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ABSTRACT

The five articles in this special issue of the bulletin deal with age discrimination in children's books. The first article is the first of two parts that deal with how older people are stereotyped; part 1 presents the statistical findings of the first major study of stereotypes based on age and ageism in children's literature, while part 2 illustrates ageist stereotypes with examples. The third article presents statistics and information to counter common ageist myths. The fourth articles presents practical consciousness raising exercises on ageism for classrooms, which can be adapted for adult workshops. The final article provides an annotated list of recommended books to counter ageist stereotypes and myths, and a list of organizations concerned with fighting ageism. (Author/AM)

INTERRACIAL BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

BULLETIN

VOLUME 7 NUMBER 6, 1976

Ageism in Children's Books

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SPECIAL ISSUE ON AGEISM IN CHILDREN'S BOOKS

ARTICLES

DEPARTMENTS

COVER

Artist Bülbül depicts some of the common ageist images found in children's picture books.

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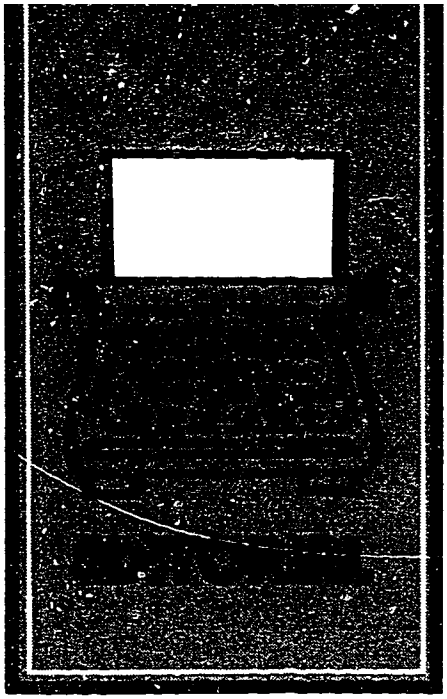
AGEISM: An Offense Against Us All



As we have explored racism and sexism in children's materials, we have become aware of the manifestations of other destructive forces and of the striking interrelationship between *all* of these forces in our society. The CIBC has therefore been expanding its focus on children's materials to include—in addition to racism and sexism—other anti-human values: ageism, elitism, individualism, materialism and competitiveness.

In analyzing children's books from this broadened perspective, we have found that books consistently stereotype and malign older people. Stereotypes of human behavior based on age—ageism—do not, of course, apply *only* to older people. In U.S. society, many false assumptions are made about "youthful" behavior, "middle-aged" behavior, etc. These assumptions often lead to illegitimate demands being made of people of every age group, and to destructive practices.

Since older people, however, are the most frequent and hardest hit victims of ageist attitudes and practices, and since little work has been done in this area, we have devoted this issue of the *Bulletin* to challenging stereotypes about older people. Our main feature, a two-part article by Dr. Edward Ansello, presents the results of a major study of 549 picture books. The study documents the pervasiveness of ageism in children's first literature.

While stereotypes reflect injustices of our society, they also reinforce and contribute to perpetuating those injustices. It is, thus, crucial that we eliminate stereotypes from children's books if we hope to change society. This holds particularly true for the materials we give children at a time when their images of what society is and should be are beginning to take shape. If we are to counteract ageism, one place to begin—as Dr. Ansello's study points out—is with children's picture books. Organizations interested in protecting the rights of older people (such as the Gray Panthers Media Watch, which has been operating out of CIBC offices for the past two years) point out how offensive stereotypes condition the public to accept abuse and oppression of older people. These stereotypes are equally destructive in forming the attitudes of the young.

There is an aspect of ageism that is not revealed in statistical analyses of children's books, namely, institutional ageism—the economic and social oppression practiced daily by government, business, health agencies and the media against older people. It is an aspect that children's books themselves do not address. While the few "better" books cited in Dr. Ansello's study as being *non*-ageist attempt to add a personal dimension generally missing from characterizations of older people, they still (like most children's books) convey the message that problems of racism, sexism, ageism, etc., are readily solved by a change in individual attitudes. By neglecting to tie the problems characters face in a story to larger societal forces, children's books imply that the institutions of our society are not to be questioned, and that the only way to bring about improvements is on a strictly interpersonal level.

A truly *anti*-ageist book would (1) depict the realities of older people's social oppression in the U.S. and (2) point out institutional practices as the source of that oppression.

In our society, many older persons who are able and healthy, and who wish to continue working, are forced into premature retirement, socially ostracized and generally treated by society as useless. (The realities that belie the myth of older people's "uselessness" can be found in the statistics on page 11 of this *Bulletin*.)

In a capitalistic economy that finds full employment unprofitable, older people are forced into retirement to make room for younger job seekers. Industry profits from employing younger workers who have not built up the seniority and higher pay that older workers have accrued.

Having become expendable to employers, older people must struggle to survive on inadequate social security payments and must often live in fear—fear of street crime, fear of those out to profit from them, fear of death from unattended illness, fear of malnutrition, fear of social isolation. No longer considered profitable as workers, they are a source of exploitation by the multi-billion-dollar, federally-subsidized nursing home industry, pharmaceutical firms and medical profession, each of which often dispenses grossly inadequate care and services while reaping huge profits.

These burdens fall most heavily on poor, Third World and female older people—and demonstrate that ageism, racism and sexism are inextricably bound together. Well-to-do white people, by virtue of their wealth and the status which derives from it, can often avoid much of the isolation, inactivity, inadequate medical care and social rejection which characterize the experiences of so many older people in the U.S. The fact that older, rich white males are an entrenched power group in our nation reflects, on the one hand, the racist and sexist nature of our society and, on the other, contradicts myths and stereotypes about the inadequacies of older people.

Like race and sex, the aging process is not a matter of choice—it is inevitable, irrevocable and eventually affects everyone. Hence, ageism, whether individual, cultural or institutional, however subtle or blatant, constitutes an offense against us all.

Ageism in Picture Books, Part I:

How Older People Are Stereotyped

By Edward F. Ansello

Many of us have become sensitive to the ways in which racist and sexist stereotypes in literature deny minorities and women the full range of human behaviors. Stereotyping has also been found to exist for another group in children's literature—older people. An exhaustive study, more thorough than any research published to date, reveals that ageism is an all-too-real part of children's first reading experiences.

What makes many portrayals racist or sexist is their repetition over and over again to the point of limiting, excluding or denying other potentials for characters of a particular race or sex. Often the behaviors depicted, even though stereotyped, are not especially onerous. (Indeed, in some cases one must assume good intentions on the part of the author.) For example, in the *Bulletin's* recent special issue devoted to Asian American images in children's books [Vol. 7, Nos. 2 & 3], the reviewers noted that time and again Asian American characters are portrayed as operating gift shops or participating in dragon festivals. In fact, of course, Asian Americans *have* done such things. What makes these portrayals racist is that they are shown to the exclusion of other activities, thereby typecasting *all* Asian Americans. Ageism, our study found, operates in much the same way.

When this study was launched 18 months ago, it was simply an attempt to quantify the roles and behaviors of older characters in children's books. The project was inspired by curiosity after reading numerous picture books with my daughter. There was no "a priori" assumption of age-stereotyping. Borrowing the behavior classification system employed by Saario, Jacklin and Tittle ("Sex Role Stereotyping in the Public Schools," *Harvard Educational Review*, August, 1973), Joyce Letzler, a doctoral student, and I set out to quantify the types of behaviors assigned to older characters in Easy Readers and Juvenile Picture books. The overall format called for analyses of publication dates of books with older characters, frequency of such books, characters' sex, race, relationship to main character, occupational roles, illustrations (whether an older character was depicted, and if so, alone or with others), characters' behaviors, and physical and personality descriptions.

We examined the Easy and Juvenile Picture books presently in circulation in the Montgomery County (Md.) Public Library System. This system was chosen as fairly representative of large county systems—for the last several years, it has had one of the highest book-use-per-capita rates of any county system in the U.S.

Two notes regarding our research technique: First, in addition to classifying behaviors and characteristics, I devised an original checklist of *adjectives* that might be used to describe physical and personality traits in reading material for grades K-3. When our investigation began, we knew of no such compilation. Most often, vocabulary analyses focus on noun and verb frequencies with little attention being paid to other parts of speech.* Second, Ms. Letzler and I read each of the books together. Then after determining a very high degree of concordance in our classifications, we read them separately.

The following data are drawn from

"Old Person" or "Senior Citizen"?

There are several opinions on terminology: "old," "elderly," "aged," "senior citizen" and "golden years" are approved by some, disliked by others.

Sanford Berman, a librarian who is a major innovator of unbiased cataloging practices, has surveyed group names and publications concerned with older people and found that the preferred term is "senior," "senior citizen" or some variation thereof. "Some terms like 'old' and 'aged' have become so opprobrious, so heavily polluted," says Berman, "that it's probably counterproductive—maybe even hopeless—to expend time and energy trying to turn around their negative connotations. A better, proven tactic is to promote positive—or at least neutral, non-disparaging—substitute terms."

The Gray Panthers disagree. They regard such alternatives as "senior citizens" as patronizing attempts to avoid confronting the reality of old age. In this edition of the *Bulletin*, we have followed Gray Panther usage. We have avoided, however, references to "the old," which limits identity to the fact of age and, at the same time, has a strongly pejorative connotation.

"Ageism" and "agism" are both in current usage. For the time being, we prefer the first as being more readily recognizable.

*Our compilation reflects a synthesis of Kucera and Francis' *Computational Analysis of Present-Day American English* (1967); Carroll, Davies and Richman's *American Heritage Word Frequency Book* (1971); Johnson's "A Basic Vocabulary for Beginning Reading" (1971); Harris and Jacobson's *Basic Elementary Reading Vocabularies* (1972); and Otto and Chester's "Sight Words for Readers," (1972). (As will be explained, the ageistic depiction of older characters unfortunately made much of this activity unnecessary.)

an interim report based upon the study of 549 children's books, comprising some 225,000 pages and 18,000 pictures. The final report will refer to more than 700 titles—virtually the entire body of Easy and Juvenile Picture books circulating in this library system. We anticipate no substantial deviation from the present findings. [The *Bulletin* will publish the final results—Editors.]

Publication Dates. Most of the books that include older characters were published in the past nine years. While these books presented slightly less biased portrayals than earlier ones, a substantial proportion of the older (and more stereotyping) books were into their tenth, twelfth or fifteenth printing. One particularly ageist book was in its twenty-first printing.

Presence of Older Characters. We applied the term "older" to any character who was (1) physically, (2) verbally or (3) occupationally (for instance, retired) described as older. At least two of these criteria had to be met, so a character who simply *looked* older was excluded from tabulation. The term "character" describes any story member who utters one word or more. Because of instances like Helen Buckley's *Grandfather and I,* in which grandfather says not a single word, this definition was expanded to include instances where the story is clearly about a character who participates in the story, however mutely. While older characters are apparently more prevalent in books published since 1967, their numbers are still disproportionately small. Even with the above most lenient qualifications, older characters are present in only 16.03 per cent of all the books surveyed. This figure reflects all animal, human, magical and "other" older characters in 549 books.

