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CRITICAL EVALUATION OF SELECTED CHILDREN'S BOOKS WITH BLACK CHARACTERS, PUBLISHED 1965-1976

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF ATLANTA UNIVERSITY
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FOR THE DEGREE OF SPECIALIST IN LIBRARY SERVICE

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PURPOSE AND SCOPE</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIGNIFICANCE</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>METHODOLOGY</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. STORIES ABOUT BLACKS BY BLACKS AND NON-BLACK AUTHORS PUBLISHED FROM 1965-1969</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. STORIES ABOUT BLACKS BY BLACKS AND NON-BLACK AUTHORS PUBLISHED FROM 1970-1976</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. AVAILABILITY OF SELECTED TITLES IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN THE ATLANTA PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Prior to current publishing practices, an all-white publishing world dictated what would and would not go into print. Some publishers refused to read a manuscript from a black author or to welcome him for an interview (stereotyped belief that blacks did not excel in the literary arts). However, some publishers were interested in stories about blacks for the entertainment of white children, hence these stories were written by white authors and the stories were designed to ridicule blacks in content and illustration.

Prior to 1965, black authors had little encouragement from publishers to write stories about the black experience. White publishers were not interested in accepting books by black authors because they thought the markets were not open for such books and the viewpoints held by black authors were of no interest to them.¹

As early as the 1930's, three black authors: Langston Hughes, Arna Bontemp, and Countee Cullen published books about black children; however, the majority of black

authors went unpublished. The 1930's also saw some improvement in books with black subjects by the quality and in the number, however, the authors supported by the major companies were still invariably white.2

After the 1954 United States Supreme Court school desegregation ruling, many people in the United States became aware of the "Negro Problem". Research shows that black people have been speaking against the basic injustice of American society for centuries.3 Direct nonviolent action by blacks led to the "black power movement" in which blacks achieved success in desegregation activities. This movement led blacks to believe in themselves and to stress their black heritage and strive for equality on their own. Even in the 1950's some black authors still wrote what they thought would be "acceptable" to white editors. Many wrote stories about school desegregation--problems and acceptance. But usually one individual (black or white) was presented in the story--not a large group of blacks, as in real life.

It was not until the mid 60's that a new attitude among American publishing houses became apparent. The passing of the 1964 Civil Rights Act introduced changes

2Ibid.

and opened up many financial inducements for the publishers. On April 11, 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the one billion dollar Elementary and Secondary Education Act, providing financial aid to schools enrolling large numbers of low-income children and setting aside 100 million dollars for the purchase of textbooks and library materials for such students. The result was that publishers changed their attitudes and were trying hard to create series about blacks and minorities which could qualify for the new funds.  

Literary critics either define the black image as a stereotype or portray black people as enterprising individuals of positive character who live poor, simple or ghetto lifestyles because of circumstances. If the media constantly portrays that black individual as "never doing anything"; the reader may come to believe that idea himself. In writing for black children, the writers are seeking to build up black children's egos, not to destroy the children. Most individuals enjoy reading literature in which the characters have some experiences and problems which are familiar to them. Children are no different from the rest of the reading public in this respect. Children enjoy reading about experiences, problems and the happiness of other individuals with whom they have something in common.

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4Carole Parks, op. cit., pp. 68-69.

5Ibid.
Reading should be an enjoyable experience. One author notes that the librarian plays a unique and an important role in the education of all black children. The selection of new literature should be geared toward building a positive self-image for the black child. Books should develop in the white child a willingness to accept the black child as an important and valued American. Therefore, in assessing the collection in an elementary school library, if there exists an imbalance fostering a negative, unacceptable portrayal of the black child, a strong, conscientious effort needs to be made by the librarian to counterbalance this situation with volumes that depict positive, acceptable, more realistic images. Children should read because they enjoy it and desire to do so. Books may give value and insight into problems of adjustment and acquaint children with new situations and opportunities which otherwise might never have occurred in their lives.

Definite improvements can be seen in children's books containing black characters. A recent survey done in 1976 noted that some changes occurred from 1965 to 1976 with regard to black representation in children's books. The percentage of children's books which depicted black characters in 1965 was 6.7 per cent and the 1976 survey showed an increase to 14.4 per cent, more than double.

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There has also been an increase in the percentage of publishers producing books depicting black characters in the narratives and in the illustrations from 87.3 per cent in 1965 to 94 per cent in 1976. It was also found that by 1976 black characters were placed in more contemporary settings and had more prominent roles. Much still remains to be done with regard to blacks in children's books. One of the best ways to improve the situation is to encourage and recognize talented writers from various minority groups who will take their own experiences and recreate them into the literature they write from these experiences.

There are many recent and encouraging developments in respect to the presentation of black characters in children's books. To conclude, this study will update some of the past studies about the "black images" in children's literature; however, the limitations will lie in the fact that comparison will be in grades four through six and only will consider changes from 1965 to 1976. However, in researching children's books written during this time-frame and in comparing these to earlier efforts, it is evident that some definite changes did occur.

**Purpose and Scope**

The main purpose of this study is to critically

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evaluate a selected number of children's books with black characters for grades four through six, published between 1965 to 1976. This investigator compared the changes reflected in the contents of these works, estimated the appeal of these titles to the audience for which they are intended, and appraised the quality of the narratives, including the utilization of stereotyping socio-economic locales, role portrayals, lifestyles, characterizations and story lines.

The main design of this research is not appraisal of literary excellence, but rather an overview of the panorama of the black experience as authors presented it during the designated time-frame considered in this paper.

A second purpose is to determine how many of the selected titles are included in the collections of ninety-five elementary school media centers in the Atlanta Public School System. The data collected indicate which schools hold the largest number of the titles selected for this study.

**Significance**

It is hoped that this study will contribute to the total research which analyzes the life and characters of black people in books for children. This study attempts to replicate studies made by several other people of the analysis of books containing black characters that were published before 1965. It is hoped that the study will be useful to librarians and teachers who work with children
in the area of reading in grades four through six. It is hoped also that librarians reading this study will realize the need to have in their libraries books that contain positive self-images of black children and present black people as an integral part of American society.

**Methodology**

The general approach used for this study is the critical evaluation of book titles which were selected on the basis of date of publication and the inclusion of black characters. In addition to general interest materials, Newbery Award books about blacks and books about social issues were included. The following bibliographies were consulted for securing titles of books for young people to be considered in this critical evaluation:

- **The Basic Book Collection for Elementary Grades**\(^8\)
- **The Black World in Literature for Children**\(^9\)
- **Book Review Digest**\(^10\)


The titles analyzed are fiction for grades four through six, published between 1965 and 1976 (see Appendix A).

The methods employed for gathering information are:
(1) titles relative to the study were read and critiqued;
(2) questionnaires were sent to all elementary schools in the Atlanta Public School System and the data received were analyzed, charted and graphed; (3) interviews were held with Mrs. Dorothy Blake, Coordinator of Planning for System Media Resources and Utilization, Atlanta Public School System; and (4) an interview was held with Miss Margaret Walker, Coordinator of Adult Education, State Department of Education, formerly a school media consultant in the Georgia State Department of Education.

In the Bulletin of the Council on Interracial Books for Children, "Ten Quick Ways to Analyze Books for Racism and Sexism" are given. One of the ways mentioned is checking the illustrations to look for stereotypes and tokenism. One stereotype is the Sambo-type individual eating watermelon; or a fat, old woman; or a person who carries the identities of the ghetto or migrant laborer. The "typical" lifestyle for blacks is that of primitive, migrant workers living in small houses with big families, without adequate space in which to live. Another way to analyze books is to examine the story lines in terms of relationships of roles played in the story; to examine what it takes for a character to succeed; the viewpoints as to the resolution of the problems arising in the story and how these problems are conceived and presented in the story. Sexism is judged in terms of the achievements based on initiative, intelligence, or looks. These aforementioned items are the ten criteria listed by the Bulletin as an aid in analyzing books in relation to literary content.16

In considering these criteria for analyzing books written for children between the years of 1965 to 1976, it becomes apparent that between the years 1965 and 1969, there were only five black authors who published children's books from the list selected for this study. These books are among the twenty-nine selected for inclusion in this study. Two of the black authors published two books each during this period. Many of the black authors who started writing books before 1965 were trying to create positive images in their books or some type of motivation to make children want to read, but upon completion of their manuscripts, the writers found it hard to convince most publishing houses to publish them. This was true in the case of Lorenz Graham, a black author,

Lorenz Graham wrote South Town in 1948 but did not get the manuscript published until ten years later. In this book South Town, Graham created David Williams and his rural family, who used every means possible to survive segregation and the white man's wrath in the South. In 1965, Graham published the sequel, North Town. The story features the Williams family moving North to a city because of the violence, bigotry and hatred in the South. David and his family are faced with some disappointments and problems and the illness of his father is the biggest catastrophe. However, Graham vividly portrays David Williams and what happens to his family as realistic as

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17 Carol Parks, op. cit., p. 68.
life was at that time one year after the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Four years later, Lorenz Graham published a third novel, *Whose Town?* In this novel, Graham takes the reader with relentless and logical reasoning through every aspect of segregation: rioting, violence, bloodshed, killing, burning, poverty, prejudice, deprivation, and revolt. The strength and power of the book lies in the range of events represented in the story and the range of ideas. David is a representation of what every black man who has struggled through segregation desires to become in America, a man. The weakness of the story lies in the tendency of the message to overshadow the plot.

Another black writer in 1967, Virginia Hamilton, wrote teenage novels and related the present to the African or black American past. In *Zeely*, for example, the young heroine's visions of a Watusi princess provide the line to connect the two locations. Elizabeth Perry, in the story, who calls herself Geeder, arrives with her younger brother for a summer on their uncle's farm. While visiting on the farm, Geeder develops a school-girl crush on Zeely Taber, the daughter of a neighboring farmer. The character, Zeely, is the embodiment of Geeder's dreams. She is a six-and-a-half foot tall lady who resembles a portrait of a Watusi queen Geeder finds in a magazine. Suddenly, Geeder decides Zeely must be a queen too and tells all the children in the village. How Hamilton
brings Geeder back to reality is surprising to Geeder most of all.

