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GENDER STEREOTYPES IN CHILDREN'S PICTURE BOOKS: A STUDY OF AUTHORS, ILLUSTRATORS, AND MAIN CHARACTERS IN A CLASSROOM LIBRARY COLLECTION

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ABSTRACT

GENDER STEREOTYPES IN CHILDREN'S PICTURE BOOKS: A STUDY OF AUTHORS, ILLUSTRATORS, AND MAIN CHARACTERS IN A CLASSROOM LIBRARY COLLECTION

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The purpose of this quantitative non-experimental study was to evaluate the gender stereotyping in picture books from a classroom library collection that primary school students use for independent reading in the classroom. Using the Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grade fiction books from the classroom library collection from Booksource, this research included 151 books from an original total collection of 900 books of which 491 books were considered fiction.

A revised coding sheet, originally from Hamilton et al. (2006), was used to code the books. Seven volunteers and the researcher coded each book with 17 books coded three times. Volunteers were provided with a link to a video, a PowerPoint slide show on coding and a cheat sheet with highlights for coding. They were given a month to code their books and access via email or phone to ask any questions.

Using descriptive statistics, two-way between-subjects ANOVA, independent samples *t*-test and binomial logistic regression, a surprising/unique finding is that there was no significant difference between main character gender and main character age in children's picture books. In addition, there was no significant difference with the written dialog of the male and female authors with relation to main character gender, behavior, and use of toys but there was a significant difference as male illustrators opposed to

female illustrators influenced main character gender, behavior, and use of toys in the children's picture books.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the two people who have continually encouraged me to be my best, my daughter, Paige and my husband, Eric. Without your constant support and love, I would not have been able to accomplish all that I have.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Gender stereotyping, the practice of making assumptions about a person because of their perceived sex, has persisted in society since the stone age when women were assigned to gather, and men were assigned to hunt because men were professed as stronger and could manage the task while women, being considered weaker, could not (Abulata, 2017). It was during these ancient times that the patriarchy took root, assigning women to function as homemakers and allowing them to leave their homes only when accompanied by a man. Although society has evolved greatly as women are now fixtures in the workforce, gender stereotyping has continued to modern times (Abulata, 2017). Advertisements geared toward men often highlight typically "male" activities and traits, depicting men as boisterous, engaging in outdoor activities, and dressing in work clothes. In contrast, females are targeted with ads showing them predominantly as homemakers, mothers dressing in high-fashion clothes with reserved demeanors or as a passive observer posing to look pretty or provocative (Aina and Cameron, 2011). In 2020, the United Kingdom banned advertisements with harmful stereotypes which has included car companies and food giants (Chiu, 2019).

As children are great observers and see the actions, emotions and activities of their parents, a child might model themselves after their same gender parent as this is the only understanding they have as to how they should act (Aina & Cameron, 2011). The focus of the current study was the exploration of the transmission of gender stereotypes to children through children's books. In many families, parents read to young children before bedtime. Book characters, their actions, and their relationships to each other might shape what a child believes is a norm for a "boy" or "girl" to do. When reading or being

read a book, children will often identify with their same-sex characters and internalize that they should look and behave similarly to them (Winconek, 2019).

Studies have shown that gender stereotyping is still occurring in children's literature. Hamilton et al. noted in 2006 that there was gender stereotyping and under-representation of female characters in over 200 popular children's picture books. As an example, consider the book *Where the Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak (1963), listed on the 100 Best Books list according to *Time* (Time, 2020). *Where the Wild Things Are* is about a boy, Max, who lets out his inner monster and is sent to bed without supper. While in his room, his room transforms into a jungle, and he wounds up on the land of the wild things where he tamed the wild things, and they named him king. He played with the wild things but soon realizes that he missed his mother and upon returning to his room he saw that his mother has left dinner for him (Lowne, 2019). This book promotes boys being wild but implies that when they are done being monsters, mom will have a warm meal waiting because that is what a mom should do! The many books still showing a female's role to be a homemaker and male's role to be a wage-earner, reinforces children's gender stereotypes (Winconek, 2019).

Most of the studies investigating gender representation in children's picture books had focused on award-winning books, such as Caldecott award-winning books and New York Times best-sellers. Clark et al. (2003), Crabb and Marciano (2011), and Crisp and Hiller (2011) focused their studies using Caldecott books. Anderson and Hamilton (2005) and Hamilton et al. (2006) used a collection of books including Caldecott, New York Times best-sellers, Publishers Weekly and Little Golden books. The remaining authors, Gooden and Gooden (2001), Kortenhaus and Demarest (1993), McCabe et al. (2011),

Peterson and Lach (1990) and Poarch and Monk-Turner (2001) used a combination of random lists of books, series books, non-award- winning books and Caldecott books. The current research has been determined that less is known about the gender stereotypes in the books found in classroom libraries—books with which children had significant contact.

Classroom libraries are critical for students' reading development. Studies had shown that students with a classroom library read 50% more than students who do not have a classroom library (Catapano et al., 2009). Students who had access to a classroom library are able to (1) better understand content, (2) be more positive about learning, (3) respond more to learning, and (4) be more positive about themselves in learning (Bridges, 2011). Those children who had access to a classroom library are better readers because they had a better attitude towards reading and demonstrate higher levels of reading achievement (Hunter, 2004). Moreover, classroom libraries might be the only reading source for children from low-income households (Berrill, 2018).

As it can take years to gather the right books for a classroom library collection that is interesting to students, a pre-selected classroom library collection is prepared by experts who include a selection of books that enrich the curriculum and cover a variety of genres to include something for everyone (Booksource, n.d., "Classsroom Libraries by Grade" section). In a classroom library collection, a child might be able to see themselves in one of the many books available to them and help them to become stronger readers. The researcher, who will be using a prepared classroom library collection that can be purchased for use in the classroom, has found that most research on gender stereotypes in

children's books is focused on popular books or award-winning books. Books sold as a collection have not been evaluated to date.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative non-experimental study was to evaluate the gender stereotyping in picture books from a classroom library collection that primary school students use for independent reading in the classroom. Classroom library books for kindergarten through grade 1 typically include picture books with rhymes, repetition in text, and bright illustrations, as well as offering both fiction, and non-fiction choices. Books for grades 1 - 3 include (1) easy readers/short chapters, (2) non-fiction, (3) award winners, (4) graphic novels, and (5) books of interest to children (Berrill, 2018). Teachers purchase a classroom library collection to make such books available for the children in their classroom. These collections are often organized by grade level and genre to help children locate books of interest. After emailing four companies, who sell sets of books for districts to purchase for classrooms, for permission to evaluate their classroom library collection, Booksource was the only company to provide permission (see Appendix C). The specific collection evaluated in the current study was developed by Booksource, which provides such libraries to nearly 4,000 schools and districts in the United States.

A coding sheet, adapted from Hamilton et al. (2006), was used to code the books chosen for the study from the kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd grade collections prepared by Booksource. The characters in the books were counted according to gender and type, such as human, animal and/or other. In addition, further analysis of the main character is included.

Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks

This study draws on the 1981 Gender Schema Theory by Bem to guide how children get their understanding of gender from the things around them. The basis of Bem's Gender Shema Theory is that a child's biological gender is set at birth. Gender is a social construct as there is a difference between gender and sex (Mascolo, 2019). Gender is "psychological," "social," or "cultural" and sex is "biological" (Mascolo, 2019). Gender theorist Kohlberg stated that children are programmed to accept societal expectations according to the gender assigned to them (Cuncic, 2020). Bem concluded that at a certain age, boys and girls prefer activities as dictated by their biological gender and by their peers of the same gender (Bem, 1981). It is the world around them that has been given the "right" to determine the specific roles. Because of societal preconceived notions, boys and girls are expected to have specific "self-concepts and personality attributes, to be masculine or feminine as defined by that particular culture" (Bem, 1981, p. 354).

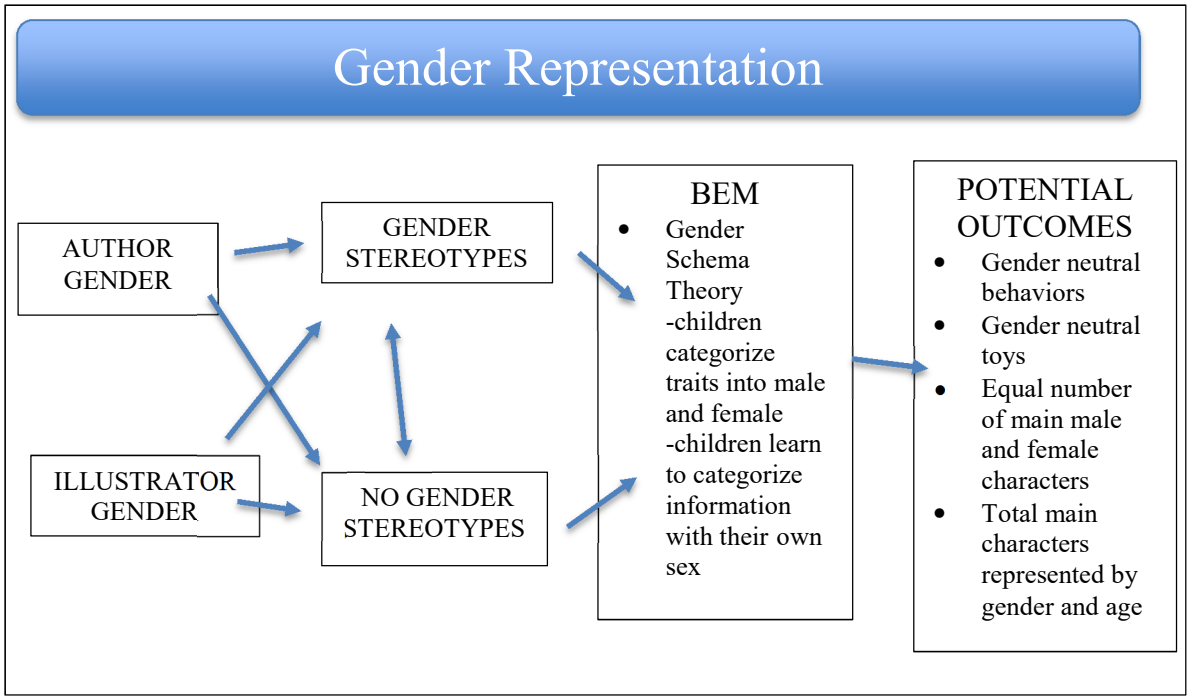
Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework for the study. This researcher hypothesized that an author's gender and an illustrator's gender are related to the representation of gender stereotypes and no gender stereotypes in children's picture books. Stereotyping is based upon research completed by Bem in 1981 when she theorized Gender Schema Theory which explains how children categorize traits into male and female and how they categorize information within their own sex. The potential outcome for this study was for picture books that children are reading to have gender

neutral characters, gender neutral toys and for there to be equal number of male and female main characters in books available to children in a classroom library setting.

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework



Connection With Social Justice and/or Vincentian Mission in Education

Particularly impactful for low-income students who may only have access to books through their classroom library, classroom libraries are student resources, as such, students in low-income areas count on their schools to provide resources for students that they might not be able to get at home. One of those resources is quality literature. In New York State, librarians are not mandated in elementary school and to save money, school districts in low-income areas might not even have a school library. Students count on their classroom library for quality literature and teachers use their classroom library to

encourage reading. It is important for teachers to have books that reflect diverse role models so that students reading these books do not feel limited by their genders.

There is an important connection to social justice through gender equality. For years, women have not been represented fairly in society and the gender stereotype often seen in picture books confirm the unjust treatment and representation of women. According to a report by Barrows (2021), more than 80% of librarians were women and Wong (2019) shared that two in three teachers or 67% were women. These statistics are unbalanced. It shows that the majority of people that children are exposed to in their early years are women. Inequality of gender representation and stereotyping in books will only reinforce the inequality in our society.

Significance of the Study

In 2017, New York State produced the New York State Next Generation English Language Arts Learning Standards. One of these standards (KR9, 1R9, 2R9), asks students to "make a connection between self, text, and the world" (New York State, 2017). This standard justifies the importance of having classroom libraries with books that appeal to all children and show children being fair with an equal amount of books having female and male main characters.

Studying gender stereotypes in children's books is not a new topic. In fact, there are thesis and dissertations which focus on this topic. Despite the numerous studies on stereotyping in children's literature through decades, gender stereotyping still persists in picture books (Clark et al., 2003; Filipović, 2018; Hamilton et al., 2006; Mattix and Sobolak, 2014; McCabe et al., 2011; Tepper and Cassidy, 1999). In this researcher's exploration for gender stereotyping in children's literature, this researcher failed to come

across any study that focused on a classroom library collection. Studies such as Hamilton et al. (2006) looked at award-winning books and Mattix and Sobolak (2014) concentrated on best-selling picture books.

Research Questions

Research Question 1 (Descriptive Statistics).

How are main characters represented in children's picture books?

Research Question 2.

What were the differences in gender and age of main character in children's picture books?

Hypotheses.

H_0 a): There will be no significant difference in the total number of main characters represented in children's picture books when comparing the gender of characters (female, male).

H_1 a): There will be a significant difference in the total number of main characters represented in children's picture books when comparing the gender of characters (female, male).

H_0 b): There will be no significant difference in the total number of main characters represented in children's picture books when comparing the age of characters (child, adult).

H_1 b): There will be a significant difference in the total number of main characters represented in children's picture books when comparing the age of characters (child, adult).

H_0 c): There will be no significant interaction effect between the gender of main characters and the age of main characters in children's picture books.

H_1 c): There will be significant interaction effect between the gender of main characters and the age of main characters.

Research Question 3.

How do the main characters use of stereotypical toys in children's pictures books compare by gender (female, male)?

Hypotheses.

H_0: There will be no significant difference in the use of stereotypical toys represented in children's picture books when comparing the gender of the main character (female, male).

H_1: There will be a significant difference in the use of stereotypical toys represented in children's picture books when comparing the gender of the main character (female, male).

Research Question 4.

What is the relationship between gendered representation of main male and female characters, male and female characters using stereotypical toys, or male and female characters with stereotypical behaviors in children's picture books associated with a) author gender, and b) illustrator gender?

Hypotheses.

H_0 a): There will be no significant relationship between gendered representation of main male and female characters, male and female characters using stereotypical toys,

or male and female characters with stereotypical behaviors in children's picture books and author gender.

H_1 a): There will be a significant relationship between gendered representation of main male and female characters, male and female characters using stereotypical toys, or male and female characters with stereotypical behaviors in children's picture books and author gender.

H_0 b): There will be no significant relationship between gendered representation of main male and female characters, male and female characters using stereotypical toys, or male and female characters with stereotypical behaviors in children's picture books and illustrator gender.

H_1 b): There will be a significant relationship between gendered representation of main male and female characters, male and female characters using stereotypical toys, or male and female characters with stereotypical behaviors in children's picture books and illustrator gender.

Definition of Terms

Caldecott Award-Winning Books

Caldecott Award-Winning Books are books named for illustrator Randolph Caldecott. The winning books are awarded to the illustrator of the most esteemed American picture books for children ("American Library Association," 2021).

Gender

Gender is the behavioral, cultural, or psychological traits typically associated with one's sex (Merriam-Webster, 2022).

Gender Schema Theory

Gender Schema Theory is a theory in which a child learns what it means to be male or female as a youngster and how they process that information while growing up (Bem, 1981; Starr and Zurbriggen, 2016).

Picture Books

Picture books are books published for children ages 4 to 8 years old that rely heavily on pictures and illustrations to tell the story; a book that consists wholly or chiefly of pictures (Merriam-Webster, 2022).

Sex

Sex is the state of being male or female (Merriam-Webster, 2022).

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature forthcoming shows that research with a focus on gender stereotypes in children's picture books unanimously finds that gender stereotyping exists in award-winning and best-sellers lists. This chapter delves deeper into previous research and includes factors relating to gender representation including the counting of the gendered characters in picture books. The study of character gender picture books follows the theory of Bem, who introduced Gender Schema Theory in 1981, which "asserted that children learn about male and female roles from the culture in which they live" (Cherry, 2020).

Theoretical Framework

The conceptualization of the impact of children's picture books is based on the theory of Bem. As the term gender role is a broad term, associated with traits and attitudes associated with being male or female, Sandra Bem, in 1981, formulated her own theory, Gender Schema Theory (Martin & Dinella, 2001). It is this theory, Sandra Bem's Gender Schema Theory, that this research is directed from.

