



'I don't like your kind of people': Cultural pluralism in Odo Hirsch's *Have Courage, Hazel Green*

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As the twentieth century progressed, 'ethnicity' as much as 'race' became an issue that confronted national myths of social homogeneity. Global movements of people, especially post-World War II, unsettled the link between nation and race and/or ethnicity in ways that challenged traditional aspects of acculturating children. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Western nations generally espoused a Social Darwinist ideology of childhood that regarded children as the 'key to social advance' (Cunningham 1991, p.219) and consequently children were represented as the nation's 'most valuable asset' (Cunningham 1995, p.72) and as central to the 'future of the nation and the race' (1991, p.191). In this discourse, 'children', 'nation', and 'race' are inextricably linked. In the first decade of the new millennium, it remains difficult to envision a reconceptualisation of the relationship between the nation and race/ethnicity that enables the emergence of a multicultural nation for adult citizens, let alone to finesse such a reconceptualisation to conceive of a widely acceptable multicultural ideology of childhood.

In the academy, both the advocates of the recognition of collective rights (that is, recognition of minority cultures in the nation) (Kymlicka 1995, p.3) and those who advocate liberalisation of human rights to ensure equality of opportunity for all citizens, understand that in the era of globalisation there is a need for more theoretical and political work (Barry 2001, p.34; Benhabib 2003). Paul Kelly (2002) argues that

All modern states face the problems of multiculturalism even if they are far from endorsing multiculturalism as a policy agenda or official ideology. They do so because they face the conflicting claims of groups of people who have identities and identity-conferring practices that differ from those of the majority in the states of which they are a part.

(p.1, emphasis in original)

Kelly's (2002) argument that all nations confront the problems of multiculturalism is borne out by the numerous ethnic and racial tragedies that have been a feature of the first decade of the new millennium, which demonstrate the problems that exist in culturally-diverse polities. Such crises tend to reinforce widely-held beliefs that successful

nation-states require a high degree of internal socio-political uniformity and homogeneity. Yet the 'circumstances of multiculturalism' (Kelly 2002, p.3) remain whether or not a nation's official ideology and institutional rhetoric advocates cultural diversity. Examples of such institutional rhetoric are seen in Australia's slogans of 'unity in diversity' and 'social harmony', and in Canada's claims to be a 'smelting pot' and an 'inclusive society' and, indeed, in the United Kingdom's promotion of the values of 'mutual respect' and 'community cohesion' (Balint 2005).

Children's acculturation into the 'circumstances of multiculturalism' (Kelly 2002, p.3) is an area of significant sociocultural interest and so too is the development of children's abilities to engage critically with textual representations of lived experiences in culturally pluralistic nations. Pearce's (2003) survey of the thematising of cultural diversity in Australian Young Adult fiction and film identified a 'third stage of the multicultural progression' where texts 'take their multicultural context for granted as they get on with their plots' (2003, p.242). This, she argues, is a move beyond Stephens' (1996) earlier finding that representations of Australian multiculturalism in similar texts were 'superficial or cosmetic' (p.3).

In contrast to the trends identified by Pearce and Stephens, Odo Hirsch's novel for children, *Have Courage, Hazel Green* (2001) critiques representations of the culturally-diverse community as a place of 'happy hybridisation' (Perera 1994). Thematically, the novel proposes that children's acculturation into an officially multicultural society generally devolves into assimilationist and integrationist practices that efface cultural differences. The novel represents the failure of a politics of respect for individual rights and of equality of opportunity for all people. It shows that migrants do not typically exercise 'the right to protest their exclusion' from the public sphere (Cox 1995, p.66). The novel interrogates the relations of domination implicit in policies of cultural pluralism premised upon the dominant culture's tolerance of minority groups. Indeed, policies of tolerance are exposed as an unsatisfactory basis for egalitarian social relations.

