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The Image of the Senior Adult in Recommended Realistic Fiction for Young Adults, 1979-1986

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The Image of the Senior Adult in Recommended
Realistic Fiction for Young Adults, 1979-1986

A Research Paper

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Faculty of the Library Science Department

In Partial Fulfillment
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Table of Contents

Chapter	page
1. INTRODUCTION	1
THE PROBLEM	6
Statement of the Problem	6
Hypotheses	6
Assumptions	6
Definition of Terms	7
Limitations	7
2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	8
3. METHODOLOGY	30
4. ANALYSIS OF THE DATA	39
5. CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND SUMMARY	69
Conclusions	69
Recommendations	76
Summary	77
BIBLIOGRAPHY	79
APPENDICES	
A. Letter	84
B. Media Specialists	85
C. Table - 1960's, 1970's, 1980's Data	86
D. List of Books Read	92

Chapter 1

Introduction

Satchel Paige, the great baseball pitcher, once "asked, 'How old would you be if you didn't know how old you was?'" (Downs, 1979, p. 7). What a marvelous way to approach old age, not as a function of accumulated years, but on the basis of how one feels about their life function. Saying a person is 35 years old does not reveal that person's activities, loves, attitudes and vocation, but mention that someone is 75 years old and most listeners believe that is all they need hear to picture and understand an individual of that age. If age is the only descriptor necessary to define someone over 60 years old then society must have a chronological template to pull from memory for "old." Templates do not vary. They are rigid patterns molded by stereotypes. The stereotypical template of "old" describes "older people as: 'all wrinkled and short,' 'have gray hair,' 'don't work much,' 'chew funny,' 'have heart attacks and die.'" These quotes (Jantz, Seefeldt, Golper, & Serock, 1977) reveal elementary children's responses to questions about the elderly and are but simplified versions of adult attitudes (Burke, 1982; Green, 1981). These views of the last third of life mirror society's equation of "old" equals "loss" which cannot factor out aging as part of the developmental continuum.

Human development is a chronological progression, but with the emphasis on progression throughout the lifespan. Until recently society has spoken about the physical and psychological growth of infants, toddlers, and adolescents. After physical maturity was reached in young

adulthood discussion also halted about the psychological growth of persons over 25. After 25 years of age, when the education cycle is completed, adults are supposedly set to deal with life as they have learned it. Freud's psychosexual theory, Piaget's cognitive learning theory, and others stop at the teen age. Erik Erikson is one prominent psychologist who extended the developmental theories to encompass birth and death and describes old age as a time of "integrity," a time of personal fulfillment (Mussen, Conger, Kagan, & Geiwitz, 1970). To ignore the life and learning in adulthood is to diminish the important contribution to the social order of possibly two-thirds of a person's lifetime. Living and learning does not stop when formal training or education is completed.

The last thirty years has seen an increased attention to the topic of aging (Green, 1981; Levin & Levin, 1980; Marks, Newman & Onawola, 1985). Margaret Kuhn, or Maggie as she is known in the media, organized and became the spokesperson of "the Gray Panthers for the purpose of liberating older persons from 'paternalism and oppression with which society keeps us powerless'" (Hessel, 1977, p. 9). In 1980, people over 65 represented 11% of the population in the United States. Various projections increase that number to 20% by the year 2000 or 30% by the middle of the next century (Hessel, 1977; Huyck & Hoyer, 1982). Maggie is working to liberate this age-group minority from the prejudice and discrimination of ageism.

"Ageism [sic] is the arbitrary discrimination against people on the basis of their chronological age" (Hessel, 1977, p. 15). Ageism, like racism and sexism, is the behavior of one group of people towards

another based on stereotypical attitudes and beliefs. Persons over 65 years of age are often negatively labeled as wrinkled, crippled, mean, crabby, passive, weak, dependent, inactive and unproductive by children as well as adults (Fillmer, 1984; Green, 1981; Hickey, Hickey, & Kalish, 1968; Parnell, 1980; Rich, Myrick, & Campbell, 1983).

Children as young as three have been found to have negative attitudes of aging (Rich, et al, 1983), but older children and young adults were seen as having more stereotypical perceptions of the elderly (Burke, 1982; Fillmer, 1984). Stereotypes can be both negative and positive. Examples of negative stereotypes have been mentioned above. Positive stereotypes, believing all older persons are happy, retired and bake cookies, also add to the misperceptions of this age group. Most studies have confirmed prejudice. Other researchers have mixed conclusions depending on the methodology and instrument used (Fillmer, 1984; Marks, et al, 1985).

The stereotypical attitudes that lead to prejudice against the elderly are not based in reality. Neither the negative nor positive description of aging depicts the average person over 65 and gives no allowances for variation. Individuals may be attributed with one or more of the descriptors, but not with all of them. People are unique whether they are 5, 35, or 65. The final third of life is populated with as many varied people and characteristics as the first two (Allen & Wine, 1963; Hendricks & Hendricks, 1981; and Peixotto, 1986). Some elderly people may be wrinkled, crippled, mean, crabby, passive, weak, dependent, inactive, or unproductive, but not all of them. This is also true of persons under the age of 65. Intelligence, memory, hearing,

personality and physical traits do exhibit some changes with the aging process; however, not all of the changes may be considered losses (Freese, 1981; Fozard, 1980; Levin & Levin, 1980; Parks, Puglisi, Thomas, & Smith, 1986). Reality is not reflected in the myths society claims.

Upon confirming that negative attitudes toward the elderly do exist in children and youth, and negative attitudes are not based in reality, the next problem is to determine how they are obtained.

Hendricks and Hendricks (1981) believe that a key element of the myth of ageism is the failure of youth to see that aging is really an extension of their present life. This lack of vision by youth leads them to conclude that the senior adult has different desires, interests, activities, and concerns or worse yet has none at all.

In Ageism: Prejudice and Discrimination Against the Elderly, Jack and William Levin (1980) discuss the theory that society believes there is a correlation between adding years to one's life and the decline in abilities which is labeled senescence. This is perpetuated by the way in which research questions are asked based on that assumption. The writers believe these assumptions limit the types of inquiries to those which focus on decline. Just looking old is not an accurate foundation for generalizations. Judgements must be founded on facts, not myths.

Society is a composite mirror of what individuals see, hear, read and experience. The truth can often be obliterated in a self-perpetuating cycle. If individuals decide aging includes only negative aspects, the products of society such as business, education and media will reproduce those ideas. Individuals will note the

inclusion in the conceptions of varying disciplines which will confirm their original beliefs. Somewhere in the circular process the conceptions are labeled "truth" without justification.

The media's version of the truth about old people is often a perpetuation of the stereotypes of aging. Television commands a great deal of attention from American society and children in particular who have never known life without it. There is stereotypical portrayal of senior adults on television (Bishop & Krause, 1984; Harris & Feinberg, 1978) and is noted even on Saturday morning programming (Bishop & Krause, 1984). Similar prejudice is seen in nonprint media (Horner 1982), newspapers (Wass, 1983, 1984), humor (Kehl, 1985; Palmore, 1971), birthday cards (Demos & Jache, 1981), and literature (Ansello, 1978; Baggett, 1980; Jackson, 1977; Storey, 1977; Taylor, 1977). Palmore concludes, "There is much evidence to indicate that these stereotypes have little or no basis in fact and that they apply at most to only a minority of persons over 65 years of age in the United States" (1971).

"Don't believe everything you read," is a frequent admonition, but the power of the printed word is believed to change adults' and children's thinking, behaviors and attitudes even if the reader is unaware of it (Belcher, 1986; Berg-Cross & Berg-Cross, 1978; Culp, 1975; Dobo, 1982; McArthur, Zebrowitz, & Eisen, 1976; Scott, 1986). Consequently, the myths and stereotypes of aging found in children's and young adult literature (Baggett, 1980; Jackson, 1977; Seltzer and Atchley, 1971; Katz, 1978) are believed to influence how the young view the elderly and possibly their own aging (Hendricks & Hendricks, 1981).

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this research was to do a content analysis of recommended realistic fiction written for young adults from 1979 through 1986 for positive and negative stereotypes as well as realistic portrayals of aging persons. Mary Carolyn Baggett (1980) did a content analysis of the image of older persons in realistic fiction for young adults from 1960 to 1979. Because very little has been published in the literature since that time, it is not known how authors have portrayed the senior adult in realistic fiction written for young adults in the 1980's (1979 to 1986). The findings of this study were compared to the analysis of data from the Baggett study to determine changes from the 1960's and 1970's to the 1980's in the way this group is depicted.

This research sought an answer to the question is there a significant difference in the projected image of older persons in the literature of the 1980's from that published in the 1960's or 1970's?

The hypotheses tested were (1) the image of the senior adult is not significantly different ($p = .05$) in realistic fiction published for young adults in 1979-1986 than 1960-1969, (2) the projected image of the senior adult in realistic fiction published for young adults is not significantly different ($p = .05$) in 1979-198 than in 1970-1979. The null hypotheses was to be rejected if there was a significant difference in a majority of the 40 categories of characteristics of the senior adult.

The assumptions underlying this research are (a) young adults do read the realistic fiction written for their age group, (b) authors write realistic fiction which portrays ideas and people as they are in

today's society, (c) senior adult characters are included in realistic fiction for young adults, and (d) young adults' beliefs/attitudes are "affected" by what they read.

Definitions of Terms

Adolescent, young adult, and youth are used in this study for persons ages 12 to 19.

Image, as used in this study, is the way in which a person is described in words.

Realistic fiction is the novel written to reflect life as it is experienced in today's society.

"Recommended" means those books which are identified by practicing media specialists as having a senior adult who is a major character or who has an important influence on the major character.

Senior adult, the aging, elderly, and older persons are used to describe persons over 65 years old. If the chronological age of a person could not be determined, senior adult characters were determined by the words used to describe persons, such as "elderly," "old," "aging," or adjective phrases like "wizened with age," or "white haired."

The results of this study are limited to recommended realistic fiction written for young adults and published in the years 1979 through 1986 and to those books which have senior adult(s) as major character(s) or who have an important influence on the major character.

Chapter 2

Review of Related Literature

This review of the literature covers three aspects important to this study- research and opinions concerning the influence literature has on readers, content analysis to discover the projected image of the senior adult in the media, and empirical studies and articles detailing what normal aging is really like. There are numerous studies available in the literature detailing the influence that literature has on the beliefs, attitudes and behaviors of children and young adults.

Culp (1975) asked 158 college freshmen English students how much they were influenced by the literature they had read since sixth grade in the areas of attitudes, values and/or behaviors. Half of the students reported they had been moderately influenced by reading and the other half was evenly divided between "little influenced" and "strongly influenced" in the areas of self-image, awareness of moral and ethical issues, sensitivity to others, and awareness of social problems. Students believed literature had more bearing on their attitudes while their values tended to be reinforced or re-examined. Very few students felt their behavior was influenced by literature, but those students who were strongly influenced felt many of their behavior decisions were a result of reading. Culp chose five students from the extreme ends of the influence range for case studies. She found a relation between the influence of literature to self-image and amount of reading, but discovered no correlation between the influence of literature and

intelligence, achievement, academic aptitudes, reading level, or background. The novel was indicated as the most influential genre.

Beach writes in "Adolescents' Attitudes and Responses to Literature" (1985) that reading one or two books will not change attitudes in a dramatic way because readers bring their own attitudes to reading. The responses of readers cannot be predicted. He challenges the cause and effect between reading and attitudes, but he does believe reading is good for shaping one's own attitudes and responses through discussion of character and learning about social issues. If an adolescent can analyze the difference between his or her beliefs and others there can be a growth in perspectives. He says "there should be an interaction of literature and living" (p. 14).

Odland (1985) believes young adults can have views of the past and contemplate dilemmas of the future by using books to "make observations and discoveries about themselves and society in which they live" (p.3).

Three studies show the importance of literature in the attitudes of children to sex roles. Children in grades 4, 7, and 11 from a university laboratory school in Florida read appropriate level materials depicting males and females in nontraditional roles. It was found that after just one reading of a story students at all grade levels responded more favorably to males and females who were participating in nontraditional roles. This was true even for the pupils in eleventh grade who showed more stereotypical attitudes toward the subject than students in the lower grades. A review of the literature showed there is an increase of stereotypical attitudes from grade to high school (Scott, 1986).

In the second study stories were read to male and female preschoolers depicting either the same sex or the opposite sex in achievement roles. A control group was read a nonachievement story. Males and females persisted longer on tasks after hearing a same sex achievement story. The findings were significant for the males, but nonsignificant for females of the group. The more a child recalled about the story the longer she or he persisted in a task. "The results of the present investigation clearly reveals that the portrayal of male and female characters in children's storybooks can have a profound effect on the readers' achievement-oriented behavior" (McArthur & Eisen, 1976).

The third study by Scott and Feldman-Summer (1979) investigated whether males and females in grades 3 and 4 would alter their perceptions of male and female roles in our society after reading about female characters in nontraditional roles. The students were given eight short stories to read in a four-week period. There were two versions of each story. They were identical except that one had a female as the main character and the other had a male. Three experimental conditions exposed separate groups to majority male characters, majority female characters, and equal proportions of male and female main characters. Children's perceptions of the roles females could participate in increased as related to the roles depicted in the stories, but did not affect perceptions of roles not depicted. The authors conclude, "Children's reading material, then, can constitute a potentially important avenue for social change with regard to the elimination of sexism" (p. 401).