Bem was a United States psychologist best known for the development of gender schema theory (Starr & Zurbriggen, 2016). Inspired by the 1960's and 1970's and what she perceived as inadequacies in theories during these decades, Bem began working on her own gender-based theories (Cherry 2020).

Gender Schema Theory, developed by Bem in 1981, hypothesizes that children process gender cues from associations with gender-linked persons (Bem, 1981). Bem's theories are considered to be based off of previous theories by Sigmund Freud in the 1930's which suggests that boys and girls learn gender cues from a same sex parent and

Gender Consistency Theory in 1966 by Kohlberg in which he postulated that a child develops their understanding of gender in three stages (Cuncic, 2020). Freud, in the 1930's, suggested that boys and girls acquire gender identity by a combination of needs for an opposite sex parent which leads them to identify with the same-sex parent (Martin & Dinella, 2001). Bem felt that Freud's theories were focused on a person's anatomy and suggested that combining a child's development with influences from society predisposed the patterns of thought that dictate male and female traits (Cherry, 2020).
Kohlberg's argument is that children are trying to understand their place in the world and once they learn this, they will become followers of this information (Bem, 1993). However, theorists are unclear regarding Kohlberg's cognitive developmental theory but feel that all levels of gender understanding had importance and that gender consistency is a precursor to learning stereotypes (Martinez et al., 2020, Martin & Dinella, 2001).

Bem established Gender Schema Theory to bring focus to the ways society creates and enforces the categories of gender (Starr & Zurbriggen, 2016). Gender Schema Theory, a social-cognitive theory, explains how children are gendered from an early age (gender schema) and how this gendering effects them their whole life (Starr & Zurbriggen, 2016, Martin & Dinella, 2001). American culture, according to Starr and Zurbriggen (2016), is very gender polarizing, or gender schematic, children organize their social life around what they think is expected of them (Starr & Zurbriggen, 2016, Liben & Bigler, 2015). Theorists suggest that gender schemas are introduced at a young age and that whichever gender a child is born into, this assists in explaining how a child behaves and their behavior (Martin & Dinella, 2001). Bem concluded that at a certain age, boys and girls prefer activities as dictated by their biological gender and by their peers of the

same gender (Bem, 1981). It is the world around them that has been given the "right" to determine the specific roles. Because of societal preconceived notions, boys and girls are expected to have specific "self-concepts and personality attributes, to be masculine or feminine as defined by that particular culture" (Bem, 1981, p. 354). Those individuals that are gender schematic base their behavior on their gender but those that don't base their behavior on their gender are known as gender aschematic (Starr & Zurbriggen, 2016).

Martinez et al. (2020) stated that "Schemas are viewed as dynamic knowledge structures that change according to situations and age-related changes in person perception with content that varies with social experiences and other individual and cultural differences" (p19). Bem suggested that children alter their behavior to associate with what is seen as stereotypical for their gender according to their culture (Cherry, 2020). Bem's assumption further stated that this occurs in a child's earliest stage of development (Cherry 2020). Martinez et al. (2020) inferred that considering a child's culture and experiences in society could cause errors in the gender schemas.

Liben and Bigler (2015) shared that, "Bem stated that children should be free from the constraints associated with gender stereotypes and suggested that we focus on a world where gender is ignored" (p550). Children are better at remembering gender stereotypes (Liben & Bigler, 2015). Unfortunately, that is not the case, especially when it comes to books, more specifically picture books. From previous research, it has been established that children's books contribute to how children understand what is expected of females and males and their roles in society as both genders are frequently presented in gender stereotypical roles (Ullah & Naz, 2014).

An article by Marcin (2020) and medically reviewed by Dr. Karen Gill, shared that reading to your child will help improve their brain development. Children soak up things they are exposed to (Marcin, 2020). Books also provide life lessons. One way to bring up topics that might be difficult to discuss could be to introduce a book of that topic. Books that feature a child just like the child reading the book might help a child feel less alone (Marcin, 2020). Books like "Heather Has Two Mommies" by Lesléa Newman or "A Tale Of Two Daddies" by Vanita Oelschlager can show children that not all families are the same. Books that show a family member in the service might explain what a child's parent is doing when they are away. Comforting books that help explain the death of a parent, grandparent or pet could assist a child getting through that emotional time in their life.

Neufeld (2014) shared recent research and the first early literacy policy from the American Academy of Pediatrics which encourages reading starting at infancy to help with language and retention. The American Academy of Pediatrics is asking its more than 62,000 member doctors to ask questions of parents which, in the end, will help the doctor understand the development of the child (Neufeld, 2014). The American Academy of Pediatrics just recently updated their website, calling this topic Early Literacy (2020) and sharing how reading to children is their first introduction to language which will help a child become ready for school. By encouraging parents to follow the five R's, read together; rhyme every day; develop routines such as reading every day; reward with praise and form a relationship with your child, a child will build skills for healthy brain development.

While not the purview of this study, the stereotypes presented in the books then are hypothesized and play a role in children's formation of gender identities and stereotypes. Substantial research has studied the connection between gender representation and children's formed stereotypes. For example, Karniol and Gal-Disegni (2009) studied gender stereotypes in basal readers, books that are selected by school personnel with first graders. This study was conducted in Israel where the language, Hebrew, is a gender-based language meaning that there are gender-specific words, e.g., male and female version, to designate actions. In two schools on the same street, 72 children in first grade were given a questionnaire to complete of which 64 were returned. The group was divided into those provided a gender-fair reader (11 male and 17 female), or a gender-stereotyped reader (22 male and 14 female). The gender-stereotyped reader showed the male characters in outdoor physical activities and female characters in indoor passive activities. The gender-fair reader showed the males and female participating in all activities, both physical and passive. The children, in their classroom, were asked to rate the activity shown in the text of the reader as something a male would do or something a female would do.

The results indicated that those children who read the gender-stereotyped reader chose activities that are typically associated with a female ($M = 0.10$) as such and those that read the gender-fair reader chose activities as equal for both males and females ($M = 0.30$). Karniol and Gal-Disegni (2009) were surprised that the stereotypes of those that read the gender-fair reader were significantly different than those that read the gender-stereotyped reader in that those that read the gender-fair reader were more accepting of

all activities for male and female. According to the researchers, this shows that gender-fair readers can promote gender stereotyping changes in children's minds.

Endendijk et al. (2014) studied how parents gender socialize their children when reading a picture book and how the illustrations in the picture books being read would encourage communication about gender. Families in the Netherlands, who had two children as reported in municipality records, were chosen for this study. The families were visited twice, by pairs of trained female students, with one visit consisting of the mother and the two children and the other visit with the father and the two children. Endendijk et al. (2014) stated that the order of the visits between parents was varied. Each parent was asked to look at the illustrations and discuss them with the children asking open ended questions such as "What do you see in the picture?" The books were two different versions of the same concept, each given a different title. Coding of gender labels such as boy, he, girl hers was used; the reactions (positive, negative, or neutral) of the activities in the illustrations; and gender stereotype comments. The researchers concluded that when speaking, mothers and fathers spoke with implied gender stereotyping. Fathers also were less negative towards illustration of boys behaving in a destructive way when reading with two sons rather than with a son and daughter or two daughters. Mothers were found to be more positive about activities that showed gender stereotype than fathers. Finally, this study concluded that parents introduced gender views to children at an early age and that mothers often informed their daughters that girls could also do typical male gender activities.

Seitz et al. (2020) studied if words read by children are associated with a gender based upon the picture book. Three kindergarten classes from a city in South Germany

were included in this study. Forty children, ages three to six years old (60% female; *M* = 55.7 months were given 28 stories (seven stories written in four versions), and two trial stories of situations that might occur every day. Pseudowords were included in each story to see if the children associated that the made-up words as masculine or feminine by reading of the stories. In a total of three sessions which lasted about 30 minutes, 8 to 10 stories were read. Children were asked by pointing to a picture of a boy, a girl, a boy and girl or neither to let the researchers know with what gender the pseudoword was associated. Parental socio-demographic information was obtained by questionnaire. Seitz et al. (2020) saw that character gender had a significant effect on the children's gendering of the pseudowords. The researchers also found that the child's gender would influence the child's interest in an activity if the main character in the book they read was the same as their gender.

Bartholomaeus (2015) examined gender issues using four picture books that had a central focus of gender and did not show males negatively. The books chosen could allow dialogue with the children, 10 girls and 11 boys aged six and seven-year-old students in an Australian school. Using children's reading and comprehension levels, students were categorized into four groups each containing 5-6 students. Bartholomaeus (2015) volunteered in the classroom prior to the study to encourage a relationship so that when the researcher joined each group to read a book and encourage a discussion, the children were comfortable. Questions asked included: (1) what the children thought the book was about and (2) why the children thought the characters acted a certain way. While the researcher's purpose for this study was to investigate the children's understanding of gender and gender stereotypes, they found that the use of feminist picture books could

provide a deeper understanding of a child's interpretation of gender stereotypes. Bartholomaeus (2015) also found that the written words provided more information about the character, the gender stereotyping of the character and that if the child was unable to read. When the children did not fully comprehend the feminist message coming across in the book, the researcher would read the book with the children to help the children better understand the gender differences of the characters (Bartholomaeus, 2015).

Related Research

Gender Representation in Children's Picture Books

Number of Female Characters. Prior analysis has shown that there is an underrepresentation of female characters in children's picture books. For example, in an early childhood center in Ireland, Filipović (2018) reviewed 15 books for three different age groups from 12 months to 5 years of age (e.g., waddlers, toddlers, and preschoolers) and interviewed teachers about their thoughts regarding gender representation in children's picture books. This study was completed in three stages: (1) the author's analysis of the books, (2) the teachers' analysis of gender patterns through journaling, and (3) a dialog between the authors and the teachers. When coding the books, animal characters that were not gender specific as determined by pronouns or characteristics, e.g., clothing, were considered gender neutral. Filipović (2018) concluded that there were more male characters than female characters with male characters as 82% of title characters and 72% of main characters. The teachers showed surprise that most of the characters in the books sampled were male, although they admitted to not paying much attention to this matter prior to the study.

Gooden and Gooden (2001) studied how females are represented in American Library Association (ALA) Notable children's picture books. ALA Notable Children's Picture Books is a collection of books of high quality that exhibit creativity and are encouraging to children's interests ("American Library Association," 2021). Using books published between 1995 and 1999, the researchers looked for evidence of gender stereotyping in 85 ALA Notable Children's picture books. Using a revised version of a coding sheet previously used by LaDow (1976), 1464 illustrations were analyzed. Gooden and Gooden (2001) included the most noteworthy characters and the activity in which they were participating in their analysis. If the researchers determined that the number of male and female characters were about the same, they included them in both columns. If there were ungendered animal characters, they were not included. In the end, this study showed that there was a slight decrease in gender stereotyping; however, the prevalence of female stereotyping is still noteworthy in Notable Children's picture books. In addition, as compared with other studies, this study showed a larger presence of female characters with female and male characters being equal as main characters.

McCabe et al. (2011) analyzed the titles and main characters in 5,618 books collected from Children's Catalog, 1900-2000 (*N*=4,485), Little Golden Books (*N*=1,023), and Caldecott award-winning books (*N*=263). Titles that contained a male name were coded male, books that had titles with female names were coded as female and if the title contained neither a male nor female name it was coded as nonidentifiable. The central character was determined by either the story or description and coded male, female or nonidentifiable. Coding of the central character also included if the character was animal or human or other. The findings showed that males are represented in, on

average, 36.5 percent more than females in both titles and main character as compared with females who represented only 17.5 percent. The use of male main animal characters was statistically significant with males at 23.2 percent compared with females at 7.5 percent. Males were represented in more titles than females in a ratio of 1.9:1. More books also featured male main characters to female main characters at a ratio of 1.6:1. The authors concluded that inconsistency continues in children's books with underrepresentation of females in children's literature.

Use of Artifacts. Prior analysis has shown that males were often illustrated outdoors using production artifacts and females were often illustrated indoors using household artifacts. For example, replicating a study by Crabb and Bielawski (1994), Poarch and Monk-Turner (2001), looked at easy-to-read series non-award-winning books from a public library. The researchers wanted to learn about the gender messages in literature for children ages 4-7 years. Using series that represented each letter of the alphabet, Poarch and Monk-Turner, chose 22 series and randomly selected one book from each series. Household and production artifacts illustrations were looked at in addition to character gender, author gender and copyright date. Three raters analyzed 15 books and their results were compared with the results of the researchers to a 91% reliability rate. The results found that in books published between 1963 and 1995, there were more male characters than female characters. The male characters used production artifacts. In addition, more female characters used household artifacts than male characters.

Using Caldecott Medal and Honor books from 1990 - 2009, Crabb and Marciano (2011) studied whether the illustrations showed gender stereotypes of the time period that the book was given the award. Of the 85 books that won either the medal or an honor

award, only 68 books with a total of 490 illustrations were chosen for the study. Crabb and a student assistant coded the illustrations using a coding sheet prepared by Crabb and Bielawski (1994). The coding sheet focused on character gender (male, female) and artifact type (household, production). They found that in books published in the 1990's, almost 60% of illustrations showed females using household artifacts such as pots and pans, cleaning, and care of family whereas a little more than 10% of illustrations showed males using household artifacts. Illustrations from the 2000s showed 56% of females using household artifacts such as pots and pans, cleaning, and care of family, while a little more than 16% of illustrations showed males using household artifacts. In the illustrated books from the 1990s, there were 88% of males using production artifacts such as hammers, tractors, and cars and 41% of females using production artifacts. In the books from the 2000s, 84% of males were depicted using production artifacts and 44% of females using production artifacts. Crabb and Marciano (2011) concluded that children's books should be more reflective of gender.

Gendered Roles and Emotions. Prior analysis has shown that females are often shown in nurturing and traditional gender roles and males are shown as adventurous. For example, Tepper and Cassidy (1999) studied the emotional language used by male and female characters in children's picture books. Asking 47 preschoolers' parents what picture books their preschoolers read or heard during a specific week, the researchers chose 178 books from the original 432 books because the books contained emotional language. Of the 47 children, 27 were males and 20 were females, ranging in age from 3 years to 6 years 10 months with a mean age of 4 years, 9 months. All were from middle-class homes. The books used in the study were located at the local public library and

included 18 books with the designation of being Caldecott award-winning books. A single coder coded the books using 11 emotions: interest; enjoyment-joy; surprise-astonishment; sadness; anger; disgust-contempt; fear-anxiety; shyness, shame, guilt-conscience-morality; and like-love. To ensure triangulation, the original coder, recoded a random 15% of the books and another coder coded 25% of the books to a reliability of 90% and 80% respectively. Looking at the number of emotional words used by males and females in the picture books, male characters (*M*=4.49) used more emotional words than female characters (*M*=2.92). In the Caldecott award-winning books, male characters (*M*=5.78) used more emotional words than female characters (*M*=1.67). When the researchers looked at just emotional words, they found that males (143) said more like-love words than females (111). Tepper and Cassidy (1999) concluded that males had a higher incidence of word usage because males were represented more frequently than females in children's picture books.

By 2003, at least 22 research teams had looked at gender role stereotyping in children's picture books with most researchers concluding that males and females were shown in stereotypical ways and that there were a minimal number of female characters in those books. Clark et al. (2003) chose to replicate these studies with Caldecott award-winning and honor books from the late 1930s (1938 - 1942), 1940s (1947 - 1951), 1950s (1957 - 1961), and 1960s (1967 - 1971). A total of 84 books (20 from 1938 - 1942, 28 from 1947 - 1951, 18 from 1957 - 1961, and 18 from 1967 - 1971) were chosen. Following studies by Weitzman et al. (1972) and Clark et al. (1993), the researchers looked at gender stereotyping and images of female characters in these books. Behavioral traits were evaluated in the main character, most important character, and the important

character of the opposite sex. Clark et al. (2003) found that all the books in the 1930s contained a female character with 45% having a central female character. However, female characters were more dependent, submissive, and emotional than male characters who were more independent, persistent, and active. In the 1940s, 22% of books coded did not have a female character and those that did showed that female characters were more dependent, nurturing, and emotional than male characters who were more cooperative, explorative, and cooperative. Books from the 1950s had the second highest number of books with central female characters at 39% and only 11% without a female character. Females exhibited dependent, submissive, and nurturing behaviors and males exhibited independent, directive, and persistent behaviors. In the 1960s, 17% of books had a central female character with 33% not having any female characters which is consistent with the results of Weitzman et al. (1972). Females were cooperative, creative, and nurturing and males were persistent, explorative, and emotional. Clark et al. (1993) found that there was positive correlation between books from the late 1960s and 1990s and female characters, Clark et al. (2003) found a negative correlation in the late 1930s and 1960s. Clark et al. (2003) also concluded because books published in the 1930s were longer, that might have a direct correlation to the increase in female characters in the award-winning and honor books. The researchers concluded that the number of females in the books analyzed might have a direct association to a woman's status during the years studied.

