

International Students in the U.S.A.: Portrayals in South Asian and Middle Eastern Diaspora Novels

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Abstract

During the 2014/15 academic year, the U.S. had 974,926 undergraduate and graduate international students, which is ten per cent more than in the previous year. Considering the growth of international enrollment, the subject of foreign students' acculturation on U.S. campuses is becoming prominent in research and at times appears in creative literature as well. The purpose of this paper is to explore how making friends among international students is portrayed in four novels written by South Asian and Middle Eastern Diaspora authors: *American Dervish* by Ayad Akhtar, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* by Mohsin Hamid, *The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf* by Mohja Kahf, and *An American Brat* by Bapsi Sidhwa. The author comes to the conclusion that the portrayals generally correspond to the findings in psychological research and include three predictable scenarios: complete acculturation on campus; living in relatively isolated communities with other international students which suggests little interaction with non-belonging students; and individual aloofness from all fellow students, domestic or international. The portrayals in Bapsi Sidhwa's novel, however, do not conform to any of the mentioned scenarios; the author consistently places her character in unique non-stereotypical situation and makes her find the way out largely on her own. Due to the accuracy with which the four novels portray international students' experiences, the author makes a recommendation that the novels should be included in the curricula of American colleges and universities, specifically, in the Common Freshman Reader Programs. These programs were launched to help bridge different kinds of divides, including that between foreign and domestic students. Popular fiction, like the four novels in question, discussing the interactions between international and American students could be a perfect fit for Freshman Reader Programs.

Keywords: *international students, diaspora literature*

Introduction and Background

During the last two decades, internationalization has become one of the most ubiquitous terms in higher education around the world. It is gradually becoming one of the major strategic components of a college's or university's activity because it touches directly on questions of curriculum relevance of an institution, its quality and prestige, as well as its

national competitiveness and innovation potential (Rumbley, Altbach, & Reisberg, 2012). Although internationalization means different things depending on the contexts in which it is used, it is broadly defined as “the process of integrating an international dimension into the teaching, research, and public service function of the institution” (as cited in Hudzik & Stohl, 2012, p. 67).

The most visible feature of internationalization is the increasing numbers of foreign students on college and university campuses, and the United States still remains the destination of choice. Its colleges and universities enroll more of the world’s 4.5 million mobile undergraduate and graduate students than any other country in the world, almost double the number hosted by the United Kingdom, the second leading host country (IIE Releases, 2015). In 2014/2015 academic year, U.S. colleges and universities enrolled 974,926 students from abroad - ten per cent more than in the previous year, which makes it the highest rate of growth since 1978/79 (Open Doors Data, 2015). Students from China, India, South Korea, and Saudi Arabia represent fifty eight per cent of all international students in the U.S. While China remains the top country of origin of international students in the U.S., India’s growth outpaced China’s in 2014/15, and the increase of students from Saudi Arabia is more than six per cent compared to the previous year and about eleven times more than in 2000 (Open Doors Data, 2015).

However, to be successful, internationalization of US campuses requires more than enrolling increasing numbers of international students. It requires that international students become integral to campus life, which the involved faculty and staff work together to build a learning environment that prepares students for a local society. For this to occur, colleges and universities must be committed to making their campuses more globally aware and willing to adapt to the needs of students coming from abroad (Brannan & Dellow, 2013).

The choice to study in the U.S.A. may present many challenges including the experience of acculturative stress and difficulties with adjustment to the environment of the host country (Smith & Khawaja, 2011). Research in psychological science distinguishes several predictors of psychological adjustment of international undergraduate and graduate students, such as stress, social support, English language proficiency, region/country of origin, length of residence in the United States, acculturation, social interaction with Americans, self-efficacy, gender, and personality (Zhang & Goodson, 2014). The closely related factors of stress and social support, the latter being of paramount importance in coping with stress, have received significant attention in psychological literature. One particular avenue of research has focused on friendship formation, a

variety of social support; specifically, it investigates the role friendship formation plays in the international students' experiences and the unique friendship combinations made possible by this experience (Severiens & Wolff, 2008; Wilcox, Winn, & Fyvie-Gauld, 2005). International students can form friendships with individuals from their own countries, from other countries, and from the host country. Research has found that international students often have more friends from their own country (Wu, Garza, & Guzman, 2015); however, research has also demonstrated that there exist a direct link between having more host country friends, on the one hand, and satisfaction, contentment, decreased homesickness, and social connectedness, on the other (Hendrikson, Rosen,& Aune, 2014).

