

# Racial prejudice



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Racial Prejudice It Is human nature to want to feel accepted. Prejudice In the United States, specifically with Immigration has been a major Issue. Julie Toasts describes this prejudice in " Evacuation Order #19" which is about a Japanese-American family and the internment camps that affect them during World War II. However, prejudice is not only found in the United States. Marine Satraps writes about her experience as an Iranian during the Iranian Revolution of 1979 and her refuge in Austria to finish high school In the graphic novel " The Vegetable".

While " Evacuation Order #19" Is about exclusion and " The Vegetable" Is about acceptance, they both deal with the prejudice associated with Immigration. It Is hard to compare apples and oranges, just as it is hard to compare a short story and a graphic novel. Regardless of the style of writing, the point of writing is to convey a message to the reader. Both do a pretty good job of showing the difficulties of living in a foreign country, but Toasts describes the exclusion associated with immigration in a more powerful way.

" Evacuation Order #19" by Julie Toasts is about a Japanese-American family living In California In the spring of 1942. After the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor In December of 1941 , rumors began spreading around the United States that Japanese- Americans were going to sabotage military efforts. President Roosevelt issued an order that would imprison nearly 120, 000 people with Japanese ancestry. The characters in " Evacuation Order #19" are being affected by this order. The family had assimilated into the community before President Roosevelt issued the order.

We understand that the mother has a friendly relationship with the store owner Joe Lund. Melee Glasses,' Joe Lund said the moment she walked through the door" (Toasts 381 This shows that the family assimilated into the local society because the shop owner comments on something new he sees with her. Joe Lund even offers that the mother does not have to pay for the items she purchased from the store. The reader is led to infer that the family has been a part of the community for a long time and they are nice people that wouldn't do anything to harm the country.

As the story concludes, we see that the family is being taken to " wherever it was they had to SGF' because of their race and the family cannot do anything about it. The exclusion that is imminent on the family is a direct result of racial prejudice. " The Vegetable" by Mar]Anne Satraps takes place in the late 1970s or early 1980s in Vienna, Austria and is about her own life. Marine is Iranian and living without her parents as she attends school in Austria. During the late 1970s, Iran was going through a large scale political and social revolution.

The revolution became violent in many instances, In fact in January of 1978 students began to protest and many students died during the protest. As a reader of " The Vegetable" we don't know the nationality of Marine until page 482 when she sees stories about Iran on the TV and she talks about her attempts to " make her past disappear" (Satraps 482). We do not really see her being excluded or treated differently because of her nationality by the other students. It seems that she does not accept herself as she is constantly changing the way she looks and that she smokes marijuana with some of the other students.

As and makes the comment about trying to disappear. In the end when she proclaims she finally relinquished the prejudice that she put on herself. The exclusion Marine feels is because of her race but also because she put herself into a situation where she feels excluded. Both stories show that the characters are capable of assimilating into the new culture and by the end the stories, racial prejudice has an effect on their lives. "Evacuation Order #19" shows very clearly that the characters are being excluded based on racial prejudice where "The Vegetable" implies that part of the exclusion is because of other factors, and not necessarily her race. The reader develops a stronger emotional feel for Tossup's characters because you feel bad for the situation they are in. To truly understand how a character is feeling, one would have to look at the choices or decisions that the character makes. The characters in these two stories both feel excluded, and the actions that they decide to take, show the extent of the racial prejudice.

Julie Toasts writes about a mother who spends the entire day caking her house before her family and she are taken away. The degree of racial prejudice that she felt caused her to have a very emotional day. Not only did she pack away all of her belongings, she had to put down their dog, release their bird and hide sentimental objects and after hiding her emotions as to not scare her children, she finally has one last moment in her home to reflect on her emotions. "... And began to laugh - quietly at first, but soon her shoulders were heaving and she was gasping for breath.

She put down the bottle and waited for the laughter to stop but it would to, it kept on coming until finally the tears were running down her cheeks" (Toasts 386). Her emotions took over and she lost control because of the racial

prejudice and what it made her do. Marine in "The Vegetable" felt such a strong exclusion from her racial prejudice that she decides to lie about her nationality to a stranger at a party. She wanted to disappear from her past because she was tired of being judged based on where she is from. After Marine proclaims that she is proud to be Iranian, she starts crying. But really, I had nothing to cry about. I had just redeemed myself. For the first time in years, I felt proud" (Satraps 485). She felt so relieved that the weight of racial prejudice was no longer affecting her and she began to feel more comfortable. The actions that the characters perform in these stories show the power that racial prejudice put on them. The mother's actions in "Evacuation Order #19" are a bit more extreme than Manner's actions in "The Vegetable" and because the actions are more extreme, the reader can't help but feel more empowered by Tossup's story.

While both Julie Tossup's "Evacuation Order #19" and Marine Satrap's "The Vegetable" have powerful effects on the reader, Tossup writes a more powerful story. She effectively shows the exclusion caused by racial prejudice and the effect it had on families during this time. "The Vegetable" has a confusing message because we are not sure if the stress she feels is from racial prejudice or if it is because of a teenager's desperate desire to feel included where "Evacuation Order #19" has a very clear and strong message of racial prejudice that makes the reader feel for them more.