

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

NEW EDITIONS

Flake, Sharon J. ***Begging for Change***. New York: Hyperion/Jump at the Sun, 2004. 252 pp. ISBN 0-7868-1405-5, \$5.99 (pb).

Flake, Sharon J. ***Money Hungry***. New York: Hyperion/Jump at the Sun, 2004. 202 pp. ISBN 0-7868-1503-5, \$5.99 (pb).

Flake, Sharon J. ***The Skin I'm In***. New York: Hyperion/Jump at the Sun, 2004. 176 pp. ISBN 0-7868-1307-5, \$5.99 (pb).

Boxed set of three books: ISBN 0-7868-5164-3, \$17.99 (pb).

This set collects three young adult novels about teenage African-American girls struggling with difficult situations. The 1998 novel *The Skin I'm In* (Flake's first) is narrated by 13-year-old Maleeka Madison, an intelligent middle school student who feels that she is unpopular because she is too tall, skinny, and dark-skinned. Maleeka's father has died in an accident, and she has had to work to keep together her family and support her grieving mother. To fit in, she offers to do schoolwork for Charlese, the toughest girl in her grade, and falls in with her disrespectful crowd. A new and unconventional English teacher, Miss Saunders, tries to encourage Maleeka's gift for writing, as she creates an imagined diary for a young slave girl on the way to America. Out of fear, Maleeka goes along with Charlese's plan to take revenge on Miss Saunders for a failing grade by vandalizing her classroom. In the end, though, Maleeka is able to break free of Charlese's influence, feel better about herself, and develop her relationship with a smart, cute, and upstanding boy named Caleb.

Money Hungry is narrated by Raspberry Hill, a 13-year-old girl who, after a period of homelessness, now lives in a run-down housing project with her mother. Determined to have

more security in her life, Raspberry becomes obsessed with making money any way she legally can. Her mother tries to move the two of them to a nicer home in a development, but the residents there, who are opposed to Section 8 housing, manage to block them from moving. The 2004 book *Begging for Change* is a sequel to *Money Hungry*. It takes place one year later, when Raspberry must make some difficult choices after the return into her life of her drug-addicted father. All three of these novels feature realistic narration and situations, and young readers should be able to relate to these characters and their struggles to do what is right.

Griffin, John Howard. ***Black Like Me***. San Antonio, Texas: Wings Press, 2004. 256 pp. ISBN 0-930324-72-2, \$24.95 (cl); 0-930324-73-0, \$29.95 (library binding).

In 1959 Griffin, a white novelist and essayist, undertook a project to try to experience life as a black man in the segregated South. After receiving injections from dermatologists and applying dye to his skin, he spent about a month in living in New Orleans and traveling about Mississippi and Alabama (and at one point shining shoes). His experiences become known in 1960 through a series of articles and interviews, and for a time he became a noted (and, in some quarters, a hated) figure in the controversy over race relations. This book, in the form of a diary from that period, first appeared in 1961.

Various types of discrimination Griffin encounters, such as having to walk across town to find a bathroom he can use, do not generally exist anymore, and some of the language he uses (referring to "Negroes," for example) is now dated. It is also true that some of Griffin's imaginings about what was in the minds and hearts of the black people he encountered don't seem to be well supported by the limited experiences he had. But this is still a powerful document of the pervasiveness of segregation in that time and place and a dramatic demonstration of the way that skin color instantly affects the way a person is regarded. This edition includes a foreword by Studs Terkel; epilogues from 1976 and 1979 by Griffin (who died in 1980); photographs from his month as a black man; and a 2004 afterword by Robert Bonazzi, who authored a 1997 book on Griffin and the writing of *Black Like Me*. The title of the book comes from a Langston Hughes poem ("Night coming tenderly/Black like me"). That phrase and the idea of posing as someone from another race remain fairly well known in our culture; it is interesting to learn in detail how it all really happened.

Jiang, Ji-Li. ***The Magical Monkey King: Mischief in Heaven***. Fremont, Calif.: Shen's Books, 2004. 124 pp. Illus. by Youshan Tang. ISBN 1-885008-24-4, \$14.95 (cl); ISBN 1-885008-25-2, \$6.95 (pb).

The Monkey King is a popular trickster figure in Chinese folklore. The text of this version of his adventures, by the author of the memoir *Red Scarf Girl*, was first published in 2002 by HarperCollins; this new edition includes black-and-white drawings. It is written at a level suitable for ages seven to ten.

Eighteen short chapters tell of the Monkey's miraculous birth at the top of the Mountain of Flowers and Fruits; the bravery and daring that makes him the king of a tribe of monkeys; his search for the secrets of eternal life through study with a great sage; and his time spent in Heaven at the invitation of the Jade Emperor who rules there. Throughout these stories, the Monkey King is smart and powerful, but also mischievous, lazy, and disrespectful of any authority—even that of the ruler of Heaven. When the Jade Emperor grows frustrated at his inability to control and defeat the Monkey, the tales conclude with what might be called a *Buddha ex machina* ending, as the Great Buddha descends from a circle of light above. Buddha—who also is given little respect from the Monkey King—finally traps him in his giant hand and promises to release him in 500 years if he learns from his mistakes. In an Author's Note, we are told these are only the first of many tales of the Monkey King, so some further adventures of this trickster may be forthcoming.

The Qur'an. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2004. 512 pp. A new translation by M. A. S. Abdel Haleem. ISBN 0-19-280548-7, \$27.00.

The first introductory sections to this translation give readers background on the life of Muhammad and on the revelation, structure, and style of the Qur'an. Haleem then discusses the history of translations of the Qur'an into English before describing what he is attempting to achieve with his own translation. One aim is to provide a text written in a modern, easy (though not inappropriate) style that is free of archaic expressions and phrasings. In general, the text fulfills this goal. A second priority is to make clear to the reader the ways in which certain passages in the Qur'an should be understood in relation to other passages, and also in the more general historical context in which they were written. This is done through short introductions to each of the 114 suras that make up the Qur'an, and with one or two footnotes per page that clarify the background or meaning of passages. At a time when the interpretation that people have of Islam is so significant, this clear and thoughtful translation could be a good resource for those seeking to understand better the teachings of its holy book.

Smith, Henrietta M., ed. **The Coretta Scott King Awards 1970–2004.** Chicago: ALA Editions, 2004. 176 pp. ISBN 0-8389-3540-0, \$35.00 (pb); \$31.50 for ALA members.

The previous two editions detailing these awards for African-American writers and illustrators of children's books appeared in 1994 and 1999. After a short history of the awards, this new edition begins with the 2004 author awards—one winner (*The First Part Last* by Angela Johnson), three honor books, and one New Talent award. The book then

goes back through the years to discuss each author award back to the single honored book from 1970. The next section begins with the 2004 illustrator awards and winds back to 1974, the first year those awards were given. For each book, a paragraph of description is given, followed by a short excerpt.

