

HEROISM AND EXPERIENCE IN TWO CHILDREN'S NOVELS

by

KIRSTIN LEE HAMILTON

A THESIS

Presented to the Department of English
and the Honors College of the University of Oregon
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Bachelor of Arts

June 1999

APPROVED: _____



Professor Elizabeth Wheeler

An Abstract of the Thesis of

Kirstin Lee Hamilton for the degree of Bachelor of Arts
in the Department of English to be taken June 1999

Title: HEROISM AND EXPERIENCE IN TWO CHILDREN'S NOVELS

Approved: _____

Professor Elizabeth Wheeler

An author's inclusion of heroism in a children's novel provides child readers with valuable life experiences. An analysis of the divergent portrayals of heroism in two award-winning children's novels, *Island of the Blue Dolphins* and *Call it Courage*, recognizes the contrasting experiences that the two novels provide for child readers. The third person narration of *Call it Courage* creates a distanced perspective for the reader, while the first person narration of *Island of the Blue Dolphins* creates a personal perspective for the reader. Each author forms a different version of heroism in each novel, and the differences in perspective create two contrasting experiences for child readers. While the protagonist of *Call it Courage* is portrayed as an epic hero, the protagonist of *Island of the Blue Dolphins* is a heroine, a favorable role model for child readers, particularly for girl readers, who gain empowering experiences by reading of the personal experiences of an independent, courageous heroine.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my appreciation to the members of my committee for their assistance and guidance throughout my project. I wish to thank Professor Henry Alley, who has been a supportive teacher and guide to me since I began my education at the University of Oregon; my choice to pursue English and writing is due greatly in part to his classes. Additionally, I would like to thank Professor Kathleen Karlyn, who was graciously able to step in near the end of my project to serve on my committee. And of course, I wish to express sincere and utmost thanks to Professor Betsy Wheeler for her commitment to my project and my well-being. Betsy has been a true advisor, mentor, and friend throughout my research and writing processes, and my thesis nor my experience could not have been achieved without her support.

I also wish to thank Carol Coburn, whose life work as a teacher and mentor to students taught me the value of my own imagination and devotion, as well as how to “make decisions.”

I dedicate this thesis to my parents, J.T. and Melissa Hamilton, who introduced me to children’s literature by reading to me when I was a child. I express to them the same unconditional love, respect, and support they have always given me.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION: CHILD READERS AND EXPERIENCE.....	1
II. <i>CALL IT COURAGE</i> : THE EXPERIENCES OF A LEGENDARY HERO.....	4
III. <i>ISLAND OF THE BLUE DOLPHINS</i> : THE EXPERIENCES OF A HEROINE.....	16
IV. CONCLUSION.....	32
V. BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	35

The thing that makes a book a good book to a child is that it is an experience. The child who has read and enjoyed such a book has grown a little, has added something to his stature as an individual. He is a little more capable of enjoying new impressions and receiving new ideas, which will illuminate his next new experience whatever it may be. He has gained something permanent which can never be taken away from him.

-Lillian Smith, *The Unreluctant Years: A Critical Approach to Children's Literature*¹

INTRODUCTION: CHILD READERS AND EXPERIENCE

As Lillian Smith's definition indicates, excellent children's books possess the power to alter a child reader's perspective and personal experience. An excellent children's book does not simply tell a story or relay a moral; rather, a good children's book provides a tangible and memorable experience for a child reader and leaves a permanent impression on him or her. However, because not all children's books are alike, a study of the portrayals of book characters' experiences in a variety of children's novels will prove the contrast of resulting personal experiences for child readers. While all readers, boys and girls alike, gain experiences from reading children's novels, girl readers engage in the most powerful experiences when they encounter the life of a novel's heroine.

One of the most significant aspects of the portrayal of experience in a children's novel is the author's means of portraying heroes, heroism, and, for girl readers, heroines. "Children are aware, consciously or unconsciously, that in

¹ Lillian Smith, *The Unreluctant Years: A Critical Approach to Children's Literature* (1953; Chicago: American Library Association, 1991) 4-5.

hero stories they find experience,” Smith states later in her book. “Beyond their glamour and magic and romance there is something tough and real....When children have met and shared the life of a hero, life has more meaning to them....”² As Smith suggests, heroes provide memorable and tangible experiences for child readers; children can gain life-altering experiences simply by sharing the life of a hero or a heroine in a novel.

But because children’s book heroism is not identical in every story, neither are the resulting experiences of child readers. In a category of “good” children’s books such as the Newbery Medal-winners, for example, numerous types of heroism exist, and, as a result, child readers gain a variety of experiences as well. By definition, the Newbery Medal is “awarded annually to the author of the most distinguished contribution to American literature for children published in the United States during the preceding year.”³ Two Newbery Medal-winning children’s novels, Armstrong Sperry’s *Call it Courage* (1940) and Scott O’Dell’s *Island of the Blue Dolphins* (1960), demonstrate divergent portrayals of heroism in children’s literature. At first glance, the representations of the two protagonists, Mafatu of *Call it Courage* and Karana of *Island of the Blue Dolphins*, appear similar. Both Mafatu and Karana are adolescent members of Pacific island tribes, Mafatu of a Polynesian tribe and Karana of a North American Native American tribe, and each is the son or daughter of his or her tribe’s chief. Each character’s story

² Smith 84.

revolves around his or her struggle to survive alone in a wilderness area. And of course, each protagonist triumphs as “a character who has such admirable traits as courage, idealism, and fortitude,” a literary dictionary’s definition of a hero.⁴ However, though both characters exhibit common surface traits and the three literary qualities of heroism, each character exhibits a different type of heroism. While Mafatu is a traditional romance genre legendary hero, Karana is a heroine, recognized not in comparison to the members of a genre or group but instead for her strengths as an individual.

The contrast between the two depictions is a direct reflection of the authors’ contrasting presentations of the protagonists: Sperry portrays heroism from a third-person observer’s perspective, while O’Dell portrays heroism from a first person, autobiographical viewpoint. Additionally, Sperry uses specific symbols to portray Mafatu’s heroism, but Karana’s heroism is subtle and implicit throughout the novel. The divergent portrayals of heroes result in two different experiences for the child reader; the reader of *Call it Courage* learns to recognize heroism in others from the position of an observer, but the reader of *Island of the Blue Dolphins*, particularly the female reader, learns to discover heroism in his or her own personal achievements. While the *Call it Courage* reader knows a hero

³ Association for Library Service to Children, *The Newbery and Caldecott Awards* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1994) 3.