Have Courage, Hazel Green is the third novel in Hirsch's *Hazel Green* series, and all four books are concerned with

the child's right to participation in the public sphere (Pennell 2003). Postmodern playfulness is important in all four of the novels, and Hazel Green is represented as a feisty child participant. Her well-intentioned schemes often place her in conflict with adults and with her peers, and she is used to being regarded as a 'troublemaker' (p.74). Hazel matures across the series so, in successive novels, readers are involved in her confrontation of increasingly serious issues that require her to be ever more perspicacious about her engagement with people and with her community's problems. This third novel interrogates the extent to which a powerful adult's use of the words 'I don't like you and I don't like your kind' (2001, p.11) reveals the failure of the tacit racial and ethnic tolerance that Hazel assumes underpins social relations in her culturally-diverse community. She requires courage and ingenuity to expose a powerful adult's racial bigotry, and she needs determination in order to discover the origins of, and the reasons for the perpetuation of, such bigotry.

The novel articulates the disjuncture between the public perceptions of social harmony in the culturally-diverse community of families in Hazel's apartment block—ironically named the Moodey Building—and the negative lived experiences of successive generations of migrants who have homes in the apartments or work in the ground-floor shops. As the spatial framework for the novel, the Moodey Building offers a Toyland reality and the nomenclature of the novel's families is a play on the names used in the ubiquitous children's card game, Happy Families. For instance, the shop owners include Mr Volio, the baker—rather than 'Mr Bun the Baker'—and Mr Petrusca, the fishmonger rather than 'Mr Sole the fishmonger'. The playful etymological diversity of the family names indicates explicitly the racial and ethnic mix of the occupants of the building: Mrs Gluck, the florist; Mr and Mrs Frengel, the delicatessers; Mr Egozian, the caretaker; and Yakov Plonsk, whose family is the latest one to settle in the building 'from another country, Russia or Finland or Mozambique, no one knew for certain' (p.43). In contrast, the anglo-celtic name, 'Hazel Green', offers the humorous redundancy used in the card game. There is also cultural hybridity suggested by 'Marcus Bunn', the name of Hazel's most admiring peer.

Hazel, as the novel's main focaliser, has privileged access to the shops and apartments in the Moodey Building. In her community, the acculturation of all children to cultural pluralism means that she is astonished to overhear the Chairman of the Moodey Building Residents' Committee, Mr Davis, direct racist remarks towards Mr Egozian, the building's caretaker: "I've never liked you, Egozian. Look at you! I don't like you and I don't like your kind. Don't trust a single one of you. You're all the same. Liars, cheats" The man paused. "Just after what you can get, aren't you? Well watch out, Egozian. Wake me up one more time and that's it!" (p.11). Mr Davis's dialogue, with its racist generalisations and stereotyping, offers a 'substantialist position' (Bourdieu 1998, p.3) on race and ethnicity, and Hazel learns that a 'respectable' adult is a hypocrite with regard to racial prejudice.

When Hazel realises that Mr Egozian refuses to defend himself against such racial vilification, she knows that something is awry. As a device for maintaining narrative suspense, the adult speaker's identity is withheld from the reader at first. There is tension around Hazel's reactions to his statements that constructs them as heinous: 'If she hadn't seen for herself, heard the things he said with her own ears, Hazel would never have believed it' and it plagues her (p.12, 18, 40, 41). Hazel focalises, in free indirect thought, her options for exposing the speaker's racism and compares this dilemma with her previous experiences of disempowerment as a younger child—ignored, ridiculed, bullied (p.41). She realises that even as an older child her competency will not be recognised, so she decides that it is pointless to speak directly to Mr Davis (p.42). Instead, she devises the ultimately disastrous ruse of the 'play within the play' in order to challenge Mr Davis's conscience. Her ruse backfires and Hazel is widely ostracised for her racist remarks when the gossip spreads around the building.

