

Portrayals of Immigrants in Trade Books (1880-1930s & 1980-2010s)

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Immigrants are a part of America's founding and history. Until this study, it was unclear how immigrants have been historically portrayed in youth American trade books. Utilizing a discourse analysis approach, this study offered a critical and comparative examination of the portrayal of first-generation immigrants, the authors' perspectives, and the historical evolution of American trade books written during two peak United States immigration eras (1880-1930s and 1980-2010s). After examining 98 books written over 100 years, findings indicated in both peak immigration eras, immigrants faced similar problems; first-generation immigrants were insensitively criticized and viewed as subpar individuals by Americans. As a whole, books were mostly tales of assimilation and mistreatment in the United States. Since youths' ideas of people and cultural groups are formed by what they learn from not only social interaction but also the media, it is important for books to provide meaningful representations of immigrants.

Key words: immigrant, immigration, trade book, multicultural education, stereotypes, social studies

As a teacher and member of a family of immigrants, I wanted to understand how first-generation immigrants and their experiences are portrayed in trade books, or non-textbook literature "written for the general market" (Kim & Garcia, 1996, p. 1). What kind of descriptions of immigrants are my students absorbing from this literature? As United States history is deeply entwined with that of immigrants, it was important to examine how first-generation immigrants have been represented through various authors' and illustrators' perspectives. The purpose of this study was to analyze children's and young adults' trade books authored during the two peak United States immigration eras (1880-1930s and 1980-2010s) and to investigate the portrayal of immigrants and their experience in written text and pictorials. This study further aimed to investigate how these immigrant depictions could affect the social studies and multicultural curriculum.

Literature's Role in the Documentation of Immigrants

The United States of America is a country founded by immigrants, or people who move "from one country to another" (Deaux, 2006, p. 1). The country has allowed individuals to enter its borders in search of religious and political freedom, economic opportunity, and the American Dream, the idea that in America, "anything can happen" (Hochschild, 1996, p. 15). The last two significant eras of immigration occurred during 1880-1930s and 1980-2010s (United States Census Bureau, 2010), periods during which over 34 million immigrants entered the USA. While the mid-19th to early 20th century's "old immigration" consisted of waves of European migration, the 20th to early 21st century's "new immigration" (Riofrio, 2008, p. 7) brought immigrants mostly from Asia and Latin America (United States Census Bureau, 2014). As the mid-1800s Industrial Revolution increased the need for unskilled and cheap labor to meet the

demands of production, immigration to the USA soared. Events such as the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 (Lee, 2002), post World War I anti-immigrant feelings of nativism (Higham, 1955), Red Scare's fear of communism (Schmidt, 2000), and immigrant-reducing U.S. Immigration Quota Acts (Simon, 1993), caused immigration to decline.

Literature has documented how first-generation immigrants helped shape the United States. Trade books, accessible forms of literature for students and books that teachers can use as supplements to their lesson plans, are often used in the classroom today. Although some elementary teachers have the advantage of using picture books as read alouds, middle school educators rarely have the materials (for example, 25 copies of the same trade book) needed for students to be able to read individually. Due to the large amount of time involved in reading chapter books as a class, trade books are often used in the middle school curriculum as lesson extensions or as extra credit projects. Although trade books have been used to entertain students or instill an interest in reading (Edgington, 1998), few have been used to specifically teach about the immigrant experience. The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), in association with the Children's Book Council (2011) encourages the use of trade books in the classroom through its *Notable Trade Books for Young People*, an annual bibliography highlighting cultural diversity (NCSS, 2012). Unlike textbooks, trade books offer youth a passage to different cultures and experiences (Fuhler, 1992). Since immigrants are American history, the immigrant is central in establishing today's multicultural ideology.

