

History of Reading News

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NANCY LARRICK TELLS OF EARLY YEARS AT IRA

By Nancy Larrick

I came into the International Reading Association via one of its parent organizations, the ICIRI (International Council for the Improvement of Reading Instruction), which I had joined in 1949. That was the year Nila Banton Smith became president of ICIRI, and shortly thereafter, she asked me to chair the Publications Committee and edit *The Bulletin of the International Council for the Improvement of Reading Instruction*. Now, some 45 years later, I marvel that Nila Smith turned to me--and even more, that I had the courage to take on such a job.

At that time I was editing a group of children's classroom magazines, the *Young America Readers*, and shortly went on to become associate editor of children's books at Random House. I had been a classroom teacher in my home town in Virginia, with a bachelor's and master's degrees in English literature, but no education with a capital E.

In the ICIRI I found myself working with the giants in the field of the teaching of reading. They were from the great universities and reading clinics. I soon learned that many of these people were creators of the basal reader series I had heard of but never used. My experience had also been with books and children's reading. I had lived and worked with such popular trade books as *The Black Stallion* by Walter Farley, *All About Dinosaurs* by Roy Chapman Andrews, and *Ballet Shoes* by Noel Streatfield. I knew Dr. Seuss but not Dr. Gates and Dr. Gray.

The welcome and support I had from these greats of the reading field was marvelous. Even on short notice, Dr. Gray, Dr. Witty, Dr. Sheldon and others would send me an article for the ICIRI *Bulletin*, or give me their reaction to a new proposal. I couldn't have had more generous cooperation.

My first issue of the *Bulletin* (October 1950), like its predecessors, was mimeographed on 8 1/2 x 11 sheets, hand stapled. Not very classy looking, but it brought favorable comments, nonetheless.

But the title worried us. "The Bulletin of the International Council for the Improvement of Reading Instruction" sounded too formal, too distant. Certainly not reader-friendly for the classroom teachers we hoped to reach. I suggested we make it simpler, more personal, and just call it *The Reading Teacher*. The Board approved, and the new title was used for the first time on the issue of September 1951. It was well received and has been used ever since.

At the same time we were struggling to work our way up from office mimeographing to office multilith and finally on September 1952, to what we called "real printing." Now instead of the standard office paper size (8 1/2 x 11), we went to a 6 x 9 page with two columns, still with self-cover. The issue of May 1953 showed a giant step forward--



Nancy Larrick

we had a lemon yellow cover imprinted in black and were ecstatic!

By 1953, *The Reading Teacher* seemed to be well established as a professional journal to read and to watch. But I found myself at the crossroads. I was holding down a demanding editorial job at Random House. At the same time I was trying to write the dissertation for my EdD at NYU, and always I had *The Reading Teacher* assignments hanging over me! Time was running out at NYU, so rather than take an ABD and be stuck with it for life, I resigned as editor of *The Reading Teacher* in May 1954, and pushed through my dissertation to graduate in June 1955.

By the end of 1955, the International Council for the Improvement of Reading Instruction (ICIRI) merged with the National Association for Remedial Teaching (NART) to form the International Reading Association (IRA). *The Reading Teacher* became the official publication of the new organization.

As might be expected, the IRA built on several significant principles established in the early years of the two parent organizations. One of these dealt with membership. Who would be eligible to join the IRA? In 1952, the assembly of the ICIRI had removed from its statement of purpose the wording that limited its services to "all English-speaking people." Officially it became a multi-

lingual organization. From the beginning, the IRA was established to serve people of all languages and all nations. However, questions arose when state and local councils sought affiliation with the new IRA. One state reading council admitted only white members. A county reading council in another state restricted membership to remedial reading specialists. Classroom teachers, librarians, authors, editors, and parents were ineligible.

From the beginning, several influential ICIRI members were African Americans. Many were classroom teachers, parents, authors, and librarians. Without hesitation the board of the new IRA declared what might be called an Open Door policy: Anyone interested in the improvement of reading would be welcomed as a member regardless of race, nationality, language, or professional training. Affiliated reading councils, such as those of state and county, would be expected to maintain this Open Door policy as well.

It was a momentous decision for that period--just two years after the Supreme Court had ruled racial segregation in public schools to be unconstitutional. I don't recall anyone raising objections to the Board's ruling, but several segregated groups seeking affiliation were told firmly that they would have to mend their ways to be part of the IRA. I do recall, however, that the Board was vigilant in its determination to see that non-white members would receive full privileges of membership. Several years later when it was proposed that the annual IRA conference be scheduled in a previously segregated city, questions were raised. Would our non-white members be welcomed in the hotels and restaurants? Would taxi drivers serve them courteously?

Months in advance of that national conference, the IRA president visited the site to meet with local committee members as well as representatives of hotel, restaurant and taxi associates to win assurance that all IRA delegates would be received with the same Open Door hospitality. Their pledge was given, and no violations were reported. I have always been very proud of that IRA president's vigilance.

