

# BOOK NOTES

Center for Children's & Young Adult Books

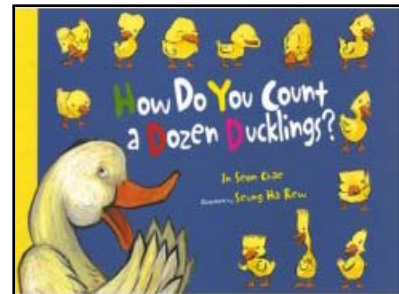
Minnesota State University, Mankato

March 2007

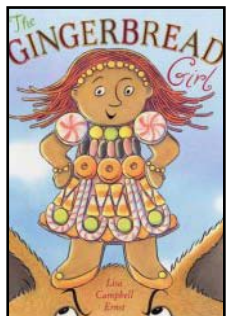
It seems as though 2007 has barely begun, and already some elementary and secondary schools have completed "spring break." Despite chilly weather and snowy forecasts, the CCYAB has lots of color and warmth thanks to the constant arrival of new titles, some of which are reviewed below.

## Books for Preschool and Primary Grades

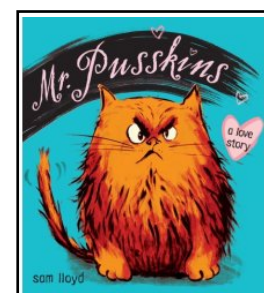
Most picture books that feature ducklings as characters portray them as cute, yellow, and fluffy. Seung Ha Rew's water birds in *How Do You Count a Dozen Ducklings?* by In Seon Chae, look feisty, not cuddly (Albert Whitman). In fact, their beleaguered mother has to figure out ways to organize them and keep them under control, which leads to impromptu math lessons in which young humans can participate. First, Mama has them walk to the water in pairs to cut her counting in half. Then she tries to reduce the counting task further by dividing them into groups of four, then three, then six. When a not-too-bright wolf hears her count to two, he decides that a pair of ducklings would make a tasty lunch. Imagine his surprise when he encounters 12 cantankerous ducklings that drive him away. Each duckling has a distinctively shaped head, and some have "feather cuts" that make them look like Marine recruits. These are ducks with attitude!—KP



One year after the unfortunate demise of the Gingerbread Boy, the little old man and woman decide to try a new cookie creation: *The Gingerbread Girl* (Penguin). Lisa Campbell Ernst creates an elaborate, sugary lass complete with candy designs on her dress and "an amazing hairdo made of licorice whips." Like her older brother, the Gingerbread Girl starts running as soon as she leaves the oven and taunts those who try to catch her as she races past them. When she reaches the river and accepts a ride from the fox, her doom appears certain. However, those licorice whips come in handy for tying the fox's mouth shut. Then she proceeds to ride the creature "like a bucking bronco," leading the entire crowd back to the house of the old woman and old man, whose lonely days have ended. Even those unfamiliar with the story of the Gingerbread Boy can enjoy this humorous version, but knowledge of the older tale increases the anticipation of the encounter with the fox.—KP

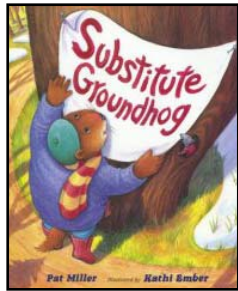


The cover of *Mr. Pusskins* (Atheneum) by Sam Lloyd describes the book as "a love story." Mr. Pusskins is a grouchy cat who does not appreciate the good life his owner, Emily, lets him lead. So one night he sneaks away but comes to regret his decision when he realizes that life



without Emily is not much fun. One of the major strengths of this book is Lloyd’s illustration of Mr. Pusskins. The reader can identify the cat’s change of heart merely by looking at the pictures. At the beginning, Mr. Pusskins is delightfully angry. He appears forlorn and downtrodden when he misses Emily. At the end, he smiles and grins. Lloyd’s text will engage and entertain adult readers as well as children although the book might appeal particularly to children in kindergarten through second grade.—NS

