades seven through twelve in fifteen schools throughout Florida.[6] This sample was randomly chosen from 14,324 records that were kept by school librarians and teachers and that tracked all the books borrowed from the various school libraries for the school year 1947–48. These records were then analyzed, giving the number of readers of each book by grade and gender. The books were then classified into one of fifteen possible categories and percentages were calculated. The results showed males with a strong interest in general fiction (undefined by McCarty) and adventure fiction, and a marked disinterest in mythology and fairy tales, occupations, and career fiction. Girls' reading interests were similar (general fiction and adventure fiction ranking highest overall), but they were disinterested in war and defense, hobbies and sports fiction, and history and geography. Girls' low interest in war and sports is similar to other studies of gender differences in reading.[7]

Similar to the Mauck and Swenson study, McCarty found that fiction was the most often read category, and it remained fairly constant across the grades, though it was considerably higher for girls than for boys. Both boys and girls became more interested in general fiction and the arts as they grew older, and both genders experienced a sharp decrease in interest in animal fiction and mystery and detective fiction with age. Girls read career fiction more than boys, and boys read hobbies and sports fiction more than girls.

Ashley studied the reading interests of nine hundred school students in grades four through seven in Canada in 1970.[8] Each child was given a list of forty reading topics and asked to indicate both their likes and dislikes. These responses were then analyzed to create a rank ordered list of the forty topics and an understanding of the changes over time in children's interest in twelve randomly chosen topics. The results indicated that boys prefer war and hobbies much more than girls, and girls prefer poetry and talking animals more than boys. Real animals and science fiction were strong favorites among children of both genders. Interest in most categories peaked in grade five, leading to Ashley's claim that "the best chance of encouraging good reading habits lies in—and before—grade four." Younger children, it appears, read more, and more widely, than older children. Ashley also found that, contrary to many other studies showing girls reading more than boys, "in this study, boys show somewhat more interest than girls."

Unfortunately, Ashley did not compute these grade differences for all of the topics. Mysteries, adventure, ghost stories, and comics were the four primary interests overall, and these topics were not part of the random selection to assess by grade. Another potential bias was the differing number of students in each grade. While using percentages can help address this bias, it still remains a complicating factor.

Lauritzen and Cheves, in collaboration with the Beta Upsilon chapter of Pi Lambda Theta, conducted a 1974 study of 811 children, ages seven through twelve to determine their reading preferences.[9] One part of the survey asked each child to respond to the phrase, "I like to read about. . . . " Responses were categorized by topic. Some children replied with more than one answer to the question, so the total number of responses to this particular question was 933. Again, gender differences were evident from their data. Boys showed a much greater interest in science, history, sports, transportation, science fiction, and hobbies than did the girls, and girls showed greater interest in animals, mystery, people, make-believe, adventures, comedy, house and home, and romance than did the boys. With the

exception of history and adventures, these gender preferences were similar to other studies. While some generalizations can be made about changing interests across ages from these data (boys' interest in animals rose with age and their interest in transportation peaked at age twelve, while girls' interest in animals peaked at age seven and dropped steadily thereafter), care must be taken due to the changes in the number of students participating at each age level.

In 1986, Bank studied 844 students in grades six through twelve in ten secondary schools in the New York metropolitan area.[10] Teachers administered a survey to the students asking them to choose from a list of fifty-eight topics, those that they would select when reading voluntarily. These topics, developed in consultation with students and teachers, were then correlated with information about the students. Teens, mysteries, humor, adventure, love, and sex were the most often chosen topics for voluntary reading. Anthropology, literary studies, westerns, and philosophy were the least read topics. There was no overall decline in reading interests with increasing age, as was evident in Mauck and Swenson's study, though interest in animals, hobbies, and art experienced a fairly steady drop in interest for older children. There was a rise in interest in news, current events, social problems, psychology, national problems, and politics until the senior year, at which point interest in many of these subjects fell, to be replaced by a focus on sex and the students' peer group. Action and intrigue seem to dominate the voluntary reading of these young people.

Gender differences were also evident, though not at the grade level of specificity. Girls' preferences revolved around love (82 percent), young people (80 percent), romances (73 percent), and fashion (57 percent), while boys preferred sports (71 percent), sex (57 percent), humor (about 55 percent), and adventure (about 53 percent).

In 1991, Solomon explored the search strategies of elementary school children while using an online public access catalog.[11] As part of this study, he analyzed children's search language to determine the topics chosen, the complexity of the terms used, and the similarity of those terms to the Library of Congress Subject Headings used by the online catalog system. While his primary purpose was not to explore children's information interests, Solomon's overview of actual terms used by children to search the catalog may be considered indicative of those interests. He found that twenty terms were used most frequently by these first through sixth graders. In rank order the terms were: cats, dogs, mystery, animals, magic, poetry, dinosaur, drawing, horses, weapons, karate, baseball, rabbits, sports, ghosts, insects, monsters, birds, fiction, and science. He noted that eight of the search terms related to animals, four were forms of literature or genres, and three terms concerned sports.

There were some gender distinctions regarding the search terms used. Search terms related to animals were used by both genders, but more girls than boys used the terms dogs and horses while more boys than girls used dinosaurs. Boys were primarily the ones who searched for sports-related terms—sports, karate, basketball, or baseball—though several girls searched for football. Astronomy terms (space, planets) were used primarily by boys, as were transportation terms such as cars and motorcycles. Data for age-related interests were not tabulated or explored in this study.

Boraks, Hoffman, and Bauer studied 315 third through fifth graders (154 boys, 161 girls) in Virginia and Ohio in 1997.[12] These children completed an open-ended survey asking them to record the title of their most favorite book. These titles were then classified by literary genre. The grade-level analysis showed that there were no statistically significant changes in genre preference as children grew older. There was, however, "a developmental trend as children move from picture books and fantasy toward realistic fiction by grade five." Once again there exists a certain bias in the study as the number of students in each grade differed considerably.

In 1998, Goodyear surveyed the fiction reading preferences of 474 students in forms three through six (ages thirteen through sixteen) in Auckland, New Zealand.[13] Boys showed a consistent preference for adventure and science fiction and a disinterest in stories of love and in history, while girls' preferences focused on teenage coming of age stories and adventure and a concomitant disinterest in war and history. No major changes in interests were evident as the grade level rose, though the girls' responses showed a slight decrease in their interest in animals and sports and a small increase in interest in modern problems, while boys' interest in war rose slightly and their interest in sports and classics fell during the first three forms.

While these studies employ different methods of data collection and involve different ages of children, they can, individually and collectively, give a sense of the changing interests of children at different age levels. The current research is meant to add to this literature and address several of the methodological issues found in the prior studies (i.e., varying numbers of children involved at each age level and for each gender).

Method

Data Collection

The State Library of North Carolina sponsored a reading enrichment program in the summer of 2000, entitled The Very Best Place to Start. The project was funded by a grant through the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) made possible by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services and administered by the State Library of North Carolina, a division of the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources.

One element of this program was the Start Me Up! Game, which ran during National Library Week (Saturday, April 8, 2000 through Saturday, April 15, 2000). Colorful, preprinted, double-sided cards were placed in visible areas of school and public libraries for the children to fill out and enter in a drawing for institutional and state-provided prizes such as computers, games, and free movie and sports tickets. The front of each card required the child to fill in such personal information as name,

home address, home phone number, age, and the name of their library. The back of the card asked four questions: "What would you like to know more about?" "Ask your librarian where to start; by the way, who is your librarian?" "Where did your librarian tell you to start?" and "Name the most amazing thing you found out."

An estimated 150,000 cards were returned as part of this program. They were combined and thoroughly shuffled prior to selecting the prize-winning cards, and then the cards were put, unsorted, into cardboard boxes. The data for this study were culled from eighteen hundred cards drawn from this huge data set (one hundred cards for each gender for the inclusive ages six through fourteen). As cards were examined for inclusion in the study, incomplete and illegible cards were destroyed. Many children had filled out multiple cards to try to increase their odds of winning the drawing; all of these duplicate cards were collected, and one was chosen using a random number generator publicly available on the Internet at www.random.org/nform.html.

A Microsoft Excel spreadsheet was used to store the data as it was entered. Data points were: last name, first name, gender, age, and the answers to the two questions: "What would you like to know more about?" and "Where did your librarian tell you to start?" Gender posed a slight problem, as this was not an entry on the cards, so it was inferred from the children's first names. This meant excluding some cards for which the gender was not immediately decipherable (most notably several names of international origin). While this limits the results somewhat, the cards were not designed with research in mind, and so this study made use of whatever data existed.

Once the data were entered, they were sorted by last name to discover any duplicate entries. Several such duplicates were found; one was randomly chosen for deletion and a new entry was added to maintain the total count at one hundred cards for each gender and age, resulting in eighteen hundred unique entries.

Data Analysis

The children's answers to the question, "What do you want to know more about?" were coded and assigned a category name based on the subject of the response. These categories emerged from the data. In order to increase the reliability of the study, a second researcher was asked to code the first one thousand entries, and differences in coding strategies were discussed and category definitions created. The entire data set was then coded using these categories (see the appendix for category definitions). To further ensure the accuracy of the coding, a third researcher was then asked to code the entire data set; intercoder reliability was calculated at 77.3 percent using Cohen's Kappa. The results of the coding were then graphed to explore the changing distribution of responses over the ages and genders.

Limitations of the Study

Any study of children's interests runs the risk of overlapping categories. While a response of "alligators" is relatively easy to categorize as animal, a response of "Judy Blume" raises the difficulty of whether to assign the response to the category of biography (i.e., books about Judy Blume) or to the category of literature (i.e., books by Judy Blume). A similar difficulty arises when a child writes down "race cars." Does this belong in the category transportation or sports? An answer of "Leonardo da Vinci" could be placed in the category of science, biography, or art. Without a log of the reference interview to decipher exactly what the child meant, there is no way to know the best way to categorize these responses. To ameliorate this problem, the answer to the second question, "Where did the librarian tell you to start?" served as an indicator to the results of the reference interview; a response to this question of "in the fiction books," led to categorizing the response of "Judy Blume" as literature. A child told to start in the 920s led to "Leonardo da Vinci" being categorized as biography.

Table 1. Fictitious Data Example

	Males				Females				
Age	**7**	**8**	**9**	**Total**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**Total**	**Total**
***n* =**	12	15	18	45	10	17	19	46	91
Response = animals	4	8	3	15	7	4	12	23	38

A second limitation of this study, mentioned above, is that gender was inferred from the children's names rather than being expressly written down by the children. This led to several cards being deleted from the study as the researchers could not identify the gender of the child from the name. While this does not detract from the validity of the results, it may render them less useful in understanding the interests of children with non-English names.