Crisp and Hiller (2011) studied how "femininity" and "masculinity" is represented in Caldecott award-winning books from 1938 to 2011 by building on the research previously published. Upon reading earlier studies, the researchers found that previous authors relied on illustrations to determine the gender of a character in the

award-winning picture books and, if necessary, they used the text. If the character gender were not ascertainable by illustrations or text, the previous authors would determine the character gender using gender stereotyping. Crisp and Hiller (2011) felt that the interpretation by adults might not be the same interpretation by a child. Coding of the books included the gender of the author and illustrator, the total number of characters by gender, and the gender of the character in a single illustration. Using 74 Caldecott award-winning books, Crisp and Hiller (2011) determined that 56% of authors were male and 44% were female. Except for the 1930s and 1970s, there were more male authors than female; in the 1960s there were more female authors than male authors (8:3), and in the remaining decades, there were more male than female authors. In all years, except in the 1930s and the 2010s when there were equal numbers of male and female illustrators, there were more male illustrators than female illustrators. Female main characters were found in only seventeen (23%) books and were often described as passive, emotional, and nurturing. Male main characters were found in thirty-nine (53%) books with one book only having male characters. Male main characters were described as independent, persistent, and active. The remaining ten (14%) of the books had ungendered main characters. Because Caldecott award-winning books audience range are well sought after, Crisp and Hiller (2011) concluded that the books need to represent the population they reach so that children can see themselves and their loved ones in these books.

Mattix and Sobolak (2014) saw how female characters were often categorized as passive if they were represented in children's literature. For 40 years, they studied how the way gender is portrayed in current children's literature. New York Times best sellers from the years 1972, 1982, 1992, 2002 and 2012 were reviewed with each researcher

reading and coding 10 books and coding noting themes and major characters. Mattix and Sobolak (2014) then looked at the existence of strong male and female main characters in the stories in each decade. Presence of strong female characters was highest in 1992 (*n*=7) with a total of 66.6% but it was still lower than most of the decades for strong male characters which ranged from 57.1% to a high of 85.7% in 2012. The researchers then evaluated the frequency that female characters were depicted in traditional gender roles such as caregiver, mother, etc., and found that in 1992 (*n*=6), females were shown 83.3% of the time in a stereotypical female role. The researchers concluded that although their sample size was small, there shows a need for more gender equality in picture books.

Researching the Governor-General award-winning Canadian children's literature, Taber and Woloshyn (2011) analyzed gender and inclusive education in these most recently awarded books. Using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which examines how the communication is represented according to character gender, Taber and Woloshyn (2011) felt that CDA is important because picture books share messages in their written words and illustrations on their own and in the environment, they are placed, such as a classroom. The researchers found that the female characters were often shown as maintaining the household and were nurturers and the male characters were often shown as the head of the household were protectors. Taber and Woloshyn (2011) concluded that gendered roles were prevalent in these books with three out of five books showing males as adventurous and females in traditional roles.

Using early school readers in New Zealand schools, Jackson and Gee (2005) analyzed the illustrations of characters presented. The researchers randomly selected 100 readers by using one in every 15 books from each decade starting in 1949. Books from

the 1950's and 1960's were from a special collection and books from the 1970's, 1980's and 1990's were from library shelves. Books from the 1950's to 1960's were part of a series called *Janet and John*; books from the 1960's were from the series *PM Readers*; books from the 1970's to the 1990's were from the series *Ready to Read*. The researchers first identified how a character's physical appearance was illustrated making note of clothing and posture. In most of the series books, females were shown holding objects close to their bodies, e.g., snuggling, and males were shown holding objects away from their bodies. Mothers were shown bending to care for children and fathers were shown kneeling to care for children. Females in the series were usually shown in dresses and males were in pants. Over time, the images of mothers and fathers decreased but were replaced by other adults such as teachers, who were always female. Gender stereotyping was prominent in these series books as girls were often shown playing with dolls, doing household chores, or reading and boys were often shown playing sports and using cars. Jackson and Gee (2005) found that there was not much change in representation of characters in the books throughout the decades as girls and boys were shown in gender stereotypical activities.

Gritter et al. (2017) researched how books' male characters and their representation were depicted through text and illustrations in Children's Choice picture books. Children's Choice books are chosen by an annual vote by children and this list is collected by the International Literacy Association and the Children's Book Council and published every October in *The Reading Teacher*. The researchers used concepts from Cherland (2008) which helped define the language used in the books and from Zambo (2007) which helped define archetypes for the male characters. Using 11 random books

published between 2000 and 2014 from Children's Choices and an additional ten books from the years 2013-2014 based upon summaries from Children's Choices, the researchers analyzed these books for setting. In 21 books from the 2000 - 2014 list, Gritter et al. (2017) coded themes and patterns of when a male was writing, reading books, or using tools. At least two researchers read each book, and if there was a disagreement, the researchers would discuss until an agreement was reached. Gritter et al. (2017) first looked at settings for the male characters and noted that settings included school (n = 6); home (n =9); community (n = 6); and home (n = 5). The researchers then looked at archetypes and found that of the 14 archetypes, two archetypes, Healer and Prophet, were not found in any of the texts. Gritter et al. (2017) found Wildman (n = 8); Friend (n = 7); Creator (n = 5); Reader (n = 1); Lazy Teacher (n = 1); Authority (n = 1); and Survivor (n = 1). Male characters solved problems in eleven of the 21 books and the remaining ten books did not show any problem solving. In ten of the books, males were shown positively. In two of the texts, males were shown negatively. In the remaining books, eight showed males going from negative to positive character and one did not show the male character in a positive or negative identity. When males were with females, there was harmful language in three books; nine books showed positive language; language was negative to positive in six books; two books were not coded; and one was not mentioned. The researchers felt that children should took turns reading text and verbalize how they might manage a situation differently.

Gendering of Parents in Children's Picture Books. Prior analysis has shown that fathers are often underrepresented and that mothers are often shown as the primary caregiver. For example, DeWitt et al. (2013) investigated as to whether portrayals of

parents in picture books from 1902 - 2000 changed. In particular, the researchers explored whether there was an increase in books depicting fathers performing traditional female roles such as childcare and females performing traditional male roles such as working outside the home. A sample of 1,448 children's books from the Children's Catalog (H.W. Wilson Co., 2001) were reviewed by librarians from around the United States and a random sample of 300 books were chosen; 50 from each time period: 1900 - 1959, and each subsequent decade (1960, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000). College students used an instrument to evaluate the illustrations and text of up to three books. Books depicting fathers as nurturers, companions and caregivers were most significant in the 1970s and that mothers employed outside the home in the year 2000 almost doubled before 1960. However, there was no significant difference in the roles performed by mothers and fathers in fiction and nonfiction books for children between a preschool to third grade reading level.

Anderson and Hamilton (2005) examined how mothers and fathers are represented in children's books. As fathers are often represented as ineffective in their parenting role, the researchers also focused on how men are stereotyped as fathers. Statistics showed that in 2002, about 55% of mothers were in the workforce but still doing almost half the amount of household chores, such as cooking and childcare. Stereotypical roles are often portrayed in children's literature. Men are often shown outside the home performing traditional tasks such as mowing the lawn and women are inside the home performing traditional tasks such as housework. The researchers looked at 200 books which included books from Caldecott Medal winners and honor books, best-selling books from New York Times, Publishers Weekly, Barnes and Noble and

Amazon.com, best-selling Little Golden Books, 2001 list of books everyone should know and the top ten picture books. The coding instrument, which looked at mothers and fathers, consisted of 43 items for each book. Broken down, items 1 - 4 addressed family pairings; items 5 - 7 focused only on parents separate or together; items 8 - 13 related to how children mentioned the mother or father in the text; items 14 - 27 reviewed physical interactions and contacts; and items 28 - 43 spoke about parents' expressions and emotions. The findings showed that mothers appeared in 64% (129) of the books as compared to the fathers who appeared in 47.5% (95) of the books. Half of the books evaluated showed mother-only scenes, with fathers only scenes shown about 27.5%. Children mentioned mothers twice as many times as fathers. Mothers nurtured babies and older children more times and mothers showed more emotion than fathers. The researchers' conclusion was that gender stereotyping was shown in children's picture books with fathers being underrepresented and mothers being the primary caretaker.

Physicality of Male and Female Characters. Prior analysis reveals that books that show females as athletes show positive interaction with parents and mixed interactions with peers. For example, Roper and Clifton (2013), borrowing from Tuchman's (1978) concept of representative extinction of woman in media, wanted to study how girls, who are physically active, are represented in picture books and what the books teach the reader about girls who are physically active. The books chosen had the following criteria: (1) fiction; (2) published in the United States; (3) the main or primary character is female; and (4) the main or primary character had to be involved in a sport or physical activity. A book list of 11 books was assembled by a university professor but the researchers were unable to use five of the books because they were either no longer in

print or did not meet the requirements as listed. The researchers then searched Amazon using three search topics and located 10 books which fit their requirements. Of the 10 books, six were repeats from the previous list. In the end, they compiled 10 books, five authored by a male and five authored by a female, with six illustrated by a male and four illustrated by a female. All books had a publication date between 1995 and 2010 and were 18 to 31 pages ($M = 27$). Books were read multiple times and coding included five categories: (1) demographics of main or primary female character; (2) overall appearance of main or primary female character; (3) activity/movement of main or primary female character; (4) encouragement and discouragement by other characters for physical activity; and (5) comparison of male and female main or primary character. Looking at clothing and the body of the female characters, Roper and Clifton (2013) found that in seven of the books, the female characters were dressed in a uniform and when they were not in uniform, all female characters were in clothing that would allow for physical activity. The hairstyle of the females was away from their face in either pigtails or ponytails. For six of the books, the female character's actions were described with action words such as leaping and passes. In the remaining four books, the action of the female character was rarely discussed. All female characters were illustrated as active even if their voice was not that descriptive. Encouragement, mostly by parents, was described in all ten books with peers discouraging the female character in four of the books. Roper and Clifton (2013) concluded that the books they reviewed provide a positive message for females in athletics, however, the sample size available is exceedingly small which sends the point that sports are not important for females.

Use of toys. Prior analysis shows that toy preferences were based mostly on gender stereotyping. For example, Richards et al. (2020) sought to learn how children use age-appropriate and age-inappropriate toys. They further sought to learn if the manufacturers age suggestions allowed children to use toys according to their recommendations. Including children ages 1 - 8 years, Richards et al. (2020) included 243 children in the study grouped in the following age groups: 1-1.5 years (43% female, 57% male; $n = 60$); 1.6-2 years (54% female, 46% male; $n = 61$); 3 - 5 years (50% female, 50% male; $n = 62$); and 6 - 8 years (47% female, 53% male; $n = 60$). Toy groups were broken down into nine categories: exploratory; construction; games and puzzles; instructional; sports and recreation; imaginative; small vehicles; arts and crafts and musical. Questionnaires were completed by the parents of the children who were either only children or the oldest child in the family. The researchers concluded that play within toy groups (children, who played with the toys for 5 seconds or more), depended on the age group of the child. Children in the 1 - 1.5 age range were more likely to play with age-appropriate toys in the exploratory, construction, and instructional categories; children 1.6 - 2 years were more likely to play with games and puzzles; and 6 - 8 years old were less likely to play with arts and craft toys. Overall, Richards et al. (2020) concluded that children used the age-appropriate and younger toys about equally.

In a collaboration with a Finnish toy company, Mertala et al. (2016) set to explore play as the way a child plays with the toy. The researchers followed Piaget, who found a connection between play and child growth. A group of 13 children, ages 6 to 8 years, consisting of seven girls and six boys were recruited for the study. The students were provided with a book of 45 age-appropriate toys they could choose from and were

instructed to choose eight toys they would like. The catalog included toys labeled as feminine, masculine, trendy, traditional, and technology enhanced. The same interviewer interviewed each child,, two times. Each interview lasted between 14 and 51 minutes with the child guiding the length of the interview. From the catalog, 25 toys were chosen with a digging toy being most popular as 11 out of 13 children included it on their list. Most of the other toys chosen could be categorized in the feminine category (dolls) for the girls and the masculine category (racing car) for the boys. Mertala et al. (2016) concluded that toy preferences are based upon four values (functional, material, social and personal), and these values overlap with each other. They further found that toy preference was based on gender stereotypes, which was corroborated by previous research.

Tonetto et al. (2020) researched ways to develop toys to promote social skills in children. Understanding that childhood is the first phase of development for children and that peers had a considerable influence on a child's social skills, the researchers observed play in a child's natural setting. Parents of children currently in their first two years of school were invited to participate in this study. A total of 23 children, age 6 to 8 years, divided up into 11 girls and 12 boys, were observed between one and three times, one time based on free play, one time play was with specific toys and the last time consisted of free play of the child's choice. Individual and group play, arranged by the parents, were observed in twenty-two sessions with sessions lasting from 90-120 minutes in length. Five researchers, trained in observation skills, observed children's behaviors while they played with toys. Tonetto et al. (2020) found that activities under the pretense of a game elicited feelings from one child when they made a postcard for a friend who

moved. The child expressed how much she missed her friend. In another observation, a group of boys, during pretend play, shared their disapproval at not being "allowed" to play with the dollhouse. They felt that the dollhouse is not just for girls as they expressed that they, too, live in a house. When play sword fighting, a child hit with a sword decided not to "die," which prompted some discussion after which the children decided to start their play fighting all over again. Children also appeared to ask for help in negotiating the rules of games played. Tonetto et al. (2020) had credited the children in this study with their active play as the researchers felt that many of the toy options available did not incite cooperative play. This age group was ultimately chosen as it is the start of when children begin to interact more with their peers. The researchers felt that this, along with the opportunity for the children to choose the toys they wanted to play with, were limitations to the study. The conclusion is that this study can help guide toy manufacturers to create toys that encourage child development.

Cherney et al. (2003) sought to learn how children's play is affected by the use of stereotypical toys; how this impacts a child's development; and what toys would be most beneficial for a child's playtime. For 30 minutes, 30 children ages 18 - 47 months consisting of 15 boys (M = 30.40 months, SD = 9.09) and 15 girls (M = 30.73 months, SD = 10.66) were observed in a playroom complete with an assortment of toys. Parents brought their child into the room and the researcher offered the child the opportunity to play with any toy(s) he/she wanted. Toy selection included those stereotyped for girls, boys and both genders or neutral. The play was videotaped and coded on a scale of 1 to 4 with 4 being the highest score. Boys and girls played for a total of 713 minutes (girls 323 minutes, boys 390 minutes) for approximately 23 minutes each. When Cherney et al.

(2003) evaluated the use of stereotypical toys by the children, they found that girls gravitated toward the neutral toys first, toys typically for boys second and toys typically for girls last and the boys played predominately with toys for boys.

Jadva et al. (2010) studied color and shape choices for toys in children 12, 18 and 24 months of age. Parents were contacted through either baby groups or nurseries, with 20 girls and 20 boys participating in each age group. The breakdown of each group is 12 months (for boys: M = 54.51 weeks, SD = 5.20; for girls: M = 53.66 weeks, SD = 4.76); 18 months (for boys: M = 80.45 weeks, SD = 3.42; for girls: M = 81.26 weeks, SD = 5.24); 24 months (for boys: M = 106.58 weeks, SD = 6.36; for girls: M = 105.85 weeks, SD = 5.28). Most children participated with their mothers, however four children participated with their father. Children were recorded and evaluated while looking at two images concurrently. Color preferences were also analyzed to see if girls preferred pink and boys preferred blue. Shapes were also included to learn the preferences between angular and rounded shapes by the children. Lastly, two gender stereotypical toys were included, a doll and truck, to learn if there was a preference according to the child's gender. To further evaluate the hypothesis of color related to the toys, blue truck/pink doll images along with pink truck/blue doll images were shown. The researchers also offered a shade of pink, red, and a shade of blue, pale blue, and a colorless option. Jadva et al. (2010) found that girls preferred dolls and boys preferred trucks but did notice that the children preferred when the colors of the dolls and trucks were bright, such as red, and also preferred rounded shapes to angular shapes. They further concluded that because girls preferred the doll and boy the truck, these differences occur at an early age and

might be because they were influenced at a youthful age by what they were given as children.