Bibliotherapy is the use of books to change attitudes and behaviors. The Greeks believed in the therapeutic value of books for healing (Rubin, 1978).

The use of bibliotherapy to affect change is a six step process: (1) read or view and listen; (2) identify with an element in the situation; (3) experience vicariously; (4) catharsis; (5) insight; which should result in (6) change in attitude or behavior (Monroe, 1978). This technique is used by various counselors and teachers in a variety of settings which include mental institutions, hospitals, colleges, libraries, nursing homes, and schools and has been expanding since the 1950's and 1960's (Warner, 1980). Bibliotherapy is used to help people work through the emotional, psychological, or social problems confronting them (Butcher, 1980). There are a great many enthusiastic theories for the use and success of bibliotherapy (Rubin, 1978), but Warner (1980) has a view representative of the cautions issued against its use. She says that although "books can sway, enlighten, move emotions, change attitudes and opinions," as bibliotherapists claim, it is "'little more than moralizing'" (p. 8) which can do more harm than good. Warner, like Beach (1985) and Butcher (1980) cited above, observes it is what a reader brings to the literature that decides the responses. She feels it is better to use books to supplement therapy.

The social aspects of mainstreaming handicapped children into the regular classroom is a concern to parents and teachers. Dobo (1982) advocates the use of children's literature to promote better understanding of the handicapped student by the regular students in the class. In her literature review it was found that even children as

young as four can discover qualities in a disabled child that encourage friendship. Books can help the nondisabled child to have vicarious experiences with handicapped persons which will dilute fears and misconceptions. The regular classroom student will have an improved attitude and relationship with the mainstreamed child.

Ezell (1982) states that authors of children's books perpetuate the stereotypes of aging and the elderly become victims of these images because literature teaches how to live in a society. Children learn from what they read and stereotypes must not be reinforced through reading.

Picture books were one element in a three component study on improving positive and nonstereotyped views of the elderly in three- and four-year olds (Dellmann-Jenkins, Lambert, Fruit, & Dinero, 1986). One component of the research was the daily contact of the children with grandmother volunteers. A second component was interaction with participants of a senior citizen day care center. The third component included books used to provide accurate information about older people. When comparing pretest to posttest scores, the children in the experimental condition, which included all three components, showed more positive change than those in the control group. The researchers suggest the discussion of books, along with other media which project an accurate image of aging and old people, may help eliminate negative opinions about the way the elderly look and act.

Taylor (1977) believes literature can heighten children's awareness of aging and its social needs by showing the diverseness of this age group in a positive way which also develops the idea that old age and

youth are both a part of human development. Books which successfully incorporate these goals will help children see the many dimensions of aging (Seefeldt, 1978).

Content analysis of children's literature for the projected image of the senior adult considers the number of elderly characters and how they are portrayed. Not all studies do both. A study may just do a frequency count for characters present in a book or quantity of items published in a newspaper concerning aging. Other research looks at qualitative portrayals of older persons. This includes noting the positive and negative stereotypes as well as realistic descriptors. Depending upon the inclusion of quantitative and/or qualitative analysis, and the method of choosing books to analyze, the conclusions span a broad range. From a random selection of materials may come a claim of under-representation of elderly in proportion to the population, but if using books identified as having senior adult characters there may be seen a more realistic representation. Likewise, the random selection of literature used for quantitative studies can lead to claims of shadow characters. If the materials are chosen because they do contain older adult characters, it may be found they are diversely portrayed or stereotyped.

Ansello (1978) surveyed 656 randomly chosen children's books classified as picture books or easy reading. Most of the books were published between 1967 to 1976, but some classics were included. Elderly characters were found in 16.46% of the materials. Of these only 17.93% were principal characters with fewer females than males and very few minorities. Only 3.96% of the books had older adults as major

characters. Older persons were seldom seen as problem solvers, but often as problem creators who were not self-sufficient. Three-fourths of the characters were called little, ancient, or elderly and although their personalities were described with more numerous adjectives, it was done so less often. The negative evaluations far outweighed the positive ones. Ansello found the portrayals flat and unidimensional.

John Newbery Medal winners from 1922 through 1975 were evaluated for the extent, types and importance of older characters in adolescent literature (Peterson & Karnes, 1976). The research did not find the elderly underrepresented, but underdeveloped--peripheral to the major action. The findings were no different from the earliest books to the latest. There was an average of three senior adults per book and only two contained no such characters. Older characters represented 12% of all characters of which 94 were male and 65 female. Of 159 older persons only 19 were minorities. There were few demographics of these characters and they were not well-defined. From the descriptions of 60 aging males a wide range of employment was found, while few occupations were developed for females. Maids and owners of rooming houses were the most common for women, when given. A variety in economic classes was depicted and 66% lived in their own homes which is similar to United States demographics. However, the authors caution against making strong conclusions because demographic information was given for few characters. The elderly were not seen to be negatively stereotyped, but just shadows of the main characters. Peterson and Karnes felt this

conclusion may be an indication of our society's attitude that older people "are useful only for their relationship to the important people" (p. 229).

Horner (1982) states that both Ansello and Peterson/Karnes are condemning fiction that would not necessarily be improved by the addition of older characters. Authors should not be forced to include token aging roles when none is needed just to quiet charges of discrimination or "to placate a vested-interest group" (p. x). Care must also be given to judge books in the context in which they were written. Authors may be writing biography or from personal experiences. In such cases realistic portrayals would not be a true picture of history.

Katz (1978) was not satisfied with the appraisal from the Peterson and Karnes inquiry because she feels a book must be judged on its entirety while looking at literature that is concerned with aging instead of that which is not. Katz advocates a broad perspective of the special bond of children and the senior adult. The author talks about the two worlds of the young and the old as separated from the "...practical, working world of middleagers" (p. 319). This view, to divide groups of people solely on the basis of chronology, in itself, is ageism.

Because no content analysis had focused on a particular genre, Blue (1978) searched 125 realistic fiction books for children 3-12 years and written from 1945-1975 to discover how writers portrayed elderly persons' physical traits, demographics, health, personality, activities, roles, and situations as well as the broader concept of aging and social

interaction. She chose only books that had any character that could be a grandparent or described as old, aged, or elderly. In general, the aging characters were found to be representative of the population and multidimensional which Blue says does not support the assumption that society has a negative view of aging. The researcher concluded that the physical characteristics of this age group are positive, neutral and diverse with no negative portrayal found. When reading the article however, this researcher found there were references to many characters as wrinkled, with losses of hearing and vision which is viewed as negative when projected to a large number of older characters. Although diverseness of roles was mentioned, there was no indication of the extent.

A decrease in positive attitudes toward aging was noted in a content analysis of children's literature from 1870 to 1960 (Seltzer & Atchley, 1977). This decrease was not as much as expected and may indicate that negative attitudes are not as strong as sociologists suggest.

In a content analysis of picture books, Jackson (1977) assessed 33 picture books in the youth collection of the University of Northern Iowa Library. She analyzed for main character, function or role, physical appearance, and personality. Because the books were identified under related subject headings, 86% of the books had elderly main characters. The data showed stereotypes in the latter three categories. Senior adults were also seen as uninteresting, nonproductive, and sedentary. Contrary to other studies there was a larger percentage of female rather

than male characters. Jackson suggested further studies to see if females are more stereotyped than males.

When children's books, published from 1972-1977, were analyzed for accurateness and realism in aging, Storey (1977) found the portrayals were like those in books published before the identification of ageism and the formation of advocate groups such as the Gray Panthers and the American Association of Retired Persons. The books selected had an older person who was the main character or had an influence on the main character. The aging persons were seldom active in sports or interest groups and the grandparents were usually too old, mostly in their 70's and 80's which is the age of many great grandparents. Storey found it disturbing that, although the text did not imply physical conditions, the pictures were very negative in showing old people who had trouble walking, were bald, or in rocking chairs wearing extra clothing. In all, very uninteresting people.

Rutherford (1978) examined books which centered on the young adult's relationship with an older adult when both were main characters. Findings were that the young adult either accepted or rejected the qualities of the older person. The author expressed the belief that because young adults have very little contact with aging outside of the family, literature is a realistic source of learning about growing old to gain awareness of values and lifestyles of that age group. She feels this will help adolescents develop positive concepts of their own aging for the best adjustment as they mature.

A study was done to investigate the projected image of the senior adult in realistic American fiction intended for adolescents from 1960

to 1978 and to compare the two decades (Baggett, 1980). There were 76 recommended books in the sample randomly chosen from the Senior High School Library Catalog and the ALA-YASD annual list of "Best Books for Young Adults." Two were chosen from each list for each year studied. A checklist was constructed by the researcher to discover the demographics and image of elderly characters in the genre. The image checklist contained 40 categories based on Robert N. Butler's six myths of aging as described in his book Why Survive? Being Old in America. Each category listed three statements. One was a negative stereotype, the second was a positive stereotype, and the third statement reflected a realistic attitude toward aging based on recent research findings. A frequency distribution and chi-square were used to analyze the data.

For the years 1960-69 Baggett (1980) found that the senior adult was realistically portrayed in 20 of the 40 categories, positively stereotyped in 10 categories and negatively stereotyped only in the category of sex. There was no majority indicated in any of the three image areas in 9 categories. There were significant differences in the projected image of the literature of the sixties and seventies in all of the computable categories except for health and senses. Eight categories were excluded from the analysis of data because of computing problems. Four categories showed an improvement from the 1960's to the 1970's in all three of the image areas and 15 categories showed a deterioration in all three areas. An improvement in a category is when the realistic image is increased and the stereotypes are decreased. The demographic checklist showed more than 21% of the characters had professional occupations followed in frequency by semiskilled and

agricultural workers. Almost 18% were unemployed and more than 7% were retired. The results may be confounded because over 34% of the 178 characters had no identifiable occupations. The socioeconomic status was varied, but with a heavy emphasis on the poor. More than 33% could not be classed for any socioeconomic status. For the 59% of the characters where a living arrangement could be ascertained, most were shown to live with their spouse, in their own home alone, or with relatives. No precise educational nor marital profile was established because there were too few indications in the books read. The method of randomly selecting four books from each publishing year resulted in a limited number of older adult characters and the inference that this age group was not represented equally in fiction as in reality. This may also be the reason there was a lack of demographics to record for elderly characters. The results suggest that the overall image of the senior adult in realistic fiction for young adults was less positive in books written in the 70's than those of the 60's.

The media stereotypically portrays the older person both positively and negatively, although there are mixed views and conclusions in the studies cited in the previous section. The next portion of the literature review concentrates on the reality of being physically and socially old in the United States.

The National Council on the Aging has been in existence since the 1950's and "has served as a resource and catalyst" for inquiries into the reality of aging (The National Council on the Aging, 1978, p. 5). The Duke University Center for the Study of Aging and Human Development began its study of this question in 1955 (Freese, 1981) and since that

time the amount of scientific material published has multiplied many times over. An example is the third publication in less than three decades by the American Psychological Association of a compilation of selected scientific research on aging. The first was published in 1956, the second in 1973, and the current, Aging in the 1980's: Psychological Issues, was published in 1980. There are several professional journals devoted to the physical, emotional and social aspects of aging and its relationship to the whole society. In 1940 only one journal, specializing in aging issues, existed in the world, the Zeitschrift fur Allersforschung (Hulicka, 1977). The first gerontological journal was The Journal of Gerontology which began in 1946 (Palmore, 1981). Now such periodicals number more than 30. The current titles include The Gerontologist, Journal of Gerontology, Educational Gerontology, Psychology of Aging, and The International Journal of Aging and Human Development. The interest in this topic is not limited to the specialized journals, but is a basis of concern in all sectors of our society as attested to by the varied types of periodicals cited in this research. Because of the vast amount of research reported an accurate delineation of the aging person can be projected.

The reality of aging in scientific publications is shown to be somewhat different than the stereotypes society holds and is reflected in media as demonstrated by the content analysis literature.

The scientists classify aging in two different ways, primary and secondary. Built-in biological processes are primary, genetic signals that cannot be changed, but are not the same for all persons. Secondary aging is also biological, but results from outside influences such as

disease, injury, or social effects which may include poor health care, living conditions, and where one lives (Freese, 1981).

The physical aspect of the aging process is not a fixed timeline of deterioration, but is of varied dimensions and qualities. They can be both positive and negative, and altered by interventions (Freese, 1981).

One of the first utterances a person makes when they cannot remember is, "I must be getting old." Old is associated with a physical loss, but Parks, Puglisi, Thomas, and Smith (1986) did three experiments on three different groups made up of both young (college age) and old (persons over 60). The subjects were shown pictures with varied levels of embellishment. They were tested for memory immediately and four weeks later. All did best with elaborate pictures and there were no significant differences noted for age. The research suggests that memory is best for meaningful pictures and remains relatively intact with age. Their findings supported other studies in their literature review as well as some of the research in Empirical Studies in the Psychology and Sociology of Aging (Hulicka, 1977).

