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How Do You Dance? (Abrams Books for Young Readers, 2019) (Picture Book for 3-7 year-olds)
by Thyra Heder
reviewed by: Nori Morganstein, Youth Services Librarian/Assistant Director

As someone who works with Kids, I’m always looking for picture books that involve child participation and movement. Before reading any reviews for this book, I knew I wanted it for the library’s collection. Books that inspire participation and movement throughout the story are wonderful for kids who don’t always have the attention span for a whole book. Keeping kids involved in the story makes all the difference for kids who have trouble paying attention for so long.

I also love incorporating dance and movement in my weekly story hours at the library. I usually do this with songs and cd’s. It’s such an added bonus when books incorporate movement too. This is a book meant to be read out loud, preferably while standing up, and moving yourself. It would work as a great way to get some energy out too.

It’s all about how everyone dances. “Koyo bops. Gilda flits. Aurora scrunches…” Each page is filled with different people and their different kinds of dancing. Dance is done by moving your face, fingers, knees, toes, etc. All different types of people dance (ie: young, old, men, women, and children) Also, people in this book dance in all sorts of places. They dance at the market, at the bust stop, on a lunch break, There’s one little boy, who interrupts the dancing to say that he doesn’t dance like that. At the end of the story, when asked how he dances, he says he likes to dance alone. And the last page is him moving all around his bedroom. I like that the book addresses that not everyone likes to dance in front of people, and that’s okay. I also like the message that dance is for everyone (all ages, genders, cultures), and there is no one right way to dance. The book really celebrates movement in a way that makes it clear to all readers that anyone and everyone can dance.

The illustrations are colorful and fun. I love the pages that involve a lot of movement. It’s very clear when a person is dancing because of the illustrated range of motion. My favorite page is the one of the janitor, Rick. He leaps and moves around with his mop, making cleaning look like fun. This is a fun, simple book that will inspire all kinds of movement. I highly recommend this book to families with kids who have shorter attention spans. But, I honestly can see any child enjoying this one.
While the subtitle of *Oliver Wendell Holmes* is *A Life in War, Law, and Ideas* it might have been equally well subtitled *The Power of Dissent*. While Holmes was at first a reluctant dissenter he quickly grew into the role so that his dissents, while not carrying the day for the contemporary case, spoke to the future. As Justice Charles Evans Hughes said, "A dissent in a court of last resort is an appeal to the brooding spirit of the law, to the intelligence of a future day, when a later decision may possibly correct the error into which the dissenting judge believes the court to have been betrayed." That certainly was the case with many dissents penned by Oliver Wendell Holmes.

Brought up in mid-19th century Boston, the son of a famous writer, Holmes was steeped in the pervasive Unitarian tenet "that God had given man a rational nature and a moral conscience, and expected him to use them." This Unitarianism was blended with Calvinism so that Holmes had a powerful sense of duty, work, and self-improvement. Holmes's nascent ideas were sharpened by his experience in the Civil War in which he was wounded three times, once lying near death with a bullet through his neck. Holmes' experience in the war and that of the other survivors was to see that their fate was simply the chance fortune of a mad lottery. For Holmes, as for most veterans, the war instilled the courage to live life to the fullest.

Holmes was both a student and practitioner of the law. His earliest significant foray into the law was to undertake revisions to *Commentaries on American Law*, a compendium of common law cases. For Holmes it meant the law was at his fingertips. It also meant that he had a practical sense of how law worked in society, the notion that the law was Darwinian, adapting to the surrounding societal environment. Holmes so thoroughly rewrote Commentaries that he published his revision as *The Common Law* in which he made what is considered the great clarifying contribution to liability law and negligence, the standard of the reasonable man. Holmes followed this up with "The Path of the Law" in which he destroyed the idea that law was independent of politics and separate from social reality. This was the birth of the Legal Realist movement.

It was from this academic foundation that Holmes moved into the practice of law. After he had served as Chief Justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Court he was appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court, nominated by Teddy Roosevelt in August of 1902. The Chief Justice on the Court was Melville Fuller and it was the Fuller court that set a reactionary and pro-business standard. It had earlier declared the income tax unconstitutional, it had restricted Congress's power over interstate commerce, and it had issued the infamous Plessy v. Ferguson decision enshrining separate but equal. Beginning in 1886 the Court had struck down state regulatory laws as depriving persons of liberty, using the due process clause of the 14th Amendment to allow practically no government interference with private property or the economy. The Court stood solidly on the side of laissez faire.