A final limitation, also due to the design of the cards, is that the question, "What do you want to know more about?" may be biased toward informational responses and against literary ones. "What do you like to read?" or "What did you last read?" might have returned entirely different answers. Just as the method used to query children can influence the results, the precise question asked may also do so.[14]

One other note of caution when interpreting and presenting data on children's reading interests must be mentioned. Calculating percentages can be accomplished in two ways. A researcher may calculate either: 1) the percentage of responses within the entire data set, which would yield a comparatively smaller number, or 2) the percentage of responses within an age and/or gender grouping, which would yield a larger number. Seldom in the research on children's preferences has there been a record of how these percentages were calculated. Take, for example, the fictitious raw data in table 1.

A scholar could say that 42 percent of the responses were animals (38 of 91). One could also claim that 16 percent of the responses were from boys interested in animals (15 of 91) and that 25 percent of the responses were from girls interested in animals (23 of 91). One could also say that 33 percent of the boys' responses were for animals (15 of 45) and that 50 percent

of the girls' responses were for animals (23 of 46). The language used to describe these different calculations is very similar. The real problem arises when percentages are calculated within the age levels. One could say that the four responses of seven-year-olds constitute 27 percent of the boys' animal responses (4 of 15); this would result in a topic-specific percentage (i.e., of all of the boys who liked animals, 27 percent were seven-year-olds). One could also, however, claim that there were four responses of a possible twelve ($n = 12$), and that therefore 33 percent belongs in this cell of the table (4 of 12); this yields an age-specific percentage (i.e., of all of the seven-year-olds, 33 percent liked animals). All of these percentages are valid ways to approach children's interests, but care must be taken to specify how the percentages were calculated to avoid confusion. For this study, age-specific percentages were used. When looking at the following charts showing gender comparisons across ages, the proper interpretation is "*x* percent of *y*-year-old boys/girls like topic *z*."

Results and Discussion

Table 2 shows the preferences for various topics of all of the children in this study. The responses of these children show a distinct preference for animals, with a gender bias in favor of girls. Lauritzen and Cheves found a similar (though slightly lower) interest in animals in their study, but the imbalance between genders was similar. Ashley also found a female bias in interest in animals. Science, sports, and literature were the next most preferred topics. This study found that boys preferred sports more than girls, which is reminiscent of the Goodyear and Solomon studies. The popularity of science topics is similar to Lauritzen and Cheves, but both McCarty and Bank found a very low interest in science. One other gender distinction should be mentioned. Boys were much more interested in transportation (cars, trucks, planes) than were girls, a finding reminiscent of several other studies.[15] The popularity of literature was similar to the frequency of use of search terms related to this topic in Solomon's study.

Table 2. Categories by Gender

Category	Female	Male	Totals
Animals	356	282	638
Science	129	139	268
Sports	54	127	181
Literature	74	54	128
Biography	40	35	75
History	38	37	75
Computers	32	26	58
Library Collection	24	26	50
Transportation	7	42	49
Careers	23	19	42
Arts & Crafts	19	10	29
Entertainment	9	17	26
Music	16	10	26
Education	11	14	25
Facts	8	11	19
Health	13	2	15
Food	6	6	12
Fashion/Beauty	6	3	9
Military	0	9	9
Supernatural	6	3	9
Magic	0	7	7
Architecture	3	3	6
Holidays	4	2	6
Love & Sex	4	2	6
Languages	4	1	5
Law	4	1	5
People	2	3	5
Religion	3	2	5
Drugs	2	1	3
Finance	1	2	3
Social Issues	1	2	3
Codes	0	1	1
Genealogy	1	0	1
Jokes	0	1	1
Totals	900	900	1800

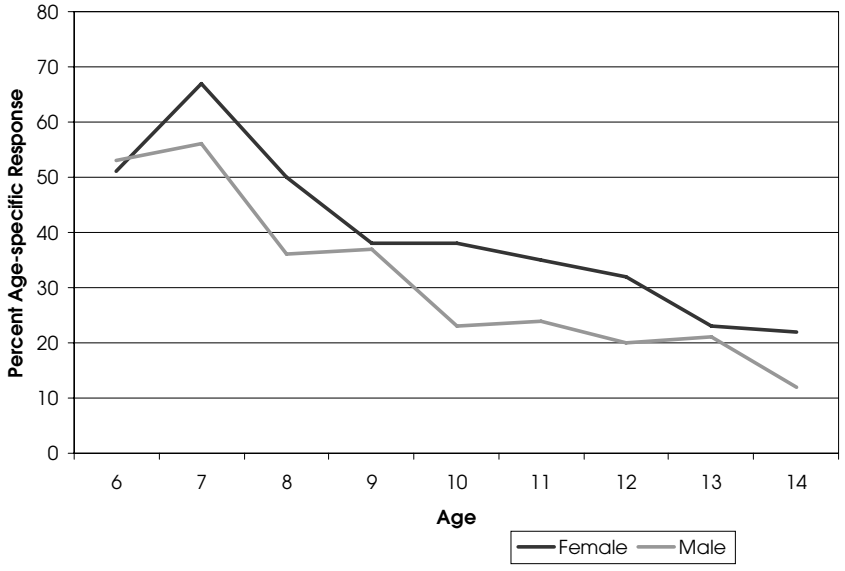

Figure 1. Interest in Animals by Age and Gender

The following figures show the trends across ages of children's interest in the ten most-often-cited categories in this study. Figure 1 shows the percentage of children at each age who expressed an interest in animals. Girls show a consistently higher rate of interest in animals than do boys across all age groups. There is also a marked decrease in interest by both genders as age increases. Lauritzen and Cheves found a similar (though less consistent) drop in interest for girls, but their results showed no decrease in boys' interest. Ashley also found no decrease in fourth through seventh graders' interest in real animals, though girls' interest fell after grade five (age 11). McCarty found a waning interest in animal fiction among thirteen-through eighteen-year-olds; Bank also found a drop in interest in animals across these ages.

Figure 2 shows the changes in children's interest in science across ages. While the six-year-olds of both genders showed similar interest in this topic, boys kept that interest while girls lost it for two years. Interest in science peaked for both genders at ages nine and ten. This contradicts Lauritzen and Cheves,

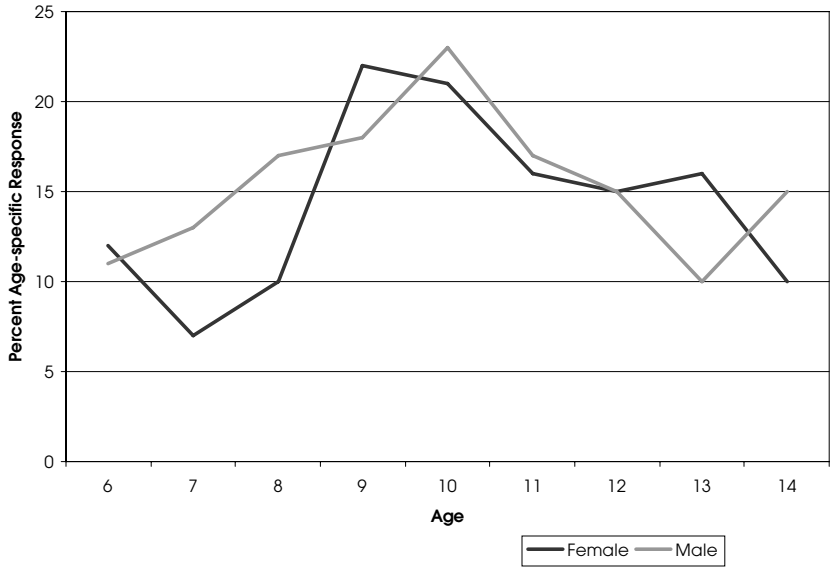

Figure 2. Interest in Science by Age and Gender

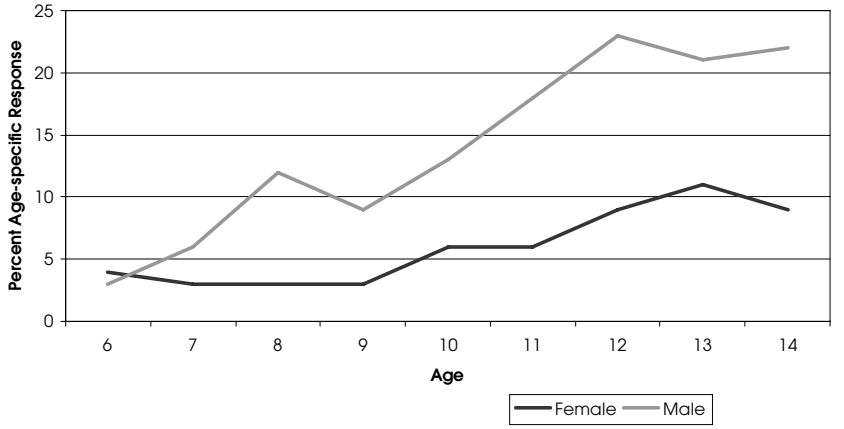

Figure 3. Interest in Sports by Age and Gender

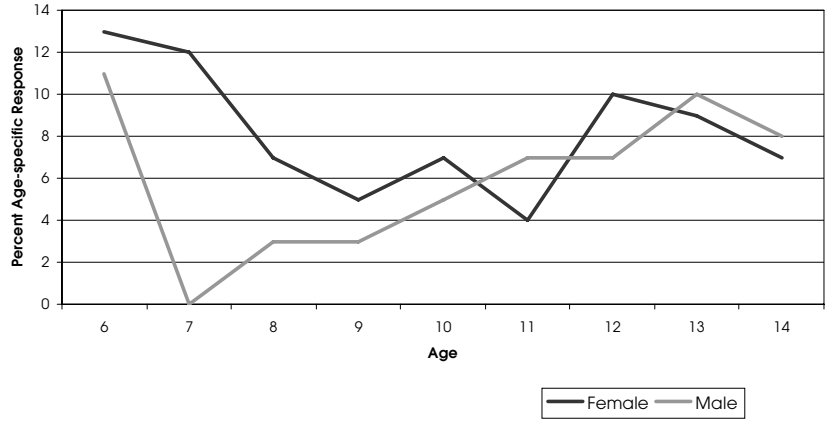

Figure 4. Interest in Literature by Age and Gender

who found that interest in science was at its lowest during these ages. McCarty found little interest in science for older adolescents, and Bank found interest peaking at ages thirteen and fourteen, in contrast to this study.

