VIDEO REVIEWS


In this is the 1st in a series of tapes produced by the California-based Larstspur (see Great Gardens of England. Video Reviews, LJ 11/1/95), the viewer is transported to the England of thatched-roofed cottages and lush, overgrown gardens. Our tour begins at Yew Tree Cottage, located in West Sussex. The owner, artist Kathleen Hudson, who at age 90 continues to tend her gardens daily, advised gardeners how to keep "everything you don't like." Then we visit with Mabel Cottage in Kent, brimming with rare and unusual plants. The gardens at Camp Cottage (only seven years old) and the aptly named Swan Cottage are both located in Gloucestershire. Lane Cottage in Oxfordshire is the home of the "king of lettuce" and his marvelous gardens. Swan Cottage in Dorset is a bed-and-breakfast featuring a garden of English native and historical plants. East Lambrook Manor, located in Somerset, was the former home of the well-known English garden writer Margery Fish. Last is the lovely rose-laden Ash Tree Cottage in Wiltshire. Ten years ago merely a field of nettles, this quintessential English country garden was envisioned and created by its owners, as were all the gardens in the program. Beautifully photographed, this video tour, narrated by John Joss, contains high production values. It also includes a list of typical English cottage plants: craneshill, delphinium, penstemon, scabiosa, peony, columbine, dianthus, astrantia, foxglove, campanula, and yarrow. Highly recommended for all general libraries, especially those with gardening and travel collections.—Sharon Wang, School-to-Career Office, Employment Development Dept., Sacramento, Cal.

Jan Smith's Complete Yoga Workout color. 50 min. Hart Associates, distr. by 411 Video Information, PO Box 1223, Pebble Beach, CA 93953; 408-622-9441, 1995. $19.95. (Health) One of the best-stress-dusters of today is the ancient practice of Hatha Yoga, and more and more library patrons are requesting yoga videos. While this video says its two workouts are for beginners and intermediates, the "intermediate" workout is actually more suited for beginners. The camera work is nicely done, with several different angles and good dissolves that make the most of the instruction and the serene outdoor garden setting. However, some of the voice-overs lack a bit in synchronizing with the demonstrated movements; beginners who may be focusing on one pose might look up and discover Smith way ahead of them. The two basic yoga videos every library should have remain Priscilla Patrick's Take a Break (Patrick Enterprises, 1986) and Priscilla's Yoga Maintenance Routine (Video Reviews, LJ 9/19/91); all others (including this one) are optional.—Reilly Reagan, Punam Cty. Libs., Cookeville, Tenn.


ea. vol: color. 60 min. Meurinck Media Methods, 24907 N. Shore Dr., Edwardsburg, MI 49112, 616-699-7061. $29.95. Public performance. (Health) In Little Medicine, narrator/host Jim Meurinck discusses plants used by Native Americans for medicinal purposes, while Therese Barnes explains the ceremonial uses of medicinal plants. Meurinck shows the plants, gives its Latin name, tells what ailment it cures, and demonstrates its preparation and application. Little Medicine features interesting facts, and offers suggestions to prevent poison ivy itch, yucca root shampoo to eradicate lice, jimsonweed for ticks, and goldenseal to repel insects and scorpions. Meurinck rapidly covers a lot of practical information here: repeated viewings and freeze-frame will afford the viewer the chance to absorb it all.

In Native American Medicine, Estela Roman, Patsy Clark, and Barnes offer a more spiritual approach to using native plants for healing: "smudging" to eliminate negativity, "sweeping" to take away bad spirits and bad energy, employing plants to warm and cool the body, which plants to use for first aid in the woods, and the healing properties of massage. Each tape includes a segment from the Herbal News Network, music and dance by the Spring Creek Singers and Dancers, and some of the same supplementary visual images. Both tapes are recommended for alternative health and Native American studies collections.—Susan Hamburger, Pennsylvania State Univ. Libs., University Park

Postpartum Emotions: The Blues & Beyond color. 17 min. FEMP/Family Experiences Prods., PO Box 5879, Austin, TX 7873-5879; 512-338-1318, 1995. $49.95. (Health) Host Ann L. Dumnewood offers an overview of postpartum emotions, differentiating between normal adjustment and more serious emotional problems, and offers suggestions for effective intervention options. The brief video is obviously meant for the pregnant mother, to inform her of possible future mood swings, rather than for the woman who is already suffering and is looking for help. This is strictly a basic introduction to postpartum mood disorders, probably most useful viewed in the obstetrician's waiting room. Included is a booklet with "a spectrum of postpartum emotional reactions, who is at risk, danger signs, [and] resources." Those wanting detailed knowledge of postpartum disorders should view Fragile Beginnings: Postpartum Mood and Anxiety Disorders (Video Reviews, LJ 11/15/95). Postpartum Emotions is not recommended.—Julia Stump, Voorheesville P.L., N.Y.