Hazel is further alerted to her *misrecognition* (Bourdieu 1998, p.95) of the actual state of intercultural relations in the Moodey Building when she hears of her friend Yakov's misery. While his peers know he is a recently-arrived migrant, there is no interest in where he came from or what his previous life experiences might have entailed, let alone an interest in the difficulties he might face in his new community (p.43). Indeed, Hazel has thoughtlessly

contributed to his marginalisation by nicknaming him 'the Yak' (p.90). From early in the novel, the reader knows that Yakov is appalled by the 'principle' of racist thinking (p.55), but when Hazel seeks his assistance in the ruse to expose Mr Davis's racism, Yakov protests: "First of all, I didn't say *we*. Second, I said I wanted to show people what it's like, I didn't say I *had* to show them. And third, I didn't say him. I certainly didn't tell you to go and show someone like Mr Davis" (p.55). Clearly, of his own volition, Yakov will not protest behaviour that in principle he repudiates.

In the second level storyline, the Moodey Building delicatessers, Mr and Mrs Frengel, want to give a special party to celebrate their twenty-five years of business in the Moodey Building. Like Mr Egozian, the Frengels refuse to influence the public sphere and they 'were the quietest, meekest shopkeepers you could imagine'; when they worked 'they did it seriously, and never hastily, as if it was the most important thing in the world' (p.32). The couple agonise about the best way to celebrate. Eventually they decide that a party in the Moodey Building's courtyard is the 'perfect place' (p.221) because, 'If you wanted to celebrate with your family, you didn't send them presents, did you? You brought them together That was the point. After twenty-five years, the Frengels felt as if virtually the entire Moodey Building was part of their family' (p.34). Mr and Mrs Frengel see themselves as integrated into the community, but they also accept that they are subordinated subjects and citizens. This is represented in the storyline by their submission to Mr Davis's and Mrs. Driscoll's organisation of their party (p.179). The enormous banner hung across the building's courtyard for the party, 'Thank you, Moodey Building!' (p.227), is another example of reification of the national and ironises the fact that the Frengels should feel gratitude for their marginalised and disempowered social status in this 'family'. They will not protest injustice and in fact refuse a voice on any issue, even about who should attend the party they are hosting. Indeed, the Frengels believe that it is wrong for Hazel to be excluded from their party as punishment for not retracting her accusations of racism against Mr Davis. They admit that they are being used as a means of punishing her and that this distresses them (p.220), yet they only support

Hazel privately, giving her a box of party delicacies that she will otherwise miss out on (p.222).

Bourdieu's (1998) model of nation-citizens relations provides a useful frame for examining the ways that the migrant citizens in *Have Courage, Hazel Green* are socially disempowered and politically marginalised. In Bourdieu's model (1998, p.104), the nation-state exists on two levels: on one level it exists as a symbolic entity ascribed with a history and traditions; and on the second level, it exists as a structure of social relations organised by state institutions. The nation's children are significant to the nation-states at both levels. Children are part of the nation's symbolic capital—its 'most valuable asset'—and they are also enmeshed in the structures of social relations that are imposed by the state's institutions in matters of health, welfare, and education (see also Cunningham 1995, p.190).

Bourdieu (1998) argues that the external institutional reality of the state as a structure of social relations is balanced by each citizen's potential for subjective agency. The nation-state attempts to acculturate citizens to perceive its interventions in their lived experiences as not only appropriate but benevolent. Bourdieu (1998, p.54) further argues that national institutions have the means to activate forms of symbolic capital that elide the power relations underpinning the citizen's compliance with its social policies. Bourdieu (1998, p.3) claims that the nation's history, or rather, its 'collective histories', are significant mechanisms for effecting symbolic domination of citizens. Thus, in Bourdieusian terms, policies of multiculturalism form one part of the Australian nation's 'collective histories'. As such, Australia's multiculturalism—however it is constituted—is the top-down imposition of a particular conceptualisation of national identity. Strands of the 'collective histories', such as 'multiculturalism' assume authority as the 'rhetoric of the official' (Bourdieu 1998, p.59) and the nation's institutions employ the 'rhetoric of the official' to legitimate their policies and actions.