Lev S. Vygotsky's *Social Development Theory* (1962) promotes the notion that children learn in two ways: through social interaction and instruction. Individuals, therefore, may learn through exposure to printed stories. By reading immigrant tales, children may be able to connect to their ancestry or present life. Literature, however, also has the power to distort history. As history textbooks do not normally discuss an individual immigrant's experience (Deaux, 2006), social studies often lacks the opportunity for different generations of immigrants to build links to their culture (Johnson & Giorgis, 2002). As previous researchers have discussed, bias often is present in books, particularly social studies textbooks which often present an unbalanced story about immigrants in America (Cruz, 2002; Hawkins & Buckendorf, 2010). Social studies textbooks often are regarded as informational (Lamme, Fu, & Lowery, 2004); tending to describe the immigrant statistically using maps and dates (Freeman et al., 1998). As Alan A. Block (2000) suggests, there is a need for books humanizing individuals, unlike those "occupied by scientists" (p. 132). Immigrant literature tends to portray immigrants as foreigners (Pefanis, 2007), or individuals struggling to assimilate in a biased America (Portes & Zhou, 1994). Although immigrants have viewed themselves as a "product of 'two worlds'" (Schlund-Vials, 2006, p. 171), they have been shown as choosing their ethnic identity over being an American.

During the late 19th and early 20th century, the term "peasant culture" (Keller, 1995, p. 48) was a general characterization of immigrant life. Immigrants were commonly viewed as "the laborer, never the citizen" (Reisler, 1976, p. 231) or as "uniformly poor and uneducated" (Portes & Rumbaut, 2004, p. 13). As decades passed, immigrant statuses were determined from the minute of arrival in the USA; immigrants either just arrived "off the boat" or on a "Boeing 747" (De la Cruz, 2005, p. 23). Literature often contributed to these portrayals by telling stories about an immigrant's economic mobility in the form of a rags-to-riches tale (Bowerman, 1979), a story revolving around the good luck factor (Kelly, 1973), or an immigrant tale told from a "working class subjectivity" (Schlund-Vials, 2006, p. 25). Popular media has, as well, caused children to form flawed impressions of certain ethnicities (Griswold, 1993) and to correlate "immigration

[with] discourses of poverty and illegality” (Riofrio, 2008, p. 3). Defining an immigrant as such removes his or her humanity and ignores contributions to American society. As generalizations learned from stories could very well “harden into stereotypes” (Cortes, 2001, p. 5), it is suggested literature does not “affect the degree of inequality in our society” (Barta & Grindler, 1996, p. 269).

As far as the writers who create immigrant stories, Ronald T. Takaki (1993) argues authors are not able to understand the lives of immigrants without experiencing immigration firsthand. Likewise, Michael M. Levy (2000) suggests “even the most well-meaning attempt to write about a culture with which the author is not totally familiar runs the risk of falling into factual inaccuracy and stereotype” (p. i). In agreement, Carmen L. Medina (2006) asserts American literature often is written and viewed from a “mainstream perspective” (p. 72) and, for the most part, devoid of culture. Publishers “play[...] it safe” by “publishing what they think readers think they want,” therefore, American literature has become “predictable” (Olsen, 1992, p. 172). Picture books featuring immigration are challenged to portray immigrants through images. “Picture books require a shared responsibility between author and illustrator. Very often the author and illustrator are the same person, yet other times they are different people” (Johnson & Giorgis, 2002, p. 601). For this reason, one may question whether an illustrator is truly representing diverse ethnicities, or simply drawing faces differently to honor multiculturalism (Lee, 1995).

Method

“Words can be the same, but they will mean very different things” (McGee, 2010, p. 2). This qualitative study used a discourse analysis research approach to identify “discourse,” or “commonly shared patterns of text that [go] beyond the ‘institutional’ ways of seeing” (Bartesaghi, 2009, p. 153). My aim was to analyze, evaluate, and compare trade books’ usage of language, illustrations, and historical events to determine the portrayal of immigrants, and to highlight cultural and social forces that influenced the evolution of children’s literature.

Six major research questions guided this inquiry: 1) How are immigrants portrayed in children’s and young adults’ American trade books published during the United States peak immigration era of 1880-1930?; 2) How are immigrants portrayed in children’s and young adults’ American trade books published during the United States peak immigration era of 1980-2010s?; 3) What are the similarities and differences in the portrayals of immigrants between the two peak immigration eras?; 4) How historically accurate are children’s and young adults’ American trade books published during the two peak immigration eras?; 5) Who are the authors and illustrators of books about immigration for children and young adults?; 6) Who are the publishers of books about immigration for children and young adults?

I initially compiled a bibliography of approximately 200 trade books found through the Internet, public libraries, and the University of South Florida’s Interlibrary Loan System and Special Collections Department. The criteria used to amass this list were that books must: a) be a children’s or young adults’ trade book; b) include characters who are immigrants to the United States; c) be works of fiction; d) have been written and published during the two peak U.S. immigration eras: 1880-1930 and 1980-2010s; e) be written in English. In order to ensure the books were correctly selected, a checklist containing the above criteria was filled out for each of the books under consideration. Those that did not fit the criteria were omitted from the study.