In the chapter on memory there are 14 studies abstracted by the author. Some show no change in memory for older persons while others show a decline. The differences come from the type of recollection asked for as well as kinds of information. The recall of remote events is difficult to verify and consequently most inquiry is done on recent recall. These studies showed differences across and within age groups as related to sex, education, health, type of memory asked for (recognition or retrieval), and time given for each task. The older subjects required more time than younger ones for recall. Results of

some studies also showed a sharp decline in memory after the mid-thirties with only a slight decline from the 60's to 70's.

Dr. Labouvie-Vief discovered that older persons have difficulty recalling verbatim, but for meaning and inference no difference was found when compared with other age groups. Dr. Robert L. Kahn, the University of Chicago, related that poor memory is often associated with depression or alarm at forgetting (Freese, 1981).

In his review of research of the 1970's Fozard (1980) concludes there is a decline with age in the capacity and time to recall newly learned information, but older persons' ability to use short and long term memory is not diminished and they are probably more efficient searching long term memory.

Older persons have a lot more accumulated information in storage because of the length of experience. It seems, to the researcher, the practice over the years of deciding which material was relevant to store in memory would be the basis of the criteria used by older persons to decide whether or not to store new information. It may be the case that society's stereotypes of memory in aging are based in the idea that those persons over 60 are not storing information younger people deem relevant.

The intelligence of aging individuals does not decline with age, but does sometimes decline about five years before death (Freese, 1981). This factor may confound research findings. Intelligence is measured by tests designed to predict learning success for young students. Older individuals are not as interested in the test or various items in the test and may not be motivated to do well (Huyck & Hoyer, 1982). Willis

and Baltes (1980) summarize the recent research concerned with the design of psychometric measures of intelligence in aging and the type of intellect measured. Psychometric tests are used to compare individuals including the concepts of human abilities while measuring intelligence as cognition involves learning, problem solving, and memory.

The exact intellectual capabilities of older adults is not conclusive, but the findings certainly are not indicative of the stereotype of senility which is seen by many as an inevitable, natural loss associated with aging. Mental confusion is often the result of physical problems such as heart attack, stroke, or a malfunctioning gall bladder. Kidney or liver malfunctions result in a build up in the body of some drugs that can cause disorientation (Freese, 1981). Senility is used as a label when people cannot explain the actions of older persons. The same actions in younger people result in immediate trips to medical facilities; however, older people are expected to act that way eventually, so society ignores it. Thus another stereotype of old age is perpetuated because of misinformation.

Hearing is another loss wedded to aging. If a person is labeled "old" because he/she has a hearing loss, does it follow that a 30 year old who needs a hearing aid device is also "old?" While there is much research yet to be done, Harkins and Lenhardt (1980) state the results of the studies show little change or decline in auditory waves relating to the brainstem in older persons which cannot be accounted for by presbycusis. Hearing loss, outside of presbycusis, is not a correlate with age. Presbycusis is the term for hearing loss in old age and usually involves the inner ear. Thirty percent of older persons will

experience a hearing loss; however, only 13 percent will require professional services (Huyck and Hoyer, 1982).

Vision may be the area most affected by the aging process. Loss of flexibility of the eye lens causes the clearest point of vision to move outward from the body, a loss of accommodation, and a decline in color discrimination. Advanced years also may bring a need for more illumination for tasks, a change in susceptibility to illusions, and cataracts in many instances (Huyck & Hoyer, 1982).

The basis for other physical losses present in older persons can often be found in disease and health problems of this age group which cannot be attributed directly to the aging process. There is a striking difference between natural aging and aging due to disease or trauma. The resultant physical condition of a person following a stroke or heart attack is a consequence of the disease. The disease is contingent upon the lifestyle which includes diet and societal influences. The mere accumulation of years must not be blamed.

There are physical losses and changes associated with aging. The losses of motility, vision, hearing, and memory are present to some degree in some people; however, they are not assured nor are they necessarily debilitating. Even though the physical changes that can occur in old age may elicit a transition in lifestyle, they do not preclude life-satisfaction.

The place in society that is held by persons over 60 years of age is a complex picture influenced by physical and psychological factors plus the opinions held by those under 60. Social researchers, like

many others studying aging, have tended to focus on decline of social connections in individuals as they age (Levin and Levin, 1980).

A more pertinent focus would be on age-related changes. Changes after 60 may include the effect of attitudes of the younger population toward the older persons, self-definition, retirement, loss of income, and loss of a spouse.

Green (1981) concluded in a review of research that stereotypes held by our society of "the needs and capacities of the elderly may not only change individual's behavior toward elderly persons but also influence the types of political and social institutions designed for them" (p. 99). The lifestyle of the elderly is not always a chosen one. It is often imposed by the rest of society because of beliefs of what is "natural" and "approved" behavior for those over 60. Green (1981) also found that studies show beliefs by younger people of what should and should not be characteristics of old age also modify how the elderly define their role and how they act as a result. If a person has always believed he/she can not be productive after a certain age, then when that magical number is reached he/she may have faith in the societal notion and not try to work or be creative because it is thought impossible.

The Duke Center for the Study of Aging and Human Development began its work in the early 1950's and closed August 25, 1980 (Palmore, 1981b). For many years a large number of researchers were involved in the Duke Longitudinal Studies of Normal Aging which began in 1955 and spanned more than two decades. The results of these widely published studies indicated a much more optimistic, varied view of life after 60

and found this age group has "far greater biological, psychological, and social potential than had been imagined previously" (Foreword).

Because of the magnitude of the Duke Studies and other sociological gerontology research the following conclusions on the status of aging in the United States are taken from Erdman Palmore's 1981 book Social Patterns in Normal Aging: Findings from the Duke Longitudinal Study. The author also incorporated other relevant studies in the book. The Duke Studies used a combination of cross-sectional and longitudinal methods which is called cross-sequential. This method of studying normal aging allows a separation and estimation of age, period, and cohort effects.

Socioeconomic status influences every aspect of our lives. The Duke Studies found poor health, including poor mental health, is a consequence of low socioeconomic status although it is not known if illness causes poverty or poverty causes illness.

Socioeconomic status has little bearing on religious function attendance or contact with friends and relatives, but an upper socioeconomic status shows a higher number of secular events attendance along with greater longevity and greater life-satisfaction.

Two-thirds of all workers retire by the time they reach 70 years of age and the age factor is the most compelling reason. Retirement has a slight positive effect on life satisfaction when all social factors are taken into account. Higher education among men is related to later retirement age as is never-married status for women.

Contrary to the disengagement theory for life-satisfaction in aging, the Duke Studies found social activity is a predictor of better

health, greater longevity, and happiness. As in many such studies there were some differences in findings for men and women, but the mean was 9.8 hours per week engaged in social activities.

Since 1940 people have been living longer. As a consequence, there are more older persons living with a spouse and also there are more of the elderly living alone as opposed to living with relatives or in an institution. This is probably an outgrowth of improved health and finances.

In social networks, a decline in the number of friends and relatives is offset by an increase in the number of relatives and children outside of the immediate household. The density of social contacts remains the same for those over 60.

Our society has a picture of the asexual senior citizen. This perception promotes the belief that any sexual activity over 60 is abnormal, dangerous or harmful. Much to the contrary, the research finds that there is a continuity of sexual activity from younger to older life that abides into the 80's and beyond. Evidence suggests this is a contributor to better health and happiness in later life.

The research on life-satisfaction is often contradictory because of the methodology employed, but the longitudinal studies show that little change in life satisfaction occurs in late life when compared to a younger age. Good health, financial status, social activity and sexual activity were important to maintaining life-satisfaction.

In research for "The Facts on Aging Quiz: Part Two" (1981b) Palmore discovered, compared to persons under 65, older persons:

(a) have less absenteeism, (b) as a whole get more than their proportionate share of the nation's income, (c) are more fearful of crime and take precautions so they experience less victimization and are more law abiding, and (d) have a larger proportion of representatives in public office. In addition, there is a rising proportion of Blacks in this age group with a poverty rate three times higher than that of whites, and men's life-expectancy at age 65 is still shorter than women's which results in five times more widows than widowers.

Using the Comrey Personality Scales, Stoner and Panek (1985) studied age and sex differences in personality. Subjects (150) were divided into three categories of 21-38, 40-59, and 60-80 years of age. For the aged, when compared with the other two groups, there was a significant decline in dominance, enthusiasm, and tension but with an increase in sensitiveness, social values, and restraint.

Literature does have an influence on the views and attitudes of the reader. Not everyone agrees to what degree a book can affect the reader nor if one or several books are needed to precipitate change. Some theorize what a person brings to the reading decides the response to the literature. With few exceptions, studies showed stereotyping and underdevelopment of the senior adult in children's literature. The reality of physical aging indicates a decline in certain functions, but it is better characterized by change instead of loss. Physical changes in old age are not inevitably debilitating. Psychologically, the elderly are very similar to the persons they were all their lives with some changes provoked by physical transformations of aging and by

opinions held by younger people which prescribe "proper lifestyle" for those over 65.

Chapter 3

Methodology

This research employed a content analysis technique to assess the projected image of the senior adult in recommended realistic fiction, intended for young adults, published from 1979 through 1986. The present study is based on the methodology used by Carolyn Baggett in a 1980 doctoral dissertation completed at the University of Mississippi in which she examined the projected image of the senior adult in realistic fiction for young adults for the years 1960 through 1978.

This study deviates from the Baggett study in some parts of the methodology. Baggett used random selection from two lists of recommended young adult fiction. Because this method resulted in some books being analyzed which had only very minor older characters or none at all, a different selection method was used in this study.

Sixteen books, two for each year, were examined in the study. Ten media specialists were chosen from those who are presently employed in an academic or schools setting and who work with young adult materials. They were asked to identify young adult realistic fiction published 1979-1986 in which older persons are a major character or have a great influence on the major character. A letter was sent to each (see Appendix A and B) and eight of the ten requests were returned. A total of 44 different book titles were identified.

Reviews of the 44 books were sought in Booklist and School Library Journal. When a review could not be found in either of these sources Book Review Digest was consulted to locate an alternate reviewing

source. If none could be located or the reviewing source was not available in the University of Northern Iowa's Donald O. Rod Library, the book was removed from the list. After this procedure, eleven books were disqualified from consideration. One book was written for children, reviews could not be located for two titles, three were originally published before 1979, and three books did not contain major older characters or ones who were a major influence on the major character. Of the 33 remaining books, only two titles were identified for 1981. The titles identified for the other seven years were placed on index cards and an impartial graduate student randomly drew two titles to be analyzed from each year.

A frequency checklist, created by Baggett (1980) and based on Robert N. Butler's identification of six myths of aging, was used to note how each author described the senior adult or adults in each book. The six myths of aging are represented by 40 numbered categories each of which contain three image statements about aging. Each image statement represents ideas or statements that reflect research in the area of gerontology. Statement one indicates the totally negative stereotype (n) of aging. Statement two is an unrealistically positive stereotype (p). Statement three is based on a realistic (r) representation. The realistic statements were composed from factual statements in research on aging.

Following is a list of the myths and categories that were used for the instrument.

AGING

Category 1: Learning

1. Are unable to learn
2. Are able to learn any kind of material
3. Are capable of learning relevant, meaningful material at their own pace

Category 2: Fatigue

1. Feel tired most of the time
2. Feel tired very seldom
3. Admit that aging limits physical and mental capacities

Category 3: Health

1. Die soon after retirement
2. Discover that their health declines rapidly following retirement
3. May discover that their health improves following retirement

Category 4: Widowhood

1. Have lost their spouse before retirement age
2. Have not lost their spouse by retirement age
3. May very likely find themselves widows by age 65-70 and widowers by age 85

Category 5: Illness

1. Suffer from numerous chronic conditions
2. Suffer from hardly any chronic conditions
3. Are more likely to suffer from one or more chronic conditions

Category 6: Senses

1. Become deaf and blind
2. Enjoy improved hearing and vision
3. Experience loss of hearing and visual decline

Category 7: Personality

1. Become more alike with advancing years
2. Become totally different from one another
3. Are even more varied than are younger people

Category 8: Adaptability

1. Tend to get along poorly if they have never been married

2. Tend to get along remarkably well if they have never been married
3. Tend to get along relatively well if they have never been married

Category 9: Appearance

1. Are untidy and careless about appearance
2. Are clean and neat in appearance
3. Are less likely than younger people to be concerned about their appearance

UNPRODUCTIVITY

Category 10: Support

1. Expect their children to support them
2. Expect the federal government to support them
3. Endorse self-reliance and attempt to provide for themselves

Category 11: Involvement

1. Make no contribution to the community and/or society
2. As a group, make the most significant contributions to the community and/or society
3. Tend to remain productive and actively involved in life

Category 12: Creativity

1. Are not creative
2. Are highly creative
3. May become unusually creative for the first time

Category 13: Skills

1. Possess limited skills
2. Have many skills
3. May possess skills which are obsolete

Category 14: Income

1. Are more likely to have an income considered to be "average" by today's standards
2. Are more likely to have an income considered to be "above average" by today's standards
3. Are more likely to have an income considered to be "below average" by today's standards

DISENGAGEMENT

Category 15: Activities

1. Totally disengage from life
2. Become very active in numerous activities
3. Tend to become more satisfied with their lives if they are active and involved rather than disengaged

Category 16: Responsiveness

1. Withdraw into themselves
2. Are more outgoing than ever
3. Have feelings of loneliness which increase in frequency and intensity with age

Category 17: Lifestyle

1. Prefer to live alone or to live with peers
2. Live with their children or other relatives
3. Are probably married and live with their spouses in separate households

Category 18: Leisure

1. Do not participate in sports and similar activities
2. Become actively involved in a variety of activities
3. Tend to do the same things in their leisure time that they did for relaxation all of their lives

Category 19: Outlook

1. Have a totally pessimistic outlook on world problems
2. Have a totally optimistic outlook on world problems
3. Are less likely than younger persons to believe that there are solutions to world problems

Category 20: Suicide

1. Are quite likely to commit suicide
2. Do not commit suicide
3. Account for one-quarter of the successful suicides in the U.S.

