

A Quest for a Multiplicity of Gender Identities: Gender Representation in American Children's Books 2017-2019

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Introduction

"That's my name, and it fits me just right!
I am Alma, and I have a story to tell."

Alma and How She Got Her Name (Martinez-Neale 2018).

Empowering little girls has become a kind of war cry in the parenting world. The publication of children's books like Mudpuppy's Little Feminist Board Book Set and Holub's This Little Trailblazer highlight historical and influential women for children ages 0-5 years old and enhance many of the ideologies present in today's increasingly feminist world. While many parents encourage young girls to transgress traditional feminine norms, are we placing a similar emphasis on young boys to challenge the stereotypical masculine mask in modern society? We are beginning to ask questions around gender representation and the extent to which change must occur in the way we raise children.

A range of media is produced and targeted towards children to support early development, parental bonding, and play. Among these tools, picture books are a powerful educational and social tool for adults who wish to enhance a child's cognitive processes, literacy, and social understanding. Most parents want every advantage for their children, and in a society that appears to be undergoing a shift in its ideological normative landscape, it seems that this genre may support the move towards molding the little girls and boys that mainstream society promotes.

As discussions around parenting practices evolve, we are seeing a surge in headlines emphasizing the importance of reading to children of all ages, with an emphasis on early years and pre-school aged children. Headlines from online articles such as *Psychology Today's* 'The Magic of Reading Aloud to Babies' (Denworth) and *New York Times's* 'Reading Aloud to Young Children Has Benefits For Behavior and Attention' (Klass) have mainstreamed academic studies around child development in the early years. Massaro found a strong correlation between reading out loud to children and vocabulary development and suggests that 'shared picture book reading offers a potentially powerful strategy to prepare children for competent literacy skills' (520). Similarly, a study from *Pediatrics* journal found that reading aloud to children reduced disruptive and hyperactive behaviors and 'enhanced social-emotional development for children in low-income families' (Mendelsohn, et al. 6).

Clearly, these studies offer significant findings and promote positive behaviors for parents and children. However, these studies neglect to discuss the types of books children read and the power they have to shape beliefs. Norman Fairclough argues that 'using language is the most common form of social behavior' (*Language and Power* 2), and Frank Taylor acknowledges that children as young as four years old understand gender to be a basic component of his or her sense of self. Therefore, picture books are a significant factor in the socialization of children; while not the only factor, picture books offer a child early insight into the social practices, ideologies, and norms that permeate society (Pace Nilson; Taylor). Therefore, the presence of gender stereotypes in these books can greatly impact the way children see the world and themselves.

In order to address these concerns, the focus of this study aims to uncover to what extent contemporary American children's books transgress gender stereotypes and support the continued progress towards a multiplicity of identities for both males and females. The data for this study are taken from the 2017-2019 Caldecott Medal and Honor books, which primarily focus on preschool and early years picture books. There has been little academic exploration of gender stereotypes in these types of children's books from the decade between 2010-2019. As such, this study aims to address the gaps in the field by considering the development of gendered themes and characters in the most contemporary American children's books at the time of this publication.

To approach this study, I firstly outline the theoretical background regarding language and gender. Next, I review previous studies regarding gender stereotypes in children's books from as early as 1500 AD to the turn of the twenty-first century. Furthermore, the main analytical approach provides a comprehensive, quantitative and qualitative analysis of the characters in all fifteen books using content analysis. I utilize case studies to further exemplify my findings. With these ideas in mind, in this paper, I examine the function of thematic elements, linguistic components, and visual structures as a means of examining the power that language has to shape stereotypes and socialize children according to the beliefs and values of society.

Previous Approaches to Gender and Children's Literature

Theories of Gender Identity

‘There she lay and was so beautiful that he could not take his eyes off her. He bent over and gave her a kiss. When he touched her with the kiss Little Brier-Rose opened her eyes, awoke, and looked at him kindly’
(Grimm and Grimm).

The handsome prince saves the beautiful, helpless maiden. As children, we hear this recurring trope and internalize the social expectations placed upon us: men can be active heroes while women wait for rescue. This persistent storyline socializes children to adhere to the rigid binary structure society prescribes to its members. However, as theories of gender shift, so too do the stories.

Historically, attitudes towards gender have shifted and represent four key stages in the development of approaches to gender: deficit, dominance, difference, and dynamic. Early work by feminist linguists emphasized an inherent binary divide between male and female, with Lakoff claiming that ‘women are systematically denied access to power’, and that “‘women’s language’ is characterized by weakness’ (42) when compared to the language of men. Similarly, in 1980, Dale Spender’s work, *Man Made Language*, developed the notion of patriarchal control within language, claiming that language is literally produced and controlled by men, thus contributing to the metaphorical and often literal silencing of women, as seen with Little Brier-Rose.

This early work sparked development in the field and led researchers to consider a difference approach. Maltz and Borker suggested that the differences in spoken discourse can be directly attributed to a ‘cultural difference and miscommunication’ between men and women, and emphasized that boys and girls ‘are learning self-consciously to differentiate their behavior from that of the other sex and to exaggerate these differences’ (489). Tannen’s 1991 book *You Just Don’t Understand* popularized this approach for the general public, emphasizing stereotypes, such as men being problem-solvers, lecturers, independent, oppositional, and status-driven, while women are sympathetic, supportive listeners, who seek connection and intimacy (see Talbot). Tannen’s book was heavily criticized by gender theorists, with Troemel-Ploetz condemning Tannen for omitting concepts of dominance, sexism, and feminism altogether, and Freed stating that it ‘perpetuates negative stereotypes of women, and excuses men of their interactional failings’ (1-2).

Contemporary theorists (Talbot; Mills and Mullaney; Butler; Bing and Bergvall) now work within a more dynamic approach to gender, aiming to dismantle the rigid binary of male and female. While sex is recognized as biological, gender is a learned, socially constructed behavior (Butler; Talbot). Butler argues that ‘gender is the cultural meaning that the sexed body assumes’, highlighting that gender may respond to external influences and is a product of culture’s ideals rather than a seemingly fixed notion, such as sex (*Gender Trouble* 9).

A dynamic approach to gender creates space for a multiplicity of gender identities. We might compare gender to other dichotomies, such as war and peace or day and night. Where does one end and the other begin? Just as day and night have no distinct boundaries, gender, too, cannot be so clearly divided. In this way, gender is 'better described as a continuum with indistinct boundaries' (Bing and Bergvall 1), one that is fluid and flexible. Therefore, if gender is culturally constructed on a diverse continuum, then two women, for example, cannot be said to encompass a common identity automatically. '[Gender] identity can be seen as multiple and fluid, and never complete', thus creating space for different femininities and masculinities to arise across cultures and even within individuals (Litosseliti and Sunderland 7).

Chouliaraki and Fairclough (cited in Litosseliti and Sunderland 17) apply this notion to texts and contend that individuals interpret and incorporate texts according to their own experiences. Individuals continuously create unique identities that can shift and change. However, Litosseliti and Sunderland also argue that, in the Western world, males lack access to this multiplicity of gender identities. Arguably, females can access traditionally masculine experiences with fewer societal consequences than males who adopt traditionally feminine experiences. While this may not necessarily be the case for economic and social opportunities, they emphasize that society has created a barrier for men, which feeds into normative, hegemonic masculinity. This, then, may be perpetuated by stereotypes in children's literature.

Construction and Representation

The formation of gender identity crucially begins from birth, with picture books being a pivotal avenue for the socialization of children. The multimodal nature of the children's book genre allows for messages to permeate children's identities and formulate 'ideologies, values, and beliefs from a dominant culture, including gender ideologies and scripts' (Taylor 301). These messages may emphasize certain voices while silencing others, leading children to understand normative behaviors and gendered expectations from a young age (Sunderland).

The embedded ideologies lead us to question: to what extent is the human social world represented or constructed in a text? Sunderland

(2011) identifies that representation and construction are often synonymous, highlighting that words in a text often work together to present a particular representation or to create a new representation (7). Fairclough makes a distinction between construction in and beyond a text, emphasizing the inherent differences between construal and construction:

The world is discursively construed (or represented) in many and various ways, but which construals come to have socially constructed effects depends upon a range of conditions which include for instance power relations but also properties of whatever parts of aspects of the world are being construed (*Critical Discourse Analysis* 4-5).

The social constructivist approach here reinforces the conditions of power within society. As attitudes and conditions for women shift and the destructive elements of hegemonic masculinity are exposed, one might expect the representation of gender in books to evolve. However, Fairclough reinforces that the ‘natural and social worlds differ in that the latter but not the former depends upon human action for its existence’ (*Critical Discourse Analysis* 4). Therefore, as power and ideological structures remain embedded in societal attitudes, the representation of the socially constructed world will continue to reflect this “reality.”

Approaching children’s literature from a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) angle allows critical linguists to ‘show how language and grammar can be used as ideological instruments’ to examine the categorisation of ‘people, events, places, and actions’ within texts (Machin and Mayr 2). On the surface, these strategies may appear neutral or taken for granted, however, CDA works to uncover the buried ideology inherent in texts which may shape a particular representation. Fairclough identifies that CDA ‘aims to raise consciousness of how language contributes to the domination of some people by others, as a step towards social emancipation’ (‘CDA as Dialectic’ 37). If we consider Kristeva’s term ‘intertextuality’ (cited in Fairclough ‘Discourse and Text’), the idea that there are certain master discourses that get repeated and carried throughout history, it becomes clear that ideological expectations and representations of gender are perpetuated in stories throughout time. The damsel-in-distress and active hero tropes from early fairy tales are

certainly present, if not overt, within contemporary children's stories, and through a critical examination of the text these buried ideologies can be faced and perhaps subverted.

Early Gender Representation in Texts

For generations, Western stories have reflected and passed on traditional values to children and adults alike, thus reinforcing strong stereotypes. For example, the traditional male work role can be traced in children's stories as far back as the early 1500s (Gooden and Gooden 89). From a young age, children learn these 'behavioral and associative patterns, value systems...[and understand] a picture of sexual roles, behavior and psychology' (Lieberman 187).

For women, many of these early texts reinforced opposition. In traditional European fairy tales, the presentation of the stepmother-and-heroine dichotomy promoted divisiveness amongst girls. The physical or internal ugliness of the stepmother and the juxtaposing beauty of the heroine is presented alongside the evil and goodness of the respective characters (Lieberman). Gilbert and Gubar call this the 'angel-woman and the monster-woman' (201) in Western fairy tales, identifying only two options for women to pursue, with only the former, or the angel-woman, being socially desirable.

Similarly, many Western fairy tales often represented women as powerless within society, preserving stereotypes and establishing tropes. The damsel-in-distress archetype emphasised passivity, dependence and self-sacrifice, with tales such as Perrault's 'Little Red Riding Hood' and the Brothers Grimm's 'Little Briar Rose' depicting the female as powerless to change her own destiny. Similarly, the pursuit of domesticity, with marriage as a girl's ultimate reward, contrasts the heroic and bold pursuits available to boys in fairy tales. A meritorious attribute in males is conversely rejected in females. While some females in fairy tales may in fact display some kind of strength, it generally appears in her ability to endure hardships or persevere through trials. 'Hansel and Gretel' (Grimms and Grimms) proves to be one fairy tale in which the female character is given an active role in saving her brother. However, the character must endure torture at the hand of her oppressor, an ugly, powerful witch. In this context, being powerful is associated with

a lack of femininity, as the witch is presented as wicked and non-human (Lieberman). Rowe suggests that these stories indicate how ‘culture’s very survival depends upon a woman’s acceptance of roles which relegate her to motherhood and domesticity’ (210). As these stories get passed down and even reappropriated, it becomes evident that they had great power in shaping what girls believed they ‘could or could not accomplish, what sort of behavior would be rewarded, and of the nature of reward itself’ (Lieberman 187).

