AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF RURAL VALUES AND SETTINGS IN CHILDREN'S PICTURE BOOKS

THESIS

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The main problem of this research was to discover if children's picture books over the last fifty years have depicted rural values more significantly than urban values. One-hundred and one children's picture books were systematically chosen for analysis.

This study takes an overall view of the history of children's literature. Also included is a review of the current studies and literature most germane to this study. Content analysis was used as the technique of data analysis. A descriptive analysis of the sample is also given.

The study supports the main hypothesis that rural settings and rural values do occur more often than non-rural settings and urban values in children's picture books.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Children's literature has been published in America since 1646 (1, p. 34). From the 1930's on there have been so many picture books published that the present age may come to be known as the age of the illustrator (1, p. 62). Since the thirties, thousands of picture books in all shapes, sizes and descriptions have been published.

The purpose of this study is to discover if children's picture books over the last fifty years have depicted rural values and rural settings more significantly than urban values and non-rural settings. The categories selected to represent the analysis of this problem are rural values versus urban values, rural settings versus non-rural settings, rural tools versus non-rural tools and negative urban views versus positive urban views.

Where It All Began

Children's picture books have contributed to the culture of American society. As stated by Mary Lystad,

Children's books reflect the attitudes and values of a people. Through America's children's books one sees the hopes and concerns our society holds for its young and for its future. Changes in books content over our country's history reflect changes in people's feelings about what is significant in their world (8, p. 37).
Children's books began as early as 1646 in New England. These books were often written in a proper English style and used for instruction in catechisms, spelling, geography, and other related school activities. When the colonies began, the code of conduct and activities were controlled by the clergy. The Puritan ethic and religious overtones controlled such books as John Cotton's *Milk for Babes, Drawn out of the Breasts of Both Testaments, Chiefly for the Spirituall Nourishment of Boston Babes in Either England, but May be of Like Use for any Children* (1). These books and others were meant to help the child, through the guidance of parents, overcome human nature and fault (8).

One of the first and most recognized books is the *New England Primer* (1691). This book contained spelling and alphabet in couplets, both sacred and secular. It was memorized by all young students (1, p. 35).

It was not until the 19th century that children's fiction began to take hold in America. These children's fiction books, however, were meant to have a strong lesson to add to the pleasure and comedy of the reading. Children were not seen as small people needing love, patience and care, but incompetent adults that must be taught the Puritan laws and ethics and religion (8).

Boys and girls were treated differently in children's literature of the 1800's. There were boys' books such as *Useful Lads: or Friendly Advice to Boys in Business* (1847). These books for boys gave insight into personal habits and appearance, punctuality and how to succeed in business (8, p. 37).
However, books for little girls such as Little Lucy: or the Pleasant Day An Example for Little Girls (1840) taught

Let all my little readers strive, like Lucy, to be kind, gentle and affectionate, and to do all that is in their power to make their friends happy, they will then find that doing their duty has increased their own happiness, and every day will be to them A Pleasant Day (8, p. 37).

All children's books up to this point were also written for the white Protestant audience. The black slaves and Indians appeared in children's books as "heathens," only good for subjects of conversion (8).

The Victorian age brought about a change from religion to the family. Children's literature by the 1850's was picking up themes of social roles of the middle class, academic skills and life in the family. This era marked the first widespread reading aloud time in the home. The Victorian Age was also the beginning of novels for children that centered around the family and the great American success story. Some books of this period included The Adventures of Tom Sawyer (1876); The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (1884); and Nights with Uncle Remus (1883) (8).

Fairy tales from Europe were published in the 1800's, but it was not until the 1900's with the writing of The Wizard of Oz by Frank Baum that America had a true fairy tale with an all American value—"There's no place like home" (8, p. 38).

Even during the Victorian period, the child was strictly disciplined, but a more loving nature was beginning to show
through. Sex stereotypes were still rigidly drawn to show boys as active and girls as passive and domestic. Racial stereotypes were still enforced during this period (8, p. 38).

With the emergence of the 1920's, children became more important in children's literature. The books emphasized the child as being human and having needs and desires. This was also the beginning of children's book reviews and children's book publishers. This era was noted for taking one character and sending him on many adventures, such as Nancy Drew and Hardy Boys (8).

**Picture Books**

The first book a child sees is simply a series of pictures. The child not only learns to turn pages but to read pictures. In picture books, the pictures as well as the words tell the story, enabling a child to 'read' the story by interpreting the pictures. As written in Arbuthnot's *Children and Books*, Ester Averill states,

> In an illustrated book the pictures are, as the term illustrated implies, a mere extension—an illumination—of the text. In a picture book, as the term implies, the pictures play a livelier role, and are an integral part of the action of the book (1, p. 52).

Children's picture books are used to teach children association with pictures and words. They tell stories of achievement, love and reassurance and how children relate and fit into society. Picture books are the child's first association with the printed word and offer the first insight into learning.
Picture books are designed for the child from ages two through seven. For this age group, the brightly colored pictures are fascinating and enchanting. Many of the older stories that have had lasting success were built around two basic general themes: love and reassurance and achievement. Books such as *Peter Rabbit* by Beatrix Potter had both. Even children have a yearning to be independent and out from under the rule of older siblings and parents. Children's picture books have provided over the years an escape complete with adventure, reassurance and achievement (1).

It was not until the 1920's that picture books became of age. Wanda Gag is considered the first American picture book author-artist. Her first book was *Millions of Cats* (1928) and is still read by children today (8, p. 38). Another author, Theodor Seuss Geisel (Dr. Seuss), has published over forty children's picture books in the last forty years.

Geisel's picture books besides being enjoyable also stress the inner child and personal feelings. These books with their pretty pictures also enforce the socialization of the children that read them. They are not only meant to amuse but to present ideas and social attitudes and values (8, p. 38).

However, even the current generation of children's books are still reinforcing the sexual and racial stereotypes that began hundreds of years ago. The main characters are still white, and the problem of racial interaction is only beginning to be addressed with such minority writers as Lucille Clifton, Nikki Giovanni and John Steptoe (8, p. 39).
According to May Arbuthnot,

For children must be trained to see truly and subtly. They must be taught to look and look again at the illustrations in their books. Pictures can help them see the comic absurdities of life or its heroic struggles and tragedies. Pictures can give children a sudden breathtaking feeling for the beauty or the wonder of life. Such pictures deepen their perspective and help them to grow (1, p. 71).

And if picture books portray the American values associated with the rural lifestyle, then these values are the ones that will be lasting and remembered. Images of picture books are engrained in the minds of children and are a part of the socialization process from the bedtime story to adulthood.

This study does not attempt to prove the validity of the material of children's picture books. It will, however, take the view based on previous studies, that children's books affect the value systems of the children who read them. It is assumed that picture books for children form the basis for further learning and are remembered for life. If these stories from childhood are retained and are of a rural nature, then this helps to perpetuate the great American ideology of the country life.

Statement of the Problem

The main problem of this research was to discover if children's picture books over the last fifty years have depicted rural values more significantly than urban values. This research also attempts to answer such questions as follows: Have rural settings been more dominant than urban settings in
children's picture books in the last fifty years?; Are rural tools and implements more prevalent in children's picture books over the last fifty years than non-rural tools?; Is the urban way of life depicted negatively more often than positively in children's picture books?

Methodology

The sample frame for this research was drawn from four books that list award winning, prize winning and notable children's picture books since the 1930's. These books contain numerous notable children's picture books.

The sample was drawn using the following method. The picture books with copyright dates of 1930-1939 were listed. The total number of these picture books were divided by thirty-three (the number of books researched from each decade) to achieve an nth number. For example, if one hundred books were listed for the years 1930-1939, then by dividing thirty-three into one hundred, the sequence number was every third book. This method of sampling was repeated for the period of 1950-1959 and 1970-1976. More books were found for the period of the 1950-1959 and 1970-1976, but the sampling technique was identical. The total sample included one hundred and one books, approximately thirty three from each decade.

Because of time limitation and lack of financial resources, it was not possible to obtain thirty three books from the sample list for the years 1930-1939. Some substitutions
were made to accommodate for the destruction and misplacement of many children's picture books written in the 1930's. These substitutions were made by replacing listed books with books by the same author. Children's librarians were also consulted in order to find the most read books of the 1930's. There was no effort made to read the story for content.

The sample frame was constructed by using lists of children's picture books from the following four sources:

Four categories were chosen for analysis. They were 1) Rural settings versus non-rural settings, 2) Rural values versus urban values, 3) Rural tools and implements versus non-rural tools and implements, 4) Negative urban views versus positive urban views.

A data analysis chart was developed to record the frequency of occurrence of each of the categories. Two categories--rural versus non-rural settings and rural tools versus non-rural tools--were analyzed by the frequency of their appearance in only the pictures of the book. Since pictures in
children's books tell the story of what is happening, it seemed important to take the pictures at face value. The other categories, rural values versus urban values and negative versus positive urban views were analyzed using the narrative content of the book. The book was read and re-read to determine the value or theme it presented. Pictures in these categories were also helpful and used with the story for the analysis. Many books, however, did not deal with a value or opinion of the city. Any time a category did not appear in the book, it was not scored.