The first annual conference of the IRA was held in Chicago on May 11, 1956, at the old Morris Hotel. The organization was in its infancy (only four months and eleven days old). Mailing lists were still in a state of chaos. The organization was operating from one corner of Don Cleland's desk at the University of Pittsburgh.

Despite these valid reasons for postponing this first meeting, Dr. William S. Gray, the first president, insisted that we must have a national conference in the Spring of 1956 and publish the proceedings of its various sessions. His determination was unshakable.

Dr. Gray recruited students and colleagues of the University of Chicago who hand-addressed announcements, processed registration, worked out hotel plans, scheduled speakers, invited exhibitors and helped them set up. Facilities were arranged for 1,000 registrants. More than 2,000 showed up. Major speakers gave their presentations twice to accommodate the crowds. An air of excitement and enthusiasm prevailed.

The International Reading Association was a winner! And it was Dr. Gray who did it--steadily pushing ahead, insisting we take risks to meet brave goals and then making it happen. But the stunning success of that first conference did not wipe out the disturbing facts we had to face. Our

office was in chaos because of lack of space and lack of money. In the first six months we had incurred a deficit (something like \$6,000, I think, which seemed much bigger in 1956 than it does in 1996). This distressed Dr. Gray, who was a meticulous business man. He proposed that he write a personal check to cover that figure. Members of the Board protested. He insisted. Then I pointed out that this would set a bad precedent--certainly not one I could face as the incoming president. This time Dr. Gray gave in to the Board.

We were still faced with Dr. Gray's determination to publish the proceedings of that first IRA conference. But publication costs money which we didn't have. I proposed that we turn to two publishers of reading materials for children: *Scholastic Magazines* and *My Weekly Reader* and ask for their support. Scholastic gave an immediate and affirmative reply. Their president, Maurice Robinson, and their editor-in-chief, Jack Lippert, both good friends of mine, offered a generous proposal: If the IRA would do all of the editing and proofreading, Scholastic would design the book and handle all production detail and costs. Both IRA and Scholastic would advertise the book; Scholastic would fill the orders. In case of a deficit, Scholastic agreed to absorb it. If there was a profit, it would be turned over to the IRA. And there was a profit! This generous arrangement, which continued for a number of years, was a lifesaver for the IRA.

Immediately after the first IRA Conference in 1956, we began work on the 1957 conference to be held in New York City. As the new president, I had to plan and implement the program. Dr. Albert Harris, the President Elect, was responsible for advertising, registration, hotel space, exhibits, and finances. With both of us in New York, we could confer easily and frequently--and we did. No one could have been a more gracious and efficient partner than Bert Harris. I knew then that I was very lucky.

Immediately after that first annual conference, Dr. Gray was urging me to get the program lined up for 1957. I was overwhelmed by the prospect and appealed to him for suggestions. One day as we crossed Fifth Avenue on our way to a restaurant in New York, he tossed me a challenge I could not resist: "Call on your friends in the publishing world," he said. "Make use of your contacts here in New York, and make your unique contribution."

So I turned to friends at the Children's Book Council and the National Book Committee. I conferred with children's librarians and, of course, my colleagues at NYU, where I had taught on occasion and had earned my doctorate. Each suggestion seemed to spark another. As excitement grew I began to wonder if these proposals would be well received by the rank and file of the reading teachers. Were we going too far with our innovations?

I needed advice. So I invited twelve or fifteen prominent IRA members in the New York area to meet with me one evening at Random House, then located in the magnificent old Villard mansion back of St. Patrick's Cathedral. We met in the imposing office of the Random House president, Bennet Cerf, then an extremely popular TV commentator. (His large and luscious photo of Marilyn Monroe set us off.) I remember that Jeanne Chall was one of the group as well as Alvina Burrows and Jeanette Veatch of NYU, and Mary Gaver of Rutgers University. Would they be receptive to

program ideas such as these: (1) Bring in Phyllis Fenner, a magical storyteller and school librarian from Manhasset, with a busload of her fourth graders for a classroom session where children became involved in reading through storytelling; (2) Have another classroom session with Ruth Strang leading a group of teenagers in a discussion of books and reading; and (3) For the final session have a Book and Author Luncheon with authors and illustrators of children's books telling of their books.

My advisory panel gave me just what I needed: enthusiastic backing and more ideas. Even the Book and Author Luncheon, which I was fearful would be too much, was heartily endorsed. (When the time came, I got so carried away that I invited four speakers for that luncheon: Marguerite deAngeli, May McNeer and Lynd Ward, and a fourth now forgotten.) The Book and Author Luncheon was well received by 890 guests, and has been repeated at every IRA conference since that first one in 1956.

My early experience as a classroom teacher in Virginia and now my involvement in the production and use of children's literature in the classroom and in the home had strongly influenced my philosophy of education and still does. Yet I soon discovered that publishers exhibiting at those early IRA conferences were not displaying trade books for children. As I visited the exhibits of such firms as Macmillan, Doubleday and Harper, which published both text books and tradebooks for children, I found no trade books on display. Yet these companies were publishing some of the most distinguished gems of children's literature. Why? "Oh, we only exhibit those books for librarians, not teachers. Trade books are in a different division," I was told. It made no sense to me.