Gender Representation in Children’s Books: 1950-2011

With the rise of the second wave of feminism in the 1960s came a focus on gender representation in children’s books and a consciousness that these stereotypical representations continue to be perpetuated. Fisher mainstreamed the dialogue with an article in *The New York Times* documenting the stereotypes observed in libraries and bookstores. She noted a ‘conspiracy of conditioning’, where ‘boys’ achievement drive is encouraged [and] girls’ is cut off’ (6). The nature of these representations reinforces the intertextuality of the gender narrative, uncovering latent ideologies and expectations placed upon males and females and reinforced throughout time.

Empirical studies in this field include Pace Nilson, Gooden and Gooden, Jackson and Gee, Wharton, Anderson and Hamilton, Adams, Walker and O’Connell, and Sunderland. Picture books offer one medium in which to influence children in their crucial identity-forming years, socializing children from an early age to understand the rules of gender identity and the appropriate roles for males and females (Pace Nilson 919). Therefore, by examining the changing nature of children’s books from the 1950s-2010s, we can better understand the social attitudes towards males and females and the identities and roles available to children.

Studies from the 1970s indicate a significant imbalance in male and female representation. In a study of 154 picture books, Stewig and Higgs (cited in Sunderland) noted an overrepresentation of male characters who participated in a wider range of professional roles than female characters despite 40% of American mothers working in factories or offices at the time. Czaplinski (cited in Sunderland) identified a similar

imbalance in Caldecott, Carroll and NY Times Book Review award winners with a 4:1 ratio of males to females identified in written text and a 7:3 ratio in images. A 1971 study of 80 Caldecott award and honor books indicated that while fourteen books used a male name in the title, only four books used a female name in the title. Similarly, while every book contained a male character, either human or animal, six books contained no female representation, and one quarter of the books contained only a token female - a mother who sewed, packed lunches, or cooked food (Pace Nilson). A study by Freebody and Baker (cited in Sunderland 123) found that when two social actors occurred on a page or in a sentence, the idea of 'male firstness' generally occurred, meaning the males were positioned as the subject rather than the object of a clause, or a male was introduced before the female character. These representations arguably elevate males as the normative representation of humans within society and thus marginalize women (Sunderland 131).

Reading schemes, or school readers, present a significant opportunity to construct gender, as they are used in most schools and in many homes to teach reading. The images offer pictorial clues for word recognition, and the repetitive language reinforces vocabulary for early readers. Most reading schemes center around families and children, which can serve to acculturate vast numbers of children to traditional stereotypes.

A study by Jackson and Gee of 100 New Zealand readers from 1950-2000 noted significant constructions of traditional representations of femininity and hegemonic masculinity in the illustrations. Firstly, they observed a phenomenon which they called 'the snuggle factor.' In all five decades, girls are depicted holding objects close to the body, such as cuddling, rocking or cradling objects. Conversely, boys consistently hold objects away from the body. Where a girl cradles a doll or a teddy bear, a boy balances it on his shoulders. Similarly, in a Janet and John book, the female character snuggles a kitten while the male character dangles it by its paws. Across all five decades, only one story features a little boy cuddling his lost teddy bear (120-121). These representations reinforce the traditional gender dichotomy, emphasizing the softness and nurturing nature of femininity and the emotional distance of masculinity.

Interestingly, Jackson and Gee observed an increasing variation in the representation of female play over male play. While males engaged primarily in masculine activities, such as camping, trucks, or sports, females engaged in both masculine and feminine activities (the latter can be described as playing with dolls, reading or domestic chores). While many characters are observed to engage in non-traditional activities throughout the decades, these activities are often depicted with a gendered marker. For example, a female pushing a wheelbarrow (a traditionally masculine activity) is depicted with dolls in the wheelbarrow bed, and a boy playing with dolls is also playing with a train set. (124-125). In the 1990s, they noted a complete absence of girls engaging in traditionally feminine activities, reinforcing the ‘girl power’ ideal of the time; however, boys seem to have ‘less space to incorporate traditionally feminine behaviours or activities, imparting the notion that masculinity may be compromised by such departures’ (126).

When considering visuals, Pace Nilson identifies the lack of a singular neuter pronoun in the English language as problematic for illustrators. Due to traditional socialization, many individuals implicitly identify the masculine form as representative of all humanity. Therefore, many animals and even objects are interpreted as being masculine by illustrators. For example, the book *A Tree is Nice* utilizes the second person narrative perspective, allowing both boys and girls to visualize themselves as the protagonist. However, the illustrator drew twenty-seven males and only thirteen females throughout the story. One page depicts children up in a tree, with eleven boys and only three girls drawn. The three girls occupy the lowest branches, subtly suggesting a lack of strength and adventure (922). Similarly, there appears to be a disparity in the amount of female-to-male animal characters interpreted from the text and depicted on the page. These animals are often gendered through clothing, accessories, and identifying facial features. Pace Nilson notes that illustrators must be aware of this socialized tendency and avoid interpreting an animal as a ‘he’ more often than a ‘she’ (921-922).

Finally, the representations of fathers and mothers in children’s books indicates the pervasiveness of gender stereotypes across the genre. Fathers lack representation as nurturing caregivers who engage in housework, while mothers continue to be confined to the housewife role

(Anderson and Hamilton; Gooden and Gooden). Diekman and Murnen (cited in Anderson and Hamilton 145) discuss the representation of a one-dimensional father, finding that books containing non-sexist portrayals of female characters neglected to attribute traditionally feminine characteristics to male characters, particularly fathers. A study of 200 notable American books from 1995-2001 corroborated this finding, noting that mothers nurtured babies ten times more than fathers, and older children twice as often; similarly, no book depicted a father kissing or feeding a baby (Anderson and Hamilton 148). Jackson and Gee found that fathers traditionally took on the role of playmate and adventurers, and when domestic work was represented in children's books, it was generally an exception. In one such book, a father engaged in housework because the mother was at the hospital giving birth (124). In this way, the housework is positioned as feminine rather than a shared responsibility. However, Adams, Walker and O'Connell extended this research of the 'invisible father' through a study of 60 bestselling UK pre-school books from 2008, finding no difference in the action of scolding between the father and mother and a lack of disparity in what is classified as 'childcare activity', such as bathtime, reading, or bedtime routines (265). This shift perhaps suggests a movement towards a more involved father in the family structure, one that could help to shape a more positive and helpful perception of the father role for young children.

Despite this shift, the 2008 study displays a persistent stereotype of mothers in the housewife role, with 41.7% of the books depicting mothers doing the housework and only 8.3% of fathers engaging in the cooking and cleaning (Adams, Walker and O'Connell 265). Pace Nilson calls this phenomenon, 'the cult of the apron' (918). Illustrators rely on the apron as a costuming technique to emphasize domesticity. Pace Nilson found that, of 25 women depicted in a random study of books, only four did not wear an apron; within the books, she even found animal mothers wearing aprons (918). Jackson and Gee similarly found that across every decade from 1950-2000, mothers cared for children, husband, and home. Despite some 1970s picture books displaying non-binary expectations for females, adhering to the gender revolution at the time, mothers remained static and stuck in the role as housewife (124). It seems that young girls can be

powerful and independent, but the message remains that they are destined for a life as a mother and housewife.

Author Neil Gaiman once said, ‘I like stories where women save themselves’ (cited in TeamEpicReads). While this sentiment certainly promotes a view of femininity that goes beyond the classic tropes in traditional tales, it still leaves room to question the capacity of men. Where are the stories of girls saving boys? Is there space for male characters to cry out for help to a strong female rescuer, perhaps another male? We cannot fully empower women without also empowering men to access the full range of roles available to them. Children’s books offer a crucial opportunity to rewrite the gender code and provide a wide spectrum of opportunities for all children to access.

Methodology

Choice of text for the study

This study focuses on the fifteen Caldecott Award and Honor books selected from 2017-2019. The Randolph Caldecott Medal, established in 1937, awards the artistic accomplishments of American picture books for children published during the preceding year. Each year, the artist of the most distinguished book is presented with the Caldecott Medal, and three to six books are awarded the Honor medal (“Caldecott Medal”). According to Pace Nilson, this prestigious award represents the best of American picture books. Once a book has made the Caldecott list, it is generally ordered by most librarians across the country. Therefore, it can be argued that these books are highly influential in the socialization of children.

I have chosen to examine the award and honor-winning books from 2017-2019, as this represents the most recent sample of award-winning books at the time of this study. This sampling provides insight into the current representation of gender, allowing for a clear evaluation of the types of changes that have occurred in the representation and construction of gender in children’s books over time.

Table 1: 2017-2019 Caldecott Award and Honor books

P*	Award Year	Title [author]	Winner or Honor	Narrative
M	2019	<i>Hello Lighthouse</i> [Sophie Blackwell]	Winner	A man and woman begin their family while living and working in a lighthouse out at sea.
M	2019	<i>The Rough Patch</i> [Brian Lies]	Honor	Evan and his dog do everything together. When his dog passes away, he must deal with his grief and try to move on.
F	2019	<i>Thank You, Omu</i> [Oge Mora]	Honor	Omu shares her delicious red stew with her neighbors and soon finds she has none left for herself.
F	2019	<i>Alma and How She Got Her Name</i> [Juana Martinez-Neal]	Honor	Alma Sofia Esperanza José Pura Candela thinks her name is too long, but when her father shares the history behind her name, she realizes it fits her well.
F	2019	<i>A Big Mooncake for Little Star</i> [Grace Lin]	Honor	Little Star and her mother bake a delicious mooncake and send it up into the night sky. However, Little Star sneaks out of bed each night to eat part of the cake, which mimics the phases of the moon, until a new cake must be made.
F	2018	<i>Wolf in the Snow</i> [Matthew Cordell]	Winner	A girl and a wolf pup are lost in the snow. When they meet, the little girl braves a snowstorm to help the pup find its family. When she gets caught in the snowstorm, the wolves help her in return.
M	2018	<i>Crown</i> [Derrick Barnes and Gordon C. James]	Honor	A young African American boy visits his local barber shop to get his haircut. The experience connects him to his neighborhood and leaves him feeling confident.
M	2018	<i>A Different Pond</i> [Bao Phi and Thi Bui]	Honor	A Vietnamese immigrant father takes his son fishing in the early hours of the morning. The boy learns about his father's homeland and what it means to take care of a family.

