

CHINESE FAMILY VALUES
IN A SELECTION OF CHINESE-AMERICAN AND CHINESE-CANADIAN
CHILDREN'S NOVELS ON THE IMMIGRANT EXPERIENCE

by
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Abstract

This study examines the representation of traditional family values, in particular filial piety, in four Chinese-North American immigrant children's books: *The Bone Collector's Son* by Paul Yee, *The Star Fisher* by Laurence Yep, *Donald Duk: A Novel* by Frank Chin, and *Yang the Third and Her Impossible Family* by Lensey Namioka. Utilizing the theoretical framework of Critical Race Theory and the methodologies of content analysis and close reading, this research investigates the depiction of the role and importance of filial piety in the immigrant families of the texts, as well as the relationship between acculturation and heritage values.

Conclusions include that the value of traditional Chinese filial piety, while present in the fictional family relationships, is to an extent modified and questioned in the North American society. The choice of acculturation strategies by parent and child protagonists also creates intergenerational conflicts and affects the adherence to traditional family values. By providing diverse perspectives on the immigrant experience, the novels give a voice to minority group issues and celebrate individual differences.

Preface

This dissertation is original, unpublished, independent work by the author, Yan Ling Li.

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Dedication

To my family, without whom I would not be who I am today.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Origins of Interest

Since arriving at Canada, an ethnically diverse country, I have been frequently asked where I come from. As simple as the question is, I always hesitate for a brief second before answering: China. I am from Hong Kong, a former British colony (1842-1997) that reunited with China in 1997 as a special administrative region. However, many Hong Kong citizens (including myself) generally identify themselves as “Hong Kongers” because we consider ourselves more westernized than Mainland Chinese. While traditional Chinese values bear significant weight in our minds, we are heavily influenced by British western culture. We like to view ourselves as individuals where east meets west. This mentality, however, puts us in the awkward position of being caught between two cultures. At times, this blurred cultural identity makes me feel lonely and out-of-place.

During my stay in Vancouver, I discovered another group that reflects a mix of Chinese and Western influences—the Chinese-North Americans. My interest in the group stemmed from a conversation with a fellow student at the University of British Columbia—a black-haired, Asian-looking individual. At our first conversation, I casually asked if he was from the School of Business. He appeared upset by my remark and demanded if my rationale was that he *looked* like a Chinese and would act like one. In reality, he said, he was an American. Confused, I asked if his family originated from China. He clutched his fists in frustration and insisted once again that he was American. He was born in America, raised in America, educated in America, and had never been to China. If that still didn't make him an American, he questioned, then would he be considered an outsider forever? He even dared me to close my eyes and search for traces of Chinese-ness in his voice or speech.

The conversation with this Chinese-American (who turned out to be a student from Women's and Gender Studies) ended quickly and we have not talked much since. His argument, however, lingered in my mind and raised my awareness of my unquestioned assumption about ethnicity. Indeed, how do we define ethnicity? Do immigrants and their descendants, even third- or fourth-generation children, remain outsiders because of their ethnic roots and physical characteristics? Is discrimination inevitable in the globalized world? How do foreigners deal with the challenge of balancing two very different worlds? With these questions in my mind, I became increasingly curious about Chinese-North Americans—a growing minority group that lives at the boundary of two cultures like Hong Kong citizens.

My roommate, a second-generation Chinese-Canadian, also experiences this bi-cultural dilemma. On one level, familiarity with both cultures and languages gives her a competitive edge in seeking jobs. Yet, she faces the quandary of integrating two sets of value systems into her daily life. For example, she wavers between prioritizing independence—a core North American value—and filial piety—a core Chinese value. She feels a strong obligation to honour her parents' wishes and well-being and gave up an opportunity abroad so as to take care of her parents. Despite this, she admits resenting the patriarchal beliefs and high filial expectations that her Chinese parents appreciate. As opposed to what Chinese philosophers intended, she finds filial piety a disabling force and a barrier to her choices in life. As she struggles to balance the values advocated inside and outside her home, she questions the practicality of exercising Chinese family values in the Canadian context.

My other Chinese-Canadian acquaintance is a middle-aged female immigrant with a young son. With a good mix of both Chinese and Western friends, she is fluent in English and appears to be open-minded to new customs. Although the cultural transition is relatively easy for

her, I sense her underlying fear that her son would be completely assimilated into Canadian culture. She is torn between the desire for her son to interact with locals and the concern for her son's development. She is particularly frustrated when he doesn't treat his elders in an appropriately respectful manner as would be expected of him back home in China. Similar to my roommate, this immigrant mother encounters difficulty practicing Chinese family values in North America. What fascinates me is the effect of immigration on one's family values, especially filial beliefs. How do newcomers adapt their heritage value systems in different societies? How do the applications of filial piety differ between immigrant parents and their children—who tend to acculturate into the dominant culture at a faster rate? How does this generational acculturation gap affect family dynamics and the children's development?

Because of my own background and a newfound interest in immigrants, I started reading youth fiction about Chinese-North Americans. I have always enjoyed reading and view literature as an effective channel to provide insight into societal phenomena and underlying value systems. As Michael Holquist describes in *Dialogism: Bakhtin and His World*, the Bakhtin term “chronotope” implies an intrinsic connectedness between texts and other areas of culture. In fact, a chronotope analysis of literature provides an understanding of the social and historical aspects of our world (Holquist, 113). As such, I seek a deeper understanding of Chinese-North Americans through reading fictional works. I find myself identifying with the immigrant protagonists, which helps validate my feelings of confusion and displacement as a Hong Kong citizen heavily embedded with both Chinese and Western ideas.

While there are numerous studies on the authenticity and benefits of immigrant fiction, a review of the literature reveals limited analyses specifically on intergenerational conflict in Chinese-North American books. For example, few scholars have written on the topic of parent-

child conflict in Chinese-North American literature, which Perry Nodelman and Mavis Reimer observe to be a frequent subject of fiction about minority groups (175).

The observations and questions I have described above foreground my research study, in which I document the depiction of Chinese family values in Chinese-North American immigrant children's literature. Specifically, I examine filial piety in the parent-child relationship. The acculturation strategies employed by characters in the texts are also examined. By doing so, I explore how these strategies and Chinese family values interact with each other.

Later in my research process, I came across Amu Chua's *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother*, the author's account of her experience as a Chinese-American mother. What fascinated me was the heated debate on authoritarian parenting style provoked by the memoir. In fact, Annie Murphy Paul of the *Time* magazine says that the memoir "has inspired both ire and awe among the many who have read her words" (Paul n.pag.). The controversy surrounding this memoir reaffirms the purpose of my thesis to bring other immigrant literature to light and to provide alternative perspectives on Chinese-North American families and parenting styles.

I hope that my research, among other resources, will have significance in that it may raise awareness among authors and teachers of existing Chinese-North American stories, which in turn may facilitate the development or use of high-quality books. In the long run, the books may serve as inspiration for immigrant children and as a tool for non-immigrant children to develop cultural sensitivity (Lamme 123). Furthermore, many of the novels I have read are based on the immigrant authors' personal experiences, so an examination of their works reveals their inner struggle as minority members. In the following section, I will introduce my research questions in detail.

Statement of the Problem

As the study of Chinese-North American literature is still evolving in the scholarly field, I aim to contribute to the development of the genre that greatly inspires me as a bicultural individual. Most existing literary analysis regards the genre as a whole. There is also extensive and in-depth sociological research on Chinese-North American immigrant families, including the endorsement of Chinese values among family members. My analysis fits into existing scholarship by presenting an in-depth examination of four Chinese-North American novels to the literature field, as well as providing a new perspective on current sociological research.

I document the presence of Chinese family values, in particular that of filial piety, in representations of Chinese-North American families in children's fiction. My study examines how the young protagonists and their parents balance traditional family conventions with the mainstream Western norms. Furthermore, this study explores the characters' acculturation strategies to question how being ethnic minority members affects their endorsement or rejection of Chinese family values. Specifically, I address two questions:

- (a) How are Chinese family values, in particular filial piety, portrayed in the parent-child relationships within immigrant families in the primary texts?
- (b) What are the acculturation strategies employed by the child protagonists and their parents? How do these strategies contribute to the parent-child relationships and the endorsement of Chinese family values?

Significance of the Study

As North American society accommodates an increasing number of Chinese, there is a growing representation of Chinese immigrants in books for young readers. By exploring the

challenges of a minority member, immigrant literature helps facilitate communication among non-immigrant and immigrant children.

In an interview about his novel *The Bone Collector's Son*, Paul Yee says that his description of a hypercritical Chinese father is based on his real life observations in Vancouver's Chinatown, where cultural and linguistic barriers contribute to frustration and tension between parents and their children (Yee, "Author Interview," n.pag.) According to the studies I have been able to locate during my literature review, few scholars have written solely about intergenerational conflict and traditional Chinese family values in Chinese-North American children's literature. As such, this study attempts to document the preservation or disruption of Chinese family values, in particular filial piety, as represented in the portrayal of Chinese-North American families in children's fiction. It uncovers the roles and importance of filial piety among immigrant families while exploring how acculturation strategies affect the characters' value systems. Ultimately, this research aims to shed light on the struggles of immigrant youth and the importance of immigrant literature through an evaluation of *The Bone Collector's Son*, *The Star Fisher*, *Donald Duk: A Novel*, and *Yang the Third and Her Impossible Family*.

The Primary Texts

I have purposively selected the study's primary texts. As Alan Bryman suggests, "purposive sampling" is a strategic attempt that is frequently employed in qualitative studies to ensure "a good correspondence between research questions and sampling" (458). He explains how samples are selected according to their usefulness in understanding a social phenomenon (415). Applying Bryman's idea to this research, four books are selected according to their relevance to my research topic.

To explore the portrayal of Chinese-North American families in children's literature, I have identified a list of primary texts based on various criteria: (1) The primary text must be a literary work of realistic fiction that centres on the immigrant experience of a Chinese youth in Canada or the United States. The protagonists should be over ten-years-old as they are likely to deal with deeper internal issues and thus provide more evidence for analysis. The protagonist must retain a close connection to the original culture. (2) The primary text must include family values as a substantial theme for the benefit of my research. (3) The primary text must be written only by Chinese-North American immigrant writers. For the purposes of my thesis, the term immigrant writers refers not only to first-generation newcomers, but also to their close descendants (within two generations) who have an intimate relationship with the immigrants and are likely to present an insider's perspective on the immigrant experience.

I found it difficult to formulate the final criterion regarding the origin of authors. Immigrant literature could be defined as not only *about* immigrants, but also *by* immigrants or writers of the same race as the protagonists. According to the Critical Race Theory concept, "voice-of-colour," writers of colour may be able to communicate matters that others are unlikely to because of their historical background and experiences with oppression (Delgado and Stefancic 9). Yet, experience of oppression is not homogenous among various minority groups. With a unique historical background, each group faces different challenges. It is most appropriate for my study if the authors originated from the same ethnic group as the fictional characters they create. In this way, the authors are not only familiar with the migration experience, but have also *created* part of that experience. As such, I searched for works written by Chinese-North American writers (immigrants and their close descendants) and ended up with a shortlist of titles from which I selected my primary texts.

Applying the above three criteria to the titles I examined, I narrowed the pool to a list of 29 books (see Appendix A). They range from stories about building the Central Pacific Railroad in California to contemporary novels that deal with daily life events. From the list, I chose two historical and two contemporary novels as subjects of examination to contrast how issues are addressed in different time periods. The richness of the text, recognition of the author through positive reception in reviews and awards, and my personal preference also determined my selection. In the end, I chose *The Bone Collector's Son* (2004) by Paul Yee and *The Star Fisher* (1991) by Laurence Yep for the historical texts, and *Donald Duk* (1991) by Frank Chin and *Yang the Third and Her Impossible Family* (1995) by Lensey Namioka as the contemporary texts. These four books emphasize parent-child relationships and are written by recognized Chinese-North American authors. All the authors are award-winners, which indicates their contribution in the field of children's and young adult literature.

Set in Vancouver's Chinatown in 1907, *The Bone Collector's Son* is a suspenseful tale balancing family dynamics, supernatural elements, and realistic racial discrimination. Fourteen-year-old immigrant Bing has a love-hate relationship with his father, who is not only a gambler but a bone collector who digs bones of Chinese immigrants and ships them back to China. A skull is found to be missing and Ba develops a severe, strange fever. Bing, determined to save his father, travels from the graveyard to the fortune-teller's place, and from Chinatown to the hospital's secret basement, in order to solve the mystery and pacify the unsettled spirits. As the finalist for several awards, *The Bone Collector's Son* won the City of Vancouver Book Award in 2004. The third-generation Chinese-Canadian author Paul Yee was raised by his Canadian-born aunt in Vancouver Chinatown (Yee, "Author Interview," n.pag.). His familiarity with Chinese

culture, as well as his identity as a bi-cultural individual, equip him to portray Bing's adventures in the Chinese community.

Laurence Yep's *The Star Fisher* follows 15-year-old Joan Lee, a second-generation Chinese-American in 1927, who faces the challenge of being a newcomer when her family moves from Ohio to West Virginia. Apart from the discrimination and prejudice imposed upon her, Joan struggles with the generational and cultural clashes with her non-English speaking, traditional-minded parents. Joan acts as a translator for her parents, which results in blurred and somewhat inverted parent-child roles. As Joan journeys to maturity, her mother also becomes increasingly open to unfamiliar customs. Intertwined with the main plot is the folktale of the Star Fisher, a magical kingfisher bird that is forced to stay on earth after her marriage with a farmer. The parallel between Joan and the Star Fisher's daughter—who is caught between heaven and earth—is cleverly drawn to reflect Joan's quest for freedom and acceptance. *The Star Fisher* was a Christopher Award winner in 1992. Yep, a second-generation Chinese American who grew up in San Francisco, had conducted extensive research on Chinese-American history before writing the "Golden Mountain Chronicles" series which documents his family's cross-generational experiences in the United States (*Something about the Author* 213: 190). His knowledge of immigrant culture and his experience of alienation as an American-born second-generation Chinese American allow him a suitable storyteller for *The Star Fisher*, a story based on the life of his mother (191).

Donald Duk, by Frank Chin, is about a young boy who despises everything Chinese in his life—Chinese New Year, his comical name, and his father King Duk, who appears to appreciate Chinese culture as much as Donald detests it. This 12-year-old Chinese-American disregards his Chinese identity until he starts having strange dreams in which he identifies as one

of the Central Pacific Railroad builders in 1869 California. Through his research on the railroad workers, he learns to accept his Asian heritage and appreciate his father's way of viewing the two cultures. *Donald Duk* appears as required reading in a number of college courses and has sold over 45,000 copies (Feldman n.pag.). Frank Chin, an American Book Award-winning author, has an immigrant father and a fourth-generation Chinese-American mother (The Asian Canadian Writers' Workshop n.pag.). He is an influential novelist, playwright, and critic of Asian-American literature. His experience as a second-generation immigrant is expressed in this funny, outspoken, and somewhat edgy story about Donald's journey of self-actualization.

Yang the Third and Her Impossible Family describes the experience of Mary Ying-mei Yang, the third of four Chinese siblings who has immigrated to Seattle. In the family, Mary is most eager to adopt American customs. She keeps a list of English slang, works hard to befriend her popular American classmates, and cannot stand her family members, who, in her opinion, are so obnoxiously ignorant about American culture that they keep embarrassing themselves and her in public. It takes numerous cultural misunderstandings, raising a kitten in secret, and sacrificing a dream for Mary—or Ying-mei—to realize that it is possible to gain respect from others even if her family is different. This novel won the Parents' Choice Award in 1995. Namioka was born in Beijing, China, and immigrated to America when she was nine-year-old. She later married a Japanese-American and is known for her multicultural books on both the Chinese-American and Japanese-American immigrant experience (*Something about the Author* 157:176).

Significant Terms

1. Acculturation

Robert Redfield, Ralph Linton, and Melville Herskovits claim that acculturation involves “phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into

continuous first-hand contact with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups” (149). In “Acculturation as Varieties of Adaptations,” John W. Berry proposes “four distinct varieties of acculturation” (13) based on an individual’s attitudes towards the dominant group and the country of origin. Over the course of his research, the four strategies are renamed as assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalization (Berry, “Immigration,” 9). Berry’s acculturation paradigm is later referred as the fourfold model (e.g. Rudmin), a term that is used in this study.

2. Confucianism

Confucianism is one of China’s most prominent philosophical schools. Developed by Master Kong in the Han Dynasty (206 BC—220 AD), Confucianism has remained an influential ideology from Han to the contemporary era. Major Confucian themes include humanism, loyalty, etiquette, and filial piety.

3. Filial piety (*Xiao*)

Filial piety (or *xiao* in Chinese) reflects one’s gratitude and respect for one’s elders such as parents, ancestors, and the emperor in earlier days. As Paul R. Goldin observes, filial piety is not limited to Confucianism, but is present in many religious and ethnic traditions (34). For the purposes of my study, I focus on filial piety as defined in the Confucian treatise *Classic of Filial Piety*. Goldin argues that, in Confucianism, filial piety is regarded as “the cornerstone of moral training and virtuous government” (36). I also utilize filial piety scales created by David Yau-fai Ho and Sylvia Xiao-hua Chen, Michael Harris Bond, and Dong-hui Tang, which offer contemporary applications of filial piety.

4. Immigrants / First-generations

The Census of Canada defines first-generations as “[p]ersons born outside Canada. . . . who are now, or have ever been, landed immigrants in Canada” (Census of Canada n.pag.). First-generations include both permanent and non-permanent residents such as those who are living on Work or Study Permits.

5. Immigrants / Second-generations

A second-generation is naturally born in a country where at least one of his or her parents is a first-generation immigrant. It is stated in the Census of Canada that second-generations are “born inside Canada with at least one parent born outside Canada. This includes (a) person born in Canada with both parents born outside Canada and (b) persons born in Canada with one parent born in Canada and one parent born outside Canada” (n.pag.).

6. Immigrants / Third-generations or more

Third-generations or more refer to individuals “born inside Canada with both parents born inside Canada” (Census of Canada n.pag.). They are descendants of second-generations.

7. Immigrant literature

The genre “immigrant literature” may refer broadly to literature *about* immigrants or, if applied specifically, literature *about* immigrants that is written *by* immigrant authors. Although my primary texts are all written by immigrant writers, “immigrant literature” takes the generic meaning in this research and refers to any book that centres on an immigrant’s experience in a new environment.

8. Immigrant writers

In my study, immigrant writers include first-generation newcomers as well as their descendants within two generations. I believe that second- and third-generations are close enough to the immigrants to present a meaningful and authentic portrayal of the immigrant experience.

9. Master Kong / Confucius

Master Kong (551—479 BCE) was a famous Chinese philosopher and the founder of Confucianism. Although he is better known as Confucius, I refer to him as Master Kong to avoid confusion with the school of Confucianism.

Outline of Chapters

In Chapter Two, I present an overview of the scholarship related to this study, including multiculturalism in children's literature, Asian-North American immigrant writing, Chinese family values, and challenges facing Chinese-North American families. In Chapter Three, I introduce my theoretical frameworks, Critical Race Theory and acculturation, as well as my methodology, a combination of qualitative content analysis and close reading. Chapter Four comprises my findings on filial piety in a thematic structure to facilitate comparison across texts. Chapter Five follows a book-by-book approach to analyze characters' choices of acculturation strategies. In Chapter Six, I address the conclusions drawn from my research and discuss the contribution and limitations of my research study while offering suggestions for further research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

China is one of the leading countries of origin among immigrants to Canada and the United States. As ethnic minority members, the Chinese-North Americans face the dilemma of positioning their heritage values within those of the host countries. Children, in particular, struggle with cultural clashes because they often serve as the front line of cultural adjustment for the family (Crocco 435). As children's value systems and ways of thinking evolve and differ from those of their parents, the growing generation gap may result in conflicts and misunderstanding. In this research study, I examine the depiction of Chinese family values in Chinese-North American children's immigrant literature as well as the effect of acculturation strategies on parent-child relationships.

This literature review begins with a broad discussion of the benefits and limitations of multiculturalism in children's literature. It then focuses on a review of existing scholarship on Asian-North American immigrant literature and the debate regarding the authors' ethnic backgrounds. It transitions from literary analysis to explore Chinese family values in classic Chinese treatises. Shifting to the field of Sociology, the literature review outlines existing findings on parent-child conflicts and the preservation of family values within Chinese-North American families. Information on immigrant writing, family values, as well as the challenges of immigrant families, provides both the background and the rationale for my research.

Multiculturalism in Children's Literature

Multiculturalism is a widely-discussed topic in children's literature and is, in general, well-received by academia. According to Donna Norton and Sandra E. Norton, the authors of *Through the Eyes of a Child: An Introduction to Children's Literature*, multicultural literature

focuses on racial and ethnic minority groups—“the Other”—that are culturally and socially different from the dominant group in a society (580). The authors claim that such literary works allow children of minority groups to appreciate their cultural heritage and develop their cultural identities (581) while heightening non-minority children’s respect for unfamiliar customs.

Ronald Jobe, whose argument aligns with that of Norton and Norton, discusses in *Cultural Connections: Using Literature to Explore World Cultures with Children* that immigrant literature can be beneficial to children’s psychological development because the protagonist’s transition to a new country can be extended to other life experiences (39). Yet, Jobe expresses concern about the accuracy of the cultural elements in multicultural stories. After all, literature is a major source from which young people develop their sense of cultural sensitivity (131). While Norton and Jobe view multicultural children’s literature in a positive light, Caroline Hunt explores a different side of multiculturalism in “Dick and Jane, the Newbery Medal, and the Politics of Geography.” She voices her skepticism towards the objectivity of several young adult novels about Sierra Leone, which address the local custom of female genital mutilation in a dismissive manner. Hunt questions whether the authors have deliberately selected the aspects that they appreciate in a culture while ignoring those that make them uncomfortable. Although Hunt argues that multicultural texts may be incomplete and misleading, her major concern essentially aligns with Jobe’s discussion on the authentic representation of a minority culture. The question, therefore, is not whether children should read multicultural books, but *which* books are most authentic. In *The Pleasures of Children’s Literature*, Perry Nodelman and Mavis Reimer also warn that reading multicultural texts can lead to “essentializing”—a generalized assumption that there are always identifiable characteristics in an ethnic or cultural group that are shared by all the members (171). Although ethnic membership contributes to one’s identity, Nodelman and

Reimer emphasize that ethnic group characteristics are largely constructed by the external environment—customs, cultures, and history—rather than by one’s race or ethnicity. In sum, multicultural stories with credible depiction of culture are generally recommended by scholars.

