

Children & Libraries

the journal of the Association for
Library Service to Children

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2008 Awards Issue

Newbery and Caldecott Speeches

In Honor of Batchelder • Brian Wildsmith's Colorful World



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Editor's Note Banquet Is Always Thrilling

Sharon Verbeten

It's not quite the Academy Awards. But when you see all the coiffed hair, the bejeweled necks, and the elegant evening wear, you'll swear there was a red carpet somewhere and that George Clooney was just

around the corner.

You'll have to settle for Brian Selznick.

The Newbery/Caldecott banquet is my highlight of the ALA Annual Conference—one I look forward to even if I haven't read all the winning books. It's an experience not to be missed if at all possible. It's an excuse to dress up, to schmooze, and to name drop.

But really, I truly admire the authors who, through their speeches, share tales of how their lives have led them to this shining moment. I respect the awards committee members who have spent much of the last year buried in books, reveling in them, and ignoring much of the outside world. I love seeing librarians from across the nation beam at their favorite authors on the podium.

This year, Brian Selznick and Laura Amy Schlitz thrilled and inspired us with their stories—pulling from their storied histories to tell us how they got to where they are. We're so glad they did . . . and we look forward to just who will be on that hallowed podium next year. They truly raised the bar for future speakers.

So, who needs George Clooney? ☺



Executive Director's Note The World Turned Upside Down

Diane Foote

Wow! An illustrated Newbery Medal winner (*Good Masters! Sweet Ladies! Voices from a Medieval Village* by Laura Amy Schlitz) and a picture book with more than five hundred pages as Caldecott

Medalist (*The Invention of Hugo Cabret* by Brian Selznick). Has the world turned upside down?

Not at all. ALSC remains dedicated to our core purpose as stated in our strategic plan, "to create a better future for children through libraries" and our primary goal, "to lead the way in forging excellent library service for all children." One way we do this is by identifying excellence in all types of media for children.

In this issue, please enjoy the Caldecott, Geisel, and Newbery acceptance speeches, as well as an article on an award that shouldn't be overlooked, even though it may not be given the media attention that Newbery and Caldecott receive—the Mildred L. Batchelder Award for the most outstanding translated book for children.

Happy reading! ☺

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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 "Policies and Procedures" document adopted by the ALSC board, April 2004.)

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Outgoing President's ALSC Message

Jane B. Marino
ALSC President, 2007-08
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Each year, as one of her final duties, the ALSC president compiles a report to be presented to ALA Council. Preparing this report gave me the opportunity to reflect on the year gone by and marvel at the accomplishments of our vibrant organization thanks to its membership of talented, energetic, and devoted youth services professionals. Below are highlights of the year excerpted from the annual report. What a busy, productive (and quick!) year it has been.

Professional Awards and Scholarships

Every year, ALSC awards more than \$60,000 in funds to support members through a variety of programs with support from endowments and our sponsors. It is gratifying to see how these awards make a difference in our members' lives by offering study grants, money to sponsor an author visit, or financial support to attend ALA Annual Conference.

This year, through the generosity of Candlewick Press and Newbery Medalist Kate DiCamillo, we administered a one-time donation to a library with exemplary service to traditionally underserved populations. The Library Service

to Special Population Children and Their Caregivers Committee did a yeoman's work in developing an application and evaluating more than fifty applicants for the Light the Way grant. This year, the donation went to the Rogers (Ark.) Public Library for their Bilingual Teens as Teachers and Tutors program.

This year's Distinguished Service Award winner is Henrietta Smith, who has been an ALSC member for twenty-three years and an ALA member for forty-four. Smith is professor emeritus from the University of South Florida. Over her long and storied career, she has been a teacher, mentor, and inspiration to children's librarians and ALSC members. What a pleasure to see her honored during ALSC's membership meeting in Anaheim.

The 2008 ALSC Emerging Leaders project focuses on membership, and participants are developing a marketing plan for their peers to answer the question, how can ALSC best reach those who are poised to take the next step in their career, and what kinds of programs and services do these folks need? ALSC sponsored two leaders this year: Patricia Tarango from Los Angeles and Jessica Trujillo from New Brunswick, New Jersey.

Literary and Related Awards

Participating in ALA's Youth Media Awards press conference at the Midwinter Meeting was quite a thrill. The energy in the room was palpable, and it was humbling to watch the excitement of the award committee members who have devoted a year of their lives to choosing their winners. The live Web cast of this year's press conference has been archived and is available on Google Video (<http://video.google.com/videosearch?q=ala+youth+media+awards&sitesearch=#>).

The first Odyssey Award for Excellence in audio book production, administered jointly by ALSC and the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) and sponsored by *Booklist* magazine, was awarded this year to Live Oak Media for *Jazz* by Walter Dean Myers. The award and five honors were presented at the *Booklist* Books for Youth Forum on Friday night at Annual Conference.

This year, both the REFORMA and ALSC boards voted to present the Pura Belpré Awards annually, beginning in 2009. These awards have been presented every other year since their inception in 1996. It is indicative of the success of the awards, as evidenced by the growing body of work by and about Latinos, that we are able to present them annually.

In April, I attended the May Hill Arbutnot Honor Lecture, delivered by Caldecott Medalist David Macaulay to a capacity crowd in Madison, Wisconsin. The lecture, "Thirteen Studios," gave a retrospective look at what inspired him throughout his career. Thanks to streaming video, the lecture was enjoyed by many more "attendees" via their computers.

Our Initiatives

The Kids! @ your library® Campaign continues to offer tools and tips, many at no charge, to help youth services librarians raise public awareness of their collections and services. The first phase of the campaign is targeted at children in kindergarten through grade 4 and their caregivers; the second phase is set to launch in 2009 and will focus on children in grades 5–8. The ALSC board voted significant budget support of \$25,000 this past year for enhancement and evaluation of phase 1 and planning for phase 2. Results of a spring survey of librarians and focus groups with fifth- through eighth-grade students will help the Public Awareness Committee develop exciting and relevant materials for phase 2.

El día de los niños/El día de los libros (Day of the Child/Day of the Book) 2008 was a success. Nearly three hundred libraries registered their celebrations on a Web-based database. Our event "spokesperson," Dora the Explorer, was featured on complimentary bilingual brochures and on posters and bookmarks for sale through ALA Graphics. I was honored to attend the second Día celebration that was held in Washington, D.C., on April 30. Other guests included Día founder Pat Mora, REFORMA president Mario Ascencio, Congressmen Mike Honda of California and Rubén Hinojosa of Texas, and Senators Debbie Stabenow of Michigan and Ken Salazar of Colorado.

I am also pleased to note that the ALSC board voted to fully integrate the Día initiative into the ALSC structure. In so doing, it becomes a part of the ALSC strategic plan as a strategy under the "Advocacy" goal area and will become part of the ALSC budget. This year, we worked with a number of new partners to increase awareness of Día, including First Book, the National Education Association, the Association of American Publishers, the Children's Book Council, and the National Council of Teachers of English.

ALSC and the Public Library Association, co-administrators of Every Child Ready to Read, have begun a comprehensive evaluation of the program this year, and a full report is expected by Annual Conference 2009.

Projects and Partnerships

In addition to our own initiatives, ALSC partners with other like-minded organizations and programs to promote each other's literacy-based activities. We work hard to make sure the partnerships we pursue are ones that will truly interest and benefit our members and the children and families we serve. This year we were involved with Drop Everything and Read Day, Boys and Girls Clubs Day for Kids, PBS Parents, National Endowment for the Humanities/We the People, National Education Association/Read Across America, and ALA/CBC Home Library Bibliographies.

We began a new partnership with First Book, which provides children from low-income families the opportunity to read and own their first new books. To begin, First Book offered Día host libraries the opportunity to receive new bilingual books for free or at deeply discounted prices, and plans are in the works for future opportunities for ALSC members.

Publications and Communications

ALSC seeks to reach members in a variety of ways, including ways that increasingly allow for two-way communication. We still publish our traditional journal, *Children and Libraries*, as well

as the *ALSCconnect* newsletter, which went electronic-only last fall. In addition, we're now hosting a blog and a wiki, and we've even got a presence on Facebook and in Second Life in addition to our complement of electronic discussion lists.

Building on the success of our wiki, which launched in 2006, the ALSC Blog launched this year with a mission to provide a venue for coverage of time-sensitive news in children's librarianship, current issues in the field, and programs, conferences, initiatives, resources, and activities of interest to ALSC members and those interested in children's librarianship. It is ably run by blog manager Teresa Walls, aided by a cadre of volunteer bloggers. Even the staff has gotten involved, with regular "behind the scenes" posts from ALSC headquarters.

Events and Continuing Education

The past year has been filled with top-notch special events and professional development opportunities. At Annual Conference in Anaheim, the Charlemae Rollins President's Program featured Dr. T. Berry Brazelton, founder of the Brazelton Touchpoints Center and pioneer of infant research, and was part of ALA's Auditorium Speaker Series for the second year in a row. Our Preconference, Summer Reading Survivor: Overcoming the Challenges, attempted to help youth services librarians fight summer reading fatigue and come away re-energized and inspired. Folklorist and author Judy Sierra; literacy educator Stephen Krashen; Newbery Honoree and Belpré Award winner Pam Muñoz Ryan; and library director Ginnie Cooper were featured speakers.

The first-ever Bill Morris Seminar was held at Midwinter Meeting 2008 and was an enormous success. ALSC's Morris Endowment supported the seminar and provided travel stipends to thirty selected ALSC members who had never before had the opportunity to serve on an award or media evaluation committee. The seminar was designed to train future

continued on page 6



Incoming President's ALSC Message

Pat Scales
ALSC President, 2008-09
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Serving ALSC . . . In Many Ways

"Everyone can be great, because everyone can serve."

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

I have a stack of volunteer forms from ALSC members who are eager to serve the organization in a variety of ways. These forms have been my reading material for most of April. This is what I have learned about the greatness of ALSC:

- Our membership extends to every state in the nation and to some foreign countries.
- We are children's librarians, school librarians, reading teachers, library directors, book reviewers, publishers, and university professors.
- Retired librarians continue to serve and are willing to mentor emerging leaders.
- Young librarians are enthusiastic about becoming involved in the profession.
- Most members prefer the awards committees, but offer to serve the organization in other ways.

- Members who can't always attend conferences are willing to serve on virtual committees.

I want to take this opportunity to thank those of you who have volunteered your time to make ALSC the visible and vibrant organization that it is. Some of you have already accepted committee appointments, and others will be receiving invitations soon. Every effort has been made to accommodate each person's committee request. But there are other factors that must be considered: gender, work experience, term limits, type of library, and geographical representation.

If you don't receive a committee appointment, please understand that there are simply more volunteers than available committee slots. Those who have been involved with ALSC for a number of years will quickly say that there are other important ways to serve the organization:

- Attend membership meetings.
- Observe committee work by attending the all committee meeting at Annual Conference and Midwinter Meeting.
- Take part in conference programs.
- Observe board meetings.
- Network with colleagues.

Each of these experiences promises professional growth, and leads to opportunities to achieve greatness within the organization.

It is probably the dream of every ALSC member to serve on the Newbery, Caldecott, and Wilder committees. Those who have served numerous times are happy to share their experiences, and most will say that it was the highlight of their career.

Some members continue to see these committees as the premier appointments, but don't overlook the other ALSC awards and notable committees that recognize significant children's materials. While all awards committees hold closed meetings, the notable committees' meetings are open and welcome observers.

This is a terrific way for new members to cut their teeth on materials evaluation and to see committee process at work. Evaluation skills and understanding the committee process are essential to a successful awards committee experience.

The public has long associated ALSC with the awards program, but our success-

ful participation in the @ your library® campaign has broadened the public's knowledge of our other initiatives and programs. We have documented evidence that our public has expanded and that our programs and services are making a significant contribution to young library patrons and their families. Service leads to greatness, and we accomplish

that every single day when we serve children through the profession we have chosen.

ALSC is about service. The organization serves its members, and the members serve the organization. This is true greatness. And everyone can participate. ☺

OUTGOING PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE, continued from page 4

committee members in book evaluation and discussion, as well as the committee process. We expect these talented individuals to form the core of many future committees, and look forward to hosting the Morris Seminar every other year at Midwinter Meeting.

In May, I participated in ALA's National Library Legislative Days in Washington, D.C., with ALSC executive director Diane Foote and the executive directors and presidents of AASL and YALSA. We called on the Democratic and Republican staffs of the House and Senate committees charged with education and library issues and thanked the legislators for their successful passage of language in the Head Start reauthorization bill that expressly lists libraries as suitable partners for Head Start agencies. In addition, we advocated for the SKILLS Act, the section of No Child Left Behind reauthorization that would require a certified school library media specialist in every school library, and for an approach to Internet safety for youth that is education-based, rather than filter-based. We also met with some of our current and potential national partners, including National Parent Teacher Association and the National Education Association.

Bylaws Changes

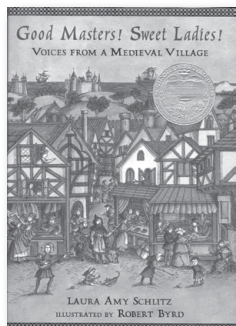
This past spring, bylaws changes in two areas appeared on the ALSC ballot: updating the procedure for appointing the ALSC Nominating Committee to conform to current practice, and changing the award committee chair positions from elected positions to appointed positions and increasing the number of existing member positions that are elected by one. The total number of positions on the committee would not change. Both bylaws changes were approved by the ALSC membership and will take effect with the 2009 election.

ALSC Finances

In an effort to encourage committee work and initiative, we publicized the availability of funds from the ALSC Children's Library Services Endowment (CLSE), which is available to support projects at the board's discretion. This year the winning application came from the School-Age Programs and Services Committee, which created a bibliography called "Great Early Elementary Reads." CLSE funds went for designing and printing the bibliography, which was distributed at Annual Conference in Anaheim and

is available free for download as a PDF document on the ALSC website.

It has been my honor to serve as your president for 2007–2008 and to work with the dedicated member leaders who serve as committee members and chairs, task force chairs, discussion group conveners, and priority group consultants and who have been amazing in their responsiveness and sense of responsibility as well as their creativity and vision for ALSC and its mission. This report has detailed many of their achievements. But what it does not tell you is how inspiring it has been to work with so many people who are ready, willing, and able to pitch in whenever and wherever they are asked. Our stalwart and visionary board of directors has faced a whole array of issues and problems, and they have handled them all with great thoughtfulness and care. We continue to value our hard-working office staff, capably led with energy and enthusiasm by Executive Director Diane Foote. Incoming President Pat Scales, who has already proved herself to be a person of integrity and intelligence, will lead our association in 2008–2009 and will continue to move ALSC forward. Thank you ALSC for all that you do. It has been a memorable year. ☺



Newbery Medal Acceptance Speech

Of Kites, Moles, and Other Interesting True Stories

Laura Amy Schlitz



Laura Amy Schlitz is the winner of the 2008 Newbery Medal for Good Masters! Sweet Ladies!: Voices from a Medieval Village, published by Candlewick. Her acceptance speech was delivered at ALA Annual Conference in Anaheim, California, on June 29, 2008.

Dear friends, a cadre of perceptive and passionate readers has decided that my book is good. This is earthshaking. As a writer, there is nothing in the world I want more than this: that my work should be good. And now, in my joy, I am supposed to speak to you, and this is dangerous, because I am apt to be both maudlin and grandiose. I must remind myself that *good* is an approximate term. A second grader once asked me for “a really, really good book,” and I asked him, as librarians do, what he considered a good book. He eyed me with thinly veiled impatience and replied, “Medium-long with poisonous snakes.” By his standards, *Good Masters! Sweet Ladies!* falls short. It is medium-long, but there is only a glancing reference to poisonous snakes.

So I must catch hold of myself and try not to be vainglorious. I must remind myself that the Newbery Medal comes with strings attached. The biggest string—a rope thick enough to hang a writer—is the speech. Whenever I’ve dreamed, as writers do, of winning the Newbery, my dream has always ended with the sad conclusion that I never would. And then I’ve comforted myself: “Well, all right, I’ll never win the Newbery, but at least I won’t have to give one of those speeches.”

Thus the whirligig of time brings in his revenges.

My friends, you deserve a good speech: something coherent and profound. But even if I trusted myself to be profound, being coherent poses a problem. I have a storyteller’s mind—a deranged junk drawer, clogged with memories and metaphors. I deal in mental pictures: a carousel horse, a devil in a green coat, a girl balancing a basketful of eels on her hip. I brood over these images until I divine their stories.

When I first conceived of my Newbery speech, I found myself haunted by three anecdotes. These stories have something to do with what I want to tell you. So—sweet ladies, good gentlemen—let me begin there. Let me tell you about playground duty, a kite, and having moles removed.

We’ll start with playground duty, and Tessa. At the time of my story, Tessa was in second grade. She was an appealing child, with brown eyes and a round sweet face. I was on playground duty when Tessa’s friends flocked up to me, telling me that Tessa was stuck on the playhouse roof and afraid to come down.

So I went to help. The playhouse had a peaked roof eight feet high, and the edge of the roof was five feet off the ground. Tessa perched on the ridgepole, not crying. I suggested that she hold onto the ridgepole, turn around backward, and let her feet dangle, so that I could grab her legs. She looked dubious. I couldn’t blame her: Coming down backward means coming down blind. So at last I held out my arms. “Just pretend it’s a sliding board and come on down. I’ll catch you.”

For some reason, this solution struck Tessa as workable. She grimaced, let go of the rooftop, and slid.

I caught her. But I had neglected to take into account the fact that the average second grader weighs fifty-five pounds, and a fifty-five-pound weight gathers momentum on an inclined plane. That small, soft-limbed child hit me like a cannonball. My knees gave way and I staggered, wondering what irreparable damage I had done to my spine. I fell—hard—onto my well-upholstered rear end.

But I didn’t drop Tessa. And since I am well-upholstered in front as well as in back, she fell softly and scrambled to her feet as nimbly as a little squirrel. We asked each other if we were hurt. Neither of us was. Then Tessa met my eyes and said, “Thank you,” with a purity and grace I have never forgotten.

Why does this memory come back to me? I think it has something to do with the fact that winning the Newbery was like catching that fifty-five-pound, entirely lovable child. The stars danced. My knees buckled. I wasn’t sure what had happened to me.

I also think this story has something to say about the way librarians feel toward

children. We do our best for them. We try to help them when they're stuck and catch them when they fall—even if we never have quite enough books about poisonous snakes.

Now for the moles.

Several summers ago, I had moles cut out of my forehead. I ended up with an intriguing scar, a red-stitched crescent like a third eyebrow. My schoolchildren demanded, "What happened to your face?"

I was ready for them. One must be truthful with children, but a good scar war-rants a story. "Do you want the true story or the interesting story?" I asked.

Bless them; they wanted both. "Here's the true story," I said. "I had moles removed. Moles are like pimples, but sometimes they turn into little cancers, so the doctor cut them off."

The children were unimpressed. "What's the interesting story?"

"Oh, well, the interesting story is this," I answered.

* * * * *

I do not go camping. I like my comforts—indoor plumbing and air-conditioning and locks on the door. But my friend Faith is wild about camping, and last summer she talked me into an overnight camping trip.

We went to West Virginia. There were signs on the campground warning us about bears, which excited me, because I have a great yearning for bears. When Faith and I went walking, we saw the claw marks on the trees. Black bears of both sexes mark trees by rubbing and clawing them—scientists don't know why.

One of the marked trees held a few black hairs. I pried them out of the bark and twined them around my finger like a ring.

Night fell. Faith slept beneath the stars, but I zipped myself into the tent and fell asleep.

In my dream, I walked through the woods. I was searching for something—I don't know what. I came to a clearing that was almost a perfect circle. Moonlight poured into the clearing like milk in a bowl. At the edge of the clearing, there was a moving shadow: someone's dog, I thought at first, a Labrador or a Newfoundland. Then the bear smelled me. She lumbered forward, meeting me in the center of the clearing.

I say she, because she was a female. When she rose on her haunches, she was exactly my height. We stood face to face, so close that I could smell her. It was a rank and powerful odor. I could see into her eyes, and they were bloodshot, furious.

"Give me back my hair," she said to me. She made no sound. Nevertheless, I knew what she meant. I had stolen her hair, and I had no right to it. I held up my hand with the ring on my finger.

"Give me my hair," she said again.

I stood my ground. You must recall that this was a dream. "I want to be bear," I said. And that is true. I am an ordinary woman, a tame woman, but there is a part of me that longs to be as wild and unaccountable as a bear.

The bear didn't answer. It's always hard to know what a bear is feeling, because their facial muscles are rigid. "I want to be bear," I said again. I tried to say it in a way that would tell her that I respected her, loved her. But bears don't care about respect. She growled. I knew that if I defied her, she would tear off my face.

So I began to unwind the hair from my finger. But I went on begging. "Give me something else," I entreated her, "so I can be bear."

She raised her left paw—bears are left-pawed. The tip of one claw raked my face, slicing open my flesh. The blood began to trickle down my cheek. That's when I woke up.

I was safe. The tent was sealed. But when I put my fingers to my forehead, I found that my skin was wet with blood—and the ring was gone from my finger.

* * * * *

I told the story many times, and the children always said: "Is that true?"

"No," I said, "I had moles removed." And they said, "Oh."

But here's the real point: the children passed the story on. Not the true story—which every child forgot—but the bear story. I overheard two children talking when I was in the stacks. "She didn't really see a bear," one child said skeptically, and the second said, "Yes, she did. She said it was a true story."

Thus the surreal holds sway over the real. Fiction trumps fact. The true story was pointless, so the children forgot it. But the bear story was mysterious, numinous, and it stayed with them. Dramatic narrative creates meaning, and what is meaningful takes root in memory. That's why, when I decided to write about the Middle Ages, I chose to teach history through story. It's also why—like most librarians—I secretly favor fiction over nonfiction. Facts are necessary, facts are useful, facts are fascinating. But stories enlarge our lives. They awaken us to color and depth and pattern. They help us make sense of a random world. And the imaginary bears—which are endangered, make no mistake about that—dig their dens in the fiction section. They like the wilderness.

Last story. I have never been able to get a kite in the air. Lithe, active people get kites in the air, and if I am present, and if they are kind, they let me hold the string. I love the feeling of a kite, but I've never been able to fly one. They won't go up. I run as fast as I can, but the kite drags behind me like the broken muffler of a car.

When I turned fifty, I made up my mind that I was going to fly a kite. I went to the kite store and bought a purple and scarlet parafoil. The clerk in the kite store assured me that all I needed was a wind; small children, he promised me, could fly this kite. I cross-examined him, flattening him against the cash register. "You really think," I said sternly, "that I can get this kite in the air?" "Lady," he said to me, "you're gonna come back

here; you're gonna be screaming at me because I didn't let you buy two of 'em."

I liked his panache. I believed him. But he was wrong, because I couldn't get the kite up. I tried—twice. Bystanders averted their eyes in pity.

Two years later, I won the Newbery Medal. I decided to go to the ocean to write my speech. The ocean, I believed, would help. So I packed my suitcase: fountain pens, ink, thesaurus, wrist splints . . . At the last moment, I tossed in the kite. After all, my life had changed. I was living in a world where anything was possible.

I worked on Monday. On Tuesday, I awoke to the keening of the wind. I hurried through breakfast and headed for the shore with the kite. It was chilly, a gray morning. The ocean was greenish and savage, with the waves breathing hoarsely against the shore. Even the seagulls looked cold. I took the kite out of my pocket. As I unfolded it, the ribbons of the tail began to flutter. I could feel the kite straining to be free. I let go of her, and she soared into the air. Once she was aloft, she ceased to be a kite and became a creature: a nylon falcon, willful and capricious.

It was a miracle. She rose above my head. I gave her a little more string, and she lashed her tail like a tiger. She pirouetted, and I unwound the string. I was flying a kite. I stumbled along the shore, bemused, enchanted, disbelieving. She was smaller than a postage stamp—a motley speck in a furrowed sky.

