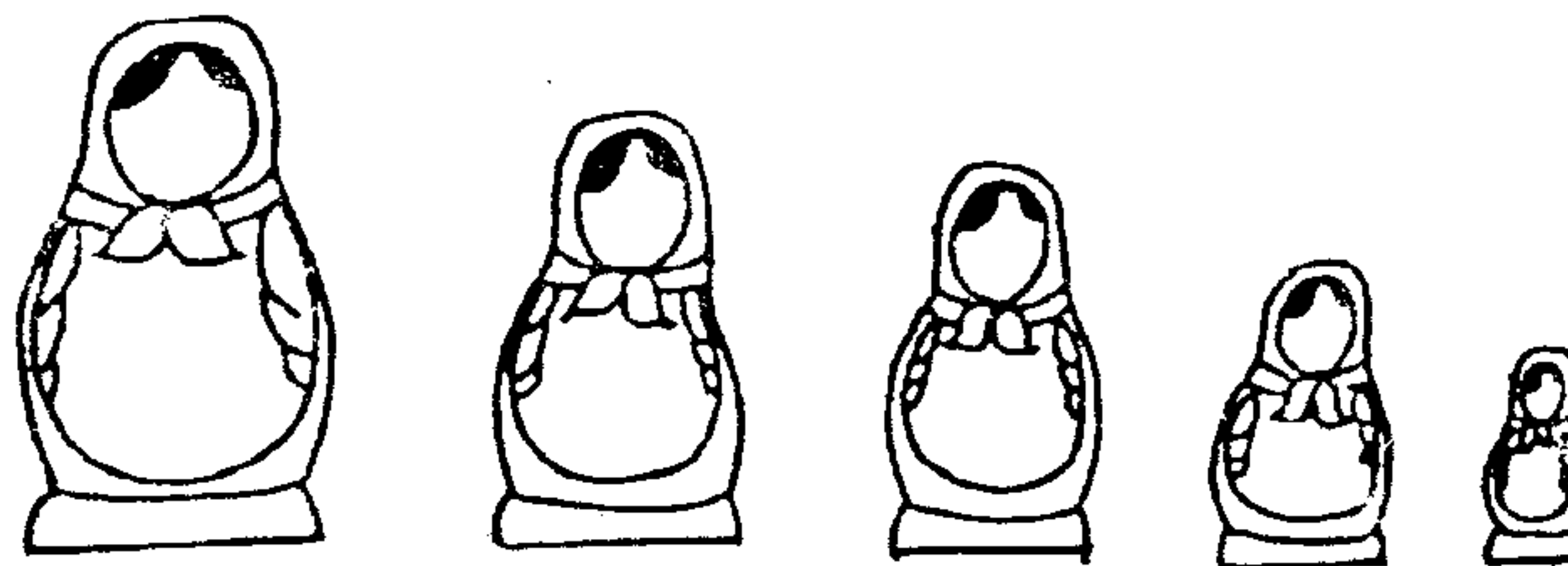
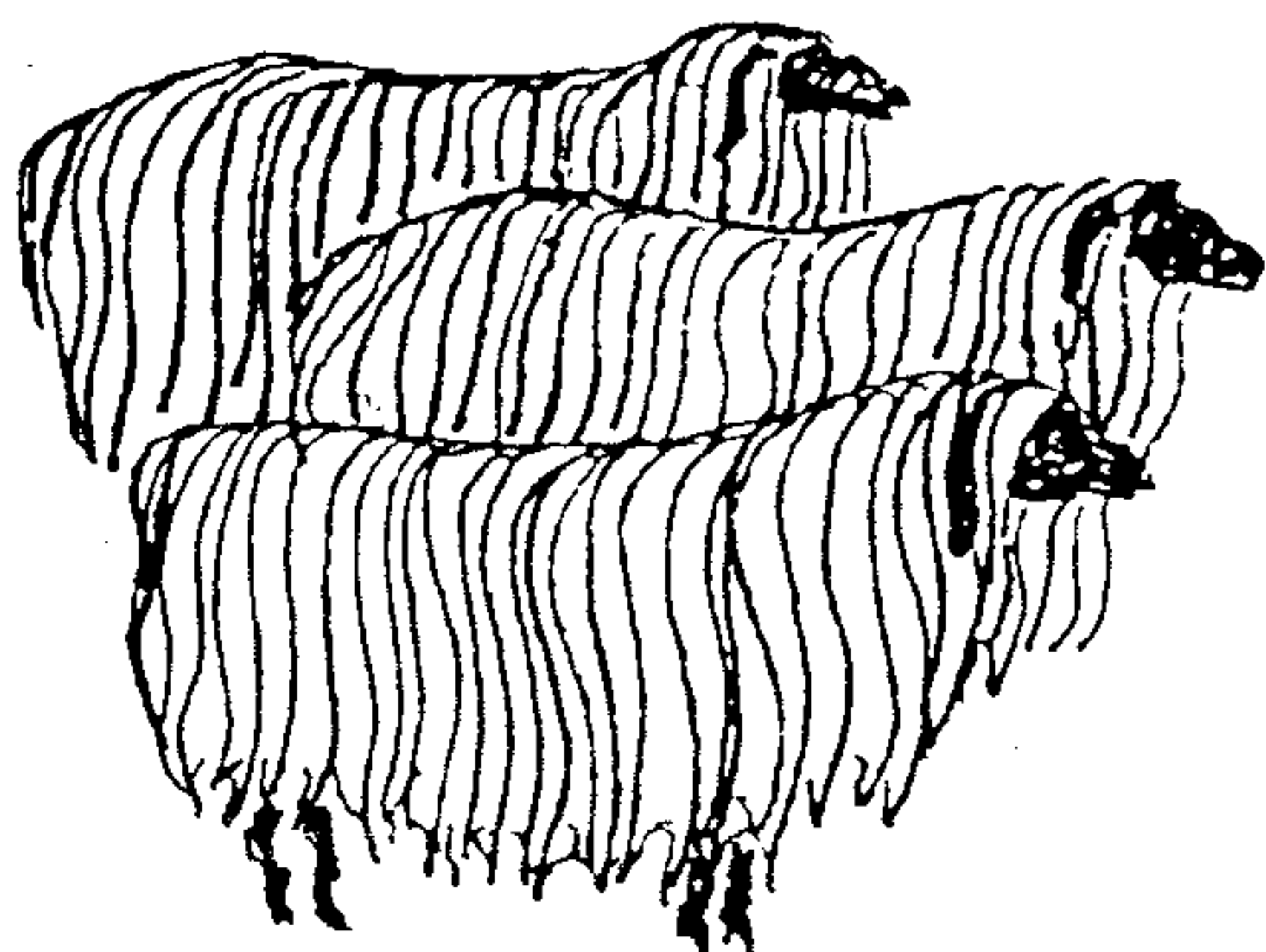