Aces: A Story of the First Air War color & b&w. 92 min. $300. (Rental: $100). The Lucky Ones: Allied Airmen and Buchenwald color & b&w. 46 min. $295. (Rental: $70). ea. vol: Natl. Film Bd. of Canada, 1251 Ave. of the Americas, 10th fl., New York, NY 10020-1173; 212-596-1770. 1994. Preview avail; public performance. (History) Aces presents the careers of World War I Canadian airmen and chronicles the development of aerial technology, strategy, and tactics in a war that began shortly after the end of mustering in trenches. Airmen entered into the air as a field of concentrated aerial action meant to start artillery spotters in hydrogen balloons. Later, amazingly, the first airplane pilots flew without parachutes, used pistols and rifles to shoot at the enemy, and employed horses in air-to-ground communications. The film's producers have done a superb job of applying modern standards to rare archival footage. The story of these pioneer aviators flying near Sopwith Camels, Bristol, Fokkers, and other craft will dazzle air buffs from nine to 90.

In the summer of 1914, a desperate Gestapo shipped 168 captive Allied airmen to Buchenwald instead of to internationally sanctioned POW camps. Here, for the first time, is moving testimony from these veterans, along with rare archival footage. Although these events are neither a key part of World War II history nor a vital part of the Holocaust, this film does provide good eyewitness accounts of the Buchenwald camp. Suitable for high school and adult audiences.—James J. Dudley, Copilague, N.Y.

Domestic Differences color. 60 min. Cinema Guild, 1697 Broadway, Suite 506, New York, NY 10020; 212-246-5522. 1996. $295 (rental: $90); home use only $99.95. (Int AFFAIRS) With narration by Ruby Dee and a sound track featuring the ethereal healing voices of Lualamma Black Manabah, this documentary set during South Africa's historic 1994 democracy elections is aimed at an American audience. The title denotes the contrast between a well-off white family in Cape Town and their black housekeeper, who earns the typical low domestic wage and has little time to visit her family in the townships. Unfortunately, the director Matthew Kaufman's view of the Silberman family and domestic worker Francine Menam does not expand much on the portrayed gap between South Africa's rich and poor. While Paul Silberman expresses pessimism about the future black-led government and...
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Kolyma
color, 44 min. Mikhail Mikelov, dist. by Artistic License, PO Box 19407, Sacramento, CA 95819-0407; 916-456-6646. $159.95

Labor camps were a crucial part of Stalin's cruel regime, both for social control and cheap labor, and this film—a 1992 Russian production with English voiceovers—provides an important portrait of alegendary grim camp. The briskly paced documentary mixes propaganda films, interviews with survivors, and footage of the camp's remains. The story is ugly: industrial accidents, prisoners shot by guards, political inmates tortured by professional criminals. "was found guilty of belonging to the wrong class," one former prisoner testifies, animating the absurdities of Stalinism. Because Kolyma was made for a domestic audience, the narrative lacks some historical and geographical context for Americans. For libraries where interest in Russian history is high.

[A three-and-a-half-hour director's cut is now available for $159.95.—Ed.]—Norman Oder, "Library Journal"

Winning at the Track:
How To Pick 'Em

color, 60 min. Increase Video, 31312 Via Colinas, Suite 107, Westlake Village, CA 91362; 800-233-2880; 818-707-0300. 1994. $29.95.