If you believe in Groundhog predictions on February 2<sup>nd</sup>, you’ll definitely conclude that the furry rodent must have seen its shadow this year. Minnesota has had below-zero temperatures since the month began, and upstate New York . . . That much snow would scare anyone back into hibernation! Two recent children’s books take very different approaches to the holiday but would complement each other for a preschool or primary grade story time. Pat



Miller offers a whimsical view of the holiday in *Substitute Groundhog* (Albert Whitman). On February 1<sup>st</sup>, Groundhog wakes up with the flu. Dr. Owl insists that he stay in bed, but he knows everyone counts on him to emerge from his hole to see if he can spot his shadow. Desperate to find a substitute, he interviews a variety of animals. Unfortunately, they all lack at least one of the attributes necessary for the job. Mole is too nearsighted to spot a shadow. Eagle’s wings are too wide to fit in the hole. Finally, a visitor from Texas solves the problem. Not only does Armadillo perform

Groundhog’s task without a hitch, but he also invites his new friend to recuperate in the sunny south, where spring has already arrived. Kathi Ember’s illustrations will amuse viewers because she uses clothing and accessories to reinforce the animals’ essential traits. For example, Mole wears a miner’s hat for his tunnel work while sleepy Bear arrives with bathrobe and slippers. Armadillo sports cowboy boots and hat. —KP

In contrast to Miller’s cozy, anthropomorphic view of the holiday, Gail Gibbons provides a straightforward, factual presentation of the origins and celebration of *Groundhog Day!*

(Holiday House). She notes that many ancient cultures included rituals or festivals related to spring and that people have long studied hibernating animals to try to predict when winter might end. In the United States, the observation of one particular animal, Punxsutawney Phil, has gained national attention in the century since the Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, newspaper declared February 2 Groundhog Day. In addition to information about the holiday, Gibbons offers facts about the groundhog’s life cycle.



She provides one map of where groundhogs live in North America and another that pinpoints the locations of Phil “rivals,” including Sir Walter Wally in Raleigh, North Carolina, and Chuck Wood in Los Angeles. Gibbons’ multi-panel format will be familiar to those who know her nonfiction works.—KP

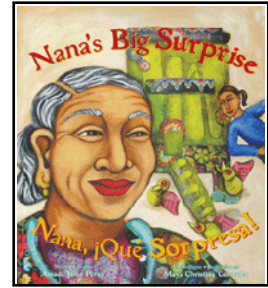
Conflict is at the center of the picture book *17 Things I’m not Allowed to Do Anymore* by Jenny Offill and illustrated by Nancy Carpenter (Random House).



The narrator lists all of the things she is not allowed to do ranging from using the stapler (because she stapled her brother’s hair to his pillow) to showing Joey Whipple her underpants! Carpenter’s digitally layered pen-and-ink drawings give the illustrations texture and a whimsical feel. The carpet looks like real carpet, and mashed potatoes are photographic, but the children look like softer versions

of photographs, creating a magically realistic feel. In the end, the narrator learns there is one thing she can do: apologize. A great reminder for all of us. —TS

Amada Irma Perez reveals how a family in California undertakes a special project to help their grandmother, Nana, deal with her grief after the death of her husband. Before she comes from Mexicali, Mexico, they build a chicken coop in their backyard. Because Nana has raised chickens since she was a small girl, they hope that having something familiar in her new surroundings will reduce her sadness. Despite the family's efforts to cheer her, Nana misses her husband and her town. Although the children do their best to care for them, the growing chicks fail to produce eggs. One morning the mystery is solved when the yard erupts with a cock-a-doodle-doo chorus. All the chicks are roosters! Nana's sadness had prevented her from noticing the family's mistake, and as novices, they hadn't realized the error either.