Bourdieu (2001, p.117) also argues that the nation-state instantiates some citizens as subaltern because the concept of the 'universal citizen' of liberal humanist epistemologies, typical of Western socio-political orders, inherently oppresses certain individuals and groups. This

is the outcome of the conceptualisation of the universal situation that 'recognises only abstract individuals, devoid of social qualities' (2001, p.106). Among such subaltern groups, I argue, children and feminine subjects are proper inclusions and so too are non-Anglo migrants to Britain and to former British colonies like Australia and Canada. Narrative closure in *Have Courage, Hazel Green* advocates the operation of social relations in ways that conform to Bourdieu's (2001, p.4) social ideal: that oppressed subjects unite with other marginalised individuals or groups in order to challenge the legitimacy of oppressive actions condoned in their social world as a result of the unquestioned acceptance of the 'rhetoric of the official' (Bourdieu 1998, p.59). Bourdieu (2001, p. viii-ix) argues that such alliances can be agential, and a means to contest the structure of the nation/citizens relations that perpetuates their marginalisation. Hazel is both a feminine subject and a child subject. As such, she is often positioned as subaltern, and she understands that she is expected to acquiesce to such positionings. Her experiences of subalternity allow her to empathise with the disempowered migrant members of her community.

Bourdieu is not pessimistic about the pervasiveness of national power, asserting that it is contestable, that rupture of dominant discursive practices is possible and is indeed evident in the construction of counter-narratives, such as fiction potentially offers. The individual's *habitus* permits the possibility of change; since any *habitus* is learned, it can also be unlearned. As the representative of dominant culture subjectivity, Hazel demonstrates a shift away from a *habitus* of unthinking acceptance of an ideology of tolerance that underpins her community's cultural pluralism. In Bourdieusian terms, *Have Courage, Hazel Green* shows Hazel initially *misrecognizing* (Bourdieu, 1998, p.95) her apartment block as a social space that endorses cultural pluralism. Hazel correctly identifies the voicelessness of two marginalised citizens, an adult and a child, when they steadfastly refuse to resist symbolic and institutional domination. This is achieved by the articulation of some of the social determinisms that underscore the impossibility of equality and social justice deriving from social policies of immigration that validate homogenisation of citizens' lived experiences.

Using a Bourdieusian lens, I want to focus on three ways that *Have Courage, Hazel Green* narrativises the operation and effects of racist values in the Moodey Building's community. Firstly, the storylines show that the migrants in the Moodey Building accept their subaltern positioning and refuse to resist marginalisation. Secondly, the disempowerment of some people is implicit in the governance of the Moodey Building Committee. This committee is responsible for the regulation of the building and for policing the implementation of its policies. The committee typically activates symbolic power to ensure that the community accepts the imposition of hierarchical social arrangements and that citizens submit to the committee's symbolic domination. Usually everyone in the building determinedly sees the Committee's actions as legitimate (p.221). Thirdly, the recirculation of racist narratives—often intergenerational—are transplanted from migrants' former homelands. Focussing on these aspects of this novel opens up the possibility that where Australian texts take a 'multicultural context for granted' (Pearce 2003, p.242) they may only be representing a cosmetic change to Australian identity and thus continue to be ideologically 'superficial' (Stephens 1996, p.3).

1. Migrant experience and subaltern subjectivity

When read in the context of Australian immigration policies, *Have Courage, Hazel Green* schematises shifts in post-war immigration strategies. The novel subverts the structure of social relations established by national discourses and social policies that celebrate cultural difference but delimit migrant opportunities throughout the community; rather than inclusion there is economic, social, educational, and political exclusion of migrant citizens, and rather than living with difference there is suppression of serious ethnically-based differences. With Mr Egozian vilified by the policies of the Moodey Building Residents' Committee, Hazel discovers that it is not only children who are denied participation and power in the public sphere.