The *Lochner* case established Holmes reputation as a great dissenter. This case was brought against the state of New York for regulating how bakeries were run. In particular, it set health standards and maximum hours of labor (60). The Supreme Court on a 5-4 vote overturned the regulations, saying that the regulations were an illegal interference with the rights of individuals, employers and employees, to make contracts regarding labor. That there was a great imbalance between employer and employee did not sway the court. In his approximately 600 word dissent Holmes blasted the majority, stating that "general propositions do not decide concrete cases" and that a reasonable man test would find the law valid on health reasons. Judge Richard Posner called this dissent perhaps the greatest dissent of the 20th century.

Holmes's rejection of the laissez faire attitude of the court majority also features in his dissent in *Coppage v. Kansas* that outlawed a yellow-dog contract, a contract that restricts an employee from joining a union. Holmes, dissenting, tried to correct the employer/employee imbalance by writing that a "workman may not unnaturally believe that only by belonging to a union can he secure a contract that shall be fair to him."

Free speech was another area in which Holmes left his mark. Influenced by Harold Laski and Learned Hand, and often joined in dissent by Louis Brandeis, Holmes had a gradually evolving view of free speech. He came to believe Hand's maxim that "our skepticism about our own certainty ought to counsel tolerance in repressing the beliefs of others." He began to see that the test of truth is to get itself accepted in the competition of the market. Freedom of speech as a right only has meaning when it includes freedom for the thought we hate. (continued on the next page)
If Holmes had a blind spot it was in regard to the fate of blacks. When Southern states effectively disenfranchised blacks he wrote that relief must come legislatively, not from the courts.

Stephen Budiansky has written an impressive biography of Oliver Wendell Holmes. He has done justice to the spirit of the times and has persuasively made the case that decisions that Holmes wrote or dissented from helped move the court and society from its 19th century laissez faire attitudes to a more modern 20th century conception of the role of government in regulating society. Budiansky has also given us insight into Holmes's personal life, effectively providing a window into Holmes's society and his place in that society.

Carrying The Fire: an Astronaut’s Journey
by Michael Collins
reviewed by Jim Mills

This year, with the 50th anniversary of Apollo 11’s moon landing, there were many articles and TV programs celebrating that event. One commentator mentioned that his favorite book written by an astronaut, by far, was Michael Collins' Carrying the Fire. Michael Collins, as you may recall, was the Command Module pilot who orbited the moon while Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin were making the first lunar landing in 1969. Collins’ book was published five years later in 1974. With this strong endorsement I hunted on CLAMS and found only one copy available, a 2009 reprint.

In Collins’ memoir, the astronaut covers his entire career as an Air Force pilot, a test pilot and as an astronaut. He makes it evident that the competition to succeed was severe at each stage as he had to contend with many driven, talented individuals. Each career level was replete with danger and a number of Collins’ colleagues lost their lives doing their jobs. In the early 60s he decided to apply for the second round of astronaut selection. He was not selected. The following year there was another selection process and this time Collins was among those who made it.

In 1966 Collins made his first spaceflight in the two man Gemini program. This program pioneered techniques that would be employed in the following Apollo moon landing series of flights. In the Gemini 10 flight, his spacecraft rendezvoused and docked with another vehicle and Collins made one of the early spacewalks. The author describes the extended detailed comprehensive training that each astronaut faced for years before going into space. This training was physically and mentally grueling especially the centrifuge sessions used to generate very high G (gravitational) forces a high as 20X normal gravity. NASA appeared to cover every eventuality and put the astronauts through exhaustive training sessions until an astronaut’s response to any potential problem becomes second nature.