My hand was cold. I fumbled in my pocket for a glove, and all at once I dropped the spool. It was then that I made a discovery—quite an obvious one, really, but to me it was startling and wondrous. As the spool of string rolled over the sand, the kite faltered and plummeted. Without me, she couldn't soar. She needed the tension of my hand on the string.

I am not built for speed. But I clumped over the sand as fast as I could, try-

ing to catch the uncoiling reel. A tuft of dune-grass snagged it, buying me time. I snatched the spool and yanked the string. The kite began to recover. She went on rising until there was no more thread.

“Flying a kite is a bit like being a writer. Most of the time, the words aren't right, and the prose drags on the ground. . . . When the wind comes—those are the extraordinary, the surreal times. They are worth all the other times.

I flew her for an hour before I brought her in. By now I was feeling superstitious about her, and I thought it would be good luck if I could lure her to my glove like a falcon. It was a bit like Tessa, come to think of it—I wanted to catch her before she hit the ground.

And I did. I pulled her within three feet of me, leaped skyward, and plucked her out of the air.

Why am I telling you this? Oh, because this story makes sense. First of all, the thrill of getting the kite in the air—of doing what could not be done—was like winning the Newbery. Unclouded joy, soaring disbelief. I was holding the wind in my hands.

And also, because flying a kite is a bit like being a writer. Most of the time, the words aren't right, and the prose drags on the ground. We don't know how to get the kite into the air. Flying defies gravity. If there are rules and laws that govern this flight, we don't know what they are. We only know that we have to go to the shore with the kite in our hands, in case the wind is there. When the wind comes—those are the extraordinary, the surreal times. They are worth all the other times.

Can you tolerate one more metaphor? Because I should like to draw your attention to the invisible presence, the secret

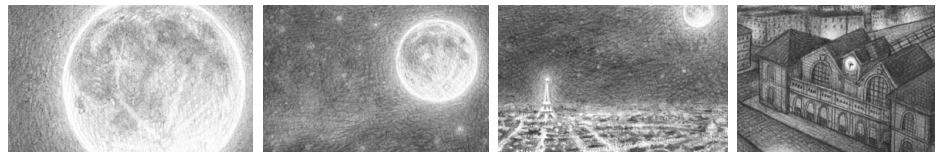
protagonist of the kite story: the string. I tell the story as if it's about me—I flew the kite. Then I personify the kite, and it's a falcon. And then I wax rhapsodic about the wind. But the real hero of the story is

the string—which stands for the connection between things. Without the string, I have no hold on the wind, and the kite falls to earth.

And this is the final, the most potent reason for telling you this story. Because the Newbery Medal isn't about my book, or any book. It's about the invisible fellowship of librarians, publishers, parents, teachers, and writers who want to give their best to children. The Newbery Medal is a symbol of our communion. We are threaded together by our commitment to children and the life of the mind. We dance together on one string.

And now it is time to say thank you, and to try to say it simply, purely, as Tessa did. Thank you for coming here tonight—for being readers, for knowing that children and books matter. Thank you, my parents, for opening the world of books to me. Thank you, my friends from the Park School, for helping me write and for helping me rejoice. Thank you, Robert Byrd, for your irresistible artwork—and thank you, Chris Paul, for your stunning sense of design. Thank you, goddesses of the Candlewick pantheon—but especially Danielle Sadler, who dredged this manuscript out of the slush pile, and Mary Lee Donovan, whose faith and compassion are heroic. And last of all, thank you, members of the Newbery committee, for feeding my bears, and granting me my heart's desire. ☺

Editor's Note: The images accompanying the text here were part of a DVD author and illustrator Brian Selznick used to introduce his acceptance speech at the Newbery/Caldecott Banquet. His finely detailed images follow protagonist Hugo Cabret upon learning that the book had won the Caldecott Medal. All images used with permission. ©Brian Selznick.



Caldecott Medal Acceptance Speech

Make the Book You Want to Make

Brian Selznick



Photo by David Serlin

Brian Selznick is the winner of the 2008 Caldecott Medal for *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*, published by Scholastic Press, an imprint of Scholastic. His acceptance speech was delivered at ALA Annual Conference in Anaheim, California, on June 29, 2008.

The speech I am about to deliver takes place in 2008, under the roofs of Anaheim. It concerns a young boy named Hugo Cabret, who once, not that long ago, starred in a book that changed his life forever.

But before we turn the page, I want you to picture yourself sitting in the darkness, like the beginning of a movie. You'll remember how you zoomed toward a hotel in the middle of the city, rushing through the halls into a crowded ballroom. On screen, you will eventually spot a boy, asleep in his secret apartment. Watch out for him, because this is Hugo Cabret. He's unaware that in a city he's never heard of, a man he doesn't know has taken the stage, and a speech all about him has just begun.

Which brings us to tonight.

The Caldecott Medal was first presented in 1938, having been established the year before by a man named Frederic G. Melcher, who in 1921 had also created the Newbery Medal. For the Caldecott, his intention was to honor the work done in picture books by American illustrators. But right from the start, there was a question of what exactly defined a picture book. In her *History of the Newbery and Caldecott Medals*, Irene Smith states that Melcher believed that the "dominant feature must be the work of the artist."

When I began work on *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*, I had no idea that the "dominant feature" would be the work of the artist; that the story would be told so prominently through images. So tonight, members of the Caldecott committee, esteemed colleagues, fellow honorees, friends, and family, I'd like to talk a little bit about how I came to make a 550-page picture book.

The story begins, as everything does, with childhood. I grew up drawing, reading books, and watching movies. I had my favorites, and among them were the artist Leonardo da Vinci, the hilarious picture book *Fortunately* by Remy Charlip, and the movie *King Kong*, produced by my grandfather's first cousin David O. Selznick. I eventually grew up and became a writer and illustrator of children's books, a job that combines all my childhood loves. But about five years ago I came to an impasse. I needed some kind of change, even though I didn't know what, exactly. Something about my work wasn't satisfying me. I stopped illustrating. Everything came to a standstill. I grew quite depressed.

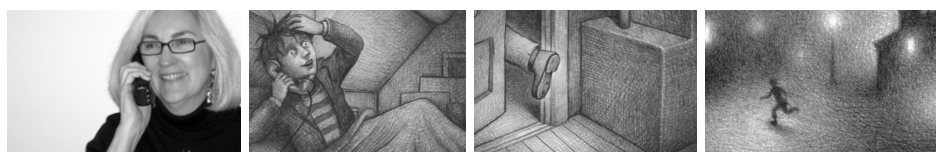
This lasted for six months.

During this time, there was one thing that graced my life and saved me from going completely crazy. I met Maurice Sendak.

He talked to me about my work, which he said showed great promise, but he steadfastly maintained that I hadn't come close to reaching my full potential yet. These words resonated with me very strongly. I think I had secretly felt the same way. I talked to him about how lost I felt, about how I didn't know what I should do next. His words were simple but powerful: "Make the book you want to make."

I didn't know what that meant at the time. I had no new ideas.

So, with nothing else to do, I decided to turn this period of my life into a sort of apprenticeship to Sendak, even if he didn't fully know it. I surrounded myself with the things he loved, like *Moby-Dick*, Mozart, and the paintings of Vincent van Gogh, and I studied Sendak's own work even more closely. I read, and I tried to





leave myself open for things to come. But as for my own work, I created nothing.

The Invention of Hugo Cabret grew out of this period in my life. I came across a book called *Edison's Eve* by Gaby Wood, where I learned that Georges Méliès, the man who made the first science-fiction movie, *A Trip to the Moon*, in 1902, had owned a collection of automata, and at the end of his life they'd been destroyed and thrown away. I had seen *A Trip to the Moon* long ago and loved it. As soon as I learned about Méliès's lost automata, I suddenly, mysteriously, imagined a boy climbing through the garbage and finding one of those broken machines. It was almost like a flash of light had gone off in my head. Here was the beginning of a story.

Perhaps this was the book that Sendak was talking about.

I was both greatly relieved and terrified, because it quickly became clear that this book would incorporate everything I'd learned about book-making up to this point, while at the same time it would be unlike anything I'd made before. I wanted to create a novel that read like a movie. What if this book, which is all about the history of cinema, somehow used the *language* of cinema to tell its story? How could I do this?

I looked to picture books for the answer.

And the secret was in the page turns.

Think about the wild rumpus in *Where the Wild Things Are*. The pictures grow until they take over the entire book and there is no more room for words. Only the reader turning the page can move the story forward. We are put in charge at the exact moment Max himself takes

charge. We become Max, all because of the page turns.

Think about my favorite childhood book, *Fortunately*, by Remy Charlip, which employs page turns so brilliantly to tell its story. We watch what happens as Ned, page by page, tries to get from New York to a surprise party in Florida. Having *fortunately* borrowed a friend's airplane, which has *unfortunately* exploded, he *fortunately* finds himself with a parachute that *unfortunately* has a hole in it, and so on. The story moves forward after each line of text, always bringing a surprise when we turn the pages.

Through my friend Dan Hurlin, I met Remy Charlip a few years ago, and we became friends. This friendship is one of the great joys of my life. I was so excited to meet the creator of *Fortunately* and to really get to know him. While I was working on *Hugo*, I tried to explain to him what my book was going to be about and how I wanted to use page turns. He said, "Oh, I wrote something about that a while ago. I'll send it to you." This brilliant little essay, called "A Page Is a Door," ends with this paragraph:

A book is a series of pages held together at one edge, and these pages can be moved on their hinges like a swinging door. . . . Of course if a door has something completely different behind it, it is much more exciting. The element of delight and surprise is helped by the physical power we feel in our own hands when we move that page or door to reveal a change in everything that has gone before, in time, place, or character. A thrilling picture book not only makes beautiful single images or sequential images, but also allows us to become aware of a

book's unique physical structure by bringing our attention, once again, to that momentous moment: the turning of the page.

In the end, Remy posed for me as Georges Méliès because of his uncanny resemblance to the filmmaker, and I'm extremely proud that he is one of the stars of *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*. Amazingly, Remy told me that he's long loved Méliès and that he even used drawings by Méliès as inspiration for pictures in one of his books. It is beautiful little coincidences like this, which occur again and again while I work, that convince me I must be on the right path.

* * * * *

I should mention here that *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* would not exist at all without my editor at Scholastic, Tracy Mack. The first book we did together, in 1995, was Pam Conrad's *Our House*, and since then Tracy has pushed me to be a better artist and writer than I ever could have been without her. From the moment I told her I wanted to write about a boy who meets a famous French filmmaker, she and editor Leslie Budnick embraced the story and the format and helped me craft every line, every word, every image. I share this award with them and will forever be grateful for their guidance and friendship. Thank you, Tracy and Leslie.

And I must extend these thoughts to art director David Saylor, who, along with his partner Charles Kreloff, made the book more beautiful than I could have imagined. I must also thank Scholastic Press for publishing *Hugo* so exquisitely. Everyone understood that even though *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* is a book about movies, and it's told *like* a movie, the main concern was still *the book*. We





wanted readers to be aware of the object in their hands, to fall in love not just with Hugo but with the book itself, the thing with covers and pages and pictures and words.

While I was making *Hugo*, I also shared early drafts with friends who helped me with the story. I have to especially thank Pam Muñoz Ryan and Sarah Weeks for their insights and comments. You helped make Hugo the man he is today.

* * * * *

This speech probably should have begun slightly differently. It should have begun with the door opening into Eeyore's Books for Children in 1989, because this is where my life in children's books really started.

The manager of the store took me under his wing, and I learned what it meant to truly be a bookseller . . . getting the right book into the right child's hand, something everyone in this room has in common in one way or another. I also learned how difficult this could be. I remember the time a customer, an elderly woman, wanted a book for her grandchild. Nothing I recommended was right: one book was too long, one too short; the pictures were not good enough, or bright enough, or engaging enough. Finally, in desperation, I said, "Here, this book is a classic. Your grandchild will love it. It's Dr. Seuss's *Green Eggs and Ham*." She looked at it and said, "They're Jewish. Do you have it without the ham?"

When I was finally ready to start making my own book, it was the manager at Eeyore's and his girlfriend who helped me first get published. The manager soon left the store and eventually became a wonderful editor himself. Steve Geck, now at Greenwillow, married his then-girlfriend

Diana Blough, now at Bloomsbury, and I must say a profound "thank you" to you both. In so many ways, I'm here tonight because of you.

Noel Silverman has been my lawyer, advisor, and very close friend since my first book was published, and I have to thank you for all your guidance and wisdom.

Thank you especially to my parents, Lynn and Roger Selznick, who have been endlessly supportive. My mom traveled with my first book in a Ziploc baggie in the trunk of her car in case she ran into anyone who hadn't seen it.

My dad, an accountant who had wanted to be an archaeologist, never liked his job, and because of this, both my parents made sure their three kids followed their dreams. As a kid, I wanted to be an artist, my sister wanted to be a kindergarten teacher, and my brother wanted to be a brain surgeon, and that's what we're each doing today.

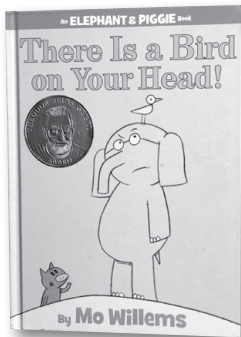
My dad died just before I began work on *Hugo*, and for a long time while I was writing the story I didn't know what was going to happen to Hugo's father. I didn't want Hugo's father to die, so I kept him alive. But there were huge holes in the story—the plot simply wasn't working. I still remember the moment when I realized what needed to happen. It was a profound and complicated moment. I was sad, but also uplifted. Hugo's father's death gave reason to the entire story. It meant everything that happens to Hugo would be connected to *his* father. I discovered, a year into writing the book, that it was his love for his father that gives the plot power and meaning and makes the story matter, for Hugo himself, for me as the creator, and hopefully, by extension, for the reader.

I certainly don't have the words to thank my boyfriend, David Serlin. I think I can only be described as *unbearable to be around* while I'm working. If he says, "Your drawings look good," I get angry because he obviously knows nothing about art and can't see all the flaws that I'm trying to fix. And if he says nothing, then I get mad at him for being unsupportive. He's really in a no-win situation, yet he manages to handle me with patience and understanding and love. He's a brilliant thinker, a respectful listener, and, well, I'll say it again, a very, very patient man. I know that I wouldn't be here tonight without you, D. Thank you.

And finally, to Karen Breen and the Caldecott Committee, thank you for this great honor. Tonight's banquet marks the seventieth anniversary of the Caldecott Medal, Frederic G. Melcher's brainchild. Melcher had wanted to define what exactly picture books were and how best to honor them. I think he would be proud to see that his intentions are still being discussed so seriously, and that we are still passionately debating what exactly a picture book *is*.

But however we choose to define or label them, I think the most important thing to remember is that kids want good books, with good stories. That's what we're here to provide—books that are serious, or funny, or true, or made up. We need to give children the books they want, and the books that they don't yet know they want. And sometimes, we have to remember, the one thing a child *really* wants in their book is a little bit of ham. 🍖





Geisel Award Acceptance Speech

Mo Willems



Mo Willems is the winner of the 2008 Theodor Seuss Geisel Award for There Is a Bird on Your Head!, published by Hyperion. His acceptance speech was delivered at ALA Annual Conference in Anaheim, California, on June 30.

Thank you.
Thank you for this prize.
This is a good prize.

This is a fun prize.

I like this prize.

It is a prize for people who make books.

I like to make books.

I like this prize and I like to make books.

I like to make books that are Easy to Read.

They are called: Easy Readers.

But Easy Readers are not Easy to Write.

They are diffic—

They are not Easy.

They are fun to make.

They are good to make.

But, not easy.

Books with easy words make me glad.

I think a good book can make you glad.

I think a good book should make you glad.

I think a good book must make you glad.

Why?

Why do I think a good book can and should and must make you glad?

I do not know. Go ask your dad.

I make books.

I have made many books.

Many, many, many books.

But these books, the books about Elephant and Piggie, are the most fun books I have ever made.

Really.

Thank you.

Thank you, Geisel Committ—

Thank you, uh, . . . guys.

Thank you, Alessandra. Thank you, Marcia. Thank you, Anne. Thank you, Cheryl.

Thank you, Trixie.

Thank you, readers.

The End. &

Forty Years Old and Still Vibrant

ALSC's Batchelder Award

Karen Nelson Hoyle

Through translated books, children's minds are opened to other cultures. However, adults are responsible for selecting, translating, publishing, and promoting these titles.

The now forty-year-old annual Mildred L. Batchelder Award recognizes the American publisher of such a translation. Members of the Batchelder Award Selection Committee select the book for the award and then publicize their choice in news releases. Batchelder, for whom the award is named, collected both the award books and the book in the original language. She donated her collection to the University of Minnesota's Children's Literature Research Collections (CLRC), and that staff continues her endeavors.

Since the award's inception in 1968, forty books have received the award. Established by the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC), the award recognizes an American publisher for a children's book (any trade book for which children up to and including age 14 are a potential audience) considered to be the most outstanding of those books originally published in a non-English language from other nations of the world and subsequently published in English in the United States during the previous year.¹

Honor Books were added in 1994, and the award can be withheld, as was the case in 1978 and 1993. Each year, a new Batchelder Award committee reviews titles that may qualify.

For "crossing the international border," an editor discovers a



Karen Nelson Hoyle is a Professor and Curator of the Children's Literature Research Collections (CLRC) in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

potential book, weighs the appropriateness of the subject, and then deals with translation issues. Selection for translation and publication of these books in the United States that may eventually win the award are tasks undertaken by the publishing staff, but aided frequently by agents. Book fairs in Frankfurt and Bologna serve the publishers well in promoting books and making them available for perusal by editors such as Beverly Horowitz, Mark Aronson, and Richard W. Jackson.

Horowitz, an editor at Delacorte, said, "I believe we need to broaden the minds of our U.S. young people."² Married to a Frenchman, Horowitz often peruses bookstores while traveling. For example, she found the book that eventually would become, in translation, *The Pull of the Ocean* by Jean-Claude Mourlevat.

Executive Editor Francoise Bui at Delacorte, also fluent in French, discovered *The Shadows of Ghadames* by Joëlle Stolz. Horowitz noted, "Between us, we search and seek the best of what is out there to acquire for the U.S. market. I am always actively buying foreign novels when I am in Bologna and Frankfurt."³

Marc Aronson, editor for Cricket Books, proposed to the publisher that Karin Gündisch's German original be published as *How I Became an American*. Although she had never visited the States, the Romanian-German author based her story on family history about a boy who immigrated to Ohio. For Harry Kullman's *Stridhåsten*, eventually translated as *The Battle Horse*, ten American publishers declined to consider it for publication before Richard Jackson, vice president and editor-in-chief at Bradbury Press, and his partner Robert Verrone, offered to commission a translation and publish the book. Only one book that received the award was translated from a Moscow periodical, rather than a book—"Listy Kamennoi Knigi" became *An Old Tale Carved Out of Stone*.

On occasion, agencies such as the International Children's Book Service in Copenhagen or the Japan Foreign-Rights Centre

become intermediaries. Virginia Allen Jensen, owner of the Copenhagen agency, wrote,

Sometimes in a conversation at a dinner party or a reception at a book fair, an author's name or a book title comes up, and several editors will make a note of it and follow up with a request for a reading copy. It even happens that a brief conversation in the aisle at a book fair is enough to raise an editor's curiosity. Here I should note that it is much harder to interest an editor in 'older' titles than in new upcoming titles and authors.⁴

The subject matter of these forty award books can be divided (in descending order) into historical fiction, contemporary life, fantastic realism, and folktale. Of the twenty-four historical fiction titles, fifteen deal with war or pending war. *The Winter When Time Was Frozen* describes the German World War II occupation of the Netherlands and *An Innocent Soldier* portrays a participant in Napoleon's campaign to Moscow. The latter is written by Josef Holub, who was himself conscripted into the German army as a seventeen-year-old. In a village archive, Holub read about one in three hundred of fifteen thousand who survived the Moscow campaign. Rudolf Frank's *No Hero for the Kaiser*, about a fourteen-year-old boy named Jan in World War I, was published in Germany in the 1930s and publicly burned by Hitler because it was deemed to have anti-war sentiment. It re-emerged in the United States in 1986. Another nine titles are historical fiction with subjects other than war, including *The Shadows of Ghadames*, in which eleven-year-old Malika acquires new understandings about her nineteenth-century Libyan village.

Nine of these titles about contemporary life reached the award pinnacle. Daniella Carmi set her book *Samir and Yonatan* in an Israeli hospital ward. Five blend fantasy and realism, including *The Pull of the Ocean*, which is reminiscent of Charles Perrault's fairy tale "Tom Thumb," while the most recent winner, *Brave Story*, depicts the boy Wataru, who enters a videogame. The one folktale among the award books is a traditional cat-and-mouse story.

Over the years, the Batchelder award books originated primarily with titles published first in Western European languages. Exceptions are five titles in Hebrew by the same author, three titles from Japanese and one Russian. The German language dominates, with fourteen award winners originating in the language. The first Batchelder Award title was Erich Kästner's *The Little Man*, which was translated from *Der Kleine Mann* by James Kirkup.

Israeli author Uri Orlev is the author of four winning books, all translated by Hillel Halkin. In *The Island on Bird Street*, Alex lives in an abandoned building in Poland after his mother disappears and his father is drafted

into the German army. *The Man from the Other Side* is based on a true story about a boy living in a Warsaw Ghetto. In *The Lady with the Hat*, World War II survivors search for a country in which they and relatives are welcome. Almost twenty years passed between the first and the fourth Orlev book, *Run Boy Run*, about eight-year-old Srulik, who survives the Holocaust while living in the Warsaw Ghetto.

Alki Zei, born and raised in Greece, authored three books that won the Batchelder Award; the author has since lived in Russia, Uzbekistan, France, and Italy.⁵ Her translator, Edward Fenton, is an American who spent time in Greece, and he translated this trio of books within a ten-year period. *Wildcat Under Glass* originated in Athens as *To kaplani tis Vitrinas* and *Petros' War* was *Ho Megalos Peripatos tou Petrou* in Greek. Rather than in Greece, the author's *The Sound of the Dragon's Feet*, was set in pre-revolutionary Russia.

Danish author Bjarne Reuter and Josef Holub tie, with two award books each, and subject matter differs substantively for both. The humorous *Buster's World* by Reuter depicts a child eager to perform magic tricks for his classmates, while at home he faces an alcoholic father. Reuter's *The Boys of St. Petri* describes Danish teenagers who use sabotage against the Nazi occupation in 1942.

Joseph Holub's book *The Robber and Me*, published in 1997, describes how Boniface meets the gentle Robber Knapp in the village of Graab, while the book published only eight years later, *An Innocent Soldier*, reveals the horrors of war.

CLRC at the University of Minnesota Libraries endeavors to collect the original language edition as well as the award book, author and translator manuscripts, and related correspondence. The collection holds only a single author partial manuscript—a first draft in Swedish shorthand by Astrid Lindgren.



The 2008 Batchelder Committee, left to right: Susan Poulter, Ginny Moore Kruse, chair Fran Ware, Annette Goldsmith, and Anna Healy.
Photo courtesy of Ginny Moore Kruse

Ronja rövardotter, translated by Patricia Crampton as *Ronia, the Robber's Daughter*, tells the story of a courageous girl who supports her father's band until she becomes friendly with his rival's son. Translators' manuscripts are also in the collection for some fifteen titles.

Several books possess titles, character names, and text literally translated to the English language, while others change significantly. Some translator holograph, or handwritten, drafts are in the collection, such as Ann Conrad Lammer's handwritten first draft for Jörg Steiner's *Rabbit Island*. Alison Gode, translator of *Pulga* by S. R. Van Iterson, was paid \$15 for translating each one thousand words in 1970. While most translators are identifiable as individuals, *Hiroshima No Pika* was "translated through Kurita-Bando Literary Agency." In this story, a seven-year-old girl faces the aftermath of the Hiroshima bombing.