HOBBIES
Professional horseplayer Trill Parker, in a spin-off from her book Horses Talk, It Pays To Listen (Jacana Pubns., 1989), contends that the key to wagering successfully on thoroughbred horse races is in observing the body language of horses prior to a race. She says that each horse's physical appearance, musculature, attitude, and behavior, looking for positive or negative indicators of its readiness to run. Parker shows a variety of examples of what she looks for and comments on how each might affect performance. She then uses race and race footage to illustrate her technique. The video is generally well done, and its setting at Golden Gate Park is colorfully attractive, but at times its visual quality does not do justice to its subject. Nevertheless, there are many ideas here that probably don't occur to most bettors, giving the video the value of potentially improving their handicapping or at the very least making them better observers at the track. This could be a popular item for libraries in horse-racing states. —David Van de Steek, Pennsylvania State Univ. Libs., York

Round Trip: The Near Death Experience

color, 58 min. Tim O'Reilly Prods., PO Box 170, Cranford, NJ 07016-1701; 908-276-6934. 1995. $29.95.

PARAPSYCH
While a parapsychologist, a philosopher, and a theologian provide commentary, five people offer testimonials about their near-death experiences. Common facts emerge: none of the people wanted to return to life because of the joy and "unconditional love" they felt on the other side; they did return because of their earthly responsibilities; and while on the other side, they felt they were given omniscient powers—a gift they lost on their return to this world. Some encountered dead relatives and friends, and all came back convinced that a higher power or deity exists. The experts point out that near-death survivors do not like to talk about their experiences for fear of ridicule. As a 1996 Gallup poll estimates that more than eight million people claim that they had near-death experiences, it is difficult to dismiss such testimonials as the products of overactive imaginations. An informative video at a good price, this is recommended for public libraries. —Joseph D'Olive, Jackson Dist. Lib., Mich.

That's a Mustang?
color, 30 min. J.B. Andrew Inc., PO Box 151308, Lakewood, CO 80215-9308; 303-779-4364. 1996. ISBN 0-9654283-0-3. $15 + $3 s&h. RECREATION
One big black stallion stood out among the young wild mustangs rounded up in Nevada and sent to a reclamation center, there to be tame by prisonners at the Colorado State Prison as part of the Bureau of Land Management adopt-a-horse program. Too big for Western-style competition, Andy was sold to Ginger Scott for her daughter and her to ride. Andy proved adept at dressage and began training with Kelly O'Leary as J.B. ("Jaibrat") Andrew. Strapped for cash, Scott sold Andy to O'Leary, who now successfully competes on the first mustang to reach upper-level dressage events. This sentimental video follows Andy from prison to horse show and demonstrates the love of two women for this magnificent animal. Though the video is beautifully photographed, viewers will find no how-tos on taming wild horses or training for dressage, making us a marginal purchase for most libraries; recommended for libraries with strong collections in horses, riding, and dressage. —Susan Hamburger, Pennsylvania State Univ. Libs., University Park

Fueling Death. 2 vols.

ex. vol: color. REPI/Family Experiences Prods., PO Box 5879, Austin, TX 78753-5879; 512-494-6338. 1997. set $29.95.

Sociology
Public performance. Includes: Vol. 1: Providing Physical, Emotional & Spiritual Comfort to Loved Ones. 33 min. $49.95; Vol. 2: Practical Planning & Legal Issues. 17 min. $44.95.

SOC SCI
These tapes are for people who are caring for terminally ill loved ones and for the patients themselves. A series of narrators from religious, healthcare, legal, and counseling institutions discuss the spiritual, emotional, and practical aspects of attending death. They offer sympathetic and familiar suggestions on how to cope. The video on providing comfort outlines the issues to be considered after a terminal diagnosis is rendered. The narrators offer help in thinking and talking about treatment options and pain management and review the emotional stages involved in coming to terms with death. Special attention is paid to the needs of caregivers. The practical planning tape focuses on wills, advance directives, funeral arrangements, and insurance questions. Running for only 17 minutes, it is quick coverage of some substantial issues. It does do a good job with the options for funeral arrangements, including how to donate a body to a medical school. However, the coverage of wills, advance directives for healthcare decisions, DNR orders, and durable power of attorney is very cursory. An optional purchase for those looking for something basic. —Joan Petzick, Harris Beach & Wilcox, LLP, Rochester, N.Y.

"All Aboard!"

Passenger Trains in America

RECREATION
Great Trains Ride Again (Popular Mechanics) 60 min.

Railroading in America (Popular Mechanics)

47 min.