⁴ Karl Beckson and Arthur Ganz, *Literary Terms: A Dictionary* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1975) 94.

when he or she sees one, the *Island of the Blue Dolphins* reader knows a hero when he or she is one.

CALL IT COURAGE: THE EXPERIENCES OF A LEGENDARY HERO

In order to impose a distanced “outside” perspective on readers of *Call it Courage*, Sperry uses third person point of view to narrate Mafatu’s story. His narration limits the reader’s perspective to that of the narrator, causing the reader to experience Mafatu’s story from a distanced, outside perspective, not from the personal perspective of Mafatu. The opening paragraphs serve as a type of prologue:

It happened many years ago, before the traders and missionaries first came into the South Seas, while the Polynesians were still in great numbers and fierce of heart. But even today the people of Hikueru sing this story of Mafatu, the Boy Who Was Afraid.

They worshipped courage, those early Polynesians. The spirit which had urged them across the Pacific in their sailing canoes, before the dawn of recorded history, not knowing where they were going nor caring what their fate might be, still sang its song of danger in their blood. There was only courage. A man who was afraid—what place had he in their midst? And the boy Mafatu—son of Tavana Nui, the Great Chief of Hikueru—always had been afraid. So the people drove him forth. Not by violence, but by indifference.

Mafatu went out alone to face the thing he feared the most. And the people of Hikueru still sing his story in their chants and tell it over the evening fires.⁵

⁵ Armstrong Sperry, *Call it Courage* (New York: Simon and Schuster Books for Young Readers, 1940) 7-8.

Sperry specifically uses phrases such as “they,” “the boy Mafatu,” and “the people” to engage the reader in a distanced, limited perspective of Mafatu. Not only does the prologue limit the reader’s perspective to a third person point of view, but the prologue also embodies a legend tone. Sperry presents Mafatu as a legendary hero of “many years ago” and sets the novel in a distant, far-off land, unfamiliar to an American child reader. By implementing a third person perspective and a legend tone, Sperry distances the reader from Mafatu’s surroundings and personal perspective, limiting the reader to the perspective of an observer.

Additionally, the prologue limits the reader’s perspective by defining courage as the single cultural ideal for Mafatu’s culture. By setting Mafatu’s story in a distant unfamiliar place and endowing his Polynesian culture with “only courage,” Sperry continues to confine the reader to a particular perspective. He provides a skeleton definition of Polynesians as “fierce of heart” with “danger in their blood,” making Mafatu’s culture appear simple, one-dimensional, and exotic. However, although Sperry’s generalization about courage excludes from the reader’s perspective any complexities of Polynesian people, he uses it to his advantage in order to effectively develop a setting for Mafatu’s character, “The Boy Who Was Afraid.” By limiting the reader’s point of view to only one significant trait for Mafatu’s entire culture, Sperry develops a

plain portrait of Polynesians but an effective setting in which to develop Mafatu's fearful character.

Immediately following the prologue, Sperry elaborates on Mafatu's fear in order to develop reader sympathy for him and to continue placing the reader in the position of an observer of Mafatu, rather than an empathetic supporter of him. A description of Mafatu's intense fear of the sea immediately follows the prologue:

He could not remember when the fear of it first had taken hold of him. Perhaps it was during the great hurricane which swept Hikueru when he was a child of three. Even now, twelve years later, Mafatu could remember that terrible morning. His mother had taken him out to the barrier-reef to search for sea urchins in the reef pools....

Despite all the woman's skill, the canoe was carried on the crest of the churning tide, through the reef-passage, into the outer ocean....

When at last they were cast up on the pinnacle of coral, Mafatu's mother crawled ashore with scarcely enough strength left to pull her child beyond the reach of the sea's hungry fingers. The little boy was too weak to even cry. At hand lay a cracked coconut; the woman managed to press the cool, sustaining meat to her child's lips before she died.⁶

While the reader sympathizes with Mafatu during this passage, it is impossible to empathize for him because his personal perspective is not presented. The phrases "The little boy" and "the woman" encompass a much different perspective when written as "I" and "my mother," and Sperry's exclusion of Mafatu's first person point of view continues to distance the now sympathetic reader from Mafatu's inner thoughts. Though the reader understands why

Mafatu fears the sea, he or she cannot empathize for him without a personal perspective from Mafatu. Sperry develops sympathy in the reader in order to maintain the reader's limited "outside" perspective of Mafatu's fear.

Because Sperry uses specific literary devices to limit and focus the reader's attention, it is important to address Sperry's own limitations as a writer as well. As he discusses in his acceptance speech for the Newbery Medal, Sperry traveled and lived in Polynesia and often incorporates his observations of Native Polynesians into the novel. "The thing which remains with me most vividly from those months in Bora Bora, stronger than the manifold charm of the island, is the remembrance of the great courage with which that little band of Polynesians faced the destruction of their world and faced it down, and stooped, only to rebuild."⁷ Just as he identifies courage as the Polynesian people's most significant trait in the prologue of *Call it Courage*, Sperry's comment demonstrates that he notes courage as the most significant trait he witnessed in his personal experience with Polynesians as well. However, while the line from Sperry's acceptance speech expresses his admiration for Polynesians, it is also a perfect example of the tone of his entire novel. Though Sperry observed and lived alongside the people of Bora Bora, he was still an outsider, having only witnessed their world, not lived it. Sperry not only limits the reader's

⁶ Sperry 8-10.

⁷ Armstrong Sperry, "The Newbery Medal Acceptance," *The Horn Book* 17 (1941): 267.

perspective by using third person narration, but his portrayal of Polynesian culture limits the reader to Sperry's personal perception of the culture as well.