At Random House, where I was an editor of children's books, we had many titles which were perfect for classroom reading: *The California Gold Rush*, *The Pony Express*, *Paul Revere's Ride*, and *Custer's Last Stand* on the non-fiction list as well as stories by Noel Streatfield, Walter Farley, and on and on.

Why didn't Random House exhibit these books at such conferences as the IRA? I decided to try my idea on Lew Miller, our sales manager, who took my boss and me to lunch at "The 21 Club" to talk it over. I thought it would be a shoo-in. But, even the atmosphere of "The 21 Club" didn't soften the blow. "Nancy," he said, "you don't buy shoes for baby on the books you sell to schools." The subject was closed.

After attending another season of reading conferences where only textbooks were exhibited, I decided I'd rig up an exhibit table on my own for the next conference in New York. I measured, then shopped for material in Macy's basement and, with the help of my apartment-mate's sewing machine made a pleated table cloth to fit, created posters from color proofs and jackets and was in business--a Random House exhibit without the blessing or the financing of Random House. And it was very popular! I think it was the first exhibit of trade books for children at an IRA conference.

Now at every conference there are many gorgeous professional exhibits of trade books for children. By this time a lot of shoes for baby have been bought on the sale of trade books to schools.

More About Nancy Larrick

Millions of parents know Nancy Larrick for her book, *A Parent's Guide to Children's Books*, first published in 1958, in both hardcover and paperback under the sponsorship of the National Book Committee and 19 national organizations working with children--the PTA, Boys Scouts and Girl Scouts, the NCTE, the IRA, etc. In 1959, it won the Edison Foundation Award as an outstanding contribution to education. The book was completely revised for a second edition (1964), for a third (1969), a fourth (1975), and a fifth (1980), with a total sales of over a million and a quarter copies. This book was a direct outgrowth of her dissertation for her EdD at NYU (1956).

In 1980, she extended her message to parents through a 64-page supermarket rack book: *Encourage Your Child to Read*, published by Dell Purse Books. The first print order was 385,000; reprints brought the total close to a million copies. An updated edition was published by the Trumpet Book Club in 1989.

Children know Nancy Larrick best for the 21 poetry anthologies she has compiled, four of them mass market paperbacks. Teachers know her also for such books as *A Teacher's Guide to Children's Books* (Merrill 1960) and *Let's Do a Poem: Introducing Poetry to Children* (Delacorte 1991).

Nancy Larrick has also written extensively for such periodicals as *Parents' Magazine*, *Publishers Weekly*, *The New York Times*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, *School Library Journal*, *The Instructor*, *Today's Education*, *Childhood Education*, *The Reading Teacher*, *Learning, Language Arts*, *The Phi Delta Kappan*, and *The New Advocate*.

The most significant of her magazine articles appeared in the *Saturday Review* on September 11, 1965: "The All-White World of Children's Books." It reported on a survey of more than 5,000 trade books for children published in the three years 1962-1964, which showed that only 6.7 percent of these books included one or more African Americans. Only 4/5 of one percent told of African Americans today. Now, 30 years since its publication, this article is frequently referred to as pivotal in the development and use of multi-ethnic books for children in the United States.

OF INTEREST TO OUR READERS

Carolyn Larrington, *Women and Writing in Early and Medieval Europe* (New York: Routledge) provides primary source materials including literary and imaginative writing on themes central to medieval women's lives (\$17.95 pb).

Writers of the Eighteenth Century (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995) includes selections from writers such as Olaudah Equiano (\$16.95 pb); and Kevin Robb, *Literacy and Paideia in Ancient Greece* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), discusses the origins of Greek literacy and alliance between literacy and the law, and literacy and education (\$45).

In our next issue look for reviews of Armando Petrucci's *Writers and Readers in Medieval Italy* and Deborah Keller-Cohn, ed., *Literacy: Interdisciplinary Conversations*. This issue will also feature a discussion of Marcius Willson's *School and Family Readers* (1860).

BOOK REVIEW

William Holmes McGuffey: Schoolmaster to the Nation, by Dolores P. Sullivan, Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1994, Pp. 244. \$39.50.

For nearly ten years now I've worked in a building called McGuffey Hall. Outside is a statue of William Holmes McGuffey reading to children. The eight-sided, rotating table on which he compiled his readers is in his home across Spring Street. On the porch is where he is said to have sat with children trying out his stories. Inside is one of the most complete collection of McGuffey readers, spellers, and rhetorics in existence.

In her acknowledgments Dolores Sullivan expresses her gratitude for the "invaluable assistance" from library and museum personnel here and for the information from the collections in McGuffey's home and museum, which is now a National Historic Landmark.

Leaving his family and friends in western Pennsylvania and northeastern Ohio, the 25-year-old arrived here in Oxford, Ohio, in 1826 and began a decade of great productivity. His education up to that point included Latin, Greek, Hebrew, ancient history, and philosophy. When he had no money to buy a needed book, he "copied out the contents of a borrowed volume, word for word, and bound the pages by hand. A copy of William's Hebrew grammar, written painstakingly by hand, is still in the possession of Washington and Jefferson College" (p.44).