The story of the sixty-eight-year old Mr Egozian shows the effects of the assimilationist policies applied to the first wave of post-war immigrants to Australia: 'He was always around, in the background, and never did anything to push himself forward. You were always seeing him

here or there...’ (p.15). Mr Egozian is relegated to a lowly place in the social structure where his employment is not secure. He is represented as self-abnegating; he accepts that his place in the social order is marginal and that his ‘rights’ may be revoked at any time. This happens to him, for instance, when he is barred from attending the Moodey Building’s social gatherings such as the annual picnic and the Fregels’ party (pp.133, 143). Mr Egozian appears abject in the presence of the powerful Mr Davis, who continually intimidates the caretaker with threats of dismissal. Mr Egozian accepts his disempowerment because he lacks structural connections to the public sphere that might provide access to processes of intervention and advocacy. He describes himself as ‘an old caretaker who comes from another country’ (p.121) and contrasts himself with Mr Davis whose symbolic capital of respectability is derived from his education and professional status.

From Hazel’s perspective, Mr Egozian (p.42) is a ‘victim’ and she wonders at his acceptance of disempowerment and about why he will not ‘protest his exclusion’ (Cox 1995, p.66). Mr Egozian argues that in any confrontation with Mr Davis people will believe Mr Davis because ‘he’s a respectable man. He’s a lawyer. He makes speeches. People believe him’ (p.120). In Bourdieusian terms, Mr Davis has symbolic and cultural capital. Mr Egozian reveals that he has never challenged power structures because he believes that those who fight ‘ended up getting get hurt. Most of us didn’t. Sometimes I wanted to fight back, I wished I was brave enough. Now I don’t even wish that any more. I was sensible. I can see I wouldn’t have changed anything’ (p.123). Mr Egozian judges the cost of speaking truth to power—to Mr Davis, in this case—to be too high because he knows he will be dismissed (p.123). He regards speaking out as ‘making trouble’ (p.243). Hazel’s response is typically belligerent:

‘Sometimes you’ve just got to make trouble, Mr Egozian. Sometimes, if something’s important enough, it’s the only way.’

Mr Egozian shook his head. ‘It’s just not me. It’s not the way I am.’

‘Mr Egozian, you have to do it. This is your chance.’

‘To do what, Hazel? To do what? To get my job back? I don’t want it.’

Hazel shook her head. ‘This isn’t about your job, Mr Egozian.’

‘Then what is it about?’

‘Truth,’ said Hazel. ‘And fairness. This is your chance, Mr Egozian. To fight back, to show them. This is your chance.’

The caretaker gazed at the girl in front of him. She was on her feet. Her eyes were ablaze. Her fists were clenched in anticipation.
(pp.243-4, emphasis in original)

In the Australian context, readers will realise that Mr Egozian’s response, ‘Truth? Fairness? I’m sixty-eight-years old. I stopped hoping for that a long time ago’ (p.244) indicates a disjuncture between the lived experience of citizens and national mythologies that espouse egalitarianism, mateship, and a ‘fair go’ for all.

Yakov’s experiences as a child of the most recently-arrived migrant family in the Moodey Building show that his story parallels Mr Egozian’s in many ways. Yakov’s strategy for coping with the oppression of migrant experience is to embrace alienation more determinedly even than Mr Egozian. Ostracised by his school peers (pp.51-3), he withdraws from them to pursue his passions for mathematics and music. Hazel correctly predicts that he will not choose to attend the Fregels’ party (p.47). Yakov constructs his choice to be reclusive as agential, but from the reader’s perspective, focalised through Hazel, it results in his abjection:

‘Do you know what it’s like to come from a different country, Hazel Green? Do you know the things people say to you when you first arrive, when you’re learning a new language? Maybe you should think about that. No, I’ll make it easy for you. Let me tell you’ ... ‘His face was red, his body was trembling, and his voice shook in a way that Hazel had never heard from him before.’ (p.53)

When Hazel says, “I didn’t realise,” Yakov replies, “Of course you didn’t. Why should you? You’ve never been in that situation. You’ve always been a local, never a foreigner. You’ve never been different, have you?” (p.53).