A number of educators and children’s literature academics approach multicultural children’s books through the theoretical lens of post-colonialism. In the introduction to *Voices of the Other: Children’s Literature and the Postcolonial Context*, Roderick McGillis defines post-colonialism as the resistance against colonialist perspectives and an acknowledgement of the history of oppression (xxii). Post-colonial critics read literature for “their stated and unstated assumptions about the other” (xxviii). McGillis also addresses the concept of neo-colonialism along with diasporic writings, both of which are related to my study of immigrant fiction. McGillis argues that neo-colonialism, which depicts a minority culture that is economically and culturally inferior to the dominant culture, is essentially a reaction to “multicultural societies” such as those in the United States and Canada (xxiv). Diasporic texts—writings by authors who do not live in their country of birth—frequently incorporate the theme of negotiating one’s identity within a new culture (xxvi). McGillis provides a definition of a critical post-colonial lens and introduces concepts that are applicable to immigrant literature. In “Cultural Studies,” Wilfred Guerin justifies the application of post-colonial studies to literature by arguing that language and books are imperial means in which the British Empire fosters its political influence over others (*A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature* 303). He claims that post-colonial concepts of hybridization and orientalism can be used to deconstruct racial discourse and binaries in works of literature, including diasporic texts written by minorities such as immigrants and refugees (305). Clare Bradford is another scholar who examines representations of Indigenous peoples and cultures in children’s literature from a post-colonial perspective.

Drawing on post-colonial scholars Edward Said, Mary Louise Pratt, and Homi K. Bhabha, Bradford presents a comparative study of settler-society¹ literature published in various countries in *Unsettling Narratives: Post-colonial Readings of Children's Literature*. She identifies the use of counter-discourse in texts and claims that they subvert dominant power by refuting discourses that are recognized as the normal or default model (23-24). For example, Bradford suggests that the picture book *A Coyote Columbus Story* by Thomas King and William Kent Monkman provides an alternate outlook on imperialism through the portrayal of Columbus as a sinister intruder instead of a heroic figure (27-29). While Bradford and McGillis view children's fiction via a post-colonial framework, other scholars apply specific terms to their literary study. Perry Nodelman and Mavis Reimer recommend that children should read books that reveal hybridization (173). The post-colonial term hybridity is defined as the two-way influence between colonizers and colonized as set out in Homi K. Bhabha's *The Location of Culture*. It challenges the traditional binary dichotomies between the dominant and subdominant power and proposes the existence of a "third space" in the borderline of cultures. This space, with "newness of cultural practices and historical narratives" (Bhabha 311), emerges as a result of the negotiation of incommensurable global and national differences (312). Bhabha also proposes that the space "in-between the designations of identity" may open up the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains differences by interrogating presumed hierarchy (5). As discussed by scholars such as McGillis, Bradford, and Guerin, post-colonialism is an appropriate theoretical lens to bring to multicultural books for young readers, including those that include neo-colonialism or the experience of diaspora.

¹ Settler Societies are countries settled predominantly by European migration. Examples are the United States, Canada, South Africa, and Australia.

To discuss children's understanding of multicultural books, Richard Beach and Arlette Willis utilize their experiences—Beach as an educator and Willis as a minority group member. In “Constructing Cultural Models through Response to Literature,” Beach states that young readers encounter tension if the cultures depicted in literature differ from their own cultural models (88). He proposes that adults should challenge the youths' subconscious cultural beliefs to stimulate their reflection on the self and the world (92-94). Meanwhile, Arlette Willis brings her experience as an African-American female to the literary analysis of multicultural texts. In “Dissin' and Disremembering: Motivation and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students' Literacy Learning,” Willis discusses her son's reading of African-American novels to claim that children of colour feel confused by the dominant view presented in mainstream novels. To empower children of all ethnicities, Willis encourages the use of novels that offer alternative viewpoints (10). Beach's and Willis' first-hand experiences provide insight into the significance of minority voices in multicultural literature.

While many academics assert the positive impact of multicultural books on children's development, it is crucial that the texts present authentic cultural representations. Meanwhile, some critics study the novels through a post-colonial framework in order to challenge traditional notions of a multi-cultural society, and others apply their teaching experience and cultural background to support the analyses of books that provide a voice to minority groups.

Asian-North American Immigrant Writing

The genre of immigrant literature, which typically centres on the experience of living in a new country, has grown substantially in the North American publishing industry in recent decades because of the large immigrant population as well as the rise of immigrant writers. The United States is revealed as the top destination for permanent immigrants in 2011 in the article

“International Migration: Where Do People Go and Where From?” In 2006, the Census of Canada also recorded 1,110,000 immigrants arriving in Canada from January 2001 to May 2006 (*Daily n.pag.*). The high number of immigrants signals a need for children’s writings on this topic. In “Immigrants as Portrayed in Children’s Picture Books,” Linda Leonard Lamme, Ruth McKoy Lowery, and Danling Fu claim that picture books about immigrants allow immigrant children to see their experiences validated. Moreover, reading immigrant literature provides an opportunity for non-immigrant children to learn more about integrating with new cultures (123). Roni Natov’s discussion on the benefits of immigrant literature also sheds light on the growing popularity of the genre. In her article, “Living in Two Cultures: Bette Bao Lord’s Stories of Chinese-American Experiences,” Natov argues that issues dealt with in immigrant stories, such as defining one’s own identity and integrating traditional beliefs with contemporary values, are universal to young people of all nationalities (38).

Immigrant literature is beneficial not only to readers, but also to immigrant writers who view storytelling as a cathartic experience. Chinese-American author Laurence Yep explains how writing a story is similar to solving a puzzle: “I could reach into the box of rags that was my soul and begin stitching them together” (qtd. in Davis, “Metanarrative,” 147). Paul Yee, a third-generation Chinese-Canadian children’s writer, also talks about the experience of writing as a way of rediscovering his roots. In addition, Yee believes that it is his duty to write so that Chinese-Canadians can grow “spiritually and creatively” by relating to the characters in his stories (qtd. in Day 201). Equally insightful is that Bette Bao Lord, a Chinese-American author, views her stories as a way to celebrate the uniqueness of her bicultural identity: “I think we hyphenated Americans are doubly blessed. We can choose the best of both [worlds]” (qtd. in Natov 39). Lord’s perspective demonstrates the advantage of living in two cultures. In response

to the expanding immigrant population, books about immigrant experience serve an important role in preparing both the reader and the author to deal with challenges in the real world.

Asian-North American immigrant literature has attracted much attention in the academic field. Yet, in “Asian-Americans in Literature for Children and Young Adults,” a summary of current research on Asian-American children’s literature, Junko Yokota criticizes some scholarship for generalizing Asians as a homogenous group rather than as culturally specific groups (16). The nature of her argument is parallel to Perry Nodelman and Mavis Reimer’s warning on “essentializing,” in which stereotypes are created based on an individual’s ethnic or cultural group. Yokota’s observation can be applied to several frequently cited texts about Asian-North American literature. In his introductory essay to *Aiiieeee: An Anthology of Asian-American Writers*, for instance, Frank Chin highlights common concerns faced by Chinese-, Japanese-, and Filipino-American writers (e.g. orientalism and ghettos) without directing each group separately. Another illustration of oversimplifying Asian groups is Elaine Kim’s examination of stories on 19th century immigrants in *Asian-American Literature: An Introduction to the Writings and Their Social Context*. Kim discusses racial discrimination reflected in the genre of Asian-American books, identifies the roles played by immigrant writers, and includes interviews with several Asian-American writers. By overlooking the unique historical background and immigrant experience of each ethnic group, Chin and Kim fall into the trap of generalizing Asians groups as identified by Yokota.

Although Yokota claims that Asian-North American novels are discussed as a homogenous group, a number of recently published articles prove otherwise. The first section of *An Interethnic Companion to Asian-American Literature*, edited by King-Kok Cheung, includes a survey of literature on different national origins. In the second half, Cheung provides broad

comparative studies on diaspora, post-colonialism, and masculinity in Asian-American Literature. Sarah Park's Master's thesis "Korean-American Children's Picture Books: Critical Analysis and Annotated Bibliography" identifies and highlights cultural-specific racism and sexism in Korean-American books. Her PhD dissertation, "Representations of Transracial Korean Adoption in Children's Literature," evaluates the authenticity and usefulness of 51 books about transracially adopted Koreans. Lien Chao's *Beyond Silence: Chinese-Canadian Literature in English* is a book-length analysis about Chinese-Canadian writing. Chao presents recurring themes and tropes as well as the social construction of Chinese history and culture in a selection of Chinese-Canadian novels. Her critical examination is a milestone in Canadian literary studies because it recognizes the importance of Chinese-Canadian stories and lays the foundation for future studies. The growth of literary analysis on specific Asian ethnic groups reflects the recognition of Asian-North American immigrant literature.

While a large proportion of scholarly writing in this area discusses Asian-North American literature for adults (with occasional inclusion of children's books), some focus solely on children's Asian-North American literature. Dolores de Manuel and Rocio G. Davis co-edited a special issue in *The Lion and the Unicorn* journal, "Asian-American Children's Literature," with articles on a wide range of topics, including the paradigms of Asian-American autobiography, the celebration of heritage culture through an appreciation of literature, as well as the concept of personal space in the American-born Asian population. Grace Ko and Pamela J. McKenzie's article, "At the Margins of Mainstream? East-Asian-Canadian Fiction for Children and Young Adults," identifies the main themes in East-Asian-Canadian books and provides a bibliography for the study of Asian-Canadian literature. In "Gold Mountain and More," Carolyn Kim provides a brief overview of existing Chinese-Canadian children's literature. Kim divides

the texts under categories such as autobiographies, immigration stories, and stories about railway workers. She summarizes each example and concludes with the hope to see more Chinese-Canadian books in the future. In “Images of Chinese and Chinese-Americans Mirrored in Picture Books,” Ming-shui Cai surveys 73 picture books to identify representations of Chinese people as he believes that multicultural books greatly impact children’s first impressions about unknown cultures. Cai points out that while stereotypes are less frequent in recent Chinese-American publications, several inauthentic visual symbols still persist (e.g., the Chinese dragon and anachronisms). Commenting on the high proportion of folktales among existing picture books about China, Cai calls for more contemporary realistic stories, which tend to promote cultural understanding in a positive manner. As more literary analysis now focuses solely on Asian-North American children’s books, there are also more articles on individual authors. In the following paragraphs, I will discuss selected critical writing about the four authors of my primary texts—Frank Chin, Lensey Namioka, Laurence Yep, and Paul Yee.

Frank Chin’s junior novel *Donald Duk* has attracted attention from literary scholars. In the examination of internalized racism in “‘The Dragon is a Lantern’: Frank Chin’s Counter-Hegemonic *Donald Duk*,” David Goldstein-Shirley argues how Chin evokes anti-racist feelings by portraying white domination not only in the community of Chinatown, but in young Donald’s mind. As Donald’s internalized racism and assimilationist attitude call for sympathy among readers, his ultimate acceptance of his heritage identity encourages Asian-Americans to learn their ancestral roots while still remaining an American. Goldstein-Shirley claims that Chin’s novel asserts Chinese-American identity as a step towards reconciliation across races (n.pag.). Susan Richardson highlights the didactic purposes of *Donald Duk* in “The Lessons of Donald Duk.” She argues that in comparison to his other works, Chin does not apply lessons to readers

in a forceful manner. Instead, he directs readers through the words of Donald's wise father and uncle to ease readers into the unfamiliar terrain of Chinese culture (59). Apart from Goldstein-Shirley and Richardson, other scholars examine the use of food (e.g., Fung) and dreams (e.g., Leonard) in *Donald Duk*.

Margaret D. Stetz, in "“Chinese, Japanese, What's the Difference?": Lensey Namioka's Realistic Young Adult Fiction," offers a discussion of the racial and cultural dilemma present among fictional characters in Lensey Namioka's *Who's Hu?* and the Yang family series. Stetz draws a parallel between Namioka's experience as the mother of children of dual ethnicity (her husband is a Japanese-American) and the Yang series, in which she addresses racial stereotypes. Often, her Asian-Americans characters lose their national identities as they are categorized as a homogenous group by others. Stetz believes that Namioka is not only writing for immigrants like herself, but white audiences who "need to be pushed . . . to understand identities and experiences unlike their own" (50). In addition, Melinda L. de Jesus, in "“Two's Company, Three's a Crowd?": Reading Interracial Romance in Contemporary Asian-American Young Adult Fiction," studies Namioka's *Yang the Second and Her Secret Admirers* in terms of interracial romantic triangle and the cultural dilemmas it entails. Peter E. Morgan also quotes from Namioka's novel in "A Bridge to Whose Future? Young Adult Literature and the Asian-American Teenager" to illustrate the use of Asian-American narratives in the high school setting.

Of the texts dedicated to Laurence Yep's books for youth, many focus on his award-winning *Golden Mountain Chronicles* series. Rocio G. Davis has published several articles on the series, including "Reinscribing (Asian) American History in Laurence Yep's *Dragonwings*," in which he focuses on literature as a reflection of Asian-American history, and "Metanarrative in Ethnic Autobiography for Children: Laurence Yep's *The Lost Garden* and Judith Ortiz Cofer's

Silent Dancing,” in which he discusses Yep’s contribution to ethnic writing with his novels and autobiographies. Besides Davis, Celestine Woo explores Yep’s creation of fantasy novels that combine reality with Chinese myths in “Towards a Poetics of Asian-American Fantasy: Laurence Yep’s Construction of a Bi-cultural Mythology.” Leona W. Fisher also articulates Yep’s description of cultural transitions in his *Golden Mountain Chronicles* series in “Focalizing the Unfamiliar: Laurence Yep’s ‘Child in a Strange Land.’”

Paul Yee’s Chinese-Canadian novels are considered from several perspectives. In *Picturing Canada: A History of Canadian Children’s Illustrated Books and Publishing*, Gail Edwards and Judith Saltman explore Yee’s depiction of culture and history in his illustrated books (106). Edward and Saltman are not alone in considering Yee’s works as a valuable historical record of the contribution of Chinese workers in the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Marie C. Davis studies Yee’s historical fiction as a way of recognizing the experience of Chinese-Canadians in “A Backward Way of Thanking People: Paul Yee on His Historical Fiction.” As asserted in “Society, History, and Values: A Cultural Study of Paul Yee’s Chinese-Canadian Female Characters,” John (Zhong) Ming Chen and Pat Parungao argue that Yee empowers the often neglected Chinese women through the portrayal of independent, intelligent female fictional characters in the Canadian context. In addition to literary analyses, there are a number of book reviews on Yee’s novels in *Canadian Children’s Book News* and *Canadian Children’s Literature* (e.g., Greenlaw; Carson; Jia; Kim, “Bone”).

While research on Asian-North American adult fiction is more well-established than that on children’s books, the latter has developed from generic analyses to specific discussions on the literature of an individual ethnic group or the works of a specific author. Nevertheless, many themes in Asian-North American children’s books are still unaddressed in the academy (Yokota

16). The adoption of culturally specific values (such as filial piety) in a new society draws little attention from literary scholars. A discussion of the interplay between heritage family values, acculturation, and family dynamics in immigrant fiction, specifically written for children, remains a gap in the corpus of Asian-North American literary analysis.

Cultural Elements: Chinese Family Values

As family is considered the pillar of the Chinese society, many traditional Chinese teachings focus on values and expectations in regards to familial relations. Among the values, filial piety is the most prominent element. As a well-known Chinese proverb says, *Bai xing xiao wei xian* (“priority is given to filial piety in all circumstances”). Filial piety refers to feelings of gratitude and responsibility towards elders, particularly one’s parents and grandparents. Paul R. Goldin, in the book *Confucianism*, states that filial behaviour is encouraged in most Chinese ethnic traditions (34). It is most thoroughly discussed in *Classic of Filial Piety*, a treatise from Confucianism, a regnant Chinese philosophical system originated by Master Kong (also known as Confucius). This well-known classic was published circa 400-470 BC and was used in the Chinese Imperial Civil Service Exams for over 2000 years. Its influence and broad readership make it the most recognized book about filial values in China. In *Classic of Filial Piety*, Master Kong states that filial piety is the fundamental virtue: “Of all human conduct, nothing is greater than *xiao* (“filial piety”)” (15). To fulfill filial responsibilities, he urges one to serve his or her parents with utmost love and respect while bringing glory and renown to the family. His teaching is based on the argument that children have the obligation to repay parents for giving birth to them, nurturing them, and raising them. At the same time, Master Kong recognizes the parental right to discipline their children.

Confucian teachings on filial piety are the foundation of works such as *The Twenty-four Filial Exemplars of Filial Piety*, written in the Yuan dynasty (1260-1368), in which the author Guo Jujing discusses the application of filial piety. Guo includes 24 short stories, each featuring a hero who is subjected to a severe test of filial piety, such as sacrificing his or her health for the benefits of the parents. Literary scholars Weiman Mo and Wenju Shen observe that the moral of Guo's book is that supporting one's parents should "precede all other obligations" (16). They suggest that in the stories, filial piety stems from guilt. The protagonists feel as if they can never do enough to redeem their debt to their parents for bringing them into the world. Finally, Mo and Shen highlight the happy endings of Guo's 24 stories as a positive reinforcement of filial piety. Not only do all the protagonists succeed in their quests, but their intrinsic moral perfection, as seen from their filial behaviour, moves the emperor or the gods to bestow great rewards on them. In "The Place of Filial Piety in Ancient China," Donald Holzman also notes the presence of Confucian filial values in an important Chinese text from the 5th century, *Book of the Later Han*, in which a character Zhu Mu is rewarded for his filial act of refusing to eat or drink when his parents fall ill. Holzman reasons that such extreme action is best explained by the idea that filial piety is seen as an absolute value in China. He argues that by praising characters that act altruistically towards their parents, *Book of the Later Han* encourages and promotes similar behaviour among Chinese readers. Confucian filial belief, as demonstrated in examples of classic treatises and interpretations of these texts, is experienced as a core family value in China.

A number of studies have been conducted to determine whether traditional teachings on filial piety still hold the same degree of influence in modern China. In "Filial Obligations and Expectations in China: Current Views from Young and Old People in Beijing," Xiao-dong Yue and Sik-hung Ng reveal that citizens in Beijing still hold strong filial expectations and

obligations (222). Among the four qualities of filial duty, the study's young participants feel most obligated to act respectfully and to provide financial support. They feel least obligated to act obediently. Yue and Ng conclude that the new protocol in Chinese societies is "respecting elders but not necessarily obeying them" (224). Andrew J. Fuligni and Wen-xin Zhang have conducted a study on family obligation among contemporary Chinese adolescents. Both urban and rural participants in China reported a substantially stronger sense of family obligations when compared to American participants (188). Although Fuligni and Zhang admit that globalization and modernization may eventually lead to the loss of traditional values (214), current studies show that the value to support, assist, and respect one's elders is still deep-rooted among Chinese adolescents (189). Other scholars provide useful tools to measure the degree in which an individual endorses filial beliefs. David Yau-fai Ho's filial piety scale, for instance, assesses an individual's reported levels of filial values in a contemporary setting. Sylvia Xiao-hua Chen, Michael Harris Bond, and Dong-hui Tang adapted this scale in order to compare filial attitudes between citizens from Beijing and citizens from Hong Kong. Contents of *Classic of Filial Piety* and the filial piety scale will be discussed in the methodology chapter as benchmarks in my study of Chinese-North American children's books.

While there are few teachings on parents' duties in China, contemporary research on family relations reveals parents' sense of duty and highly involved care for their children. The Chinese Constitution states "parents have the duty to rear and educate their minor children" (Constitution of the People's Republic of China, Article 49). In the academy, there are various interpretations of the expected roles of Chinese parents. Western scholars such as Diana Baumrind, and Laurence Steinberg, et al., describe Asian parenting style as authoritarian with control and governance as two predominant components. However, in her paper "Beyond

Parental Control and Authoritarian Parenting Style: Understanding Chinese Parenting through the Cultural Notion of Training,” Chinese scholar Ruth K. Chao suggests that Baumrind misunderstands the implications of two Chinese parenting terms: *chiao shun* (“child training”) and *guan* (“to govern”) (1112-13). Although the two terms appear to be restrictive, Chao notes that they have a very positive connotation of “to care for” (1113). She comments how Chinese parents view training as rigorous educating or inculcating of children to ensure harmony and integrity of the family unit (1117). In 1995, Chao conducted a comparative study on the teaching styles between Chinese and Americans, recorded in “Chinese and European American Cultural Models of the Self Reflected in Mothers’ Childrearing Beliefs.” She notes that Chinese parents hold the belief that they have to be highly involved, caring, and concerned in their child’s upbringing (341-42). They believe it is their duty to teach children the proper behaviour of the adult world, a belief that contrasts greatly to those of the American mothers, most of whom take a “child-centred” approach to allow individual choice and growth (1118). With differing expectations for the parent-child relationship in China and the West, it is understandable that immigrant families in North America are likely to experience intergenerational conflicts.

Challenges in Chinese-North American Families

One of the major challenges faced by immigrants in their host countries is intergenerational conflict. Sociologist Min Zhou, in his article “Growing up American: The Challenge Confronting Immigrant Children and Children of Immigrants,” claims that acculturation—the process of cultural and psychological change following an interaction between cultures—creates conflict within parent-child relationships. He observes that children often lack meaningful connections to their heritage and tend to evaluate themselves according to the standards of the new country (64). Zhou claims that, in most cases, children are eager to

acculturate in order to fit in while parents prefer retaining traditional family life (84). In other words, parents cannot match the rapid rate of acculturation among children. Different acculturative responses—assimilation, separation, integration, or marginalization—not only extend the generation gap, but also evoke fear in parents that their children will forget about their roots (83-84). In addition, Zhou explores the impact of foreign language acquisition on the parent-child relationship. He argues that when children act as interpreters for their Chinese parents, role reversal occurs and undermines parental authority. As Zhou points out, the immigrant experience influences family dynamics and disrupts normal parent-child relationships in various ways. This suggests the possibility that the emphasis on heritage family values in immigrant families may be changing as well.

