



The Black Experience in Children's Literature

Children To Hear Black Authors and Illustrators of Children's Books

Children in six local elementary schools will have a chance to hear three black authors and illustrators during the week of October 19th. John Steptoe, writer and illustrator of such books as "Stevie" and "The Story of Jumping Mouse." Mildred Pitts Walter, author of "My Mama Needs Me," and Pat Cummings who illustrated Walter's book as well as many others will spend time with the students.

During the evenings the authors and illustrators will speak at the Las Vegas/Clark County Library on Flamingo at 7 p.m. as a part of The Black Experience in Children's Literature co-sponsored by UNLV's College of Education, the school district and the county library with funding provided by the Nevada Humanities Committee.



Augusta Baker

The week's events begin on Monday, October 19, with Augusta Baker, who has taught storytelling and black literature in UNLV's summer program for over twenty years, presenting a University Forum address at 7:30 p.m. at Wright Hall on the campus. Her talk is entitled the Black Experience in Children's Literature.

Mrs. Baker, retired New York Public Library Coordinator of Children's Services, is currently Storyteller - in - Residence at the University of South Carolina. Over the year hundreds of Clark County teachers have taken her courses.

"It wasn't until the 1960's that black stereotypes in children's literature began to change," Dr. Robert Boord, UNLV's coordinator for the lecture series, said. "In 1963 Ezra Jack Keats, author and illustrator, won the Caldecott medal for 'A Snowy Day,' judged the most distinguished

picture book published in the United States for the year," Boord said.

The book depicts a young black child paying in the snow and it received the first major award given to a children's book based on a black child's experience.



Pat Cummings

On Tuesday, October 20th Pat Cummings will speak at the county library. Her topic is "Making Children's Books That Are User Friendly." Cummings has received three Coretta Scott King awards for books she has illustrated. Her works reflect emotions all children share, stories about humans who happen to be black.

John Steptoe speaks at the library on Wednesday October 21st. His topic is "Being Responsible to Children Through Minority Based Literature." Steptoe has written and illustrated children's books since he was 17 when "Stevie" was published. It is a universal story of a young child who feels displaced when a younger child comes to stay in the home.



Mildred Pitts Walter

Mildred Pitts Walter ends the series on Thursday, October 22 with her speech entitled "The Metamorphosis of Black Characters in Children's Literature."

Walter writes for both children and young adults. Her books address social problems

Famous Storyteller Jackie Torrence at Reed Whipple Cultural Center October 21

Celebrate an old-fashioned Halloween, loaded with spookey stories and eerie tales, when one of the country's most honored storytellers, Jackie Torrence, weaves her magic in the Reed Whipple Cultural Center, 821 Las Vegas Blvd North, at 7 p.m., Wednesday, October 21.

Jackie Torrence, "The Story Lady," is one of a handful of nationally known "tellers" who travel year-round, stopping at one storytelling festival after another, visiting schools and working as artists-in-residence for universities.

She has delighted audiences of all ages with her animated personality and her rich, marvelously bendy voice that can pop in and out of her various characters' mouths without breaking the narrative flow. She has kept audiences spellbound conjuring up images with her words that weave colorful

and also provide portrayals of blacks in such familiar situations as the reaction of a child to a new baby in the family in "My Mama Needs Me."

"This week's program will strive to emphasize the similarities of peoples and to develop in children an appreciation of the universality of the human experience as seen through ethnic literature," Dr. Boord said. The four programs are presented to familiarize the community, teachers, and librarians concerning the large volume of excellent humanistic Black literature available for home and school consumption.

Those elementary schools at which the authors will speak are Nate Mack, Gordon McCaw, Myrtle Tate, Twin Lakes, Ruby Thomas and Robert E. Lake.

Copies of the authors' and illustrators' books will be available for purchase and autographing at the schools as well as the evening performance of the lectures.

These presentations sponsored by UNLV Department of Curriculum and Instruction, and Nevada Humanities Committee, Inc., in cooperation with the Clark County School District and the Clark County Library District. Additional funding is furnished from publisher William Morrow and Co., Inc., and Harper and Rowe Publishers, Inc.

The entire series is also available for graduate credit for Clark County teachers and librarians through Continuing Education at UNLV by calling 739-3394.



Jackie Torrence

tales to capture the imaginations of any "kid," eight to eighty. Her collection of stories are guaranteed to send shivers through the most "iron-nerved" listener.

Jackie has a rich heritage of story telling handed down from her mother, grandparents and fourteen aunts and uncles. She has collected an enormous repertoire specializing in ghost stories, Afro-American tales and Appalachian mountain lore.

Tickets are \$4 general admission and go on sale Octo-

CHILD WATCH

By Marian Wright Edelman
President Children's Defense Fund

Feelings of a Teen Father

Look into the eyes of a young man who has become a teen father before he was ready and who wants to take responsibility for his child. It is easy to imagine what it is doing to him inside.

The young man full of anger. He is thinking: why did this have to happen to him? Most of his friends are "doing it," but he had to be the one to pay the price. He is furious at his parents for not warning him about what could happen. In his impatience, he even blames his girl friend.

He is frustrated. He wants to be with his friends, playing sports, not tied down

ber 7. Anyone attending the performance in Halloween costume will receive \$2 off the ticket price.

This program is presented by the Cultural and Community Affairs Division of the City of Las Vegas Department of Parks, Recreation and Senior Citizen Activities.

For more information call the Center at 386-6211.

with a crying baby. He hears songs on the radio that remind him of more carefree times, but those times seem to have ended for him. He feels cheated.

He is worried about his future. He had been hoping to get ahead, make some money, have a career. He cannot even think about that now. When his friends start talking about their plans, he tunes them out. His own future seems to have shut down in his face. He feels trapped.

Most of all, the young man is scared. Suddenly, unexpectedly, there are two human beings looking to him for support. His baby is tiny and helpless, the weight of a feather in his arms. He knows he should help take care of it. But he feels shaky instead of strong. What if he cannot handle the responsibility?

He needs a job, and is afraid he will not be able to get one. He needs money, but he has none. Most im-

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ALL NEW
Jim Henson Presents
the MUPPET BABIES
MAGIC BOX
LIVE ON STAGE

WITH SPECIAL GUEST STARS KERMIT AND MISS PIGGY

UNLV's Thomas & Mack Center

7:30 pm, Nov. 19 - 22

(Sat. & Sun 1 pm & 4:30 pm)

Tickets \$8.50 & \$9.50

Thurs. Nov. 19 Opening Night KLAS TV-8 All Seats \$5
★ Win A Cartoon Collector's Item★

Fri. Nov. 20 TV-13 Camera Night
★ All Children Receive A FREE Camera With Ticket★

Sun. Nov. 22 KVBC TV-3 & McDonald's
★ All Seats \$5 With McDonald's Coupon★

Tickets on sale Oct. 19 at the TMC Box Office & all Ticketron outlets.

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