Translators often struggle with many aspects of the text, from title to characters to English word choice. Rika Lesser's translation from the original of *A Hand Full of Stars* from the German *Eine Hand Voller Sterne* is a good example of what barriers must be overcome. In her "Notes and Comments for Editor Donna," Lesser raises questions about character names, dates, money, the metric system, street names, style, and other issues. She struggles with three different spellings in authoritative reference books for "Abdülhamid." The translator requests editorial advice about which is better, "Josef" or "Joseph" and "Georg" or "George." Then she ponders whether the closest meaning of the word "stolperbein" is "stumbling" or "bum" leg.⁶ In preparing *The Sound of the Dragon's Feet*, Edward Fenton typed X across words and phrases, while he marked in ink other words on his double-spaced carbon typescript, proposing a substitute "casual way" for his first choice, "indifferently" in chapter 1.⁷

The titles *Hiroshima No Pika* and *Rose Blanche* remain identical in both editions; the latter was co-published in 1985 by both Editions in Lausanne and Creative Education in Mankato, Minnesota, with the same title. Peter Härtling's *Crutches* was translated literally by Elizabeth D. Crawford from the German *Krücke*. Among those that are direct translations are Hans Baumann's *In the Land of Ur: The Discovery of Ancient Mesopotamia* from *Im Lande Ur; Die Entdeckung Altmesopotamiens*. Similarly, Ruth Hürlimann's retelling of the Brothers Grimm tale, *Katze und Maus in Gessellschaft* is translated directly by Anthea Bell as *The Cat and Mouse Who Shared a House*. This British citizen translated books by Reuter as well as Christine Nöstlinger's *Konrad*.

In contrast, other titles change significantly. Translator Edward Fenton used the working title *Beside the Railway Tracks* for Alki Zei's *The Sound of Dragon's Feet*. A literal translation of Kazumi Yumoto's book transcribed as *Natsu No Niwa* would be *Summer's Garden*, but it was titled in the United States as *The Friends*.

In *The Apprentice* by Pilar Molina Llorente, translator Robin Longshaw retains the boys' names Piero and the narrator Arduino, but changes their companion from "Simon" to "Marco." The individual who made changes to the typescript



The Apprentice by Pilar Molina Llorente, translated from Spanish by Robin Longshaw, published by Farrar, 1993.

using blue ink and red pencil is not identified. The word "shadows" is changed to "shadings," "pantaloons" is changed to "breeches," "knapsack" to "satchel," and "fabric" to "tapestry."⁸

Character names may either remain the same or change. The boy in Austrian Christine Nöstlinger's

Konrad retains his name in the American edition, despite the more common spelling beginning with the letter C. However, translator Lise Sømme McKinnon substituted "Teddy" for the Norwegian boy's nickname "Bamse," often used for a teddy bear toy in Norway, in *Don't Take Teddy* taken from Babbis Friis-Baastad's *Ikke ta Bamse*. A few pages of her draft exist in the CLRC with changes marked in magenta and two shades of blue ink. For example, on page nine of a draft of the first chapter "The Handball Game," the original word choice "guarded" becomes "blocked."⁹

Translators struggle with many aspects of the text. For *In the Land of Ur*, Stella Humphries' translation carbon copy is marked with blue ink, changing a description of a thunderstorm from "bathing" to "drenching them in livid green," substituting "ferryman" for "boatman," and "shot" to "wounded in the upper thigh."¹⁰

When George Blecher and his wife Lone Thygesen-Blecher worked on Ulf Nilsson's *If You Didn't Have Me*, one translated on yellow foolscap paper and tried "puttra . . . white puffers" and "bubbles" as the appropriate words. Then the spouse jotted down a series of pages with questions and a play on words, "*om ni inte hade mig*."¹¹

Copy editing is in evidence in Cathy Hirano's translator manuscript for *The Friends*, a book about three young boys intrigued by death and dying. In chapter eight, "ten centimeters" is changed to "five inches" and in chapter eleven, "ten meters" changes to "twenty feet." In chapter eight, "window" is eliminated from the original translation, "screen window." Chapter 12's expression "Eh?," meaning "what?" is substituted by "Huh." Chapter 11 includes word choices from "pachinko parlor" to "pinball parlor" and "bank tellers" to "bank clerks." In chapters 12, 13, and 15, "toilet" converts to "bathroom." In chapter 13, "keeper" changes to "goalie" and the phrase, "slashes our wounds with ointment" changes to "pours disinfectant on our wounds." In chapter 14, "futon" is replaced by "covers" and in 15, "apartment block" is changed to "apartment complex." "Cicadas" is replaced by "insects" and "sieve" by "colander." Yet the locations remain constant, such as "Hokkaido," "Aibetsu," and "Toma."¹²

Dutch author Siny Rose Van Iterson, who lived in Colombia, was the author of *Pulga*, about a street urchin in the Bogota slums who lands a job. The translator Alison Gode for the original *De Adjudant van de Vrachwagen* proposed to her American

editor Connie Epstein that *Pulga* would be a better title than *The Teamster's Helper* or the working title, *The Truckdriver's Assistant*. In addition, she recommended for the American edition a map of Colombia similar to that used for the end papers of the Dutch book. Heeding her suggestion, the editor promised a map. Correspondence reveals that during the time in 1970 when she was translating the work, her husband died. As his business was Interlingua Translations and he was a member of the American Translator's Association, he could have been helpful to her.¹³

The literal translation for Hans Peter Richter's *Damals war es Friedrich* could have been "Unfortunately, it is Friedrich," but it was published in the States as *Friedrich*. Edite Kroll's translator's manuscript is an early draft, with multiple changes in pen and pencil on each typed page. Much of the text is tightened, with phrases crossed out and changed, such as "landlord" for "owner." The carbon final copy is clean, with only a few interpolations.¹⁴ Maryka and Raphael Rudnik made a few changes in their translation from Dutch of Els Pelgrom's *The Winter When Time Was Frozen*. "Sledding" substitutes for the first proposed phrase, "sleighting in the dark."¹⁵

Blecher and Thygesen-Blecher translated the book *The Battle Horse* by Harry Kullman, writing the first draft by hand in pencil or blue ink and correcting with red ink on yellow lined paper. Author and translator corresponded with one another. The Swedish editor forwarded a letter with page numbers and related questions. Kullman responded in detail, on four pages of single spaced lines, to queries about a sailboat, the movies, class differences, and conveyed the fact that many cows in Sweden are named "Rosa." In a letter dated September 17, 1980, sent from Stockholm, Kullman wrote,

Dear George... Your way of translating the tricky points sounds extremely fine to me and I hope that it will sound better in the American language than it does in Swedish! I am very proud that my book has fallen into so competent hands.¹⁶

When the translator requested a map of the setting in Stockholm, Kullman sketched a map with labels in Swedish and English prior to George's visit and invited him to stay in his own home.

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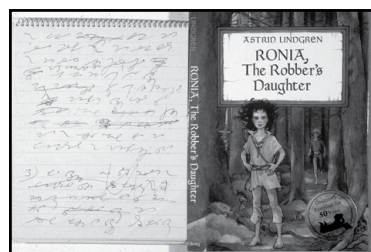
The American publisher must consider sales and how the appearance of a book will appeal to the librarian, teacher, or parent who will purchase the book. The child or young adult must be attracted to the translated book. Jacket and interior illustrations may be replicas of the original or redone by an American artist.

German artist Ruth Hürlimann's picture book illustrations in both *Katze und Maus in Gessellschaft* and *The Cat and Mouse Who Shared a House* appear exactly the same in format and art. Likewise, the American version of *Hiroshima No Pika* utilizes not only the same title, but replicates the picture book art. Kästner's *Der Kleine Mann* has the same jacket image in its

translation, *The Little Man*.

Some American artists depart significantly in subject matter, medium, and style to interpret the text. While the Danish Cecil Bødker's *Leoparden* is faithfully translated as *The Leopard*, its new dust jacket by Elzia Moon, with a wide-nosed child, seems inappropriate for an Ethiopian boy. Sometimes the cover and interior illustrations in the two books differ remarkably.

For *Krücke*, she abstracted a boy's face and a single leg with one crutch, superimposed on a red street map. The American Wendell Minor's art bears no relationship to that of the original illustrator Susanne Berner. He drew a boy wearing hat and coat and holding a blanket against a background of a bombed city, train engine, and rubble for the American edition *Crutches*.

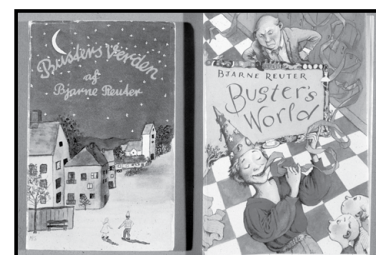


Ronja, The Robber's Daughter by Astrid Lindgren, translated from Swedish by Patricia Crampton, published by Viking Press, 1983.

Another example is Ilon Wikland's cover for the Swedish *Ronja rövardotter* by Lindgren, depicting a girl with a bow and arrow and a castle in the distance, creating a mood of fantasy. In contrast, *Ronja, The Robber's Daughter* jacket art by Caldecott Award-winning illustrator Trina Schart Hyman portrays a wild-appearing yet glamorous girl with hands on hips in the foreground and a boy running toward her through the woods in the background.

While Wolfgang Rudelius drew a nondescript boy standing next to his bicycle for *Eine Hand Voller Sterne*, Barbara Roman instead drew with pencil on grained paper the teenage protagonist, his Uncle Salim, and girlfriend Nadia against a silhouette of mosque and minaret, much more suggestive of Damascus, Syria, for the translated *A Hand Full of Stars*.

In the Danish edition of *Busters verden*, Mette Svarre depicts a boy fleeing and girl at a standstill, viewed from the back with houses and church nearby in her night scene. *Buster's World* illustrator Paul O. Zelinsky presents a completely different scene with the boy wearing the hat of a magician performing a trick while the angry teacher and fascinated pupils look on. Zelinsky tried several positions for the jacket, and those studies reside in the CLRC. Some books, such as the Japanese edition of *The Friends*, lack illustrations in the original. For the jacket art in the American edition, Tatsuro Kiuchi painted three boys wearing Western-type shirts and short pants with a soccer



Busters Verden by Bjarne Reuter, published in Denmark by Branner og Koch, 1980 (left); *Buster's World*, translated from Danish by Anthea Bell, published by Dutton, 1989 (right).

ball on the ground nearby. This scene familiar to children might encourage them to read the book.

Publicizing the Batchelder Award

The American Library Association (ALA) has publicized the award since its founding. The booklist with or without annotations has been published in various formats. Barbara Elleman compiled a list of books that had won the award from its founding through 1990.¹⁷ Joan Irene Stidham Nist analyzed the content of the award books for her doctoral dissertation while at the University of Alabama,¹⁸ and she summarized her findings in *Bookbird*.¹⁹ ALA occasionally publishes a pamphlet listing the books.²⁰ In 1998, a list of awardees through 1996 was published in *The Reading Teacher*.²¹

Batchelder was a children's librarian and then the executive secretary of the Children's Services Division (now ALSC) of ALA. Her work, which spans three decades, continues to have international influence. She exercised leadership in personally acquiring award books given in her name from many lands both in original language editions and in English translations when possible. In this effort she corresponded extensively with publishers, editors, authors, and librarians around the world.

While her official ALSC correspondence resides in the ALA archives at the University of Illinois in Champaign, much of her personal international exchange is at the CLRC. She selected this library as the permanent home for both her books and archival holdings.²²

The CLRC staff now routinely acquires translated titles in English and the original counterpart edition, frequently assisted by the American publisher receiving the award. Visitors can view the thirty American awardees and their international counterpart books, author and translator manuscripts, illustrations, and correspondence pertinent to them. Some research patrons may read both versions for comparative study and examine related materials. A scholar may glean information about the roles and decision-making processes of author, translator, artist, and editor.

Only three publishers have won the award five times: Dutton, Random House and its imprints (Delacorte, Pantheon, and Dial), and the now defunct Morrow/Lothrop. Houghton Mifflin won four times with one author, Uri Orlev, and Scholastic, with Chicken House and Arthur A. Levine imprints, won three times. However, with few exceptions, the book eventually goes out of print. Cornelia Funke's *The Thief Lord* is an exception, and there is an option for a forthcoming movie.

The forty Batchelder Award books with their original non-English-language editions provide the basis for comparison and contrast in both text and art. Translators seem sensitive to the American readers and make changes appropriate to American children. Artists, too, may create dust jackets that communicate to the new land and culture. Concern for replicating the

language, including the title, character names and phrases, and visual art must be balanced against child appeal and readability. ☺

Portions of this article were presented at the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading, and Publishing conference July 11–14, 2007, in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

For a comprehensive list of all the Batchelder Award titles, visit www.ala.org/ala/alsc/awardsscholarships/literaryawds/batchelderaward/batchelderaward.cfm.

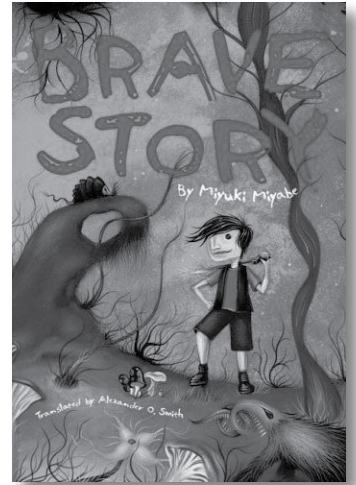
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Brave Story

Not Just Another Epic for Younger Readers

Susan A. M. Poulter



Stop me if you've heard this one. It's a children's book about a boy whose home life is unhappy at best. He meets someone who ushers him into a world he could only imagine, and there he makes friends with humans and nonhumans alike. Ultimately he goes on a quest that he must complete if he wants to change the world. If he fails, he will die.

Sound familiar? No, it's not the Harry Potter saga. It's *Brave Story*, Miyuki Miyabe's stunning book for young readers. Just keeping track of the many versions of this story can keep a slightly obsessed fan busy. There's the Japanese-language novel that started it all (ブレイブ・ストーリー *bureibu sutōrī*), published in 2003; then there are the seventeen (so far) volumes of Japanese-language manga based on the novel, with publication beginning in 2004; the animated film released in Japan in 2006; and the video games (*Brave Story: My Dreams and Wishes* for Nintendo DS, *Brave Story: Wataru's Adventure* for Sony PS2, and *Brave Story: New Traveler* for Sony's PSP, all released in Japan in July 2006).

Tokyopop began publishing the English-language translation of the manga in June 2007, followed by the U.S. debut of *Brave Story: New Traveler* in July, followed in August by VIZ Media's publication of the novel's translation. There are even action figures based on the characters as they appear in the film.

In January, *Brave Story's* publisher, VIZ Media, was named the winner of ALSC's 2008 Mildred L. Batchelder Award. The award



After more than a decade in academic librarianship, **Susan A. M. Poulter** has been a Children's Services Librarian in Nashville, Tennessee, since 2000. She served on the 2008 Batchelder Award Committee.

is intended to encourage publishers to seek out great children's books from around the world and is awarded to the publisher of the book deemed to be the most outstanding children's book originally published in a foreign language in a foreign country, and subsequently translated into English for the American market in the previous year.

Now, why would children want to read this massive, 816-page tome? Let's take a look at the story in a bit more detail.

Wataru is just trying to make it to summer vacation; he gets to spend a whole month with his grandparents at the shore this year, not just a couple of weeks. There's something going on with his parents, but eleven-year-old Wataru isn't sure just what is happening. His father is gone a lot, and his mother spends a lot of time crying.

Near a temple in his neighborhood is a never-completed building. Construction has stopped, and everyone says the building is haunted. Walking past the building on his way home from cram school (a specialized private school with classes in the evening and on weekends, usually focused on preparing for high school or college entrance exams) one evening, Wataru stops when he sees the padlocked plastic over the entrance move; then he sees a hand inside. Like any curious, adventure-seeking boy, Wataru goes inside. He meets a hooded man in front of a glowing door who questions Wataru about why he has come; as it becomes clear that Wataru does not know what is happening, the man casts a spell to gradually erase Wataru's memory of the encounter.

When Wataru tells his beloved Uncle Lou about his adventure, Uncle Lou wants to go back near the same time another evening to see if the wizard is there. Uncle Lou gets a phone call and leaves Wataru alone for a few minutes; Wataru finds not only the glowing door, which is now open, but also Mitsuru, a new and

mysterious boy at his school. When Mitsuru runs through the door, Wataru runs after him and finds himself falling through the warm air. After hitting the ground, Wataru sees a strange creature about the size of a dog with a corkscrew face lined with sharp fangs. Just before the creature and his companions attack, Wataru is flown off by a large talking bird.

The bird explains many things to Wataru; that the *Porta Nectere*, the doorway through which Wataru came, is open only for ninety days every ten years; that this land is called Vision; and that Wataru must return to his world because only Travelers authorized by the Gatekeeper may enter Vision. Wataru's memories of this latest adventure gradually fade.

By now Wataru knows that his parents are divorcing; his father has moved out and has a new fiancée, and his mother is just trying to cope with the changes. One night, Wataru is awakened by Mitsuru, that mysterious boy from his school. Mitsuru tells him that Wataru's mother has turned on the gas in the apartment because she wants to die with Wataru. Mitsuru also gives him a Traveler's Mark that will allow him to travel freely in Vision, and explains that Vision is created in the imaginations of the people in the real world, but to enter Vision one must want to "change his fate more than life itself—to get back something that was lost."¹

After turning off the gas, Wataru heads back to the incomplete building, following Mitsuru's instructions on finding the *Porta Nectere* and entering Vision. And this is where things get really interesting.

Wataru's quest is to find five gemstones that will fit into the handle of a sword he is given, then to make his way to the Tower of Destiny. Along the way, he learns that only one of the Travelers, either Mitsuru or himself, will complete his quest; the other will be the Halnera sacrifice and never return to his real world. While there are two Travelers, there is only one final stone.

Other Award Winners

The lists of Batchelder Award winners and honor books can serve as selection tools, expanding our collections and expanding our horizons. The *Nicholas* books by Gosciny and Sempé, named Batchelder Honor Books in 2006 and 2008, are wonderful read-alouds to share with younger children, who will recognize their own antics in these timeless short stories; children looking forward to adulthood may welcome the different perspective provided by Joëlle Stolz's *The Shadows of Ghadames*, winner of the Batchelder Award in 2005; and even adults will be moved by the 1983 Batchelder Award winner, Toshi Maruki's stunning *Hiroshima No Pika*.

Established in 1966, the Batchelder is one of ALSC's older and lesser-known awards, but its significance should only increase in a time of globalization. The award can guide librarians toward quality books that reflect the cultures of our increasingly diverse service populations, and open the eyes of all our library users. ☺

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Batchelder Award Acceptance Speech

Eric Searleman, editor at VIZ Media

Publishing translated fiction is a tricky business. You have to walk a fine line between respecting the source material and respecting the reader. As an editor who wrestles with this dilemma every day, I am deeply honored that the Association for Library Service to Children has recognized *Brave Story* with its Batchelder Award for 2008.

I was the editor of *Brave Story*, but there are a lot of people responsible for its success. Masumi Washington was the person who read the book in Japanese and acquired it for VIZ Media. Thanks to her, *Brave Story* is reaching a worldwide audience. Alexander Smith did a fantastic job translating Miyuki Miyabe's prose into English. Dan May gave us a wonderful and surreal cover painting, and Courtney Utt outdid herself with the book's overall design.

But of course, most of the credit must go to the author herself. Miyuki Miyabe is a wonderfully inventive writer who is just now gaining an audience outside of Japan. We at VIZ Media are proud to have had the opportunity to work with her, and hopefully we'll continue working with her in the future.

So, for everyone involved, I'd like to again thank the ALSC for honoring us with the Batchelder Award. This will undoubtedly inspire us for years to come as we continue bringing great Japanese fiction to the U.S.

Let's Pretend

Exploring the Value of Play at the Library

Rebecca Bane

For several years, educators and psychologists have studied the relationship between pretend play and children and the possible effects of play upon their mental development. Many such studies suggest a causal relationship between play and the evolution of cognitive and linguistic processes.

Here, we address the importance of pretend play in the daily lives of young children, referencing four sources who suggest the value of childhood play experiences. Readers are reminded that books can be stepping stones to play experiences. The major portion of this article is devoted to Let's Pretend, a program held at the Hughes Main Library in Greenville, South Carolina. This program is geared toward children two to five years old accompanied by parents or caregivers.

Good news! You're three years old, and your parents just bought a new dishwasher. Are you happy that you won't have to wash dishes by hand anymore? Of course not, silly! You never washed dishes, anyway—just sloshed water in the sink until your fingertips shriveled. But you are simply amazed at the huge box the dishwasher came in. Oh, the fun and adventures you will have in that box as it becomes a playhouse, a castle, a race car, or even a puppet theater!



Rebecca Bane (pictured) is a professional photographer and a former Youth Services Library Assistant at the Hughes Main Library of the Greenville County (S.C.) Library System. **Gail Moore**, a Children's Librarian in the Greenville County Library System, edited the manuscript.



Detective I. Brown (Gail Moore) pretends to search for clues at the library.

Bad news! You're four years old, and your parents don't need a new dishwasher. You have no big box to enjoy, and you're hungry for adventure.

Good news! Your local library has great books and big boxes. You can listen to stories about exciting travels, then blast off in a space ship, cross the prairie in a covered wagon, ride the rails in your locomotive, and hibernate in a cozy cave. You are about to embark upon an adventure, a journey of imagination. Welcome to Let's Pretend. You're invited!

Why It's Important

How important is pretend play to a child's development? Educators and psychologists have performed numerous studies attempting to answer this question. According to Doris Bergen, a professor of educational psychology at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, "There is a growing body of evidence to suggest that high-quality pretend play is an important facilitator of perspective taking and later abstract thought, that it may facilitate higher-level cognition, and that there are clear links between pretend play and social and linguistic competence."¹

In today's fast-paced society, children's lives have become so structured, their daily schedules so regimented, there is a decreasing amount of room left for playtime. Even babies and toddlers are rushed to achieve precociously as evidenced by the creation of computer software, toys, and audiovisual materials focused on the early achievement of these youngsters.

Fred Rogers, in the introduction to his book, *Mister Rogers' Playtime*, expresses his opinion on the value of play. "Child's play' is one of the most misleading phrases in our language. People often use it to suggest something trivial, but. . . . When children play, they're working . . . on learning about themselves, about other people, and about the world around them."²

Books Are Involved

Books can have an integral role in facilitating play experiences. Reading books to children opens up many avenues to explore the world through pretend play. In a 2005 *Parents* magazine article, David McKay Wilson writes, "To make up her own thoughts, a child needs a base of knowledge about the world (she can't pretend she's a space traveler or a ballerina unless she knows what an astronaut or a dancer does), and she needs

inspiration. Books are an ideal way to supply both of these building blocks."³ Thus books stimulate the imagination, and imagination fosters literacy development.

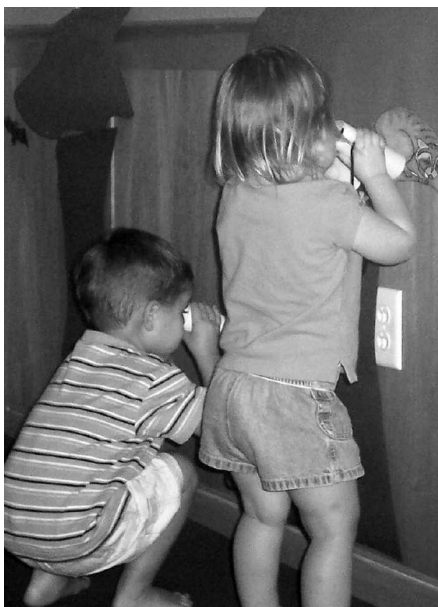
The Program

The Greenville County Library System has developed a program called Let's Pretend to bring the world of make-believe to the library. Let's Pretend is held once a month at the Hughes Main Library for children ages 2-5 accompanied by parents or caregivers. We use books to guide children through play that focuses on the imagination and fosters the development of thinking, language, social, and physical skills. In addition, parents are shown ways to convert common household items into playthings. Every month a different theme is presented. We begin with a couple of books, songs, and sometimes finger plays and flannel board stories. This modified story time introduces children to the pretend play that follows it.