Factors Related to Gender Representation

Author Gender. Prior analysis has shown that male and female authors typically include more male characters in their books than female characters. For example, Davis and McDaniel (1999) examined how males and females were portrayed in children's books by authors and illustrators during a teacher education course at Converse College, SC. Pairs of students replicated research previously done by Czaplinski (1972), in which she studied Caldecott-winning books from 1940 - 1971 and counted males and females in text and illustrations. The researchers were interested in learning if males still outnumbered females in both text (65% to 35%), and illustrations (63% to 37%) and if the number of females in text would continue to decrease from 1972 to 1977 as Czaplinski (1972) found in text from 1950s (51%) to the 1960s (23%). Using 25 award-winning Caldecott books, Davis and McDaniel (1999) showed that males were mentioned 61% of the times compared to females who were mentioned 39% of the time. Males were found in 60% of the illustrations compared to females who were found in 40% of the illustrations. When compared to the study by Czaplinski (1972), the number of illustrations of females in a book decreased while the number of male illustrations in a book increased. Illustrations of females in picture books increased from the 1960s to a high in the 1980's but then slightly decreased in the 1990s and the total number of female characters decreased from the 1980s to the 1990s.

Hamilton et al. (2006) explored sexism in about 200 of the top-selling picture books from 1995 - 2001 by looking at the book characters and the relationship between

gender of the author and characters. The researchers chose a total of 207 books which included 30 Caldecott Medal books, 155 best-selling books from New York Times, Publishers Weekly, Barnes and Noble and Amazon.com, 9 best-selling Little Golden Books, 3 books from the 2001 list of books everyone should know, and the top 10 picture books. The researchers looked at 22 items from each book, counting the total number of male and female title characters as well as the total number of male and female characters that were illustrated. If the title contained a male name, the title character was determined to be male. The researchers calculated the number of times each character was passive or active, performed indoor or outdoor activities, was rescued, or needed rescuing, and was nurtured or nurturing. Traditional or non-traditional occupations were also calculated. The findings indicated that there were more male pictures per book than female pictures. Male authors wrote more about male characters and female authors wrote using equal numbers of male and female characters. Female characters were more nurturing and were shown as having traditional female roles. Lastly, award winning books showed twice as many male characters as female characters.

Copyright Date. There is some evidence that the depiction of female characters has changed over time. For example, Peterson and Lach (1990) studied if gender stereotype still existed in picture books at the time of their research. Using a random sample of 136 picture books, half that came from The Horn Book List in the years 1967, 1977 and 1987, the researchers coded the books based on five properties: gender of the author; gender of the main character; number and gender of any additional characters; if the main character was human or animal; and book genre. In previous studies, males outnumbered females significantly, but Peterson and Lach (1990) saw that character

gender was nearly equal with the number of males to females in 1967 being 2:1; in 1977 it was 3:1; and in 1987 it was 1:1.

Updating research completed by Weitzman et al. (1972) and Collins et al. (1984), Kortenhaus and Demarest (1993) used 125 non-award-winning picture books and 25 Caldecott award-winning, or runners-up picture books published between 1940 and 1980 to learn if the characterization and frequency of characters in picture books had changed since the publications by Weitzman et al. (1972) and Collins et al. (1984). Character gender roles and activities of the characters, mainly child characters, were also analyzed. Eight characteristics, by Collins et al. (1984) were used for evaluation: (1) females in title; (2) male in titles; (3) female in central role; (4) male in central role; (5) females in pictures (combined with female animals); (6) males in pictures (combined with male animals); (7) female animals (combined with female in pictures); and (8) male animals (combined with male in pictures). The two raters for each book had a 100% agreement rate on the identification of male and female characters in book title; 98.5% agreement rate on illustrations; and 98.3% agreement rate on animals with a high total agreement rate ($r = 0.992$). The type of book, Caldecott, and non-award winning, were compared by gender in five categories (1) title; (2) central roles; (3) pictures; (4) animals; and (5) animals and people. Males significantly outnumbered females in all categories but only 2:1 in title and central role in Caldecott award-winning books. By decade, and using non-award-winning books, Kortenhaus and Demarest (1993) found that there has been a decrease from 1940 to 1970 in sexism. When looking at the number of males and females, books published before 1970 showed four times as many males in titles and male animals; and twice as many in central roles and pictures. Males were more active

than females in all decades (M = 293, F = 54) whereas females were more passive than males (F = 249, M = 29). Kortenhaus and Demarest (1993) concluded that their findings were similar, and in some cases the same as those reported by Collins et al. (1984). Books published in the 1980's appeared attentive to woman's changing role according to Kortenhaus and Demarest (1993). The researchers feel that authors and publishers should continue to provide readers with books that represent the roles of females as active and productive.

Conclusion

A comprehensive search of research studies on picture books shows a lack of focus on classroom library collections. In addition, from the review of literature, this researcher felt that the research available is both not recent (studies from 1990s to the latest being published in 2016) and the number of resources was, in some respect, minimal and predetermined meaning that if a study focused on Caldecott award-winning books, there is only one winning book per year. As gender theories, which suggest that boys and girls had certain roles in society do not reflect the status of the world, it is important that resources for children reflect culture as it is today (Cuncic, 2020).

Filipović (2018), Gooden and Gooden (2001), McCabe et al. (2011) include the number and roles of females represented in a book, Davis and McDaniel (1999) and Hamilton et al. (2006) included author gender with Peterson and Lach (1990) and Kortenhaus and Demarest (1993) including copyright date. Mertala et al. (2016), Tonetto et al. (2020), Cherney et al. (2003) and Jadva et al. (2010) also focused on activities of the characters whether they are indoor, or outdoors and the activity in which they are participating. In some cases, those activities were recognized positively, and in some

cases such as those highlighting females as athletes had mixed results. As the books in the current study are recently published, this researcher determined that there would not be enough variety of copyright dates for this to be included in the study.

The researcher's analysis will look at books available to teachers who purchase prepared classroom library sets which are often compiled with the expectation that they will be of interest to children.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to determine if gender stereotyping still exists in children's picture books and how books in a classroom library collection compared to award-winning books, honor books and books on a best seller list. This focused on gender characteristics, gender behavior and author and illustrator gender.

Volunteers and the researcher completed coding, and after calculating interrater reliability, the researcher prepared a spreadsheet with the responses which will then be uploaded as an SPSS data file. These data will be used to answer research questions about the representation of male and female characters in the books and the stereotypical nature of their actions.

Methods and Procedures

Research Questions

This study was guided by four research questions that explored character gender, character behavior, use of toys and author and illustrator gender.

Research Question 1 (Descriptive Statistics).

How are main characters represented in children's picture books?

Research Question 2.

What were the differences in gender and age of main character in children's picture books?

Hypotheses.

H_0 a): There will be no significant difference in the total number of main characters represented in children's picture books when comparing the gender of characters (female, male).

H_1 a): There will be a significant difference in the total number of main characters represented in children's picture books when comparing the gender of characters (female, male).

H_0 b): There will be no significant difference in the total number of main characters represented in children's picture books when comparing the types of characters (child, adult).

H_1 b): There will be a significant difference in the total number of main characters represented in children's picture books when comparing the types of characters (child, adult).

H_0 c): There will be no significant interaction effect between the gender of characters and the type of characters in children's picture books.

H_1 c): There will be significant interaction effect between the gender of characters and the type of characters.

Research Question 3.

How do the main characters use of stereotypical toys in children's pictures books compare by gender (male, female)?

Hypotheses.

H_0: There will be no significant difference in the use of stereotypical toys represented in children's picture books when comparing the gender of the main character (male, female).

H_1: There will be a significant difference in the use of stereotypical toys represented in children's picture books when comparing the gender of the main character (male, female).

Research Question 4.

What is the relationship between gendered representation of main male and female characters, male and female characters using stereotypical toys, or male and female characters with stereotypical behaviors in children's picture books associated with a) author gender, and b) illustrator gender?

Hypotheses.

H_0 a): There will be no significant relationship between gendered representation of main male and female characters, male and female characters using stereotypical toys, or male and female characters with stereotypical behaviors in children's picture books and author gender.

H_1 a): There will be a significant relationship between gendered representation of main male and female characters, male and female characters using stereotypical toys, or male and female characters with stereotypical behaviors in children's picture books and author gender.

H_0 b): There will be no significant relationship between gendered representation of main male and female characters, male and female characters using stereotypical toys, or male and female characters with stereotypical behaviors in children's picture books and illustrator gender.

H_1 b): There will be a significant relationship between gendered representation of main male and female characters, male and female characters using stereotypical toys, or male and female characters with stereotypical behaviors in children's picture books and illustrator gender.

Research Design and Data Analysis

The current study used a correlational research design. The researcher was trying to determine the relationship between variables as they exist. The researcher evaluated the gender stereotyping in picture books from a classroom library collection that primary school students use for independent reading in the classroom. The research questions were chosen to examine the relative frequency at which male and female characters are depicted in children's books, how those characters behave relative to traditional stereotypes, and whether gender representation varies across books because of author and illustrator gender.

The first research question, "How do main characters' behaviors in children's picture books differ by gender?", was measured with descriptive statistics. This analysis was used to determine if the characteristics of the main character differ by gender.

The second research question, "How are male and female characters represented by age in children's picture books?", used a Two-Way Between-Subjects ANOVA to compare the gender of the character with the age of the character. The rationale for using a two-way between-subjects ANOVA is to understand if there is an interaction between the two independent variables on the dependent variable (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). The two independent variables are main character gender (female, male) and main character age (child, adult) and the dependent variable is the number of main characters in the book (one, two or more). The alpha level of .05 was chosen to test the significance of the null hypothesis.

The third research question, "How do the main characters use of stereotypical toys in children's pictures books compare by gender (male, female)?", used an

independent samples t-test. The rationale for using an independent samples *t*-test is to determine whether there is a difference in the means between two independent, unrelated groups on a continuous dependent variable (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). The dependent variable is stereotypical toys, and the independent variable is character gender (male, female). The alpha level of .05 was chosen to test the significance of the null hypothesis.

The fourth research question, "What is the relationship between gendered representation of main male and female characters, male and female characters using stereotypical toys, or male and female characters with stereotypical behaviors in children's picture books associated with a) author gender, and b) illustrator gender?", used two binomial logistic regressions. The rationale for using a binomial logistic regression also known as a logistic regression is to predict a dichotomous dependent variable based on one or more continuous or nominal independent variables. The independent variables, or the predictor variables, are the gendered representation between the main male and female characters, male and female characters using stereotypical toys, or male and female characters with stereotypical behaviors. The dependent variables, or the outcome variables are the character representation, are the author and illustrator gender (male, female). The alpha level of .05 was chosen to test the significance of the null hypothesis.

Planned analyses by research questions are as described. For all analyses, a level of significance of $\alpha = 0.05$ will be used. Prior to each analysis, the data were screened for missing values, miscoded values, and outliers. Assumption tests for each analysis were also run to ensure that the data were appropriate to use with each analysis. Descriptive statistics were calculated for each analysis.

Reliability and Validity of the Research Design

The sample was accessed from a list of books in a classroom library collection spanning three grades, Kindergarten, grade 1 and grade 2. A possible threat to reliability was the observer/researcher error. The seven volunteers coded a total of 151 books. In order to ameliorate this possible threat, the volunteers were provided with training, handouts for coding and the researchers contact information should they have questions, but this researcher found that there were questions regarding the coding especially within group illustrations. The volunteers, when they were unsure of counting of characters, wrote notes on the coding sheet explaining how they calculated the number of characters instead of contacting the researcher. In order to minimize this possible threat, the researcher contacted the volunteer for further explanation of the notes and together determined how to include this information in the coding sheet should it be important. Another possible threat to reliability was human error. The volunteers and the researcher coded books on their own, without observation. The researcher found that coding mistakes could be easily made by miscounting or losing one's place in the counting process which inevitably required a recounting of characters. Another threat to the study, an external validity threat, may have been reactive arrangements. The volunteers expressed concern about "getting this right" for the purpose of this study. This researcher explained that there are no wrong answers and asked that the volunteers use their knowledge and experience when coding books. Another possible threat might have been the small sample size. The researcher began by looking at 900 book titles. After eliminating books cataloged as non-fiction, the researcher determined that there were 491 books which fit the fiction criteria. Of those books, the researcher concluded that 181

books would fulfill the requirement of picture book and upon further examination, found that 30 books from the collection were not confirmed to be picture books so they were therefore eliminated. Therefore, the study used 151 picture books that fulfilled the criteria set forth by the researcher.

Sample and Population

Sample

The sample of books used in this study come from Booksource's Classroom Library Collection. In selecting the sample, the researcher emailed numerous companies for permission to evaluate their classroom library collection (see Appendix B). Throughout this process, one company respectfully requested the researcher not analyze their collection, many companies did not respond, and one company, Booksource, gave permission to analyze their collection (see Appendix C).

Booksource states that "they provide the education market with the largest selection of new and classic titles and classroom collections with over 30,000 titles representing more than 150 publishers (Booksource, n.d., "About us" section)." According to a representative from Booksource, they have sold their collections to all 50 states and in the last two years, have sold to 3,816 different districts/customers (J. Catanzaro, personal communication, February 8, 2022).

Booksource's collections are updated yearly, and the researcher chose to use the 2022 calendar year collection as this collection was the most current year and the books available are the most recent books available for purchase. The complete classroom library collections for kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd grade were examined. After reviewing 900 books, the researcher located 491 books that Booksource categorized as fiction. The

researcher then checked the titles of the books in the Suffolk County, New York online library catalog and chose books with the designation of Juvenile Picture Book, regardless of other designations such as Juvenile picture and Juvenile non-fiction, for poetry or folktales and fairytales or Juvenile Easy Readers. The Suffolk County online catalog was used to determine which books were cataloged as a Juvenile Picture Book for two or more libraries in Suffolk County. If this criterion was met, the book was included in the study. As cataloging in a public library was relatively consistent with cataloging in a school library (both use the Dewey Decimal Classification), the researcher chose to check all books in the Suffolk County online catalog for cataloging consistency. The researcher determined that 151 books (see Appendix D) fit the Juvenile Picture Book criteria.

The researcher then located the publication date and copyright date of each book and searched for the author and illustrator gender for each book. In total, 66% of the books on the 2022 list were published within the last five years, and 80% were published within the last ten years. Due to the lack of variation in the copyright years in the collection, this independent variable was not included in the study.

Population

Primary school classroom libraries are important component of reading success (Hunter, 2004). The population and setting to which this research was directed towards was a primary school classroom, grades Kindergarten to grade 2. While classroom library collections, for sale through Booksource include up to grade 12, this researcher chose to focus on primary school books.

The sample included 151 children's picture books from Booksource's classroom library collection. Books used for the study included an interest age, according to

Booksource's website of between Preschool, for the Kindergarten list, to grade 5, for the books from the 2nd grade list. In addition, the audience listed in the OPAC, Online Public Access Catalog, provided the same age range.

Instrument

A coding sheet developed by Hamilton et al. (2006) was adapted and used to code the books in this study. The researcher received permission from Dr. Hamilton, Professor at Centre College, to use the coding sheet that she used in her study *Gender Stereotyping and Under-Representation of Female Characters in 200 Popular Children's Picture Books: A Twenty-First Century Update* (see Appendix E). The original coding sheet (not shown) was an eight-page document with 121 questions in which most of the responses were completed by circling yes/no or writing short answers to questions such as occupation. The headings on the coding sheet included general information such as title, author, classification of the story and target age of the audience; all characters which included a counting of the male and female characters; count of all male and female pictures; main character name, role and behavior; another category for characters whose gender was not recognized; mothers/fathers and if they were in illustrations with a child; mother's interaction with children, meaning if the mother showed affection to the child(ren); mother's other actions that were more verbal such as crying or yelling; father's interaction with children, meaning if the father showed affection to the child(ren); father's other actions that were more verbal such as crying or yelling; stereotypical household chores list for men and women and traditional/nontraditional jobs list for men and women. The variables derived from the coding sheet and used in the analysis are shown in Table 1.

The coding sheet also included a household chores list containing nine items; a household chores list for women containing eight items; a traditional/nontraditional jobs list containing three items for men and two items for women; and a traditional/nontraditional toy list for boys containing five items, for girls containing eight items, and a neutral category containing four items.