Virginia Hamilton, in 1969, wrote The Time-Ago Tales of Jahdu which is set in Harlem. The story begins with Mama Luke telling stories to Lee Edward. Lee Edward picks a place in the air and Mama Luke cups her hands around the place he has pointed out in the air and opens her mouth to swallow it. Then she tells a tale. These tales are of the mischievous and magical black Jahdu. The stories are beautifully narrated, but it is the setting that really gives the book meaning and power and which reminds the reader that being black is delightful. The charcoal illustrations do not convey any significant feelings except one knows the pictures are of blacks. Children in grades four through six relate to the fantasy and appeal of this story, yet gain insight and information about the black culture.

In 1967, Evangeline Morse, a black writer, wrote Brown Rabbit: Her Story, the story of an ten-year-old black girl named Ceretha Jane Brown who, after moving into a new neighborhood, discovers she cannot win the friendship of the elite Barbara, but favors dull-witted, underprivileged, Bernadette. Ceretha, nicknamed Brown Rabbit, is very alert and reads on the sixth grade level. Finally her personal qualities win her a friend among the snobs. The stale language, her father's forced move to the city and her older sister, who does not get married because she is
concerned with wealth and looks, are presented but not dealt with in full detail. In attempting to make the story a success, the author uses the wrong techniques.

Two other black writers wrote books in the 60's. In 1968, Elizabeth Vroman wrote Harlem Summer. This story is about a teenager named John from Montgomery, Alabama who spends a summer with relatives in Harlem in New York City. City life is very confusing and complex to John who finds a job in a store similar to the one he had in Alabama, but he meets a lot of good people and enjoys his summer vacation. The theme of the story is good and the character portrayal really helps to strengthen the story.

One year later, in 1969, Mildred Pitts Walter, the last black writer to be studied in this chapter, wrote a very good book entitled Lillie of Watts. This is the story of Lillie, a young black girl who turns eleven years old and listens to her teacher, Mr. Knox, playing "Happy Birthday" to her on his violin. What happens to Lillie is genuine and alive with expressive details and humor. Her birthday starts well, her mother lets her wear her best sweater and skirt and a classmate spills paint on the sweater. She is further disheartened when her mother brings her employer's cat to stay overnight. Lillie, afraid of cats, lets the cat out, and what happens in the events that follow are expressive to any child in grades four through six. One thing hampers the book
from being read by the appropriate age group. Children in grades four through six would never go to the easy shelf where the picture books are shelved, to find the book. Therefore, the book may be lost to readers of the right age level. However, this is one example of a good story for grades four through six.

During the 1960's, the non-black authors who wrote children's books often created stories with black images that were exaggerated, preconceived, theories of what black life involved. As a result, the books deal with negative images and experiences. The stories were often sad with the mother and father either getting killed or one parent, usually the father, dying in the story; or, the father leaving home and the mother being left with the responsibility of raising a family with five, six, or more children. In some instances the child is left alone to take care of himself; or he goes to live with another relative. The stories most often create stereotyped images, carrying labeling connotations which identify "colored", "white" through skin colors, speech patterns, habitation, locations, inter-relationships with others and career patterns. Blacks with normal family relationships and living patterns or blacks aiming for the "American Dream" are the exception rather than the norm in most of the stories. Another idea which is still true is that some of the images created about blacks by non-black writers were "too perfect" or the "ideal-type" all of which seems
so unnatural and unrealistic. 18

In 1965, Natalie Savage Carlson, wrote *The Empty Schoolhouse* in which stereotyping terminology often utilized by non-black writers is exposed. Carlson, a white writer, labels characters as "colored" and "white" by identifying skin color as "coffee" and "cream", and by descriptive passages as to how the various skin colors derive from mixtures of light and dark shades. In her book, loaded words are used to identify "black" and "white"; however, the theme is a good one for a fifth grader because Lullah Royall, the black character in the story, wants to go to school with her friend Oralee Fleury. The events that lead to the climax are interesting and should keep the child's mind involved in finishing the story and in telling others about it. The story creates a vivid picture of the unrealized desire of wanting to attend an integrated school.

Three years later, in 1968, Carlson published *Ann Aurelia and Dorothy*. The story begins with Ann Aurelia, living with a foster mother in a new section of town. She finally meets Dorothy, a black girl her own age, who is supposed to have a stable, mature background, the perfect home environment, and knows all about the neighborhood. This story is trite and is wrapped around a lot of dramatic, disparate elements to produce a subtle episode full of humor and interest. The narrative includes

the improbable rescue of a teacher who nearly drowns on
a school outing, Ann Aurelia's adapting to her foster
mother, her feelings when her real mother returns, Ann
Aurelia's decision to go to live with her natural mother
which causes a loss of impact of the story, and lastly,
the enjoyment Dorothy and Ann Aurelia share in a good
relationship together. The emotions the author paints
are love and comfort, good and bad, humor and excitement.
A fifth grader would certainly become engrossed in the
story even though it is very unrealistic in theme.

In contemplating the writings about blacks in the
1960's, it is important to recognize that a scarcity of
such books existed before and during this period of time.
As a result of the Brown vs The Board of Education of
Topeka, Kansas, which was decided in the Supreme Court
in 1954, leading to school integration and the passing
of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, public consciousness,
and demands by school populations, teachers, students,
and school librarians, created instant demands for such
materials. In an effort to satisfy their sudden demands,
and in an effort to cash in on the profits and gains to
be realized from this, there developed an excessive
number of such books, good, bad, or indifferent by both
black and non-black writers without much serious effort
at evaluating the contents. Most of the books were pre-
sented with school ideas, housing, family backgrounds,
incorporating all the complex social vibrations that
blacks were supposed to experience, along with segregated
connotations that were not questioned by publishing companies. There can be no argument about the reality of the pictures presented. The authors supported the arrangements of the laws and voiced their feelings in what they wrote about including their preconceived ideas into the content of the volume without regard for the veracity of ideas.

In 1966, Mary Hays Weik, a white author, wrote *The Jazz Man*, the story of a black boy named Zeke, who lived in an apartment house in Harlem with his mother and father. This story depicts blacks in a very negative manner and presents a typically stereotyped, non-positive image of the black experience. The ghetto family in this story lives in Harlem on the top floor of an apartment building. The father does not work, but just stays out drinking, and the mother has to work and support the family. Zeke, nine years old, does not go to school everyday because he does not have clothing and food; therefore, he just sits at home and looks out of the window. One day, a man moves into the apartment across from Zeke's. He plays jazz on the piano and plays for a night club in the neighborhood. The problems Zeke has to face are sad—his mother leaves him first and does not return; then his father leaves and Zeke is alone and hungry. The author did not plot the story well. The character of *The Jazz Man* was created to add interest and fill the lonely spot in Zeke's life. The musician lived in a room across from
Zeke and was really not an uplifting influence on Zeke. The entire theme of the story is contrived and far-fetched.

In the same year, 1966, Thomas Fall, a non-black author, wrote *Canalboat to Freedom*, a very good book teaching courage and the value of friendship. It is the story of a lonely boy, 12 years old, named Benja Lown, who crosses the ocean from England to America in the 1840's with hopeful ideas about the land of the free. His idea is given a fresh perspective in this novel. Benja recalls the events that result in his departure from his home and anticipates a future in a new land—a future which is to bring him both fulfillment, disillusionment, tragedy, contentment, and meaningful friendship. In this suspenseful, believable, engrossing, historical novel, the author paints a vivid picture of the locale and the characters involving the slavery issue, the underground railroad, the canalboat operation, and human nature. He is sympathetic to slaves and their quest for freedom. The author also depicts blacks favorably. The exciting events, and moving passages help to convey the starkness of the message.

In 1965, two non-black authors wrote books full of adventure, feats, quests and exploitation with perilous, daring and hazardous scenes plotted to make them interesting. Both are very good reading for grades four through six. One of these stories, *D. J.'s Worst Enemy*, was written by a white Georgian, Robert Burch. In Burch's story, typical
lifestyle is depicted with a lot of fun sharing adventure. The story is written as if D. J. is telling the story himself. It tells the story of the adventures D. J. and his friends, Nutty and the Caster boys, share on a farm. D. J. becomes involved in some childish incidents. He throws a corn cob at Renfroe, his younger brother; his trick to get even with Clara May, his older sister, causes her to lose a chance at a local honor. He realizes that it is time to stop being his own worst enemy and to join the family instead. The story is full of explorations and ventures and creates a good positive story with things a child in grades four through six would enjoy.

The second story, written in 1965, by Ester Wier is entitled Easy Does It. This is the story of a young white boy, Chip Woodman and his parents. Upon moving into a new white neighborhood they had to wait to become accepted. Finally, after Chip is accepted into the baseball club, something happens that causes the boys to ignore him completely—a new black family moves next door to Chip and because Chip would not tell them about the new neighbors, the club members are angry with him. Chip and the new neighbors' son become the two who are left out of everything until A. L., the other neighbors' son have a strange visitor one day. He turns out to be Terrible Thomas, a famous black pitcher that Chip admires. The story is full of impact, force and action, and creates a good positive image for boys.

Robert Burch wrote Queenie Peavy in 1966. It is a
story full of exciting events that any child would enjoy reading. It is about a revenge when Queenie acts as a defiant nonconformist because of her father's being sent to prison. Quennie fights, talks back, chews tabacco, throws rocks, and acts like a very mischievous person. Only with the black neighbors' children does she relax by telling stories and singing folk songs. After her father is released from prison a changed person, she faces the truth and plays the role of a conformist; a cooperative, sunny, spirited person and in the end discovers she likes the feeling.