However, when it comes to establishing relationships with American peers, international students often find such relationships short-term and shallow (Glass, Wongtrirat, & Buus, 2015). Many international students whom Glass, Wongtrirat, and Buus (2015) interviewed

spoke specifically about examples of American friendliness, such as inviting an international student to one's dorm room for coffee, that international students mistook for a sign of interest in developing a closer relationship. When this proved not to be the case, many students . . . spoke of dashed expectations, hurt, and the feeling of having been duped or even betrayed by their American peers. (p. 57)

In this connection, it has been often noted that that people who live and study abroad often have more in common with one another than with U.S. students (Bhatia & Ram, 2009; Fong, 2011). Researchers even argue that the formation of friendships across cultures on university campuses has a double effect: it intensifies the sense of a student's own national identity and at the same time opens him or her up for a more global identity not exclusively tied to a specific nationality or location (Bhatia & Ram, 2009; Phelps, 2013). In any case, international students' friendship with same-institution peers is an important means of academic and social advancement (Poyrazli, Kavanaugh, Baker, & Al-Timimi, 2004); it is also a significant factor in international students' adjustment on campus (Smith & Khawaja, 2011). Research conducted by Glass, Wongtrirat, and Buus (2015) concludes that U.S. universities often serve as unique "cosmopolitan spaces in which international students who are otherwise worlds apart find themselves at home together" (p. 55). They help one another through bureaucratic processes and share information about public transportation, grocery and clothing stores, and other everyday necessities.

Another trend of research that has been noticeable in the last fifteen years emphasizes the international students' resilience rather than their susceptibility to hardships and stress. Lee (2013) analyzed international students' stories and came to the conclusions that their stories "indicate not only their vulnerability, but, just as important, their endurance, adaptability, and will to succeed" (as cited in Glass, Wongtrirat, & Buus, 2015). Several years before Lee(2013), and Montgomery (2010) conducted a similar research project with an emphasis on the international students' personal ways of navigating through the system of U.S. higher education; she noted that the students' adaptation process might in fact lead to personal growth (as cited in Glass, Wongtrirat, & Buus, 2015).It has been also claimed that stress experiences by international students in the process of adaptation may not necessarily be a negative factor and individuals who have experienced stress often display significantly higher health and performance scores as compared with other people (Rudmin, 2009).

Regardless of whether researchers put an emphasis on the vulnerability of international students or their resilience, the general agreement is that U.S. colleges and universities should invest more time, thought, and resources in increasing the quality of their international students' education and living experiences. By strengthening their commitment to international students, institutions will make a lasting impact on international enrollment and make more global the experience of all students, both international and domestic (Glass, Wongtrirat, & Buus, 2015).

Statement of Problem and Purpose

As discussed above, friendship formation has been identified as an important factor in the acculturation process of international students on American campuses. Research has also distinguished three patterns in such friendship formations: making friends with students from the same country, with students from other countries, and with domestic students. As a teacher of relatively large classes consisting of both international and domestic students, I have had a chance to observe how these patterns work. I currently teach English Composition classes at Ball State University. The university enrolls over 1000 international students, which comprises about 12 per cent out of its entire student population. I typically have two to four international students, usually from China, in each of my core curriculum classes. The most common scenario is when my foreign students keep together. They sit next to one another in class, prefer to choose one another as partners for group work, and, as a rule, seldom interact with American students. A different scenario, much less common, is when an international student becomes an accepted member of the

class from the very beginning, freely interacting with his or her American classmates. Such student typically has an excellent command of English, is vocal, has good social skills, and has been residing in the country for considerable time. Interestingly, such student rarely interacts with other international students in my classes and prefers to work and socialize with his or her American classmates.