The final selection of books was chosen using a systematic and objective Likert-style rating scale. Ratings were based on a scale of “1” to “5,” with “1” being the lowest (e.g. lightly

focused on the immigrant, less well-known author), and “5” being the highest (e.g. heavily focused on the immigrant, very popular author). Of the books the highest 98 scored were chosen for the study (see Appendix A). Only fictional picture books and novels written for primary, elementary, and middle school students which were written in English (to avoid translational errors) were used in the study. Since books such as “The Newbery and Caldecott books are logical choices [, having] . . . received the most prestigious awards given in children's literature,” the familiarity of the books, authors, and titles was taken into account (Davis & Wilson, 1992). The variety of ethnicities represented per decade was also considered, however, the length of the book was not a factor. An array of authors was included to prevent the overrepresentation of one author's view. Book selections must have included characters who immigrated to America. Although a description of the immigrants' lives in their native country was taken note of, their experience in the USA was to be the central focus. The main character did not have to be an immigrant; however, there must have been first-generation immigrants highlighted in the story.

Once the sample of trade books was identified, the study began by categorizing the books by immigration era and then by decade (six decades within the era of 1880-1930, and four decades within 1980-2010s). Since there was not an equal number of trade book available for each time period (particularly those published between 1880 and 1930), the number of book selections varied per decade. To strengthen the validity of the results, each book was read and analyzed by participant readers (who had experience in research or were knowledgeable in the field of reading); I also read and analyzed the text. Participant readers ($n = 46$) gave their time and effort to read one or more books randomly assigned to them. The assignment process involved labeling each book with a number, randomly selecting a number chosen through a generating system called Random (Haahr, 1998), and giving a reader the book matching that number. After the participant reader and I read each book, we individually logged data onto a Trade Book Data Collection instrument categorizing various themes (e.g., illustrations, main characters, lifestyles, authors, historical events, and publishers) and sub-categories (e.g., journey to America, peer relationships, author's message, multiculturalism, and age-appropriateness). This data collection instrument was created using a combination of factors taken from three resources: 1) the Council on Interracial Children's Books (1994) “Ten Ways to Analyze Children's Literature” (p. 1), 2) Norton's (2001) “Sequence for Studying Multicultural Literature” (p. 5), and 3) Norton's (2001) “Chart for Studying Multicultural Literature” (p. 9). I also kept a journal before, during, and after the review process to record additional observations. The journal served as a record and as a third source of data. The study included a triangulation data model with researcher's data, second party data, and researcher's journal notes. All the data were then critically analyzed and evaluated by comparing the researcher and participant readers' data by coding and categorizing themes, patterns, and commonalities. To reinforce reliability, one-on-one discussion sessions to explain the study procedure to participant readers took place in the readers' workplace, at the University of South Florida (USF) campus, or via Internet or telephone communication. Sessions often were held again after readers completed their task to overview their experience.

Findings

Portrayal of Immigrants During the First Era (1880s-1930s)

The collection of 28 trade books examined during the first immigration era included western and southern Europeans (e.g., Norwegians, Italian, and Scottish) who migrated to the USA during the late 1800s and settled in western territories or major cities such as New York