Numerous sociological studies on Chinese-North American families have provided insight into existing family values among immigrant parents. Findings show that most parents still maintain a strong tie to their heritage culture because they constantly refer to Confucian teachings in interviews (Chao 343; Li, “Expectations,” 489; “Parental,” 175). Some express disappointment when their children fail to fulfill filial responsibilities such as respecting elders and honouring the family (Gorman 75). Parents also demonstrate a strong emphasis on academic performance, viewing it as a ladder for a better life and family glory—the highest form of filial piety (Hao and Bonstead-Bruns 176; Goyette and Xie 23-4). On the other hand, parents recognize the need to adjust their parenting style and expectations in response to North American society. According to Jean Cheng Gorman, half of the immigrant mothers interviewed have not specifically raised their children to “be Chinese” because they understand the struggle to balance two sets of value systems (77). In Jun Li’s recent study, “Parental Expectations of Chinese Immigrants: a Folk Theory about Children’s School Achievement,” several Chinese-Canadian

parents highlight the need to integrate Confucian values with Western beliefs in the education of their children (176). Also, in 2004, Eli Lieber, Kazuo Nihira, and Iris Tan Mink incorporated both David Yau-fai Ho's filial piety scale (quantitative analysis) and interviews (qualitative analysis) in their research on the role of filial piety in Chinese-North American families. Results of the filial piety scale reveal that most parents embrace the virtue of filial piety (Lieber, Nihira, and Mink 341). Meanwhile, the qualitative data provide consistent parental perspectives on acculturation. While parents feel uncertain about their expectations regarding filial behaviour from their second-generation children, they try to modify Confucian practice of obedience and respect to adapt to American culture (337, 339). Despite a strong personal tie with Chinese family values, Chinese-North American parents try to adjust the conceptualization of filial piety in the new society. At the same time, research findings show immigrant parents' dilemma and struggle to find the perfect balance of Confucian values with Western beliefs at the margins of two cultures.

Although filial piety is deeply rooted among immigrant parents, the degree of endorsement of Confucian values varies among immigrant children. Jun Li's study of seven Chinese-Canadian families presents diverse views on conventional values ("Parental"). Some child participants feel torn and confused when negotiating different expectations of their heritage norms and the Canadian norms. One girl expresses her disdain for Confucian beliefs and resents her parents' unrealistic wish of having a "100% Chinese" daughter in the North American context (177). She argues that it is impossible to resist any influence from her non-Chinese peers in daily life. A number of participants, however, experience no cultural conflicts because they remain mostly unassimilated into the Canadian culture and share similar expectations with their Chinese parents. One boy demonstrates strong filial beliefs in his altruistic response: "I would be

satisfied if . . . all my friends and relatives [are] happy throughout their lives. Because if they are happy, I will be happy; but if I am happy, it does not mean they are happy” (176). His wish is parallel to that encouraged in Chinese treatises such as *Book of the Later Han*. In his more recent research in 2007, Li again records mixed responses from immigrant children in “Forging the Future between Two Different Worlds: Recent Chinese Immigrant Adolescents Tell Their Cross-Cultural Experiences.” While some embrace filial piety, others resent the Chinese parenting style, which conflicts with Canadian democratic values. Li reveals the mixed views on Chinese family values among immigrant children. However, the findings in Li’s studies are undermined by the small sample sizes (“Forging”). He interviewed seven immigrant families in 2001 and 2004, and 12 adolescents in 2007, respectively. In 1974, L. C. Yu conducted a large-scale quantitative study exploring filial behaviours and beliefs among 522 Chinese-Americans. More than 54% of the respondents scored low in the self-completion questionnaires, revealing that filial piety may no longer exert the same level of influence it did in traditional Chinese society (30). Older respondents score lower on the filial scale than the younger groups. Yu attributes this to a longer period of American influence and the acculturation process, which creates “an emotional distance between immigrants and their aging parents who have stayed in their native country” (18). Data reveals that regardless of the age, American born respondents score low in filial obligations compared to the immigrants and are not prepared to accommodate their aged parents (32). Yu proposes that acculturation gaps between immigrant parents and their children lead to conflict and stress between generations. While Yu’s study involves a large number of participants, his study was conducted in 1974 and may, therefore, be outdated in contemporary society. While both Li’s semi-structured interviews and Yu’s quantitative findings provide

insight on Chinese-North American children, current research is not sufficient to determine how the majority of contemporary immigrant children adopt Chinese family values in the West.

Conclusion

A review of the literature reveals that the majority of children's literature specialists consider multicultural books, including immigrant fiction, a useful teaching tool for children given that the texts provide an authentic depiction of the cultural minority group. As such, evaluation and analyses of immigrant fiction are essential in order to move the genre forward. As I researched Chinese-North American children's literature, I noticed a gap in the analysis on the preservation of cultural values. As such, my thesis is unique in its focus on the interaction between filial piety and acculturation in relation to the parent-child relationship as represented literary works. As seen in the Chinese classics and sociological studies, filial piety is regarded as a core family value in Chinese families both in the past and the present. Surveys of Chinese-North American families report parents' strong reliance on Confucian filial teachings and children's diversified attitudes towards their heritage values. This discrepancy may widen the generation gap, leading to intensified intergenerational conflicts in immigrant families.

Given that intergenerational conflict is a major challenge among immigrants (Zhou 64), as well as a major theme of immigrant literature (Crocco 435; Nodelman and Reimer 175), I have chosen to examine the depiction of the heritage value of filial piety in my primary texts and its relationship with characters' acculturative responses. Such research is significant in determining the influence of literature on children, who rely on multicultural stories to develop their own cultural identity. In relation to intergenerational conflict, I document the representation of filial piety and acculturative strategies in a selection of Chinese-North American immigrant texts.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework and Methodology

Theoretical Framework

In my construction of a theoretical framework, I draw on the cultural and psychological concept of acculturation while also referring to Critical Race Theory. I begin by explaining the acculturative fourfold model and transition to discussing the notions of counterstorytelling and voice-of-colour in Critical Race Theory.

I use the fourfold model, derived from acculturation, as the organizing structure to categorize the characters' intercultural adaptations in my study. In their frequently cited paper "Memorandum for the Study of Acculturation," Robert Redfield, Ralph Linton, and Melville Herskovits state that: "[a]cculturation comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups" (149). Further, David L. Sam and John W. Berry, in their article "Acculturation: When Individuals and Groups of Different Cultural Backgrounds Meet," define acculturation as the cultural and psychological changes caused by interactions between cultures (472). They argue that, in comparison to assimilation, acculturation is a more generic term which acknowledges the reciprocity through which cultural groups influence each other. In "Acculturation as Varieties of Adaptations," Berry first proposes four attitudes individuals adopt in response to acculturation (13). In his later work, "Immigration, Acculturation, and Adaptation," he refines the attitudes as four strategies—assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalization—according to a person's wish to maintain the culture of origin and the willingness to participate in the dominant culture (9). His paradigm is referred to as the fourfold model by scholars such

as Floyd W. Rudmin in “Critical History of the Acculturation Psychology of Assimilation, Separation, Integration, and Marginalization.” Berry regards integration as the most adaptive style due to the corresponding flexibility and “willingness for mutual accommodation” in two cultural communities (24). On the other hand, he argues that marginalization has the least adaptive outcome because of “the presence of hostility and much reduced social support” (24). In all, the fourfold model provides a theoretical framework to identify an individual’s reaction towards an alien culture.

Critical Race Theory (CRT), particularly the concepts of counterstorytelling and voice-of-colour, plays an important role in my research. In “Critical Race Theory: A Proposed Structure and Application to Federal Pleading,” Roy L. Brooks states that CRT comprises various race-based theories and values that question legal traditions (87). Arguing on the principle that people of colour are adversely affected by their race, CRT seeks to achieve racial equality by deconstructing aspects of legal order that disregard minority group members (88). Rather than addressing issues related to cultural transition at the level of the individual, CRT focuses on racism and its influence on minority members.

Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic remark in *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction* that CRT has spread beyond the field of legal studies into areas such as education, ethnic studies, and American studies (3). Gloria Ladson-Billings and William F. Tate, in their article “Toward a Critical Race Theory of Education,” demonstrate how CRT sheds new light on educational phenomena such as curriculum, pedagogy, and school funding. They state that while both multicultural education and critical legal studies seek justice to minority groups, CRT aims to create radical change in the current

order and can therefore bring a “radical critique of both the status quo and the purported reforms” in education (62). With an “activist dimension” (Delgado 3), the application of CRT in education not only increases understanding of the current situation, but transforms it for the better. Meanwhile, CRT is used to examine how issues of race and racism operate within the context of children’s literature. In “An Author as a Counter-Storyteller: Applying Critical Race Theory to a Coretta Scott King Award Book,” Wanda Brooks explains her choice of CRT as the theoretical lens to analyze Mildred Taylor’s *The Land*. Firstly, CRT encourages counterstories, which authenticate the lives of minority groups by exploring the enduring influence of racism (10). Secondly, it positions racism as the centre of literary analysis, especially for historical novels. Finally, CRT is a contemporary framework that acknowledges the past-present racial linkages. By introducing these three CRT tenets, Brooks argues that CRT is an appropriate tool for literary analysis. Jonda C. McNair also employs CRT in her analysis of African-American children’s literature in “A Comparative Analysis of The Brownies’ Book and Contemporary African-American Children’s Literature Written by Patricia C. McKissack.” She claims that CRT provides insights about the significance of race in children’s books because of its assumption that racism is so heavily embedded into our everyday lives that it appears to be “normal” (7). McNair also mentions the notion of counterstorytelling that subverts dominant constructions of social reality. She states that ultimately, both literature and CRT are committed to re-envisioning and changing the status quo of the social order (10). Although the application of CRT to the fields of education and children’s literature remains relatively new, educators and literary critics

have begun to acknowledge its value in accessing race, which remains “un-theorized” in education (Ladson-Billings and Tate 49).

Following the examples of Brooks and McNair, I utilize the CRT terminology “counterstorytelling” as the foundation of my research on immigrant literature. In “Critical Race Methodology: Counter-Story Telling as an Analytical Framework for Education,” Daniel G. Solorzano and Tara J. Yosso define counterstories as narratives that focus on groups whose “experiences are not often told” (26). The group is not limited only to those who experience racial discrimination, but may also refer to minorities such as the poor or homosexuals. Richard Delgado expresses a similar stance in “Storytelling for Oppositionists and Others: A Plea for Narrative” and explains how counterstories address the experience of outgroups as a means of providing a voice to the members of marginalized groups. Counterstories can appear in the forms of stories, parables, chronicles, or narratives (2413). For instance, Black slaves have written stories about their pain and oppression through songs, letters, and verses (2435). By presenting the often devalued perspective of the subordinated groups, such narratives become a form of “counter-reality” that liberates outgroup members while challenging existing racist characterizations (2412). Delgado points out that counterstorytelling ultimately seeks to reallocate power by challenging the status quo and deconstructing conventional prejudice (2414-15). Counterstories are broadly defined and may appear in different formats including immigrant literature, which focuses on the experience of a group that is still seeking a place in the mainstream society. In a similar way that counterstorytelling is therapeutic to minority group members, novel-writing is a cathartic experience for immigrant authors.

The notion of voice-of-colour is applied to my selection of primary texts. In *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction*, Delgado and Stefancic state that writers of colour, with their historical background and experiences with oppression, can communicate matters that the whites are unlikely to address with the same authenticity (9). Although immigrant literature written by non-native writers should also be acknowledged (for they may be less prone to present a biased viewpoint), many respected critics support the argument of voice-of-colour. Sarah Park points out that although white authors can write high-quality books about ethnic experiences, “being ethnic does provide a certain perspective of the world which a white person has not experienced” (21). Perry Nodelman and Mavis Reimer also claim that books by native writers have a greater likelihood of an authentic representation of minority groups (173). To keep my research focused, I include works by immigrant writers.

The concept of acculturation forms the foundation of my research while providing a critical framework for my content analysis. I also draw on the notions of voice-of-colour and counterstorytelling from CRT to shape the theoretical lens through which I analyze my texts. In addition, I employ post-colonial terms as outlined in Literature Review to discuss my texts when appropriate. While the Chinese-North Americans are not colonized, I believe post-colonial theory can be used to view immigrant literature, which is a form of neo-colonial or diasporic writings (McGillis xxiv, xxvi).

Methodology

I interrogate my primary texts using a combination of qualitative content analysis, a minimal amount of descriptive quantitative content analysis, and close reading. According to Alan Bryman, content analysis seeks to “quantify content in terms of

predetermined categories and in a systematic and replicable manner” (181). Content analysis aims to minimize personal bias by recording information using a coding system with well-defined parameters. Ideally, a reliable system should produce consistent results regardless of the researcher. In *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*, Klaus Krippendorff claims that this methodology can be applied to the humanities field which essentially involves symbols and messages as well as their functions and effects (9). In other words, specific themes in a book can be regarded as codes in content analysis. Specifically for this research study, content analysis provides an orderly system to record elements of filial piety as well as the acculturation strategies employed by characters.

I approached my texts using a qualitative content analysis to document how characters view their heritage values in the host country. Compared to a quantitative approach, qualitative content analysis offers an inductive tool that can be applied to this research. Hsiu-Fang Hsieh and Sarah E. Shannon, co-authors of “Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis,” define qualitative content analysis as a subjective interpretation of themes through a systematic coding system (3). The purpose of this approach is to classify “large amounts of text into an efficient number of categories that represent similar meanings” (3). To ensure an objective yet flexible study, I adopted a qualitative content analysis approach to provide rich data about how people interpret the world.

The procedure of the study is as followed: First, I designed two coding schemes in response to my research questions based on existing scholarly resources and theoretical frameworks. The first scheme focuses on filial piety while the second one centres on

acculturation strategies. Each scheme includes a coding manual which explains the indicators to be identified, and a coding table for documentation. Details of the schemes can be found in the next section. Second, I examined each primary text for any indicators of the schemes and recorded the findings in Appendices B and C, giving specific examples in note forms or in quotations. To facilitate comparison between texts, I also employed descriptive content analysis to note the frequency in which indicators appear in the texts in Tables 4.1 and 5.1 in the beginning of Chapters Four and Five. Third, I employed a close reading of the primary texts based on the findings in the tables. I made comparisons, derived meanings, and observed patterns in regard to the characters' family values and responses to cultural transition.

The combination of modified qualitative content analysis and close reading offers a reliable framework to develop an understanding of the depiction of family values and acculturation strategies in Chinese-North American immigrant novels. These two approaches complement each other and allow me the flexibility necessary to record and interpret concepts that are difficult to quantify.

Content Analysis Coding Scheme

The coding scheme addressing my research question on filial piety is developed from *Classic of Filial Piety* and two filial piety scales. *Classic of Filial Piety*, published in approximately 400-470 BC, records the conversation between Master Kong (the founder of Confucianism) and his students. The classic was used in China's public academic curricula for over two thousand years and is considered the most influential text on filial piety. The filial piety scale (FPS), developed by David Yau-fai Ho and later adapted by Sylvia Xiao-hua Chen, Michael Harris Bond, and Dong-hui Tang, is an

assessment tool to measure an individual’s filial attitudes in a contemporary setting. Both scales include 22 to 25 items, each of which is a statement (e.g. “As a son or daughter, one must obey one’s parents no matter what” Chen, Bond, and Tang 219). Participants of the two research studies were required to rate themselves on the items on a 6-point scale. A higher total score in the scale reflects a stronger reported level of filial piety for an individual. Some items are scored in the opposite direction. For the purposes of my research, I derived four major codes from the items of the scales as well as quotations from *Classic of Filial Piety*. The coding scheme is as follows:

Coding Scheme 1: Filial Piety		
Confucian Filial Values	Supporting Examples	Opposing Examples
1 Utmost Respect for Parents		
2 Glory to Family		
3 Serve and Provide for Parents		
4 Self-Cultivation		

Each novel is coded in a separate table, which is included in the appendices. The supporting and opposing examples for each code are listed in the table. The examples are briefly described with the inclusion of direct quotes when appropriate. The codes are explained below with quotes from *Classic of Filial Piety*, items on the filial piety scales, and my elaboration with supporting citations.

1. Utmost Respect for Parents

Classic of Filial Piety: “Etiquette is nothing more than respect. Therefore respect the father and the sons are happy . . . that is why it is called a crucial doctrine” (25-26).

Ho's Filial Piety Scale:

Item 1. Sons and daughters may protest against being unreasonably scolded by their parents (N)².

Item 11. No matter how their parents conduct themselves, sons and daughters must respect them.

Item 18. Sons and daughters do not necessarily have to seek parental advice and may make their own decisions (N).

Item 22. As a son or daughter, one must obey one's parents no matter what.

Chen, Bond, and Tang's Filial Piety Scale³:

Item 5. I don't consult my parents on every matter and deal with them on my own (R⁴).

Item 11. I protest against my parents' unreasonable blaming (R).

Item 18. I obey my parents under all circumstances.

Item 21. I don't lose my temper in front of my parents.

Item 22. I do what my parents want me to do.

Explanation: Respecting parents is a significant aspect of filial piety. Manifestation of respect can be demonstrated by obedience and the children's concern for parents' happiness. Although Master Kong disagrees with "blind obedience" (29), he still advocates obedience as a form of reverence unless the act results in a crime. He asserts

² In Ho's filial piety scale, items with the symbol (N) are reverse scored.

³ The scale is co-designed by Sylvia Xiao-Hua Chen, Michael Harris Bond, and Dong-hui Tang. In this study, I refer to it as Chen's scale.

⁴ In Chen's filial piety scale, items with the symbol (R) are reverse scored. Chen argues that formulating items in the reverse direction limits the impact of an acquiescence response set (215).

that treating one's father in a polite, humble manner is the first step for one to respect all authority figures, eventually creating a harmonious society (26-7).

2. Glory to Family

Classic of Filial Piety “Establishing oneself, practicing The Way, spreading the fame of one's name to posterity, so that one's parents become renowned—that is the end of *xiao*” (4).

Ho's Filial Piety Scale:

Item 15. Spreading one's fame to glorify one's parents should not be the most important reason for getting ahead (N).

Chen, Bond, and Tang's Filial Piety Scale:

Item 13. I strive for excellence in order not to disappoint my parents.

Explanation: Filial piety is not limited to serving the parents' immediate needs, but extended to honouring them in a broad sense. One of the highest ends of filial piety is to honour the family name. One's chief motivation for high achievement is for one's parents. Success often takes the form of academic achievement as education has always been greatly emphasized in China. On the other hand, Master Kong says that disgracing the family is considered an immoral, severe offense that harms the whole society (24).

3. Serve and Provide for Parents

Classic of Filial Piety: “The Teacher said, ‘This is how the *xiao* son serves his parents: during daily living he presents respect, when providing for them he presents happiness, during their illnesses he presents worry, during mourning he presents grief, when making offerings he presents reverence. When he is prepared in these five things, then he is able to serve his parents’” (22).

Ho's Filial Piety Scale:

Item 10. "Rearing sons to provide for oneself in one's old age" should no longer be the main purpose of raising children (N).

Item 20. After children have grown up, all the money they earn through their own labor belongs to themselves, even though their parents are still living (N).

Chen, Bond, and Tang's Filial Piety Scale:

Item 6. When my parents are tired, I help them with housework and cooking.

Item 9. When I start to work, I contribute financially to my parents.

Item 16. As long as my parents are alive, I do not leave them to live overseas for a long period of time.

Explanation: Children should try their best to fulfill the material and mental needs of their parents. They serve their parents sincerely by putting parents' well-being in first priority. As elaborated in Ho's and Chen, Bong, and Tang's filial piety scales, filial children do not hesitate in supporting their parents financially.

4. Self-Cultivation

Classic of Filial Piety: "The body, hair and skin, all have been received from the parents, and so one doesn't dare damage them—that is the beginning of *xiao* [filial piety]" (3).

Ho's Filial Piety Scale:

Item 7. The main reason for sons and daughters not to do dangerous things is to avoid getting their parents worried.

Chen, Bond, and Tang's Filial Piety Scale:

Item 4. I take care of my body in order not to worry my parents.

Item 8. To avoid my parents worrying about me, I never do dangerous things.

Explanation: A filial child is expected to take good care of his or her body because it is a gift from the parents. By monitoring themselves in the correct way, the child keeps the parents from worrying.

In order to explore my second research question regarding acculturation strategies, I developed a coding scheme on the basis of John W. Berry’s fourfold model. The table is as follows:

Coding Scheme 2: Acculturation Strategies		
Acculturation Strategies	Protagonist	Parents
1 Assimilation		
2 Separation		
3 Integration		
4 Marginalization		

I noted any thoughts, behaviours, or dialogues that reflect the acculturation strategies of the protagonists and their parents. While it is likely that a character demonstrates a variety of responses towards the host and heritage cultures, I searched for the protagonist’s major strategy throughout each novel. I also looked for possible shifts from one strategy to another.

According to Sam and Berry’s “Acculturation: When Individuals and Groups of Different Cultural Backgrounds Meet,” assimilation refers to the strategy used when individuals reject their original cultural identity and adopt a foreign culture. Separation occurs when individuals preserve their culture of origin and avoid contact with the new culture. Integration is employed when individuals retain their native culture while immersing in other cultures. Marginalization occurs when individuals maintain neither their root culture nor the dominant host culture. The strategies reflect not only outward

behaviour, but one's attitude towards the two cultures. For example, individuals employing the strategy of assimilation often view the foreign culture as superior to the heritage culture, and others who integrate perceive both cultures in a positive light.

Conclusion

Through the theoretical frameworks of acculturation and Critical Race Theory, I investigate the representation of filial piety and the depiction of the relationship between family values and acculturation in my primary texts. Acculturation is a significant component in my research as it forms the basis of my research question about the effect of acculturation strategies on family values. Next, I apply the CRT notion of voice-of-colour to my selection of primary texts as well as the discussion of counterstorytelling to illustrate the importance of immigrant literature.