In the novel's climactic episode, in order to protest their exclusion and expose Mr Davis's hypocrisy, Mr Egozian leads the way, flanked by Yakov and Hazel, as the trio gatecrashes the Frengels' party. Mr Egozian takes courage from Hazel but more so from Yakov:

'No!' exclaimed the Yak. He jumped up as well, breathing heavily, trembling with passion. 'You must never stop hoping for truth, Mr Egozian. Never!' he cried. 'Remember Konchinsky!'

'That's right! Remember Konchinsky, Mr Egozian!' cried Hazel.

The caretaker shook his head in disbelief. Now they were both on their feet, both of these children. What did they want of him? He felt too old, too tired for this.

'Mr Egozian, I'm not allowed up there either,' said Hazel. 'But you already know that I'll go if you will.'

'And I will too, Mr Egozian,' said the Yak, his voice shaking, barely rising above a whisper. 'I'll be with you every step of the way.'
(pp.243-4)

Here readers see Mr Egozian and Yakov 'protesting their exclusion' (Cox 1995, p.66). With Yakov supporting Mr Egozian and Hazel encouraging them both, the reader sees the effective operation of Bourdieu's ideal (2001, p.4) of marginalised subjects uniting to challenge the legitimacy of the stigmatising actions that occur in their community. The resistance of the three participants is a courageous but painful triumph (p.250-5). While morally vindicated, Mr Egozian gives up his job despite receiving many apologies (p.256), and Hazel understands that she ruined the Frengels' celebration (p.261). More significantly, readers are positioned to understand that she has undermined the community's narratives of social cohesion (p.261).

2. Activating symbolic capital as a means to power

One way of reading the composition of the Moodey Building is as a trope for the Australian nation-state. For example, Mr Davis habitually employs a 'rhetoric of the official' (Bourdieu 1998, p.59) for purposes of self-aggrandisement and as an instrument of symbolic violence to control

the Moodey Building's families and the three-member committee he heads. Mr Davis's strategy of reifying the Moodey Building illustrates one kind of symbolic capital that Bourdieu (1998) identifies in the discursive practices of nationalist programs. Such programs ascribe history and traditions to places, as happens with Mr Davis's narratives that represent the Moodey Building's occupants as a distinctive and cohesive community (pp.82, 248). And Hazel recognises the strategy: '[a]ll he was really worried about was the Moodey reputation. But the Moodey was just a building. It didn't have feelings, it couldn't be hurt by what people said about it' (p.86). With her recognition of his strategy, Hazel can undermine Mr Davis's condemnation of her behaviour and resist his narrative and the symbolic power it intends to activate.

The florist, Mrs Gluck is, as the German derivation of her name signals, Hazel's 'good luck', her fairy godmother. This fairy godmother, however, is a subversive force in Hazel's life as she teaches Hazel that '[r]ules are only good for people who couldn't tell, in their hearts, what to do' (1999, p.9). However, even wise Mrs. Gluck seems to adhere to the hierarchical expectations in this matter. Mrs Gluck blanches when Hazel speaks the phrase 'your kind of people' to her. Nevertheless, she attempts to maintain adult/child power differential by insisting that Hazel must not make such accusations against an important man like Mr Davis:

'Mr Volio's right,' said Mrs. Gluck. 'And your parents are right as well, Hazel. You can't go around saying things like that about a man like Davis.'

'Mr Davis! Mr Davis!' muttered Hazel. 'No one believes me because it's Mr Davis. I bet if it was anyone else no one would care. What's so special about Mr Davis?'

'Nothing,' said Mrs. Gluck. 'You're right. You can't just go accusing people without proof, Hazel, no matter who they are. You ought to know that already.'