One year later, in 1967, there appeared three stories written by non-black authors. One of the stories, Adam Bookout, is stereotyped, another, Marassa and Midnight, depicts primitive living in America, and, A Wonderful Terrible Time, is a good story about two black girls. Adam Bookout, written by Louisa R. Shotwell, tells the story of eleven-year-old Adam who, after his parents are killed in a plane crash, runs away from two great-aunts in Oklahoma to Brooklyn to live with cousins Katie and Gideon. The problems encountered in a big integrated city are the same problems he left in Oklahoma. In the end, he goes back to Oklahoma and the aunts, Auntie Vann and Auntie Meg, are glad to have him back. The author brings in a harmonious relationship among children from four different backgrounds. It is doubtful whether the story would ever have happened in real life. Yet, the story would have some impact on the personal life of a child in grades four through six. Adam Bookout has problems that everyone would be concerned with, yet the story is a
Morna Stuart, in 1966, wrote *Marassa and Midnight*. This is the moving story of twin black boys, born in slavery on a plantation in Haiti, who are separated from one another by two Revolutions—the Haitian and French Revolutions. Marassa is bought and taken to Paris as the page to a Marquis. Each twin feels lost without the other, and they long to be reunited again. In Haiti, Midnight runs away from the plantation to try to follow his brother, and, failing, lives in the jungle. Marassa, deserted in Paris, is brought back to Haiti and discovers that the plantation where he and Midnight lived and worked, has been destroyed by fire. After thirty years of playing vital roles in trying to restore peace to the Island, they meet and regain their happiness. The story is superbly written and describes the beauty of the country in great depth. The pen and ink sketches reflect the narrative and enhance the story. The book is highly recommended to children in grades four through six.

Fictitious lessons are written about blacks through the use of historical fiction. These seem to create an image of how the black experience originated. Letta Schatz's *Bola and the Oba's Drummers* is set in Nigeria with villages and markets and a wealth of details concerning Africa. It is the story of Bola and his experiences with the drums—making the drum talk, to drum the
mighty Oba's own dance. In the story Bola, whose father is a farmer, is depicted as a little boy doing meaningful chores at the market, following a parade, running through the streets of Nigeria, working at the cocoa harvest, doing his household chores, and playing with the village children. Verisimilitude is enhanced by the Yoruba-like metaphorical English of the dialogue and the characteristic playfulness, competitive spirit, and mercurial moods of the Africans of the story. In the end, upon approval from his father, Bola becomes an apprentice with Oba and learns to play the drums. The illustrations are good.

Another non-black author, Mary Stolz, writing a book entitled *A Wonderful Terrible Time* depicts the black child's way of life when school closes and there is nothing to do but play with dolls, tour the five and dime stores, or splash in the water when the firemen turns on the hydrant. The varied activities and their conversations will enable one to know they are from low-income families, but not poverty-stricken urban families. Mady is shy and sensitive; her father has been killed in a Freedom March in Mississippi and her mother is a nurse. Sue Ellen, whose father is a taxi-driver, is out-going and imaginative, and dominates Mady until that wonderful terrible time when the two are awarded a vacation at a summer camp. Mady is so elated and happy; however, to Sue Ellen it is a terrible time. This story is another example of the way of life of children in grades four through six who have spent a
summer away from home at a camp. The images created are positive.

Frank Bonham spent two years doing research on Durango Street, his first novel, and his involvement in that novel led him to the two stories written about in this study. Bonham states "that these kids live in a real world, they know what is going on. He started writing because there were not enough books that seemed real and gripping to the children and are written on their levels."

Frank Bonham, a non-black author, wrote two books, Nitty Gritty and Mystery of the Fat Cat, in the same year, 1968. In spite of forced slang, or use of colloquialisms of the underprivileged, depicting slum people the way they are, both novels written by Bonham are written with tough vitality and honest pragmatism. Bonham depicts Negro ghetto life negatively, and, although he is guilty of stereotyping, this weakness does not undermine the basic plot of his stories because of the realistic manner in which he writes. In Mystery of the Fat Cat, the story carries a mysterious style to keep fifth and sixth graders' reading interest at the highest peek, the climax of the story. The story tells of the Dogtown Boys Club, located in a building that is rat-and roach-infested, and after the fumigation of the building, it is completely destroyed under the strain of an old building. Four boys from the club, Buddy Williams, Johnny Pastelita, Rich Smith, and Cool Hawkins

set out to find a half-million dollars left by Mrs. Atkins to be awarded at the death of her cat named Buzzer.

In the third book by Frank Bonham, *Nitty Gritty*, the story is about Charlie Matthews, seventeen-years-old, and the problems a black boy has to face. In the story, we find Charlie living in a predominantly black section of town in a large city called, Dogtown. Charlie, desperate to earn $175 in two weeks in order to buy half interest with his free wheeling Uncle Barron, gets out of Dogtown and realizes some of his dreams, makes the money, and is left by his uncle to struggle with the reality of things when the policeman appears to break up a fight in which his uncle does not want to become involved.

Bonham paints a stereotyped black image. The lifestyle of both novels depicts the black "ghetto," "slum-living" and people deprived of a good environment in which to live. His stories have good characterization and the themes and plots are superb, but a reader will think only that all black boys live and think that way. They emerge as realistic boys from the darker side of the colored fence living in "ghetto" areas. "This is the lifestyle and it just has to be this way", is the picture painted in Bonham's two books. But, it is not a realistic picture to paint, nor should one think of blacks this way. Boys like mysteries and fictitious adventure stories and these basic plots are well stated and conceived.

During some of the early writings about slavery and
the auction markets, the lives of these black slaves are so brutally portrayed, a young mind could not really read the cruel, evil, inhuman, savage and barbarous stories that were published. However, in avoiding both sentimentality and brutality, Burchard in 1968 wrote *Bimby* a memorable book which tells the story of a young slave in the Sea Islands of Georgia who lives on the Butler Plantation, just before the Civil War. The main characters are Bimby; Bimby's mother, who longs for freedom for her son; and the one-armed slave, Jesse, who commits suicide and is the cause of Bimby's running away. In a postscript the author says "that the Butler Plantation really existed, that Miss Fanny referred to in the story was a famous English actress, and writer, named Frances Anne Kemble. She married Pierce Mease Butler of Philadelphia, whose family were slave owners. Fanny left Butler and became divorced. The auction did take place, although *Bimby* is fictional.20 *Bimby* is written to portray in simple language what slavery means in American history. The strong characterization of *Bimby* from an unassuming slave boy to a free youth, the effect of the suicidal death of Jesse, his ultimate decision to run away are influencing factors in *Bimby*’s life to make this story highly recommended reading for grades four through six.

An author who writes a book on the effects of segregation in the schools and why black children are being bused to white schools is Robert Coles, who in 1968, wrote

Dead End School, the story of a black boy, named James, who is in the sixth grade. The story begins with James, called Jim, telling about his family and lifestyle, the typical stereotype of the poor, black home with the father working hard to make a decent living as a poorly paid, apprentice laborer. After Jim's father's death, his mother and six brothers and sisters move to a smaller house, and Jim is transferred to another school. The principal decides to tell all the blacks in Jim's room that their school is overcrowded and they will have to go to another school. Jim's mother calls a meeting of all the parents to discuss plans to enable their children to stay at the white school. It seems as if Jim's mother's protesting causes him to be sent to another white school to which he has to ride a bus each day. However, the school is very nice and not like the one at the "dead end of the school" which his best friend Larry attends.

The author degrades the study he writes on the effects of segregation in schools by creating a book of fear of the necessity of getting an education at a white school. The relationship of Larry and Jim add to the humor and interest of the situation; however, ugliness and tensions are vividly depicted. A young reader in grades four through six, will visualize what has to be encountered in a big school system through the roamings in alleys of Larry and Jim, the rats, the garbage, and the filthy ghetto living, the poverty and the marches for civil rights, all of which
play a part in the story and create appalling situations. This work is written in a style one usually associates with the black experience.

In 1968, John Neufeld won the ALA Notable Books award for *Edgar Allan*, a well written story of a family who adopts a black boy and loves him as much as their own four children. The Fickett family is like any ordinary family who lives comfortably in their home in a small town in California. The father is a good man who raises his family within the framework of religion. The events, and tragedies that take place cause him to lose his church and Edgar Allan.

The story is sad, and through the incidents that happen in the book, one can visualize the events that take place, and understand how important acceptance and belonging are; how difficult it is to want for love, security, understanding, and how having someone you have known and care about say "you cannot stay with us anymore". Edgar Allan is intelligent and likeable but his skin color is different. Therefore, the Fickett family is put into a situation reflective of society today and have to return Edgar Allan, a young boy who could be any child faced with a similar experience. The story is a good one happening just after the desegregation act is passed.

Robert Burch wrote *Renfroe's Christmas* in 1968. This story does not indicate race in the illustrations
or the narrative. The story begins with three boys stacking wood and discussing Christmas. Renfroe, an eight-year-old boy is very selfish and does not want to share the presents he receives for Christmas. Finally, one day Renfroe meets a retarded boy and is delighted to give him a Mickey Mouse watch. Everyone forgets that Renfroe is selfish because he makes the retarded boy happy.

In 1969, there are still some stereotyped delineations of blacks through their lifestyles and attitudes. Natalie Savage Carlson's Marchers for the Dream tells the story of Bethany, an eleven-year-old black girl and her family who have to move to a new place because the Model City Program is to come through their street and wreck the houses. After her family spends a few days trying desperately to find another home, Bethany and her great-grandmother decide to go to Resurrection City in Washington and march with other poor people who are marching for food, jobs and education. The year in which the book is written serves to make the plot of the story very contemporary and realistic, reflecting a true happening. After the Civil Rights Act of 1964, blacks marched in Washington, D. C. to demonstrate for equal opportunities, civil rights and jobs. The story is very moving and dramatic. The theme and plot are based on historical information even though the story is fictional. Carlson plots the conversation around grievances,
reassurances, dedications, and hopes. One reviewer, however, states that it is "a crude monument to poverty, dedication and hope." The people are lifeless, the circumstances not lifelike.\(^{21}\)

Gunilla Norris writes Good Morrow with strong characterization about a black girl's first experience away from the city when she goes to summer camp. Along with becoming homesick and lonely, Josie experiences the fears and insecurities that most children her age face when separated from their families. Many children can get along away from home regardless of race, but Gunilla Norris burdens this book with misunderstandings between the races in terms of black and white. The unhappy camper picking on Josie because she is black should have been omitted from the story. This factor typifies misunderstandings between the races because of the lack of communication and interaction. If the book had been written using the theme that fear is caused from alien surroundings, or that this fear can cause unreasonable behavior, the story would have been more compassionate and warm to read.

