

News Release: American Library Association

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The American Library Association's book column "About Books," is now running regularly in over 300 daily newspapers nationwide. The column, which marks the first time ALA has reviewed for the general public, is distributed every week to 575 daily papers in the U.S. by Newspaper Enterprise Association (NEA), the oldest and largest features news service in the world.

According to ALA's Carol Felsenthal, who writes most of the columns and assigns the rest, this unique arrangement between ALA and NEA has worked out superbly. ALA is particularly pleased that the majority of the 300 papers using the column have circulations under 50,000; in other words, these are papers that previously offered book coverage irregularly, if at all. While some of the papers using "About Books" serve cities as small as Ames IA and Bowling Green KY, others serve relatively large cities--for example, Detroit, Cincinnati, Cedar Rapids, San Antonio.

The "What Americans are Reading" list, the first and only national poll of titles most frequently checked out from libraries, is also distributed weekly by NEA. ALA compiles the poll from reports from 150 libraries across the country.

Each column covers two-to-five books on a related theme. Adult fiction and nonfiction are covered in three columns per month; the remaining column is devoted to children's books. Both libraries and book stores have reported increased requests for titles reviewed.

For further information, contact, Carol Felsenthal, American Library Association, 50 East Huron Street, Chicago, IL 60611 (312-944-6780).