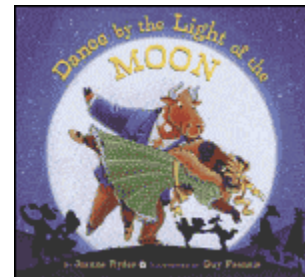


Laughter and love help Nana decide she needs to return to Mexico. *Nana's Big Surprise/ Nana, Que Sorpresa!* includes English and Spanish texts (Children's Book Press). Maya Christina Gonzalez's illustrations infuse the humans with strength and dignity but add whimsical touches to their surroundings. Colorful, patterned clothing and borders add to the visual energy.—KP

Although Haley starts the new school year eager to leave her kindergarten days behind, she quickly decides that *First Grade Stinks!* by Mary Ann Rodman (Peachtree). Not only does the first grade room lack decorations, but also the teacher, Ms. Gray wears dull-colored clothes and expects the students to get to work immediately. Once Haley discovers that first graders get only one recess and don't even get to hear an entire book during story time, she's definitely ready to go back to her old room. After Haley yells in frustration, Ms. Gray takes time to explain some benefits of first grade, most important of which is that soon Haley will begin to read for herself. This first-person account of a very important day is illustrated by Beth Spiegel. Her watercolor-and-ink illustrations capture the various emotions of the first graders as they adjust to new circumstances. Although first graders often listen to chapter books, as Ms. Gray explains, they would definitely enjoy hearing from Haley at the start of their own year of transition.—KP



Joanne Ryder offers a barnyard interpretation of the chorus of "Buffalo Gals," first published in 1844, in her picture book, *Dance by the Light of the Moon* (Hyperion). Her story begins when a real buffalo named Flo receives an invitation to an outdoor dance. After donning a fancy dress and dancing shoes, she sets off with Gertie May Goose to pick up their friends for the evening's festivities. Cassie Sue Cat and Patty Ann Pig accompany them, but when the lovely ladies arrive at the farm, no dancing partners await them. Eventually their well-dressed male counterparts make the scene so the dancing can commence. Farmer Snow, who had organized the event to thank his animals, plays the banjo as part of a hoedown band. While Ryder's premise and rhymes are clever, the story really comes to life through Guy Francis' illustrations. Somehow he manages to make animals in fancy evening wear simultaneously elegant and humorous. Their complicated dance moves add to the fun. The end pages contain the music and words to the chorus of the song for those who want to try singing as well as reading.—KP



In the picture book, *Ella, of Course!* by Sarah Weeks with illustrations by Doug Cushman, Ella the pig is a problem solver (Harcourt). Ella recovers her brother's frog from the neighbor's swimming pool with a spaghetti strainer and a curtain rod. But Ella's clever

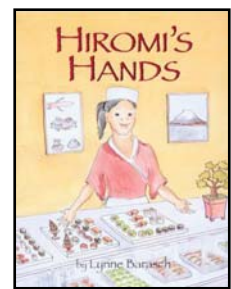


endeavors end when she receives a sky blue umbrella “with puffy clouds that floated across it like fat sheep.” One “whoosh” and a “click” later Ella has opened not only the umbrella, but also a catastrophe. At this point Cushman's colorfully comic illustrations take over. Ella knocks over everything and everybody in sight—the lamp, the cake, her friends. Here and throughout the book, Cushman litters the pages with funny details such as the crazy aunt in turquoise eyeglasses, Ella's little brother sneaking frosting off the cake, or a black-and-white pig portrait flying through the air. But in the end, Weeks reminds us that the pig “hadn't forgotten who she was, for heaven's sake; Ella was a problem solver.” And her problem-solving finale is worth the read! –TS

### Books for Elementary and Middle School Readers

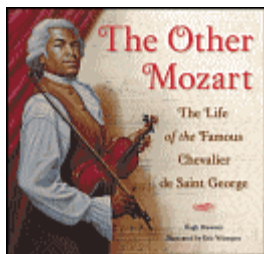
Lynne Barasch's picture book biography of Hiromi Suzuki documents the determination and years of training that led to her breakthrough achievement of working as a sushi chef.