In 1969, a non-black writer, Betty K. Erwin wrote Behind the Magic Line. Dozie Western, eleven-years-old, is concerned about the things beyond the "magic line", the picture of Utopia her Uncle Samuel Dan depicts magically for her. Her family lives in a cramped, crowded house in a crowded neighborhood. Dozie longs to move into a new house in another city. Dozie, with her dreams, almost

sees another and better world, but her brother gets into trouble, is implicated in a robbery, and her father leaves home. Dozie's dreams are toward fulfillment when her father returns and they move to the West Coast, hopefully to start a new life together.

Erwin displays a family image of warmth, love and humor. Her story will be enjoyed by most children because of Dozie's strong determination to make a dream become a reality. One reviewer states, "a compelling story of an Afro-American family, typical, but not stereotyped, this will be welcomed by young readers".22

Mebane Holomon Burgwyn, in 1969, wrote Crack-a-jack Pony, a story about a twelve-year-old black boy, Cliff Morgan, who moves with his parents and brothers to an inherited farm and meets Ted, a white boy visiting his grandfather for the summer. In a series of accidental episodes and sub-plots, Cliff and Ted discover a whisky still operated by the black helper, Hoke, who works on the Morgan farm; a horse becomes ill from eating wet peanut vines; Cliff and Ted are reluctant to assume proper responsibility in caring for a mare who is about to foal, Ted breaks a leg trying to find the mare; the horse dies in afterbirth; and Cliff is given the new-born foal after he finds Ted. The problems, one after another, race relations, making friends, disillusionment, responsibilities in caring for a horse, the whiskey still operation

and the racial implications for the people involved become too much to handle, especially for a young child. One reviewer states, "the most disappointing story is this book with its complicated plot. There is simply too much here to digest".23

The last effort of the sixties to be reviewed is, *Sounder*, written in 1969 by William H. Armstrong, it presents a heart-wrenching story of the South; a coon dog named, Sounder; a man, woman and a boy. The story presents the tragedy of a poor black sharecropper who is arrested for stealing a ham for his wife and hungry children. When the sheriff comes to arrest him nobody can save him from fate, not even the big coon dog who is wounded in the attempt to bark and scare them away. The boy spends years trying to find out where they took his father. In the end the boy has to bury both his father, who expires as a result of despondence and sadness, and his dog, who dies of old age. The story is full of compassion, warmth and love and shows dignity, and endurance to the highest peak in both man and beast. This is a good dog story and is highly recommendable reading for grades four through six. The story won the Newbery Award in 1970 and was subsequently made into a movie and will be read in the years to come by many adults as well.

Of the twenty-nine books published about blacks

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during the periods 1965 to 1969, most of the books have categories of stereotypes, segregation and school stories racial emphasis as to blacks being "poor","deprived" and with very little positive images of blacks. Racial pre-judice and school story examples are: Empty Schoolhouse, Adam Bookout, Dead End School, and Marchers for the Dream.

There are several stories with black portrayals of positive characterization. These include: A Wonderful Terrible Time, Lillie of Watts, Brown Rabbit: Her Story, Harlem Summer, Ann Aurelia and Dorothy, Easy Does It, Behind the Magic Line, Edgar Allan and Renfroe's Christmas. Three good Civil War and slavery stories with positive characterization were well written during this period by non-black writers. Examples are: Bimby, Marassa and Midnight and Canalboat to Freedom.

Stories with settings in Africa or written about African life include the well written Zeely and Bola and the Oba's Drummers. In Time Ago Tales of Jahdu, the setting is in Harlem and fantasizes the tales of being black.

The stories of the 1960's depict black people as being poor, living in slum conditions, participating in political activity, and experiencing racial prejudice, these include both Natalie Carlson's book Empty Schoolhouse and Marchers for the Dream. Also in Dead End School, Nitty Gritty and Mystery of the Fat Cat, blacks are depicted in a world which is real to the period and setting for
which they are written; however, the negativeness of the ghetto life seems so unreal and unnatural for a black child to read about today.

The twenty-nine stories discussed in this chapter include over twenty stories for boys and are equally divided between the fifth and sixth grade levels. In Chapter Three, the books that were published from 1970 through 1976 by blacks and non-black authors are discussed.
CHAPTER III

STORIES ABOUT BLACKS BY BLACK AND NON-BLACK AUTHORS PUBLISHED FROM 1970 TO 1976

The 1970's reflect a change in both authorship and content as the books analyzed here demonstrate. They are mostly equally distributed because, research in this study of the 1970's shows there are fifteen black writers and seventeen non-black writers included as compared to five black writers and seventeen non-black writers in the 1960's. There are seventeen stories written by black writers and seventeen stories written by non-black writers in the 1970's which were selected for inclusion in this study as compared to seven stories written by black writers and twenty-two stories written by non-black writers in the 1960's. There is also an improvement in the quality of books written with black characterization and there were fewer stereotyped images included.

In 1971, Ernest J. Gaines, a black writer, wrote A Long Day in November. The story is about Sonny, a six-year-old boy and his difficulties at home. The longest day in Sonny's life begins when Sonny's mother and father have an argument, and his mother takes him away to live with his grandmother. His mother's grievance is his
father's preoccupation with his car and his neglect of her. After Eddie, Sonny's father, on the advice of a "hoo-doo" woman, reluctantly burns the car, Sonny and his mother return home. The story is full of humor and appeals to adults as well as to children. However, some of the imaginative and strange happenings in the story are in poor taste or are far-fetched. For example, a six-year-old going to school and wetting himself, a man burning his car up because some "hoo-doo" woman said to do so. However, these, among other things, add to the humor and make the story appealing and genuinely funny.

Another black writer, in trying to publish a good story, succeeds in developing a good setting but the story is contrived. This writer is Dawn C. Thomas who wrote, A Tree for Tompkins Park in 1971. This story is about a Cub Scout's effort to get a huge tree to plant in his neighborhood. The story is humorous and full of interest, yet it is not a contemporary story. The narrative is artificial and attempts to show a true story but fails in the effort. The primary asset is the cheerful helpfulness of Johnny's family and neighbors.

Sharon Bell Mathis, in 1971, wrote Sidewalk Story. This effort, written by a black writer, is the 1970 winner in its age category, of the award given by the "Council on Interracial Books for Children" for manuscripts by black writers. The story is about Lilly Etta, who decides to do something about the eviction of her best friend's family from their apartment. Lilly Etta, a nine-year-old
sees workmen carrying Tanya Brown's belongings onto the sidewalk and thinks Tanya is moving. Discovering differently, Lilly Etta tries helplessly to get her mother and other neighbors to help prevent this displacement. However, the grown-ups do nothing to help, so, Lilly Etta telephones the newspaper and the police to elicit their help and services. The story is lively, full of humor and has the contemporary realism to make it an excellent story for readers in grades four through six.

Four years later, in 1975, Sharon Mathis wrote another book with strong characterization entitled, *The Hundred Penny Box*. Mathis's stories show characters who live in the ghetto and share the problems common to a child's everyday living. The characters are black but the problems are universal. In this book Michael and his one-hundred-year-old great-great aunt have the day-to-day experiences of living together. The story relates how Dewbet Thomas and Michael enjoy an old coin box full of one hundred pennies which represents a penny for every year in the life of Miss Thomas. Michael counts the pennies and, with each penny, Dewbet Thomas relates past experiences in her life to him. When Michael's mother suggests destroying the old box, along with some of her other belongings, Michael becomes the old woman's co-conspirator and helps her hide these items because she is too old to do so by herself. The story is full of mystery, fear, and sadness, and opens an awareness in other children to warmth, love, and enrichment that an older person can bring to their lives if they
are fortunate to have a third generation present. The story makes youngsters aware of the values of older people; it makes a child think of whoever has been old and dear to them in their lives, and it leads them to think of the burdens, problems, awkwardness, and rewards of living with someone very old. While the story does not include a great deal of action, it does incorporate a realistic theme and openly relates the feelings and emotions of grouping three generations under the same roof.

A highly recommended book for children written in 1974 by Eloise Greenfield, a black writer, is entitled *Sister*. This book is the story of a thirteen-year-old black girl named Doretha, but nicknamed "Sister". The narrative concerns the secret diary of "Special days" in Doretha's life beginning at age ten, and it covers her life to age thirteen. Among the important events Greenfield writes about are: at age ten "Sister's father's death; at age eleven, she learns about her freedom-fighting, ex-slave ancestor; and at age thirteen, discovers her African heritage; she observes her older sister leaving home and alienating herself. Doretha's problems convey a message of warmth and realism, and the hard times reflect the message of the self image of children in today's world.

Dindga McCannon, a black writer, wrote and illustrated *Peaches* in 1974. Like Peaches, Dindga McCannon is born in Harlem in New York City. In this story, Peaches has some good times and some bad times, all adding up to touching on several episodes without concluding any. This leaves
a young mind in limbo as to what the end results are. As real as things are in Peaches' life, from her eleventh to fourteenth years, including her school and summer experiences, relationships with family and boyfriends, and early determinations to be an artist--these all end abruptly with the death of her grandmother. One reviewer states, "as real as Peaches' life seems, however, there is a callous surface effect created when the author involves a reader intensely in a scene and jumps to another without any conclusions". 24

Another black author, Edgar White, wrote *Children of Night* in 1974. Chaka and his two brothers live in a basement apartment and share the same bed. Twelve-year-old Chaka dreams he is someplace where there is always enough food. The story, written in poetic style, portrays simple and natural everyday life scenes involving the black ghetto children in South Bronx. The black and white drawings, illustrated by Dindga McCannon, (author of *Peaches* on the list of books selected for this study), are of a modern nature, portraying a different perspective of the themes about which the author writes. The illustrations are suggestive of upper class lifestyles, not of the poor ghetto existence. The drawings, however, express the dreams and darkness in Chaka's life. In simple writing style, the author reveals Chaka's attitudes, feelings, longings, and his distaste for school.

