

## Ninety-eight and Three Fourths Percent Guaranteed

*By Loweta Kimball*

"Oh, the places you'll go," the opening line of the children's book by Dr. Seuss, the encourager, motivator, an inspirational guide for children and adults regardless of age, gender, ethnic group or economic condition. He will always be noted as one of the most enthusiastic writers of children's books ever to come down the pike.

I recall discovering this author when my children were young, inquisitive, and anxious to discover all they could be. They immediately fell in love with his characters, primarily a string of a cat in a red and white striped hat that triggered the imagination through almost impossible antics; "The Cat In the Hat", "The Cat In The Hat Comes Back", "Cooking With The Cat", just to name a few. I could tell by their repeated readings of Dr. Seuss that they envisioned themselves wandering through a maze of adventures and possibilities. That was also a time when they wanted a cat as a house pet. Their cat, that didn't last long enough to get a name, was scurried away by their dog that didn't approve of the invasion.

The book by Dr. Seuss, "Oh, The Places You'll Go!" was among their favorite that most encouraged travel beyond the road atlas our family was using. Their grandparents and I not only had limited resources to do much traveling, but access to decent accommodations was virtually non-existent for our ethnic group even if funds were available. My parents and I enjoyed visits with friends and relatives in other cities in the 1940's, 1950's and 1960's but were limited in the number of miles we could travel by automobile as there were so few decent places that would allow overnight stays, and it was unsafe for a Black woman to travel alone. A 50-mile distance by automobile was good at best. An overnight stay was with relatives or friends.

My parents refused to be subjected to the conditions of a segregated train. Bus travel was just as bad with segregated or no eating facilities in the small towns through which we had to travel. The best way to eat while traveling on the road was to carry your own food. A monumental task for any family. Therefore, our places to go were limited.

Today, race relations are different and travel accommodates us all. With time and money, "you can steer yourself any direction you choose."

Further lines from Dr. Seuss read: "You have brains in your head, feet in your shoes, you're on your own, you know what you know and you're the one who'll decide where to go. You're off to great places, today is your day, and your mountain is waiting so get on your way."

My children and millions like them, whose parents and grandparents did not have the luxury of safe travel in their childhood, appreciate the positive approach to guaranteed success. A whopping 98-3/4% percent guaranteed success in live traveling anywhere on the globe. And we are the ones who'll decide where to go.