Sperry also implements his own cultural perspective and ideals in order to portray Mafatu's story in a manner familiar to American child audiences. He clearly imposes a romantic "Western" idea of heroism on Mafatu's non-Western Polynesian culture. A passage following Mafatu's story of the loss of his mother exemplifies a traditional romance genre narrative:

Perhaps that was the beginning of it. Mafatu, the boy who had been christened Stout Heart by his proud father, was afraid of the sea. What manner of fisherman would he grow up to be? How would he ever lead the men in battle against warriors of other islands? Mafatu's father heard the whispers, and the man grew silent and grim.⁸

The passage parallels a chapter from Robert Foulke and Paul Smith's book, *An Anatomy of Literature*, in which the authors outline the use of the romance style in literature from the Homeric to the contemporary:

We may think of the romance pattern as simpler to than the others because it is so familiar to us in children's literature and in movies, cartoons, comic strips, and television dramas. Much of the popularity of these forms lies in the simplicity of the questions they raise and the inevitability of their answers. Will good triumph over evil? Will the innocent young find protection? Will the skeptical elders be proved wrong?⁹

As Foulke and Smith suggest, the "romance pattern" is common in children's literature, but more than that, they indicate the specific yet simplistic questions

⁸ Sperry, *Call it Courage* 10.

raised by a novel such as *Call it Courage*. The questions posed in Sperry's passage, "What manner of fisherman would he grow up to be?" and "How would he ever lead the men in battle against the warriors of the other islands?" directly reflect the reader questions posed in the essay, particularly the question of "Will the skeptical elders be proved wrong?" Sperry's reader wonders if Mafatu will triumph over his fear of the sea in order to instill new faith in his "skeptical elders," the other members of Mafatu's tribe and Mafatu's father. However, the questions do not confuse the reader during *Call it Courage*; rather, they outline the steps Mafatu must take in order to achieve hero status in the setting Sperry creates for him. In the tradition of a romance narrative, Sperry presents Mafatu as a non-hero in the beginning of the novel, posing simple, familiar questions to the reader in order to lay out Mafatu's path to heroism.

Sperry continues pose questions about Mafatu's social survival by depicting the harsh comments of Mafatu's peers, which cause his departure from the island. He overhears a conversation between a group of island boys, including Kana, who is usually friendly to Mafatu:

Mafatu, standing tense in the shadows, heard a scornful laugh. His heart contracted. "Not all of us will go [on the fishing trip]," he heard Kana scoff. "Not Mafatu!"

"Ha! He is afraid."

"He makes good spears," offered Viri generously.

"Ho! That is woman's work. Mafatu is afraid of the sea. He will never be a warrior." Kana laughed again, and the scorn of his voice was like a spear thrust through Mafatu's heart.

⁹ Robert Foulke and Paul Smith, *An Anatomy of Literature* (San Francisco: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1972) 46.

"*Aiá!*" Kana was saying. "I have tried to be friendly with him. But he is only good for making spears. Mafatu is a coward."

The boys disappeared down the moonlit beach. Their laughter floated back on the night air. Mafatu stood quite still. Kana had spoken; he had voiced, once and for all, the feeling of the tribe. Mafatu—Stout Heart—was a coward. He was the boy who was afraid.¹⁰

Suddenly, after years of whispers and gossip, Mafatu knows, "once and for all," the entire tribe's opinion of him as a coward. He reaches the lowest point of his depression over his fear of the sea. It appears to his audience that he has no choice but to remain an outcast, but instead, Kana's words provoke him to overcome his fear and become courageous. In order for Sperry to effectively portray Mafatu as a hero in his culture, Mafatu must "hit rock bottom" in this scene before beginning his ascent to courage.

Following the conversation between Kana and the other boys, Mafatu immediately and boldly decides to overcome his fear of the sea, which Sperry portrays in the manner of a traditional epic hero. Mafatu's decision is sudden: "he knew in that instant what he must do: he must prove his courage to himself, and to the others, or he could no longer live in their midst. He must face Moana, the sea God—face him and conquer him. He must."¹¹ Sperry portrays Mafatu as having a single enemy which restricts him from reaching hero status or even cultural acceptance. Because of Mafatu's single obstacle, "[*Call it Courage*] is true to tradition. The hero, whether he is called Ahab or Odysseus or Ulysses, goes

¹⁰ Sperry 16-7.

¹¹ Sperry 17-8.

forth to conquer the enemy that threatens him most," writes children's literature critic Carolyn T. Kingston of Sperry's novel.¹² Similar to the traditional heroes portrayed in canonical Western literature, Mafatu identifies his enemy, the sea, and sets a goal to defeat it. Sperry distances and limits the reader's perspective of Mafatu by writing in third person point of view and setting the story in an unfamiliar culture, but he familiarizes the story for an American audience by limiting Mafatu's character to a portrait of a traditional Western literature hero.

Following his declaration of defeating his enemy, Mafatu begins his quest for courage on the sea, taking little food and water and only his faithful dog Uri for companionship. Sperry's use of a journey as Mafatu's means of gaining courage is significant to his portrayal of Mafatu as a traditional romantic hero. "The most common form of the quest [in romance pattern] is the journey...the journey often describes a movement into the realm of the unknown and back: Odysseus, and Leopold Bloom [of Joyce's *Ulysses*] for that matter, trace paths that circle from the familiar to the mysterious and back to the familiar."¹³ Having already been identified with Odysseus and Ulysses by Kingston, Mafatu embodies Foulke and Smith's comment regarding a romantic hero's quest as well. Mafatu, who has barely ventured beyond the shores of his home island, pursues his quest for courage through a journey "from the familiar to the mysterious," just as the heroes of traditional Western literature attain heroism by

¹² Carolyn T. Kingston, *The Tragic Mode in Children's Literature* (New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 1974) 19.

journeying to the unknown. Sperry creates a familiar but limited identity for Mafatu for the reader by instigating another aspect of romance narrative, the journey.

After days of journeying at sea, Mafatu and Uri eventually arrive on an unfamiliar tropical island, where Sperry creates specific challenges for Mafatu which serve as symbols in his ascension to heroism. One of the most significant symbols is Mafatu's discovery that the feared but admired wild boar lives on the island:

...He had never known a man who had killed a wild pig. But Grandfather Ruau, who had traveled as far as distant Tahiti, had told how the warriors of that island killed pigs in the mountains with naught but a knife for a weapon, bracing themselves so that the animal impaled itself upon the blade. It needed a strong arm and a stouter heart. Could he, Mafatu, ever accomplish such a feat? Grandfather brought back with him a necklace made from the curling tusks of the boar, and Mafatu could remember to this day how the dark-blue scrolls of tattooing on the old man's chest set off the handsome ivory of teeth. That necklace was the envy of every man in Hikueru and its possession earned Grandfather much respect.

"I will make such a necklace for myself from the tusks," the boy promised bravely. "And when I return to Hikueru men will look up to me and say: 'There goes Mafatu. He killed the wild boar single-handed!' And Tavana Nui, my father, will be filled with pride."¹⁴

The third person narrator suggests that a simple token, the boar's tooth necklace, will symbolize Mafatu's courage to the people of Hikueru upon his return to the island. Just as he does in the prologue, Sperry simplifies the ideals of Mafatu's

¹³ Foulke and Smith 53.