Illustrations usually reflect the narrative and are appealing, but at times, can be misleading. However, if the story captivates the reader's attention, these illustrations may not be an influencing factor in deciding whether the story is good or bad. A black writer, Lucille Clifton, in 1974, wrote *The Times They Used To Be*, which is illustrated by Susan Jeschke. In this narrative the illustrations are stereotypes, utilizing pictures of women with fat, big hips, little waists with broad shoulders and flat broad noses. However, the monolog is written in a slow rhyming style appealing to reluctant readers. Mama tells her children, in a poetic style, of the "olden days" (1948) when she was a girl of twelve and had a friend named Tassie who was thirteen. Mama goes on to explain the experiences as she and Tassie, both eighth graders, learn the facts of life when blood is found on Tassie's blue jeans one day. The story is warm and humorous.

Most of the eight black writers who wrote books in 1975 from the list selected for inclusion in this study, wrote narratives that delineated positive images as compared to the seven black writers of the 1960's, who wrote about desegregated schools, churches, and family lifestyles.

Robert Green, in 1975, composed the beautifully written book, *The Ebony Tree and the Spirit of Christmas*. Allegorizing the seed of the ebony tree and later, the tree itself, to the black experience, this touching story
written by a black author, is woven around the "Black is
Beautiful" non-violence themes. Beginning with the seed's
origins with his family in Africa, this seed is taken
aboard a ship to a new land to a Christmas tree planta-
tion where a black boy befriends it, plants it, and gives
it a start in life. Segregated and abused by the other
trees because of its blackness, the ebony tree learns the
lessons that strength, endurance, knowledge and love are
the most important gifts of all. The ebony tree finally
achieves his dream as events result in his giving and
receiving happiness in the ghetto, as he is reunited with
his friend, and as the prince, the "Sprit of Christmas",
gives the ghetto dwellers the truly meaningful gifts of
Christmas. This is a captivating, moving story which
should become a traditional part of every black child's
Christmas celebration.

Another black writer in 1975, June Jordan, wrote
New Life, New Room. The impending addition of a fourth
child to the Robinson family presents problems because a
larger apartment in the housing project is not available,
and additional space is needed. Therefore, Mr. & Mrs.
Robinson decide to give their larger bedroom to the three
children who learn to share the same room and work out a
solution to the problem in a cooperative, understanding
manner. This narrative reveals a partly ordinary, partly
idealized family that children in grades four through six
will appreciate and love. The relationships exemplify
close, strong family ties. The illustrations add to the
Mildred D. Taylor, a black author, wrote two very fine narratives during 1975 and 1976. Both of these narratives are based on her family experience. These efforts deal with a love of nature and a sense of self-respect. The first story, Song of the Trees, was published in 1975. Eight-year-old Cassie tells the story of a time during the Depression Era when a group of haughty, white men come to their farm and want to cut down all the trees to use for lumber in order to make money. In a tension-filled climax, Cassie's father confronts them, and armed with ammunition, threatens to dynamite the entire farm if they do not stop cutting the trees down. Emotional dignity is carried in the message and in the characters portrayed. Highly recommended for a contemporary realistic story for children in grades four through six.

One year later, in 1976, Taylor wrote Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry which was made into a movie in 1978, with Lark Ruffin, a tenth-grader from Atlanta, Georgia as the central character, Cassie Logan. This is the vivid story of a black family during the Depression Era whose warm ties to each other and their land give them strength and encouragement to ignore the racial problems surrounding them. This narrative is written using the same characters as in Song of the Trees, but is written with more power and complex details. This is a story of physical survival, survival of the human spirit. This story tells of Cassie Logan and
her strong determination not to surrender her feelings of independence and humanitarianism which are being threatened because of her color. The story is detailed with tension-building incidents: a white neighbor's determination to take the Logan's land after they boycott white store owners who set fire to a black man; the Logan children and a friend, T. J. were sprayed with dust and mud by white kids on the school bus as they walk to school one day; and a white girl's public humiliation of Cassie Logan are all powerfully portrayed to show the struggle of the Logan family against overwhelming odds. This narrative shows the pride, love and independence in one black family despite the tragedies, defeats and losses endured. One reviewer states, "the novel shows the rich inner rewards of black pride, love and independence, despite the certainty of outer defeat".  

Walter Dean Myers, a black author, published in 1975 an unusual humorous book on what true friendship really means. The book entitled Fast Sam, Cool Clyde, and Stuff is an ALA Notable Award book and it also won the Woodward Award. Francis, a black boy, moves to 116th Street in New York City when he is twelve-and-a-half years old. He does not have any friends, but that does not last for long, because he meets Sam, Clyde and Gloria. The setting is in the ghetto, and the text utilizes dialect and

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25 Mildred Taylor, "Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry," *Booklist*, vol. 73, (October 1, 1973), 257.
slang relating to the locale. The story is told in the first person by Francis. It is a very humorous and realistic story. One can see the stereotypes of the fat mother, living in the ghetto area in a worn-down apartment building, no father, and many problems associated with being black. Many of the experiences of teenagers are brought out. There are no illustrations, however, but one can use his or her own imagination and paint a picture because of the way the book is written.

Another black author to write a book in 1975 was Brenda Scott Wilkinson. The story is written about Ludell, an eleven-year-old, who grows up in Waycross, Georgia, in the 1950's. Ludell has a loving grandmother whom she calls Mama, an irrepressible frier’; Ruthie Mae; and her family next door. She attends a small segregated school. Wilkinson writes in a biographical style with a lot of episodes pertaining to Ludell’s life. Ludell is a warm, humorous and interesting novel, and the experiences in Ludell’s life are authentic enough for a reader to empathize with them. Although there is no mother or father for Ludell, she glides through these years with few concerns. When she reaches seventh grade, she experiences her first romance with Willie, the boy next door. Wilkinson vividly describes her own Southern background and recreates the joys, hopes and dreams of a young black girl in the South.

Pearl Bailey, a black writer and famous entertainer, wrote Duey’s Tale in 1975. It is the tale of a baby seed-
ling who, in the end, grows up to be a tall tree. It is an allegorical story about Slicker, a bottle, that is found at the perfume counter; and Gabby, a log, which is later shaped into a beautiful masterpiece. In the story, they are parted, but Duey later discovers Gabby, now an elegantly carved walking stick, and Slicker in a sailmaker's shop window. Duey eventually settles down as a fine young tree, happy to be noticed by a young couple who sit at his feet. The story is slow moving and dull, and none of the things Duey sees are described adequately in the story. The story is written about an unfortunate undertaking, and is published because of Pearl Bailey, herself. It tells nothing and goes nowhere.

Mari Evans wrote J. D. in 1975. Meadow Hill, where J. D. lives is certainly a misnomer, as there are no hills or meadows. Evans writes four short stores which reflect the life of eight-year-old J. D. Imagination enlivens his life as he finds an old metal box and tries to get it open; he pretends to be a bully picking on a younger child; his embarrassment as he worries about three dollars and twenty-five cents he owes for school book rental fees; and his disillusionment as he sees his hero take drugs. Striving for realism, Evans writes a book that is depressing more than absorbing and involves four tales seemingly without endings.

There was only two black writers to write books in 1976 selected for this study, Lorenz Graham and Mildred Taylor. Taylor's book has been dealt with earlier. There-
fore, Lorenz Graham, in writing *Return to South Town*, is the last black author to be critiqued in this study from the list selected. Graham's writing is fourth in a sequence of novels based on the life of David Williams. Dr. David Andrew Williams returns to his repressive hometown to decide if he should set up his medical practice there. David finds the "Jim Crow" laws gone but racism still an obstacle as he gets into trouble for "daring" to save the life of a badly injured white woman at the hospital where he goes for an interview. In this rural town, David faces opposition from Dr. Harold Boyd who owns the only hospital here. However, the trouble does not come to a climax until a plane crash gives Boyd an excuse to accuse Williams of practicing without the state license that Boyd's old friends have conspired to delay. This is a well-told, pertinent story with a dynamic, appealing and coincidental ending that will appeal to readers as the other three books have.

The majority of literature for children in grades four through six written in the 1970's by non-black authors reflects a change in the representation of the black image in a more realistic, positive approach. More writers are conscious of the needs of the young minds and their writings contemplate books which will build the ego of the black child.

Alfred Slote, a non-black writer of the 1970's selected for inclusion in this study, wrote *Jake* in 1971.
The story is told by Jake himself. Jake Wrather, an eleven-year-old self-reliant, very independent boy lives with his young, rock-musician uncle because his parents leave him. Jake comes and goes unsupervised and virtually runs his neighborhood Little League team, called the Print-Alls. The team, coached by his best friend's mother, Mrs. Fulton, may not be able to play any more because the league president warns Jake that the team needs a male coach instead of a female, and the members' fathers are too busy to coach the team. The problem is solved in the end and Jake and the team members are happy. The story is full of excitement and goes in detail describing baseball play action. This narrative by Slote represents a good story to be read by children in grades four through six.

In 1972, Charlotte Baker wrote the excellent Cockleburr Quarters, which relates the experiences of ten-year-old Dolph who finds a half-blind dog and her eight puppies hidden under the Kingdom of Heaven Church on Cockleburr Street. Dolph's efforts to save these dogs from extermination, and the responsibilities and problems this involves, result in absorbing reading for elementary school children. Although this book weaves social problems of today into their story, including a sister who drops out of school to have a baby; the war in Viet-nam; a homeless drifter who sets up housekeeping in Cockleburr Quarters; the displacement of families from their homes; life in the ghetto; and the economics of the poor; the narrative is not a depressing
one. Matter-of-factly told, without moralizing and with humor and warmth, Baker is not demeaning or patronizing in her use of dialect, superstition, or life style to weave a story that won and deserves the Book World Award. Simple illustrations by Robert Owens enhance a story which will be enjoyed by young children as they sympathize with young Dolph.

In 1972, Mel Williamson, a non-black writer, wrote Walk On. Although labeled a children's book, this effort will be appreciated more by adults than youngsters. Using the vernacular of street life, this story describes one day in the narrators' (the black child's) life. Simply written but meaningful, this is a good effort to depict life in the ghetto. The introduction by James Baldwin is meant to add meaning to the story, but can be construed as inflammatory by those trying to promote good will between the races and can have an adverse effect upon elementary school child's reading of the book.