Sullivan vividly describes Professor McGuffey's life in Oxford, which at that time was a village of 500 residents. (Today about 10,000 people, excluding the students, live in Oxford.) He arrived with his ten-year-old brother, Alex, who is credited with assisting, years later, with the entire McGuffey series and "responsible entirely for the *Speller* of 1838, and the popular *Fifth Reader*" (p.106). She tells about Professor McGuffey's marriage to Harriet Spining of Dayton, Ohio, and the birth of four of their five children in Oxford.

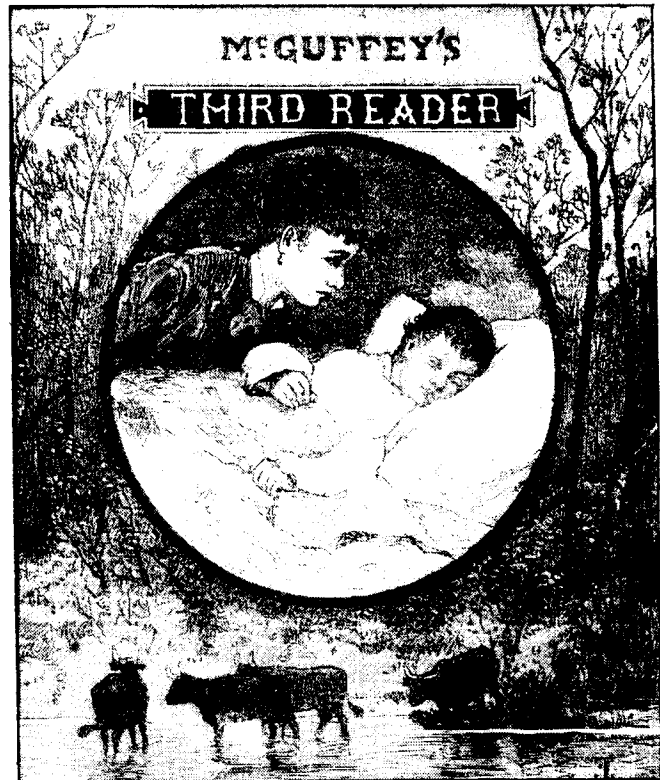
Sullivan also relates his life as a professor who had great expectations for his students and his running battle with Miami University's first president, Robert Hamilton Bishop, who expressed the belief that students should have a say in their governance. Professor McGuffey evidently felt otherwise. Their disagreements extended to courses with Professor McGuffey yearning "for an opportunity to be reassigned (from Latin and Greek) to philosophy and religion courses, taught ably by Dr. Bishop." (p.61).

In 1836, Professor McGuffey quit Miami University to become the president of the newly founded Cincinnati College. As head of Cincinnati College, he is quoted as advising parents not to send their sons to Miami "where it is more likely that they would be made Drunkards and Gamblers than good scholars" (p. 63). The college went bankrupt in the financial panic of 1837. President McGuffey landed on his feet by accepting an offer to be the president of Ohio University located in southeastern Athens, Ohio.

Sullivan details the professional and personal lives of Mr. and Mrs. McGuffey. Their three sons died early in life. The third son, Edward, was born in Cincinnati and died soon after they arrived in Athens. Only their two daughters--Mary

and Henrietta--survived: Mary married Walker Stewart, a physician in Dayton; and Henrietta married Andrew Dousa Hepburn, chair of the English department and for one year president of Miami University.

Before and during their lives in Cincinnati, William was building a prodigious reputation as a teacher, preacher/orator, and writer. His students were in awe of his phenomenal memory and manner in the classroom. He fulfilled his mother's hope (a year after her death) that he become a minister--he was ordained on October 8, 1830, by the Presbytery of Oxford. And in 1836, the year he left Miami University, his *First Reader* and *Second Reader* were published with the other books following shortly.



Seven years later half a million copies of his series were sold. His publishers became millionaires. McGuffey, however, was paid only \$1,000 and, in later years, he was given a barrel of ham each Christmas.

As Sullivan makes clear, McGuffey was not a good businessman. Nor was he an able university administrator. His years as president of Ohio University "were the unhappiest of his life" (p.70). Shortly after arriving in Athens to cope with his despondence over his infant son's death, he planted young elm trees on the campus. This, however, infuriated the villagers because the fenced-in trees prevented their cows from grazing where they used to. From time to time President McGuffey came home caked with mud thrown by the villagers. After four years he had had enough, packed up, and moved the family into his brother Alexander's home in Cincinnati.

During this time Alexander was establishing himself as a lawyer whose home became the social setting of Cincinnati. Friends of the family included the Beechers, whose daughter, Harriet Beecher Stowe, wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and guests included General Tom Thumb. Alexander fathered

fifteen children with his two wives, Elizabeth and Caroline, whom he married two years after Elizabeth's death. His brother, William, taught at Woodward College, a small school in Cincinnati, until he received an invitation to become the Professor of Moral Philosophy at the University of Virginia, where he spent the last twenty-eight years of his life.