Polynesian culture by implying that a single necklace will represent courage and prompt acceptance for Mafatu. Additionally, by stating the necklace's importance to Polynesians, the observing reader recognizes the symbol's significance as well, which places further limitations on the reader's perspective of heroism. Sperry depicts a clear symbol of Mafatu's heroism through his description of the boar's tooth necklace; the reader observes the importance Mafatu places on the necklace and, as a result, recognizes Mafatu's pending heroism.

By the time Mafatu decides to return home, Sperry has portrayed many symbols of Mafatu's courage; he has killed a shark, a boar, and an octopus single-handedly. On the eve of Mafatu's return to Hikueru, he lays to down to sleep, finally feeling peaceful and confident:

Never again need he hang his head before his people. He had fought the sea for life and won. He had sustained himself by his own wits and skill. He had faced loneliness and danger and death, if not without flinching, at least with courage. He had been, sometimes, deeply afraid, but he had faced fear and faced it down. Surely that could be called courage.¹⁵

Having foreshadowed and identified the symbols of Mafatu's heroism, Sperry blatantly lists Mafatu's heroic accomplishments for the reader to recount.

Additionally, the final sentence in the passage directs the reader to call Mafatu's achievements courage; it is the source of the novel's title, which also instructs the

¹⁴ Sperry 42.

¹⁵ Sperry 79.

reader to literally “call it courage.” Sperry’s emphasis on “calling it courage” encourages the reader to participate in Mafatu’s recognition as a hero. Having provided numerous symbols and means of limiting the reader’s perspective, when the narrator instructs the reader to “call it courage,” the reader will certainly perceive Mafatu’s courage and heroism.

Finally, Mafatu returns home, and his father and tribe recognize his new-found courage; Mafatu becomes a “culture hero” for Hikueru. Upon his son’s return home, “The Great Chief’s face was transformed with joy. This brave figure so thin and straight, with the fine necklace and the flashing spear and courage blazing from his eyes—his son?...Then Tavana Nui turned to his people and cried: ‘Here is my son come home from the sea. Mafatu, Stout Heart. A brave name for a brave boy!’”¹⁶ Sperry’s final depiction of Mafatu in this scene completes the reader’s portrait of Mafatu, who is now a “culture hero,” or, “a legendary or mythic hero who embodies the idealized values of a particular culture—as Achilles embodied the ideal of the Greek warrior,” according to the definition in Lee T. Lemon’s *Glossary For the Study of English*.¹⁷ Indeed, as Tavana Nui points out, Mafatu embodies the idealized traits of his culture, which the reader can agree to because Sperry clearly and obviously outlines courage as the ideal trait of Hikueru’s tribe and Mafatu’s achievement of it. The reader needs no choice in the matter—Mafatu is clearly a hero.

¹⁶ Sperry 94.

Likewise, as he portrays in Mafatu's character throughout *Call it Courage*, Sperry's acceptance speech for the Newbery Medal reflects his personal belief that courage is based on overcoming a single obstacle:

In each of these books I have given to the major character some challenge he must meet, some great obstacle he must overcome, some ideal toward which he must aspire. Children identify themselves with the characters they read about, and so it becomes an obligation on the part of the author to create the kind of people with whom we want our children to be identified.¹⁷

Both in the prologue and in his speech, Sperry notes that he believes heroism is achieved by overcoming a single challenge. However, he also states in his speech the importance of giving child audiences the characters with whom "we" want them to identify, implying that as adults, we want children to identify with a hero such as Mafatu, who overcomes his greatest fear. As an outside observer of Mafatu with a familiar background in common romance narrative, a child reader will find it easy to understand Mafatu's struggle for courage and recognize his heroism.

However, Armstrong Sperry's vision of child audiences also reflects the experience a child will gain from reading *Call it Courage*. A child reader will experience recognizing the hero in pre-hero stages, observing him overcoming his fear, and witnessing his triumph as a hero. In other words, the child will gain the experience and knowledge to understand and recognize heroism in others,

¹⁷ Lee T. Lemon, *A Glossary for the Study of English* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971) 46.

but the child will have very little experience recognizing personal heroism or identifying personally with Mafatu. Sperry narrates the novel in such a way that he fails at his own attempt to create a character “with whom we want our children to be identified.” Though Sperry succeeds at encouraging children to recognize heroism in others through the experience of reading *Call it Courage*, he does not meet his own goal of giving children the chance to identify with Mafatu in the novel.

ISLAND OF THE BLUE DOLPHINS: THE EXPERIENCES OF A HEROINE

Because Scott O'Dell bases *Island of the Blue Dolphins* on historical facts, the novel acquires a much different tone than the legend tone of *Call it Courage*. O'Dell loosely bases the story of Karana, an adolescent Native American girl, on historical accounts of a Native American woman who survived alone on the Spanish-named island of San Nicolas off the coast of Santa Barbara, California, from 1835-1853.¹⁹ Rather than a far-off, distant legend tone, *Island of the Blue Dolphins*, which is written in first person narrative, acquires the tone of a historical, autobiographical account. A quote by Hertha Dawn Wong, a scholar of Native American literature and autobiography, exemplifies the differences between the tone of Karana's story versus the legend tone of Mafatu's story:

¹⁸ Sperry, “The Newbery Medal Acceptance,” 267.

¹⁹ Scott O'Dell, *Island of the Blue Dolphins* (New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1960) 182-3.

Rather than shaping a past life in the present, [Native American autobiographers] shaped a present (and sometimes future) life in the present moment. Once again, this process is more like that of a diarist capturing the immediacy of the recent moment in a diary entry than that of a memorist pondering and reformulating the long-ago past into a unified and chronological narrative.²⁰

Wong precisely captures the differences between O'Dell's personal narrative of Karana and Sperry's "memorist" recollection of the legend of the Boy Who Was Afraid. Karana's experience, as it is told in first person narrative, is immediate and real to the reader. The autobiographical tone causes the reader to endure Karana's experiences as she encounters them.

