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BOOKS BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

Where Do You Stop?
by Eric Kraft (Crown; \$15)

WHEN black students show up in Peter Leroy's junior-high class, he perceives them not as "other" but as an extension of a spectrum that includes him and lighter-skinned people he knows. He makes friends with one of these new classmates while they are collaborating on a science project. He loses the classmate, however, when de-facto segregation is instituted; his gorgeous and cerebral science teacher quits in protest, and the project is left hanging. This novel, the tenth installment in the highly engaging series collected under the title "Little Follies," is the fulfillment of that science assignment, handed in thirty-five years late. Its subject, as the title suggests, is the nature of boundaries, or, rather, the impossibility of definitively establishing them. In dealing with a subject both explosive and cosmic, Mr. Kraft exercises his customary light touch—perhaps at its peak in pseudoscientific diagrams that appear throughout the book and make you laugh out loud.