The volume also includes interviews with two award winners, author Jacqueline Woodson and illustrator Ashley Bryan. A 16-page insert has color illustrations from 17 of the winning books. (It is unfortunate that more illustrations could not be included, such as at least some of the covers of the winning books.) A "Selected Biographies" section has about 90 short profiles (one-half to one page long) of award winners; most are accompanied by a black-and-white photo. The book concludes with alphabetical lists of winning authors and illustrators and an index. Besides recording the history of this award, this volume serves as a guide to 35 years' worth of great achievements in children's books and as a source of information on many of those who created them.

REISSUES OF OUT-OF-PRINT WORKS

Alexander, Elizabeth. **The Venus Hottentot.** St. Paul, Minn.: Graywolf, 2004. 66 pp. ISBN 1-55597-392-2, \$14.00 (pb).

This collection of poetry, the author's debut, was first published in 1990 by the University Press of Virginia. Since then, Alexander has published the collections *Body of Life* and *Antebellum Dream Book*, and a book of essays on African-American artistic life titled *The Black Interior*. The poems in this first collection are written in a variety of forms and styles. Some are personal and perhaps autobiographical, while a number are responses to figures in African-American culture. Romare Bearden is mentioned in several poems, and others refer to Duke Ellington, John Coltrane, Paul Robeson, Mike Tyson, and the black cowboy Nat Love. Some other cultural figures, such as Frida Kahlo, are also the subjects of poems.

The title poem, the longest in the book, starts off from the point of view of a scientist studying the Venus Hottentot, an African woman with large buttocks who was exhibited as a carnival attraction in nineteenth-century England. The rest of the poem is narrated by the Venus Hottentot herself, who decries the false promises that led her to leave Africa for this humiliation. As in most of the rest of the poems here, Alexander adeptly combines the personal with the cultural and historical.

Austin, Mary. **One-Smoke Stories.** Athens: Ohio Univ. Press/Swallow, 2003. 226 pp. ISBN 0-8040-1061-7, \$19.95 (pb).

This collection of 39 tales from the American Southwest was first published in 1934. Its author, a prolific Southwestern writer, referred to herself as a feminist, mystic, naturalist, and ethnologist. In her extensive introduction to this edition, Noreen Groover Lape describes Austin as a "popular anthropologist." She notes that Austin freely adapted (and invented) many of the tales in this book, as she did not simply record those stories she heard in a strict academic

manner. The tales are told from a number of points of view and are drawn from various cultures, including Native Americans, mestizos, European Americans, and Asian Americans.

"One-smoke stories" refers to stories that can be told in the time it takes to smoke a ceremonial cigarette, and most of these stories are just a few pages long. This volume can be appreciated not so much as a study of folklore but as one writer's multifaceted portrait of the peoples, traditions, and legends of the Southwest.

Isherwood, Christopher. *The Condor and the Cows: A South American Travel Diary*. Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 2003. 268 pp. ISBN 0-8166-3982-5, \$17.95 (pb).

In September 1947, Isherwood (the British writer best known for his book *Goodbye to Berlin*, the basis of the musical and film *Cabaret*) embarked on a six-month tour through Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, and Argentina. This diary of his experiences first appeared in 1949, and this edition includes a new foreword by Jeffrey Meyers that describes the origins of the book and its place in Isherwood's career.

Isherwood does not romanticize his journey, as he shares his feelings about the occasional boredom and frequent lack of comforts, along with numerous well-observed and honest descriptions of the people and places of these countries. He did not speak Spanish, and his perspective is that of a sympathetic outsider, not someone immersed in these cultures. Isherwood was one of the earlier writers to treat gay themes in his work, and he was accompanied on the trip by his lover, Bill Caskey. In this book written for general publication in the late 1940s, though, he generally sidesteps that aspect of his life. Included are about 40 photos taken by Caskey of the people he saw on the trip (none are of Isherwood). Like Isherwood's prose, these portraits of everyday people, from prisoners making shoes to women dancing at a festival, often manage to be both matter-of-fact and startling.

Ishigaki, Ayako. *Restless Wave: My Life in Two Worlds*. New York: Feminist Press, 2004. 298 pp. ISBN 1-55861-470-2, \$55.00 (c); 1-55861-464-8, \$16.95 (pb).

When it appeared in 1940, this memoir was one of the first English-language books published by a Japanese woman. Living in the United States at the time, an exile from an increasingly militaristic Japan, Ishigaki (1903-1996) describes her coming of age and the events that led to her leaving her country. In vivid prose, she describes the home in Tokyo where she grew up, her extended family, school, vacations, holidays, and the lessons she learned from her father, a professor whose ambitions for his daughters combined intellectual pursuits with proper wifely behavior. Her political activities at an alternative university in Tokyo led to her arrest in 1929 and her decision to move to New York City and later Los Angeles, where, now married, she became an outspoken advocate of women's rights. She also spoke out against Japan's invasion of Manchuria; the final chapter of the book recounts a fallen young soldier's diary.

Following the memoir is an afterword by Yi-Chuh Tricia Lin and Greg Robinson that places the story in the context of Ishigaki's life and details her career as a journalist and activist who often wrote under the pen name Haru Matsui.

Jackson, Bruce. *Get Your Ass in the Water and Swim Like Me: African-American Narrative Poetry from the Oral Tradition*. New York: Routledge, 2004. 272 pp. Includes CD. ISBN 0-415-96997-2, \$19.95 (pb).

The reissue of Jackson's 1974 classic collection of "toasts," more than a hundred in all, has many attractive new features for a new generation of language and folklore buffs. The reissue is available in paperback and includes a CD of previously unreleased toasts, from four lines to two pages, that the author recorded in jails, migrant camps, and urban street corners. Topics of toasts include noted criminals like Stackolee (the subject of several toasts), pimps and whores, notable sexual partners, "signifying and poolshooting monkey," *Titanic* toasts, and drinking toasts. Jackson's original introduction places the toasts in historical, literary, and cultural context, and the back matter includes source notes and an index of names and first lines.

Neruda, Pablo. *The Captain's Verses: The Love Poems*. New York: New Directions, 2004. 160 pp. Trans. by Donald D. Walsh. ISBN 0-8112-1580-6, \$14.95 (pb).

Neruda, Pablo. *Residence on Earth*. New York: New Directions, 2004. 384 pp. Trans. by Donald D. Walsh. ISBN 0-8112-1581-4, \$14.95 (pb).

Neruda, Pablo. *The House in the Sand*. Buffalo, N.Y.: White Pine, 2004. 124 pp. Trans. by Clark M. Zlotchew and Dennis Maloney. ISBN 1-893996-74-3, \$16.00.