'I bet if I said it was Mr Egozian, no one would get upset,' muttered Hazel. 'I don't think anyone would care at all.'
(p.105)

In Bourdieusian (1998) terms, the reader sees, in this scene, symbolic violence enacted against the Moodey Building's citizens. Symbolic violence is instantiated through the symbolic capital that Mr Davis possesses as a lawyer and as Chairman of the residents' committee. He uses his physical presence to intimidate, and this intimidation is reinforced by his educational, economic, and social capital. As Hazel's final line in the dialogue above implicitly identifies, ethnicity is a factor in such acts of intimidation and subordination.

The novel also makes it clear that there can be a high personal cost in behaving courageously, in pursuing 'matters of principle' (p.55), and in resisting symbolic power, especially when one does not possess symbolic or cultural capital. This situation is one in which Hazel finds herself, and her disempowerment serves a double purpose in the primary storyline. First, her humiliation when she is punished for apparently making racist remarks to Yakov demonstrates the public opprobrium at racist behaviour shared by the Moodey Building's citizens and confirms that a multicultural social policy is the shared 'rhetoric of the official' (Bourdieu 1998, p.59). Second, Hazel's experience of abjection, as a child in the building, mirrors the common experience of the migrants in the society. But the novel complicates values such as courage and bravery because the storyline shows that what some people regard as principled action is viewed by others as 'troublemaking' and therefore undesirable.

As a subject lacking symbolic or cultural capital, Hazel feels the full negative social consequences of her two attempts to 'speak truth to power'. Hazel's first attempt is the 'play within a play' but unlike Hamlet's ruse, Hazel's does not serve to elicit guilt or shame in Mr Davis. He doesn't even listen to the script she and her friend Yakov perform in the lobby of the building, and he shows no interest in the racist taunts or any interest in why she and Yakov are shouting at one another (p.62). Second, in the face of Mr Davis's hypocrisy and the building's condemnation of her, Mr Davis denounces Hazel for her hateful crime. Hazel then exposes him, telling her parents and the Moodey Building Residents' Committee members what she has heard him say to Mr Egozian. Mr Davis is outraged and Hazel's story is not believed by anybody except Yakov and,

of course, Mr Egozian. In Bourdieusian (1998) terms this is a triumph of Mr Davis's personal symbolic power and also of institutional power.

Ironically, despite all the public disapproval surrounding Hazel's assumed racist insults directed towards Yakov, no one in the community actually cares about whether Yakov is hurt by the remarks. No one from the building approaches Yakov or his mother with the story. As disempowered new arrivals, their feelings and views are inconsequential. When Hazel tells Yakov of the furore about their 'play' he says,

'Why shouldn't you say something if it's the truth? He asked, still struggling to understand. 'The truth is always right. It's the truth. The truth should always be told. From that premise it follows that to hide the truth is always wrong.'

'I told them. I told Mr Davis to his face!' cried Hazel, and she almost jumped off the sofa when she remembered how she'd done it. 'And that didn't help?' inquired the Yak disbelievingly.

'It made it worse!
(p.92, emphasis in original)

This situation demonstrates a clear triumph of the operation of symbolic power. The children of the Moodey Building have no power to operate in the public sphere. The shopkeepers and residents of the building understand that they are allowed to participate in the public sphere but generally avoid doing so and thus also submit to symbolic domination. They accept the hierarchical social arrangements implicit in the dominant culture and submit to the operation of symbolic violence presented in the form of Mr Davis's professional status and his wealth as well as his power over the Moodey Building's governing body. The community does not want to sue for justice, and usually constructs the pursuit of justice as troublemaking or not worth the effort. Late in the novel, Mrs Gluck offers her view about how virtues such as courage and bravery function in communities. She suggests to Hazel and Marcus, that, regrettably, communities leave it to the braver, more courageous citizens to act on their behalf when it comes to matters of principle (p.258).