Only a subset of the coding sheet was used, including the following sections in this research: title, author name and gender, illustrator name and gender; story classification; gender of title character; count of all female and male characters; main character gender; if main character was active or passive; and chores and jobs, traditional/nontraditional, that the adult character performs (see Appendix F).

Table 1

Variables for Adapted Coding Sheet

Variable	Coding	Question on Coding Sheet or Calculation
Number of female child characters	Integer	8
Number of female adult characters	Integer	9
Number of female unknown age characters	Integer	10
Number of male child characters	Integer	15
Number of male adult characters	Integer	16
Number of male unknown age characters	Integer	17
Total female characters	Integer	Sum of female child, adult, and age-unknown characters (11, 14)
Total male characters	Integer	Sum of male child, adult, and age-unknown characters (18, 22)
Number of main characters	0 = No main character 1 = One main character 2 = More than one main character	23
Sex of main character	1 = Female 2 = Male 3 = Neutral	24
Age of main character	1 = Child 2 = Adult 3 = Unknown age	25
Role of main character	1 = Active 2 = Passive 3 = Both	26
Location of main character	1 = Indoors 2 = Outdoors 3 = Both	27
Number of times main character rescues another	Integer	28
Number of times main character is rescued	Integer	29
Number of times main character asks questions of an other-sex character	Integer	28D
Number of times main character answers questions of an other-sex character	Integer	28E
Number of times main character behaves fearfully	Integer	28G
Number of times main character behaves bravely	Integer	28H
Number of times main character nurtures/cares for another	Integer	28I
Number of times main characters acts assertively/aggressively	Integer	28J
Toys	0 = No toys 1 = Typically female 2 = Typically male 3 = Both 4 = Neutral	29

To assist in the counting of characters, the researcher implemented the guidelines used by Hamilton et al. (2006) as suggested by Dougherty and Engel (1987). In determining character gender, Dougherty and Engel (1987) proposed an illustration to be gender neutral if obvious indications of gender were not provided. However, taking into consideration the guidelines by Dougherty and Engel (1987), Hamilton et al. (2006), the researcher chose to code a character as male if, a child reading the book would consider the character male. This determination was backed up by a study by Lambdin et al. (2003) in which the researchers, including Dr. Hamilton, using stuffed animals, asked children the gender and in most cases, the children referred to the animal as he.

This researcher had the volunteers count all characters in each illustration which was different than what Hamilton et al. (2006) did during their research. Hamilton et al. (2006) used a method of counting groups in scenes and if the illustration consisted of seven or more characters, the illustration counted as the dominant character. Hamilton et al. (2006) chose to do this, so a crowd illustration did not carry more weight than characters in a small group or as individuals. However, this researcher felt that all characters should be included in the analysis and noted on the coding sheet to count all characters on each page and include those numbers in the total number of characters as the final response.

Through correspondence with K.T. Horning, Distinguished Special Librarian, former Director of the Cooperative Children's Book Center, School of Education at University of Wisconsin-Madison, the researcher decided to add the animal distinction information as discussed in the article by Gershowitz and Parravano (2018). The gender marker information, supplied by Horning (2021) helped coders determine the gender of

animal characters. This distinction information was included on the coding sheet as an asterisk under the male and female sections for animal adult, animal child and animal unknown age.

Procedures for Collecting Data

To ensure reliable coding, the researcher and at least one volunteer coded each book in the collection. Coders were public and school librarians. For this study, the researcher hopes to secure 5 to 10 librarians who are familiar with children's literature to participate in the process. The researcher will prepare a video that the volunteers can review at their convenience which is approximately ten minutes in length. The researcher contacted the volunteers by email and attached a link to the video and included a copy of the completed coding sheet for the sample book, *Knuffle Bunny* by Mo Willems, not part of the collection. The researcher also included a printed sheet of highlights from the video, and a PowerPoint presentation of the sample book.

The researcher offered to meet with any volunteer via phone, video or in-person to answer any questions prior to the coding of books. The researcher provided a collection of books ranging from 15 to 25 books per librarian to review within a month. The researcher will be available by email, text and phone should a reviewer have any questions during the process. When the month of review was over, the researcher collected the books and the completed coding sheets from the volunteers at a convenient time for the volunteer. To divide the books up randomly, the researcher chose a random number generator and included the numbers 1 – 151 and divided the books into seven bags with the first six bags each containing 24 books. As the seventh bag contained seven books, the researcher returned to the random number generator and chose the first 17

books from the second randomization which, luckily, did not duplicate any of the books in bag seven as shown in Table 2.

A subset of 17 books (about 10% of the total sample) will be coded by three individuals (the researcher plus two coders) to establish that there was sufficient interrater reliability in coding the books. Specifically, the researcher will compare the results to enhance the accuracy of the study (Creswell and Guetterman, 2019). In cases in which the book coding does not match, the researcher will ask another librarian to code the book. If the coding continues to not match, the researcher reserves the right to eliminate the book from the study. All coders will receive an honorarium in the amount of $100 for participating. Once the researcher was confident with the coding, the researcher will begin the task of entering the results into a database, which were uploaded into SPSS for analysis.

Research Ethics

The importance of ethics for the volunteers was of significant importance to this research. The first step in the study was to obtain permission from the Institutional Review Board (IRB). The application was submitted and approved without need for further inquiry from the IRB (see Appendix A). The researcher then sent out an email (see Appendix G) to ten librarians that worked as either a public or school librarian or as both a public and school librarian. The researcher received responses from seven librarians volunteering their time to assist with the coding of the books. An informed consent letter (see Appendix H) describing the purpose of the study and the ethical procedures was sent to each volunteer. Any correspondence was sent through a blind carbon copy (bcc) so that the volunteers were not able to discuss the process prior to

receiving their bag of books and coding sheet. All participants who volunteered placed their completed coding sheets in a large envelope which they sealed prior to returning this to the researcher. Participation in this study was voluntary and volunteers were given the option of opting out if they no longer wished to continue.

Table 2

Random Selection of Books Into Bags for Volunteers

bag 1	bag 2	bag 3	bag 4	bag 5	bag 6	bag 7
1	14	4	3	9	15	9
2	21	12	7	10	18	21
5	25	19	16	11	20	30
6	27	24	17	13	31	32
8	28	32	23	37	33	42
22	29	42	41	38	35	52
26	34	45	51	49	40	56
36	39	52	61	63	47	82
43	50	56	68	64	53	86
44	54	66	80	75	57	91
46	55	69	83	76	58	97
48	65	71	101	79	73	100
59	67	77	103	81	84	103
60	70	90	114	102	88	105
62	72	97	120	104	89	108
74	78	119	122	105	92	111
85	94	125	124	109	93	112
86	96	127	126	118	106	121
87	115	128	131	123	110	123
95	116	130	134	132	111	135
98	117	137	141	135	113	136
99	129	142	146	139	133	139
144	136	143	150	140	138	142
148	107	147	151	145	149	149

The books chosen for the study were purchased by the researcher and chosen for each volunteer using an online random generator. The books were then placed in each

bag with the assistance of another volunteer, Paige Robinson. Bags were distributed to each volunteer at a mutually convenient time and once completed, picked up at the volunteer's convenience. The volunteers chosen for this research were anonymous and were not provided with each other's names or a list of the books they were given to code. Volunteers were provided with a link to a pre-recorded video which explained the process and provided with this researcher's contact information should they have additional questions. One volunteer requested a meeting, and the remaining volunteers communicated via email or text with questions. Once the coding was completed, this researcher requested that the completed coding sheets be placed in the envelopes provided. When the researcher coded the books from the bag, the coding sheets from the envelope were removed and put in numeric order.

Conclusion

This chapter presented the research design and data analysis, sample, instruments, treatment and interventions, procedures for collecting data and research ethics for this quantitative study.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

The purpose of this non-experimental research was to explore the representation of male and female characters in children's picture books, the toys that they might use and to understand how author and illustrator gender relates to that representation in a classroom library collection. The sample consisted of 151 picture books assigned to grades Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grade of a collections put together by Booksource and coded by seven volunteers. Their responses, along with the researcher's responses, were entered into a spreadsheet and uploaded into SPSS. This chapter presents the findings from the four research questions in this current study. The results and finding provide framework for Chapter 5.

Results

Research Question 1 (Descriptive Statistics)

How are main characters represented in children's picture books?

From the coding sheet, three responses were used for descriptive statistics. Those were: Classification of the story type (human, animal, object), main character's primary demeanor, and main character primary location.

The descriptive statistics for the type of main character (*N*=151) is shown in Table 3. There were more human characters in the books, followed by mixed characters, human and animal, with animal and object characters last.

Table 3

Classification of Main Character's Story Type

	Frequency	Percent
Human	101	66.9
Animal	16	10.6
Object	11	7.3
Mixed	23	15.2
Total	151	100

The descriptive statistics for the main character's primary demeanor (*N*=151) is shown in Table 4. There were more active characters, with such behaviors as in the books energetic action or activity, giving advice rather than taking advise, helpful rather than being helped, leading not following, deciding not deferring and/or doing not waiting, followed by passive characters, with behaviors such as not participating or not compliant and both active and passive demeanors.

Table 4

Main Character Primary Demeanor

	Frequency	Percent
Active	128	84.8
Passive	14	9.3
Both	7	4.6
Total	151	100

The descriptive statistics for the main character's primary location (*N*=151) is shown in Table 5. There were an equal number of characters counted indoors and in both indoors and outdoors, followed by characters only found indoors.

Table 5

Main Character Primary Location

	Frequency	Percent
Indoors	33	21.9
Outdoors	59	39.1
Both	59	39.1
Total	151	100

Research Question 2

What were the differences in gender and age of main character in children's picture books?

Hypotheses.

H_0 a): There will be no significant difference in the total number of main characters represented in children's picture books when comparing the gender of characters (female, male).

H_1 a): There will be a significant difference in the total number of main characters represented in children's picture books when comparing the gender of characters (female, male).

H_0 b): There will be no significant difference in the total number of main characters represented in children's picture books when comparing the age of characters (child, adult).

H_1 b): There will be a significant difference in the total number of main characters represented in children's picture books when comparing the age of characters (child, adult).

H_0 c): There will be no significant interaction effect between the gender of main characters and the age of main characters in children's picture books.

H_1 c): There will be significant interaction effect between the gender of main characters and the age of main characters.

The assumption test for a two-way between-subjects ANOVA were conducted prior to running the statistical analysis. The dependent variable (total number of main characters) was measured on a continuous scale. The two independent variables, main character gender (male, female), and main character age (child, adult) were categorical with two levels each. There was independence of observations, as there were different participants in each level of each group. The test for normality indicated that the data were not perfectly normally distributed. This was evident by examining the standardization skewness and kurtosis results, where the variables had some skewing. However, the ANOVA test is robust for not having a perfectly normal distribution. The test for homogeneity of variance was significant as evident by the Levene's test, $F(3,105) = 10.117$, $p < .001$, which means that the assumption test for homogeneity of variance was not met. Since the data violated the assumption of homogeneity of variances, the researcher chose to do two separate one-way between-subjects ANOVAs using the Welch ANOVA. The Welch ANOVA has the most power and the lowest type I error rate and is used when the data has unequal variances.

The one-way ANOVA was then conducted for number of main characters based on main character gender as seen in Table 6. There was no significant difference between groups $F(1,135) = 1.480$, $p=.226$. Due to the non-significant results, the null hypothesis was accepted.

Table 6

ANOVA Results of Number of Main Characters Based on Main Character Gender

Source	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*
Groups	0.26	1	0.26	1.48	0.226
Error	23.725	135	0.176		
Total	23.985	136			

The one-way ANOVA was then conducted for number of main characters based on main character age as seen in Table 7. There was no significant difference between groups $F(1,121) = 1.604$, $p=.208$. Due to the non-significant results, the null hypothesis was accepted.

Table 7

ANOVA Results of Number of Main Characters Based on Main Character Age

Source	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*
Groups	0.283	1	0.283	1.604	0.208
Error	21.343	121	0.176		
Total	21.626	122			

Research Question 3

How do the main characters use of stereotypical toys in children's picture books compare by gender (male, female)?

Hypotheses.

H_1: There will be no significant difference in the use of stereotypical toys represented in children's picture books when comparing the gender of the main character (female, male).

H_0: There will be a significant difference in the use of stereotypical toys represented in children's picture books when comparing the gender of the main character (female, male)

The researcher decided to use an independent samples *t*-test to analyze the data. The researcher determined that this was an appropriate statistical analysis to use when there are two groups, a control group and treatment group (Knapp, 2017). The categorical independent variable in this study was had only two levels (female, male) and the dependent variable was continuous, stereotypical toys used by the main character.

The data file was screened, and it was determined that there were no missing values. There were no outliers noted as the scores were converted to z scores for evaluation. The alpha level chosen to test for significance was .05.

Prior to running the independent samples *t*-test, the assumption tests were conducted. Independence of observations was noted as characters were only assigned to one of two groups. Histograms with normal curves demonstrated normal distributions of for each group. Homogeneity of variance was not violated, as the Levene's test result was not significant, $F(1,117) = 2.527$, $p = .115$. Therefore, the data set passed all of the assumption tests in order to conduct the independent samples *t*-test.

The use of stereotypical toys for those characters who were gendered female had a lower mean score ($M = .88$, $SD = 1.266$) than those who were gendered male ($M = 1.11$, $SD = 1.343$), as is shown in Table 8. The difference in gender was not significant, $t(151) = -.978$, $p = .330$. The result was not significant. This indicates that males were more often seen with stereotypical toys than females, but the difference was not significant. The nonsignificant results determine that we retain the null hypothesis.

Table 8

Mean Scores for use of Toys by Character Gender

	M	*SD*	*t*(151)	*p*
Female	0.88	1.27	-0.98	0.33
Male	1.11	1.34		

Research Question 4

What is the relationship between gendered representation of main male and female characters, male and female characters using stereotypical toys, or male and female characters with stereotypical behaviors (see Table 9) in children's picture books and a) author gender, and b) illustrator gender?

Hypotheses.

H_0 a): There will be no significant relationship between gendered representation of main male and female characters, male and female characters using stereotypical toys, or male and female characters with stereotypical behaviors in children's picture books and author gender.

H_1 a): There will be a significant relationship between gendered representation of main male and female characters, male and female characters using stereotypical toys, or male and female characters with stereotypical behaviors in children's picture books and author gender.

H_0 b): There will be no significant relationship between gendered representation of main male and female characters, male and female characters using stereotypical toys, or male and female characters with stereotypical behaviors in children's picture books and illustrator gender.

H_1 b): There will be a significant relationship between gendered representation of main male and female characters, male and female characters using stereotypical toys, or male and female characters with stereotypical behaviors in children's picture books and illustrator gender.

Table 9

List of Main Character Behaviors and Main Character Toys

Main Character Behaviors	rescues another character is rescued by another character asks question of other sex answers question of other sex asks question of same sex answers question of same sex behaves fearfully behaves bravely nurtures cares for another acts assertively stereotypical dress
Main Character Toys	no toys stereotypical female toys - dolls, jewelry, makeup stereotypical male toys - cars, trucks, construction neutral toys - blocks, stuffed animals equal uses of toys stereotyped to either gender

For research question 4(a), a binomial logistic regression was conducted to determine how main character gender, toys and behavior are associated with author gender. There were 151 books in the study. This was an appropriate statistical analysis to use when an observation falls into one of two categories of a dichotomous categorical dependent variable based on one or more independent variables which can be either continuous or categorical (Knapp, 2018). The predictor independent variables were coded

as: main character use of toys (0 = No, 1 = Yes), main character behavior (0 = No, 1 = Yes), and main character gender, (0 = Female, 1 = Male). The outcome dependent variable, which was author gender, was coded as 0 = Female and 1 = Male.

In order to determine if the data were appropriate to use with a binomial logistic regression, six assumptions tests were run. The dependent variable was measured on a dichotomous scale (0, 1). The independent variables were categorical, and dummy coded as (0, 1). There was independence of observations as the participants could only belong to one group in the independent variable (0 = No; 1 = Yes). The dependent variable was dichotomous and had mutually exclusive and exhaustive categories (0 = Female; 1 = Male). There were no continuous independent variables so the assumption of linearity with the Log Odds of the dependent variable did not apply. Sample size was more than adequate as there were 151 books in total. Since logistic regression relies on a goodness-of-fit test as a means of assessing the fit of the model to the data, a crosstabs analysis was run. Each of the cells had a count of ($n > 5$).