Collins discusses his relationship with many of the astronauts including the original seven Mercury group. He includes frequent evaluation of personalities and motivations. The highlight of this book to this reviewer is the authors detailed description of and reason for each of the various steps involved in the preparation for and execution of spaceflights. The mind boggling complexity of the moon landing series is discussed and the realization of just how many things could have gone wrong. The seven moon landing attempts were conducted virtually flawlessly with the exception of the explosion on Apollo 13 and in this case NASA ingenuity has to be credited with saving the lives of three astronauts who were nearly at the moon when the accident occurred. The sole fatal disaster took place at the start of the program with three astronauts dying in a capsule during a test on the launch pad in 1966. Today it is hard to see how the conditions that led to this catastrophe could not have been anticipated.

Carrying the Fire is a wonderfully written book and the detailed descriptions and explanations of the life of a pilot and astronaut is a very rewarding read. It is a wonder that individuals voluntarily subject themselves to the every present dangers and the continuing hardships of an astronaut’s life. Collins finally decided that his good fortune could not last forever and left the space program after the successful moon landing. So did Armstrong and Aldrin. How can you possibly top what they did. This reviewer strongly recommends this almost 50 year old book. It is worth waiting for the only copy available in CLAMS. I promise to return it in a couple of days.
Blowing The Bloody Doors Off: And other lessons in life.
by Sir Michael Caine
reviewed by Don Boink

This is a worthwhile hand book for any aspiring actor or other individual with ambitions of success. Michael Caine began life in the slums of London. A destitute childhood beset by gang violence and poverty. Early on the London blitz of WW II caused him to be evacuated to the countryside. His father, in the military, was absent for four years. This is his account of how he coped with the situation.

From an early age he had a great interest in acting. His cockney accent did not help (until he was called upon to produce it for a part he was given). He participated in theatrical groups of various sorts and enjoyed it despite lack of recognition. From this modest beginning he gradually rose to prominence and the winner of a number of Academy Awards. He, along with other English actors such as Sean Connery, John Gielgud, Richard Burton, Roger Moore, and Peter O’Toole, came to the fore in several Hollywood pictures. This was during the sixties.

All through his book he emphasizes points he feels are essential to being a good actor. One thing he mentions in several instances is “learn your lines”. Putting the effort into this part makes taking direction much less stressful. He also has taught himself to be constantly alert to how people react to various circumstances. What facial expressions and hand movements go with the reaction. Page after page is filled with what he has learned the hard way. Dozens of actors and actresses are mentioned as friends or respected professionals. His favorite director was John Huston. Woody Allen directed his Academy Award picture “Hannah and her Sisters” Caine enjoys movies and how actors and actresses perform, he appreciates the professionalism they exhibit.

As he has aged the parts he gets fit his current persona. He recognizes he is no longer the lead who gets the girl. As long as he gets parts he’s willing to do what the director calls for and thoroughly enjoys it. At age 85 he is enjoying his family and the life he is leading. He is happy that he never quit when that was the most frequent advice he got along the way. When he first got to play next to Laurence Olivier, who had ben knighted at the time, he didn’t know how to address him. He was much relieved when Olivier greeted him and said.. “please call me Larry”. Although Sir Michael now also has a title too and feels comfortable expounding his sage advice he never gets preachy or talks down to others. For the reader who has a long memory of films he will feel that he is among many friends.

Maurice Joseph Micklewhite Jr.,
better known as
Michael Caine
in the 1960s

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Also appear on the Brewster Ladies Library Web Site
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The author, David Roberts, who has written many books about his own and other mountaineering exploits, in Escalante’s Dream brings attention to the explorations of two Franciscan friars, Atanasio Dominguez and Silvestre Velez de Escalante. Their travels followed a loop of several thousand miles extending to the north-west from the Spanish stronghold of Santa Fe in the territory of New Mexico. Their travels went as far north as present day Provo, Utah covering parts of present day states, New Mexico, Colorado, Utah, and Arizona. The journey which took place in 1776, as American leaders were creating a new nation two thousand miles to the East, is less well known than the Lewis and Clark explorations farther north four decades later.

A major feature of Robert’s narrative is the effort that he and his wife, Sharon, made to follow, as best as could be determined, the route used by the friars almost 250 years ago. The friar’s group numbered only 12 members traveling with horses and other domesticated animals. They were not equipped with sufficient weapons to deal with any challenge from the indigenous populations. Their protection derived from the non-threatening nature of the group and in Escalante’s opinion that the group had divine protection. Most of the tribes encountered were either friendly or tried to avoid the Spanish incursion. Escalante’s name still lives on in the name of a southern Utah city and the new Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument.