I interrogate my texts using a combination of qualitative content analysis and close reading. Content analysis provides me a systematic format to document observable manifestations of family values and acculturation strategies. The coding systems are developed according to John W. Berry's fourfold model, the Confucian *Classic of Filial Piety*, and the filial piety scales designed by David Yau-fai Ho, and Sylvia Xiao-hua Chen, Michael Harris Bond, and Dong-hui Tang. The data gathered are recorded in table formats in the appendices. Next, I draw from the data collected to present a close reading of my novels. As such, I hope my research can build on the examination of Chinese-North American immigrant literature and provide additional awareness of the authenticity and comprehensiveness of existing texts.

Chapter 4: Filial Piety

Chapter Overview

This chapter reports on the indicators of filial piety collected via Coding Scheme 1 (derived from Master Kong's *Classic of Filial Piety* and the two filial piety scales of David Yau-fai Ho and Sylvia Xiao-hua Chen, Michael Harris Bond, and Dong-hui Tang) regarding the representation of filial piety in the four primary texts. Tables 1-4 in Appendix B summarize examples of the indicators, documenting the presence (both positive and negative) of filial piety, or equally its absence. Each table focuses on one primary text. The areas are (1) Utmost Respect for Parents, (2) Glory to Family, (3) Serve and Provide for Parents, and (4) Self-Cultivation. The indicators were applied to a close reading of the four primary texts in order to identify and analyze different aspects of filial piety.

Introduction

The integration of Chinese immigrants into North American society often entails the re-establishment and modification of heritage culture and virtues such as filial piety. In *Confucianism*, Paul R. Goldin defines filial piety as “the gratitude and respect for the parents who brought one into the world” (35). He claims that filial piety is considered the cornerstone of moral training and virtuous government in Chinese culture. According to Master Kong's *Classic of Filial Piety* and the filial piety scales of David Yau-fai Ho and Sylvia Xiao-hua Chen, Michael Harris Bond, and Dong-hui Tang, filial piety can be manifested in four major aspects: Glory to Family, Utmost Respect for Parents, Serve and Provide for Parents, and Self-Cultivation. These elements, as explained in the

methodology chapter, are the basis of Coding Scheme 1 for the examination of indicators of filial piety in the primary texts.

The parent-child relationship is a major theme of all four primary texts. Paul Yee's *The Bone Collector's Son* focuses on fourteen-year-old Bing's love-hate relationship with his father, a gravedigger in Vancouver's Chinatown 1907, who is very critical of his son. Set in 1927 West Virginia, Joan in Laurence Yep's *The Star Fisher* also struggles to fulfill the expectations of her traditional-minded mother. The contemporary novels, Frank Chin's *Donald Duk* and Lensey Namioka's *Yang the Third and Her Impossible Family*, are set in San Francisco and Seattle respectively. The first book surrounds the American-born Donald, who despises anything Chinese—including his father, a famous chef and opera performer. Namioka's story describes a first-generation immigrant, Mary Ying-mei Yang, who is so desperate to fit into the United States that she is constantly frustrated by her family's culturally inappropriate acts. Examination of these parent-child relationships will be conducted in this chapter to explore the roles of filial piety in Chinese-North American immigrant literature.

This chapter presents the positive and negative evidence of filial piety under the categories of the four indicators. Table 4.1 outlines the frequency in which indicators (both positive and negative) of filial piety are mentioned in each novel. Full details of the indicators are documented in Tables 1-4 in Appendix B in note forms or in quotations. It is important to note that the descriptive quantitative data may not reveal the full picture of filial piety in the novels. Higher occurrence of indicators does not necessarily imply a stronger endorsement of filial piety. Thus, the analysis is mainly based on the qualitative

data in Appendix B, with the quantitative data in Table 4.1 as complementary information.

Table 4.1 Frequency of Indicators of Filial Piety in the Primary Texts

Primary Texts	<i>The Bone Collector's Son</i>	<i>The Star Fisher</i>	<i>Donald Duk: A Novel</i>	<i>Yang the Third and Her Impossible Family</i>
Utmost Respect for Parents	6 (+) 11 (-)	3 (+) 4 (-)	4 (+) 5 (-)	1 (+) 2 (-)
Glory to Family	6 (+) 1 (-)	3 (+) 2 (-)	0 (+) 2 (-)	0 (+) 6 (-)
Serve and Provide for Parents	8 (+) 4 (-)	8 (+) 4 (-)	0 (+) 0 (-)	3 (+) 1 (-)
Self-Cultivation	0 (+) 2 (-)	1 (+) 1 (-)	0 (+) 0 (-)	0 (+) 0 (-)

Key: (+) refers to supporting examples
 (-) refers to opposing examples

(1) Utmost Respect for Parents

Respect for one's family is a key element of filial piety and regarded as a "crucial doctrine" in Chinese culture because the act brings pleasure to the giver and spreads to "thousands of people" (Master Kong 25-6). Manifestations of respect can be measured in several ways. Children should consider their parents' wishes and advice when making decisions (Ho 365; Chen, Bond, and Tang 217). Indeed, they are expected to obey their parents unquestioningly (Ho 364-65; Chen, Bond, and Tang 217). Although Master Kong discourages "blind obedience" in situations involving "unrighteousness" (30), he also advocates obedience to one's parents in most circumstances. More importantly, Kong insists that even when disagreement is inevitable for moral reasons, children should still address their parents in a gentle and respectful manner. This mentality is reflected in the filial piety scales, where a respectful attitude towards parents should be maintained at all

times (Ho 364; Chen, Bond, and Tang 217). As shown in Table 4.1, there are six positive and eleven negative examples of respect in *The Bone Collector's Son*, three positive and four negative examples in *The Star Fisher*, four positive and five negative examples in *Donald Duk*, and one positive and two negative examples in *Yang the Third and Her Impossible Family*.

Respect manifests in *The Bone Collector's Son* in a number of ways. First, Bing is conscious of his filial duty to be respectful and obedient to his father. He dares not betray his fear of ghosts out of concern that that he will be considered disrespectful. According to Bing, impudence is a serious misconduct that will “bring on a beating for sure” (11). On his first holiday off work, Bing immediately visits his father to avoid accusations of “being disrespectful” (86). Despite Bing’s submissive attitude, his deference is driven by fear rather than admiration. For Bing, being respectful is a burden rather than pleasure, which opposes Master Kong’s claim that “respect the father and the sons are happy” (25-6). The potential beatings and accusations reflect his father’s expectation of reverence from his son. If his father does not demand that Bing “show . . . proper respect” (160), Bing would not be as anxious to avoid behaviours that may be interpreted as insolent. Furthermore, Bing’s father takes his son’s obedience for granted. In the graveyard, he disregards Bing’s protests and forces a bloodstained bone into the latter’s clenched fist (13). Nonetheless, the fact that Bing does not resent his father’s high expectations illustrates how he agrees that respecting one’s father is an absolute moral norm.

Throughout the novel, Bing struggles to respect his father willingly while he simultaneously detests his father for having “one of the worst jobs in Chinatown [and] he still [can’t] do it right” (14). Contemptuous thoughts repeatedly occur in Bing’s mind. He

calls his father a “failure” (29) for hiding the nature of his job from their family back in China, thus shaming Mother and Grandmother, who has to lie about his failures (32). From Bing’s perspective, his father “tricks him into coming back with him to Canada” with false promises of eating fresh chicken and riding tall horses every day (32). Yet, Bing is rebellious mainly in his thoughts. His only disrespectful outburst (“Don’t come near me! I don’t want to walk with you!” (22)) occurs when he believes that a powerful ghost is following his father. In this case, his fear of the ghost overcomes his resolution to treat his father with regard.

Although both characters recognize the filial obligation to be respectful, their relationship shifts from one-sided to mutually respectful by the end of the story. After saving his father by pacifying the unrested spirits, Bing’s new-found confidence gives him the courage to demand equal respect from his father. It is only then that Bing deliberately voices his dissatisfaction: “Who was it that saved your life, Ba? . . . So show your son proper respect!” (160). Although Bing’s insolent words challenge traditional filial values, they lead to a resolution of the tense father-son relationship and signify Bing’s transformation to a strong, independent individual. Through Bing’s subversion of absolute respect and obedience towards his father, Paul Yee challenges the application of filial piety in the North American context. While respect is still a dominant component of the father-son interaction in *The Bone Collector’s Son*, the shift to mutual respect shows that Yee does not grant a full endorsement of respect in his narrative.

In *The Star Fisher*, the idea of respect plays an important role in Joan’s conflict with her mother. As seen in Appendix B, Table 2, Joan’s mother represents all the positive examples while Joan is depicted in all the negative examples of respect.

Evidently, there is a clear discrepancy between the two characters' perspectives on respect, which is likely to generate value clashes. The value system of Joan's mother is deeply rooted in Chinese filial beliefs. "At home, a girl does what she's told," she justifies when correcting Joan's attitude towards her (48). When Joan disobeys, her mother accuses her of being worse than a dog (82). In another example where Joan purposely mistranslates for her mother's benefit, the latter perceives her daughter as defiant and slaps her for the first time that she "really trie[d] to hurt [Joan]" (82-3). Based on her uncontrollable anger in response to disobedience, Joan's mother embraces the filial expectation that children are supposed to submit to their parents unconditionally and tries to impose it on her American-born children. By contrast, Joan loses respect for her mother when she realizes that her "all-powerful" mother is in fact weak and vulnerable because of her inability to communicate in English (48). Joan refuses to consent to what she perceives as unreasonable commands from her mother. In Joan's words, she says, "I'm not a dog. You treat me like. . . . your shadow" (81), indicating how she views herself as an independent individual. Indeed, Joan argues that she no longer relies on her mother by saying that her "umbilical cord got cut years ago" (82). As well, Joan is irritated when her mother expects absolute reverence and submission from her without appreciating her efforts. "I try and try, but you never notice," complains Joan. "It's only when I don't do what you want. Then I'm stupid and lazy" (82). While Joan's mother endorses the Confucian virtue of respect, Joan challenges the mentality to obey and respect her mother under all circumstances. The discrepancy in values between the two characters creates friction, misunderstanding, and disappointment in the parent-child relationship.

Compared to *The Bone Collector's Son* and *The Star Fisher*, the significance of respect in the parent-child relationship is more ambivalent in *Donald Duk*. On the surface, Donald is more indifferent than respectful towards his parents. He tries to have “as little to do with any of them [his family] as he can” (12). Even though his father is a well-known chef and a legend among the opera community, Donald does not share his sisters’ pride in his father (46-7). In fact, he feels “pukey” (50) whenever his friend Arnold treats his parents in a courteous, deferent manner. It is possible that Donald’s lack of respect towards his parents stems from his perception of Chinese and American cultures. As he identifies himself as a “white” (47) instead of a Chinese, Donald finds it hard to understand or appreciate his Chinese parents. In fact, Donald asks himself: “Why does Dad like being Chinese? Doesn’t he know everyone talks about him funny?” (47). Upon first examination, Donald seems to go against the Confucian teaching to respect his parents in his attempts to separate himself from them. Yet, Donald’s actions uncover how much he actually relies on his father’s guidance. Even though he questions his father’s suggestion in dealing with bullies, he ends up following the advice to adopt a strong posture and acknowledges that “what the old man says works” (4). Despite Donald’s reluctance to admit it, there are times when he values his father’s wisdom. A good example of this occurs in the novel when his father provides insight on the role of the Chinese during the construction of the Central Pacific Railroad in 1869. Applying his father’s explanation, Donald learns to distinguish his real allies within the Americans and reconciles with his white friend, Arnold (157). Following this interaction, Donald comes to have greater appreciation and respect for his father. Moreover, Donald is mostly obedient, which is one of the core elements in respect. He consents to his father’s

suggestion and participates in the dragon dance despite his initial wish to avoid the Chinese parade (12). Donald also follows his mother's order to confess to his father about stealing the P-26A airplane model (66). Although Donald eventually complies with his parents' instructions, he often voices his dissent directly to his parents. As Donald never feels guilty for challenging his parents in this disrespectful manner, it is possible that the positive examples he demonstrated are not deliberate attempts to be filial. Likewise, Donald's parents never reproach their son for his discourteous manners. While Donald exhibits ambiguous feelings about the value of respect, the fact that his parents never criticize his disrespectful attitude suggests that the obligation to regard parents is not greatly emphasized in this family.

Incidents concerning respect for one's parents occur less often in *Yang the Third and Her Impossible Family* when compared to the other texts. In general, Mary maintains a comfortable relationship with her parents and does not feel particularly obligated to comply with their wishes as does Joan in *The Star Fisher*. Mary's attitude reflects that of her parents, who do not demand reverence from their children throughout the story. There are also a number of occasions when Mary disobeys her parents. For example, she hides a kitten in the basement even though she knows that her parents will disapprove (36). Additionally, she lies to her mother about the missing milk that she feeds the kitten (50). Instead of feeling guilty or ashamed of her falsehood, Mary is more anxious to please her classmate Holly by adopting the kitten. She decides that she "simply ha[s] to stand by [her] offer [to keep Holly's kitten]" (28) even though she is aware of her father's concern for keeping the house safe for the musical instruments. This illustrates that Mary does not regard her parents' wish as the highest authority when making decisions. Nonetheless,

Mary recognizes her prejudice towards her family by the end of the novel and understands their restrictions in learning American customs. In her words, “in spite of my list of new words and careful study of American ways, I still make mistakes, just like the rest of the family” (125). This realization makes Mary more tolerant towards her family’s embarrassing mistakes in the new society (130-1; 141). Even though she has not reached the level of reverence for her parents, Mary learns to appreciate her imperfect family. Similar to Bing, a change in the parent-child dynamic is a key element in Mary’s growth and search for self-identity. While Mary’s opinion of her parents grows with the understanding of their efforts to fit in with the new environment, her parents never impose the expectation of respect on her. To sum up, respect is not a prominent feature in Mary’s relationship with her parents, who interact with her on an equal standing throughout the story.

Several observations can be drawn from the four primary texts in terms of their manifestations of filial piety through the element of respect for one’s parents. Respect is reflected not only in the form of outward obedience, but the attitudes and thoughts the protagonists harbour towards their parents. For instance, Bing’s attempts to hide his disrespectful thoughts indicate his determination to maintain a filial attitude towards his father. This attitude reveals the importance of respect in Bing’s family. The children’s attitudes and behaviours also reflect parental expectations. As neither Donald nor Mary feel burdened to be respectful, it is likely that their parents do not stress this filial virtue. Furthermore, the social contexts of the stories may affect the preservation of heritage values in immigrant families. Indeed, the historical novels (*The Bone Collector’s Son* and *The Star Fisher*) provide a much stronger indication of respect towards parents than that

in the contemporary novels (*Donald Duk* and *Yang the Third and Her Impossible Family*). Through the portrayal of respect, the authors demonstrate ambivalent attitudes towards this aspect of filial piety. Nonetheless, the spirit of respect retains a position in the Chinese-North American immigrant families as portrayed in the texts.

(2) Glory to Family

Filial piety is not limited to satisfying parents' immediate needs, but includes making parents proud and renowned in a broad sense through personal achievement (Master Kong 4). In fact, attaining achievement is a filial act because it honours and spreads the family name. Thus, appropriately devoted children should keep their parents in mind when striving for excellence (Ho 365). On the other hand, disgracing the family—any action that negatively affects the family's reputation—is regarded as a severe offense. According to Table 4.1, *The Bone Collector's Son* contains six positive and one negative example, *The Star Fisher* has three positive and two negative examples, *Donald Duk* has no positive and two negative examples, and *Yang the Third and Her Impossible Family* contains no positive and six negative examples.

In *The Bone Collector's Son*, both Bing and his father regard honouring one's parents as a crucial duty. Bing protects the reputation of his father by presenting a favourable image of himself in the Chinese community. After his father scolds him for running away from the cemetery in fright (37-8), Bing learns to mask his fear so as to live up to his father's standard. He pretends not to believe in ghosts (44) and forges the courage to work in the haunted house (60). Bing's father also uses the tenet of glorifying one's parents to evaluate Bing's performance. When Uncle Won praises Bing for successfully pacifying unrested spirits, fighting against the white, and "saving [Ba's]

bones from the rioters” (173), Bing’s father embraces him with “tears in [his] eyes” (173). Given his usual demanding attitude towards Bing, his father’s remarkable change reveals his pride and delight in Bing at this compliment. This incident demonstrates the importance of honouring the family name in the perception of Bing as a dutiful son. Glorifying one’s family is greatly valued in Bing’s family and plays a significant role in his father’s recognition of Bing’s bravery.

Joan and her mother in *The Star Fisher* view protecting the reputation of the family as one of the responsibilities of children. They believe that children should conduct themselves in a way that the family name will not be disgraced. An example is how Joan’s mother requests that her children conceal their lettuce sandwiches from others so as to cover up the family’s poor financial situation. She warns, “This is important. When you eat lunch, make sure you eat separately” (52). Burdened by the obligation to safeguard her parents’ reputation, Joan turns down lunch invitations even though she feels “ugly and stupid and lonely” (60) sitting by herself. At one point she almost relents to join the others, but she quickly reminds herself that by exposing the lettuce sandwich, her classmates may “shame my family in front of the entire school, and from the school it [will] be spread over the whole town” (61). Joan is more determined to protect the family name than her younger sister Emily, who chews her sandwich with loud crunching noises (62) and scavenges food from her new friends (65). Indeed, Joan’s mother often reminds Joan of her duty as the eldest child, making statements such as “You’re the oldest, so you have to set the example. . . . Don’t try; just do it” (52). As such, Joan may feel that she has a greater responsibility to protect the family name. At the same time, Joan’s mother also tries to make her family proud. Despite numerous failed attempts, she is determined

to perfect an American apple pie for the pie social so she will not “shame [her] children anymore” (109) by appearing to be what Joan considers “too foreign” (116). When no one bids on her pie, she nudges her husband to buy the pie to avoid humiliation for the family (120). While both characters clearly endorse the Confucian tenet of protecting the family reputation as a means of filial piety, Joan’s mother also takes on the burden for herself rather than placing the entire responsibility on her children.

The virtue of honouring the family name is subverted in the contemporary texts, *Donald Duk* and *Yang the Third and Her Impossible Family*. The negative examples in Appendix B, Tables 3 and 4 show that this filial element is reversed in the parent-child relationship. Instead of pleasing their parents, Donald and Mary constantly wish that their parents can behave better in front of their peers. Donald feels ashamed when his mother cannot understand Mrs. Azalea’s joke (Chin 86) and apologizes for his father’s behaviour to Arnold Azalea (100). Likewise, Mary is desperate for her family to act more Americanized and “normal” so as to make a good impression on her classmate Holly (Namioka 5). She is extremely embarrassed when her mother exhibits manners that she feels are culturally inappropriate in North American society. For example, she cringes when her mother calls Holly’s mother “old” and “fat,” comments that are meant as compliments in China but insults in America (9-10, 18). In a similar way, Mary is disappointed by her father’s mistakes in pronouncing English consonants and remarks that “now the entire Yang family had managed to embarrass me in public” (76). Donald and Mary’s reactions to the Chinese ways of their parents can be explored through the framework of Critical Race Theory. In “A Comparative Analysis of The Brownies’ Book and Contemporary African-American Children’s Literature Written by Patricia C.

McKissack,” Jonda C. McNair says that CRT sheds light on the influence of race in children’s books by revealing the stories’ assumption that racism appears to be “natural,” instead of abnormal, in daily life (7). McNair argues that CRT provides a lens to identify the misrepresentations about race that seems to reinforce white supremacy instead of refuting stereotypes (9). Aligned with McNair’s observation, Mary views racism as normal and holds a prejudice towards her heritage culture. She is extremely eager to fit into the new cultural system. Because of her racism, Mary demonstrates a reversed filial attitude and hopes that her parents can change their Chinese ways—unconventional in the mainstream society— so as to secure friendships with her classmates. In fact, Mary is less than grateful when her mother apologizes for letting her down (81). Instead of accepting her mother’s weaknesses, Mary blames her for the lack of effort in learning American customs. The filial expectation to glorify one’s family is not only undermined in the two novels, but reversed as the children demand that their parents act in ways that honour their own personal and non-familial reputation.

While the filial value of glorifying parents remains instilled within the families of the two historical texts, it is subverted within those in the contemporary texts. Once again, the distinction may be caused by the social conditions of the stories. While *The Bone Collector’s Son* and *The Star Fisher* are set in the years 1907 and 1927, *Donald Duk* and *Yang the Third and Her Impossible Family* are set in the present, presumably around the time they were published (1991 and 1995 respectively). It is reasonable that immigrant families in earlier years maintained a stronger connection to their root culture and its values whereas families in more recent years are more open-minded to foreign cultures in the increasingly globalized world. The Critical Race framework is appropriate

in the comparison of the historical and contemporary texts in this study. As Wanda Brooks points out, CRT encourages “close readings of historical fiction in such a way that racism becomes the center of literary analysis” (9). At the same time, she claims that CRT takes a contemporary approach by acknowledging past-present racial linkages (9). With emphasis on both the historical and current oppressions of a minority group, CRT provides a lens through which to examine and compare the primary texts and to reveal how prejudice towards Chinese immigrants can contribute to the members’ attitudes towards their heritage values, such as filial piety. Despite the differences among the historical and contemporary novels, this aspect of filial piety remains mostly consistent within each novel. In other words, the protagonists hold a similar stance to that of their parents. Therefore, conflicts between children and parents are less likely to arise when they hold similar stances in the filial expectation of honouring one’s parents.

(3) Serve and Provide for Parents

A relatively tangible and observable manifestation of filial piety is service towards one’s parents. Master Kong believes that the practice of serving parents is extended to one’s superiors, thus bringing peace and harmony to the family as well as the society as a whole (8-9). Bringing a contemporary outlook to this principle, Ho and Chen, Bond, and Tang claim that a filial child should support his or her parents financially, live close to them so as to take care of them, and assist them in daily chores (Ho 365; Chen, Bond, and Tang 217). As recorded in Table 4.1, there are eight positive and four negative examples of this filial principle in *The Bone Collector’s Son*, eight positive and four negative examples in *The Star Fisher*, neither positive and negative examples in *Donald*

Duk, and three positive and one negative examples in *Yang the Third and Her Impossible Family*.