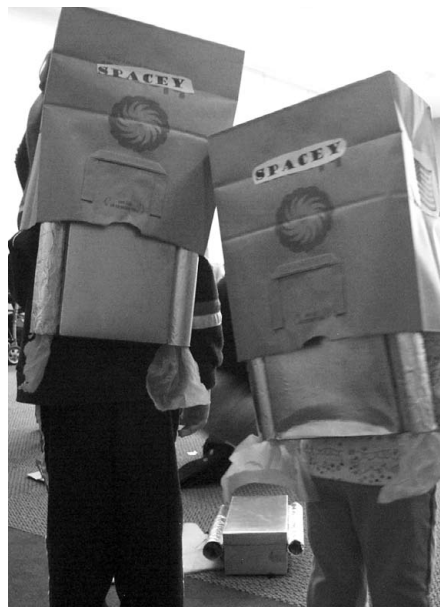
Going Camping

One month our theme was Let's Pretend Camping. The children did not enter a program room but rather a camping scene complete with a tent, forest of animals, fishing pond, and campfire. The children sat in the tent and around the fire while listening to camping stories and tales about forest animals. In between stories, children participated in action songs including "A-Camping We Will Go" from *Barney's Favorites*, volume 1 (Capitol, 1993). Children were then given sheets and chairs to create their own tents.

After the campsite setup was complete, we went on a nature walk. Using binoculars made of toilet paper rolls, we looked for animals in the forest. The trees, made of butcher paper cut-outs,



Paper trees and animals teach about forest life.



Who doesn't want to be an alien? Meet Spacey.



Cardboard tubes create a jungle hut.



Welcome to the jungle.

were positioned at child's level along the wall. Pictures of animals were placed at various locations throughout the forest.

When we returned to the campsite, we went fishing. In a tackle box made from an egg carton, children found their paper-clip hooks, which they attached to fishing poles (made of wooden dowels). The children took turns fishing in a blue butcher paper pond full of magnetic fish that would stick to the paper clips. As each child caught a fish, he used the campfire (made of criss-crossed logs and orange and red tissue paper) to grill it.

Once everyone had a "full belly," we prepared for nightfall. The overhead lights were turned down, and we brought out the flashlights. Since fireflies come out at twilight, the children took turns with the flashlights, participating in a firefly freeze dance. While the song "Fireflies" from *Anna Moo Crackers* (Good Moo's, 1998) played, children danced around in the dark with flashlights, pretending to be fireflies. When the music stopped, the overhead lights came on, and each child with a flashlight gave it to the next child to play. Then the room lights would dim, and the fireflies would come out again. We continued to replay the song until everyone had a chance to be a firefly. This ended our day of camping.

The Setup

The entire Let's Pretend program lasts approximately forty-five minutes. The story time takes about ten to fifteen minutes followed by fifteen minutes of guided play in which we pretend together and the props are introduced. The last fifteen minutes are left for open play and socialization for children and parents.

Our Success

Let's Pretend has been a huge success from the start. More than eighty people attended each of the first three programs. Because we're more interested in quality than quantity, the program is now available by registration only. We register up to twenty-five children but allow a waiting list. Not only are the

children eager for the next program, but the parents also enjoy the experience and love to get new ideas for pretend play at home. We have received positive feedback from parents about the ideas they have acquired.

When creating the props, I try to make enough for each registered child to facilitate participation. I usually let the children take their props with them at the end of the program. Parents tell me that their children enjoy playing with toilet paper rolls and egg cartons just as much, or more, than their expensive store-bought toys. Children and parents also enjoy the time spent together making homemade toys from the ideas presented to them during Let's Pretend.

The recognition of the importance of pretend play and the facilitation of opportunities for its occurrence can have a lasting affect on childhood experiences. Children do need to become knowledgeable individuals, but this can begin with the imagination. According to L. Frank Baum, in the introduction to his book, *The Lost Princess of Oz*:



Rebecca Bane plays wizard during a Let's Pretend program.

Imagination has given us the steam engine, the telephone, the talking-machine and the automobile, for these things had to be dreamed of before they became realities. So I believe that dreams—day dreams, you know, with your eyes wide open and your brain-machinery whizzing—are likely to lead to the betterment of the world. The imaginative child will become the imaginative man or woman most apt to create, to invent, and therefore to foster civilization.⁴

So fasten your seatbelt, and let's pretend! 🎪

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A Personal Visit with Ashley Bryan

Cora Phelps Dunkley

Renowned and internationally recognized children's author, illustrator, historian, and philanthropist Ashley Bryan recently spent time with Cora Phelps Dunkley and her husband, Paul, when an unexpected change was made in Ashley's travel plans. The three reminisced about previous times together, and Ashley shared personal stories that related to some of his books, presented an impromptu program at Paul's school, and was the featured speaker at the Alice Smith Lecture Program, an annual event sponsored by the School of Library and Information Science at the University of South Florida, Tampa.

I have more than one reason to be excited about Ashley Bryan's recent trip to Tampa. What may have been most meaningful was his desire to always arrive in the place where he is to present a day in advance to relax, have dinner with sponsors, and perhaps spend time working on one of his many ongoing projects. Consequently, his arrival time in Tampa was to be on Saturday afternoon for a Sunday evening program.

But then fortune smiled on me—a change in travel plans afforded my husband, Paul, and me the pleasure of offering the hospitality of our home in place of a lonely hotel room.

Paul met Ashley in 2005 at the Ashley Bryan Art Series Celebration sponsored by the Youth Services Department of the

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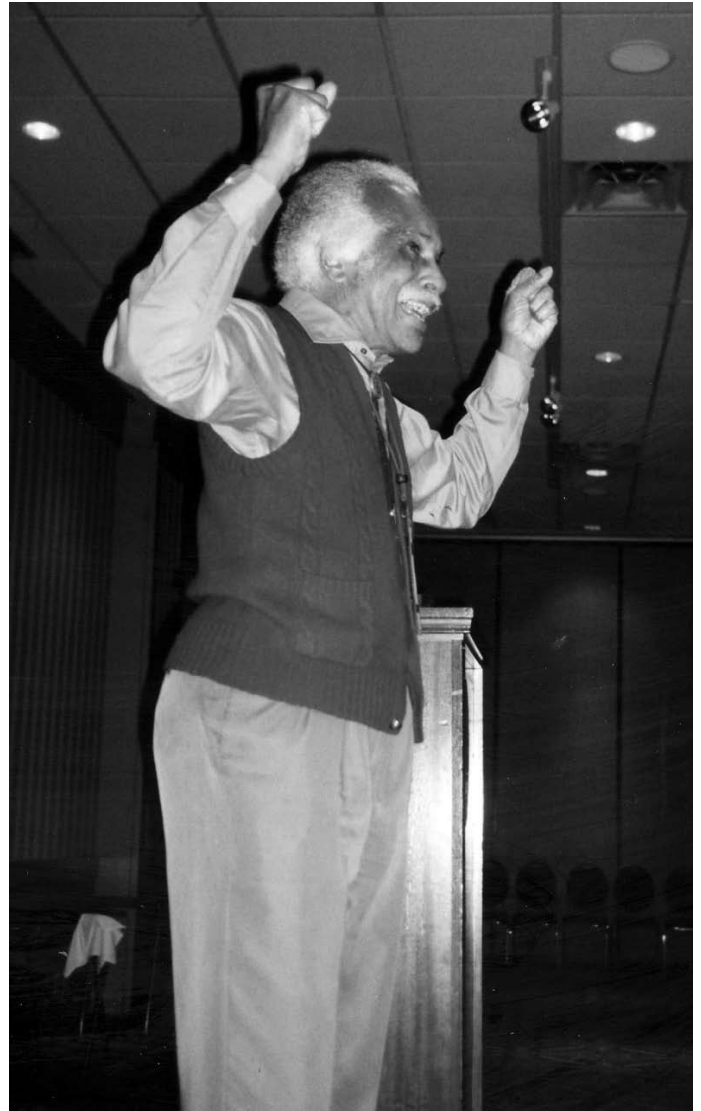
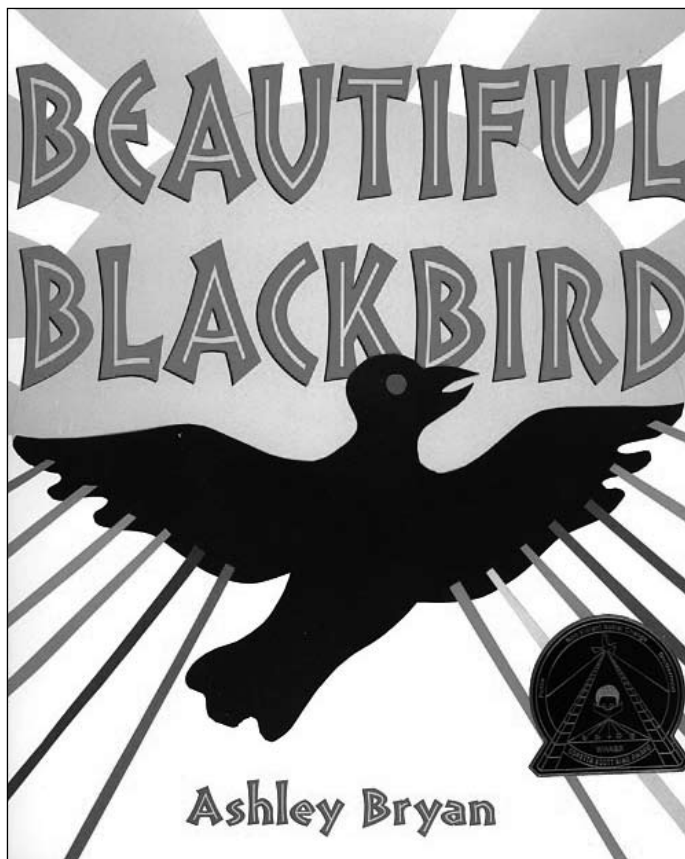
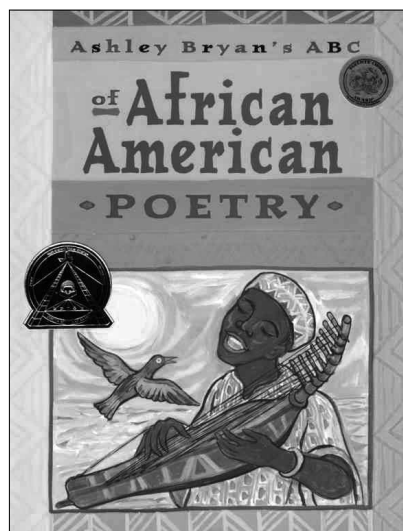


Photo courtesy of Karen Nelson Hoyle



African American Research Library and Cultural Center in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Both Paul and Ashley have personal connections to the Caribbean homeland, and each enjoyed sharing stories of years past.



I've known Ashley for many years and have attended several of his presentations. As a member of ALA's Coretta Scott King (CSK) Book Award Committee since 2003, I was in the audience when he delivered his acceptance speech and received the 2004 CSK Illustrator Award for *Beautiful Blackbird*.

Since Paul and I were not strangers to Ashley, he delightfully accepted our offer to

spend time in our home. We assured him there would be no interference with time he wished to spend working on a new project. Ashley has a philosophy about time and reiterated it as he so often does when one asks him about the open-door policy of his home. "I only have this life now . . . you cannot take my time. We share time," he said. To know Ashley is to know the importance and sincerity of these statements.

The ride from the airport was filled with pleasant conversation and remembrances of other shared events. Ashley brought us up to date on his recent travels, but quickly moving away from himself, he asked Paul about his work as a middle school teacher. Paul mentioned the Family Fun Day coming up and invited Ashley to come along. Being the "people person" that he is, Ashley went to school with Paul and presented an impromptu program. Parents and teachers, as excited as the children, were eager to ask questions, and they were answered with the same eagerness.

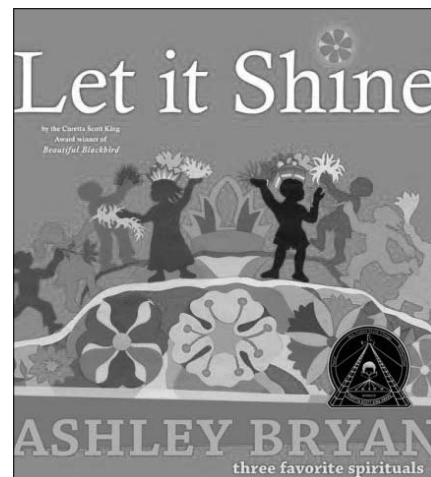


Through conversation at home later, Paul and I could sense Ashley's love for family as he talked about his granny. Reflecting on his treatment of the crafty spider, he stated that he could not let Spider Ananse defeat Granny Anika in his book *The Dancing Granny*. That is his granny!

When I asked him about the end papers in *Beautiful Blackbird*, he explained how he used his mother's scissors (she used large ones for sewing and small ones for embroidery) to cut the colorful birds that by masterful blending became an entrancing collage—his first book in collage. The collage evolved into a rhythmic story with a special message. Talking to Ring Dove, who wanted to be like Blackbird with a touch of black, he was told that "color on the outside is not what's on the inside." Is there a message here for all of us?

Moving from discussing the collage in *Beautiful Blackbird*, Ashley shared with us his love and respect for spirituals, which he demonstrates in his latest book *Let It Shine: Three Favorite Spirituals*. He mentioned the importance of spirituals in his life and how they are a part of the foundation in his heritage and continue to be in the lives of his family members in Antigua, Atlanta, and Texas.

We talked briefly about several publications he authored or illustrated including *Beat the Story Drum, Pum-Pum* (1981 CSK Illustrator Award), *The Cat's Purr*, and *What a Morning!* (1988 CSK Illustrator Honor Book). In reflecting on the greatest significance of his family relative to his writings and illustrations, Ashley shared the accolades he received from his parents and siblings





Cora Phelps Dunkley and Paul Dunkley

for his first work, an alphabet book, written when he was a kindergartner.

I was excited to share Ashley's talents at the Alice Smith Lecture Program. This is an annual event sponsored by the School of Library and Information Science, University of South Florida, honoring the first director of the library school. Smith is remembered for her love and knowl-

edge of children's literature. This celebration was the ultimate reason for Ashley's visit to Tampa.

He grabbed the audience's attention the minute he stood and began to speak. As he recited poetry by Nikki Giovanni and Langston Hughes, his infectious spirit made all eager to hear more. His history lesson on spirituals brought an awareness of their importance in the lives of all people, and as he played his musical rendition of "This Little Light of Mine" on his recorder, the audience could be heard softly singing.

Ashley concluded his presentation by reading *Beautiful Blackbird*. As he told the story, with cues to the audience for responses, one could easily sense his inheritance of Granny Anika's agility in his steps as he moved from one side of the room to the other to engage each member of the audience.

As Paul and Ashley departed for the airport the next morning after a hearty home-cooked breakfast, I reflected on how fortunate we were to have had the opportunity to spend such time with Ashley in our home. He is a man of integrity, wisdom, and patience, but most of all, he is a man who loves people in general, children in particular, and who welcomes opportunities to share a poem, a spiritual, or a story with any audience. 🐾

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Opening Doors

Visual and Textual Analyses of Diverse Latino Subcultures in Américas Picture Books

Jamie C. Naidoo

On July 1, 2002, Latinos became the largest ethnic minority in the United States with 38.8 million residents identifying as Latino.¹ More recent estimates indicate that 44.3 million U.S. residents identify as belonging to this cultural group.² Nearly eight million Latino children are enrolled in U.S. nursery schools, kindergartens, and elementary schools.³ These children represent a heterogeneous group celebrating the diverse perspectives, origins, and subcultures from Mexico, Central America, South America, and the Caribbean.⁴

Edward James Olmos asserts, “Much like a quilt woven intricately with many beautiful fibers, Latinos are a proud and diverse people interwoven with indigenous, Spanish/European, African, and Asian roots. . . . [They] are citizens not only of the United States of America, but also of all the Americas and of the Latin American countries around the world.”⁵ Often the U.S. media do not represent this multicolored tapestry of the Latino people. Instead, a “Latin look” of brown skin, dark hair and eyes, and a predilection for the Mexican subculture reigns through the images created by media that purport to represent the diversity of the Latino subcultures.

It is important for Latino children, as well as their non-Latino peers and educators, to encounter positive representations of the Latino subcultures in the books they read. According to the

National Education Association, “Exposing Latino children to books that reflect their culture as well as their language is one of the most effective ways of motivating them to stay in school.”⁶ In addition, providing such books improves the ethnic identity and self-esteem of children from the culture being represented and provides positive and accurate representations of the Latino culture that can be embraced by non-Latino children and educators. Unfortunately, most teaching materials and children’s books about Latinos frequently stereotype them as a monolithic group rather than embracing the rich diversity of the Latino subcultures.

When compared to their strong presence in U.S. society, Latinos are significantly underrepresented in children’s literature. Each year the Cooperative Children’s Book Center (CCBC) compiles annual statistics of children’s books published in the United States. According to the CCBC, of the approximately five thousand books published in the United States in 2006, an estimated 1.5 percent contained Latino themes and topics and roughly 1 percent were created specifically by Latino authors and illustrators.⁷ These statistics have remained steady for more than a decade, reinforcing the concern from researchers that while the number of Latinos in the United States is increasing each year, the number of children’s books published about and by them is not.⁸



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This lack of representation of an ethnic minority is not a new trend in U.S. children's book publishing. In her seminal article "The All-White World of Children's Books," Larrick described the paucity and mediocrity of the representation of African Americans in children's books.⁹ Surveying 5,206 children's books published during a three-year period by sixty-three different publishers, the author found only 6.7 percent had African American characters, most of which perpetuated stereotypes. Thus, Larrick surmised, "Integration may be the law of the land, but most of the books children see are all white."¹⁰

Regrettably, the same can be said about the representation of Latinos in U.S. children's books today. Compared to all of the children's books being published each year, there are few books that represent the Latino culture and even fewer that portray the population's diversity and many subcultures.

In an effort to improve the quality and quantity of Latino representation in children's and young adult books in the 1990s, U.S. educators and librarians created literary awards for Latino children's literature. The first of these honors was the Américas Award, established by the national Consortium of Latin American Studies Programs (CLASP). According to the award's website,

the Américas Award is given in recognition of U.S. works of fiction, poetry, folklore, or selected non-fiction (from picture books to works for young adults) published in the previous year in English or Spanish that authentically and engagingly portray Latin America, the Caribbean, or Latinos in the United States. By combining both and linking the Americas, the award reaches beyond geographic borders, as well as multicultural-international boundaries, focusing instead upon cultural heritages within the hemisphere.¹¹

The criteria for selecting award winners and commended titles include: "1) distinctive literary quality; 2) cultural contextualization; 3) exceptional integration of text, illustration, and design; and 4) potential for classroom use."¹²

Américas Award Books: Purveyors of Cultural Heritage?

In 2008, the Américas Award celebrates its fifteenth year of recognizing positive and accurate portrayals of Latin Americans, U.S. Latinos, and Caribbeans in children's and young adult literature. The award has significantly affected the quality of U.S. juvenile books written about and by these diverse populations. Since the establishment of the Américas, more artists have begun to realize the importance of creating literary works for young people that celebrate the traditions of Latin American and Caribbean cultures throughout the Americas. Cultures long silenced have finally been given a voice. Américas award-winning author Amelia Lau Carling emphasizes the importance of the award:

The Américas Award matters because it opens doors to views about American life and life in Latin America to people—especially children—who have not been exposed to them,

and reinforces in those who already know about them, the importance of our stories in terms of family and culture. These books are very personal, and the young reader will discover how rich the connections can be between the young and the old, between community and self, and will be encouraged to find creativity in his/her own home environment.¹³

Since its inception, the award has been well-received by researchers in the library and children's literature fields. Dresang suggests that titles winning the Américas have particular appeal to youth in the digital age, helping them "gain the necessary experiences for twenty-first-century literacy."¹⁴ She posits that a significant portion of the Américas books embody *radical change*—a shift in formats and perspectives that coincide with advances in technology and multimodal texts. These changes create "books that provide the type of reading experience that, because of their interactivity, connectivity, and access, may appeal particularly to net-generation youth."¹⁵

Similarly, Bloem notes that the Américas winners authentically highlight the various facets of Latino culture and remarks "as the world gets more complicated and complex because of immigration, language diversity and mobility, how good and important it is to have a major award such as the Americas [sic] that focuses on cultural rather than national boundaries!"¹⁶

Like all award-winning books, titles receiving the Américas are incorporated into the educational curriculum by teachers and librarians. Numerous Latino early-literacy programs recommend the Américas award books to parents and educators of Latino children. Curriculum guides for these award books are also available on the award's website, and numerous library programming ideas are available through print and electronic resources.

As a result of these endorsements and recommended applications, the visual and textual messages inscribed within the award books are encountered daily by Latino and non-Latino children and educators each time the books are used in a classroom lesson, shared during storytime, or selected by children for their independent pleasure reading. Some of these visual and textual messages speak to the socioeconomic status, education level, physical appearance, cultural traits, and moral attitudes of Latinos. While it is assumed that the Américas books convey accurate messages, an analysis is necessary to determine the precise social and cultural messages transmitted about the Latino subcultures. Exploring these representations can highlight the level of accuracy and variety portrayed in children's books that have been honored for their authenticity and literary merit relative to their depiction of the Latino culture. Any negative messages and cultural omissions highlighted by such a study can be addressed by librarians and educators when using these books.

This information could also help them in leading discussions around the identified issues, thereby preventing the destructive effects on self-esteem and ethnic identity development of Latino children. In addition, it will help in the deconstruction of cultural stereotypes in non-Latino children.

Examining the Visual and Textual Imagery

As part of a larger study that examined both Américas and Belpré award-winning picture books, the illustrations and texts of a sample of seventy-one children's picture books receiving the Américas Award, Américas Honor, or making the Américas Commended lists from 1993 to 2004 were analyzed. These books were examined using a coding instrument that was developed from a literature review of the representation of Latinos in U.S. children's picture books, the checklists from previous studies on children's books about Latinos, and guiding research questions.

To determine how the Latino people and their subcultures were represented in the visual and textual messages of the picture books, three methodologies were incorporated—textual content analysis, visual content analysis, and semiotic analysis.

Applying textual content analysis provided data that was later analyzed to understand how Latinos are represented within the textual narrative of the picture books. The visual content analysis examined the frequency of various elements within the illustrations such as gender, race, sexual orientation, age, type of dress, facial expressions, and so on. The semiotic analysis offered insight into the representational and symbolic messages associated with the Latino people and subculture, and demonstrated the types of messages that Latino and non-Latino children encounter in the award books.

By limiting the study to an analysis of picture books, the researcher examined literature encountered earliest by Latino and non-Latino children and was able to explore the visual imagery, as well as the textual imagery, inscribed within these books. While the analysis of the textual messages in all of the Américas books (novels and picture books) is appropriate, this study was more concerned with the literature encountered by the approximately eight million Latino children enrolled in U.S. nursery schools, kindergarten programs, and elementary schools. For a full explanation of the study including the sampling and reliability procedures, see my dissertation, "Embracing the Faces at the Window: Visual and Textual Representation of Latino Subcultures in the Américas and Pura Belpré Award-winning Picturebooks."¹⁷

Depiction of Latino Subcultures

An analysis of the study suggested that the award picture books provided divergent representations of Latino subcultures, with some subcultures being overrepresented and other cultures having minimal representation. Collectively, the books overlooked many of the South and Central American Latino subcultures, focusing predominantly on the Mexican, Mexican American, and Caribbean subcultures. This was evinced by the fact 18.3% of the books represented Caribbeans (Haitians, Jamaicans, Trinidadians, Dominicans, or nonspecific Caribbeans) and almost half the award books mutually

portrayed the Mexican (15.5%) or Mexican American (33.8%) subcultures. The remaining Latino subcultures were marginally represented: Puerto Rican 4.2%, Central American 8.5%, Cuban 5.6%, and South American 4.2%. More specifically, the Central American subcultures presented were the Costa Rican, El Salvadorian, Guatemalan, and Panamanian; and the South American subcultures represented were the Argentinean, Venezuelan, and Brazilian cultures. In almost 10% of the picturebooks, a Generic Latino subculture with no specific cultural traits, such as the one presented in Elisa Kleven's *Hooray, A Piñata*, was depicted.¹⁸

Consequently, educators and children reading only these award-winning picture books could develop the erroneous belief that a few Latinos live in the Caribbean, while most are from Mexico or are Mexican American. Perhaps this significant depiction of Mexican and Caribbean subcultures in the picture books is correlated to the large presence of these groups within the overall U.S. population. Since these cultural groups have greater visibility within the U.S. population, then, conceivably, publishers are more likely to produce books that represent these populations in lieu of books about smaller, less populous Latino subcultures. Nonetheless, children from these other cultures deserve greater representation in the award picture books. Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of Latino subcultures as they are presented in the Américas picture books.