Content analysis was used as the technique of data analysis. According to Zito, "Content analysis may be defined as a methodology by which the researcher seeks to determine the manifest content of written, spoken, or published communications by systematic, objective, and quantitative analysis" (12, p. 27). Content analysis in its elementary form simply consists of counting the number of times a particular word, event, or setting occurs and comparing it to the total content. Even with an elementary method, problems may occur. First, it must be determined that the sample is representative of the population. Secondly, there must be careful attention given to the categories and to the coding procedures (6, p. 369).

In more detail, content analysis assumes that inferences or valid relationships can be established between intent and content or between content and effect. It is also assumed that a quantitative description of content is useful
and the frequency of the occurrence is important (12, p. 28).

Content analysis, although a relatively new method of research, has been used to study many kinds of problems, including but not limited to mass media.

Content analysis is used to study three areas of mass media. The first area of study includes a quantitative description of the material or a direct look at implied meanings of the mass media.

The second area of concern seeks to determine something about audience of mass media.

Thirdly, content analysis is used to study the effects of mass media on society and its values. For example, this type of analysis may be used in the study of possible cause and effect relationship between crimes as reported in the newspaper and the degree of actual crimes in society.

Content analysis may also deal with non verbal communication such as pictures, cartoons, music (12, p. 27). An example of this type of analysis is the study of occurrence of a predetermined setting in children's picture books in relationship to the total number of pictures.

After the operational categories were determined, the books were read to count the frequency distribution of each category. A data analysis chart was used to record the frequency of occurrence of each category.

Operational Definitions of the Categories

For the purpose of this research, four major categories were chosen to be studied. These four categories serve to
represent four major areas that relate to the overall theme of rural values in children's picture books. Each category has two concepts that serve as opposites and complement the whole. These categories are 1) Rural settings versus non-rural settings, 2) Rural values versus urban values, 3) Rural tools and implements versus non-rural tools and implements, 4) Negative urban views versus positive urban views.

Rural settings.--For this analysis, any picture portraying the country and rural atmosphere was considered a rural setting. Red barns, silos, stables, farm houses, trees and forest lands with open water were considered rural. The appearance of domesticated or wild animals as main characters was considered rural if they were outside the city. The setting was also considered rural when open fields of crops surrounded by stone or wooden fences were shown in a picture. More than one-half of the pictures of any one book were determined by analysis to be rural in order for the entire book to be classified as rural.

Non-rural settings.--All other pictures not classified in the above category were included in the category of non-rural setting. These two concepts are exhaustive and mutually exclusive.

Rural values.--For this analysis, rural values were considered as love of nature, love of farming, love of the soil, good neighborliness, helpfulness and clean living. The entire book was read to determine the value that the author was
trying to relate in the book. This category hinged mainly on the association with a love of nature and the soil.

**Urban values.**—Any book that emphasized the importance of the values of the city and what it has to offer was considered urban values. Many values of the city are linked with the culture, services and entertainment it may offer that cannot be found in the rural areas. Books that emphasize that the city holds value in its services and variety was classified as urban value picture books. The entire book was read to determine an overriding or dominate theme.

**Rural tools and implements.**—A tool was considered rural if it was pictured and used exclusively in a rural setting. For this analysis rural tools were tractors, wagons, hoes, gardening tools and egg baskets.

**Non-rural tools and implements.**—Any tool or implement directly related to city life such as taxicabs, police cars, dump trucks, jack hammers was considered non-rural. If there was a question on the use of a tool or implement, the context was referred to in order to check the actual use of the tools and implements.

**Negative urban views.**—Books that portray the city life as being crowded, dirty, dark, and portray the city people or animals as being weak and having a hard life were categorized as negative urban views.
Positive urban views.—All other books that portray the city as clean and bright, new and exciting or in any favorable way were considered positive urban views. These two categories are mutually exclusive.

Review of Literature

Many people have written about themes in children's picture books. An article by Judith Stevenson Hillman discusses "Occupational Roles in Children's Literature" (8). Two distinct periods in children's picture books, the 1930's and the late 1960's, were studied to learn what occupational roles were assigned to each sex and how diverse these roles were used. The main supposition was that the children's literature in the early 1930's would show men and women cast in traditional roles and that the children's literature of the late 1960's showing a variety of roles for both sexes.

Sixty children's picture books for each period were randomly selected and carefully read to analyze the frequency of roles assigned to each sex. After the tallies were counted, the study did not support the main hypothesis. There was little significant difference between the sex roles portrayed over the thirty year period in these children's picture books.

Two major changes have, however, occurred. The first change was that for the first time women were pictured as professional persons in professional lines of work, such as doctor, dentist, lawyer, and the second change showed women in any job outside the home. However, the dominant and majority role of the woman was still that of housewife.
A book analyzing children's books was written by Sally Anne Daugherty Chant (5). The study was entitled *An Explanatory Study of Mass-Produced Fiction Books for Children to Identify Selected Social-Personal Values*. This study was designed to investigate to what extent social-personal values are reflected in mass-produced fiction books for children. The study used content analysis to identify selected values and measure value content frequency.

The type of books studied were the inexpensive books, selling for one dollar or less. Sixty-five books were contained in the study. The specific values studied and analyzed were ambition, citizenship, compassion, cooperation, honesty, individuality, respect, responsibility, selflessness, and understanding.

The significant results were as follows: 1) selected social values are found in picture books, 2) the values occurred in decreasing frequency in this order: cooperation, responsibility, respect, understanding, citizenship, ambition, compassion, individuality, selflessness and honesty, 3) cooperation is the most frequent value found, 4) two values of selflessness and honesty were not found to any notable extent and 5) social-personal values were realistically treated in the majority of cases. Based on this study, it was concluded that mass-produced picture books are limited in providing vicarious experiences to increase development of children's value systems (5).
A study done by Dewey Chambers, entitled "An Exploratory Study of Social Values in Children's Literature" (3), was written in 1965. This study was concerned with value-influencing material which was judged to be in fiction books for children ages five through nine. This data measured frequency of appearance of the social values as well as intensity of the same values (4).

Seven social values were analyzed in the study. They were as follows: 1) Aspects of the person himself, 2) Selected social values such as fairness, honesty, kindness, cooperation and commitment, 3) Aspects of peer group relations, 4) Aspects of family living, 5) Aspects of the neighborhood, 6) Aspects of world and national living, 7) Aspects of time passage and social change (4).

A number of conclusions were drawn from the gathered date. Some of the conclusions were 1) The books analyzed gave little chance to explore the social values listed in the study, 2) The causes of the limited treatment of these values may have been caused by several reasons: a) fear of loss of sales of the books, b) fear of loss of acceptance by writers, c) lack of understanding on the part of the writer, and d) the feeling of writers that children of this age cannot deal with social values, 3) The social values of the study as outlined by experts, were found to be present in a uniformly weak manner, 4) Social values were in terms of human beings. Hence, fiction for children of the prescribed age is of realistic variety (4).
This study was not concerned with the affect of the books and their content on children. It was a content analysis to see what is in children's literature that can affect the child that reads these books (4).

Significance

There is a purpose for children's books. They create a feeling of affinity for the world, a sense of being a part of nature, a sympathy for animals and for all that lives. Stories in picture books about pets and wild animals and books about nature reflect these feelings and deepen them. Good books make all life seem valuable (10).

Children live in a world of hope and wonder with a sense of beauty and adventure and a feeling of the glory of life. These same qualities are the ones retained by children's authors as adults and expressed in their books (10, p. 8). Authors of children's books should be aware that these qualities are good, but they should be intermingled with urban settings and values.

A book that has children in it will most likely duplicate some experience most children have already had. Good children's books make a child feel he is a vital part of life (9, p. 9). However, people concerned with children's literature should realize that children not only need to experience the rural life, which most have never seen, but to find new adventures in the urban lifestyle through literature. These books should bring new adventures that can be related to
their surroundings to bring reality to their home.

Picture books for the very young are important because they are the books that shape a child's listening and looking ability in his earliest years and these are the years when ideas and values are beginning to form.

The American scene today is filled with rapid communication, transportation, and totally changing lifestyles. Children's books must keep up with the times in order to orient children to what is happening today and what has happened in the past. Fiction is most important in order to gain new experiences children might not be able to have otherwise. However, it is equally important to realize that although most children's books are written picturing a rural setting and reinforcing rural values, this does not represent reality for the majority of American society today.

The data found in this study will help writers to examine closely the amount of attention and significance placed on rural settings in the illustrations of picture books. If it is determined that rural values are more dominant in children's literature, teachers, publishers, picture book authors, among others should be made aware of the unequal emphasis placed on rural orientations in children's books. This is especially important since the majority of the children reading these books are from a statistically defined urban place.