Sex of Older Characters. The 1970 census reported that there are approximately three women for every two men at age sixty-five; thereafter, the ratio is four to one. In these picture books, 55 per cent of the older characters are male, 42 per cent female, and the balance "undefined."

Racial Composition. All the older characters are classified into one of eight categories. Five of these are according to race. We found substantial under-representation of racial minorities: White—66.1 per cent; Black—3.4 per cent; Hispanic—1.7 per cent; Asian—0.8 per cent; Native American—0.8 per cent. There are three non-human additional categories: Animal—15.4 per cent; Magical—4.2 per cent; and Other (machines, etc.)—7.6 per cent. Significantly, we found twice as many older machines as older Blacks, and almost as many older witches, fairies, leprechauns, etc. as older Blacks, Asians and Native Americans combined.

Relationship to Main Character. The older person is the main character in 16.9 per cent of the books in which older characters are present. A more sobering way of relating the data is to say that only 3.64 per cent of the 549 children's books focus on an older person as the principal character of the story. Understandably, a child's interest may be better stimulated by a book *about* a child; but at a time when research shows that fewer children have regular contact with the elderly, this figure is surprising and dismaying.

Occupational Roles. Over three-fourths of the older characters have "indeterminate" occupational roles—that is, they seem to have no real function or position. This correlates with the previous finding that older persons are main characters in only one-sixth of those books containing anyone older. Being generally peri-

A composite of ageist stereotypes is reflected in the above illustration from The Case of the Cat's Meow *by Crosby Bonsall. Hard of hearing, decrepit and, it is implied, useless, the old man is accompanied by his passive, and apparently equally helpless and unhelpful, wife.*

pheral to the story line, older characters exist in a "role nirvana."

Illustrations. There are 816 pictures of older characters out of just over 18,000 pictures in the 549 books, or approximately 4.5 per cent of the total. We decided that an even more telling gauge of a character's importance was whether the character is shown alone on the picture book page(s) (i.e., he/she/it is significant enough to warrant such a portrayal): In less than one-half of one per cent (0.46 per cent) of all pictures do older characters appear alone.

Behaviors. The 16 behavioral categories employed by Saario, Jacklin and Tittle were supplemented with 2 categories especially pertinent to our study (the categories with examples and their frequency for older characters appear below). A particularly revealing comparison is that between the four most frequent categories (statements of information, routine-repetitive, nurturant and directive) which account for 55.3 per cent of all behaviors and four of the more inventive, personally meaningful categories (constructive, productive, statements about self, problem-solving and self-care) which total only 10.0 per cent of all behaviors. The message is clear: When older people are in a story (which is rare), they say rather than do and, on the whole, they perform mundane, uninteresting tasks rather than insightful, creative ones.

Physical Descriptions. Although an original checklist of 136 adjectives pertaining to "physical and personality characteristics" was created for this study, the physical descriptions of older characters were found to be so limited that three of the adjectives alone suffice to encompass them. A total of 75.3 per cent of all physical descriptors consist of the single adjective "old," another 5.8 per cent are covered by the word "little," and 2.5 per cent by "ancient." *These three adjectives comprise almost five-sixths of all physical descriptors applied in the books to older characters.* Certainly no minority in the country would feel comfortable being circumscribed by only three words. Older characters are rarely given developed physical descriptions; instead, the descriptions are flat and unidimensional—as if saying someone is "old" says all that needs to be said.

Personality Descriptions. While there is substantially greater variation in adjectives used to describe an older character's personality, the two equally most frequent adjectives are "sad" and "poor," representing a total of 15.6 per cent of all personality descriptors. "Dear," "happy" and "pleased" are the three next most frequent personality adjectives—11.7 per cent combined. These figures speak for themselves.

Conclusion. Ageism pervades children's first literature. When older characters are always portrayed as sweet, little or slow and are seldom depicted as capable of self-care or as active or productive, then we must acknowledge that children's literature with its present focus is a disservice to society.

Growing old is a reality for *all* of us. Thus, we would do ourselves and our children a service by encouraging the view that old age is a stage of growth as varied in its landscape as other stages of living. We hope this first extensive study will be a beginning—the springboard for further research, for consciousness-raising and for elimination of ageist stereotypes.

Analysis of Behavioral Categories

TYPE OF BEHAVIOR (examples appear in parenthesis)	FREQUENCY BY OLDER CHARACTER
Statements of information (non-evaluative observations)	20.6%
Routine-repetitive (eating, turning on light)	12.5%
Nurturant (helping, praising, serving)	11.7%
Directive (initiating, directing, demonstrating)	10.5%
Physically exertive (lifting heavy objects, labor)	7.4%
Social-recreational (visiting someone, card games)	6.8%
Aggressive (hitting, verbal put-downs)	5.8%
Expressions of emotion (crying, laughing)	5.2%
Constructive-productive (writing a story, knitting)	4.1%
General verbal (listening, looking for something)	3.4%
Fantasy activity (daydreaming)	2.2%
Problem-solving (producing idea, unusual combinations)	1.9%
Statement about self: (negative)	1.4%
(positive)	1.2%
(neutral)	0.3%
Conformity (express concern for rules, social norms)	1.3%
Passive-supportive (observe actions of others)	1.3%
Self-care (dressing, washing)	1.1%
Avoidance (stop trying, run away)	0.7%
Passive-exertive (out-of-control situations)	0.5%

Old Age Does NOT Equal Death

In too many children's books, old age and aging are equated with death and many bibliographies list books primarily about death under headings purporting to deal with old age. (Some examples are *The Tenth Good Thing about Barney* by Judith Viorst, Atheneum, 1971; *Nana Upstairs and Nana Downstairs* by Tomie dePaola, Putnam, 1973; and *Annie and the Old One* by Miska Miles, Little, Brown, 1971.)

Certainly death is a reality that children should read about but teachers. parents and librarians should make every effort to also include books that show older people in more life-affirming situations. Picture books suggested as "antidotes" are *Fish for Supper* by M.B. Goffstein, Dial, 1976; *Grandpa* by Barbara Borack, Harper & Row, 1967; and (though slightly sexist) *Ultra-Violet Catastrophe* by Margaret Mahy, Parents Magazine Press, 1975.

About the Author

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Ageism in Picture Books, Part II:

The Rocking Chair Syndrome in Action

By Edward F. Ansello

Our investigation of children's first literature for the ways in which older characters (human or otherwise) are portrayed has revealed stereotyped behaviors and descriptions reflecting what we call "ageism." (See the article beginning on page 4.) Even when an older character is somewhat important to the story line, that character is often confined to a few types of behavior. As mentioned, this stereotyping may assume a positive or negative effect—or neither.

Let's look at some examples of the behaviors of older characters in a brief sampling of the picture books in circulation which we studied. We will include examples of peripheral/limited characters as well as relatively more central characters.

Ageist Classics

In Beatrix Potter's classic *The Tale of Benjamin Bunny* (F. Warne & Co., 1932), old Mr. Bunny chases the cat away (aggressive on our scale of behaviors; see page 6) then proceeds to whip Benjamin and Peter (aggressive). Except for walking and smoking, this is the extent of his active involvement in the story.

Kate Greenaway, the renowned illustrator of children's literature in an earlier time, reflected the grim attitude toward age that was presumably more prevalent at the turn of the century. In *Marigold Garden* (F. Warne & Co., acquired 1968) we find the only appearance of an older character in "When we went out with grandmamma." Grandma makes the children walk stiffly, chides them and generally makes life uncomfortable for them. One can argue that such were the modes of the day, i.e., grandma was instilling traditional values ("conformity" in our matrix). Greenaway's *Under the Window* (F. Warne & Co., acquired 1967) also features only one rhyme about an older person, "Some geese went out a-walking." In this case, the older person is definitely not engaged in instilling tradition. She is simply unpleasant. Described as "an ancient crone," she wishes that "all you geese were starved to skin and bone!" Our research disclosed that older females are significantly more likely to be shown exhibiting aggressive behavior (which includes *verbal* abuse) than are older males.

An early example of many depictions of old women as "crones" is the above "very ancient crone" from Kate Greenaway's Under the Window. *A contemporary example is "Mean Landlady Twitch" (below) from Ellen Raskin's* Franklin Stein.

In Ingri and Edgar Parin d'Aulaire's *Don't Count Your Chicks* (Doubleday, 1943), an old woman feeds her animals (nurturant) and then engages in prolonged silliness (fantasy activity), only to wind up looking foolish. While the reader may learn a lesson here, it is learned at an old woman's expense. (Interestingly, in children's books females are also significantly more likely to engage in "fantasy activity" than are males.)

Passive Females

Another predominantly older female activity is "passive exertive" behavior. This involves a character being part of wild commotion, though not of her own doing. The "old lady" in Virginia Kahl's *Away Went Wolfgang!* (Scribner's, 1954) has scarcely made an appearance in the story before she is drawn through town on

The man above is "Old Crummles," who rose from the grave to frolic with a soon-to-be-departed lady. His saga appears in the nursery rhyme collection, Four and Twenty Blackbirds *by Helen Dean Fish.*

a cart while "hanging on for dear life." She spends much of the story this way. Fortunately, she is eventually able to make good use of her helplessness: she puts milk in her cart and, during the bumpy ride, churns it into butter!

Grandfather in Helen Buckley's *Grandfather and I* (Lothrop, 1959) is a nicely supportive grandparent to the boy-narrator, but his chief contribution seems to consist in the fact that he walks slowly. He never says anything. Much of his behavior is "passive-supportive."

Similarly, constricted behavior can be seen in Evaline Ness' *Long, Broad and Quickeye* (Scribner's, 1969) where an old wizard ("old and humpbacked and bald") keeps a beautiful princess under a spell. Were there ever any *young* wizards?

Peripheral Characters

In Eleanor Schick's *Peggy's New Brother* (Macmillan, 1970), the grandmother wakes Peggy up (routine-repetitive) to report that her mother has gone to the hospital to have a baby (statement of information). On the next page, the grandmother is looking at the new baby (general verbal) and, thereafter, disappears. This is the common fate of peripheral older characters.

The meanest character in Ellen Raskin's *Franklin Stein* (Atheneum, 1972) is landlady Twitch, "old as the rickety rackety house but too rich to have to live in it." She creaks through several of the pages with cane and witch's nose.