Logistic regression is very sensitive to multicollinearity. The multicollinearity statistics showed that the assumption was met as the VIF scores was well below 10 (number of main characters =1.115, rescues another character or characters from imminent physical danger = 1.287, is rescued by another character from imminent physical danger = 1.125, asks questions of an other-sex character = 1.307, answers the questions of an other-sex character = 1.438, asks questions of a same-sex character = 1.484, answers the questions of a same-sex character = 1.604, behaves fearfully = 1.192, behaves bravely = 1.287, nurtures/cares for another character = 1.162, acts assertively/aggressively = 1.264, stereotypical dress (females in dress; males in pants) =

1.111, stereotypically female toys used by main character = 1.187, stereotypically male toys used by main character = 1.120, neutral toys used by main character = 1.300, equal uses of toys stereotyped to either gender and/or neutral toys used by main character = 1.139) and the Tolerance score was above .20 (number of main characters = .896, rescues another character or characters from imminent physical danger = .748, is rescued by another character from imminent physical danger = .884, asks questions of an other-sex character = .780, answers the questions of an other-sex character = .703, asks questions of a same-sex character = .703, answers the questions of a same-sex character = .627, behaves fearfully = .831, behaves bravely = .777, nurtures/cares for another character = .861, acts assertively/aggressively = .791, stereotypical dress (females in dress; males in pants) = .900, stereotypically female toys used by main character = .842, stereotypically male toys used by main character = .893, neutral toys used by main character = .769, equal uses of toys stereotyped to either gender and/or neutral toys used by main character = .878).

A standard binary logistic regression was conducted to determine how main character gender, toys and behavior are associated with author gender. Based on a significance level of ($p < .05$), results indicated that the regression model was not statistically significant, $\chi^2(16) = 23.490$, $p = .101$. The model explained 22.5% (Nagelkerke R^2) of the variance in author gender and correctly classified 75.9% of the cases. Female authors were 4.707 times more likely to write a main male character than male authors (95% CI 1.952, 11.355), female authors were 1.220 times more likely to write a main male character who rescues another character or characters from imminent physical danger than male authors (95% CI .310, 4.807), female authors were 2.580 times

more likely to write a main male character who is rescued by another character from imminent physical danger than male authors (95% CI .518, 12.858), male authors were .825 times more likely to write a main male character who asks questions of an other-sex character than female authors (95% CI .312, 2.181), female authors were 1.263 times more likely to write a main male character who answers the questions of an other-sex character than male authors (95% CI .406, 3.923), male authors were .894 times more likely to write a main male character who asks questions of a same-sex character than female authors (95% CI .325, 2.457), female authors were 1.163 times more likely to write a main male character who answers the questions of a same-sex character than male authors (95% CI .369, 3.659), female authors were 1.088 times more likely to write a main male character who behaves fearfully than male authors (95% CI .313, 1.948), male authors were .781 times more likely to write a main character who behaves bravely than female authors (95% CI .528, 2.560), male authors were .691 times more likely to write a main male character who nurtures/cares for another character than female authors (95% CI .263, 1.813), female authors were 2.736 times more likely to write a main male character who acts assertively/aggressively than male authors (95% CI 1.092, 6.855), male authors were .943 times more likely to write a main male character who stereotypical dress (females in dress; males in pants) than female authors (95% CI .396, 2.246), male authors were .514 times more likely to write a main character who no toys used by main male character than female authors (95% CI .029, 9.106), female authors were 1.449 times more likely to write a main character who uses stereotypically female toys used by main male character than male authors (95% CI .044, 47.851), male authors were .245 times more likely to write a main character who stereotypically male toys used

by main male character than female authors (95% CI .011, 5.569), male authors were.459 times more likely to write a main character who neutral toys used by main male character than female authors (95% CI .021, 9.849). This analysis as shown in Table 10 indicates that the null hypothesis is retained. The gender of the male and female authors and the relationship to main character gender, main character behavior and main character use of toys influenced the dialog in the children's picture books, however the relationships were not significant.

For research question B, which predicted the relationships of the main character gender, main character behavior and main character use of toys and the gender of the illustrator, a binomial logistic regression was conducted. There were 151 books in the study. This was an appropriate statistical analysis to use to better understand how multiple variables effect a dichotomous outcome (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). The predictor independent variables, which were coded as: main character use of toys (0 = No, 1 = Yes), main character behavior (0 = No, 1 = Yes) and, main character gender, (0 = Female, 1 = Male). The outcome dependent variable, which was illustrator gender, was coded as 0 = Female and 1 = Male.

Table 10

Binary Logistic Regression Results of Author Gender With Main Character Gender, Behavior and Toys

	b	*SE B*	*Wald* X^2	*df*	*Exp (B)*	*95% CI Exp (B)*
main character gender(1)	1.549	0.449	11.892	1	4.707	1.952 - 11.355
rescues another character(1)	0.199	0.7	0.081	1	1.22	0.31 - 4.807
is rescued by another character(1)	0.948	0.819	1.338	1	2.58	0.518 - 12.858
asks question of other sex(1)	-0.192	0.496	0.15	1	0.825	0.312 - 2.181
answers question of other sex(1)	0.233	0.578	0.163	1	1.263	0.406 - 3.923
asks question of same sex(1)	-0.112	0.516	0.047	1	0.894	0.325 - 2.457
answers question of same sex(1)	0.151	0.585	0.066	1	1.163	0.369 - 3.659
behaves fearfully(1)	0.084	0.496	0.029	1	1.088	0.412 - 2.874
behaves bravely(1)	-0.248	0.466	0.282	1	0.781	0.313 - 1.948
nurtures cares for another(1)	-0.369	0.492	0.563	1	0.691	0.263 - 1.813
acts assertively(1)	1.006	0.469	4.611	1	2.736	1.092 - 6.855
stereotypical dress(1)	-0.059	0.443	0.018	1	0.943	0.396 - 2.246
no toys(1)	-0.666	1.467	0.206	1	0.514	0.029 - 9.106
female toys(1)	0.371	1.784	0.043	1	1.449	0.044 - 47.851
male toys(1)	-1.406	1.593	0.778	1	0.245	0.011 - 5.569
neutral toys(1)	-0.779	1.564	0.248	1	0.459	0.021 - 9.849
Constant	-1.211	1.543	0.616	1	0.298	

In order to determine if the data were appropriate to use with a binomial logistic regression, six assumptions tests were run. The dependent variable was measured on a dichotomous scale (0, 1). There independent variables were categorical, and dummy coded (0, 1). There was independence of observations as the participants could only belong to one group in the independent variable (0 = No; 1 = Yes). The dependent variable had mutually exclusive and exhaustive categories (0 = Female; 1 = Male). There were no continuous independent variables so the assumption of linearity with the Log Odds of the dependent variable did not apply. Sample size was more than adequate as there were 151 books in total. Since logistic regression relies on a goodness-of-fit test as a means of assessing the fit of the model to the data, a crosstabs analysis was run. Each of the cells had a count of ($n > 5$). Logistic regression is very sensitive to multicollinearity. The multicollinearity statistics showed that the assumption was met as the VIF scores was well below 10 (number of main characters =1.115, rescues another character or characters from imminent physical danger = 1.287, is rescued by another character from imminent physical danger = 1.125, asks questions of an other-sex character = 1.307, answers the questions of an other-sex character = 1.438, asks questions of a same-sex character = 1.484, answers the questions of a same-sex character = 1.604, behaves fearfully = 1.192, behaves bravely = 1.287, nurtures/cares for another character = 1.162, acts assertively/aggressively = 1.264, stereotypical dress (females in dress; males in pants) = 1.111, stereotypically female toys used by main character = 1.187, stereotypically male toys used by main character = 1.120, neutral toys used by main character = 1.300, equal uses of toys stereotyped to either gender and/or neutral toys used by main character = 1.139) and the Tolerance score was above .20 (number of main

characters = .896, rescues another character or characters from imminent physical danger = .748, is rescued by another character from imminent physical danger = .884, asks questions of an other-sex character = .780, answers the questions of an other-sex character = .703, asks questions of a same-sex character = .703, answers the questions of a same-sex character = .627, behaves fearfully = .831, behaves bravely = .777, nurtures/cares for another character = .861, acts assertively/aggressively = .791, stereotypical dress (females in dress; males in pants) = .900, stereotypically female toys used by main character = .842, stereotypically male toys used by main character = .893, neutral toys used by main character = .769, equal uses of toys stereotyped to either gender and/or neutral toys used by main character = .878).

A standard binary logistic regression was conducted to determine how main character gender, toys and behavior are associated with illustrator gender. Based on a significance level of ($p < .05$), results indicated that the regression model was statistically significant, $\chi^2(16) = 29.954$, $p = .018$. The model explained 26.4% (Nagelkerke R^2) of the variance in illustrator gender and correctly classified 73.0% of the cases. Male illustrators were 3.959 times more likely to draw a main male character than female illustrators (95% CI 1.786, 8.776), female illustrators were 1.657 times more likely to draw a main male character who rescues another character or characters from imminent physical danger than male illustrators (95% CI .448, 6.130), male illustrators were .950 times more likely to draw a main male character who is rescued by another character from imminent physical danger than female illustrators (95% CI .188, 4.810), male illustrators were .850 times more likely to draw a male main character who asks questions of an other-sex character than female illustrators (95% CI .335, 2.158), female illustrators were 1.074

times more likely to draw a male main character who answers the questions of an other-sex character than male illustrators (95% CI .375, 3.077), male illustrators were .704 times more likely to draw a main male character who asks questions of a same-sex character than female illustrators (95% CI .274, 1.814), female illustrators were 1.504 times more likely to draw a main male character who answers the questions of a same-sex character than male illustrators (95% CI .516, 4.387), male illustrators were .679 times more likely to draw a main male character who behaves fearfully than female illustrators (95% CI .265, 1.734), female illustrators were 1.183 times more likely to draw a main male character who behaves bravely than male illustrators (95% CI .501, 2.789), male illustrators were .544 times more likely to draw a main male character who nurtures/cares for another character than female illustrators (95% CI .223, 1.327), female illustrators were 1.678 times more likely to draw a main male character who acts assertively/aggressively than male illustrators (95% CI .711, 3.957), female illustrators were 1.383 times more likely to draw a main male character who stereotypical dress (females in dress; males in pants) than male illustrators (95% CI .613, 3.122), female illustrators were 657783789.968 times more likely to draw a main character who no toys used by main male character than male illustrators, female illustrators were 584593308.954 times more likely to draw a main character who uses stereotypically female toys used by main male character than male illustrators, female illustrators were 589219279.336 times more likely to draw a main character who stereotypically male toys used by main male character than male illustrators, female illustrators were 1546716319.056 times more likely to draw a main character who neutral toys used by main male character than male illustrators.

Table 11

Binary Logistic Regression Results of Illustrator Gender With Main Character Gender, Behavior and Toys

	b	*SE B*	*WALD X*	*df*	*Exp (B)*	*95% CI Exp (B)*	
main character gender(1)	1.376	0.406	11.481	1	3.959	1.786	- 8.776
rescues another character(1)	0.505	0.668	0.572	1	1.657	0.448	- 6.13
is rescued by another character(1)**	-0.051	0.828	0.004	1	0.95	0.188	- 4.81
asks question of other sex(1)	-0.163	0.475	0.117	1	0.85	0.335	- 2.158
answers question of other sex(1)	0.072	0.537	0.018	1	1.074	0.375	- 3.077
asks question of same sex(1)	-0.35	0.483	0.527	1	0.704	0.274	- 1.814
answers question of same sex(1)	0.408	0.546	0.559	1	1.504	0.516	- 4.387
behaves fearfully(1)**	-0.388	0.479	0.656	1	0.679	0.265	- 1.734
behaves bravely(1)**	0.168	0.438	0.147	1	1.183	0.501	- 2.789
nurtures cares for another(1)	-0.609	0.455	1.79	1	0.544	0.223	- 1.327
acts assertively(1)	0.517	0.438	1.397	1	1.678	0.711	- 3.957
stereotypical dress(1)	0.325	0.415	0.611	1	1.383	0.613	- 3.122
no toys(1)**	20.304	22198.5	0	1	657783790	0	
female toys(1)	20.186	22198.5	0	1	584593309	0	
male toys(1)**	20.194	22198.5	0	1	589219279.3	0	
neutral toys(1)	21.159	22198.5	0	1	1546716319	0	
Constant	-21.552	22198.5	0	1	0		

** significant difference between binomial logistic regression results between author gender and illustrator gender

This analysis, as shown in Table 11, indicates that the null hypothesis is rejected as male illustrators as opposed to female illustrators influenced main character gender, main character behavior and main character use of toys in the children's picture books.

Conclusion

This current quantitative research was used to determine how main characters in children's picture books relate to behaviors, toys and author and illustrator gender. The research comprised of seven volunteers who coded 151 children's picture books. The analysis included descriptive statistics, Two-Way Between-Subjects ANOVA, Independent Samples *t*-test and Binomial Logistic Regression. The data were analyzed and gathered in order to provide findings to address the research questions in line with the conceptual framework of the research study.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

This chapter discusses the findings of the current research and how it relates to the theoretical and conceptual framework, and how this research relates to prior studies found in Chapter 2. This chapter will also include the limitations of the present study, and the recommendations for future practice and research.

Implications of Findings

The theoretical framework that guided this study was Bem's Gender Schema Theory. As Bem believed, encouraging children to be different from the stereotypes that society expects of them will provide children with the opportunity to free themselves from these confines (Cherry, 2020). The importance of this quantitative research was to learn if gender stereotyping in children's picture books was still being practiced.

The researcher, using descriptive statistics, analyzed the classification of the story (human, animal, mixed, object), main character's primary demeaner (active, passive, both) and primary location (indoors, outdoors, both). The analysis showed that there were more books with human characters than animal, mixed or object characters. For the descriptive statistic of main characters primary demeanor, Bem's discussions of the beginnings of gender schema theory were from cultural assumptions where in some cultures, a female is expected to be passive, and a male is expected to be active. Many of the books were recently published which might account for the explanation as to why the books reviewed started to change the schema because the coded books showed more main female characters were active. The last part of the descriptive statistics showed that main characters were located outdoors or both indoors and outdoors which might be a positive consequence of the last two years where the public remained indoors for safety.

When the data analysis for the main gender and age of the main character was performed, it was inconclusive, so another analysis was performed which showed that there are more male characters than female characters and more adult characters than child characters. Bem stated that as early as 2 years old, boys and girls show a preference for sex-differentiated play (Martin & Dinella, 2001). This choice of toy continues in upper grades with boys being more into sports and girls into shopping (Martin & Dinella, 2001). When analyzing toy preferences of no toys, male stereotypical toys such as sport equipment and cars, female stereotypical toys such as dolls and jewelry, neutral toys such as stuffed animals, and both male and female stereotypical toys, more male stereotypical toys were found being used by both male and female characters in the books reviewed. For example, in the book *Happy Like Soccer* by Maribeth Boelts, the main female character, Sierra, loves to play soccer for which she is using a male stereotypical toy, a sports ball.

Boys are encouraged to be brave and act strong where girls are encouraged to be weak and helpless. However, Bem's gender schema theory shared that children realize what behavior they should engage in by seeing their surrounding (Bem, 1983).

Relationship to Prior Research

Similar studies which focused on gender stereotyping resulted in similar results. In 2018, Filipović evaluated 15 books in an early childhood center in Ireland. He concluded that there were more male main and title character in the books. Gooden and Gooden (2001) looked at 85 ALA Notable Children's picture books and found that while there was a slight decrease in gender stereotyping, the instance of female stereotyping was still noteworthy. In 2011, McCabe et al. analyzed the title and main characters in a

total of 5,618 Caldecott award-winning books, Children's Catalog books and Little Golden books. On average, males were represented more as both title and main characters than females and McCabe et al. (2011) concluded that underrepresentation of female characters still exists in children's literature. Coding and statistical analysis of this study showed that there were more male main characters than female main characters, with more adult main characters than child main characters, but the difference between the gender is smaller. Of the 151 books, there were 1.273 main male characters for every female main character and 1.250 adult main character for every child main character. This researcher is happy to see a change in the main character gender in picture books and feels that it shows that authors and publishing houses are interested in showing more equity and diversity of characters.

