A SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE REGIONAL NOVELS

WRITTEN BY LOIS LENSKI

A Thesis

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By

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CHAPTER I
THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Throughout history there has been an array of social functions which men have always carried on together. These functions include the beliefs and practices that are called traits, folkways, mores, and institutions which are observed in a given society. The application of them tends to develop a culture along distinctive lines and adjusts it uniquely and appropriately to the major physical, economic, political, and historical backgrounds of a geographic-economic region.

Joyce O. Hertzler tells us that:

Natural factors, such as topography, climate, soil, mineral and biological resources, first shape a region. But as men work and live in such a distinctive geographic-economic area, they unconsciously and consciously invent, discover, select, and shape culture traits and complexes that are well adjusted to the geographic-economic arena and enable them to survive and even to flourish. In brief, they unavoidably build a distinctive culture system—one that is more or less stable equilibrium with the physical features of the area—upon a distinctive physical environment. Thus, every region has typical activities, peculiar types of industry, special political attitudes and activities, typical folkways, and other expressional products. These combined natural factors and the adjusting cultural processes produce variations, concentrations, and coherences of culture materials and give us a distinctive and identifying combination of traits, complexes and patterns for each region.¹

Children are born customarily into one of these diverse systems of culture patterns, usually national in scope and of a definite historical epoch. The pattern into which a child is born is too large to be transmitted either by the family or by any of the other existing

¹ Joyce O. Hertzler, Society in Action, p. 93.
institutions with which the child comes in contact. However, since the family is the first institution into which the child is inducted, and in which he spends almost entirely the first few years of his life, it may be said that:

The family performs three additional or supplementary functions:
1. It selects from the existing surroundings what is transmitted.
2. It interprets to the child what is transmitted.
3. It evaluates what it transmits.
In other words the child sees the cultural heritage through the eyes of the family; he learns of it through the symbols which the family uses; and he shares the family's feeling toward it.

Teachers in our schools should be aware that the outstanding fact in the American heritage is that our land has been built by people from many religions, races, and cultures which has resulted in cultural differences.

The teacher should also be aware that no child is born with any ideas concerning his or any other culture, but he reacts early to the social attitudes experienced in the home, and that he may have definite ideas concerning other cultures by the time he comes to school. If his attitudes are negative ones, his education in human relations should begin at once.

Bossard has emphasized this point by writing:

The child is the carrier and connecting link of this recurring relationship between the culture of successive generations...This is a fact of great importance; for, in terms of social process, it makes the relation of adult to child as important, if not more so than, that of adult to adult.2


Ibid., p. 6.
On the basis of the foregoing it has seemed logical to assume that the school curriculum should have a substantial part to play in preparing young people for living in this ever-changing society. The schools of America are dedicated to the preservation and extension of democratic ideals for all people. Therefore, one of the school's major objectives should be to develop the understandings, attitudes, and behaviors needed for effective participation in the various communities of men. With the recognition of diverse cultures within our own country, patterns of curriculum organization may vary from school system to school system; however, research studies have shown us that despite cultural differences produced by natural factors and adjustable social functions, the fundamental needs, motives, and satisfactions of men remain the same everywhere, and at all times. In fact, these factors have remained so stable throughout history that a list has been developed of nine, basic, human social functions. These functions are found to be ever-present in the cultural system of any society:

1. Protecting and conserving life, health, resources and property.
2. Producing, distributing, and consuming food, clothing and shelter.
3. Creating and producing tools and technics.
4. Transporting people and goods.
5. Communicating ideas and feelings.
6. Providing education.
7. Providing recreation.
8. Organizing and governing.
9. Expressing esthetic and spiritual impulses.

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These functions have been used as a basis for the social studies program in many school systems in the United States. As children study these activities in relation to cultures other than their own, as they strive to attain their basic needs, they begin to appreciate the problems faced by other people. They begin to understand that the actions of other people which seem strange or unusual to them are a necessary part of the culture of the people using them.

In view of these understandings, the nine, basic, human social functions which have been mentioned form the basis for this study, since they are of concern to all people at all times.

I. THE PROBLEM

Variant cultural conditions existed in this country long before writers of children's literature or educators thought of them as implements for teaching children to understand the similarities and differences of people of cultures other than their own. However, the critical depression years called attention to the different regions of the United States. The great shifting of population brought about by economic disasters brought added awareness. It was during these years that great interest began to be displayed in "regional stories." It was also during these years that Lois Lenski began her series of novels for children which she called the "Roundabout America Series." These stories gave children a picture of social and economic conditions of different regions and ways of life in America. Miss Lenski's intense interest in people, especially children, prompted the writing of these
stories which have the avowed purpose of helping children "see beyond the rim of their own world."

**Statement of the problem.** The purpose of this study is to make a critical, sociological, analysis of the regional novels written by Lois Lenski to determine how American cultural conditions and/or differences coupled with our understanding of them can be portrayed to children.

Children's ideas can be influenced at almost any age. For this reason, it was thought that, the novels used in the study could provide illustrations and atmosphere which would be most beneficial to the children reading them because of the high morals of the characters involved.

Josette Frank said

*If we cannot make sure of giving our children good examples, can we not at least guard against bad ones? We question whether a child can be steered to a life of crime by reading a crime story, but we do not question whether young minds can be impressed through their reading with opinions and attitudes which may color their future thinking for better or worse. An individual's course through life is not determined by one force but is the product of many. His choices of action, his response to situations, grow out of what he was born with plus the many influences which play on him through his environment—and reading is one of those influences.*

We cannot hope to change a child's attitudes or to build outstanding character by putting the proper book in his hands. We can, however, introduce him to beauty and truth as we see it by providing books which offer him understanding of the ideals which we hold.

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The seventeen novels used in this study are planned to satisfy the curiosity of the nine-to-twelve year old about those aspects of other cultures which interest or challenge him. Their purpose is to show what people in other cultures are like, how they live, and, to some extent, how they came to be as they are. In the intermediate grades the beginnings are laid for many understandings which will be more completely developed in later periods of child growth and study.

**Delimitation of the study.** In order to work with the above problem the following questions seemed to warrant consideration.

1. What American cultural conditions and/or differences, in the terms of social functions, does Lois Lenski portray in her seventeen regional novels?

2. How does the author treat some of the particular cultural conditions portrayed to enable children of different environmental backgrounds to experience empathy and understanding of children in other cultures?

3. On the basis of the above analyses, what uses of the Lenski regional novels appear feasible in intermediate grades curriculum of the elementary school?

**Importance of the study.** Democracy is a way of life that has grown from beginnings in Ancient Athens to its present form in the United States.

Characteristics of the American way of life are regard for the welfare of the individual and of minority as well as majority groups,
recognition of individual differences, maintenance of civil liberties, and intelligent participation in the duties and responsibilities of citizenship.

Democracy operates, in varying degrees, in all of the institutions of our country today, but to maintain and respect the right of people to be different and at the same time to build unity and loyalty to common purposes and ideals is one of the problems which we face.

Few people meet face to face the people who produce the goods they use. Consequently they tend to know only people who are much like themselves. Since a person's personal experience is segmented in that it does not encompass the experiences of all the subgroups in American culture, the individual faces the problem of understanding Americans who differ from him. One does not have to adopt the customs and beliefs of others in order to understand them. He does need to guard against using stereotypes or generalizing about individuals and groups because he knows one or even several who behave in a certain way. Getting along with people who differ is a matter of understanding. It is a complicated process—one which requires much judgment and much thought on the part of everyone concerned.

This study may be helpful to teachers, because it deals with all types and groups of people and their problems within our country. The schools offer our young generations many opportunities to begin the study and evaluation of American culture. In order to become competent citizens, our children must begin early to be familiar with and sensitive to the cultural problems which exist in the American way of life.
II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Regional. One method usually employed in studying any large area is to divide it into regions according to the purpose of the study. Bossard defines a region as, "A unit part of the larger society, identified first in geographical terms, subsequently on the basis of trade and other economic considerations...It is now being used by social scientist on cultural bases." This, however, is a very broad definition, since it has been estimated that more than one hundred and thirty separate regional divisions have been used by the United States Government for various purposes.

After considerable deliberation of this problem, the six major regions of the United States as suggested by Howard Odum were selected for use in this study because they divide the nation into groups on the basis of outstanding similarities of culture. Mr. Odum characterized his divisions as the Northeast, the Southeast, the Northwest, the Southwest, the Middle States, and the Far West.


The Southeastern Region includes eleven states; Virginia, North

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6 Bossard, op. cit., p. 129.
7 Howard W. Odum and Harry Estill Moors, American Regionalism, pp. 435-436.
Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, Tennessee, and Kentucky.

The Southwestern Region includes the four states of Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Arizona.

The Middle States which we know as the Middle West, include eight states; Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, and Missouri.

The Northwest includes nine states; North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, and Utah.

Finally the Far West includes the four states of Washington, Oregon, California, and Nevada.

Mr. Odum has written that these six divisions have been made as such, because they "approximate the largest degree of homogeneity measured by the largest number of criteria for the largest number of purposes."

Although Miss Lenski does not include each of the states in her seventeen novels, all the above regions are very well represented.

Cultural Conditions. In ordinary and literary usage the word "culture" has been employed to designate only those particular traits and behavior systems that are regarded as refinements, such as art galleries, Shakespearian plays, and symphony orchestras. Since this meaning of the work differs greatly from that used within this study, it seemed advisable to clarify the term.

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\[ \text{Ibid., p. 436.} \]
In the above instance mentioned, the traits and behavior systems characterize the "upper" social classes. This study, however, has been concerned with all people; therefore, the terms culture or cultural conditions have been used to include all activities that are characteristic of a given society. These activities include the beliefs, practices and traits that have an important influence upon human behavior.
CHAPTER II

THE AUTHOR

I. HER LIFE, PURPOSES, AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Lois Lenski, the daughter of a Lutheran minister, was born in Springfield, Ohio, October 14, 1893. When she was six years of age her parents moved, with their five children, to a small village called Anna. This is where Miss Lenski spent her childhood.

She relates that she is certain that the family's arrival in this small village must have caused a great sensation among the people, because one of their wagons which was hauled down the main street was topped by a large wire bird cage with a tin, toy dog standing upright inside. One of the family's jokes was that they had increased the population of the town from 200 to 207. These two illustrations suggest the genuine, "old-fashioned" family spirit which was an important part of Miss Lenski's early years, and which apparently had an influence upon her later writings.

It was in the town of Anna that Miss Lenski lived until she finished high school, and it was here, she later stated, "I learned to know and love small town and country life."

In 1911 the family moved to Columbus, Ohio, where her father became a professor at Capital University and later Dean of the Theological Seminary. She graduated from The Ohio State University, College of Education in 1915, expecting to teach. However, one of her teachers in
the art department suggested that she should go to New York to study art for a year. After the first year she felt that she should have further study. For four years she worked at the Art Students' League for half a day and did odd jobs for the other half to pay her expenses. At the end of the four years she went to London where she studied with Walter Bayes at the Westminster School. It was here that she did her first illustrating—three books. With this experience behind her, and with the improvement of publishing conditions after World War I, she soon found openings with American publishers. In 1927 she had her first individual exhibition of oils and water colors in New York. Her second exhibition of water colors was held in 1932.

In 1921 she married Arthur Covey, a well-known mural painter. They are at the present living in an old colonial farmhouse in Harwinton, Connecticut.

For several years Miss Lenski illustrated books which had been written by other authors. She always tried to adhere strictly to the period, mood, and atmosphere of each book, and to give it an original character of its own. This procedure has been followed faithfully by Miss Lenski in the books she has written. Reviewers of her books suggested that her sketches play an extremely important role in developing her stories for young readers.

The writing of her own books was a gradual development. It began with two stories of her own Ohio childhood, *Skipping Village* which was written in 1923 and *A Little Girl of 1900*, written in 1927. In the opinion of the writer, it was in these novels that her interest in
people and their differences became apparent. Her writings then pro-
gressed through a group of simple "nonsense" books. Her picture books
were inspired by the interests and needs of her son, Stephen, when he
was at the picture-book age. This was the beginning of the ever-
increasingly popular "Mr. Small" series. Miss Lenski writes that, "all
of my picture books are tried out on various groups of children, before
publication, to get their reactions, both critical and appreciative."

Her books for older boys and girls followed the picture-book
stage. These books were classified, by Miss Lenski, as "Interpretation
of the American scene, which is the focus of my fundamental interest."
Her two Ohio books, *Skipping Village* and *A Little Girl of Nineteen
Hundred*, were followed by seven historical books based on careful
research and were "an attempt to interpret American child life of the
past, and bring to life for modern child readers various early periods
in our country's history."

In 1943 she began her current series of regional American books
for children in the intermediate grades in school. This would include
children in grades four through seven, or, as Miss Lenski prefers to
call them, "Middle age," children. The first of this series was,
*Bayou Suzette*, a story of French-speaking bayou people of Louisiana.
In 1944 this novel won the Chioana Medal which is awarded, each year,
to an Ohio person for outstanding contribution to literature. The
second, *Strawberry Girl*, a story of a Florida Cracker family won the
Newberry Medal in 1946. The third was *Blue Ridge Billy*, a story of
mountain people of North Carolina. The fourth, *Judy's Journey*, about
sharecroppers, won the 1947 award of the Children's Book Committee of the Child Study Association, as a book for young people "which faces with honesty and courage real problems in today's world." These novels were followed in order, by *Boom Town Boy*, a story of a family in the Oklahoma oil fields, written in 1948; *Cotton in my Sack*, life in the Arkansas cotton fields, written in 1949; *Texas Tomboy*, the story of cattle ranching in western Texas, written in 1950; *Prairie School*, a story of life in South Dakota, written in 1951; *Peanuts for Billy Ben*, about people who raise peanuts in Virginia, written in 1952; *We Live in the South*, four short stories about children who live in Southeastern United States, written in 1952; *Mama Hattie's Girl*, a large regional story, written in 1953; *Corn Farm Boy*, life on an Iowa farm, written in 1954; *Project Boy*, tells of the lives of children in an emergency housing project in New York State, written in 1954; *We Live in the City*, three stories about three different children who live in a large city, written in 1954; *San Francisco Boy*, the story of a Chinese boy and girl, and their adjustment to life in a new country, written in 1955; *We Live by the River*, three stories of the lives of people who live along the banks of three different rivers, written in 1956; *Berries in the Scop*, the story of people who earn their living picking cranberries in the bogs of Cape Cod, also written in 1956.

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The majority of material used in this biography was taken from *The Junior Book of Authors*, by Stanley J. Kunitz and Howard Haycraft. Published by the H. W. Wilson Company, New York, 1951, pp. 193-194.
Material for these regional novels was gathered by Miss Lenski in the localities described. She went to stay in the region, listened to the stories of the people living there, and made numerous sketches of them, their houses, and details of their surroundings, which she later incorporated in her illustrations. She hopes to introduce in this series "other fascinating and little known regions of our country to American child readers." She has a further desire to show "through an artist's interpretation, a deeper meaning in the commonplace, and to make us see others as ourselves."

II. HER PURPOSES AS REVEALED IN THE NOVELS

As was stated earlier in this study Miss Lenski's avowed purpose in writing these regional novels was to help children "see beyond the rim of their own world," and to make us "see others as ourselves." Using these words from the author, this writer assumed that one of Miss Lenski's purposes is to create a better understanding and more friendliness among the people of the different cultures which exist within our own country.

With this assumption in mind, the novels have been placed in their proper regional division of the United States as suggested by Howard Odum. It was felt that by placing the novels in this order that Miss Lenski's purposes could be more clearly and specifically stated.

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since there is some relationship within the cultures of each regional division.

The Northeast

Although [Mama Hattie's Girl] cannot be placed, altogether, in the Northeastern regional division of the United States, it was in this region in which the purposes as set forth by Miss Lenski were established. To clarify this situation it may be said that the setting of the novel begins in the South, moves to the Northeast, and finally goes back to the South. The novel has been spoken of as a large regional picture with the more important processes taking place in the North. The plot concerns a little Negro girl who has always lived with her grandmother in the South, and the adjustments she must make when she is suddenly moved to a large northern city to live with her father and mother.

To create a mood for the reader and to achieve her purposes for writing the novel, Miss Lenski has used the insecurity and loneliness felt by this Negro child. One scene from the book demonstrates her purposes very well:

"They put you out?" asked Aunty Ruth. "They sure did," said Imogene angrily. "The waiter said, 'I can't serve you. We don't serve Negroes in this restaurant. You'll have to go somewhere else...""

Lula Bell lay on the bed and listened. She could not help hearing what her mother said. She was surprised to learn that even up north there were places where Negroes were not wanted. She was used to it in the South and had never thought much about it.

"Down south you know just what you can do and you never try to different," Imogene went on. "Up here you're never sure. It's
not very nice to think you're welcome and then be thrown out."

People who are habituated by existing attitudes look for an explanation, if not a justification in the cultural background of different groups. It would seem that this is the position in which Miss Lenski has placed her composite characters in this novel in order to permit her reader to experience a feeling of sympathy and understanding for this little Negro girl.

Otto N. Larsen has explained this condition in relation to the Negro in the United States as follows:

At any given time the status system held in any culture is likely to be largely traditional and not the result of any logical conclusions held by the people who exhibit the attitudes. If so, however, we have to account for the existence of the tradition in question. In some parts of the United States we find that one class of people who possess the combination of physical characteristics called "Negroid" are treated as people of low status. In many parts of South America and Europe this same class of people is treated without status distinction. The reason for the difference in attitude must be found in some past or present experiences which have produced the attitude in question. In the case of the United States the prevalent attitude assigning low status to the Negro class is perhaps adequately explained by the historical fact that Negroes were for 100 years or more assigned to a slave status. The whites were able to impose this status upon the Negroes chiefly because of the industrial or technological superiority of their culture at that time. At present we merely point out that North American attitudes toward the Negro are based primarily on the function which the Negro class performed as slaves.

Berries in the Scoop is the story of people who earn their living by working in the cranberry bogs of Cape Cod.

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3 Lois Lenski, Mama Hattie's Girl, p. 103

4 George A. Lundberg, Clarence C. Schrag, Otto N. Larsen, Sociology, p. 278.
The Northeastern States, and especially the section around Cape Cod has come to be known as a favored vacationland for many people of the nation. Little is known, or has been written about the people who live and work in this region. Among these people are the Portuguese children. We see them working and playing, having picnics and harvest celebrations just as the children do in all other regions of the United States. The reader also learns how cranberries are grown and gathered, and finally shipped to all other regions of the country. The story illustrates the dependency of one region upon another in the production of a food which has become an institution in all regions at holiday times.

*We Live in the City* is a story of life in a great city as seen through the eyes of a resourceful, friendly boy. The reader learns how Mike and his friends worked hard to help their families, yet they found time to enjoy activities similar to those enjoyed by people living in different cultures.

In the foreword to this story Miss Lenski calls this "a world within a world. A world of a few streets between a park and a river in a great city. Here the streets are noisy with traffic; the subway rushes underground; the elevated shakes the houses and rattles the windows. Many homes are tucked away in tall apartment houses and three and four-story flats. Here many children live and work and play on the streets. They are very much at home there."

Miss Lenski has tried to develop an understanding for these people who live in a large city through experiences which can only be
enjoyed vicariously by persons not living in a metropolitan area.

_**Project Boy**_. The children in this story live in an Emergency Housing Project which has been built at the edge of a large city dump. The dump is the only place the children have to play. The crowded conditions cause the families to quarrel easily. When a tragedy occurs, however, the neighbors band together to help in true American fashion.

This story should help to broaden the understanding of young readers, or people in the United States who are living under conditions somewhat less than normal. Miss Lenski created the understanding by causing the reader to experience empathy for the people in the story.

The Southeast

_**Bayou Suzette**_. Suzette is the ten-year old in the large Durand family, living in the Bayou Country of Louisiana, the Jean Lafitte country. Vigorous little Suzette and her good-natured family live their quiet lives, hampered only by one mild feud. The problems of race and prejudice are involved in this novel. Miss Lenski portrayed this condition to the reader by having Suzette and her family help, and even adopt, Marteel, a little Indian girl.