The emergence of content analysis as a tool in researching children's literature is a recent development. Too few
studies have been done in this area to produce conclusive results. Since few content analyses of children's picture books have been done, it is important that this study be added to the small but growing list of content analyses of children's picture books.

Additional content analyses concerning any aspect of children's literature are needed. Educators and researchers need to know the effect these picture books have on children. It would also be beneficial to know how long this effect will last. There is a need to know what is in children's picture books that can shape or mold values.

This research is important in contributing data analysis of the content and values represented in children's picture books. This study gives insight into what is in children's picture books that could possibly affect the child who reads them.

The popularity of children's picture books has created an interesting phenomenon. Not since Caldecott has so much time and money been spent on children's books and their pictures. Because of all this time and money that is being spent, it is important that the writer of children's picture books know the content of the books already published. Beyond that, the possibilities for creation in children's picture books seem to be endless (1, p. 48). The values these books seek to emphasize should be brought out, as is the purpose of this study, in order to inform the writer of the content of children's picture books.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to present a thorough review of the literature relating to the subject of this study. This chapter also presents a detailed look at the methodology used for the analysis of the material in this study.

Review of Literature

It is almost exclusively a universal belief among experts that children's literature can influence the attitudes and behavior of children. The experience gained as a result of interaction with literature affects the learning syndrome. These vicarious experiences with literature can stimulate the mind, stir curiosity, and give the reader a living model that can affect attitudes for life (3).

Children's literature can also affect the development of values. There have been some studies done in this area, and many more are needed. Dewey W. Chambers in his work *Children's Literature in the Curriculum* has reviewed studies and published works concerning the effects of books on children (3). The following studies, from his review of the literature in this area, seems to be most appropriate.

In a study conducted by Douglas Waples, the idea that change can be effected through selected reading material is
verified. This study used college students for the testing procedures. The attitudes of the students were checked before and after reading certain materials. The reading material was controlled and selected to check attitudes of religious belief, racial bias, and economic status. Waples reports that reading material can influence and even change values and attitudes as shown in these studies (3).

The Waples studies are significant despite the generalization of terms and limited social group tested. Under certain circumstances, these tests do show a relationship between reading material and attitudes. These tests do not, however, show how strongly or for how long this attitude will be changed (3).

David Russell has done much research in the area of personality development in relation to literature. Russell believes that books for children are one of the main sources that help a child develop a unique personality (3).

Russell was concerned for the lack of empirical verification for his assumptions and set out to isolate and determine the effect of children's literature on children. He reviewed seventy-three studies on the impact of reading on children and drew this conclusion:

We are beginning to get clues about the kinds of reactions we can expect from individuals of different backgrounds, interest and personality, but it is difficult to disentangle the influences of reading from those of other activities (3).

Hilda Taba has also done research in the area of value modification and learning as a result of interaction with
literature for children (3). Taba's work was conducted using eighth grade students as subjects. The problem of the study was to help this group of eighth grade students overcome their ethnocentric orientation to values and become sensitive to other cultural groups and their value orientation.

Taba's work involves working with books and children in a way designed to modify attitude. Taba wrote,

The development of a cosmopolitan sensitivity and a capacity to respond to human problems, values, and feelings is a central task in education for human relations. Each individual grows up in a somewhat limiting cultural shell by virtue of the fact that the intermediate primary groups in which a growing person is socialized are culturally unique.... The experiences in the hemmed-in cultural climates tend to cultivate ethnocentricity, or a tendency to interpret all other person's behavior, values, and motivations in terms of one's own values (3, p. 145).

The increasing mobility of the culture, according to Taba, has caused a continuing social distance from the primary family groups. Core values are therefore, she wrote, becoming more and more inaccessible (3, p. 145). Taba believes that this cultural mobility is one cause of prejudice and the growth of ethnocentricity. According to Taba, major ways are needed to combat ethnocentricity in judgment and conduct and bring about a more realistic look at life.

The problems for the research conducted by Taba are as follows: 1) fiction is one strong source for internalizing values different from the experiences of a given group; 2) by indification with problems, characters, and feelings expressed in fiction, children can be helped to make a transition from ethnocentric orientation to "other-centered"
orientation; and 3) an open-ended discussion is one way to accomplish this goal (3, p. 146).

Taba expanded the curriculum of the eighth grade students to include books and stories that reflected the actual problems of the student. The student's behavior was analyzed systematically through discussion of problems and characters in the stories and comparing them to the problems of the students. There was a continuing effort to compare the problems in the literature to as many situations as possible.

The following conclusions by Taba were reached after one year of research.

1. The method of reading and discussing fiction about life problems has a positive effect in extending sensitivity to human values and in comparing orientation to human relations.

2. Many intellectual and personality types can be reached by using this methodology.

3. This method allows an integration of emotional insights and of concept building. This integration is also an aid in deepening understanding and development of the ability to transfer.

4. This method is successful in using complicated concepts and adapting them to all areas of life.

5. This analysis of values and feelings had a positive affect on the content of the peer group life (3, p. 147).

Many studies followed the ideas established by Taba. One was by W. Loban, who found that merely reading stories aloud did not bring a change in attitudes. He also found that the discussion of the material was necessary to achieve an insight of social sensitivity that the study intended (3, p. 147).
Muriel Crosby offers techniques about how books can help foster the growth of sensitivity. The organization of the material, according to Crosby, must be as follows.

1. The reader must be given the opportunity to identify himself with the characters in the book. The reader must be able to put himself in the character's situation in order to relate to the joys and sorrows of the character.

2. The reader must be able to understand how the emotional experiences in the book can relate to his own experiences.

3. The reader must be encouraged, perhaps through discussion, to use the identification made in literature to build his own experiences. The environment of the school and home can provide this building space and hopefully lead to emotional maturity (3, p. 148).

Henry Meckle also approves the use of the discussion method when he states,

Since pupils left to their own resources are likely not to acquire the insights desired by the teacher, the discussion method becomes of great significance in the effective teaching of literature. Through discussion, the teacher can lead pupils to perceptions and discoveries that they are not likely to apprehend or understand without his guidance (3, p. 148).

David Russell seems to sum up the need for discussion of literature for children when he writes,

In literature children and adolescents can find many of man's most important social-ethical ideas. Our values are the things we live by...values are usually described in the lovely words of our language such as truth, justice, loyalty and faith. These are puzzling and difficult ideas for adults and even more for children, and yet they are the foundation of society. A child's or adolescent's grasp of such concepts is slow growing. Only wide variety of experience can give some understanding to tolerance or perseverance or sacrifice, but sometimes the process of getting to understand such ideas can be quickened through literature (3, p. 149).
Russell indicates that although many concepts are found in stories, they are not stated explicitly and must be 'read into' by the reader. Therefore, the discussion is needed to bring out these hidden meanings (3).

A study by John Shepard was done on the content analysis of children's literature. Shepard's study dealt with the treatment of characters in popular children's fiction. His survey consisted of reading sixteen of the most read books by children as reported by librarians, teachers and parents. These books reportedly covered almost one century of writing (3, p. 150).

The study was designed to compare, in six categories, the favorable and unfavorable character. The categories used were 1) race, 2) nationality, 3) religion, 4) physical appearance, 5) socioeconomic status, and 6) conduct and attitude.

Two distinct sets of characters emerged from the study. The heroes or good guys were clean white, handsome and healthy, middle class and Protestant. The bad guys or villains were most often ugly, non-caucasian, physically undesirable and either very wealthy or very poor.

Many other results from the study were found to be significant: 1) The favorable characters outnumbered the unfavorable characters three to one, 2) The Americans in the stories were almost exclusively the heroes, 3) The non-
Caucasians were portrayed in a negative way and were shown to be physically unattractive, unintelligent or cruel, 4) Religious affiliations were rarely indicated. However, Protestantism was the majority religion for the heroes.

This study, by Shepard, did not tell how the characteristics were chosen or how the results were tabulated. There was also no attempt to validate the popularity of the books (3, p. 151).

David C. McClelland did a study analyzing children's trade books from forty different countries. These books were analyzed to locate values and compare them to the adult values of each country. McClelland stated that popular children's literature reflects the values of the adult population in the forty countries where the children's books were analyzed (3, p. 152).

After analyzing all the books, he found themes stressed in these books that reflected what he thought were the underlying values of the people. The following countries are linked with their values and themes in children's books:

1) Chile and Japan stressed kindness and obligation, 2) Turkey, Lebanon, and Tunisia emphasized cleverness in most of their books, 3) German books stressed loyalty and 4) American books were dominated by a cooperation theme. McClelland realizes that most themes are present in all books but, only a few are stressed, giving evidence to the theory that
children's literature does reflect the value orientation of a nation. He states,

The conclusion is inescapable that popular stories for children reflect what the people in the country value most, what they think is important. And children learn from reading stories that adults regard as important (3, p. 152).