Another example comes from Arnold Lobel's *Mouse Tales* (Harper & Row, 1972). Generally an amusing book of tales, the only one which contains ridicule is that about an old mouse who does not like children and shouts at them. One day his suspenders break and his pants fall down. He screams for help but "old ladies"

In The Tale of Benjamin Bunny, *"old Mr. Bunny" has a limited but agressive role: he chases a cat and then proceeds to whip Benjamin and Peter.*

passing by just run away. His wife is of little help—she cracks him over the head with a rolling pin (again, older female aggression). Some children solve the problem by sticking his pants up with chewing gum.

Children's picture books which contain older characters need not be joyless, sobering tomes. As will be seen, humor in a book with an older character need not be at that character's expense. More fundamentally, older characters do not have to be restricted to narrow and/or stereotyped portrayals.

James Flora's *Grandpa's Farm* (Harcourt, 1965) contains four silly yet extremely imaginative tall tales. Grandpa runs a farm and, in the course of spinning his yarns, he packs clouds like snowballs during the great freeze and has his hen hatch an automobile and a steamboat! He is outrageous, but we laugh at his tales—not at him.

In Josephine Aldridge's *Fisherman's Luck* (Parnassus, 1966), the action is more realistic. When a storm destroys fisherman Sy's home, his friends chop trees for pilings and build him another. No children come along to solve the problem; these older men exhibit physically-exertive behaviors that are infrequently found in books of this type.

Grandpa in Barbara Borack's *Grandpa* (Harper & Row, 1967) amuses, understands, slurps soup noisily, dresses up with the children, saves pennies, tickles, listens to the radio, makes funny faces, kisses and generally behaves like a non-older character; i.e., he shows a full range of behaviors. His shaving and running a store (examples of self-care and occupational behaviors) are, moreover, very unusual for older characters in children's books.

Another attempt at fuller character development for older characters can be found in Edward Ardizzone's *Tim to the Lighthouse* (Walck, 1968). In fact, throughout the "Tim" series, set in a seacoast town, we have older characters running lighthouses, swapping tales, operating open boats, wrestling robbers, behaving badly

The older man's role in Grandfather and I *by Helen E. Buckley is an example of "passive supportive" behavior. The grandson leads while the grandfather follows slowly behind, smiling pleasantly but never saying a word.*

In Mouse Tales *by Arnold Lobel, an old mouse's misfortune is aggravated by unsympathetic neighbors and a shrewish wife. Unable to help himself, he is rescued by children who stick his pants up with chewing gum.*

and so forth. This depiction of a variety of roles and behaviors conveys the message that people of any age are diverse.

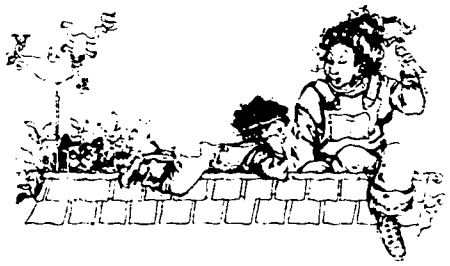
The aspects of cleverness and generosity are found in stories about Ananse, the Spider Man, who is depicted as old in Gail Haley's *A Story, A Story* (Atheneum, 1970). This is a charming retelling of an old African tale about how stories came to earth. Originally all stories belonged to the Sky God. In order to obtain some stories Ananse has to perform several difficult tasks. Through highly creative problem-solving, Ananse is able to satisfy the Sky God's challenge and bring song and stories to people.

In Charlotte Zolotow's *William's Doll* (Harper & Row, 1972) and *My Grandson Lew* (Harper & Row, 1974) it is a grandparent who emerges as the most understanding of all the characters. In *William's Doll,* grandma is the only one who can understand young William's desire for a doll. While his father buys him more and more trains and balls, and his brother calls him "sissy," his grandmother *talks* with and supports him. To William's upset father she says, "He needs it [the doll] to hug and to cradle and to take to the park so that when he's a father like you, he'll know how to take care of his baby and feed him and love him. . . ."

In *My Grandson Lew,* a young boy awakens in the middle of the night remembering his dead grandfather. Lew recounts, to his mother's surprise, many of the things he did as a child of three with his grandfather. His grandfather is depicted as an active and robust man, capable of trips to museums and giving rides on his shoulders. Readers are given the sense that inter-generational contact can be poignant and meaningful however simple or early in a child's life it may occur.

A great grandmother is the principal character in Lucille Hein's *My Very Special Friend* (Judson, 1974). She walks slowly and takes naps, but she also teaches great-grand-daughter to play games, sew and tie shoe laces. She also plans surprises and explains why people may grow smaller with age. This book shows a behavioral balance too seldom found in picture books.

A delightful extreme of the capable grandmother (as well as a failed effort at anti-ageism) is to be found in Barbara Williams' *Kevin's Grandma*



One grandmother in Kevin's Grandma *is independent and self-sufficient; the book's anti-ageist message is undermined, however, when Kevin's credibility is questioned in the final pages.*

(Dutton, 1975). Two children compare their grandmothers. One is active, interesting, but fairly traditional. But Kevin's grandma is the modern woman. Together, she and Kevin play checkers, drink root beer, stay up late, send out for pizza, practice yoga, armwrestle, cook, hammer, shingle the roof and perform a host of tasks with an independence of mind and self-sufficiency that is totally at odds with ageist stereotypes. One cannot help but contrast Kevin's grandma with Buckley's grandfather. The anti-ageist lesson of Barbara Williams' book is substantially undermined, however, when Kevin's credibility is questioned in the final pages and the reader is left to wonder if this model of older capability is fact or fancy.

Less complex and less fanciful is the grandmother in M.B. Goffstein's

AGEISM/RACISM/SEXISM

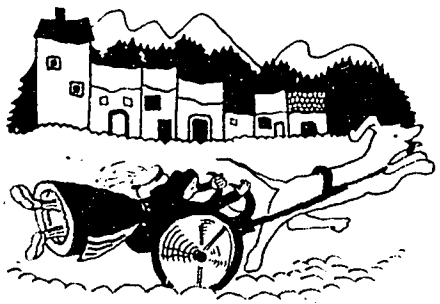
Ageism is frequently intertwined with racism and sexism. In *Granny and the Indians* by Peggy Parish (Macmillan, 1969), both older women and Native Americans are severely demeaned. "Granny" is a stereotype of the foolish old woman, and the Native American characters are stereotypes of the "childish savage."

A much-heralded book of Americana is *Little House in the Big Woods* by Laura Ingalls Wilder (Harper & Row, 1971). Many readers know about the book's slurs against Native Americans. But how many are aware that the book also contains ageist and racist slurs against Black people? The following poem appears on page 100:

"There was an old darkey
And his name was Uncle Ned,
And he died long ago, long ago.
There was no wool on the top of his head,
In the place where wool ought to grow. . . .

"So hang up the shovel and the hoe,
Lay down the fiddle and the bow,
There's no more work for old Uncle Ned,
For he's gone where the good darkeys go."

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory by Roald Dahl (Knopf, 1974) has been severely criticized for reinforcing racist and sexist values. Not surprisingly, the book also perpetuates ageism. The four decrepit grandparents—the only old people in the book—do nothing but lie in bed, two at the head and two at the foot, "shriveled as prunes and as bony as skeletons."



The Ansello study uncovered many depictions of "old ladies" propelled by fate into situations of wild commotion, as in the above illustration from Away Went Wolfgang!

Fish for Supper (Dial, 1976). Through a series of simple black-and-white sketches, grandmother is shown getting up early in the morning and going fishing. She prepares her lunch, tows her boat, catches fish and cleans them. Goffstein's anti-ageist portrayal lacks breadth of character development, but it does establish a self-sufficient older person. And unlike Kevin's grandmother, Goffstein's is allowed to remain credible.

A final example is perhaps more compatible with traditional concepts of "old" behavior but imparts a worthwhile lesson nevertheless. In Liesel Skorpen's *Mandy's Grandmother* (Dial, 1975) the visiting grandmother has styles and ways quite different from her rough-and-ready granddaughter, Mandy. Where Mandy prefers sandwiches for breakfast, wearing jeans and roughhousing in dirt, her grandmother eats bacon and eggs, wears dresses (she has brought one for Mandy, much to her granddaughter's dismay) and enjoys sitting quietly. These differences understandably create tension, which is only broken when Mandy discovers she has made her grandmother feel rejected and sad. The two talk and reach a compromise of peaceful coexistence. While the grandmother is no "super-now" person like Kevin's, she and Mandy become friends. Perhaps because grandmother is so *un*extraordinary, their developing relationship has even more warmth. The story suggests that when two very different people try to communicate, the differences—of age, of values, of whatever—become less important than the communication. One of the most unfortunate consequences of ageism is that, in the long run, communication between generations is tragically undermined.

Ageist stereotypes are not so much negative (witches and wizards are present but not to any large degree) as boring. Old characters are not "fleshed out," are often described by only two or three rather flat adjectives, and their behaviors are predominantly unimaginative and routine. Older characters are not problem-solvers, nor are they physically-exertive or emotionally developed. In some instances they are punishing, in others nurturant. However, variety is rarely to be found in the same characters. As we have seen, there have been some attempts at a broader development of older characters. (Barbara Borack's *Grandpa* stands out—he shaves, works, plays, cares, laughs, likes and dislikes; in short, he is quite developed.) But even the better books must be seen on a continuum *toward* anti-ageism. The examples we have selected can be seen as more or less ageist or non-ageist but none would appear to be undeniably anti-ageist, portraying a fully functioning older character.

The general thrust of the ageist stereotype is that, unlike characters of other ages, the older character is denied full range. Older characters do *not* have to be portrayed as "super-people." Quite simply, they should exhibit the whole continuum of behaviors and roles—good to bad, strong to weak, active to passive—that all characters (and people) are entitled to.

A rare example of an occupational role by an older character is found in Grandpa *by Barbara Borack.*

The folk jingle about "an old woman who swallowed a fly" and other assorted creatures is the theme of There Was an Old Woman *by Stephen Kellog. The author-illustrator's ageist depictions of the hero's antics are extremely grotesque and offensive. The book promotes other anti-human values as well: The gluttonous hero grows huge and earns fame and fortune as a circus "freak" (a "fat lady" of lesser girth is fired to make way for her).*

About the Author

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Aging in the U.S.: Facts and Figures

The statistics and information on this page will help counteract ageist myths and stereotypes. See the consciousness-raising exercises on the following page for further information and suggestions.

WHAT IS AGEISM?

Ageism is any attitude, action or institutional structure which subordinates a person or group because of age *OR* any assignment of roles in society on the basis of age. Ageism is usually practiced against older people, but it is also practiced against young people. Ageism can be individual, cultural or institutional *AND* it can be intentional or unintentional.

EXAMPLES OF AGEISM

Individual: "She's too old to wear jeans," or "My grandfather is too old to understand me."
Cultural: "You can't teach an old dog new tricks," or "There's no fool like an old fool."
Institutional: Compulsory retirement. Also, the expectation that older people will be volunteers rather than paid employees.