Figure 3 depicts the interest in sports across ages. It shows the marked difference in interest between boys and girls in this topic, but it also indicates that both genders tend to get more interested in sports as they get older. It also shows that the interest in sports develops earlier in boys (ages seven and eight) than in girls (ages ten and eleven). Both the gender bias and the rising interest in sports are found in Lauritzen and Cheves. McCarty found a similar gender bias toward boys on the topic of hobbies and sports fiction, and Bank found that the high interest seems to remain through grade twelve. Goodyear also found that boys liked sports fiction more than girls, a distinction that increased with age. All of these studies agree that sports are more popular with boys than with girls.

Figure 4 depicts children's interests in literature. It indicates that girls tend to prefer the topic more than boys. Between ages seven and ten, interest in literature falls dramatically for both genders from the peak interest at age six. There are several possible explanations for this drop. This age encompasses the transition from the prereading enjoyment and immersion in picture books to the ages of independent reading, when the real work of learning to read in school takes place. Perhaps the effort involved in this process makes reading literature for pleasure less of a focus. Another possibility is that the need to read for information takes over as children enter school and are faced with reports and projects. So, literary reading may fall as children focus on schoolwork. By the time children reach upper elementary and middle school ages, fiction reading seems to regain its popularity.[16] A third possibility for this drop in interest is a bias in the coding of the results. Literature was coded as the topic of children's responses that made reference to authors, titles, and genres. The general response of "books" was classified as library collection. Had these two categories been conjoined, the decrease in interest would have been less dramatic.

Figure 5 depicts the changes in interest across ages in the category of biography. It shows a general trend of rising interest in the topic for girls and a peak interest for boys around age nine. Girls tend to prefer this topic more than boys, though the gender differences are slight. Lauritzen and Cheves found a strong gender

bias among seven- through twelve-year-olds in the topic of people, as the girls' responses ranged from 0 to 21 percent, while the boys' responses ranged from 0 to 4 percent. Both genders showed an increasing interest among older children. Bank found a strong and consistent interest in movie or television stars (ranging from 35 to 59 percent), though he had no specific category called biography, and peak interest in his study occurred at grade seven and decreased thereafter. McCarty found only a moderate interest among both boys (mean 7.4 percent) and girls (mean 5.6 percent) with a peak interest for both genders in eleventh grade. Mauck and Swenson found a low and decreasing interest in biography from grades five through nine. Only the Lauritzen and Cheves' study supports the findings of this research, though the rising interest among older children depicted here points toward the findings with older children in the studies of both McCarty and Bank.

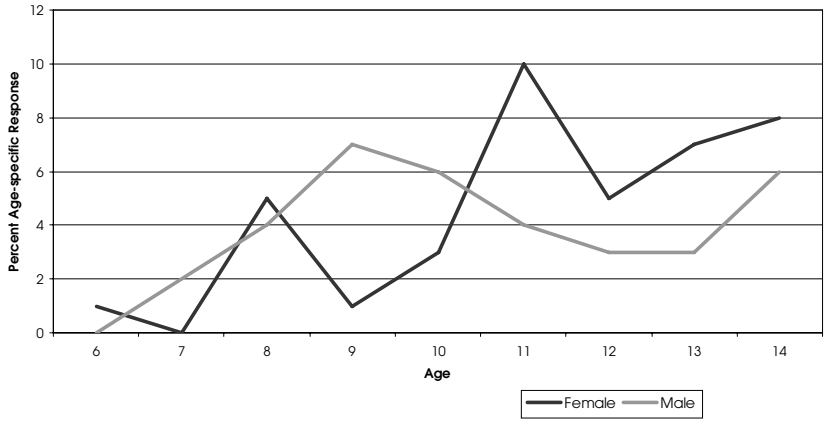

Figure 5. Interest in Biography by Age and Gender

The sixth most frequently mentioned category in this study was history. Figure 6 shows the age-specific responses that were coded under this topic. Girls tended to favor this topic more than boys (though the boys in this study discovered that interest earlier), and the peak interest occurred at age eleven for both genders. History was the fourth most popular topic in the Lauritzen and Cheves study: boys (0–17 percent) tended to favor the topic more than girls (0–11 percent), there was a rise in interest with age, and peak interest occurred at age twelve. The fifth through ninth graders in Mauck and Swenson's study showed little interest in the topic (it was their least favorite choice), and what little interest there was, fell after grades five and six. Bank found the strongest and most consistent interest in the topic (mean 31.5 percent) with a double peak of interest during the eighth and tenth grades and a decline thereafter. Both genders in the Goodyear study ranked history as one of their least favorite topics of fiction reading, but again, the oldest children showed more interest. McCarty also found little interest in history by either gender, but there was a slight bias toward boys; peak interest was in eleventh and twelfth grades. It appears that while history is not very popular with most children, older adolescents tend to prefer it more than younger ones.

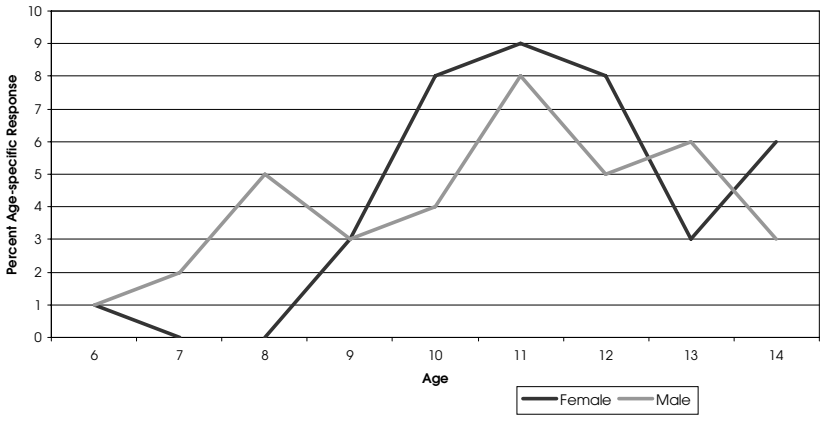

Figure 6. Interest in History by Age and Gender

Children's interest in computer topics is depicted in Figure 7. It must be noted that this is not an indication of children's interest in using computers, but in reading about them or finding out information about them in the library. While there was no perceivable gender bias in overall interest, there was one interesting trend: girls' interest in computers (ages nine through eleven) appeared before that of boys (ages eleven through thirteen), and then rose again at age fourteen. This may imply that the window of opportunity for reaching girls on this topic is earlier than it is for boys. The strong gender bias toward boys that is prevalent in the literature on computer use and com-

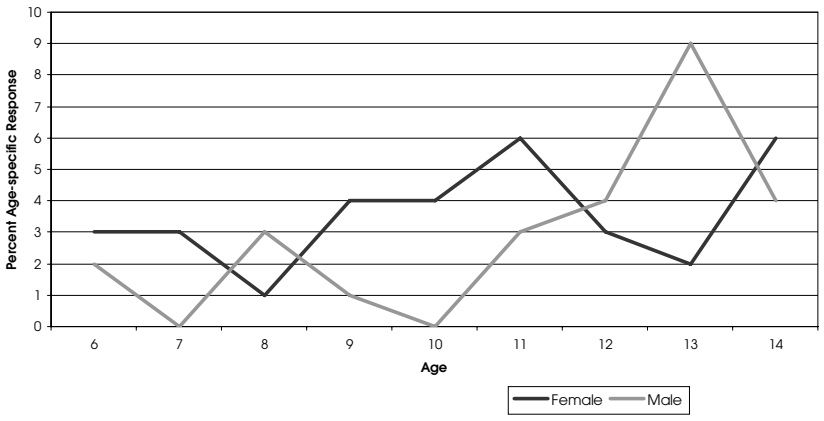

Figure 7. Interest in Computers by Age and Gender

puter gaming was not evident here. Bank's study was the only other to use the category of computers. He found that computers were not often chosen as a topic of voluntary reading by sixth through twelfth graders. Interest fell to a low in ninth grade, then rose thereafter.

Figure 8 shows the trends in the responses coded as library collection: responses relating to the library materials in general or the daily functioning of the library. As the other studies were not conducted in libraries, this issue was irrelevant for them; hence no comparison is made with them here. It is interesting to notice the general decline in interest in this area as children get older. Part of this phenomenon may be due to the increased specificity of their responses (hence a decrease in the number of the response "books"), but it may also indicate a decreasing interest in the functioning of the library. Perhaps more effort should be made to capture children's interest in this area while they are still very young; if this graph is indicative of this interest, librarians lose children after age nine or ten. More research is needed to support or reject this possibility.

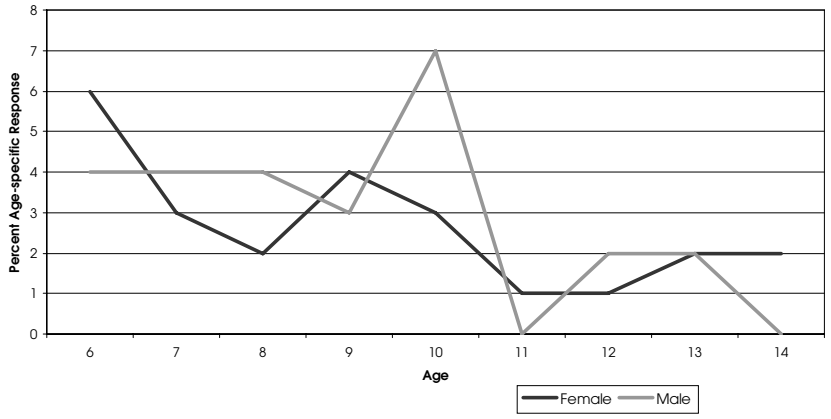

Figure 8. Interest in Library Collection by Age and Gender

Figure 9 shows the changes in responses that were classified as transportation: cars, trucks, planes, bicycles. There is a strong gender bias toward boys and a wavering interest by girls (relating to airplanes at age eight and cars at ages eleven and fourteen). Boys' interest peaked at age seven, with another rise in interest at age eleven, but the overall trend was a decline in interest with increasing age. The only other study to use transportation as a category was that of Lauritzen and Cheves. They, too, found that boys were much more interested in transportation (4–22 percent) than girls (0–4 percent); however, they found a steadily increasing interest in boys across the ages of seven to twelve. The wavering interest of girls was also evident in their study, but the peaks occurred at ages eight, ten, and twelve instead of eight, eleven, and fourteen as this study found. These alternating peaks and troughs of girls' interest may be related to the small numbers who respond in this category, but it does show that, despite a general disinterest in the subject, some girls do have an interest in vehicles.