Michelle Murray and Rita Micklish, two non-black writers who wrote books in 1971 and 1972 respectively, were not as successful in depicting the black image. The narratives, though written with good intentions are depressing, non-realistic and downers. Nellie Cameron by Michele Murray is the story of a nine-year-old girl who lives in Washington, D.C., where she attends school and church, trying to learn in every area possible. The book involves Nellie's relationship with her friend Emma, her
five brothers and sisters, her parents who work hard, her participation in a special school reading clinic where she learns to read, and her summer vacation in South Carolina. The use of dialect is an introspective measure and will deter some children. The story is a somewhat depressing, and slow-moving account of a young girl and nothing is realistically portrayed. This is a result of the delineation of her life with a family at home where she feels lost due to doubts, hopes, and fears about being the dumb one in the family. The story is as one reviewer stated, "from the outside-in, too introspective, conscientious, too measured to click".  

Rita Micklish, author of Sugar Bee, tells in her own words, of eleven-year-old Stephanie Harris' life as being "ugly", her house, her school, and her ghetto neighborhood. Even when she is awarded an opportunity to escape for a week into the country, this is "tainted" because of the blindness of her white companion, Rosemary. Stephanie finally overcomes her feelings of frustration concerning her friend's handicap when she realizes how normal Rosemary's life is.

Micklish's presentation is generally a downer and infers that the circumstances of Sugar Bee's life are due to her blackness rather than economic factors. The entire theme of the book is reflected in one question that Sugar Bee's handicapped friend asks her, "Do you hate what you

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are?" Overworking the word "ugly" throughout the writing, this book is depressing reading and utilizes clichés and stereotypes with predictable outcomes. The possibility of an interracial friendship is the one positive idea encompassed by Micklish in this effort.

No Arm in Left Field, written by Matt Christopher, a non-black writer in 1974, is the story of a black boy named Terry Delaney. The theme and plot of this story are contrived. Everything planned is racist in the beginning and concludes with an ending which is unrealistic. Terry faces problems when his family moves to Forrest Lake from Long Island. He makes friends with Mick Jordan, a white boy, and tries out for the local baseball team. Terry can play ball but has a weak throwing arm, however, he is made an outfielder. Tony Casterline, a white shortstop, dislikes Terry and refuses to run into the outfield to help Terry relay the ball to the infield in order that their team might win the games. However, when Tony finally realizes he must help out, he instantly becomes friendly toward Terry. Every theme in this narrative starts and ends instantly. The illustrations are not meaningful and certainly do not make the story warm and interesting.

Barbara Cohen, a non-black writer, in 1974 published Thank You, Jackie Robinson, not the expected sports story about the great baseball player, Jackie Robinson, but based on the friendship of a sixty-year-old black man and a ten-year-old white boy. It is 1947, and Sam Greene,
whose father is deceased, is the only male in a family of women. He finds a substitute father in Davy, the sixty-
year-old cook who works for this mother in the Inn in New Jersey. Both of them are devout fans of the Brooklyn
Dodgers and Jackie Robinson, and Davy takes Sam to his first major league game. When Davy suffers a severe heart
attack, Sam, in a touching scheme to cure him, goes off to a Dodger game where he manages to get a baseball autographed and a special get well message from all the Dodger players, including Jackie Robinson, in hopes of curing his male "companion-like-father," Davy. Despite the boy's hope that this special gift will cure Davy, he dies. Although touching on segregation, the story has warmth, love and sadness and is very realistic. The characters have unusual depth and the friendship is an understanding, loving, and touching relationship.

Scott Corbett, a non-black writer, in 1974, wrote The Hockey Trick. Kerby Maxwell's Panthers suffer a crisis because the star outfielder moves and is replaced by someone who cannot perform. The new kid they enlist for their neighborhood team not only seems to be a looser but also costs them their chance at a whole family of superstar athletes. Sporting rivalries produce the tension when two local baseball teams differ over which of them will benefit from three brothers who are new to the neighborhood. This contest is decided by a hockey match in which Kirby's team is victorious. The plot is appealing to youngsters, and
the issue involves ability in sports rather than race, which is a wholesome approach. Highly recommended for children in grades four through six.

Another narrative to portray warmth and love is written in 1974 by Rebecca Caudill, a non-black writer, entitled *Somebody Go and Bang a Drum*. Built around family togetherness, the story concerns a young couple, Julian and Edie Garth, and their "international" family. The Garths have one son of their own, Eric, and adopt seven more children, three sons and four daughters, of racially mixed parentage. The chapters are all written dramatically and extend a welcome to these new children, who adjust and absorb into a reality every child wishes for his own parents to express. The story is told in simple sentences and in the dialogue of a youngster. One reviewer states, "the story is so dramatic, that adults will probably find it difficult to believe; but children will believe its reality..."27 The illustrations are very realistic and express the warmth of the story.

*The Toothpaste Millionaire*, an idealistic narrative of how to succeed in business and an explication of free enterprise mechanics, was written in 1974 by Jean Merrill. Rufus, a sixth grader, is disgusted at the high cost of toothpaste and decides to make his own using bicarbonate of soda as the main ingredient. His goal is low-cost produc-

tion, selling the toothpaste for three cents, thereby making a penny profit on each unit. He begins selling in his neighborhood. Publicity increases the orders and Rufus finally borrows the money in order to rent a factory to keep up with supply and demand. In the end, the cost of the toothpaste becomes fifteen cents a tube while his penny profit remains. The story is farfetched and unrealistic but has all the logic and honesty of a free enterprise business world. The story demonstrates a lot more ingenuity than usually found among youngsters in everyday life.

Florence Parry Heide, wrote *When the Sad One Comes to Stay*, in 1975. The story is about a young girl named Sara, who has been taken away from her father and step-brother in order to live with her mother, Sally. Sally is introducing her to more desirable friends, hoping she will forget the past. Sara makes friends with a wise black woman whose name is Maisie and Sara feels able to relate stories of her past to Maisie. Sara plans to stay with Maisie when her mother takes a trip, but at the last minute her mother has another idea and Sara is to stay with one of the "right people" (Sally's rich friends). Toward the end of the story, Sara is influenced to make fun of her only friend, Maisie. The affinity between a lonely child and an outcast oldster is handled with a sensitive approach. Although a recommended book for children in grades four through six, this novel leaves an undesirable
effect upon readers since Sara is disloyal to her friend.

Dorothy Hamilton's *Linda's Rain Tree*, published in 1975, is an example of a narrative by a non-black writer in which the story portrays a negative, unrealistic image and is a weak description of the black experience. Linda Powell sits on her porch contemplating her adolescent friendships, her life, her family and their work, her chores, her teacher, and the rain tree she planted. This slight, uninteresting story is rampant with stereotypes; the father, a poor laborer who is often laid off; the mother doing washing and ironing; their living in a low income section of town; abusive men; low teen-age moral codes; language, etc. While Linda is depicted as having high character, a member of a loving family and properly motivated toward the better ideals, the inference is that she is a rare exception, an idea which is demeaning to blacks. Her instant friendship with a rich white girl and the solution to the problem of busing to school across town is unrealistic. Unimaginative and uneventful, this rapid writing by Hamilton is not fairly representative of the total black experience and can be misleading to non-black girls reading fiction.

In 1975, Ann Waldron published *The Integration of Mary-Larkin Thornehill*. In 1970, the southern town of Stonewall is faced with a court order to integrate the all-black Phyllis Wheatley Elementary School. Mary-Larkin, the Presbyterian minister's daughter, and Critter Kingsley,
the messiest boy in town, are forced to attend the all black school, while the other white families have either moved or given false addresses. There are problems, from harassment to being hooted off the stage when Mary-Larkin tries out for cheerleading. However, one popular girl befriends her, and Mary-Larkin's father almost loses his church over the racial issue. Due to the fact that she invites several of her classmates to sing in the choir at her father's church, these issues all bring experiences and a sympathetic portrayal of an integrated situation and of becoming more personally involved. Mary-Larkin's insights evolve realistically in the face of fear, anguish, and misgiving that plague her and those around her as they fight or make peace within integrated surroundings.

*Iggie's House*, written by Judy Blume, a non-black writer, was published in 1976. The story is about eleven-year-old Winifred Barringer who is wondering who would be the new tenants of the house vacated by her best friend, Iggie, when Iggie moves to Japan with her family. When a black family with three children moves into the house in the white neighborhood, the events of the following week trigger a new awareness and a difference in Winnie's appraisal of human nature and behavior. Blume writes an interesting, authentic story portraying a current issue that embodies attitudes and feelings of both blacks and whites. Blume depicts the bigotry, the problems created by the vocal minority, the attempts at blockbusting, the
effects of apathy by those concerned toward correcting the injustice in an objective, well written volume. The author is very sympathetic to blacks and positive in characterizing the black family. Recommended reading for grades four through six.

Ruth Hooker, a non-black writer, wrote *Kennaquhair* in 1976. This science fiction begins as two boys meet along the road and walk slowly until they meet five more individuals, three girls, a boy, and a man. The man takes them all to his environment and teaches them survival tactics. Toward the end of the story, he draws a picture of the surrounding valley, points out the dangerous areas, tells them to survive for two weeks, and leaves them. He promises to return, but does not. While there is nothing in the context of the narrative that is distinctly black the illustrations reflect black children, one girl and one boy. The story itself teaches good lessons, and even though one will not desire for youngsters to wander in this manner, the story shows how they meet and get along together.

Another positive book written in 1976 by William H. Hooks, a non-black writer, is entitled *The 17 Gerbils of Class 4A*, an excellent story about gerbils as pets. This story, written as an undisguised lesson in gerbil behavior and care, and involving a math puzzle as three co-owners attempt to divide the seventeen gerbils among themselves. Rogue Johnson is the owner of the pets, and before he leaves for California he tries to work out a formula in order to
divide his pets equally between his three friends. He writes a will and a problem which solves the whole puzzle. Any facts on gerbils which could not be included in the main story are appended in the end under the title "More Facts from Chris's Science Notebook on Gerbils". Hooks' humorous, contemporary style is highly illustrated throughout the book.

