

Responses/Réponses

In response to *CCL* issue No. 37, which emphasized sexual stereotyping in children's books, I would like to bring to your readers' attention a German book, *About smart little Peter and dull little Anna* [my translation]. In *Vom pffiffigen Peter und der faden Anna*, published in 1986 by Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, a reputable Frankfurt publishing firm, in a series called "Woman in society", Astrid Matthiae, a feminist scientist, analyses modern picture books for children, by German, Italian, French, British, Swedish, Dutch, American, Danish and Swiss writers. No mention is made of Canadian books. Matthiae offers a consciousness-raising book for writers, publishers, and book buyers, a manual for the detection of overt and not so overt sexism; I wished we had something similar in Canada!

In order to determine whether books avoid gender stereotypes, Matthiae asks the following questions:

- Who plays the main role within the happening, a male or a female being?
- In group scenes, how many people are male, how many are female?
- Which are the characteristics of females/or males?
- What are the occupations, games, of boys and girls? Which are their surroundings?
- Who has ideas, initiatives, who succeeds in his/her endeavours?
- What are the relationships of male/female figures with objects and with living beings?
- What personal relationships do male/female figures have?
- Are they alone or most often in company of others?
- Do boys/girls act the same, whether alone or in company of the same or the other sex?
- Which forms of family or community life are being depicted?
- Do male and female figures have equally pronounced personalities?
- In the case of books with sex educational aspects: are male and female sexual organs shown with the same degree of openness and in a positive way?
- Can this picture book be a source of encouragement for girls?
- Does it facilitate, for boys, the leave-taking from the eternal hero?

Astrid Matthiae is a hydro-biologist who now works, with scientific precision, in the women's and ecology movements in the Federal Republic of Germany.

There must be a good number of Canadian children's books, in French or in English, which would satisfy Matthiae's requirements. Someone should bring such books to the attention of researchers and activists outside Canada. Canadian children's books of today deserve to be better known abroad.

Marguerite Andersen.

Request for Information

With the support of a grant from the SSHRCC Strategic Grants Program on Women and Work, I am compiling a bio-bibliographical research guide on English-Canadian women authors of fiction and poetry active before 1939. I would like to hear about obscure resources relating to the life and work of any woman writer of the period, such as unlisted archival holdings, papers or correspondence in private hands, materials held by local historical societies or foreign repositories, and significant student research projects or theses. I would also be interested in hearing from other researchers in the area, with a view to coordinating our efforts. All replies and assistance will be gratefully acknowledged.

Carole Gerson
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A reader writes:

Don't look for my renewal of *Canadian Children's Literature*. Since you have invited comments on my notice I am enumerating them here. . .

Out of 96 pages [in issue No. 41], 47 of them are in English. Not being bilingual, I am unable to benefit from the multicultural thrust the magazine persists in pursuing.

The editors comment: No. 41 was designed to be a special issue on Quebec. As it happened, most of the francophone writers turned out to be less interested in regionalism, and more interested in general topics, particularly fantasy. Our object in running the French material is to aid French immersion teachers, and also to issue a genuinely national Canadian magazine.

Call for papers

The Children's Popular Culture Caucus will organize sessions at the annual meeting of the American Culture Association in Montreal from March 25 through March 29, 1987.

Presentations are welcomed on various aspects of children's popular culture: toys, games, television, movies, comics, radio, clothing, folklore, languages, and literature. Papers on Maurice Sendak, psychocultural criticism of children's literature, and the role of the adult in children's culture are especially sought for this meeting. PCA encourages interdisciplinary approaches and the use of visual media in its presentation, which should be 15 to 20 minutes long. Deadline for paper or 200-word abstract is September 1, 1986. Submit material to Kathy

Merlock Jackson, Theatre/Communications, Virginia Wesleyan College, Wesleyan Drive, Norfolk, VA 23502.

En mai 1986, la revue *Vidéo-Press* faisait ses quinze années d'existence. Et pour marquer l'occasion, *Vidéo-Press* lance le concours Nouvelle-Jeunesse 1986. Ce concours littéraire est organisé pour stimuler la création dans notre milieu. Chaque nouvelle de 7 à 10 pages, en deux exemplaires, signés uniquement d'un pseudonyme, doit parvenir à la revue avant le 30 septembre 1986, à l'adresse suivante: Nouvelle-Jeunesse 1986, Vidéo-Press, 3965, boul. Henri-Bourassa est, Montréal (Québec) H1H 1L1.

A Contest:

An International Children's Fiction Contest has been called by Greenwood Books, Canada, Gyldendal Publishers, Denmark, Råben & Sjörgren, Sweden, Det Norske Forlag, Norway and Editora Miguilin, Brazil to stimulate the writing and sales of high-quality juvenile fiction.

ELIGIBILITY: (Author) Any individual who is either a Canadian citizen or a landed immigrant; (Book) A juvenile novel, based on a real-life situation, for children between nine and twelve, no shorter than 120 manuscript pp. and no longer than 220 manuscript pp.

THE PRIZE: An award of \$5,000. Publication by Greenwood Books in the Fall of 1987. Publication by the other participating publishers no later than the Fall of 1988. An advance of \$5,000.00 against Canadian royalties, and \$750.00 against each of the other publishers' royalties. A trip to the Bologna Children's Book Fair in April 1987, where the winner will be announced.

JURY: Sarah Ellis, Librarian, author and Horn Book columnist on Canadian books. Michele Landsberg Columnist, author of *Michele Landsberg's Guide to Children's Books*. Perry Nodelman, Professor of Children's Literature and editor of *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*.

PUBLICATION: Greenwood Books will have the option to publish any of the manuscripts submitted. The option must be taken up and a contract, acceptable to the author, issued by October 1987.

HOW TO ENTER: A clean, double-spaced manuscript must be received by Greenwood Books at 26 Lennox Street, 3rd Floor, Toronto, Ontario, M6G 1J4, no later than the 31st day of December, 1986. The winner will be announced at the Bologna Book Fair on April 5, 1987.

RETURN OF ENTRIES: Entrants who wish their work returned must submit a stamped self-addressed envelop. Otherwise the manuscript will be destroyed at the end of the contest. Address any queries to Kelly Mitchell, (416) 537-2501, 26 Lennox Street, 3rd Floor, Toronto, Ontario, M6G 1J4.

Awards:

**Julie*, by Cora Taylor, published by Western Producer Prairie Books, has been awarded the 1986 Canadian Library Association Book of the Year for Children Award.

*Ken Nutt, illustrator of *Zoom away*, written by Tim Wynn-Jones and published by Groundwood Books, will receive the 1986 Amelia Frances Howard-Gibbon Illustrator's Award.

*Author/storyteller Robert Munsch and illustrator Michael Martchenko have won the 1986 Ruth Schwartz Children's Book Award for *Thomas' snowsuit*. Mr. Munsch and Mr. Martchenko will split the \$2,000 award.

*The Book Award Committee of the Young Adult Caucus of the Saskatchewan Library Association is happy to announce that *The Quarter-Pie window* (Porcupine's Quill, 1985) by Marianne Brandis has been named winner of the 1986 Young Adult Canadian Book Award.

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