*Hiromi's Hands* begins with her father's apprenticeship in a Tokyo restaurant in the 1950s, when creating sushi was strictly a male occupation (Lee & Low). After 10 years, he emigrated to New York to work in a restaurant. As his daughter, Hiromi, grew up in the 1980s, she respected Japanese traditions but wanted to learn her father's craft. On trips to the fish market and visits to the restaurant, she grew more determined to learn the complicated art. After her father agreed to an apprenticeship, she spent years learning to make the varieties of sushi and eventually realized her dream of becoming a sushi chef.



For those who are unfamiliar with sushi, Barasch's two pages of illustrations portray several of the basic types. An author's note plus a photo of Suzuki provides an update of her current work plus a brief introduction to the history of sushi. Elementary school readers who want to know more about food-related careers will enjoy this account of one woman's success.—KP

Everybody who knows anything about music has heard of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, but what about the *other* Mozart? Hugh Brewster introduces readers to the true story of *The Other Mozart: The Life of the Famous Chevalier de Saint-George* (Abrams). Born of a white nobleman



and a black slave in Guadeloupe in the West Indies, Saint-George and his mother were brought to France, where Saint-George was raised as an aristocrat. His father's wealth and court position ensured the young man a life of privilege. Young Saint-George excelled at everything he tried. He became a fencing master, a composer, a violinist, a champion ice skater, and the first black colonel in the French Army. He played music with Marie Antoinette and in the largest orchestra in Paris. By special invitation of King Louis XVI, Saint-George performed one of his plays at the king's

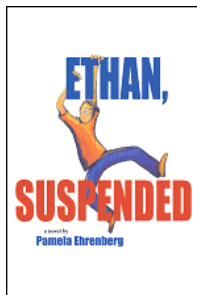
private retreat. Unfortunately, the Reign of Terror brought about the demise of the royal couple, and Saint-George spent a year in jail wondering if his fate would match theirs. He was released after the death of Robespierre. Although Saint-George excelled at whatever he attempted, he never married because of the stigma of his race. He died in 1799. However, his music has been

resurrected, and an opera about his life was performed in France as recently as 2005. Eric Velazquez’s illustrations set the scene of the times in which Saint-George lived and present the famous people who came and went during his lifetime.—MF

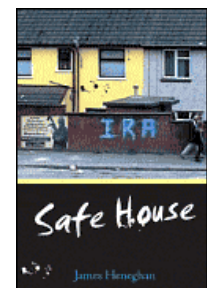
*Dude! Stories and Stuff for Boys* presents 18 stories, poems, and plays for middle-school boys on their journeys to becoming “big” (Dutton). Edited by Sandy Asher and David L. Harrison, the selections in *Dude!* are sure to captivate boys struggling to grow up, find their identities, and look back to see how far they’ve come. A Caddo Indian story tells of an orphan raised by an old widow from the tribe. Since the widow and boy were poor, he was badly teased. When the old woman died, the Indians plotted to maroon the orphan boy on an island to appease the great Water Panther who stole the lives of the people. However, the orphan’s life changed drastically when he accepted a ride back to the village from the great Water Panther. Barry Kornhauser shares the story of his parents’ wanting him to take music lessons. When he announces he wants to play the accordion, his parents are aghast. When the accordion arrives, the boy cannot lift the prize. No matter what the family tries, the boy cannot play his instrument. Finally, his mother ties him to a chair with dishtowels. He soon finds himself tied each day to his chair in the backyard with just his accordion and his imagination. The stories, poems, and plays are sure to make readers laugh, smile, and say, “I know just how that feels.” Both boys and girls will find the book a revelation about what *being* a boy is all about!—MF