AGEISM AND U.S. CULTURE

- *Ageism* makes it easier to ignore the frequently oppressive social and economic situation of older people in U.S. society.
- *Ageism* permits employers to retire higher-paid older workers with seniority and to replace them with lower-paid younger workers.
- *Ageism* protects younger people from thinking about things they fear (aging, illness, death).
- *Ageism* sabotages the self-image of older people and is an attack on their dignity as human beings.

HOW MANY OLDER PEOPLE?

- In the U.S., 24.2 million citizens are over 65. This is more than 10 % of the total U.S. population of 222 million. It is predicted that by the year 2,000, one-third of the U.S. population will be over 65 and one-half will be over 60.
- Life expectancy is less for Third World people than for white people. Blacks are 12 % of the U.S. population but, because of lower life expectancy, are less than 8 % of the U.S. elderly. Most Third World males do not live long enough to be eligible for the benefits of Social Security.

HOW MANY WORK?

- 10 % of those over 65 are employed full time; an additional 20 % work part time.

WHAT IS AVERAGE INCOME OF ALL U.S. OLDER PEOPLE?

- $75 a week for a single older person.

WHAT IS THE SOURCE OF THEIR INCOME?

- Retirement benefits: 46 %. (Social Security: 34 %; public pensions: 7 %; private pensions: 5 %)
- Earnings from employment: 29 %.
- Income from assets: 15 %.
- Public assistance: 4 %.
- Veterans benefits: 3 %.
- Other (contributions from family, etc.): 3 %.

WHO ARE ELDERLY POOR?

- One-third of all people over 65 live at or below the poverty line set by the federal government. Most people now consider the federal government's "poverty" line ($2,717 for individuals, $3,485 for couples) outrageously low. Many experts say that a more realistic criterion is at least double the official figure and—in that case—*a majority of older people in the U.S. would be classified as poor, most of them becoming poor after growing old.*
- Of aged Blacks who live alone, 75 % are below the official poverty line. The percentage of Black widows who live in poverty is 85 %. Of aged Black females, 47 % have incomes under $1,000.

WHERE DO OLDER PEOPLE LIVE?

- The largest concentrations are in the agricultural Midwest, in New England and in Florida. Over 60 % of older Blacks live in the South.
- Urban areas have 60 % of all persons 65 or over; non-metropolitan areas, 35 %; farms, 5 %.
- At least 30 % of people 65 or over live in substandard housing.
- Contrary to the popular myth that older people are infirm, need to be taken care of or live in nursing homes, only 5 % of those over 65 live in nursing homes or other institutions. (There are 23,000 nursing homes in the U.S., half of which can't oass basic fire inspection.) Approximately 15 % of the people over 65 live in the community with partial or total care; 80 %—the vast majority—live in the community without nursing or other kinds of physical care.

HOW MANY ARE SUICIDES?

- 25 % of all suicides are committed by people 65 or over.

Sources for the information on this page are *Why Survive? Being Old in America* by Robert N. Butler, M.D. (Harper & Row, 1975); the Technical Bulletin Series of the National Center on Black Aged, Washington, D.C.; and *Money Income and Poverty Status of Families and Persons in the United States, 1974-1975*, Bureau of the Census, U.S. Dept. of Commerce.

ACTION AGAINST AGEISM: Consciousness-Raising Exercises

By Albert V. Schwartz

The term *aging* refers to a continuum in which we are all necessarily involved. As long as we live, we can only age.

The classroom is an excellent arena in which to examine the concept and practices of ageism. The series of consciousness-raising exercises below can help students confront the reality of the future and, in addition, foster their understanding of, and identification with, older people. The exercises can also be adapted for use in adult workshops.

Exercises on Ageism

Objectives: 1. To make students aware of ageist attitudes and practices—their own, in literature and in all social institutions.

2. To guide students towards actions that will counteract these attitudes and practices.

Age Level: Adaptable for all grades.

Time Allotment: Five or more classroom periods.

Materials Needed: One copy of this *Bulletin,* the accompanying page of facts on ageism (page 11), blackboard and chalk, access to a children's library, a few photographs or drawings of older people, which depict them in non-stereotypical ways (active, in good health, etc.), and of some interesting older faces.

Exercise 1: Recognizing the Problem

Ask students to close their eyes while you describe a scene. Then ask them to quickly call out the first words they think of. List the words on the blackboard. Have the students react to the following four scenes, so that there are four lists in all, each of about ten words: 1. room full of old people, 2. party with people dancing, 3. large junkyard and 4. spring garden.

Ask students to identify which adjectives or phrases are negative and which are positive in each column. Invariably the negative words will be in columns 1 and 3 and the positive words in columns 2 and 4. Ask the students to discuss why they equate old age with unpleasant and discarded things. The teacher should not be judgmental and should encourage all opinions, no matter how ageist. The teacher can then ask students to decide whether their views coincide or conflict with the views and actions of society towards older people.

Results of this discussion are likely to reveal that the class considers old age to be boring, ugly, ridiculous and unpleasant.

Exercise 2: Analyzing the Problem

Write the definition of "myth" and "stereotype" on the blackboard. (A *myth* can be defined an an ill-founded belief that is perpetuated in the face of contrary facts. A *stereotype* can be defined as an untruth or oversimplification about the traits and behaviors of an entire group of people. A stereotype is applied to each member of a group, without regard to each person's individual traits.) Ask students to give one example of a myth or stereotype about the racial, religious or sexual group they are a member of, and to comment about whether it is true or false and, if false, why it is harmful. Then write on the board examples of a stereotype, myth, saying, joke, cliché, etc., pertaining to older people. Ask students to add to the list. Some possibilities are: *There's no fool like an old fool.* (Assumes infallibility of older people and faults them for making errors, thus negating their individuality.) *You can't teach an old dog new tricks.* (Old people, like the young, learn and adjust in their own individual ways.) Other examples: *Old codger* (is there ever a young codger?), *Old maid* (the term is sexist as well as ageist) and *Old and crotchety* (is "crotchety" ever used without "old"?).

Discuss the list and introduce into the discussion some of the statistics from page 11. Also point out that Dr. Richard L. Sprott of the Jackson Laboratory in Bar Harbor, Maine, has concluded from his studies that "learning ability and I.Q. do not decrease with age but remain steady and perhaps even increase." Many individuals' lives can illustrate this point. For example, W.E.B. Du Bois worked on a major project—the *Encyclopedia Africana*—until his death when he was in his nineties. Other examples are Pablo Picasso, Frederick Douglass, Golda Meir and Benjamin Franklin (who was in his seventies when he helped write the U.S. Constitution). Also, ask students if the older people they know conform to or contradict ageist stereotypes and myths.

Results of this discussion should be that students will begin to feel that old people are not being treated fairly.

Exercise 3: Clarification of Values

Hang the photos, drawings or paintings of older people cited in the "materials needed" section. Begin a discussion on the meaning of "old age" by asking the students to agree on a chronological definition. Write this number on the blackboard. Then ask what a six-year-old can do that an infant cannot do, what a fifteen-year-old can do that a six-year-old cannot do, etc.—for a thirty-year-old, fifty-year-old, seventy-year old. What kind of things, if any, can people no longer do as they become older? Is this true for all older people? How much depends on health and how much on age? Isn't this true at most age levels? Should people stop doing anything which they like to do and can do well? (Bring up forced retirement.) Ask students to think of the kinds of work needed by society that many older people can do. List activities in education, health services, government, etc. Can people function better in general when useful?

Further questions to discuss: Ask students if they have ever made fun of old people or laughed at TV comedians who have done so. Is beauty to be equated with youth? What is true

beauty? How do the students think this society should change in the way it treats people who are old?

Exercise 4: Ageism and Racism/Ageism and Sexism (for secondary students only)

Present information from page 11 which pertains to the relationship between poverty and ageism—which in reality connects class to age and race to class. Ask students to speculate about, and then discuss: (1) how and why people who are old [illegible] more when they are poor than who are well-to-do; (2) how a most Third World people society are poor; and (3) how and [illegible] Third World people suffer more than other people when they grow old. Start a similar discussion on the relationship of sexism to ageism. Jokes and stereotypes about older women can be discussed, as well as advertisements aimed at keeping women youthful in appearance. Explore the devastating emotional effects which result when sexism and ageism combine.

Exercise 5: Analysis of Literature

Have each student visit the library and select a children's book in which there are one or more older characters. Students should read the book and then write or orally present their analysis of how old age is depicted in the book. What adjectives are used to describe the older characters? Are they stereotyped in passive, do-nothing roles? If the student were to make the book less ageist, how would that be done? [Note: A major problem inherent in the treatment of all oppressed groups is that the dominant group tends to consign the oppressed to anonymity by the use of group terms instead of individual names. Older characters in children's books often have no names at all. They are referred to simply as "the old one," "the old man," "the old woman" or "the old." (*Annie and the Old One* by Miska Miles, a Newbery Honor Book, is an example of this treatment.) Have your students give names to each older character in stories. A full and proper name is critical to recognizing the personhood and humanity of the individual.]

After the students have reported and discussed their findings, show them a copy of this *Bulletin*, and tell them about the results of the study done by Dr. Edward Ansello and his associates at the University of Maryland on ageism in 549 picture books (pages 4-10). Discuss how the results of this study compare with the students' analyses.

Exercise 6: Community Analysis

Depending on the age level of the students, the class might conduct a simple or complex study of older people in the school community. How many old people live in the area? Is their income on the average higher or lower than middle-aged people? What social and health facilities are availa[illegible]? What jobs are open to [illegible]at kinds of discrimination [illegible]uffer from? How is their [illegible]ss status or racial identity [illegible]ected to their problems? Can the school assist them? Can they assist the school? Students should be encouraged to find active older people who will visit the class to discuss these questions.

Exercise 7: Community Outreach

Discuss with your supervisor a young-old exchange program in your school. Active older people may be invited to eat lunch and engage in informal dialog with the children, as well as to tell stories, share crafts and teach. Such a program can promote positive interaction between students and active older people.

Exercise 8: A Media Project

Have the students be on the alert for ageist stereotypes and myths in the TV shows they watch. Have them keep a record of the names and sponsors of the shows that are particularly ageist. Have them write critiques of the most offensive shows. Also, suggest that they be on the lookout for commercials and advertisements that either ridicule older people or imply [illegible] it is undesirable to grow ol[illegible] a classroom project the student[illegible]rite letters to producers of television shows and sponsors protesting the harm they do by perpetuating stereotypes. You might send copies of letters to the Gray Panther Media Watch, Room 300, 1841 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023.

About the Author

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Grandma, how come you don't sit around in your rocking chair?

On Aging: Background Material and Resources

RECOMMENDED READING

The following books, pamphlets and articles will provide readers with background information and insights necessary to counteract the ageist stereotypes and distortions so frequently found in children's books. Many of the books are suitable for assigned reading in high school and college courses and can be adapted by teachers for younger age levels. For additional periodical resources, see the Information Exchange department on page 22.