3. The recirculation of transplanted racist narratives

The third way that racist values operate in the *Moodey Building* is via the recirculation of racist narratives, that is, by re-telling stories of racial and ethnic conflict that migrants bring with them from their former homelands. As I have argued above, the novel demands recognition of migrants' former life experiences and shows these experiences overtly and covertly impacting on migrants' lives in their new homeland. Two migration stories are told: Mr Egozian tells his story to Hazel, and Mr Davis's story is told to Hazel and Marcus Bunn by Leon Davis.

Mr Davis is a second-generation non-British migrant whose family choices for assimilation involve effacing race/ethnicity markers, including changing the family name, and then using education as the means to achieve symbolic and cultural capital in the new community. Mr Davis's successful assimilation in his new homeland masks continuing racial prejudices that are part of his family's history. It is Mr Davis's son, Leon, who tells Hazel and Marcus the story that Mr Davis uses to justify his prejudice against Mr Egozian and all of 'his kind' (pp.170-3). According to Leon, Mr Davis is embittered by his family's experiences of dire poverty caused by migration. His family's migration was financed by a migration agent in their homeland, and regular repayments against this debt had to be paid to the agent's proxy in the new land, where employment was difficult to find and poorly paid.

Leon melodramatically recounts the stories his father has told him about these hard times and the sufferings of family members saying, 'You should hear my father tell the story. My mother doesn't like him to, but he says, no, why shouldn't the boys hear it?' (p.173). Leon concludes his story with: 'If they'd done all that to you, if you'd seen them punch your mother, wouldn't you hate them too?' (p.173). Leon appears not to question his father's story or its racist ideology. This leads Hazel to tell Leon that she is sceptical about his honesty and his maturity (pp.174-6) because of 'this ridiculous idea of hating a whole people—a whole people—just because one or two of them had treated you badly!' (p.176). The significance of the uncritical acquisition of racial prejudices from family narratives is made clear to readers through Hazel's critical commentary on Leon's story.

In contrast to Leon's delivery of Mr Davis's family migration story, Mr Egozian tells Hazel the story of his former homeland reluctantly, saying, 'I'm not telling you this to make you sad' (p.121). Nevertheless his story involves an episode of racial/ethnic cleansing that occurred in his former homeland in his grandparents' time 'when my people were slaughtered like sheep' (p.120). Mr Egozian says that it is certainly true that people can hate and that '[s]ome people seem to hate others who are not like them. Who can understand it? Maybe it's what they're taught' (p.121). This dialogue acts as a prolepsis to Leon's recount of his father's migration story. Readers draw the significance of these two migration stories from the distinction between the generalisation of racial hatred and racial/ethnic stereotyping offered in Leon's story and the contrasting moral position in Mr Egozian's story. Hazel's critical reaction to Leon's story and her acceptance of Mr Egozian's story position readers to make moral decisions to reject racial/ethnic hatred.

The limits of tolerance as an ideology of cultural diversity

Have Courage, Hazel Green offers a literary representation of ideological rupture in a community's multicultural history, and so offers child readers an opportunity to participate in debates about the conceptualisation of (Australia's) multiculturalism. The interaction of several storylines reveals the limits of tolerance as a sufficient ideological platform for national policies of cultural pluralism. The novel represents how hierarchically-organised communities perpetuate subaltern positions for some citizens, especially with regard to race and ethnicity. The discursive formations of 'multiculturalism' and 'cultural diversity' are problematised for readers as emptied of agency for large numbers of citizens. Tacit assumptions of assimilation—as in the case of Mr Davis, the Fregels, and Mr Egozian—mask aspects of difference and disempowerment that need to become public knowledge. *Have Courage, Hazel Green* speaks to the importance of minority rights and to the due recognition of culture (Kelly 2002, p.5) and enables child readers to see why 'the circumstances of multiculturalism' (Kelly 2002, p.3) are far from straightforward.

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

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