Category 21: Sex

1. Exhibit no interest in sex
2. Exhibit renewed interest in sex
3. Exhibit a decline in sexual activity, often caused by social-psychological barriers

Category 22: Family

1. Have little contact with children and/or other family members
2. Live with children and/or other family members
3. Usually live independently, but have frequent contact with children and/or other family members

Category 23: Nursing homes

1. Often live in nursing homes
2. Occasionally live in nursing homes
3. Seldom if ever live in nursing homes

Category 24: Politics

1. Are unconcerned about politics
2. Are actively engaged in politics
3. Are disposed toward a high degree of political participation

INFLEXIBILITY

Category 25: Adjustment

1. Are unable to adjust
2. Can adjust to any situation
3. Generally remain open to change throughout the course of life, right up to its termination

Category 26: Change

1. Become less responsive to innovation and change
2. Keep up-to-date
3. Are extremely adaptable

Category 27: Ideas

1. Are unable to deal with abstract ideas
2. Deal more easily with abstract ideas than with concrete ideas
3. Prefer the more concrete tasks and work in more concrete fashion than younger adults

Category 28: Performance

1. Are unable to perform satisfactorily, even when sufficient time is available
2. Are able to perform as well as young people
3. Need more time for responding (performing) than typically is provided

Category 29: Rigidity

1. Are much more rigid than younger people
2. Are far less rigid than younger people
3. Tend to be more rigid than younger people

SENILITY

Category 30: Forgetfulness

1. Are forgetful, absent-minded, and "senile"
2. Seldom forget anything
3. May experience anxiety, depression, drug-tranquilization, alcoholism, malnutrition, and physical illnesses which produce "senile" behavior

Category 31: Confusion

1. Are usually confused
2. Are hardly ever confused
3. May suffer from reversible illnesses which account for confusion

Category 32: Time-orientation

1. Look to the past
2. Look to the future
3. Find a certain amount of enjoyment in recounting past experiences

Category 33: Coping

1. Are seldom able to cope
2. Have no difficulty coping
3. Become better able to cope as they grow older

Category 34: Stability

1. Become insane
2. Appear to become mentally healthy
3. Are more susceptible to mental illness

Category 35: Intelligence

1. Become less intelligent
2. Become increasingly more intelligent
3. Seem to grow wiser with the coming of age

Category 36: Memory

1. Are unable to remember
2. Can remember most things
3. May exhibit a weakening short-term memory while verbal and long-term memory seem relatively unaffected

SERENITY

Category 37: Tranquility

1. Become aggressive and argumentative
2. Become tranquil and serene
3. Are less likely than young people to show irritability and annoyance

Category 38: Stress

1. Live in a world of fear and frustration
2. Live in a fantasy/dream world
3. Experience more stresses than any other age group

Category 39: Contemplation

1. Like to sit and dream
2. Are constantly on the go
3. Appear to be more restrained and less impulsive than younger persons

Category 40: Events

1. Are not greatly affected by retirement, widowhood, dependency, and the like
2. Are profoundly affected by retirement, widowhood, dependency, and the like
3. Are less affected by retirement, widowhood, dependency, and the like than the earlier events in their lives such as school, marriage, work, and parenthood

A separate frequency checklist for each category was used for the books to note descriptions of a senior adult character by category and image area. If there were duplicate statements in an individual book about a single senior adult character the frequency was noted only once, but the same statement about another character was counted separately. This "character image count as recorded on the checklist provided a

picture of the elderly as the adolescent sees them in contemporary realistic fiction published" (Baggett, 1980, p. 71) from 1979-1986.

In the analysis of the data the number of checks for each image area in each category was converted to percentages. The "Chi-square Test with Probe" (Berger, 1982) was used at the .05 level of significance to determine the significant differences of the projected image found in this research compared to the periods 1960-1969 and 1970-1978 as analyzed in Baggett's study. Baggett's study does not list the chi-square test used nor the degrees of freedom.

Chapter 4

Analysis of Data

This chapter presents the statistical analysis of the data to answer the question is there a significant difference in the image of the senior adult in recommended realistic fiction written for young adults and published in the years 1979-1986 from that published in 1960-1969 or 1970-1978. For purposes of discussion the period 1960-1969 is referred to as the 1960's, 1970-1978 is referred to as the 1970's, and 1979-1986 is called the 1980's. If a majority of characters in a category is recorded in the negative and positive image areas, combined, the category is "stereotyped" in the analyzed books. If a majority of the characters is recorded in a single image area, the characteristic is "negatively stereotyped," "positively stereotyped," or "realistic."

Baggett's research was based on 40 books and 120 identified senior adults for the period 1960 to 1969 and 36 books and 58 identified senior adults for the period 1970 to 1978. The present research is based on 16 books and 35 identified senior adults.

Aging

Category 1: Learning

1. Are unable to learn
2. Are able to learn any kind of material
3. Are capable of learning relevant, meaningful material at their own pace

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X2	sig	X2	sig
n	4	10.25	1	4.76	0	0.00	0.9709	.6154	3.8596	.1452
p	17	43.58	4	19.04	4	57.14				
r	8	46.15	16	76.19	3	42.86				

The research findings for the 1980's show a change from the 1960's and 1970's in the portrayal of learning by the senior adult. The image is shown to be more positively stereotyped in the 1980's than in the two previous periods, but no significant difference is measured by the chi-square statistic. No negative stereotype was found in the 1980's, a change from a high of 10.25% in the 1960's. The 1970's gave the most realistic picture of the older citizen.

It may be more important to note the percentage of total characters that were depicted in a learning situation. The fact that only 20% of the 35 elderly characters in the 16 books read for the 1980's were in situations of learning new information may be a negative statement that older persons are not interested or do not participate in such activities

Category 2: Fatigue

1. Feel tired most of the time
2. Feel tired very seldom
3. Admit that aging limits physical and mental capacity

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X2	sig	X2	sig
n	7	16.66	6	14.00	3	1.15	1.7655	.4136	1.9737	.3727
p	6	14.28	8	32.00	7	26.92				
r	29	69.04	11	44.00	16	61.53				

No significant difference was found. A majority of the characters was depicted realistically in the 1960's and 1980's, but the 1970's showed no majority in any area.

In books read from the 1980's, the three characters who felt tired most of the time were those who had terminal illnesses. Those represented realistically did admit that aging limits abilities, but did not allow those limitations to prevent work and leisure activities in which they wished to participate.

Category 3: Health

1. Die soon after retirement
2. Discover that their health declines rapidly following retirement
3. May discover that their health improves following retirement

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X ²	sig	X ²	sig
n	1	25.00	3	33.33	0	0.00	3.9375	.1396	4.0000	.1353
p	3	75.00	5	55.55	1	33.33				
r	0	0.00	1	11.11	2	66.67				

There was no significant difference shown at the $p = .05$ level, but there was a large percentage increase in the realistic portrayal from 0.0% (1960's), 11.11% (1970's), to 66.67% (1980's). The positive stereotype decreased to 33.33% and the negative stereotype was eliminated.

Although there is a realistic depiction of the health of the aged in the 1980's, with only three of 35 characters being counted in this category, it is difficult to draw accurate conclusions for this image area. The books read for 1979-1986 did not contain comments often on

health unless a character had a life-threatening illness and in those instances the persons were well past the retirement age.

This researcher found that the word "rapidly" in the positive statement excluded most characters in poor health because there was no indication that those persons "rapidly" declined in health.

Category 4: Widowhood

1. Have lost their spouse before retirement age
2. Have not lost their spouse by retirement age
3. May very likely find themselves widows by age 65-70 and widowers by age 85

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X2	sig	X2	sig
n	6	25.00	10	55.55	8	61.54	18.2995	.0001	5.0471	.0802
p	17	70.83	5	27.77	0	0.00				
r	1	4.16	3	16.66	5	38.46				

The chi-square measured a significant difference at the $p = .0001$ level when testing the 1960's and 1980's data. The negative stereotype increased from 25% to 61.54% and although the category remained stereotyped, the realistic portrayal increased from 4.16% to 38.46% in the 1980's. The dramatic change was in the positive stereotype area which declined from 70.83% in the 1960's to 0.00% in the 1980's.

None of the 35 elderly characters in the books read for the 1980's was married. Most of those who had been married were widowed, but when the death occurred was not always easy to determine. Where the author did mention the time of the spousal death, it was always well before retirement.

Category 5: Illness

1. Suffer from numerous chronic conditions
2. Suffer from hardly any chronic conditions
3. Are more likely to suffer from one or more chronic conditions

1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's		
f	%	f	%	f	%	X2	sig	X2	sig	
n	14	38.88	6	18.18	1	4.55	9.0083	.0111	2.3299	.3119
p	6	16.66	9	27.27	8	36.36				
4	16	44.44	18	54.54	13	59.09				

The data of the 1980's show a significant difference when measured with that of the 1960's with a chi-square of 9.0083 ($p = .0111$). The difference is seen in the decrease of the negative stereotype from 38.88% (1960's) to 9.55% (1980's). The positive stereotype increased from 16.66% to 36.66% and the realistic increased from 44.44% in the 1960's to 59.09% in the 1980's. The decade of the 1970's reflected these same trends.

Category 6: Senses

1. Become deaf and blind
2. Enjoy improved hearing and vision
3. Experience loss of hearing and visual decline

1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's		
f	%	f	%	f	%	X2	sig	X2	sig	
n	2	22.22	0	0.00	2	40.00	0.9333	.6271	4.8750	.0874
p	1	11.11	1	10.00	0	0.00				
r	6	66.66	9	90.00	3	60.00				

No significant difference was measured at the $p = .05$ level. The number of characters whose senses were mentioned were few, but the increase in the negative stereotype from 0.00% in the 1970's to 40.00%

in the 1980's was based on two older persons who were blind. The positive stereotype was not found, and a majority of the characters was realistically portrayed in all three decades.

The relatively few characters who were described with vision or hearing losses may suggest that a loss of these senses is not an exclusive consequence of aging and such losses are not used to judge age. In none of the 16 books read for the 1980's was there a caricature of an aged person who confused all communication because she or he was deaf. Loss of senses, as shown by the three characters recorded in the realistic area, was mentioned briefly and had very little influence on the persons' function.

Category 7: Personality

1. Become more alike with advancing years
2. Become totally different from one another
3. Are even more varied than are younger people

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X ²	sig	X ²	sig
n	1	2.38	1	6.66	0	0.00	1.5048	.4712	4.2550	.1191
p	3	7.14	6	40.00	3	15.79				
r	38	90.47	8	53.33	16	84.21				

While there was an absence of the negative stereotype in the 1980's, no significant difference was statistically measured for the category. A majority of the characters was illustrated realistically for all three decades, but there was a decrease in that image in the 1970's.

Category 8: Adaptability

1. Tend to get along poorly if they have never been married
2. Tend to get along remarkably well if they have never been married
3. Tend to get along relatively well if they have never been married

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X2	sig	X2	sig
n	0	0.00	1	50.00	0	0.00	----	----	4.3714	.1124
p	1	12.50	0	0.00	3	42.86				
r	7	87.50	1	50.00	4	57.14				

Of the seven characters identified in the 16 books of the 1980's as "never been married," none was shown to get along poorly, three or 42.86% got along remarkably well, and four or 57.14% got along relatively well. This was a 30% decrease from the realistic picture of 87.50% in the 1960's.

The chi-square for the 1960's/1980's data was not computable because of the zero counts in the negative stereotype and no significant difference could be determined. There was no significant difference in the 1970's/1980's data.

Category 9: Appearance

1. Are untidy and careless about appearance
2. Are clean and neat in appearance
3. Are less likely than younger people to be concerned about their appearance

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X2	sig	X2	sig
n	14	35.00	9	29.03	1	4.34	13.0010	.0015	14.3740	.0007
p	21	52.50	20	64.51	11	47.83				
r	1	12.50	2	6.45	11	47.83				

In this image area, a significant difference was measured for both the 1960's/1980's data (chi-square 13.0010, $p = .0015$), and the 1970's/1980's (chi-square 14.3740, $p = .0007$). For the 1960's/1980's the significant difference is the result of the decrease of the negative stereotype from 35.00% to 4.34% and an increase of the realistic depiction from 12.50% to 47.83%. For the 1970's/1980's data the significant difference shows in a similar improvement. Where the 1960's and 1970's show a majority of the characters positively stereotyped, the 1980's have an equal number of elderly persons in the positive stereotype and realistic areas, although the category is still stereotyped.