Butler, Robert N., **Why Survive? Being Old in America.** Harper & Row, 1975. In this angry and thoroughly documented book, Dr. Butler, a noted gerontologist and psychiatrist, balances the grim reality of what it is like to be old in the U.S. against the pieties that deny that reality. This is strongly recommended as a textbook for sociology, gerontology and related fields.

Butler, Robert N. and Myrna I. Lewis. **Aging and Mental Health: Positive Psychosocial Approaches.** C.V. Mosby (St. Louis), 1973. Important material which reflects an approach to aging with emphasis on a continued involvement in life. Dispels myths of old age. Presents life as a continuum.

——. **Sex After Sixty.** Harper & Row, 1976. *Sex After Sixty* is a guide for men and women *and* for younger people who want to know what their future holds for them sexually. The acceptance of the reality of active sex and sexuality in later life is very recent. It had long been assumed—except by men and women who knew better from their own experience—that with the years, sex was impossible, perhaps immoral and unquestionably absurd. Gray Panthers recommend this for a study group of older people.

de Beauvoir, Simone. **The Coming of Age.** Putnam, 1972. Deals with the biological, ethnographic and historical treatment of aging, including detailed examples from these fields. Has an interesting discussion of ageism in literature. However, because there have been so many breakthroughs in this field since the book was written, Gray Panthers feel that this work is out of touch with today's old and it tends to be depressing.

Journal of Communication. **"The Myths of Old Age Are the Myths of the Young."** Vol. 24:4, Autumn 1974. Published by the Annenberg School of Communication, 3620 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, Pa. 19170. This section of the *Journal* investigates some codes of communication and conduct that define age roles in American culture. Taken for granted ideas of the elderly are found to be erroneous. Old people never did fit one image, but the big story is the emergence of a truly new kind of older people who have better education, better health and—what is most important—are becoming aware of their oppression.

Kuhn, Maggie. **"Liberation From Ageism: New Life Styles for the Elderly."** *Inquiry.* September, 1971. Published by the United Presbyterian Church, 475 Riverside Dr., New York, N.Y. 10027. Kuhn, an activist, is able to articulate for the elderly and motivate the old to action. Inspirational guidelines for today's generation of old persons.

Mead, Margaret. **Blackberry Winter: My Earlier Years.** Morrow, 1972. A very human and moving story. Mead's candid portrait of herself as a child, student, wife, mother and grandmother reveals a self-liberated woman who is acknowledged as one of the world's leading anthropologists.

Nader, Ralph and Kate Blackwell. **You and Your Pension.** Grossman, 1973. Comprehensive information about pensions, potential beneficiaries of private pensions and the crucial difference between a pension fund's promise to pay and the many strings attached to pension plans. Appendices summarize pending pension legislation and list people to contact.

Sontag, Susan. **"The Double Standard of Aging."** *Saturday Review of the Society.* Vol. 95, No. 39, pp. 29-38, September 23, 1972. A protest against our youth-oriented society's bias against mature women; i.e., society says men improve with age, women disintegrate. A love affair between an old man and a young woman is perfectly acceptable while the same situation involving an older woman and a young man is frowned upon.

Townsend, Claire. **Old Age: The Last Segregation.** Grossman, 1971. The report of the Nader study group on nursing homes; activist-oriented. Very good on treatment of elderly in nursing homes, on providing recommendations for nursing home reform and aging, and on individual evaluation of nursing homes.

RESOURCE GROUPS

The groups listed below can be of help. (See also the publications listed above and in the Information Exchange department, page 22.)

American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)
1909 K St. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

Gray Panthers
3700 Chestnut St.
Philadelphia, Pa. 19104

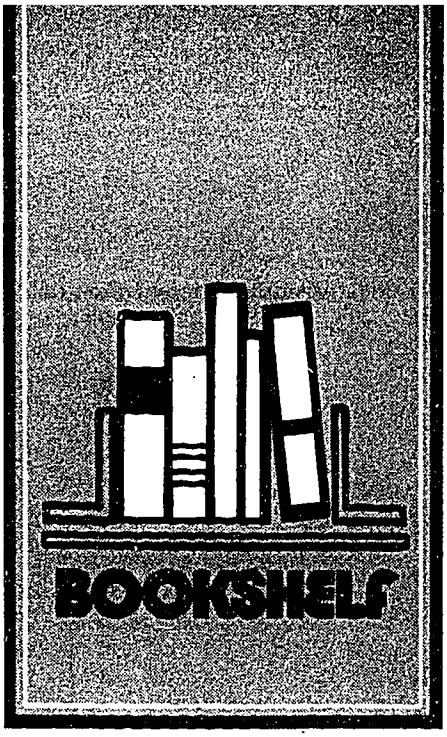
National Caucus on the Black Aged
1730 M St. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

National Council of Senior Citizens (NCSC)
1511 K St. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

National Council on the Aging
1828 L St. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

NOW Task Force on Older Women
6422 Telegraph Ave.
Oakland, Cal. 94609

Internat'l Senior Citizens Assn.
11753 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles, Cal. 90025



Hawk, I'm Your Brother

by Byrd Baylor,
illustrated by Peter Parnall.
Charles Scribner's Sons, 1976,
$5.95, 42 pages, grades 3-6

This is a beautiful book which reveals the values of a Third World culture in a profoundly positive way.

Driven by the desire to fly, Rudy Soto steals a baby hawk from its nest in the hope that having a hawk as his "brother" will somehow enable him to take flight. Seeing the hawk's frustration in confinement, the boy finally releases it. But the haw[illegible]embers Rudy and the two call[illegible]d forth to each other acro[illegible]is. Through their comm[illegible]nicat[illegible]Rudy begins to experi[illegible]ying vicariously—the pull of the wind, the sense of open space. In giving the hawk its freedom, he has found a new power. Now the hawk is truly his brother.

The setting is the Southwest, and the characters appear to be Native American or possibly Chicano (in the Southwest, Native Americans often have Spanish names like Soto and much of Chicano culture is similar to Native American). The lack of specific identification seems intentional. The author is not interested in the "quaintness" or "color" of Native American or Chicano people but in their view of life. Instead of emphasizing dress, food or other surface aspects of culture, he focuses on values. And although the characters wear ordinary, "white" clothes and speak "regular" English, they have a profoundly Third World cultural outlook.

The oneness between human beings and nature is the core concept of the book. Unlike many animal stories for children, this book does not assign human qualities to animals or recreate a human world in animal form. The latter approach (the Walt Disney Syndrome) reflects a common attitude toward nature in U.S. society: Nature exists to be exploited—either ravaged for profit or petted for human pleasure.

Rudy's selfishness in confining the hawk is gently but firmly rejected. The message is: no one can be truly free if others are not free, and we attain our own freedom by allowing others to be free. Thus, in an uncontrived way, individualism is put down. Rudy's feelings are treated with respect, patience and a touch of mystery—it is no accident that a book which does not exploit or distort animals also does not exploit or distort children.

The theme of unity between people and nature is expressed in the illustrations. They are full of circular patterns which, on the one hand, capture the glorious sweep of a hawk in flight and, on the other, interrelate sky and human beings. *Hawk, I'm Your Brother* should be excellent for Native American or Chicano children and should foster respect for these cultures in other children. A minor complaint: in some pictures, Rudy's features are not as sharply defined as they might be. [Elizabeth Martinez]

Where's Florrie?

by Barbara Cohen,
illustrated by Joan Halpern.
Lothrop, Lee and Shepard, 1976,
$4.95, 48 pages, grades 1-4

Sexist stereotypes abound in *Where's Florrie?*, the story of a little girl who lives with her parents in back of a tavern owned by her father, in East New York about 50 years ago.

Florrie is overjoyed when she receives a toy cast iron stove like her mother's for her birthday. Her enthusiasm is dampened, however, when her austere father warns her not to build a fire in it. (Florrie is convinced that her father is "mean" and does not love her, although her mother tries to reassure her by saying, "It's just that he has so much on his mind.")

Gladys, a neighborhood girl, dares Florrie to build a fire anyway. They collect wood and matches and are about to light the fire when a boy named Morrie Weissbinder, whom Gladys likes, comes by and asks her to help him carry a pail of root beer. She doesn't hesitate to go off with him without a backward glance, leaving Florrie alone with the stove and the matches. Florrie lights the fire, it flares up uncontrollably and is discovered by her father.

Frightened, she runs away, gets lost and in desperation, sits down on a curb crying. Eventually, her father appears and says simply, "Will you come home now, Florrie?" He never scolds her for building the fire or running away, as she had expected, but puts the stove out of reach for a year. Florrie realizes her mistake in thinking her father did not love her.

Are any interesting, positive or stereotype-breaking characters to be found in this book? Hardly. Mother appears in the beginning and end of the story on duty at her stove in the kitchen. She is kind, gentle and affectionate. Father is strict, aloof and unemotional, though in the end he shows sympathy and affection for his unhappy, lost daughter. He is the doer and definitely in charge, while Mother cooks and "was always in the back with the baby."

Timid Florrie plays with dolls and pretends to cook. She shows no creativity or assertiveness. When it comes time to light her toy stove, she says to Gladys, "I don't know how to light a match." When she gets lost, does she ask someone for the way home or knock on a door for help? No. She sits down and cries.

Her relationship with Gladys is competitive, not sisterly. When Gladys's friend Morrie Weissbinder appears (note that the neighborhood boy has a last name, while Gladys doesn't), Gladys drops Florrie and goes off with him. Boys, after all, are more important than girls. [Jane Califf]

Three Stalks of Corn

written and illustrated by Leo Politi.
Charles Scribner's Sons,
1976, $6.95, 32 pages, grades 1-3

The strength of this book lies in the illustrations. They are beautiful—except for one peculiarity: the characters (who are all Mexican) often have their eyes closed, and the grandmother *always* appears with her eyes closed. The result is that they all appear to be blind.

The story is filled with warmth and a real feeling for certain aspects of Mexican culture. It also is non-sexist, anti-racist (in that it seeks to engender pride in Mexican culture), definitely non-competitive.

A major weakness of the text is that it deals with Mexican culture only on a material level—corn, dolls, cooking, songs, a little history. It does not go into the deeper aspects of the culture, such as particular values of traditional Mexican culture. Hence it is very superficial.

Another problem: Angelica and her grandmother, the main characters, live in what is described as "an early California house." This suggests historical dignity, possibly even wealth. Actually, such houses and the barrios themselves are just plain OLD and POOR. So here, and in other subtle ways, the book falls into *quaintness*. The sprinkling of Spanish words adds to the quaintness and is irritating, especially since the words of the songs in the book (which were obviously sung in Spanish) are *not* given in Spanish—only in English. One is left with a feeling of unreality: Everything is so nice, so peaceful, so sweet, so pretty, so charming, so delightful. Perhaps the lack of conflict is acceptable since the author clearly does not aim to tell a real story but only to depict a culture and inspire pride in it. But $6.95 seems like a lot of money to pay for a book about corn and cooking.