After Ethan Oppenheimer is suspended from his wealthy suburban school near Philadelphia, he is sent to stay with his grandparents in Washington, D.C. In Parker Junior High, he is the only white student, which puts him in many awkward situations as he tries to navigate among the rival factions of Hispanics and African-Americans. Complicating the situation is the fact that his frugal grandparents don’t want to spend money on anything and hesitate to bend their routines to accommodate his activities. As weeks pass, he begins to realize that his parents may have had several reasons for sending him to D.C. as they begin a trial separation. Readers discover the reasons for Ethan’s suspension and for his grandparents’ insistence on staying in their changing neighborhood. Eventually Ethan establishes some tentative friendships, learns to play the oboe for jazz band, and gains insights about his family situation. *Ethan, Suspended* by Pamela Ehrenberg doesn’t provide simple answers but will intrigue junior high readers with the questions she raises about friendship, family, and loyalty (Eerdmans).—KP



James Heneghan provides readers with a thriller through the unrest of Northern Ireland in his new book *Safe House* (Orca). Liam Fogarty is a 12-year-old boy whose parents are murdered in the novel’s first few pages. He spends the rest of the book on the run, not sure whom to trust. The police place him in a safe house that turns out to not be as safe as promised, and Liam is left to his own devices to survive on the streets of Belfast. Through flashbacks, Heneghan fills in details about Liam’s mother and father, and these memories serve to keep Liam alive. The narrative is quick and engaging and also provides a good introduction to the problems in Ireland. An appendix offers a few selected dates from the history of the conflict in Ireland that are good jumping off points for further reading or discussion. Students in grades five through nine would find this an engaging read.—MM



Marie Peary captivated the Inuit people and the entire world when she was born in the arctic in 1893. Katherine Kirkpatrick captures those magic days in *The Snow Baby: The Arctic Childhood of Admiral Robert E. Peary's Daring Daughter* (Holiday House). The Inuits, who called her the Snow Baby because of her blue eyes and blond hair, “wondered if the fair-skinned child was fully human or created from snow.” Marie made friends with the Inuit children as well as dog-sled puppies, bunnies, and a musk ox. Her pranks captivated the sailors who cheered her for “keeping the ship lively.” Living between two worlds—Washington, DC and Greenland—Marie formed life-long attachments with the people from both continents. The hardest part of growing up, though, were the long absences Marie endured from her father. She had him home for good in 1909 when she turned sixteen, for that was the year he finally reached the North Pole...a 23-year odyssey. Kirkpatrick tells the rich story of Marie’s friendships and the harrowing experiences of living in a land where the ice beneath one’s feet can suddenly give way. Photographs serve to orient readers, who can watch the *snow baby* grow before their eyes and share in her escapades.—MF



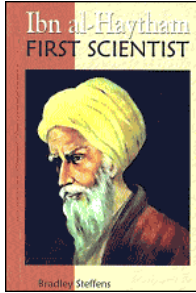
Charlotte, the main character of Janette Rallison’s *It’s a Mall World After All*, has an after-school job at a department store where she sees her best friend’s boyfriend, Bryant, flirting with another girl. Charlotte must convince Brianna that Bryant is unfaithful, and in the process, she ends up falling for Bryant’s best friend Colton, who is nothing like Bryant (Walker). Charlotte is a comic character because of her awkwardness in social situations but is still endearing because of her good intentions, intelligence, and compassion, particularly to two underprivileged children. She is also a complex character struggling to understand and experience the dynamics of male/female high school relationships. Rallison captures the fun, drama, and excitement of being a teenaged girl in America. This book would be most interesting to girls in middle school.—NS



The chapter book *Aggie and Ben: Three Stories* by Lori Ries and illustrated by Frank W. Dormer explores the endearing connections between a boy and his dog (Charlesbridge). Ben and Aggie want to be a part of each other’s world, but sometimes they can’t. In the first story, Ben’s daddy takes him to the pet store, where Ben looks for a new pet. Ben thinks about various possibilities. “A bird could never play outside. It would fly away.” “A snake might make Mommy scream.” He finally decides to get a dog that he names Aggie. In the second story, Ben and his daddy take Aggie home, where Ben imitates the new dog by sniffing the floor and following his pet around the house until Aggie sees the toilet. This is when Ben is “done being a dog.” In the third story, Ben and Aggie go to bed, but there are scary things in the dark. In the end, the boy and his dog are comforted by each other. Dormer’s illustrations, which are framed in boxes like comics, highlight the friendship between Ben and Agee, showing ordinary, but sweet moments such as the boy and dog smiling, playing, and sitting on the bed looking out the window. –TS