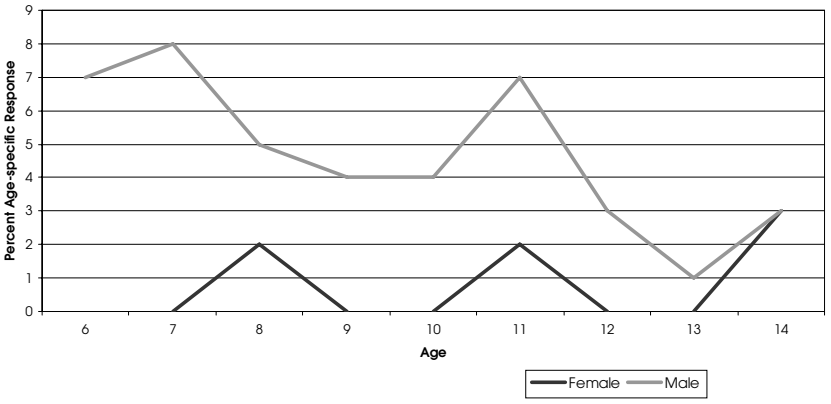

Figure 9. Interest in Transportation by Age and Gender

The tenth category of interest expressed by the children in this study was careers (figure 10). As one would expect, interest in this topic rose steadily among older children as the issue of jobs and life careers became more immediate and relevant to their lives. Occupations were of little interest to the children in Lauritzen and Cheves' study; ten children (five boys and five girls) expressed an interest in this topic out of 811 total (1.2 percent of all of the children), and there were no distinctive patterns to this interest across ages. McCarty used two categories to explore this topic: occupations and career fiction. For boys, these categories were their least favorite ones; occupations showed a slight increase in interest across ages, but career fiction remained fairly constant near 0.5 percent. Girls, on the other hand, showed a distinctly

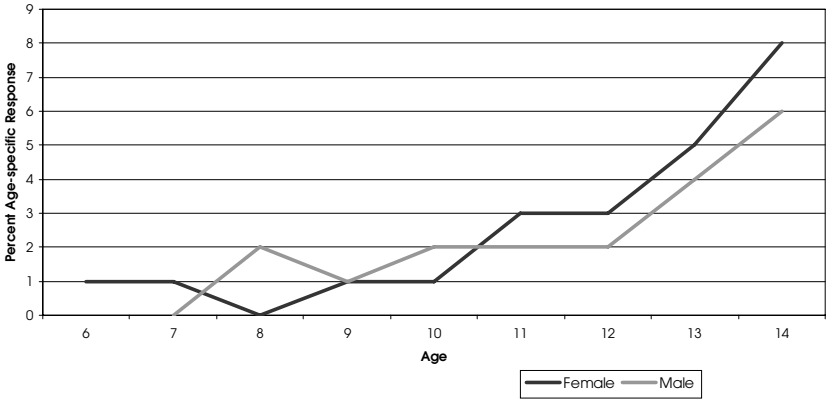

Figure 10. Interest in Careers by Age and Gender

higher interest in career fiction (1.7–7.7 percent) with a peak interest during the eighth grade and a decline thereafter. Occupations were of little interest to girls (0.1–7.0 percent), though the seventh graders showed a remarkable jump in interest. The gender bias toward girls is similar, though more pronounced, to the one evident in the figure below. Compared with other studies, this study suggests that today's children are somewhat more career conscious than those of prior generations and that care should be taken to nurture the higher interest of young girls.

Possible Influences on Reading Interests

Cognitive Development

Most of the children (those seven through eleven years old) in this study fall into the stage of cognitive development labeled by Jean Piaget as "concrete operational."[17] Children in this stage of development have moved beyond the preoperational focus on representational thinking (the ability to use symbols to represent objects), basic number concepts, and the limitations of egocentrism and centration (the inability to attend to more than one aspect of a stimulus at a time). They are now gaining a flexibility of thought that allows them to understand changes in objects and perspectives and to organize their world through seriation (ordering objects in a logical progression), classification (grouping things by shared attributes), and conservation (realizing that changes to the appearance of an object do not fundamentally change the object itself). These issues are evident in the choices children make of topics to explore.

Figures 1 and 9 show a high interest in animals and transportation (at least among boys) in the early years with a steady decline among older children. Preoperational and early concrete operational children's thinking is tied to real events and objects that are part of their daily lives. This may explain the high interest at this age in pets (and other animals by association) and the toys with which they are accustomed to playing.[18] Perhaps the declining interest in these topics throughout this period is due, in part, to the decreasing need for close ties between direct experience and interest. As children are able to think more abstractly, new and more cognitively challenging interests take precedence.

Figures 2 and 6 depict the rise in both boys' and girls' interest in history and science around ages nine or ten. Both of these disciplines require the cognitive ability of flexible thought. An understanding of history rests partly upon a child's understanding of chronology and time (an issue of seriation) and partly upon his or her ability to classify, both of which are concrete operational processes that develop in upper elementary school students. An interest in history could not easily precede this cognitive development. Similarly, an appreciation for science depends on the ability for hierarchical classification (on which much of science relies) and for distinguishing whole-part relations, which also develop during the later elementary years.

Interest in biography, depicted in figure 5, also rises beginning around age eight, as the egocentrism of the preoperational child gives way to more flexible thought and the ability to take on others' perspectives. This is integral to enjoying reading about the lives of other people.

Three of the graphs (figure 3 [sports], 7 [computers] and 10 [careers]), however, show rising interests beginning around ages eleven or twelve. This is the time period that Piaget associates with a new stage of cognitive development, the formal operational stage. During this period, which lasts through adulthood, adolescents develop the power of scientific reasoning (hypothetico-deductive thinking), propositional logic (the ability to extrapolate logical inferences based on two or more premises), and combinatorial reasoning (the ability to examine multiple possible solutions to a problem). They also move from a focus on the real to an exploration of the possible.

These cognitive developments are important for the child's understanding of sports, computers, and careers. The ability to strategize and think about possibilities, the understanding of multiple perspectives (and hence group dynamics), and the ability to alter thought patterns quickly and effortlessly to deal with constant change are integral to the appreciation of most sports. Computers are more accessible to adolescents who have developed reasoning skills, who can handle some of the abstractions of mathematics, and who have a deeper understanding of language as an organized—and fundamentally mathematical—system of thinking. An interest in careers demands a flexible understanding of time, the ability to plan, and a shift from the reality of the present to the possibility of the future. These topics might appeal to some younger children (as the figures depict), but the real growth in interest must await the development of the requisite cognitive abilities.

Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky, however, disagreed with Piaget's perception that cognitive development was primarily an individual construction; instead, he believed that knowledge was socially constructed as people interact. Children were born with certain innate mental abilities (memory, attention) that were transformed to higher mental functions through interaction with more knowledgeable peers and adults. These ideas are fundamental to the current educational system in which adults interact with children in the social context of school to help children's minds grow by creating situations in which children are challenged to reach beyond what they can do on their own toward what they can do with others' assistance (Vygotsky's zone of proximal development).[19]

Social Environment

Vygotsky's perspective may have an impact on children's interests, as the social contexts in which, and the people with whom, they interact influence how they think and what they like. One of the principle social contexts for young children in America is the school. Children start their formal education around age five or six (kindergarten) though many children attend daycare or preschool as early as one to two years old. Children in elementary school typically spend a full day in this context, and, in the last twenty years due to changes in demographics and family structures, many kindergartens have changed to a full day schedule as well. School, therefore, is one of the principle edu-

cational forces in a child's life, and the subjects covered at particular grade levels may have an impact on children's interests. The impact of the curriculum on children's online catalog search terms was noted by Solomon, and the North Carolina Standard Course of Study seems to have a similar impact on the findings of this research.[20]

The high interest expressed by children in animals (and the decrease in interest among older children) may be due, in part, to the focus on animals and plants as objects in primary and early elementary grades and the change to looking at these creatures as parts of systems beginning in third grade (eight years old). The first significant drop in interest (as depicted in figure 1) occurs at precisely this age. While this study has no data to support the speculation, it is possible that a more finely grained study comparing children's interests in animals and ecology might show this reorientation from object to system. The science curriculum for North Carolina specifies that kindergarten and first grade are the times for children to "use the five senses to observe plants, animals, earth materials, weather, and other objects" and to "construct explanations as they observe, collect data, and classify living and nonliving objects." For grades two through six, the focus becomes to: "observe changes in animal and plant life cycles, systems of weather, properties of materials and sound," and to examine "plants, soils, earth/moon/sun, and heat/light" as systems. By sixth grade, children are exploring connections between scientific disciplines such as mathematics, technology, social science, and communication. This curriculum has certainly been organized based on Piagetian principles, as the level of abstraction (formal operations) increases dramatically as children mature.

The expressed interest in science, interestingly, begins to rise as the interest in animals wanes. Perhaps this is partly due to the same phenomenon mentioned above; at about nine years of age (third grade), children have had the benefit of a systems-based approach to science for a year, and they are beginning to understand and enjoy the process of living and nonliving things (notice also the rise in interest in computers at this age in figure 7). They therefore may express their interests in more general and abstract terms (i.e., disciplines) rather than focusing on the objects of those disciplines.

The children's increasing interest in sports (figure 3) across ages seems linked to their increasing competence, mastery, and ability to participate in these activities. Table 3 depicts the sequence of competencies relating to fitness and sports in the Healthful Living Curriculum of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

By seventh grade (thirteen years old), children should have the fundamental skills and cognitive abilities to participate completely in individual and team sports. It is not surprising, then, that their interest in sports continues to grow throughout this age range, peaking once they have gained this basic physical and psychological mastery of sports (age twelve through thirteen as shown in figure 3).[21]

Figure 4 depicts the drop in interest in literature between ages seven and eight, and then a steady rise thereafter. It was suggested earlier that this might be due to the effort of learning to be an independent reader, and this speculation seems to be supported by the curriculum. By this age (third grade), the English curriculum explains that children should be able to "apply foundational skills learned earlier automatically and flexibly to decode and comprehend fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama." The flexibility and automaticity of the reading process would lead to a decrease in needed effort and potentially to an increased enjoyment and interest. Children's interest in biography (figure 5) also follows a gradually rising curve of interest, and it may be linked to the higher cognitive skill of taking on multiple perspectives.

Table 3. Sequence of Competencies Relating to Fitness and Sports in the Healthful Living Curriculum of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

Grade	Competencies
Kindergarten	joy of play
1	following rules and procedures
2	working cooperatively
3	catching, throwing, dancing, basic tumbling
4	dance, ball handling, inverted balances, jump rope skills
5	skill combinations, racquet skills
6	routines, offense and defense strategies
7	game strategies, sportsmanship
8	body image, health and nutrition, substance abuse

While history is taught at all grade levels, it is only in the middle school years that adolescents "begin to understand and appreciate differences in historical perspectives, recognizing that interpretations are influenced by individual experiences, societal values, and cultural traditions." Figure 6 shows the peak interest in history for both genders falling at age eleven. While this peak is several years early (middle school is usually considered to start at age thirteen—seventh grade), it still seems indicative of the need for formal operational cognition to understand the complexity of historical issues and events.