McClelland also takes a firm stand on the effect these books have on the value structure and personality of the children. As he writes,

I believe that children acquire the values or ethical ideas expressed in the stories, even without conscious and deliberate attempts to abstract them. It is the abstraction process that is difficult, not the ideas themselves. I believe that Middle Eastern children learn naturally and easily from what they read that cleverness is a good thing, just as American children learn that working together is usually the best way of doing things. Children come to take such ideas for granted because that's the way things 'are' or 'happen' in the stories they read (3, p. 152-3).

A study by Heath Lowry in 1966 offers further evidence about didactic material found in children's books. This study surveyed the content of Newberry Medal Award winning books from 1922-1965. The study using the process of content analysis gathered data in preparation to answer four problems: 1) Are American values and morals found in the Newberry Award books? 2) If found, to what degree of frequency and intensity? 3) What variations can be measured in the presence, frequency, and intensity of these values as they have been treated in five-year spans during the years of the forty-five year period? 4) What trends are found in the data collection of the period studied (3, p. 156-7)?
Lowry listed fifteen values to be analyzed; they were Responsibility of Church (religion), Civic and Community Responsibility, Freedom and Liberty, Initiative and Achievement, Justice and Equality, Self-Reliance, Loyalty, Responsibility to Family, Importance of Education, Sexual Morality, Cleanliness and Neatness, Good Manners, Honesty in All Things, Sanctity of Marriage, Thrift and Hard Work. Using these values as keys to the study, the following general conclusions were made.

1. The values and criteria of values were found in all books analyzed.

2. The moral and ethical values were treated positively by their authors.

3. The books are not, however, charged with didactic material.

4. Most often the books with high value intensity were set in colonial times of early America.

5. "Human relations" were not particularly emphasized in these books.

6. The committee that chooses the Newberry Medal books does not consider the didactic content, only the literary merit of the book (3, p. 157).

All of these studies do not necessarily agree. This emphasizes the fact that more studies need to be done on the content of children's picture books.

A study of the effect crime comic books have on children was conducted by Frederic Wertham, M.D. (7). This study was entitled Seduction of the Innocent. Dr. Wertham has defined crime comic books as "those books that depict crime, whether the setting is urban, Western, science-fiction, rural,
jungle, adventure, or the realm of superman, horror or supernatural beings" (7, p. vi). Dr. Wertham believes comic books are anti-educational and interfere with healthy mental growth. According to Dr. Wertham, chronic stimulation, temptation, and seduction by comic books, both their content and their alluring advertisements of knives and guns, are contributing factors to many children's maladjustments (7, p. 10).

For the study, Dr. Wertham read and analyzed hundreds of comic books. After reading the comic books, he made associations of comic books read to patterns of behavior in the children he analyzed. These children were taken from all parts of the city (7).

The basic findings of the study are as follows.

1. Comic book formats are an invitation to illiteracy.

2. Crime comic books create an atmosphere of cruelty and deceit.

3. Crime comic books stimulate unwholesome fantasies.

4. Crime comic books suggest criminal or sexually abnormal ideas.

5. Crime comic books suggest the forms a delinquent impulse may take and supply details of technique (7, p. 118).

In conclusion, Dr. Wertham states that crime comic books are an agent of harmful potentialities. They bring about a mass conditioning of children with different effects in individual cases. A child is not a unit which exists outside of its living social ties. Comic books themselves may be the
virus, or the cause of a lack of resistance to the social virus of a harmful environment (7, p. 118).

A study by Florence Eilau Bamberger was entitled The Effects of the Physical Make-up of a Book Upon Children's Selection. The problem for this study was to find what influence is exerted by the general attractiveness of a book from a casual inspection and does this influence change after more critical examination? The alternatives to be considered were size, shape, illustrations and color (2, p. 5).

The books selected for the study were chosen from books children liked to have read to them. The next step was to secure at least five different editions, in different sizes, thicknesses, illustrations, color of cover, and number of stories per volume. The five stories chosen were Cinderella, Black Sambo, Sleeping Beauty, Peter Rabbit and The Night Before Christmas. A story teller read the first part of a book and then stopped in the middle of the story. The children were then asked to select which of the five books on display they would prefer to finish reading themselves (2, p. 5-6).

Some basic conclusions of the study were:

1. The physical make-up of a book does exert influence upon children's selections,

2. Size appears to be a factor in book selection; The larger books are the most chosen,

3. The color of the cover exerts an influence with bright colors the most chosen,

4. Titles are an additional factor influencing the book selection,
5. A wide margin on the page is appealing to younger children,


These studies help to reinforce the belief that children are affected by what they read. The values of children may also be shaped by what they read and hear. The importance of the content of children's picture books should not be ignored if indeed these books could shape the values of the children that read them.

Methodology

The years chosen for this study were picked with careful rationale. Children's picture books written in the thirties, fifties, and seventies were chosen for the study. Picture books written in the thirties were chosen because they represent the beginning of the era that may be known as the age of the illustrator because so many picture books have been published (1, p. 62). With Wanda Gag's picture-story Millions of Cats, "The Golden Thirties" of picture books began (1). Most of the books used in this study, from the thirties, had copyright dates from the middle and late thirties. This is completely understandable when one recalls the condition of the economy of the United States during the first part of the thirties. Many of the books from this decade are small (four by five) and contain pictures in black and white.

Picture books written in the fifties were chosen to represent a decade when many picture books were published.
Worlds War II was over, and America was experiencing a baby boom. Many children were enrolled in public school, and thousands of books were being published to accommodate this growing number of students. The books of the fifties are large in most cases and colorful.

Picture books published in the seventies were chosen to represent the trends of today in children's picture books. The study covers only books published from 1970-1976. It is important to have the trends of the present generation of children's picture books in order to have a comparison to the picture books published in the thirties. All of these children's picture books were chosen randomly from public libraries and represent a true picture of what a child has to choose from when he enters the public library.

The first step in analyzing the content of children's picture books was to develop a data analysis chart. (See Figure One). This chart is divided into four main categories with each category having two subcategories.

After the books had been selected by sampling technique, the counting began. The first step was to write down the title of the books on the chart. Each book occupied one line across the width of the data analysis chart.

The first category was rural settings versus non-rural settings. The book was placed in one or the other—rural or urban settings. The procedure for determining which subcategory the book was counted for was as follows. 1) Each picture was taken individually and analyzed for its content
### Figure 1

**Data Analysis Chart**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book Title</th>
<th>Non-Rural Rural Rural Non-Rural Urban</th>
<th>Urban Urban Negative Positive</th>
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<td>Category One</td>
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2) A picture was considered rural if it contained a country environment with red barns, silos, fields, trees, water, and forest lands; the setting must definitely be a country atmosphere to be in the rural subcategory. 3) If the setting was inside a house or of any other place not specifically country, then it was considered non-rural. It was, therefore, much easier for the picture to be placed in the non-rural than the rural subcategory. 4) If the illustrations in a children's book pictured the inside of a house, then the content was referred to in order to try to determine the location of the house. If the picture was of the inside of a farm house and if it could be determined by the content that the story was of a rural nature, then the book was scored in the rural column. However, if it could not be determined by the content, the book was scored non-rural.

The second category on the chart was rural values versus non-rural values. This category was divided into two subcategories. The criteria for placing a book in column one or two was as follows. 1) The book was read twice, once to familiarize the reader with the story and the second time to confirm any values that appear in the reading. 2) In order for the book to be scored in column one, rural values, it must have a theme of love of nature, love of farming, love of the soil, good neighborliness, helpfulness or clean living. Not all of these values were in every book, but if one or more exist as the dominant theme, it was scored in column one. 3) On the other hand, if a book depicted the importance of the
city and what the city has to offer, it was scored in column two, urban values. The city does offer many services the rural life cannot fulfill and when this was emphasized in children's picture books, it was scored for column two. Many books did not express a value, and unless a value was specifically shown in the book, it was not scored for either column.

This category was selected in order to test for the occurrence of rural values in children's picture books. It is important to know what the occurrence of these rural values are in children's picture books in order to see what emphasis has been placed on these values.

The techniques used in differentiating rural values from urban values in children's picture books can be illustrated by the following: In Lois Lenski's *Surprise For Mother* (6), certain rural values are emphasized. The three girls in the story make a cake with ingredients borrowed from their neighbor, the farmer. One girl milks the cow to get milk for the cake, and another girl collects eggs from the farmer's chicken coop. In the children's picture book *And To Think That I Saw It On Mulberry Street*, by Dr. Seuss (4), the values of the urban setting are emphasized. The young boy in the story watches an entire parade complete with bands, clowns and celebrities appear before him on Mulberry Street. This story emphasizes the services and culture of the city that are not found in rural areas.
The third category for this study was rural tools and implements versus non-rural tools and implements. This category is divided into two subcategories. Although actual tools and implements did not appear often in children's picture books, it is important to note what type of tools were shown and with what setting these tools were associated. The following procedure was used to categorize the tools in the selected children's picture books.