F	2018	<i>Grand Canyon</i> [Jason Chin]	Honor	A girl and her father trek through the Grand Canyon and learn about the fossils and foliage of this spectacular place.
N	2018	<i>Big Cat, little cat</i> [Elisha Cooper]	Honor	When a new cat arrives, big cat must teach little cat about life as a housecat. However, as the big cat ages and dies, the little cat must now take its place and pass on all it has learned to the newest cat in the home.
M	2017	<i>Radiant Child</i> [Javaka Steptoe]	Winner	Jean-Michel Basquiat, a famous artist in the 1980s, loved art as a child and hoped that one day he would become famous.
F	2017	<i>Leave Me Alone!</i> [Vera Brosgol]	Honor	A grandmother seeks quiet and solitude so she can knit her family sweaters. She soon realizes that the chaos of her home has more love than the solitude she finds.
N	2017	<i>Du Iz Tak?</i> [Carson Ellis]	Honor	When a strange plant sprouts, the insects band together to make a fort that must withstand spiders, birds and the weather.
N	2017	<i>Freedom in Congo Square</i> [Carole Boston Weatherford and R. Gregory Christie]	Honor	African Americans in New Orleans worked hard all week under the injustice of slavery. On Sundays, they were allowed a taste of freedom and danced the day away in Congo Square.
N	2017	<i>They All Saw a Cat</i> [Brendan Wenzel]	Honor	A cat walks through life being observed by different animals and people. Everyone sees the cat in a new way and from their own perspective.

* P = Protagonist: (M)ale, (F)emale, (N)eutral

Choice of analytical approach

This study will take a multimodal approach, which falls under the broad heading of Critical Discourse Analysis. Content analysis focuses on gathering quantitative and qualitative data about the types of characters utilized and presented throughout the stories. 'Content analysis takes texts and analyses, reduces and interrogates them into summary form

through the use of both pre-existing categories and emergent themes in order to generate or test a theory' (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 564). Using this approach, the fifteen books in the sample have been examined with specific emphasis placed on gender representation. Each page, excluding the cover and title page, was analyzed using the following categories:

- Types of characters represented
- Represented clothing
- Represented activities
- Represented forms of affection
- Represented emotions

Both language and visuals have been accounted for in the data collection. People, animals or personified objects whose gender could not be determined have been labeled 'gender neutral.'

Content analysis provides an essential first step in understanding the contents of the books in the study. Mills (1995 cited in Sunderland 2011: 82) asserts that 'language analysis alone cannot help us to make the link between language and ideology, because if we focus on individual language items we risk...excluding the context of the text' (197). Therefore, content analysis establishes patterns that can be further elucidated through close linguistic analysis.

Content Analysis

Quantitative and qualitative content analysis provided a clear foundation for further linguistic and visual analysis on gender themes and values in the set texts. The examined categories explore the extent to which contemporary American children's books transgress gender stereotypes and support the continued progress towards a multiplicity of identities for both males and females.

Represented Characters

A precursory investigation of gendered characters found that fourteen of the fifteen books in the sample included at least one male character, and fourteen of fifteen books included at least one female character. As shown in table 2, the data consisted of an equal representation of male (6) and

female (6) protagonists. This congruence suggests some generalized progress in contemporary American children's books; males and females are provided with more equality in terms of representation and depiction in the primary role.

Table 2: Types of protagonists and total gendered protagonists

	No. out of 15 books	Percentage
Human Protagonist	11	73%
Animal Protagonist	4	27%
Male	6	40%
Female	6	40%
Neutral	3	20%

When looking at stories that depict human characters in table 3, more females (6) than males (4) have been utilized in the protagonist role. Similarly, it is interesting to note that, contrary to previous research (Pace Nilson; Kortenhau cited in Sunderland), only two books utilize character names in their titles, and both are female names (*Alma and How She Got Her Name* and *Thank You, Omu*). These initial findings suggest some advancement in the representation of females as actors of their own stories and provide more opportunity for young girls to see themselves in the characters.

Table 3: Gendered protagonists in human stories: 11 books

	No. out of 11 books	Percentage
Male	4	36%
Female	6	55%
Neutral	1	9%

Another interesting statistic to emerge is the visual frequency of male, female, and gender-neutral characters, including backgrounded characters in the texts (table 4). Though females are finding agency in the lead role, males continue to be depicted at a greater frequency, with male characters depicted 10% more than females. Many of the stories that depict a male protagonist, such as *The Rough Patch* (Lies 2018), *A Different Pond* (Phi and Bui 2017) and *Radiant Child* (Stephoe 2016), fail to visually represent gender equally, creating a gender disparity. Perhaps illustrators have intentionally aimed to target boys, and therefore focus on male characters, or perhaps this is a sign that the internalized notion that boys will not read stories with female characters continues to persist (Sunderland 14-15). Regardless of the reason, it appears that illustrators continue to interpret scenes using more males, thus reinforcing the socialized tendency to favor males over females.

Table 4: Total gendered characters pictured: 287 pictured characters

	No. out of 287 visuals	Percentage
Male	125	44%
Female	98	34%
Neutral	64	22%

Represented Clothing

As with the visual depiction of characters, illustrators make clothing choices that contribute to the gendered nature of the characters and the ideologies in the books. For the purpose of this discussion, I will use the terms costume and clothing interchangeably to discuss the visuals in the sample set of texts. Tables 5 and 6 provide significant insight into the perpetuation and shift of gender norms.

Table 5: Depiction of clothing for female characters. Each costume counted once.

	No. of costumes - Dresses/skirts	No. of costumes - long pants	No. of costumes - shorts	No. of costumes - aprons

<i>Hello Lighthouse</i>	10	0	0	2
<i>The Rough Patch</i>	1	1	0	0
<i>Thank You, Omu</i>	0	2	0	0
<i>Alma and How She Got Her Name</i>	3	2	0	0
<i>A Big Mooncake for Little Star</i>	1	1	0	0
<i>Wolf in the Snow</i>	1	1	0	0
<i>Crown</i>	1	0	0	0
<i>A Different Pond</i>	0	1	0	0
<i>Grand Canyon</i>	0	0	1	0
<i>Radiant Child</i>	7	0	0	1
<i>Leave Me Alone!</i>	13	0	0	1
<i>Du Iz Tak?</i>	1	1	0	0
<i>Freedom in Congo Square</i>	46	0	0	0
TOTAL	84	9	1	4

Table 6: Depiction of clothing for male characters. Each costume counted once.

	No. of costumes - Dresses/skirts	No. of costumes - long pants	No. of costumes - shorts	No. of costumes - aprons
<i>Hello Lighthouse</i>	0	1	0	1
<i>The Rough Patch</i>	0	1	0	1
<i>Thank You, Omu</i>	0	3	2	1
<i>Alma and How She Got Her Name</i>	0	1	0	0
<i>Wolf in the Snow</i>	0	1	0	0
<i>Crown</i>	0	1	0	0
<i>A Different Pond</i>	0	3	0	0

<i>Grand Canyon</i>	0	1	0	0
<i>Radiant Child</i>	0	11	1	0
<i>Leave Me Alone!</i>	0	13	0	0
<i>Du Iz Tak?</i>	0	2	0	0
<i>Freedom in Congo Square</i>	0	46	0	0
<i>They All Saw a Cat</i>	0	0	1	0
TOTAL	0	84	4	3

Firstly, when looking at female clothing, it is surprising to note that only three books choose to dress female characters in clothing other than dresses or skirts. In other words, 80% of the books reproduce gender norms and present women in stereotypical clothing. *Hello Lighthouse* (Blackwell 2018) depicts the adult female and her daughter wearing a different dress in each frame while the man has only two costume changes throughout the story. In *Big Mooncake for Little Star* (Lin 2018), the mother and daughter wear identically patterned clothing, as they are meant to represent the stars in the night sky. While the girl wears long pants for pajamas, the mother wears a dress. The child is allowed freedom from gendered clothing, but the depiction suggests that as a female child ages, she will be expected to don more stereotypical clothing. One potential anomaly is in the book *Freedom in Congo Square* (Weatherford and Christie 2016). For this text, the number (46 dresses or skirts) is not as telling in terms of reinforcing gender ideals; though the costuming is highly gendered, the historical nature of the story of slavery limits what the illustrator can do with the clothing. For historical accuracy, the women must wear skirts or dresses. Unsurprisingly, in all of the books, there are no cases where a male character dons a dress or a skirt.

Pace Nilson's 'cult of the apron' (918) seems to have dissipated somewhat in recent years. Only three books, or 20%, depict females wearing aprons. In each of these books, the aproned women are presented as housewives, mothers or in a traditional caregiver role, which aligns with past tradition and stereotypes. However, this portrayal

represents a significant shift in the depiction of mothers, as ten of the books have at least one mother figure and yet only three are illustrated with an apron.

Men are also costumed wearing aprons in three books. While this is the same figure as the female count, it is important to note that all three men who wear aprons do so in a way that does not transgress gender norms. There are no men depicted in the kitchen preparing a meal for a family while wearing an apron. *Thank You, Omu* (Mora 2018) shows a hot dog vendor wearing an apron, which aligns with his profession. *The Rough Patch* (Lies 2018) depicts the protagonist wearing an industrial apron with tools and gardening equipment, thus reinforcing the expectation of being a handyman. Finally, *Hello Lighthouse* (Blackwell 2018) shows the male protagonist wearing an apron on two pages as he awaits the arrival of his wife. He completes domestic chores only on these pages. These chores and the presentation of the apron is then passed on to the wife when she emerges in the story, thus positioning housework as a female responsibility.

It appears more acceptable for females to have a variety of clothing options than males, as they are depicted wearing both stereotypically feminine and masculine clothing. Male characters overwhelmingly wear long pants and are often marked with a hat or suspenders. For female characters, the options appear slightly more varied. *A Different Pond* (Phi and Bui 2017) costumes the mother, a working immigrant, in long pants. Though she is depicted in the kitchen on one page, her clothing defies gender stereotypes, which aligns with her role as a working mother rather than primarily a housewife. Similarly, *Grand Canyon* (Chin 2017) depicts a father and daughter as mirrored images. Each character wears a baseball cap, a solid-colored t-shirt, shorts or long pants, and a backpack. This depiction suggests that the little girl is capable of the same opportunities and adventures as her father, thus empowering young girls to see more limitless opportunities.

Though female characters appear to have a greater variety of dress, it is interesting to note that dresses and skirts continue to dominate the representation of feminine clothing, thus reinforcing traditional gender norms for women. Similarly, the data suggests that males continue to be restricted within a narrow view of acceptable clothing options, perhaps

relating back to previous ideas of ‘difference’ within gender (Maltz and Borker 1982; Tannen 1991). With no male characters depicted wearing a dress or skirt, contemporary views of what is acceptable in the realm of masculinity persist. It would be refreshing to see a male character exploring different forms of dress within the pages of a children’s book and reflecting the more contemporary dynamic approach to gender (Bing and Bergvall).

Represented Activities

Characters engage in a variety of activities, and illustrators make choices about how to elucidate the text. To distinguish the gendered activities, I have drawn from Jackson and Gee’s (2005) criterion of normative activities (125). For example, masculine activities are associated with activities like sports and trucks whereas feminine activities have a normative association of domestic work. I have created my own category of gender-neutral activities, which involve activities such as eating and sitting. Table 7 shows that characters engage in same-gendered activities at a higher frequency than different-gendered activities. In 69% of the books, males engaged in traditionally masculine activities whereas in 80% of the books, females engaged in stereotypically female activities. In line with expectations, male characters engaging in traditionally feminine activities have the lowest frequency of representation (38%).