On the hundredth anniversary of his birth, works by the Nobel-winning Chilean poet have been published in these three bilingual editions from two different publishers. "The House in the Sand," from the title of one of them, is Neruda's home in the fishing village of Isla Negra; it inspired him to write the prose poems in this volume first published in Spanish in 1966 and translated into English in 1990. The current edition includes a foreword from Marjorie Agosin, who knew Neruda from that village, and an afterword from Ariel Dorfman. Several black-and-white photos of the home are included; one shows the ceiling beams upon which the names of several people important to Neruda were scrawled. The emotionally charged poems of *The Captain's Verses* are addressed to Neruda's lover (and later wife), Matilde Urrutia. They were first published anonymously in 1952; this translation, and its introduction from the translator, are from 1972. The larger volume titled *Residence on Earth* combines three volumes of poems from the period of 1925 to 1945 that were originally titled *Residencia I*, *Residencia II*, and *Tercera Residencia*. Many of them were written during Neruda's period of exile from Chile, and they encompass a wide range of reflections on loneliness, love, and nature.

Peterson, Susan. **Lucy M. Lewis: American Indian Potter.** New York: Kodansha, 2004. 220 pp. ISBN 4-770-2991-8, \$45.00 (pb).

Lewis was a woman who lived in the Acoma Pueblo of New Mexico and created works of stunning pottery, mostly with black-and-white designs, based on her people's tradition. This large-size, lavishly illustrated account of her life and work was first published in 1984. A brief section inserted at the end of the preface notes that Lewis died in 1992, at the age of approximately 95; no other elements of the book seemed to have been changed since the original publication.

The text details Lewis's life and career, and it includes a list of her many awards, a bibliography, and an essay by Bertha P. Dutton on the background of Native American pottery that influenced potters such as her. The greatest appeal of the volume, though, comes from its many photos: historical and contemporary photos of the Acoma Pueblo; step-by-step depictions of the pottery-making processes Lewis would use; and, in particular, photos of her creations. These pots are graceful shapes decorated with black and white lines (and

occasional patches of red) that form abstract patterns as well as striking animal images.

Pineda, Cecile. **Face.** San Antonio, Tex.: Wings Press, 2003. 198 pp. ISBN 0-930324-90-0, \$16.00 (pb).

Pineda, Cecile. **The Love Queen of the Amazon.** San Antonio, Tex.: Wings Press, 2001. 288 pp. ISBN 0-930324-69-2, \$17.95 (pb).

Wings Press has returned to print with full national distribution two novels by the acclaimed Latina author, both featuring new cover artwork by Kathy Vargas and additional introductory material. Originally published by Viking in 1985, *Face* was Pineda's first novel. Set in the slums of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, it presents the aptly named Helio Cara, the victim of a horrific accident that has left his face scarred and unrecognizable. The novel addresses the construction of identity in a callous society. The new edition contains a foreword by South African novelist J. M. Coetzee, an introduction by Latino literature scholar Juan Bruce-Novoa, and a

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new note by the author that describes the novel's genesis and publishing history.

While *Face* is a biting, somber work, *The Love Queen of the Amazon* is a picaresque take on love, marriage, literature, and the remote Amazon region of Peru. The protagonist, Ana Magdalena Arzate de Figueroa, is married to a novelist in this inhospitable town and having an affair with a riverboat owner. Ana's feminism centers on the right to have sex with whomever she wants, whenever she wants, and her relationships satirize traditional machismo as well as economic and political inequalities. This new edition is revised and expanded, as the novelist has added scenes to the first edition, published by Little, Brown in 1992. When that edition, and its 1993 paperback version, went out of print, the author self-published a revision (iUniverse, 2000) that Wings Press later redesigned and republished.

U.S. PUBLICATION OF BOOKS PUBLISHED ELSEWHERE IN ENGLISH

Ramos, Michael. *Polvoron: Tales and Stories from the Philippine Islands*. Denver, Colo.: Pearl Street, 2002. 132 pp. ISBN 0-9673867-1-3, \$20.00 (pb).

The author of this collection of short stories and fables is a first-generation Filipino American. His travels in the Philippines to learn about his heritage inspired him to write these tales. Five of the stories are two to three pages and have their origins in Filipino folklore; their titles include "The Crab with the Green Mango Belly" and "How the Crow Became Black and the Culeta Lost His Crown of Feathers."

The eight longer tales are more traditional short stories, though their straightforward language and narrative style is not that different from fables. They tell of the lives of ordinary Filipino people and their struggles, with a particular emphasis on the strong and sometimes difficult connections among family members. The stories are set in the present, with the exception of the occasionally melodramatic "Batac," which tells of a youth whose father has been captured during the Japanese occupation of the islands during World War II. Overall, this collection, originally published in the Philippines, is an interesting distillation of traditional culture and family life as created by a son of Filipino immigrants.

River of Hands: Deaf Heritage Stories. Toronto, Canada: Second Story, 2000. 48 pp. ISBN 1-896764-36-3, \$9.95 (pb).

The four short stories in this book were written by young Canadians ranging from 12 to 17 years old. First published in Canada in 2000, it is now being distributed in the United States. Each story features deaf characters, and deafness is an important theme in three of the stories. (In the first one, a tall tale about two boys who go fishing in a toilet, the use of sign language is mentioned, but it is not essential to the plot.) At the end of each story, readers are given some information about deaf culture. After the fish story, the difference between American Sign Language and Langues de Signes Québécoise (used by French Canadians) is described, and

some of the words from the story are signed by cartoon drawings of fish. The signing fish appear after another story as well, though their signs are not very easy to interpret. A list of facts after some of the stories answer such questions as what deaf people would do before flashing lights for doorbells were invented.

Five different illustrators also contributed to the book; each story begins with a full-page drawing and has small pieces of spot art throughout. Students in grades three to five could learn some facts about deaf culture from this book; its student-written stories could also perhaps serve as a springboard for students to write stories of their own.

NEW VOLUMES IN SERIES

The African American Intellectual Heritage

McAuley, Christopher A. *The Mind of Oliver C. Cox*. Notre Dame, Ind.: Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 2004. 304 pp. ISBN 0-268-03472-9, \$60.00 (c); ISBN 0-268-03473-7, \$30.00 (pb).

Cox (1901-1974) was born in Trinidad and immigrated to the United States as a teenager. Like fellow West Indian scholar C. L. R. James, he wrote about race and class from his perspective as an immigrant from the Caribbean, comparing these issues among countries and ethnic and racial groups in the United States. His most important book was *Class, Caste, and Race*, published in 1948. This biography and analysis of Cox's writings, part of a series on black intellectuals in the United States in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, begins with a summary of his life. The second part of the book analyzes his work in the field of historical sociology, both theoretical works and studies of the development of capitalism from thirteenth-century Venice through the Industrial Revolution in England to the United States of his time. The third part examines his writings on race relations as they applied to African Americans, Asian Americans, and Jews. The final part presents his theory of social transformation, in which he embraces socialism over ethnic nationalism. The book concludes with extensive endnotes and an index.

The American Civil War

O'Connell, Kim A. *Slavery, Emancipation, and the Civil War*. Berkeley Heights, N.J.: Enslow, 2004. 48 pp. ISBN 0-7660-5190-0, \$19.95.