Very few Mexican or Chicano parents could afford to buy this book about *their* culture. For other parents who are able to afford it, the book is attractive, generally inoffensive and pleasant. [Elizabeth Martinez]

Never to Forget: The Jews of the Holocaust

by Milton Meltzer.
Harper & Row, 1976,
$6.95, 217 pages, grades 7-up

The mass murder of six million Jews by the Nazis during World War II is the subject of this compelling history. Interweaving background information, chilling statistics, individual accounts and newspaper reports, it provides an excellent introduction to its subject for American young people, whose lack of knowledge about the war and/or about anti-Semitism continually amazes people like the reviewer who lived through those times.

Scapegoating a minority group to gain and consolidate political power was not a device originated by Adolf Hitler, but it was used by him with outstanding success. Meltzer documents just how and why this happened, and how Hitler retained mass support even though "wages sank while profits rose." The one deficiency of this background information is that readers are given the impression that Hitler controlled everything in Germany, including big business. It is much more likely that Hitler was encouraged by big business because, in addition to killing Jews, he also suppressed all labor union activity and all political opposition. "Civilized" Germans enthusiastically helped to jail, torture and murder endless numbers of Jews and non-Jews alike.

In relating information about the infamous German leaders and presenting first-person tales by anonymous victims, Meltzer exposes the myth of Jewish non-resistance. He says this myth developed because "historians based themselves largely on the captured Nazi documents, which gave only a one-sided version of what happened" (in the same way that U.S. newspapers based their Attica headlines on police accounts and many U.S. historians base their work only on white perspectives and white records). Using recently discovered documents and the accounts of concentration camp survivors, Meltzer gives a stirring and important description of active and passive resistance that was marked by courage, confusion over tactics and passionate struggle for survival.

In his "Never to Forget" wrap-up chapter, the author makes it clear that the Holocaust must never be regarded merely as an aberration. (Unfortunately, the male pronoun is used to denote all of humanity in making this point.) He not only shows that "it can happen here" but that it *has* happened everywhere both before

and after Hitler. He cites the many places where genocide has been practiced and explains that such horrors are always possible when people believe in the superiority of one group over another. He also makes it clear that all humanity was responsible—individuals, churches, governments, along with the Germans who actually committed the murders—by not acting to prevent the Holocaust.

Readers will gain a greater understanding of history, of racism and of individual responsibility from this excellent book—and hopefully, neutrality will be impossible. [Lyla Hoffman]

Shawn's Red Bike

by Petronella Breinburg,
illustrated by Errol Lloyd.
T.Y. Crowell, 1976,
$6.95, unpaged, ages 3-8,
grades pre K-3

This is the author's third entry in a picture-book series about a little Black boy named Shawn.

By perseverance and initiative, what Shawn wants, Shawn gets. Although his mother feels that the red bicycle is too expensive, Shawn performs a variety of tasks—even helping with his aunt's baby—to earn enough money to buy the bike.

On the day the bike finally arrives.

Shawn attempts to ride it as his friends look on. He fails but tries again. The second time around, he rides to the corner before falling off. The story suggests that, little by little, Shawn will master bike-riding.

The representation of females, young and old, is disappointing in this book. Girls are relegated to the fringes of the action and are "dressed up" in knee socks, dresses and hair ribbons. Except for Shawn's mother, none of the females speaks.

However, *Shawn's Red Bike* has some admirable features. The bicycle is not an elitist object but is symbolic of whatever a child may wish to accomplish. Many of the children—more accurately, the boys—own bikes. Children of other ethnic groups are among Shawn's friends, the illustrations are textured and vivid and readers are given an important lesson: All things that are worthwhile cannot easily be attained. [Emily Moore]

Sitting on the Blue-Eyed Bear: Navajo Myths and Legends

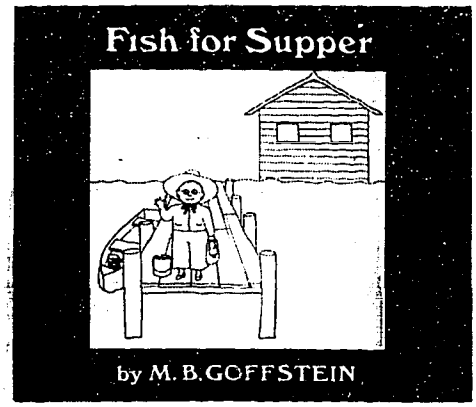
by Gerald Hausman,
illustrated by Sidney Hausman.
Lawrence Hill, 1976,
$10.00, grades junior high-up

Here is an excellent text (combined with good drawings) that provides an example of exactly how Native American myths and legends should be told. The introduction by the author and collaborator Alice Winston, who is familiar with Navajo stories, describes the life situation of Navajo people. Among the areas covered are the Navajo world view, history, art and the situations facing Navajos today—specifically, the threat presented by massive strip-mining and coal gasification by multi-national corporations.

The myths and legends, as the author learned them from Navajo people, follow the introduction. The book's format is very effective in giving readers a sense of the wholeness of life which is natural to the Navajos and to many other native nations. Most books of "Indian" legends do not correct their stories to present realities and problems, thus robbing them of their essence and relevance.

Alice Winston's interpretations of the myths and legends are generally very good, although a few seem overly anthropological and rely for their validity on famous non-Indian authorities.

These two white American writers have done a good job of helping other non-Native Americans gain a deeper understanding of Native American reality and learn about the Navajos in a positive way. [Jimmie Durham]



Fish for Supper

written and illustrated by
M.B. Goffstein.
Dial Press, 1976,
$4.95, unpaged, grades ps-2

The sparest line drawings and a very few well chosen words lend warmth and humor to this tiny book's delightful description of one day in the life of a dedicated fisherperson.

Grandmother's routine, beginning at five A.M., involves getting ready to go fishing, rowing her boat, catching some fish, cleaning, cooking and eating the fish and then going to bed to rest up for the next day's fishing. Grandmother is a happy loner who will bring smiles to young and old alike. [Lyla Hoffman]

In the BOOKSHELF, a regular *Bulletin* feature, all books that relate to minority themes are evaluated by members of the minority group depicted.—Editors.

Third Worlders, Feminists Praise ALA Action

Minority and feminist organizations have lauded the American Library Association's adoption of a CIBC-sponsored resolution citing the need "to aggressively address the racism and sexism within its own professional province" [see Vol. 7, No. 4 and No. 5] The resolution calls for the ALA to develop a model program in racism and sexism awareness for librarians and urges all library schools to introduce similar programs into their curricula. The resolution also directs librarians to take a new advocacy role in order to "raise the awareness of library users to the pressing problem of racism and sexism."

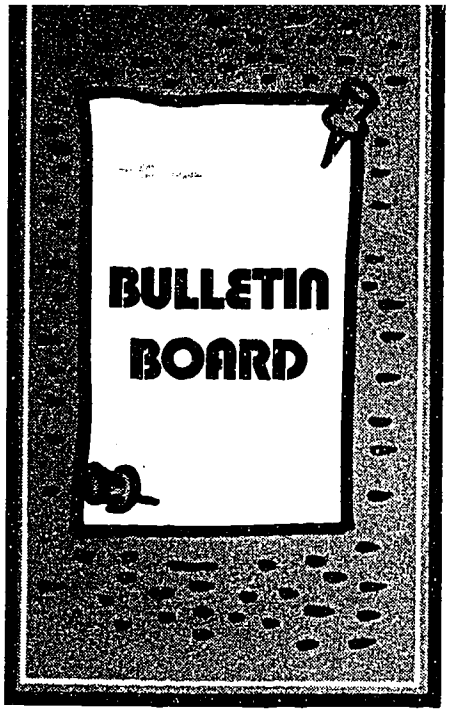
A joint congratulatory message was forwarded to ALA President Clara Stanton Jones by William Byler, Executive Director, Association on American Indian Affairs; Kathryn Fong, Chairperson, Chinese for Affirmative Action; Raul Arreola, President, Mexican American Education Commission; Karen De Crow, President, NOW (National Organization for Women); Dr. Robert Hill, Director of Research, National Urban League; and Ruth J. Abram, Executive Director, Women's Action Alliance. The message states:

"We salute the American Library Association for acknowledging the need to actively confront racism and sexism in its own ranks; and we applaud the ALA's foresight in taking unprecedented steps to overcome race and sex bias in the library profession. We look forward to the positive effects ALA's stand will undoubtedly have on other educational fields."

The ALA action was also hailed by Samuel B. Ethridge, Director of the Ethnic Studies Project of the National Education Association in Washington, D.C., as a "major achievement, long overdue," and by Lerone Bennett, Jr., historian and senior editor of *Ebony* magazine.

Black Author Honored

Black author Eloise Greenfield received the 1976 Jane Addams Children's Book Award on September 6 for her biography, *Paul Robeson* (T.Y. Crowell, 1975; reviewed in the Bookshelf department, Vol. 6, Nos. 3 & 4). Illustrated by George Ford, the book describes Robeson's militant struggle



against the oppression of Black and poor people in the U.S. and throughout the world.

The Jane Addams Children's Book Award has been given yearly since 1953 by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and the Jane Addams Peace Association to the book that "most effectively promotes the cause of peace, social justice and world community." This year's honor award recipients are Mildred D. Taylor for *Song of the Trees* (Dial Press and, in manuscript form, winner of the 1973 CIBC contest for Third World writers; Vol. 6, Nos. 3 & 4); Laurence Yep for *Dragonwings* (Harper & Row; Vol. 6, Nos. 5 & 6) and Robert C. O'Brien for *Z For Zachariah* (Atheneum).

"Cataloging Bulletin" Wins Wilson Award

The Hennepin County Library Cataloging Bulletin has just received the 1976 H.W. Wilson Library Periodical Award. Commended for being both "innovative and informative," the bimonthly publication seeks to make catalog data more intelligible, promote greater access to library materials and humanize the subject headings related to people. (See "Don't Look in the Catalog," by Sanford Berman, *HCLCB* editor, in Vol. 7. No. 4.) Subscription rates: $4 for individuals, $7 for institutions. All 22 back issues are still available at $1 each. Write the Secretary, Technical Services Division, Hennepin County Library, 7001 York Ave. S., Edina, Minn. 55435.

Maryland School Board Acts Against Sexist Book

The Montgomery County (Md.) Board of Education has agreed with the National Organization for Women (NOW) that the second-grade reader *The Dog Next Door and Other Stories* is "riddled with sexism." The Board voted September 13 to replace the book. The board also voted to continue training school staffs "to be sensitive" in their approach to school materials that are sexist or racist.