Table 7: The total amount of books with a gendered protagonist engaging in a gendered activity.

Gendered Activities	Count out of 13 books	Percentage
Males - male activities	9	69%
Females - male activities	8	62%
Males - female activities	5	38%
Females - female activities	10	80%
Males - gender neutral activities	10	80%

Females - gender neutral activities	10	80%
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Only five out of thirteen books (38%) depict males engaging in traditionally feminine activities. Of these five books, only three (23%) depict a male character engaging in a feminine activity voluntarily. *A Different Pond* states, ‘Dad will put rice in the cooker, and Mom will fry the fish’ (Phi and Bui 2017: 25), suggesting that the father contributes equally to the dinner. Similarly, *Thank You Omu* (Mora 2018) depicts a little boy giving Omu a floral, homemade thank you card at the end of the story. Though brief, this moment balances out the masculine activity of playing with a race car, which was performed in a previous frame.

On the contrary, two books depict males engaging in feminine activities out of necessity. *Hello Lighthouse* (Blackwell 2018) and *Freedom in Congo Square* (Weatherford and Christie 2018) depict men making tea, threading a needle, and scrubbing floors. In the former book, the male only engages in these activities when his wife is not physically present or is giving birth and is therefore incapable of doing the duties herself. The latter depicts enslaved peoples engaging in feminine housework, however, due to their status, it is clear that this is forced labor rather than a voluntary act.

Of the thirteen books, nine (69%) depict males engaging in traditionally masculine activities, which transgresses the expectation that all of the books would depict at least one male engaging in a masculine act. It is encouraging to see writers and illustrators working with more gender-neutral activities, such as letter writing, enjoying ice cream and reading. *In Alma and How She Got Her Name* (Martinez-Neal 2018), the writer seems to have carefully chosen the activities for the father and grandfather, as neither of them are traditionally nor overtly masculine. With 80% of the books depicting both males and females participating in gender-neutral activities, we see progress. If more children read stories with characters engaging in a wide range of activities, gendered or not, the limits placed upon gender can begin to widen, and children will have greater access to a range of opportunities.

Represented Forms of Affection

Traditionally, fathers lack representation as caregivers and nurturers (Anderson and Hamilton; Gooden and Gooden). The findings from this set of texts displays a shift from the previously one-dimensional father to a more two-dimensional caregiver.

This part of the study focuses primarily on the forms of affection represented between the parent and the child in the story. Of the twelve stories that depict a mother or a father, a surprisingly small number of affectionate interactions is displayed between parents and children (table 8). However, the frequency of affection between a mother and a daughter appears most often, with affection between a father and a daughter the next most represented.

Table 8: Representation of parents showing affection and physical contact towards children

	No. of Frames	Father/ Daughter	Father/ Son	Mother/ Daughter	Mother/ Son
<i>Hello Lighthouse</i>	29	2	0	2	0
<i>The Rough Patch</i>	31	0	0	0	1
<i>Alma and How She Got Her Name</i>	19	3	0	0	0
<i>A Big Mooncake for Little Star</i>	31	0	0	2	0
<i>Wolf in the Snow</i>	37	1	0	4	0
<i>Crown</i>	20	0	0	1	0
<i>A Different Pond</i>	34	0	3	0	1
<i>Grand Canyon</i>	27	2	0	0	0
<i>Big Cat, little cat</i>	47	0	1	0	0
<i>Radiant Child</i>	19	0	0	0	4
<i>Leave Me Alone</i>	40	0	0	2	0
<i>Freedom in Congo Square</i>	16	0	0	0	1

Total	350	8	4	11	7
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We do see a shift in the way fathers display affection and create physical contact with their children. Rather than simply taking on the role of playmate and adventurer (Jackson and Gee), we see examples of fathers holding hands, cradling a baby, gazing fondly at a child, snuggling a child on the couch, touching a child's nose and carrying a child. Each of these displays of affection creates a more two-dimensional view of fatherhood, one where the father can act as nurturer as much as a mother.

Grand Canyon's (Chin 2017) depiction of affection, and the lack of affection, between the father and daughter empowers the child. The father holds his daughter's hand in the final three pages as they come to the end of their adventure and overlook the Grand Canyon, suggesting a sense of pride and accomplishment. The affection depicted, particularly on the final page, indicates that their relationship has become closer throughout the trip. Because this hiking trip is mostly physical, it might be inappropriate for the father to show more affection and physical contact during the adventure. If he had, it could have suggested that he thinks his daughter is weak. Because he allows her to hike on her own, she is strengthened and encouraged throughout the journey.

While it is encouraging to see fathers expressing affection, we must also consider the disparity between the father/daughter and father/son relationships. The lowest proportion of affection occurs between fathers and sons, indicating a greater need for actions such as kissing, hand holding, and hugging in children's books between males. To break down the emotional barriers constructed by hegemonic masculinity, fathers need to be depicted embracing and emotionally supporting their sons.

Represented Emotions

Children's books provide a pathway for children to learn about the world. Gooden and Gooden state that 'books are often the primary source for the presentation of societal values to the young child' (91). Therefore, to disengage from sex-role stereotypes and construct a new emotional

reality for young boys and young girls, these books must represent a variety of emotions for all characters to access.

Each of the books in the sample utilizes a character's emotions to teach a lesson and connect with the reader. *Wolf in the Snow* (Cordell 2017) teaches that bravery and compassion are rewarded, *Big Cat little cat* (Cooper 2017) introduces children to grief and the loss of a pet, and *Crown* (Barnes and James 2017) empowers black boys to feel pride and confidence in their identity.

Nine emotions or states of being have been identified for this element of the study. Table 9 demonstrates that male and female characters are provided with the opportunity to access a spectrum of emotions, such as sadness, worry, curiosity and confidence.

Table 9: Statistics for emotional states of male and female characters - 12 books with female characters and 12 books with male characters

Represented Emotions		
	Male Character	Female Character
Sadness or Grief	4 - 33%	2 - 17%
Concern or Worry	1 - 8%	3 - 25%
Curiosity	1 - 8%	3 - 25%
Anger	3 - 25%	1 - 8%
Confidence or Pride	2 - 17%	1 - 8%
Loneliness	1 - 8%	1 - 8%
Compassion or Empathy	1 - 8%	1 - 8%
Fear	1 - 8%	0
Bravery	0	1 - 8%

It is positive to note that male sadness or grief appears as the most frequent emotion in all of the books. With four of the twelve books (33%) displaying these emotions, and one book (8%) showing a male character feeling lonely, we see progress in the presentation of males accessing their emotions.

Not only do the images depict sadness and loneliness, but in some cases the language highlights these emotions for a more overt representation. In *Radiant Child*, the text states, ‘After a car accident, he is scared and confused’ (Steptoe 2016: 15), and ‘Jean-Michel is confused and filled with a terrible blues’ (16). It is progressive to note that the male child experiences sadness, confusion, and fear and that this is stated as a fact rather than a taboo subject. However, as the child progresses to his teenage and adult years, the only emotions discussed are happiness and pride. While this depiction of childhood emotions is positive for young boys to understand their own feelings of sadness, it also reinforces the normative expectations that adult males lack emotionality.

Similarly, *The Rough Patch* (Lies 2018) introduces children to grief as Evan must overcome the loss of his pet. Positively, we see the male protagonist experiencing the grieving process. However, he is shown engaging in aggressive and masculine activities to process grief rather than quiet activities which may be perceived as more feminine. He does not speak to anyone about his feelings, but rather hacks away at his garden and internalizes his emotions. While it is progressive to show a male battling sorrow, this depiction of the grieving process further solidifies the stoic masculine stereotype. This is a beginning step to changing the narrative and showing boys the acceptability of expressing their feelings. However, while these emotions are mentioned, they are not consistently utilized, nor are they normalized from childhood to adulthood. The next step for children’s books may be to depict young boys facing a range of emotions and working through them using strategies and relying on other people for support.

Beyond sadness and grief, males and females are depicted accessing a range of emotions that cross gendered boundaries. None of the books depict a female feeling fearful, and an equal number of books depict males and females feeling compassion or empathy (8%). The latter can

be seen for males in *A Different Pond* (Phi and Bui 2017) when the little boy does not want to hook his worm yet is not chastised by his father for his sensitivity. For females, it becomes apparent in *Wolf in the Snow* (Cordell 2017) where a little girl fights through a snowstorm to return a wolf pup to its family. In both texts, the children feel compassion towards an animal, normalizing the role humans play in taking care of the more vulnerable beings in the world.

While more males do express anger (25%), the presentation is subtle. *Du Iz Tak?* displays a male insect expressing anger at the destruction of the fort while the gender-neutral insects display sadness; though this expression of anger confirms gendered expectations, the insect is drawn quite small on the page and it is therefore a subtle reference. Similarly, *Freedom in Congo Square* (Weatherford and Christie 2016) depicts a male slave owner chasing after escaped enslaved peoples. With his fist raised in the air and the contrast of his character shaded dark with no obvious features, he is portrayed as angry. Despite this display of anger, the historical context isolates this moment in time rather than reinforcing masculine expectations.

Conclusion

Although the sample set represents only a small portion of the children's books available to the American public, I hope to have exemplified the role that language and images play in contemporary children's literature. A comprehensive content analysis of the way in which gender stereotypes are shaped, reproduced, and transgressed has revealed that many gender stereotypes are beginning to break down in children's books.

Positively, we are seeing an increased representation of female protagonists, which has created a balance of gender representation in the characterization of these books. Similarly, female characters are accessing a wider range of activities, wearing more varied costuming, and showing that they can be the actors in the narrative. These ideas continue to challenge preconceived stereotypes of the passive female and the expected role of the housewife for adult women. We are also seeing some shifts in the representation of male characters, particularly in the way male characters express emotions and affection. Finally, we are seeing a variety of gender-neutral characters and activities throughout

the texts, indicating that any child may see him or herself in these roles. These small steps work together to create a more varied image of female empowerment and male vulnerability.

We must then consider the implications of these findings. Caldecott Award-winning books come with a level of prestige, as the winning and honored books are subsequently given a gold or silver sticker on the front cover acknowledging the award ("Caldecott Medal"). Librarians and teachers across the United States routinely order Caldecott winning books to stock preschool and elementary libraries, and many parents will engage with them at home due to the award-winning nature of the books. Thus, these books provide an important mechanism for the socialization of children across America and the international community. While the Western world seems to be engaging in feminist discourse and questioning norms, this study reveals that children's books may not fully replicate this dialogue, and therefore require further consideration by writers and illustrators to challenge hegemonic norms and reflect these progressive ideas.

While this study has considered the progress made in contemporary American children's books, it is important to reinforce the limitations and opportunities present. In order to gain a more accurate and detailed assessment of the progress made in the twenty-first century, it is recommended that a full study of the Medal and Honor books be conducted. A focus on gender-neutral characters may present a more nuanced understanding of the development of gender norms in recent years. Furthermore, I have noted the presence of heteronormative ideals in the texts with little discussion of the representation of sexual identity and other non-binary identities. Another study could be done to further investigate the representation of sexuality in contemporary children's literature, as this is a significant component in the development of a multiplicity of gender identities for all children.