Characterization of Latinos in Narratives and Illustrations

The illustrations in the picture books represented male and female Latino characters equally; however, their portrayal in terms of gender roles was unbalanced. Although a proportion of the picture books provided alternative depictions of Latinos defying traditional gender roles, gender stereotyping persisted for female Latino characters in 37 percent of the books and for

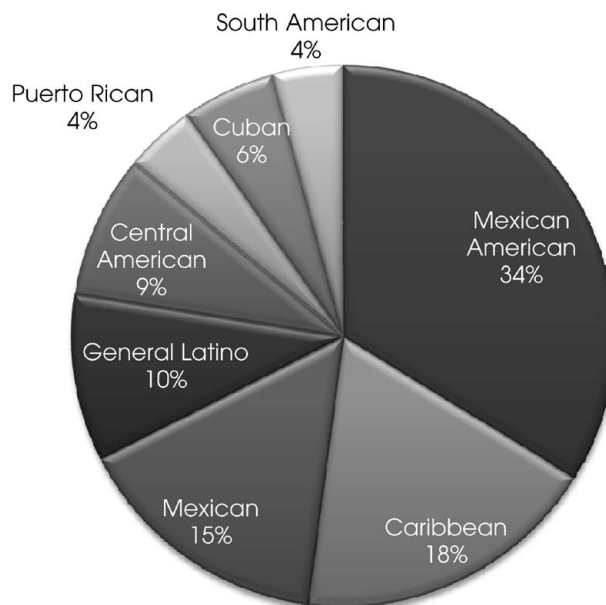


Figure 1. Distribution of Latino Subcultures in Américas and Pura Belpré Picture Books.

male Latino characters in 23 percent. These portrayals fail to recognize the strides that females have made in terms of gender equality within society.

The analyses revealed a significant shift in the representation of the socioeconomic status of Latino characters. With almost an equal representation of both lower and middle classes, the award books challenged past representations of Latinos as being primarily of low socioeconomic status. A small percentage of the books, such as Pat Mora and Beatrice Vidal's *A Library for Juana: The World of Sor Juana Inés*, even represented Latinos in the high socioeconomic category—a momentous change from previous studies of Latinos in youth literature.¹⁹

Conversely, the picture books failed to portray the variety of abilities, sexual identities, and races within the individual Latino subcultures. Characters with mental or physical disabilities appeared in 7 percent of the books' illustrations, while gay or lesbian characters were conspicuously absent.

The conventional depiction of Latinos as having brown eyes accompanied by dark hair and skin, commonly referred to as the "Latin look," is a perpetuation of the misconception that all Latinos have the same physical appearance. The book sample amplified this fallacy with a majority of the titles illustrating Latino characters as such. Half of the books exclusively depicted their characters with a Latin look. Of the remaining books that did present at least one Latino character embodying racial diversity—Black (African), White (non-Anglo), and Asian Latino—almost half still contained characters with the traditional Latin look.

Beyond the physical appearance of the characters, disregard for bicultural background was also prevalent. A large percentage of Latino children in the United States come from biracial or multiple origin backgrounds.²⁰ As of July 1, 2004, almost half of all children under the age of 18 identified as being multiracial.²¹ According to the 2000 U.S. Census figures, more than seven hundred thousand Americans identify as part Hispanic and more than two hundred thousand identify as having multiple Hispanic origins.²² With only three of the books—Alma Flor Ada's *I Love Saturday y domingos*, Natasha Wing's *Jalapeño Bagels*, and Leyla Torres' *Liliana's Grandmothers*—describing mixed-race Latino characters, this group is overwhelmingly underrepresented in the award-winning picture books.²³

Yet an encouraging attribute of the picture books was the positive representation of elderly characters within their illustrations. These depictions, found in almost two-thirds of the sample, counteracted ageism and featured elderly Latinos as active members of the family and society. In fact, fewer than 3 percent of the books with elderly characters demonstrated any signs of ageism.

Settings, Plots, and Themes

Historically, children's books about Latinos have had the tendency to glamorize Latino neighborhoods (barrios) as charm-

ing, colorful, and postcard-like. More than 90 percent of the award books included realistic portrayals of barrios, allowing readers to formulate accurate perceptions of the daily lives of Latinos and their environments.

Prior to the creation of the Américas awards, depictions of Latinos in U.S. children's books conveyed an overall atmosphere of despair stemming from Latinos being "rescued" from their problems by Anglos or being forced to move to the United States to achieve success.²⁴ These books disregarded the values and traditions that were integral to the Latino culture.

As a departure from this, the overall mood of the award book sample was positive and upbeat, with more than 98 percent depicting characters that embrace their cultural diversity rather than abandon aspects of their cultural heritage to achieve success. Concurrently, almost half (47 percent) of the award books, such as Jonah Winter's *Frida*, failed to highlight one of the most pervasive values in the Latino culture—the importance of the extended family.²⁵ As Eggers-Piérola asserts, "For many Latinos, life revolves around the tightly knit, loving bonds of *la familia*. By tradition and by design, grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins, and friends of all ages are a constant presence in the family nucleus and assume responsibility for one another's well-being."²⁶ This failure in the award books to emphasize an intrinsic component of Latino culture denies the reader an inclusive conception of this diverse people.

Previous studies of children's literature have indicated that the representation of Latinos in the role of community leaders is extremely marginal.²⁷ This imbalanced depiction may ostensibly result in readers developing the erroneous belief that Latinos are incapable of holding leadership roles. A further affect could be the development of poor ethnic identity in Latino children. Fortunately, at least 40 percent of the picture books portray Latino characters in roles as community leaders such as teachers, store owners, healers (*curanderos*), and so on, a marked improvement on the status quo.

Many of the books contained cultural symbols (such as piñatas, calla lilies, butterflies, palm trees) that were employed to add authenticity to their illustrations. The researcher noted that sometimes these symbols supported the text to create a believable reading experience surrounding the Latino subculture represented as in Amada Irma Pérez and Maya Christina Gonzalez's *My Diary from Here to There/Mi diario de aquí hasta allá*, and other times they had the potential to produce a contrived atmosphere that perpetuated cultural stereotypes, as in Campbell Geeslin and Ana Juan's *Elena's Serenade*.²⁸ Accordingly, the social messages ingrained within the illustrations ranged from expressions of cultural pride to reinforcements of cultural stereotypes.

In *My Diary from Here to There*, the butterfly, depicted in almost every illustration of the book, is a symbol of metamorphosis, flight, and fragility. Since many butterflies are native only to Mexico, the butterfly is significant to the Mexican culture and a source of cultural pride. Accordingly, numerous children's books about Latinos have included butterflies as significant cultural

symbols: Francisco Jiménez and Simón Silva's *La Mariposa*, Tony Johnston and Susan Guevara's *Isabel's House of Butterflies*, Virginia Kroll and Gerardo Suzán's *Butterfly Boy*, Julia Alvarez's *In the Time of Butterflies*, and Ana Baca and Anthony Accardo's *Benito's Bizcochitos: Los Bizcochitos de Benito*.²⁹

Particularly symbolic in many of these books and in *My Diary from Here to There*, the monarch butterfly represents the immigration of fragile souls from their native home in Mexico across the U.S. border to places unknown. Yet, just like the monarch, many Mexican people will return to their country for periods of rejuvenation and growth.

On page 19 of *My Diary from Here to There*, readers observe clusters of grapes, which symbolize the Mexican migrant culture, cascading over a two-page spread of fertile-green fields. This fruit is often used to represent Mexican immigrants who work as *campesinos* (farm workers) in the fields of California. Several children's books about Latinos—particularly about Latino migrant farm workers—include grapes as the quintessential crop that is picked by the workers. For instance, George Ancona's *Harvest*, another book examined during the textual and visual content analyses of the original study, incorporates grapes as part of the book jacket illustration.³⁰ Likewise, it was in the grape vineyards in California that César Chávez led the first *huelga* (strike) among farm workers in 1965. Both grapes and an image of Chávez are present in the illustrations of *My Diary from Here to There*.

Numerous props and cultural symbols abound in the illustrations of *Elena's Serenade*. A barren dirt yard filled with chickens and pigs represents the Mexican ranch. Likewise, the large sombrero, burro, cacti, and tortilla are culturally loaded symbols that have plagued visual representations of Mexicans in children's picture books since the 1930s. These four symbols have often been used to depict Mexicans as a languid people that



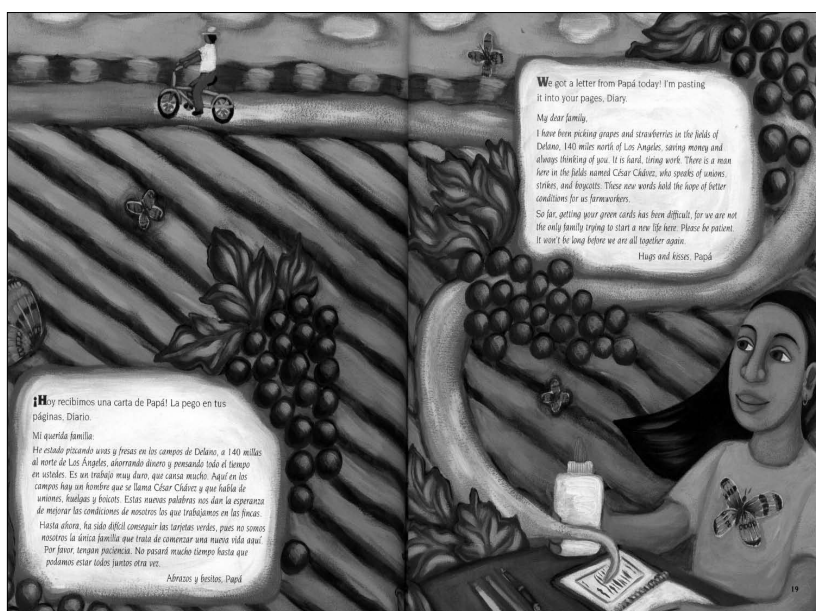
Elena's Serenade by Campbell Geeslin, illustrated by Ana Juan (New York: Atheneum, 2004).

constantly eat tortillas or take numerous siestas under their sombreros while leaning against cacti or riding their burros. Calla lilies, adobe houses, butterflies, and glassblowers are also significant symbols that specifically represent the Mexican culture; yet, instead of conveying negative images of the culture, they add authenticity to the illustrations, highlighting various symbols of cultural pride.

The juxtaposition of both positive and negative culturally significant symbols with attractive colors creates a sense of dysphoria in the viewer. While the illustrations are quite attractive and demand the attention of the viewer, some are infused with cultural symbols that are quite negative; others contain authentic, positive signs of the culture. With these visual representations, the viewer is left to ponder which cultural symbols outweigh the others. Are Mexicans a lethargic people that take countless siestas or are they a people that actively encourage females to take on male roles? The striking illustrations create more questions than they answer.

Cultural Authenticity

The debate concerning who should write about a particular culture has been raging for decades. Some critics assert that those authors residing outside a culture cannot fully capture the essence and spirit of the other culture's experiences that are different from their own. At the same time, other literary critics maintain that if authors live in a social environment that mirrors a particular culture, then they can



My Diary from Here to There, illustration © 2002 by Maya Christina Gonzalez. Used with permission of the publisher, Children's Book Press, San Francisco, Calif., www.childrensbookpress.org.

legitimately write about that culture even though it is not their own. Volumes of research have been written that support both sides of this debate.³¹

The Américas Award is unique in scope compared to other awards for Latino children's literature, such as the Pura Belpré or Tomás Rivera. As Bloem points out, "the awards committee has side-stepped the festering debate about authenticity linked to an author's own ethnicity—these books don't have to be penned or illustrated by Latinos or Latinas—and instead has focused on authenticity of the cultural representation."³² This decision to not limit a title's eligibility on the basis of the culture of the artist created an opportunity to compare the works of Latino and non-Latino artists.

This study suggests that Latino authors and illustrators generally created more authentic depictions of the subcultures without limiting these depictions to fiestas, piñata parties, and other cultural stereotypes. This is a derivative of Latinos generally having more first-hand experiences with the subculture that they are writing and illustrating about than non-Latino authors and illustrators. It should be noted, however, that Latinos writing and illustrating about a particular subculture may not necessarily have first-hand experience with that subculture, as they may identify with another Latino subculture.

Overall, non-Latino authors and illustrators created more award-winning picture books that represent the diverse Latino subcultures while successfully portraying fewer gender stereotypes. Since Latino authors and illustrators created more books about the Mexican and Mexican American subcultures, which traditionally include more gender-stereotyped roles and narratives, their works are apt to depict more gender-defined roles than their non-Latino counterparts. For instance, Rudolfo Anaya and Amy Córdova's *The Santero's Miracle: A Bilingual Story* portrays Mexican-American Latinas in traditional roles such as cooks and caregivers, while the male characters undertake more active roles.³³

This last point is an issue that should be considered when selecting children's literature about Latinos. It has been argued that Latinos who create books for youth help both Latino and non-Latino children to "forge confident and secure personalities who can speak two languages and relate to most of the cultures of the Americas."³⁴ Thus the dilemma remains—should librarians and educators promote books that are authentic but may include gender-stereotypes, should they advocate for books that are free of gender-stereotypes but less authentic, or should they promote both types of books and encourage discussion of the issues?

A Mezcolanza of Representation

According to Américas coordinator Julie Kline, CLASP originally created the award "to encourage and commend authors, illustrators, and publishers who produce quality children's and young adult books; to provide teachers with recommendations for classroom use; and to offer librarians guidance to develop

culturally diverse collections."³⁵ The results of this study concur that for some Latino subcultures the award has successfully achieved its goal and, for others, it has been less successful.

This examination suggests that picture books winning the Américas Award do not represent the complete social and cultural mosaic of the Latino people. While some subcultures are overrepresented in terms of diversity, other subcultures receive little or no recognition. Likewise, certain physical features of characters dominate the illustrations. Latino characters with disabilities and Latino children of mixed race or multiple origins are underrepresented, while characters with alternative lifestyles are simply nonexistent in these books.

Although gender stereotyping has improved, this study indicates that a proportion of the award books still perpetuate the idea that Latino men are full of machismo while Latinas are submissive females constrained to domestic duties. Similarly, the socioeconomic status of Latinos depicted in the picture books has improved with more Latino characters representing the middle class. Despite this, the overall percentage of characters depicted as low-income earners are notably higher than the 21.9 percent of Latinos that were living in poverty in 2004, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.³⁶

Improvements acknowledged in this study include the increased portrayal of Latino characters in the roles of community leaders and a greater representation of active, elderly Latinos. It should be noted that this study's definition of community leadership has been expanded to include both traditional (e.g., government officials) and nontraditional leadership roles (e.g., store owners, teachers, leaders of migrant farm worker movements, and *curanderos*), which varies from previously published research in this area. These books also include fewer stereotypical images and use of cultural props than children's books published during the 1970s and 1980s, even though some flagrant images of cultural stereotyping still exist. Yet we should remember that the omissions found in these picture books reflect similar omissions within the entire body of children's literature. It is unjustified to assume higher expectations for the Américas books than other titles within the field of children's publishing.

For Further Study

Limited research has been conducted on the quality of U.S. children's literature about Latinos since the 1990s. This study provides the foundation for further research concerning children's literature about Latinos and the responses of both Latino and non-Latino children to this body of literature.

Among the suggestions for further research would be an examination of the visual and textual representation of the Latino subcultures in novels and other picture books winning the Américas, Pura Belpré, and Tomás Rivera awards to determine the social messages that Latino and non-Latino children encounter in additional literature that is honored for its depiction of the Latino subcultures. Researchers could also analyze children's books about Latinos published in other countries to

determine how U.S. publishers portray Latinos compared to international publishers. Additionally, a study of how Latino and non-Latino children respond to literature about the various Latino subcultures would be helpful to gain insight into the role of cross-cultural literature in children's understanding of cultural diversity.

Librarians and other educators want to make the highest quality literature available to their patrons and students. If literature from other countries provides a more positive or global view of Latinos than the *Américas* books, children in the United States should have access to them. The reactions of all children to cross-cultural books helps researchers and educators better understand the formation of cultural stereotypes and provides a platform for discussion on topics related to cultural understanding and tolerance.

Practical Implications

As educators and librarians, one of our goals is to prepare children from all cultural backgrounds to function in our culturally pluralistic society. It is crucial for all children to realize that the United States should be a social and cultural mosaic representing multiple subcultures with distinct compositions rather than a singular melting pot of assimilated cultures.

Similarly, children's books must represent this social and cultural mosaic, providing mirrors of our own cultures and windows into those cross-cultures of the Other. Educators, embracing the metaphorical face of the Other at the classroom or library window, will need to include all types of literatures that authentically and accurately portray the culturally pluralistic society that America has become. Providing such literature allows "students from more privileged backgrounds [and dominant cultures] a sense of the lived experience of people who suffer the effects of poverty and discrimination."³⁷

Yet librarians and educators need to go one step beyond simply supplying these books; they need to provide a forum for discussing various alternative representations of culture. As Dudley-Marling notes, educators too often try "to *match* texts to the social and cultural identities of their students . . . without regard to how they [the students] might have chosen to represent those identities had they been given the opportunity."³⁸ Rather than subscribing to this practice, Dudley-Marling suggests that educators "create a space where students [can] represent themselves or at least see themselves represented in the books in our classroom[s]."³⁹

The *Américas* picture books, with their positive, negative, and limited representations of the Latino subcultures, should be shared in such a platform to facilitate discussion of the social and cultural mosaic of the Latino experience. Having an awareness of the precise social messages about a particular culture—in this case the Latino culture—that children encounter in their literary transactions will help us to facilitate our children's learning and understanding of the metaphorical Other in society.

On occasion, librarians have the tendency to believe that award books, particularly cultural ones, are a one-size-fits-all solution. As this study indicates, limiting a library's collection to only *Américas* Award-winning picture books provides a narrow view of the vast Latino subcultures. By knowing which Latino subcultures are overlooked or underrepresented in the *Américas* books, librarians have the opportunity to find additional books to supplement these gaps when planning *El día de los niños/El día de los libros* (Children's Day/Book Day) and other programs celebrating Latino culture.

For instance, Rigoberto González and Cecilia C. Álvarez's *Antonio's Card/La tarjeta de Antonio* could be included to fill the void for picture books with gay and lesbian characters while the addition of Ina Cumpiano and José Ramírez's *Quinito's Neighborhood/El Vecindario de Quinito* would provide many images of Latino characters in nontraditional gender roles and occupations (i.e., a mother as a carpenter or a father as a nurse).⁴⁰

Validation for books representing the diversity of the Latino subcultures is best summarized by U.S. children's book author and illustrator Ezra Jack Keats. More than forty years ago, Keats wrote, "Let us open the book covers, these long shut doors, to new and wonderful, true and inspiring books for all children about all children—the tall and short, fat and thin, dark and light, beautiful and homely. Welcome!"⁴¹ By integrating *Américas* books with other Latino children's literature that represents the richness of all the subcultures, libraries open doors and proclaim, ¡Bienvenidos! 🍌

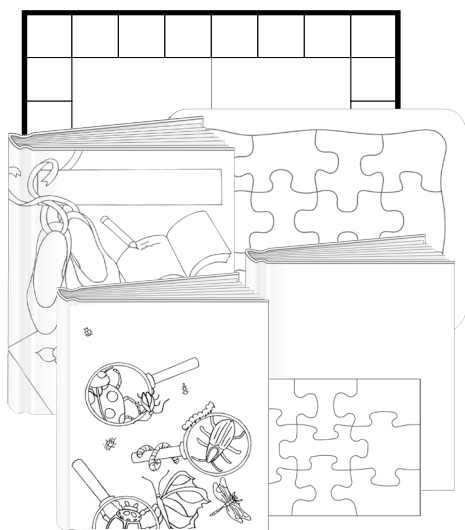
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One Book, Every Young Child

Pennsylvania Literacy Initiative Enters Third Year

Susan Pannebaker

Imagine more than half a million Pennsylvania children ages 3–6 being exposed to the fun of reading through the same picture book. That’s exactly what is happening with Pennsylvania’s One Book, Every Young Child program, now in its third year.

The purpose of the initiative is to foster early childhood literacy in the state. More than 140,000 children are born in Pennsylvania each year; this initiative targets approximately 560,000 children by communicating to adults with children in their lives how the development of early literacy skills, through quality interactive experiences with books and stories, is critically important to a child’s success in learning to read.

The following recommendation put forth by the Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education’s report, “Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children,” was a guiding principle in starting the program.

Systematic and widespread public education and marketing efforts should be undertaken to increase public awareness of the importance of providing stimulating literacy experiences in the lives of all very young children. Parents and other caregivers, as well as the public, should be the targets of such efforts, which should address ways of using books and opportunities for building language and literacy growth through everyday activities both at home and in group care settings.¹

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How It Began

In September 2003, a group of librarians, museum educators, and public television staff first met at the 21st Century Learner Symposium sponsored by ALSC, the Association of Children’s Museums, the Families and Work Institute, and the Civil Society Institute in Washington, D.C. That group understood the importance of the recommendations in “Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children” and returned to Pennsylvania determined to seek ways to work together. The group estab-



Author Katherine Ayres signs a book during an author visit to a child care center.

lished the following goals.

Goal 1. To increase awareness among parents, other family members, and the early care and education community of the need for practices that promote early literacy development:

- reading often to children, and
- engaging children in the story as they read it.

The goal is based on studies showing that simply providing the book is not enough. Adults must find ways to engage children. Mason and Kerr found that storybook reading is a more effective influence on literacy development when children have opportunities to engage in conversation about the story.² Further, Pellegrini and Galda found that joint make-believe between parents and children seems to be an important precursor to the skills necessary for literacy.³

Goal 2. To reach children more at risk because of poverty and other risk factors. The partners want to provide rural and urban children with increased opportunities to participate in early learning activities. The Pennsylvania Department of Education's Office of Child Development and Early Learning 2007 report on "Program Reach and County Risk Assessment" finds that sixteen of Pennsylvania's sixty-seven counties, most in rural northern and western Pennsylvania, plus Philadelphia, are most likely to benefit from early childhood investments because of educational and family risk factors. Another thirty-one are at moderate-high risk, with only twenty at moderate-low risk or low risk.

Goal 3. To increase the education community's ability to respond to early literacy needs through collaboration. Through this collaboration, agencies and organizations can reach those not typically served.

The group identified a statewide One Book program as the vehicle to reach their goals. The One Book partners knew that simply providing a book is not enough. Adults must engage children in activities, such as talking about the book's cover and illustrations, discussing the action in the book, pretend play related to the book, and more. The combination of reading, interactivity, and adult involvement creates an ideal environment for early learning development. Adults must have the necessary resources to engage children and see appropriate modeling activities.

The original group of partners has grown and now includes public libraries, children's museums, several state agencies (the Departments of Education, Public Welfare, and Agriculture; the State Museum; the Department of Labor and Industry's PennServ volunteer program; and the Pennsylvania Public Television Network), and a variety of nonprofit organizations (the Pennsylvania Library Association, the Pennsylvania Head Start Association, and the Pennsylvania Center for the Book).