UNPRODUCTIVITY

Category 10: Support

1. Expect their children to support them
2. Expect the federal government to support them
3. Endorse self-reliance and attempt to provide for themselves

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X2	sig	X2	sig
n	2	3.22	0	0.00	0	0.00	1.0963	.5780	-----	-----
p	3	4.83	0	0.00	2	6.67				
r	57	91.93	28	100.00	28	93.33				

There was no significant difference when comparing 1960's/1980's data and the 1970's/1980's data was not computable. A small change is seen in the latter years with a 6.67% increase in the positive stereotype category.

This researcher put two characters in the positive stereotype who were receiving government assistance for food and subsistence living.

This was a subjective decision, the difficulty of which was compounded by the word "expect" in the positive statement. The intent of Baggett in the creation of that statement was unknown. If "expect" implies the character needs monetary assistance and needs it to supplement income and is secure in the knowledge that help will come each month, then this researcher's judgement is correct in placing them in the positive stereotype. However, if "expect" means the character demands federal support "because it is her/his due" then, the two characters should be transferred to the realistic count because they were depicted trying to provide for themselves, but need federal money to supplement their income. Because of the subjectivity of interpretation, the increased percentage should not be cause to conclude there is a less realistic view of older characters in books of the 1980's. In fact, there is a touch of realism to show that older persons sometimes do have to rely on federal money for subsistence. The realistic portrayal for all three decades shows authors do see the elderly as self-reliant.

Category 11: Involvement

1. Make no contribution to the community and/or society
2. As a group, make the most significant contributions to the community and/or society
3. Tend to remain productive and actively involved in life

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X2	sig	X2	sig
n	8	11.26	7	23.33	5	15.62	1.0963	0.5780	-----	-----
p	2	2.81	0	0.0	0	0.00				
r	61	85.91	23	76.66	27	84.38				

There was no significant difference found for the 1960's/1980's data, and the 1970's category of involvement was not computable. The

category continued to be realistic as in the two previous periods. In the 1980's as in the 1970's no characters expressed the belief they were making the most significant contribution to society, but most felt and acted as if they were still a part of the community and contributed to it.

Category 12: Creativity

1. Are not creative
2. Are highly creative
3. May become unusually creative for the first time

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X ²	sig	X ²	sig
n	2	13.33	1	16.66	20	69.97	14.7678	.0006	5.7663	.0559
p	12	80.00	2	50.00	6	20.69				
r	1	6.66	3	33.33	3	9.44				

A test of the 1960's/1980's data resulted in a chi-square of 14.7678 ($p = .0006$). The result represented a dramatic increase in the negative stereotype with a majority of the 29 characters (69.97%) appearing in this area. The image of creativity changed from a positive stereotype in the 1960's to a negative stereotype in the 1980's.

For the 1970's/1980's the chi-square was 5.7663 ($p = .0559$) which, although not significant, is close to the $p = .05$ level chosen for this research. The difference is seen in a switch from a positive stereotype and realistic view of creativity in the 1970's literature to a very negative stereotype in the 1980's.

Category 13: Skills

1. Possess limited skills
2. Have many skills
3. May possess skills which are obsolete

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X2	sig	X2	sig
n	5	17.85	4	26.66	0	0.00	4.2087	.1219	7.0072	.0292
p	19	67.85	8	53.53	17	89.47				
r	4	14.28	3	20.00	2	10.53				

For all three time periods, the skills category was positively stereotyped showing that elderly persons possess many skills. The percentages in the positive stereotype increased in the 1980's and the realistic depiction decreased. There is a significant difference at the $p = .0202$ level, chi-square of 7.0070 for the 1970's/1980's data. This significance was due to the increase in the positive stereotype and also the disappearance of the negative stereotype from a high of 26.66% in the 1970's.

Category 14: Income

1. Are more likely to have an income considered to be "average" by today's standards
2. Are more likely to have an income considered to be "above average" by today's standards
3. Are more likely to have an income considered to be "below average" by today's standards

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X2	sig	X2	sig
n	23	31.50	12	26.66	4	12.91	5.1784	.0751	2.1535	.3407
p	23	31.50	12	26.66	9	29.03				
r	27	36.98	21	46.66	18	58.06				

The research for the category "Income" shows a realistic characterization of the senior adult in all three decades. There was a steady increase in the realistic representation from 36.98% in the 1960's and 46.66% in the 1970's to 58.06% in the 1980's. This increase is balanced by the over 18% decrease in the negative stereotype from the

1960's while the positive stereotype shows little fluctuation for the three periods.

DISENGAGEMENT

Category 15: Activities

1. Totally disengage from life
2. Become very active in numerous activities
3. Tend to become more satisfied with their lives if they are active and involved rather than disengaged

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X ²	sig	X ²	sig
n	7	11.86	6	28.57	1	3.33	3.5564	.1689	16.7616	.0002
p	3	5.08	5	23.80	0	0.00				
r	49	83.05	10	47.61	29	96.67				

This category gives a realistic image for the three decades with a chi-square of 16.7616 ($p = .0002$) for the 1970's/1980's data. The difference was illustrated by a decrease from 28.57% to 3.33% for the negative stereotype and absence of the positive stereotype in the 1980's. This gave the realistic area 96.67% of the characters in the 1980's because only one of the 30 characters identified in the activities category totally disengaged from life.

Category 16: Responsiveness

1. Withdraw into themselves
2. Are more outgoing than ever
3. Have feelings of loneliness which increase in frequency and intensity with age

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X ²	sig	X ²	sig
n	7	21.21	5	27.77	5	19.23	0.8303	.6602	0.5328	.7662
p	12	36.36	5	27.77	7	26.92				
r	14	42.42	8	44.44	14	53.85				

The category Responsiveness gives a realistic impression of the aged for all three periods. Over the three periods there was a gradual increase in the realistic category which is reflected by a gradual decrease in the positive stereotype while the negative stereotype increased and declined over the three periods.

Category 17: Lifestyle

1. Prefer to live alone or to live with peers
2. Live with their children or other relatives
3. Are probably married and live with their spouses in separate households

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X ²	sig	X ²	sig
n	14	33.33	17	48.57	20	68.97	8.9586	.0112	11.0277	.0040
p	10	23.80	7	20.00	9	31.03				
r	18	42.85	11	32.42	0	0.00				

There was a significant difference when testing both the 1960's and 1970's data with the 1980's data. The chi-square for the 1960's/1980's is 8.9586 ($p = .0112$) and the 1970's/1980's data resulted in a chi-square of 11.0277 ($p = .0040$).

The significant difference represents a large increase in the percentage of characters who live alone or with peers. The figures changed from 33.33% (1960's) to 48.57% (1970's) to 66.97% (1980's). The alarming change was a total absence of any characters in the books read for the years 1979 to 1986 who were married at the time of the story.

Some were widowed, some divorced and some never married, but not one character was still married or had recently lost a spouse through death or divorce. Most of the older persons had been single for more than man three or four years. This changed the realistic depiction of the 1960's to a negative stereotype in the literature for young adults in the 1980's.

Category 18: Leisure

1. Do not participate in sports and similar activities
2. Become actively involved in a variety of activities
3. Tend to do the same things in their leisure time that they did for relaxation all of their lives

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X2	sig	X2	sig
n	7	18.91	5	27.77	1	4.76	2.9649	.2271	5.4683	.0650
p	1	2.70	1	5.55	0	0.00				
r	29	78.37	12	66.67	20	95.24				

Although there was no significant difference measured by the chi-square for any of the data, there is a change in the Leisure category over the periods in the negative stereotype and realistic images. The negative stereotype declined from 18.91% (1960's) and 27.77% (1970's) to 4.76% in the 1980's. The realistic image data of 78.30% and 66.67% in the first two decades, respectively increased to 95.24% in the 1980's. Twenty of the 21 characters in the books read for the 1980's were shown to be realistic because they did the same leisure activities in their later years that they had done all of their lives. This continued the realistic portrayal of the elderly from the 1960's and 1970's.

Category 19: Outlook

1. Have a totally pessimistic outlook on world problems
2. Have a totally optimistic outlook on world problems
3. Are less likely than younger persons to believe that there are solutions to world problems

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X ²	sig	X ²	sig
n	0	0.00	4	33.33	5	23.81	5.4562	.0653	6.2931	.0430
p	0	0.00	4	33.33	1	4.76				
r	16	100.00	4	33.33	15	71.43				

There was no significant difference for the 1960's/1980's data; however, a chi-square of 6.2931 ($p = .0430$) for the 1970's/1980's data was found. This was a change from the equal distribution of characters across all three areas in the 1970's to a large majority of characters placed in the realistic area in the 1980's. Although this was an increase in realistic characters from the 1970's to the 1980's, it was a decrease of approximately 28% from the totally realistic depictions in the 1960's books.

Category 20: Suicide

1. Are quite likely to commit suicide
2. Do not commit suicide
3. Account for one-quarter of the successful suicides in the U.S.

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X ²	sig	X ²	sig
n	1	0.83	1	1.72	1	2.86	7.8838	.0194	3.5515	.1694
p	119	99.16	57	98.27	32	91.43				
r	0	0.00	0	0.00	2	5.71				

The category of suicide was positively stereotyped for all three decades. The chi-square of 7.8838 ($p = .0194$) for the 1960's/1980's

data resulted mainly from a rise in the realistic image. No characters were shown realistically in the 1960's or in the 1970's.

The exact meaning of the negative and realistic statements was difficult to judge for this researcher. The phrase, "do not commit suicide," calls for a yes or no answer, but "are quite likely to commit suicide," and "accounts for one-fourth of the successful suicides in the United States," requires a different consideration. Not all of the settings were in the United States. For the 1980's research, place of setting was ignored for this category, and the negative stereotype was determined to mean suicide was a prevalent thought or a suicide attempt was made by a person over 65 years. The realistic statement was defined to mean an aging person killed her/himself. An attempt at suicide was not counted in the realistic image because "successful" was included.

A problem arose in the interpretation of this category. For a realistic portrayal, a majority of the elderly characters would have had to commit suicide. Because of this dilemma, the chi-square and consequent level of significance should not be given too much importance when drawing conclusions about the characterization of senior adults in young adult literature in the category of suicide.

Category 21: Sex

1. Exhibit no interest in sex
2. Exhibit renewed interest in sex
3. Exhibit a decline in sexual activity, often caused by social-psychological barriers

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X2	sig	X2	sig
n	2	66.66	7	50.00	21	65.66	0.7609	.6836	3.0975	.2125
p	1	33.33	6	42.85	6	18.75				
r	0	0.0	1	7.14	5	15.62				

In Baggett's research this category was negatively stereotyped in the 1960's and the 1970's. The 1980's continued this trend. While little change was seen in the negative stereotype, the realistic image increased slightly over the three periods. The positive stereotype varied from 33.33% in the 1960's to 42.85% in the 1970's and 18.75% in the 1980's.

This negative depiction of the sexuality of older persons may be a stronger negative picture of the elderly in the 1980's because of the more permissive and open attitudes toward sex which are now present in western society. While most of the adolescent characters in the 16 books read for the 1980's expressed feelings of sexuality and love, the older characters in the books were given no such dimension in their characterization even when they were in relationships similar to the adolescents.

An increase in the realistic area in the 1980's gives one hope that authors are beginning to be courageous in the exploration of this aspect of aging persons.

Category 22: Family

1. Have little contact with children and/or other family members
2. Live with children and/or other family members
3. Usually live independently, but have frequent contact with children and/or other family members

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X2	sig	X2	sig
n	10	27.02	5	22.72	11	42.31	3.1210	.2100	2.5301	.2822
p	9	24.32	7	31.81	8	30.77				
r	18	48.64	10	45.45	7	26.92				

No significant difference was found for either of the data comparisons, but the portrayal switched from one of realism in the 1960's and 1970's to a negative stereotype in the 1980's. The positive stereotype was similar for all three periods, but the negative stereotype increased from 27.02% and 22.72% in the first two periods to 42.31% in the 1980's. At the same time there was about a 20% decline in the realistically presented older persons..

Category 23: Nursing homes

1. Often live in nursing homes
2. Occasionally live in nursing homes
3. Seldom if ever live in nursing homes

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X2	sig	X2	sig
n	0	0.00	0	0.00	2	5.71	13.6545	.0011	4.6571	.0974
p	1	0.83	2	3.44	3	8.57				
r	119	99.16	56	96.55	30	85.71				

A chi-square of 13.6545 ($p = .0011$) was found in the 1960's/1980's data test. The difference was due to an increase in the negative and positive stereotypes and a decline in the realistic image.

* The three statements seem to require an overall judgement of all the characters. Because the exact intent of Baggett's three statements was not known, this researcher interpreted them as follows:

1. Lives in a nursing home because of numerous health problems

2. Does not need a nursing home because family provides care or refuses to go to a nursing home
3. Lives in a nursing home because of temporary or terminal illness, or health does not require nursing home care.