As Janks and Ivanić state, 'Hegemony depends on the consent of the masses. It starts to break down when people refuse to conform' (330). With increased exposure and demand for progressive themes, this study suggests that the children's literature genre will continue to develop and promote a wider range of ideologies and identities for everyone. Parents and teachers must recognize the power that children's books provide

beyond strengthening literacy skills. It is through this process that we can hope to see a more open, receptive, and honest developmental trajectory for our children.

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APPENDIX: Content Analysis Data

Book: Hello Lighthouse by Sophie Blackwell										
			Year: 2019		Winner or Honor: WINNER					
Protagonist	Human	Animal	Notes							
	x									
Gendered Protagonist	Male	Female	Neutral	Notes						
	x			Adult male - lighthouse keeper						
Gendered Characters (pictured)	Male	Female	Neutral	Total Count	Notes					
	4	2	0	6	Main characters - Male/Female adults; female child; 3 passive male characters on one page					
	66%	33%	%							
Adults v Children	Child	Adult	Mom	Dad	Notes				Pictured or referenced; if adult is a parent, only count as mom/dad. Only main characters used.	
	1	0	1	1						
	33%	0	33%	33%						
Gendered Activities	Adult Male		Adult Female		Child Male		Child Female		Neutral	
	Trad. Female	3		5						
	notes	threading a needle, makes tea (wife not there yet); makes tea during wife's pregnancy - The male only does these activities when the woman is not around or incapable of doing it herself at the time.		carried up to lighthouse; serves tea; feeds and cares for sick husband; cleaning; pregnant						
	Trad. Male	5		1				1		
	notes	lighthouse work (painting, winding clock); fishing, helping lift wife; rows out to save men; helps wife breathe during pregnancy		tends to lighthouse (b/c husband is ill)				plays with a boat		
	Gender Neutral	3		3						
	notes	letter writing; dancing; kite flying (man behind woman)		dancing; kite flying (man behind woman); reading						
Clothing	Adult Male	Adult Female	Child Male	Child Female	Neutral	Notes			Main characters - each costume change counted only once	
	Dress/Skirt	7		3		Man wearing a sailor's uniform - has only two costume changes; the woman wears a different dress on each page.				
	Long Pants	1								
	Shorts									
	Hat	1								
	Scarf/shawl									
	Apron	1	2							
	Suspenders/Overalls	1								
Affection	Count	Type of Affection								
	Male/Male	1	wrapping a sick man in a blanket;							
	Female/Female									
	Male/Female	7	Reaching towards each other; holding each other while dancing; holding hands; female holding males hand while he is ill; male holding females waist while flying a kite; hugging; male arm wrapped around female shoulder while she rests head on shoulder							
	Father/Son									
	Father/Daughter	2	holding baby daughter close to body and looking at her; gazing at daughter from afar							
	Mothers/Son									
	Mother/Daughter	2	Mother holding daughter looking through a telescope; arm around daughter							
Neutral/Neutral										
Emotions - Each emotion recorded, even if emotions are repeated.	Emotion	Male	Female	Notes						
	Lonely	1		"Wishes for someone to talk to" & facial expression;						
	Joy	2	2	Facial expressions; actions						
	Concern/worry	1	2	Body language; "there's an unexpected letter";						
Other Observations	Strong stereotypes in both visuals and images.									

Book: Thank You, Omu by Oge Mora										
Year: 2019			Winner or Honor: HONOR							
Topic: "A heartwarming story of sharing and community"										
Protagonist	Human	Animal	Notes							
	x		An elderly woman lovingly nicknamed Omu, which means 'queen' in Igbo							
Gendered Protagonist	Male	Female	Neutral	Notes						
		x		The story aligns with gender stereotypes as it is a woman who is cooking and sharing her food.						
Gendered Characters (pictured)	Male	Female	Neutral	Total Count	Notes					
	6	7	0	13	Progressive gender representation, as more than half of the characters are women. In particular, they are represented with progressive professions: police officer, doctor, and bus driver					
	46%	54%								
Adults v Children	Child	Adult	Mom	Dad	Notes					
	2	7	0	0	Pictured or referenced; if adult is a parent, only count as mom/dad. Only main characters used.					
	22%	78%								
Gendered Activities - each activity only counted once	Adult Male		Adult Female		Child Male	Child Female	Neutral			
	Trad. Female			1	1					
	notes		cooking a stew; sharing food with others; dancing; sharing a salad;	Giving Omu a thank you card;						
	Trad. Male	4	2	1						
	notes	selling hot dogs (hot dog vendor); carrying construction work; playing soccer; driving a taxi	driving a bus; directing traffic	playing with a race car;						
	Gender Neutral		1	1						
notes		reading;	eating							
Notes: The women appear to be engaging in traditionally masculine activities, but the males are not represented as engaging in feminine activities. Therefore, it can be said that the females are offered more variety in roles and identities.										
Clothing	Adult Male	Adult Female	Child Male	Child Female	Neutral	Notes			Main characters - each costume change counted only once	
	Dress/Skirt					The women do not wear female-gendered clothing. Most characters wear the clothing of his/her profession, so hats are worn by both males and females (males: hot dog vendor and taxi driver; females: police officer, baker, bus driver). The males wear traditionally male clothing, though the hot dog vendor is depicted as wearing an apron.				
	Long Pants	3	2							
	Shorts	1		1						
	Hat	2	3							
	Scarf/shawl									
	Apron	1								
Suspenders/Overalls										
Affection	Count	Type of Affection								
	Male/Male									
	Female/Female									
	Male/Female	2	"The little boy tugged at Omu's sleeve"; little boy leans in close to Omu with eyes closed							
	Father/Son									
	Father/Daughter									
	Mothers/Son									
	Mother/Daughter									
Neutral/Neutral										
Notes: As these are strangers, little affection by touch is shown. In a few scenes, Omu is depicted as smiling while sharing her soup. While this could be interpreted as affection, for the purposes of this study I have not counted it here. I have factored this action in as an activity.										
Emotions - Each emotion recorded, even if emotions are repeated.	Emotion	Male	Female	Neutral	Notes					
	Happiness	6	9		smiling;					
	Surprised		4		"Little Boy!" Omu exclaimed.					
	Sadness		1		"Omu sniffled" with a sad facial expression;					
Notes:										
Other Observations	Most characters are identified by their professions, such as "the baker" or "the mayor." However, the people who visit Omu are introduced with an honorific before their name, such as "Ms. Police Officer" and "Mr. Hot Dog Vendor". While there is an attempt to subvert gender norms here with a variety of professions, the use of traditional honorifics does reinforce gender as a form of identity.									

Book: A Big Mooncake for Little Star by Grace Lin						
		Year: 2019		Winner or Honor: HONOR		
Topic: Similar to a folk tale: "explain[ing] the phases of the moon.						
Protagonist	Human	Animal	Notes			
	x		Protagonist: Little Star, who is a little girl			
Gendered Protagonist	Male	Female	Neutral	Notes		
		x		Her name is Little Star, which is not overtly feminine, but has a more feminine connotation. Likewise, female pronouns are used throughout.		
Gendered Characters (pictured)	Male	Female	Neutral	Total Count	Notes	
	0	2	0	2	Only two characters - both female. Folktales and baking are generally associated with women, so this aligns with stereotypes.	
Adults v Children	Child	Adult	Mom	Dad	Notes	
	1	0	1	0	Pictured or referenced: if adult is a parent, only count as mom/dad. Only main characters used.	
	50%		50%			
Gendered Activities	Adult Male		Adult Female		Child Male	Child Female
	Trad. Female		1			2
	notes		baking			pictured helping mama bake; reading a book (entitled "Seven Sisters"); eating a snack (described using verb "nibble", which has a delicate quality)
	Trad. Male					
	notes					
	Gender Neutral					4
	notes					brushing teeth; washing face; sleeping; running (described as she "flew back to bed");
Notes: Though some of the activities could be considered gender neutral, the language used connotes a feminine action. Neither of the female characters engages in a traditionally male activity. Though they are the active social actors, their activities do not suggest a progressive view of gender.						
Clothing	Adult Male		Adult Female	Child Male	Child Female	Neutral
	Dress/Skirt		1			
	Long Pants				1	
	Shorts					
	Hat					
	Scarf/shawl					
	Apron					
Suspenders/Overalls						
Affection	Count		Type of Affection			
	Male/Male					
	Female/Female					
	Male/Female					
	Father/Son					
	Father/Daughter					
	Mothers/Son					
	Mother/Daughter		2	leaning towards Little Star and handing her the rabbit; holding hands		
Neutral/Neutral						
Female/Neutral		7	Snuggling stuffed rabbit close to body (x5); holding rabbit away from body (x2)			
Notes:						
Emotions - Each emotion recorded, even if emotions are repeated.	Emotion	Male	Female	Neutral	Notes	
	Happy		10		smiling; "Little Star looked up, her grin reflecting her mama's smile."	
	Inquisitive		2		Would her mama notice if she took a tiny nibble?; "Was the cake still there?" coupled with a half smile;	
Notes:						

Book: The Rough Patch by Brian Lies						
Year: 2019			Winner or Honor: HONOR			
Topics: 'loss and grief, love and hope, and the healing power of friendship, curiosity, and nature' - inside jacket						
Protagonist	Human	Animal	Notes			
		x	A fox named Evan.			
Gendered Protagonist	Male	Female	Neutral	Notes		
	x			Highly gendered animal (pronouns - 'he' - and first name, Evan)		
Gendered Characters (pictured)	Male	Female	Neutral	Total Count	Notes	
	8	3	2	13	The only non-gendered animals are the pets. Despite characters being animals, they adhere to human gender norms and roles. The gender of Evan's dogs are never identified.	
	62%	23%	15%			
Adults v Children	Child	Adult	Mom	Dad	Notes	
	3	7	1		Only one recognizable mother caring for children. All the men pictured or discussed are clearly separated from father role.	
	27%	64%	9%	0%		
Gendered Activities	Adult Male		Adult Female		Child Male	Child Female
	Trad. Female					
	notes					
	Trad. Male	11				
	notes	pushing a wheelbarrow; vegetable gardening; hiking; driving a pickup truck; shoveling snow; burying a dog; slashing 'the garden to the ground'; shearing bushes; watering plants; talking with male friends; entering/winning 3rd place at a pumpkin growing contest				
	Gender Neutral	5				
	notes	playing catch with a dog; eating ice cream; reading; riding a rollercoaster; eating fair food (caramel apple and pizza);				
Notes: In this book, gardening is considered a male activity since the protagonist grows vegetables rather than flowers. Similarly, Evan is seen catching up with friends amongst the pumpkins. Though talking is gender-neutral, the fact that he is surrounded by male friends, coupled with his body language, suggests this a male-centered activity. Overall, this book greatly perpetuates gender stereotypes with the male-focused activities engaged in by the protagonist. The protagonist is shown engaging in aggressive activities (masculine) to process grief rather than quiet activities which may be perceived as more feminine. He is never shown to talk to anyone about his feelings.						
Clothing		Adult Male	Adult Female	Child Male	Child Female	Neutral
	Dress/Skirt		1			
	Long Pants	1				
	Shorts		1			
	Hat					
	Scarf/shawl					
	Apron	1				
	Suspenders/Overalls	1	1			
Notes: Main characters - each costume change counted only once Evan wears overalls in almost every scene. On three pages, he wears an apron when gardening, but the apron has an industrial look to it, as it is coupled with goggles and boots. A close-up of this apron shows that it has pockets with rope and a pencil inside, indicating a worker apron rather than a kitchen apron. For males , only Evan's clothing has been counted, as the other characters have such a minor role. For females : the female characters have been noted to consider the contrast. Though two of the females wear shorts or overalls, they are clothed in pink and purple, with the mother wearing a purse.						
Affection		Count	Type of Affection			
	Male/Male					
	Female/Female					
	Male/Female					
	Father/Son					
	Father/Daughter					
	Mothers/Son	1				
	Mother/Daughter					
Male/Neutral	2	petting dog; hand on deceased dog;				
Notes: Very little affection shown in the book, however, as the story is meant to discuss dealing with grief, this seems appropriate. Aligns with gender norms, as the male does not give or receive affection from others in order to process grief.						
Emotions - Each emotion recorded, even if emotions are repeated.	Emotion	Male	Female	Neutral	Notes	
	Happy	9			Smiling or laughing;	
	Grief/sadness	5			downturned eyes and face, hunched posture; his garden would be "the saddest and most desolate spot he could make it"	
	Anger	2			Swinging garden hoe; language describes metaphorical feelings, as he tends to the prickly and foul-smelling weeds in his garden	
	Excitement	1			"Evan felt an old, familiar sense of excitement";	
Notes: The protagonist experiences almost equal parts happiness and emotions associated with grief as he grieves the loss of his dog. Though many of his actions appear aggressive as he processes his grief, he is shown to go through the grieving process and accessing his emotions. A more progressive view of grief, particularly for a male.						
Other Observations						