City or Chicago. During the turn of the 20th century, however, trade books began portraying America as a more diverse country with main characters originating from central Europe, Japan, Germany, and Russia, who often settled in non-urban locations. Reasons for their migration included poverty, ethnic or religious oppression, education, land acquisition, or to rejoin family or group members already in the United States. Wealthy immigrants primarily came to seek new business ventures. Most European immigrants endured month-long tortuous ship journeys during which they suffered through theft, seasickness, and appalling living conditions. Wealthy immigrants who traveled in first class were found to have less harrowing experiences. Uniformly, however, a majority of immigrants reaching Ellis Island were shown to be in awe of the Statue of Liberty. After setting foot on U.S. soil, most immigrants faced disturbing processing inspections – if unable to pass an examination or interview, immigrants were detained or sent back to their country. After passing the inspections, most immigrants entering New York were disenchanted; they wondered how a land filled with stockyards, crowds of people, and tenement housing could be the wonderful America (Sienkiewicz, 1897). Pioneering immigrants who traveled west also viewed the land as nothing more than a vast and empty space where no humans could survive (Rølvaag, 1927). Once settled in the USA, pioneering immigrants were mainly farmers while urban immigrants worked as manual laborers or in factories. As shown in earlier stories, both categories of immigrants continued to be disappointed in their new lives. Most immigrants believed God would watch over them and give them courage to overcome difficulties; however, others felt God was punishing them for past sins or for having brought their family to the United States. A Norwegian wife in *Giants in the Earth* (Rølvaag, 1927) felt coming to the US “was her retribution” for having a child out of wedlock (p. 223). Her husband, as well, believed this was his pay back since he had always been “a shiftless fellow” who “drank [and] fought” (p. 224). Many of the stories, particularly during the 1880s-1890s, were filled with a multitude of tragic scenes where immigrants ended their lives due to disappointment and the feeling of futility. Regarding a Russian-Jewish immigrant who was treated unkindly by fellow Americans, James William Sullivan (1895) asserts in *Tenement Tales* that “Every day of his life he died; for every day brought its insults, its oppressions . . . and each day made less a man of him and killed him by just that much” (p. 180). Likewise, Henry Sienkiewicz’s (1897) message in *After Bread* was if immigrants had not been laden with anguish, they would not have died or committed suicide. Both authors implied that it was better to be dead than to live the life of an immigrant.

Across ethnicities and time periods, the variety of main characters fell into a uniform set of character types. Immigrant mothers were strong and hardworking, but compliant to their husbands and bound by the whims of men. In *The Hohenzollerns in America* (Leacock, 1919), women adhered to their husbands’ beliefs that it was a “woman’s lot to bear and to suffer” (p. 13). In *Our Natupski Neighbors* (Minitzer, 1911), a Polish wife was ordered by her husband to not only get up to do chores directly after giving birth to their eighth child, but was also chastised by him for failing to produce another boy. Unlike their mothers who clung to old traditions, immigrant daughters brought about cultural and family conflict when they became Americanized. Male factory bosses, too, were harsh towards young female immigrants. In *Comrade Yetta* (Edwards, 1913), a boss abusively grabbed a young female immigrant worker and shouted, “You’re fired . . . You’re the slowest woman here” (p. 118). Having withstood ill treatment, young females were often the stories’ heroes as they advocated for change. In contrast, immigrant fathers were strong leaders of the family, yet weak when presented with

alcohol. As an example, in *Giants in the Earth* (Rölvaag, 1927), Norwegian males enjoyed their “Sunday bottle” (p. 31) of whiskey every day of the week. Often depicted as drunkards, absent, and mentally and physically abusive, immigrant fathers were poor role models for their children. When a Polish father in *Our Natupski Neighbors* (Minitier, 1911) was informed that the United States legal system prohibited the beating of children, he responded by saying, “American law! Poh! Poh!” (p. 154). Regardless of their poor role models, immigrant sons, often copies of their fathers, were the most important members of the family, not only because they were males, but also because they performed daily chores. Overall, immigrant children were either bound to their families or guardians, or left unsupervised to become street bullies (Sullivan, 1895). Most were forced to become wise before their years, especially orphaned children who were often featured as main characters during this era. Several immigrant parents were found to be narrow-minded about educating their children and believed work came first; success was symbolized by wealth, not education.

The storylines exposed a severe division between class and wealth. Americans considered immigrants to be peasant-like and unwilling to conform. Immigrants were blamed for bringing diseases, alcoholism, and other societal ills to America. The socio-economic gap was also present in the pictorials as wealthy Americans were fashionably dressed while poor immigrants wore heavily layered dark clothing. Textual stereotypes included Lithuanians, Bohemians, and Irish males as drunkards and Jews as wealthy factory owners (yet misers). Italians were portrayed as gang members and dirty beggars who were, as Wilbur Sarles Boyer (1917) points out in *Johnnie Kelly*, “garlic-loving “wop[s]” (p. 70). The Chinese were often characterized as servants, or as Helen Hunt Jackson (1886) suggests in *The Hunter Cats of Connorloa*, people who wore hats resembling “great dinner-plate[s] upside down” (p. 29). The Polish were shown as dysfunctional and the Scots as righteous and religious. Further, Russian males were depicted as non-smiling, Russian women as emotional and unwilling to conform, and Polish and Armenian males as child and spouse abusers. The illustrations in children’s picture books reinforced ethnic stereotypes with images of large-nosed Jews and overweight European adult females.