The region explored was essentially unknown to the Spanish and featured many obstacles including major mountain ranges, extensive mesa and buttes, dead end ravines and canyons and numerous rivers, many with very difficult fords. On their return to Santa Fe they had to cross the Colorado in the Glen Canyon region of southern Utah. This effort took many days and the ford that they finally found has been memorialized as the Crossing of the Fathers, now at the bottom of Lake Powell following the construction of the Glen Canyon dam in the 1960s.

The nominal purpose of the journey was to find an overland route from Santa Fe to the new Spanish mission on the California coast at Monterrey. At that time the longitude of various locations was very poorly determined, so the friars had little understanding that the actual direct distance was close to 1,000 miles. Had they been able to go all of the way they would have had to cross the forbidding Nevada desert and the imposing obstacle of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. As Escalante turned south-west from the future site of Provo he ran into the beginning of the extensive deserts to the west with no readily available water sources.

The Dominguez - Escalante explorations did not have any long term effects on Spanish colonization. About 70 years later the American war with Mexico resulted in all of the region covered by the expedition including their objective in California becoming part of the United States. Needless to say, David Roberts’ tracing of the earlier Spanish route was accomplished in a much shorter time with the benefit of modern roads and his own private vehicle. His conversations with the current inhabitants along the route showed that they had a very little familiarity with the earlier Spanish exploration. Today much of this region still has a very low population, has a great natural beauty and is the location of numerous National Parks and National Monuments. Only one inscription has been found along the route that can be tied to the D - E group. Robert’s story of this early south-western exploration is a fascinating one and the author has done much to add detail to a skimpy story based on Escalante’s diary.
Our Man. Richard Holbrooke and The End Of the American Century
by George Packer
reviewed by Don Boink

This is a definitive account of the rise and demise of one of America’s must remarkable foreign service officers. His career began in the quagmire of the Vietnam war. His experiences there led to his coming to the attention of powers that be in the hallowed halls of Washington, D. C.. Richard Holbrooke was a most ambitious, very brilliant, driven, kind of individual. George Packer is a well known historical writer of long standing having written a number of books about the world’s political involvements. He knew Holbrooke for many years and though he had admired his brilliance acknowledged he did not very much like him. How Packer learned of all the details in his narration is difficult to imagine. That however is what good writers do. Holbrooke went through the intense training courses for foreign service personnel and early on set his goal to become the Secretary of State. Although he came close he did not achieve that lofty position.

The essence of the problems in Vietnam can be summarized by quoting Holbrook’s statement regarding the sequence of events. He, Holbrooke, joined a group studying the history of Vietnam. The documents told the story that he had lived for two years doing pacification work. Decisions made in Washington were carried out in Vietnam. (the military took over decision making from the State Department) The study showed when and where the pessimism began. “It was a record of voluminous lies”. The South Vietnamese were having their own civil war while at the same time fruitlessly fighting the Vietnam Cong, the North Vietnamese. The South told the Americans what they thought the Americans wanted to hear and the American advisors told Washington what they thought Washington wanted to hear. McNamara was sold on the idea that the domino effect would allow Communism to spread throughout the region. (He later recanted and said it was a false premise). So, the lies piled up and the bombings increased. Hanoi didn’t seem to be affected in its determination and it became too obvious that we were not winning. The war concluded with the fall of Saigon.