Of all the examples in *The Bone Collector's Son*, Bing's thoughts and actions provide the most evidence while his father only displays two negative examples. Despite the contempt Bing feels for his father, his willingness to provide for his father exhibits his adherence to this Confucian obligation. Bing is outspoken in his support of his father and promises that "you have a son to help you" (138) when his father feels as if he has lost everything. Indeed, Bing overcomes two of his greatest fears in order to protect his father. He stands up against the terrifying debt collector who threatens to hurt his father (118) and steals the lost skull (in the hope of healing his father's strange illness) despite his reluctance to touch dead bodies (134-155). Furthermore, Bing demonstrates filial attitude through his sense of duty to support his family financially. He does not think twice before offering to repay his father's huge sum of loans with his hard-earned salary (118-9). His readiness to take on the responsibilities of his family reflects the deep-rooted filial belief in his mind. When his father is severely ill, Bing thinks that, "If Ba dies, it's up to me to take care of Mother and Grandmother" (139). He feels obligated to take care of his seniors even though he is only fourteen years old. Another interesting observation is that Bing does not display positive examples of service until the second half of the story. This may suggest a change in Bing's attitude, or that the shock of his father's illness helps connect Bing with his heritage values. The ethics of supporting his parents may be an underlying value that only emerges in Bing's consciousness when his parents are in need of aid. In comparison, his father rarely reveals the belief that his son should serve him unconditionally. Even though he is mostly traditionally-oriented in the novel,

Bing's father feels uncomfortable receiving help from his son. For example, he refuses Bing's money: "I don't need your money . . . I can take care of myself. . . . Stay out of my affairs!" The reason behind this response is ambiguous—Why does Bing's father feel insulted and annoyed when Bing offers to help? Has he begun to deny old Chinese values and subscribe to new Western ones? Given his lack of emphasis on this particular filial value, it is unclear whether Bing's father appreciates Bing's efforts and acts of service to their full value. By portraying a gap in the values held by the two characters in the filial aspect of service, Yee illustrates how disparity in values may hinder understanding and create disappointment in the father-son relationship.

Of the four primary texts, *The Star Fisher* contains the largest number of examples of service as represented by both Joan and her mother. Aware of her parents' cultural and linguistic limitations in the United States, Joan tries her best to assist them in various ways by performing her duty as a filial daughter. She carries out domestic chores, acts as the translator for her parents (4, 27, 107), and takes up the role of a mother to her younger sister because their parents do not speak English (8, 11-15). When fulfilling her duties, Joan displays mixed feelings about serving her parents. Although she feels guilty when she is unable to help (108), she sometimes resents her mother for giving her "all the dirty work" (52). When her mother asks her to do more chores, Joan slaps the front door in a display of anger while muttering "[i]t's not fair" (49). On another occasion, Joan compares her Chinese home to her American school, stating that at home, she and her siblings "could work all day, do everything we were supposed to do, and not get one word of praise. We never heard what we did right, only what we did wrong" (58). She is frustrated that her parents fail to compliment or acknowledge her efforts in the way her

teachers do. In this situation, the North American value system complicates Joan's attitude towards her parents.

Similarly, Joan's mother struggles to balance her expectations of Joan in a western society. While she perceives herself as lenient according to Chinese standards, she is aware that by American standards she is strict. As she points out to Joan: "we live in America, so you compare me to those lazy American parents. And compared to them, I'm mean" (79). Furthermore, she faces a dilemma between the wish to be "nice" and to be "practical" (79) given the family's difficult financial situation caused by economic limitations experienced by immigrant families during this period. By the end of the novel, Joan's mother adjusts her expectation that her children should serve unconditionally and admits that she takes Joan for granted (99). She even tries to speak English on her own to let Joan "lead [her] own life" (107). By portraying Joan and her mother's confusion in a world instilled with both Chinese and Western cultures, Yep concludes with the hope that immigrant parents and children can negotiate a balance and appreciate each other's efforts.

There is minimal evidence of the value of serving one's parents in Frank Chin's *Donald Duk*. Its absence, however, can be considered in several ways. Firstly, the lack of concrete filial examples reinforces the image of Donald, a foreign-born youth who is deeply assimilated into American culture and refuses to acknowledge his Chinese heritage. His experience shows the potential influence of the immigrant experience on young people, who are developing their sense of identities. Secondly, this ethic is not present among the adult figures of Donald's family. This opens a possibility that Chinese immigrant parents do not necessarily impose pressure on their children to follow their

root culture in the new country. As the child of an immigrant father and a fourth-generation Chinese-American mother, Chin may be aware of the different attitudes immigrant parents have towards Chinese values. Through a Critical Race framework, Chin's omission of including reference to the value of service can be seen as a counterstory in which an author provides his or her personal narratives in order to open a window for alternative realities among minorities (Delgado and Stefancic 39) and to subvert commonly accepted myths (144). As such, the lack of concrete, quotable evidence is a notable element of Chin's development of his characters.

In Lensey Namioka's *Yang the Third and Her Impossible Family*, the thirteen-year-old protagonist Mary demonstrates three positive examples and one negative example of serving her parents. Instead of performing concrete chores, Mary serves her parents in less tangible ways such as aiding their transition into the new environment and improving their reputations. For example, Mary recommends her mother as a piano accompanist so that the latter's ability can be acknowledged by others (113-6). She chooses to help her mother at the risk of losing Holly's friendship. Furthermore, in the face of criticism, Mary defends her family against Holly and her mother Mrs. Hanson by explaining: "We're new in this country, and we can't do everything right immediately. . . . When you [Holly] picked up your viola for the first time, you probably played a few sour notes. I bet your teacher didn't break down laughing" (124). After Mary's confrontation, Mrs. Hanson becomes more respectful and patient towards Mary's parents. Apart from the above few examples, Mary does not perform typical duties of a filial child such as providing financial support or shouldering domestic responsibilities. The Confucian ethic of serving is present but not greatly emphasized in Mary's family.

A comparison across the four texts shows that characters in the two historical novels tend to endorse the filial principle of serving one's parents more than those in the two contemporary novels. A straightforward explanation can be that immigrant parents in the earlier days were more concerned with this filial element and they passed it on to their children. However, one must also consider the situations of the four immigrant families portrayed in the novels. The families in *The Bone Collector's Son* and *The Star Fisher* are facing financial difficulties. Hindered by intense racial discrimination in their social environment, both Bing's and Joan's parents are close to unemployment. It may be natural, therefore, for the young protagonists to step up and assist their parents. By contrast, the families in *Donald Duk* and *Yang the Third and Her Impossible Family* are financially self-sufficient. Donald's father runs the most famous Chinese restaurant in town and Mary's father has a steady job as a music teacher. Without urgent financial needs, Donald and Mary may not feel as obligated to support their families as Bing and Joan do. As such, the difference between the characters' attitudes is not limited to a reflection of Chinese values in immigrant families, but to the social and racial situation in North American society. As suggested by Delgado and Stefancic, the thesis of social construction claims that "race and races are products of social thought and relations" (8). The attitude adopted by the dominant society towards minorities greatly affects their environment and experience. Thus, examining the filial value of service in the primary texts sheds light on the hardship and racial prejudice faced by Chinese immigrants in the early 20th century.

(4) Self-Cultivation

In *Classic of Filial Piety*, Master Kong claims that a basic responsibility of filial piety is to take good care of one's body because it is a gift from one's parents (3). Manifestations of Self-Cultivation include conducting one's body in an appropriate manner and avoiding "dangerous things" (Ho 364; Chen, Bond, and Tang 217) that can potentially harm the body. The purpose of Self-Cultivation is to prevent parents from worrying. As shown in the indicator of Self-Cultivation in Table 4.1, *The Bone Collector's Son* has no supporting examples and two opposing examples; *The Star Fisher* has one supporting and one opposing example, while *Donald Duk* and *Yang the Third and her Impossible Family* have neither supporting nor opposing examples.

As the idea of monitoring one's body is considered one of the foundations of filial piety, it is surprising that little evidence of this value appears in the primary texts. Indeed, the only positive example takes place in *The Star Fisher*. In this situation, Joan conceals her troubles at school from her mother in order to save her from worrying: "I wanted to tell Mama about my star-fisher day [feelings of isolation], but I also didn't want to add to her troubles" (71). Although Self-Cultivation is an imperative aspect of filial piety, it does not play a significant role in the primary texts.

Bing in *The Bone Collector's Son* and Joan in *The Star Fisher* contravene the virtue of Self-Cultivation by involving in dangerous adventures. Bing returns to the haunted house even after many others run away from the house for their own safety (122). Disregarding his personal safety, he also steals a missing skull from the basement of the hospital to reunite it with its body in the graveyard (154-6). Likewise, Joan ignores others' warnings and visits an unfamiliar slum in the dark alone. Interestingly, there is no

description of Bing's or Joan's inner struggle or thoughts towards refuting this filial value. Without any textual indications of their knowledge of this tenet, it is possible that they do not consciously oppose the concept of Self-Cultivation. It may not occur to them that by exposing themselves to danger, they unintentionally disregard the importance their parents place on the value of Self-Cultivation.

The value of Self-Cultivation is the element with the least evidence in these novels, despite the fact that it has priority as a core filial value according to Master Kong. While this absence of evidence pertaining to Self-Cultivation in the four novels might imply that the authors are unaware of the value, voice-of-colour suggests this might not be the case because writers of colour are likely to write with higher cultural authenticity (Delgado and Stefancic 9). This theory holds that minority authors create accurate portrayals of under-represented cultures because of their first-hand experience of racial oppression as well as their familiarity with the particular culture (9). Based on this proposition, the Chinese-North American authors of the primary texts are likely familiar with the spirit of Self-Cultivation in filial piety and offer authentic representations of cultural attitudes. Instead of concluding that Self-Cultivation is insignificant in the Chinese-North American community, one might conclude that Self-Cultivation is given a lower priority by the authors in the creation of the primary texts, which may not be able to cover every value in detail.

Summary

Examining specific indicators of filial piety in the primary texts, it is possible to conclude that traditional Chinese family values are modified and adopted in different extents in the parent-child relationship of Chinese-North American immigrants.

A noteworthy observation on the indicator of Utmost Respect for Parents is its application in different social and historical contexts. Historical characters such as Bing and Joan obey regardless of disrespectful thoughts, which mirrors the traditional filial belief that respect entails obedience (Ho 365; Chen, Bond, and Tang 219). On the contrary, we see a contemporary character Mary who disobeys despite her claim to respect her family's feelings (Namioka 140). For Mary, obedience is not an essential demonstration of respect. Her interpretation parallels Xiao-dong Ye and Sik-hung Ng's observation that a "new protocol" among contemporary Beijing citizens is to "[respect] elders but not necessarily obeying them" (224). Given different adaptations of respect, one can conclude that a character's individual value system is a complex issue that is not only affected by the immigrant experience, but possibly a change in social and historical contexts.

Immigrant status is another factor that contributes to the protagonists' determination to maintain a respectful attitude at all times as Master Kong emphasizes (29). For instance, Joan and Donald, both second-generation Chinese-Americans, explicitly express their frustration to their parents while the other protagonists tend to keep insolent thoughts to themselves. Born in the United States, Donald and Joan would be more familiar with the western structure of an equal parent-child relationship. It is also possible that being American-born increases their acculturative stress that is channelled towards their parents. As such, the protagonists' immigrant statuses can be an explanation for the presence or absence of a respectful attitude.

There is a disparity between the presence of the indicator of Glory to Family in the historical and contemporary texts. In the historical texts, parents expect their children

to honour the family name. Bing's father evaluates his son based on others' compliments (Yee 173) and Joan's mother demands her daughter to eat alone so as to protect their family reputation (Yep 52). Conversely, the contemporary parents do not display such attitudes. Possibly due to the parents' expectations, the historical protagonists are more aware of this filial aspect than the contemporary protagonists, who are more concerned with their personal reputations among peers. Given the similar view of Glory to Family shared by the parents and child in each text, it can be assumed that the virtue of honouring the family name is passed on from parents to children, thereby suggesting the significance of parental influence even in a bicultural environment

Evident in most texts except *Donald Duk*, the indicator of Serve and Provide for Parents is highly regarded in the primary texts. Both Bing and Joan in the historical texts exhibit a strong sense of filial duty to serve their parents. Their awareness of the necessity to assist their parents is perhaps logical given the intense racial discrimination as well as limited economic opportunities in the early 20th century. Indeed, the parents' linguistic and financial difficulties may evoke the children's obligation to serve. As Delgado and Stefancic assert in the notion of social construction, "race and races are products of social thought and relations" (8). Indeed, societies and their relationships with one another create a background that either facilitate or limit the characters' willingness to provide for their parents. As such, an examination of traditional family values sheds light on the racial discrimination in Chinese-North American history.

The gender of the protagonists also appears to affect the manifestation of serving one's parents. In the traditional Chinese family hierarchy, males typically shoulder the financial burden whereas females take care of the household. The two historical novels

reflect this traditional hierarchy as Bing takes up an unpleasant job whereas Joan never considers employment outside the home. Nevertheless, Joan also acts as an interpreter for her parents in addition to domestic chores. As her filial duty is no longer confined to the domestic sphere, Joan is empowered by the immigration experience. While acknowledging the influence of gender on exhibitions of filial piety, the authors expand the role of a filial daughter beyond the boundaries of traditional Chinese family structure, which in turn suggests the development of a more equal gender status in Chinese-North American families.

The most prominent feature of the indicator of Self-Cultivation is its lack of evidence in the primary texts. Giving a lower priority to this particular indicator, the four immigrant writers appear to endorse only selected aspects of filial piety. According to the theory of voice-of-colour, minority writers are likely to provide an authentic view of their culture. The omission of Self-Cultivation in fictional stories, therefore, suggests that this core element of filial piety may be devalued in the Chinese-North American community as well.

An examination of the primary texts reveals a diverse adoption of filial piety, a core Chinese family value, among the fictional depiction of families of Chinese-North American immigrants. In addition to the immigration experience, social and historical contexts, gender, and immigration status also play a role in contributing to the adoption of filial piety in the parent-child relationship as interpreted by the authors. In all, the broad range of perspectives enables the texts to act as counterstories that offer “alternative realities” (Delgado and Stefancic 48) and “invite the reader into a new and unfamiliar world” (41) about Chinese-North American immigrants. By presenting the

varied and complex experiences of Chinese immigrants, the texts reject the essentialist belief that members of an ethnic group share similar characteristics and celebrate individual differences and uniqueness among minority groups.

Chapter 5: Acculturation Strategies

Chapter Overview

Examining the acculturation strategies pursued by the characters of the four primary texts, this chapter explores how these strategies contribute to the parent-child relationships and the presence or absence of Chinese family values. Evidence of the strategies was collected via Coding Scheme 2 (derived from John W. Berry's fourfold model) and recorded in Tables 1-4 in Appendix C. Each table documents examples in a text in which the protagonist and his or her parents demonstrate the use of an acculturation strategy. The four strategies are (1) Assimilation, (2) Separation, (3) Integration, and (4) Marginalization. The results were then applied to a close reading of the texts to explore the influence of acculturation strategies within the fictional immigrant families.

Introduction

Immigrants go through a process of acculturation when they move from one culture into another. As Sam and Berry define, acculturation is "the cultural and psychological change that results following meeting between cultures" (472). Sam and Berry claim that even among people of the same origin, there can be "vast individual differences" (473) in the way they respond and participate in acculturation. To distinguish various acculturative attitudes, Berry develops the fourfold model as a framework for understanding individual acculturative styles as explained in "Acculturation: Living Successfully in Two Cultures." The fourfold model addresses two issues: the extent to which people wish to maintain their heritage culture and the extent to which people wish to have contact with other cultures (704). Four acculturation styles are

observed: assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalization. Assimilation occurs when individuals adopt foreign cultures and reject their original culture. Separation refers to the process in which individuals hold on to their original culture and avoid new cultures. Integration involves individuals who seek to participate in the larger society while maintaining their original culture. Marginalization is employed when individuals reject both their root and foreign cultures. Berry claims that individuals usually exhibit a pattern in their behaviours and attitudes that is consistent to a particular strategy in their everyday social encounters (704). The fourfold model forms the basis of Coding Scheme 2 for the examination of acculturation strategies demonstrated in the primary texts

This chapter examines the primary texts on a book-by-book approach. Each text is examined by comparing the major strategies pursued by the characters in response to acculturation, thereby exploring how acculturative styles affect the parent-child relationship and family values. Table 5.1 presents the frequency of characters demonstrating a particular acculturation strategy. Full details of the indicators are presented in Tables 1-4 of Appendix C in note form or in quotations. As in the chapter on filial piety, the descriptive quantitative data in Table 5.1 provides additional information to the qualitative data in Appendix C. The numerical findings, however, may not reveal the full picture of acculturation strategies in the novels.

Table 5.1 Frequency of Acculturation Strategies in the Primary Texts

Primary Texts	<i>The Bone Collector's Son</i>		<i>The Star Fisher</i>		<i>Donald Duk: A Novel</i>		<i>Yang the Third and Her Impossible Family</i>	
	Child	Parent	Child	Parent	Child	Parent	Child	Parent
Assimilation	3	0	3	0	14	0	17	0
Separation	8	5	3	16	12	1	0	3
Integration	1	0	2	5	2	4	4	0
Marginalization	1	0	6	0	1	0	3	0

The Bone Collector's Son

Paul Yee's *The Bone Collector's Son* depicts first-generation immigrant Bing Chan who lives in Vancouver Chinatown in 1907. Bing's father is a gambler and a bone collector who sends skeletons of deceased Chinese back to their hometowns. Determined not to follow his father's footsteps, Bing seeks work out of Chinatown as a houseboy and sees racial discrimination in a different light. As well as experiencing the inequalities of racial discrimination as a Chinese in Canada, Bing also struggles to heal his father's mysterious illness and pacifies unquiet spirits in the haunted house in which he works. Table 5.1 records the frequency of different acculturation strategies pursued by Bing and his father. Bing most frequently seeks a strategy of separation. He is involved in eight examples of separation, three examples of assimilation, as well as one example each of integration and marginalization. Bing's father demonstrates five examples of a separation strategy and no evidence of other strategies.

In "Immigration, Acculturation, and Adaptation," Berry defines the separation strategy as the process of dismissing the dominant culture that involves a positive orientation towards one's root culture and a negative orientation towards the host culture

(20). This orientation towards the two cultures is commonly seen in Bing's actions throughout the novel. He repeatedly recalls his life back in China, from the scent of the farmland to the way his mother picks her fingernails clean with a hairpin and scrubs her feet (Yee 8). The manner in which Bing recalls every detail reveals how he treasures and longs for his old life. A number of times when Bing faces difficulties in Vancouver, he thinks that "I should go back to China . . . where I belong" (115). Indeed, Bing perceives life in China as "safe" and "simple" (142). This belief is shown in his thoughts:

If only I were back in China! Then I won't be afraid . . . Grandmother and Mother would go to the temple and pray. And the ancient gods and spirits would protect me. But here in Canada, who knows what works and what doesn't work. There is no one here I can rely on . . . (53).

Evidently, Bing holds a positive attitude towards China and views it as a better place than Canada, and follows traditional Chinese cultural norms and beliefs. When Bing realizes that his workplace is haunted, he asks a Chinese fortune teller for a protective charm, thinking that "it's good to have some magic just in case" (53). He also burns a paper model of the house—a Chinese ritual to respect the dead—in an effort to appease the ghost of a deceased Canadian (147, 163). This event can be seen as significant, as Bing bridges the two cultures by bringing a Chinese traditional ceremony into a Western context. In fact, his success is acknowledged by his Canadian employer, Mrs. Bentley, who travels a long distance to Chinatown to thank Bing. In addition, Bing wishes the Chinese patrol can protect him outside of Chinatown. He believes that "the [Canadian] police are like everybody else. They think that too many Chinese live here. They want to drive the Chinese out of town" (95). He is cautious to leave Chinatown

because of his unfortunate experience of being harassed by two drunks. When his father falls ill and is taken to the basement rather than the examining room in the hospital, Bing thinks that “perhaps Ba was taken to the basement because he’s Chinese” (152). This assumption reflects a victim mentality in which he views ethnicity as the cause of unequal treatments. This mentality deepens Bing’s reliance on the separation strategy. In all, Bing’s behaviour suggests he is utilizing a separation strategy whereby he sees himself as Other and does little to integrate into his new community.

Bing’s perspective on China, however, is complicated by the western environment he encounters outside of Chinatown. At one point when Bing is in a Canadian streetcar, he speaks loudly in English to show that he does not “have to ask other Chinese to translate” (18) for him. In this way, Bing attempts to distance himself from the stereotypical Chinese image and seeks to assimilate. Bing is also disappointed in the passivity of Chinese men in response to racial prejudice in Canada: “He’d heard their bold words and brave talk on other occasions but had never seen them take any action” (57). His observation is a case of assimilation as he measures the Chinese according to North American culture. At the same time, Bing is constantly reminded by others that he is not fully Chinese, but a Chinese-Canadian. As one of Chinese men says, “You children think you’re smart because you speak English” (62). When Bing decides to take a risky path outside Chinatown, he knows that the men in Chinatown “would say that children who grow up in Canada don’t listen to the wisdom of their elders; that Chinese-Canadian children can’t even read or write Chinese, and that they’re like empty salmon cans—shiny on the outside, but nothing inside!” (131). At times, bias against Chinese-Canadian youth drives Bing to experience marginalization as he feels excluded from both cultural

groups. At the end of the novel, Bing demonstrates an integration strategy when his employer Mrs. Bentley saves him from the gangsters. Although Bing still longs to return to China where he feels “protected by the very landscape itself” (142), he comes to a realization that “there is something protecting me here [in Vancouver] as well” (142). This thought implies that Bing has become more open-minded and positive towards the host society he once considered dangerous and foreign. He is moving towards a strategy of integration in which he feels comfortable in both places. All in all, Bing pursues a number of strategies in response to the larger society, which in turn complicates his attitude towards his heritage country and Chinese father.