Portrayal of Immigrants During the Second Era (1980s-2010s)

The second era included a collection of 70 trade books consisting of immigrants not only from Europe, but also Asia, South America, Africa, India, Mexico, and the Caribbean. Although immigrants were still viewed as separate from native born citizens, skilled professionals who had held reputable positions in their home countries began arriving to the USA and settling in rural areas, refugee camps, suburban areas, and west coast regions. Reasons for migration included economic opportunities, political and economic freedom, and escaping genocide and terrorism. Although the voyage-by-ship method of traveling continued, more modern methods of transportation became cheaper allowing immigrants to come by plane in less than a day. Upon entering the country, immigrants were, again, often dismayed with life. Although skyscrapers were wondrous, city streets were overcrowded and lined with filth. Based on ethnicity or religion, immigrants were often offered the most menial jobs. Immigrants who eventually increased their socioeconomic status were the ones who became more modernized, the ones who changed their clothing style and the foods they ate. For others, life did not change much; grueling workloads and daily struggles were all that awaited them.

Character archetypes remained ever-present in this era of trade books. Immigrant mothers were more open-minded and supported their children’s dreams. They longed for their

children to have a better life, but feared their sons and daughters would turn out to become “too American” (e.g., disrespectful and spoiled) as expressed in *A Step From Heaven* (Na, 2001, p. 112), or find everything would be “American easy” for them (Budhos, 2010, p. 93). Women were slaves to their homes and family, as well as to their sewing machines and bosses in the garment factories. Feeling unsatisfied, mothers often wanted to go back home. Besides the misery, immigrant fathers were more optimistic and encouraged their children to think positively about America. There were those fathers who could not support their families, blamed poverty for their failures, and turned to alcohol. This state of mind led to hostility between family members, particularly between fathers and daughters. In *The House on Mango Street* (Cisneros, 1984), after an immigrant father notices his daughter conversing with a boy, “the next day she doesn’t come to school. [Her father] just forgot he was her father between the buckle and the belt” (p. 93). Although parents in the first era mainly valued work over education, parents in the second era primarily considered it a gift to attend public school free. Parents longed to be involved in their children’s schooling but often could not; they worked long hours and could not communicate with teachers. Teachers were portrayed as both good and evil; some gave young immigrants instruction after school and offered words of encouragement while others showed little compassion. Many teachers’ primary job was to assimilate young newcomers. A teacher in *My Name is Not Gussie* (Machlin, 1999) announces to her immigrant students:

Your teeth will rot, your bones will break, you’ll sicken and die if you continue to eat that awful, fatty, starchy, colorless stuff you ate in Europe. It is your duty to be healthy American children, and I will tell you how. (p. 16).

Grandparents tried to maintain cultural traditions, but were disappointed when their grandchildren did not use their native language or attempt to keep traditions alive. Although the second era featured less orphans, many immigrant children were portrayed as *parentless* (one parent missing) for a variety of reasons. Some reasons were: a parent being too ill to travel, children waiting to be reunited with a parent, a father missing or killed in war, or a parent who died after coming to the US.

Although immigrant youth had a difficult time with bullying classmates, newcomers eventually adjusted to American social customs. In *Shirley Temple Wong* (Lord, 1984), a young Chinese girl went so far as to change her name to that of an American celebrity simply to fit in. Immigrant children were often described as intelligent, the first in their class, and quick to learn English. A Chinese immigrant featured in *Angel Child, Dragon Child* (Surat, 1983) was laughed at for being too smart. Like American classmates, relatives in America, who had either come before or been born in the country, acted superior towards the newly arrived immigrants and gave off the impression they were richer and smarter. Aunts, in particular, would take advantage of newly arrived relatives by using them as housekeepers, babysitters, or workers in their businesses. Although uncles were kinder, they forgot they were once immigrants themselves, and treated the newcomers like strangers. Cousins, too, were depicted as wanting nothing to do with their immigrant relatives. Jean Kwok’s (2010) *Girl in Translation*, includes a prime example of how relatives who sponsored immigrants to America felt as if they should be thanked by the immigrants for the rest of their lives. Amidst the negativity, religious figures and traditions remained a central facet of immigrant’s lives. Hoping to hold onto a piece of home, immigrants frequented their local clerics or houses of worship to find comfort. Given the depressed lives immigrants led, many began to question their faith and subsequently mocked

religion and those who believed in it. Other immigrants willingly converted to American religions in order to become accepted into society.