O'Dell effectively portrays Karana's experience using first person point of view, enabling the reader to experience the novel from Karana's personal perspective. Children's literature critic Rebecca J. Lukens' demonstrates the appropriateness of O'Dell's use of first person narration in *Island of the Blue Dolphins* in her book, *A Critical Handbook of Children's Literature*. Throughout the book, Lukens uses specific examples from a variety of children's books to define literary terms useful for studying and critiquing children's literature. She identifies O'Dell's novel to illustrate the value of first person point of view to her audience:

...one of the strongest assets of first-person narration is its great potential for pulling the reader into what appears to be autobiographical truth. Because Karana's thoughts are interesting to us, we are sympathetic with her. She is consistently credible

²⁰ Hertha Dawn Wong, *Sending My Heart Back Across the Years* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992) 17.

because she is believably limited in what she can admit to knowing.²¹

Not only does the audience recognize Karana's personal "autobiographical truth," but O'Dell's use of first person narration for Karana is also effective because "she is believably limited in what she can admit to knowing." Unlike a third person narrator, Karana is limited to her own perspective, and as a result, the reader is only able to perceive Karana's story from her personal viewpoint. The reader is not an observer, as he or she is while reading *Call it Courage*; instead, the reader recognizes, as Lukens points out, the limitations of a first person narrator and must perceive the story through the protagonist's eyes. As in *Call it Courage*, the reader is limited to the narrator's perspective in *Island of the Blue Dolphins*, but in this story, the narrator is the protagonist. Because of O'Dell's use of first person narration of Karana's story, the reader experiences the novel not as an observer but from Karana's personal point of view.

Shortly after the opening of the novel, Karana's limiting first person narrative is particularly significant after a devastating battle in which the Aleut tribe of the North kills most of Karana's tribe, and the tribe decides to join a group of white men who offer to relocate them. However, at the moment when the ship has been boarded and is about to depart, Karana jumps overboard to return to the island for her young brother Ramo, who was accidentally left behind. In order to understand Karana's feelings during the pivotal moment

²¹ Rebecca J. Lukens, *A Critical Handbook of Children's Literature* (Palo Alto: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1976) 100.

when she jumps, it is necessary for the reader to have access to Karana's personal perspective provided by the first person narrative. When it appears to Karana that everyone but six-year-old Ramo has boarded the ship, she panics and frantically searches the ship for her young brother, who has stayed in the village to search for his spear:

I was overcome with fear. "Where is my brother?" I cried. [Nanko] repeated what he had told me on the beach, but as he spoke [my sister] who stood beside him pointed toward the island. I looked out across the deck and the sea. There, running along the cliff, the fishing spear held over his head, was Ramo.

The sails had filled and the ship was now moving slowly away. Everyone was looking toward the cliff, even the white men. I ran to one of them and pointed, but he shook his head and turned from me. The ship began to move faster. Against my will, I screamed.

Chief Matasaip grasped my arm.

"We cannot wait for Ramo," he said. "If we do, the ship will be driven on the rocks."

"We must!" I shouted. "We must!"

"The ship will come back for him on another day," Matasaip said. "He will be safe. There is food for him to eat and water for him to drink and places for him to sleep."

"No," I cried.

Matasaip's face was like stone. He was not listening. I cried out once more, but my voice was lost in the howling wind. People gathered around me, saying again what Matasaip had said, yet I was not comforted by their words.

Ramo had disappeared from the cliff and I knew that he was now running along the trail that led to the beach.

The ship began to circle the kelp bed and I thought surely that it was going to return to the shore. I held my breath, waiting. Then, slowly its direction changed. It pointed toward the east. At that moment I walked across the deck and, though many hands tried to hold me back, flung myself into the sea.²²

²² O'Dell 38-9.

Karana's emotions and love for Ramo are clearly her reason for jumping overboard in the passage. However, the reader would not be able to recognize her state of mind or her reasons for jumping if her narrative were in third person, as in *Call it Courage*. O'Dell's use of first person narrative is effective in conveying Karana's emotions during her jump to save her brother, and the reader believably perceives Karana's inner feelings and personal experience.

While it seems that O'Dell's use of first person narration for a Native American character imposes a Western writing style on the community-based culture of most Native American tribes, the first person individual perspective is actually a means for O'Dell to effectively portray Karana's personal experiences and resulting heroism. Hertha Dawn Wong writes that

...a Native American concept of self differs from a Western (or Euro-American) idea of self in that it is more inclusive. Generally, native people tend to see themselves first as family, clan, and tribal members, and second as discrete individuals....Instead of emphasis on an individual self who *stands apart* from the community, the focus is on a communal self who *participates within* the tribe.²³

O'Dell's use of first person narrative for Karana contrasts Wong's commentary about the Native American perception of the communal self. O'Dell depicts Karana as making a sudden individualized action against the tribe's "many hands [which] tried to hold me back." However, just as Sperry uses traditional Western heroism for Mafatu's Polynesian character, O'Dell imposes a Westernized standard of individuality on Karana's Native American character.

²³ Wong 13-4.

And, similar to Sperry's use of Western heroism, O'Dell's portrayal of the Western "individual" through first person point of view is effective in order to portray Karana's solitary personal experience. Though O'Dell imposes a Westernized perception of "the individual" on Karana's character, his technique is effective in conveying Karana's personal thoughts and experiences to the reader, and he or she experiences Karana's life through her own eyes. As a result, the scene in which Karana jumps overboard to return for Ramo illustrates her love for him and demonstrates her heroism for risking her own future with her tribe. O'Dell's portrayal of Karana as an independent individual demonstrates her courage and heroism to risk abandonment in order to save Ramo.

Soon after Karana's sudden return to the island, O'Dell depicts another case of her independence regarding tribal policy and loyalty, and the experience again demonstrates her heroism. After wild dogs attack and kill Ramo, Karana, fearing for her own life and angered by her brother's death, vows to avenge Ramo's death by killing the dogs. However, she fears what will happen to her if she disobeys the tribal law that forbids women to make weapons. Karana narrates her fears and her decision:

For a long time I lay on the rock while [the wild dogs] trotted around below me. The rock was high and they could not climb it, but I was still fearful. As I lay there I wondered what would happen to me if I went against the law of our tribe which forbade the making of weapons by women—if I did not think of it at all and made those things which I must have to

protect myself.

Would the four winds blow in from the four directions of the world and smother me as I made the weapons? Or would the earth tremble, as many said, and bury me beneath its falling rocks? Or, as others said, would the sea raise over the island in a terrible flood? Would the weapons break in my hands at the moment when my life was in danger, which is what my father had said?

I thought about these things for two days and on the third night when the wild dogs returned to the rock, I made up my mind that no matter what befell me I would make the weapons. In the morning I set about it, though I felt very fearful.²⁴

Once again, Karana disobeys her tribe's wishes, this time by making the decision to make weapons. However, Karana does not compromise the herself or her beliefs. Instead, she makes the conscious and thought-out decision to adapt to her situation in order to survive. Though it is subtle, O'Dell portrays Karana's decision to break the rules as heroic, not rebellious or wrong. Unlike Mafatu, who is a hero when he is able to conform to the ideals of his tribe, Karana is heroic when she makes an educated decision to disobey her tribe's laws.

