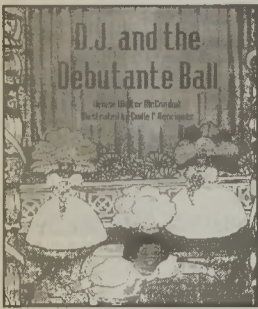


Children's book makes etiquette fun



By Artellia Burch
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"D.J. and the Debutante Ball" by Denise Walker McConduit is a great children's book.

It's a great story and the illustrations are vivid and full of life.

The story starts off with D.J. finding out that his older sister plans to participate in the debutante ball. However, D.J. is unaware that he'll have to participate and go through some changes.

I think it's highly creative how McConduit uses this light and cute story to teach simple rules of etiquette. By the end of the short story D.J. and his

cousin Alex has undergone a major transition from boy to young gentleman.

McConduit shows the importance of young black men being mentored by their elders without being preachy or heavy. "D.J. and the Debutante Ball" is the third book collaboration between McConduit and Emile F. Henriquez.

Henriquez's pictures captures are very reflective of the black culture and each is remarkably detailed.

I enjoyed the book and I think it's a great read for young children especially young boys.

Racial profiling not systematic

By Jay Cohen
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

RALEIGH — A study of state Highway Patrol traffic stops released Wednesday found no systematic racial profiling but researchers say some individual officers may be biased.

Researchers from North Carolina State and North Carolina Central said their study showed that in 2000, blacks accounted for 21.2 percent of all licensed North Carolina drivers, but received 24.9 percent of all citations from troopers.

However, that wasn't enough of a gap to suggest a prevalence of racial profiling in traffic stops and citations, they added.

"We found nothing in the rules of the organization that encourages officers to target minorities and that's consistent with the patterns for citations and surveys," said Donald Tomaskovic-Devey, a professor of sociology at N.C. State.

"This doesn't mean that individual officers aren't biased and that becomes a role for managerial awareness and monitoring by the leadership of the Highway Patrol."

In the study, some districts and individual troopers were found to have higher rates of citing of blacks than would have been predicted. Others had lower-than-expected citation rates.

Researchers said several variables could contribute to differences between districts and across the state, including where and when troopers patrol and are deployed, as well as the behavior of drivers. They declined to release data about individual districts or areas.

Some troopers who participated in focus groups also said they believe it is likely that some racial profiling occurs among their ranks.

The analysis is based on data on citation and searches by the North Carolina Highway Patrol from 1997-2000. Matthew Zingraff, a sociology professor at N.C. State, said most of the citations, stops and written warnings were from 2000.

The report also includes a survey in 2000 of just under 3,000 North Carolina licensed drivers and focus groups comprised of citizens and Highway Patrol officials.

Some researchers believe that the variables involved in the study make it hard to draw comprehensive conclusions.

"You can see how many people the North Carolina Highway Patrol has stopped, but it really becomes meaningless without knowing who is available to be stopped," said Geoffrey Alpert, a criminology professor at the University of South Carolina.

Link between anger and smoking

Continued from page 4B

grams. Previous surveys had suggested that Type A personalities are more likely to be big smokers, especially when nervous or irritated. Also, some scientists have put smokers into brain scanners while infusing them with nicotine, to see what brain areas the drug targets.

But Potkin's study took the crucial step of adding nonsmokers to the mix. And he asked 86 people to do various tests — such as computer games that showed who were the sore losers — while a PET scanner monitored their brain activity before and after receiving low- or high-dose nicotine patches or a sham patch.

"No one has looked at nicotine in this way," says Kenneth Perkins, a psychiatry professor at the University of Pittsburgh who also is studying predictive traits of smoking.

The PET scans showed no brain effects of nicotine on people whose personalities were more relaxed and cheerful.

But in people rated as having more hostile tendencies

easier to anger, more impatient or irritable — nicotine triggered dramatic changes in activity in brain regions important for controlling emotion and social response.


For some people, nicotine increased energy metabolism, for others, it decreased, depending on dose.

But despite the common assumption that nicotine can be calming, actually "nicotine made them even more aggressive," Potkin says. "They may smoke to feel better, but they don't feel better."

That's a curious finding,

Perkins says, but it may be because the study used different doses. Low nicotine doses sometimes stimulate brain activity while high doses suppress other activity.

The next step: Seeing how the brain reacts when people smoke instead of having carefully controlled doses of nicotine administered via a patch. For that study, Potkin can't induce nonsmokers to start smoking, so he'll compare regular smokers to people who puff a few cigarettes every so often.



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