Tepper and Cassidy (1999) studied emotional language used by males and females in picture books and concluded that male character used more emotional language than female characters but noted that male characters were using more emotional language because there are more male characters in children's picture books than female characters. Mattix and Sobolak (2014) studied the way gender is portrayed in New York Times best sellers from 1972, 1982, 1992, 2002 and 2012. While some years showed a larger presence of female characters, they concluded that female characters were still depicted in stereotypical roles such as caregiver, or mother, for example. This researcher found that authors tended to write female characters to ask questions of same-sex characters and other-sex characters, and to care for other characters which does not seem to be a large change from previous studies. In addition, illustrators drew female characters being rescued and behaving fearfully. There are many female representatives

that contradict the findings of the authors and illustrators, and the hope is that the trend to show females in roles that show their strength will persevere.

The researcher concluded that males were more often seen with stereotypical toys than females which is corroborated by the studies of Mertala et al. (2016) and Jadva et al. (2010). Mertala et al. (2016) collaborated with a Finish toy company providing a catalog of 45 age-appropriate toys to 13 male and female children. Offering the children their choice of toy, they found that toy preference was based on gender stereotypes which was validated by previous research studies. Jadva et al. (2010) studied children aged 12 to 24 months and their interest in two stereotypical toys, a doll and truck. When testing how the children would react to the color of the toy, they found that children preferred a pink doll and blue truck more than a blue doll and pink truck. While the color choice is more acceptable with girls being known for pink and boys for blue, toys should be gender neutral meaning that if a girl wants to play with a truck or a boy with a doll, they should be allowed to.

In 1999, Davis and McDaniel studied how male and female characters were portrayed by authors and illustrators in children's picture books. Using 25 Caldecott award-winning books from 1940-1971, male characters were found in more illustrations than female characters and males were mentioned in more text than females. Hamilton et al. (2006) explored the relationship between gender of the author and character using 200 top selling books from 1995-2001. More male pictures per book were found with male authors writing more about male characters and female authors writing about male and female characters equally. This researcher found that male and female authors were more likely to write about a male main character than female main character and illustrators

were more likely to draw more male main characters than female main characters. The researcher's results matched with results previously found in studies in the 1990s and as recent as 2006 by Hamilton et al. The researcher felt that the illustrator, who is not chosen by the author, but by the publisher, would be illustrating the book using the author's words as a guideline. However, the researcher was surprised that the coding of the author did not have a significant difference in main character gender stereotyping, while the illustrator did.

Limitations of the Study

The researcher contacted three companies requesting permission to use their classroom library collection for research purposes. Only one company, Booksource, provided permission to evaluate their collection. One company respectfully requested the researcher not include their collection in the study and one company never responded to the researcher's email. The results of this study will only be generalizable to similar collections, and it was not clear at the outset how much variability to expect among classroom library collections produced by different companies.

Another possible limitation to the study could be variations among the volunteers who coded the books. The coders were provided with directions, books, and a blank coding sheet to complete for each book but coded books in their own space with factors not within their control such as disruptions which might have impeded their concentration. As most children's librarians are females, the volunteers also were not a diverse group, which could have biased the results as their gender created a frame for their coding. Some individual coders might have had strong biases toward gender issues of characters that could have altered results of the study. Some coders might also have

looked for things by reading too much into the text or by trying too hard to evaluate the illustrations. The provision of training and use of multiple coders per book was intended to reduce errors and increase reliability of the results.

Another limitation were the volunteers and researcher's interpretations of what was-happening in the book. This researcher found that if the book was read prior to coding, it was easier to understand the story the author wrote, and the illustrator drew. However, upon speaking with the volunteers, it appears that some did not understand the story or like the message being presented.

Counting issues is another possible limitation with the research. As previously mentioned, all illustrations were counted which caused a large discrepancy with more than one book. This researcher, when comparing the responses from a coding sheet completed by a volunteer and the researcher, found some differences in the counting of characters. In those cases, the researcher asked two other volunteers to provide their impression on specific pages and adjusted the character count to reflect the feedback received. In instances where there was a small difference, the researcher took both responses, added them and divided them by two.

Lastly, over time, the coders might have changed their coding strategies due to a better understanding of the coding process. This might encompass changes in the coding of the books and as such, the researcher suggested the volunteers code at the same time each time they are coding and code more than one book at a time. The researcher also suggested that the volunteers code books in a random order to be consistent with their coding.

Recommendations for Future Practice

Although this study shows small changes in gender representation of female and male characters in children's picture books, this dissertation proves that a prepared list of books for a classroom library collection, that is comprised of more recently published books, is a good start in ensuring that books that our children read in their classroom are more diversified. Speaking with future educators and current leaders about gender stereotyping in children's literature would be a good place to start in the hopes that there could be changes in book purchasing. If books are purchased by schools and libraries with knowledge about character stereotypical behaviors, and if educators, current and future, was aware of the positive behaviors and negative behaviors, the publishing industry might take notice and change the books they are publishing. On a note to the Big Six publishing houses, it is important to offer books that reflect our society which includes books with strong female characters. Books such as *Dinorella* by Pamela Duncan Edwards, are very popular with both parents and children and are an excellent example of a female main character. In this story, a fractured fairytale of Cinderella, Dinorella arrives at the Dinosaur Dance, wearing a ballgown, and rescues the Duke from a dreaded deinonychus who is trying to eat him. Dinorella shows that girls can be tough, too.

Recommendations for Future Research

This researcher felt that it would be important to code all the books suggested for a classroom library collection as only 151 out of 491 fiction books for three grades were coded for this research. The researcher felt that coding all of the books, for the three

grades, or coding books just for one grade might have resulted in a different analysis for main character gender.

This researcher felt that including race/ethnicity in coding would be an asset to the data. While the researcher and volunteers did count the total number of characters in the story, the number of main child or adult characters was more specific to the statistical analysis for this research. This results for the kind of character, human or animal is included in the statistical analysis but could be important for future research.

Previous authors have found that gender stereotyping exists in children's picture books, however, this researcher has found that the gender stereotyping in this classroom library collection was not significant and that the future in children's literature is changing. This researcher feels that it would be important to further this research study by coding children's picture books to look for gender stereotyping in all picture books. By partnering with schools of education that prepare students to become teachers and librarians, future educators will be able to look for books that promote a positive female character which can be available for the children of our future. To further assist teachers and librarians, it would be advantageous to have an accessible database with book information listed including title, author, illustrator, main character gender, main character age and if the book shows the main character in a stereotypical manner or not.

Conclusion

This study was important as there is a lack of recent studies on gender stereotyping in children's picture books and no studies specifically using classroom library collections. This researcher would encourage further research using the classroom library collection of other companies that sell sets to school districts.

APPENDIX A IRB APPROVAL MEMO

IRB-FY2022-359 - Initial: Initial - Other Decisions - St. John's

do-not-reply@cayuse.com <do-not-reply@cayuse.com>
Tue 5/31/2022 9:24 AM
To: Erin Fahle <fahlee@stjohns.edu>;Mildred Bernstein <mildred.bernstein19@my.stjohns.edu>

* External Email *

ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY

Federal Wide Assurance: FWA00009066

May 31, 2022 9:24:47 AM EDT

PI: Mildred Bernstein
CO-PI: Erin Fahle
Dept: Ed Admin & Instruc Leadership

Re: Initial - IRB-FY2022-359 GENDER STEREOTYPES IN CHILDREN'S PICTURE BOOKS: A STUDY OF AUTHORS, ILLUSTRATORS, AND MAIN CHARACTERS IN A CLASSROOM LIBRARY COLLECTION

Dear Mildred Bernstein:

The St John's University Institutional Review Board Institutional Review Board has rendered the decision below for GENDER STEREOTYPES IN CHILDREN'S PICTURE BOOKS: A STUDY OF AUTHORS, ILLUSTRATORS, AND MAIN CHARACTERS IN A CLASSROOM LIBRARY COLLECTION.

Decision: No Human Subjects Research

Sincerely,

Raymond DiGiuseppe, PhD, ABPP
Chair, Institutional Review Board
Professor of Psychology

Marie Nitopi, Ed.D.
IRB Coordinator

CAUTION - External email. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

APPENDIX B E-MAIL TO REQUEST USE OF CLASSROOM LIBRARY COLLECTION FOR RESEARCH

mildred bernstein <[redacted]>

Gender Stereotyping in Children's Picture Books

mildred bernstein <[redacted]> Fri, Oct 29, 2021 at 1:09 PM

To: service@booksource.com

Hi,

I am a doctoral student at St. John's University.

From the time I decided to obtain my doctorate, I decided to research gender stereotyping in children's picture books. As a children's librarian, I have had the opportunity to read many books and have always been fascinated with how book characters are represented. At the suggestion of one of my professors, I am also going to include author gender and book copyright date in my research.

Because the program is education based, I would like to use a collection of picture books that are used in a classroom library and from your website, I see that you have a collection of books dedicated to a classroom library. I am currently writing my first three chapters, but wanted to know if I have permission to evaluate your collection around March 2022? I would purchase the collection available for the classroom library for grades Kindergarten through 2nd grade and will share my results with you as I work on this project and upon its completion.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Regards,
Mildred Bernstein

APPENDIX C RESPONSE FROM BOOKSOURCE

Jessica Catanzaro <[redacted]>
to me

Mildred,

Thank you very much for reaching out about our collections. You are more the welcome to use one of our collections and we would love to hear the feedback.

Please let me know if I can help with anything else.

Jessica Catanzaro
Office Administrator
1230 Macklind Avenue | Saint Louis, MO 63110
p. 800.444.0435 ext. 325| **f**. 800.647.1923
Booksource.com

APPENDIX D LIST OF BOOKS USED FOR RESEARCH

	BOOK TITLE	AUTHOR	ILLUSTRATOR
1	Felíz New Year, Ava Gabriela!	Alessandri, Alexandra	Sonda, Addy Rivera
2	Acoustic Rooster's Barnyard Boogie Starring Indigo Blume	Alexander, Kwame	Bowers, Tim
3	Can Bears Ski?	Antrobus, Raymond	Dunbar, Polly
4	Buffalo Storm, The	Applegate, Katherine	Ormerod, Jan
5	Moon Pops	Baek, Heena	Baek, Heena
6	Stuff Of Stars, The	Bauer, Marion Dane	Holmes, Ekua
7	Sloth At the Zoom	Becker, Helaine	Orbie
8	Me And My Dragon	Biedrzycki, David	Biedrzycki, David
9	I Dream of Popo	Blackburne, Livia	Kuo, Julia
10	Bus For Us, The	Bloom, Suzanne	Bloom, Suzanne
11	Happy Like Soccer	Boelts, Maribeth	Castillo, Lauren
12	Kaia And the Bees	Boelts, Maribeth	Dominguez, Angela
13	Bike Like Sergio's, A	Boelts, Maribeth	Jones, Noah, Z.
14	Anthony And the Gargoyle	Bogart, Jo Ellen	Kastelic, Maja
15	Across The Blue Pacific	Borden, Louise	Parker, Robert Andrew
16	Lucy Tries Soccer	Bowes, Lisa	Hearne, James
17	Trust Me, Jack's Beanstalk Stinks!	Braun, Eric	Bernardini, Cristian Luis
18	Ruby's Wish	Bridges, Shirin Yim	Blackall, Sophie

19	Clifford, The Big Red Dog	Bridwell, Norman	Bridwell, Norman
20	Little Beauty	Browne, Anthony	Browne, Anthony
21	Powwow Treasure, The	Bruchac, Joseph	Deforest, Dale
22	Yard Sale	Bunting, Eve	Castillo, Lauren
23	There Was an Old Woman Who Lived in A Shoe	Cabrera, Jane	Cabrera, Jane
24	All Because You Matter	Charles, Tami	Collier, Bryan
25	Redwoods	Chin, Jason	Chin, Jason
26	Mixed: A Colorful Story	Chung, Arree	Chung, Arree
27	We Shall Overcome	Collier, Bryan	Collier, Bryan
28	Juneteenth For Mazie	Cooper, Floyd	Cooper, Floyd
29	New In Town	Cornell, Kevin	Cornell, Kevin
30	Jabari Jumps	Cornwall, Gaia	Cornwall, Gaia
31	Lia & Luis: Who Has More?	Crespo, Ana	Medeiros, Giovana
32	Herd Boy, The	Daly, Niki	Daly, Niki
33	Once In a Blue Moon	Daniel, Danielle	Daniel, Danielle
34	Day War Came, The	Davies, Nicola	Cobb, Rebecca
35	Star Crossed	Denos, Julia	Denos, Julia
36	Sunday Shopping	Derby, Sally	Strickland, Shadra
37	Mixed Me!	Diggs, Taye	Evans, Shane W.
38	My Friend!	Diggs, Taye	Evans, Shane W.
39	Night Walk, The	Dorléans, Marie	Dorléans, Marie

40	Quill Soup: A Stone Soup Story	Durant, Alan	Blankenaar, Dale
41	Place Inside of Me: A Poem to Heal the Heart, A	Elliott, Zetta	Denmon, Noa
42	Librarian's Stories, The	Falcone, Lucy	Wilson, Anna
43	It's Not Little Red Riding Hood	Funk, Josh	Taylor, Edwardian
44	Little Wooden Robot and The Log Princess, The	Gauld, Tom	Gauld, Tom
45	Pangolina	Goodall, Jane	Ma, Daishu
46	Change Sings: A Children's Anthem	Gorman, Amanda	Long, Loren
47	In The Garden with Dr. Carver	Grigsby, Susan	Tadgell, Nicole
48	Peeper And Zeep	Gudeon, Adam	Gudeon, Adam
49	Place To Stay: A Shelter Story, A	Gunti, Erin	Meza, Estelí
50	Norman Didn't Do It! (Yes, He Did)	Higgins, Ryan T.	Higgins, Ryan T.
51	Big Bob, Little Bob	Howe, James	Anderson, Laura Ellen
52	Brontorina	Howe, James	Cecil, Randy
53	Ira Crumb Makes a Pretty Good Friend	Hrab, Naseem	Holinaty, Josh
54	Lonely Mailman, The	Isern, Susanna	Galán, Daniel Montero
55	Brown: The Many Shades of Love	James, Nancy Johnson	Moore, Constance
56	Soccer Star	Javaherbin, Mina	Alarcão, Renato
57	Goal!	Javaherbin, Mina	Ford, A.G.
58	Something's Wrong! A Bear, A Hare, And Some Underwear	John, Jory	Kraan, Erin

59	Bad Seed, The	John, Jory	Oswald, Pete
60	Good Egg, The	John, Jory	Oswald, Pete
61	Shahrzad And the Angry King	Kazemi, Nahid	Kazemi, Nahid
62	Frankenslime	Keller, Joy	Belote, Ashley
63	Arabic Quilt, The	Khalil, Aya	Semirdzhyan, Anait
64	Usha And the Big Digger	Knight, Amitha Jagannath	Prabhat, Sandhya
65	Alpha Oops! The Day Z Went First	Kontis, Alethea	Kolar, Bob
66	I Wish You Knew	Kramer, Jackie Azúa	Mora, Magdalena
67	(We're) Riding on A Caravan: A Silk Road Adventure	Krebs, Laurie	Cann, Helen
68	Two At the Top: A Shared Dream of Everest	Krishnaswami, Uma	Corr, Christopher
69	Paintbrush For Paco, A	Kyle, Tracey	Heinsz, Joshua
70	Boy Who Cried Ninja, The	Latimer, Alex	Latimer, Alex
71	Drawn Together	Lê, Minh	Santat, Dan
72	Leilong The Library Bus	Liu, Julia	Lynn, Bei
73	Run, Little Chaski!	Llanos, Mariana	Johnson, Mariana Ruiz
74	What Are Your Words? A Book About Pronouns	Locke, Katherine	Passchier, Anne
75	Pug	Long, Ethan	Long, Ethan
76	Encounter	Luby, Brittany	Goade, Michaela
77	Big Bath House, The	Maclear, Kyo	Zhang, Gracey