As one of the MyReportLinks.com books, this volume in a new series for middle-school students attempts to be connected to the Internet in several ways. Four pages at the beginning of the book describe about 30 web sites on topics that would be useful for students writing reports on slavery and the Civil War; these include a National Geographic site on the Underground Railroad and one that collects letters and diaries from participants in the war. No web addresses are given, and students need to go to a MyReportLinks site and enter a code included in the book to access these pages. The computer and Internet theme is also carried throughout

in that each page spread has a border resembling a computer screen, including icons and scroll bars. Also, most of the book's photos are placed in a window familiar from Internet Explorer, complete with a line of a web address. Several of the "Report Links" that are given seem quite interesting, but the book's stress on the Internet sometimes seems unnecessary. Some of the photos don't employ the web design, and nothing seems to have been lost by simply putting the illustrations on the page.

The text of the volume is a straightforward account of its topic. The first chapter tells of Harriet Jacobs, a North Carolina slave who later wrote *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*. Succeeding chapters relate the history of slavery in America; how it contributed to the start of the Civil War; the Emancipation Proclamation and the end of slavery; and the aftermath of slavery (including, briefly, the civil rights movement). The book begins with a time line, and it ends with some chapter notes, a list of books for further reading, and an index.

Bluford Series

Langan, Paul. *Summer of Secrets*. West Berlin, N.J.: Townsend, 2004. 142 pp. ISBN 1-59194-018-4, \$4.95 (pb).

Langan, Paul and Alirez, Ben. *Brothers in Arms*. West Berlin, N.J.: Townsend, 2004. 152 pp. ISBN 1-59194-017-6, \$4.95 (pb).

Langan, Paul and Blackwell, D. M. *Blood Is Thicker*. West Berlin, N.J.: Townsend, 2004. 156 pp. ISBN 1-59194-016-8, \$4.95 (pb).

The eighth, ninth, and tenth volumes in this series for reluctant readers at the high school level continue the sagas of some familiar characters while introducing a brand-new one. Hakeem Randall, one of the stalwarts of the series set in a mostly African-American high school in Los Angeles, has to move with his family to Detroit in *Blood Is Thicker*. His father, who has battled cancer for the past year, lost his job; the family lost its home and has to move in with Hakeem's uncle, a furniture dealer. Hakeem must share a bedroom with his spoiled and angry cousin, Savon, who harbors many secrets. Hakeem's aunt and uncle use the more compliant teen as a spy against their son, and Hakeem has his own worries, including the girlfriend he left behind and uncertainty about his father's health. Believable, multidimensional characters reveal the dangers of jumping to conclusions.

Hakeem's girlfriend, Darcy Wills, is the protagonist of *Summer of Secrets*. The book picks up where *Until We Meet Again* (2002) leaves off, with Darcy missing both Hakeem and her grandmother, who recently passed, and recovering from a rebound relationship with an abusive boyfriend. She notices a former friend, Brisana Meeks, dating a college man who is a "player." Wiser from her own mistake, Darcy tries to warn Brisana. Tensions escalate until there is a confrontation between the college student and some of Darcy's high school friends, and Brisana has to face the possibility of pregnancy alone. The strength of this book lies in its realistic dialogue

and depictions of teenage girls and their relationships.

Stylistically, *Brothers in Arms* differs from the other two titles in that it is narrated in first rather than third person. In addition, it introduces a new character, Martin Luna, a 16-year-old Latino youngster who moved across town with his mother after his eight-year-old brother, Huero, was killed in crossfire from a gang shooting. Now at Bluford, Martin has trouble fitting in, not least because he still dreams of returning to his old neighborhood to avenge Huero's death. His efforts to do so place him in danger from his brother's killers as well as from his former gang, and he also imperils a girl in his English class whom he has befriended. While the third-person limited omniscient narrative of the other volumes moves the stories along, Martin's first-person narration is particularly affecting, as are the dilemmas he faces as a newcomer with a past he cannot escape.

The Civil War Library

Ford, Carin T. *African-American Soldiers in the Civil War*. Berkeley Heights, N.J.: Enslow, 2004. 48 pp. ISBN 0-7660-2254-4, \$18.95.

Near the end of this volume in a new series aimed at students in grades three and four, we are told that during the Civil War, "More than 180,000 African Americans had served in the Northern army and navy. Before the war, more than half of these men had been slaves in the South." The book uses a very lively design (with tan paper intended to resemble old-style paper) to tell the story of the origins of the Civil War, the initial refusal to allow black men to fight on the Union side, and the struggles of the black soldiers who were eventually allowed to enlist. These soldiers experienced harsh conditions and unequal pay. Throughout, the author stresses the courage exhibited by black soldiers and describes the engagements of the war where they played a significant role.

The book is well illustrated with many photos and period illustrations, posters, and documents. It ends with a time line, glossary page, two pages of chapter notes (the use of endnote numbers throughout the book is unusual for a series at this level), and a list of several related books and web sites. Students in the early to middle elementary grades will find this to be a clear, detailed, and visually interesting account.

The Collected Works of Langston Hughes

Hughes, Langston. *Volume 6: Gospel Plays, Operas, and Later Dramatic Works*. Columbia: Univ. of Missouri Press, 2004. 710 pp. Edited with an introduction by Leslie Catherine Sanders. ISBN 0-8262-1477-0, \$49.95.

This volume includes five opera librettos, the book and/or lyrics of seven musicals, four "gospel-plays," two regular plays, four radio plays, eight ballet librettos, five cantatas, and some miscellaneous lyrics. Remarkably, this amount and breadth of creative production includes only plays Hughes wrote after 1942 (with a few of the works in other genres from before then), and it makes up only one of 17 volumes in this

series of collected works (one of which is a bibliography).

As with the other volumes, a chronology of Hughes's life by Arnold Rampersad is included. In the introduction, the editor notes that Hughes's place in African-American theater was "foundational"; this general introduction and short ones to each of the book's sections place the works within the context of his career. The most well known works here are probably the 1961 gospel song-play *Black Nativity* and the lyrics from the 1947 Kurt Weill musical *Street Scene*. Not all the works are of as much enduring interest as those, and some (such as the ballet librettos) wouldn't likely be read on their own if they weren't part of the amazingly varied output of this writer.

Continents of the World

Aretha, David. *Discovering Asia's Land, People, and Wildlife*. Berkeley Heights, N.J.: Enslow, 2004. 48 pp. ISBN 0-7660-5183-8, \$25.26 (list), \$18.95 (school and library).

Barring some major geological developments, this new series intended for students in grades four to ten already has a definite number of total entries to end with—seven. As a MyReportLinks.com Book, the present volume begins with descriptions of 30 web sites on Asia that can be found at the publisher-maintained web page; sites include some from the U.S. State Department with information on various countries, as well as ones on more specialized topics like the castles of Japan and a Tibetan museum. After an introductory chapter, succeeding chapters discuss Asia's geography and climate, animal and plant life, people and culture, economy, and history.

Each page spread has one or two color photos, some of which are within simulated Internet Explorer windows; the general page design also has a web theme. With such a large topic, this book can naturally only give a very general overview of its subject (the author of the volume on Antarctica may not have quite the same problem), but it does provide students with a good amount of information on many facets of Asia and the countries that it encompasses.