They all have their own separate programs to promote early literacy, but One Book, Every Young Child takes advantage of



These girls are thrilled to meet Lindsay Barrett George, author of *Inside Mouse, Outside Mouse*.

existing strengths and builds a stronger program through collaboration than any of the partners can achieve in isolation. The result is a robust program that combines the creativity and unique professional knowledge base of each of the collaborating agencies.

The Program's Components

Each year, the One Book committee selects a picture book and obtains a commitment from the author, illustrator, and publisher to support the statewide effort. Past books selected include *Inside Mouse, Outside Mouse* by Lindsay Barrett George (2006), *A Splendid Friend, Indeed* by Suzanne Bloom (2007), and *Up, Down, and Around* by author Katherine Ayres and illustrator Nadine Bernard Westcott (2008).

The publishers make the book available at deeply discounted prices to ensure an impact statewide. In 2007, more than ninety thousand books were provided free or sold in several formats—English and Spanish hardbacks, English and Spanish paperbacks, and a big book. Braille copies were provided to Pennsylvania's two Regional Libraries for the Blind and Physically Handicapped and to regionally based public libraries to enable adults with vision problems to participate with the children in their lives. For 2008, the formats include an English hardback and paperback and an English big book. A Spanish-language version is not available, but the text has been translated and a one-page insert is available for programs serving Spanish-speaking populations. A Braille version has again been prepared.



Reaching the early care

and education community is a vital component of the One Book, Every Young Child program. It ensures we reach outside the walls of libraries and museums to serve adults with children most in need of literacy services. Verizon provides funding to mail a copy of the book and two copies of the poster to all home- and center-based child care programs regulated by the Department of Public Welfare, Head Start classrooms, registered private preschools, and families in family literacy programs.

After a One Book kickoff at the state capitol in late March or early April, the author and illustrator make visits across the state at public libraries and early care and education programs.

The Office of Commonwealth Libraries and its public library partners work with Pennsylvania's 640 public library outlets (libraries, branches, and bookmobiles) to make the selected book available in their communities and to offer programming that complements and extends the impact. Promotional materials such as posters and stickers enhance the effort. The back of the poster provides a selection of book-related activities that support Pennsylvania's *Learning Standards for Early Childhood*.

The participating museum partners create a traveling trunk filled with fun book-related puppets, games, and manipulatives for young children, as well as a guide for librarians and educators that encourages use of the trunk contents in activities that are aligned with Pennsylvania's *Learning Standards for Early Childhood*. Sixty to seventy replicas of the trunk are placed in public libraries and museums for sharing by libraries and early care and education programs. The activity guide has proven so useful that it is printed and distributed to all public libraries.

The One Book partners annually create new resources for their website (www.paonebook.org), which features resources for librarians, museum educators, early childhood professionals, and parents. Examples include read-aloud tips, booklists, websites of interest, fingerplays, songs, activities, crafts, healthy snacks, and lesson plans for kindergarten through grade 2. The materials for the previous year's book are archived so they remain accessible to all.

A family fun guide, first created in 2007, is a component used again this year to support efforts to model ways adults can engage children as they read. The guide is widely distributed to parents.

The secretaries of Education and Public Welfare annually support the initiative through a Commonwealth Readers program. In 2007, sixty-two staff of state agencies, including Secretary of Public Welfare Estelle Richman and Secretary of Education Gerald Zahorchak, and 226 additional volunteers visited child-care sites during the Week of the Young Child to read *A Splendid Friend, Indeed*. They read to almost one thousand adults and more than 8,500 children at 520 early learning sites.

Each reader received a hardback copy of *A Splendid Friend, Indeed*, a sheet of tips for sharing the book with a group, stickers, and a mouse button. The 2007 press release, approved by the governor's office for release to the media, included

quotes from both secretaries. Secretary of Public Welfare Estelle Richman said,

For a child, a book can spark a love of reading that will last a lifetime. Through this initiative, we're providing children and their families with the opportunity to learn and grow together as they develop the skills they need to succeed in school and in life.⁴

Public television has been a partner since the program's inception. Pennsylvania has eight PBS stations, and the Pennsylvania Public Television Network (PPTN) is a state agency that ties the stations together loosely. Thanks to their work, the Scranton station produced a thirty-second spot that featured author Lindsay Barrett George in her studio talking about why reading aloud is so important. That station and several others aired the spot in 2006; we were also able to put it on the One Book website.

In 2007, the Penn State station taped Suzanne Bloom reading *A Splendid Friend, Indeed* and interacting with children at the Schlow Library in State College. PPTN was also instrumental in connecting the One Book program to the Mid-Atlantic Gigapop in Philadelphia (MAGPI). MAGPI supplies programming to its members via Internet2. Internet2 is only open to educational and research institutions. In October 2007, Bloom traveled to MAGPI's studio on the University of Pennsylvania campus where she connected with nine pre-K–grade 2 classrooms across the state via video conferencing on Internet2. After school, Bloom presented a professional development program on reading aloud that reached teachers in three elementary schools, a graduate class at a university in western Pennsylvania, and a live audience of students in a graduate class at the University of Pennsylvania. In one afternoon, she interacted with more than seven hundred children and thirty teachers. We hope to do a similar program in fall 2008.

Local Activities and Anecdotes

There is documented evidence that the One Book program reached all sixty-seven of Pennsylvania's counties in 2007. Public libraries, nonprofit organizations, the early care and education community, and school districts took the One Book resources and made an impact locally. Here are comments shared by some librarians involved in the program.

- Last year, an enterprising middle school librarian showed the book to her reading teacher colleague, and they developed a plan to have their at-risk middle school students practice reading the book. Then the middle school students visited an elementary school to share the book one-on-one with kindergarten and first grade students. The younger students enjoyed the attention of older children and the at-risk middle school students had a chance to be successful readers and mentors. Plans are being made to replicate this successful approach.
- In Centre County in 2007, the county commissioners declared April "Splendid Friend Month." The bus company displayed



Boyd's Mills Press, publisher of *A Splendid Friend, Indeed*, had this van designed to transport author Suzanne Bloom to author visits throughout the state.

posters on their fleet and arranged three family read-aloud sessions on the buses. Doctors' offices gave out copies of the book during office visits. A community engagement team organized guest readers at more than thirty child care venues. The public television station interviewed author Suzanne Bloom, who read *A Splendid Friend, Indeed*. That reading continued to be available on the library's website.

- Mike Packard, head of children's services at the Pottstown Public Library, presented *Inside Mouse, Outside Mouse* and many of the trunk activities to more than thirty families in two one-hour family storytime workshops. Each family received a copy of the book as well as stickers and complimentary snacks. Packard modeled different ways to share picture books with the children in their lives and emphasized the integration of supplemental activities relating to the themes of the book.
- To focus public attention on the literacy needs of young children, directors from Lititz childcare centers and the public library joined to form Community Partners for Early Childhood Literacy in 2006. To kick off the partnership, members highlighted the importance of literacy development in preschool children by promoting One Book, Every Young Child. The library will host displays from caregivers showcasing photographs and art by children as they participate in literacy activities. Future collaboration will include Small Steps to Big Books, a book-of-the-month selection recommended for reading aloud with young children and on-site story telling programs at childcare centers.
- The Community Library of Allegheny County offered a Mouse Fest. According to staff, "The children and adults had a great time working together measuring mice tails, playing the lotto game, sorting mice by size and color, and trying their skills at threading the cheese block." Each child

received a paperback copy of *Inside Mouse, Outside Mouse*, a stuffed mouse, stickers, and other goodies.

- The Carnegie Library of McKeesport was pleased with Bloom's visit. They said, "She was perfect, and the kids had a great time, and the agency people that brought the kids were very impressed. This was truly a once in a lifetime event for many of our little ones here, and we so appreciate being a part of this."

We also had feedback from more than two thousand early care and education programs in 2007.

Results

The Office of Commonwealth Libraries and Pennsylvania's public libraries are developing stronger relationships with early care and education programs. Public libraries are committed to serving the same children these programs serve and children's librarians can provide leadership and collaborate within their own communities. Adults (early care and education providers, parents, and other caregivers) are seeing interactive reading modeled and have resources to help them provide engaging reading opportunities. A rural county childcare provider "got it." She wrote, "From the website I learned to do more than reading—engage children in activities, discuss the book from cover to cover, ask questions about the cover, pretend to play eat, use library more."

A sustained multi-year effort is required for the One Book program to make a difference. This investment will provide early care and education providers across the state with the immediate benefit of a high-quality children's book and instructional guidance in offering quality literacy activities. Long term, this program will encourage the adults in children's lives to engage in continued interactive use of books and stories to build literacy skills. ☺

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Brian Wildsmith's Magical World of Color

Judi Moreillon
Photos courtesy of Star Bright Books

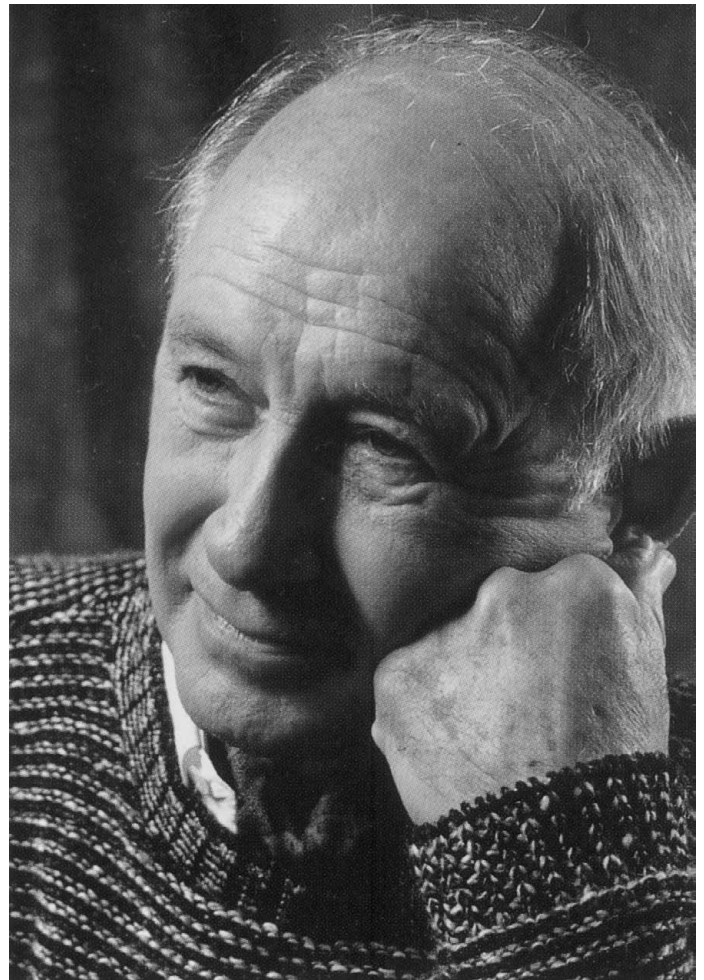
Picture lions, tigers, and bears in vibrant and sometimes unsettling colors, with lines that convey the texture of fur and expressions that compel readers to want to know these characters. Open his books, and you too can step into the magical, colorful world of British artist and bookmaker Brian Wildsmith.

Today, children's book illustration is considered a fine art form. Children's book art graces the walls of galleries, and whole museums have been dedicated to it. In many books, innovative and stunning artwork dominates the print, and visually oriented children have come to expect books to be feasts for their eyes. But that hasn't always been so. In fact, before Wildsmith came onto the children's book scene, the children's book illustrator's role was simply to support the author's story.

In 1962, Wildsmith authored and illustrated his first children's book, *ABC*, for which he was awarded the Kate Greenaway Medal, Britain's equivalent to the Caldecott Medal. This was an auspicious beginning for a young man at the start of his freelance art career, and many consider Wildsmith's entrance into children's book illustration as the beginning of a golden age.

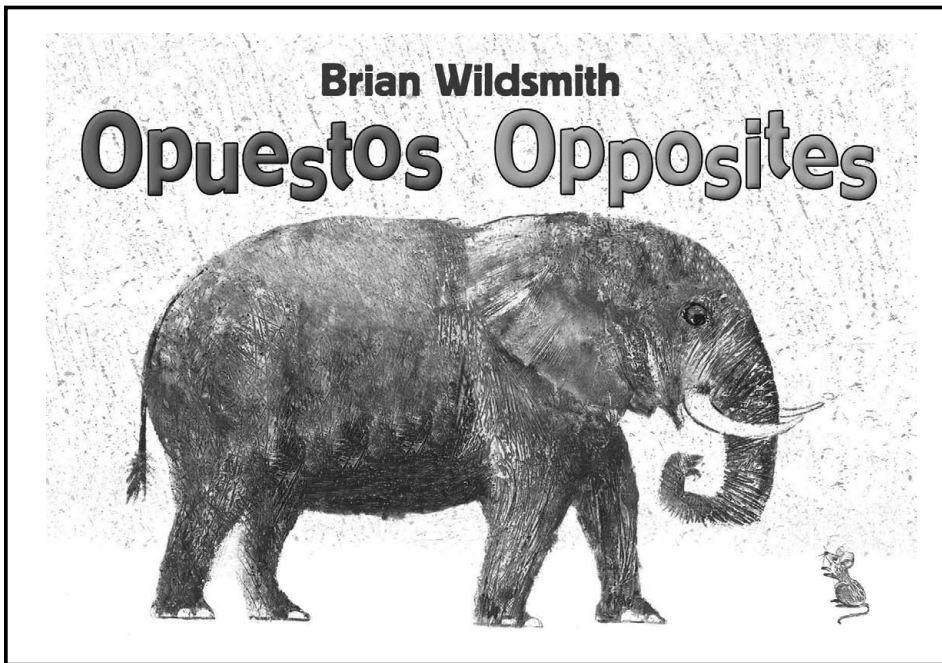
His artwork broke with tradition when he created images that could be described as "challenging" for children. His work was not realistic, and as such it may not have appealed to adults

who assumed that children's book illustration should simplify, rather than complicate, the story elements of setting, character, and plot.



Brian Wildsmith, © Brian Wildsmith

Judi Moreillon, MLS, PhD, is a literacies and libraries consultant. She is the author of two children's books and a professional book for school librarians, Collaborative Strategies for Teaching Reading Comprehension: Maximizing Your Impact (ALA Editions, 2007). She lives in Tucson, Ariz., where she teaches courses in children's and adolescent literature and school library administration at the University of Arizona.



Opuestos/Opposites, Star Bright Books, 1996

Fortunately, Mabel George, his editor at Oxford University Press, recognized Wildsmith's brilliant designs and succeeded in finding a printer who could reproduce the dynamic colors of his artwork with integrity. Both artist and editor were committed to creating children's books with mature, grown-up artwork. Wildsmith has said "I believe that beautiful picture books are vitally important in subconsciously forming a child's visual appreciation, which will bear fruit in later life."

In 1994, the Brian Wildsmith Art Museum was established in Izukogen, Japan. Eight hundred of his paintings are on loan to the museum. Almost one and a half million people, children and adults, visited a traveling exhibition of his work in 2005. Many have been touched by his talent and influenced by his exuberant vision.

Born and raised where everything was cold and gray in Yorkshire, England, Wildsmith became devoted to the sun early on in life. Today, he paints in a lovely sun-drenched studio in southern France, where the light is warm and clear. From his window, he sees luscious green countryside, and in the distance he glimpses the Mediterranean Sea.

Wildsmith remains an artist who applies his expansive talent to illustration. Through his books for children, he has dedicated nearly fifty years to developing children's appreciation for art.

Now in his seventies, he continues to create striking books for children with pieces of art that serve as illustrations and can stand on their own as well. This is his homage to his love for the light, his expression of the magical world of his imagination, and his gift to generations of children.

This interview with Brian Wildsmith, in his own words, took place in fall of 2007.

On Becoming an Artist

I was born in Yorkshire, England, and spent my childhood in a mining village. We had no books; children's books and illustrated children's books like I create today were nonexistent. All we had were comics, which I absolutely loved. Apart from that, I had no early introduction into children's stories.

When I was eleven, I won a scholarship to the high school. The art classes there were ridiculous. All we did was draw cubes and circles and rectangles. We had no introduction whatsoever into all the glories that have been produced in the art world, no introduction to sculpture or architecture. My friends told me I was the best artist in the class because we used to draw—apart from the cubes—airplanes dogfighting and ships shoving each other. Then World War II came, and

paper and paints were very difficult to get, so there was hardly any painting.

Even to this day, I can't grasp why I became an artist. As a child, I wanted to be a scientist. In the sixth [grade], I remember going to a physics class and I stopped on the way and a voice said to me, "Is this really what you want to do with the rest of your life?" And the answer was, "No. I want to be a creator."

I turned around and saw the headmaster and left the school. He was perplexed and bewildered. My parents were wonderful. They said, "Look, Brian, what are you going to do?" I said, "I want to go to Barnsley School of Art."

It was a very good art school, and from there I won a scholarship to the Slade School of Fine Arts, which is the art department of University College, London. For three years, I didn't do any illustration. All we did was draw the nude model, and I hardly ever painted them because I was so poor I couldn't afford paints and brushes.

I left Slade to do my national service and was sent to the Royal Military School of Music to teach mathematics. When I finished my service, I became an art teacher at what we call a grammar school; you would call it a high school.

During that time, I read an article that said that there were twenty-eight thousand book titles published every year. I thought to myself, "Oh my goodness, they would all need a book cover." So I taught myself how to do lettering and designed book covers. In those days, there was no full-color book cover production. It was all two-, three-, or four-color printing. You had to draw for every color on a separate piece of paper and then they all had to be combined. But it was a marvelous introduction into techniques and into producing works for books.

Then I got married. I used to drive into London on my little scooter after the high school art classes had finished and made appointments to see publishers. Eventually, I got book covers to do, and then I got more and more. After three years, my wife said, "Why don't you give up teaching, Brian, and do what it is you want to do?" And then when I came home and said, "I resigned." She said, "I'm pregnant!" She was marvelous about that. She knew that had I realized she was going to have a baby, I would have been too scared to go into books because you never quite know if you are going to earn any money or not.

On Becoming a Children's Book Author and Illustrator

After I had done book covers for a while, I went to see Oxford University Press. I saw there a wonderful lady, Mabel George, who was very shy. I took some semi-abstract paintings I had done in color, and she looked at them and she said, "Right, Mr. Wildsmith. We'll be in touch."

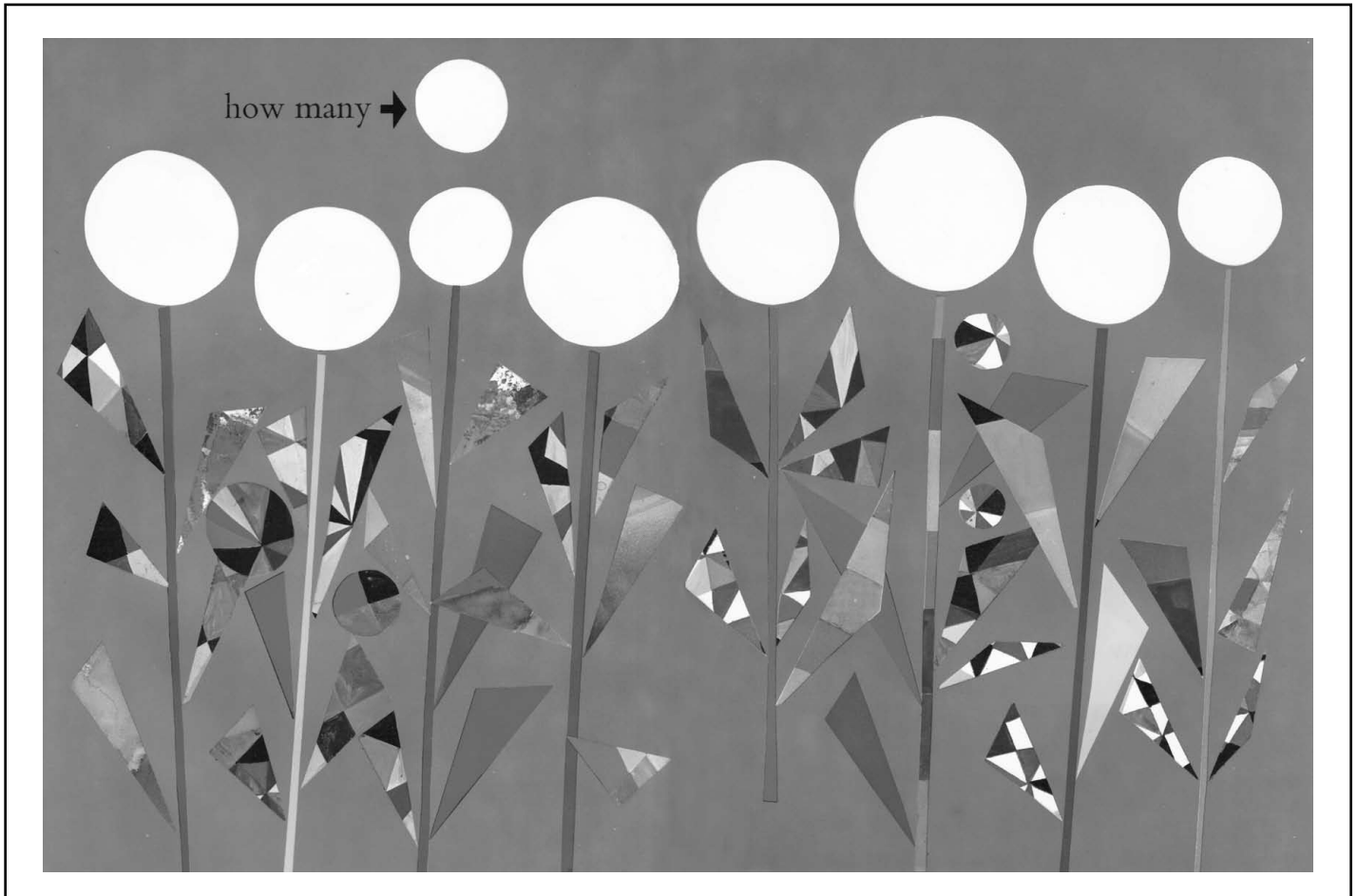
So I thought that means, "Don't call us, we'll call you." Two weeks later, she called me and said, "I have a book cover for you to do." So I did that and then more and more and more. After a couple of years, she said, "Right, Brian. It's time for you to do a book in color. The reason I gave you the books in black and white to do is that you knew nothing about books."

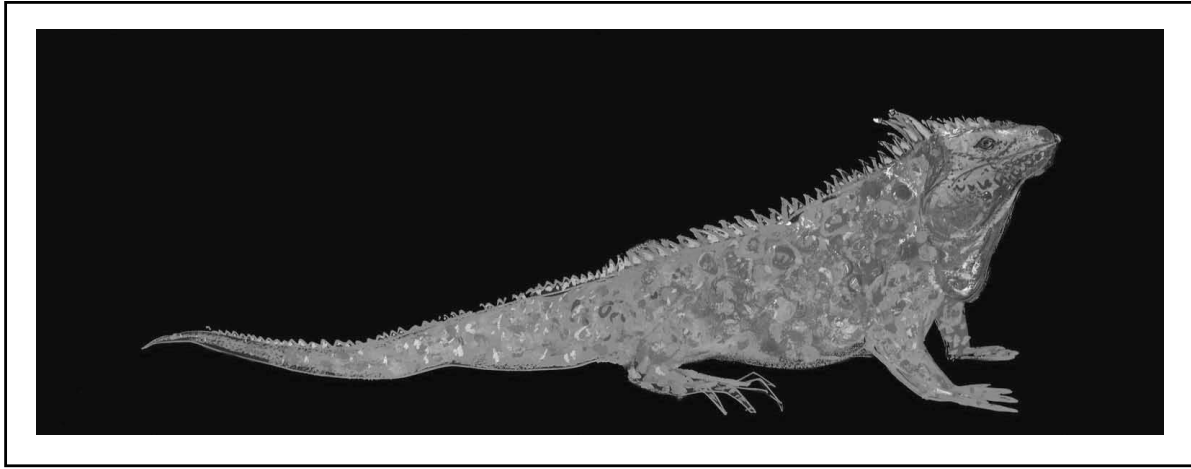
One day, Mabel asked me if I would produce twelve color illustrations for the *Arabian Nights*. Of course, I was delighted. The book was published, and in the *Times Literary Supplement*, the review said, "We now descend to the lowest depths, to Brian Wildsmith's vicious attack on the *Arabian Nights*. These aimless scribbles which do for drawings wander aimlessly and pointlessly about the page. It may be art, but it certainly isn't illustration."