Additionally, Karana's decision to break the tribal rules provides an experience for the reader different than the experiences attained by Mafatu's reader. Karana's reader experiences an incident in which the use of good judgment, though a rule is broken, leads to a successful outcome. Children's author Natalie Babbitt illustrates the value of such an experience in her essay, "Protecting Children's Literature." She notes that

A good children's book says to the reader, 'Yes, Virginia, you *can* escape the pinches of your life and, for a little time, make a difference in the world, even if it is only vicarious.' If we turn

²⁴ O'Dell 54.

children's stories into handbooks for proper behavior, we will subvert their purpose and destroy their magic...²⁵

Karana, who strays from "proper behavior," provides child readers with the experience that with consideration and courage, a broken rule can prove to be a better way. As Babbitt suggests and Karana exemplifies, children's book heroes need not be role models for "handbooks for proper behavior" to provide valuable experiences for child readers.

Following her significant decision to build weapons, Karana attempts to hunt and kill the wild dogs. Having, "vowed that someday I would go back and kill the wild dogs in the cave," Karana implies that she will obtain her closure, like Mafatu's triumph over the sea, by killing the dogs to avenge Ramo's death.²⁶ However, unlike Mafatu "defeating" the sea to avenge his mother's death, Karana gains closure for her brother's death by suddenly deciding to save and befriend her enemy, the dog pack leader. After shooting down the dog with an arrow, she finds him laying on a pile of rocks. Prepared to shoot him again, Karana suddenly halts. She describes

Why I did not send the arrow I cannot say. I stood on the rock with the bow pulled back and my hand would not let it go. The big dog lay there and did not move and this may be the reason. If he had gotten up I would have killed him. I stood there for a long time looking down at him and then I climbed off the rocks.

He did not move when I went up to him, nor could I see him breathing until I was very close. The head of the arrow was

²⁵ Natalie Babbitt, "Protecting Children's Literature," *Only Connect*, ed. Sheila Egoff, Gordon Stubbs, Ralph Ashley, and Wendy Sutton (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996) 37.

²⁶ O'Dell 48.

in his chest and the broken shaft was covered with blood. The thick fur around his neck was matted from the rain.

I do not think he knew I was picking him up, for his body was limp, as if he were dead....I carried him to [my house].²⁷

Though Karana does not follow through with her threat to kill the dog, the scene is a pivotal moment for Karana. She is no longer vengeful for her brother's death and no longer wants to resolve her anger and loss through killing. Saving the dog becomes a means of closure for Karana, an act through which she overcomes her anger for Ramo's death. Though she takes a risk, she realizes the potential for friendship with the dog, who becomes her dear companion Rontu. Karana becomes heroic not because she follows through with her planned revenge, as Mafatu does, but because she resolves her anger through the act of befriending the dog leader. The personal portrayal of her experience provides the reader with the experience of learning to overcome anger and loss in order to obtain closure and friendship.

Much like her experience befriending the wild dog, Karana also achieves heroism by overcoming her anger toward an Aleut girl when the Aleut tribe returns to the island to hunt. At first, Karana is hesitant to interact with Tutok, who is from the tribe who took the lives of so many of her loved ones. However, Karana resolves her biases and the two girls eventually become friends. When Tutok's tribe leaves the island, Karana acknowledges her sadness over the loss of her friend, narrating "as I stood there on the high rock looking down at the

²⁷ O'Dell 95-6.

deserted harbor and the empty sea, I began to think of Tutok. I thought of all the times we had sat in the sun together. I could hear her voice...as I thought of Tutok, the island seemed very quiet.”²⁸ Again, O’Dell depicts Karana’s heroism by demonstrating her resolution to accept the past and make a friend out of a former enemy. The reader experiences her decision to resolve her anger and befriend Tutok, and the reader experiences her sorrow for the loss of Tutok.

O’Dell includes the segment on Karana’s friendship with Tutok due to a personal experience, as he notes in his acceptance speech for the Newbery Medal. In the speech O’Dell recalls his childhood enemy and school bully, Jack. After years of picking fights with O’Dell as a child, Jack eventually becomes a professional boxer, and O’Dell witnesses him lose a match. Hoping to reintroduce himself in the face of Jack’s defeat, O’Dell goes to the locker room, but instead of a cold glare or an ashamed look of defeat, Jack embraces O’Dell and weeps. Following this personal story, O’Dell notes “that we must forgive our enemies. Further, I believe that the hopes of civilization, unique and obscure as they are, really exist in the act of identification with our enemies.”²⁹ O’Dell’s personal story reflects another aspect of the *Island of the Blue Dolphins* reader’s experience: by learning to identify with someone else, especially an enemy, it is possible to understand his or her perspective, and forgive if necessary. O’Dell, like Armstrong Sperry, includes in his speech his personal view of what is

²⁸ O’Dell 145-6.

²⁹ Scott O’Dell, “Newbery Award Acceptance,” *The Horn Book* 37 (1961): 314.

important to teach children and his reasons for including a specific aspect of his book. However, O'Dell's speech also reflects his reasons for telling Karana's story from a personal point of view; by portraying Karana's inner thoughts and feelings, the reader immediately identifies with her because he or she experiences the story from her perspective.

However, some critics do not agree that O'Dell portrays an emotional, complex protagonist in *Island of the Blue Dolphins*. One children's literature critic, C. Anita Tarr, believes that "*Island of the Blue Dolphins* is a beautifully written novel, resonant with metaphor and imagery. The problem is that it is also emotionless, even numb."³⁰ But Tarr's argument is inaccurate for many reasons, namely that O'Dell does not portray Karana as being void of emotion. Because O'Dell narrates her story from a first person perspective, Karana herself has the responsibility of addressing and describing every aspect of the novel, and her emotional reactions appear subtle because from her perspective they are part of the scenery. She is not a third person narrator who must interpret the protagonist's emotions for an audience, so it is unnecessary for Karana to dwell on her own emotions because they are a part of the overall narration of the story.