Book: Alma and How She Got Her Name by Juana Martinez-Neal										
			Year: 2019		Winner or Honor: HONOR					
Protagonist	Human	Animal	Notes							
	x		Two characters - father and daughter							
Gendered Protagonist	Male	Female	Neutral	Notes						
		x								
Gendered Characters (pictured)	Male	Female	Neutral	Total Count	Notes					
	2	5		7	Main characters: father/daughter. Also pictured, memories of Alma's family					
	29%	71%								
Adults v Children	Child	Adult	Mom	Dad	Notes				Pictured or referenced: If adult is a parent, only count as mom/dad. Only main characters used.	
	1	5		1	Adults: grandmother, grandfather, great-grandmother, great aunt					
Gendered Activities	Adult Male		Adult Female		Child Male		Child Female		Neutral	
	Trad. Female						1			
	notes						pictured holding a flower;			
	Trad. Male		1							
	notes		protesting							
	Gender Neutral		3				5			
notes		looking at a photo album; telling stories; painting				writing; likes to read; wants to travel; drawing; lighting a candle				
Clothing	Adult Male		Adult Female		Child Male		Child Female		Neutral	
	Dress/Skirt		3						Alma: pink pants, a heart t-shirt, a pink bow; Memories of family members: dresses and shawls - the grandmother who protests wears pants; did not count the background kids on the protest page	Main characters - each costume change counted only once
	Long Pants		1				1			
	Shorts									
	Hat									
	Scarf/shawl									
	Apron									
	Suspenders/Overalls									
1										
Affection	Count		Type of Affection							
	Male/Male									
	Female/Female									
	Male/Female									
	Father/Son									
	Father/Daughter		3 sitting out couch with arm around daughter; daughter on father's shoulders; touching daughter's nose							
	Mothers/Son									
	Mother/Daughter									
Neutral/Neutral										
Emotions - Each emotion recorded, even if emotions are repeated.	Emotion	Male	Female	Notes						
	Wonder		2	Facial expressions;						
	Contentment/happiness		4	Facial expressions;						
	Determination		1	"The world is so big! I want to go see it, Daddy."						
	Nostalgia	1		Body language and looking at books						
	Joy	1		Facial expression while tapping daughter's nose						
Other Observations	Only colors used: pink and shades of grey/blue. Ethnicity: Hispanic (Peruvian)									

Book: Wolf in the Snow by Matthew Cordell						
			Year: 2018		Winner or Honor: WINNER	
Protagonist	Human	Animal	Notes			
	x					
Gendered Protagonist	Male	Female	Neutral	Notes		
		x		Gender identified on the book jacket. Otherwise, gender only apparent on first page (before the title page) due to ponytail. The rest of the story isn't overtly gendered in terms of visuals.		
Gendered Characters (pictured)	Male	Female	Neutral	Total Count	Notes	
	1	2		3		
	33%	66%				
Adults v Children	Child	Adult	Mom	Dad	Notes	
	1		1	1	The parallel story follows a family of wolves who mimic this family, though animal genders are not apparent.	
Gendered Activities	Adult Male		Adult Female		Child Male	Child Female
	Trad. Female					
	notes					
	Trad. Male		1			1
	notes		searching for the child in a snowstorm; protecting child			protects the wolf baby from another animal using a stick
	Gender Neutral		1			2
notes		using a flashlight to show the way home	using a flashlight to show the way home		walks home from school; helps an animal;	
Clothing		Adult Male	Adult Female	Child Male	Child Female	Neutral
	Dress/Skirt		1			
	Long Pants	1	1		1	
	Shorts					
	Hat	1	1		1	
	Scarf/shawl	1			1	
	Apron					
	Suspenders/Overalls					
Affection		Count	Type of Affection			
	Male/Male					
	Female/Female					
	Male/Female					
	Father/Son					
	Father/Daughter	1	arm around daughter			
	Mothers/Son					
	Mother/Daughter	3	holding daughter under arms (arms outstretched rather than hugging); carrying daughter home - holding close to body); arm around daughter			
	Neutral/Neutral	2	adult wolf holding wolf baby in mouth; adult wolf licking baby wolf;			
Male/neutral						
Female/neutral		3	reaching out towards a baby wolf; holding baby wolf close to body (depicted 11 times); wolf baby licking girl's face			
Emotions	Emotion	Male	Female	Notes		
	tired/exhaustion		6	onomatopoeia (huff huff) with emanata; sitting on knees; falling; huff huff; huddled on ground; bent knees when with dad;		
	compassion		5	defined as: helping a weaker being - eyes and arms outstretched towards scared animal;		
	concern	2	4	defined as: worried about the wellbeing of another being - eyes; holding child; carrying child home in snow; mother showing way with light in snow		
	brave		1	fending off a predator;		
	apprehension		2	facing the wolves (eyes and body posture)		
	content	1	2	family sitting at home in warmth by fire		
Other Observations	The little girl in the story experiences a wide range of emotions and capabilities. The storyline really teaches children that compassion and care is rewarded. It is also interesting to note that the gender is not enforced widely throughout the story. Though it is a little girl, the images do not necessarily depict this outright.					

Book: Crown: An Ode to the Fresh Cut by Derrick Barnes and illustrated by Gordon C. James									
Year: 2018			Winner or Honor: HONOR						
Topic: "to capture that moment when black and brown boys all over America visit "the shop" and hop out of the chair filled with a higher self-esteem, with self-pride, with confidence, and an overall elevated view of who they are."									
Protagonist	Human	Animal	Notes						
	x		Written in second person and following a little boy as he goes to the barber shop. "When it's your turn..."						
Gendered Protagonist	Male	Female	Neutral	Notes					
	x								
Gendered Characters (pictured)	Male	Female	Neutral	Total Count	The book seems to be aimed at young black boys, so the over-depiction of male characters appears justified as these are the role models for the young boy. However, the female characters include crushes from school and his mother, which reinforces gender norms.				
	10	6	0	16					
	63%	38%							
Adults v Children	Child	Adult	Mom	Dad	Notes				
	3	12	1	0	Absent father, but many male characters who could play a father-figure role.				
	19%	75%	6%						
Gendered Activities - each activity only counted once	Trad. Female	Adult Male		Adult Female		Child Male	Child Female	Neutral	
	notes			kissing son			gossiping about a cute boy		
	Trad. Male	1				4			
	notes	cutting hair in a barber shop;				getting hair cut in a barber shop; imagining he is a king; playing trumpet; paying and tipping			
	Gender Neutral	2							
	notes	using an iphone; cheering/clapping							
Notes: Greatly reinforces traditional representation of gender.									
Clothing	Adult Male	Adult Female	Child Male	Child Female	Neutral	Notes		Main characters - each costume change counted only once	
	Dress/Skirt	1				Gossiping girls are wearing bright pink shirts and the background of the page is also pink. The male barber's capes are camo coloured, also reinforcing norms through color and pattern. Many of the clothes cannot be seen, as the focus is on the hair.			
	Long Pants		1						
	Shorts								
	Hat	1							
	Scarf/shawl								
	Apron								
	Suspenders/Overalls								
Affection	Count	Type of Affection							
	Male/Male								
	Female/Female								
	Male/Female								
	Father/Son								
	Father/Daughter								
	Mothers/Son	1	mother kissing son						
	Mother/Daughter								
Neutral/Neutral									
Notes: It is the mother who shows affection rather than a father (father is absent)									
Emotions - Each emotion recorded, even if emotions are repeated.	Emotion	Male	Female	Neutral	Notes				
	Confident	5	1		facial expression coupled with the line, "They're going to have to wear shades when they look up to catch your shine."; "It frames your swagger."; body language while putting on do-rag; facial expression; "You'll leave...feeling...magnificent. Flawless. Like Royalty"				
	Shy/attracted to		1		smiling while whispering to each other, "Girlllll...he's so fine!"				
	Happy	9	1		Smiling; "You'll smile a really big smile."; cheering; "Being viewed in your mother's eyes as someone that matters-now that's beautiful."				
	Impressed	1			looking at self in mirror: "can't get over the masterful designs crafted" on his head				
Notes: All positive emotions. This book reinforces stereotypical emotions of males (confidence and power), however, as it is aimed primarily at an African American audience and is meant to encourage young black boys in general, this seems quite progressive in its representation of emotions. The writer and illustrator are promoting self confidence in black identity.									
Other Observations	Ethnicity: African American								