Holbrooke shuttled back and forth between Washington and Vietnam till the peace treaty was concluded. His time in the Sate Department was a rocky period because of changes in administrations which brought new faces to the scene. One person who seemed to dislike Holbrooke was Zbigniew Brzezinski who was the Assistant for National Security Affairs under Jimmy Carter. In several ways he tried to cut Holbrooke out of negotiations. That was the way it was in Washington. He then later became embroiled in the Bosnian upheaval. His concern was for the Muslims that were beings “cleansed” by the Serbs. Sarajevo was a killing ground as Serb snipers methodically killed civilians on the streets of Sarajevo. It became obvious that the U.N. was incapable of solving the dilemma. President Clinton was leery of getting involved but his advisors convinced him it was imperative. Forcing the combatants to a peace negotiation was finally accomplished by using NATO forces to bomb the Serb positions. Secretary of State Albright wasn’t considered a strong enough negotiator and a replacements was sought. After great deliberations Holbrooke was the person who emerged from the pack as the most likely to be able to handle the belligerents. He picked his team for the negotiation and departed for Croatia. Tragedy struck as they crossed a mountain near Sarajevo...Two of his five man team were killed when their armored vehicle (RH was in another vehicle) careened off the steep road. Despite the accident, their resolve was not diminished and a negotiation was scheduled to take place in a neutral territory. The meeting took place at a U. S. Airbase outside of Dayton, Ohio. Packer does a great job in giving a vivid account of the tumultuous wrangling. He gives Holbrooke full credit for keeping things together. The successful outcome of what became known as The Dayton Accord was the the crowning touch to Holbrooke’s career.

Throughout the book Packer uses a conversational tone to convey the nuanced episodes that occurred frequently, at times letting Holbrooke tell it in his own words. What comes through is how driven and irascible Holbrooke was. He had three marriages and they all suffered from his preoccupation with his work. There are many incidental facts presented giving color to the narration. His sudden unexpected death came as a shock to all. His demise then became a contest of who could say the most eloquent things about him. Without a doubt he was a very important person in our history. For history buffs this aspect is especially fulfilling. For the rest of us it is a long slog of 556 pages.
The Pioneers: The Heroic Story of the Settlers who Brought the American Ideal West
by David McCullough
reviewed by Jim Mills

In the Treaty of Paris (1783), which formally ended the American Revolutionary War, Great Britain yielded a region north of the Ohio River, south of the Great Lakes and east of the Mississippi to the United States. This region known as the Northwest Territory, an area of a quarter million square miles, was eventually formed into five of our major states: Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin. In 1787 the Northwest Ordinance opened up this area for settlement, designating the area as a region where slavery was outlawed. At that time none of the thirteen original states had banned slavery. One of the historical figures featured in The Pioneers, Rev. Manasseh Cutler of Massachusetts, was instrumental in promoting the slavery ban.

The Pioneers describes the early settlement of this region specifically the future state of Ohio. The emphasis is on the first settlement, the town of Marietta, on the Ohio River near Pennsylvania and just across the river from Virginia (now West Virginia). In 1788 early settlers set out from Massachusetts to found Marietta in the midst of what was then a trackless wilderness. As the author describes, these pioneers faced daunting challenges from the start. In order to establish an agricultural existence, every acre of farmland had to be reclaimed from dense forests. The open panoramas of farmland we associate with the mid-west is entirely a manmade effect, achieved by unceasing arduous labor involving all of the immigrant population. Since the indigenous Native American population resented this intrusion into their territory, the seed had been set for sustained conflict. This violent conflict, which would continue for many decades, compounding the difficulties experienced by the pioneers. The river, of course, provided the easiest avenue of travel, determining the location of the earliest communities, including Cincinnati. Even this mode of travel was difficult at first especially when traveling upstream. The first steamboats appeared on the Ohio in the early 1810s making all the difference, stimulating growth and commerce throughout the region. The flood of immigrants into Ohio, which became a state in 1803, was unending bringing the population to 45,000 in 1800 and close to a million inhabitants only 30 years later.

The Pioneers is an interesting account of an era and a process in our history with which this reviewer had not been acquainted. McCullough had to expend considerable effort to track down the sparse information available on the topic. This reviewer does not consider this effort to be among the best from his pen. Having read most of his works through the years my favorites are The Path Between the Seas (the building of the Panama Canal) and his excellent biography of our 33rd president, Harry Truman.

Kochland: The secret history of Koch Industries and Corporate Power in America
by Christopher Leonard
reviewed by Don Boink

This extensive history of one of America’s largest and most secretive industries begins in a pasture among a herd of cows. An FBI agent with a camera, having a very powerful lens, is surveilling an oil collection tank. This is the first thread to the tale of corporate America’s little known industry that has connections with practically every thing that we are apt to come in contact with each and every day.