Given the separation between the two populations of students in my classes, I have been trying for several years to bring the two groups closer together. One means that I have been practicing to achieve the purpose is to effectively organize group work that would encourage international and domestic students to share knowledge and experiences, build confidence, and develop collaborative skills. The organizational challenges of group work as a mechanism for integrating international and domestic students is a separate topic of research which is beyond the scope of the present discussion. In this paper I will be concerned with the academic substance for such group work, specifically, what reading materials educators can use in their courses as a platform for organizing teamwork and leading discussions which would be meaningful and engaging for both their international and domestic students.

The purpose of this paper is, first, to examine how international students' interactions with their American peers and faculty are reflected in bestselling novels by contemporary diaspora writers. Second, it is to recommend how these novels may be included in colleges' and universities' curricula to raise awareness about the challenges international students meet on American campuses and to create a sense of community among different groups of international and domestic peers.

Methodology

I selected three novels written in English by American writers of Pakistani origin and one novel written in English by an American writer of Arabic (Syrian) origin: *American Dervish* by Ayad Akhtar, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* by Mohsin Hamid, *An American Brat* by Bapsi Sidhwa, and *The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf* by Mohja Kahf respectively. All four novels describe at different lengths the experiences of their protagonists as students at U.S. schools of higher education; the religion and ways of bringing of all four protagonists are portrayed as significantly different from those of domestic students.

I base my selection of the four bestselling novels on the assumption that popular literature contains themes that have potential of creating significant social implications. Popular literature is so well liked because it often addresses current issues and answers the readers' misgivings and anticipations; it even may at times prompt a way out of an

unpleasant or threatening situation. It is always up-to-date and evolving, and as such can offer material for consideration and discussion within a community.

Analysis

The main character of *American Dervish* (2012) is Hayat Shah, a young American of Pakistani heritage growing up with his Pakistani parents. The novel opens with a scene in which a grown Hyat, a student in a large American university, is watching a basketball game with his friends. He sees a vendor approaching their row with brats and wieners and asks his friend whether they want anything. They order three bratwursts, and he orders a wiener for himself, but the vendor mistakenly sells him four bratwursts. After a minute's hesitation, Hayat eats the bratwurst, just like his American friends.

This scene of camaraderie among friends is followed with a classroom scene. Professor Edelstein teaches a class on Quran. In his interpretation, Quran, like the Bible, is a historical documents rather than a revelation from God. One of the students begins a hostile argument and shortly leaves the auditorium in anger. Another Muslim student follows. Professor Edelstein addresses Hayat, the only Muslim student left:

“That leaves you, Hayat.”

“Nothing to worry about, Professor. I am a true and tried Mutazalite.”

Edelstein's face brightened with a smile. “Bless your heart.” (p. 5)

Hayat completely fits in with his American friends; he also comes to an understanding over a culturally controversial issue with a faculty member. A different scenario is presented in Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. The main hero, a young Pakistani Changez, is a student at Princeton where students come “from around the world, sifted not only by well-honed standardized tests but by painstakingly customized evaluations . . . until the best and the brightest of *them+ had been identified” (p. 4). Among his well-off American classmates in the elite school Changez behaves generously and cordially; however, he is close to none, although he is “friendly with one of the Ivy men, Chuck, from *his+ days on the soccer team, and [is] well-liked as an exotic acquaintance by some of the others . . .” (p. 17). Changez is not wealthy as his fellow students are; he cooks his meals in the basement of his dormitory, yet in public he assumes the air of a young prince. His attitude towards his fellow students is that of polite aloofness, another possible scenario of an international student's behavior, although it may be more typical of an Ivy League school and not so common in regular public universities.

