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The cover design, from Robert Munsch's The Boy in The Drawer, is by Michael Martchenko, and is reproduced courtesy of Annick Press Ltd.



Editorial: Dark Realism

The anarchic child on our cover is Michael Martchenko's illustration of the latest of Bob Munsch's stories. (*The Paper Bag Princess*, who announced to her supercilious prince, "You are a toad!" was till now our favourite among Munsch's marvellously disruptive children.) The theme of disruption emerges in several ways in this issue. Dennis Lee, says Perry Nodelman, catches the voices of childhood anarchy. Cory Bieman Davies traces a quieter disruption of traditional values in Barbara Smucker's *Days of Terror*. Gary Paterson suggests the historic sources of the growth of "dark realism" in books for children, and raises general questions about its value. Several of our reviewers also note modern concern with the darker elements of children's experience – divorce, confusing changes in traditional roles, the impact of war and of persecution. The whole question of "dark reality" – the presentation in children's books of violent and distressing scenes, or of violence and rebellion within the child's own psyche – is an urgent issue for writers, parents, teachers, librarians, and publishers.