One of O'Dell's most prominent portrayals of Karana's emotions is through her loneliness, which she describes to the audience numerous times. For example, when Karana finally realizes that she will not be rescued from the

³⁰ C. Anita Tarr, "An Unintentional System of Gaps: A Phenomenological Reading of Scott O'Dell's *Island of the Blue Dolphins*," *Children's Literature in Education* 28 (1997): 61.

island for many months, she narrates, “The thought of being alone on the island...filled my heart with loneliness. Now my hopes were dead. Now I was really alone. I could not eat much, nor could I sleep without dreaming terrible dreams.”³¹ Karana, in this scene and in many scenes, endures a natural emotional reaction: the worry and depression of loneliness causes her eating and sleeping habits to change, but most of all, she experiences the heartbreaking grief of having lost all of her companions indefinitely. Likewise, the reader experiences her pain and grief because her point of view is explicit through her own personal narrative. Lukens appropriately points out that “O’Dell’s tone of restraint makes us feel sympathy for and understanding of Karana in her isolation and loneliness.”³² Indeed, the restraint O’Dell uses effectively portrays Karana’s emotions in order to cause her audience to experience her emotions and recognize her heroism.

However, Tarr continues her argument and suggests that because O’Dell provides a sparse portrayal of Karana’s emotions, the audience completes her characterization “primarily because O’Dell has sketched her as a stereotype” of a Native American woman.³³ Tarr’s argument is inaccurate once again because if Karana were a Native American stereotype, or for that matter, a female stereotype, O’Dell would have portrayed her in the tradition of the stereotype of Pocahontas, the historically-recognized young Native American woman who

³¹ O’Dell, *Island of the Blue Dolphins* 60.

³² Lukens 144.

rescued white explorer John Smith. Unlike the traditional Pocahontas stereotype, O'Dell's portrayal of Karana does not require a relationship with a male to define her heroism. In this manner, O'Dell breaks the mold of the Pocahontas stereotype described in Rayna Green's essay, "The Pocahontas Perplex: The Image of Indian Women in American Culture." After describing the ways in which non-Native Americans define Native American women in relation to males, Green suggests that "the Native American woman, like all women, needs a definition that stands apart from that of males....Delightful and interesting as Pocahontas' story may be, she offers an intolerable metaphor for the Indian-White experience."³⁴ Unlike the stereotypes of Native American women according to the story of Pocahontas, O'Dell provides a unique portrait of Karana as an independent, intelligent Native American woman. The reader recognizes that Karana achieves independence and competency long before white men arrive on the island, providing an experience for the reader that is separate from any male characters.

Additionally, O'Dell's portrayal of Karana sets itself apart from the frequent stereotype of female protagonists. In 1960, at the time of the novel's publication, critic Ellen Lewis Buell exemplifies the stereotype of female heroes in literature, stating in *The New York Times Book Review* that "[*Island of the Blue Dolphins*] is a romance in every sense of the word. It has no hero, no frills, none

³³ Tarr 61.

of the usual feminine props, but I think that thoughtful readers will be willing to forego these for the sake of an unusual experience."³⁵ Buell's dated review indicates exactly what is important about O'Dell's portrayal of Karana as a hero: her heroism is not typical, especially for the time period when the book was written, and her heroism is subtle, for Buell goes so far as to comment that the book "has no hero." Buell implies that in a novel containing the "usual feminine props," the female protagonist would be accompanied and perhaps eclipsed by a male hero, unlike Karana, whose independence sets her apart from Buell's stereotype. As a result, "thoughtful readers," or any readers, for that matter, are not only "willing to forego" the stereotype for an "unusual experience," but readers of Karana's story experience a realistic perspective of an independent female hero.

One possible interpretation of Buell's commentary could take an extreme feminist viewpoint, as discussed in the book *The Female Hero in American and British Literature* by Carol Pearson and Katherine Pope. The authors note that "...female heroism...often is simply ignored....An obvious example in American history is the women who homesteaded in the West. These women performed the same heroic feats as men...."³⁶ Like the homesteaders of the American West,

³⁴ Rayna Green, "The Pocahontas Perplex: The Image of Indian Women in American Culture," *Placing Women's Studies* (San Francisco: McGraw-Hill, 1998) 139-40.

³⁵ Ellen Lewis Buell, rev. of *Island of the Blue Dolphins*, by Scott O'Dell, *The New York Times Book Review*, 22 Mar. 1960: 40-1; as quoted in *Contemporary Literary Criticism*, ed. Jean C. Stine and Daniel G. Marowski, vol. 30 (Detroit: Gale Research Company, 1984) 267.

³⁶ Carol Pearson and Katherine Pope, *The Female Hero in American and British Literature* (New York: R.R. Bowker Company, 1981) 6.

Karana patiently practices and discovers survival skills and performs acts of bravery, much like Mafatu, who performs similar tasks but receives validation and recognition for his heroism throughout the novel. But it is too strong a statement to say that Karana's heroism is "ignored," rather, it is more effective to discuss the ways in which Karana's heroism is portrayed as though she is a striking *heroine*.

Although Karana's experience is significant to all child readers, her experience and portrayal as a heroine is especially valuable to girl readers. In order to define "heroine," author and scholar Laura Kalpakian directly refers to literary critic Rachel M. Brownstein's book, *Becoming a Heroine*, in her essay, "My Life as a Boy." Throughout the essay Kalpakian provides a personal perspective of her readings of children's novels as a young girl, emphasized by her own summary of Brownstein's beliefs. She writes

In the largest sense Brownstein's book argues that in the reading of fiction, girls do it differently than boys. She extrapolates quite wonderfully from there, but for my purposes I would pull one tiny shred of her argument forth here. Rachel Brownstein suggests that boys with ambition, with drive, with some great wish to find or pattern their lives on already-furrowed fields of greatness, that these boys read biographies. Biographies make such lives available in boys, and they can read them and place their little boy-feet into the metaphorical shoes of these Great Men. This experience, she argues, is denied girls. Girls might read biographies, but the Great Men's metaphorical shoes will not fit their little girl-feet. For that reason, in looking for paths or models, girls turn to fiction. To heroines. And in reading fiction they point to the heroine and say:

Kalpakian clearly illustrates the ways in which boys have the resources to observe heroes and role models in biography, while girls must seek heroines and role models in fiction. A girl reader of *Island of the Blue Dolphins*, for example, will experience the life of Karana, a fictional heroine, as an independent, intelligent, and courageous young woman. Because the "shoes" of Great Men do not fit a girl reader, she can turn to heroines such as Karana to experience the life of a heroine in fitting shoes.