Pictorials featured both fathers and eldest sons as tough and hardworking. Immigrant mothers often resembled their teenage daughters with matching attire. Russian-Jews were stereotypically featured with large noses, or as shown in *The Keeping Quilt* (Polacco, 1998), still wearing the same clothes and boots they wore on their native farm. Asians were commonly illustrated with jetting ponytails or in glasses. Pre-immigration settings were generalized as Mexicans were shown living in adobe homes and Italians standing near the Leaning Tower of Pisa. Textual stereotypes did not cease during this era of literature. Typecasts were harshest on Mexicans who were portrayed as migrant workers, living in run-down neighborhoods, loitering in parks, participating as gang members, and being undocumented. Feeling ashamed of his ethnicity, a young Mexican male in *Living Up the Street* (Soto, 1985) described how he felt Mexican when he stooped to pick up grapes or wore mismatched clothing. Other ethnic stereotypes included Puerto Ricans as thieves, the Irish as disease-carrying, Italian mothers as pushy and hyperactive, Christian-Russians as evil and greedy, Jewish-Russians as cruel factory bosses who made female immigrants work overtime, and the Chinese as smart and punctual, but who spoke poor English.

Similarities and Differences Between Immigrant Portrayals

In both eras, immigrants traveled to the USA to escape hardships, strict traditions, religious and political persecution, and war. Although immigrants during the first era mostly traveled on a difficult month-long ship journey and experienced demeaning inspection processes, immigrants during the second era often came to America on short plane rides and experienced less stressful entrances into America. During both eras, immigrants often were disappointed upon arrival in America. A disenchanted Italian in *The King of Mulberry Street* (Napoli, 2005) described Manhattan as “smell[ing] like urine” (p. 82). Immigrants found the streets were not paved in gold. As described by Donna Jo Napoli (2005) in *The King of Mulberry Street*, “fresh off the boat” (p. 119) immigrants or inexperienced “greenhorns” as they were called in *Ashes of Roses* (Auch, 2002, p. 68) were destined for menial labor. This view of immigrants as the US government’s burden contributed to the evolution of the word immigrant into alien (Kelly, 1910) and eventually terrorist (Esses, Medianu, & Lawson, 2013).

Many immigrants felt life was better in their native country and regretted coming to America. Immigrants who stayed in the United States for years believed America had caused them to forget their homeland and whom they were; therefore, they found comfort keeping company with others from their homeland. Although immigrant males during both eras were portrayed as hard-working individuals, several were also difficult to live with and abusive towards their children. Although it was common for immigrant parents to discipline their children, the beatings described expressed severe abuse. Often unemployed and no longer able to support their families, immigrant fathers became complainers and self-pities (Littman, 2010). On the other hand, although immigrant women during the first era yielded to their domestic duties and family’s demands, in both eras, women were often shown taking care of life after their husbands left for America, died in America, or took to alcohol. Thus, immigrant women managed to survive on their own, even without their husbands. As immigrant women often experienced poverty, abuse, and poor working conditions, many of their daughters decided they did not want to live like their mothers. Some even resorted to divorce when married to controlling husbands. Since immigrant children (e.g., Italian and Irish) during the first era were

often left home alone because their parents always worked, they were often shown as street hoodlums. This gang-member portrayal was then transferred to the Mexicans during the second era. Both eras portrayed immigrant children as uneducated and their parents as illiterate. Most parents hoped their children would pursue an education in the US and be successful; however there were those parents who believed that children should go to work instead of school. Regardless, some caring teachers, friends, and strangers went out of their way to help young immigrants go to college and pursue careers. Immigrant grandparents, often their grandchildren's only companion since parents worked long hours, were shown in both eras as wise, religious, and respected members of the family. As many grandparents chose to live in the past, they had a hard time adjusting to America. Other relatives, such as aunts and uncles, in both eras gave off the impression that since they had succeeded in America, they were better off than their newly arrived relatives. Cousins, too, were insensitive towards their immigrant relatives since they were for the most part American-born and their immigrant-relatives were not.

