

BRUNSWICK POOL TABLE

FACTORY AUTHORIZED SALE!

BRUNSWICK PIONEER TAVERN SIZE 6' POOL TABLE

- PATENTED SLATE & PLAYFIELD
- BRUNSCO GREEN CLOTH

SALE
MFR LIST #1049

\$698

or \$21⁰⁰ per month
7' SIZE IS ALSO AVAILABLE • \$99 MORE

OUR
GOOD
QUALITY

OVER 500 POOL TABLES IN STOCK

7' BRUNSWICK RICHMOND OAK

- RICH OAK FINISH
- CUSTOM 22oz. CLOTH
- IN LAID BRASS SCOREKEEPER
- INCLUDED PLAYER ACCESSORIES

SALE
MFR LIST #1893

\$1024

or \$34⁰⁰ per month
4 X 8' SIZE ALSO IN STOCK • \$100 MORE

OUR
BETTER
QUALITY

CUESTICKS • CLOTH • BILLIARD LAMPS • SUPPLIES

BRUNSWICK DAKOTA 8'

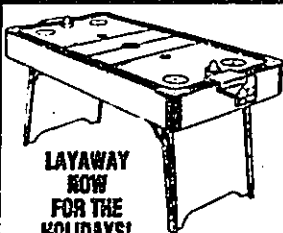
- REAL ENGLISH OAK
- CUSTOM LEATHER POCKETS
- INCLUDES PLAY EQUIPMENT
- BRUNSWICK FIT & FINISH

\$1697

or \$51⁰⁰ per month
MFR. LIST #2645
OUR REG. #2259

OUR
BEST
QUALITY

DARTS • FOOSBALL • POKER TABLES • SKEE-BALL



BRUNSWICK 3' X 6' AIR HOCKEY

- EXCITING FAST FUN
- INCLUDES PUCKS, GOALIES

LAYAWAY
NOW
FOR THE
HOLIDAYS!

WAS
\$399

\$297

U
CAN'T
BEAT

Viscount Pools
The Pool & Spa People

NO PAYMENT
UNTIL
1996
ON APPROVED CREDIT

LIVONIA 1-313-261-8580 WATERFORD 1-810-674-9689

BOOK BREAK

Novel on John Brown: fascinating, haunting



VICTORIA DIAZ

"Raising Holy Hell," by Bruce Olds (333 pp., \$22.50, Henry Holt).

In this uniquely formatted novel, Bruce Olds paints a haunting portrait of one of the most controversial figures in American history. You may not understand the shadowy

heart of the 19th-century abolitionist, John Brown, when you finish this fictionalized biography, but Olds' rendition of his severe and stoic subject fascinates and convinces from first syllable to last.

Brown was born in 1800 in Connecticut, the son of a stern, Bible-thumping tanner. His childhood, painful and abbreviated, was marked by the death of his mother when he was eight years old. It is hard to say exactly when he took up the cause of abolition, but once he did, everything else (including wife, Mary, and his numerous children) played a distinctly secondary role in his life. His belief that he was led by God in this "holy war" never seemed to falter, no matter the merciless killings, no matter that a number of his sons died in the carnage.

After the infamous raid on the U.S. armory at Harpers Ferry (where Brown and only 21 other abolitionists took on federal troops), he was dispatched by Lt. Col. Robert E. Lee to Charlestown, Va., and hanged there Dec. 2, 1859. Arguably, his activities (although in themselves not especially widespread) served to light the fuse which eventually erupted into the U.S. Civil War.

Olds, who has close family ties in the Detroit area, tells his absorbing story via narrative, letters, poems, song lyrics, fictionalized interviews, courtroom transcripts, and other devices which not only flesh out the enigmatic Brown, but delineate his times as well. The proslavery beliefs of Founding Fathers Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and others illuminate — and darken — American history, and Olds underscores vividly the unspeakable, but legal, practices of the institution Brown fought against.

Transcendental Bronson Alcott praises John Brown, as do American icons Henry David Thoreau and Ralph Waldo Emerson. African-American Frederick Douglass, on the other hand, appears to have regarded his friend with caution, ultimately refusing Brown's ardent plea to join the raiders at Harpers Ferry. ("I never approved of his methods," says Douglass.)

Olds also features the input of various members of Brown's family in this hodgepodge biography. The abolitionist's first wife, Dianthe Lusk, says, "I shared (his) bed for 11 years, and if the best of him was a dotish father and loyal husband, the rest of him . . . drove

You may not understand the shadowy heart of the 19th-century abolitionist, John Brown, when you finish this fictionalized biography, but Olds' rendition of his severe and stoic subject fascinates and convinces from first syllable to last.

me mad (and) kill me dead."

His daughter, Ruth, stresses that her father was neither a saint nor lunatic, as many insisted at the time of his death, but a man touched by "the genius of faith. His son, John Brown Jr., whose promising career in politics was demolished by his father's actions, confesses that "It is a wondrous . . . thing to realize that one's father is truly brave," but adds, "I had no stomach for his brand of moral ruthlessness."

Not surprisingly, Brown didn't see himself as others did. "I am here to create difficulty," he says at one point. "I wreak havoc upon slavekeepers." To his children, he sends a final letter shortly before his execution. It reads "Dear Family: I admonish you always to remember — Be good haters."

There seems to have been truly a part of John Brown that nothing else besides his "cause" ever touched. As he rides to his execution in the back of a horse-drawn wagon, he sits atop his own casket, discussing the countryside. When he arrives, he takes the gallows steps, two at a time. He grows irritable and impatient then, eager to hurry his own hanging. (Among those witnessing the grim event is a young militiaman consigned to Company F of the 1st Virginia. His name is John Wilkes Booth.)

Olds appears to have a big, soft spot in his writer's heart for the unusual (sometimes made-up?) word. While this at times enlivens his efforts, it also after a time tends to feel a bit mannered and overwrought. Within one page, for instance, readers will encounter "diplopie," "sockdolager," and "taintured." And throughout you'll meet verbs you've never met before. Keep a dictionary handy.

LAST WORDS: Jane Hamilton, author of the acclaimed novel, "A Map of the World," will sign books and read from her work at Birmingham's Baldwin Library, 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 15. For further details, call 810-647-1700.

Victoria Diaz of Livonia, a longtime member of Detroit Women Writers, has a lifelong interest in reading "everything from great novels to cereal boxes." You can leave a message for her on a Touch-Tone phone by dialing (313) 953-2047 and her mailbox number, 1854.