Howard Odum says that:

Of all the states in the Southeast Region, only Louisiana contained an heterogeneous group which was not completely submerged by the Anglo-Saxons. For in Louisiana there was a large number of Creoles, in its broadest sense meaning all the Spanish or French descent as well as those of mixed blood. Holding on to their racial integrity, they today still remain as testimony of the French and Spanish regime in America and give folk character to that part of the region.5

5Howard W. Odum, American Regionalism, p. 535.
These are the people of the Bayou Country. They are proud as a result of their own heritage and intolerant of other races.

A speech by Suzette's father portrays the method used by Miss Lenski, throughout the novel, to create understanding and tolerance of people who are of a different culture than our own:

"The Indians, they here long before the white man," said Papa Jules. "Remember that, Susu. We thought the Durands owned that mound, we forget the Indians owned it first, built it themselves."

The Indian girl set down her candles and said an Indian prayer and chant for her great-great-grandparents who had once been chief and Queen of the People-of-the-Rising Sun, and for those unknown ancestors of hers who had built the great mound long before they ever saw a white man.  

_Peanuts for Billy Ben_ is a story of family life on a peanut farm in southern Virginia. The very existence of the family depended upon the peanut crop which they were able to produce. All members of the family were expected to help in some capacity, including six-year old Billy Ben.

Miss Lenski used several methods to achieve her purpose of creating better understanding among cultures in the various regions of the United States: First, the cultural condition "family life" was very vividly portrayed in the novel. Second, southern Virginia and northern North Carolina are the only communities in the United States where peanuts are produced commercially. This provides an illustration of one region's dependency upon another. Third, the social function "producing food" for other regions formed a framework for action in the novel.

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We Live in the South. This novel contains four short stories of the adventures of boys and girls who live in different sections of the South.

The background for the stories is the piney woods section which stretches from the Carolinas westward through Louisiana. To achieve her intended purposes, Miss Lenski first asked four questions: "How do people in the South make their living? What are the children like? What kind of houses do they live in? What games do the boys and girls play?"

The novel is used to answer these questions through the activities of the characters which Miss Lenski has created. Through the activities of these characters the reader may experience empathy for children of other cultures and, at the same time may be helped to realize that children of all cultures are basically alike.

Strawberry Girl is another typical family story. All members of the family are needed to help on the strawberry farm in the lake section of the state of Florida. It is a story full of enterprise and the excitement of real life in a remote section of America.

Miss Lenski's own words reveal her purposes in writing the novels, and the understanding she has gained:

The "Crackers" lived a primitive life, an endless battle went on—a conflict with nature, with wild life, and with their fellow men. Their life was replete with drama, and being people of character and dignity, they lived it, and still live it with vigor.

They have preserved a flavorful speech, rich with fine old English idiom—word, phrase and rhythm. Many old customs, folk songs and superstitions have been handed down along with Anglo-Saxon
purity of type, shown in their unusual beauty of physical feature, and along with their staunch integrity of character...

I am trying to present vivid sympathetic pictures of the real life of different kinds of Americans, against authentic backgrounds of diverse localities. We need to know our country better; to know and understand people different from ourselves; so that we can say: "This then is the way these people lived. Because I understand it, I admire and love them." Is this not a rich heritage for our American children?

Blue Ridge Billy is the story of family life on a farm in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina. It is the story of a ten-year-old mountain boy whose first love is music. His father is not convinced, at first, that music is much use to a farmer. When he is proved wrong he very readily admits it.

Miss Lenski's purposes are revealed in the novel by portraying the rich spirit which is possessed by the mountain people, although they are poor in worldly goods. She showed how the environment made the people live as they did, and how it affected every phase of their life.

She revealed her purposes in her own words:

...When we understand their environment and see how their lives have been conditioned thereby, then we can understand their behavior. We can imagine ourselves in the same situation, and we wonder if we would be different...I am trying to point out that all people are flesh and blood and have feelings like ourselves, no matter where they live or how simply they live or how little they have; that man's material comforts should not be an end object of life. I am trying to point out that people of character, people who are guided by spiritual values, come often from simple surroundings, and are worthy of our admiration and even our emulation.

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7 Lois Lenski, Strawberry Girl, pp. 10-11.
Judy's Journey is a story of a family of sharecroppers who left their leaky Alabama shack and followed the crops, first down to Florida and then up the coast to New Jersey. They all longed for a home of their own, and Judy longed for permanent friends. Before their goal was reached the family had many bitter experiences.

In the novel are found many of the cultural conditions which exist in all regions of America. Primarily the novel is concerned with the plight of migrant workers. Miss Lenski used the technique of causing the reader to experience empathy for the children of the migrant worker. She said:

These migrant children exist with only the bare necessities of life. Many of them do not go to school at all, others go for only a few months a year, if the family stays in one place long enough. In the communities where they stop they are often looked upon as aliens and therefore undesirable, and are given little or no chance to share in community life.\(^5\)

Also, the problems of racial differences and prejudice are woven into the story. The children in the school are making democracy work. There are mountain white, Northern white, Southern Negro, Japanese-American and American children of foreign descent living and learning together peacefully and happily.

Cotton in My Sack is the story of Joanda and the life lived by cotton-pickers of Arkansas. Sometimes Joanda and her family had money to buy necessities and "purtees" in town on Saturday. Sometimes they had nothing. During the course of the story Joanda and her family came

\(^5\) Lois Lenski, Judy's Journey, p. 8.
to an understanding of a better way of living.

In this novel the reader also is helped to develop an awareness of the cultural conditions which exist in all regions; family, the portrayal of esthetic and spiritual values, racial differences, conflicts, and prejudices. The following quotations by the author demonstrate the methods used to create a better understanding of cultures other than our own:

One day in a thunder storm the lights went out and a woman said, "We're all the same color when the lights are out."

An elderly man at a fruit stand, watching it rain said, "The rain is God's fertilizer. It falls on rich and poor alike."

A Negro preacher in a little frame church set in a cotton field said to his congregation, "If you want a friend, first show yourself friendly."10

The Far West

San Francisco Boy is a regional story of the boys and girls who live in Chinatown in San Francisco. The principals, in the story are ten-year-old Felix Fong and his sister Mei Gwen, who have just moved to the city. Felix misses his country home and friends left behind, but Mei Gwen makes friends easily. In telling the story the author also pictures the lives of other Chinese people living in the region. The main purpose of the story is to create an understanding of people of an entirely different culture than our own.

Miss Lenski reveals her purposes in the introduction to the novel:

10 Lois Lenski, Cotton in my Sack, p. 12.
I have tried to understand the compromise between the old and the new, so intelligently worked out by the modern Chinese. I wonder why many of their customs and their basic philosophy of living, proven to be effective centuries ago, have not been adopted by the West. They long ago learned the art of living together and of easing the frictions of daily living.\footnote{Lois Lenski, San Francisco Boy, p. 12.}

The Middle States

_Corn Farm Boy_ is the story of a gentle eleven-year-old boy, growing up on an Iowa farm. Dick, a victim of rheumatic fever, loves all animals and outdoor life, but his activities are limited. His understanding mother helps him when help is most needed.

The story is an attempt to acquaint the reader with American farm life. It shows how the lives of people grow out of their environment.

_We Live by the River_ is a group of stories which is held together by the theme of the river which colors and influences the lives of children and adults who live near it.

The first novel is about the story of a lock tender and his family who live on the Pearl River, between Louisiana and Mississippi.

The second novel is about a little girl who lives on an island in the Mississippi River, between Arkansas and Tennessee.

The third novel is about people who gather mussel shells for buttons. They live on the Ohio River, between Illinois and Kentucky.

Miss Lenski achieved her purposes of creating a better understanding for people living in other cultures by portraying the hardships
suffered by those people who live near a river. They live so close to the river that their whole lives are affected. Their food, their home, their transportation, their play all come from the river. The reader experiences a feeling of sympathy and understanding for these people who would never be happy away from the river.

The Southwest

**Texas Tomboy** is the story of cattle ranching in western Texas during a period of drought. The story concerns the Carter family and their struggle to keep their ranch in the face of great privations.

A feeling of empathy is felt for the people living in the region as their land was turned into a tragic and desolate sight by the drought. The author also depicts the resourcefulness of the people who live in the region as they take active steps toward the conservation of natural resources.

Within this novel the author portrayed many of the cultural conditions which are found to exist in all regions. Conflicts with nature and with fellow-men are portrayed. Prejudices against people of different races and cultures are depicted. Miss Lenski explained both sides of these conditions in her attempt to create a better understanding of the people living in this region.

**Boom Town Boy** is the story of oil drilling on an Oklahoma farm. When the well "blew in" oil workers came to live on the farm, and ten-year-old Orvie and his family moved to the city. They soon became tired of their new riches and were glad to move back to the country.
Emphasis, in the novel, is on the human side. It illustrates what the coming of oil into the community meant to one family—how it disturbed and disrupted their lives; what an upsetting thing sudden wealth can be, and how futile the pursuit of riches. The novel also shows how a family is obliged to stop and think, to decide for themselves what constitutes happiness and how to use money as a constructive rather than a destructive force.

**The Northwest**

**Prairie School** is the story of a little school on the South Dakota prairie, and the life of children, parents and teacher when a great blizzard paralyzes all moving things.

Miss Lenski achieved her purposes in this novel by portraying the courage and determination of the children who live in the region. The novel is decidedly a character study. All of the novels previously mentioned develop the idea that all children are basically alike. This novel develops the idea to a greater degree because of the rigorous and dramatic experiences which the people of this region face in the blizzard.

A letter from the teacher of the prairie school to Miss Lenski described the attitude of the children in the novel toward their life on the prairie:

The children are having a tough time, but they never complain. Since the severe blizzard the first week in January, they have had to walk as much as two or three miles, since no horse, car, or truck can get through the drifts. Today it is twenty-five below. We are having school in the kitchen of the teacherage and it is crowded, but they are cheerful about it. Of such solid stuff is
childhood made.

Miss Lenski has said that her primary purpose in writing the novels was to help children "see beyond the rim of their own world" and gain that "ultimate wisdom."

She used the environment as her primary source for achieving that purpose. She made the physical environment affect every phase of her character's lives. In Louisiana, where it is too wet to raise crops, the people make a living by fishing. In all other regions, people used other methods to make a living because of their environment.

This section of the study has attempted to delineate her purposes as they were portrayed in the novels.

III. HER ACHIEVEMENTS AS REVEALED IN REVIEWS OF THE NOVELS

Purposes of an author are achieved only if they are accepted by the reader.

The present section of the study is an account of all of the available reviews about Miss Lenski's novels. All of the reviews have been included whether or not they coincided with Miss Lenski's purposes. Although reviews for all of the novels could not be located, all regions are well represented.

The Northeast

Mama Hattie's Girl

The book has a place as a part of a large regional picture and has been done with sympathy and integrity, without caricature or stereotype. However, it is extremely important that other positive
books be in the collection to give a representative picture of the American Negro.


This is a good book for explaining the feelings of white children and colored children to each other. The treatment of an "outsider" by both white and colored, up north is given with touching drama.


This book, written by the talented author-artist whose regional stories have done so much to interpret the United States to young readers, is a happy one, full of vitality and warmth.

R. C. Benet, New Yorker 29:194, November 23, 1953.

...Her scenes and people present with almost adult realism the poverty and insecurity of Lula Bell's harsh world. Both on Hibiscus Street "down South" and on Mechanic Street "up North" she faces loneliness and frustrations, helped only by her own spunk and her confidence in Mama Hattie, a loving grandmother who teaches her important truths.


The Southeast

Bayou Suzette

The friendship between Suzette and a homeless, little, Indian girl causes plenty of excitement in the Durand household.

...This is an amusing and appealing story set against the colorful, unfamiliar background of the Louisiana bayou country. Delightfully told and illustrated; the idiom, French-English patois, in which it is written may make for reading difficulty.

Booklist 40:99, November 15, 1943

Suzette's French ancestry is shown in her gaiety and intense desire to see everyone happy.

Katherine H. McAlarney, Library Journal, 68:963, November 15, 1943

Bayou scenes, strange customs of living, the memories of Lafitte and his treasure, the Mardi Gras, are local color details of rare
individuality.


The Legend of Jean Lafitte and many customs of the Bayou French are woven into this story of the Louisiana reproduced...This idiomactic language runs through the whole book.

E. W. Shaffer, Saturday Review of Literature 26:30, November 13, 1943

Peanuts for Billy Ben

Peanuts for Billy Ben takes up life in southern Virginia where the peanut crop is so important to a family's livelihood that everyone must take part, even six-year-old Billy Ben, who likes eating peanuts much better than shelling them, but does his share at planting and harvest time. Along with hard work comes good times with peanut parties and fish meldles...

Chicago Sunday Tribune, p. 14, May 25, 1952

It is essentially a family story because everyone works together.


We Live in the South

Sympathetic, simple, stories which spotlight typical conditions in different sections of our country.


Strawberry Girl

The peculiar speech of the Florida backwoods, handed down from Anglo-Saxon origins, gives flavor to a vivid regional story.


Although the picturesque speech of this American group may hinder reading by children of Birdie's age. The story introduces a locale and people about which little has been written for children, and its obvious authenticity, attractive format and interesting plot will make it a welcome addition to juvenile book collections.

E. D. Friggs, Library Journal, 70:822, September 15, 1945

The speech in this one is particularly interesting. It is based
on old English and has a distinctive flavor and rhythm. The illustrations, too, strengthen the feeling of locality. Miss Lenski does not give glamour to Birdie and her friends. They are drawn as they are. They look rather thin and badly nourished, but there is spirit and humor in them.

Francis Lander Spain, Saturday Review of Literature, 28:44, October 20, 1945

The speech, customs, and life of the Florida Crackers are vividly and sympathetically depicted in a story of the feud between Birdie Boyer's hard working, enterprising family and their neighbors, the shiftless, violent Slaters.


...Interesting local detail and a narrative full of episode and rich cracker talk give a sympathetic picture of a region and a way of life unknown to most American children.


Blue Ridge Billy

The characters are drawn with skill, from sturdy Billy, with his loyalties and his inborn strain of music, to fearless Granny, a match for any of the mountain men. Miss Lenski's pictures are equally revealing of life on the farm in the Blue Ridge Mountains.


Quaint expressions and distortions in spelling may hinder the reading for some, but an attractive format and appealing plot will make it generally welcome.


In this book, as in her two preceding regional stories—Bayou Suzette and Strawberry Girl—Lois Lenski gives a wealth of information about the folklore, customs, and traditions of a colorful backwoods people. The dialect of the region is skillfully handled. Children who read the book will grow in tolerance and understanding of people different from themselves.


There is a glossary of mountain words and phrases in the back of the book, and if the expressions seem alien to urban readers, it is only because they themselves are of a regional culture, too...

This is a regional story, with customs, manners, speech, and the Blue Ridge Mountains deftly interwoven with the plot.


**Judy's Journey**

There is sadness and insecurity, but Lois Lenski has the wisdom and the balance to see that there is adventure, excitement, promise, fulfillment, even where there is insecurity and too hard work. The migrants of the east have had few spokesmen.

Virginia Kirkus, *Kirkus*, 15:338, July 1, 1947

The sad and insecure life of the migrant workers is pictured, but there is adventure, excitement and fulfillment too. One of the best of Miss Lenski's regional stories. Will prove useful for material on the American scene, farm units, democracy.


...The book is an honest account of conditions not often discussed in children's books. It is a thoughtful serious work and, in its way, a plea for a better democracy.


...Judy is a human and lovable child, longing for a home with belongings and friends and a chance to go to school. Because of their interest in Judy, children will draw from her moving story a valuable revelation of the deprivation and poverty of these homeless American workers who pick most of the vegetables we buy in cans.


**Cotton in my Sack**

The author deserves praise for putting down this unusual picture from the children's angle, and also reflecting honestly the whole adult and economic picture, mixing the good with the bad, fun with sorrow, and bringing into the story, besides the work, the school, teachers, books, the boss, the store, the bank account—giving a rounded world, but not a slanted view.

The author, through regional stories, is doing a great work of drawing the children of America together in understanding the friendship.

_School and Society_ 70: 78, July 30, 1949

**The Far West**

**San Francisco Boy**

_San Francisco Boy_ is not only for the local audience, but will widen the horizon of all children in the eight to twelve age group.


Lois Lenski's regional stories are always welcome. They contribute to the social studies program through their interpretation of people and a way of life in many parts of the country. This one describes a Chinese family in the fascinating Chinatown of San Francisco. Their daily life, work, play and adventure bring an appreciation of their culture and an understanding of the joys and sorrows of life in a crowded community.


**The Middle States**

**Corn Farm Boy**

...We watch the corn grow and the hogs fatten for market and share in all the work and worry--and fun--that belongs on a farm. Best of all, we meet a fine, gentle, boy who loves to care for animals, domestic or wild.

Folly Goodwin, _Chicago Sunday Tribune_, p. 15, October 31, 1945

Dick yearns to ride the new tractor and work with the men; but when he tries his rheumatic fever recurs. Keenly sensitive to the needs of animals, Dick makes a hobby of nursing those sick or injured back to health. Gradually the inanimate machinery loses its fascination for him, and he sees his future is to be caring for animals.

Whether the activity portrayed is contour plowing, the farrowing of pigs, a visit to the stockyards, or the daily business of the farm, each has its high spot, ranging from comedy to near tragedy.

Without parades, without flag waving, it manages to distill an atmosphere that reflects the basis American way of life.


The Southwest

*Texas Tomboy*

This is a grand book, full of clear morals and rich, human understanding.


Written with realism and humor, it tells of the rigors as well as the excitement of ranch life, the courage and hope of the ranchers, and of the unselfish devotion of Charlie Boy when the ranch is threatened.


*Boom Town Boy*

It is a realistic picture of daily living among people whose environment has made them unusual and interesting...Emphasis is on the human issues involved.


The Northwest

*Prairie School*

The children and the adults are very real people, some strong, some weak, but all living very close to the fierce elements they must face.


A most vivid account of life in the wheat and cattle country... Real prairie children will greet it with special affection, for it shows the fortitude and courage their way of life demands.

This is a chronicle based on the actual experiences of real children, supplemented by drawings which bring the homely setting to life and emphasise the hardy, endearing qualities of the prairie people. It is one of the most graphic of Miss Lenski's regional stories.


Miss Lenski's basic aim was to create and foster in American children a better understanding of the many communities of people which make up the total picture of America today.

The reviews of the novels suggested that she had, in the opinion of the reviewers, achieved her purposes. The reviews also suggested the importance of the study of social functions, of each region, in relation to the cultural conditions which exist in a given region. By this method it is possible to develop criteria by which the cultural differences may be portrayed successfully to children.
CHAPTER III

TOTAL CULTURAL CONDITIONS AND/OR DIFFERENCES PORTRAYED IN TERMS OF THE SOCIAL FUNCTIONS

In Chapter One it was stated that there are nine, basic, social functions which are of concern to all cultures at all times. These functions are:

1. Protecting and Conserving Life, Health, Resources and Property.
2. Producing, Distributing, and Consuming Food, Clothing, and Shelter.
3. Creating and Producing Tools and Technics.
4. Transporting People and Goods.
5. Communicating Ideas and Feelings.
6. Providing Education.
7. Providing Recreation.
8. Organizing and Governing.
9. Expressing Esthetic and Spiritual Impulses.

In this section of the study an attempt is made to determine how the cultural conditions, which were illustrated in the Lenski novels, are related to the nine, basic, social functions.

In order to determine specifically what cultural conditions were portrayed in the novels, it is necessary to reaffirm the meaning of the term as it is used in this study. As was stated earlier, the terms "culture" or "cultural conditions" are used, in this study, to include all activities that are characteristic of a given society. These activities include the beliefs, practices, and traits which have an important influence upon human behavior.

The novels were then reread to determine what activities were
portrayed that would bear a direct relationship to one or more of the social functions. A careful tally was kept of each of the activities as they appeared in the novels. After this reading it was found that these activities could be group under certain headings. The activities of the individuals and groups portrayed in the novels tended to cluster about nineteen major cultural conditions. These major cultural conditions formed the basis which seemed to determine the behavior of the individuals and the groups involved. Therefore, it appeared relevant to employ these groupings as the foundation for the cultural conditions which were used in the study.

Since a subjective method was used to determine the cultural conditions, it was realized that the incidence of mention could vary. The novels were read again to determine whether or not the same activities would be forceful enough to attract the reader's attention as they had at the first two readings. In some instances certain activities were deleted because they did not have the same effect on the reader as they had at the previous readings. At this reading a final tabulation was made for each activity which was portrayed, and the social function to which it was related.