The high interest in transportation (figure 9) among young children (and its subsequent drop in interest) may be due in part to the object/system change in the teaching of science mentioned above. It may also be related to the content that is taught, as the social studies curriculum explains that primary and early elementary children "can study how basic technologies such as ships, automobiles, and airplanes have evolved." Once the focus turns to systems, the child's interest may follow suit and physics, chemistry, and math may become more interesting.

Finally, figure 10 shows a rise in interest in careers at age twelve (grade six). This corresponds to the first year in which adolescents are exposed to the workforce development curriculum that aims to "empower students for effective participation in an international economy as world-class workers and citizens." It seems apparent that social context is a major determining factor in this particular interest of young people, and this connection between exposure and interest would benefit from further research to determine whether age or cognitive development are influencing factors.

As the relationships in this section indicate, there exists a substantial correlation between the social environment (school topics and curriculum emphases), cognitive development, and children's information and reading preferences. While this research cannot show causal relationships among these areas (i.e., indicating that curriculum causes reading preferences, or levels of cognitive development are required for particular topics to rise in interest), the data from this study are certainly suggestive that such relationships exist.

Implications for Collection Development

These data provide yet another perspective on children's information and reading preferences when they enter a library. They also provide a possible framework for collection development in school and public libraries. They show that children need information about a wide array of topics, but that certain areas of the collection may benefit from specialized buying practices. Books on animals and pets (Dewey 590s and 636s) are of principal importance for all ages, but an emphasis could be placed on sources that were appropriate for the six- through eight-year-olds who show the most interest. Science books (Dewey 500s) are also important for all ages, but these data show that a collection emphasis on eight- through twelve-year-olds might be rewarded. There are two possibilities for the sports books (Dewey 790s): 1) collect according to interest, which would lead to buying more books about boys' sports appropriate for eleven- through fourteen-year-olds or 2) buy more books for girls to try to influence their reading habits and stimulate their interest in this area. Either way, the interest seems to grow in older children, so books in this category appropriate for upper elementary and middle school children may find a larger audience of readers.

Due to the possibility of survey bias, the results of this study concerning literature and the library collection will not be considered further here. The biography section of the collection (Dewey 920s) could be augmented with books appropriate for eight- through ten-year-old boys and eleven- through fourteen-year-old girls, as these two age ranges showed the highest interest in this topic. These children's interest in history (Dewey 900s) peaked between ten and twelve years of age, so materials written for this age would make sense, as would providing information on computers (Dewey 003-005) for girls age nine through eleven and boys ages twelve through fourteen. Finally, transportation books (Dewey 620s) are primarily an interest of boys prior to age eleven, though books designed for girls on this topic might find a willing readership if there were more research to discover which vehicles girls like and why.

Both the cognitive development and the social environment seem to exert a strong influence on children's information and reading interests. There are exciting opportunities for more studies in this area to determine precise relationships among these two—and other—influences on children's interests.

Further Research

As with most research, this study raises more questions than it answers. The understanding of children's reading interests would benefit from an even more extensive study that included more children, a wider range of ages, and children from varied geographic locations. An international study would begin to illuminate cultural trends in reading preferences, and dividing the categories into more specific sub-categories would help elucidate the precise nature of these reading interests (i.e., what kinds of animals are most popular and what areas of science are of special interest to specific aged children). A survey designed as part of a funded research study could address the issue of the wording of the question to which children are asked to respond, thereby clarifying whether the question language influences children's responses. Further exploration of the impact of the research method on the results of a study is also strongly encouraged. A longitudinal study of the changing interests of the same children over time would add a new perspective to the ongoing research. Finally, an analysis of the cultural context paired with an examination of children's reading preferences could show if, and in what manner, current events and social norms influence children's reading.

As children grow and their interests change, it is imperative that librarians, teachers, and other child care providers understand their charges' information and reading needs and desires. This will help them serve the children more effectively and efficiently, and it will provide children with the necessary breadth and depth of resources to spur their intellectual and emotional development.

Conclusions

Children's information and reading interests do vary with age. This study found that children tend to enjoy objects when they are very young (animals, transportation) and more abstract concepts that require more cognitive sophistication (science, literature, biography, history, computers, careers) and physical prowess (sports) as they get older. There were some topics that appealed more to girls (animals, literature, careers) and others that were favored more by boys (sports and transportation), but there was a remarkable similarity between the two genders in their interests. This may be indicative of changing educational practices (increasing gender equity, exploring gendered learning styles, increased focus on multiculturalism, increased attention to social inclusion), or it may be related to the increasingly homogeneous social roles and expectations experienced by both genders during the last twenty years.

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Appendix: Explanation of Categories

Category	Definition Examples
Animals	Wild animals, pets, dinosaurs
Architecture	Building, construction
Arts and crafts	Drawing, painting, quilting, and fine art
Biography	Names (other than authors)
Careers	Anything related to a vocation
Codes	Codes and ciphers
Computers	Computers, Internet
Criminology	Crime and murder
Drugs	Drugs (not medicine)
Education	References to math, reading, college
Entertainment	Video games, television, movies
Facts	World records, queries for general, factual information
Fashion/beauty	Fashion, clothing
Finance	Money, stocks, business
Food	Edibles or drinkables
Genealogy	Ancestors, family trees
Health	Diseases, medicines
History	References to places and events of historical significance
Holidays	Christmas, Hanukah
Jokes	Riddles, puzzles
Languages	Foreign languages
Law	Legal issues (other than crime)
Library collection	Anything to do with the library function or the collection in general
Literature	Authors, book titles, genres
Love and sex	Sexual interactions, babies (not pregnancy)
Magic	Magic and magic tricks
Military	War, weapons
Music	Musical groups, songs
People	Kinds of people and cultures (more general than biography)
Photography	Photographic equipment or process
Religion	References to god, rituals, heaven (not religious holidays)
Science	Any of the hard sciences: biology, botany, geology, meteorology, geography
Social issues	Environmental concerns
Sports	Generic sports or specific mention of a sport such as football, fishing
Supernatural	Ghosts, monsters, UFOs
Transportation	Cars, trucks, planes

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Book Reviews

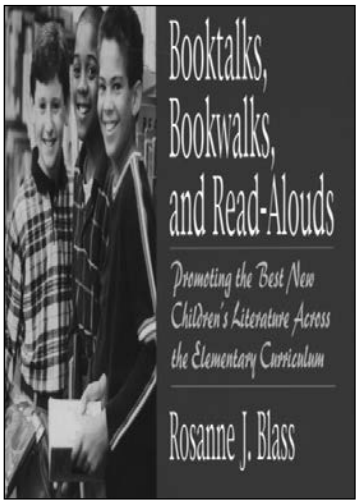
Blass, Rosanne J. *Booktalks, Bookwalks, and Read-Alouds: Promoting the Best New Children's Literature Across the Elementary Curriculum.*
Keane, Nancy J. *Booktalking Across the Curriculum: The Middle Years.*
Odean, Kathleen. *Great Books for Babies and Toddlers: More Than 500 Recommended Books for Your Child's First Three Years.*
Polette, Nancy J. and Joan Ebbesmeyer. *Literature Lures: Using Picture Books and Novels to Motivate Middle School Readers.*
Dale, Doris Cruger. *Bilingual Children's Books in English and Spanish/Los Libros Bilingues para Niños en Inglés y Español: An Annotated Bibliography 1942–2001/Una Bibliografia con Anotaciones, 1942–2001.*

Matching Books and Readers

by Junko Yokota

One of the biggest challenges librarians and teachers face is making just the right match between readers and books. But it is also one of the biggest rewards when we help readers find their way to just the right books. In this age when there is so much fighting for attention in students' lives, we must all commit to helping ensure the future of reading by raising readers who choose to read.

This issue takes a look at several books that strive to connect readers with books and to motivate them to enjoy reading books.

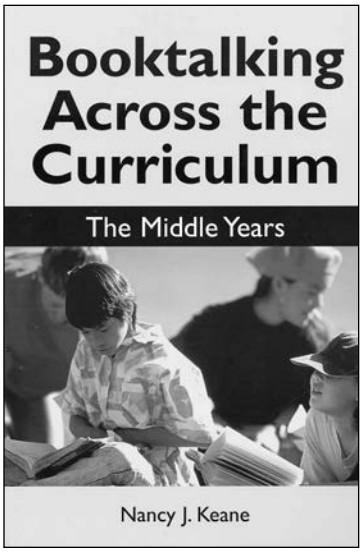


Blass, Rosanne J. *Booktalks, Bookwalks, and Read-Alouds: Promoting the Best New Children's Literature Across the Elementary Curriculum.* Westport, Conn.: Libraries Unlimited/Greenwood, 2002. 180p. $30 (ISBN 1-56308-810-X).

Beginning with the assumption that reading builds literacy, the domino effect enhances academic success and offers tools that empower learners and lead to satisfying life experiences. This book focuses on books that relate to school curriculum; these are highly recommended books that make it possible for students to engage in good books while making connections to their school learning.

Booktalking is encouraged as an interactive, participatory activity where the teacher or librarian promotes books by introducing the book to children, asking questions, and inviting children's responses. Bookwalking is explained as a method by which teachers or librarians turn the pages of the book, using words and phrases from the book as they walk children through the book. Read-alouds are promoted by author Rosanne Blass because "a spirited first reading with beginning readers can often promote multiple successive readings (p.ix)."

The four chapters cover curriculum areas including language arts and literature, mathematics and science, social studies, arts, and recreation. For each book, the bibliographic data is followed by the recommended general reading level, a brief summary, tips for booktalking/bookwalking, curriculum connections, and related books. The books are sorted into broad areas, and the index is equally broad: American history spans pages eighty through ninety. More detail in categorizing books would have enhanced the book's usefulness. Appendix A has graphic organizers that promise to be quite useful for teachers in helping their students organize how they understand the information in their books. A few examples are character web, character wheel, semantic feature analysis, story map, time line, venn diagram. Appendix B includes two directions and recipes referenced in the book.



Keane, Nancy J. *Booktalking Across the Curriculum: The Middle Years.* Westport, Conn.: Libraries Unlimited/Greenwood, 2002. 218p. $30 (ISBN 1-56308-937-8).

Author Nancy Keane makes a case for booktalks as the opportunities that excite children about reading. She says, "Booktalks are short promotional presentations that tease a child into wanting to

Dale, Doris Cruger. *Bilingual Children's Books in English and Spanish/Los Libros Bilingues para Niños en Inglés y Español: An Annotated Bibliography 1942–2001/Una Bibliografia con Anotaciones, 1942–2001*. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Co., 2003. 174p. paper, $39.95 (ISBN 0-7864-1316-6).