Karana, in the words of Kalpakian, "succeeds in having adventures usually denied girls: boys' adventures" and "lives beyond the bondage of petticoats, or their cultural equivalent: this is to say, the confines of feminine expectations."³⁸ Karana endures many of the same survival experiences as a boy such as Mafatu endures, experiences which are often denied girls in stories such as the stereotypical Pocahontas story. Karana's experience serves as a model experience for girl readers, who live vicariously through Karana as they read her personal narrative. Likewise, Karana is not bound by the cultural equivalent of petticoats. The gender-based restrictions formerly placed on her by her culture evaporate during her isolated struggle to survive, demonstrating to girl readers that the metaphorical "petticoats" of one's culture are not necessary for survival, courage, intelligence, or strength of character. Karana's narrative allows a girl

³⁷ Laura Kalpakian, "My Life as a Boy," *The Confidence Woman*, ed. Eve Shelnutt (Atlanta: Longstreet Press, 1991) 48.

reader to experience the experiences of a female character who abandons the stereotypical confines of traditional female literary characters. Girls gain experiences from the less-gendered experiences of heroines that are more beneficial than the same experiences portrayed in novels such as *Call it Courage*, which contains male heroes.

CONCLUSION

Through their specific choices of narrator perspectives and their personal visions of child audiences, Armstrong Sperry and Scott O'Dell elicit valuable experiences for child readers in each of their Newbery Medal-winning novels. Each author portrays his own sense of heroism and role models for children, and though both types of heroes demonstrate the excellence valued in Newbery winners, O'Dell's *Island of the Blue Dolphins* sets itself apart as a novel which encourages child readers to seek and recognize the heroism within themselves, as opposed to Sperry's portrayal of heroism as a distant quality found in others. Unlike Mafatu, whose third person narrator provides the reader with the experience of recognizing heroism in others, Karana's first person point of view narrative engages the reader in the experience of recognizing heroism in one's self. And not only does O'Dell's depiction of Karana engage child readers in the experiences of an intelligent, independent, courageous heroine, but her

³⁸ Kalpakian 49.

experiences serve as one of the rare models for girl readers, who are unlikely to draw the same experiences from reading the non-fiction biographies of "Great Men." Girl readers need heroines such as Sperry's Karana in order to undergo the life-shaping experiences found in books.

While some literary critics assign elementary definitions to "heroine," such as Harry Shaw's definition that "a heroine is a female hero," the most accurate definition of "heroine" reflects a female protagonist's own courage and independence, not in reference to that of males.³⁹ In a discussion of a canon of novels containing heroines and her personal experience reading them, literary critic Rachel M. Brownstein, as referred to in Laura Kalpakian's essay, provides commentary in the introduction to her book, *Becoming a Heroine*, on the differences between simply being a hero and becoming a heroine. "The classic hero takes place in an epic poet's imagination, where a brave man is central; the heroine at the center of a novel is informed by a novelist's vision of character and destiny. She is made in the image of an integral, aesthetically and morally coherent unique individual," Brownstein states.⁴⁰ Her definition provides a clear portrait of both the hero and the heroine in literature.

But most importantly, Brownstein's definition recognizes the difference between the two award-winning children's novels: Mafatu is a traditional male

³⁹ Harry Shaw, *A Dictionary of Literary Terms* (San Francisco: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1972) 182.

⁴⁰ Rachel M. Brownstein, introduction, *Becoming a Heroine* (1982; New York: Penguin Books, 1984) xvi.

romance genre hero, centered in *Call it Courage* by Sperry's own vision of cultural identity and courage. Karana, however, is a true heroine in *Island of the Blue Dolphins*, shaped by O'Dell's portrayal of her as an independent individual, shaped by his personal vision of heroism and strength of character. While Mafatu fits the mold of a standard group of heroes, Karana is an individual heroine who narrates her own story and achieves successful survival without the assistance of a male. O'Dell's depiction of Karana as a heroine sets her apart from standardized male heroes such as Mafatu, providing her reader with a not only memorable experience but an experience in which the reader learns to recognize individual triumphs and personal strengths. In the words of Lillian Smith, a reader of Karana's story "has gained something permanent which can never be taken away," and the lasting impression of Karana will gear a young reader for a lifetime of experiences through reading.⁴¹

⁴¹ Smith 5.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Association for Library Service to Children. *The Newbery and Caldecott Awards*.

Chicago: American Library Association, 1994.

Beckson, Karl, and Arthur Ganz. *Literary Terms: A Dictionary*. New York:

Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1975.

Buell, Ellen Lewis. Rev. of *Island of the Blue Dolphins*, by Scott O'Dell.

Contemporary Literary Criticism. Ed. Jean C. Stine and Daniel G. Marowski.

Detroit: Gale Research Company, 1984.

Brownstein, Rachel M. Introduction. *Becoming a Heroine*. 1982. New York:

Penguin Books, 1984. xiii-xxviii.

Egoff, Sheila, Gordon Stubbs, Ralph Ashley, and Wendy Sutton, eds. *Only*

Connect: Readings on Children's Literature. 3rd ed. New York: Oxford

University Press, 1996.

Foulke, Robert, and Paul Smith. *An Anatomy of Literature*. San Francisco:

Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1972.

Green, Rayna. "The Pocahontas Perplex: The Image of Indian Women in

American Culture." 1975. *Placing Women's Studies*. San Francisco:

McGraw-Hill, 1998.

Kalpakian, Laura. "My Life as a Boy." Ed. Eve Shelnutt. Atlanta: Longstreet

Press, 1991.

Kingston, Carolyn T. *The Tragic Mode in Children's Literature*. New York:

Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 1974.

Lemon, Lee T. *A Glossary for the Study of English*. New York: Oxford University

Press, 1971.

Lukens, Rebecca J. *A Critical Handbook of Children's Literature*. Palo Alto: Scott,

Foresman and Company, 1976.

O'Dell, Scott. *Island of the Blue Dolphins*. New York: Dell Publishing, 1960.

O'Dell, Scott. "Newbery Award Acceptance." *The Horn Book* 37 (1961): 311-319.

Pearson, Carol, and Katherine Pope. *The Female Hero in American and British*

Literature. New York: R.R. Bowker Company, 1981.

Shaw, Harry. *A Dictionary of Literary Terms*. San Francisco: McGraw-Hill Book

Company, 1972.

Smith, Lillian. *The Unreluctant Years: A Critical Approach to Children's Literature*.

Chicago: American Library Association, 1991.

Sperry, Armstrong. *Call it Courage*. New York: Simon and Schuster Books for

Young Readers, 1940.

Sperry, Armstrong. "The Newbery Medal Acceptance." *The Horn Book* 17 (1941):

258-268.

Tarr, C. Anita. "An Unintentional System of Gaps: A Phenomenological

Reading of Scott O'Dell's *Island of the Blue Dolphins*." *Children's Literature*

in Education 28 (1997): 61-71.

Wong, Hertha Dawn. *Sending My Heart Back Across the Years*. New York:
Oxford University Press, 1992.