

lory of women's religious contributions in America from colonial times to the present reveals the antecedents of the current women's movement in religion among radical Victorians, female and male. The collection of documents, well introduced and placed in context, covers a wide range of traditions—American Indian, Black, Jewish, Roman Catholic, evangelical, holiness, and pentecostal, as well as mainline Protestant. The general introduction provides a clear overview, while the individual chapters with primary sources furnish details, evidence, and interpretation. Highly recommended.—*Carolyn M. Craft, English, Philosophy & Foreign Languages Dept., Longwood Coll., Farmville, Va.*

## Home Economics

### Cookery

Crouch, Dorothy. *Entertaining Without Alcohol.*

Acropolis. 1986. 224p. illus. index. LC 85-22974. ISBN 0-87491-794-8. \$14.95.

COOKERY/BEVERAGES

The first part of this book is devoted to drink selections and menu ideas for entertaining without alcohol. Alternative drinks for nondrinkers, the health conscious, and recovering alcoholics are listed and rated. Crouch's informative and creative approach to parties is welcome. Nonalcoholic wines, beers, and sparkling fruit beverages are chosen to complement formal and elegant meals. Also included are substitutions for recipes that specify liquor among the ingredients. Menus and recipes follow in the second part of the book. A very useful and informative guide to entertaining.—*Connie Chambers, Perrot Memorial Lib., Old Greenwich, Ct.*

## Literature

Shavit, Zohar. *Poetics of Children's Literature.*

Univ. of Georgia Pr. 1986. c.232p. bibliog. index. LC 85-1110. ISBN 0-8203-0790-4. LIT

Advocacy of value systems is not unique to children's literature. This semiotic study of the social matrix of the genre sees it as in thrall to the educational establishment. While deploring the poor self-image of children's literature, Shavit discounts as "ambivalent" (ostensibly for children but "really" for adults) some of its best productions. Although the rise of the "notion of the child" is central to the argument, a major weakness of the text is its failure to distinguish among child readers or to acknowledge advanced literary competence among them. Other weaknesses include obscurities of semiotic jargon and limitations of the test-case method. Much theoretical discussion of conventions and constraints merely underscores the fact that this genre must accommodate both adult and child

readers.—*Patricia Dooley, formerly with English Dept., Drexel Univ., Philadelphia*

### Composition

Pinckert, Robert C. *Pinckert's Practical Grammar.*

Writer's Digest. 1986. c.179p. ISBN 0-89879-211-8. \$12.95.

COMPOSITION

In eight pithy "lessons" the author playfully assails such topics as the parts of speech, composition, and arguing a point of view. A basic assumption is that use of good English is a sort of one-upmanship or competitive game. Not really "practical," it suffers from an overload of curt, peremptory sentences that make it a labor to follow. It offers too little detail and exposition for an adequate text or treatise. Still, the many clever, thought-provoking observations and pronouncements might please language-minded readers who enjoyed books like Karen Gordon's *The Transitive Vampire* (LJ 1/84) or Stephen White's *The Written Word* (LJ 6/16/84). Not a necessary purchase.—*William A. Donovan, Chicago P.L.*

## Music

Dalton, David. *Piece of My Heart: the life, times and legend of Janis Joplin.*

St. Martin's. Mar. 1986. c.284p. photogs. ISBN 0-312-61055-6. \$15.95.

BIOG/MUSIC

Dalton tries to unravel the twisted life of rock singer Janis Joplin, basing the account on his interviews with the singer during a 1970 tour. He organizes the book into discrete chapters: some compare Joplin to the likes of Bessie Smith and Zelda Fitzgerald; another casts her as the prototype of the liberated woman; many contain heavy doses of the singer's drunken prattle; and a few interviews occasionally touch the roots of her riveting rock-blues. Dalton intersperses over 60 rare and interesting photos among the short chapters. Though at times Dalton hints at an explanation for Joplin's blues-drenched rock, much of the book is little more than sophomoric fluff; some of the material has already appeared in print. Recommended primarily for the photos.—*David Szatmary, Continuing Education Dept., Univ. of Washington, Seattle*

Libin, Laurence. *American Musical Instruments in the Metropolitan Museum of Art.*

Metropolitan Museum of Art and Norton. 1985. fwd. by Philippe de Montebello. pref. by Henry Steinway. photogs., some color. bibliog. index. LC 85-4817. ISBN 0-393-02277-3. \$39.95.

MUSIC

Musical instrument curator Libin has singled out the Metropolitan Museum's diverse collection of American musical instruments, ranging from beautiful spinets of the 18th century to folk instruments, such as the jawbone rattle and scraper used by 19th-century minstrel troupes. The instruments are beautifully displayed and described in

good detail. Libin ties the collection together with a well-written and informative narrative of the history of musical instruments and their uses in American history. A fine book and an excellent first step in the history of American musical instruments.—*Timothy J. McGee, Faculty of Music, Univ. of Toronto*

Wilson, Frank R. *Tone Deaf and All Thumbs?: an invitation to music-making for late bloomers and non-prodigies.*

Viking. Apr. 1986. c.200p. ISBN 0-670-80842-3. \$14.95.

BIOLOGY/MUSIC

To encourage music-making in non-gifted music lovers and to elaborate the special relationship between music and the human brain, Wilson, a neurology professor, discusses music from a neurophysiological perspective. Much as an athlete develops muscular skills to improve his sport, so the musician develops skill in small muscle movements to shape and perfect his performance. Wilson discusses the extraordinary refinement of human auditory perception, the biology of time, principles of learning theory, and some elements of playing publicly. In short, he believes almost anyone is capable of making music and at almost any age, so long as one is willing to practice properly and set realistic goals. The book is well written, interesting, and should be helpful to the amateur and would-be musician.—*Bonnie Hoffman, CSW, North Fork Counseling Svce., Mattituck, N.Y.*

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