I went in to see Mabel, and thinking this would be the end, she said "Brian, we're the Oxford University Press. We make up our own minds, and that review has convinced us we have something new."

By giving me an allocated space, in which I had to draw, say, three inches by four and a half, I had to learn to do a drawing that size. She said, "Now, you are ready. Have you thought about an A-B-C book?" To be quite honest, I hadn't. But immediately it flashed in my mind what it was I would like to do, and I explained it to her. She said, "Right, go and do it." The book was published to great acclaim. In fact, from all the articles I read after, it changed the course of English picture books in England.

Then after the *ABC*, I saw Mabel and she said, "Brian, what about doing your own stories?" So I said, "Mabel, my spelling is terrible. My punctuation is terrible, and my grammar is not all that wonderful."



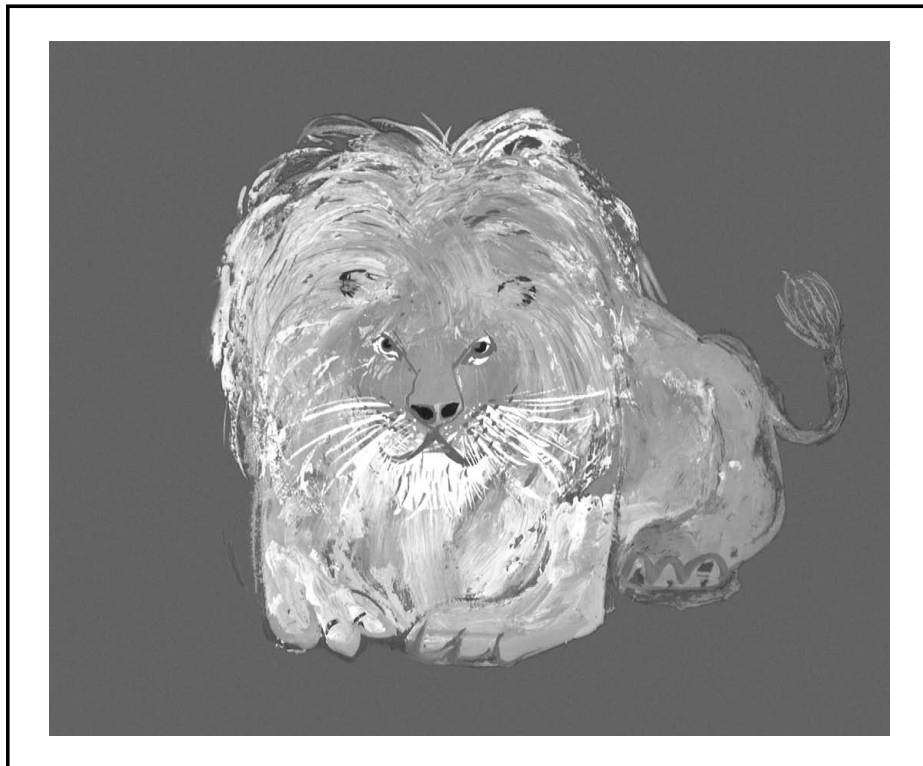


Iguana picture from Brian Wildsmith's *ABC*, Star Bright Books, 1996

She replied, "Brian, we have editors here with ink pots full of full stops, commas, exclamation marks, and etc. The core of the book, the main thing, the chief thing is the idea. The idea. Original ideas in the way the pictures are produced are very, very rare."

On Interpreting with Colors and Shapes

Before I start a painting, I must have a complete picture of what I'm going to do in my mind. I call it the "Mozartian Method." Mozart had the complete sounds in his head before he wrote them down. His process was like copying what was in his mind. It's like that for me. The subject and the intensity of what has to be expressed determine if I use a combination of reds and blues,



Lion picture from Brian Wildsmith's *ABC*, Star Bright Books, 1996

or if blue or yellow is prominent, and so on. It's something you can't describe. There's a certain intuitive way of doing it.

Every subject needs its own special interpretation to my point of view. Like a composer, although you always know it's his work, he doesn't produce music for a ballet or a sonata or prelude or symphony the same way. Each one has a different interpretation. And that's what I have felt I must do with my work. Many illustrators' work is the same for everything that they do. It's just different shapes and so on.

I want to have a different interpretation for everything. One of the best examples of that is my *123*, which is a counting book that has a section without numerals. Numbers are abstract until applied to something specific. So what I did was to take the three basic shapes—triangle, circle, and square—and I used these in a combination of forms, colors, and shapes within these shapes to produce my counting book.

I was very happy with it. As a point of fact, I remember Mabel George saying, "Brian, some of our mathematicians at the university, they don't understand your book. They were totally visually ignorant, but the children saw it straight-away."

On the Value to Children of Learning Life Lessons from Animals

Normally we say wisdom comes with age, but not always so; hence a child with an uncontaminated mind often sees a reality that the adult does not. Children respond to and love animals. They are intrigued and fascinated by them. I believe children need to know fables [with animal characters] because they are treasures of wisdom. I want to make a picture book that children take delight in, not a kind that merely

serves for education. I depict simple and realistic scenes powerfully, and by reading the stories and by looking at these pictures, children rediscover the world of wisdom.

For me, animals are wonderful to paint because the essence of painting them, as in all painting, is to get to the heart of what you are representing. Whether it's a kettle or a tree, there is an inner life to everything. All great painting has this. If it doesn't have it, it's not memorable art. And all the paintings I have ever seen that I have loved and enjoyed, they are all about inner meaning.

Once I was in Japan and a curator of a large museum and his friends took me to lunch. He said, "When I was an art student, the teacher said to draw an object and paint it." This he did. The teacher came back and said, "No, you haven't painted it." And then he tried again. And again the teacher said, "No, you haven't painted it." Then the teacher came back and put my *ABC* in front of him. "This is what painting is about—the inner life that which makes a thing what it is."



Wildsmith in his studio, © Brian Wildsmith

On Creating Books with Religious Themes

I decided I would like to do something about the fact that most children's books I've seen that are supposedly on religious themes give no real indication of what religion is about. When I decided to do a book on the passion of Christ, my wife said, "If you're going to do that, a book set in Israel, you have to go and case out the joint."

So we decided to visit Israel. Through a friend, the Israeli director of tourism got to know that we were coming to Jerusalem, and he decided to help us. He was absolutely wonderful. We were met at the airport by a chauffeur-driven Mercedes. He got us a double suite of rooms for the price of one at the King David Hotel. He engaged a brilliant scholar on the history of Israel, and she took us around to places we would not have otherwise seen or known about.

It was amazing how wonderful they were to us. I asked, "Why are you doing this?" The Israeli tourism director replied, "Jesus was a Jew, you know. And we're proud of him."

The eight religious books I have created were simply wonderful to do.

On Board Books for the Very Young

I am absolutely delighted with the board books offered by Star Bright Books. Publisher Deborah Shine assembles the books

with illustrations from various titles that I have created over the years. The books are very well printed and well thought out. I'm especially pleased that she is printing them in so many languages; they get to such a wide variety of children from different backgrounds. Star Bright Books has the best interest of children at heart.

On Art, Faith, and Passion

There are schools of art, but you cannot teach art. A good teacher advises and will recognize the individual qualities of that particular student and help him develop. Art is an intensely personal thing. The first thing for new artists, I think, is that drawing is crucial. Good drawing is an absolute necessity. So draw, draw, draw, draw.

Then, you have to look within your own soul as to what you want to do and how you want to do it. If you want to paint an elephant red, white, and blue, paint it red, white, and blue. If you want to paint a dinosaur not just gray but in colored spots and so on, then so be it.

You have to believe in yourself. It's not an easy job. But you have to have faith in yourself. You have to have the will and the courage to carry on, carry on, carry on. Without the faith in yourself, forget it, forget it!

Art is the expression of all that is wonderful, beautiful, and mysterious in our world and the essential nourishment for the soul, that which make us what we are. As I approach fifty years of producing books for children, my passion for children and their books has remained constant. &

To learn more about Brian Wildsmith, visit www.brianwildsmith.com.

Ready to Read Grant

How Columbus Metropolitan Library Got It and What They Learned

Kim Snell

We just couldn't do it alone. We didn't have the time. We didn't have the resources. We didn't have the budget, and we didn't have all the connections to reach all the parents and children we wanted to benefit from our Ready to Read program.

These are all common problems in public libraries, and they were true for Columbus (Ohio) Metropolitan Library (CML) as well. But CML has learned that librarians need to find ways around these problems to get the job done. This is why CML was thrilled this year to receive a grant from the United Way, in partnership with Action for Children, for \$62,500 to expand its Ready to Read program.

Most children's librarians are well aware of the history of the Every Child Ready to Read initiative and the Public Library Association's (PLA) role, but let us refresh our memories a little bit just to revisit the historical significance of partnerships and challenges with Every Child Ready to Read.

PLA began its Early Literacy Project in 2000 with a partnership with the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), a division of the National Institutes of Health.

In 2000, NICHD released a helpful report called "Teaching Children to Read: An Evidence-Based Assessment of the Scientific Research Literature on Reading and Its Implications



Baby Brooklyn enjoys looking at books.

for Reading Instruction," and PLA distributed this information to libraries beginning with the 2001 PLA Spring Symposium. That is also when PLA announced plans to build model library programs incorporating the research found in the report.

In 2001, PLA partnered with ALSC to test an early education model program at twenty demonstration site libraries of varying size and demographics. In 2002, another fourteen sites were tested. Over the next few years, these models became instrumental in the growth and success of Every Child Ready to Read.

PLA and ALSC's hard work and research has yielded phenomenal results since then. The initiative's website offers all members of the library community the ability to download training materials, grant application information, pamphlets, contacts, and even an online screening tool for parents to test their children. It contains almost everything a youth services librarian could need to create a successful Every Child Ready to Read program.

Kim Snell works in Media Relations and Communications for the Columbus (Ohio) Metropolitan Library.

CML's Journey

Ever since the Every Child Ready to Read initiative was introduced to libraries, it was a priority for CML, especially for the youth services staff. In September 2004, CML conducted a day-long training session with its youth services staff on Every Child Ready to Read, and CML librarians incorporated their training into their storytime sessions.

Slowly but surely, the staff began to offer our Ready to Read programs in the community. But because of lack of resources, the workshops could only be held sporadically. And though CML offered participants take-home items such as books and crayons, neither the quantity nor the quality were as high as would have been preferred. However, an opportunity to rise to that challenge would present itself in 2007.

While CML youth services staff were being trained in the initiative in 2004, Kathy Shahbodaghi, public services administrator for youth services at CML, began volunteering with United Way. As one of the many employees who genuinely cares about the education and well-being of the children in the Columbus community, she began serving on the Education Vision Council, Kindergarten Readiness Committee. This involvement eventually led to the partnership with Action for Children and the United Way grant.

Another individual serving on that committee was Diane Bennett, director of Action for Children. Action for Children is a private, not-for-profit organization in Columbus that works with agencies on programs such as childcare, early education, employment opportunities, professional development workshops, and other valuable resources for parents.

Shahbodaghi and Bennett worked together on the Kindergarten Readiness Committee and saw many similarities in their professional goals and personal values, but this was not the only connection the organizations had with one another. In 2005, Pat Claeys, an early childhood specialist at CML, worked with Action for Children as one of the trainers in their Adventures in Literacy program. And in 2006, CML conducted ten Ready to Read workshops with Action for Children at Early Learning Consortium sites, training more than three hundred participants that year.

All these little projects finally came together in January 2007, when representatives from the United Way suggested that CML apply for a grant. They also suggested that Action for Children apply for a grant. Shahbodaghi and Bennett decided that by working together, they could pull together resources, contacts, and strong reputations to create a program that would make the biggest impact on the community. So they applied for an \$80,000 grant together, and they got it.

About the Partnership

Action for Children was already aware of the tremendous potential of CML's Ready to Read program, and CML was very enthusiastic about the professional connections available



Puppets, clay, and more are part of CML's Ready to Read take-home kits.

through Action for Children. What needed to be ironed out were the many little details that require meticulous planning to ensure smooth execution of the workshops.

Shahbodaghi enlisted the help of many other CML youth services staff to begin planning this initiative, especially Claeys and Cathy Williams, manager of CML's Linden Branch. Both Claeys and Williams were already heavily involved with the Ready to Read program and, like Shahbodaghi, were anxious to bring the program to the forefront of the community. They spent many long hours working with Action for Children to coordinate training session locations, details of take-home kits and catering, and the presentation of the programs themselves.

In the end, the program was presented as a ninety-minute workshop by members of the CML youth services staff. All participants were given an Adventures in Literacy plastic container filled with books, puppets, writing pads, markers, alphabet magnets, and other resources for parents to use at home with their children. They also received Action for Children's *Adventures in Literacy Guidebook*, which provides information, tips, and activities aligned with the Ohio Department of Education's Early Learning Content Standards for English Language Arts.

Locations for the workshops were chosen from Action for Children's database of publicly funded childcare centers, including Head Starts and ELI programs. This is one of the key reasons partnerships are so critical to the success of this program. CML may not have had ready access to this valuable list without the partnership with Action for Children. The list included Franklin County Early Learning Consortium, YMCA of Central Ohio, and thirty-five daycare centers engaged in ELI (for three-to-five-year-olds whose families were at or below the poverty level).

Each parent and caregiver who attended the workshop received a nutritious box meal; children in the childcare facility also received a healthy meal. Centers who opted to provide childcare during the workshop also received a \$50 stipend.

Why did CML decide that feeding the participants was necessary for the success of the project? In the world of at-risk parenting, preparing children for kindergarten and to be successful learners is not seen as a critical need like food and shelter. By offering free, nutritious meals to them and their children, CML gave parents a significant incentive to attend and participate in the program.

This realization affected the marketing strategy for the program, and that increased attendance. Initially, marketing materials were very focused on parents preparing children for kindergarten, and the attendance for these training sessions was very low. CML did not take into account that these parents were so consumed by the intricacies of their daily lives that they just did not have the ability or time to focus on years down the road. When staff put their heads together with the marketing staff at CML, they decided to target those immediate needs of free meals for them and their children.

The updated flyers advertising the Ready to Read workshops were changed to read, "Make your child a winner, and get a FREE DINNER." When parents of at-risk children saw that CML was providing the means to satisfy this immediate need, attendance improved dramatically.

The Results?

At the beginning of this project, CML hired an outside professional research firm to evaluate the program. About \$6,500 of the grant money went into this research to validate the success of the program and to identify ways the program could be improved in the future.

At the end of the program, 1,320 kits had been distributed and 1,067 of the research firm's surveys had been completed by parents and caregivers. This alone was a fantastic achievement considering the original goal was to train 1,200 low-income parents or caregivers and 120 teachers.

The survey responses CML received about how the participants planned to utilize the information from the training were very promising. Overall, most participants said they would read more often, read more interactively with their child, use reading as a time to build literacy skills, and visit the library more often. They also planned to use the take-home kits (on average) four times per week.

CML wholeheartedly believes that the results of the research study were instrumental to the library receiving another United Way grant to continue the project this year.

Another positive result of this partnership was the development of new contacts and potential partners in the community. CML has strengthened relationships with Action for



COLUMBUS METROPOLITAN LIBRARY

Children, Columbus Public Schools and the Homeless Families Foundation, just to name a few. This presents CML with many more opportunities to collaborate with other organizations in the future for this and other programs.

A Learning Experience

This partnership was not without its challenges. CML's biggest struggle was meeting the demands of community organizations throughout Columbus. Once word circulated that the Ready to Read program was available, it was sought out by many organizations, particularly for repeat programs. This will be an ongoing struggle, but too many parents and caregivers wanting to improve the school success of their children is the best kind of problem to have. CML could not be happier to have to face this problem.

There were also challenges with vendors. CML could not meet the demand for workshops as quickly as they had hoped because the Adventures in Literacy plastic boxes could not be ordered and delivered conveniently. The boxes had to be delivered all at once, and they had to be filled with all of the take-home materials. There was not enough space to store hundreds of plastic boxes, so CML and Action for Children had to use grant funds to rent storage space for more than one thousand boxes.

There was also difficulty in the scheduling of the workshops. Because Action for Children had the contacts and relationships with the locations chosen to hold programs, they originally took charge of scheduling. There were some communication mishaps about the librarians' schedules. Sometimes a workshop would be scheduled when no trainer was available. CML eventually rectified that problem by having trainers contact locations directly so they could coordinate days and times that worked for everyone.

As CML and Action for Children began 2008 intending to reapply for the same grant money from the United Way, they were presented with yet another challenge. In 2007, there was \$80,000 in grant money available for this project, but in 2008, there was only \$62,500 available. The intention had been to not only continue the project, but also expand it. They had to find ways to cut \$17,500 from the project.

Cuts in Cost, Not Quality

Without sacrificing the quality of Ready to Read workshops themselves, the team decided to make the following creative changes to the program in order to save money:

- Use high-quality tote bags instead of heavy-duty boxes for take-home kits (saving \$8,400)
- Examine the philanthropic nature of our workshops and cut food costs (saving \$5,000)
- Renegotiate the contract with research firm (saving \$1,500)
- Make changes to vendors, prices, and quantity of take-home kit items

In this process and through new partners in the community, CML has entered into a contract with the Department of Job and Family Services to provide Ready to Read workshops to professional family and childcare providers. This gave CML another \$24,860 dollars to train 150 caregivers in the community.

CML also plans to explore working with school districts and teacher associations to offer the workshop for continuing education credits. This helps position the program as beneficial for both the working members of our community as well as the children they serve.

How Other Libraries Can Do This

All the training tools are available to librarians at ALSC and PLA's Every Child Ready to Read website (www.ala.org/every-child). But the work does not end with that information. You have to get involved in the community outside of your library doors.

Here is a list of places to begin:

- The local United Way
- School districts
- The Department of Jobs and Family Services
- Welfare programs
- The YMCA/YWCA
- Local health centers and clinics
- Local foundations
- Head Start centers
- Local philanthropic organizations

It is unfair to say you have to be at the right place at the right time to reap the rewards of fortunate opportunities and partnerships like this one. Seek out grant opportunities. The key is to get to know the movers and shakers in your community and to make sure they know you. When decision-makers and philanthropic organizations think about valuable partners and programs in the community, make certain they are thinking about you, your library, and Every Child Ready to Read. ☺

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Dewey—or Don't We—Classify?

Suzanne M. Stauffer, ALSC Research and Development Committee

The issue of classification of school and public library materials has been in the news ever since the Maricopa County Library District in Arizona decided to organize their nonfiction at the Perry branch utilizing the subject headings used by the Book Industry Study group rather than according to Melvil Dewey's classifications system, which has been updated twenty-two times since its creation in 1876.¹ Comments, such as "Dewey doesn't facilitate browsing,"² books in bookstores are "grouped by subject . . . instead of according to the Dewey Decimal System,"³ and the call number is only used to "find the right book at the right address on the shelf,"⁴ reveal a fundamental misunderstanding of the structure, function, and purpose of the Dewey Decimal System (DDC). The primary purpose of DDC is to organize materials according to precise subject in a systematic arrangement from the general to the specific. Besides making it possible to easily locate a given item, such an arrangement supports browsing more effectively than arranging materials by the author's last name within a broad general category because each book is related to those on either side by specific subject, not alphabetical accident. The user can easily find additional materials on a topic in a single stop, and if the desired work is not on the shelf, similar works will be in the same location. By arranging materials by the author's last name within a broad general category, the bookstore doesn't facilitate browsing so much as demand it because there is no other way to find a specific title. In addition, the DDC arrangement is the same in every library, while the arrangement in bookstores varies with each store.

Furthermore, bookstores also shelve books according to current commercial status rather than subject, in areas such as "New Books," "Sale Books," "Remainders," etc. As Shonda Brisco discovered, this method "obliges the customer to engage the store clerk," which provides the clerk with the opportunity to

suggest further items for purchase and so fulfill the mission of the bookstore, which is to make a profit.⁵ Ironically, many promote the "bookstore arrangement" for libraries to encourage patron independence and reduce the need to ask librarians for assistance.

Perhaps more important for the librarian faced with this decision and the need to justify it to the library's directors is the lack of information about children's understanding of the DDC, their use of it, and their ability to locate desired materials on the shelves using it or any other systematic method. Research into children's information-seeking behavior has focused primarily on the reference encounter, online catalogs, the Internet, and digital libraries.⁶ Recently, however, several researchers have investigated children's ability to find the books that they have located in the library catalog as well as their ability to access information electronically.⁷

These researchers found DDC does require certain skills and cognitive abilities that develop with age, but that most children are able to use DDC independently by the fourth grade. These skills and abilities include counting to 999 and working with decimal numbers, which are learned in school, thinking of information in terms of related categories with divisions and subdivisions, and locating items in real space (spatial ability).⁸ Children are inherently capable of categorizing objects and information. They progress from dividing information into two

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categories (e.g., people and animals) in kindergarten to a large number of more sophisticated and abstract categories by fourth grade.⁹ Their spatial ability develops along with other cognitive abilities as they mature.

These studies also found that children did not understand the sequencing of books on shelves, expecting the books to be arranged from one end of the range to the other by shelf rather than section by section. These findings suggest that young children will have trouble with any system (numerical or otherwise) that organizes information into more than two or three categories and that all children will continue to need instruction in the physical arrangement of the books on the shelves, regardless of the system used.

In addition to the benefits of frequent updates, systematic subject arrangement, and uniformity across libraries mentioned above, DDC organizes information according to traditional Western academic disciplines, so that most of the nonfiction in public and school libraries is organized according to how it is used in the curriculum. Children who learn to use DDC will also be learning to organize information according to the structure that they will encounter throughout their academic and professional careers.

This research suggests that librarians can take some simple steps to make the collection more accessible to the children who use it while retaining the benefits of using DDC. First, take a page from the bookstore model and make use of generous signage. In the tradition of Charles Ammi Cutter, whose *Rules for a Dictionary Catalog* (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1904) included the instruction to use language familiar to the library's community, signs can employ familiar terms from children's vocabulary and from the curriculum rather than the formal language used in DDC. Signs and book labels can use pictures as well as words to indicate subjects. Directional signs can literally point children in the right direction. Library-use instruction can include an explanatory tour of the collection, and will take into account the age and cognitive abilities of the children.

Books can be classified using the Abridged DDC into broader categories with shorter numbers that require less mathematical ability to follow. They can be reclassified where necessary and can be located with other materials that are used in the same way or for the same purpose.

The librarian will maintain skills, knowledge, and abilities by reading professional literature, attending workshops and conferences, and taking advantage of other opportunities for continuing professional education. Most importantly, the librarian will get to know the children who use the library, their needs, interests, and abilities, and respond to them. No system of organization can substitute for that. ☺

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Elevator Speeches

What's So Important about Them?

ALSC Managing Children's Services Committee

What do you do when you find yourself walking next to Bill Gates at the airport? Introduce yourself with an elevator speech! An elevator speech is an overview of an idea for a product, service, or project. Its name reflects the fact that an elevator pitch can be delivered in the time span of an elevator ride (about thirty seconds or one hundred words).

First impressions are crucial, so you need a clear, consistent message when introducing yourself in face-to-face conversations and for introductions to groups. Here are some tips to help you develop exceptional elevator speeches.

1. **Keep it simple.** As Denzel Washington said in the movie *Philadelphia*, "All right, look, I want you to explain this to me like I'm a 6-year-old, OK?"¹ Your idea or goal does not have to be complicated to be valid. Break it down, break it down, break it down. Avoid the use of technical jargon as much as possible. Answer questions that explain

- what you are doing;
- where you are doing it;
- for whom you are doing it;
- how you are doing it; and

Members of the 2007–08 **Managing Children's Services Committee** included Chair Leslie M. Molnar, Kristine Casper, Sarah English, Ginny Gustin, Cheryl Kallberg, Ja-Lih Lee, Melanie Lightbody, Susan Pannebaker, Bianca Roberts, Meg Smith, and Anitra Steele.