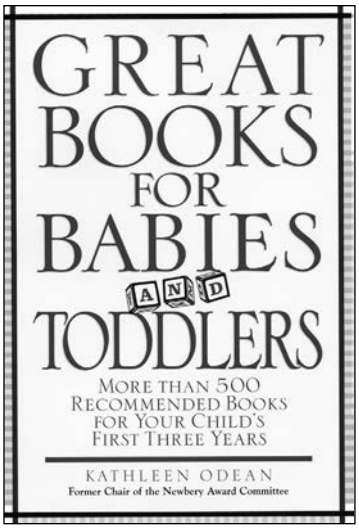
Doris Cruger Dale has annotated 433 bilingual books in her newest offering. Of those, 2,007 appeared in her *Bilingual Books in Spanish and English for Children* (Libraries Unlimited, 1985). While McGuffey's *First Spanish-English Reader* (1891) was the earliest bilingual book she could identify, she starts her chronology with the 1940s. A self-proclaimed collector of bilingual books, Dale admits the list could be incomplete having identified titles from reviews, publishers' catalogs and exhibits, bibliographies, visits to libraries and bookstores and from colleagues. All the titles included in the bibliography have been viewed by the author and are either in a public library in the Phoenix area or her personal collection.

Dale identifies four awards that have been established for books by Latino authors or with Latino themes, including ALSC's Pura Belpré medal. Although 166 publishers have produced the books in the bibliography, only eighteen publishers account for 42.03 percent of the titles. This is hardly surprising since the publication of bilingual materials has been in a constant state of flux over the decades and a lot of publishers have either disappeared or been bought out by the giants. Dale acknowledges that the number of bilingual books being reviewed has doubled since 1985, but complains that small presses are not reviewed. While this is true, she fails to address two problems review publications face: getting qualified bilingual reviewers and the difficulty small publishers face providing review copies in a timely manner. The book's introduction serves as a good overview of the field though Dale's occasional editorializing is off-putting.

Yes, publishers need to produce original material, and yes, small presses need to redesign their entries and improve distribution, but this book is not the place to say it. She also points out the need for qualified translators and the need for reviewers to point out inaccuracies. This last point is amusing because Gregoria Flores, our children's librarian, found parts of the Spanish text difficult to understand. She attributes the problem to the fact that it was a word-for-word translation rather than taking the sense of the sentence and putting it into proper Spanish.

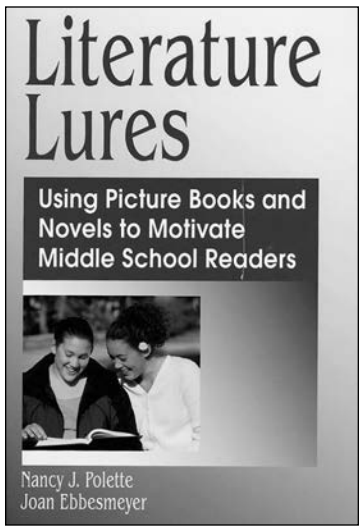
Errors in the use of word genders were also noted. Of course, these are problems when dealing with any kind of translating. The bibliography itself is quite interesting though its failure to indicate availability of titles or addresses for publishers decreases its value as a selection tool. Still, it can serve as a starting point for most interested in establishing or expanding their bilingual collections. Foremost, the book provides a historical perspective of an area of children's books that has long been ignored and undervalued.—*Ann L. Kalkhoff, former branch librarian, Brooklyn Public Library, New York*

know more about specific books." (p.xi) She goes on to express how infectious enthusiasm is in selling the book to potential readers. Keane also includes thought-provoking questions in each booktalk, helping readers set a purpose for reading the book. More than 160 booktalks are presented, and each is followed by several ideas for extending the learning experience, and each theme has a set of annotated suggested book titles. The learning extension ideas are often discussion-starting questions but vary to include ideas for research, writing prompts, listening to related music, or creating pamphlets that show what they have learned. The organization is around typical school curriculum: American history, world history, social studies, language arts and literature, mathematics, science, the arts, and physical education and sports. The tenth chapter, Critical Thinking, relies on Bloom's taxonomy as the framework for organizing the learning extension ideas: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. The final chapter, Just for Fun, has humorous books and books about holidays around the world. Suggested interest level and reading level are given for each title. School librarians and teachers who want to garner enthusiasm among their middle school students will likely find this book useful. Public librarians may not need the curricular organization as much but will benefit from thinking of the ways in which middle grade readers can be hooked into reading a book.



Odean, Kathleen. *Great Books for Babies and Toddlers: More Than 500 Recommended Books for Your Child's First Three Years*. New York: Ballantine, 2003. 352p. $14.95 (ISBN 0-345-45254-2).

Kathleen Odean is widely recognized for her role in writing engaging and candid reviews, recommending thousands of books for various audiences in her Great Books series. In *Great Books for Babies and Toddlers,* she recommends more than five hundred titles for children from birth to age three. The introduction includes valuable information about why children of different ages need different



types of books, and "when, where, and how" to read aloud to babies and toddlers. Particularly useful are the tips on engaging children to read the book interactively with the adult and extending the book experience to real life.

Reviews are classified into two sections: Nursery Rhymes, Finger Plays, and Songs; and Picture-Storybooks for the Very Young. A third section includes resources and tips for parents: Tips for Reading Aloud, Activities with Books, Information on Locating Books and Keeping Up with New Books, and Organizations and Web sites related to this topic. Former librarian Odean offers advice on how to make connections with library programs and how to make the most of library resources. This book will be very popular in libraries and would delight any parent as well. Ultimately, readers of this book will find useful advice on how to read aloud and how to select books for babies and toddlers. Surely, this will help a child begin the journey to becoming a life-long reader. To serve older readers, other books in Odean's Great Books series will prove valuable.

Polette, Nancy J. and Joan Ebbesmeyer. ***Literature Lures: Using Picture Books and Novels to Motivate Middle School Readers.*** **Westport, Conn.: Teacher Ideas Pr., 2002. 125p. $24 (ISBN 1-56308-952-1).**

This book is based on the premise that literature can be used to lure and motivate middle school students to read. Nancy Polette and Joan Ebbesmeyer team up to present many picture books with mature themes appropriate for middle school students: the wages of war, the pioneer spirit, and homelessness, to name a few. In Part I, issues are presented alphabetically and subdivided by connecting themes; for example, the section on problems of society is subdivided into connections on resisting drugs, fighting drugs, the inner city, the Great Depression, recklessness, and consequences of carelessness. Some of these connecting themes fit the heading more naturally than others. Each connection begins with an annotation of a picture book, then three discussion-starting questions are posed, followed by annotations of novels that are thematically linked to the picture book. The book could have been divided into two distinctly separate books. Part 2, Lures to Language, is organized by literary devices and other types of literary analysis as headings. Each section is followed by picture book examples and suggestions for a writing prompt. An especially large section is the one on parody.

The books referenced here range from well-known to obscure. The audience is likely to be school librarians and teachers because of the discussion starter ideas and writing prompts. Some public libraries also host a "teacher resource center" or a "teacher/parent bookshelf" where this information could be of value. &

Junko Yokota *is a professor of Reading, Language, and Children's Literature at National-Louis University in Evanston, Illinois.*

Someday You'll Go to the Moon

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handlers, but she would like to see more books (written with passion) about the physical sciences. And Setterington said he'd like to see more nonfiction with a multicultural slant.

And, in the middle of all those things to consider, Setterington reminded, don't forget one of the most important points of selecting children's nonfiction—Is it going to engage the reader? &

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The ALSC News

Nominate a Sibert Contender

On behalf of the 2004 Robert F. Sibert Informational Book Award Committee, I invite you to reflect on your past year of reading and to think about the best works of informational literature published for children in 2003. Our committee members are eager to hear from you, to learn about the titles that excite you the most, and to find out what you think deserves our attention.

We are looking at books "written and illustrated to present, organize and interpret documentable, factual material" published in the U.S. by U.S. residents. We consider the book's use of language, its visual presentation, and its organization and documentation as well as its presentation of facts, concepts, and ideas. We attend to the book's style of presentation of its subject for its audience and look at its supportive features (e.g., index, table of contents, maps, etc.). We are mindful that books must be respectful of and of interest to children.

If you would like to suggest a title, please send to me the name of the book, a brief annotation that highlights the book's excellence, and your name. I can be reached via e-mail at cathryn.mercier@simmons.edu or by post at Cathryn M. Mercier, Center for the Study of Children's Literature, Simmons College, 300 The Fenway, Boston, MA 02115. All suggestions will be acknowledged. Many thanks for your assistance.

Slate of Candidates: 2004 Elections

Vice-President/President Elect

Carolyn S. Brodie, Kent State University, School of Library and Information Science, Kent, Ohio
Ellen Fader, Multnomah County Library, Portland, Ore.

Board of Directors

Jos Holman, Tippecanoe County (Ind.) Public Library
Jane B. Marino, Bronxville (N.Y.) Public Library
Elaine E. Meyers, Phoenix (Ariz.) Public Library
Rose Treviño, Houston (Texas) Public Library

Caldecott Chair, 2006

Sue McCleaf Nespeca, Kid Lit Plus Consulting, Youngstown, Ohio
Gratia Banta, Gratia Arts, Portland, Maine

Caldecott Committee, 2006

Sylvia A. Anderle, Santa Monica (Calif.) Public Library
Susan T. Birkett, Boston Public Library
Corinne Camarata, Port Washington (N.Y.) Public Library
Jeanne C. Lamb, New York Public Library
Genevieve A. C. Gallagher, Orange County (Va.) Public Library
Lucinda Whitehurst, St. Christopher's Lower School, Richmond, Va.
Merce C. Robinson, Cleveland Public Library
Kemie R. Nix, Reader-to-Reader: Africa, Peachtree City, Ga.
Wendy Lukehart, District of Columbia Public Library
Ellen M. Riordan, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore
Silvia Kraft-Walker, Glenview (Ill.) Public Library
Sue Sherif, Alaska State Library, Anchorage
Wendy Sue Wilcox, West Bloomfield (Mich.) Township Public Library
Nicole A. Reader, Benicia (Calif.) Public Library

Newbery Chair, 2006

Barbara M. Barstow, Cuyahoga County (Ohio) Public Library
Linda A. Perkins, Berkeley (Calif.) Public Library

Newbery Committee, 2006

Stephanie D. Bange, Dayton (Ohio) Metro Library
Cheri Estes Dobbs, Detroit Country Day School
Susan Allison, Richardson (Texas) Public Library
Susan P. Bloom, Center for the Study of Children's Literature, Simmons College, Boston
Doris Gebel, Northport-East Northport (N. Y.) Public Library
Maida L. Wong, South Pasadena (Calif.) Public Library
Steven L. Herb, The Pennsylvania State University, Education & Behavioral Science Library
Sue W. Voet, Bedford (Mass.) Free Public Library
Linda L. Plevak, St. Mary's Hall, San Antonio, Texas
Sue C. Kimmel, Gillespie Park Elementary School, Greensboro, N. C.
Maeve Visser Knoth, San Mateo (Calif.) County Library System
Danita R. Nichols, Connecting Libraries and Schools Program, Bronx (N.Y.)
Eva Mitnick, Los Angeles Public Library
Rob Reid, Indianhead Federated Library System, Eau Claire, Wis.