Book: A Different Pond by Bao Phi (illustrated by Thi Bui)								
Year: 2018		Winner or Honor: HONOR						
Topic: "A young boy learns of a world bigger than the one he's known"								
Protagonist	Human	Animal	Notes					
	x		An unnamed little boy.					
Gendered Protagonist	Male	Female	Neutral	Notes				
				Written in 1st person. The only gendered reference in writing is at the end when the father says, "Our boy did a good job with the fire today." The images depict a traditional little boy.				
	x							
Gendered Characters (pictured)	Male	Female	Neutral	Total Count	Notes			
	10	4	0	14	Four of the males and two of the females are background characters who are never mentioned in the story. Characters who are mentioned: 5 males (83%); 1 female (20%) - Males highly depicted.			
	71%	29%	0					
Adults v Children	Child	Adult	Mom	Dad	Notes			
	1	3	1	1	Only characters who are mentioned or play a role in the story are noted here.			
	20%	50%	20%	20%				
Gendered Activities	Trad. Female	Adult Male		Adult Female		Child Male	Child Female	Neutral
	notes	Make rice		fry the fish		help set the table for dinner		
	Trad. Male	5		1		3		
	notes	making sandwiches; buying minnows; driving a car; fishing; goes to work		goes to work		gathering sticks; making a fire; putting a fish into a bucket		
	Gender Neutral	3		1		3		
	notes	storytelling; eating; washing hands		sleeping		eating; washing hands; dream		
Note: The family is depicted as a Vietnamese immigrant family. Both parents work, though the father stereotypically catches the food (a hunter) while the mother stereotypically prepares the food. The father is depicted as doing the most gendered activities, followed by the son. It can be assumed then that the father is passing on male traditions to his son.								
Clothing	Dress/Skirt						Notes	
	Long Pants	2	1	1			Only characters counted: Father, son, mother. The mother's costuming defies gender stereotypes, which aligns with her role as working mother rather than simply a housewife.	
	Shorts						Main characters - each costume change counted only once	
	Hat							
	Scarf/shawl							
	Apron							
	Suspenders/Overalls							
Affection	Count	Type of Affection						
Male/Male								
Female/Female								
Male/Female								
Father/Son	3	Holding hands and helping son down a small hill; high five with a "black man" (stereotypical male greeting); father places hand on son's shoulder						
Father/Daughter								
Mothers/Son	1	mother puts arm around son's shoulder						
Mother/Daughter								
Neutral/Neutral								
Notes: Affection is primarily shown through father/son interaction. Though it is not highly depicted or discussed, this type of affection corresponds with the father's desire to pass on stories and traditions, which defies gender stereotypes, as men are not shown to display affection in previous stories.								
Emotions - Each emotion recorded, even if emotions are repeated.	Emotion	Male	Female	Neutral	Notes			
	Happy	5			little boy laughing; little boy smiling; dad laughs; dad smiles			
	empathetic/sensitive	1			little boy does not want to hurt a minnow - "I don't want to hurt that little fish, even if I know it's about to be eaten by a bigger one";			
	nostalgic	1			Father tells stories about Vietnam and his brother - "He nods, then looks far away."			
	excited	2			exclamation points when they catch a fish;			
	sad	1			"I'm sad that she and Dad must leave, but not too sad."			
	proud	1			The little boy imagines the happy family eating the dinner he caught, and he imagines the smiles and pride that his parents will show him.			
Notes:								
Other Observations	Ethnicity: Asian (Vietnamese) - In some ways, this book challenges previous notions of gender. The father does engage in typically masculine actions and is focused on feeding his family; similarly, he is very concerned with passing on traditions from father to son, which is a deeply entrenched masculine trait. However, the affection that he shows and the fact that the mother also works shows some progress in the depiction of gender roles.							

Book: Grand Canyon by Jason Chin									
Date: 2018		Winner or Honor: HONOR							
Topic: "Follow a father and daughter as they make their way through this wondrous place, discovering life both present and past."									
Protagonist	Human	Animal	Notes						
	x		An unnamed father and daughter hike through the Grand Canyon. Their story is told in pictures while the words act as a scientific overview of the canyon.						
Gendered Protagonist	Male	Female	Neutral	Notes					
		x		The little girl is in the foreground of most images, so she is identified as the protagonist. The little girl is pictured carrying her own pack and hiking alongside her father, which transgresses gender norms.					
Gendered Characters (pictured)	Male	Female	Neutral	Total Count	Notes				
	1	1	0	2	While there are countless animals in the book, only the father and daughter are identified as characters.				
Adults v Children	Child	Adult	Mom	Dad	Notes				
	1			1	The daughter is depicted as a parallel character to her father as she discovers and hikes. They take part in the adventure together.				
	50%	50%		50%	Pictured or referenced; if adult is a parent, only count as mom/dad. Only main characters used.				
Gendered Activities	Trad. Female	Adult Male		Adult Female		Child Male	Child Female	Neutral	
	notes								
	Trad. Male	3					4		
	notes	camping; reading a map; hiking					camping; examining paw prints in mud; hiking; examining a fossil;		
	Gender Neutral	2					2		
	notes	taking photos;					swimming; balancing on a log		
Notes: The father and daughter engage mostly in traditionally male activities. Though no traditionally female activities are depicted, the illustrator has balanced the traditionally male activities between both a male and female character. Because of the balance, a more progressive view is depicted, as one particular activity is not reserved for a certain gender.									
Clothing	Dress/Skirt	Adult Male	Adult Female	Child Male	Child Female	Neutral	Notes		
	Long Pants	1					Both father and daughter are dressed similarly: a baseball hat, a tshirt, a camping backpack, and sneakers. The little girl wears shorts rather than long pants, but this often aligns with the preference of young children rather than a gendered preference. The only gendered aspect of the little girl's clothing is her socks, which are brightly colored polka dots. However, aligning with previous observations, the two characters mirror one another in costuming, suggesting that the little girl has the same capabilities as her father.		
	Shorts				1				
	Hat	1			1				
	Scarf/shawl								
	Apron								
	Suspenders/Overalls								
Affection	Count	Type of Affection							
	Male/Male								
	Female/Female								
	Male/Female								
	Father/Son								
	Father/Daughter	2	father holding daughter's hand as she points to deer; holding hands as they look onto Grand Canyon together;						
	Mothers/Son								
	Mother/Daughter								
Neutral/Neutral									
Notes: Few examples of affection in the story. The father shows affection only in the final three pages, suggesting that they have come to the end of their trip and perhaps there is a sense of pride at their accomplishment. The affection depicted, particularly on the final page indicates that their relationship has become closer due to the trip. Because this hiking trip is mostly physical, it would be somewhat inappropriate for the father to show more affection throughout the story. If he had, it could have suggested that he thinks his daughter is weak. Because he allows her to hike on her own, she is strengthened and encouraged throughout the journey.									
Emotions - Each emotion recorded, even if emotions are repeated.	Emotion	Male	Female	Neutral	Notes				
	Curiosity		6		leaning over tracks in mud or fossils; reaching out to a fossil; walking up and looking off into distance;				
	Happiness	1	3		smiling;				
	Surprise		1		Hands back and facial expression;				
	Astonishment	1			mouth open looking at a Bighorn sheep;				
	Excitement		1		Arms splayed				
Notes: The child shows more emotions throughout, which aligns with her role as protagonist. She is depicted mostly as curious and happy. The father appears more stoic. Though curiosity can be described as a state of being, I also label it as an emotion as very clear signs of feeling curious about the environment are displayed on multiple pages. The writer has emphasized the journey of a child, rather than of a girl.									
Other Observations	Ethnicity: Asian; The little girl's 'female-ness' is understated in this text. It seems likely that little boys and little girls will identify with this book as the visuals and text do not necessarily coincide. We do not have a written storyline of a little girl, rather we have more scientific facts about an interesting landmark, and therefore children of either gender may feel more drawn to the exploration and curiosity of the child rather than noting the gender of protagonist. In another way, the fact that a little girl was used rather than a little boy does challenge preconceived gender stereotypes of this type of adventure. It shows that little girls can and do have fun in								

Book: BIG CAT, little cat by Elisha Cooper									
			Year: 2018	Winner or Honor: HONOR					
Protagonist	Human	Animal	Notes						
		x							
Gendered Protagonist	Male	Female	Neutral	Notes					
			x	No mention of gender in text or visuals. Always called "the cats" or "they". Two protagonist cats in most scenes reinforces non-gendered identities - black and white					
Gendered Characters (pictured)	Male	Female	Neutral	Total Count	Notes				
	2	2	3	7	3 non-gendered cats (2 at beginning and one new cat at end); one page indicates a family and gender is implied, but not overt. Silhouettes and the fact that all family members are wearing pants makes it less obvious.				
	29%	29%	43%						
Adults v Children	Child	Adult	Mom	Dad	Notes				
	2		1	1	Though the characters are silhouettes, the heights of adults indicate mom/dad, as well as hair styles. Stereotypical depiction of heights. Only pictured on one page.				
	50%		25%	25%					
Gendered Activities	Trad. Female	Adult Male		Adult Female		Child Male	Child Female	Neutral	
	notes							1	
	Trad. Male							cleaning	
	notes							2	
	Gender Neutral							hunting, wrestling,	
notes							12		
								eat(x2), drink (x3), use the litter box (bathroom)(x2), sleep (x3), climbing on furniture, exploring/playing.	
Notes: Most activities are non-gendered and universal. Activities are depicted and written. While activities are appropriate for cats, they depict a broad spectrum.									
Clothing	Adult Male	Adult Female	Child Male	Child Female	Neutral	Notes		Main characters - each costume change counted only once	
	Dress/Skirt					Cats are not clothed. One page depicts a silhouetted family - not counted due to minor characters.			
	Long Pants								
	Shorts								
	Hat								
	Scarf/shawl								
	Apron								
	Suspenders/Overalls								
Affection	Count	Type of Affection							
	Male/Male								
	Female/Female								
	Male/Female								
	Father/Son	1	holding son's shoulder in comfort after cat has died						
	Father/Daughter								
	Mothers/Son								
	Mother/Daughter								
Neutral/Neutral	11	big cat licking little cat (x3); resting paw on little cat (x2) cuddling while sleeping (x3); sitting close together and touching bodies (x2); little cat resting paw on big cat for comfort							
Notes: Mostly the affection is given to the little cat. At the end, when 'little cat' becomes 'big cat', the responsibility is now on this cat to provide affection to the newcomer. Therefore, it is not a gender who provides affection but it is the job of the eldest cat to provide affection for the little cat. In many ways, this transgresses gender norms, as it emphasizes a universal sense of care rather than focusing on the female to provide care.									
Emotions	Emotion	Male	Female	Neutral	Notes				
	Bored			1	On page 2, the cat is depicted many times as looking bored or lonely (only counted once)				
	Content			2	cats depicted snuggling (x2)				
	Curious			3	"exploring"; "making plans" - both cats depicted playing; Black cat looks behind shoulder at a new cat who has entered;				
	Concerned			1	little cat with paw on big cat as big cat's face is turned away				
	Sadness/grief	2	2	2	little cat looking out the window alone coupled with the line, "Until the older cat got older and one day he had to go..." implying the big cat has died; Little cat depicted alone in a shadowed bubble with back facing the reader. The line reads, "And that was hard"; Whole family is sad about the death of the cat - pictured as silhouettes and it states that the death of the cat was hard "for everyone";				
Notes: The non-gendered cats are able to express a wide range of emotions, which aligns with the other non-gendered traits in this book. When the family is depicted, "everyone" is described as feeling sad, however, it is the father who appears to be comforting the son as the son reaches towards the cat. In this way, it is implied that the son feels more grief than the father (adult v child). The male child appears to be slightly more grief-stricken than the female child, which challenges stereotypes.									
Other Observations									