Yet another scenario, especially familiar to those teaching freshmen core curriculum classes, is depicted in Mohja Karf's novel *A Girl in the Tangerine Scarf*. The heroine, a Syrian immigrant Khadra Shamy, enrolls in Indiana University. She and her brother, also a student, are "not a part of the mainstream campus scene of frat houses and tailgate parties. Most of the 'practicing' Muslim students stayed away from all that" (p. 181). The social interaction of Muslim students at IU is a continuation of their parental communities' lifestyle: henna parties, baby aqiqas, religious seminars, and social activism (p. 234).

There is no mention that Khadra ever gets close to any of other students at IU except perhaps her classmate Joy Shelby, or Shalaby, a third generation American Arab. At one point Joy invites Khadra to visit her family in Mishawaka, Indiana, where Khadra experiences the life of an Americanized Arab family who keep their own traditions, yet have adapted much of the lifestyle of Americans.

[Khadra] had never seen Arab folks like this; women called Rose who mangled Arabic with an American accent and played Arabic music on American guitars, and men who looked like Hoosier farmers in denim overalls but a shade or two darker. All sitting around eating kibbeh nayyeh of an Indiana evening . . . (p. 191)

However, this friendship with Joy ends in frustration; the two women could not agree on too many things, from insignificant to more serious, such as whether or not to enter a sushi bar because it is a "bar" or whether a Muslim woman has a right to abortion.

With her professors, Khadra does not achieve much understanding either, although with one of them she seems to begin establishing a more candid connection. Dr. Eschenbach is an Islamic Studies professor who in her lectures leads Khadra to a new understanding of Islam.

. . . Khadra began to admit to herself that that there were whole areas of Islam that all her Dawah center upbringing and Masjid Salam weekend lessons hadn't begun to teach her. All the Islam she knew before, she'd looked at from the inside. In Professor Eschenbach's class, she began to see what her belief looked like if you stepped away and observed it from a distance. (p. 231)

At times this new vision of Islam is terrifying to Khadra, but she steadies herself against the rift that occasionally opens beneath her feet, so that this challenge becomes less of a menace and more of an intellectual and personal fulfillment. It seems that this nascent fascination with a professor could lead to a long-lasting friendship, yet this does not happen. At one time Khadra drives to Professor Eschenbach's home to hand in a late paper

and unwittingly witnesses an eclectic religious ceremony in the basement of Eschenbach's house.

The lit basement was full of people. Five, ten, more, she could see the tops of heads, men, women, scarves, hair, caps, braids, locks. How odd! They were swaying in time to the rhythm of words weirdly familiar: All-lahh, All-lahh, All-lahh, All-lahh, sang the chorus. Ba-boom, ba-boomba-boom, ba-boom, beat the drums. (p.238)

Khadra flies the scene in terror, and there is no mention of Professor Eschenbach again.

While the characters in Akhtar's, Hamid's, and Kahf's novels follow three different, but predictable scenarios of international students' behavior in the U.S.A., the college life of the heroine of Bapsi Sidhwa's novel *An American Brat* defies any stereotypes. The Pakistani Feroza Ginwalla is sent to the U.S.A. as a 16-year-old for a three-month visit which eventually turns to be a fully-blown college career. First, Feroza enrolls in a junior college in the small city of Twin Falls in Idaho. Her encounter with the first person she meets on campus, a counselor, puts her at ease and creates a favorable impression of the college.

The counselor smiled and stood up when Feroza and Manek *Feroza's uncle+ entered her small, sun-lit office crowded with file and books. "You must be the new Pakistani student. I am Emily Simms," she said, extending her hand. She looked admiringly at Feroza's embroidered shirt and came round her desk to examine it. "Now isn't that pretty?"