Historical Accuracy

According to the historical references I examined, the events and attitudes expressed in the trade books during the first era were historically accurate. After the construction of the railroads (mid-1800s), immigrants increasingly journeyed to the West. The 1880s was an era filled with discrimination, particularly towards the Chinese who Americans viewed as job-snatchers, leading to the establishment of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act blocking immigration from China. As industrialization, poor working conditions, and the mistreatment of immigrant laborers grew, the early 1900s was a time when muckrakers (e.g., journalists, novelists, and photographers) documented these societal ills. Using these methods to confirm historical accuracy during the second era, stories during this time period also presented truthful descriptions of the events discussed (e.g., World War II, the Holocaust, the Vietnam War, the Cold War, and 9/11). The portrayal of immigrants as resented by Americans during World War II was a reality during the 1940s. Events featured in many of the early 21st century stories, such as 9/11, political and religious wars, and the resettling of refugees in the USA, did occur.

Authors and Illustrators

Out of the 28 books examined during the first era, approximately half of the authors were immigrants. They described events that led up to the immigrants' decision to emigrate, feelings of being torn between two countries, and what it was like adapting to the US. The other half were non-immigrants, often historical novelists and journalists who wrote to expose societal injustices, promote political views (such as socialism), and either encourage Christianity or mock it. Stories were often so focused on politics and religion that they brushed aside the immigrant. The immigrant was merely a tool for societal and political discourse, as opposed to a real person. Authors often blamed immigrants for their own dilemmas or for lacking the desire to become Americanized. As Mary Antin (1912) offers in *The Promised Land*, when an immigrant asks for "bread," America should ask in return, "What will you do to earn it?" (p. 203). In contrast, two-thirds of the books during the second era were written by non-immigrant authors. These non-immigrant authors often based their stories on historical events, family members' experiences, research, or social causes. Since their stories reflected personal views, authors such as Albert Edwards (1913) and Sidney McCall (1918) wrote under pseudonyms to avoid criticism. Illustrators in both eras who were from the same country portrayed in the story rendered their illustrations more genuinely; non-ethnic illustrators tended to depict immigrants and their native

countries in a stereotypical manner. Without having first-hand knowledge, non-immigrant authors and illustrators often failed to include the reality of the immigrant experience.

Publishers

Publishers during the first era mainly consisted of printing houses promoting “religious, political, and commercial freedom” (Nowell-Smith, 1958, p. 1). Older publishers, such as Houghton Mifflin, set out to educate and enlighten students (Houghton Mifflin and Harcourt, 2011). Publishers during the second era (e.g., Scholastic House, Clarion Books, Simon and Schuster, HarperCollins, and Harper & Row) were credited with promoting Newberry and Caldecott Medal award-winning books, timeless classics, and inspiring a paperback revolution (Penguin Group USA LLC, 2015). Other publishers such as Greenwillow Books, Candlewick Press, and Tilbury House aimed to educate readers about current societal issues (Candlewick Press, 2014) and promote cultural diversity and social justice (Tilbury House Publishers, 2014).

Final Thoughts

After examining over 100 years of immigrant tales, I conclude the portrayal of immigrants changed very little; immigrants were consistently portrayed as peasants, drunkards, and second-class citizens. Immigrants with higher economic levels upon arriving had easier immigration experiences and lives in America, as poor immigrants were the ones most often mistreated. The continuous portrayal of Americans as uncaring and class-conscious was disheartening. Authors often focused more on the Americans’ ill treatment towards immigrants, than on the immigrant themselves. Themes such as suicide, alcoholism, and child abuse made many stories inappropriate for young children. There were inspirational messages such as never give up and anything is possible among the negativity. Several stories promoted the value of education and described the extremes to which a person would go to come to America.

This study found multicultural literature is not always what it seems. While many of the books could be used in the social studies classroom to discuss historical events, most fell short in promoting multiculturalism. As Kira Isak Pirofski’s research (2001) reports, there is an overwhelming number of classics, best-sellers, and Newbery and Caldecott award-winners that lack cultural authenticity. Since it has been indicated that pre-service teachers often leave education programs with little understanding about multicultural instructional methods (Nathenson-Mejia & Escamilla, 2003), teacher-preparation programs should offer children’s literature courses for potential teachers. Such courses could help pre-service teachers recognize how children’s books have evolved over time, who the influential authors, illustrators, and publishers are, and how multicultural literature could be successfully integrated into lesson plans (Hoewisch, 2000). Teachers should cautiously review multicultural trade books for misleading immigrant portrayals before including them in the social studies curriculum and student classroom library.

