BOOKS



Jacket Drawing For 'Rascal'

Rascally Raccoon: Boy's Best Friend

RASCAL. A Memoir of a Better Era. By Sterling North. Illustrated by John Schoenher. Winner of the 1963 Dutton Animal Book Award. 189 Pages. \$3.95.

The relationship between a boy and an animal is always interesting. Perhaps that is why the boy and the dog are part of the traditional boy - dog - Abraham Lincoln-doctor sure-fire cast of characters. Rascal is no dog, however. Rascal is a raccoon. After Mr. North's memoir, a rash of pet raccoons may break out across the nation, and neighborhood veterinarians may from time to time find themselves facing masked patients.

There are in "Rascal" overtones of Kipling's mongoose "Rikki-Tikki-Tavi" and Saki's "Sredni Vashtar," but without Rikki-Tikki's atmosphere of incipient violence, or Sredni's sinister note of malice aforethought. In fact, one reason the country stands an even chance of being overrun with pet raccoons is that Rascal is as gentle and innocent as a kitten—baby raccoons are called kits-and gentleness and innocence in an omnivorous wild animal is strangely appealing.

Mr. North, whose memoir is true, found Rascal, not yet old enough to fend for himself, in May during World War I in the Wisconsin woods. Mr. North was twelve then, and from the moment of Rascal's discovery and adoption into the North family, Mr. North's trick of writing total-



CURRENT BEST SELLERS

Fiction

1. The Shoes of the Fisherman . . . West

2. Elizabeth Appleton

. . . O'Hara

3. The Glass-Blowers . . . DuMaurier

Non-fiction

1. My Darling Clementine

2. The Fire Next Time . . . Baldwin

3. The Whole Truth and Nothing But

. . . Hopper

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ly without stylistic gimmicks immerses you in nature, which is also totally without gimmicks. Mr. North's writing is not unlike hominy: unpretentious but highly satisfying.

In an odd sort of way, "Rascal" both has and has not a story line. On one level it is no more than a series of memories of a peculiarly delightful pet. On another level, "Rascal" is a touching essay on how much an animal can mean to a lonely

Sterling North's mother is

dead, his sisters have grown up and left home, his brother is in the trenches in France, and he lives alone in Brailsville with his kind, indulgent, wise, but slightdistant father. There are other animals in the family, among them a crow; there is a half-finished canoe in the living room, and Sterling's father is search for a novel about Indians, which for some reason was never published. Sterling has friends, both adult and contemporary, but he is a solitary type. After you get the whole picture of his personal situation, you begin to feel that his life was never really complete until he found

The setting of this little stage provides the book's only sustained note of tension. Rascal raids neighbors' gardens, but that is solved; Rascal steals a lady's engagement ring, but it is found. All of Rascal's other habits are highly endearing. The boy and the raccoon become one, interdependent and inseparable. The raccoon deserves (and gets) as much respect as an individual for his adaptation to life in a human context as Sterling North does for his love for and understanding of nature (Mr. North writes about wild places, birds, animals, fish, and even weather with the same trenchant lucidity with which Hemingway wrote

But despite all the pleasure and delight of that year, you know the situation cannot last. A boy and a raccoon cannot remain together indefinitely. What will happen?

about war).

Toward the end of the book you discover that throughout the story of Rascal's discovery and absorption into the North family, there has been an underlying note of sadness, and that this note is gradually becoming more and more important. The war ends, Sterling's brother is unharmed, everything seems fine; but something isn't. At the very end Sterling's solution to the inevitable drawback of developing a love for a raccoon is wise but heartbreaking. You find yourself weeping inside at the end of page 189-but not entirely in sympathetic grief. You are also weeping because there was a time when a boy could have this kind of experience, and you know what the experience meant. You have just been through it yourself.

-JACD

The Tract Is Showing

Racial Ferment In Africa

Drummond. The World Publishing Company. 249 Pages.

By MARTHA ADAMS

Highly controversial and emotional contemporary situations are often rather risky subjects for novels. There is the danger of an overwrought harangue countered by the opposite hazard of a chilly objectivity which, while avoiding excesses, also avoids any feeling on the part of the reader, and turns a novel into a social tract.

Such a subject at present is South Africa and its policy of racial separation or Apartheid. June Drummond has tackled just this slippery subject in her third novel "A Time to Speak." She is herself a native of South Africa, and a graduate of the University of Capetown, although much of her life has been passed

abroad.