Seven of the nineteen cultural conditions were grouped as follows: occupations, racial differences, conflicts, prejudices, dialects, institutions, customs and superstitions. One large grouping was developed under the heading of "living conditions." This area had reference to the cultural conditions with particular significance to the operation of everyday family life, rather than that of the entire region. The
remaining conditions are listed under this heading as family life, metropolitan areas, rural areas, esthetic and spiritual values, dress, names, pride, houses, holidays, neighbors, and democracy. The accompanying table on page 38 shows the frequency of mention of each of the cultural conditions which were portrayed in the seventeen novels. The object was to show the division of the existing conditions, and to determine how each one was related to the nine, basic, social functions.

I. PROTECTING AND CONSERVING LIFE, HEALTH, RESOURCES AND PROPERTY

The United States is one of the richest land areas on the earth. The large expanse of territory and the rich mineral deposits have made possible a variety of industries and the growing of crops and forests requiring varying soils and climates. When we speak of protecting and conserving the natural resources of our country we may forget the one great resource we possess without which the others would be useless; that is, our human resources.

When the European immigrants came to this country, the United States seemed a land of unlimited resources. Trees were chopped down to clear the land for planting, wildlife was destroyed for fur, prairie grass was plowed under so that crops could be raised, mines were stripped, and forests were exhausted by logging operations and sawmills. When land was worn-out, game gone, mines and forests stripped, and grasslands overgrazed, the pioneers could move on to new land, new forests, new mines, and new pastures.
TABLE I

CULTURAL CONDITIONS Portrayed in the Novels
And the Incidence of Mention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural Conditions</th>
<th>Number of times mentioned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Occupations</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migrant Workers</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial Differences</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflicts</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prejudices</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialects</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutions</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customs and Superstitions</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family life</td>
<td>264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan Areas</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Areas</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esthetic and Spiritual Values</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dress</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Names</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houses</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holidays</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbors</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
By 1900 the frontier was closed, and some persons had begun to realize that our seemingly inexhaustible resources were not inexhaustible. In a hundred years our ancestors had used the accumulated wealth of centuries. They had given little thought to the future. The extravagant use of resources was not, however, an economic waste, for through their use of resources our ancestors developed the nation; increased productivity; and raised standards of living for succeeding generation.

Our task is to protect and conserve our resources, both natural and human, so that future generations get a better return of goods and services for their labor than we do for ours.

The social function, Protecting and Conserving Life, Health, Resources and Property, demonstrates the methods that are being used by individuals and groups, in the various regions of the United States, to subdue and conquer the forces of nature and make life better for all human beings, not only for now but for generations to come.

In performing this social function it was found, in the novels, that eleven of the cultural conditions were involved. Table II shows the cultural conditions which refer to this social function and the number of times each was mentioned.

Occupations. The occupations, or the economic production of a given region, are determined by the natural resources which are available, the climate, the topography of the land, and other natural conditions. The extent to which these conditions are utilized depends upon the tastes, desires, and values which are present within the existing culture. The tastes and values are usually determined by the
### TABLE II

**PROTECTING AND CONSERVING LIFE, HEALTH RESOURCES, AND PROPERTY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural Conditions</th>
<th>Number of times mentioned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Occupations</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflicts</td>
<td>64</td>
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<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialects</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutions</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Life</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan Areas</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Areas</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esthetic and Spiritual Values</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbors</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
educational facilities in the region. The extent of the educational facilities which are present in a given culture, is determined by the needs of the people within that society which, in turn, is dependent upon the resources which are readily available. This cycle results in the large number of occupations which are available today.

The Statistical Abstract of the United States lists eleven major occupational groups under which are classified all of the types of available occupations in the country:

1. Professional technical, and kindred workers.
2. Farmers and farm managers.
3. Managers, officials, and proprietors, excluding farm.
4. Clerical and kindred workers
5. Sales-workers.
6. Craftsmen, foreman, and kindred workers.
7. Operatives and kindred workers.
8. Private household workers.
10. Farm laborers, except unpaid and foremen.
11. Farm laborers, unpaid family workers.
12. Laborers, except farm and mine.\footnote{Statistical Abstract of the United States, Washington, D.C., p.186}

In the seventeen novels used in this study, reference was made to eighty-six occupations. Some of them were of the same types, but were performed differently depending upon the culture of the region. Each of them bear a relationship to one of the eleven major occupational classifications as listed in the Statistical Abstract of the United States.

In this section of the study, however, twelve of the occupations were recognized, because they dealt directly with the social function: Protecting and Conserving Life, Health, Resources, and Property.
The setting for *Strawberry Girl* is a remote section of the Florida backwoods. The lack of cities or many people living together in one section resulted in the adoption of an unusual occupation. The unusual occupation portrayed a very necessary function for the people living in this particular region. The occupation is that of a traveling dentist.

An excerpt from the story illustrates the acceptance of this occupation by the people of the region:

"Doc Dayton's my name. I'm a tooth dentist. I pull teeth of animals or humans, as the occasion requires. Any teeth need pulling round here?"

"Oh!" exclaimed Birdie. "How did you know Dan had a toothache?"

The dentist pulled Dan's tooth and filed Semina's (the mule's) teeth.²

This episode illustrates the protection of the health of people living in a particular culture. If this condition seems strange to some readers, it should be remembered that we are members of different cultures. Some of the methods which we employ to obtain satisfaction in our pursuit of the social functions may seem just as strange to the people living in the Florida backwoods.

*Blue Ridge Billy* supplied three occupations, two of which could be found in any region of the United States; a doctor and a druggist. The third was one without a particular name, however, it supplied the people of the particular region of the Blue Ridge Mountains with a livelihood, therefore, it was considered as an occupation. This occupation is what the people of this region called "yarbin" which is the mountain

expression for "gathering herbs." An illustration from the story shows the importance of this occupation.

"And who do ye reckon gits all these yarbs we trade in at the store?" Granny's eyes pierced the boy through.

"Jeb Dotson," he said sullenly.

"Jeb don't do nothin but sell 'em again. Who buys 'em from Jeb?" demanded Granny.

"I don't know." answered Billy.

"Well, I'll tell ye. Jeb sells 'em to a big drug company in North Wilkesboro," said Granny, "and the drug company sends the stuff off somewheres to a factory, where hits made up into bottle medicines and pills and powders and I don't know what-all. Off there, in them fur-off parts, they have drug stores where them furrin' doctors buy that stuff to cure folkses with."3

This occupation seemed particularly important, because it is not only, indirectly related to the protection and conservation of life and health, but it also suggests the dependency of the people of one region upon the people of another region. "Yarbin" also illustrates that the economic production of a given region is determined by the natural conditions which are available in that region.

The next occupation which bore a relationship to the social function now under discussion was that of a nurse. In Judy's Journey Miss Lenski relates an episode which concerned a nurse and the children of the migrant workers. Judy's brother cut his leg, but there were no facilities to care for him at home. Consequently the leg became infected. It came to the attention of the school nurse who treated it

3 Lois Lenski, Elue Ridge Billy, p. 52.
until it was well. The nurse gave Judy a first aid kit, because she knew that migrants were not always in a position to care for their injuries. This was another illustration of the protection of life and health by a nurse.

Another occupation which was portrayed in the novels was that of the farmer. In this portrayal there were four different methods used by the farmers to protect and conserve their resources.

The problem of conserving our natural resources is one of the most basic ones Americans have to face. When our country was first being settled our resources followed a pattern of waste and depletion. It has only been within the last fifty years that, through private and governmental action, our society has started to do something about our conservation problem. Among the steps taken have been soil conservation practices, such as rotation of crops and contour plowing which are illustrated in Cotton in My Sack and Corn Farm Boy. Another method of conserving resources has been that of the orange grower who uses smudge pots to protect his young trees from frost.

Another occupation portrayed was that of a veterinarian who saves the life of an animal on the farm by his quick action.

The final occupation in this section of the study was that of an oil field worker who wore shoes with steel safety toes for protection against falling objects.

The occupations suggested in this section of the study are not unique in themselves. There are dentists in all parts of our United States. The method of operation may have been different for the
"traveling dentist" in *Strawberry Girl*, but his function was the same as a dentist in any other part of the country. Nurses and veterinarians perform the same functions wherever they are found. The idea expressed in this section of the study seems to be that, basically, people are alike everywhere in the function of Protecting and Conserving Life, Health, Resources and Property.

**Conflicts.** Within a common culture, beliefs and practices which conflict with each other exist side by side. In the seventeen novels studied it was found that sixty-four conflicts existed. It was, also, determined that these conflicts were of two different types. First, there were the conflicts with fellow-men. Kimball Young states that the conflicts between fellow-men are of two types:

1. "Inter-Community Conflicts: When the groups in opposition have as their focus the most dominant values of the community.

2. Intra-Community Conflicts: At times conflict of interest within the community may disrupt its equilibrium and destroy its solidarity."

It was found that both inter-community conflict and the intra-community conflict existed in the novels.

Second, there were conflicts with nature. This type included conflicts with wild animals, the lack of rain, dust storms, hailstorms, disease, and injuries suffered as a result of natural forces.

It was noted that one or more conflicts existed in sixteen of the seventeen novels used in the study. The accompanying Table III reveals

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Kimball Young, *An Introductory Sociology*, p. 437.
how the conflicts were grouped in relation to the novels.

These conflicts were broken down to more specific topics to demonstrate how they were related to the social function Protecting and Conserving Life, Health, Resources, and Property:

**Strawberry Girl** - **Conflict with nature**. The existence of these people depended upon their ability to bring in a strawberry crop each season.

1. The hot weather caused their wells to stop flowing.
2. The storm which came after the hot weather caused damage to the strawberry plants.
3. They covered the plants with pine straw to keep them from freezing when the temperature, unexpectedly, dropped.
4. A huge flock of migrating robins ruined the berry field.
5. Fire threatened to destroy their land and home.

It was against these conflicts that the people of the lake region of Florida fought in order to exist.

**Conflict with fellow-men.**

1. Erect fences to keep neighbors stock out of the strawberry fields.
2. The teacher's fight with the Slater boys who were students in the school.
3. The threatening note.
4. Conflict over the "squatters" fence law.

**Blue Ridge Billy** - **Conflict with nature**.

1. Uncle Jamie was thrown from a horse and suffered a broken arm.

**Conflict with fellow-men**

1. The store had the windows barred with heavy iron gratings.
# TABLE III

CONFLICTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Novel</th>
<th>Conflicts with Nature</th>
<th>Conflicts with Fellow-men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strawberry Girl</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Ridge Billy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judy's Journey</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We Live in the South</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We Live by the River</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton in My Sack</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peanuts for Billy Ben</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corn Farm Boy</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prairie School</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boom Town Boy</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas Tomboy</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berries in the Scoop</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We Live in the City</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mama Hattie's Girl</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bayou Suzette</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco Boy</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>43</strong></td>
<td><strong>21</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Judy's Journey - Conflict with nature.
1. Dikes built to hold back water.
2. A hailstorm ruined the truck-garden crops.

Conflict with fellow-men.
1. Judy's family was put off their farm because they did not pick enough cotton.

We Live in the South - Conflict with nature.
1. Children could not go to school because high water had washed the bridge out.
2. Smudge pots were used to save the fruit from freezing.
3. Hurricane.

We Live by the River - Conflict with nature.
1. The wells ran dry. There was not enough water for washing clothes.
2. Typhoid fever as a result of the water.

Cotton in my Sack - Conflict with nature.
1. Lack of rain produced a poor cotton crop.
2. Ricky was run over with the tractor.

Conflict with fellow-men.
1. A trailer load of cotton was stolen.

Peanuts for Silly Ben - Conflict with nature.
1. Too much rain ruined the peanut crop. This problem occurred three times throughout the story.

Corn Farm Boy - Conflict with nature.
1. They could not plant the corn because of rain.
2. Dick was injured by tractor.
3. The children chopped cockleburrs, because they were poisonous to the farm animals.
1. Rain ruined the first planting of corn.
5. Dad was injured by the corn-picker.
6. The family could not deliver stock to market because of flood.

Prairie School - Conflict with nature.
1. Plowed fireguards to stop prairie fire.
2. First they had hail, then drought, then it rained and brought the green lice and the grasshoppers.
3. Dust storms.

Boom Town Boy - Conflict with nature.
1. Hailstorm.
2. Oil well explosion.
3. Lack of rain.
1. Gas fumes from oil wells.
5. Blizzard.

Conflict with fellow-men.
1. One man shot another.
2. Stolen quilts.
4. The town people against the oil company.

Texas Tomboy - Conflict with nature
1. Drought.
2. Disease.
3. Flash flood.
4. Dust storm.
5. Rattlesnakes.
Conflict with fellow-men.

1. Sheepmen against cattlemen.
2. Farmers against cattlemen.
3. Landowners against nesters.

Berries in the Scoop - Conflict with fellow-men.
1. Disagreement over ownership of scoop.

We Live in the City - Conflict with fellow-men.
1. A fight between newsboys.

Mama Hattie's Girl - Conflict with nature.
1. Girl fell from tree.
2. Hurricane.

Conflict with fellow-men.
1. Neighbor killed a plum tree.
2. A fight between two children.

Bayou Suzette - Conflict with nature.
1. Levee
2. Gar-fish
3. Alligator
4. Wildcats
5. High water.

San Francisco Boy - Conflict with fellow-men.
1. Ronnie destroys a neighbor's property accidentally.

It had been difficult throughout the analysis to decide what should be included under the heading of "conflict." The preceding selections,
therefore, were made on the basis of the combined statements of John F. Cuber and Kimball Young.

Professor Cuber states:

Some of the rivalrous interaction among the persons and groups in a society takes place within the more or less culturally approved channels of competition. But there are other rivalries which are less controlled, less within the recognized and accepted "rules." In the absence of agreed-upon standards for carrying out the rivalry, crude hostility and more intense forms of struggle become common.5

It was noted in this section of the study that the conflicts which took place between fellow-men were not of the "culturally approved" type. It was also noted that conflict of this type occurred in most of the regions studied. It was also significant that more of the conflicts between fellow-men existed in the regions which were most densely populated. Kimball Young explains this condition as follows:

Although conflict is a universal process, it always takes place in a social situation affected by a particular culture. The form of conflict will be affected by the nature of the group and the individual interrelations.6

Prejudices. Prejudices were mentioned four times in relation to the social function, Protecting and Conserving Life, Health, Resources and Property.

There are groups in the United States who feel that they are being excluded from full participation in the American way of life.

Prejudices toward groups can be established, and they may remain

5John F. Cuber, Sociology, p. 546.
6Young, op. cit., p. 444.
for a long period of time side by side with beliefs in the dignity of man and freedom for the individual. Prejudices are generalized feelings of being against someone or something. Social prejudices are such feelings addressed toward a particular group. Such were the attitudes found in this section of the study.

For many years, cattlemen in the southwest, have been discriminating against men who raise sheep. It is said that the sheep eat the grass so close to the ground that it dies, and there is none left for the cattle.

In this same region there have been prejudices against the farmers and the nesters.

The "land rushes" took place in the years 1901-1902. The big ranches suffered from the inexorable advance of the homesteaders, who were called nesters and sod-busters, because they plowed up the sod for farming. Despite the opposition of the cattlemen, the homesteaders stayed on the land.7

The opposition, although not entirely open, has continued in this region until the present time, the continuation of conflict is evidenced in the novel, Texas Tomboy.

Most Americans believe in the dignity and worth of every individual; that each individual is a free agent and can act as he chooses within the limits established by law; that people have "certain unalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." They believe that the common welfare supercedes individual rights; and that free discussion and persuasion are the ways of settling controversy.

7Lois Lenski, Texas Tomboy, p. 11.
In spite of these ideals and values their

Conflicting beliefs and practices often make for irrational, or unreasonable behavior. Prejudice and discrimination are never rational. A prejudice is an attitude in a closed mind. It is usually based upon a stereotype and the person holding it does not want to examine it critically. Many stereotypes give us more than information about a given group. They often carry strong feelings for or against the group in question and are learned in settings where strong feelings are involved.8

Institutions. Howard Odum states that,

The home and family; the school and education; the church and religion; the state and government; industry and work; community and association are the institutions which are focused upon the setting of American democracy. Acting upon these and fabricated by them is, of course, a vast jungle of attitudes, beliefs, patterns of behavior, codes and manners, techniques and procedures, traditions and near-institutions, baffling and bewildering alike to social scientist, moralist, publicist, leader, and common man.9

Each of these facets of the institution have been discussed during this study, however, this particular section has dealt only with those directly related to the Protection and Conservation of Life, Health, Resources, and Property.

Blue Ridge Filly which is one of the novels written about the southeast region of the United States make reference to the "sheriff" or "Law" on five different occasions.

Judy's Journey, also a novel about the southeast region, mentions the Salvation Army and the Women's Philanthropic Welfare Circle. Also, mentioned is a government clinic for treating indigent families, and the

State Farmer's Market, whose job it is to see that the farmers get fair prices for their truck crops. Reference is made to the police on two different occasions.

In Cotton in My Sack reference is made to the facilities of a bank.

Corn Farm Boy, a novel of the middle states discusses the function of the Farm Bureau.

Boom Town Boy, a novel of the southwest reference is made to a hospital.

San Francisco Boy, a novel of the far west makes reference to the police.

Family Life. Family life, as it was used in this portion of the study referred directly to social function Protecting and Conserving Life, Health, Resources, and Property. This was the largest of the cultural conditions which existed in the novels, and it was referred to many times.

Lavone Hanna states that,

Living in a family is a good laboratory for learning democratic group living—sharing responsibility, being considerate of others, learning social skills, planning together, cooperating, and making group decisions.10

The instances in which "family life" was found to occur in the novels in relation to the social function Protecting and Conserving Life, Health, Resources and Property were noted as follows:

Lavone A. Hanna, Facing Life's Problems, p. 84.
Strawberry Girl — The Southeast

1. Picket fence to protect the family property.
2. The girl helped to plow the field.
3. Neighbors helped at cane-grinding time.
4. Entire family gather pine straw to keep strawberry plants from freezing.
5. Entire family help pull cow from swamp.

Blue Ridge Billy — Southeast

1. Washing done outdoors with entire family carrying water and keeping fire going.
2. Springhouse to keep food from spoiling.
3. Boy saved his sister from falling in creek.
4. Boys chopped wood for fire.

Judy's Journey — Southeast

1. Bathtub (keeping clean)
2. Family meal.
3. Older children took care of younger children.
4. Boy given first-aid by a stranger.
5. Children contracted measles.
6. The children were considerate of sister who had heart trouble.

We Live by the River — The Middle States

1. Family contracted typhoid fever from bad water.

Cotton in My Jack — Southeast

1. Boy injured working on tractor - taken to hospital by family.
2. Haircuts.
4. Family cleaned up trash to prevent disease.
5. Family burned grass to get rid of weed seeds, eggs, or weevils and other pests.

Corn Farm Boy — The Middle States

1. Spring housecleaning.
2. Father taught the sons the process of contour farming to protect the soil.
3. Trees planted on northwest side of house to act as wind-break and snow-scatcher.
4. Children and parents put splints on leg of baby pig.
5. Conservation practiced by family.
6. Family dug cockelburrs to protect animals.
7. Calf rescued from water by mother and children.

**Prairie School - Northwest**

1. Family plowed a fireguard to protect home.
2. Sick child in family was given penicillin.
3. Conservation practiced by family.

**Boom Town Boy - Southwest**

1. Storm cellar built by family.
2. Family arguing about money.

**Texas Tomboy -- Southwest**

1. Family went to grocery to get supply of food.
2. Conservation practiced by family.
3. Cleanliness practiced by family to prevent disease.
4. Family constructed "dirt tanks" to conserve water.

**Berries in the Scoop -- Northeast**

1. Family heirloom protected.

**Mama Hattie's Girl -- Southeast**

1. The family resisted change.

**Bayou Jusette -- Southeast**

1. The children pounded red bricks into dust for cleaning.
2. Family built levee to protect home.
3. Family used smudge pots for protection against mosquitoes.
4. Mosquito bar used by family for protection from mosquitoes.