Culture and Customs of Africa

Culture and Customs of Latin America and the Caribbean

Afolayan, Funso. *Culture and Customs of South Africa*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2004. 328 pp. ISBN 0-313-32018-7, \$45.00.

Standish, Peter, and Bell, Steven M. *Culture and Customs of Mexico*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2004. 328 pp. ISBN 0-313-30412-2, \$45.00.

Both volumes in these related series provide secondary and college students (and interested adult readers) with a great deal of information on the history, society, and culture of these nations. The volume on Mexico has more of an artistic emphasis, with chapters on history and geography; religion; social life, leisure, and food; media; film; performing arts; literature; and visual arts. Chapters in the South African volume discuss its land and people; history and economy; religion; lit-

erature; media; art and architecture; food and dress; gender and family; social customs; and performing arts and film.

In each book, the chapters are preceded by a chronology of events and followed by a glossary. The book on Mexico includes a selected bibliography, while the one on South Africa has a helpful bibliographical essay. The text in both books is punctuated by occasional half-page black-and-white photos. A number of sections in these volumes, particularly the earlier ones on history and geography, are very straightforward recitations of facts and events. Others, in chapters such as the one on Mexican film, manage to be full of facts while also presenting a picture of a lesser-known area of another culture that invites further exploration.

Discovering Cultures

De Capua, Sharon. *Dominican Republic*. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Marshall Cavendish, 2004. 48 pp. ISBN 0-7614-1722-2, \$17.95.

Gordon, Sharon. *Argentina*. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Marshall Cavendish, 2004. 48 pp. ISBN 0-7614-1723-0, \$17.95.

Gordon, Sharon. *Poland*. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Marshall Cavendish, 2004. 48 pp. ISBN 0-7614-1724-9, \$17.95.

Murphy, Patricia J. *Canada*. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Marshall Cavendish, 2004. 48 pp. ISBN 0-7614-1725-7, \$17.95.

Rau, Dana Meachen. *Iraq*. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Marshall Cavendish, 2004. 48 pp. ISBN 0-7614-1726-5, \$17.95.

Rau, Dana Meachen. *Singapore*. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Marshall Cavendish, 2004. 48 pp. ISBN 0-7614-1727-3, \$17.95.

With these six books, this series for students in grade two through four now has 24 entries. Each has chapters on the country's geography, people, daily life, schools, fun activities, and holidays. (The volume on Iraq sticks mostly to discussions of the country's culture, with a few descriptions of the nation's recent history that are, probably necessarily, left inconclusive.) Most of the many color photos in each volume are of ordinary people and places. One-page sidebars give additional cultural information, songs, games, and fairly simple recipes (such as, from Poland, Kielbasa Maple Bites). The back matter in each book includes a section of short facts, how to count to ten in the national language, three short biographies, a short glossary, a list of books and web sites, and an index. This series has a colorful design, attractive photos, and easy-to-read text that make it accessible for its target audience.

Enchantment of the World

Heinrichs, Ann. *Pakistan*. New York: Children's Press/Scholastic, 2004. 144 pp. ISBN 0-516-24248-2, \$35.00.

Milivojevic, JoAnn. *Bosnia and Herzegovina*. New York: Children's Press/Scholastic, 2004. 144 pp. ISBN 0-516-24247-4, \$35.00.

Orr, Tamra. **Slovenia**. New York: Children's Press/Scholastic, 2004. 144 pp. ISBN 0-516-24249-0, \$35.00.

Willis, Terri. **Democratic Republic of the Congo**. New York: Children's Press/Scholastic, 2004. 144 pp. ISBN 0-516-24250-4, \$35.00.

The volumes in this series for students in grade five and above provide a broad and detailed introduction to the history, culture, and people of these countries. Each book has chapters on the country's geography, wildlife, history, government, economy, people, religions, culture, and daily life. The regular text in the chapters is informative and fairly comprehensive, but what may attract the interest of young people even more is likely to be the many color photos, thematic maps, tables, and sidebars. The volume on Slovenia, for example, includes sidebars that tell the history of the Lipizzaner horses, and the story of Davo Karnicar, a Slovenian who skied down Mount Everest.

The books end with a time line, some Fast Facts, lists of common phrases and famous natives, a resource guide, and an index. With other entries on countries both familiar (Italy, Russia) and less common (Zimbabwe, the United Arab Emirates) in country guides at this level, this series provides students with solid sources of information for a variety of nations.

Facets

Paris, Peter J. **Virtues and Values: The African and African American Experience**. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004. 96 pp. ISBN 0-8006-3661-9, \$6.00 (pb).

In 1994, this author published *The Spirituality of African Peoples: The Search for a Common Moral Discourse*, a book inspired by his experiences as an African Canadian who worked in Nigeria for a period and then later immigrated to the United States. The present small volume is adapted from the concluding discussion of that book.

The first sentence of Chapter 1 summarizes much of the book: "Africans and African Americans share a common worldview, which comprises a cosmological whole and unites all of life in and among the realms of spirit, history, and nature." The author's analysis of what informs that worldview is defined by the first sentence of the next chapter: "The preservation and promotion of community is the paramount goal of African peoples in all spheres of life." To demonstrate how this common moral nature is expressed, succeeding sections discuss how America's Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Africa's Nelson Mandela embody the virtues of beneficence, forbearance, practical wisdom, improvisation, forgiveness, and justice. In this book, Paris concentrates on what can be said to unite peoples of African background, with less focus on the divisions and difficulties that may lie along the way.

Finding Out About Holidays

Gnojewski, Carol. **Kwanzaa: Seven Days of African-American Pride**. Berkeley Heights, N.J.: Enslow, 2004. 48 pp. ISBN 0-7660-2209-9, \$18.95.

Leeper, Angela. **Juneteenth: A Day to Celebrate Freedom from Slavery**. Berkeley Heights, N.J.: Enslow, 2004. 48 pp. ISBN 0-7660-2206-4, \$18.95.

Parker-Rock, Michelle. **Diwali: The Hindu Festival of Lights, Feasts, and Family**. Berkeley Heights, N.J.: Enslow, 2004. 48 pp. ISBN 0-7660-2235-8, \$18.95.

This series for students in grades three and four gives the historical origins, meaning, and ways of celebrating for a variety of holidays. Early chapters in each book describe the beginnings of each holiday; the Kwanzaa entry, for example, tells of its founding in 1966 by Dr. Maulana Karenga. Students are likely to be particularly interested in the chapters that follow, with many color photos of the symbols used and the common celebrations held for each holiday.

The books each conclude with a glossary, lists of books and web sites, an index, and a project students can create based on the holiday. In the volume on Juneteenth, the project was a pinwheel with the colors of the Juneteenth flag; such a pinwheel was successfully made and enjoyed by my young daughter. (This volume does have an error in the text; at one point it is stated that the original Juneteenth occurred on June 19, 1865, "over one year after the end of the Civil War," when it was actually only two months after the war's end in April 1865.) Students are likely to enjoy many of the volumes in this series (with entries for Christmas and Halloween and a number of other holidays), but volumes such as the three above that help them to become aware of some lesser-known holidays are particularly worthwhile.