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The immigrants diversified the ethnic mix of the United States. The majority in the 1870s and 1880s still came from Ireland, England and Germany, as was the case before the Civil War, but these were joined by increasing numbers of Scandinavians and eastern and southern Europeans, as well as Asians. The immigrants, with their languages and traditions, contributed to the rich ethnic mix of the United States. Between 30 and 50 percent of Italian immigrants in the late nineteenth century, for example, returned to Italy within five years of arrival. However, the vast majority remained part of American society, and many Americans today can trace their ancestry back to a particular group of immigrants. Between 1880 and 1920, more than 25 million foreigners arrived on American shores, transforming the country. The immigrant surge of the late-19th and early-20th centuries was distinctive in its size, its demographics, and its impact upon American culture and society. Immigrants in these bustling cities tended to congregate together with their countrymen: the 1920s were the heyday of the urban ethnic enclave. Immigrants, many speaking little or no English, settled together with their compatriots and forged close-knit communities, often boasting ethnic shops, ethnic markets, ethnic banks, ethnic clubs, ethnic cinemas, and even ethnic radio stations, broadcasting in the mother tongue. Key words: immigrant, immigration, trade book, multicultural education, stereotypes, social studies. As a teacher and member of a family of immigrants, I wanted to understand how first

Portrayal of Immigrants During the First Era (1880s-1930s) The collection of 28 trade books examined during the first immigration era included. western and southern Europeans (e.g., Norwegians, Italian, and Scottish) who migrated to the. USA during the late 1800s and settled in western territories or major cities such as New York.

Portrayal of Immigrants During the Second Era (1980s-2010s) The second era included a collection of 70 trade books consisting of immigrants not only. from Europe, but also Asia, South America, Africa, India, Mexico, and the Caribbean.

New immigrants flooded into cities. In places like New York and Chicago, groups of immigrants chose to live and work near others from their home countries. Whole neighborhoods or blocks could be populated with people from the same country. Small pockets of America would be nicknamed "Little Italy" or "Chinatown." The United States suffered through the Great Depression in the 1930s. America no longer looked like the land of opportunity, and few immigrants came. From the late '30s to 1945, World War II locked Europe, Japan, and a great deal of the Pacific Rim in conflict. In the postwar period, much of Europe was physically and economically in ruin. Europeans started looking to America again as a place of refuge. University of South Florida. Scholar Commons. The Portrayal of Immigrants in Children's and Young Adults' American Trade Books During Two Peak United States Immigration Eras (1880-1930 and 1980-2010s). tmp.1410224824.pdf.QaAIH. Graduate Theses and Dissertations. The Portrayal of Immigrants in Children's and Young Adults' American Trade Books During Two Peak United States Immigration Eras (1880-1930 and 1980-2010s). Rina Roula Bousalis. University of South Florida, rbousalis@tampabay.rr.com. Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarcommons.usf.edu/etd> Part of the Bilingual, Multilingual, and Multicultural Education Commons. Scholar Commons Citation.

Download books for free. Find books. Advances in general advertising layouts and graphics are discussed in Part One, together with the ways in which automobile styling, mechanical improvements, and convenience features were portrayed and highlighted in automobile advertisements over the years. Part Two explores the advertising themes that were concerned less with the attributes of the cars themselves than with shaping the way consumers would perceive and identify with them. Part Three addresses ads oriented toward the practical aspects of automobile ownership, concluding with an account of the advance of imported cars into America 1880: As America begins a rapid period of industrialization and urbanization, a second immigration boom begins. Between 1880 and 1920, more than 20 million immigrants arrive. The majority are from Southern, Eastern and Central Europe, including 4 million Italians and 2 million Jews. Many of them settle in major U.S. cities and work in factories. 1882: The Chinese Exclusion Act passes, which bars Chinese immigrants from entering the U.S. Beginning in the 1850s, a steady flow of Chinese workers had immigrated to America. They worked in the gold mines, and garment factories, built railroads, and