It was noted that all families worked together to protect and conserve all of the values that they cherished. The practice was evident in all regions of the country. Angell says:

Any person can accept the institution of the family and believe it conducive to the realization of the highest values he cherishes... though the individual is within the structure he does not feel it as constraining. A father plays his role in the family loyalty, not from fear of legal sanctions if he does not, but from a sense of the importance of the family in the scheme of things that he values.11

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Miss Lenski sums up the condition in one of the novels: "The children all stood together, forgetting their differences, unified, now, against a common danger."

Rural Areas. It was decided to make a distinction between the processes which the people living in rural areas employ as they protect and conserve, as contrasted with those who live in metropolitan areas. It was found that although the processes differ, basic purposes were similar.

1. Fences to protect property. This condition was expressed in fourteen of the seventeen novels.
2. Traveling dentist.
3. "Fence law" passed to protect against "squatters."
4. Conservation of land. This idea was expressed in four of the novels.
5. Destruction of weeds to protect animals.
6. Saving animals life.

Metropolitan Areas.

1. Building fences to protect property.
2. Dentist.
3. Laws passed to protect property.

Esthetic and Spiritual Values. According to Webster esthetic values are those having to do with what is beautiful as distinguished from what is good. Spiritual values are those in the realm of goodness or closely associated with religious impulses. In this section of the study the purpose was to discover the relation between the esthetic and spiritual values as expressed in the novels and the social function,

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12 Lois Lenski, Texas Tomboy, p. 157
Protecting and Conserving Life, Health, Resources, and Property.

Boom Town Day was the story of the oil towns of Oklahoma during the era of the oil booms. The people in these small towns invested their money, made fortunes overnight, and lost them just as quickly. They permitted oil wells to be drilled everywhere, even in their own yards. However, when the oil companies came too close to the church the entire community showed a true spiritual attitude by sacrificing much of their riches to protect their church.

An episode from Cotton in My Sack reveals the attitude toward esthetic values as was expressed in all of the regions of the United States:

Daddy already had the old door off its hinges and was fitting a new one in place.

Mama brought warm water and a cloth and washed the glass on both sides. It looked very beautiful. It let in light.

They all went out in the road to see how the new door looked from the front.

"It makes the house look all dressed up!" cried Joanda.

"Steve," said Mama, "Go git the rake. Let's clean up some of this trash. Why don't we make a dump in one place back by the shed, and stop throwing trash around? Let's have Clean-Up Day here like at school."

Joanda looked at Mama. "Can I make some flower-beds and plant those flower seeds?" 13

The episode above seemed to express an idea which prevailed throughout the seventeen novels. When one member of a family did something constructive other members of the family were doing the same.

13 Lois Lenski, Cotton in My Sack, p. 102.
This portion of the study was an attempt to determine how persons in each region of the United States reacted to the process of Protecting and Conserving Life, Health, Resources and Property.

II. PRODUCING, DISTRIBUTING, AND CONSUMING FOOD, SHELTER, AND CLOTHING

From early childhood we have been taught that there are three necessities of life -- Food, Clothing, and Shelter. In order to provide these necessities we need, again, to rely upon the richness of both human and natural resources within the United States. We need people to produce, distribute, and consume these products of our natural resources.

People are both producers and consumers. They determine what can be produced and what is consumed. Our prosperity depends not only upon our productive power, but also upon our ability to consume what we produce.

The economy of a region has to do with the relationships involved in the earning and spending of the incomes of the people in that region.

It was the purpose of this section of the study to look into each of the six regions of the United States and to determine the various processes employed in the Producing, Distributing and Consuming of Food, Shelter, and Clothing.

The following chart illustrates each cultural condition that related to Producing, Distributing, and Consuming Food, Shelter, and clothing. The number of times each cultural condition was mentioned indicated the degree to which it affected this social function.
### PRODUCING AND DISTRIBUTING FOOD, CLOTHING AND SHELTER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural Condition</th>
<th>Number of times mentioned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Occupations</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migrant Workers</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflicts</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialects</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Life</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Areas</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dress</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houses</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbors</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Occupations.** There were eighty-four occupations involved in the seventeen novels. There seemed to be an overlapping in some; such as agricultural. Although many portrayed a relationship to agriculture, they were considered as separate occupations because each performed a specific function.

It was found that every region of the United States had some provision for the production of goods and services to meet needs, and some arrangements for the exchange of goods and services.

This section of the study emphasized more than any other the great dependency which one region of the United States has upon another. The occupations were treated by regions for the purpose of clarity, and to portray to the reader the similarity of occupations within a particular region.

The accompanying chart shows the occupations as they were portrayed...
by regions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Novel</th>
<th>Occupations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>THE NORTHEAST</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berries in the Scoop</td>
<td>Textile worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Picking cranberries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Boy</td>
<td>Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carrying papers</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grocer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Truck driver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We Live in the City</td>
<td>Carrying papers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clerk in store</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Office worker</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Factory worker</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taxi driver</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shoveling snow</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Janitor</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Police</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bus driver</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Flower peddler</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Doorman</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Grocer</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shoeshine boy</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organ-grinder</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ice man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Movers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mama Hattie's Girl</td>
<td>Seamstress</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Launderer</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grocer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>THE SOUTHEAST</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bayou Suzette</td>
<td>Merchandiser for raw furs, moss, alligator hides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grocer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fishing
Trapping
Hunting
Skiff paddlers
Sheriff
Basket weavers
Workers on sugar plantation
Shrimp fishing

Peanuts for Billy Pen
Peanut farmer
Teacher

We Live in the South
Timber-man
Waitress
Grocer
Mechanic

Strawberry Girl
State police
Truck farmers (producing and selling oranges, strawberries, sweet potatoes, sugar cane, peanuts.)
Teacher
Peddler
Dentist
Refrigerator car manufacturer

Blue Ridge Billy
Sheriff
Gathering herbs
Basket weaving
Grocer
Farming
Timber-men
Hand-made chairs
Teacher

Judy's Journey
Migrant workers
Sharecropper (farmer)
Fisherman
Making turpentine
Truck farmer
Factory worker
Grocer
Nurse
Truck driver
Oyster fisherman
Clothing manufacturer
Policeman
Teacher
Newspaper reporter
Cotton in My Sack
Grocer
Peddler
Cotton pickers
Truck driver
Sheriff
Carpenter
Blacksmith
Farmer
Teacher

THE FAR WEST

San Francisco Boy
Fish shop
Jeans factory
Herb shop
Restauranteur
Noodle shop
Teacher
Laundry
Paper boy
Paper company

THE MIDDLE STATES

Corn Farm Boy
State police
Farmer
Veterinarian
Grocery
Stock yards
Teacher
Seed company

We Live by the River
Locktender
Tug boat operator
Farmer
Peddlers
Shull boats
Mussel fisherman
Grocer
Jeweler
Shell buyer
Button factory
Police
Teacher
## THE SOUTHWEST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Texas Tomboy</th>
<th>Sheriff</th>
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<td>Rancher</td>
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<td>Saddlemaker</td>
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<td>Boom Town Boy</td>
<td>Oil-field</td>
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<td>Airplane</td>
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<td>pilot</td>
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<td>Huckster</td>
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## THE NORTHWEST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prairie School</th>
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<td>Lumber company</td>
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<td>Teacher</td>
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<td>Railroader</td>
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<td>Hardware</td>
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<td>Wheat farmer</td>
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It has been mentioned in the study that the occupations of any given region are determined by the natural resources which are available, the climate, the topography of the land, and other natural conditions.

It seemed particularly significant to note that the occupations of a specific region were all directly in relation to the outstanding
feature of that region. Also, it was significant to note that there were some occupations which were mentioned in all regions. This fact seemed to substantiate the idea that, the extent to which the natural conditions of a region are utilized depends upon the tastes, desires, and values which are present within the existing culture.

Migrant Workers. Although the migrant worker could have been considered in the category of "occupations," it was decided to treat it in a separate category because of the important problem which they have created in every region of the United States.

It has been estimated that there are at least 500,000 migratory workers in the United States and that, when their families are counted, the number in excess of 1,500,000 people...We know that many of these people cannot, or do not, even send their children to school. They do not know the stability and security of being a real, integral part of a community, and therefore enjoy almost no social participation of any kind...They live in the worst housing in America. The great majority are below the standard of health and decency.  

The problem of the migrant worker was mentioned only once in the seventeen novels, but an entire novel, Judy's Journey, was devoted to this subject. Miss Lenski indicated in the foreword of her novel that "The number of homeless migrants, living under conditions which make impossible normal participation in the benefits of American life, is so large that it is a matter for grave concern."

Nels Anderson summed up the condition of the migrant as follows:

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11 Lois Lenski, Judy's Journey, p. 9.

15 Carey McWilliams, Ill Fares the Land, p. 354.
The resident homeless man earns his living as he can at odd jobs, seasonal work or casual labor. He may have an address which may only be used for voting purposes, and after a fashion he may take part in the community's political life. He earns his living most of the time although in hard times he may join the bread lines. Although he may have political status, he is without social status, and as for his economic status, he is the marginal man on the labor market, very much needed sometimes, and very much in the way at other times.  

Conflicts. The conflicts which occurred in the novels were natural conflicts, and they occurred in the area of Producing Food, Clothing and Shelter. The conflicts occurred as a result of inadequate conservation practices and, according to Miss Lenski, could have been prevented.

It was found that the conflicts affecting the Production of Food, Clothing, and Shelter occurred in the rural areas.

Corn Farm Boy was written about the people who live in the greatest corn producing states. Most of the corn is fed to livestock which is shipped all over the United States to provide meat for families living in the large cities. As a result of the lack of rain, not as much corn could be produced as was needed. This conflict with nature affected consumption of food in all regions of the United States. Indirectly, it affected the production and consuming of shelter and clothing, because the lack of rain would also affect the employment of those connected.

Boom Town Boy and Texas Tomboy portrayed the same ideas as those in the preceding illustration.

---

16. Nels Anderson, Men on the Move, p. 32
It was a hot day in August, and the road which in April had been a sea of mud was now deep in dust. All the grass in the pastures was brown and dry. There had been no rain for a long time and there was little evidence of given growth.\textsuperscript{17}

Texas which is one of the greatest cattle producing regions of the United States, was also affected by the lack of rain:

"Won't the grass ever grow again Papa?" asked the girl.

"Sure, just give it time and a little rain."

"There's no grass for the cows to eat," said the girl. "It rained once when I was little," she continued. "I ran out in it and got my face wet."

"Yes, I remember," said the man. "That was three years ago."

"Won't it ever rain again, Papa?"

The shadow of remembered droughts hung in the man's mind.\textsuperscript{18}

These natural conflicts were included in this part of the study, because they emphasize how the entire nation can be affected as a result of conflict in a given region.

\textbf{Family Life.} The family is the basic social group in our society. The people who make up the families of our nation are producers, distributors, and consumers. They determine what can be produced and what is consumed. The prosperity of our nation depends not only upon our productive power, but also upon our ability to consume what we produce.

The relationship of "family life" to the Producing, Distributing, and Consuming of Food, Clothing, and Shelter was mentioned a total of

\textsuperscript{17} Lois Lenski, \textit{Ecom Town Boy}, p. 128

\textsuperscript{18} Lois Lenski, \textit{Texas Tomboy}, pp. 1-2.
thirty times in the seventeen novels.

The criterion for the selection of the items to be used in this section was based on the condition that the entire family was involved in Producing, Distributing, and Consuming Food, Clothing and Shelter.

It was noted that the people of the existing culture adjusted to their own particular "family life" in relation to the physical environment and the economic condition of the region.

The Northeast

Nana Hattie's Girl

1. The family went fishing to provide food for themselves.

Berries in the Scoop

1. The entire family picked cranberries. An episode from the novel illustrated the outstanding feature of this cultural condition as it related to the social function now under consideration:

"Cranberry money is not so bad," said Uncle Tony.

"If there are three or four people picking," said Father, "they can make a couple thousand."

"We have to pay our taxes with cranberry money," said Mother. We have to buy oil for fuel and our winter food supplies. We have to pay our debts. And we ought to save a little."

"Julie can scoop this year," said Father. "He's big and strong for twelve."

Project Boy

1. A "rolling store" distributed food to the project families.

We Live in the City

\[19\text{Berries in the Scoop, pp. I0-I1.}\]
This was the final novel which was concerned with the Northeast Region. This was the only one of the novels concerning this region in which the setting was a large city. The lack of items relating to "family life" in the process of Producing, Distributing, and Consuming Food, Shelter, and Clothing was noted in this section, although, the majority of occupations were available in the city, as was mentioned earlier in the study.

The Southeast

Peanuts for Billy Ben

1. The entire family helped in all phases of producing the peanut crop.
2. The family live on a half-shares farm. Half of the peanut crop belonged to the family. The sale of their share, of the crop, provided them with food, clothing, and shelter.

We Live in the South

1. The following episode illustrated the economic condition of this particular region as it related to the clothing and family life.

"Sally Jo's Mama was barefoot just like the children. They wore shoes only in the coldest part of winter. Only when they went to town or to church did they put them on." 20

Strawberry Girl

1. The houses were constructed of pine and cypress wood which is found in abundance in this region.
2. The neighbors borrowed staple foods from each other.
3. The girl helped with the plowing.
4. The family fished with a trout line to provide food for the family, and they sold some to the fish market in town.
5. The family set traps for turtles to provide food for themselves and to sell.
6. The members of the family hunted to provide food for themselves.
7. At the church picnic, "The women opened their baskets and spread out all the delicious dishes of the Florida backwoods."
There was food for everybody—fried chicken, rabbit, squirrel, ham, sweet potatoes, cowpeas, grits and gravy, cakes and pies, corn bread and biscuits, and plenty of cane syrup.21

8. All members of the family helped to pick the strawberries, and to get them ready for market.

**Blue Ridge Billy**

1. The family slept on corn shuck mattresses which they made themselves.
2. The corn was taken to the "grist mill" to be ground into meal. The miller kept part of the meal as payment for grinding it. This he sold to people living in the city.
3. At corn planting time all members of the family helped in the fields.

**Judy's Journey**

1. The family ate boiled peanuts for supper.
2. The family fished to provide food for themselves and to sell.
3. The family all worked in the orange groves and bean fields.

**Cotton in My Sack**

1. The entire family helped to pick cotton in the fields.

**The Far West**

**San Francisco Boy**

In the metropolitan areas it was found that the production of food, clothing and shelter was not limited to single activities as it was in the rural areas. It was further noted that the family ties were just as great in the cities as in the rural areas, as the families performed this social function.

1. Most members of the family worked in the "jeans factory" to provide food, clothing and shelter for the family.
2. The members of the families, involved in the novel worked in fish shops, herb shops, restaurants, noodle shops, laundries, and the paper company.

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The Middle States

Corn Farm Boy

1. The family helped to farrow the hogs.
2. The girls cooked supper for the family.
3. The entire family helped in all operations of producing and distributing corn crop.

We Live by the River

1. The family all helped to tend the locks.
2. The only method for distributing goods was by means of boat paddlers.
3. All of the male members of the family worked on the "shell boats."
4. All of the family helped to get the mussel shells ready to be sold to the button factory.

The Southeast

Texas Tomboy

1. The entire family helped with some phase of the ranching.

Boom Town Boy

1. Available space in the family home was rented to the oil-field workers for lodging and food. This procedure affected the entire family, and indirectly it resulted in the production, distribution and consumption of food, clothing, and shelter for all concerned.

The Northwest

Prairie School

This was primarily a region concerned with the production of wheat.

1. The entire family helped, in some way, with the production of the wheat crop.

This section of the study demonstrated how members of the family
in each region cooperated and worked together to produce, distribute, and consume food, shelter and clothing for themselves and for members of families in other regions.

**Rural Areas.** This portion of the study describes some of the methods which the people living in rural areas would use in the process of performing the social function of Producing, Distributing, and Consuming Food, Shelter, and Clothing.

1. **Eating lunch at school.** One dinner bucket was packed for all the children of a family group. They ate their dinner on the grass, under an oak tree.

   The dinner bucket contained a bottle of cane syrup, pieces of fried rabbit, and cooked hominy grits. They ate the grits with a spoon. They poured syrup into the cover of the bucket and dipped their biscuits in it.\(^{22}\)

2. **The family lived on a half-shares farm.** The family got half and the owner got half after everything was paid for. This was a peanut farm in southern Virginia.

3. **The family lived on a corn farm in Iowa.** This was, also, a half-shares farm.

4. "One man was from South Dakota and the other from Nebraska. But the problems of raising hogs were just the same as in Iowa."\(^{23}\)

5. **Children plowing.**

6. **People from rural areas took lunch to town in baskets rather than eating in restaurants.**

**Dress.** The particular dress which was worn by the people in the novels was confined to the rural areas, because it was in these areas in which the people produced some of their own clothing:


\(^{23}\) Lois Lenski, *Corn Farm Boy*, p. 151.
Cotton in My Sack  Southeast  sunbonnet
Strawberry Girl  Southeast  sunbonnet
Blue Ridge Billy  Southeast  linsey shirt
                   sunbonnet
                   feed-sack calico
                   brown-check linsey
                   flowered calico
                   home-made overalls

Judy's Journey

We Live By The River  Middle States  calico feed sacks

Houses. The houses that are inhabited by people in the various regions of the United States were portrayed, in the novels, as follows:

Cotton in My Sack -- The Southeast

Shotgun house. "It has three rooms in a row. I can take my shotgun and shoot through the front door and the bullet will go out the back door. It will go through all four doors in a straight line."

The front room had flowered wallpaper on the walls, and there were pictures hanging. It had lace curtains at the windows and velvet carpet on the floor. There was an oil heater which heated the entire house.

Corn Farm Boy -- The Middle States

The upstairs was only a half-story. It had three bedrooms with sloping ceilings. The one on the west was the boys' room. On the wall colored pictures of birds were tacked up. Four small bird books and a natural history stood in an open bookcase, with several birds' nests. On the lower shelves were farm and sports magazines.  

Prairie School -- The Northwest

House trailer.

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25 Lois Lenski, Corn Farm Boy, p. 3.
Bayou Suzette -- The Southeast  

Palmetto Hut

San Francisco Boy -- The Far West  

Apartment dwelling.

Strawberry Girl -- The Southeast  

The house was a simple one, but by backwoods standards a mansion. It was a double-pen plant house, with an open hall or breezeway in the middle. On one side was a bedroom, and the other a kitchen. Behind were two small shed rooms used for sleeping quarters. Wide porches spread across front and back. It was built of sturdy pine and cypress wood.

Blue Ridge Billy -- The Southeast

It was built of logs with a mud-daubed rock chimney at one end and a porch across the front. The roof was covered with hand-riven shingles.

Judy's Journey -- The Southeast

"Through the rickety, unpainted, cabin, he could see that the place was empty. The walls inside were covered with old newspaper."  

People lived in tents. (migrant workers)

People lived in trailer camps.

She and the children walked through the house slowly, looking at everything. The floors had carpets, the walls had pretty wallpaper and were hung with pictures. The windows had white curtains with ruffles. The house was clean and orderly.  

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26 Lois Lenski, Judy's Journey, p. 1

27 Ibid., p. 185.
People lived in a dormitory camp owned by the company. Long barracks were divided into two-room apartments, which were furnished with two beds, a bureau, table, stove, and boxes for chairs.

Judy's father built a cabin on the body of a truck. It had a window on one side and a window and a door on the other. There were platforms for sleeping bunks, and a stove.

_We Live in the South -- The Southeast_

"Steve's family lived in a little three-room house. The yard had a fence, made from an old fish-net, draped on posts. It had an orange tree and a banana tree. All around grew cabbage palms."

_Project Boy -- The Northeast_

These people lived in an Emergency Housing Project. This one had long army barracks buildings for four or five families. The home units had two rooms and a bath.

_We Live in the City -- The Northeast_

The rich girl lived in a penthouse. The newsboy lived in an apartment building in the slum area of the city.

The cultural conditions portrayed in the present section of the study showed that the various forces operating in the economic life of a region are interrelated, that people work at specialized jobs, and that they require the services of many other people as they strive to achieve the social function--Producing, Distributing, and Consuming Food, Shelter, and Clothing.

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28 Lois Lenski, _We Live in the South_, p. 78.
III. CREATING AND PRODUCING TOOLS AND TECHNICS

"Technology consists of the culture objects and the skills which make it possible to produce the goods and services."

