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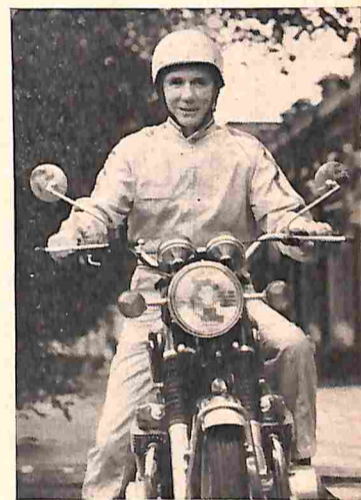
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Books, bikes and Melvin Maddocks

Once every few weeks for the past few years we have published a book review by Melvin Maddocks, book editor of the *Christian Science Monitor*. The reviews, by and large, have been of big, substantial works of fiction. He is well-read in so many fields that he has the reputation of knowing more about the subject than the author he is reviewing. This week his 36th review for LIFE appears on page 22.

As his job might imply, Mr. Maddocks is a quiet man of considerable personal dignity and dry, understated wit. He neither drinks, smokes nor swears, is a classical scholar (Harvard '46) and lives with his wife and three small children in a pleasant house in Auburndale, Mass. Hardly the kind of man to be hooked on motorcycles. But Maddocks is hooked. He commutes to the *Monitor's* sedate office in Boston on a full-throated Honda 350, his thirteenth motorcycle. Last year he rode to Chicago, Cleveland and Buffalo to cover theater there (he's a theater critic, too) and wants to do it again. He got the bike bug when he was mustered out of the service in San Francisco and bought one to drive home to Boston. He got married there—and biked his bride back to the coast for a honeymoon. "It's a kind of funny habit," he says, looking a bit embarrassed, "but I guess I'll keep on owning one."



MADDOCKS

Maddocks does most of his work at home, often in the garden and sometimes at the beach. "That's one of the joys of a book," he says. "It's portable." He writes a weekly book column for the *Monitor*, and reviews one or two books a month for LIFE, reading comparatively slowly—about 50 pages an hour—always making notes "even when I'm reading on my own."

Maddocks once reviewed television, movies and theater as well as jazz in New York, but he prefers books and Boston. "You have more options when you review books," he says. "Reviewers are overeaters. We were the little kids who could always sit through three movies on a Saturday, or read two books at a sitting. We're insatiable."

"In general I think there are two types of reviewer. One type likes the power, the fact that he is sitting in judgment. The other type is someone who likes to talk about books. I guess that's the kind of reviewer I am. What is important to me is the kind of discussion that develops from my review." Sometimes he feels the pleasures he gets from reviewing are offset by a subliminal suspicion that no one really likes a critic. "Reviewers are like umpires. They're a necessary evil." On the other hand, he suggests that if critics and reviewers didn't exist to pick their way through the 30,000 new hardbacks that are published every year, "we would all drown in the amount of type that is being thrown at us. As it is, we're supersaturated by media. We need the sorting out. In a way, a reviewer is running interference for the whole of civilization."

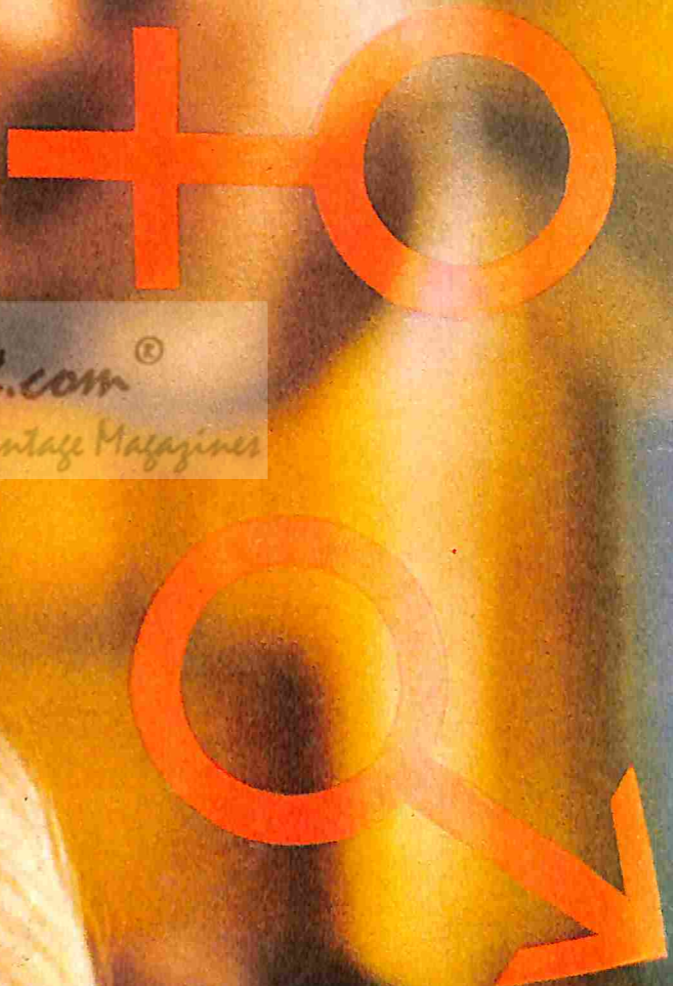
Ralph Graves

RALPH GRAVES
Managing Editor

LIFE

Sex Education for Little Children

Debate splits the nation's schools



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