Bing’s father demonstrates a consistent adoption of separation strategy by maintaining his culture of origin while refusing to engage with other cultural groups. He stays in Chinatown most of the time and never interacts with a foreigner in a pleasant manner. In fact, his use of the derogatory term “the white” reflects how he mentally categorizes people based on ethnicity. Often, Bing’s father follows the racial epithet of “the white” with condemnations such as “bastards” (7). He divides the two cultures in his mind and thus utilizes separation to detach himself from people outside Chinatown. His occupation as a bone collector (who ships skeletons of deceased Chinese back to their hometown for burial) also indicates that his loyalty belongs back in China (7). He is constantly saving money for “another trip back home” (138). As Bing’s father treats China as his real home, it is natural for him to raise his son with a filial mindset that does not tolerate defiance. Last but not least, Bing’s father shares a similar victim mentality with Bing and often explains unfortunate events by referencing racial discrimination. When the electricity shuts down on three streetcars in a row, Bing’s father perceives it as

an act of prejudice and says: “Fah! Those whites! They just don’t want Chinese riding on their streetcars” (21). On another occasion, Bing’s father tells Bing that “you’ll have plenty of your own problems working for white people” (59). Evidently, he perceives their everyday problems through the lens of prejudice. Critical Race theorist Thomas Ross, in his article “Innocence and Affirmative Action,” outlines the “rhetoric of innocence,” which argues against legal cases in which racial minorities claim to be victims of racial discrimination. The concept suggests that it constitutes an “oversimplification” to assume that every single member of a minority group “currently suffers from the effects of past or present racial discrimination” (554) and questions the validity of victimization among minority members. Applying to this reading of *The Bone Collector’s Son*, this critical view suggests that Bing’s father may be overgeneralizing his experience as racism. He presumes that the Chinese are victims of the dominant culture, which reinforces his refusal to interact with other cultural groups. His behaviour resonates with the strategy of separation and explains his reliance on filial piety in his relationship with Bing.

Both Bing and his father employ separation as their main acculturation strategy. Sharing a similar attitude towards Chinese and Canadian cultures, they experience less conflict regarding their orientation in response to acculturation. A difference between the two characters is that Bing also demonstrates examples of other strategies whereas his father relies solely on the separation strategy. Nevertheless, acculturation does not appear to be a major source of conflict in the parent-child relationship in the novel. The father and son share a similar acculturation strategy of separation, which emphasizes their

strong ties with China and provides a ground in which both characters largely uphold the Chinese family values of serving, obeying, and respecting one's parents.

The Star Fisher

Set in 1927, *The Star Fisher* centres on the experience of Joan Lee, a second-generation Chinese-American who moves from Ohio to West Virginia. As the only Chinese family in town, the Lees are labelled as outsiders and have to battle against discrimination to keep up the family laundry business. Of the thirteen examples of Joan's use of an acculturation strategy, the largest proportion (six in total) falls into the marginalization category, three depict strategies of assimilation, three depict the strategy of separation, and one depicts the strategy of integration. By contrast, Joan's parents illustrate sixteen examples of separation and five examples of integration. They do not seek assimilation or marginalization within their new West Virginia community.

Joan's confusion in dealing with the acculturation process is revealed in her alternating assimilation and separation approaches. Evidence of her assimilation strategy comes from her attraction and "sheer curiosity" (14) for American customs such as tea gatherings. At times, Joan sheds her heritage culture and seeks to identify with the Americans. For example, she rebukes her mother's Chinese teaching by saying that "We're in America, Mama" (48). On another occasion, Joan realizes that she views her mother with "American eyes . . . [and sees] a little woman with the funny skin and the odd eyes" (72). Joan's rejection of her root values and identification with American culture are indicative of her assimilation attempts to deal with her bi-cultural environment. Yet, her outlook shifts to separation from time to time. She embraces Chinese wisdom (58) and is irritated by the fact that others label her parents as "fresh-off-

boat,” (56) a term often employed to describe new immigrants who are ignorant of the host culture. In those examples, Joan identifies with the Chinese. She also acknowledges that Chinese is an integral part of her family: “we may talk and dress and act like Americans, but in our hearts we’ll always be Chinese” (146). Joan’s conflicting attitudes towards the two cultures demonstrate both the strategies of assimilation and separation, leading to her interior struggle and frustration.

Joan’s dominant acculturation strategy is marginalization, which Sam and Berry use to describe people who “acculturate . . . to neither culture” (472). Even though Joan is born in the United States and can recall factual details of the country, she is oblivious to a number of American cultural practices. An example is when Joan does not know how to set the table for a tea gathering, a situation which she calls “a crisis” (19) because she is afraid her “ignorance” (19) will make the family a laughing stock. As she thinks to herself, “we were often like actors who were thrust onstage without a script, so that we had to improvise” (19). This illustrates Joan’s feelings of helplessness and alienation when she faces unfamiliar cultural situations. While Joan finds American culture foreign at times, she also feels distant towards Chinese culture because of her American-born background. Indeed, Joan is intimidated by China, “the strange world that [is] their birthright and yet so mysterious and frightening” (100). Whenever she explains that she is from Ohio, not China, she feels almost “apologetic” (64) to disappoint others for not belonging to a “strange, exotic world” (64) that she knows nothing about. Her guilt illustrates her lack of belonging to either world. Indeed, she often compares herself to the star fisher’s daughter, a mythical character who grows up in an ordinary world without ever visiting the sky (where her mother comes from). Joan draws a parallel between

herself and the star fisher's daughter, who "belongs to both the earth and the sky . . . [and sees] everything through a double pair of eyes" (72). As Sam and Berry observe among individuals who prefer marginalization, Joan faces the questions "Who am I? To which group do I belong?" (475). With one foot in China and one in the United States, Joan struggles to fit into either group and is constantly discouraged in the acculturation process. This resonates with Sam and Berry's assertion that marginalization leads the highest risk of adaptation difficulties among individuals (478).

Later in the novel, Joan gains a lesson on integration from her classmate Bernice, who is bullied not for her racial background, but for being the child of actors. Here, Joan recognizes her own prejudice against others and learns to overcome her prejudgment. Joan reflects that instead of being "blindfolded by silly prejudice," she should "meet with the person and not the notion" (101). This openness and curiosity to something new or different is extended to ethnicity in the novel. As Bernice says, "Without curiosity, you wind up being dead in the head" (131). Joan finally learns to appreciate her bi-cultural background, which is shown in her identification with the star fishers, who "glide back and forth in the sky, shining like a comet" (147). The new town becomes a sea for Joan to "fish for a few stars" (147). Through Joan's discovery, Yep encourages readers to explore the unfamiliar with an open mind.

Joan's parents enact a separation approach in their adjustment to North American society, an attitude that may be explained through the Critical Race concept of involuntary immigrants. Even after they have settled in the United States for over fifteen years, her parents avoid the host culture and remain faithful to Chinese traditions in many ways. Their Chinese practices range from preferences for Chinese newspapers (4),

insistence on their children speaking Chinese at home (4), the use of the Chinese calendar (4-5), to the continuous reliance on Chinese values in teaching their children (48) and dealing with strangers (27, 80). They tend to view the Chinese way as superior to the American way, as when Joan's mother says: "Americans don't know how to count years. They should count the year in the womb just like the Chinese" (5). Their reluctance to adopt foreign customs creates misunderstanding and tension in their daily life. For example, Joan's parents are suspicious of Miss Lucy's offers of assistance because in China, strangers don't usually interact with one another. The distrust of strangers almost ruins their friendship with Miss Lucy, who later plays a crucial role in introducing the Lees into the community. Despite Joan's mother's instances of behaviour that reflect integration, she is still very concerned with the preservation of their heritage culture. She tells her husband to start Chinese lessons for her children because she doesn't "want them to forget who they are" (146). From her words, it is evident that Joan's mother views their core identity as Chinese, not Chinese-Americans. The parents' reluctance to acquire American culture may be linked to the reason behind their migration. In "African-American Immersion Schools: Paradoxes of Race and Public Education," Critical Race theorist Kevin Brown, argues that involuntary immigrants "perceive themselves as victims" (417) and are generally less active and positive in overcoming the racial barriers when compared to voluntary immigrants. In *The Star Fisher*, Joan's father feels that he was forced to immigrate because of the lack of opportunities in China for scholars like himself (Yep 30). He demonstrates the characteristics of an involuntary immigrant as suggested by Brown and takes "a negative interpretation" of the social difficulties encountered in the United States (Brown 417). Correspondingly, Joan's mother blames

her husband for initiating the move (Yep 30) and wishes that they could return to China (100). Because Joan's parents hold a negative attitude towards moving to the United States, it is understandable that they remain close to their root culture instead of embracing the unfamiliar culture, thus exhibiting a separation strategy.

Acculturation strategies affect the parent-child relationship in *The Star Fisher* in several ways. First, the parents' attitude of separation evokes misunderstanding and fear in the relationship. At times, Joan's father finds it hard to understand his children, whose attitudes are greatly influenced by their western upbringing. As Joan observes: "Papa stared at me the way he always did when his American-born children did something strange—almost as if he couldn't quite understand how we could be his" (96). Similarly, Joan's mother fears that her children will become too Americanized and insists that they speak Chinese at home, an act that may be mistaken as a forceful demand from Joan's perspective (97). Secondly, the acculturative stress Joan experiences makes it difficult for her to maintain a filial attitude. As Berry argues, marginalization creates most acculturative stress on an individual's mental health ("Acculturation," 707). This is shown in Joan's case where she feels "angry and mixed-up inside" (Yep 72) to be caught between two worlds. Joan's frustration towards her parents, who long to return to China in a way that she doesn't (100), leads to her outbursts that oppose filial teachings to respect one's parents. Lastly, her parents' strong tie with their root culture leads to value clashes with their daughter. When her mother lectures Joan about the customs back "home" in China, Joan protests by saying that they are "in America" (48). Joan's mother then accuses her of being "just as spoiled and just as lazy as an American brat" (48). The two disagree because they uphold different value systems. Joan's mother keeps Chinese

family values whereas Joan struggles to find a balance between two value systems. As such, acculturation strategies become a significant element which contributes not only to Joan's relationship with her parents, but to their adherence of family values.

Donald Duk

Frank Chin's *Donald Duk* revisits the Chinese contribution to the construction of the Central Pacific Railroad through the experience of the American-born-Chinese protagonist, Donald Duk. Donald initially feels a strong attachment towards the United States, but his view changes when he begins having strange dreams about the railroad from the perspective of a Chinese worker. Struggling against his American upbringing and the prejudice to Chinese it entails, Donald finally learns to embrace his heritage culture and acquires a newly-found loyalty to China. As recorded in Table 5.1, Donald exhibits fourteen examples of an assimilation strategy, twelve examples of a separation strategy, two examples of an integration strategy, and one example of a marginalization strategy. While Donald's parents do not demonstrate examples of the assimilation and marginalization strategies, they illustrate one example of a separation strategy and four examples of an integration strategy.

Donald Duk displays two major strategies over the course of the novel, with a noticeable shift from an assimilation attitude to a separation approach. Initially, Donald clearly rejects his Chinese heritage. He comments that "looking Chinese is driving him crazy" (2) and "everything Chinese in his life seems to be awful" (8). He considers Chinese New Year "the worst time of year" with all the "stupid questions about the funny things Chinese believe in" (3). Moreover, Donald avoids other Chinese because "he doesn't like speaking their Chinese. He doesn't have to—this is America" (2-3).

Ashamed of his heritage, Donald distances himself from his root culture. At the same time, Donald identifies himself as an American, which fits Sam and Berry's definition of assimilation as "to seek close interaction with other cultures. . . . [and to] adopt the cultural values, norms, and traditions of the new society" (476). Donald announces that "I'm an American" (Chin 20) and aspires to be the American dancer Fred Astaire (52). In fact, Donald believes that "everybody's gotta give up the old and become American" (42). His assimilation strategy is clearly conveyed through his wish to replace his heritage culture with the host culture. However, Donald shifts from assimilation to separation once he begins dreaming about being a Chinese railroad worker in the construction of the Central Pacific Railroad. His dreams become a recurring motif, allowing him to connect with his heritage. Donald is furious when he learns that the Chinese contribution to the railroad is omitted from American history books. He argues that "we [Chinese] belong in this picture [of the railroad] more than any of these white men" (133). The pronoun "we" shows Donald's identification as a Chinese, a strong contrast when compared to his earlier claim to be an American and his use of "their" (2) in describing Chinese language. Donald also accuses the Americans as "stupid racists" (149) and says that "everything I dream makes me mad at white people and hate them. They lie all the time" (138). The above examples indicate a change in Donald's cultural orientation and self-identity. As he learns about the discrimination against the Chinese in the past, Donald adopts a separation strategy and tries to evade his American school (149) and his white best friend, Arnold (133).

In the resolution of the novel, Donald is more inclined to seek integration and reconciles with his American friend Arnold instead of rejecting all white people (157-8).

Donald also dreams that he, as an American-born-Chinese, is praised as “a most remarkable example of the breed” (129). This shows that he is no longer ashamed of his bi-cultural background. Yet, his final choice of acculturation strategy is not explicitly stated. If Donald’s case is examined through the lens of Critical Race Theory, Delgado and Stefancic would explain the ambiguity of Donald’s final strategy with the notion of intersectionality and anti-essentialism, which states that “no person has a single, easily stated, unitary identity. . . . Everyone has potentially conflicting, overlapping identities, loyalties, and allegiances” (9). Indeed, Donald’s many identities complicate his cultural orientation and acculturative preferences. It is therefore logical that he displays a combination of several acculturation strategies through his actions, thoughts, behaviours, and dreams. Instead of presenting a single final strategy for Donald, Chin allows the space for the reader to interpret and decide Donald’s ideal position between the two worlds.

Donald’s parents demonstrate a strategy of integration while occasionally displaying separation behaviours. They are fluent in English, comfortable in North American culture, yet maintain strongly connected with their Chinese traditions. On one occasion, Donald’s father, King Duk, seeks a separation strategy by pointing out that no matter what they do, they will always be identified as Chinese. He ridicules some Chinese-Americans who, like Donald, believe that if “all they knew was 100 percent American-made in the USA Yankee know howdy doodle dandy, people would not mistake them for Chinese” (42). Nevertheless, Donald’s mother displays an integration strategy in her comment: “we [the Chinese] have been living with them [the Americans] for over a hundred years and we get along with them fine” (150). She is accustomed to

living with people from other cultures. Likewise, King Duk mocks his son for being “the very last American-born Chinese-American boy to believe you have to give up being Chinese to be an American” (42). Instead of giving up his heritage, King tells Donald to learn from the new immigrants, who “include America in everything else they know. And that makes them stronger than any of the American-born . . .” (42). As demonstrated, Donald’s parents reflect an integration strategy towards acculturation, especially King, who advocates adding American culture on one’s heritage culture. In addition, King does not over-generalize racism. When Donald accuses all Americans of mistreating the Chinese, King corrects his son: “No, don’t hate all the white people. Only the liars” (138). King Duk distinguishes ethnicity from character, and teaches Donald to distinguish his real friend among the Americans (157). Through King’s teaching, Chin avoids what Perry Nodelman and Mavis Reimer describe as essentializing—the assumption that there are always identifiable characteristics among all the members of an ethnic group (171). Indeed, Chin challenges racial stereotypes by pointing out that people’s characters are independent from their ethnic origins. His plot achieves the main goal of Critical Race Theory to deconstruct stereotypes and transform the society’s racial lines and hierarchies for the better (Delgado and Stefancic 3).

Donald and his parents respond to acculturation with different strategies, leading to a gap that affects the parent-child dynamics in several manners. Firstly, their strategies contribute to the lack of filial expectations in the family. Donald, who is largely assimilated to the American culture, is unaware of the duties required as a filial son. His parents, who prefer integration, are open-minded towards other cultures and do not impose Chinese values on their children. As a result, the novel has the least number of

indicators of filial piety among the four texts. The absence of indicators reflects that filial piety is not a value expressed strongly by the author, suggesting that heritage culture may be absent as a result of acculturation.

Secondly, misunderstandings and conflicts may occur when family members employ different acculturation strategies. In the first half of the story, Donald adopts a strategy of assimilation and is unable to comprehend his parents' appreciation of Chinese traditions: "Why does Dad like being Chinese? Doesn't he know everyone talks about him funny?" He questions the way his parents follow the traditions of Chinese New Year such as joining in the tradition of placing 100-pound sacks of rice at every door in Chinatown (Chin 137-8). At the same time, King Duk mocks his son who regards himself as an American: "You think if you are a real good boy for them [the Americans], do what they do . . . they will take care of you forever? . . . You're dreaming, boy" (123). Conflicts arise between Donald and his father because of their varying approaches to acculturation.

Nevertheless, King later becomes Donald's role model in the integration of the two cultures. He pulls Donald back when the latter engages in extreme feelings of separation and teaches him to distinguish his allies among the white (157). Furthermore, King Duk teaches Donald that as minorities, they have the responsibility to recover lost knowledge as a way of integrating and bridging the two cultures. In his words: "Fair? What is fair? History is war, not sport! . . . You gotta keep the history [of the Chinese] yourself or lose it forever" (123). He encourages Donald to speak up and reorient history. *Donald Duk* is an example of how counterstories present alternative realities of the world as claimed by Critical Race theorists. It discloses that American historical texts do not

necessarily record the full picture of events. As King Duk instructs Donald, it is crucial to revisit the Chinese participation in the transcontinental railroad in order to integrate the Chinese reality into the mainstream culture. Donald's experience opens a window for readers to recognize another side of Chinese-American history by providing voice to minorities "whose voice and perspective . . . has been suppressed, devalued, and abnormalized" (Delgado, "Storytelling," 2412). For the most part of the story, disputes occur when characters adopt different acculturation strategies, but as Donald becomes increasingly open-minded towards his parents' strategy of integration, he views his father as a role model in dealing with the two cultures.

Yang the Third and Her Impossible Family

Lensey Namioka's *Yang the Third and Her Impossible Family* centres on first-generation Chinese-American Mary Yingmei Yang in her transition to her new home in Seattle. While Mary tries her best to fit into the mainstream society, her family keeps embarrassing her with their Chinese ways. After the attempt to befriend her popular classmate Holly, Mary finally acknowledges that Chinese heritage is a core part of her identity and appreciates the diversity of the multicultural society in which she resides. Table 5.1 shows the frequency of examples by which Mary and her parents employ different acculturation strategies. Of the twenty-four examples of Mary's use of an acculturation strategy, seventeen of them reflect an assimilation strategy, four reflect an integration strategy, and three reflect a marginalization strategy. By contrast, there are only three examples in which her parents seek a separation strategy.

Throughout the novel, Mary is enthusiastic to imitate practices of the dominant culture in order to secure friendships and acquire a sense of belonging to the mainstream

society. She comments that she “want[s] to do everything right—everything that Americans [do]” (64), suggesting that she perceives American customs as the appropriate way. She memorizes the “proper” dining manners in an etiquette book by heart (6) and keeps a list of new English terms and idioms with her at all times (16). Unlike her family members, Mary dislikes appearing different from the others. She is the only Yang member who selects an English name for herself since her Chinese name, Yingmei, is too hard for the Americans to remember (16). When someone remarks that her family doesn’t care what others think about them, Mary thinks, “Maybe the rest of the Yangs didn’t care, but I did” (108). Indeed, Mary is so anxious to follow the norm that she observes her classmates’ lunches to count the most-frequently used jelly for peanut butter and jelly sandwiches (20). In addition, Mary is greatly attracted to the host culture. She is excited to join a “real” (4) Thanksgiving and is eager to befriend her American classmate Holly, who looks like a princess with her “curly blond hair” and “soft, unhurried ways” (4-5). Given Mary’s determination to fit in with the crowd, she is ashamed and irritated when her family members fall short of her expectations. She is embarrassed when Fourth Brother eats bean sprout sandwiches because “in America, kids are supposed to hate vegetables” (21). Likewise, Mary tries to persuade Eldest Brother to join a sports team so that others will not call him a nerd (68). Mary’s efforts in following host customs and her denial of her roots are indications of her assimilation strategy in the United States.

Later in the novel, Mary begins to realize that being different is not necessarily unpleasant and thus learns to accept her Chinese identity. When her classmate Kim praises Eldest Brother for not worrying about what others think of him, Mary reflects that “it is possible to be different and still get respect from people. . . . If Kim respected them

[her family] in spite of their differences, I should respect them, too. Most of all, I should respect *myself*” (138). She understands that learning American customs does not mean she has to be ashamed of her family and change their ways (138). Mary also acknowledges that Chinese is a core part of her identity that she cannot deny. Influenced by Chinese values, Mary respects her family whereas Holly does not truly care about her parents’ feelings (140). When she discovers her difference from Holly, Mary experiences a strange feeling of “a stir of cool air . . . open[ing] my eyes to the real world, while my dreams gradually faded away” (139). Mary’s feelings suggest that her wish to impress Holly may be a form of her fascination with western culture, and learning her difference from Holly disenchanting Mary from the dream of assimilation. Mary finally reaches a balance where she thinks that “I’m happy in America now and feel I belong here. But a part of me will always remember China . . . We shouldn’t forget the music of our home” (143). As such, the major acculturation strategy Mary appears to use shifts from that of assimilation to integration.

There is little evidence that describes the strategy which Mary’s parents adopt in acculturating to Seattle. The only examples found are cases of separation for Mary’s mother. Two examples involve Mary’s mother’s reluctance to try new cooking recipes. She is terrified to roast a turkey because she has never used an oven in China (4) and insists on making Chinese wontons for fund raising despite Mary’s earnest request for typical American chocolate chip cookies (71). Her reservation towards unfamiliar practices shows her inclination to keep her accustomed Chinese ways in the new society. At the same time, Mary’s mother remains ignorant of a number of social norms and western conventions. An example is how she calls Mrs. Hanson old and fat, cultural-

specific mistakes made because of her continuous reliance on the Chinese idea of compliment. Her unwillingness to participate in the host culture is likely caused by fear and perplexity. She apologizes to her daughter for acting in a manner inappropriate in the United States: "I'm sorry, Yingmei [Mary]. I know that you want to be friends with Holly, but I always seem to be saying things that offend her mother" (81). The apology shows that Mary's mother feels confused and helpless in a place so different from her original hometown. She is hesitant in acquiring the host culture and gravitates towards her root culture, thus demonstrating an adoption of a separation strategy.