In her preface Sullivan tells how she learned the whereabouts of a former colleague, Helen Bair Owen, who had collected McGuffey memorabilia. Sullivan visited her home "on a tree-lined street where all the houses were at least one hundred years old. . . . She led me up the narrow steps to a second-floor room, but I was totally unprepared for the vastness of the accumulated McGuffey treasures. . . . There I saw box upon box of newspaper clippings and magazine articles dating back to the early 1900s, collections of books, pictures--a veritable researcher's dream come true!" (p.8).

Sullivan makes excellent use of these materials and weaves facts and anecdotes into what should be considered the definitive biography of William Holmes McGuffey. (She points out little known information such as the extremely religious McGuffey laboring hard and long to help establish state-wide public school systems in Ohio and Virginia.) She has written well-documented chapters ranging from McGuffey's "Formative Years" to "The Federation of McGuffey Clubs: Perpetuating the Memories."

The only regret I have is when Sullivan leaves the data and jumps into explanations of current social and educational problems in the United States. While I agree with her concerns, she makes a startling leap from not using the *McGuffey Readers* in schools to crime in the streets, "teenage pregnancy and drug abuse, and . . . the functional illiteracy of adult Americans" (p. 190). She quotes and paraphrases individuals who have similar views. "Much of the blame for this social malaise must be placed squarely on the shoulders of the liberal educational establishment," believes E. Merrill Root in "What McGuffey Readers Read," an article that appeared in the *Daughters of the American Revolution Magazine*, April 1973. Articulating similar beliefs are Gary L. Bauer and "his former 'boss,' then Secretary of Education William Bennett" (p.191). In a speech at the 50th annual meeting of the Federated McGuffey Societies of America, Bauer is quoted as decrying the lack of values in our schools. Without a shred of evidence he says that "it is my firm belief that this trend toward 'value-neutral' classroom instruction has contributed significantly to massive increases in youth drug and alcohol abuse, delinquency, promiscuity and illegitimacy, violent crime in school, and disregard for the authority of parents, teachers, and elders" (p. 191).

Both Bauer and Sullivan then praise home values for the educational success of the Indo-Chinese Boat People. She quotes others to make her point about what seems to be the demise of education for not using the *McGuffey Readers* more widely. For example, James W. Kirchansky, who uses the *McGuffey Readers* in his 3R Schools in California, says that "80 percent of American children are cripples in their reading ability." Half the adults of the postwar generation are "functional illiterates who cannot understand a newspaper editorial page" (p. 197). Sullivan presents these questionable data as facts. She also assumes that today's teachers have

little or no concern for values and traits such as honesty, truthfulness, obedience, kindness, thrift, industry, patriotism, piety and others found in McGuffey's *Readers*. It would add to the overall value of the book if the chapter entitled "A Final Appraisal" were revised or omitted in newer editions.

Allen Berger is the Heckert Professor of Reading and Writing at Miami University. He has chaired IRA's Studies and Research Implementation Sub-Committee. He is on IRA's Book Proposal and Manuscript Board and is a liaison for five states in IRA's State/NCATE Partnership Program.

BOOK REVIEW

A History of Holistic Literacy: Five Major Educators, by M. P. Cavanaugh. Westport, CT: Praeger, 1994. Pp. 176. \$47.95.

The positive feature of this book (and there is one) is its spotlight on the accomplishments of five prominent educators who believed in child-centered reading instruction. John Dewey, Hughes Mearns, Francis Parker, Rudolf Steiner, and Laura Zirbes offered theoretical and practical alternatives to rigid, mind-numbing literacy instruction, and these alternatives deserve attention. I, for one, became especially curious about what Mearns and Steiner had to offer when I first surveyed this text.

A History of Holistic Literacy follows a topical approach to its subject. The first chapter presents brief biographical information on the focal educators. The next five chapters, which are the body of the book, present the individuals' views and practices relative to childhood, language and literacy, school structures, relationships among educational stakeholders, and assessment and evaluation. These chapters describe what each person wrote about and implemented in his or her schools regarding the topic. The seventh, concluding chapter addresses reasons for looking to the past while moving to the future.

Synthesizing the achievements of the five individuals selected for this study is a promising undertaking; however, the contents of this book rarely fulfill its promise. One problem centers about the rationale for bringing together the educators' contributions; I never was able to point to or infer a clear message from this study. In the first chapter the book explicitly states that the five educators' "dedication and hard work can teach us much about the way we go about education in the 1990's and beyond" (p. 1), but the nature of the promised lessons and their applicability is unclear. Other parts of the book refer to the need for realizing that past ideas and practices are similar to present ones, but the value of such a realization is not explained.

The concluding chapter states, "The purpose of this study was to learn what our five educators . . . thought and did. What they thought, and perhaps why they thought it; what they did; how they succeeded, and how they failed" (p. 153). If this actually were the purpose of the book, then I understand why the contents were so jumbled. Satisfying such a global purpose for only one historical figure would be a life's work; setting out to accomplish it with five individuals predictably leads to the book's disarray.