The last non-black writer selected for inclusion of books for this study is Betty Miles. The story, All It Takes Is Practice, published in 1976, centers around Stuart Wilson, a shy ten-year-old boy who practices basketball at home after school. Stuart worries about not having a friend other than the one buddy, Alison, a girl, who lives next door and plays basketball well also, Stuart finally develops a friendship with a new classmate, Peter Baker, son of an interracial couple. After they move into the neighborhood, Stu discovers that Mrs. Baker is black. The boys are beaten up by three bullies from the high school because of this bi-racial friendship. Meanwhile, a fun night of trick-or-treating brings Alison and Stuart closer together as girlfriend and boyfriend because they discover they really like one another. The story is a light, easy going story with a warm friendship of love and understanding. The characters are portrayed as positive and their attitudes and feelings are very positive. A very recommendable story for grades four through six.

-56-
Some definite changes did occur with regard to black representation in children's books for grades four through six written during the 1970's as compared to the 1960's. As stated earlier, the 1970's reflect books equally distributed by black and non-black authors. The narratives reflect a change in content, style and plot and most of the stories are recommendable reading for the level selected for this study. From conclusions and analysis of the books written in the 1970's, there are only three really stereotyped, negative, un-appealing stories written, and these are written by non-black authors. From the list of black stories by black authors, three stories seem to be negative narratives because one is far-fetched, another story leads a person on as the climax never takes place, and the third one is guilty of redundancy and capitalizing on the earlier books.

On the whole, the books written in 1971, 1972, 1974, 1975 and 1976 are good stories to which children in grades four through six should have access. The years 1970 and 1973 are omitted from this study because the bibliographies used as a basis for book selection did not include any titles for these years. The list of books included in this study are a select group published in the 1970's. During this period, definite improvements are seen in types, as well as numbers, of books that have been published.

Most of the fictional works published during the 1970's
show a wide variety of literary content, but have positive images of blacks. Of the thirty-four books selected for inclusion in this study, at least twenty-three titles have positive images of blacks. These include realistic stories utilizing black boys and black girls as main characters. Examples are: *Sister*, *Peaches*, *Sidewalk Story*, *The Hundred Penny Box*, *New Life*, *New Room*, *Song of the Trees*, *Return to South Town*, *Ludell*, *Roll of Thunder*, *Hear My Cry*, and *Fast Sam*, *Cool Clyde and Stuff*.

Some of the stories portray interracial situations as main themes and include such titles as *Somebody Go* and *Bang A Drum*, *All It Takes Is Practice*, *When the Sad One Comes To Stay*, and *Thank You, Jackie Robinson*.

Only eight show real negative images of blacks in the 1970's. In *Sugar Bee*, the word "ugly" appears in relation to Stephanie Harris' life in her surroundings. The illustrations in *The Times They Used To Be* show real stereotyped pictures of black women, however, the story is warm and humorous.

Five stories have fantasy and imaginary themes. *Kennaquhair* is an example of science fiction fantasy. *Duey's Tale* is an allegory tale of inanimate objects talking about what most people think of themselves as ordinary. Imagination is seen in the strange happenings in the story *A Long Day in November* especially when a man burns his car because some "hoo-doo" woman said to do so. No one has ever planted a huge tree in a neighborhood, and in *A Tree*
for Tompkins Park, the story is artificial and fails to show a true story. In *The Times They Used to Be* this monolog goes back to the "olden days" and relates what happens to a woman in her younger days.

Many of the titles deal with racial relations at home and at school. Examples are: *The Integration of Mary-Larkin Thornehill*, *Linda's Rain Tree*, *Ludell, Iggie's House*, *Children of Night*, and *All It Takes Is Practice*. Stories of love, pride and acceptance include *The Ebony Tree* and *the Spirit of Christmas*, *New Life*, *New Room* (also a story with strong family ties), and *Roll of Thunder Hear My Cry*. True friendship built with love, self-pride and acceptance include *Myer's Fast Sam*, *Cool Clyde and Stuff*. Along with showing love, pride and acceptance physical survival is reflected in *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* which won the Newbery Award in 1977. The realistic story of *Song of the Trees* shows a love of nature and a sense of self-respect.

The historical settings of many of the books of the 1970's include the Revolution War, stories set in Africa and in Harlem, slavery and Civil War stories and stories set in rural and ghetto areas of the United States. Science fiction, fantasy and imaginative stories are included. There are more positive realistic books presented even though a few negative images still prevail. The list covers a wide range of subject matter for boys as well as girls. There are twenty-three realistic stories
with black images and about eleven with negative, unrealistic stories.
CHAPTER IV

AVAILABILITY OF SELECTED TITLES IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN THE ATLANTA PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

If librarians or educators are to make use of stories with black characters available to the audience for whom they are in contact it is imperative that each one of them include books available with unbiased realistic black characterizations. The lack of these kinds of materials for ages nine to eleven in the schools previously is due to librarians' selections rather than to a lack of funds. The adults are to guide what is to be appreciated by children and young people, and the degree to which the librarian or educators develop in these readers an appreciation for black stories will depend on them to a certain extent.

The purpose of this study is to research this development and evaluate books written during the later 1960's and the 1970's. In order to accomplish this purpose, a select group of sixty-three books, was chosen for critical evaluation (see Appendix A). In addition, lists of these

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Margaret Walker, private interview held by telephone from the State Department of Education, October 19, 1979.
sixty-three titles were sent to the ninety-five elementary schools in the Atlanta Public School System to investigate how many of these books are included in their school library collections (see Appendix A). Forty-four responded, less than one-half of the total. Of these, only three schools reported having over half of the sixty-three books in their collections (see Table 1). In the Atlanta Public School System Selection List, for ordering books, fifty-eight titles are included.

In evaluating returned surveys, (see Figure 1), *Sounder* (William Armstrong, 1969) the winner of the esteemed Newbery Award in 1970, is the most popular title, being included in all forty-four schools. The movie production of the novel could be a strong influencing factor. However, most librarians have included all the Newbery and Caldecott Award Books in their collections.

The second and third most popular titles held in the collections of as many as forty-two schools are *Renfroe's Christmas*, 1968 and *Queenie Peavy*, 1966, both written by Robert Burch, a native Georgian. The inclusion of books by a Georgia writer in the school library collections could account for this factor.

Tied for fourth place in popularity are *A Wonderful Terrible Time* (Mary Stolz, 1967) and *The Empty Schoolhouse* (Natalie Savage Carlson, 1965). The former is a positive portrayal of fun at a summer camp and the lifestyles of a
child in summer. The latter contains stereotyped writing which uses labels to identify characters and makes no effort to omit such terminology as "black" and "white". However, the effort is a book about blacks and school segregation, which was a popular issue in 1965 due to the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Most of the thirty-seven respondents who included this book in their collections are black with the exception of three.

The fifth popular book on the list is Zeely (Virginia Hamilton, 1967) with thirty-four schools including it in their collections. This book written by a black writer, relates the present time in America to African culture and is an excellent addition to a school library collection.

Next ranking in popularity in a tie for sixth place, with thirty-three schools including them in their holdings are D. J.'s Worst Enemy (Robert Burch, 1965, and Dead End School (Robert Coles, 1968). Burch's novel is full of love, warmth, and sharing, and creates a favorable image of rural life in the minds of young readers interested in adventure and fun on a farm. Cole's effort describes a stereotyped family picture, delineates busing of black children far from home to a white school, and paints a dreary word picture. From the forty-four schools responding, six were white and both of these novels are in their holdings.

The last three schools to be included in the top twenty-five percentile of respondents as being most popular
books are: **Mystery of the Fat Cat** (Frank Bonham, 1968), **Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry** (Mildred Taylor, 1976) and **The Toothpaste Millionaire** (Jean Merrill, 1974). All three of these books are good narratives that reflect positive images.

Of the top twenty-five per cent, most of the books were published in the 1960's. Only the last two were written in the 1970's. The reason for the scarcity of books published in the 1970's being found in the schools responding to the titles included in Appendix A could be the quality of the selection list used by the librarians in the Atlanta Public School System or the limited budgets at the time. There was also a deluge of books written during the 1960's. Some authors attempted to cash in on the sudden demand and to take advantage of the Title II ESEA Federal Funding Program which set aside monies for this purpose. The efforts of Mrs. Dorothy Blake in organizing a selection list for facilitation of purchasing and her inclusion of a wealth of these materials in the list made for better choices of quality material.29

In Table 1, is included a list of the sixty-three books with the number of schools that include the titles in their holdings. Contained in the Table is the total number of books found in each school, reflecting six schools with holdings of at least twenty of the sixty-three titles

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29 Dorothy Blake, private interview held in her office at Instructional Service Center, Atlanta Public Schools, October 15, 1979.
and five schools having sixteen. A strong effort is being made to encourage every school media center to increase its collection and acquire as many of the positive books as possible.³⁰ A list of the books critiqued in this study, is being sent to each school. These titles which qualify in fulfilling this goal, are starred with an asterisk (see Appendix B).
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<th>Title</th>
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FIGURE I

The Most Popular Titles in the Elementary School Media Centers of the Atlanta School System

- The Toothpaste Millionaire
- Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry
- Mystery of the Fat Cat
- Dead End School
- D. J.'s Worst Enemy
- Zeely
- The Empty Schoolhouse
- A Wonderful Terrible Time
- Queenie Peavy
- Renfroe's Christmas
- Sounder

-70-
CHAPTER V

The image of black people that emerges from the selected number of books analyzed in this study does reflect a high degree of reality in terms of the way society operates during the years in which these titles were published. Society dictates the content and society reads what they know is real at that particular time. During the 1960's the black representation reflects segregation, home lifestyles, church orientations, school-goers in the settings with poor resistive experiences, and relates to the times. The 1960 stories are often negatively written and the endings sad. However, some of the stories are the perfect story for the black image but are contrived in their portrayals of blacks.

During the 1970's, a definite change did occur in reference to the content of the books examined in this study. During this period, the black image delineates stories favorable in reflecting black images. The black writers are better represented in the publishing world, and their writings express a positive viewpoint depicting blacks as opposed to the white society. Their portrayals are an explication of the uniqueness of blacks instead of an imitation of the white society in order to gain acceptance
of their efforts.