1) Each picture was viewed for the appearance of a tool or implement of any kind,
2) If a tool or implement appeared in a picture, it was analyzed for its use within the picture.
3) In order for a tool to be called rural and placed in column one, it must be in a rural setting and used exclusively in that setting. Rural tools are considered as tractors, wagons, hoes, gardening tools, and egg baskets.
4) A tool was scored for column two, non-rural tools, if it was related to the city life or associated with any area other than the country or rural setting. Examples of non-rural tools were taxi cabs, police cars, dump trucks, jack hammers, etc.
5) If there was a question about the use of a tool that could not be explained by the picture, then the context of the book was referred to in order to confirm the actual use of the tool.

The fourth category for this study was negative urban views versus positive urban views. This category was divided into two subcategories. The following steps were taken in order to rank these two subcategories.

1) The book was re-
viewed in both narrative and pictures to analyze the material for suggestions of positive or negative views of the city.

2) A book was considered anti-urban if its pictures or words portrayed the city as being dirty, dark, crowded, or if it portrayed the people or animals as being weak or having a hard life. 3) A book was considered pro-urban if it portrayed the city, in pictures or narrative, to be bright, clean new and exciting, or in any other favorable way. 4) This category was selected in order to determine if perceptions of the city have changed over the last fifty years in children's literature. The realities of pollution, crime, traffic and overcrowdedness have become increasing problems in the city since 1930. This category was devised to check for an increasing occurrence of these incidents in children's picture books that were chosen for the study.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to bring the reader up to date on what has been written and what studies have been conducted in the area of children's literature and to make a thorough review of the methodology used in this study. Ten studies concerning children's literature were selected for review.

The studies given in this review of literature included such areas as 1) What changes can be effected through selected reading material; 2) What is the role of children's books in the development of a unique personality; 3) Can children's
interaction with literature effect value modification and learning; 4) Is discussion of material necessary to achieve an insight into social sensitivity; 5) Can children's picture books foster the growth of sensitivity in children; 6) What is the treatment of characters in popular children's fiction; 7) What didactic material is found in children's books; 8) What is the effect crime comic books have on children? These studies and others give the reader an insight into the research being done in the area of children's literature.

The methodology used in this study was discussed in detail in this chapter. A data analysis chart, used for recording the frequency of occurrences of data, was inserted and discussed thoroughly. The rationale for placing material in the defined categories was also explained.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


CHAPTER III

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF SELECTED CHILDREN'S PICTURE BOOKS

One hundred and one children's picture books were selected for analysis. The books were chosen from an extensive list of award and prize winning children's picture books. Of the one hundred and one children's picture books, a small number were selected from each category for illustrative purposes. The children's picture books exemplified in this chapter are typical of the books defined in each category. Descriptive examples found in children's picture books relating to rural settings of the 1930's were compared to descriptive examples of rural settings found in the picture books written in the 1950's and 1970's. This procedure was repeated for each category.

Rural Settings

Children's picture books from all three decades represented in this study were dominated by rural settings. It is important to remember that for this study rural settings were any picture portraying country and rural atmosphere. Red barns, silos, stables, farm houses, trees and forest lands with open water were considered rural. The settings were also considered rural when open fields or fenced in fields were shown in the picture. A small number of books were chosen from each decade to illustrate the rural setting.
Rural settings in children’s literature of the 1930’s.

Rural settings were illustrated in twenty-four of the children’s picture books of the 1930’s. The following five descriptions represent rural settings in children’s picture books.

In *The Tale of Tom Kitten*, by Beatrix Potter, the rural setting is located around a small house in the meadow. Tom and his kitten friends play in the meadow and chase butterflies and soak up the sun. Later, after returning to the small isolated cottage, Tom washes his clothes that were soiled during the play time (36).

The story of *Johnny Crow’s New Garden*, by L. Leslie Brooke, also has animals as the main characters. Johnny has a party to celebrate his new garden and the story follows the animals through the woods preparing for a party. Human beings do not appear in the story, and the animals dress in clothes (6).

*The Story of Ferdinand*, by Munro Leaf, is the story of a bull that loves to smell pretty flowers. The setting for most of this story is a flowery meadow with a big tree in the center. Ferdinand loves to sit all day under the big trees and smell the flowers. Ferdinand is captured and carried off to the city only to return to his favorite spot in the meadow (29).

The story of *Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel*, by Virginia Burton, begins in the city. Mike is the owner and operator of a steam shovel named Mary Ann. Mike is soon
forced out of the city in search of work and goes to the country where he finds a job in a rural area. Mike and Mary Ann remain in the country working and even retire there (8).

The setting for *The Country Bunny*, by DuBose Hayward, is a small cottage in a large field. The country bunny has twenty-four baby bunnies that she teaches to do all the chores and work in the garden. The country bunny is selected to deliver Easter eggs to all the other small bunnies in the meadow and field in the area (24).

Although the settings and areas and scenes seem almost realistic, the characters do not. The animals in the four animal stories are given speaking parts and clothes to wear. The steam shovel, in *Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel*, was treated as a person. Since many of the stories have animals as characters, the subject matter and themes follow simple forms.

**Rural settings in children's literature of the 1950's.**—Twenty-three children's picture books of the 1950's were pictured with rural setting. The following examples are illustrative of the rural settings found in the 1950's.

The story *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*, by P. C. Asbjornsen, is pictured in a rural setting. Three goats act as the main characters and spend their time trying to cross a bridge to a greener pasture. The illustration of the entire book is set in the country (2).

*One Morning in Maine*, by Robert McClosky, takes place on the shore of a lake. The small house is surrounded by trees
and beaches and water. The children of the story spend the morning playing in the woods and on the beaches (32).

The story *Here Comes the Beavers*, by Alice Goudey, takes place entirely in the country areas. Beavers play all the roles, and the writer narrates the story of the life of the beavers. Human beings do not appear in the story (19).

The children's song "Frog Went A-Courting" was also published in book form with the same title, by John Langstaff. This story also has an entire animal cast of characters. The frog of the story is to be married, and all the forest animals come to the big wedding in the old oak tree (28).

*Journey Cake Ho!,* by Ruth Sawyer, is the story of a poor family that lives in an isolated rural area. The young boy travels through the country side and brings farm animals back to his small farm (38).

Books published during the years 1950-1959 represented somewhat more realistic characters and story lines than those selected books written from 1930-1939. The book of the beaver's life and building the dams portrayed realistic scenery. *One Morning in Maine* pictured believable family characters in a rural setting.

*Rural setting in children's literature of the 1970's.* In all, twenty-four of the picture books of the 1970's exemplified rural settings. The following five books are examples of these rural settings.

The story *The Chick and The Duckling*, by Mira Ginsburg,
takes place on a farm and at the farm pond. The chick and
the duckling play in the field surrounding the pond. The
duck finds the water much more comfortable than the chick (18).

An Invitation to the Butterfly Ball, by Jane Yolen, oc-
curs in the forest. All of the forest animals are invited
to the butterfly ball and must find appropriate dress for the
occasion (48).

In the story All Upon A Stone, by Jean Craighead George,
the setting is a huge stone in a field. The story describes
what the stone is to different animals and insects that only
see a small part on the stone at one time (17).

Brian Wildsmith's Little Wood Duck takes place in the
woods and surrounding field. The mother teaches the ducks
to escape from other animals and how to survive (47).

In William Pene DuBois' version of The Hare and The
Tortoise, the setting is on an island covered with trees and
vegetation. No buildings or people appear in the story. The
animals are, however, dressed in clothes (10).

Twenty-four books of the 1970's had illustrations of
rural settings. These children's picture books were drawn in
vivid color. The artistry and illustrations are clearer
and more lifelike than those of the previously examined decades.

Rural settings were pictured in seventy percent of the
children's picture books studied. The occurrence of rural set-
tings has remained almost unchanged since the 1930's. The
most noticeable changes have appeared in more detailed and
lifelike illustrations. Animals are still being used as
main characters in children's picture books, much like the main characters of the 1930's.

Non-Rural Settings

Non-rural settings were pictured in approximately one-third of the children's picture books analyzed. This number remained stable over the fifty year period.

Non-rural settings in children's literature of the 1930's.--Children's picture books of the 1930's were represented by thirteen books illustrating non-rural settings. The following five books are examples of the non-rural setting.

In the story, And To Think That I Saw It On Mulberry Street, by Theodor Seuss Giesel, the setting is in the city. A young boy watches a parade go down the street while he is waiting on the corner. Although the setting appears realistic, the story is only dreamed by the young boy (16).

Little Toot, by Hardie Gramatky, emphasizes the importance of big city harbors. Little Toot is a small tugboat that helps tow in the large ships. The backgrounds for the pictures are the skylines of the harbor cities (20).

Chosen Baby, by Valentina Wasson, is set in a large city. A man and his wife visit a large adoption agency in the city and pick out a child. They later return and select a second child (45).

Majorie Flack's book William and His Kittens was pictured in a small city. William, the main character, plays
with his kittens in the yard of the city home. William also visits such places as the newspaper office, police station and other stores (12).