Sibert Chair, 2006

Leslie M. Molnar, Cuyahoga County (Ohio) Public Library
Kathleen Simonetta, Indian Trails Public Library District, Wheeling, Ill.

Sibert Committee, 2006

Teffeny Y. Edmondson, Atlanta-Fulton Public Library
Kelly Jennings, Tulsa (Okla.) City-County Library System
Stephen A. Zampino, The Ferguson Library, Stamford, Conn.
Penny S. Markey, County of Los Angeles Public Library
Cecilia P. McGowan, King County (Wash.) Library System
Elizabeth C. Overmyer, Berkeley (Calif.) Public Library
Carol K. Phillips, East Brunswick (N. J.) Public Library
Kate McLean, De Kalb County (Ga.) Public Library

Wilder Chair, 2007

John Warren Stewig, Emeritus Professor, University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, Department of Curriculum and Instruction
Roger Sutton, The Horn Book, Boston, Mass.

Wilder Committee, 2007

Rudine Sims Bishop, Ohio State University, College of Education
Ann D. Carlson, Oak Park and River Forest High School, Ill.
Debbie McLeod, Johnson County Library, Shawnee Mission, Kan.
Susan M. Stan, Central Michigan University, Mount Pleasant

Board of Directors' Major Actions

Thanks to the ALSCBOARD electronic discussion list, ALSC board members are able to keep on top of division issues and move actions along quickly through electronic discussion and voting. We will continue to share all board actions—those voted on at conference and electronically on ALSCBOARD—with members in the ALSC News section of *Children and Libraries* and on the ALSC Web site at www.ala.org/alsc, click on "Board & Committee Work" and "Board Actions."

Members interested in following board discussion of ALSC issues can subscribe as "read only" subscribers of the ALSCBOARD electronic discussion list. "Read only" subscribers receive all messages posted to the list but cannot post messages to the list. To subscribe to ALSCBOARD, send an e-mail message to LISTPROC@ALA.ORG. Leave the subject line blank, or, if your system requires a subject line, enter "subscribe" (without quotation marks) as the subject. As the only line of text in the body of the message, enter the following: subscribe ALSCBOARD [YourFirstName] [YourLast Name] substituting your own first and last names. Do not include the brackets in your message.

Below are the major actions voted on by the ALSC board since the summer ALA Conference, including in parentheses the month during which the Board voted.

VOTED, to rescind the previous board action making e-books eligible for ALSC awards. (July 2003)

VOTED, that the editor of the ALSC journal, *Children and Libraries*, serve as an ex-officio member of the *Children and Libraries* Editorial Advisory Committee, and that the chair of the committee be appointed from among the other committee members. (July 2003)

VOTED, that a task force be appointed to explore an ALSC award for public figures who are strong advocates of children's reading and library service. (July 2003)

VOTED, to establish a discussion group, "Children's Collection Management in Public Libraries," membership to be open to all who wish to attend, per division policy on discussion groups. (August 2003)

VOTED, to approve the FY 2004 Budget Proposal. (August 2003)

VOTED, to make a second contribution in the amount of $37,500 in support of the PLA/ALSC Early Literacy Initiative. (August 2003)

Upcoming Events

2004 Midwinter ALSC Meeting Schedule

Executive Committee
Thursday, January 8, 2–4:30 P.M.

AASL/ALSC/YALSA Jt. Exec. Committees
Thursday, January 8, 4:30–5:30 P.M.

ALSC Past Presidents' Breakfast
Saturday, January 10, 7:30–9 A.M.

Priority Group Consultants
Saturday, January 10, 8–9 A.M.

Division Leadership
Saturday, January 10, 9:30 A.M.–12:30 P.M.

William Morris Memorial Celebration
Saturday, January 10, 1–2 P.M.

All Committee Meeting
Sunday, January 11, 9:30 A.M.–12:30 P.M.

Planning and Budget Committee
Sunday, January 11, 9:30 A.M.–12:30 P.M.
Tuesday, January 13, 9:30–11 A.M.

All Discussion Group Meeting I
Sunday, January 11, 2–3:30 P.M.

All Discussion Group Meeting II
Sunday, January 11, 3:30–5 P.M.

ALSC Board of Directors
Sunday, January 11, 2–4:30 P.M.
Monday, January 12, 2–4:30 P.M.
Tuesday, January 13, 2–5:30 P.M.

AASL/ALSC/YALSA Jt. Youth Council Caucus
Monday, January 12, 7–8:30 A.M.

ALSC Award Winners Press Conference
Monday, January 12, 8:45–9:45 A.M.

Membership Reception
Monday, January 12, 6–7:30 P.M.

For a complete list of ALSC meetings, including the "closed" award committee meetings, please visit the ALSC Web site at www.ala.org/alsc and click on "Events & Conferences."

Reading for Elementary Achievement and Development

ALSC member Jana Fine is the 2003 recipient of the Econo-Clad Literature Program Award for her Reading for Elementary Achievement and Development (READ) program. Below she shares highlights of her winning program.

The READ program was begun in 2000 with a grant from WGBH public television station in Boston. The purpose of the original program was to take elements of the PBS show *Between the Lions* (reading and grammar enhancement activities aimed at 4–7 year olds) and prepare library based programs promoting the television show. Gregory Lord, one of the Graduation Options and Alternatives to Leaving School (GOALS) teachers at Clearwater High School, was looking for an activity that would create a sense of fun and purpose in her classes. I was looking for a way to involve teen volunteers in the WGBH grant. So a match was made. The GOALS students would be trained on how to present story times using stories, songs, finger plays, and video segments of the PBS show. I contacted four facilities to see if they would be interested in having the teens present these programs. Kings Highway, South Ward, Peace Memorial Child Development Center, and Community Pride Gateway Center all were very interested.

Eight teens (four boys and four girls) were trained on how to present story times and went out once a month to each of the sites. The children loved having the teens read stories and sing songs with them. The teens loved having such loving attention given to them. The teens were treated to lunch before heading back to school. At the end of the 2000–2001 school year the grant ended, but Lord and I were so impressed by the teens' commitment to this program that we continued the program, renaming it the Designated Reader program. During the 2001–2002 school year, fourteen students signed up to present story times to six facilities. The original four sites welcomed us back. Plumb Elementary and Community Pride Mosich Center were added to the roster. At the end of the school year, fourteen tenth and eleventh grade students presented 24 programs to 1,747 children.

As the 2002–2003 school year approached, Lord and I both felt that the program was still a valuable learning tool. Returning teen participants wanted to rename the program to better reflect what they did, so they came up with Reading for Elementary Achievement and Development (READ). And during the school year of 2002–2003, 26 teens signed up to present programs at nine facilities with a total attendance of over 4,000 children and teachers throughout the school year.

The highlights of the program so far include:

- Teens who are in this program tend to have low self-esteem as well as other personal and family problems that cause them to exhibit behaviors that might lead them to drop out of school. The children they are presenting to are also in similar familial situations. The teens become role models to these children. The young ones often lavish affection on the teens, making them feel important and connected.

- The teens who are presenting learn several different and important skills. They learn oral speaking skills, how to interact with groups of children (behavior management), how to read to children and turn reading into an enjoyable activity, and how to discipline themselves by preparing before presenting the program.

- The older adults who are volunteer drivers develop a positive relationship with the teens, thereby fostering

Announcements

Preconference on Early Literacy

Mark your calendar for the 2004 ALSC Preconference, "Great Beginnings! Libraries and Early Literacy," to be held Thursday and Friday, June 24-25, in Orlando, Fla. **Early literacy** is a hot topic in the library world these days. Public librarians all over the country are implementing the findings of the PLA-ALSC Preschool Initiative; many school librarians are learning to work with preK children; several state libraries have instituted innovative statewide early learning projects. Learn about the latest research and best practices from your colleagues and some of the nation's experts in early learning. Go home with practical ideas for building partnerships, adding a proven program to your services, and influencing public policy to support early literacy @ your library!

Learn some baby-tested and toddler-approved rhymes and songs from ALSC colleague, Jane Marino, author of *Babies in the Library!*

Be inspired by Mem Fox, author of *Reading Magic: Why Reading Aloud to Our Children Will Change Their Lives Forever*, Kathy Hirsh-Pasek and Roberta Michnick Golinkoff, authors of *Einstein Never Used Flash Cards*, and Rosemary Wells, who has encouraged all of us to Read to Our Bunnies!

Watch for registration information in the March issue of *American Libraries*.

Taking Aim at Youth Violence

The Guidance Channel and National S.A.V.E. announced the success of the inaugural National Youth Violence Prevention Campaign held April 7–11, 2003, across America. Organized and sponsored by seven nationally recognized youth advocate organizations, the campaign focused on prevention education and in-service activities with hundreds of thousands of children, teens, parents, teachers, and other participating caregivers.

Launched by National S.A.V.E. and the Guidance Channel, each day of the week

an appreciation of teens as an age group. They also get a chance to interact with the children in the facilities.

- A young boy stopped me in the grocery store over the summer and asked if Leon (one of the teen participants) was going to come back to his school to read to him. Jazmine, one of the teen participants, wanted to bring the children to the high school. So the entire group planned a "CHS READing Buddy Day" in April 2003 during the week of the Young Child. Three daycare centers (about 60 three- and four-year-olds) came to Clearwater High School and the teens read to them, developed a series of plant and butterfly crafts (there is a butterfly garden at the school that the GOALS teens planted), and fed them lunch donated by local businesses and organizations.

There isn't a lot of work involved for the school. I set up the site visits as well as arrange transportation. I choose books, songs, fingerplays, puppets, and non-book activities that revolve around a theme. I then bring the themed materials to the school one to two weeks ahead of time so the students have time to go through the materials. The only cost is providing the teens with lunch at a fast food restaurant (and this is an option that the volunteer drivers can choose not to do).