children, she loves sports, drama, art, music. She is also industrious and creative. Although her family may be poor or foreign, she strives to become what she wants. Family, friends, teachers support her ambitions: to pursue a career in science, math, or engineering.

By the time the young woman is in high school, she has decided to become a scientist, whether a biologist like Ru Chih Cheo Huang, an engineer like Nancy Wallace, or a mathematician like Shirley Mathis McBay. Sometimes the struggle through college is difficult, as it was for Elma Gonzalez whose family had to take out a loan, or for Agnes Naranjo Stroud-Lee who spent fourteen years earning her doctorate. Finally, the woman, once a curious child, is pictured and described as a professor who has earned her doctorate in science. ("A doctorate is the highest degree a scientist can earn" is the one repeated sentence in the books.) In conclusion, one scientist tells the young reader, "When I was a little girl, I liked to try new things. I liked to try to be the best I could at whatever I tried. That's how I found out what I like to do and what I do best. It worked for me. Maybe it will work for you." (Noguchi, p. 30)

Sensitive to the cultural background of each woman portrayed in this series, author Mary Ellen Verheyden-Hilliard and artists Scarlet Biro and Marian Menzel recreate the lives of these women sometimes dramatically, oftentimes playfully, but always realistically. Best of all, they portray both sexes in fullest human dimensions, with women equally able to succeed as mother, wife, career person. Mother, daughter, father, husband, sister, brother are pictured as part of a caring community, neither sentimental nor exaggerated, just balanced and humane. With their juvenile audience always in focus, Verheyden-Hilliard, Biro, and Menzel seldom stray from their purpose: to tell young children that science, as a field of study, is wonderful and valuable and that women can become successful scientists, whether they are Afro-American, Black, American Indian, Hispanic, or White.

Published by the Equity Institute under a grant from the Women's Educational Equity Act Program, these books are so attractively produced that I can't imagine elementary classroom teaching without them.



FILM REVIEW

The International Sweethearts of Rhythm ✓
by Greta Schiller and Andrea Weiss

Cinema Guild (1697 Broadway, NY, NY 10019), 30 minutes, 1986, \$55 rental, \$425 purchase (16mm), \$295 purchase (video).

Reviewed by Martha Maas
Ohio State University

The phenomenon known as The International Sweethearts of Rhythm, the multi-racial all-women jazz band of the 1940's, originated at the school founded by Booker T. Washington near Jackson, Mississippi, the Piney Woods School. The band began travelling through the south, rehearsing all day, playing in schools at first, and then gradually getting theatre and nightclub bookings. Conducted by Anna Mae Winburn, it arrived on the Washington D.C. scene just as women began to go into "war work."

The strength of this film is that it lets us hear the women's music and see them in action in film-archive sections and also hear and see some of them as they are today. (Trumpeter Tiny Davis' singing of "Mack the Knife" during the interview is delightful.) They talk not just about the band but about the racism and sexism they encountered, about the strong sisterhood that grew up among them, and about the economic and social pressures that made them disband after the war.

They tell us that black people remember them especially because, though the arrangements they played were all based on the idioms of black music, the band members were "all colors." They always stayed together ("we had the gall to do this in the Deep South"), and often slept on their bus to avoid trouble. Racial incidents were common, and the band members tell how the white women painted their faces black and "permed" their hair, or had to take a different cab to the station to avoid trouble.

"They play okay for girls;" "she played drums like a man;" "they didn't have the power (of a male band)" say the men who knew their playing, providing a fine little survey of typical sexist attitudes. But the band members themselves talk about the mobs of people trying to get into their concerts (with film footage to prove it), about their overseas broadcasts, and about the six-month tour of Europe made when the war was just over. Back in the U.S., members began to get married and didn't want to go on touring, leaving gaps that were hard to fill. When the men returned, bookings were gradually harder to get, and this hottest of the all-women bands of the '40's disbanded. But thanks to the producers of this video, they are much more than a memory.