Posters Against Apartheid Sought by Africa Group

A poster campaign is being sponsored by the American Committee on Africa (ACOA) to affirm and publicize the response of U.S. artists to the South African government's repression of Black protests against apartheid.

ACOA is calling upon artists to express, in simple graphic terms, strong feelings against apartheid and/or a vision of what South Africa's oppressive society could be like if its members were allowed to live in harmony and justice. Members of the poster selection committee include Milton Glazer of MG Associates, State Supreme Court Judge William H. Booth (who is also president of ACOA) and Enuga Reddy of the UN Special Committee.

Some uses to be made of the poster include: exhibition at the United Nations and other centers; the sale of catalogs and full-size reproductions with proceeds divided equally between the poster artists and anti-apartheid movements here and abroad (poster originals will remain the property of the artists).

There are no entry or hanging fees. Posters should be submitted by December 31, 1976 to The American Committee on Africa, 305 East 46 Street, New York, N.Y. 10017.

For suggested themes and further information, write to Herb Yavel, Poster Campaign Director, ACOA, 305 East 46 St., New York, N.Y. 10017 or call (212) 838-5030. Documenting pictures and literature for reference use by artists may be obtained from The Center Against Apartheid, United Nations, New York, N.Y. 10017.

Ageism in Videoland

By Lydia Bragger

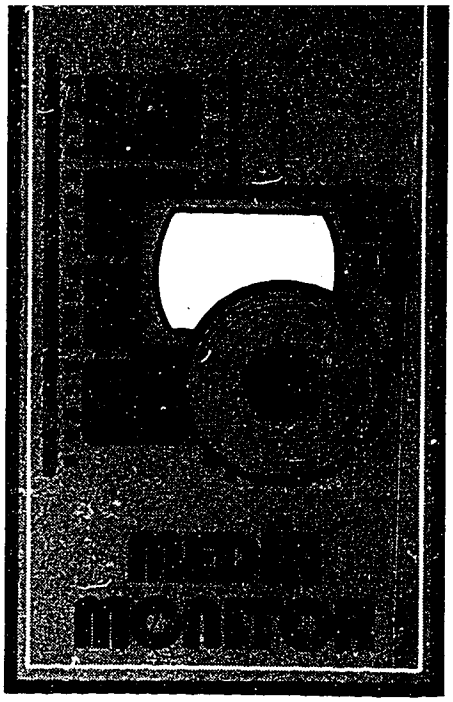
Old people are ugly, toothless, sexless, incontinent, senile, confused and helpless. This is the way the media have portrayed us. Old age has been so negatively stereotyped that it has become something to dread and feel threatened by. No wonder people of all ages are afraid of growing old.

In November, 1974, the Gray Panthers held a conference at which the Council on Interracial Books for Children was invited to lead a media watch workshop. Out of this workshop—and with the support of the CIBC—came the Gray Panther Media Watch National Committee.

One of our first endeavors was to prepare guidelines for monitoring radio, television and the press and to develop criteria pinpointing stereotypical images, negative characteristics, distortions and discriminatory patterns whereby older people are excluded from positive action situations. These guidelines (which were based on CIBC criteria for analyzing children's books) appear in the box at the right.

Media Watch committee members—Gray Panthers and other watchers across the country—submit reports on current TV programs. These reports are analyzed, evaluated and acted upon at bimonthly meetings. Many people who write us say, "I haven't known where to complain before. Thank God that someone is doing something about this atrocious situation."

Many of the young people I speak to have had little or no contact with old people and the media may be their only source of information about old people. Unfortunately, media images of the old are overwhelmingly negative, comical and/or idiotic. Our committee found the Carol Burnett Show to be the most consistently offensive in this regard. She, along with her co-stars, Tim Conway and Harvey Korman, repeatedly ridicule the infirmities that some old people do suffer—and portray old people as being stupid, drooling idiots. In addition to warping young people's perceptions of old people, Burnett-and-Company's antics are cruel to the many older people who depend on television, not only for entertainment, but for companionship as well. They must also strike terror in the hearts of people who are middle-aged at the



thought of getting old. (By the way, Tim Conway is a very funny man and doesn't have to resort to this offensive comedy to get laughs.) We can only believe that Burnett is unaware of the pain she is inflicting on old people and the harm she is causing to people's perceptions in general. Johnny Carson is another offender, with his double-entendre jokes about sex and old people, his obsession with old people and prunes and his Aunt Blabby character (insulting to old women). His observation on one of his programs that aging was noted on his trumpet player, not by the balding of the head, but by the graying of the lips, is one example of his constant ageism. Comedians frequently play on the theme that sex for older people is dirty, ridiculous or uncommon, thus perpetuating another myth which has made it nearly impossible for old people to be treated with respect and dignity in regard to their sexuality. A third offender is Dick Van Dyke, who makes old age an object of ridicule by portraying an old man in absurd situations and attire.

We have been getting complaints about children's TV shows and are beginning to examine them more closely. Examples of the programs criticized by our watchers are the Mr. Magoo cartoons (in which an elderly blind man is the object of ridicule) and a great many of the Walt Disney programs (criticized for their ageism as well as their racism and sexism). We welcome further comments and critiques from *Bulletin* readers.

Not only negative stereotyping but omission has been harmful to old people. Images of them making meaningful contributions to the community or to society at large are rare on the

MEDIA WATCH CRITERIA

STEREOTYPES: Any oversimplification or generalization of the characteristics and images of old age that demean or ridicule older people. Examples:

Appearance: face always blank or expressionless; body always bent over and infirm.

Clothes: men's baggy and unpressed; women's frumpy and ill-fitting.

Speech: halting and high-pitched.

Personality: stubborn, rigid, forgetful.

In comparison to others, are older people depicted as less capable? Do they have less to contribute? Are their ideas usually old-fashioned? Is the "rocking chair" image predominant?

DISTORTIONS: The use of myth or outright falsehoods to depict old age as either an idyllic or moribund stage of life. Examples:

1. Are older people depicted as intruders or meddlers in the relationships of others?

2. Are older people ridiculed when they show sexual feelings?

3. When there is an age difference in romantic relationships, are older women accorded the same respect as older men?

4. Are old people patronized and treated as children?

OMISSIONS: The exclusion or avoidance of older people, of their life concerns and of the positive aspects of aging. Examples:

1. Are the oppressive conditions under which older people must live in society analyzed? Are alternatives to the existing conditions presented?

2. In any discussion of social and economic issues, are the perspectives of older people included?

3. Are older people directly involved in writing, directing and producing the program?

4. How about the acting? Are there valid reasons for young actors to play the roles of older people?

media. (Old people are usually shown as victims of violence or else other means are used to get them out of the way and off the TV screen as quickly as possible.) Moreover, TV does not represent, either positively or negatively, old people in proportion to their actual numbers in society. There are more than 32 million persons in the U.S. aged 60 or over—15 per cent of the population. Yet, with a few exceptions, they are the invisible people of videoland.*

Covert Ageism

All of the networks are guilty of negative stereotyping and of a lack of positive images of old people. While some networks have made an effort to change their shows to present more realistic images, only one TV program we have monitored presents a fairly positive image of an old person—*Doc*, a CBS sit-com. Even programs that seem to be attempting a more positive approach are marred by ageism. As with racism and sexism, ageism is often subtle or covert. Mother Dexter, in *Phyllis*, is a feisty old woman played by an old woman—which is good—but even she is subjected to subtle manipulation. On one of the programs, Phyllis takes Mother Dexter to work in hopes of finding something to occupy her time. Mother Dexter is assigned to answering the phone. The phone rings. Mother Dexter answers in a business-like manner. Phyllis looks at her boss as if to say, "She can answer the phone." Mother Dexter abruptly says, "Yes, she's here," and immediately hangs up the phone, making her look like a complete idiot.

In commercials, old people are shown in the role of experts on remedies for aches and pains, insomnia, constipation and all kinds of dental problems. Sometimes, the message is more subtle: a yogurt commercial features people of all ages enjoying yogurt—strawberry, blueberry, etc.—but the old people are eating, what else? Prune yogurt. All of these commercials make old age and illness synonymous. When one thinks of old, one thinks of illness.

*A 1975 study by the University of Minnesota showed that of all prime time roles, only 1.5 percent—or 7 out of 464 roles—were of persons who appeared to be 65 or over. All seven were depicted as feeble, in bad health and dependent on their families. Women were depicted as nosy and silly gossips.

"Where's your sense of humor?" we old people are asked. There is a fine line between what is really funny and something that hurts or demeans. We hope the time will come when society respects and values old people and can laugh *with* them, not at them.

At a workshop the Media Watch held last winter for CBS staff members (writers, editors, program releasers, etc.), it was not easy to make our point of view understood. For example, situations that we found offensive were perceived by the workshop participants as being "poignant." In the last segment of a Carol Burnett special called *Twigs*, Burnett plays an ugly old woman who is constantly bickering with her husband and lying to her daughters. The CBS workshop participants felt she was being independent and "poignant." However, Burnett is shown leaning over an ironing board while her husband injects a hypodermic needle in her rear end! Poignant?

Broadcasters Respond

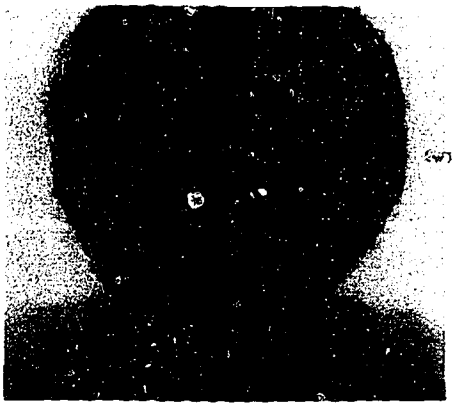
As a result of our complaints to CBS, we were asked to make a presentation to the National Association of Broadcasters Code Board at their annual meeting last year. When we entered the board room, there were 25 network executives—all white men—and 2 women secretaries, both white. No one smiled when I remarked that the make-up of the board reflected the sexism and racism of our society. But gradually as I talked about ageism I could sense that they were relating my remarks to their own lives. These men, all of middle age or over, began to realize that they themselves would be affected by ageism sooner or later and that they had better be concerned. After the presentation, the board unanimously voted to amend the NAB code to include "age" in its sensitivity guidelines which already included race, color, and sex. This is a beginning.

The Gray Panthers welcome members of all ages—and very definitely want young members who, just as old people, are oppressed because of their age. Readers interested in joining our efforts are asked to write me c/o the CIBC.

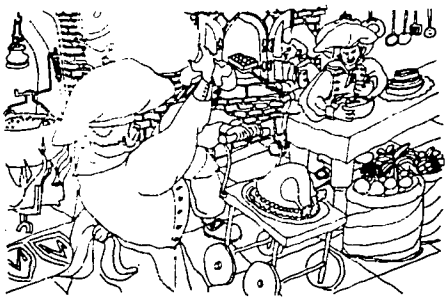
About the Author

LYDIA BRAGGER is national coordinator for the Gray Panthers and a founder of their New York chapter.