Along with conceptual difficulties, the writing style obscures the five educators' legacy. Each chapter in the body

of the book jumps from one individual to the next with few clear transitions or links. The plan to show commonalities among the five educators relative to different topics is commendable, but the implementation is not. This report might have been more comprehensible if it either devoted more page space to each person or presented each person in full, and then called attention to the group members' similarities and differences.

Another problem with this report centers about its unsophisticated portrayal of the five educators. These individuals -- especially Dewey and Steiner -- produced complex hardheaded ideas about education. The book does not serve these educators well with artless statements such as the following:

[The five educators] believed that a child is a child and should be approached and treated that way -- in a kind, understanding, sympathetic, yet structured and disciplined manner (p. 31).

[The five educators] revered children and childhood, spiritually and pragmatically. They wanted children to learn the most they could in the easiest way and the most comfortable surroundings possible (p. 53).

These educators were, above all, for introducing truth into every permeable facet of every child's existence. They decried educational dishonesty and false methodology. And they devoted their lives to the goal of providing a true education for all children (p. 152).

Those who already knew that holistic child-centered instruction did not originate with contemporary whole language advocates and those who already knew that holistic child-centered instructional ideals typically embed conceptions of literacy instruction will find *A History of Holistic Literacy* to be of marginal value. On a positive note, this book calls attention to a school of thought, some individuals, and some categories of analysis that deserve recognition. It suggests some insights. Those who seek deep understandings of what this book touches on probably would benefit from skimming it then beginning with presentations by writers such as Shannon (1990) and Uhrmacher (1995).

REFERENCES

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- Uhrmacher, P. B. (1995). Uncommon schooling: A historical look at Rudolf Steiner, anthroposophy, and Waldorf education. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 25, 381-406.

Reviewed by David W. Moore, professor of education at Arizona State University West, P. O. Box 37100, Phoenix, AZ 85069 (Internet address: David.Moore@ASU.Edu). Moore served as IRA History of Reading SIG president from 1986 to 1988. He has published historical research on Francis Parker and Laura Zirbes.

Ordering Information

Sullivan's *William Holmes McGuffey: Schoolmaster to the Nation*, is available from Associated University Presses, 440 Foregate Drive, Cranbury, NJ 08512 or call (609) 655-4770. The price is \$43 including shipping and handling. Cavanaugh's *A History of the Holistic Literacy* may be obtained from Greenwood Publishing Group, 88 Post Road West, Box 5007, Westport, CT 06881 or call 1-800-225-5800.

In Remembrance: Nancy Mavrogenes

By Earl Hanson

I was happy to read in the spring issue of our newsletter that Nancy Mavrogenes had joined the History of Reading Special Interest Group. Now, it is my sad responsibility to report that she died of cancer on May 6, 1995.

From her enrollment in the local country day school, to her senior year of high school where she was one of two students enrolled in Latin III, to her graduation from Wells College, Phi Beta Kappa with distinction in Greek, to the attainment of her Master's degree in Greek language and literature from Bryn Mawr, to her appointment as a Fulbright Scholar to the American School of Classical Studies in Athens, Nancy was destined for recognition as an outstanding scholar and advocate of literature and languages of the ancient world.

To those of us interested in the history of reading, however, it was her impressive dissertation on the history of William S. Gray, *William Scott Gray: Leader of Teachers and Shaper of American Reading Instruction*, completed ten years ago at the University of Chicago, for which she was best known. To a considerable extent, her research served as the basis for the 1985 William S. Gray Centennial Program sponsored by the International Reading Association. An influential writer on a wide range of topics, she also received national recognition when the *New York Times* reviewed her treatise on the importance of including classical studies in the secondary curriculum.

Recently, I was invited to examine Nancy's personal library for the purpose of making recommendations for its disposition. There, with the *Journal of Reading* was the *Journal of Classics*, with the early editions of Ernest Hemingway, the Gray-Elson readers, etc., a collection of books and journals reflecting the depth and diversity of a remarkable intellect. She was indeed a unique and competent scholar who contributed significantly to the history of reading.

Editors' Note: Nancy Mavrogenes' publications include "William S. Gray: The Person," in *William S. Gray: Teacher, Scholar, Leader*, ed. Jennifer S. Stevenson (Newark: International Reading Association, 1985), 1-23. In addition, she wove the past into the present in her "Young Children Composing Then and Now: Recent Research on Emergent Literacy," in *Visible Language* 21 (1987): 271-97.

Print Culture Series Announced

Paul M. Wright, editor of the University of Massachusetts Press, announces a new series: *Studies in Print Culture and the History of the Book*. The series will encompass multi-disciplinary and interdisciplinary studies in print culture worldwide from its beginnings up to the present day. The series will include but not be limited to studies of authorship, reading, writing, printing, and publishing in all relevant forms and media. Submissions are solicited for original work from scholars in history, literacy studies, sociology, bibliography, and related disciplines, who are working with materials in this area.