Her novel attempts to explore the reactions of a small, sleepy South African town symbolically known as Peace Drift to the increasing tensions of a countrywide crisis with international repercussions. The vehicle of her observations is a young doctor, born and raised in the town but resident in England for many years who returns for one month to help in a vaccination campaign-and to resolve his uncertainties about his much-publicized native land.

The reader is presented with Peace Drift as a typical South African small town or "dorp". complete with its social and political hierarchy in both races: patriarchal and powerful

steeped in tradition; a red-neck storekeeper; the philosophical local factory owner; the preacher; the resident doctor, a cynical German bound only to medicine; the proud, but "reasonable" patriarch of the surrounding Bantus: and the local, hot-blooded representative of nascent African nationalism.

Miss Drummond's novel begins as two figures arrive in Peace Drift the same day, the young doctor who marvels at the detachment of the citizens in the midst of a national crisis and a sinister "agitator" who settles himself in on the cliffs overlooking the town and leers down on unsuspecting humanity below.

The "agitator's" first action is to roo the red-neck's store, killing in the process the owner's much beloved dog and setting off a chain reaction of racial suspicion and violence which nearly wrecks the town. The obvious moral is that things were not so peaceful in Peace Drift as they seemed on the surface, particularly since the "agitator" turns out to be a simple criminal with the mind of a twelve-year-old.

Against this background, author Drummond seeks to present all points of view on the African crisis while not hiding her own stand, personified in the young doctor who holds out for a moderate multiracial culture and at times borders on the lyric in its

The other positions range from the militant but honestly based Apartheid doctrine of Peace Drift's main political figure and the Vulgar hysterical racism of the shopkeeper through the moderate, traditionalist position of

the preacher and the town's major landowner to the bitter rebelliousness of a young uneducated Negro leader.

Although no one not well ac-

Mann Film Laboratories

quainted with present-day South Africa can judge the true accuracy of Miss Drummond's presentation, her account of the positions of "white" South Africa is clear and generally convincing. Although liberals may gag at the Apartheid philosophizing of some of the characters, no one can accuse the author of impartiality on this score, even while she counters with her own arguments. The touch is sympathtic and delves deeply into motives and historical explanations. Less might be said for her

treatment of the Negroes who admittedly she deals with in less depth. Here the cards seem definitely stacked against what might be called the "activists". Where the prodigals from the goal of harmony in the direction of Apartheid are let off with a stern, but understanding lecture on humanitarianism and a devout wish that they wake up to modern times, the novel's Negro nationalist is blasted and held up to scorn as a demagogue whose only constructive act is burning half the town out of spite for being fired unjustly. The Negro heroes seem to be the old chief who proudly, but philosophically, waits to be thrown into a reservation, and a self-educated mechanic who solaces his lack of opportunity for advancement by locking himself in his shack and reading while he waits for the white moderates to produce multi-racial harmony.

This is not to say that author Drummond should have written a book damning the right-wing

the black revolution, but the reader has a right to demand equal time for the extremes when the dust-cover announces impartiality, or so it would seem. One might also criticize her failure to deal with some of the economic and class issues which underlie much of the current South African situation.

If "A Time to Speak" stands at least half way on the level of a tract on the social and ideological divisions of contemporary small town South Africa, it limps decidedly as a novel. The trouble certainly does not lie in the writing of the individual sentence, for Miss Drummond's turn of the phrase is often excellent. Rather it seems to be in the author's overbearing preoccupation with making the various opinions of her countrymen crystal clear which reduces the bearers of these opinions to little more than cardboard figures who argue, hate, and understand among themselves according to the needs of the author's exposi-

The same can be said of the plot and Peace Drift's impending tragedy which after the first few chapters interests the reader only as a device for provoking new opinions and evolving new ones. The work is too didactic to produce more than a purely intellectual involvement in the fate of small, typical Peace Drift and its representative inhabitants.

In short, those who wish to read "A Time to Speak" will find illuminating, pleasant reading on a part of the South African crisis, but not another "Cry the Beloved Country."



Duke's Fred Chappell ... Author Of 'It Is Time, Lord'

An Unquiet View~ In The Piedmont

IT IS TIME, LORD. By Fred writing to come from any North Chappell. Atheneum. 183 Pag-

es. \$3.95.

By W. H. SCARBOROUGH "You don't plow with a tiger," James Christopher mused all to himself. There are other things you do, also at great personal

Late at night in his study, sur-

passionless dalliance, gets

drunk in the company of evil

companions and attempts unsuc-

cessfully to pretend his stub-

bornly undemanding wife is not

there. Another man would have

gone barrelling to an analyst.