It all began in the oil fields many years ago. Fred Koch (pronounced coke) developed a business collecting oil from the large companies like Mobil and Standard Oil who were the drillers and transporting it to the refineries. This business became quite intricate with barges and pipelines. In Oklahoma oil rigs were ubiquitous across the landscape on land largely owned by Native Americans. Oil from these rigs was taken to local holding tanks. From the holding tanks it was either piped or shipped in tankers to the refineries.

The investigator was gathering evidence in a case where charges were made that the gaugers were, in effect, stealing oil by intentionally miscalculating the amount they pumped from the tanks. This is all explained in great detail in the book. Fred Koch had four sons. His oldest had no interest in the business. The second was Charles, he, like his father, was a graduate engineer. He assumed control of the company when his father, who had instilled a strict work ethic in his son, passed away. Then there was David and Bill, twins. There were no shareholders as the company never went public. It valued anonymity and secrecy rather than publicity. (continued on the next page)
Charles valued the philosophy of two Austrian economists, von Mies and Hayek. Their theory was that the market was the best arbiter rather than governmental regulations.

Early on Charles had a deep distrust in government and an abhorrence of the onerous regulations it imposed on business. Nonetheless he managed to grow the huge conglomeration that is today’s Koch Industries. Through his analytical thinking he devised a management system that urged each employee to think like an entrepreneur. They were urged to look constantly for opportunities to grow the company. In order to do that 90 percent of revenue was plowed back into the company to finance growth.

The narration describes in detail just how all of this is first envisioned and then implemented by Charles. However all was not roses. There came a period, in the late nineties where it almost all came crashing down. His younger brother Bill rebelled against years of being dominated by Charles. He demanded his share of the wealth and divorced himself from the company. The dispute is minutely covered in the narrative. Chapter 10 is titled Failure and is a resume’ of Charles’s reaction.

Making a realistic analysis of what went wrong he resolved to make corrections and resolutely doubled down working harder. He recognized his mistakes and corrected them by firing those who he felt didn’t do as well as he thought they should. Even through all the uproar the company made money. One of the strengths of diversity was the ability to gain information and then apply it to decision making. Trading in the oil business led to trading in many areas. The trading desk became a profit center in itself. The arcane science of trading is explained in detail. It also led to more legal trouble for many of the oil companies. California was a classic case of misguided policies and political ineptitude. Davis, the governor was recalled and replaced by a movie star, Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Next came the period of mergers and acquisitions. In the early 2000s this became a wave across the country. Koch competed with other large companies like Lehman Brothers and Barclays Capital. Here too Koch had an advantage. He was flush with cash, the company had only a few shareholders and could move quickly and aggressively. Another difference was that Charles was not in it for the quick buck but the long haul.

Then came the downturn caused by the real estate collapse in 2008, brought about by the excessive use of derivative devises. The poorly regulated market spun out of control. Lehman Brothers collapse led to string of financial upheavals and the need for a huge bail out at taxpayer expense. All of this was viewed by Charles as the result of governmental interference with market operations and an attack on capitalism itself. The book tells of the way Koch twisted the facts to justify his interpretation of those facts.

Each chapter seems to dwell on some instance or topic that illustrates Koch’s shrewd ability to handle whatever occurs. The chronology takes us right up 2018 and the advent of Trump. That election was a real stunner for him. Like a craftsman with a large variety of tools he selects the most appropriate ones for the task at hand. By this time his organization has been influential in politics to a large degree. Lobbying was a great source of information as to upcoming legislation and he spent many millions in cultivating a vast network. It is a fascinating story to follow.

Beside the steady growth of the Koch fortune Charles and his wife Liz have a son, Chance, and a daughter, Elizabeth. Their growth and development are interestingly described. Chance rather reluctantly is drawn into the business but finds he really likes certain aspects of it. Eventually he becomes involved in being a venture capitalist and gets his Dad interested also. Regarding Trump: Koch finds him personally repulsive and at the same time finds ways to foil him and even occasionally aid him. Whatever is advantageous to him. Considering the secretiveness of Koch it is amazing that the author has been able to piece together this lengthy account. To his credit it explains a lot of what has been going on in our country. The acknowledgements are worth reading as it is significant how many people are involved over the several years it took to write this book.

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