This interpretation may account for the increase of negative and positive stereotypes and a decrease in the realistic image. It must be noted that even with the decrease, the of nursing homes category was realistic for all three time segments.

Category 24: Politics

1. Are unconcerned about politics
2. Are actively engaged in politics
3. Are disposed toward a high degree of political participation

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X ²	sig	X ²	sig
n	3	17.64	3	37.50	16	72.73	8.9149	.0116	4.8086	.0903
p	3	17.64	1	12.50	0	0.00				
r	11	64.70	4	50.00	6	27.27				

A chi-square of 8.9149 ($p = .0116$) for the 1960's/1980's data indicates a reverse of the realistic characterization of 64.70% in the 1960's to a larger majority (72.73%) of negatively stereotyped elderly in books of the 1980's. This resulted in a decrease of the positive stereotype and the realistic portrayal. A similar change, although not statistically significant, was noted for the 1970's to the 1980's.

Very few of the younger age characters in the 1980's literature would be considered active in politics.

INFLEXIBILITY

Category 25: Adjustment

1. Are unable to adjust
2. Can adjust to any situation
3. Generally remain open to change throughout the course of life, right up to its termination

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X2	sig	X2	sig
n	12	16.66	7	30.43	5	19.23	2.3012	.3164	3.5821	.1668
p	15	20.83	5	21.73	2	7.69				
r	45	62.50	11	47.82	19	73.08				

No significant difference was found by the chi-square test. The portrayal of adjustment among the senior adult characters remained realistic through the three time periods and even increased in the 1980's.

Category 26: Change

1. Become less responsive to innovation and change
2. Keep up-to-date
3. Are extremely adaptable

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X2	sig	X2	sig
n	17	21.79	15	46.87	7	24.14	1.3396	.5118	10.5595	.0051
p	12	15.38	8	25.00	2	6.90				
r	49	62.82	9	28.12	20	68.96				

A significant difference was found with a chi-square of 10.5595 ($p = .0051$) for the 1970's/1980's. This indicates a change from a negatively stereotyped picture of aging in the 1970's to a realistic one in the 1980's.

The 1980's data were significantly different from the 1970's, but when comparing the 1980's percentages to those of the 1960's there was little change.

Category 27: Ideas

1. Are unable to deal with abstract ideas
2. Deal more easily with abstract ideas than with concrete ideas
3. Prefer the more concrete tasks and work in more concrete fashion than younger adults

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X ²	sig	X ²	sig
n	3	9.67	4	40.00	0	0.00	2.6070	.2716	7.6917	.0214
p	11	35.48	2	20.00	4	25.00				
r	17	54.83	4	40.00	12	75.00				

No significant difference was found for the 1960's/1980's data, but a chi-square of 7.6917 ($p = .0214$) was found for the 1970's/1980's data in the category. This significance was due to the disappearance of the negative stereotype in the present research from a high of 40.00% in the 1970's and a 35% increase in the realistic image. The older persons were realistically portrayed in all three time periods.

Category 28: Performance

1. Are unable to perform satisfactorily, even when sufficient time is available
2. Are able to perform as well as young people
3. Need more time for responding (performing) than typically is provided

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X ²	sig	X ²	sig
n	5	16.66	2	20.00	2	6.90	2.5554	.2787	4.0688	.1308
p	14	46.66	6	60.00	11	37.93				
r	11	36.66	2	20.00	16	55.17				

The findings for this category for books published in the 1980's showed 6.90% of the aged were negatively stereotyped, 37.93% were positively stereotyped, and 55.17% were given realistic images. There were no significant changes, but there was a switch from a positive stereotype in the 1960's and the 1970's to a realistic depiction in the 1980's.

Category 29: Rigidity

1. Are much more rigid than younger people
2. Are far less rigid than younger people
3. Tend to be more rigid than younger people

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X ²	sig	X ²	sig
n	6	18.18	5	26.31	1	4.85	2.9645	.2271	5.1407	.0765
p	12	36.36	7	36.84	10	38.46				
r	15	45.45	7	36.84	15	57.69				

No significant differences were observed for the data of the 1980's when tested against the 1960's and the 1970's data.

The 1980's character count for the negative stereotype was 1 (4.85%), the positive stereotype was 3 (38.46%), and the realistic frequency was 15 (57.69%). This was a decrease in the negative stereotype and an increase in the realistic image while the positive stereotype was little changed when compared to the earlier periods.

SENILITY

Category 30: Forgetfulness

1. Are forgetful, absent-minded, and "senile"
2. Seldom forget anything

3. May experience anxiety, depression, drug-tranquilization, alcoholism, malnutrition, and physical illnesses which produce "senile" behavior

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X ²	sig	X ²	sig
n	4	11.42	4	20.00	2	6.90	0.5647	.7540	1.9106	.3847
p	19	54.28	11	55.00	18	62.07				
r	12	34.28	5	25.00	9	31.03				

The percentages in all three image areas fluctuated only moderately across the three decades. For the 1980's, two (6.90%) of the 29 elderly identified for the area of forgetfulness were negatively stereotyped, 18 persons (62.07%) were positively stereotyped, and 9 (31.03%) were realistically presented. This continued the trend over the three periods of positive stereotyping of older characters as seldom forgetting anything.

Category 31: Confusion

1. Are usually confused
2. Are hardly ever confused
3. May suffer from reversible illnesses which account for confusion

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X ²	sig	X ²	sig
n	5	14.70	5	23.80	3	12.00	0.1208	.9414	0.5451	.7614
p	23	66.64	16	76.19	17	68.00				
r	6	17.64	0	0.0	5	20.00				

The chi-square test revealed no significant difference for the data of the 1980's. Of the 25 characters who were counted for this category, 12% were negatively stereotyped, 18% were positively stereotyped, and 20% were realistically. Little change was noted over all of the time

periods for each image area. This category remained positively stereotyped.

Category 32: Time-orientation

1. Look to the past
2. Look to the future
3. Find a certain amount of enjoyment in recounting past experiences

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X2	sig	X2	sig
n	7	18.91	10	40.00	3	11.54	0.9652	.6172	5.4958	.0641
p	7	18.91	4	16.00	7	26.92				
r	23	62.16	11	44.00	16	61.54				

No significant differences were noted and this category continued to be presented realistically in the 1980's as it was in the two previous decades. For the 1980's there was a decrease in the percentage of older persons negatively stereotyped and an increase in those positively stereotyped; however, the percentage for the realistic image was somewhat higher in the 1980's than in the 1970's.

Category 33: Coping

1. Are seldom able to cope
2. Have no difficulty coping
3. Become better able to cope as they grow older

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X2	sig	X2	sig
n	6	13.33	4	18.18	4	14.81	3.7130	.1562	20.6669	.0003
p	16	35.50	16	72.72	4	14.81				
r	23	51.11	2	9.09	19	70.37				

A chi-square of 20.6669 for the 1970's/1980's data resulted in a significant difference at the $p = .0003$ level. For the 1980's four

characters each were recorded in the negative and positive stereotypes for 14.81% and 19 characters for 70.37% were recorded in the realistic area. The majority of realistic portrayals in the 1980's was a dramatic change from the positive stereotype in the 1970's, but similar to the realistic portrayals of the 1960's.

Category 34: Stability

1. Become insane
2. Appear to become mentally healthy
3. Are more susceptible to mental illness

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X2	sig	X2	sig
n	3	25.00	0	0.00	1	6.88	2.2299	.3279	0.8330	.6594
p	4	33.33	5	62.50	8	47.06				
r	5	41.66	3	37.50	8	47.06				

There was no significant difference for the data of the 1980's as measured by the chi-square. One character became insane and eight characters were recorded in each of the positive stereotype and realistic areas. The percentages were similar to those of the 1960's and 1970's except no one was recorded in the negative stereotype for the 1970's.

Category 35: Intelligence

1. Become less intelligent
2. Become increasingly more intelligent
3. Seem to grow wiser with the coming of age

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X2	sig	X2	sig
n	5	11.62	5	45.45	1	4.55	2.6600	.2645	-----	-----
p	3	6.97	0	0.00	0	0.00				
r	35	81.39	6	54.54	21	95.45				

Only one aging person (4.55%) was described as becoming less intelligent in the books of the 1980's, no one increasingly became more intelligent, and 21 (95.45%) seemed to grow wiser with the years. No significant difference was measured with 1960's/1980's data and the category was not computable for the 1970's/1980's. Although the 1980's data were similar to that of the 1960's, there was a large decrease in percentages from the 1970's to the 1980's in the negative stereotype and a large increase in the realistic area. Intelligence is shown to be realistically portrayed for all three time periods.

Category 36: Memory

1. Are unable to remember
2. Can remember most things
3. May exhibit a weakening short-term memory while verbal and long-term memory seem relatively unaffected

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X2	sig	X2	sig
n	0	0.00	1	5.26	3	7.89	5.7762	.0557	2.9523	.2285
p	24	75.00	14	73.68	19	50.00				
r	8	25.00	4	21.05	16	42.11				

In the Memory category the literature positively stereotyped a majority of the characters for the 1960's and 1970's with exactly half of the characters placed in the same image area in the 1980's. No significant differences were noted, but there was an increase in the number of elderly placed in the realistic image area from 25.00% in the 1960's and 21.05% in the 1970's to 42.11% in the 1980's.

SERENITY

Category 37: Tranquility

1. Become aggressive and argumentative
2. Become tranquil and serene
3. Are less likely than young people to show irritability and annoyance

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X2	sig	X2	sig
n	6	13.04	5	23.80	8	30.77	3.9309	.1401	4.1599	.1249
p	4	10.86	5	23.80	1	3.85				
r	35	76.08	11	52.38	17	65.38				

Authors of the literature published in the 1960's, the 1970's, and the 1980's realistically described a majority of the elderly in this category. The percentages for the 1980's were 30.77% in the negative stereotype, 3.85% in the positive stereotype, and 65.38% in the realistic area. The 1980's figures show little change over the other two periods for the realistic image, but the negative stereotype was highest for the three periods and the positive stereotype was the lowest.

Category 38: Stress

1. Live in a world of fear and frustration
2. Live in a fantasy/dream world
3. Experience more stresses than any other age group

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X2	sig	X2	sig
n	5	20.00	3	25.00	2	9.09	2.6635	.2640	2.2976	.3170
p	5	20.00	2	16.66	2	9.09				
r	15	60.00	7	58.33	18	81.82				

The chi-square test showed no significant difference for the 1980's data. Two elderly persons (9.09%) were recorded in each stereotype

image and 18 (81.82%) represented reality. The stereotyped characterization decreased from the two previous periods while the realistic area increased over 20%. A majority of the characters were depicted realistically in all three decades.

Category 39: Contemplation

1. Like to sit and dream
2. Are constantly on the go
3. Appear to be more restrained and less impulsive than younger persons

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X ²	sig	X ²	sig
n	1	2.94	6	30.00	1	3.85	6.3063	.0427	7.9500	.0188
p	3	8.82	2	10.00	9	34.61				
r	30	88.23	12	60.00	16	61.54				

Chi-squares of 6.3063 ($p = .0427$) and 7.9500 ($p = .0188$) were measured for the 1980's frequencies when tested with the data of the 1960's and 1970's, respectively. The difference in the 1960's/1980's data was observed in a 25.79% increase in the positive stereotype and a 25.69% decline in the realistic portrayal. The difference between the 1970's and 1980's figures is a decrease in the negative stereotype of 26.15% and an increase in the positive stereotype of 24.61%.

The category, as a whole, retained a majority of realistic characterization for all three decades.

Category 40: Events

1. Are not greatly affected by retirement, widowhood, dependency, and the like
2. Are profoundly affected by retirement, widowhood, dependency, and the like

3. Are less affected by retirement, widowhood, dependency, and the like than the earlier events in their lives such as school, marriage, work, and parenthood

	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X2	sig	X2	sig
n	1	16.66	7	53.84	4	14.29	0.2145	.8983	12.8948	.0016
p	1	16.66	4	30.76	3	10.71				
r	4	66.66	2	15.38	21	75.00				

A chi-square of 12.8948 ($p = .0016$) resulted from the 1970's/1980's data test. The 1980's frequency count produced percentages of 14.29% in the negative stereotype, 10.71% in the positive stereotype, and 75.00% in the realistic area. The significant differences were noted in the negative stereotype reduction from 53.84% to 14.29% and a very large increase in the realistic area from 15.38% to 75.00%. The Events category was realistically described for the 1960's and the 1980's, but was negatively stereotyped in the 1970's.

When testing the data of the 1960's with the 1980's data using chi-square and a significance level of $p = .05$ with 2 degrees of freedom, six categories were found to be significantly different. The categories were: Widowhood, Illness, Creativity, Suicide, Politics, and Contemplation. Because a majority of the 40 categories were not found to be significantly different, the null hypothesis was accepted.

When testing the data of the 1970's with the 1980's data using a chi-square and a significance level of $p = .05$ with two degrees of freedom, ten categories were found to be significantly different. The categories were: Appearance, Skills, Activities, Lifestyle, Outlook, Change, Ideas, Coping, Contemplation, Events. Because a majority of the

40 categories were not found to be significantly different, the null hypothesis was accepted.