*Ibn al-Haytham: First Scientist*, written by Bradley Steffens, follows the intellectual journey of a devout Muslim who lived circa 950-1040 AD (Morgan Reynolds). After years of study trying to determine the differences in Muslim beliefs, al-Haytham decided that religious differences seemed to be based on the sociology of the followers. Consequently, al-Haytham



devoted his life to physical sciences, mathematics, and theology, “sensible things, and whose form is rational.” He was influenced by the Greeks, especially Aristotle, Ptolemy, Euclid, and Archimedes. Unfortunately, al-Haytham’s studies were interrupted by his appointment to government service. Mental illness released him from his duties, so he returned to his studies. Soon he was summoned by the leader of Egypt, the Mad Caliph, to consult on plans for controlling the flooding of the Nile. Al-Haytham chose Aswan as the ideal location for a dam, but logistics were too extreme to overcome in those days.

Although al-Haytham could not build the dam, the Mad Caliph gave him a government position but kept him under house arrest in Cairo for 10 years. When he was able to return home after the Mad Caliph disappeared, al-Haytham wrote *The Book of Optics* and *On the Configuration of the World*. Although he admired Aristotle, who based his studies on logic and reason, al-Haytham based his “scientific method on observation, hypothesis, and testing,” a revolutionary approach that changed the face of science. The illustrations, timelines, and photographs add richness and interest to Ibn al-Haytham’s biography. This book will interest junior high and high school students, whether they enjoy science and mathematics or not.—MF

Minnesota author Jane Resh Thomas often uses outdoor settings for her novels, as she does in her latest, *Blind Mountain* (Houghton Mifflin). This adventure/survival story for middle-grade readers establishes a scenario that includes plenty of tense moments, when wrong decisions could lead to injury or death. Twelve-year-old Sam Flynn reluctantly accompanies his father and their dog, Mac, on a day of climbing off the established trail in the Montana Rockies. His high-achieving surgeon father continually belittles Sam for his lack of confidence, considers Sam a “sissy” for wanting to play in a band, and never offers a word of praise. Sam resents his father’s demands. However, after Sam accidentally releases a pine branch that whips into his father’s eyes, Dr. Flynn is temporarily blinded. Now it is up to Sam to lead them down the unfamiliar mountain. With limited food and supplies, they must make camp for the night. Sam soon realizes that in addition to dangers from the elements, a cougar is stalking them. He and his father must cooperate to survive. What is admirable about Thomas’ characterization is that while father and son manage to bend a little and appreciate one another’s qualities, there is no magic bonding that occurs. By the time they reach a logging road where a truck stops to take them home, they have acquired grudging mutual admiration, but whether the change is permanent or temporary remains unresolved.—KP



## Books for Young Adults

Esther Friesner’s *Temping Fate* shares the adventures of 16-year-old Ilana Newhouse, who is looking for summer employment (Dutton). Unfortunately, Ilana does not interview well because of her attitude, so most people are loath to hire her. However, when she discovers the Divine Relief Temp Agency, she finds that her attitude lands her a job that may be her own undoing. Although the pay is great, Ilana struggles to avoid the possibility of being turned into a giraffe or worse. She discovers she is working for Greek goddesses and the Fates, who all act like spoiled children. Each day she decides to quit, and each day she is coerced into working just a little longer. While temping for the Fates, Ilana wonders if she is temping fate...her own? Will the power she inadvertently



wields be her undoing? This delightful story with an imaginative twist is hard to put down...a must-read for all teens.—MF