Book: Radiant Child: The Story of Young Artist Jean-Michel Basquiat by Javaka Steptoe										
Year: 2017				Winner or Honor: WINNER						
Topic: "art doesn't always have to be neat or clean--and definitely not inside the lines-- to be beautiful."										
Protagonist	Human	Animal	Notes							
	x		A biographical story about Jean-Michel Basquiat, an American-born Haitian/Puerto Rican who grew up to be a renowned artist.							
Gendered Protagonist	Male	Female	Neutral	Notes						
	x									
Gendered Characters (pictured)	Male	Female	Neutral	Total Count	Notes: Only foregrounded characters used. Some background characters and collages not counted. The main characters include Jean-Michel, his father and his mother (2 males and 1 female). Significantly more males.					
	8	2	1	11						
	73%	18%	9%							
Adults v Children	Child	Adult	Mom	Dad	Notes				Pictured or referenced; if adult is a parent, only count as mom/dad. Only main characters used.	
	3	4	1	1						
	33%	44%	11%	11%						
Gendered Activities - each activity only counted once	Adult Male		Adult Female		Child Male		Child Female		Neutral	
	Trad. Female		1				2			
	notes		cooking dinner;				double Dutch jump rope;			
	Trad. Male		3							
	notes		playing records; graffiti; visiting ill mother							
	Gender Neutral		1		2		4			
notes				reading; visiting an art gallery;		eating ice cream; drawing; reading; visiting an art gallery				
painting;										
Clothing	Adult Male	Adult Female	Child Male	Child Female	Neutral	Notes			Main characters - each costume change counted only once	
	Dress/Skirt	5		2						
	Long Pants	6	5							
	Shorts	1								
	Hat									
	Scarf/shawl									
	Apron	1								
	Suspenders/Overalls									
Affection	Count	Type of Affection								
	Male/Male									
	Female/Female									
	Male/Female									
	Father/Son									
	Father/Daughter									
	Mothers/Son	4	Sitting on floor with son and reaching towards him; holding hands; cuddling; adult son hugging mother							
	Mother/Daughter									
Neutral/Neutral										
Notes: Interesting to note that the mother is the only person to give a child (or anyone) affection in the story. This depiction of affection reinforces gender norms.										
Emotions - Each emotion recorded, even if emotions are repeated.	Emotion	Male	Female	Neutral	Notes					
	Happy	3	1		smiling; hands over head wearing boxer gloves;					
	Scared	1			"After a car accident, he is scared and confused."					
	Comforted	1			Mother gives him a book and "he is no longer afraid."					
	Sadness	2			"Jean-Michel is confused and filled with a terrible blues"; he draws to try and rid himself of sadness, but he is still sad.					
Notes: The male protagonist experiences a wide spectrum of emotions, and the text reinforces these emotions. It is progressive to note that the male child experiences sadness, confusion, and fear. However, as a teenager or adult, the negative emotions are not discussed and only happiness is overtly shown. This depiction is positive and progressive for young boys who can identify with a range of emotions, but it also reinforces that as male adults, negative emotions may not be felt or dealt with.										
Other Observations										

Book: They All Saw a Cat by Brendan Wenzel										
Year: 2017			Winner or Honor: HONOR							
Protagonist	Human	Animal	Notes							
		x								
Gendered Protagonist	Male	Female	Neutral	Notes						
			x	The cat is always referred to as 'it'						
Gendered Characters (pictured)	Male	Female	Neutral	Total Count	Notes					
	1	0	12	13	One little boy is pictured. Other than that, all animals are gender neutral.					
	8%	0%	92%							
Adults v Children	Child	Adult	Mom	Dad	Notes					
	1	0	0	0	Though there is one child, which technically counts for 100%, this statistic should not be factored in since all other characters are animals.					
Gendered Activities	Adult Male		Adult Female		Child Male		Child Female		Neutral	
	Trad. Female									
	notes									
	Trad. Male									
	notes									
	Gender Neutral				1			3		
notes				petting a cat			walking; running; flying			
Clothing	Adult Male	Adult Female	Child Male	Child Female	Neutral	Notes			Main characters - each costume change counted only once	
	Dress/Skirt					Only one little boy is featured. He wears jean shorts, sneakers and a yellow shirt.				
	Long Pants									
	Shorts			1						
	Hat									
	Scarf/shawl									
	Apron									
	Suspenders/Overalls									
Affection	Count	Type of Affection								
	Male/Male									
	Male/Neutral	1	little boy pets a cat							
	Female/Female									
	Male/Female									
	Father/Son									
	Father/Daughter									
	Mothers/Son									
	Mother/Daughter									
	Neutral/Neutral									
Emotions - the cat's emotions, not the other animals' emotions	Emotion	Male	Female	Neutral	Notes					
	Happy			2	cat smiles up at the little boy; cat smiling and emanata lines coming out					
	Scared			1	cat runs away and looks back at fox;					
	Inquisitive			3	Big eyes while looking at goldfish, bee, snake					
	Angry			1	red, sharp objects on mouse page;					
Other Observations	The emotions are slightly off because they are dependent on how the other character views the cat. For example, when the mouse is afraid, the cat looks mean and dangerous/angry. This is a pretty non-gendered book, except for the little boy. The focus on perspective eliminates some of the gendered language that could occur. The writer did not use pronouns when discussing the animals.									

Book: <i>Leave Me Alone!</i> by Vera Brosgol						
			Year: 2017	Winner or Honor: HONOR		
Protagonist	Human	Animal	Notes			
	x					
Gendered Protagonist	Male	Female	Neutral	Notes		
		x		Grandmother		
Gendered Characters (pictured)	Male	Female	Neutral	Total Count	29 children depicted: 17 males (57%) and 9 females (31%) and 3 (10%) gender neutral baby; 3 mothers and 1 grandmother depicted in the house, but no fathers - only humans counted. Some animals exist, but do not play central roles	
	17	13	3	33		
	52%	39%	0.09%			
Adults v Children	Child	Adult	Mom	Dad	Though there are significantly more children, the grandmother character is the only one that holds any significance in the plot line, so the percentages here don't necessarily balance.	Pictured or referenced; if adult is a parent, only count as mom/dad. Only main characters used.
	29	1	3			
Gendered Activities	Adult Male		Adult Female (grandmother)		Child Male	Child Female
	Trad. Female		3			
	notes		knitting; making bed; sweeping floors;			
	Trad. Male		2			
	notes		building a fire; climbing a mountain			
	Gender Neutral		6			
	notes		drinking tea; packing a bag; walking through woods; walking through a wormhole; giving presents			
	Notes: the grandmother knits on many pages (her main activity), but it has only been counted once.					
Clothing	Adult Male	Adult Female	Child Male	Child Female	Neutral	Notes The grandmother and the children are counted. Though the children are not main characters, it is interesting to note the highly gendered costumes. The mothers at the beginning have not been counted.
	Dress/Skirt	1		12		
	Long Pants		13			
	Shorts					
	Hat	1 (bandana)		8 (bandana)		
	Scarf/shawl	1				
	Apron	1				
	Suspenders/Overalls					
Affection	Count	Type of Affection				
	Male/Male					
	Female/Female	1	a female child holds onto the grandmother's back while the grandmother smiles			
	Male/Female	3	three little boys hold onto the grandmother's skirt in a hug			
	Father/Son					
	Father/Daughter					
	Mothers/Son					
	Mother/Daughter					
Neutral/Neutral						
	Notes: The grandmother never directly shows affection in the book					
Emotions - only the grandmother	Emotion	Male	Female	Notes		
	Happy		4	smiling;		
	Annoyed		8	facial expression; not looking at children; hands on hips; looking up at goats		
	Concerned		2	"That meant she had some very important knitting to do" coupled with looking up at the tree; black pages show facial expression		
	Exasperated		1	facial expressions and being knocked over by kids;		
	Angry		5	"Leave me alone!", eyebrows furrowed		
	Lonely		1	facial expressions and hands clasped;		
Other Observations	Though the grandmother engages in a stereotypical main activity, which is knitting, and wears stereotypical clothing, she engages in a wide range of emotions that are not generally associated with stereotypical femininity. She desires to complete her task for her family, but wishes for solitude, and is angry when others do not give it to her. Her repeated phrase "Leave me alone" is assertive and commanding. She states what she needs and takes action to get what she needs. In many ways, this goes against stereotypes, despite her main activity and costume.					

Book: Freedom in Congo Square by Carole Boston Weatherford and R. Gregory Christie							
Year: 2017			Winner or Honor: HONOR				
Topic: "expresses a human's capacity to find hope and joy in difficult circumstances and demonstrates how Congo Square was indeed freedom's heart."							
Protagonist	Human	Animal	Notes				
	x		No clear protagonist. The story follows enslaved people in New Orleans as a whole rather than a single individual.				
Gendered Protagonist	Male	Female	Neutral	Notes			
	x	x		Both genders depicted. No protagonist.			
Gendered Characters (pictured)	Male	Female	Neutral	Total Count	Notes		
	50	46	33	129	Each person on each page counted. Due to type of illustrations, difficult to discern certain characters and whether or not they were repeated on different pages. Very evenly distributed by gender.		
	38%	36%	28%				
Adults v Children	Child	Adult	Mom	Dad	Notes		
	1	93	1		Only illustrations in color were counted. Mostly adults in this story.		
	1%	98%	1%				
Gendered Activities - each activity only counted once	Adult Male		Adult Female		Child Male	Child Female	Neutral
	Trad. Female		2		10		
	notes		scrubbing floors; dancing		cooking; baking; hanging clothes; putting dishes away; sweeping; washing clothes; plucking a hen; canning beans; petting a horse; dancing;		
	Trad. Male		8		1		
	notes		chopping logs; feeding pigs; plowing a field; working in a field; bricking a wall; carrying a pale; riding a horse; playing a drum		working in a field;		
	Gender Neutral				1		
notes				shaking a tambourine			
Notes: Activities are highly gendered, though this aligns with historical nature of the story.							
Clothing - For this book, each page is tallied separately	Adult Male	Adult Female	Child Male	Child Female	Neutral	Notes	
	Dress/Skirt	46				For this text, the number is not as telling as the actual frequency. The costuming in this book is highly gendered due to the historical nature of the storyline. Costuming depicts the context rather than progressive view on gender.	
	Long Pants	46					
	Shorts						
	Hat/head scarf	19	39				
	Scarf/shawl						
	Apron						
	Suspenders/Overalls	2					
						Main characters - each costume change counted only once	
Affection	Count	Type of Affection					
	Male/Male						
	Female/Female						
	Male/Female						
	Father/Son						
	Father/Daughter						
	Mothers/Son	1	Son holding mother's waist				
	Mother/Daughter						
	Neutral/Neutral						
Female/Neutral	1	White woman reaching out and caressing a horse's nose					
Notes: Not much affection shown throughout book. The only characters to show affection are adult women, and this is balanced between the white women and the black women, reinforcing some universal elements of nurturing characteristics in women.							
Emotions - Each emotion recorded, even if emotions are repeated.	Emotion	Male	Female	Neutral	Notes		
	Anger	1			Male slave owner chasing after runaways; "They rejoiced as if they had no cares"		
	Joy	18	11		Hands up and dancing; playing drums; "They rejoiced as if they had no cares"		
Notes:							
Other Observations	The book does not reflect a single person's story, but is meant to reclaim the history of a group of disenfranchised people. Therefore, the illustrator has depicted a mostly even number of males and females throughout to represent this community. Only two pages refer to gender directly: the first says, "But Sunday was a day of rest, when Master charmed the weekend guests." Due to historical context knowledge, we know that Master refers to a male. The second occurs towards the end where it reads, "Women in gauze, silk and percale, men in fringe and furry tails shook tambourines and shouted chants as rhythms fueled a spirited dance." Other than that, the characters are regarded as "slaves" or "they", perhaps reinforcing their disenfranchisement and loss of identity during slavery.						