Chapter 5

Conclusions, Recommendations, and Summary

Conclusions

Although the image of the senior adult in realistic literature published for young adults in the years 1979 to 1986 was not found to be significantly different than that of Baggett's study there are some changes over the years in the percentages of characters identified in the three image areas which help one to understand the portrayal of aging in young adult realistic literature from 1960 to 1986.

A comparison of the 1960's data with that of the 1980's reveals a difference in the realistic image area of the 40 categories. Baggett found that a majority of the characters were realistically represented in 21 categories- Fatigue, Senses, Personality, Adaptability, Support, Involvement, Activities, Leisure, Outlook, Nursing Homes, Politics, Adjustment, Change, Ideas, Time Orientation, Coping, Intelligence, Tranquility, Stress, Contemplation, and Events. Of these 21 categories, only one, Politics, became stereotyped in the 1980's. The change in politics may reflect the popular opinion that in the 1980's the younger generation is more interested in pursuing education, careers, and raising families than in protesting or raising political consciousness as the young did in the 1960's. This should not change the activities of the aging in reality, but maybe the authors do not find the opportunity to put the elderly characters in political roles when they are not portraying younger characters in that way.

In the 1960's data, 19 categories had stereotyped images of the elderly. In nine of these categories a majority of the elderly were positively stereotyped. In the 1980's, four remained positively stereotyped, two became negatively stereotyped, two showed no majority, and one became realistic in portrayal. The widowhood and creativity categories changed to negative stereotypes. Not one person was married at the time of the story, and many of those who had lost a spouse through death had done so before retirement age. The absence of spouses for any of the characters seems to have given the authors more latitude in treatment of the older characters as to lifestyle and interests, albeit a stereotyped treatment. The Creativity category demonstrates a negative stereotype, but this may have come about because this researcher chose to place all characters in this category who had sufficient development in order to ascertain if they were creative. If they did not act creatively in an artistic or problem-solving sense, they were placed in the negative stereotype. Since Baggett placed only 15 of 120 characters in this category she probably used a different criterion for decisions. This explanation may account for the high negative stereotype in the 1980's, but it does not explain why aging persons decreased in the other two image areas.

The 1960's positively stereotyped Health category became realistically depicted in the 1980's. The present era promotes physical fitness, good eating habits, and a concern for universal wellness which extends to the elderly. The idea that old age and poor health are an inevitable link has been eliminated in the young adult literature read for this research.

Category 21, Sex, was negatively stereotyped in the 1960's and the 1980's. Sexuality remains a hidden aspect in the life of the senior adult in young adult literature, although authors are not timid about revealing sexuality of the young adult in the same novel and with much detail. It seems the authors have not dealt personally with the idea of sexuality and the aged. If this continues, young adults will have lost the opportunity to view the last segment of their lives as one of love, affection, and attraction as much as in the earlier years. If literature is to offer a glimpse of life and help prepare readers for living, authors of young adult literature need to analyze their own feelings on this topic so they may present it realistically in their writings.

In five categories- Illness, Income, Responsiveness, Performance, and Rigidity- a majority of the older characters became realistically portrayed in the 1980's as compared to the 1960's. The changes in these image areas seem to follow the present knowledge and research about the lives of persons over 65 years and with the exception of Illness none was significantly different. Illness was statistically different as measured by the chi-square and shown by large changes in each image area.

An improvement of the image of the senior adult was seen in 23 categories when comparing the 1960's data to that of the 1980's. An improvement occurred in any category where the total percentage of negative and positive stereotypes was reduced producing a gain in the realistic image. While these increases were not all statistically

significant, they do indicate that authors have improved the realism of older characters in those categories.

In Baggett's research for the 1970's 12 of the 40 categories showed a majority of the characters were realistically portrayed. The 12 categories were: Learning, Illness, Senses, Personality, Support, Involvement, Leisure, Nursing Homes, Intelligence, Tranquility, Stress, and Contemplation. In the 1980's all 12 of these categories remained realistic.

In the 1970's research 26 categories gave stereotyped images of the senior adult. Ten of these categories were positively stereotyped. Of these ten, four remained so in the 1980's and three showed no majority. Three- Health, Performance, and Coping- became realistic in image. These categories are: Of these three only Coping is significantly different in the 1980's when compared with the 1970's data. The change was from an approximately 70% positive stereotype in the 1970's to a similar amount of realism in the 1980's. Again it must be noted that authors seem in these instances to be modeling their older characters upon the present psychological and physical knowledge based in gerontology.

Categories Widowhood and Events were negatively stereotyped in the 1970's. Widowhood remained so in the 1980's and Events became realistically portrayed. The change in Events was statistically significant. The statement says that the elderly are less affected by the negative aspects of old age than they were by the life events in their younger days. In the books read for the 1980's the aging were people whose present lives were filled with opportunities and

activities. There was not much time to ponder the negative. Also, because the older characters in the 1980's books had been alone for a long period of time, the losses in life were not dwelt upon and had already been dealt with before the stories began.

From the 1970's to the 1980's there was a net gain of 14 realistic categories- Fatigue, Health, Adaptability, Income, Activities, Responsiveness, Outlook, Adjustment, Change, Ideas, Performance, Rigidity, Time Orientation and Coping. Except for Activities, Outlook, Change, Ideas, and Coping none was a statistically significant change. It must be remembered that there was a decline in the research from the 1960's to the 1970's of seven realistic categories. The net gain from the 1970's to the 1980's of 14 categories represents in many cases a return to the realism levels of the 1960's. Seventeen additional categories showed improvement from the 1970's to the 1980's. In many cases this approached the realism level of the 1960's. In the 1970's 28 categories dropped in percentages in the realistic image area from the 1960's data. Of these 28 image areas, 24 rose again in the 1980's to figures similar to the 1960's.

Baggett did not speculate on the reason for this 1970's decline in realistic characterization of the senior adult. The 1970's were a time of multicultural and nonsexist awareness and with that came an awareness of the joy of diversity in all segments of society. This awareness led to the study of the psychosocial development of individuals and groups. The 1970's also saw a surge of interest in the study of gerontology. Those research findings have been published in the popular literature and made society aware of what aging is and is not. Writing in the

1970's was influenced by scientific studies and the sometimes painful truths thrust upon us by the violent 1960's. The less positive view of the elderly in young adult literature published in the 1970's may have been an attempt to show the elderly as they truly are. If there was too much emphasis on the stereotypes, it may have been a result of an attempt to show the diverseness of the older individuals instead of presenting them as a gray nothingness.

The presentation of the senior adults in the 16 books analyzed for this research and published in the years 1979-1986 was one of complete diversity except that not one person over 65 years of age was married at the time the story took place. This is the most stereotyped and regrettable characterization of all the titles read because it gives the picture of aloneness in old age when in actuality many married couples have twenty years or more together after retirement before the death of one spouse. On the other hand, the singleness of the aging in the books of the 1980's gave rise to a diversity of characters. Because the senior adults were alone, the authors seemed to place them in more unconventional situations and made them strong individuals who only had to consider themselves when seizing opportunities. Even those characters who were dying or had few resources were pictured as living meaningful lives and able to reasonably control their existence. Included in the elderly characters were: a doctor with alzheimer's disease; a wife murderer; a dying Eskimo; a five-time divorced woman; an artist who left her husband and year old daughter to pursue her art; a dying colonel and female friend who cheerfully gambled away all his money in Atlantic City; a male artist who was confined to a wheel chair

and has given up hope of success, but does not cave ino a knife-weilding teenager; a female English farmer; a grandmother who does not want to care for her grandchildren because she was liberated with her husband's death; a Blackfoot grandfather just out of prison; a rich Black rancher; and Jewish members of a kitchen band. The characters are delightful, unexpected, and real. Young adults who read these stories will have an understanding of the elderly and the possibilities of life after 65. Even though not all categories are portrayed realistically, if every aging person was characterized as average it would eliminate some of the diversity and liveliness of the characters.

The purpose of the present research was to discover if the young adult realistic literature for the 1980's was significantly different from that of the 1960's or the 1970's. Having based this research on Carolyn Baggett's 1980 doctoral paper at the University of Mississippi, this researcher found some problems. One problem in patterning this research after Baggett's was the absence of explanations of methodology and description of the instruments used in her paper. No mention was made of the specific chi-square computer program used, the input of data, nor the degrees of freedom used to determine significance. Baggett found that data in four categories were not computable and of the remaining 36, all but two were found to have statistically significant differences. The chi-square results ranged from 3.13 to 215.50. Baggett's category data were entered into the "Chi-square Test with Probe" used for the present research, but chi-squares similar to Baggett's were not obtained and the results were much lower than those of Baggett's. High chi-square results over 50 are not included on the

usual chi-square tables for such few degrees of freedom. If Baggett had included more details of the methodology and type of chi-square used, the results of her research may be more easily compared with the other research results.

Recommendations

The conclusions of this study may be confounded somewhat because of the difference in book selection methods between the two studies. Baggett did a random selection from recommended book lists and read books which contained major and minor senior adult characters along with books that were found upon reading to contain no elderly characters. To limit the number of books read, this researcher asked media specialists to identify books containing major senior adult characters or those who have a major influence on the major character. This method of selection may have identified books that gave a more favorable picture of aging because of the importance of those characters to the story. A similar study for the years 1979-1986 using Baggett's selection methods would reveal the treatment given to incidental senior adult characters as well as major ones.

In a replication of this study it may be helpful to consult the latest gerontological studies to determine if any of the three statements in each of the 40 image areas need to be revised based upon new findings. As the percentage of persons over 65 increases, the world of the elderly will also change. What were valid depictions for characters of the 1960's may no longer be true for those of the 1980's

The statements in the categories would benefit from elimination of qualifying words such as "seldom" and "occasionally" which confuses the placement of characters in separate image areas. It would also be easier to interpret the statements if they were couched in the singular instead of the plural form.

A periodical update of this study will give media specialists, classroom teachers, and parents materials to support the study of aging in western society. Such readings, tied to the curriculum, help youth better understand the lifestyle of the elderly and aids them to better prepare themselves for their own aging.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine if there is a significant difference in the image of the senior adult in recommended realistic literature published for young adults in the years 1979-1986 when compared to that published in 1960-1969 and 1970-1978.

Ten media specialists, who work with young adult materials were asked to identify books published from 1979-1986 in which an elderly person was a major character or had an influence on the major character. Eight media specialists identified 44 titles. After reviewing sources were consulted for favorable reviews and the books examined against the criteria for selection, 33 books remained. Only two books meeting the criteria were identified for 1981 and were used for the study. For the other years, a random drawing was held to select the books for reading. As each book was read, a separate checklist for each category was used to note senior adult descriptions which were recorded in the negative

stereotype, the positive stereotype, or the realistic statement. Both major and minor elderly characters were analyzed for this research. Some assumptions were made by this researcher about the intent of some of the category statements developed by Baggett and no duplicate descriptions of a single person were counted. Because characterizations do not cover all aspects of life, not every aging character was counted in every image area.

Frequencies of characters from all books were tallied for each category and each statement. Percentages were then computed for each statement, and the "Chi-square Test with Probe" was used to determine the chi-square of each image area in the 1980's research with the separate data of the 1960's and 1970's. The level of significance was $p = .05$ with two degrees of freedom. In the test of the 1960's/1980's data, six categories were found to be significantly different. For the 1970's/1980's data, ten categories were determined to be significantly different.

The hypotheses tested by this research are (1) the projected image of the senior adult is not significantly different ($p = .05$) in realistic fiction published for young adults in 1979-1986 than 1960-1969, and (2) the projected image of the senior adult is not significantly different ($p = .05$) in realistic fiction published for young adults in 1979-1986 than 1970-1978. A majority of the categories in the 1980's was not significantly different in tests with the 1960's or the 1970's data; the null hypotheses were accepted.

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Appendix A

February 25, 1987

Dear _____:

As a graduate student in the Library Science Department at the University of Northern Iowa I am doing research concerning the treatment of senior adult characters in realistic fiction written for young adults (ages 12-19) and published in the years 1979-1986.

You were recommended as one who could help identify realistic fiction titles portraying older characters. I need your help because reviews and publisher's publicity do not always identify aging characters in their plot synopsis.

I know your time is valuable and limited, but I would greatly appreciate your expert contribution to this research.

On the enclosed sheet would you identify as many books as you can recall hearing or reading about that contain one or more senior adult characters who are major characters or who have a major influence on the major character in realistic fiction books written for young adults and published in the years 1979-1986. Even if you are unsure of the year of publication or remember only one book please include it.

For any titles or authors you may remember give as much bibliographic information as you can recall, but even partial information will be a great help in identifying specific books for this project.

Please return the enclosed sheet in the stamped envelope in the next two weeks. I will be contacting you by phone in this period to see if you have any questions or suggestions for me.

Thank you so much for helping in this research.