Global Studies: Asia

Blackwell, Fritz. **India: A Global Studies Handbook**. Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 2004. 320 pp. ISBN 1-57607-348-3, \$55.00.

Designed to be a resource for students, travelers, and those engaged in business in these countries, this series contains earlier volumes on Indonesia, China, Japan, Thailand, Vietnam, the Koreas, and Nepal and Bangladesh. E-book editions of each are also available.

Part One of the present volume includes four detailed chapters on India's geography and history, economy, institutions (such as government, education, and religion), and social issues (such as the caste system, the role of women, and movies and television). Part Two is composed of reference materials, including a time line of key events; a section of one-paragraph entries on notable people, places, and events; lists of India-related organizations and web sites; and an annotated bibliography divided by subject. Two sections in Part Two—one on language, food, and etiquette, and one on India's influence on the West and on American culture—are actually in narrative form like the chapters in Part One.

Occasional black-and-white photos and several maps of India are included. The prose style and the overall presentation here are sometimes dry. Chapter One, for example, begins with a discussion of the membership and purpose of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation. However, those who want an in-depth look at India's histo-

ry, society, and culture will find the book to be a solid source of well-researched and up-to-date information.

I Like Biographies!

Feinstein, Stephen. ***Read About Cesar Chavez***. Berkeley Heights, N.J.: Enslow, 2004. 24 pp. ISBN 0-7660-2296-X, \$16.95.

Feinstein, Stephen. ***Read About Martin Luther King, Jr.*** Berkeley Heights, N.J.: Enslow, 2004. 24 pp. ISBN 0-7660-2300-1, \$16.95.

These two books in this series for students in grades one to three offer easy-to-understand biographies with text in short sentences that employ limited vocabulary. (Among the other persons included in the series are Abraham Lincoln, Helen Keller, and Sacajawea.) In an unusual feature, the books have four to six “Words to Know” before the table of contents that readers can look for as they go through the book (where the words are not highlighted in any way). Each two-page spread has a short paragraph or two of text on the left and a single photograph on the right. There are no other visual components, and the page design is fairly simple, so the appearance of the spreads can be somewhat repetitive. The books end with a time line, short lists of books and web sites, and an index.

Island Alphabet Books

Phillips, Lori. ***Hawaiian Alphabet***. Honolulu: Bess Press, 2004. 34 pp. ISBN 1-57306-218-9, \$4.95.

For each of the twelve letters in the Hawaiian alphabet—*a, e, h, i, k, l, m, n, o, p, u, and w*—this small book gives three or four Hawaiian words that begin with the letter, accompanied by children’s drawings of what the word means. The book is one of ten in a series published by the group Pacific Resources for Education and Learning and distributed by Bess Press. The ten languages included are all ones used in U.S.-affiliated islands of the Pacific region. One book is on English letters, while the other languages are likely to be unknown to younger (and even older) students; they include Carolinian, Chamorro, Marshallese, and Palauan.

The words are given without any phonetic pronunciation help. For some of them, it is necessary to check the list of English translations in the back to see what the word means, even with the charming drawings included. It is not immediately apparent, for example, that the drawing above *‘awapuhi* is of a ginger flower, or that the *ipu* pictured is actually a gourd and not perhaps a pear. For students learning about Hawaii, this book would be a fun introduction to a very different language; the other volumes in the series might be of interest as part of a more in-depth study of the Pacific region.

Nations of the World

Dalal, Anita. ***Peru***. Chicago: Raintree, 2004. 128 pp. ISBN 0-7398-7000-9, \$34.28 (list), \$23.99 (library).

Giles, Bridget. ***Nigeria***. Chicago: Raintree, 2004. 128 pp. ISBN 0-7398-6999-X, \$34.28 (list), \$23.99 (library).

Harris, Nathaniel. ***Spain***. Chicago: Raintree, 2004. 128 pp. ISBN 0-7398-7001-7, \$34.28 (list), \$23.99 (library).

Horton, Edward. ***Indonesia***. Chicago: Raintree, 2004. 128 pp. ISBN 0-7398-6998-1, \$34.28 (list), \$23.99 (library).

With these volumes, this series of country guides for middle-school students has more than 20 entries. In each, the chapters are titled “Land and Cities,” “Past and Present,” “The Economy,” “Arts and Living,” and “The Future.” These chapters are followed by an Almanac section of facts and figures, a colorful time line, a glossary, a short bibliography, and an index.

The main text is clear, informative, and somewhat dry. The many text sidebars of various sizes in each book add a lot of interest. The Nigeria volume, for example, includes such sidebars as a recipe for pepper soup, an account of the methods Nigerian metalcasters use, and a discussion of the Afro-beat music created by the late pop star Fela. Numerous maps and charts (including some downtown maps of major cities) add solid information and visual variety. Each book also has a number of color photos and illustrations; most are of places and sights, and some are of ordinary people or traditional objects. Overall, this series offers a well-designed and well-informed guide to these nations for students who are at least at a fifth-grade reading level.

People to Know

Chippendale, Lisa A. ***Yo-Yo Ma: A Cello Superstar Brings Music to the World***. Berkeley Heights, N.J.: Enslow, 2004. 112 pp. ISBN 0-7660-2286-2, \$26.60 (list), \$19.95 (school and library).

This series introduces middle school students to an eclectic group of people; among those with titles mentioned on the back cover of the present volume are Bob Dylan, Dr. Seuss, and Laura Ingalls Wilder. In a well-researched biography of the cello great, readers will probably be particularly interested in his younger years. By age five, Ma had already learned three of the Bach solo cello suites (through an interesting method of learning two measures a day); in 1962, at age seven, he was playing with his eleven-year-old sister (a pianist) in front of the Kennedys at the White House. Despite his remarkable accomplishments, Ma’s life is told in terms that readers can relate to, with his occasional aversion to working and studying, some mild adolescent rebellion, and his generally down-to-earth manner.

Though the unending series of career successes described here can start to blur together, readers may be interested in such endeavors as a series of films based on the six Bach suites, and Ma’s Silk Road Project, which brings together musicians from classical Western and Eastern traditions. The book includes numerous black-and-white photos, a time line, a discography, chapter notes, and lists of books, articles, web sites, and films of related interest. Young musicians in particu-

lar are likely to find this volume interesting and inspirational.

Questions and Answers: Countries

Bauer, Brandy. **Brazil**. Mankato, Minn.: Capstone, 2004. 32 pp. ISBN 0-7368-2481-2, \$22.60 (list), \$16.95 (school and library).

Burgan, Michael. **Japan**. Mankato, Minn.: Capstone, 2004. 32 pp. ISBN 0-7368-2478-2, \$22.60 (list), \$16.95 (school and library).