The alert, short and comfortably slender woman put Feroza at ease at once. Feroza guessed she must be her mother's age. After a few pleasant remarks Emily said, "We don't get many foreign students but we are sure happy to have you with us." (p. 146)

One would imagine that this warm and welcoming reception by the first person Feroza meets on campus helps her to get through the difficulties of her subsequent stay on campus. One such difficulty comes in the form of Feroza's roommate, Joe. Joe has "a large, sullen face and a wary, hostile air"; she looks at Feroza and Manek with "insouciance that borders on disdain" (p. 147). Yet she is honest and open, which Feroza's uncle Manek recognizes and acknowledges. He says to Feroza: "You're lucky you've not been palmed off with some Japanese or Egyptian roommate. Jo's a real American; she'll teach you more than I can" (p. 148). Manek is right; Joe teaches Feroza to say "'Gimme a lemonade. Gimme a soda,' and cure*s+ her of saying, 'May I have this – may I have that?'" (p. 154). She also

teaches Feroza to shoplift which to her is both an adventure and a revenge on the unjust society.

. . . living with Joe helped her [Feroza] to understand Americans and their exotic culture – how much an abstract word like “freedom” could encompass and how many rights the individuals had and, most important, that those rights were active, not, as in Pakistan, given by a constitution but otherwise comatose. (p. 171)

After graduating from the junior college, Feroza gets admitted to the University of Denver where one of her roommates is Gwen, a 25-year-old black girl who goes with a much older white man who pays for her studies. Feroza enters a social circle of international students and becomes intimate friends with Sushi from India; he often gives her his assignments and she hands them in as her own. Being in her last year at the University of Denver, she falls in love with David, a practicing American Jew. The book ends with Feroza getting accepted in a graduate school in anthropology at a large American university.

Feroza’s college life is complex and defies any stereotypes. Each time she finds herself in an unfamiliar, often difficult, situation, she has to find solutions on her own. But gradually the learning curve becomes less steep as Feroza continues to negotiate the college life terrain. One positive factor in this negotiations is undoubtedly the favorable first impression created by a college administrator; another is the friendship with an American student; yet another is the social circle which includes both American and international peers. Bapsi Sidhwa’s novel gives an insight into living abroad on a college campus and accurately presents the factors that would make such living successful.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The goal of this paper was to discover how international students’ interactions with American peers and faculty are depicted in four contemporary bestselling novels. I chose four works by South Asian and Middle Eastern diaspora writers– *American Dervish* by Ayad Akhtar, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* by Mohsin Hamid, *The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf* by Mohja Kahf, and *An American Brat* by Bapsi Sidhwa –which feature international students as their main characters, and analyzed the portrayals of the interactions of these characters with American students and professors. My conclusion is that in such portrayals one can identify predictable scenarios that have been identified in psychological research on friendship formation among foreign students: one such scenario is becoming completely acculturated on campus, another is living in their own tightly knit communities with little interaction with non-belonging students, and the third is polite, but firm aloofness which keeps fellow

students at a distance. The portrayals in Bapsi Sidhwa's novel, however, do not conform to any of the mentioned scenarios; the author consistently places her character in unique non-stereotypical situation and makes her find the way out largely on her own.

Due to the accuracy with which they portray international students' experiences, the four novels can be recommended for inclusion in the curricula of U.S. colleges and universities. Specifically, they can be made part of the Freshman Reader Program. In this Program incoming students are assigned "common reading" – the same book which is distributed to them in the summer before they arrive on campus. The goal of the Program, which has gained much popularity in the last ten years, is to create a sense of belonging among freshmen. The rationale behind the Program is that reading the same book brings people closer together as a community by creating common ground for discussion. The mechanism of the Freshman Reader Program is as follows: during orientations, new students are divided into discussion groups typically lead by volunteer faculty. The content of group discussions depends upon the selected book, but facilitators are encouraged to touch upon broader political, social and cultural contexts which are prominent nation- or worldwide, such as diversity, multiculturalism and globalization. Other popular themes are "initiation" and "belonging." For example, some of the books Ball State University (BSU) has selected as its Freshman Common Reader since it launched the program in 1998 are: *Life on the Color Line* by Gregory Howard Williams (1998, 1999), *First They Killed My Father* by Loung Ung (2006), *A Long Way Gone* by Ishmael Beah (2009), *Where Am I Wearing?* by Kesley Timmerman (2012), and *Funny in Farsi* by Firoozeh Dumas (2015).