MEMBERS' NEWS

Edward W. Stevens, Jr., Ohio University, has recently published *The Grammar of the Machine, Technical Literacy and Early Industrial Expansion in the United States* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995). He and George Wood have also completed their third edition of *Justice, Ideology, and Education* for McGraw Hill. Stevens is presently working on a history of democracy, citizenship, and education. The work highlights the precedents of classical Greece, the social contract theorists, American constitutionalism, the expansion of democracy in mass societies, and democracy in the technological age. The role of literacy in alternative theories of democracy is a major theme.

Martha Everman Jones, Victoria College and University of Houston-Victoria, has recently presented a lecture titled "Researching Family Roots in South Texas" at the John W. Stormont Lectures on South Texas. The lecture, sponsored by the Victoria College Division of Social Sciences, included a history of South Texas and available resources for genealogical research in the area.

Mrs. Pat Garrett of Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire, is the secretary of the Children's Books History Society and temporary joint-editor of the society's newsletter. Garrett reports that the Children's Books History Society exists to promote appreciation of children's books in their literary, historical and bibliographical aspects, and further to encourage a distribution and exchange of information on children's literature. The organization invites new members to join whether their interest is amateur or professional. Membership is £7.50 per annum. Applications should be sent to Mrs. Pat Garrett, 25 Field Way, Hoddesdon, Herts EN11 0QN, England.

Paul M. Wright, editor of the University of Massachusetts Press, announces a new series from the University of Massachusetts Press: *Studies in Print Culture and the History of the Book*. (For details see page 6 in this issue of the *News*.)

Harvey J. Graff, University of Texas at Dallas, has recently published two books: *Conflicting Paths: Growing Up in America* (Harvard University Press) and *The Labyrinths of Literacy* (University of Pittsburgh Press). Recent articles include "Literacy's Myths and Legacies: From Lesson from the History of Literacy to the Question of Critical Literacy," in *Literacy Education: Difference, Silence and Textual Practice* (Hampton Press) and "Assessing the History of Literacy in the 1990s: Themes and Questions," in *Escribir y leer en Occidente* by Armando Petrucci and M. Gimeno Blay (Valencia, Spain: Universitat de Valencia). Also Graff delivered the keynote address, "Literacy, Myths, and Lessons" at a United Nations Conference co-sponsored by The City University of New York, Literacy Assistance Center of New York City, and UNESCO.

Al Tucker, Sul Ross State University, is continuing his research related to early schools in far West Texas. He is presently seeking a publisher for his book manuscript, *Ghost Schools of the Big Bend*.

Douglas K. Hartman, University of Pittsburgh, has been engaged in several scholarly presentations during the past year. At the National Reading Conference, he and colleagues, Gearing, Greenburg, Hefflin, and Jacobs, presented their research, "A Study of the Concept of Curricular and Individual Integration: its Origin, Evolution, and Instantiation in the American Context." In addition, he will give a keynote presentation at the Duval County Reading Council in Jacksonville, Florida, entitled "Three Hundred Years of Teaching Reading and Writing: Where have we been? Where are we going?" Hartman is also scheduled to participate in an IRA symposium on the history of literacy in New Orleans, giving his paper, "Developing Vitae for Prominent Literacy Scholars: An Exercise in Historical Inquiry."

Allen Berger, Miami University, had an article, "Nothing Comes from Nowhere: The Story of the National Federation of McGuffey Societies," appearing in *Reading Today* (June/July 1995). Recently Berger received three awards: A Certification of Appreciation from the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) "in recognition and grateful appreciation of service on its Board of Examiners"; A Certificate of Achievement from the National Council of Teachers of English "for outstanding service and contributions to the English language arts profession"; and a plaque from the Literacy Educators and Advocates Forum (LEAF) of Ohio for "Outstanding Contributions to the Literacy of Ohio's Students."

Arlene L. Barry, University of Kansas, has completed a survey of over 2,000 high schools across the United States to determine practices and programs available for secondary students functioning two or more years below level in reading. The study updates her dissertation research (*The Evolution of High School Remedial Reading Programs in the United States*) and is modeled after a survey conducted in 1940 by Blair at the University of Illinois.

CleoBell Heiple, Ontario-Montclair School District, Ontario, California (retired), reports that her presentation, "Fifty Years in First Grade" was well received at the California Reading Association Conference. In her presentation she used early editions of books to show what the classroom teacher used and what was cherished in the period 1943-1993. Heiple's personal collection includes a copy of Row Peterson's pre-primer, *Rides and Slides*, which she used in her first teaching position.

Kate Gearing Freeman, University of South Carolina, is embarking on a study of literacy and a single room school located on Johns Island, South Carolina, that was begun by the Freeman's Bureau, but remained open throughout the 1930s. Freeman would appreciate any guidance or information from SIG members concerning Freedman's Bureau School efforts.

Richard Robinson, University of Missouri-Columbia, is working on several literacy projects related to history and literacy education, including a position paper on the historical impact of the research and writing of the National Reading Conference. He is also developing a list of the core of the most influential articles and books in the area of literacy.