Christopher goes home. Whether

salvation awaits him there he

This is not to give a resume of

a novel, but rather to attempt

a tentative understanding of what

is the most bemusing piece of

hasn't the remotest suspicion.

call it a graphic representation Among them he might well of Freudian theory. Freudian theory is present, applicable but number lying, indolence, adultery, and the demon rum. But insufficient. Symbols don't these hold less terror than the abound in every line, but they blotting of memory or attemptare strung across the narrative ing to re-arrange the past to like rabbit snares—signs of the create a present that holds more Zodiac, shapes of leaves traced than a husk of existence. Chrisin the patterns of pieces on a topher's present is a thing to chess board; tongues of flame, be fled either forward or backchildish monsters intermingle ward. Toward the past in a fantasy of what should have hapwith moments of shame or of pened in a sequence that would have led him to be a comfortable. This, Mr. Chappell appears to undisturbed Methodist minister. be saying, is the price a man of He would, too, but for that Methirty pays for abnegating where dieval monster of the soul we he came from. If one comes call the Unconscious; it is not from nothing, one has nowhere to a tiger broken to the harness of go; man takes his wages in madreality, and its furrows are to ness, fear and desolation. be found on man rather than on In effect one must follow Marthe fields he tills. But for it one

cel Proust, one must root out the might whip the past into shape. past and string a bosun's chair Not that Christopher doesn't try. between it and the present. The message itself, if message rounded by boyhood debris and

Carolina novelist, ever. One's

first temptation is to call it the

last gasp of Surrealism and let

it bother the mind no further,

but this will satisfy none of the

disturbing perceptions that have

insinuated their way past one's

It is almost as meaningless to

mental pickets.

it may be called, would not and science fiction he types sporacould not stand independent of dically on a manuscript recounta great imaginative force. Fred ing The Way It Really Was. He Chappell more than adequately is not succeeding, however, "for supplies that, but he demands the rich money of dreams is a comparable act of imagination generally debased by the counfrom his reader terfeiting of memory." To escape he throws himself into a

As a literary virtuoso there is no one in North Carolina who can claim to be his peer, nor for that matter are there appreciable numbers outside. Some will quarrel with the manner in which he uses his resources and complain that he is giving them too little sustenance for too much work. But no one would be wise to say that his book, if worked at, will not yield a disquieting view of that terrible, largely unknown landscape in the nether regions of the soul.

Segregation Troubles In Kansas

THE LEARNING TREE. By Gordon Parks. Harper and Row. 303 Pages. \$4.05.

By BETTY SMITH

This is a deceptively underwritten book about how a growing boy feels when he realizes that he is a Negro and will always be a Negro. The author makes use of a fresh locale not the patronizing North nor the uneasy South - but Kansas: a state that has never been segregated — where the Negro has all the rights his white neighbor has, technically speaking.

Also there is a freshness the theme being carried by a child rather than an adult.

Newt Winger is thirteen years old. He lives on a farm with his parents and numerous sisters and brothers. It is a happy home. The father is a decent, hardworking man, Sarah Winger is a gentle and understanding mother, Prissy is an affectionate brother-teaser and the brothers are like the father - honest and hardworking. There is always plenty of good food, adequate clothing and warmth in winter. The Wingers are not at all what social workers call underprivileged. Why, they are just like white people - except that they are

Another refreshing thing about this book: It is not "stacked". The white people are not all fiends and the Negroes are not all noble. As Sarah Winger said: "Some of them are good and some of them are bad." There are wretchedly bad white people and quite a few wretchedly bad

Newt is a typical American boy - a little more perceptive perhaps than the ordinary boy. He loves his family, he enjoys his aged blind uncle Rob whom he leads around, confiding his hopes and dreams. Should he be a composer or a scientist when he grows up? He even loves Clint, his wild brother-in-law who when he gets a jag on, chases his wife and children back to her parents' at gunpoint, then shoots up at the sky trying to kill God because He is white. Newt likes school too, even though one of his teachers never lets him forget that he is a

He has his boy friends, Beansy, Jappy, Skunk McDowell. They swim together, hunt, or just walk around or lie on the grass talking boyotalk. They are much bothered by an older boy who sometimes joins them uninvited. Marcus Savage is a foul-talking, murderous Negro. Eventually Marcus is put in jail for a year for attempted murder and the boys have him off their hands. All of this sounds sunny and serene, doesn't it. But there

are times of sheer horror. One day, the boys were down at the swimming hole. Some Negroes were shooting craps up on the hill. Kirby, the town law, crept up on the gamblers and all but one, a man known as Doc,

got away. Doc jumped into the river. The law ordered him to halt and fired a shot over Doc's head. Doc ducked under the water. The law fired thre shots and waited for Doc to surface. Dob bobbed up to the surface for a second or two, "He wasn't swimming - just floating." He went down and remained down.