At the beginning of the school year, I meet with the GOALS classes and talk about the program, go through examples of reading to children and then have the teens volunteer for selected sites. They are then trained more specifically on how to present materials. A team leader is chosen. That teen team site leader (usually one who has been in the program for at least a year and has proven responsible) will then go over the materials thoroughly with his or her team and prepare them to present their programs.

I have had many positive responses from teachers and the school information librarians about the value of this program. The students who continue with this activity look forward eagerly to each year and will either stop by or call and ask when we are starting again.

The program has gone through several evolutions since its inception. The *bad* news: There are students who do not put much effort into the learning of the program materials. They will often wait until the day of the site visit to scan over materials. That makes for a bad presentation, especially when they have a volunteer driver who is not a librarian. Also they may decide to skip school on the day of the site visit. The *good* news: There are always three or four prepared "team leaders" ready to fill in if need be. The teens do have paperwork they fill out—a parent's permission slip, a teacher permission slip, and a teacher reminder form. The teens that stay in the program become excellent presenters and very self-sufficient in developing new ideas and shaping the READ program. And the look on the children's faces as they are being read to by the teens is priceless. One of the most pleasant surprises is when a "first-timer" goes to a site and receives numerous hugs after the program. One of the teens that just started this year said after leaving the site, "They all hugged me! I can't believe it! That is so cool!"

Need I say more?

For more information, contact Jana Fine at the Clearwater Public Library System, 100 N. Osceola Ave., Clearwater, FL 33755; phone: (727) 462-6800, ext. 242; e-mail: jfine@clearwater-fl.com

was sponsored by a different organization and focused on a specific violence prevention strategy. The sponsors, including the Constitutional Rights Foundation–

Chicago, American School Counselor Association, Association for Conflict Resolution, National Association of School Resource Officers, and Youth Service America, designed and initiated activities for students K–12 that focused on their day's strategy. Through the efforts and leadership of the sponsors, thousands of students across the country learned skills to promote respect and tolerance, manage anger, resolve conflicts peacefully, support safety, and unite in action.

The campaign inspired a variety of initiatives across the nation that demonstrated the positive steps young people can take to address violence in our schools and communities. Some of the activities included: a school in New Mexico writing and performing a play on making safe choices; a group of youth rehab centers in Florida coordinating essay and poster contests to raise awareness on violence prevention strategies; and a volunteer youth council in Nevada establishing a play room in a local domestic violence shelter.

Plans are already underway for next year's event scheduled for March 29–April 2, 2004. For more information on how to get involved in this nationwide effort to show that our youth and communities are committed to being violence-free, request a free National Youth Violence Prevention Week brochure by writing the Guidance Channel, 135 Dupont St., P.O. Box 760, Plainview, NY 11803-0760, calling 1-800-99-YOUTH, or visiting the official campaign Web site at www.ViolencePreventionWeek.org.

Children's Literature Association in Fresno

The Arne Nixon Center for the Study of Children's Literature at California State University, Fresno, will host the 31st annual conference of the Children's Literature Association from June 10–12, 2004, on the Fresno State campus. The conference theme is "Dreams and Visions." About 200 people will travel to Fresno for this conference and local people are also invited. Optional university credit will be available. For information about the Children's Literature Association, see its Web site at www.childlitassn.

org. Information about the conference and the call for papers may be seen at the Arne Nixon Center's Web site at www.arnenixoncenter.org. Proposals are due January 31, 2004.

Conference speakers will include Richard Peck, winner of the Newbery medal for *A Year Down Yonder*; Pam Muñoz Ryan, winner of the Pura Belpré Award for her novel *Esperanza Rising*; and British author Berlie Doherty, whose novel *White Peak Farm* will win the 2004 Phoenix award at the conference banquet. The Phoenix Award is given twenty years after publication to the author of a book for children published originally in English that did not win a major award when it first appeared. *White Peak Farm* has recently been republished in England as *Jeannie of White Peak Farm*. The conference will offer a discussion of this book by reviewers in the fields of education, English, and library science.

Michael Cart, librarian, writer, lecturer, consultant, critic, and national expert in children's and young adult literature, will deliver the Francelia Butler Plenary Lecture. The invitation to give this lecture is issued annually to a prominent literary critic who specializes in children's literature. The lecture is named in honor of one of the founders of the Children's Literature Association. Cart's latest book is *Necessary Noise: Stories about Our Families as They Really Are*.

Full conference and one-day registrations will be offered and banquet tickets will be available separately if space allows. The Piccadilly Inn-University, just across the street from the campus, will be the site of some conference meetings. The hotel will offer a special rate to conference attendees of about $85, single or double. For reservations, call (559) 224-4200. Early reservations are essential.

For more information, contact the Arne Nixon Center by E-mail at anc@listserv.csufresno.edu or call (559) 278-8116. Updates will be posted on the Center's Web site at www.arnenixoncenter.org.

New-Cue Writers' Conference/Workshop

The Third NEW-CUE Writers' Conference and Workshop Honoring Rachel Carson will be held in Boothbay Harbor, Maine, June 15–18, 2004. The conference/workshop will take place at The Spruce Point Inn, one of New England's finest waterfront country inns, located in one of the North Atlantic coastline's most secure and serene areas. Writers, educators, and the interested public are invited to attend.

Nature and Environmental Writers–College and University Educators (NEW-CUE), is a nonprofit, environmental education organization based in Washington, D.C. The theme of its 2004 conference and workshop will be "Living Waters," and the event will be held in an area that is well-known for its tidal pools, coves, and salt marshes. Participants will have an opportunity to hear noted authors, listen to readings submitted for presentation at the event, and participate in a variety of workshops and outdoor activities in an area that is often referred to as the boating capital of New England.

Among the featured speakers at the event will be Jean Craighead George who is an

internationally known author of over 100 books for young readers, including the Newbery Medal–winning *Julie of the Wolves* and *My Side of the Mountain*. A former reporter for *The Washington Post* and a member of the White House Press Corps, Ms. George became the first winner of the School Library Media Section of the New York Library Association's Knickerbocker Award for Juvenile Literature, presented for the "consistent superior quality" of her works. Twig George, author and former Director of Education for the Center for Marine Conservation in Washington, D.C., will join her mother at the conference and workshop. Twig George has written several books with aquatic themes for young readers, and she is married to David Pittenger, Director of the National Aquarium in Baltimore.

Other featured speakers will include noted author and ocean conservationist Carl Safina who will deliver the keynote address; Cape Cod essayist, Robert Finch; and poet Andrea Cohen who is the director of the Blacksmith House Reading Series in Cambridge, Mass. In addition, there will be a performance of a one-woman play, *A Sense of Wonder*, based on the life and work of Rachel Carson with author and actress Kaiulani Lee.

The program will also include a marine-life workshop offered by the Chewonki Foundation, presentations and guided activities including hikes led by guides from the Boothbay Region Land Trust, tide pool explorations with a marine biologist from the Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences, and a trip to the Burnt Island Lighthouse included in the schedule of events.

For further details, information, and photos from the 2002 Conference and Workshop, visit the Web site at www.newcue.org or telephone (845) 398-4147. Contact Person: Barbara Ward Klein, President, (845) 398-4247 or at info@newcue.org.

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Of Lobsters and Literature: At the Library, Don't Forget the Pets

By Cindy Lombardo

Looking up from a desk crowded with picture books and story time flyers I saw a very animated little boy peering intently back at me. Clearly he had something of great importance to communicate but was so excited that he was having a hard time talking.

Leaning forward and smiling, I asked, "What did you want to tell me?" Vigorously nodding his head, he pointed one chubby finger at the counter behind me and finally managed to say, in an awed voice that carried all the way to the reference department, "It's a . . . it's a . . . it's a LOBSTER!"

Well, almost. After much discussion and consulting of easy nonfiction books, he went away satisfied that: (a) he knew what a lobster looked like; (b) the small furry creature in the glass cage was a hamster, not a lobster; and (c) hamsters don't like to swim. Not bad for an impromptu zoology lesson!

Kids and animals go together like peanut butter and jelly. And what better place to bring them in touch with one another than the public library? As a former children's librarian and a lifelong animal enthusiast, some of the best work I've done has involved bringing two- and four-footed critters together in an atmosphere of mutual curiosity and trust.

Believing that it's better to beg forgiveness than to ask permission, I've presented story times featuring live sheep, a pony, barn owls, a red tail hawk, guinea pigs, frogs, butterflies, one very pregnant (and, it turned out, prolific) praying mantis, fish, a rabbit, puppies, kittens, and other assorted fauna, both domestic and wild.

Every program was an opportunity to educate as well as entertain. Children learned firsthand how a blind woman relies on her service dog to help her retain her independence. They discovered by listening to her words that there are many ways of seeing. They saw slides of hospital therapy dogs at work and learned by hugging and petting the dog themselves just how healing an animal's touch can be.

Having served as a volunteer docent at a local zoo, I thought I'd been well-trained to answer all kinds of animal-related questions. However, anyone who works with children knows—as Art Linkletter used to claim—"Kids say the darndest things," and they're especially curious about behavior that some adults might prefer to ignore when it comes to the wild kingdom!

Try explaining to a group of 4- and 5-year olds just what those little round pellets are that are dropping out of the rabbit scooting across the floor. How do snakes chew? Where do puppies come from? Why can't horses and cows have babies together? Hmmm. . . .

One summer we held a pet fair that literally turned the library into a modern-day Noah's ark. By 10 A.M. on Saturday, the front lawn sported everything from tadpoles to turtles, snakes to salamanders, and cats to calves. Hundreds of children, accompanied by animals on leashes and in cages, boxes, crates, bowls, and bags, milled around, visiting, asking questions, and eagerly showing off their pets.

We saw a truly amazing array of pet tricks (some more successful than others) and listened to intriguing explanations of strange behavior. We petted, stroked, oohed, and aahed over every fin, fur, and feather. After a parade around the building, each proud owner went home with a "My pet is special" sticker and a certificate that awarded his or her pet for such traits as "fluffiest fur," "curliest whiskers," "shiniest scales," "twitchiest nose" and "droopiest tail." Every child, and every pet, was a winner.

Lately, there's been some discussion among the staff about adding an animal to the children's room. Suggestions have included a ferret (too smelly), a hedgehog (too prickly), and a hamster (too boring). My vote would be a clutch of collies (I can think of at least a dozen who'd be happy to draw Milk Bones for the chance to come to work with me), but then I'm a bit biased! What do you think? Collie? Cockatiel? Siamese? Snake? Or perhaps you'd prefer a little . . . lobster with your literature?

Cindy Lombardo *is Director of the Orrville Public Library in Orrville, Ohio.*