Dahl, Michael. **England**. Mankato, Minn.: Capstone, 2004. 32 pp. ISBN 0-7368-2477-4, \$22.60 (list), \$16.95 (school and library).

Hodgkins, Fran. **Mexico**. Mankato, Minn.: Capstone, 2004. 32 pp. ISBN 0-7368-2479-0, \$22.60 (list), \$16.95 (school and library).

Olson, Gillia M. **Afghanistan**. Mankato, Minn.: Capstone, 2004. 32 pp. ISBN 0-7368-2685-8, \$22.60 (list), \$16.95 (school and library).

Olson, Nathan. **Canada**. Mankato, Minn.: Capstone, 2004. 32 pp. ISBN 0-7368-2686-6, \$22.60 (list), \$16.95 (school and library).

Olson, Nathan. **China**. Mankato, Minn.: Capstone, 2004. 32 pp. ISBN 0-7368-2687-4, \$22.60 (list), \$16.95 (school and library).

Spengler, Kremena. **Germany**. Mankato, Minn.: Capstone, 2004. 32 pp. ISBN 0-7368-2690-4, \$22.60 (list), \$16.95 (school and library).

Spengler, Kremena. **Iraq**. Mankato, Minn.: Capstone, 2004. 32 pp. ISBN 0-7368-2691-2, \$22.60 (list), \$16.95 (school and library).

Spengler, Kremena. **Russia**. Mankato, Minn.: Capstone, 2004. 32 pp. ISBN 0-7368-2692-0, \$22.60 (list), \$16.95 (school and library).

Webster, Christine. **Egypt**. Mankato, Minn.: Capstone, 2004. 32 pp. ISBN 0-7368-2688-2, \$22.60 (list), \$16.95 (school and library).

Written at a second to third grade reading level, the entries in this series are designed to be a tool for researching countries for reports and homework assignments. Each book has 12 two-page chapters that pose and answer the same set of questions on geography, national origins, government, housing, transportation, major industries, school, sports and games, art forms, holidays, foods, and family life. In each chapter, a left-hand page includes the question, one or two short paragraphs of text, and a quick fact (“German figure skater Katerina Witt won two Olympic gold medals”) or chart; the right-hand page contains a color photo, illustra-

tion, or map, along with a concluding short paragraph. The back matter for each book consists of a page of fast facts, information on currency and the flag, six or seven words (such as “please” and “thank you”) in the official language, a short glossary and list of related books, an index, and directions to the FactHound web site for approved Internet links.

For students at an early elementary level, this series provides solid information on these countries. Reading a number of these books, one notices that the format is very standardized and the design rather repetitive, and that the color photos are only occasionally striking. However, for students just beginning to read reference books, such a predictable format may be easier to follow, and if students are working on reports on different countries, it might be helpful to have the same questions covered in each book.

Rock Music Library

Olson, Nathan. **Tupac Shakur**. Mankato, Minn.: Capstone/Edge Books, 2004. 32 pp. ISBN 0-7368-2703-X, \$22.60 (list), \$16.95 (school and library).

The books in this series (which includes biographies of Jim Morrison, Kurt Cobain, and John Lennon, and several books on forming and playing in a rock band) are part of this publisher’s Edge Books, which are said to be “High Interest Nonfiction for Grades 3–4.” Young readers may indeed be interested in the story of this influential rapper, though it is unusual for a biography at this level to begin with the fact that its subject was shot dead at the age of 25. We later learn how Tupac had dropped out of school to sell drugs, that his mother had at one time become addicted to crack cocaine, and that he had served time in prison for a sexual assault conviction.

Along with the accounts of drugs, criminal activity, and deadly feuds among rappers, the book does describe Tupac’s love of music, writing, and acting from an early age (he performed in a production of *A Raisin in the Sun* at age 12) and his successful careers as an actor and rapper. No examples of his lyrics or poems are included (perhaps for reasons of appropriateness and/or rights issues), so it is difficult to get a full sense of his achievements. However, the lively, colorful design and the intriguing character who is the book’s focus are likely to attract students.

Shanna’s First Readers

Marzollo, Jean. **Shanna’s Animal Riddles**. New York: Hyperion/Jump at the Sun, 2004. 32 pp. ISBN 0-7868-1827-1, \$3.99 (pb).

Marzollo, Jean. **Shanna’s Bear Hunt**. New York: Hyperion/Jump at the Sun, 2004. 32 pp. ISBN 0-7868-1829-8, \$3.99 (pb).

Marzollo, Jean. **Shanna’s Hip, Hop, Hooray!** New York: Hyperion/Jump at the Sun, 2004. 32 pp. ISBN 0-7868-1830-1, \$3.99 (pb).

Marzollo, Jean. **Shanna’s Party Surprise**. New York:

Hyperion/Jump at the Sun, 2004. 32 pp. ISBN 0-7868-1828-X, \$3.99 (pb).

A note to parents at the beginning of each of these illustrated books notes that the text in them is designed to use rhythm, rhyme, and repetition to help beginning readers to catch on to the meanings of the words. For example, the first page spread in the book of animal riddles reads "She is orange...She is gray...She rhymes with "hat."...Purr, purr, purr. She is a..." After turning the page, the text reads "Cat!"; the character Shanna (which is said to rhyme with "banana") is shown wearing a cat costume and saying "Meow! Meow! Purr!" The rest of the book follows this format for a dog, bee, bunny, snake, bear, and finally "Shanna Bird."

The characters in the series are Shanna, an African-American girl, her younger brother Shane, and their three animal friends: Tiger, Ducky, and Dinah-saurus. In *Shanna's Hip, Hop, Hooray!* they all rap to a boom box; in other books, elements such as a visual treasure hunt are used to add interest. For children who know their letters but who have not yet really begun to put them together, this series could help bring them into the first stages of reading.

Studies in Jewish Civilization

Greenspoon, Leonard J.; Simkins, Ronald A.; and Cahan, Jean Axelrad, eds. ***Studies in Jewish Civilization, Volume 14: Women and Judaism.*** Omaha, Neb.: Creighton Univ. Press; dist. by Univ. of Nebraska Press, 2003. 338 pp. ISBN 1-881871-43-6, \$29.95 (pb).

This volume collects fifteen essays, ten of which were presented at the Fourteenth Annual Klutznick-Harris Symposium, held October 28-29, 2001, at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln and at various locations in Omaha. The essays are organized into three general topics: text, arts and literature, and history and criticism. In the section on core Jewish texts, there are studies of Jewish matriarchy, the relationship between liquor, sex, and power in ancient times, writings about Miriam, and others. Several of the pieces in the arts and literature section deal with the presentation of women in anti-Semitic works; other topics include Jewish women in murals, Israeli Orthodox women in the theatre, and Jewish-American women artists today. The final section includes studies of visionary women in medieval times, immigrant women and intermarriage in the United States, and the history of women in Nebraska's Jewish communities.