The characters' acculturation strategies affect Mary's relationship with her parents in several ways. For one, the characters' choice of acculturation strategies leads to the lack of filial indicators in the novel. Mary adopts an assimilation strategy and is more anxious to acquire American culture than Chinese values. Even though her parents express an attitude of separation, they show a fear of another culture rather than a strong endorsement to their heritage culture. Indeed, Mary's parents do not assert Chinese teachings in the same degree as Bing or Joan's parents. Without a strong commitment to maintain their Chinese culture, filial piety is not reinforced in Mary's family.

Apart from family values, Mary's assimilation strategy clashes with her parents' separation strategy in the first half of the novel. She is disappointed when her family does not act in the proper American way. Even after Mother apologizes for embarrassing Mary, Mary is unforgiving in her thoughts: "But it *is* her [mother's] fault . . . Why didn't she try harder to learn about American customs?" (81). Mary blames Mother's lack of effort in practicing American customs. In the second part, Mary starts to demonstrate an integration strategy by accepting the Chinese-ness in herself. She feels guilty in her

previous reproaches of her family's culturally inappropriate behaviour. In her thoughts: "I am actually one of them: In spite of my list of new words and my careful study of American ways, I still make mistakes, just like the rest of the family" (125). Instead of being ashamed of Mother, Mary feels more ashamed of herself (125). As her appreciation of Chinese culture grows, Mary becomes more tolerant towards her family and "no longer break[s] out in a cold sweat" (141) when her family does embarrassing things. Mary's shift from assimilation to integration strategy becomes a crucial turning point in the parent-child relationship of the novel.

Summary

An examination of the primary texts reveals how the acculturation strategies pursued by the characters play a number of roles in the parent-child relationship as well as in the endorsement of filial piety.

Acculturation strategies contribute to the presence or absence of filial piety at two levels. At an individual level, characters seeking a strategy of separation generally reflect a higher degree of filial piety than those who pursue an assimilation strategy. Acculturation strategies also appear to affect the position of filial piety at the level of the family. Examining the four texts, characters demonstrating a more consistent acculturation strategy seem to have a great impact on the degree of filial piety in the family. For instance, Bing's father exhibits a clear separation strategy throughout the novel whereas Bing alternates between different strategies. Due to Bing's father's determination to separate from the host culture and to preserve heritage values, their family reflects a stronger endorsement of filial piety. This suggests that the strategies of acculturation followed by the characters not only influence characters on an individual

level, but also affect the overall family dynamics. In fact, it can be said that North American culture becomes a third force in these narratives of immigrant families that supersedes a character's tie with his or her heritage culture.

By comparing the acculturation strategies pursued by protagonists and their parents, it is possible to conclude that an acculturation gap leads to increased conflicts within the parent-child relationship. An example is how Donald, who seeks a strategy of assimilation, fails to comprehend his parents' efforts in integrating Chinese practices in the United States. Here, the acculturation gap causes misunderstanding, thus drawing Donald away from his parents. Joan, whose marginalization strategy indicates a rejection of both cultures, also clashes with her mother, whose separation strategy entails a strong reliance on Chinese traditional values in parenting. As Berry argues, variations in acculturation rates and goals within families often lead to acculturative stress and conflicts ("Acculturation," 700). Generating disagreement and tension in the parent-child relationship, an acculturation gap creates greater challenges for protagonists to treat their parents with respect. As such, Chinese immigrant characters may find it harder to maintain traditional filial piety when their responses to acculturation differ from those of their parents.

A comparison of the historical and contemporary texts highlights and explains the protagonists' choices of acculturation strategies. In the historical texts, the strategy of separation is most dominant, in particular among the parents. For instance, Joan's parents employ a separation strategy, which is understandable given the high degree of racial discrimination they experience. In the contemporary texts, assimilation is the prevailing strategy chosen by Donald and Mary, who are eager to adapt to American culture.

Indeed, as Sam and Berry observe, characters facing low societal discrimination prefer the strategies of assimilation or integration whereas those facing high discrimination prefer separation strategy (479). In “Immigration, Acculturation, and Adaptation,” Berry also asserts that the dominant group often limits the minority members’ acculturation choice because integration requires “mutual accommodation” (10) and acceptance by both groups. His argument may explain Bing’s father’s reluctance to integrate into the highly prejudiced society. If the attitude of the dominant group indeed plays a critical role in one’s transition into the new environment, it affirms the purpose of this study to create awareness of Chinese-North American immigrant literature, which, in turn may assist in an increased understanding of immigrants in the mainstream society.

In the resolutions of all four texts, the protagonists are more inclined to seek integration, which can be examined under Homi K. Bhabha’s rhetoric of hybridity. In the notion of hybridity, Bhabha suggests the existence of a space “in-between the designations of identity” and that “this interstitial passage between fixed identifications opens up the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy” (5). Indeed, the protagonists in the texts resist “the binary opposition of racial and cultural groups” (296) by integrating two cultures in their daily life without viewing one as superior to the other. Bhabha also proposes a “third space” (316) of mutual interaction between the dominant and subdominant groups that refutes presumed dichotomies and power imbalance. This is evident in Donald’s discovery of the Chinese contributions to American history, thereby creating a space that resists white cultural hegemony. Given that the four texts conclude with the possibility of a state of cultural hybridity, it is surprising that the adoption of filial piety in North America differs

from novel to novel. At the conclusion of *The Bone Collector's Son*, Bing demands equal respect from his father, which can be seen as a challenge to, and modification of, filial piety. *The Star Fisher* and *Yang the Third and Her Impossible Family* conclude with a mutual adjustment in which the protagonists acknowledge their parents' efforts and the parents lower their filial expectations. In the conclusion of *Donald Duk*, filial piety remains ambivalent in the protagonist's cultural hybrid space. While all of the four primary texts offer a third space that bridges two cultures, they dramatize different approaches towards the implementation of Chinese family values. The range of a variety of adaptations of filial piety refutes the idea of a perfect model that fits all; instead, diversity appears to be promoted and positioned by the authors so that the interpretation of filial piety is left open for the exploration and growth of the immigrant characters in the texts.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and Discussion

Introduction

This study's goal was to examine the representation of Chinese family values and the use of acculturation strategies in a selection of Chinese-North American immigrant children's novels, including Paul Yee's *The Bone Collector's Son*, Laurence Yep's *The Star Fisher*, Frank Chin's *Donald Duk*, and Lensey Namioka's *Yang the Third and Her Impossible Family*. Employing the methodologies of content analysis and close reading, the study recorded relevant evidence of the texts in two coding schemes. The first featured four indicators of filial piety and the second categorized individual responses to acculturation. The frequency in which the indicators appear in the texts was also recorded. The data collected formed the basis of a close reading of the characters' family values and acculturation strategies.

This chapter revisits the two research questions on filial piety and acculturation strategies and discusses the research findings and conclusions. It also offers recommendations for future research.

Research Question 1: How are Chinese family values, in particular filial piety, portrayed in the parent-child relationships within immigrant families in the primary texts?

Filial piety appears to play a less significant role in the selected Chinese-North American immigrant children's novels than that advocated by Master Kong and the filial piety scales developed by David Yau-fai Ho and Sylvia Xiao-hua Chen, Michael Harris Bond, and Dong-hui Tang. Characters demonstrate various levels of reliance on, and manifestations of, filial piety. Of the four indicators of filial piety—Utmost Respect for

Parents, Glory to Family, Serve and Provide for Parents, or Self-Cultivation, some are modified or absent within the familial behaviours and relationships.

In general, characters in the historical novels (*The Bone Collector's Son* and *The Star Fisher*) exhibit a stronger reliance on, and attachment to, filial piety than those in the contemporary novels (*Donald Duk* and *Yang the Third and Her Impossible Family*).

Many characters in the contemporary novels view North America as a better place than their home country and try to fit into the mainstream culture. By contrast, the characters in the early 20th century novels are portrayed as encountering higher levels of racial discrimination than those of the present day, and are, therefore, depicted as prone to embracing a victim mentality that reinforces their hostility towards the host culture. Also, they are depicted as experiencing minimal interaction with westerners. It is understandable, therefore, that the immigrants largely retain their heritage culture. Yet, even the historical novels do not display a full endorsement of the traditional value of filial piety as characters such as Bing and Joan occasionally resent their filial obligations. In all, filial piety is more prominent in the historical novels, which suggests the influence of the social and historical contexts on the maintenance of heritage values.

The texts place various emphases on different aspects of filial piety. Of all the filial indicators, Service and Provide for Parents is most commonly present and highly regarded by the characters. Its manifestation, however, is modified by the children's gender and background. Glory to Family has a more pronounced influence in stories set in an earlier period. Instead of striving to honour the family name, the child protagonists in the novels with contemporary settings wish their parents to be Americanized in order to be more accepted by their peers. Utmost Respect to Parents, while still fairly well

represented, is challenged by contemporary characters such as Donald, who openly disagrees with his parents. The reduced respect for authority figures may stem from the North American environment where young characters are depicted as challenging their teachers. Minimal reference to Self-Cultivation may suggest a lower priority of this indicator in the texts, or perhaps this virtue is less tangible and observable compared to the others. Given that the characters endorse the indicators selectively, filial piety is no longer seen as an absolute cultural code. A likely reason is that the presence of a new culture may provide an alternative value model influencing individual choice and development of personal value systems.

Overall, the primary texts depict a diverse adoption of filial piety in North America. While evidence of filial piety is present, negative examples or absence of indicators can be seen as a modification or subversion of traditional Chinese family values. The immigrant experience complicates the adherence to filial piety when the characters are aware of both Chinese and North American family values and structures. The variety of perspectives on filial piety indicates the complexity of individual value systems and sheds light on the challenges of living between two worlds.

Research Question 2: What are the acculturation strategies employed by the child protagonists and their parents? How do these strategies contribute to the parent-child relationships and the endorsement of Chinese family values?

This study categorized individual responses to acculturation according to Berry's fourfold model, which includes assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalization. Evidence of all strategies is found in the texts, each in various degrees. In most cases, divergence in the strategies employed by the child and his or her parents contributes to

tensions in their relationships and in turn becomes a barrier to the retention of filial piety within the family.

Characters in the novels with historical settings tend to seek strategies of separation or marginalization, whereas those in the contemporary period prefer assimilation. Their attitudes are consistent with Sam and Berry's observation that individuals "experiencing high discrimination [are] more likely [to] prefer separation, whereas those experiencing less discrimination prefer integration or assimilation . . ." (479). Nevertheless, all the young protagonists become more open-minded towards the strategy of integration at the conclusion of the novels. Given that three of the novels are set in the United States, which is known for its philosophy of the melting pot and holds a generally assimilative outlook on immigration, it may be somewhat surprising that the authors' resolutions in the novels emphasize integration rather than assimilation. Do the immigrant authors refute the melting pot model in their work? Is integration privileged as a necessary or preferable element of a happy ending for the genre of literature for children? Do other immigrant novels, in particular those for adults, suggest a different resolution?

An intriguing observation is the complexity of individual characters' choices of acculturation strategies. Many characters pursue several strategies simultaneously or sequentially over the course of the narrative, and some demonstrate a clear shift from one approach to another. These realistic children's books seem to refute Berry's claim that an individual typically demonstrates a consistent strategy ("Acculturation," 704) by depicting the cultural transition as a complicated process that cannot be simplified or

generalized. Alternatively, characters in the stage of early adolescence may adopt several strategies because their sense of identity is still under development.

The characters' choices of a particular acculturation strategy appear to have a possible connection with their family values. At an individual character level, a separation strategy usually pairs with an adherence to filial piety while an assimilation strategy leads to a rejection of filial piety. At the family level, the view towards filial piety often mirrors that of the member with a stronger, more consistent acculturation strategy. For instance, the family tends to regard filial piety highly if one of its members displays a clear preference towards separation. As such, the degree of reliance on an acculturation strategy creates a power imbalance in generational relationships that determines the position of filial piety in the family.

Sociologist Min Zhou observes that different acculturative responses held by parents and their children extend the generation gap and create conflicts within their relationships (83-4). This is evident with Joan and Mary, who are disappointed in their parents' choice of a separation strategy. Nevertheless, in *Donald Duk*, the father's integration strategy guides Donald's development of cultural identity. Here, variations in acculturation have a positive influence on the family. In most cases, however, divergence in the acculturation strategies held by child and parent tends to increase misunderstanding and friction between characters. The outcome of disagreements could in turn make it harder for protagonists to treat parents with respect.

As a whole, the characters seek a number of acculturation strategies and may shift from one to another. Their choice of strategy has a correlation with the degree of filial piety at the individual and family levels. Furthermore, divergence in the response towards

acculturation chosen by child and parent leads to friction and misunderstanding in the parent-child relationship, thereby creating an environment in which it is more difficult to maintain filial piety towards the parent.

Overall Findings

This study provided a perspective on the representation of Chinese family values in Chinese-North American immigrant literature. It examined a broad range of narratives of immigrant experience that rejects the essentialist stereotyping of minority members. By adding alternative views to existing resources such as Amy Chua's *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother*, the study demonstrated how the four novels fulfill the purpose of counterstories to "cast doubt on the validity of accepted premises or myths" (Delgado and Stefancic 144) to the parent-child relationships within Chinese-North American immigrant families.

In the traditional Chinese family, filial piety is considered more than a familial obligation, but is a genuine cultural attitude that brings contentment to individuals and harmony to the society. In the four primary texts, however, even child protagonists with strong filial beliefs at times struggle to accept the filial expectations. In these works, filial piety is depicted as a burden to the immigrants, who may have lost their original connection to Chinese traditional family values. As Ruth K. Chao argues, the characters may overlook the good intentions of filial piety and share a common misconception that the authoritative Chinese parenting style is too repressive and controlling (1113). It can be considered that, in these Chinese-North American immigrant texts, the cultural authority of filial piety is challenged.

This study builds on existing scholarship on the preservation of heritage family values among immigrants in the field of Chinese-North American immigrant literature, and it is hoped that it may raise awareness of the need for immigrant fiction to provide more than one interpretation of the immigrant reality. By reading a variety of points of view across the wealth of Chinese-North American immigrant literature, I hope that young readers will learn that ethnicity cannot be generalized and that every immigrant can create his or her unique hybrid space with an individualized adaptation of heritage family values.

Limitations of Research

This study focuses only on four samples among the pool of 29 children's books (see Appendix A) that fit the parameters and criteria established in Chapter One. Beyond those identified, there are numerous Chinese-North American immigrant novels that act as counterstories about the immigrant experience. Although this study does not present a complete picture of the genre, it builds on existing scholarship on Chinese-North American immigrant literature by providing insight into the familial relations and values among immigrant families as depicted in the texts.

Another possible limitation of this study is my ethnic background. As much as I tried to remain objective, I may have brought my experience and personal viewpoint to the research. As a Hong Kong citizen familiar with Chinese values, it is possible that my personal assumptions about filial piety affected the objectivity of the study. Nevertheless, I believe that my Chinese upbringing allowed me an insider's perspective to analyze the underlying cultural elements in the primary texts.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study focuses on the representation of Chinese family values and the adoption of acculturation strategies in four primary texts, all of which are realistic novels with protagonists from ten to fifteen years old. For a more comprehensive view of Chinese-North American immigrant literature, I recommend a subsequent study of a sample for different age groups, such as picture books or young adult novels. A comparison between adult and children's books would also be useful, especially since most well-known titles in this genre are adult books (e.g. Amy Tan's *The Joy Luck Club*). It would be interesting to see how the authors depict filial piety through the perspective of older immigrants that may also be parents, and of adults looking back at their childhood experiences, thereby providing a well-rounded analysis of filial piety as represented in Chinese-North American immigrant literature.

In this study, I chose only texts written by Chinese-North American immigrant writers. A similar research study involving both the works of immigrant and non-immigrant writers could be fruitful in assessing the validity of voice-of-colour in Chinese-North American literature. In addition, it could help in determining if the existing literature describes an authentic immigrant experience that is adequate for non-immigrants to fully understand the Chinese-North American reality.

Apart from books about immigrants, it would also be beneficial to examine other children's fiction about Chinese families or other genres of children's literature with Chinese content published in different national publishing industries. For instance, a similar study could be conducted on Chinese folklore published in a Canadian publishing house. Alternatively, a comparative study between children's books published in China

and in North America could shed light on the extent to which Chinese family values are present in books published in the two different countries, thus exploring how filial piety is indirectly represented to children in the immigrant culture of Chinese families in North America as compared to those in China.

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Appendices

Appendix A Sample of Titles Examined on the Asian-North American Immigrant Experience

Author	Title	Date of publication	Setting
Chen, Pauline	<i>Peiling and the Chicken-Fried Christmas</i>	2007	Contemporary
Cheng, Andrea	<i>The Key Collection</i>	2003	Contemporary
Cheng, Andrea	<i>Only One Year</i>	2010	Contemporary
Chin, Frank	<i>Donald Duk: A Novel</i>	1991	Contemporary
Lin, Grace	<i>Dumpling Days</i>	2012	Contemporary
Lin, Grace	<i>The Year of the Dog</i>	2006	Contemporary
Lin, Grace	<i>The Year of the Rat</i>	2009	Contemporary
Lord, Bette Bao	<i>In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson</i>	1984	Post-WWII
Namioka, Lensey Chao	<i>April and the Dragon Lady</i>	1994	Contemporary
Namioka, Lensey Chao	<i>Yang the Eldest and His Odd Jobs</i>	2000	Contemporary
Namioka, Lensey Chao	<i>Yang the Second and Her Secret Admirers</i>	1998	Contemporary
Namioka, Lensey Chao	<i>Yang the Third and Her Impossible Family</i>	1996	Contemporary
Namioka, Lensey Chao	<i>Yang the Youngest and His Terrible Ear</i>	1992	Contemporary
Wong, Joyce Lee	<i>Seeing Emily</i>	2005	Contemporary
Yee, Paul	<i>The Bone Collector's Son</i>	2004	1907
Yee, Paul	<i>Breakaway</i>	1994	1930s
Yee, Paul	<i>Learning to Fly</i>	2008	Contemporary
Yee, Paul	<i>Money Boy</i>	2011	Contemporary
Yee, Paul	<i>Teach Me to Fly, Skyfighter!</i>	1983	Contemporary
Yep, Laurence	<i>The Amah</i>	2001	Contemporary
Yep, Laurence	<i>Child of the Owl</i>	1977	1960
Yep, Laurence	<i>Dragonwings</i>	1975	1903
Yep, Laurence	<i>Dragon Road</i>	2008	1939
Yep, Laurence	<i>The Dragon's Child</i>	2008	1922
Yep, Laurence	<i>Dragon's Gate</i>	1993	1867
Yep, Laurence	<i>Dream Soul</i>	2002	1927
Yep, Laurence	<i>The Journal of Wong Ming-Chung: A Chinese Miner</i>	2000	1852
Yep, Laurence	<i>The Star Fisher</i>	1991	1927
Yep, Laurence	<i>The Traitor</i>	2004	1885

Appendix B Filial Piety Excerpts from the Primary Texts
Table 1: Filial Piety Excerpts from *The Bone Collector's Son*

Filial Value: Utmost Respect for Parents
<p>Supporting Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bing obeys Ba's instructions to go to the cemetery despite his fear of ghosts (2). • Bing: "It is bad enough to be flaunting his father's orders. But if he walks off and doesn't even watch, that would show a lack of respect and bring on a beating for sure" (10-11). • Bing imagines throwing a punch at Ba, but reconsiders when he recalls that his mother ordered him to respect his father (26). • After his first week working away from home, Bing returns to visit his father, reminding himself that his "first stop had to be Ba's room or else he'd be accused of being disrespectful" (86). • Bing follows Ba to the graveyard even though the doctor told Ba to rest (87). • Ba said to Bing: "Show your father proper respect!" (160). <p>Opposing Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bing thinks: "I wish I were somewhere far away. . . . If only Ba hadn't suddenly come back to town" (4). • Bing feels disgusted by Ba. "His father was such a failure. He had one of the worst jobs in Chinatown, and he still couldn't do it right" (14). • Bing thinks: "Going anywhere with Ba always turns into a disaster" (18). • Bing yells, "Don't come near me! I don't want to walk near you" (22), to which Ba responds by cursing. • Bing despises Ba for hiding the nature of his job from his Chinese family. He thinks, "Ba must have gone out. Good! Less trouble tonight" (29). • Bing thinks, "[Ba is a g]ood man? Hardly" (32). He thinks that because Ba doesn't send enough money back to China, Mother has to lie to save face. • Bing blames Ba: "No one felt sorry for him" (34). • Bing often wishes that Ba is more like James' father, Uncle Jong (44). • Bing feels "tricked" by Ba for bringing him to Canada under a false promise. He wishes to return to China and feels hostile towards Ba (530). • Bing demands equal respect: "Who was it that saved your life, Ba? So show your son proper respect!" (160). • Ba acknowledges Bing's growth in the conclusion. Bing "had never heard Ba speak such words before, nor had he ever expected to" (173).
Filial Value: Glory to Family
<p>Supporting Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ba instructs Bing to lie so as to save face (24). • Bing pretends to be brave for Ba (44). • Bing lies to save face: "Ba and I don't believe in ghosts" (60).

Filial Value: Glory to Family

- Bing doesn't want to go home for fear of disappointing Ba. "Ba will call me a coward" (115).
- Bing imagines sending money home so Ma and Grandma will gain others' respect (139).
- When Uncle Won praises Bing in front of Ba, Ba feels proud. He even embraces Bing with tears in his eyes. "You're not afraid of anything anymore... You saved my life, and I never even thanked you" (173).

Opposing Examples

- Ba mocks at Bing's fear in the graveyard in front of other Chinese. He is furious and ashamed that his son is a coward. "This son of mine is scared of ghosts" (37-9).