This was the definition upon which was based the discussion concerning the Creation and Production of Tools and Technics as they were portrayed in the novels. It was found that there were five cultural conditions involved in this social function. They were portrayed as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural Condition</th>
<th>Times Mentioned</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Occupations</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family Life</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan Areas</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rural Areas</td>
<td>6</td>
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</table>

**Occupations.** The creating and producing of tools and technics as described, in this section of the study, were those which related directly to the occupations of the persons involved.

**Strawberry Girl** — The Southeast

1. The building of a brick furnace to boil cane syrup.
2. The building of refrigerator cars to ship strawberries to the north.

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Blue Ridge Billy -- The Southeast

1. The building of a springhouse to keep produce until they are ready to take it to market.
2. Weaving baskets.

Judy's Journey -- The Southeast

1. A cabin built on the body of a truck. These were the migrants. The cabin had built-in folding steps, bunk, and cupboards.

We Live in the South -- The Southeast

1. The men created a dye from "crutch" to dye their fish nets brown.
2. A flowing well (artesian)
3. Created smudge pots to protect fruit.

We Live by the River -- The Middle States

1. A levee was built to protect homes and crops from the river.
2. Specially constructed "shell-boats" to fish the mussels from the bottom of the river.
3. "Mule" or mud soil to get mussels from bottom of the river.

Cotton in My Sack -- The Southeast

1. A suction to pull cotton from wagon into the mill.

Boom Town Boy -- The Southwest

1. Windmill to pump water for stock.

Berries in the Scoop -- The Northeast

1. A cranberry scoop to get the berries off the bushes.

Bayou Suzette -- The Southeast

1. A crab-car to trap crabs.
2. Perogues -- special boats used in the bayous.
3. Weaving baskets.

Conflicts. "Henry had lost his leg in a railroad wreck. He had made his wooden leg himself because it was cheaper than factory one."30

30Lois Lenski, Boom Town Boy, p. 19.
Family Life. It was the purpose of this section of the study to determine the methods used in the various regions of the United States to improve family life. As these methods were portrayed in the novels, they were referred to as the "technology" of the region.

Technology is the accumulation of knowledge, techniques, processes, and skills whereby we maintain a working control over our physical world. It helps us discover new sources for materials we are already using, find new ways of extracting these materials so that we get more of them from known deposits, extend supplied by developing more efficient methods of use or by working out means of using materials which have been known but not usable, and discover and create new materials.31

The tools and technics which were portrayed in the novels were a result of man's effort to adjust to his environment.

The physical habitat influences man's behavior systems as well as his cultural artifacts. All of man's tools, weapons, and equipment are produced, of course, from materials provided by nature... As scientific technology accumulates, man's ability to modify his environment increases.32

The Creating and Producing of Tools and Technics as they related to family life in the novels were portrayed as follows:

The Northeast

Berries in the Scoop

1. The "cranberry scoop" developed by the people who worked in the cranberry bogs to get the berries off the vines.

Project Boy

1. A "Rolling store" to serve the people of the development who did not have access to a grocery store.

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32 George A. Lundberg, Sociology, p. 121.
We Live in the City

1. Street lights
2. Fire hydrant

The Far West

San Francisco Boy

1. Chinese writing -- a necessity in this particular region of the United States.
2. Padding inside the tea basket to keep the tea hot.
3. A cable car -- a necessity in this particular region of the United States.
4. An abacus
5. A machine to take feathers out of chickens.

The Middle States

Corn Farm Boy

1. The tractor
2. The combine
3. The windrower
4. The corn-cob pipe

We Live by the River

1. Shell boats to gather mussel shells.
2. "Mule" or mud soil to get mussels from bottom of river.

The Southwest

Texas Tomboy

1. Windmills
2. Dipping vat to prevent disease of stock.
3. Dirt tanks for water storage.
4. Rock tanks for water storage.

Boom Town Boy

1. Pump for oil
2. Windmill
3. Mud boat
The Northwest

Prairie School

1. Frozen food lockers
2. Snowplow
3. Windmill
4. Battery radio

The Southeast

Bayou Suzette

1. Crab can
2. Pirogues -- skiffs
3. Pot shelf
4. Spanish moss
5. Plants for medicine
6. Ashes used for cleanser
7. Red bricks pounded into dust for cleanser.
8. Palmetto hut
9. Mosquito bar

Peanuts for Billy Ben

1. Peanut poles -- used for drying peanuts.
2. "Pea picker" -- a large wooden threshing machine

We Live in the South

1. Automobile tires used for swings
2. Schoolboat
3. A broom made of small twigs of brush
4. Smudge pots to protect fruit

Strawberry Girl

1. A broom made from branches
2. A picket fence to protect property
3. The use of a "Shucks brush" for a comb
4. The use of a gourd for a dipper
5. A cane mill for crushing sugar cane
6. A cedar trough for watering stock

Blue Ridge Billy

1. A mountain sled to carry loads over grades too steep or rough for wagons
2. Mattresses made of corn shucks
3. Gourd dipper

Judy's Journey

1. A two wheeled trailer for hauling loads
2. A house cabin built on a truck body

Cotton in My Sack

1. A Christmas tree trimmed with tin cans.
2. A suction pipe to pull cotton from truck into mill.

The creation of tools and technics, as portrayed in the novels, illustrated how the people living in a particular region of the United States adjusts to conditions, both physical and cultural.

"A region has traditions, customs, and mores, which regulate the relations between man and the rest of nature as well as the relations among men."

Metropolitan Areas and Rural Areas. The purpose of this section was to determine the differences, which were portrayed in the novels, between metropolitan areas and rural areas in relation to the social function, Creating and Producing Tools and Technics.

The tools and technics which would be found in the metropolitan areas, and would not usually be found in rural areas were portrayed as follows:

1. Subway
2. Street lights
3. A subway turnstile
4. Newspapers used as umbrellas
5. Elevated train
6. Dumb waiter in hotel
7. Cable-car

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Ibid., p. 119.
Those tools and technics which were found in the rural areas rather than the metropolitan areas were portrayed as follows:

1. Drinking from a gourd
2. Artesian wells
3. A mountain sled for hauling
4. Rotation of farm crops
5. Tractor
6. Lasso rope

IV. TRANSPORTING PEOPLE AND GOODS

The survival of a region depends, first of all, upon man's ability to obtain from his physical environment the means of livelihood, such as food, clothing, and shelter. More important, however, is the fact that each region is dependent upon the facilities of transportation which enable it to utilize the resources, both natural and human, of distant regions.

This point was stressed by C. H. Cooley in the theory of transportation:

The character of transportation as a whole and in detail, at any particular time and throughout its history, is altogether determined by its interrelations with physical and social forces and conditions. The need of movement of things and persons underlies every culture...Precisely because transportation underlies social development, it is in turn determined by that development. It is the tool of the social organization and the character of the tool varies with their needs.34

It was found that each region portrayed in Miss Lenski's novels provided the type of transportation which was in direct relation to its needs. It was also noted that the people in each of the regions used

their ingenuity to develop the type of transportation which was most functional for their particular region.

**Occupations.** Following are the modes of transportation used in the novels as they were portrayed for each region, and as they related to the occupations of the people.

**The Northeast**

1. Truck  
2. Wheelbarrow  
3. Taxi  
4. Moving van  
5. Wagon  
6. Train

**The Southeast**

1. Perogues -- skiffs  
2. Skiff peddlers  
3. Wagon  
4. Refrigerator cars  
5. Mountain sled  
6. Tractor  
7. Horses  
8. Train  
9. Schoolboat

**The Middle States**

1. Tractor  
2. Grocery truck  
3. Tug boat  
4. Shell boats  
5. Wagon  
6. Horses  
7. Train  
8. Automobile

**The Southwest**

1. Horses  
2. Train  
3. Wagon
4. Automobile
5. Mud-boat
6. Huckster wagon

The Northwest

1. Train
2. Airplane
3. Horses
4. Automobile

Family Life. Following are the modes of transportation used by the people of each region which related to their family life.

The Northeast

1. Bicycle
2. Truck
3. Wheelbarrow
4. Rolling store
5. Elevated train

The Southeast

1. Percogues -- skiffs
2. Mule
3. Sleigh
4. Swing cart
5. Tractor
6. Grocery truck
7. Train
8. Wagon

9. Wheelbarrow
10. Mountain sled
11. Jolt wagon
12. Automobile
13. Trailer
14. Truck
15. House trailer

The Far West

1. Cable car
2. Taxi
3. Truck
4. Street car
5. Bicycle

The Middle States

1. Tractor
2. Horses
3. Grocery truck
1. Truck  
2. Bookmobile  
3. Tug boat  
4. Bicycle  
5. Shell boats

The Southwest

1. Horses  
2. Buggy  
3. Train  
4. Automobile  
5. Wagon  
6. Mud boat  
7. Airplane

The Northwest

1. School bus  
2. Cart  
3. Tractor  
4. Wagon  
5. Train  
6. Airplane  
7. Horses  
8. Box-sled

**Metropolitan Areas.** The methods of transporting people and goods in metropolitan areas, opposed to those methods usually found in rural areas were portrayed as follows:

1. Subway  
2. Bus  
3. Elevated train  
4. Dumb-waiter  
5. Street car  
6. Cable car  
7. Taxi  
8. Elevators  
9. Push cart

**Rural Areas.** The method of transporting people and goods in rural areas as opposed to those usually found in metropolitan areas
were portrayed as follows:

1. Sleigh
2. Swing cart
3. Tractor
4. Horses
5. Wagon
6. Mountain sled
7. Mule
8. Jolt Wagon
9. Mud-boat

The type of transportation methods portrayed in the novels seemed to be determined by the physical and geographic feature of the region. However, Howard Odum goes further in providing determining factors:

"Though the major outline of a transportation system may be set by geographic factors, social conditions also have a large part of the responsibility."

V. COMMUNICATING IDEAS AND FEELINGS

Communication by means of language is man's distinctive activity. However, Stuart Chase says that we cannot talk usefully about a language without talking about culture, for they are inseparable. He says that, "social scientists divide culture into three parts:

1. Habits, customs, rules for behavior, which a person begins to learn almost as soon as he is born. Not a single item of this enormous job is inherited; all must be taught him by the community -- what to eat, what to wear, when to bathe, how to behave on all occasions, as well as how to talk.

2. Belief systems, which give the child his standards of right and wrong. What to think about God, about the world, society,
property. These are the symbols of his society.

3. Artifacts, all the man-made utensils, weapons, construction, machines, which the society has developed or borrowed, and many of which every child must be taught to use.

This idea broadens our base of communication not only through space, but also through time. Every one of us is both a creature of our culture and a carrier of it, in that he passes it along.

Culture builds from generation to generation through language and example. It is, of course, possible to communicate without using words. The term "kinesics" has been coined by linguists for nonverbal communication.36

It was found that all of the conditions expressed by Stuart Chase existed in all regions of the United States as these were portrayed in Miss Lenski's novels.

The social function Communicating Ideas and Feelings involved more of the cultural conditions of each region than the other eight social functions. For purposes of clarity Chart IV was devised to show the relationship of the social function to the cultural conditions involved.

Racial Differences. Studies have indicated that young children are aware of racial differences, and that they learn the cultural patterns and value.

The findings emphasize the complex learning in young children's reactions to race. Their concepts and feelings about race frequently include adult distinctions of status, ability, character, occupations, and economic circumstances which may become justification for further discriminations.37

36 Stuart Chase, Power of Words, pp. 76-84.

37 Helen G. Trager and Marian Radke Yarrow, They Learn What They Live, p. 150.
TABLE IV

COMMUNICATING IDEAS AND FEELINGS

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There was a distinction made, in the study, between recognition of racial or ethnic differences and prejudices. In the illustrations selected for this portion of the study, there were no indications of racial prejudice. There is only an awareness of racial differences.

The numbers in parenthesis following each quotation indicates the page on which the references to racial or ethnic differences were found.

The Northeast

**Mama Hattie's Girl**

1. "Nobody's payin' money to colored women to wash anymore." (38)
2. "For years I had me some good white folks to work for." (38)
3. "Of course I think you look almost white," said Rose Marie. "What I mean is--sort of Spanish." (114)
4. "My mother wouldn't let me go in the colored section where you live," said Rose Marie frankly. (115)
5. "We have children of many races and from many countries -- Japanese, Chinese, Mexican, European, Hawaiian and a great many Negro." (116)
6. "There's good and bad people, both colored and white." said Miss Hattie, "but most people are good." (152)
7. "There's a few bad ones in both races that cause most of the trouble." (152)

**Berries in the Scoop**

1. "Grandma and Mother spoke in Portuguese when they talked
together." (21)

2. "Peter Dias brought a record-player with Spanish and Portuguese records." (99)

**We Live in the City**

1. Finnegan laughed too. "Irishmen don't need overcoats." (37)

**The Southeast**

**Bayou Suzette**

1. The Indian girl rose and followed her. (11)
2. "Where she come from? She's Injun, ent she?" (65)
3. "She don't like to be called 'Sabine' no more than we like to be called 'Cajun'" (103)

**Judy's Journey**

1. Several truckloads of Negro families arrived from Florida. (111)
2. "Here, you!" she said, choosing a little colored girl with a sober face and a kerchief tied round her head. (113)
3. The grower had truckloads of pickers brought out every day from Norfolk, crowds of Negro families. (165)
4. Scores of pickers, black and white, were taken to the orchards each day. (172)
5. She turned to the Italian girl and asked suddenly, "Is this up north?" (174)
6. One day in the playground, a little colored girl had a fall. (191)
7. "I like the things Judy told us," said Ramon a Mexican boy. (194)
Cotton in My Sack

1. The Negro pickers in the next field were singing. (5)
2. Mexicans and Negroes, city and country people filled the aisles. (24)
3. "Or an old colored woman?" asked Joanda. (52)
4. He also brought two truckloads of Negro choppers of all ages out from town. (104)
5. The store was crowded with many people, Mexicans, Negroes and whites. (121)
6. "We're all the same color when the lights are out," she said softly. (122)
7. A crowd of some fifty Negro pickers were at work in the next field. (123)
8. "It must be the colored people down on the by-o fishing." (170)

The Far West

San Francisco Boy

1. Her father ran the Italian Market. She lived in Little Italy, not far from Chinatown. She said she liked Chinese girls. (84)
2. With them were three Mexican boys and a small colored boy. (114)

The Southwest

Texas Tomboy

1. "It's guaranteed to curl your hair and make you yell like an Indian." (17)
2. "Si, senor," said the Mexican. "My name Pilar, this my boy Salvador." (28)

3. The Mexicans walked away. (30)

4. Charlie and Bones sat down and played ranch with the little Mexican boy. (37)

5. "She's ridden bareback so long, just like an Indian kid." (31)

6. "Are you that Mexican shepherd's boy?" (110)

Boom Town Boy

1. He put them in the cans the Indian children had brought. (6)

2. The Indian's expression did not change. (20)

3. Then he saw White Cloud, the old Otoe Indian come in. (76)

4. He saw Indian squaws wearing bright-colored shawls and Indian men with braided hair. (117)

The Northwest

Prairie School

1. At the main intersection the Indians were dancing in the street. (28)

2. After sleeping an hour, the Indian boy woke up. (124)

3. The Indian boy smiled as if he were joking, then his face turned sad, with all the tragic sadness of his race. (124)

As the study progressed, it became more evident that the awareness of racial differences was more prevalent in certain regions of the United States than in others.

Howard Odum explained this condition on the basis of the lack of
inherent racial differences:

There is a great and cumulative mass of racial differentials due to explainable causes and often so numerous and powerful as to appear in reality to be fundamental differences. This distinction between differences and differentials assumes at once that races, instead of being inherently different, are group products of differentials due to the cumulative power of the physical and folk-regional cultural environment... There are on every hand numerous differentials in the environment, living standards, treatment, cultural backgrounds, which when continued long enough, become powerful mores wrought out through cumulative folkways, such that they assume the proportions of tradition, authority and facts. And then, of course there are the measurable differentials of color and pigmentation, and of cultural heritage which to all practical intents and purposes appear as differences. 38

Conflicts. In a preceding section of the study, conflicts were divided into two groups; natural conflicts, and conflicts among fellowmen.

In the present section of the study, an attempt was made to determine how the people, in the various regions of the United States, expressed their ideas and feelings concerning the conflicts which effected them.

The number in parenthesis indicates the page number in which the quotation was found.

Prairie School

1. "I went rattlesnake-hunting up on Thunder Butte," said Emil, and I killed ten rattlesnakes." The little children looked at him wide-eyed, and full of respect. (14)

2. "Papa thought there wouldn't be no crop at all. First we had hail, then drought, then it rained and brought green lice and the grasshopper. But they've got to harvest what's left." (15)

Boon Town Boy

1. "Saddest funeral I ever been to," said Liza wiping her eyes, "It's that little Soaper girl—Annie. Her mother'll never get over it." (151)

2. "With all the money we get from the oil company, we can buy land somewheres else and build a church ten times as big." (152)

3. "But we live here, and we want our church here," spoke up a woman. (152)

San Francisco Boy

1. "You want me to arrest him?" asked the policeman. "I am a wise and thoughtful man," said Mr. Chew. "I have but one wish and that is to live in peace with my neighbors." "We Chinese believe that it is the father's duty to reprimand the son when he behaves badly." (133)

2. "You can have your ole fields and your ole cotton and your little ole piecy house as full of holes as a sieve!" snapped Judy. "But you can't have the sun nor the blue sky nor the moon'n'stars, nor the sunset." (3)

Prejudices. Prejudices are generalized feelings of "againstness"
and social prejudices are such feelings addressed toward a particular group. Such prejudices are often exhibited in a person's statements, though he may not act upon them in an open way. It was found that many of these prejudices were usually based upon a stereotype.

It was found, in the novels, that prejudices were exhibited in discrimination against various groups, individuals, and institutions openly as well as in more subtle respects.

As Clark Wissler pointed out in *Man and Culture*:

All individuals are bred in a culture group in whose superiority they firmly believe, and for whose continuity, in a crisis, they would die. People of one culture group figuratively build fences between themselves and outsiders. They are disposed to regard their group as the center of their existence, nourishing collective sense of pride, asserting a sense of group worthfulness, and exalting the cultures tested values and standards. They are bent upon saving their own individuated group life.39

This idea, as expressed by Clark Wissler, seemed to be the basis for the prejudices portrayed, in the novels, as the persons involved communicated their ideas and feelings toward other groups and individuals.

**The Northeast**

*Mama Hattie's Girl*

1. Negroes were not served in a particular restaurant.

2. "Colored people are bad and tough."

*Project Boy*

1. "Project kids!" "What can you expect from them?"

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The Southeast

Bayou Suzette

1. "One of them good-for-nothing half-breed Indians."
2. "A dirty Indian."
3. "A dirty savage."
4. "I hope them Indians won't start coming around."
5. "Sabine."
6. "Cajun" (The bayou French people)
7. "Indians can't be trusted."
8. "Indians en't got no moral sense."
9. "We do not do things like that here. We're not Indians."

Strawberry Girl

1. "We don't want no Yankees in our school."
2. "Pa said we don't need to get book-larnin."
3. "Shoo! Shoo!" cried Birdie, trying to drive the birds away,
   "Go visit the Yankees."

Blue Ridge Billy

1. "So ye're one of them city fellers."

Judy's Journey

1. "We don't have no truck with them biggaty Yankees."
2. "All them rich Yankee millionaires come down here and lie in
   the sun on Palm Beach and forget how cold it is up north."
3. "We send all the stuff up north for them Yankees to eat."
4. "Here come the shanty kids."
5. "You're hillbillies."
6. "They're mostly Crackers, born in Georgia or Florida."
7. "Who'd want a big overgrown bean-picker at their party?"
8. "A snooty Yankee from Hartford."
9. Her parents had told her about mean, thieving Yankees.
10. "Won't ride in no Yankee's car."
11. "Plenty people here in this town need work, without outsiders comin' in."
12. "White trash."
13. "Hillbillies from Tennessee."
14. "You just want to stay up north and be a Yankee!"

Cotton in My Sack

1. "We don't have no truck with books."

Children are not born with the feelings and ideas of prejudice which were expressed in the novels. "Everyone of us is both a creature of our culture and a carrier of it, in that he passes it along."