To fully comprehend the dynamics, complexities and vitality of the black experience, children should have vicarious exposure to experiences and traditions that constitute a distinctive, cohesive life-style. To live in the contemporary society and see this society realistically, a positive image should be reflected in the books that are used in a child's early reading experiences. Children in grades four through six usually read and comprehend well, therefore, a book should be effective at this level. Their understanding of the historical experiences and heritage, the socialization processes, communication styles, interaction patterns, values, feelings and attitudes, cultural life-style, and the sense of identification in social, religious and educational experiences should be considered in determining the types of books they read.

Young people of elementary school age are impressionable. Some of the writers of black books are doing their readers and society a disservice. By being prejudiced and/or bigoted in their writings and in the verbal pictures they paint, these authors are creating imprints leading to feelings of racism, and compounding attitudes of antagonism to already existing problems which the thinking population is trying to overcome and solve.

The major problem with most of the black books published is that they personalize the race issue instead
of recognizing it as the social-economic-political problem it is. Black people are not homogenous in their philosophies, lifestyles, emotions or attitudes, and therefore do not have united points of view on any one subject. Perhaps most important of all, blacks must be seen as human beings leading "normal" lives who are entitled to the same rights and privileges as are accorded non-black persons. Neither black nor white children need the books that create racists and problems because of their color. When racism is institutionalized, a child is limited insofar as to the values, actions, and changes he or she can develop.

There is an open market for books which contain unbiased pictures of black life and experiences. There is a need for better evaluation of what has been and is being published in book form. Racial integration alone cannot foster better human relations as it attempts to create improvement in communication and interaction between races. At the core of this, school librarians need to present a balanced, well-rounded, unprejudiced, fair representation of the black spirit and soul.

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31 Dorothy M. Broderick, op. cit., p. 179.
APPENDIX A

LETTER SENT TO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LIBRARIANS IN THE ATLANTA PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

September 26, 1979

To: Librarian
From: Marjorie Smith
Subject: Bibliography Involving Black Characterization in Children's Literature

I am presently doing research at Atlanta University involving the characterization of Blacks in literature for children in grades four through six. I would appreciate it if you would take a few minutes of your time and check each title on the attached list that you have in your collection in your school library. Please return the lists to me at Roosevelt High School via school mail as soon as possible.

Thank you in advance for helping me in this venture.

Sincerely,

Marjorie Smith, Media Specialist
Roosevelt High School
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Publication Year</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Duey's Tale</td>
<td>Bailey, Pearl</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>Harcourt Brace, Jovanovich, N. Y.</td>
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<td>Cockleburr Quarters</td>
<td>Baker, Charlotte</td>
<td>1972</td>
<td>Prentice-Hale</td>
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<td>Iggie's House</td>
<td>Blume, Judy</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>Dell, N. Y.</td>
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<td>Mystery of the Fat Cat</td>
<td>Bonham, Frank</td>
<td>1968</td>
<td>Dutton, N. Y.</td>
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<td>Nitty Gritty</td>
<td>Bonham, Frank</td>
<td>1968</td>
<td>Dutton, N. Y.</td>
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<td>D. J.'s Worst Enemy</td>
<td>Burch, Robert</td>
<td>1965</td>
<td>Viking, N. Y.</td>
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<td>Queenie Peavy</td>
<td>Burch, Robert</td>
<td>1966</td>
<td>Viking, N. Y.</td>
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<td>Renfroe's Christmas</td>
<td>Burch, Robert</td>
<td>1968</td>
<td>Viking, N. Y.</td>
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<td>Bimby</td>
<td>Burchard, Peter</td>
<td>1968</td>
<td>Coward-McCann, N. Y.</td>
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<td>The Empty Schoolhouse</td>
<td>Carlson, Natalie Savage</td>
<td>1965</td>
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<td>Marchers For the Dream</td>
<td>Carlson, Natalie Savage</td>
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<td>Ann Aurelia &amp; Dorothy</td>
<td>Carlson, Natalie Savage</td>
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<td>Somebody Go and Bang a Drum</td>
<td>Caudill, Rebecca</td>
<td>1974</td>
<td>Dutton, N. Y.</td>
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<td>No Arm in Left Field</td>
<td>Christopher, Matt</td>
<td>1974</td>
<td>Little Brown, Boston</td>
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<td>The Times They Used to Be</td>
<td>Clifton, Lucille</td>
<td>1974</td>
<td>Holt, Rinehart &amp; Winston</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Publisher</td>
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<td>19.</td>
<td>Coles, Robert</td>
<td>Dead End School</td>
<td>1968 Little Brown, N. Y.</td>
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<td>22.</td>
<td>Evans, Mari</td>
<td>J. D.</td>
<td>1975 Avon</td>
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<td>23.</td>
<td>Fall, Thomas</td>
<td>Canal Boat to Freedom</td>
<td>1966 Dian, N. Y.</td>
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<td>25.</td>
<td>Graham, Lorenz</td>
<td>North Town</td>
<td>1965 Crowell, N. Y.</td>
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<td>28.</td>
<td>Green, Robert W.</td>
<td>The Ebony Tree and the Spirit of Christmas</td>
<td>1975 Exposition</td>
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<td>Heide, Florence Parry</td>
<td>When the Sad One Comes to Stay</td>
<td>1975 Lippincott, Pa</td>
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<td>Hooker, Ruth</td>
<td>Kennaquhair</td>
<td>1976 Abingdon, Nashville</td>
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<td>McCannon, Dindga</td>
<td>Peaches</td>
<td>1974 Lothrop, N. Y.</td>
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<td>38.</td>
<td>Mathis, Sharon Bell</td>
<td>The Hundred Penny Box</td>
<td>1975 Viking, N. Y.</td>
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39. Mathis, Sharon Bell

40. Merrill, Jean

41. Micklish, Rita

42. Miles, Betty

43. Morse, Evangeline F.

44. Murray, Michelle

45. Myers, Walter Dean

46. Neufeld, John

47. Norris, Guilla

48. Schatz, Letta

49. Shotwell, Louisa R.

50. Slote, Alfred

51. Stolz, Mary

52. Stuart, Morna

53. Taylor, Mildred D.

54. Taylor, Mildred D.

55. Thomas, Dawn C.

56. Vroman, Mary E.

57. Waldron, Ann

Sidewalk Story 1971
Viking, N. Y.

The Toothpaste Millionaire 1974
Houghton-Mifflin, Boston

Sugar Bee 1972
Delacorte, N.Y.

All It Takes is Practice 1976
Knopf

Brown Rabbit: Her Story 1967
Follett, Chicago

Nellie Cameron 1971
Seabury, N. Y.

Fast Sam, Cool Clyde and Stuff 1975
Viking Press

Edgar Allan 1968
Phillips

Good Morrow 1969
Atheneum, N. Y.

Bola and the Oba's Drummers 1967
McGraw

Adam Bookout 1967
Viking, N.Y.

Jake 1971

A Wonderful Terrible Time 1967
Harper, N. Y.

Marassa and Midnight 1968
McGraw, N. Y.

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry 1976
Dial, N. Y.

Song of the Trees 1975
Dial, N. Y.

Tree for Tompkins Park 1971
McGraw, N. Y.

Harlem Summer 1968
Berkley, N. Y.

The Integration of Mary-Larkin Thornehill 1975
Dutton

-77-
<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Title</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
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<td>58</td>
<td>Walter, Mildred Pitts</td>
<td>Lillie of Watts</td>
<td>1969</td>
<td>Ward Ritchie</td>
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<td>59</td>
<td>Weik, Mary Hays</td>
<td>The Jazz Man</td>
<td>1966</td>
<td>Atheneum</td>
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<td>60</td>
<td>White, Edgar</td>
<td>Children of Night</td>
<td>1974</td>
<td>Lothrop, N. J.</td>
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<td>61</td>
<td>Wier, Ester</td>
<td>Easy Does It</td>
<td>1965</td>
<td>Vanguard, N. Y.</td>
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<td>62</td>
<td>Wilkinson, Brenda</td>
<td>Ludell</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>Harper N. Y.</td>
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<td>63</td>
<td>Williamson, Mel &amp; Ford, George</td>
<td>Walk On</td>
<td>1972</td>
<td>Third Press, N. Y.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B

A CHECKLIST OF FORTY-ONE BOOKS WITH POSITIVE IMAGES

1. Armstrong, William
2. Baker, Charlotte
3. Blume, Judy
4. Burch, Robert
5. Burch, Robert
6. Burch, Robert
7. Burchard, Peter
8. Caudill, Rebecca
9. Clifton, Lucille
10. Cohen, Barbara
11. Corbett, Scott
12. Erwin, Betty K.
13. Fall, Thomas
14. Gaines, Ernest
15. Graham, Lorenz
16. Green, Robert
17. Greenfield, Eloise
18. Hamilton, Virginia
19. Hamilton, Virginia
20. Heide, Florence Parry
21. Hooker, Ruth

Sounder, 1969.
Cockleburr Quarters, 1972.
Iggie's House, 1976.
Queenie Peavy, 1966.
Renfroe's Christmas, 1968
Bimby, 1968.
Somebody Go and Bang a Drum, 1974.
The Times They Used to Be, 1974.
The Hockey Trick, 1974.
Behind the Magic Line, 1969.
North Town, 1965.
The Ebony Tree and The Spirit of Christmas, 1975.
Sister, 1974.
The Time-Ago Tales of Jahdu, 1969.
Zeely, 1967.
When the Sad One Comes to Stay, 1975.
Kennaquhair, 1976.
24. Mathis, Sharon Bell The Hundred Penny Box, 1975.
25. Mathis, Sharon Bell Sidewalk Story, 1971
27. Miles, Betty All It Takes is Practice, 1976.
33. Stuart, Morna Marassa and Midnight, 1968
Bibliography

Books


Journals


-81-

Chall, Jeanne; Radwin, Eugene; French, Valerie W.; and Hall, Cynthia R. "Blacks in the World of Children's Books". *The Reading Teacher*, vol. 32 (February, 1979), 527-33.


Taylor, Mildred. "Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry". *Booklist*, vol. 73, no. 3, (October 1, 1976), 257.

Other Sources

Blake, Dorothy. Private interview held in her office at the Instructional Service Center, Atlanta Public Schools, Atlanta, Georgia, October 15, 1979.

Walker, Margaret. Private interview held by telephone from the State Department of Education, Atlanta, Georgia.