Mei Li, by Thomas Handforth, is the story of a small girl that leaves her home in the country for a day long visit to the big circus in the city. The book displays in pictures the circus and all its animals, attractions and excitement (23).

These books written in the 1930's were pictured in urban settings. The stories portray realistic characters and realistic settings.

Non-rural settings in children's literature of the 1950's.--Non-rural settings were illustrated in seven children's picture books of the 1950's. Five of these stories were selected to show a variety of non-rural settings.

The story Harry the Dirty Dog, by Gene Zion, takes place in the city. Harry the small dog roams the city looking for adventure. He encounters building sites, garbage dumps, and many other places in the city (50).

The Emperor's New Clothes, by Hans Christian Anderson, also takes place in a non-rural setting. The pictures of the story are centered around a King and his castle and the town he rules. The King walks through the town or stays in
his castle for the majority of the pictures of the book (1).

The story *Pet of the Met*, by Don Freeman, takes place inside the New York Metropolitan Opera House. A small mouse is the main character, and the entire story revolves around him in the opera house. The actors and actresses on stage are human, but the mouse is the central figure (14).

*Adelaide*, by Tom Ungerer, is the story of a flying kangaroo who helps people in the city. The book pictures such places as Notre Dame, museums, Eiffel Tower, and other notable places in Paris, France. The kangaroo uses her special flying talent to perform special duties in the cities (42).

The stories selected from the picture books written in the 1950's were represented by detailed color and illustrations. The characters in the books pictured in non-rural settings, written in the 1950's, were not as realistic as characters pictured in books of non-rural settings written in 1930-1939.

**Non-rural settings in children's literature of the 1970's.**—Non-rural settings appear in ten selected picture books written in the 1970's. All ten books of non-rural settings are pictured with people as the main characters. The following five examples were chosen to exemplify non-rural settings found in books of the 1970's.

In *Finder's Keepers*, by Alix Shulman, a city park is the background for the story. The children hide and seek things they have found in the park (39).
The story of Janey, by Charlotte Zolotow, takes place inside a house and on the street in a city. The character remembers a friend as she sees things on the street and in her house that remind her of her friend (52).

Go Hush the Baby, by Betsy Byars, takes place entirely inside a house. A young boy goes from room to room quieting his baby brother (9).

Brian Wildsmith's Circus is set inside the circus grounds. The story is vividly illustrated in realistic color and shows the things a young boy would pay special attention to during a visit to the circus (46).

The story The Beast of Monsieur Racine by Tomi Ungerer occurs mainly in the city. Two children in the story dress up as a beast to trick an old man out of his prize pears. The old man takes the beast on tour of the big city because he thinks he has found a new and perfect animal (43).

Stories of this decade were illustrated in vivid color. The characters are realistic and found in common situations and settings.

The occurrence of non-rural settings has remained relatively stable in children's picture books over the last fifty years. Only thirty percent of all the children's picture books studied had pictures of non-rural settings. The children’s picture books of the 1930’s had the largest frequency of occurrences of non-rural settings, with thirteen. The children’s picture books of the 1950’s had only seven books illustrated with non-rural settings. The children's
picture books of the 1970's had ten books illustrated with non-rural settings.

**Rural Values**

The children's picture books used in this study were analyzed for the frequency of occurrence of rural values. It is important to remember that for this study rural values were love of nature, love of farming, love of the soil, good neighborliness, helpfulness and clean living. The book was read in order to determine the value the author relates in the book.

**Rural values in children's literature of the 1930's.**

The children's picture books surveyed dealt primarily with rural values. Of the books written in the 1930's and used for this study, twenty emphasized the rural values.

In the story, *Flicka, Dicka, and Ricka and the New Dotted Dresses*, by Maj Lindman, three young girls help an old lady do farm chores and work in the garden. When the young girls return home, their mother encourages them to continue to help the old lady (31).

In the age-old story of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, by Wanda Gag, the rural values of helpfulness, love of farming and clean healthy living were demonstrated. Snow White lives with seven little dwarfs and cleans their house everyday when the dwarfs are gone to do their chores (15).

*Cock-A-Doodle-Do*, by Bert Hader, is characterized by the rural values: love of farming, love of the soil, love of
animals and love of nature. This story follows the life of a rooster from birth until he learns to wake up the farm with his cock-a-doodle-do (22).

In the story, The Little Engine That Could, by Watty Piper, the values of helpfulness and good neighborliness are displayed. The little engine helped a train full of animals make it to their destination (34).

In the Tale of Tom Kitten, by Beatrix Potter, the kitten displays the rural value of love of nature as he plays in the meadow and chases butterflies (36).

These five stories represent occurrences of all of the rural values outlined for this study. Love of animals, love of nature and good neighborliness are the most common rural values found in the children's picture books selected for the 1930's.

Rural values in children's literature of the 1950's.--The children's picture books of the 1950's were also associated with the rural values outlined in this study. Rural values were found in nineteen of the selected children's picture books written in the 1950's. The following five books were chosen to exemplify the outlined rural values.

A Tree is Nice, by Jane Udry, is characterized by the selected rural values, love of nature and love of the soil. The young boy in the story is pictured planting a tree. The story also tells the value of replacing and replenishing nature (41).
The story, *The Biggest Bear*, by Lynd Ward, also affirms the rural values of this study. This story displays a love of nature and love of farming. A young boy finds a bear cub and raises it at his farm house. The pictures portray the boy's love for his animal and the woods and fields that surround his rural home (44).

*Song of the Swallows*, by Leo Politi, accentuates this study's rural values; love of nature and love of farming. The pictures are of a rural nature and show the characters concern and love of farming and concern for the swallows at Capistrano (35).

*Summer Night*, by Charlotte Zolotow, affirms the rural value, love of nature. The two characters of the story take a long walk in the summer air and watch the animals in the moonlight. The house, in the pictures, is on a farm with a pond (53).

The story, *Do You Know What I'll Do?*, by Charlotte Zolotow, helps to defend the value, love of nature. The young girl in the story plays in the meadows and collects butterflies and flowers (51).

These stories represent many of the rural values outlined as a guide for this study. The predominated rural valued depicted in picture books for the 1950's was love of nature.

Rural values in children's literature of the 1970's.——

The children's picture books selected from the 1970's for
this study were also primarily associated with rural values. Children's picture books displayed rural values in eighteen of the selected books from the 1970's. The following five stories represent examples of displayed rural values.

In *Bird of Time*, by Jane Yolen, the rural value of love of nature is enforced. Two children travel through the countryside with the gift of time in the form of a bird (49).

*Little Wood Duck*, by Brian Wildsmith, also enforces love of nature and love of animals. The small ducks are taught how to live from the land and which animals to respect (47).

The story of *Dancing Stars*, by Anne Rockwell, takes place on an Indian reservation. The Indians commune with nature and support themselves by farming. The book especially points out that the Indians felt themselves to be a part of nature and even the stars (37).

*Over in the Meadow*, by Ezra Jack Keats, helps the child see a love of animals and love of nature. This counting book depicts animals of all kinds performing different tasks (27).

*Annie and the Old One*, by Miska Miles, is also a story of an Indian family on a reservation. The story depicts the rural values, love of nature, love of farming, and helpfulness. The story tells of the Indians' belief that they are one with the earth and must return to the earth when they die (33).

The most frequently found rural values for the 1970's children's picture books were love of nature and love farming.
The illustrations in these books were drawn with imagination and portrayed lifelike characters.

Rural values depicted in the children's picture books of the 1970's are found in more detailed stories than those of the 1930's. The values remain the same over the fifty year period, but the situations and stories have made a dramatic change. For example, in comparing *Flicka, Dicka, and Ricka* and the *New Dotted Dresses* to *Annie and the Old One*, the change of story themes can be clearly seen. Flicka, Dicka and Ricka are carefree children who perform a good deed for an old lady. Annie, however, is faced with the death of her grandmother. These two stories have the same rural values, but the stories have changed over the last fifty years to include more realistic and lifelike characters and situations. Rural values are found in fifty-five percent of all the children's picture books analyzed. The fifty-five percent has remained almost stable over the fifty year period.

**Urban Values**

Urban values are defined as those values associated with the importance of the culture and services of the city. The books were read in order to determine these values.

**Urban values in children's literature of the 1930's**

The stories in nine of the selected books from the 1930's dealt with urban values. The following five examples were chosen to express the values associated with the city.
The story *Wait For William*, by Marjorie Flack, demonstrated the value of the city. William lives in the city and by accident is a participant in the big parade that is held in his city. This book emphasized the excitement and fun of a parade in a city (11).

In the story *Madeline*, by Ludwig Bemelmans, the values of medical services in the city are emphasized when Madeline becomes ill and the teacher calls the ambulance. The ambulance arrives immediately and takes Madeline to the hospital in the city where she lives (3).

The story of *Mei Li* by Thomas Handforth also involves the value of the city. This story revolves around a small girl's visit to the big city and the big circus. The book stressed the excitement and fun of a circus in the city (23).