This idea suggests a danger as a result of ideas and feelings of prejudice. In the novels, it caused characters to act and speak without thinking.

Such emotional reactions, not checked at all by rational considerations, slow up desirable social processes. When prejudices come in the door, justice, amity, understanding, and cooperation fly out the window. A community of cultures cannot be made to integrate if each group making up a population acts upon a basis of automatic emotional responses. 

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\[\text{Chase, op. cit., p. 64}\]

\[\text{Francis J. Brown and Joseph Slabey Roucek, One America, p. 431.}\]
Dialect and Terminology. The dialect and terminology which was used by the characters, in the novels, was determined by the culture of the region.

Stuart Chase points out that,

We cannot talk usefully about a language without talking about culture, for they are inseparable. The most important element in any culture is language, not only for day-by-day communication, but for preserving the community from generation to generation. 42

The people, in the novels, used many picturesque words and phrases to communicate their ideas and feelings. They were listed, according to region, as follows:

The Northeast

_Mama Hattie's Girl_

1. "I'm fixin' to order a new dress."
2. Carried mama to the doctor
3. Mealing the mullet

_Getting ready to order a new dress._
_Took mama to the doctor._
_Dipping fish in cornmeal._

_Berries in the Scoop_

1. quahogs
2. Jag.-d' jagaseda
3. linquisa
4. munchoop
5. Kanjsha

_clams_
_lima beans with onions and rice_
_frankfurters_
_succotash_
_chicken fricassee_

The Southeast

_Bayou Suzette_

1. By'a
2. gallery
3. crevasse

_bayou_
_porch_
_levee_

---

42 Chase, op. cit., p. 6.
Peanuts for Billy Ben

1. peas
2. chop
3. boil the pot
4. lay them by

peanuts
hoe
get dinner
leave them alone

We Live in the South

1. gallery
2. branch
3. carry

porch
creek
take

Strawberry Girl

1. Iffen
2. hit
3. cooters

if
it
turtles

Blue Ridge Billy

1. hit
2. yartin
3. git'tar
4. banjer
5. poke of meal
6. tote
7. freshet
8. it's a so tale
9. dulci-more
10. high-sheriff
11. wish-book

it
digging herbs
guitar
banjo
bag of meal
carry
flood
its a true story
dulcimer
sheriff
mail order catalogue

Judy's Journey

1. hit
2. You dotta de goat?
3. You fell-a-better?

it
Do you have a goat?
Do you feel better?

The Far West

San Francisco Boy

1. herb shop

pharmacy

The Middle States
We Live by the River

1. chute
2. creek

The Southwest

Texas Tonboy

1. our country
2. red hots
3. levis
4. our ranch
5. tiny red peppers
6. jeans or trousers

Boom Town Boy

1. carping
2. rock hounds
3. royalty peddlers
4. spudding-in
5. towers
6. shooter
7. geologists
8. people who lease potential oil land
9. begin to drill
10. tours
11. person who sets off dynamite

The Northwest

Prairie School

1. teacherage
2. kuga
3. wuerst
4. school teacher's house
5. cakes
6. sausage

Although the preceding dialects and terminology may seem strange to some of us it must be remembered that they are accepted in a particular region. To the people in the region where it is used, the dialect or terminology is not at all strange.

A particular incident taken from Judy's Journey seemed adequate to explain the feeling which was found to exist in all regions:

"I don't guess we can help how we talk," said Mrs. Holloway. "It depends on where you come from, don't it? People talk different in different parts of the country, but long as we can
understand each other, we needn't pay no mind."  

Superstitions.

We were provided with folklore in our early years—stories of fairies and imps, ghosts and devils, and mystic meanings in simple things. We accepted them on the authority of our parents, or the even more compelling authority of our older playmates. Throughout life they remain as part of our common culture pattern. Because they were learned early and during our most impressionable years, they have a firm hold, and no matter how unreasonable, are often difficult to shake off.

Some superstitions are supernatural, some unnatural. Some are mere whimsey, others fearsome. But the number and diversity of superstitions ideas that thrive all about us in this age of science is impressive.

The Northeast

Mama Hattie's Girl

1. Sardines will cure mumps quickly.
2. When your right hand itches you will get a letter from someone you want to hear from.
4. Bad luck to start a journey on Friday.
5. Seven years bad luck to break a mirror.

Ferries in the Scoop

1. Killing snakes and frogs will make it rain.

The Southeast

Bayou Suzette

1. Every moonlight night the ghost of Jean LaFitte rides his white horse across the road by the Bayou.
2. Bad luck to use tools on Good Friday.

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\(^{13}\)Lois Lenski, Judy's Journey, p. 57

\(^{11}\)Claudia de Lys, A Treasury of American Superstitions, p. 51.
We Live in the South

1. Put salt on alligator's tail to catch it.

Strawberry Girl

1. Gopher turtles come out at twelve o'clock each day.
2. Unlucky to buy a Bible.

Blue Ridge Billy

1. A sow can see the wind and tell when the weather is going to change.
2. It's bad luck to burn sassyfrass wood.
3. It's bad luck for a woman to go near a man hunting.
4. A dream will come true if you are sleeping under a new quilt for the first time.

Judy's Journey

1. Belief in fortune teller.
2. Windows painted blue to keep the ghosts out.

Cotton in My Sack

1. An extra place was set at table at Christmas dinner for uninvited guest.
2. Ghost.
3. If you eat black-eyed peas on New Year's, you will have plenty of money the rest of the year.

The Far West

San Francisco Boy

1. Black chickens are good for sickness and fever.
2. Ghosts.
3. Everything clean for New Year--brings good luck.
4. Shoot firecrackers to drive away evil spirits.
5. A bird is a good omen.

The Southwest

Texas Tomboy

1. Wild dove is sign of rain.
2. When coyote speaks to the sun in the morning, he sings a rain song. But when he speaks to the moon at night he is singing of dry weather to come.
3. Crawling snakes are a sign of dry weather.
4. Dry-land turtles are a sign of rain.

Boon Town Boy

1. Use of witch sticks to locate oil.

The superstitions which were portrayed, in the novels, all seemed to have human origin. They had the convictions which come with long familiarity, and they could not be denied the people in spite of their knowledge of scientific laws.

Family Life. The relationship of family life to the social function Communicating Ideas and Feelings were a result of the responsibility which falls to the family, for teaching the individual the habits, customs, and rules for behavior which a person begins to learn almost as soon as he is born.

The Northeast

An illustration taken from Mama Hattie's Girl is a good example of people in one region expressing their ideas and feelings concerning life in another region.

All their lives, the children had heard stories about "up north." Some members of every family had been there and brought back glorified reports. The difficulties were always made light of or forgotten. Only the nice things were remembered and magnified. "Up north" became a heaven within reach on earth, especially in the mind of the children.\footnote{Lois Lenski, Mama Hattie's Girl, p. 7.}
The Southeast

*Bayou Suzette* illustrated several family customs which are practiced by the people living in the bayou country of Louisiana.

Lagniappe was a custom practiced by the merchants of this region. It was customary, after a purchase, for the storekeeper to make a generous gesture and offer some trifle as a gift.

The description of the cemetery illustrates a custom practiced by the families of this region:

They came to a small grave inside a white picket fence. At its head stood a gabled shadow-box, about two feet high, with a cross at its peak. The front was enclosed with glass. Inside, a bunch of paper roses filled a blue glass vase, and a china-headed doll, dressed in a calico dress sat staring. "That is my sister's doll-baby," explained Suzette. Mama put it in the grave-box, so she won't get lonely, when she sleeps in the graveyard.46

"The Indians really believe that," he said. "They believe that when a person dies, another one can come and take his place. Marteel was only carrying out an old tribal custom." 47

In *Strawberry Girl* it was the traveling dentist who communicated the ideas and feelings of the people by carrying the news from one community to another.

In *Blue Ridge Billy* it was the invitation to stay for dinner which seemed to be a universal custom of people of all regions.

Another expression of ideas concerning the north by people of the southeast region was expressed in *Judy's Journey*:

46 Lois Lenski, *Bayou Suzette*, p. 79.
"A neighbor of mine went, first, just to see what that-ere part of the world was like. He made a heap o'money and come back home and told his neighbors. The next year other families went and tried it. They all come back with their pockets full o' cash for the winter. That-ere farmer up in Jersey treats us fine. Gives us a two-story house to live in..."

"A real house?" gasped Mama.

The communications of feelings was portrayed in Cotton in My Sack as follows:

The red house was empty now. It was shabby and run-down. Now the beautiful glass door was gone, and the house was shorn of its glory, shorn of life, of all those varying activities of a group of human beings which could make of so shabby a building a home.

The Far West

In San Francisco Boy there were ideas and feelings portrayed, which affected the family life of the people, similar to those expressed in all regions of the United States.

"People in the city are not friendly," said Felix. "Even those in our own apartment house never speak to us."

"There was no peace and quiet at all. There were no trees to climb."

In this novel there are several Chinese proverbs by which the people of this region lived. These proverbs were used by the elder

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48 Lois Lenski, Judy's Journey, p. 86.
50 Lois Lenski, San Francisco Boy, p. 10.
51 Ibid., p. 10.
generation to communicate their ideas and feelings to the younger
generation:

"Better to keep a friend than to have a dollar." 52

"In this life there is only one thing to do, repay evil with
good." 53

The Middle States

In Corn Farm Boy there is, also, a portrayal of the communicat-
ing of ideas and feelings concerning family life of the region. The
quotation below indicates the advantages which the family enjoyed by
living on a farm in this particular region:

"There are plenty of advantages right here. There is always
clean fresh air, rain, and bright sunshine. There are plants and
animals to love and care for. Living close to nature gives you
something that is missing in town. I wouldn't want to bring up
my children anywhere but here." 54

"Nargy had never been to the city before. She began to ask
questions. Why were the houses so close together? Why were the stores
so tall? Where were all the people going?" 55

An episode was portrayed, in the novel, which emphasized the
idea that all people are basically alike in all regions:

"Nargy stared wide-eyed at the flying girl from Nebraska. Then

52 Ibid., p. 73.
53 Ibid., p. 160.
54 Lois Lenski, Corn Farm Boy, p. 66.
55 Ibid., p. 147.
she whispered to her mother. 'She wears blue jeans. She looks just like a plain Iowa girl to me.' Why wouldn't she?' Mom laughed."

The Southwest

**Texas Tomboy** expressed the feelings of the closeness of families as was portrayed in all regions.

"I thought I wanted to live in town, but even without conveniences, this is a real home here. I can't leave Dan alone on the ranch from Monday morning until Saturday night. We want to stay with him—he needs us."

The preceding are specific cultural conditions which were expressed in the novels. They portrayed the methods used by the members of the regions to communicate ideas and feelings which related directly to their family life.

**Metropolitan Areas.** The expression of ideas and feelings concerning metropolitan areas, as opposed to rural areas, were portrayed as follows in the novels:

1. "To me it was like country," said Felix sadly. "They always have grass in the country." (This quotation implied the lack of grass in the city).

2. "There were too many people in the city. Felix was always pushing into them or being pushed off the sidewalk."

---

3. "People in the city are not friendly," said Felix. "Even those in our own apartment house never speak to us. Nobody tries to be kind to us."

4. "In the city, we have no contact with the good earth and plants and animals," said Father. "We must not cut the cord that binds us to all living things."

In Judy's Journey there was a portrayal of expression of feelings concerning metropolitan life.

"In the city, all of the houses are so close together, we were packed in like sardines in a box. You cannot breathe, you cannot sleep for the noise, and you cannot see the sky. The children have no place to play, but in the street."

Following are the portrayals of communicating ideas and feelings concerning rural areas as opposed to metropolitan areas.

In Strawberry Girl emphasis was put on the idea of "company and passing strangers always stayed for meals."

In Corn Farm Boy the advantages of rural life were portrayed.

"There are plenty of advantages right here. There is always clean fresh air, rain, and bright sunshine. There are plants and animals to love and care for. Living close to nature gives you something that is missing in town."

Esthetic and Spiritual Values. The communication of ideas and

60 Ibid., p. 10.
61 Ibid., p. 29.
62 Lois Lenski, Judy's Journey, p. 177.
63 Lois Lenski, Corn Farm Boy, p. 66.
feelings as they relate directly to esthetic and spiritual values are portrayed in the novels as follows:

**Judy's Journey**

It was hard to say goodbye to the Gibsons or to know how to thank them. You couldn't thank people for treating you like human beings. They would always be in debt to the Gibsons. The kind of debt you could never repay—the debt of kindness.\(^{64}\)

**Bayou Suzette**

Martel let the birds out of all the traps she could find. "The little birds, they my brothers. They not stay all time in a cage. Now, they fly in the sky-high, high, like the clouds. They sing all day, they sing because they happy, they sing because they free."\(^{65}\)

**Names.** It seemed relevant to this study to include a section dealing with "names." This was a cultural condition which was found to exist in all regions. However, emphasis was placed on this condition in some regions more than in others.

Eva Knox Evans says that most first names in the English language come from old Hebrew or Latin words. Usually we are named for a relative or friend, or parents, sometimes, pick one because they like the sound of it."

It was found, in the novels, that most of the names resulted from the latter, and others were given because of the ethnic background of the region, while others were given because they reflected the

\(^{61}\) Lois Lenski, *Judy's Journey*, p. 122

\(^{65}\) Lois Lenski, *Bayou Suzette*, p. 98

\(^{66}\) Eva Knox Evans, *People are Important*, p. 27.
person's personality.

It was also found, in the novels, that the first and middle names of a person are used to address him in certain regions of the United States.

The Southeast region is the one in which names were emphasized to the greatest extent, and where the first and middle names are used to address a person.

Peanuts for Billy Ben

Billy Ben

Strawberry Girl

Jefferson Davis Slater  Dovey Endora
Bihu  Berthenia Lous
Daniel Alexander  Elema
Dixie Lee Francine  Mary Jim
Lank  Latrelle
Rofelia  Shad
Billie Sue  Roxie May
Kossie  Kessie
Zephy  Azulcy

Blue Ridge Billy

Sarey Sue

Judy's Journey

Joe Eob  Tessie Henrietta
Calla  Gwyn Lyle
Arlie  Mary John
Miiki  Crenna May

The Middle States

In the Middle States there was a continuation of the use of first and middle names.

Lola Mae  Sammy Joe
Pride. Pride is a by-product of the transmission of the class culture. The child probably gets this attitude from the fact that he is born of a certain class in a given region.

It was noted, in the novels, that pride was expressed in varying degrees of class culture as the people involved communicated their ideas and feelings.

The Southeast

Bayou Suzette

Suzette, with her French background, was very indignant when a member of her family was accused of stealing. "The Durands, they not steal." This quotation emphasized the pride in the family name.

"When our friens come to call, M'sieu', we give coffee to drink," said Suzette, with dignity. "We not too poor to be polite."

"Oh no, no, M'sieu', said Suzette, drawing back. 'No merci, M'sieu' I couldn't take no pepp'mint stick today.' Suzette's pride would not let her accept the gift."

Cotton in My Sack

The girls were given a free lunch at school. The mother's reaction to the situation indicated the family's pride in accepting charity:

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67 Lois Lenski, Bayou Suzette, p. h.
68 Ibid. p. 8.
69 Ibid. p. 11.
"Free lunch!" exclaimed Mama. "Thinks we're poor, does she?"

"It was hard to ask a favor of Mrs. Shands. Only her desperate need could make her go."

"What do you mean by making my children eat a free lunch?" demanded Mama. "Think we're too poor to pay for it?"

Strawberry Girl

"Birdie looked at the holes in the knees of the boy's old overalls and understood how fierce was his pride."

Judy's Journey

The women of a local charity organization had heard about the migrants camped on the outskirts of town and had come to help.

"We don't need help," said Mama. "We'll make out. We always have."

"We're not destitute, and we don't take charity off nobody. We still got our pride."

"Guess we don't need their old presents," said Judy. "We're makin' out by ourselves. We're makin' out fine."

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70 Lois Lenski, Cotton in My Sack, p. 37.
71 Ibid., p. 83.
72 Ibid., p. 60.
73 Lois Lenski, Strawberry Girl, p. 65.
74 Lois Lenski, Judy's Journey, p. 56.
75 Ibid., p. 58.
76 Ibid., p. 170.
The feeling of family pride was expressed in *San Francisco Boy*.

"He wanted to begin all over again—with the regained love and respect of his family. They did not make him feel like a culprit. They tried to rebuild his own self-respect. This would help to restore his prestige in the neighborhood."  

There were three instances, in the novels, in which the communication of ideas and feelings were related to "neighbors."

1. The novel, *Cotton in My Sack* provided the following episode:

"It's a hundred and fifty dollars, Dave," said J. T. "Guess where it came from."

"Likely there's a Santa Clause after all," said Daddy.

"It came from your neighbors, Dave," said J. T. "They all knew what a hole you were in by that big hospital bill, and they wanted to help. Some gave a little, some gave a lot, each gave what he could."  

2. Also, in *Cotton in My Sack*, the following illustration occurred: Mrs. Shands bought groceries, coal oil, and medicine for Joanda's family, even though, it meant going into debt herself.

3. In *Texas Tomboy* Charlie had always been taught to hate the nesters.

Mrs. Duffy began to talk and Charlie listened. She told about taking their homestead claim, and how they had lived in a tent for a year and a half. Little Mike had gathered mesquite leaves to serve for a carpet. At the end of three years, they had made three hundred dollars worth of improvements—a well and a windmill and a one-room house fourteen feet square. To get the well, Jake traded his horse and saddle to the driller. They had to have water.

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77 Lois Lenski, *San Francisco Boy*, p. 156.
78 Lois Lenski, *Cotton in My Sack*, p. 57.
Charlie had never questioned how the Duffy's had come to the neighborhood. They had always been called nester-outsiders, who had no business there. Now she was beginning to feel uncomfortable. For the first time she saw things from the Duffy's point of view.79

Democracy. There were three instances in the novels, in which democracy was related in terms of communicating ideas and feelings:

Mama Hattie's Girl

"You see, Lula Bell, we are all trying to be friends," said Miss Jarvis, "even though we come from different races and backgrounds. We don't always succeed, but we are trying. That's a democracy. You'll help by being kind and friendly to the other children, won't you?" 80

Judy's Journey

"There's plenty of places to go. It's a free country, I reckon."81

"This is the only country in the world where all men are free and equal—that's what we stand for anyway."82

The object of the preceding section of the study was to relate certain cultural conditions, that were found to exist, in the novels, to the social function Communicating Ideas and Feelings.

It was found that there were thirteen cultural conditions portrayed which related to the social function. The cultural conditions were portrayed through the use of language and other symbols of communication to express need, desire, and emotions. "These symbols of

79 Lois Lenski, Texas Tomboy, p. 11b.
80 Lois Lenski, Mama Hattie's Girl, p. 117.
81 Lois Lenski, Judy's Journey, p. 9.
82 Ibid., p. 31.
VI. PROVIDING EDUCATION

In the United States the schools are looked upon as one of the primary institutions for transmitting cultural values from one generation to the next.

The object of this section of the study was to determine what emphasis was placed upon the provision of education, in the novels, and how the cultural conditions portrayed were related to it.

Education was mentioned or implied a total of eighty-eight times in the novels. Sixty-nine times it was related to the cultural condition, institutions. Six times it was mentioned in connection with the cultural condition, family life; two times in relation to rural areas.

Education was of Great concern to the people from the Florida backwoods and the bayous of Louisiana, to the great cities of the Far West and Northeast regions of the United States. Table V alludes to the cultural condition, Education, as it was portrayed in the novels.

In San Francisco Boy the Chinese children attended American public school in the daytime, and Chinese evening school. This was done so that the children would not drift away from their family cultural heritage.

An incident in Strawberry Girl indicated the family's attitude toward education.

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### TABLE V

**PROVIDING EDUCATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Novels</th>
<th>Number of Times Mentioned</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Northeast</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Mama Hattie’s Girl</em></td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>We Live in the City</em></td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Berries in the Scoop</em></td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Project Boy</em></td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The Southeast</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Bayou Suzette</em></td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Peanuts for Billy Ben</em></td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>We Live in the South</em></td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Strawberry Girl</em></td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Blue Ridge Billy</em></td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Judy’s Journey</em></td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Cotton in My Sack</em></td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The Far West</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>San Francisco Boy</em></td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The Middle States</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Corn Farm Boy</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>We Live by the River</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The Southwest</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Texas Tomboy</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Boom Town Boy</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The Northwest</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Prairie School</em></td>
<td>6</td>
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</table>
Two boys did not come to school. When questioned by the teacher about their absence, their answer was "Pa says he needs us to home," said Gus. "Pa said we don't need to get booklarnin'," boasted Joe.