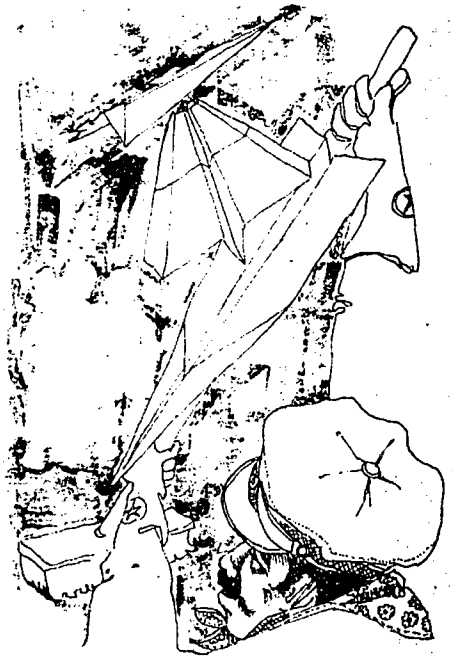
This department brings the work of minority illustrators to the attention of art directors and book and magazine editors. Artists are invited to submit their portfolios for consideration.



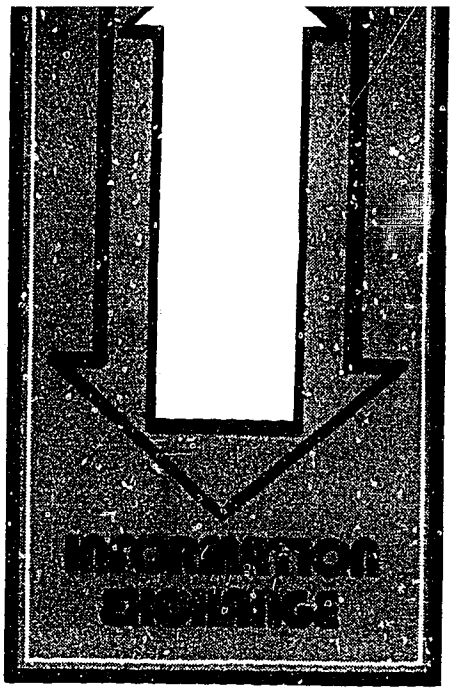
LaVon Leak, a free-lance artist, studies at Pratt. Ms. Leak can be reached at 66 Vanderbilt Ave., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11205; tel. (212) 875-0528.



Yvonne Bandy, who studied at Kent State and Pratt, has exhibited in many shows. Ms. Bandy can be reached at 199 Greene Ave., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11205; tel. (212) 857-7801.



Tomas Vega, who studied at New York University, has taught art and has exhibited in several shows. He has illustrated numerous publications, including *Borinquen . . . and then Columbus, Quimbamba* and *Three Magi* (all published by El Museo del Barrio). Mr. Vega can be reached at 935 42nd St., Apt. 4, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11212; tel. (212) 596-6157 or 438-4731.



"Everybody's Studying Us: **The Ironies of Aging** in the Pepsi-Generation" combines cartoons by Bülbül and text by Irene Paull. The 79-page paperback edition, regularly $3.95 plus postage, is available at a special price of $2 plus 50¢ postage from *Senior News*, 330 Ellis St., San Francisco, Cal. 94102.

"Sex Role Stereotyping in Prime Time Television" is a report by the Women's Division of the Board of Global Ministries. In addition to confirming that most TV shows are sexist, the group also found them **ageist**—people over 60 are the least represented on TV. A reprint of the 32-page booklet is currently being planned; for information write Ellen Kirby, Room 1514, 475 Riverside Dr., New York, N.Y. 10027.

Prime Time, a magazine for "the liberation of **women in the prime of life,**" contains a variety of articles, recommended reading, etc. Subscriptions are $4 for 6 issues, $7 yearly (11 issues). Special rate for those unemployed or on Social Security: $3.50/year. Write *Prime Time*, 420 West 46th St., New York, N.Y. 10036.

"Rights and Responsibility of **Older Persons**" is the policy statement and recommendations adopted by the United Presbyterian Church. It also includes a bill of rights for patients and "a living will." For copies of the pamphlet, write the Unit on Church and Society, The Program Agency, United Presbyterian Church, 475 Riverside Dr., New York, N.Y. 10027.

"Growing Old . . . a guide for understanding and help" includes information to counter common myths about aging, counter-measures that can be taken against some of the dilemmas faced by older persons, resource suggestions, etc. This 16-page pamphlet is $.25 from the American Occupational Therapy Foundation, 6000 Executive Blvd., Rockville, Md. 20852.

Age Is Becoming, an annotated bibliography on **women and aging,** lists a wide range of material covering role changes, finances, sexuality, etc. A project of NOW's Task Force on Older Women, the 36-page bibliography is available for $2.50 from Glide Publications, 330 Ellis St., San Francisco, Cal. 94102.

"Over Easy," a TV program for **older persons** with a magazine format featuring information, interviews, etc., is currently being aired on various PBS stations. Pilot programs are being shown, and if they are successful, "Over Easy" may become a PBS series. Check local listings for further information or write producer Gwen Donchin, KQED-TV, 1011 Bryant, San Francisco, Cal. 94103.

Feminist prints, books, cards and posters—including one of Sojourner Truth with the text of ". . . and ain't I a woman?"—can be ordered from Greyfalcon House, Inc., 60 Riverside Drive, New York, N.Y. 10024.

The People's Press publishes and distributes books (both children and adult), posters, records, etc., having to do with the struggles of **Third World** peoples and with the world-wide **women's movement**. A catalog is available from the Press, 2680 21st St., San Francisco, Cal. 94110.

The **Feminist Press** has just released its 1977 catalog. In addition to children's books, the Press publishes educational materials, non-fiction, etc. Copies of the catalog can be obtained from the Press, Box 334, Old Westbury, N.Y. 11568.

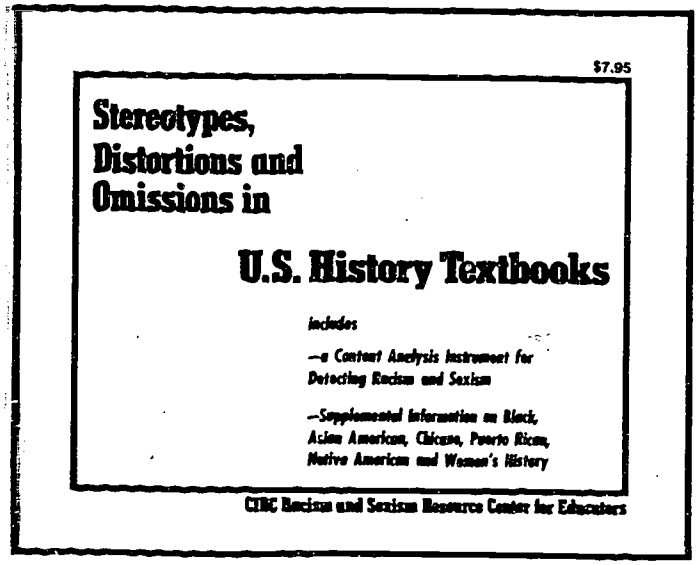
El Fuego de Aztlan, a new bilingual **Chicano** literary and art quarterly, prints poems, stories, photos and artwork; it also features articles on how to get published in its efforts to encourage the publication of Chicano literature. The magazine is currently holding a competition for cover art from aspiring Chicano/Latino artists. For further information or subscriptions ($3.50 individual; $8 institutional), write the magazine at 3408 Dwinelle Hall, Univ. of California, Berkeley, Cal. 94720.

"Women Writing Newsletter" is a bimonthly forum of practical information *from* women writers *to* women writers. Subscriptions are $3 for individuals, $5 for institutions from Women Writing, RD 3, Newfield, N.Y. 14867.

Various collections of the **Women's History** Library (now dispersed) have been published on microfilm by the Women's History Research Center of Berkeley, Cal. Among the material available are Women and Health/Mental Health (14 reels; $32/reel), Women and Law (40 reels; $32/reel) and Herstory (women's periodicals; 90 reels; $28/reel). For additional information, contact distributor Barbara Baisley, Northeast Micrographics, 27 Palmerwoods Circle, Branford, Conn. 06405.

New from the CIBC Racism and Sexism Resource Center

Stereotypes, Distortions and Omissions in U.S. History Textbooks



This manual has been five years in the making.

It was initiated by the U.S. Civil Rights Commission in an attempt to devise a numerical method for rating history books. That project was never completed. The Council on Interracial Books for Children then began to develop criteria and a syllabus to evaluate textbooks for racism and sexism. Four experimental courses to develop and test criteria were conducted at three major universities. Thirty-two feminist and ethnic scholars, historians and teachers worked on the project, retaining some of the concepts developed by the Civil Rights Commission.

This volume combines startling information and provocative chapters with detailed charts against which you can readily check your own textbooks. Similarities and differences in the historical experiences and treatment of each minority group and of women are compared. The manual clarifies the subtle ways in which new texts perpetuate stereotypes and distortions.

The charts quote passages demonstrating the most common faults in the new U.S. history books, and then provide the information which would appear if the texts were not sexist or racist. Reference sources document each item, and these comprise an extensive and extremely valuable bibliography.

Use this content analysis instrument to evaluate new textbooks before deciding which to purchase, or analyze your own textbooks for racism and sexism before starting to teach another term. Use the manual with your students to initiate classroom discussions of common historical myths. Or simply read it to increase your own awareness of textbook bias and your own knowledge of the history of all the peoples in the United States.

Useful for Social Studies, Teacher Training, Feminist Studies, Ethnic Studies, Human Relations, Textbook Editors, and everyone interested in a fuller understanding of our nation's history.

Available mid-November. $7.95.

To order, send check or purchase order for **$7.95** to:
The CIBC Racism and Sexism Resource Center for Educators
1841 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023

A BRIEF LOOK AT THE COUNCIL ON INTERRACIAL BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

The Council on Interracial Books for Children, a non-profit organization founded in 1966, is dedicated to promoting anti-racist and anti-sexist literature and instructional materials for children in the following ways: 1) by publishing this *Bulletin;* 2) by running a yearly contest for unpublished minority writers of children's literature; 3) by conducting clinics and workshops on racism and sexism; 4) by providing consultants and resource specialists in awareness training to educational institutions; and 5) by establishing the Racism and Sexism Resource Center for Educators, which publishes annual reference books, monographs, lesson plans and audio-visual materials designed to help teachers eliminate racism and sexism and to develop pluralism in education.

Council on Interracial Books for Children, Inc.
1841 Broadway
New York, N.Y. 10023

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