*Chosen Baby*, by Valentina Wasson, accentuates the value of the city by emphasizing the importance of an urban institution. This book is designed to acquaint the adopted child with the procedures associated with their adoption (45).

In *To Think That I Saw It On Mulberry Street*, by Theodor Seuss Geisel, the importance of the city was shown in the form of a big parade. A young boy watches a parade on the street in front of his city home (16).

The urban values of the 1930's in these children's picture books are most frequently associated with the culture of zoos, museums, and circuses. The services such as policemen, newspapers, and hospitals are also emphasized.
Urban values in children's literature of the 1950's.--

Urban values were found in six children's picture books written in the 1950's. The following four examples were chosen to illustrate the importance of the culture and services of the city.

**Mop Top**, by Don Freeman, displays the value of living in the city and being able to walk to stores and the barber shop. The young boy in the story walks to the heart of the city for a haircut and stops in many stores along the way (13).

**Madeline in London**, by Ludwig Bemelmans, emphasizes the value of the culture of the city. Madeline visits museums, churches and other cultural exhibits during her stay in London (4).

The story **Pet of the Met**, by Don Freeman, is associated with the cultural value of the city. The story helps acquaint the child with the New York Metropolitan Opera House and opera in general (14).

**Adelaide**, by Tomi Ungerer, also affirms the cultural value and services of the city. The kangaroo is seen in stores and churches and museums (42).

These four stories help to emphasize the importance and value of the cities. These examples show children the culture and services one can find in the city.

Urban values in children's literature of the 1970's.--

Three books written in the 1970's selected for analysis depicted urban values. Two books were chosen as examples.
In the story *Finder's Keepers*, by Alix Shulman, the value of city parks and playgrounds are shown. The children played in the park and had fun in a clean atmosphere (39).

*The White Horse*, by Edith Thacher Hurd, takes place in the city. A young boy visits a zoo in the city and imagines he is the proud owner of a big white horse (25).

Urban Values occurred only three times in the selected books of the 1970's. These stories were illustrated with lifelike characters and the settings were realistic and believable.

Urban values were discovered in only eighteen percent of the children's picture books analyzed. The occurrence of urban values has declined over the past fifty years. The stories have not made a significant change since the 1930's. Most of the children's picture books with urban values deal with children and their visits to cultural centers in the cities.

Rural Tools and Implements

A tool was considered rural if it was pictured and used exclusively in a rural setting. For this analysis, rural tools were tractors, wagons, hoes, gardening tools and egg baskets.

In the children's picture books selected from the 1930's, pictured rural tools and implements appeared in fourteen books. Rural tools depicted in these books included gardening tools, hoes, rakes, and watering cans, horse drawn
carts, tractors and heavy farm equipment. These tools were used in a rural setting and were needed to complete the farming chores of the rural areas.

Rural tools and implements were pictured in fifteen selected children's picture books written in the 1950's. The rural tools included wagons, carts and baskets. These tools were used exclusively in the rural setting and enhanced the rural way of life.

Rural tools were found in illustrations of ten of the selected picture books of the 1970's. These tools and implements included a hoe, garden tools and baskets. Many of the tools were used on the Indian reservations and all were used in rural settings.

There was a variety of tools and implements used in the illustrations of rural settings. Rural tools were pictured more often than non-rural tools for all three decades. Rural tools were illustrated in forty percent of all the children's picture books studied.

Non-Rural Tools and Implements

Non-rural tools and implements included any tool or implement directly related to city life including taxi-cabs, police cars, dump trucks and street lights. If there was a question of the use of a tool or implement, the content was referred to in order to check the actual use of the tool.

Non-rural tools and implements exemplified in this study for the children's picture books of the 1930's included
police cars, taxicabs, street lights, street signs, policemen in uniform and heavy digging equipment. Only four books of the children's picture books of the 1930's depicted non-rural tools in their content.

Eight of the selected children's picture books of the 1950's had an appearance of non-rural tools. Non-rural tools represented a wide range of tools and implements including cranes, large building equipment, barber shops, and taxicabs. These tools were pictured in the urban lifestyle.

Of the selected children's picture books from the 1970's, ten had pictures of non-rural tools. These tools were associated with the city and include cars, trucks, street lights, and street signs.

All of the non-rural tools were pictured exclusively in the city. A variety of these tools and implements appeared in the selected children's books, but they only appeared in twenty-two percent of the books.

Negative Urban Views

Negative urban views is defined in this study as any book that portrays the city life as being crowded, dirty, dark, and portrays the city people as being weak and having a hard life. This specific incident occurred in only eight percent of all books studied.

Negative urban views in children's literature of the 1930's—Negative urban views occurred three times in the selected children's picture books of the 1930's. The
following two stories exhibit negative urban views found in the picture books of this decade.

In The Story of Babar the Little Elephant, by Jean de Brunhoff, an elephant makes his way to the city only to eventually discover that the wealth and prestige of the city cannot be matched by the peace and contentment of the open spaces. The elephant returns home to become king of the jungle and live happily ever after (7).

The story of Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel, by Virginia Burton, is also one of discontentment with the city life. Mike Mulligan is owner and operator of a small steam shovel that is soon outclassed in the city. Mike moves to the country and soon is convinced that it is the perfect place to be. Mike and his steam shovel, Mary Ann, retire in the country and live happily ever after (8).

The two stories, The Story of Babar the Little Elephant, and Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel, were chosen to illustrate negative urban views in the children's picture books of the 1930's. The illustrations in these two books did not picture realistic characters.

There was no occurrence of negative urban views in any of the children's picture books selected from the 1950's.

Negative urban views in children's literature of the 1970's.—The concept of negative urban views appeared in three children's picture books selected for the 1970's.
All three of these books are used as examples in the following paragraphs.

_Ick's ABC_, by Fred Gwynne, gave negative views of such things as concrete, ghettos, industry, litter, urban sprawl and water pollution. The book encouraged children to recycle and pick up litter (21).

In the story _A New Day_, by Don Bolognese, the city was depicted as cold and cruel. The story reenacts the birth of Christ in a modern setting. The city was too busy and crowded to make room for the expectant couple (5).

_Monkeys and the Pedlar_, by Susanne Suba, tells the disadvantages of the city life. A peddler walking from city to city stops in a forest to take a nap. While he is asleep, monkeys play with his wares. Upon awakening the man says: "It is so lovely and quiet around here, not like in the city" (40).

Negative urban views in the children's picture books of the 1970's appeared with candor. The stories and pictures in these books called special attention to bad aspects of the city.

The stories in the books of the 1970's are more direct in their approach to problems of the city than the books of the 1930's. The authors of stories written in the 1970's do not hide the negative urban view but come out and say the city needs improving. Only eight percent of the total books studied even dealt with negative urban views.
Positive Urban Views

Positive urban view is defined as any pictures that portray the city as clean, bright and exciting. This specific situation occurred only three times in the entire sample of children's picture books studied.

In the story, Chosen Baby, by Valentina Wasson, the city was depicted in a positive light. The city was shown as bright and clean and as a good place to rear a child (45).

In the story of Susie Mariner, by Lois Lenski, the pictures of the city were bright and clean and fresh (30).

These two stories represent examples of positive urban views in the children's picture books of the 1930's. Pictures in these books portrayed the city as clean and exciting. Positive urban views did not appear in the children's picture books of the 1950's and 1970's.

Comparison of Overall Data

The pictures and illustrations in children's picture books have changed a great deal over the last fifty years. Twenty-four children's picture books in the 1930's sample were illustrated in black and white. Thirteen of the children's picture books of the 1930's were illustrated with some color. However, most of the color illustrations were done in three or four basic color schemes. The color was not natural or consistent.

The illustrations of the 1950's made a noticeable change. Twenty-three of the books were illustrated in color, and only
seven were illustrated in black and white. The color in the illustrations of the books written in the 1950's is more realistic than the three and four color schemes in the illustrations of the 1930's.

The illustrations in children's picture books of the 1970's were drawn with imagination, brilliance and vivid lifelike characters. The illustrations of the animals seem to be the most lifelike and truest in color and shape.

The artwork in current children's picture books is detailed and complex. Much more time and money is now being spent on the illustrations of picture books in comparison to the 1930's. When picture books began in the United States, many used basic sketches that seemed to be almost an afterthought to the story.

In comparing the data of the three decades very little is different or changed over the last fifty years. The overall trends are basically the same as seen in Figure Two. There were, however, some differences that should be noted.

Rural settings occurred almost an equal number of times in all three decades. Two-thirds of the books used for this study were illustrated with rural settings. One-third of the picture books were illustrated with non-rural settings.

Rural values appeared in just over half of the children's picture books used for this study. The trend of rural values as found in the picture books increased slightly over the last fifty years. The occurrence of urban values declined slightly in children's picture books since the 1930's.
Figure 2
Comparison of Data of Selected Picture Books Written in the Three Decades, 1930's, 1950's, 1970's

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>1930's</th>
<th>1950's</th>
<th>1970's</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive Urban Views</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Urban Views</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Rural Tools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Tools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Values</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Values</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Rural Settings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Settings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentage

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100
Rural tools appeared less in the children's picture books written in the 1970's than the picture books written in the 1930's. Non-rural tools, on the other hand, made a slight increase in appearance in the children's picture books selected for this study.