78	Fry Bread: A Native American Family Story	Maillard, Kevin Noble	Martinez-Neal, Juana
79	Good Night Wind: A Yiddish Folktale	Marshall, Linda Elovitz	Doliveux, Maelle
80	This Is a Gift for You	Martin, Emily Winfield	Martin, Emily Winfield
81	Alma And How She Got Her Name	Martinez-Neal, Juana	Martinez-Neal, Juana
82	Zonia's Rain Forest	Martinez-Neal, Juana	Martinez-Neal, Juana
83	Helga Makes a Name for Herself	Maynor, Megan	Kaban, Eda
84	Delphine Denise And the Mardi Gras Prize	Mazique, Brittany	Cloud, Sawyer
85	Who Will Bell the Cat?	McKissack, Patricia C.	Cyr, Christopher
86	Not An Alphabet Book: The Case of The Missing Cake	McLaughlin, Eoin	Boutavant, Marc
87	Bad Dog	McPhail, David	McPhail, David
88	Lola Loves Stories	McQuinn, Anna	Beardshaw, Rosalind
89	I Will! A Book Of Promises	Medina, Juana	Medina, Juana
90	Evelyn Del Rey Is Moving Away	Medina, Meg	Sánchez, Sonia
91	Subway Ride	Miller, Heather Lynn	Ramá, Sue
92	Stella's Stellar Hair	Moises, Yesenia	Moises, Yesenia
93	Just In Case: A Trickster Tale and Spanish Alphabet Book	Morales, Yuyi	Morales, Yuyi
94	Nino Wrestles the World	Morales, Yuyi	Morales, Yuyi
95	Boy Who Was Raised by Librarians, The	Morris, Carla	Sneed, Brad
96	Cowboy, The	Müller, Hildegard	Müller, Hildegard
97	Go Away, Unicorn!	Mullock, Emily	Mullock, Emily

98	Marching With Aunt Susan: Susan B. Anthony and The Fight for Women's Rights	Murphy, Claire Rudolf	Schuett, Stacey
99	Little Green Hen, The	Murray, Alison	Murray, Alison
100	Fowl Play	Nichols, Travis	Nichols, Travis
101	Freedom Bird: A Tale of Hope and Courage	Nolen, Jerdine	Ransome, James
102	Beautifully Me	Noor, Nabela	Ali, Nabi H.
103	Sulwe	Nyong'o, Lupita	Harrison, Vashti
104	Chicken In the Kitchen	Okorafor, Nnedi	Amini, Mehrdokht
105	Legend Of Gravity, The	Palmer, Charly	Palmer, Charly
106	Firekeeper's Son, The	Park, Linda Sue	Downing, Julie
107	Between Us and Abuela: A Family Story from The Border	Perkins, Mitali	Palacios, Sara
108	I Eat Poop: A Dung Beetle Story	Pett, Mark	Pett, Mark
109	Little Mermaid, The	Pinkney, Jerry	Pinkney, Jerry
110	Bravest Man in The World, The	Polacco, Patricia	Polacco, Patricia
111	Hey! A Colorful Mystery	Read, Kate	Read, Kate
112	My Name Is Yoon	Recorvits, Helen	Swiatkowska, Gabi
113	Tree For Emmy, A	Rodman, Mary Ann	Mai-Wyss, Tatjana
114	Best Friends, Busy Friends	Rollings, Susan	Cowdery, Nichola
115	Barn, The	Rogers, Leah H.	Root, Barry
116	Creak! Said The Bed	Root, Phyllis	Dunnick, Regan
117	Princess In Training	Sauer, Tammi	Berger, Joe

118	Lorraine: The Girl Who Sang the Storm Away	Secor, Ketch	Bond, Higgins
119	Seriously, Cinderella Is So Annoying!	Shaskan, Trisha Speed	Guerlais, Gerald
120	Dear Treefrog	Sidman, Joyce	Sudyka, Diana
121	Astronaut Annie	Slade, Suzanne	Tadgell, Nicole
122	Plan For Pops, A	Smith, Heather	Kerrigan, Brooke
123	Charlie & Mouse Even Better	Snyder, Laurel	Hughes, Emily
124	Gift For Amma: Market Day in India, A	Sriram, Meera	Cabassa, Mariona
125	Amos McGee Misses the Bus	Stead, Philip C.	Stead, Erin E.
126	Midnight Fair, The	Sterer, Gideon	Di Giorgio, Mariachiara
127	Best Worst Poet Ever, The	Stohler, Lauren	Stohler, Lauren
128	Kindness Counts 123	Strong, R. A.	Trukhan, Ekaterina
129	Joseph Had a Little Overcoat	Taback, Simms	Taback, Simms
130	Our Little Kitchen	Tamaki, Jillian	Tamaki, Jillian
131	Mommy's Khimar	Thompkins-Bigelow, Jamilah	Glenn, Ebony
132	Your Name Is a Song	Thompkins-Bigelow, Jamilah	Uribe, Luisa
133	Green Is a Chile Pepper	Thong, Roseanne Greenfield	Parra, John
134	Love In the Library	Tokuda-Hall, Maggie	Imamura, Yas
135	Feathered Serpent and The Five Suns	Tonatiuh, Duncan	Tonatiuh, Duncan
136	Greta And the Giants	Tucker, Zoë	Persico, Zoe
137	Mix It Up!	Tullet, Hervé	Tullet, Hervé
138	Dad, Jackie, And Me	Uhlberg, Myron	Bootman, Colin

139	Binny's Diwali	Umrigar, Thrity	Chanani, Nidhi
140	Loving Kindness	Underwood, Deborah	Hopgood, Tim
141	Octopus Stew	Velasquez, Eric	Velasquez, Eric
142	Black and White	Vogrig, Debora	Valentinis, Pia
143	Watercress	Wang, Andrea	Chin, Jason
144	This Book Is Gray	Ward, Lindsay	Ward, Lindsay
145	Won Ton: A Cat Tale Told in Haiku	Wardlaw, Lee	Yelchin, Eugene
146	Is 2 A Lot?	Watson, Annie	Evans, Rebecca
147	Scaredy Squirrel	Watt, Mélanie	Watt, Mélanie
148	Unicorns Are the Worst!	Willan, Alex	Willan, Alex
149	Astro Girl	Wilson-Max, Ken	Wilson-Max, Ken
150	Quick As a Cricket	Wood, Audrey	Wood, Don
151	Fish For Jimmy: Based on One Family's Experience in A Japanese American Internment Camp	Yamasaki, Katie	Yamasaki, Katie

APPENDIX E PERMISSION FROM DR. M. HAMILTON TO ADAPT CODING SHEET FOR RESEARCH

mildred bernstein <[redacted]> Thu, Mar 12, 2020, 10:05 AM

to mykol.hamilton

Hi Dr. Hamilton,

I am a Doctoral student at St. John's University, Queens, NY and in the beginning stages of my dissertation work. As a children's librarian, I became very interested in gender representation in picture books. After much thought, my topic of choice is *Female Representation in Children's Picture Books*.

In my research, I came across a copy of the code sheet you prepared for *Gender Stereotypes and Under-Representation of Female Characters in 200 Popular Children's Picture Books: A Twenty-First Century Update.* I would like to, with your permission, use components of your code sheet for my research. I hope to further the research you have done, and the research done by Dr. Kelly Crisp Paynter, from 2011, and include picture books from a variety of genres.

Thank you in advance for your time and attention to this matter.

Warmest regards,
Mildred Bernstein

Mykol C. Hamilton <[redacted]> Mon, Apr 6, 2020, 5:57 PM

to me

Absolutely. We've just done an update with the top 200 of 2019. Let's talk and I'll share what's new. Give me a week to get my results and head together.

Meanwhile, can you send me a link to Paynter? We're about to write the intro so I definitely need to look at it. I shared my coding sheet with Kelly, way back, then never saw her outcomes!

APPENDIX F ADAPTED CODING SHEET

Rater Name: _____

Adapted Code Sheet (Hamilton et al., 2006)

Book Information

1. Title _____
2. 1st Copyright Year _____
3. Author(s) _____
4. Author sex. Circle number: 1 female 2 male 3 mixed
5. Illustrator(s) _____
6. Illustrator sex. Circle number. 1 female 2 male 3 mixed

7. Classify the story (circle one, use mixed only if the animals are anthropomorphized or central characters):
1 Human 2 Animal 3 Object 4 Mixed

ALL CHARACTERS

**Count ALL pictures on every page starting when the text begins. Count the number of females and males in both humans and animal form, separating each count by age into child, adult or unknown. For example, if the first page has 2 adult humans and 1 child human and the second page has 1 adult human and 1 child human, your count so far is 3 adult humans and 2 child humans.

Count the number of female characters in each category.

8. Human Children ____
9. Human Adults ____
10. Human Age Unspecified ____
11. TOTAL Human characters ____
11. Animal Children* ____
12. Animal Adults* ____
13. Animal Age Unspecified* ____
14. TOTAL Animal characters ____

Count the number of male characters in each category.

15. Human Children ____
16. Human Adults ____
17. Human Age Unspecified ____
18. TOTAL Human characters ____
19. Animal Children* ____
20. Animal Adults* ____
21. Animal Age Unspecified* ____
22. TOTAL Animal characters ____

*If uncertain about gender of **Animal character**, please use the following gender markers from K.T. Horning– hairstyle, clothing, eyelashes (exaggerated for female characters), bows (top of the head=female; below the head=male), and color (pink=female)

MAIN CHARACTERS

This can be determined by reading the book. If you are not sure of the main character, count the illustrations of the two characters (can be adult or child) that you feel can be the main character. The character with the larger number of illustrations will be considered the main character.

23. Total number of main characters in book

0 no main character 1 one main character 2 two or more main characters

24. Main character gender (circle one)

1 female 2 male 3 neutral

25. Main character age (circle one)

1 child 2 adult 3 can't tell

26. Main character primary demeanor (circle one)

Definitions

Active: Characterized by energetic action or activity, gives rather than takes advice, helps rather than being helped, leading not following, deciding not deferring, doing not waiting.

Passive: not participating, or acting, compliant.

1 active 2 passive 3 both (if impossible to determine)

27. Main character primary location

1 indoors 2 outdoors 3 both (can be found indoors or outdoors)

28. Count the number of times the main character does the following behaviors or shows these qualities (leave blank if no main character):

A. rescues another character or characters from imminent physical danger ____
B. is rescued by another character from imminent physical danger ____
C. asks questions of an other-sex character ____
D. answers the questions of an other-sex character ____
E. asks questions of a same-sex character ____
F. answers the questions of a same-sex character ____
G. behaves fearfully ____
H. behaves bravely ____
I. nurtures/cares for another character ____
J. acts assertively/aggressively ____
K. stereotypical dress (females in dress; males in pants) ____

29. The toys main character are seen playing with are (circle one, "both" can include neutral)

Definitions:

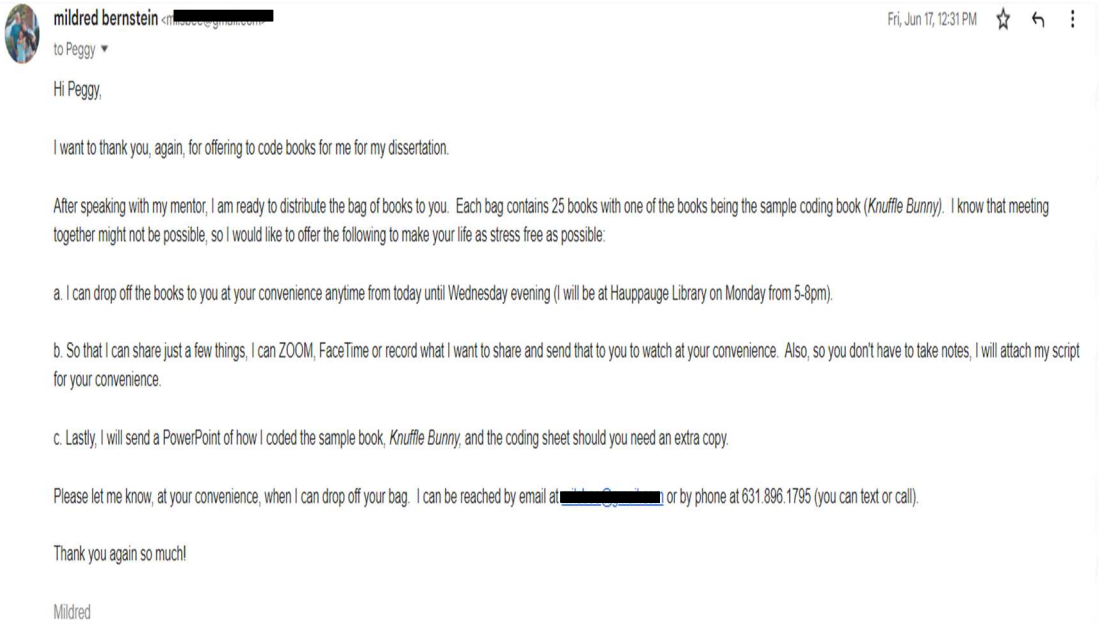
Stereotypical Boys – cars, trucks, construction, sports equipment, items from male occupations

Stereotypical Girls – dolls, tea sets, doll houses, jewelry, makeup, dress up items, EZ-bake ovens, items from female occupations

Neutral – blocks, art, stuffed animals, computer unless it has gender

0 no toys 1 stereotypically female 2 stereotypically male 3 neutral
4 equal uses of toys stereotyped to either gender and/or neutral toys

APPENDIX G EMAIL TO VOLUNTEERS



mildred bernstein <[redacted]> Fri, Jun 17, 12:31 PM

to Peggy

Hi Peggy,

I want to thank you, again, for offering to code books for me for my dissertation.

After speaking with my mentor, I am ready to distribute the bag of books to you. Each bag contains 25 books with one of the books being the sample coding book (*Knuffle Bunny).* I know that meeting together might not be possible, so I would like to offer the following to make your life as stress free as possible:

a. I can drop off the books to you at your convenience anytime from today until Wednesday evening (I will be at Hauppauge Library on Monday from 5-8pm).

b. So that I can share just a few things, I can ZOOM, FaceTime or record what I want to share and send that to you to watch at your convenience. Also, so you don't have to take notes, I will attach my script for your convenience.

c. Lastly, I will send a PowerPoint of how I coded the sample book, *Knuffle Bunny,* and the coding sheet should you need an extra copy.

Please let me know, at your convenience, when I can drop off your bag. I can be reached by email at [redacted] or by phone at 631.896.1795 (you can text or call).

Thank you again so much!

Mildred

APPENDIX H INFORMED CONSENT

To: Volunteers

From: Mildred Bernstein

Subject: St. John's University Doctoral Study on Gender Stereotyping in Children's Picture Books

Introduction: My name is Mildred Bernstein, and I am a doctoral candidate in the Department of Administrative and Instructional Leadership at the Graduate School of Education, St. John's University, Queens, NY. I am conducting a study for my dissertation titled: GENDER STEREOTYPES IN CHILDREN'S PICTURE BOOKS: A STUDY OF AUTHORS, ILLUSTRATORS, AND MAIN CHARACTERS IN A CLASSROOM LIBRARY COLLECTION. My mentor is Dr. Joan Birringer-Haig, Department of Administrative and Instructional Leadership, St. John's University.

Purpose of Study: I am writing to invite you to participate in my study, which is designed to evaluate the gender stereotyping in picture books from a classroom library collection that primary school students use for independent reading in the classroom. Your responses will help to inform educators about gender stereotyping in books found in a classroom library. The coding of each book should take no longer than 15 minutes.

Procedures: If you wish to participate, please review the video, approximately ten minutes in length, The researcher contacted the volunteers by email and attached a link to the video and included a copy of the completed coding sheet for the sample book, *Knuffle Bunny* by Mo Willems, not part of the collection. The researcher also included a printed sheet of highlights from the video, and a PowerPoint presentation of the sample book.

Possible Risks and Benefits: There are no known potential risks associated with your participation in this research beyond those of everyday life. There are no known risks associated with your participation in this research beyond those of daily life. Although you will not receive any remuneration or direct benefit, the results of this study may help to promote a greater understanding and benefit of gender stereotyping in children's

picture books. Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate, choose not to answer specific questions, or withdraw at any time without consequence.

Confidentiality: If you decide to participate, that will constitute informed consent.

Contact Information: If you have any questions or concerns about my study or your participation, or if you wish to report a research-related problem, you may contact me, Mildred Bernstein at mildred.bernstein19@stjohns.edu , or my mentor, Dr. Joan Birringer-Haig at birringj@stjohns.edu . You may also contact the Coordinator of the Institutional Review Board at St. John's University, Dr. Raymond DiGiuseppe at (718)990-1955 or at digiuser@stjohns.edu.

Your support in completing the coding sheet. As fellow educators, our voices through research can be shared to identify best practices.

Thank you in advance for your consideration to participate in this study on gender stereotyping in children's picture books.

Sincerely,

Doctoral Candidate,
Department of Administrative and Instructional Leadership
St. John's University
Queens, NY 11439

_____ _____

Signature Date

_____

Print name

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