Newt saw it all and began to learn what it was to be a Negro. The firemen came and dragged the river from a rowboat. No luck. "You fella's want'a make two

bits apiece," grunted Kirby. "Do'in what?" Newt asked, 'Divin' for Doc." "Not for no lousy two bits,"

Newt said coolly. "You gittin' real smart, ain't you, Winger? Could run you in for swimmin' naked out here,

you know." The boys dived several times before they located the body. Hooks were lowered and the boys fastened them to Doc's overall

suspenders. "Newt got a good look at Doc as the pole drew him up through the murkiness . . . his eyelids pushed back, left the dead white balls staring blankly . . . The arms and legs, limp as a rag doll's, swayed grotesquely . . . the corpse began a twisting motion as though it were coming to

life Newt had bad dreams all that night. Yes, he was learning very fast how it was to be a Negro. The book has two more harsh episodes which complete Newt's education of how it is to be a Negro. They are more forceful than the others and like a good craftsman, the author has saved them for the ending.

This book is written with so much simplicity and so much, (for want of a better word) heart, that it has the ring of bitter truth. Unlike other books based on this grievous theme, it bangs out no message. The message is inherent in the writing. There is no loud off-beat sex used to prove absolutely nothing. But this simple story of a Negro boy growing up in the white man's world has more impact than those angry books. I can only compare it to the March on Washington. The speeches were wonderful and all that But it wasn't until Mahalia Jackson sang a simple song in her glorious voice that the tremendous impact of the

March on Washington got to me. ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Gordon Parks, a Negro, grew up on a Klansas farm. He was the youngest of fifteen children. His mother died when he was sixteen and he left home to make his way in a world of white people. He made it. He is now a famous photographer, a member of LIFE's staff, a composer whose concertos have been performed in Venice. His first novel. THE LEARNING TREE, indicates he also has the makings of a fine novelist.

WUNC-TV To Carry Huntley-Brinkley

The Huntley-Brinkley Report will be broadcast over WUNC-TV, Channel 4, the educational television station of the University, it was announced here today. It will be a non-sponsored

program, without commercials. The National Broadcasting Company offered the 30-minutes NBC newscast as a public service. The first half hour Huntley-Brinkley program of the season will be heard on Channel 4 tomorrow at 7 p.m. Prior to the regular season's program, there will be a special "Huntley-Brink-

ley Advance" tonight at 6:30. NBC offered the program to WUNC-TV as a public service to the population of central North Carolina. No other TV station in the Research Triangle area now carries the program.

Approval for the right of Channel 4 to present the news review by David Brinkley and Chet Huntley was secured from WSJS-TV in Winston-Salem, the nearest primary NBC affiliate in North Carolina.

Educational television stations are not permitted to carry commercials. Therefore, the Huntley-Brinkley Report's regular commercials will not be seen and heard on Channel 4. The American Telephone and

Telegraph Company had technicians in Chapel Hill today installing new receiving equipment necessary to take the NBC beam for the program.

Devid Brinkley is a native North Carolinian, a former Wilmington newspaperman, and studied briefly at the University

WUNC-TV, Channel 4, operated with 100,000 watts by the University since 1955, offers educational, cultural and public programs in central and Piedmont North Carolina, to about 1,6,00,000 people in the area.

During the school year, WUNC-TV, which has studios in Chapel Hill, Raleigh and Greensboro, presents programs about 60 hours a week, generally from 9 to 1 on weekdays, reaching public schools classrooms, and from 5 to 10 in the evenings. On Sundays, telecasts are from 3 to 10 p.m.

Baptist Sermon Topic Announced

"Heaven on Earth" is the topic of the sermon to be preached at University Baptist Church at the 11 a.m. service today. The Chancel Choir will sing a Choral Introit from "The Cherubic Hymn" by Bortniansky, "To God on High Be Thanks and Praise" by Decius and a Hymn-Anthem 'Thy Word is Like a Garden, Lord."

Dr. Henry E. Turlington is pastor and Mrs. William C. Burris, minister of music. While the organist is on vacation, guest organist will be Mrs. James O. Cansler.

The Sunday evening worship services will resume tonight at 7:45. Dr. Turlington has chosen as his topic, "Grieve Not the Spirit!" The choral call to worship and the anthem will be sung by the Chapel Choir.

You will always be pleased with the results that come from using the Weekly's classified





Brinkley (Left) And Huntley At Work