Sincerely

Judi Siler
Graduate Student
Library Science Department
University of Northern Iowa

Appendix B

Media Specialists

Terry Dutcher	Waterloo West Intermediate School, Waterloo, IA
Roxanne Fox	Jesup Community High Schools, Jesup, IA
Sharon Gatewood	Waterloo Central High School, Waterloo, IA
Adele Harms	Waverly-Shell Rock High School, Waverly, IA
Deb Jackson	Dike Community Secondary School, Dike, IA
Mathew Kollasch	Cedar Falls High School, Cedar Falls, IA
Lucille Lettow	Youth Collection Librarian, University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, IA
Jeanne Mazuia	Waterloo East High School, Waterloo, IA
Jane Seeley	Peet Junior High School, Cedar Falls, IA
Linda Waddle	Cedar Falls High School, Cedar Falls, IA

Comparisons of 1960's, 1970's and 1980's Analyses of the Image of Senior Adults in Realistic Young Adult Fiction

Category	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's		
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X ²	sig	X ²	sig	
1. LEARNING	n	4	10.25	1	4.76	0	0.00	0.9709	.6154	3.8596	.1452
	p	17	43.58	4	19.04	4	57.14				
	r	8	46.15	16	76.19	3	42.86				
2. FATIGUE	n	7	16.66	6	14.00	3	1.15	1.7655	.4136	1.9737	.3727
	p	6	14.28	8	32.00	7	26.92				
	r	29	69.04	11	44.00	16	61.53				
3. HEALTH	n	1	25.00	3	33.33	0	0.00	3.9375	.1396	4.0000	.1353
	p	3	75.00	5	55.55	1	33.33				
	r	0	0.00	1	11.11	2	66.67				
4. WIDOWHOOD	n	6	25.00	10	55.55	8	61.54	18.2995	.0001	5.0471	.0802
	p	17	70.83	5	27.77	0	0.00				
	r	1	4.16	3	16.66	5	38.46				
5. ILLNESS	n	14	38.88	6	18.18	1	4.55	9.0083	.0111	2.3299	.3119
	p	6	16.66	9	27.27	8	36.36				
	r	16	44.44	18	54.54	13	59.09				
6. SENSES	n	2	22.22	0	0.00	2	40.00	0.9333	.6271	4.8750	.0874
	p	1	11.11	1	10.00	0	0.00				
	r	6	66.66	9	90.00	3	60.00				
7. PERSONALITY	n	1	2.38	1	6.66	0	0.00	1.5048	.4712	4.2250	.1191
	p	3	7.14	6	40.00	3	15.79				
	r	38	90.47	8	53.33	16	84.21				

Note: n = negative stereotype p = positive stereotype r = realistic image

Comparisons of 1960's, 1970's and 1980's Analyses of the Image of Senior Adults in Realistic Young Adult Fiction

Category	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's		
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X ²	sig	X ²	sig	
8. ADAPTABILITY	n	0	0.00	1	50.00	0	0.00	-----	-----	4.3714	.1124
	p	1	12.50	0	0.00	3	42.86				
	r	7	87.50	1	50.00	4	57.14				
9. APPEARANCE	n	14	35.00	9	29.03	1	4.34	13.0010	.0015	14.3740	.0007
	p	21	52.50	20	64.51	11	47.83				
	r	1	12.50	2	6.45	11	47.83				
10. SUPPORT	n	2	3.22	0	0.00	0	0.00	1.0963	.5780	-----	-----
	p	3	4.83	0	0.00	2	6.67				
	r	57	91.93	28	100.00	28	93.33				
11. INVOLVEMENT	n	8	11.26	7	23.33	5	15.62	1.0963	0.5780	-----	-----
	p	2	2.81	0	0.00	0	0.00				
	r	61	85.91	23	76.66	27	84.38				
12. CREATIVITY	n	2	13.33	1	16.66	20	69.97	14.7678	.0006	5.7663	.0559
	p	12	80.00	2	50.00	6	20.69				
	r	1	6.66	3	33.33	3	9.44				
13. SKILLS	n	5	17.85	4	26.66	0	0.00	4.2087	.1219	7.0072	.0292
	p	19	67.85	8	53.53	7	89.47				
	r	4	14.28	3	20.00	2	10.53				
14. INCOME	n	23	31.50	12	26.66	4	12.91	5.1784	.0751	2.1535	.3407
	p	23	31.50	12	26.66	8	29.03				
	r	27	36.98	21	46.66	18	58.06				

Note: n = negative stereotype p = positive stereotype r = realistic image

Comparisons of 1960's, 1970's and 1980's Analyses of the Image of Senior Adults in Realistic Young Adult Fiction

Category	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's		
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X ²	sig	X ²	sig	
15. ACTIVITIES	n	7	11.86	6	28.57	1	3.33	3.5564	.1689	16.7616	.0002
	p	3	5.08	5	23.80	0	0.00				
	r	49	83.05	10	47.61	29	96.67				
16. RESPON- SIVENESS	n	7	21.21	5	27.77	5	19.23	0.8303	.6602	0.5328	.7662
	p	12	36.36	5	27.77	7	26.92				
	r	14	42.42	8	44.44	14	53.85				
17. LIFESTYLE	n	14	33.33	17	48.57	20	68.97	8.9856	.0112	11.0277	.0040
	p	10	23.80	7	20.00	9	31.03				
	r	18	42.85	11	32.42	0	0.00				
18. LEISURE	n	7	18.91	5	27.77	1	4.76	2.9649	.2271	5.4683	.0650
	p	1	2.70	1	5.55	0	0.00				
	r	29	78.37	12	66.67	20	95.24				
19. OUTLOOK	n	0	0.00	4	33.33	5	23.81	5.4562	.0653	6.2931	.0430
	p	0	0.00	4	33.33	1	4.76				
	r	16	100.00	4	33.33	15	71.43				
20. SUICIDE	n	1	0.83	1	1.72	1	2.86	7.8838	.0194	3.5515	.1694
	p	119	99.16	57	98.27	32	91.43				
	r	0	0.00	0	0.00	2	5.71				
21. SEX	n	2	66.66	7	50.00	21	65.66	0.7609	.6836	3.0975	.2125
	p	1	33.33	6	42.85	6	18.75				
	r	0	0.00	1	7.14	5	15.62				

Note: n = negative stereotype p = positive stereotype r = realistic image

Comparisons of 1960's, 1970's and 1980's Analyses of the Image of Senior Adults in Realistic Young Adult Fiction

Category	1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's		
	f	%	f	%	f	%	X ²	sig	X ²	sig	
22. FAMILY	n	10	27.02	5	22.72	11	42.31	3.1210	.2100	2.5301	.2822
	p	9	24.32	7	31.81	8	30.77				
	r	18	48.64	10	45.45	7	26.92				
23. NURSING HOMES	n	0	0.00	0	0.00	2	5.71	13.6545	.0011	4.6571	.0974
	p	1	0.83	2	3.44	3	8.57				
	r	119	99.16	56	96.55	30	85.71				
24. POLITICS	n	3	17.64	3	37.50	16	72.73	8.9149	.0116	4.8086	.0903
	p	3	17.64	1	12.50	0	0.00				
	r	11	64.70	4	50.00	6	27.27				
25. ADJUSTMENT	n	12	16.66	7	30.43	5	19.23	2.3012	.3164	3.5821	.1668
	p	15	20.83	5	21.73	2	7.69				
	r	45	62.50	11	47.82	19	73.08				
26. CHANGE	n	17	21.79	15	46.87	7	24.14	1.3396	.5118	10.5595	.0051
	p	12	15.38	8	25.00	2	6.90				
	r	49	62.82	9	28.12	20	68.96				
27. IDEAS	n	3	9.67	4	40.00	0	0.00	2.6070	.2716	7.6917	.0214
	p	11	35.48	2	20.00	4	25.00				
	r	17	54.83	4	40.00	12	75.00				
28. PERFORMANCE	n	5	16.66	2	20.00	2	6.90	2.5554	.2787	4.0688	.1308
	p	14	46.66	6	60.00	11	37.93				
	r	11	36.66	2	20.00	16	55.17				

Note: n = negative stereotype p = positive stereotype r = realistic image

Comparisons of 1960's, 1970's and 1980's Analyses of the Image of Senior Adults in Realistic Young Adult Fiction

		1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
29. RIGIDITY	n	6	18.18	5	26.31	1	4.85	2.9645	.2271	5.1407	.0765
	p	12	36.36	7	36.84	10	38.46				
	r	15	45.45	7	36.84	15	57.69				
30. FORGET-FULNESS	n	4	11.42	4	20.00	2	6.90	0.5647	.7540	1.9106	.3847
	p	19	54.28	11	55.00	18	62.07				
	r	12	34.28	5	25.00	9	31.03				
31. CONFUSION	n	5	14.70	5	23.80	3	12.00	0.1208	.9414	0.5451	.7614
	p	23	66.64	16	76.19	17	68.00				
	r	6	17.64	0	0.0	5	20.00				
32. TIME-ORIENTATION	n	7	18.91	10	40.00	3	11.54	0.9652	.6172	5.4958	.0641
	p	7	18.91	4	16.00	7	26.92				
	r	23	62.16	11	44.00	16	61.54				
33. COPING	n	6	13.33	4	18.18	4	14.81	3.7130	.1562	20.6669	.0003
	p	16	35.55	16	72.72	4	14.81				
	r	23	51.11	2	9.09	19	70.37				
34. STABILITY	n	3	25.00	0	0.00	1	6.88	2.2299	.3279	0.8330	.6594
	p	4	33.33	5	62.50	8	47.06				
	r	5	41.66	3	37.50	8	47.06				
35. INTELLIGENCE	n	5	11.62	5	45.45	1	4.55	2.6600	.2645	-----	-----
	p	3	6.97	0	0.00	0	0.00				
	r	35	81.39	6	54.54	21	95.45				

Note: n = negative stereotype p = positive stereotype r = realistic image

Comparisons of 1960's, 1970's and 1980's Analyses of the Image of Senior Adults in Realistic Young Adult Fiction

Category		1960's		1970's		1980's		1960's/1980's		1970's/1980's	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	X ²	sig	X ²	sig
36. MEMORY	n	0	0.00	1	5.26	3	7.89	5.7762	.0557	2.9523	.2285
	p	24	75.00	14	73.68	19	50.00				
	r	8	25.00	4	21.05	16	42.11				
37. TRANQUILITY	n	6	13.04	5	23.80	8	30.77	3.9309	.1401	4.1599	.1249
	p	4	10.86	5	23.80	1	3.85				
	r	35	76.08	11	52.38	17	65.38				
38. STRESS	n	5	20.00	3	25.00	2	9.09	2.6635	.2640	2.2976	.3170
	p	5	20.00	2	16.66	2	9.09				
	r	15	60.00	7	58.33	18	81.82				
39. CONTEMP- PLATION	n	1	2.94	6	30.00	1	3.85	6.3063	.0427	7.9500	.0188
	p	3	8.82	2	10.00	9	34.61				
	r	30	88.23	12	60.00	16	61.54				
40. EVENTS	n	1	16.66	7	53.84	4	14.29	0.2145	.8983	12.8948	.0016
	p	1	16.66	4	30.76	3	10.71				
	r	4	66.66	2	15.38	21	75.00				

Note: n = negative stereotype p = positive stereotype r = realistic image

Books Read

- Bosse, Malcolm. The 79 Squares. New York: Crowell, 1975.
- Collura, Mary Ellen. Winners. New York: Dial, 1984.
- Eige, Lillian. The Kidnapping of Mister Huey. New York: Harper & Row, 1983.
- Fox, Paula. One-Eyed Cat. Scarsdale, NY: Bradbury, 1984.
- Graber, Richard. Doc. New York: Harper, 1986.
- LeVoy, Myron. A Shadow Like a Leopard. New York: Harper & Row, 1981.
- Irwin, Hadley. The Lilith Summer. Old Westbury, NY: Feminist Press, 1979.
- Irwin, Hadley. What About Grandma? New York: Atheneum, 1982.
- Miklowitz, Gloria. Close to the Edge. New York: Delacorte, 1983.
- Paulsen, Gary. Dogsong. New York: Macmillan, 1985.
- Prince, Alison. Turkey's Nest. New York: Morrow, 1980.
- Riley, Joselyn. Only My Mouth is Smiling. New York: Morrow, 1982.
- Rodowsky, Colby. Julie's Daughter. New York: Farrar, 1985.
- Thomas, Joyce Carol. The Golden Pasture. New York: Scholastic, 1986.
- Voigt, Cynthia. Homecoming. New York: Atheneum, 1981.
- Zindel, Paul. The Pigman's Legacy. New York: Harper, 1980.

Abstract

This study, patterned after Carolyn Baggett's 1980 doctoral research at the University of Mississippi, was designed to determine if recommended realistic fiction published for young adults in the years 1979-1986 was significantly different ($p = .05$) than that published in the years 1960-1969 and 1970-1978. The "Chi-square Test with Probe" was used to test the frequencies of 40 characteristics. The categories contained three image statements which were used to record characterizations of older persons in the literature. One statement was a negative stereotype, one was a positive stereotype, and the third was realistic based on gerontological studies. Sixteen books to be read for the present research were randomly selected from a list of 44 titles identified by media specialists as containing senior adults. The 1960's/1980's data produced six significantly different categories and the 1970's/1980's data produced ten significant categories. Because a majority of the 40 categories for each of the periods of the 1960's and the 1970's were not significantly different when compared with those of the 1980's, the null hypotheses were accepted.