Visual Geography Series

Markel, Rita J. ***Guatemala in Pictures.*** Minneapolis: Lerner, 2004. 80 pp. ISBN 0-8225-1998-4, \$27.93.

This volume is part of the revised second edition of this series for middle grade students; books on more than 40 countries are now available. The series and book titles, with the words "visual" and "pictures," may give the idea that this book will be mostly photos with little text. However, although

a number of color photos and maps are included, most of the information is given by the text, with chapters on the land, history and government, people, cultural life, and economy of Guatemala. Numerous sidebars discuss a variety of topics such as the languages of ancient Guatemala and how to make baked plantains. The resources section at the back of the book is particularly extensive for series of this type, with a time line, two pages of general facts (including an English translation of the words of the national anthem), short biographies of a dozen Guatemalans, glossary, descriptions of sights to see, bibliography, and list of books and web sites for further research.

As with other entries in this series, this book is said to be "web enhanced at www.vgsbooks.com," where relevant links and further information are available. This Internet connectivity is driven home by the book's design, where many elements approximate computer screen buttons and scroll bars. The photo captions, for example, each have a key phrase highlighted as though on a computer. As it happens, the amount and variety of information in *Guatemala in Pictures* is sufficient to make these bells and whistles seem unnecessary; it can stand on its own simply as a book and not as part of a multimedia learning strategy.

What Was It Like, Grandma?

Morris, Ann. ***Grandma Hekmatt Remembers: An Arab-American Family Story.*** Brookfield, Conn.: Millbrook, 2003. 32 pp. Photographs and illustrations by Peter Linenthal. ISBN 0-7613-1944-1, \$7.95 (pb).

This entry in a series for students in the lower elementary grades provides a portrait of an ordinary Arab-American family living in a New Jersey suburb, focusing on the relationship between the grandmother, Hekmatt, and her three grandchildren, who are girls of seven, five and a half, and four years old. Numerous color photos of daily life—playing on the swings, studying Arabic, and a living-room belly dance by the three girls—are further explained in clearly written, large-type text. The book also includes some older family photos, including several of Hekmatt and her husband, Hedaiet, in their native Egypt. Step-by-step drawings for creating "Egyptian Paper Boats" are included, and the book ends with suggestions of activities students can do to learn about their own families, a seven-word glossary, and an example of a family tree.

The family is shown going to worship at a nearby mosque, where the girls wear head coverings (Grandma Hekmatt wears a head covering in all of the contemporary photos), and all women stay on a different floor from the men. The three girls attend a Muslim school where their mother is a teacher. We are told that the girls are proud of their family's Egyptian heritage and their ability to read and write in both Arabic and English, but that they consider the United States the best place in the world to live. Like the earlier entries in this engaging series (which included families of Jewish, Hispanic, Chinese, and Native American backgrounds), this book gives young readers a personal look into the lives of those from other cultures, with an emphasis on the importance of family that is shared by all.



NERUDA IN ENGLISH: *Establishing His Residence in U.S. Poetry*

The multidimensional poet Pablo Neruda (1904–73)—the sexy love poet, the hot surrealist poet, the blood-and-guts political poet, the bardic poet of the American continent, the joyous everyman’s poet, the final personal poet—is now enjoying a renewed appreciation in the United States. The newly published selection, *The Essential Neruda* (2004), and the most comprehensive collection ever published, *The Poetry of Pablo Neruda* (2003), are expressions of this appreciation as much as they are stimulators and purveyors of it. Their publications, of course, were timed to coincide with the centennial of Neruda’s birth. The translations of both these works have been made mostly by poets aiming to achieve fidelity not only to the literal meaning but also to the poetic quality of the original texts. Although verse translations of Neruda’s poetry were published in the United States in the 1940s and 1950s, they did not start to gain recognition here until the 1960s. The early translations were largely ignored for both literary and political reasons. In the first place, Neruda was a surrealist, and his style of writing was at odds with the poetics of leading critics and poets. Secondly, Neruda was an ardent communist who actively supported Stalin and the Soviet Union throughout the 1940s and 1950s. At that time some of the poetry that he produced was merely Stalinist propaganda. Consequently, during the years of the Cold War and New Criticism, the appearance of Neruda in English did little to establish his reputation as a great poet or to influence poets in the United States.

The proper recognition Neruda finally gained was fostered during the 1960s by the growing romantic movement of U.S. poets emphasizing freedom of form and feelings, and was accompanied by a revived interest in verse translation, through which these poets sought new ways to create poetry in English that would liberate them from the dominant formalist modes. In this regard, Neruda had much to offer, and thus he began to receive serious attention. For several poets, translating Neruda became part of their own efforts to revitalize U.S. poetry. They were especially interested in Neruda’s style of surrealism, as well as his poems of social commitment. Starting around 1960, translations of Neruda’s poetry began to flourish in the United States and became a mediating force. Furthermore, the act of translating from Spanish led a number of U.S. poets to create original poems in English.

Commenting on new trends in contemporary U.S. poetry,

poet and translator William Meredith observed in 1979 that “many poets...believe that major directions for poetry in our country will derive from the aesthetic innovations of...Latin American poets” (Meredith, 1979, 15). He referred to this cross-cultural activity as “an American tradition,” and in this tradition, Neruda’s influence has been more real than influences normally charted in comparative literature studies, based only on a reading acquaintance; for, in having translated Neruda themselves, several major U.S. poets were affected in their own poetry by what they learned and did with “the poem in the act of translation” (Barnstone, 1973, 137). Consequently, Neruda’s poetry in translation became a significant part of the literary heritage of U.S. poets. In an interview in 1970, Pulitzer-winning poet Anne Sexton emphasized this point: “We [North American poets] are being influenced now by South American poets, Spanish poets, French poets. We are much more image-driven as a result....Neruda is the great image-maker. The greatest colorist....That’s why I say you have to start with Neruda” (Sexton, 1970, 11–12).

The purpose of the present study, therefore, is to elucidate the literary activity associated with the naturalization of Neruda in English during the years of the 1960s, the decade his poetry finally established itself in translation as a major new American voice in the literature of the United States.

The first significant event must be attributed to Ben Belitt, a poet and English professor, who published his important translation titled *Selected Poems of Pablo Neruda* in 1961, the same year Carlos Lozano’s relatively literal, though delightful, translation *The Elementary Odes of Pablo Neruda* (*Odas elementales*, originally published in three successive volumes, 1954, 1956, and 1957) appeared. For Belitt, his translation represented “an attempt to express [his] own exuberance” as well as “[his] own sense of contact with things” (Belitt, 1978, 103). Politics did not motivate Belitt to translate Neruda. Instead, Belitt was after “a special magic in the divination of surrealist metaphors...a kind of irrational metaphysics or therapeutic shorthand: like reading entrails or tea-leaves” (Belitt, 1978, 28).

One of the important contributions of Belitt’s selection was his rendering of Neruda’s brief statement on poetics, “Toward an Impure Poetry,” which Neruda had originally published in 1935 and which first appeared in English in Belitt’s translation. In this statement, Neruda advocated an