Members' News, Continued

Corine Levine Reich, Randolph High School, Randolph, NJ, spoke at the College Reading Association's conference in November in Florida. Her topic was "Child Development Course: A Program Which Trains High School Students to Work with Preschoolers in Order to Encourage Emergent Literacy." Reich is also scheduled for the New Orleans IRA conference speaking on "Character Education: Using Newspaper Stories and Cartoons to Develop Children's Skills in Solving Moral Problems."

E. Jennifer Monaghan was elected a member of the American Antiquarian Society in April 1995. She has an entry on "Textbooks by and for Women" in *The Oxford Companion to Women's Writing in the United States*, edited by Cathy N. Davidson and Linda Wagner-Martin (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995). She also served on the editorial advisory board for entries on history for the IRA's publication, *The Literacy Dictionary: The Vocabulary of Reading and Writing*, edited by Theodore L. Harris and Richard E. Hodges (1995). In May, Monaghan will chair the IRA symposium, "Teaching and Researching the History of Literacy." Other speakers will include Douglas K. Hartman, James V. Hoffman, and Richard L. Venesky.

Barbara M. Kelly, Hofstra University, is Curator of the Nila Banton Smith Historical Collection in Reading. The collection traces the history of reading instruction in the United States from 1607 through the 1980s. The collection is primarily composed of readers (hornbook through I.T.A.), teachers' manuals, workbooks, professional literature, and children's literature. The Department of Special Collections is open to the public from nine to five, Monday through Friday. For more information, call (516) 463-6409.

Jeanne S. Chall, Harvard University, reports she has recently published the third edition of *Learning to Read: The Great Debate* (Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace, 1996). It includes the material in the two earlier editions plus the research evidence on beginning reading from 1983 to the present. The second edition presented the evidence from 1967 to 1983, and the first edition covered the period from 1910 to 1967. She and the late Edgar Dale also published *Readability Revisited* (Cambridge, MA: Brookline Books, 1995). It presents the theories and practical tools used for readability measurement from the early 1900s to the present.

SHARP to Meet at the AAS

SHARP, the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing, is holding its fourth annual conference this July. The American Antiquarian Society of Worcester, Mass., is hosting the occasion, which runs from July 18-21. For details contact John B. Hench, 185 Salisbury Street, Worcester, MA 01609-1634 or call (508) 755-5221.

ATTENTION BRITISH MEMBERS

British members wishing to renew their membership to the SIG in pounds sterling may send a check for £5.00, with their completed membership form, to E. Jennifer Monaghan, 534 Third Street, Brooklyn, NY 11215, U.S.A. She will stash it in her sterling account and pay the SIG treasurer in dollars on their behalf. Make checks payable to Jennifer.

HISTORY OF READING SIG TO MEET IN NEW ORLEANS

Janet A. Miller, Northern Kentucky University, organizer of the 1996 History of Reading Special Interest Group, reports the SIG will meet in New Orleans on Wednesday, May 1, 2:00-4:45 PM. The location will be announced in the final convention program. Speakers and their topics include **Mark Zuss**, Lehman College, City University of New York: "Hugh of St. Victor's Didascalicon: Exiles in the Gardens"; **Kenneth E. McCarthy**, Center for Learning Improvement, Menlo Park, California: "The Sight Reading Method as a Source of Reading Disability;" and **H. Alan Robinson**, Hofstra University, **Richard E. Hodges**, University of Puget Sound, and **Janet A. Miller**: "Looking Back: Twenty Years of the History of Reading Special Interest Group." The session will be chaired by Arlene Barry, University of Kansas.

Rare Book School to Be Held

The Rare Book School of the University of Virginia, directed by Terry Belanger, will be holding its annual series of non-credit courses on topics related to the book, in July. A total of 23 courses will be offered for the weeks of Monday July 15 to Friday July 19; July 22-26; and July 29-August 2. Participants are encouraged to come to the Sunday supper preceding each week. Each course costs \$565, and low-cost accommodation is available from the university.

Courses include #31: "History of the Printed Book in the West," taught by Martin Antonetti; #41: "Type, Lettering, and Calligraphy, 1450-1830," by James Mosley; and #45: "Children's Books 1740-1865," taught by the antiquarian Justin G. Schiller. For details, write to the Rare Book School, 114 Alderman Library, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA 22903-2498; fax 804 924-8824; or e-mail biblio@virginia.edu.

Of Interest to Members

SIG member **Afton Miner**, who retired recently from Brigham Young University, has undertaken an outstanding piece of research on behalf of the SIG. She has completed a full bibliography of the works of Nancy Larrick and compiled much bibliographical information on early IRA notables, including Emmett A. Betts, Guy T. Buswell, Theodore Clymer, Helen M. Robinson, and George B. Schick. All these materials are being deposited in the library of the International Reading Association. More details will be forthcoming in the fall issue of the *News*.

History of Reading News is published twice a year by the History of Reading Special Interest Group of the International Reading Association. News items should be sent to **Luther B. Clegg**, Coeditor, School of Education, TCU Box 297900, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, TX 76129 or to **E. Jennifer Monaghan** Coeditor, Department of English/ESL, Brooklyn College of CUNY, Brooklyn, NY 11210-2889.