- when you began or completed doing it.

Short answers are more effective—and memorable.

2. **Use your own words.** Your explanation should resonate with your essence. Your personality or your being should not conflict with what you are saying, otherwise the internal tug of war will prevent you from believing what you are saying and hinder the flow of information. The more you believe what you are saying, the more confident you will be in explaining your idea or goal.
3. **Sound natural and inspiring.** Let your explanation be natural, in your own words, and in your own style. Avoid copying other people's styles and imagining that their language and expressions are better than yours. What was it that made you interested, *dare I say excited*, about the job, project, or program? If someone presented the idea to you, what would you need to hear to get involved? This is what you want to convey in your speech.

Your speech should always include

- who you are;
- what you do;
- why the listener should care;
- a specific example, story, or problem that you solved;

continued on page 54

Not to Be Missed

ALSC Committee Visits Free Library's Collection

ALSC National Planning of Special Collections in Children's Literature Committee

The Free Library of Philadelphia offers a compelling and fascinating sample of the history of children's books. Together, the rare book department and the children's literature research collection house an extensive research collection of children's literature from the seventeenth century to the present.

It's a collection you must see to believe. If you have already seen it, you must see it again.

The ALSC National Planning of Special Collections in Children's Literature Committee toured these collections during ALA Midwinter Meeting in January 2008. The group experienced a sense of awe and wonder as they learned about and viewed first editions, autographed manuscripts, original artwork, and other fine examples of children's literature and illustration. The collection has benefited from Philadelphia's long history as a publishing center.

Although the primary focus of the collection is on American children's books, many English children's illustrators and authors are featured, including the legendary Kate Greenaway, Arthur Rackham, and Beatrix Potter. In addition to Greenaway's autographed letters, watercolors, drawings, first editions, and a complete set of the *Almanacks*, the collection includes a copy of *The Pied Piper of Hamelin* inscribed by Greenaway to Robert Browning.

Examples of Rackham's works throughout his career are in the collection, including the pen, ink, and watercolor drawing of "The Witches Meeting" and original illustrations from Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows*.

The collection includes many Potter first editions, adaptations, watercolors, drawings, and autographed letters, and features two prized gifts—the autographed manuscript and original watercolors of *The Tailor of Gloucester* and the autographed manuscript and drawings for *The Tale of Little Pig Robinson*.

The collection of American authors and illustrators is equally impressive, with a prominent place reserved for Pennsylvanians Jerry Pinkney, Alike, E. B. Lewis, Jan and Stan Berenstain, David Wiesner, Marguerite de Angeli, and many others. A short list of other Americans includes Robert Lawson, Munro Leaf, A. B. Frost, Mark Twain, Edgar Allen Poe, Washington Irving, and Horatio Alger Jr.

The collection's diversity (illustrated children's books; historical, folklore, and series collections; historical bibliography; children's periodicals; fine art; and archives) and size (more than seventy-five thousand items) are astonishing. The illustrated children's books collection contains a nice selection of works by those listed in Bertha E. Mahony's *Illustrators of Children's Books*.

Examples of the fine art are the N. C. Wyeth paintings on display in the Central Library children's department. The historical collection is composed of books published since 1837. This collection, along with the series and folklore collections,

The ALSC National Planning of Special Collections in Children's Literature Committee includes chair Melissa Schutt, Mary Beth Dunhouse, Mary Lois Nicholls, Elizabeth Pankl, Marjorie Rosenthal, Ellen Ruffin, and Dorothy Stoltz.

contains many Free Library patrons' "favorite childhood books." The historical bibliography, children's periodicals, and the archives (which include a selection of manuscripts) are used primarily by researchers.

Our tour revealed many delightful surprises.

- A copy of *Ride on the Wind* (Scribner,

1956) by Alice Dalgliesh, which is a children's version of Charles A. Lindbergh's memoir *The Spirit of St. Louis*, with pictures by Georges Schreiber, signed by the author, the illustrator, and Lindbergh himself.

- A Robin Hood doll based on illustrations by Donald E. Cooke in his book *The Silver Horn of Robin Hood* (John C. Winston, 1956).

- An extension set of Book Week posters, including the first poster from 1919, displayed in the hallway outside the central children's department. ☺

The committee thanks the Free Library's Gabrielle Fulton, assistant head of the children's book department, and James DeWalt, head of the rare book department.

ELEVATOR SPEECHES, continued from page 52

- no more than three main points; and
- an invitation for interaction by asking or answering a question.

Creating an elevator speech provides you with an opportunity to reflect. What do you enjoy most about your job? How does your work affect others? How does your library affect the community? How has the job affected you personally? Remember all the stories you have heard from your patrons—the mother who learned to read in storytime or the elderly man who filed his own taxes on the computer. The information they shared with you is a representation of how you affect those around you.

Eventually, you will create a number of different speeches to use with different audiences. A successful speech includes information to hook the listener and motivate him to continue talking with you and eventually work with you. For example, you would tell a teenager about the cool games he can check out, but the local business woman would want to hear about the many opportunities your library provides for at-risk teenagers in your community.

Here are a few sample speeches to get you started:

I am a children's literacy expert. My staff and I help parents raise children who will enter school ready to learn

to read. We model techniques that have been shown to improve school success in all children when practiced by parents on a regular basis. I work at the Anywhere Public Library.

Have you heard of POWER Library? It is a collection of electronic resources that are available 24/7. All you need to access it is an Internet-connected computer and a public library card. You can use it to read an article in last week's *Newsweek* magazine someone mentioned to you, or research a company you are thinking about investing in, or look up information on the author of your book club's next selection, or find out more about a drug your doctor prescribed for you. It is all published material, so it is much more trustworthy than just putting a couple of words into Google.

I went to a workshop last week, and the speaker was stressing the importance of hooking boys and books together. The speaker had several easy ideas, and I would like to try two of them. I have talked to my staff, and we think we should institute a Saturday morning program for boys and a close adult male. We could also create a hot link off our website with booklists of suggested reading and other fun book-related activities.

Now you are ready for anyone else you may meet on the concourse—or in the elevator. ☺

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Read More About It

The committee recommends these titles to learn more about elevator speeches.

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Wanted! Award Applications

ALSC is seeking nominations and applications for its professional grants and awards:

- **Bechtel Fellowship.** Mid-career librarians, with a minimum of eight years experience working with children, are encouraged to apply for a Louise Seaman Bechtel Fellowship to finance a month of study at the Baldwin Library of Historical Children's Literature at the University of Florida in Gainesville. The \$4,000 fellowship is for travel and living expenses during the period of study. A mentor will be assigned upon request.
- **Bookapalooza.** This program offers three select libraries a collection of materials, including books, videos, audiobooks, and recordings. The materials are primarily for children up to fourteen years old and have been submitted to ALSC award and media evaluation selection committees for award and notables consideration.
- **ALSC/BWI Summer Reading Program Grant.** This \$3,000 grant is designed to encourage outstanding summer reading program development by providing funding to implement such a program. The applicant must plan and present an outline for a theme-based summer reading program in a public library. The committee encourages proposals with innovative ways to encourage involvement of children with physical or mental disabilities.
- **Distinguished Service Award.** ALSC members are invited to nominate one of their fellow members to be the

recipient of the Distinguished Service Award, which recognizes a member who has made significant contributions to and had an effect on library services to children. Nominees may be practicing librarians in a public or school library, a library or information science educator, a member of the library press, or an editor or other employee of a publishing house. The individual may be active or retired. The recipient receives \$1,000 and an engraved pin.

- **Maureen Hayes Author/Illustrator Visit Award.** Established with funding from Simon and Schuster Children's Publishing, this award pays the honorarium and travel for a visiting author/illustrator to a maximum amount of \$4,000. Hayes Award applicants seek to provide a visit from an author/illustrator who will speak to children who have not had the opportunity to hear a nationally known author/illustrator.
- **Penguin Young Readers Group Award.** This \$600 award is presented to up to four children's librarians to enable them to attend ALA Annual Conference for the first time. The 2009 Annual Conference will be held in Chicago. The recipients must be ALSC members, work directly with children, and have one to ten years of library experience.

For more information about each award and to download award applications, visit the ALSC website (www.ala.org/alsc) and click on Awards and Scholarships—Professional Awards. (Look for Bookapalooza on the main Awards and Scholarships page.) To request a form by mail, send a request

to ALSC, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611; or e-mail: alsc@ala.org. Deadline for all professional award applications is **December 1, 2008**.

Major Board Actions

Electronic Actions

The following actions were voted on electronically by the ALSC board of directors on the electronic discussion list ALSCBOARD. The month in which the vote took place is in parentheses after each item.

VOTED, that ALSC continue as the national home of Día, that implementation of Día be added to the existing ALSC strategic plan as a strategy under the "Advocacy" goal area, and that staff will work with existing member groups, such as the ALSC Quicklists Consulting Committee, the ALSC Liaisons to National Organizations Serving Children and Youth Committee, and the ALSC Public Awareness Committee, to continue to implement the initiative. (March 2008)

VOTED, to co-sponsor in name only the following programs at the September 2008 REFORMA National Conference: Children of Undocumented Parents and Their Right to Information; The Bilingual Child: Libraries Serving Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Children; Noche de Cuentos @ the border; Reflections of the Americas: Visual and Textual Representations of Latino Cultures in Américas and Pura Belpré Award-winning Picturebooks; Connecting Cultures and Celebrating Cuentos: Highlighting Three Latino Children's Literature

Catching Up on the Kids! Campaign

The ALSC Public Awareness Committee (PAC) has been busy this year developing new resource materials for the Kids! @ your library® Campaign and planning for its future. Now there are even more great reasons to check out the Kids! Campaign tool kit, which is filled with great, FREE resources for promoting libraries to youth!

What's New? The latest tool kit additions include *The Library Dragon* readers theater script; line art adapted from Michael P. White's Kids! Campaign artwork; a bibliography of books about kids and libraries; a list of songs for kids about reading and libraries; a Dr. Seuss-themed hidden treasure puzzle; and a Dr. Seuss Mad Libs™-type game. They are all free to download and use in your library and community.

Get the message out that there is So Much to See. So Much to Do. @ your library® with fun, temporary tattoos or a rubber stamp, both bearing Kids! Campaign logo art. ALSC has teamed up with JanWay and Kidstamps to make our logo available to librarians on their products. For pricing information and to purchase tattoos, contact JanWay at 1-800-877-5242. Mention ALSC's customer number (26981). You will not be charged a setup fee—it has already been paid by ALSC. For information on the rubber stamps, contact Kidstamps at www.kidstamps.com; 216-291-6885 (phone); 216-291-6887 (fax); or Kidstamps, PO Box 18699, Cleveland Heights, OH 44118. Each stamp is \$8.50. Shipping is free and there is no setup charge!

ALSC is offering ten **\$100 cash prizes** to libraries for the best use of Kids! Campaign materials. For details of the contest, visit www.ala.org/ala/alsc/contest. Contest entries will be due on **October 15, 2008**, and winners will be announced at the 2009 ALA Midwinter Meeting.

Phase 2 Plans. PAC has begun planning efforts for phase 2 of the Kids! Campaign. Phase 2 will bring additional resources and materials to the tool kit to help librarians promote the library to kids in grades 5–8. Phase 1 of the campaign is focused on K–4 children, their parents, and caregivers.

PAC members held a survey in February to collect information from librarians that would help guide the development of phase 2 materials. ALSC hired consultants to facilitate focus groups in April and May with kids in grades 5–8. The purpose of the focus groups was to connect directly with kids and find out what they think and feel about the library and how it should be promoted to them. On the February survey of librarians, respondents were given the opportunity to share questions they'd like to ask tweens. We received many thoughtful responses, and many of their questions were incorporated into the discussion guides for the focus groups.

The survey results and focus group findings will help ALSC develop relevant and practical tools to help libraries reach out to kids in grades 5–8. Phase 2 will kick off in 2009.

For more information about the campaign and to check out all the free tool kit materials available, visit www.ala.org/kids and click on the tool kit link.

Awards; and Puentes de la Comunidad: Understanding and Bridging the Gaps between South Carolina's Latinos, Libraries, and Legislators. (March 2008)

2008 Annual Conference Actions

During the 2008 Annual Conference in Anaheim, California, the board voted to take the following actions:

VOTED, to choose a marketing plan for professional awards as the assignment for the 2008–09 ALSC Emerging Leader project.

VOTED, to approve the recommendations stated in the Awards Eligibility Task Force report, as amended to clarify wording under definition of "children's book" in section II.C.

VOTED, to approve the board meeting agendas for Annual Conference 2008.

VOTED, to approve a publication proposal from the Intellectual Freedom Committee to update "The Censor Is Coming" as an electronic publication.

VOTED, to approve the proposed FY'09 budget as submitted by the Budget

Committee, including the use of Friends of ALSC funds for Emerging Leaders (\$1,000) and the blog manager (\$3,000).

VOTED, to authorize an additional \$2,000 for the Kids! @ your library® Campaign in FY'09, for a total of \$11,000.

VOTED, to revise the membership statement for the Program Coordinating Committee to read: "Chair + 5, including the past chair who serves an additional year as the ALSC representative to the ALA Conference Planning Coordinating Team (CPCT)."

Suggestions Welcome

ALSC members are encouraged to suggest titles for the 2009 media awards. Send recommendations with full bibliographic information to the award committee chair.

- The **Newbery Medal** is given to the author of the most distinguished contribution to American literature for children. **Rose Treviño**, rose.trevino@cityofhouston.net.
 - The **Caldecott Medal** is given to the illustrator of the most distinguished American picture book for children. **Nell Colburn**, nellc@multcolib.org.
 - The **Mildred L. Batchelder Award** is a citation given to an American publisher for a children's book considered to be the most outstanding of those books originally published in a foreign language in a foreign country, and subsequently translated into English and published in the United States. **Sandra Imdieke**, simdieke@nmu.edu.
 - The **Arbuthnot Lecture** features a speaker who is an individual of distinction in the field of children's literature. Send recommendations for lecturers for the 2010 lecture to **Kristi Elle Jemtegaard**, kjemtegaard@arlingtonva.us.
 - The **Pura Belpré Award**, co-sponsored by ALSC and REFORMA, is presented to a Latino/Latina writer and illustrator whose work best portrays, affirms, and celebrates the Latino cultural experience in an outstanding work of literature for children and youth. **Claudette S. McLinn**, cmclinn@aol.com.
 - The **Andrew Carnegie Medal**, supported by an endowment from the Carnegie Corporation of New York,
- honors an outstanding video production for children. **Margaret Tice**, mtice@nypl.org.
- The **Geisel Medal** is given to the author and illustrator of the most distinguished contribution to the body of American children's literature known as beginning reader books. **Joan Atkinson**, jatkinso@slis.ua.edu.
 - The **ALSC/Booklist/YALSA Odyssey Award for Excellence in Audiobook Production** will be given to the producer of the best audiobook produced for children or young adults, available in English in the United States. **Pam Spencer Holley**, pamsholley@aol.com.
 - The **Sibert Medal**, sponsored by Bound to Stay Bound Books, and named in honor of the company's long-time president Robert F. Sibert, is given to the author of the most distinguished informational book for children. **Carol Phillips**, cphillips@ebpl.org.
 - The 2009 (Laura Ingalls) **Wilder Award** is given in alternate years to an author or illustrator whose books published in the United States, over a period of years, made a substantial and lasting contribution to literature for children. **Cathryn M. Mercier**, cathryn.mercier@simmons.edu.
- We also welcome suggestions for the Notable Children's Media lists. Send titles with full bibliographic information to the committee chair.
- Notable Children's Books, **Caroline Ward**, cward@fergusonlibrary.org.
 - Notable Children's Recordings, **Jane Claes**, claesj@uhcl.edu.
 - Notable Children's Videos, **Kathleen Apuzzo Krasniewicz**, kras@perrotlibrary.org.

New from ALSC/ALA

ALSC is happy to announce the availability of *The Newbery and Caldecott Awards: A Guide to the Medal and Honor Books, 2008 Edition* (ALA, 2008). The guide features a comprehensive list of all current and past medal and honor books including annotations. It is an indispensable guide for quick-reference, collection and curriculum development, and readers' advisory. This edition's essay, "The Art of the Picture Book," was written by Mary M. Erbach, assistant director of interpretive exhibitions and family programs at the Art Institute of Chicago. It addresses how children's picture books and original picture book art have found a home in the art museum setting and are valued as links to permanent museum collections and as supplements for educational programming and hands-on activities. This publication is available through the ALA Store (www.alastore.ala.org). ☺

Thanks to Our Sponsors

Many thanks to the sponsors of the 2008 ALSC Preconference, "Summer Reading Survivor: Overcoming the Challenges," this past June in Anaheim.

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Submit an Article to *Children and Libraries*

Children and Libraries (CAL) is the official publication of the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC), a division of the American Library Association (ALA). *CAL* is a vehicle for continuing education of librarians working with children, and showcases current research and practice relating to library service to children and spotlights significant activities and programs of the association.

Manuscript Consideration

Submit manuscripts that are neither under consideration nor accepted elsewhere. Send one copy of the manuscript to the *CAL* editor at the address below. Editor will acknowledge receipt of all manuscripts and send them to at least two referees for evaluation. Accepted manuscripts with timely content will have scheduling priority.

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For information on formatting your manuscript, editorial style, guidelines for text and art, and copyright forms, contact the editor at the address given.

For citations, use endnotes as described in the 15th edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style*, sections 16–17.

Submit manuscripts and text (including references, tables, notes, and bibliographies) to the editor by e-mail as a rich text or Microsoft Word file attachment, copy the text directly into the body of an e-mail message, or send on a CD. Illustrative material (such as high-resolution digital images) MUST be sent via CD. CDs must be PC-formatted.

Full length features (e.g., scholarly, research and “best practice” articles): fifteen to twenty pages, double-spaced.

Short features (e.g., interviews with authors, librarians, or others involved with library service to children): three to ten pages, double-spaced.

The Last Word: 500–750 words, double-spaced.

Long and short features should be well researched with themes relevant and of interest to children’s librarians and all those involved and interested in library service to children.

“The Last Word” is an end-page feature that will run in each issue and highlight brief, light, or humorous essays from children’s

librarians, such as: a humorous story about a library experience; a short trivia quiz or puzzle about children’s literature; a brief, creatively written insight on library service, children’s literature, or programming; a very short question-and-answer interview with a popular author; a funny story about what kids are overheard saying in libraries. “The Last Word” will be a place for children’s librarians to share these stories and get their names in print. Please send your ideas or finished stories to the editor.

Attach a cover sheet indicating the title of the article and the full name, title, affiliation, phone number, fax number, e-mail address, and complete mailing address of the first author. Include a 200-word abstract.

Place tables on separate pages. Notations should appear in text for proper table and figure placement (e.g., “insert table 1 here”). Provide a title and caption for each table and figure.

Supply charts and graphs as spreadsheet programs or as graphics (TIFFs or high-resolution JPEGs). Camera-ready copy is also acceptable. You need not provide graphs in final form. If you prefer, you may provide a rough version, or even a sketch. If so, please mark all data points clearly. We will create the graphic. You will have a chance to review the graphic when you review your typeset pages during the proofing stage.

Photos can also be included with manuscript. Color or black and white photos are acceptable. We also can accept digital images of at least 300 dpi resolution. (Pictures from the Web are not of sufficient quality for printed material because their resolution is too low.)

Photos will be returned to author(s) after publication.

Submit either Microsoft Word or WordPerfect files. Double-space the entire manuscript, including quotes and references. Insert two hard returns between paragraphs. Number all pages.

Use a minimal amount of formatting in files. Specialized formatting may

be lost in translation from one program to another; mark specialized formatting with text instructions, such as <extract>. Do not use the automatic footnote/endnote feature on your word processing program; create endnotes manually at the end of the article.

If sending a disk, label it with the first author’s name and all file names.

Writing and Bibliographic Style

Children and Libraries follows the 15th edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style*. Authors are responsible for accuracy in the manuscript, including all names and citations. Editor may revise accepted manuscripts for clarity, accuracy, and readability, consistent with publication style and journal audience.

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THE LAST WORD

The Corncake Emergency

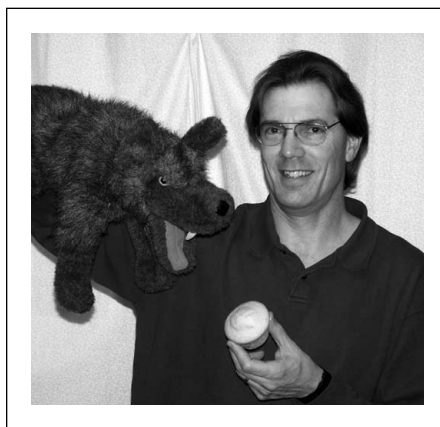
Steven Engelfried

Steven Engelfried is a Raising a Reader Coordinator with the Multnomah County Library in Portland, Oregon. He especially enjoys telling stories with puppets and with props (when he can find them).

Emergencies come up all the time in the lives of children's librarians. Mine usually involve a story-related item that I desperately need right away, and if I don't find it, storytime may be ruined.

My wife and kids have lived through this drama many times over the years. Dad storms through the house frantically wondering, "Who took my kitty ears!" Dad drives to three different grocery stores looking for blueberries, which won't be around for months. Dad asks mom if she had any time to bake up some corn cakes and could they please be ready when he leaves for work in forty-five minutes? Dad drives to three different grocery stores once again, this time looking for carrots, but only the kind with the long green leafy part still attached will do. And there's no way to know when these emergencies will hit.

Well, actually there is. It's called story-time planning. The truth is, I do a puppet version of *Annie and the Wild Animals* by Jan Brett almost every winter, which means I need to obtain some mini-corn-cakes sometime between January and March so my moose, bear, and coyote puppets can crumble them into bits. If I just planned ahead, I could make them



or buy them well in advance.

More often, though, I don't, and instead I end up grabbing whatever I can find at the grocery store that looks the most like corncakes, and that usually turns out to be mini-poppy seed muffins, which don't crumble into bits so much as they squish and smear (which is much less visually satisfying and much harder to get off your puppets). Several Christmases ago, I found an instant corn muffin mix in my stocking—my wife's idea of a slightly sarcastic gag gift—but I must have misplaced it.

My problem is that when I select a story, I want to tell it as soon as possible, regardless of the props required and the difficulties in obtaining them. Over the years, I have gradually managed to avoid some emergencies by purchasing plastic versions of real things. So I now have pretend blueberries to use, along with a pre-

tend apple, banana, and pear, when I tell Charlotte Zolotow's *Mr. Rabbit and the Lovely Present* with puppets and props.

I never did find any plastic leafy carrots, so I now use printed, laminated pictures of carrots (and broccoli and corn) when I do Janet Stevens's *Tops and Bottoms*. Two-dimensional props do not excite me, and I'd still rather have the real thing, but I guess saving gasoline and preserving family harmony might outweigh the need for authenticity.

As for kitty ears, which I like to use (along with puppets and a big shirt to stuff them all in) when telling *The Fat Cat* (from Jack Kent's book), I know they're around here somewhere.

But I couldn't find them anywhere yesterday, so I wound up quickly making some out of black construction paper. Crafts are not my strength, though, so I didn't even think to add pink insides to the ears, and when I told the kids these were kitty ears, one girl said, "Those are for a bat!" Oh well. They still liked the story.

When I return to this class next month, I've already got it all worked out—I'll do some baking several days in advance, and tell *Annie and the Wild Animals* the way I like to tell it best, with authentic, crumbly corncakes. That's the plan anyway . . . unless I forget until the last minute. ☺

Got a great, lighthearted essay? A funny story about children and libraries? Books and babies? Pets and picture books? A not-so-serious look at the world of children's librarianship? Send your Last Word to Sharon Verbeten at CALeditor@yahoo.com.