Filial Value: Serve and Provide for Parents**Supporting Examples**

- Bing protects Ba from the terrifying debt collector, Broken-leg (118).
- Despite his anger, Bing does not hesitate in paying Ba's debt (118-9).
- Bing saves Ba by stealing the lost skull. He faces his fear of ghosts to protect Ba (134-155).
- Ba: "I've lost everything." Bing: "No. . . . You have a son to help you" (138).
- Without hesitation, Bing is ready to shoulder the responsibility of his Mother and Grandmother. He thinks: "If Ba dies, it's up to me to take care of Mother and Grandmother" (139).
- Bing takes Ba to the hospital and takes care of Ba (149-152).
- Bing volunteers to dig in the graveyard so Ba can rest (159).
- Even when Ba recovers, Bing feels responsible for clearing his father's debts (162).

Opposing Examples

- Bing takes the job as a houseboy instead of helping his father at the graveyard. "He had no desire to dig up graves or to work beside his father" (38).
- Ba is irritated when Bing tries to help. "Fah, don't mind me! I can take care of myself" (58).
- Overwhelmed by fear, Bing rushes away despite Ba's order (92).
- Ba feels uncomfortable receiving help from Bing. "I don't need your money, I can take care of myself. . . . Stay out of my affairs!" (119).

Filial Value: Self-Cultivation**Supporting Examples**

- no supporting examples

Opposing Examples

- Bing returns to the haunted house, disregarding his own safety (122).
- Bing steals the missing skull from the hospital (154-6).

Table 2: Filial Piety Excerpts from *The Star Fisher*

Filial Value: Utmost Respect for Parents
Supporting Examples <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mama: “At home, a girl does what she's told. . . . Don't you talk back to me” (48).• Mama argues with Miss Lucy via Joan. When Joan protests, Ma says, “Don't talk back to your mother” and slaps her (81-2).• Mama says that Grandma used to rebuke her without explaining her actions (98).
Opposing Examples <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Joan sees mother for the first time, not as the all-powerful woman, but as a human being who is frightened and vulnerable. It makes Joan feel grown-up, sad, and angry at the same time. She blurts out, “We're in America. . . . Not fair. More chores” and slams the door in Mama's face (48).• Joan is tired of reading Mama's mind and playing the role of an adult when it comes to dealing with Americans. “I'm not a dog. You treat me like. . . . your shadow. . . . you'd rather humiliate me than you. . . . I try and I try, but you never notice. It's only when I don't do what you want. And then I'm stupid and lazy. Mama, the umbilical cord got cut years ago.” After Mama slaps her, Joan says: “What are you going to do when slapping me doesn't work? Will you try a stick? And if that doesn't work, will you use a shovel?” (81-2).• Joan lies about Bernice's background to Mama (97).• When translating for Mama, Joan omits certain details because she is afraid to be the laughing stock of the town (110).
Filial Value: Glory to Family
Supporting Examples <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mama asks the children to eat lunch alone so no one sees the lettuce sandwich (52).• Joan eats alone at lunch to hide the fact that Papa is unemployed and poor (60).• Joan eats lunch alone again (114).
Opposing Examples <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mama is determined to bring a pie to the pie social so she won't shame her children anymore (109).• Joan is ashamed of Mama's pie. She is frightened that the failures will make the family seem “too foreign” (116-123).
Filial Value: Serve and Provide for Parents
Supporting Examples <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Joan feels responsible for translating for her parents (4).• Joan automatically gets up to help Papa both with the luggage and with the awkward situation (6).• Joan protects her sister Emily as her parents don't speak English (8).• Joan takes on the role of mother for her sister Emily (reads to her, keeps an eye on her, and asks her to wipe her feet on the mat) (11-15).• Joan runs into the smoke to find Papa (25).

Filial Value: Serve and Provide for Parents

- Mama nudges Joan in the ribs and expects her daughter to read her mind (28).
- Joan defends Mama when Emily accused her of fibbing (38).

Opposing Examples

- Joan doesn't return Mama's hug because she hasn't forgiven Mama for making her do "all the dirty work" (52).
- Joan feels happy to be praised and acknowledged at school. At home, "we could work all day, do everything we were supposed to do, and not get one word of praise. We never heard what we did right, only what we did wrong" (58).
- Ma admits to Joan: "I took you for granted" (99).
- Mama tries to speak English so that Joan can lead her own life (107-9).

Filial Value: Self-Cultivation**Supporting Examples**

- Joan conceals her troubles at school from Mama to save her from worrying.

Opposing Examples

- Joan enters a dangerous area in town against the others' warning (85-6).

Table 3: Filial Piety Excerpts from *Donald Duk*

Filial Value: Utmost Respect for Parents
<p>Supporting Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donald takes Dad’s advice to joke about his name and adopt a “Don’t mess with me” attitude in dealing with bullies (4-7). • Donald participates in the dragon dance following his parents’ order (12) • Donald obeys his Mom and confesses to Dad about stealing his P-26A Peashooter model (66). • Donald follows Dad’s advice regarding his friendship with Arnold (157). <p>Opposing Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donald tries to have as little to do with family as possible (12). • Donald steals Dad’s P-26A airplane and hides the fact that he has burned it (21). • Donald does not understand why Dad likes being a Chinese: “Doesn’t he know everybody talks about him funny?” (46-7). • Donald wants to puke whenever Arnold speaks nicely to Donald’s parents. “Why is Dad kissing up to Arnold’s parents? Because they’re white and rich?” (49-50). • Donald complains to Fred about Dad. “I ask him a question and I get double talk. He treats Arnold Azalea better than me. I don’t think he’s setting me a good example at all” (125).
Filial Value: Glory to Family
<p>Supporting Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no evidence <p>Opposing Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donald is embarrassed by Mom, who cannot understand Mrs. Azalea’s joke (86). • Donald apologizes for Dad’s behaviour to Arnold. “I’m sorry my father’s such a pain,” he says. “He seems to be a pretty good actor to me” (100).
Filial Value: Serve and Provide for Parents
<p>Supporting Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no evidence <p>Opposing Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no evidence
Filial Value: Self-Cultivation
<p>Supporting Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no evidence <p>Opposing Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no evidence

Table 4: Filial Piety Excerpts from *Yang the Third and Her Impossible Family*

Filial Value: Utmost Respect for Parents
<p>Supporting Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mary recognizes she is unfair for blaming her family. She realizes that she still make mistakes despite her efforts. Also, her mother has spent most of her time caring for the family and didn't have time to learn American customs. "I had been ashamed of Mother. Now I was more ashamed of myself" (125). <p>Opposing Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mary hides the kitten at home against parents' wishes (36). • Mary lies to Mother about the kitten (50).
Filial Value: Glory to Family
<p>Supporting Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no evidence <p>Opposing Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mary is anxious for her family to make a good impression on Holly (5). • Mother embarrasses Mary with a culturally inappropriate comment on age (9-10). • Mother embarrasses Mary with a culturally inappropriate comment on weight (18). • Mary feels proud of Mother's fried wontons and thinks Mother has lived up to her standards (72). • Mary is frustrated by her father's mistakes with English consonants. "Now the entire Yang family had managed to embarrass me in public" (75-6). • Mother apologizes for offending Mrs. Hanson. Mary lies, "It's not your fault, Mother" even though she is frustrated that Mother doesn't try harder to learn American customs (81).
Filial Value: Serve and Provide for Parents
<p>Supporting Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mary recommends Mother as an accompanist for Holly so that Mother's musical ability will be recognized by others (110-1). • Mary chooses to honour Mother over pleasing Holly. She offers Mother as an accompanist so that Mother will be respected (113-6). • Mary defends her family who constantly makes cultural mistakes (124-5). <p>Opposing Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even though money is tight for the family, Mary secretly buys cat food for the kitten (44).
Filial Value: Self-Cultivation
<p>Supporting Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no evidence <p>Opposing Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no evidence

Appendix C Acculturation Strategy Excerpts from the Primary Texts
Table 1: Acculturation Strategy Excerpts from *The Bone Collector's Son*

Assimilation
<p>Child Protagonist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bing prays to Jesus and recites Psalm 23 at the cemetery (1-2). • Bing speaks loudly in English to show everyone that he doesn't need translation (18). • Bing is disappointed at Chinese passivity: “He’d heard their bold words and brave talk on other occasions but had never seen them take any action.” (57). <p>Parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no evidence
Separation
<p>Child Protagonist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bing recalls China in fine detail; he wishes Mother and Grandmother were with him (7-8). • Bing believes in the fortune teller’s protective charm - ancient superstitions that “may have magic” (46-53). • Bing wishes that he were back in China. If so, ancient gods and spirits in the temple would protect him. He doesn't know what works and what doesn’t in Canada and there is no one to rely on (53). • Bing misses his life in China (55). • Strong division between Chinese and the Caucasians. Hopes the patrol can protect him outside of Chinatown (95). • Bing desperately wants to go back to China, “where I belong.” He would find a way back to his village and Grandmother would welcome him (115). • Bing follows Chinese rituals to pacify Mr. Bentley Sr.’s ghost. He burns a blue paper model of the house to send it to the spirit world (147-163). • When Bing is ignored in the hospital, he assumes it is because he is Chinese (152). <p>Parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ba sneers at Bing’s prayer (2). • Ba dismisses a Moustache-man for not being able to “read” Chinese characters (7). • Ba is a bone collector who sends dead bodies of Chinese back to China as their final resting-place (7). • Ba thinks that the street car driver intentionally kicks Chinese off his car jumping to the conclusion of racial discrimination (18-21). • Ba: “You’ll have plenty of your own problems working for white people” (59).
Integration
<p>Child Protagonist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After Red Checks’ attack, Bing wishes he is back in China where he feels protected by the landscape itself. He also realizes, however, that someone (Mrs. Bentley) protects him in Vancouver (142). <p>Parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no evidence

Marginalization

Child Protagonist

- Bing takes a different road, where no Chinese will be around to help him if trouble arises. People will say that “children who grow up in Canada don’t listen to the wisdom of their elders; that Chinese-Canadian children can’t even read or write Chinese, and that they’re like empty salmon cans—shiny on the outside, but nothing inside!” (131).

Parents

- no evidence

Table 2: Acculturation Strategy Excerpts from *The Star Fisher*

Assimilation
<p>Child Protagonist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Joan is fascinated by American tea parties (14).• When Mama mentions Chinese tradition, Joan blurts out: “We’re in America” (48).• Joan sees her mother through American eyes—a little woman with the funny skin and the odd eyes (72). <p>Parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• no evidence
Separation
<p>Child Protagonist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Joan is annoyed when Miss Blake treats her parents as fresh-off-boat (56).• Joan embraces Chinese wisdom: “The nail that sticks out gets hammered” (58).• Joan: “We may talk and dress and act like Americans, but in our hearts we’ll always be Chinese” (146). <p>Parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parents cannot speak English. As described by Joan: “Though both Mama and Papa wore American clothes, that was about the only thing American about them, since they spoke little English” (4).• Papa is eager to read Chinese newspapers, even ones that are slightly out of date (4).• Mama always demands that her children speak Chinese: “Speak Chinese. I don’t want you to forget your Chinese” (4).• Mama insists that Joan is sixteen, not fifteen: “Americans don’t know how to count years, they should count the year in the womb just like the Chinese” (4-5).• Parents are suspicious of Miss Lucy because they are unused to receiving help from strangers (27).• Papa is angry at Miss Lucy: “What does she know? How can you write great poetry, great novels, great thoughts in that gobble-gobble talk of the Americans?” (30).• Papa says to Mama: “You’re just as bad as the rest of them. You’d turn your back on four thousand years of [Chinese] tradition and learning” (30).• Mama: “At home, a girl does what she’s told. . . You’re getting just as spoiled and just as lazy as an American brat” (48).• Parents are uncomfortable receiving help and refuse Miss Lucy’s leftovers (80).• Papa stares when his American-born children do something strange (96).• Mama is frightened to see her daughter growing up in an American way (97).• Mama insists that they will go back to China (100).• Mama lacks English proficiency and knowledge of host customs (conversation with Reverend Bobson)• Mama: “You’re a Lee. You’re never going to be like the others. You can’t let their laughter rule your life” (124).• Mama dreams of returning home (146).• Mama: “You should start the Chinese lessons again. I don’t want them [the children] to forget who they are” (146).

Integration

Child Protagonist

- Joan: “If I had learned one thing from my visit to Bernice, it was not to let a lot of silly prejudices blindfold you. It was important to meet with the person and not the notion” (101).
- Joan views her bi-cultural identity in a positive light and imagines how the star fishers “glide back and forth in the sky, shining like a comet” (147). The town becomes a sea for her to explore and in which she may “fish for a few stars” (147).

Parents

- Mama understands the need to learn western ideas. “The empire is gone. It’s a new age” (30).
- Mama: “But I’ll try to be more American” (100).
- Mama extends the concept of family clan to neighbours (102-7) and takes cooking and English lessons from Miss Lucy (107).
- Mama tries to bake an American apple pie to fit in (109-110).
- Mama tries to communicate with Reverend Bobson in English (126).

Marginalization

Child Protagonist

- Joan: “Even though we had been born here and could name all the presidents and the capitals of the states, there were so many little things that we didn’t know—like place settings. In some ways, we were often like actors who were thrust on stage without a script, so that we had to improvise. And too often, up in Ohio, our ignorance had gotten us laughed at; and no one likes to feel like a fool” (19).
- Joan is unfamiliar with American culture and adds six teaspoons of sugar to her tea (21).
- Joan feels almost apologetic and disappointing to others by saying that she is not born in China, but in Ohio (55).
- Bernice is also disappointed to hear that Joan comes from an ordinary place like Ohio and not China. “Whenever it happened, I felt like the star fisher’s daughter, on the one hand belonging to an ordinary world, and belonging to a strange, exotic world, too—and one that I knew nothing about” (64).
- Joan compares herself to the star fisher’s daughter, who belongs to both the earth and the sky and sees everything through a double set of eyes. Joan feels angry and mixed-up—angry at herself and at Mama (72).
- Joan compares herself to the star fisher’s daughter, thinking that China is a strange world that is her birthright and yet mysterious and frightening (100).

Parents

- no evidence

Table 3: Acculturation Strategy Excerpts from *Donald Duk*

Assimilation
<p>Child Protagonist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donald and the other Chinese avoid each other. “He doesn’t like the gang kids. He doesn’t like speaking their Chinese. He doesn’t have to—this is America. He doesn’t like Chinatown. But he lives here” (2-3). • “His own name is driving him crazy! Looking Chinese is driving him crazy!” (2). • “[Chinese New Year] is Donald Duk’s worst time of year. Here come the stupid questions about the funny things Chinese believe in . . .” (3). • Donald: “Everything Chinese in his life seems to be awful. His father is awful” (8). • Donald says to the American Cong, “I’m an American” (20). • Donald has no knowledge of the 108 heroes of The Water Margin, well-known Chinese mythic characters (21). • Donald is embarrassed by Chinese red pockets (33). • Donald doesn’t care if the History teacher knows more than he does about Chinese culture (34). • Donald: “Hey, everybody’s gotta give up the old and become American. If all these Chinese were more American, I wouldn’t have all my problems” (42). • Donald: “Why does Dad like being Chinese? Doesn’t he know everybody talks about him funny?” (47). • Donald aspires to be Fred Astaire (52). • Donald thinks Larry Louie isn’t the Chinese Fred Astaire because unlike Fred, Larry enjoys flamenco. This shows that Donald believes in order to become another person, one has to be entirely the same as that individual (51-54). • Donald hates the Chinese New Year decorations at school: “slathered in red and gold, gaudy, crude and obnoxious. . . . Why can’t the Chinese leave Donald Duk alone here at school, Donald Duk wants to know” (80). • In his dream, Donald talks to Fred. “You know why after all the years they’ve [the Chinese] been here, they’re not more American? . . . Passivity. . . . not competitive. Can’t stand the pressure. . . . I’m like you [Fred]. You know what I’m talking about. We speak the same language. We talk the same lingo. We dig the same jive” (92). <p>Parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no evidence
Separation
<p>Child Protagonist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donald dreams of being one of the 400 Chinese railroad workers at the Central Pacific Railroad and sides with the Chinese (73-79). • Donald: “We built them [the railroad]. So we might as well read about them” (103). • Donald is very interested in books on the construction of the railroad (122). • Another railroad dream (lion dance) (93-99). • Another railroad dream (Soong Gong and the last cross tie) (105-17). • Donald looks for historical records of the Railroad and says “It’s not fair” when no Chinese names are mentioned (122-23).

Separation

- Another railroad dream (Mr. Crocker tries to tear out the tie so Donald runs to tell the Chinese) (125-31).
- Donald is furious at the whites. He says to Arnold: “Don’t you think we belong in this picture [Promontory on 1869] more than any of these white men? . . . You’re white, but you’re not white like these guys. I like you. I don’t care what you are” (133).
- Donald: “We laid the last crosstie . . .” Dad: “We?” Donald: “The Chinese . . . and nobody knows what we did. Nobody, just me. And I don’t want to be the only one who knows, and it makes me mad to be the only one who knows, and everything I dream makes me mad at white people and hate them. They lie about us all the time” (138).
- Another railroad dream (145).
- Donald refuses to go to school and accuses his classmates of being “stupid racists” (149).
- Donald rebukes his history teacher’s claim that Chinese are passive and non-competitive. He points out that the Chinese built the last crosstie at Promontory, setting the world’s record for miles of track laid in one day (151).

Parents

- Dad: “Fair? What’s fair? History is war, not sport! You think if you are a real good boy for them, do what they do, like what they like, get good grades in their schools, they will take care of you forever? . . . You’re dreaming, boy. . . So, don’t expect me to get mad or be surprised the bokgwai never told our history in any of their books you happen to read in the library, looking for yourself. You gotta keep the history yourself or lose it forever, boy. That’s the mandate of heaven” (123).

Integration

Child Protagonist

- In Donald's dream, he is praised as “a most remarkable example of the breed. He speaks English like a white man” (129). This reflects Donald’s subconscious aspirations.
- Donald reconciles with his white friend Arnold (157-78).

Parents

- Dad: “I think Donald Duk may be the very last American-born Chinese-American boy to believe you have to give up being Chinese to be an American. . . Instead of giving up, they [the new immigrants] add on. They’re including America in everything else they know. And that makes them stronger than any of the American-born, like me, who had folks who worked hard to know absolutely nothing about China, who believed that if all they know was 100 percent American-made in the USA Yankee know howdy doodle dandy, people would not mistake them for Chinese” (42).
- Dad: “No, don’t hate all the white people. Just the liars” (138).
- Mom: “What’s wrong with racists, anyway? . . . We have been living with them for over a hundred years now, and we get along with them fine” (150).

Integration

- Dad clearly distinguishes race and enemies and tells Donald that Arnold is his friend: “He is your friend. All he knows about Chinese, as far as you know, is you. You say he wants to know the truth . . . in this war he is your ally. . . If you want to be stupid and call him a white racist and that kind of stuff, that's your business” (157).

Marginalization**Child Protagonist**

- Donald: “Arnold can play Chinese, he can eat Chinese and go gah-gah over Chinese, but no matter what, he is white. He can leave Chinatown . . . All he has to do is cross the street . . . Donald Duk doesn't want to be Chinese” (47).

Parents

- no evidence

Table 4: Acculturation Strategy Excerpts from *Yang the Third and Her Impossible Family*

Assimilation
<p>Child Protagonist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mary wishes to have an authentic, “proper” Thanksgiving dinner as featured in magazines (4). • Mary is eager to befriend Holly, who she believes looks like a princess with curly blond hair (4). • Mary uses an etiquette book and carefully observes Western dining manners (6). • Mary is ashamed of her mother’s Chinese ways (10). • Mary is glad that she earns money baby-sitting, something that girls don’t do in China (14). • Unlike her siblings, Mary selects an English name for herself (16). • Mary keeps a list of new English words and phrases (16). • Mary is constantly embarrassed by her family members, such as Fourth Brother, who eats sprout sandwiches every day (20). • Mary observes her classmates to adopt the norm of peanut butter and grape jelly sandwiches (20). • Mary agrees to adopt a kitten in order to please her American classmate Holly (27). • Mary is too embarrassed to admit that she doesn’t know an English word (30). • Mary is embarrassed by Second Sister and her “I’m Chinese and I don’t care who knows it” attitude (39). • Mary wishes Eldest Brother could try sports to gain others’ respect because in the United States, playing sports makes you popular. • Mary: “I wanted to do everything right - everything that Americans did” (64). • Father embarrasses Mary at the PTA bake sale with his odd English consonants (70). • Although Mary prefers fried wonton to cookies, she wants Mother to bake normal, American food (71). • Maybe the rest of the Yangs don’t care what people think about them, but Mary does (108). <p>Parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no evidence
Separation
<p>Child Protagonist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no evidence <p>Parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mother is terrified to roast a turkey because the family doesn’t have an oven in China (4). • Mother interacts according to Chinese customs and commits social gaffes such as commenting on age and weight (9-10). • Mother insists in making Chinese wontons instead of the chocolate chip cookies that Mary asks for (71).

Integration

Child Protagonist

- At the bake sale, Mary found that Chinese wontons can be popular in America (72).
- Mary realizes that despite all her effort, she still makes mistakes. She cannot deny the Chinese part of herself (125).
- Mary thinks: “It is possible to be different and still get respect from people. . . . If Kim respected them in spite of their differences, I should respect them, too. Most of all, I should respect myself” (138).
- Like Rita, who settles in a new home, Mary left China to live in America. “I’m happy in America now and feel I belong here. But a part of me will always remember China . . . We shouldn’t forget the music of our home” (143).

Parents

- no evidence

Marginalization

Child Protagonist

- Mary feels wistful to see how Fourth Brother gets along with other classmates. She finds it hard to get close to her classmate. No one appreciates her Chinese game (22-23).
- Mary mixes up English words: “In spite of all my hard work in writing down new English expressions, there were still some that tripped me up!” (78).
- Mary reflects “I had thought that learning English was just a matter of memorizing a lot of new words and phrases. It is much more complicated than that. Even knowing when to say yes or no is tricky!” (124).

Parents

- no evidence