Also, in *Strawberry Girl* another incident indicated the children's reaction at not being able to attend school.

The school house was gone. It was burned to the ground. Birdie forgot her own loss in the light of this new calamity. She wanted to go back to school again.

"Now you won't mess up with no school, Jefferson Davis Slater!" she said in a good loud voice. "Nor learn to read nor write, will you?"

"No!" said Shoestring. He dropped his eyes and in his voice there was a note of sadness. "Now they ain't no more school to go to, I wish I might could go."8b

"I'll tell you something," Shoestring confided, I'm fixin' to go to school once the new schoolhouse is built."

"To learn to read and write?" asked Birdie in astonishment.

"Yes," said Shoestring. "Pa said he made a mistake to take Gus and Joe out of school, and he wants me to get a little booklarnin'."85

In *Judy's Journey*, the concern of the family was to keep the children in school. Judy's family followed the crops and she missed a lot of school. Judy was twelve years old, and was only in the third grade because she had missed so much school. She was an intelligent child, and she was catching up in her school work, when the family was forced to move on. This caused her mother and father to be greatly

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85 Ibid., p. 188.
concerned for her education.

Rural Areas.

"All the schools in the neighborhood had closed right after Christmas. So many families were growing berries, it had been decided to give the children their vacation in the three winter months--the strawberry season--so they could pick berries. Throughout the strawberry area the schools were soon to become known as "Strawberry Schools." 86

In Blue Ridge Billy the boy had to walk across a footlog to get to school.

VII. PROVIDING RECREATION

Recreation is any diversion or activity which brings release from the tensions and strains accompanying work, and results in renewed energy and restored physical and mental well-being.

It was found, in the novels, that people in all regions took part in some form of recreation. Although the activities, which were of recreational value, differed from region to region, they provided the participants with one or more of the following: Companionship, excitement, physical exercise, adventure or new experience, self-expression, quiet and solitude or self-improvement.

The Northeast

Mama Hattie's Girl

1. fishing

86 Ibid., p. 107.
2. fish fry
3. climbing trees
4. listening to radio

We Live in the City
1. fire-hydrant shower in the summer
2. picnic

Project Boy
1. merry-go-round truck
2. picnic

Berries in the Scoop
1. bicycle
2. picnic
3. playing on the sea shore
4. bog party
5. ice skating

The Southeast

Bayou Suzette
1. fishing
2. Mardi Gras party
3. rowing boat

Peanuts for Billy Ben
1. fishing
2. peanut party (shelling peanuts)
3. fish muddle
4. possum hunting

We Live in the South
1. tree swings
2. Johnny-Over-The-Ocean game
3. oyster picnic

Strawberry Girl
1. fishing with trout line
2. turtle hunting
3. hunting
4. tree swings
5. turtle race
6. cane-grinding party
7. frolic (dance)
8. yard-plays
9. chicken-pilan party

**Blue Ridge Billy**

1. playing accordion
2. making banjo
3. singing
4. children built toy house with corn cobs
5. playing dulcimer
6. hunting
7. square dance

**Judy's Journey**

1. fishing
2. playing school
3. flower garden
4. gypsy dance

**Cotton in My Sack**

1. cotton boll fight
2. picnic

**The Far West**

**San Francisco Boy**

1. roller skating
2. flying kites
3. fishing
4. picnic
5. bicycle

**The Middle States**

**Corn Farm Boy**

1. riding hogs
2. riding cow
3. picnic
4. horseshoes
5. fishing

We Live by the River

1. Easter-egg hunt
2. carnival
3. picnic
4. television
5. hunting nuts
6. bicycle
7. fishing

The Southwest

Texas Tomboy

1. playing ranch with horned toads and lizards
2. playing Indian
3. buggy riding
4. fishing
5. hunting
6. bird-fry (picnic)

Boom Town Boy

1. picnic
2. cake-walk
3. catching frogs

The Northwest

Prairie School

1. picnic
2. county fair
3. horseback riding

Metropolitan Areas. There was only one recreational activity portrayed which could occur in a metropolitan area and not in a rural area.

In the novel, We Live in the City, the fireman turned on the fire
hydrant to give the children a shower on hot days.

Rural Areas. In the novels Strawberry Girl, Boom Town Boy, and Texas Tomboy, one of the greatest recreational activities which people had was a trip to town on Saturday.

Esthetic and Spiritual Values. In Blue Ridge Billy there were two instances in which the participants were provided with recreation by playing musical instruments (accordion, banjo, and dulcimer) and singing.

As the various regions of the United States were studied, it became evident that the recreation of the people was determined by their environment. Although there was not much difference in the type of recreational activities performed by the people of the various regions, some activities were more readily available to persons living in certain regions than in others.

VIII. ORGANIZING AND GOVERNING

Organization refers to the ways people relate themselves to one another. There are many organized groups which people join and from which they learn behaviors. Examples of these are: Boy or Girl Scouts, Hi-Y or Gra-Y for different age groups, 4-H Clubs, unions, business associations, service, political and social clubs. All of these groups affect the thinking, and sometimes the actions, of the members.

One of the most direct ways of recognizing the nature of an organization is to know the institution of which it may be a part.
Knowing that an organization is a business association, a church club, a government department or a family reveals something about its functions and the interaction patterns involved. These organizations were formed by people for particular purposes.

In the seventeen novels studied there were twenty-nine portrayals of cultural conditions which related directly to the social function Organizing and Governing. Three of the conditions dealt in the area of prejudice; nineteen related to institutions; five related to pride; one to neighbors; and three to democracy.

Prejudice. The three portrayals which dealt with the cultural condition "prejudice" occurred in the novel, Texas Tomboy. The condition existed as a result of the environment.

1. The conflict between sheepmen and cattlemen.
2. The conflict between farmers and cattlemen.
3. The conflict between nesters and land owners.

This condition portrayed groups of persons organized on the basis of common interest. However, John Cuber states that, "undeniably some of man's interests are common, but others are individualized or specialized, while some are openly antagonistic." 87

Institution. Whenever people live together in groups they need organization and some kinds of rules for conducting their relationships with each other. The organization set up by people for providing these rules is known as government. It is created by the people to perform

87 John F. Cuber, Sociology, p. 267.
functions and services for them.

As individuals, people are not able to supply many of the things they need. At the request of the people provision is made for rules, regulations, and agencies to protect all people and provide for the common needs of all.

The nineteen portrayals which were based on the cultural condition, Institutions were noted as follows:

The Northeast

1. The Salvation Army - Organization
2. police - Governing
3. democracy - Governing

The Southeast

1. sheriff - Governing
2. police - Governing
3. Salvation Army - Organization
4. Newspaper - Organization
5. Women's Philanthropic Society - Organization
6. Democracy - Governing
7. State Farmers' Market - Organization
8. State Police - Government
9. Farm Bureau - Organization
10. Hospital - Organization

The Middle States

1. Farm Bureau - Organization
2. Government - Governing

The Southwest

1. Sheriff - Governing
2. Women's Christian Temperance Union - Organization
3. Hospital - Organization
The Northwest

1. Police - Governing
2. Civil Aereonautics Association - Organization

**Pride.** The relationship of the cultural condition, "pride" to the social function Organizing and Governing was portrayed five times:

1. In *Judy's Journey* the family refused help from the Salvation Army.

2. There was a reluctance to have their picture taken and their story in the newspaper even if it would help them to get a job and a place to live.

3. They refused help from the Women's Philanthropic Society because they were too proud.

**Neighbors.**

1. The neighbors organized into a search party to help find the baby.

**Democracy.** The cultural condition democracy was mentioned three times in relation to the social function Organizing and Governing.

In *Judy's Journey* the idea of democracy was portrayed as follows:

This is the only country in the world where all men are free and equal—that's what we stand for anyway. The first settlers came here to git land, and for a long time everybody went west to git land. This country's always been a place where a man had the right to own a little piece of land.\(^8\)

Also in *Judy's Journey* another portrayal referred to democracy

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\(^8\) Lois Lenski, *Judy's Journey*, p. 31.
as follows:

"You got no right to camp here," growled the man. 89

"No?" said Papa. "It's a free country, ain't it."

Mama Hattie's Girl portrayed democracy in a different manner;

"You see, Lula Bell, we are all trying to be friends," said Miss Jarvis, "even though we come from different races and backgrounds. We don't always succeed, but we are trying. That's a democracy."

Lula Bell remembered some of the things Miss Jarvis had said. She wrote them down in her own words and said that her school was a little democracy and the United States a big one. 90

The last quotation seems to summarize the social function Organizing and Governing. In the light of cultural conditions portrayed, in the novels, the objective of the people living in all regions was to conserve their freedom through democracy.

IX. EXPRESSING ESTHETIC AND SPIRITUAL IMPULSES

The family may clean the yard, plant flowers, or beautify the house, and in this way they are expressing their esthetic impulses. Their spiritual needs may be met by worship at home or by regular attendance at church.

Arnold W. Green states that "church membership has been increasing more rapidly than population...however, historical comparison

89 Ibid., p. 42.
90 Lois Lenski, Mama Hattie's Girl, p. 117.
shows that spiritual influence has never been measured by a count of church members."

This idea was substantiated in the novels. In many regions of the United States people did not have access to a church. However, there was no lack of spiritual influence prevalent.

The cultural conditions which were related to the social function Expressing Esthetic and Spiritual Impulses were portrayed as follows:

Expressing Esthetic Impulses.

The Northeast

We Live in the City

1. Mike chose the prettiest plant for his mother.

Project Boy

1. The music sounded like spring.

2. They made a flower bed along the edge of their yard.

3. The flowers in the hospital yard were for sick people to enjoy.

Berries in the Scoop

1. There was a gold bracelet and a pair of gold earrings. There was a pretty brooch set with pearls.

The Southeast

Bayou Suzette

1. Each year, all summer long, there were roses to pick.

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91 Arnold W. Green, Sociology, p. 451.
Peanuts for Billy Ben

1. Peggy was going to get a new dress, new shoes, a new pocket book, and all the candy and ice cream she could eat.

2. She tied her pink hair ribbon around the hen's neck.

3. A full moon came up and shed a soft light over the little farmhouse.

4. Winter was over and spring had come. Birds were singing in the two cedar trees out front.

We Live in the South

1. The children walk on the soft pine needles. They sniffed the sweet smell of pine.

2. The piano was nice and shiny. The girl was so happy she could not talk.

3. The birds in the piney woods heard her music and sang with her.

Strawberry Girl

1. The mother took the pretty flowered plate from the shelf.

2. They painted the lard buckets blue to plant flowers in.

3. The organ music was rich and melodious. It was the nicest music she had ever heard.

4. The artificial flowers looked like real ones, freshly picked from a living rosebush.

5. A landscape of green fields, trees and sky began to glow under the magic of the man's hand.

Blue Ridge Billy

1. The boy watched the rosy glow turn to purple, then to deep
blue. He watched the mountains fade away in blue haze. Just to watch the sun go down each night made the whole day seem easier.

2. The smell of all these wild things were satisfying.

**Judy’s Journey**

1. The towns were full of white houses and green grass lawns with sprinklers going, and bright-colored flowers blooming.

2. Judy thought Angelina was the most beautiful girl in the world.

**The Far West**

1. There was a new blue birthday dress, new shoes and socks and new ribbons for the girl’s hair.

2. She untied the pretty ribbons and took the pretty papers off the boxes.

**The Middle States**

**Corn Farm Boy**

1. There was nothing more beautiful in the whole world than a brand new tractor. So graceful, so neat, so streamlined, so powerful—as strong as twenty or thirty horses.

2. The wind passing over the field made the corn rustle as though it were talking.

**The Southwest**

**Texas Tomboy**

1. After a good rain, the pasture would grow grass again,
and pretty wild flowers and leafy trees.

**Boom Town Boy**

To watch the green wheat grow and turn to gold at harvest time; to see trees blossom and bear fruit; to make friends of animals, wild and tame; to know the friendship of other men; to have time to think and hope, to work and pray—a man can't ask for more than that.

**The Northwest**

**Prairie School**

1. The prairie rolled and tumbled like the great waves of a mighty sea. There were no trees, and yet there was a grandeur and a majesty about this barren landscape. The brown velour texture of the grassy prairie slopes was beautiful.

**Expressing Spiritual Impulses**

**The Northeast**

**Hana Hattie's Girl**

1. The Lord can do anything.

**We Live in the City**

1. Meeting at church

2. Father said grace.

**Berries in the Scoop**

1. The family had all been to church.

2. We must not forget to thank God for being good to us.

3. A special feast day at church.
The Southeast

Bayou Suzette

1. No tools could be used on Good Friday.
2. Palm leaves were burned before the Virgin's statue.

We Live in the South

1. It was Sunday in the little churchhouse in piney woods. All the people were in church.
2. The Piney Woods Church was to have an All Day Sing.

Strawberry Girl

1. They were busy getting ready to go to church. Today was the All Day Sing and that meant taking dinner.
2. The congregation kept singing all day long. Nobody had to sit through it all. People kept going in and coming out. They sat or stood and talked in the yard, then came in and sang till they were tired and went out again.
3. Mrs. Slater bought a Bible from the salesman.

Blue Ridge Billy

1. Father did not like "tune-singing"—only hymns at the churchhouse.
2. "Just because the Lord made a plant so plentiful it can't be killed out, does not make it a weed."
3. "I know the Bible from cover to cover even if I can't read."

Judy's Journey

1. "This is no way to live. Never no meeting to go to, never no preaching, never no all-day singing."
2. They all went to inter-faith service and sat on plank benches in the shade.

Cotton in My Sack

1. They were praying to the Lord in long prayers to save her.

The Far West

San Francisco Boy

1. The Creator gives each person only so much food. If you want to waste it or use up your share too quickly you will be sure to starve.

The Southwest

Boom Town Boy

1. The father said grace.

2. Grandpa gave a hundred dollars to the church for a "thank-offering."

3. "I gave this land to the church. My father took this quarter-section in the Cherokee Strip opening, and he and my mother are buried here. As long as the land is used for Church and cemetery, it belongs to the congregation.

The Middle States

We Live by the River

1. They walked over the locks to go to church.

2. The family went to church together.

The Northwest

Prairie School
When I turned over the first strip of prairie sod, I remembered that no man had ever touched it before, since the day the good Lord made it.

**Holidays.** In each region there was an expression of esthetic and spiritual impulses through the celebration of various holidays.

**The Northeast**

**Project Boy**

1. Thanksgiving  
2. Halloween  
3. Christmas

**Berries in the Scoop**

1. Christmas  
2. Portuguese Christmas

**The Southeast**

**Bayou Suzette**

1. All Saint's Day  
2. Christmas  
3. Mardi Gras  
4. Easter

**We Live in the South**

1. Christmas

**Blue Ridge Billy**

1. Christmas

**Cotton in My Sack**

1. Christmas  
2. New Year's
The Far West

San Francisco Boy

1. Chinese New Year
2. Christmas

The Middle States

Corn Farm Boy

1. Fourth of July
2. Thanksgiving
3. Christmas

We Live by the River

1. Easter

The Southwest

Texas Tomboy

1. Christmas

The Northwest

Prairie School

1. Labor Day
2. Christmas

A region has been identified as a "unit part of the larger society, identified first in geographical terms, subsequently on the basis of trade and other economic considerations, and now increasingly on a cultural basis." 

The regional community is not as sharply defined geographically

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or politically as a city or state. Instead, the people of the region are conspicuously more interrelated and interdependent than they are with people of other areas.

The present chapter of this study dealt with the nineteen cultural conditions which were portrayed in the seventeen novels, and their relationship to the nine social functions. There were limitations noted, as the study progressed, which had an important bearing on the findings of the study.

First, there was the unequal number of novels written with the background setting in each of the six regions:

- The Northeast -- four novels
- The Southeast -- seven novels
- The Far West -- one novel
- The Middle States -- two novels
- The Southwest -- two novels
- The Northwest -- one novel

Second, there was the number of novels written about rural areas in comparison to metropolitan areas.

There were only three novels with a large city background. The other fourteen novels were, largely, written with a rural background.

Third, the subjective method used to determine the incidence of cultural conditions may vary with the person determining the incidence of mention.

In spite of these differences the original purpose of the study, which was to determine how cultural conditions and/or differences
coupled with our understanding of them can be portrayed to children, was not deterred because all regions were well represented.

In view of the findings of this portion of the study it was determined that the cultural conditions which were found to exist in all regions of the United States were based on four factors: (1) historical background, (2) physical environment, (3) economic structure, and (4) ethnic characteristics.
CHAPTER IV

AN ANALYSIS OF THE SEVENTEEN REGIONAL NOVELS

On the basis of the material accumulated in the preceding chapter, a criterion was developed on which an analysis of the seventeen novels could be undertaken.

There were four views which seemed to dominate, indirectly, in the novels. These views pointed out how the reader was enabled to understand cultural conditions and/or differences of children of other cultures; (1) Dependency of one region upon another; (2) Ideals of democracy were characterized in all regions; (3) All children have common needs; (4) The nine basic factors of human nature are present in all regions.

One of Miss Lenski's basic aims was "to create and foster a better understanding of children of other cultures." She accomplished this purpose by causing the reader to experience empathy for children of other cultures through the use of living conditions, racial differences, prejudices, and dialects and terminology.

1. HOW THE READER IS ENABLED TO UNDERSTAND CULTURAL CONDITIONS AND/OR DIFFERENCES OF CHILDREN OF OTHER CULTURES

1. Dependency of One Region Upon Another. One of the characteristics of a complex and highly developed economy, like that of the
United States, is the high degree to which the welfare of individuals and groups depends upon the welfare of others.

Awareness of this close interdependence should make us realize our own personal interest in the responsibility for the economic and social welfare of people in other regions whom we may never see. The thoughtless person may not be able to see a common bond between vegetable growers of Florida, the cotton growers of Arkansas, or the textile worker in New England. Closer reflection, however, makes it evident that neither group can sell their products to the other unless their respective incomes are high enough to make the purchase and their cultural conditions warrant the acceptance of it. For these economic reasons, the region forms an integral part of the nation. The prosperity of the nation as a whole, is tied up with the prosperity of each of the major regions.

The novels suggested that each region specialized in one or more products which had become necessities to all other regions in the process of performing the social function.

For example, in the novels, the Northeast was noted for its textile mills. The cotton and wool which were used in the mills were produced in the Southeast and Northwest regions respectively. The finished product was then exported to all regions.

The novels of the Southeast region suggested the distribution of many products which are used in all other regions of America. **Judy's Journey** and **Strawberry Girl** were concerned with the production of fruits and vegetables which are a necessity in the north where the
growing season is limited. In Blue Ridge Billy herbs were dug, prepared, and sent to large cities to be made into medicines for people in all regions. Many new uses for peanuts have been found in recent years. This important product was grown in southern Virginia by the families characterized in Peanuts for Billy Ben. The Southeast is the only region in the United States where cotton is grown to a great extent. It is, then, shipped to all regions to be made into many necessary articles.

The Middle States are known for the production of corn and hogs. An illustration from Corn Farm Boy suggested the dependency of all upon one for the production of pork: The family from Iowa had accompanied their shipment of hogs to the stockyards in Chicago. "Close at hand was a 'Buyers Shanty,' with telephone booths, where orders for pigs were received from all over the United States."

We Live by the River related the story of the people who fished for mussels. The shells of the mussels were sold to button factories for use on wearing apparel which was manufactured in other regions.

Texas Tomboy and Boom Town Boy were two novels describing life in the Southwest region of the United States. People in other regions depend upon the specialized products of the region more than any other. They are cattle and oil. An illustration from Boom Town Boy suggests the importance of the by-products of oil to other regions.