"All Aboard!" is a beautifully photographed video giving a thumbnail sketch of the history of passenger trains in America. It starts with steam trains and travels all the way to Amtrak and various tourist lines. The musical score is above average for this type of railfan video. But that is just what it is: a video for railfans, with lots of scenes of moving trains and little real substance. Produced by Popular Mechanics magazine, Great Trains Ride Again and particularly Railroading in America place greater stress on the technology of railroading. There is some duplication of content, and the background employs annoying elevator music with a steady beat. Otherwise, these programs are well done and of some general interest, but the appeal will also be mostly to railfans. —George M. Jenks, Bucknell Univ., Lewisburg, Pa.
praised work. The result is a history of neither the Troubles nor the IRA, which are amply covered elsewhere in such works as Paul Arthur’s Northern Ireland Since 1968 (Blackwell, 1996. 2d ed.) and Tim Coogan’s The IRA: A History (Rinehart, 1993). Instead, Patterson deliberately seeks here the objectivity usually so lacking in similar works. He views IRA/ Sinn Fein as a social phenomenon, an evolving “social republicanism,” and views its role in crucial periods of postpartition Irish history. What emerges is a picture of a movement divided between the impulses of violence and terrorism and the attractions of peace and political responsibility. As such, it is an extremely timely book that will be an eye-opener for those who believe they understand Ireland and its problems.—John J. Doherty, Montana State Univ., Bozeman

Seeking to provide inspiration for his racial son, Russell (The Man Who Knew Too Much, Carroll & Graf, 1992) delves here into the roots of achievement by African Americans. From research and interviews with many of his subjects, Russell successfully explores the interconnectedness of influences across generations and ties together his overarching themes: “Family and Intergenerational Continuity, Spirituality and Diligence, Activism and struggle.” He focuses on 24 men and nine women, some well known and many lesser known—among them Duke Ellington, Romare Bearden, Ralph Ellison, Cheryl McAllee, Paul Robeson, Gordon Parks, Cornel West, Toni Morrison, Bob Moses, Elna Lewis, and Albert Murray—in a refreshingly typical narrative style of juxtapositions rather than linearly. With recommended readings and notes on sources; an essential purchase for African American studies collections in public and academic libraries.—Susan Hamburger Pennsylvania State Univ. Libr. Univ. Park

In her study of the life and death of Perpetua, a third-century Christian martyr, Salisbury (history and humanities, Univ. of Wisconsin, Green Bay) examines the cult-like mentality that drove a 22-year-old woman with an infant son to turn away from her family and accept with enthusiasm a horrific death for her faith. Salisbury describes the social, political, and religious climate in Carthage that made Christianity so appealing to its disillusioned youth. In addition, pagan Rome’s emphasis on magic and omens combined with the North African tradition of noble suicide to create a social dynamic in which public death in the arena would be viewed as not only acceptable but also desirable. Utilizing Perpetua’s prayer diary as well as an eyewitness account of her final hours, Salisbury analyzes the martyr’s “passion,” her recorded dreams and visions, in relation to these existing forces. The impact of her death on those who witnessed the event as well as those who heard about it became apparent in the veneration bestowed on Perpetua by her contemporaries and in the efforts of patriarchal church leaders like Augustine, who tried to minimize her strength and leadership qualities. This remarkably objective, insightful piece of scholarship is highly recommended for all public and academic libraries.—Rose Cichy, Osterhaut Free Lib., Wilkes-Barre Pa.

Boldly investigating the meaning of race, the experience of war, and the function of the public monument, Savage (history of art and architecture, Univ. of Pittsburgh) probes the landscape of collective memory on which the art forms of commemoration in the public sphere depicted the shift from slavery to freedom in post-Civil War America, the greatest era of U.S. monument building. The author brilliantly illuminates the cultural and artistic problems in the representational battleground of public space as groups competed to construct history in the language of sculpture. His astute observations reveal not only the theoretical foundation of racism embedded in sculpture but the importance of the aesthetic dimension of racial theory. This tour de force is for any serious collection on U.S. history, art, architecture, or race relations. Highly recommended.—Thomas J. Davis, Arizona State Univ., Tempe

Stacewicz (history, Indinn Univ.) explores the histories of the men who fought in Vietnam and who, along with many women, joined the Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW) in the 1960s and 1970s. He interviews 30 VVAW members (25 men and five women), mostly of white working-class background, dividing...