As with her other books, Beth Goobie either has done considerable research or is drawing from personal experience with *Hello Groin* (Orca). The writing is seamless, the characters well-rounded, and the dialogue seems sincere and true. The novel follows Dylan Kowolski through her sophomore year in high school as she struggles to find her identity and, as the title of the novel implies, to understand her sexuality. Conflicted with trying to fit in and trying to be herself at the same time, Dylan's struggles are those of most high school students. Though her relationship with her boyfriend Cam (the most popular boy in school) ends, both Dylan and Cam learn a lot from the relationship and share mutual admiration and respect for one another. As Dylan struggles to hide her homosexuality, she also becomes a crusader for freedom of speech thanks to a supportive family and to a librarian who asks for her help with creating a display case. The story ends happily with Dylan and her best friend Joc openly in a gay relationship and with both families supporting them with love and care. The school also seems to support their relationship, though more tentatively than their parents. —MM



Based on the real life experience of Maurice Garbarz, someone author Jean-Jacques Greif met while camping, *The Fighter* (Bloomsbury) tells the story of a Jewish boxer growing up after World War I. The story begins just after the war, when three-year-old Moshe lives in Praga, a suburb of Warsaw, Poland. Though his family lives poorly, Moshe is able to attend school longer than his other siblings and also learns to fight to defend himself against the Polish boys who wait for him after school. His fighting skills lead him to be interested in boxing, which serves him well throughout the rest of the novel. Attempting to disguise his Jewish heritage, Moshe takes on the name Maurice instead. Unfortunately this plan does not protect him from being separated from his wife and one-year-old child. The rest of the novel follows Maurice's tribulations as he is transferred from one German work camp to another as World War II begins, intensifies, and ends. After five years of imprisonment, he is reunited with his family and attempts to readjust to society. This first personal narrative is gripping and will make a good read for high school students. The author's note at the end explains how Greif came by the story and states that the only fictional parts are the dialogue.—MM



Julius Lester creates a retelling of Cupid and Psyche's love story as the basis of his young adult novel, *Cupid* (Harcourt). Venus, jealous of Psyche's beauty, sends her son Cupid for retribution. His task is to use one of his love arrows to make Psyche fall in love with an ugly man. Unexpectedly, though, Cupid falls in love with Psyche. Since he has never been in love himself, this is new territory for him. Julius Lester synthesizes Greek and Roman mythology, later Cupid stories, and his own personal experiences with love to tell the story. Lester writes, "I will tell you two things no woman can resist. Number two is cook dinner for her. . . . But number one works better than that. If a woman knows you listen to her and take seriously what she says, she will give you her heart, body, and soul." Lester's commentary does not interfere with the plot but rather complements it. Though the setting is an ancient time when gods and goddesses ruled, the lessons which Cupid and Psyche learn about love, desire, and self-sacrifice



are appropriate for contemporary young people just beginning to learn about love and adults who have already experienced the complications of that emotion.—NS

Patricia McCormick traveled to India and Nepal to prepare for her latest novel, *Sold*



(Hyperion). While in those countries, she interviewed women from Calcutta's red-light district and some of the rescued girls from the sex trade. *Sold* confronts the degradation those women face. Often, parents who have no money for food sell their daughters, many as young as 12, to families who need servants. Unfortunately, the young girls find themselves in brothels hundreds of miles from home. With little chance of escape and nowhere to go should they manage to get away, the girls spend years enduring abuse and horrors that leave some of them little more than zombies. McCormick follows 13-year-old

Lakshmi from her idyllic though poor home in Nepal to the brothels of Calcutta.