Oil means progress... Oil makes modern industry and transportation

1Lois Lenski, Corn Farm Boy, p. 151.
possible. I was reading in a magazine about oil— they call it 
petroleum, and they make hundreds of things out of it— kerosene, 
gasoline, lubricants, asphalt, linoleum, varnish, paints, cold 
cream, perfume, vaseline and even hair tonic.2

The content of the novels emphasized the close relationship 
between interdependency of regions and the economy of the region. This 
idea is summarized by Lucien Brocard:

The regional economy depends for its complete development upon 
the continuous contact with other regions, so that by cooperating 
with them, it may facilitate the movement of commodities and men. 
It is necessary to combine with the complex economic development, 
a certain geographical specialization of industry, by means of 
which the various communities may accentuate the prosperity of one 
another and of the whole nation.3

2. Ideals of Democracy Characterized in all Regions. Democracy 
is too often thought of only in a political sense.

But democracy is more than a political creed or system. It is, 
in the ultimate analysis, an idea, an attitude, a value, a spirit, 
which permeates every phase of life. It expressed itself in and 
through our religious, economic, scientific and social develop-
ment.4

This study was primarily concerned with the sociological aspects 
of the novels, consequently, the writer was more concerned with the 
meaning of social democracy. In the opinion of the writer, it means 
that every individual possesses a natural worth and a natural dignity 
which sets him apart from all other persons. Every individual must 
have a chance for the highest development of his personality. On the 

2 Lois Lenski, Boom Town Boy, p. 169.
3 Brocard, Lucien, Annals of the American Academy of Political and 
Social Science, pp. 84–85.
other hand, the individual must show respect for others whatever their race, nationality, religion, or social group. The best of our culture has been the result of these individuals and groups working and thinking in whatever fields they chose.

All of the ideals which characterize a democracy were evident in all of the novels. There was portrayed what might be called a democratic motive, which supplied to the children what the culture wanted to give them. In this case, it was the transmission of democratic ideals. We saw mountain white and Northern white, Southern Negro, Japanese-American, Chinese, and American children of foreign descent all living and learning together, peacefully and happily.

Each region was composed of persons living in the same general area and sharing common interests because they were living in close proximity. This suggested that the regions maintained one or more institutions such as the family, school, church, or government. These institutions were found to exist in all of the novels.

3. All Children Have Common Needs. Each child is unique, with his own individual backgrounds, abilities, strengths and weaknesses. Each child differs from every other in his physical, mental, and emotional development. Many educators agree, however, that every child has common basic needs which he is continually striving to satisfy. To satisfy these needs is a difficult task for any person, and the happiness we find depends upon our ability to make adjustments to them.

Educators, generally, accept a classification which includes the same specific needs:
A sense of belonging, of being wanted
Achievement and recognition
Emotional security
Freedom from fear
Freedom from intense feelings of guilt
Self-respect
Driving purposes
Understandings of the world in which we live.

An examination of the novels revealed that these needs were basic to all children in all regions. The stories seemed to have been written on the assumption of children's basic needs.

An illustration from the novels may help to clarify this idea:

Mama Hattie's Girl presented the poverty and insecurity, and the loneliness and frustrations of a little Negro girl as she was taken from her southern environment to a northern one.

Lula Bell and her mother were on a train going "up north." The train had a fifteen minute stop. The mother left the train to get a cup of coffee.

When Lula Bell saw her outside on the platform she became terrified.

"Mama!" she screamed, "Come back! Don't you go off and leave me!" Suddenly everything was all right again. There was her mother stepping up the coach steps, with a cup of steaming coffee in one hand and milk in the other.

This was an example of the lack of security. The illustration demonstrates the method used by the author, in all of the novels, to explain how children strive to achieve their basic needs.

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6 Lois Lenski, Mama Hattie's Girl, p. 83.
that function to the region, as indicated in the following Table VI.

There were certain limitations which determined the number of times referral was made to each of the social functions. These limitations needed to be considered, because they had a direct bearing to the analysis of the data collected.

First, there was a difference in the number of novels written about each region:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Number of Novels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Northeast</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Southeast</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Far West</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Middle States</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Southwest</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Northwest</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total...........17 novels

The difference in the number of novels resulted in a difference in the number of times referral was made to each of the social functions. Proportionately, however, it was noted that there was a great similarity.

Other limitations were a result of the differing needs of the people in the region based upon the historical background, physical environment, economic conditions, and the ethnic characteristic of the region.

A discrepancy in the number of times the functions were mentioned, in a region, was traced to one of the four limiting factors which have been mentioned above.

Performance of the social function Protecting and Conserving Life, Health, Resources, and Property disclosed that there seemed to be
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>The Northeast</th>
<th>The Southeast</th>
<th>The Far West</th>
<th>The Middle States</th>
<th>The Southwest</th>
<th>The Northwest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Protecting and Conserving Life, Health, Resources and Property</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Producing Distributing and Consuming Food, Shelter and Clothing</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Creating and Producing Tools and Technics</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Transporting People and Goods</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Communicating Ideas and Feelings</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Providing Education</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Providing Recreation</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Organizing and Governing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Expressing Esthetic and Spiritual Impulses</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
a much greater need for this activity in the Southern Regions and Middle States than there was in the Northern Regions or the Far West. Possibly the reason for this is a result of the work done by the government in the area of conservation in the Northeast and Western States within the past twenty years.

Study of the function Producing, Distributing, and Consuming Food, Clothing, and Shelter showed that, proportionately, there was more reference made to this activity in the Northeast than any other. This was a result of the historical background, the physical environment and the economic condition of the region. When the country was being settled many of the people settled and stayed in the Northeast. The result was that this region became our most heavily populated region. The physical environment and the great population caused it to become a great industrial region which, in turn, resulted in the region becoming economically sound.

The great number of times the social function was referred to in the novels pertaining to the Southeast is a result of the diversity of people and culture in this region. Howard Odum says that:

The millions, living in this region, represents the original gateway to the West; they continue a gateway between the past and the future; and they constitute one of several blocks of the population of the Southeast, which afford abundant evidence to support the conclusion that, just as there is no longer a "South," so any blanket classification, "southern people," no longer constitutes an authentic characterization. Even within the restricted Southern Appalachian Region of some 200 counties in six states with an area of half hundred million acres, there is considerable diversity of people and culture.7

This diversity of people and culture indicated the need for more communication of ideas and feelings than in any of the other regions.

The other proportions of social functions and the number of times they were referred to in relation to the regions remained fairly constant.

II. HOW THE READER IS ENABLED TO EXPERIENCE EMPATHY FOR CHILDREN OF OTHER CULTURES

Another method used by Miss Lenski to enable her reader "to see beyond the rim of their own world," is to cause them to experience empathy for children of other cultures. This was done through reference to the cultural conditions, living conditions, racial differences, prejudices, and dialects and terminology.

By empathy we are able to put ourselves in the place of other persons so that what happens to them affects us just as much as if it had happened to us. Empathy is an important process in our development and socialization. It may result in real understanding and help free people from feelings of prejudice against those who are of a different culture.

1. Living Conditions. We Live in the City is a story of a world within a world. Miss Lenski described the streets, noisy with traffic; the subway rushing underground; the elevated railway as it shook the houses and rattles the windows. The story gives the reader an opportunity to contrast his own way of living with that of a large city.

Project Boy tells the story of people who lived in an Emergency Housing Project which was built on a dump near a large city. The only
place the children had to play was in the gravel courts, on the garbage
sheds, and in the surrounding dumps.

In Bayou Suzette the strange customs of living may well cause the
reader to experience a feeling of pity for the people of this region.

Strawberry Girl presents the living conditions of people living
in the Florida backwoods with all the attendant crudities, brutalities,
and cruelties. These people live a primitive life in an endless battle
with nature, with wild life, and with their fellow-men.

Miss Lenski portrayed the life of the migrant worker very vividly
in Judy's Journey. In the foreword to the novel she told of the plight
of these people as it was woven into the story.

These migrant children exist with only the bare necessities of
life. Many of them do not go to school at all, others go for only
a few months of the year, if the family stays in one place long
enough...They go to the field at six in the morning and return at
dark. They have never had books or playthings. Some of them are
not longer childlike, but are already old before they are ten.
They do not know how to play.8

The primary objective of the people in this novel was to find a
permanent home.

Miss Lenski used the same means to create a feeling of empathy
for the children in Cotton in My Sack. She said:

In their faces I saw a look of wisdom and kindness which only
children know, expressed with ease and certainty. They had seen
sorrow and so they were compassionate. They had seen meanness, and
so they valued goodness. They had endured hardship, and so theirs
was an attitude of escape by acceptance. They were ready for
whatever life might bring. And because sorrow, meanness, and

8
Lois Lenski, Judy's Journey, p. 10.
hardship were a part of their lives, they had a better understanding of the joy of living, which comes by a full sharing in human adventure.  

Through the reading of the novels the reader may share in the lives of these people, and live it vicariously through the means of a vivid, dramatic real-life story.

2. Racial Differences. Many nationalities have migrated from their homelands to make new homes in the United States. They brought with them their cultures. Some of their ideas and feelings were adopted by other people in the new environment and thus became a part of American culture. Some of these people remained unassimilated and lived in the ethnic island of which San Francisco's Chinatown is a good example.

The people of the latter group have better living conditions because they are living among people who are of the same nationality. In San Francisco Boy the reader was helped to experience empathy for this group as they longed for the familiar surroundings of their homeland to which most would never return.

People of different nationalities moved from place to place throughout the United States, and their identity was lost among the other cultures. Many of these became associated with the so-called minority groups of the United States. It was upon these groups that Miss Lenski focused attention as she helped the reader to experience empathy. Illustrations, from the novels, suggested the methods that were used.

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Lois Lenski, Cotton in My Sack, p. 11.
"I'm glad Grandpa and Grandma came to America," said Delores. "Instead of being Germans or Russians, we're Americans. Miss Martin told us that in America, people come from every country in the world."  

"Don't they look silly," giggled Ruby, "when they dance."

"Silly," answered Delores. "That's the way they've always done it."

"Since long before the white men came," added Miss Martin. "It's about all we've let them keep of their rightful heritage."  

"The boy smiled as if he were joking, then his face turned said, with all the tragic sadness of his race."  

"Marteel, she hear w'at the birds say to each other," replied the girl. Marteel, she hear w'at the wind say when it blow softly through the trees and shake the leaves. Marteel, she hear w'at the animals talk each other. Marteel she talk to them, she listen to all they say."  

In the novels, Miss Lenski characterized many such groups as these. Many of the attitudes, behavior, and concepts toward these people have been the result of fixed, unchangeable ideas called stereotypes.

Miss Lenski created conditions which found Chinese, mountain white, Northern white, Southern Negro, Japanese-American, Portuguese, Indian, and American children of foreign descent living and learning together, peacefully and happily.

12. Ibid., p. 124.
Each of these racial groups has made contributions to the common culture. Some of these contributions have lost their identities with the group which made them, but some are always identified as the contribution of particular racial groups to the strength and well-being of the nation.

3. Prejudices. An attitude which produces a fixed emotional response is called a prejudice. A person is prejudiced if he acts on his feeling, rather than on the evidence of what he knows about a person, idea, or situation. Within a common culture, beliefs and behaviors which conflict with each other existed side by side. The people of the regions portrayed in the novels had learned values which conflicted with other values. There was evidence that they believed in equality of opportunity, the dignity of man, and freedom for the individual. At the same time there were thirty-nine instances of prejudice exhibited.

Mama Hattie's Girl portrayed the most vivid example of prejudice.

A little white girl and a Negro girl were playing together. The Negro girl invited the white girl to her home. The white girl's response was:

"My mother wouldn't let me go in the colored section where you live," said Rose Marie frankly. "Colored people are bad and tough and always making trouble. They fight with knives...and my mother says it's dangerous for little girls."

These are the kinds of statements about whole groups of people that are often called stereotypes. They are not based on facts; they

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are not true; yet they are stated as though they were.

Stereotypes are learned. Children hear what their parents say about others. What they hear is often accepted, because they like and have confidence in the persons saying these things. Very often the people saying these things are repeating what they have heard. As they are passed by person to person they soon become common property of the entire culture.

Discrimination was another form of prejudicial behavior exhibited in the novels. In this case, the prejudice was expressed in the form of segregating racial and cultural minorities into a less desired position.

This idea was portrayed in Judy's Journey where the migrants were restricted to an area outside of the town proper, therefore, being denied the chance to share in the community life.

Another illustration was vividly portrayed in Texas Tomboy. The cattlemen discriminated against the sheep-men and the "dirt farmer."

There were other illustrations of prejudices portrayed in the novels. As was noted, they were based upon stereotypes.

Understanding the feeling of a person who is rejected or mistreated, or of a person who behaves irrationally because of frustrations which he has not learned to handle wisely helps free you from prejudice. Empathy may result in real understanding and is the cornerstone on which improved intergroup relations will rest.15

4. Dialect and Terminology. Most Americans speak English, however,

15 Lavone A. Hanna, Facing Life's Problems, p. 129.
there are distinct regional patterns of speech.

Linguistic area studies render suggestions on the influence of factors such as colonial settlement, geographical barriers, transport facilities, and social stratification on localizing or disseminating linguistic usages...Local and regional expressions are not likely to disappear from our language. Many of them survive because they stand for local or regional phenomena.16

There were as many different kinds of American speech as there were regions. Miss Lenski sacrificed the ease of reading the novels by retaining the picturesque speech of the regions so that the reader could gain a better understanding and feeling of a different people. All of the different kinds of speech used in the novels had a distinctive rhythm. As the novels were read, the speech of each region became more meaningful. The novels about the Northeast took on one rhythm, in Louisiana another, in Florida and the mountains another. Miss Lenski summed up the various speech patterns as could only a person who had actually heard them all:

When I remember the soft, velvety tones of the bayou-French people, the way they transfer our English words into their native French rhythm, when I hear the soft, lazy drawl of the Florida Crackers, of the mountain people with fine, old, forgotten, Elizabethan parases on their lips, it seems to me sacrilege to transfer their speech to correct, grammatical, School-Reader English... To me, this would be a travesty on all the beauty and character in the lives of these people.17

Consequently, Miss Lenski resorted to using the simplest words, with a minimum of distortions in spelling so that she could convey, to the reader, an understanding and feeling for people who live a life different from their own.

17Lois Lenski, Blue Ridge Billy, p. 15.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

I. SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to make a sociological analysis of the regional novels authored by Lois Lenski to determine how American cultural conditions and/or differences coupled with our understanding of them can be portrayed to children.

The first necessary step in the process was to determine the author's purposes and achievements in writing the novels. Studies of the author's life indicated that she had three important purposes in undertaking her work: (1) to show "through an artist's interpretation, a deeper meaning in the commonplace, and to make us see others as ourselves"; (2) "to help children see beyond the rim of their own world, and to make us see others as ourselves"; (3) to create a better understanding and more friendliness among the people of the different cultures which exist within our own country.

A study of all available reviews of the novels was made, coupled with the writer's own ideas gained by reading the novels, to determine if Miss Lenski had achieved her purposes. This was done with satisfactory results which reinforced the writer's idea that these were the proper novels to be used in the study.

The next step was to determine the criteria to be used. Several
sociological studies revealed that there were nine social functions which are thought to be present in all cultures at all times. The studies also revealed that there are numerous cultural conditions which exist in various cultures. The ways in which these social functions are performed depend upon the existing cultural conditions. The social functions of all cultures were:

2. Producing and Distributing and Consuming Food, Shelter and Clothing.
3. Creating and Producing Tools and Technics.
4. Transporting People and Goods.
5. Communicating Ideas and Feelings.
6. Providing Education.
7. Providing Recreation.
8. Organizing and Governing.
9. Expressing Esthetic and Spiritual Impulses.

There were nineteen cultural conditions portrayed, in the novels, which were directly related to the social functions listed above. In all instances portrayed more than one of the cultural conditions were related to each social function.

The nineteen cultural conditions portrayed in the novels were:

1. Migrant Workers
2. Dialects and Terminology
3. Occupations
4. Family Life
5. Metropolitan Areas
6. Rural Areas
7. Racial Differences
8. Prejudices
9. Esthetic and Spiritual Values
10. Conflicts
11. Institutions
12. Dress
13. Names
14. Pride
15. Superstitions
16. Houses
17. Holidays
18. Democracy
19. Neighbors

The final step in the preparation for the study was to divide the United States into proper regions. Howard Odum in his book,
American Regionalism suggested the sociological division which was used. The divisions, as suggested by Cordem, were the Northeast, the Southeast, the Far West, the Middle States, The Southwest, and the Northwest. The novels related to these regions as follows:

The Northeast

Mama Hattie's Girl
Berries in the Socoop
We Live in the City
Project Boy

The Southeast

Bayou Suzette
Peanuts for Billy Ben
We Live in the South
Strawberry Girl
Blue Ridge Billy
Judy's Journey
Cotton in My Sack

The Far West

San Francisco Boy

The Middle States

Corn Farm Boy
We Live by the River

The Southwest

Texas Tomboy
Boom Town Boy

The Northwest

Prairie School

This section of the study answered one of the questions which was needed to delimit the problem. This question was: What American
cultural conditions and/or differences, in terms of the social functions, did Miss Lenski portray in her seventeen regional novels?

It was found that, although, all of the social functions were present in all regions at all times, the activities (cultural conditions) which were performed to attain the social functions, varied from region to region. The variation was a result of the historical background, the physical environment, the economic condition, and the ethnic characteristics of the region.

When this portion of the study was completed, and the cultural conditions were properly related to the social functions two primary ideas became evident: (1) The reader was enabled to understand cultural conditions and/or differences of children of other cultures. (2) The reader was enabled to experience empathy for children of other cultures. These were the two basic ideas used in treating the material.

To enable the reader to understand the cultural conditions and/or differences of children of other cultures, Miss Lenski used four ideas. First, was the idea of the dependency of one region upon another. Each region possessed one or more outstanding features, but, in turn, each region depended upon the products and ideas developed in other regions for its very existence. Second, the ideals of democracy were characterized in all regions. Third, the children in all regions had common, basic, needs which must be met. Fourth, the nine basic factors of human nature were present in all regions.

Empathy involves understanding the feelings of other people who are rejected, mistreated, or in some other way different from the
majority. Miss Lenski accomplished this idea by enabling the reader to live vicariously the vivid, dramatic, authentic, real life story of people different from themselves. She did this by portraying, vividly, the living conditions of the various cultures, the effect of racial differences, the conditions which result from prejudices, and the personality of people as it was reflected through their dialects and terminology.

This treatment of the material which had been obtained through studying the novels answered the second question which was a delimiting factor of the study. This was: How does Miss Lenski treat the particular cultural condition of differences portrayed, to enable children of different environmental backgrounds to experience empathy and understanding of children in other cultures?

II. CONCLUSIONS

The final delimiting factor in the study was: What uses of Miss Lenski's regional novels appear feasible in the intermediate grades of the elementary school? An attempt to answer this question was developed in the concluding ideas which were gained from the study.

Children growing up in today's culture are certain to learn that the United States is made up of many people with similarities and differences. Beyond this, they need to develop the understanding that differences among people do not need to affect their friendliness toward them. Educators want the best for all children; the best in terms of building inner strength and socially acceptable techniques to
meet the ever-changing patterns of their lives.

There are many opportunities in the social studies program for children to recognize the worth of each individual, the moral responsibility of each to view his actions in light of the welfare of the group, the need for different kinds of jobs, the interdependence of all community workers, the value of cooperative group effort to solve common problems, and the need for laws and for institutions to serve men. These are the major functions group life as they were portrayed in the novels.

Fortunately, there are books, like those authored by Miss Lenski, through which children can live vicariously the ideals and experiences which are the common heritage of us all.

Hollis Caswell said:

The curriculum should be organized so as to emphasize the major functions of group life. It is believed that mere contact or acquaintance with phases of culture will not provide this emphasis. The relationship of knowledge, facts, and principles to social functions must be established by the school rather than left to chance.\(^1\)

Only as citizens are socially intelligent can they make wise choices. Social intelligence, however, is individually acquired from the group culture by an intelligent sharing in group experiences. The school must begin the process of intelligent study and evaluation of American culture. In order to function as competent citizens, children in our schools must be familiar with and sensitive to the problems of

\(^1\)

our American way of life.

The books written by Miss Lenski, and similar novels written by other authors of juvenile books could be included in the curriculum of the intermediate grades. The use of these and similar novels would certainly help the children to "see beyond the rim of their own world" and gain that "ultimate wisdom" which would foster in all American children a friendlier understanding of the many regions and people which make up the total picture of America today.
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