Negative urban views and positive urban views were not an issue in the children's picture books selected for the study. There was little or no occurrence of negative or positive urban views over the last fifty years in children's picture books.

Tables One, Two, and Three depict a comparison of the categories within the individual decades. The data for each individual decade is shown using frequency of occurrence of the defined category and the percentile for each category.

Summary

One hundred and one children's picture books were selected for analysis. This study identified and analyzed children's picture books using the categories: 1) rural settings versus non-rural settings, 2) rural values versus urban values, 3) rural tools and implements versus non-rural tools and implements, 4) negative urban views versus positive urban views. Each of the categories were taken independently and compared from books of the 1930's, 1950's, and 1970's. For example, rural settings found in children's picture books of the 1930's were compared to rural settings found in children's picture books of the 1950's and 1970's. This pro-
procedure was repeated for all of the defined categories.

Data analysis tables and comparison charts were used as graphic displays of the analysis of the data. The overall data was compared for changes of occurrences over the last fifty years.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Frequency of Occurrence of the Defined Category by Number of Books</th>
<th>Frequency of Occurrence of the Defined Category by Percentile</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural Settings</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Rural Settings</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Values</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Values</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Tools</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Rural Tools</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Urban Views</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Urban Views</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8%</td>
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TABLE II
FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCE OF DEFINED CATEGORY FOR THE YEARS 1950-1959

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Frequency of Occurrence of Defined Category</th>
<th>Percentile</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural Settings</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>76%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-Rural Settings</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rural Values</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>63%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Urban Values</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Tools</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-Rural Tools</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Urban Views</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Urban Views</td>
<td>0</td>
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TABLE III
FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCE OF DEFINED CATEGORY FOR THE YEARS 1970-1975

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Categories</th>
<th>Frequency of Occurrence of the Defined Category</th>
<th>Percentile</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural Settings</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Rural Settings</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Values</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Values</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Tools</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Rural Tools</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Urban Views</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Urban Views</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
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CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


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CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

Children's literature has been published in America since 1646. The emergence of books with pictures for children did not occur with any popularity until the 1920's. Since that time thousands of books in all shapes and sizes and descriptions have been published.

Children's picture books are used to teach children the association of pictures with words. Picture books are designed for the child from ages two through seven. For this group, the brightly colored pictures are fascinating and enchanting. They tell stories of achievement, love and reassurance, and how children relate and fit into society.

According to this study the rural values of love of nature, love of animals, love of the soil, helpfulness, good neighborliness are found to be dominate in children's picture books. Picture books do indeed portray the American values associated with the rural lifestyle and are the ones that will be lasting and remembered. Images of these picture books are ingrained in the minds of children and are a part of the socialization process from the bedtime story to adulthood.

Children's picture books written in the 1930's, 1950's and 1970's were chosen for the study. Picture books written
in the 1930's were chosen because they represent the first full decade of publication of picture books for children. Picture books written in the fifties were chosen to represent a decade when picture books were abundantly published. Many books were published in the 1950's to accommodate the great influx of school age children after the baby boom of the 1940's and the early 1950's. Picture books published in the seventies were chosen to represent the trends of today in children's picture books. The study covers only books written from 1970-1976 for the 1970's decade. It is important to have the trends of the present generation to compare with the picture books published in the 1930's.

The main problem of this research was to discover if children's picture books over the last fifty years have depicted rural values more significantly than urban values. This research also sought to answer such questions as have rural settings been more dominant than urban settings in children's picture books in the last fifty years, are rural tools and implements more prevalent in children's picture books over the last fifty years than non-rural tools, is the urban way of life depicted negatively more often than positively in children's picture books?

Content analysis in its elementary form consists of counting the number of times a particular word, event, setting or anything occurs and comparing it to the total content. This study used an elementary form of counting the frequency of occurrence of categorized pictures and values.
The sample frame for this research was drawn from four books that list award and prize winning picture books since the 1930's. These four books—Adventuring with Books, by Shelton L. Root, Jr.; Children's Books Too Good to Miss, by May Hill Arbuthnot; Picture Books for Children, by Patricia Jean Cianciolo; Children's Literary Almanac, by George Kurian—contain numerous books for children. However, since only the years of the 1930's, 1950's, 1970's were studied, then all books published in the 1920's, 1940's, and 1960's were not included in the sample frame. The books were listed and selected by a sequence number that gave an equal number of books to each decade studied.

The content of children's picture books analyzed for this research was divided into four major categories. The categories were chosen to reflect rural connotations in children's picture books. The categories used for this study were rural settings versus non-rural settings; rural values versus urban values; rural tools and implements versus non-rural tools and implements; negative urban views versus positive urban views.

This study does not attempt to prove the validity of the material in children's picture books. It is assumed that picture books for children form the basis for further learning and are remembered for life. If these stories from childhood are retained and are of a rural nature, then this helps to perpetuate the great American ideology of the country life.
This research sought to answer four key questions. The first question was have rural settings been more dominant than urban or non-rural settings in children's picture books? According to this study, rural settings occurred in seventy percent of the total sample of children's picture books, and non-rural settings occurred in only thirty percent of the total sample.

The second question the research answered was that of the significance of rural values in children's picture books. According to this research, rural values were found in fifty-six percent of all the books in the sample. Urban values were found in only eighteen percent of the total sample.

The third question used for this research was are rural tools and implements more prevalent in children's picture books over the last fifty years than non-rural tools? The results of this study showed that rural tools appeared in thirty-nine percent of the total books and only twenty-two percent of the books had an appearance of non-rural tools.

The fourth question this research sought to answer was is the urban way of life depicted negatively more often than positively in children's picture books? According to this study there was not a significant number of books that enforced the negative or positive urban view. Negative urban views appeared in eight percent of the total sample and positive urban views appeared in three percent of the total sample. The negative urban view appeared twice as often as positive urban views, but there was not a large number of
books in either view.

Conclusions

The results of this study verify that rural settings are dominant in children's picture books. It would seem logical that one major reason for the preponderance of rural settings is the fact that many animal stories are high in entertainment value and children identify with the animal characters. Many of these animal stories tell of the relationship between a child and his or her pet.

It may be that rural settings are predominant in children's books because most people have a need for contact with nature. According to Tuan, intimate contact with nature means working on the land and possibly obtaining food from it (1). These opportunities for communing with nature are not available in the city. The only form of nature in the city may be found in the city parks. Children's picture books with their rural settings and values may offer a part of nature to the writer and reader as well. In getting back to nature, these picture books may also represent an escape from the reality of the city. It has been said that people have an intimate desire to return to nature. These children's books may, in a small way, help to perpetuate this dream.

One reason for the emphasis on rural settings and values in children's picture books may be the dependance Americans have on the farmer. The majority of Americans no longer live on self-contained farms. There is a constant and almost
total dependency on the farmers of America to feed the population. Although most of the farmers of America today are big time businessmen, they are still idealized in the minds of the people. Children's picture books, even in the 1970's, still picture the traditional farm crops and farm tools. The idealized view of the farmer has survived in at least fifty years of children's picture books.

It may be that rural settings and rural values are more predominant in children's picture books because publishers of children's literature realize that their companies can sell more books with rural settings. A study needs to be conducted in order to compare the number of books published with rural and urban settings.

Implications for Further Studies

Research in the content of children's literature is an area of grave concern. Further investigation is needed involving the thousands of books published from 1928 to the present in relation to values and settings. There is also a need for further study of the content and quality of the illustrations in children's picture books. Some areas which need investigation are the following: what kind of picture is most pleasing to a child; what ideals, values and themes can be understood by children; how may these ideals, values and themes be communicated; is it possible for picture books to do no more than entertain without introducing values?
It would also seem logical to make a detailed study of the violence in children's picture books. During the course of this study, many books were found that dealt with children in violent situations. For example, in Dancing Stars, a child falls from the sky and disintegrates into the earth; in The Hare and The Tortoise, the hare is tricked into being a victim and captured only to discover that the tortoise is going to take out his liver; in The Angry Moon, two children are chased and haunted by a large angry moon; in The Runny Little Woman, an old lady is held captive by ugly ogres; and in The Three Billy Goats Gruff, the ugly ogre is killed by the goats. These are only a few of the many examples that dealt with violence or violent acts in this sample of children's picture books.

There is also a need for sociological and/or psychological studies to be done concerning the effect of children's picture books on children. There are many questions to be answered such as what effect do children's picture books have on children; how long does this effect last; what part do children's picture books play in the socialization of children; what effects do the illustrations in children's picture books have on the children that see them; how important are the size and colors of the book in choice selection by children?
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Books


Magazines


Unpublished Materials