Through Lakshmi's experiences, McCormick pieces together the tragedies that befall girls like her. Unfortunately, the girls' families do not want them back, for in spite of being duped, the parents feel great shame at what their daughters have become. McCormick's book gives a timely look at the indignities and wretchedness that occurs all too often in the sexual exploitation of young girls.—MF

**Book reviews written by:**

KP—Kathy Piehl, CCYAB Director

MF—Marge Freking, Adjunct Instructor, Colleges of Arts and Humanities and Business

MM – Michael MacBride, English Department Teaching Assistant

NS – Natalie Stowe, English Department Teaching Assistant

TS —Trisha Shaskan, English Department Teaching Assistant and Children’s Book Author

**Books Reviewed in this issue:**

Barasch, Lynne. *Hiromi’s Hands*. Lee & Low, 2007. ISBN 978-1-58430-275-9. \$17.95

Brewster, Hugh. *The Other Mozart: The Life of the Famous Chevalier de Saint-George*. Illus. by Eric Velasquez. Abrams. ISBN 0810957205. \$18.95

Chae, In Seon. *How Do You Count a Dozen Ducklings?* Illus. by Seung Ha Rew. Albert Whitman, 2006. ISBN 0-8075-1718-6. \$16.95

*Dude! Stories and Stuff for Boys*. Ed. by Sandy Asher and David Harrison. Dutton, 2006. ISBN 0525476849. \$17.99

Ehrenberg, Pamela. *Ethan, Suspended*. Eerdmans, 2007. ISBN 0-8028-5324-2. \$16.00

Ernst, Lisa Campbell. *The Gingerbread Girl*. Penguin, 2006. ISBN 0-525-4667-9. \$16.99

Friesner, Esther. *Tempting Fate*. Puffin, 2007. ISBN 0142408484. \$6.99

Gibbons, Gail. *Groundhog Day!* Holiday House, 2007. ISBN 0-8234-2003-5. \$16.95

Goobie, Beth. *Hello, Groin*. Orca, 2006. ISBN 1-55143-459-8 \$17.95

Greif, Jean-Jacques. *The Fighter*. Bloomsbury, 2006. ISBN 1-58234-891-X \$16.95

Heneghan, James. *Safe House*. Orca, 2006. ISBN 1-55143-640-X. \$7.95

Kirkpatrick, Katherine. *The Snow Baby: The Arctic Childhood of Robert E. Peary’s Daring Daughter*. Holiday House, 2006. ISBN 978-0-8234-1973-9. \$16.95

Lester, Julius. *Cupid*. Harcourt, 2007. ISBN 0-15-202056-X. \$17.00

Lloyd, Sam. *Mr. Pusskins*. Simon & Schuster, 2006. ISBN 1-4169-2517-0. \$14.95

McCormick, Patrick. *Sold*. Hyperion, 2006. ISBN 0786851716 \$15.99

Miller, Pat. *Substitute Groundhog*. Illus. by Kathi Ember. Albert Whitman, 2006. ISBN 0-8075-7643-3 \$15.95

Offill, Jenny. *17 Things I'm Not Allowed to do Anymore*. Illus. by Nancy Carpenter. Random House, 2007. ISBN 0-375-83596-2. \$15.99

Pérez, Amanda Irma. *Nana's Big Surprise*. Illus. by Maya Christina Gonzalez. Children's Book Publishing, 2007. ISBN 0-89239-190-1. \$16.95

Rallison, Janette. *It's a Mall World After All*. Walker, 2006. ISBN 0-8027-8853-X. \$16.95

Ries, Lori. *Aggie and Ben*. Illus. by Frank Dormer. Charlesbridge, 2006. ISBN 1-57091-594-6. \$12.95

Rodman, Mary Ann. *First Grade Stinks!* Illus. by Beth Spiegel. Peachtree, 2006. ISBN 1-56145-377-3. \$15.95

Ryder, Joanne. *Dance by the Light of the Moon*. Illus. by Guy Francis. Hyperion, 2007. ISBN 078681820-4 \$15.99

Steffens, Bradley. *Ibn al-Haytham: First Scientist*. Morgan Reynolds, 2006. ISBN 1599350246. \$27.95

Thomas, Jane Resh. *Blind Mountain*. Houghton Mifflin, 2006. ISBN 0-618-64872-0. \$15.00

Weeks, Sarah. *Ella, of Course!* Illus. by Doug Cushman. Harcourt, 2007. ISBN 015-204943-6. \$16.00