Freshman Reader Programs also supplement group discussions with other activities, such as panel discussions and films. Some colleges and universities make a point to invite the authors of the common reading book to campus. Thus, in September 2015 BSU hosted Firoozeh Dumas, the author of *Funny in Farsi*, who gave a large well-attended presentation at the University's auditorium and participated in small-group discussion with faculty and staff. Currently Ball State University is getting ready to host Anand Giridharadas and Rais Bhuiyan, the author and main character of *The True American* which has been selected at the 2016 Common Reader. Concerning the importance of the authors' visits, the Freshman Common Reader webpage at BSU says:

Having the author of the Freshman Common Reader visit campus for both a large public lecture and small group discussions with new students helps to enforce the principle that ideas take life when they are discussed among readers. Often this is the first time

new students have had the chance to meet with and directly question a book's author about the ideas they have read.

Some campuses seek to continue conversations about the reading throughout the fall semester or even the academic year. The administrators of the Freshman Reader Program encourage, although do not require, faculty to use the reading as part of their courses. The effectiveness of this approach depends on how well faculty members involved in the Program coordinate their efforts to make students consider the same reading from different perspectives. To make this coordination easier, BSU organizes a Summer Planning Group in which colleagues involved in the Freshman Reader Program share their ideas and class materials. The organizers of the Summer Planning group also provide the participants with general resources on the book: information on the author, study guides, samples of assignments, and so on.

Below is the description of an assignment that was discussed in the summer Planning Group and later implemented in my English Composition (Rhetoric and Writing) class:

We began with a discussion of what students liked and did not like about the book. Many students agreed that the humor and the episodic organization of the book would much benefit from comic-book like illustrations. I directed the discussion towards the significance of the visual element in understanding a textual message nowadays and showed the students several pages from Persepolis by Marjane Satrapi. We talked about the compatibility of written text and visuals, and I demonstrated to them on examples the common basic principles of written and visual communication. The homework assignment they received was as follows:

Assignment 1, Creating Comics

1. Create a comic book episode (a sequel of two or three pictures accompanied with text) illustrating an incident in your life. When working on the episode, please keep your audience in mind (us, your classmates and instructor); you need to get us interested (moved, amused, pleased, etc.) in what you have to say. The comic book episode can be created electronically or on paper.

2. Write a paragraph about the choices you made about your visual representation of the event to ensure it is rhetorically effective (interesting) and will reach your audience in the way you want.

All twenty five students created comic book panels. Some reflections on the assignments were as follows:

1. My comic strip depicts my trip to Italy, Germany, Switzerland and France because it had such a huge impact on my life. It opened the door to travel which I have since come to love. In my comic strip, I used the characters (sic!) faces to show how happy I was as I traveled through the Swiss Alps. I also used the sun as a way to show how beautiful the scenery was throughout my trip. We concluded our trip in Paris where I fell in love with the Eiffel Tower's size and structure. I wanted my audience to see the beauty of Europe as much as I did by showing not only the landscape but my reactions to the landscape through happiness and joy.

2. The reason I made the choices I did in my visual representation was that I was summarizing the large life events I've experienced. Many people cherish family so I drew my family. Many people can sympathize with the hurt a family is put through in a divorce. There are also others that can understand moving away from home. I also drew my life headed towards a college, specifically Ball State.

3. I felt like most people liked puppies, if not all baby animals, so I (sic!) decided to start out with a nice sunny day while holding up my new puppy, Manfred, for my first square. I wasn't (sic!) able to show how much he mattered to us, but I was sort of able to show the relationship he and our family had built. The element of security is what he provided for us, and that's all that we could have asked for from him. He would always come by name and let you pet him. So then finally to achieve my goal of grabbing at my audience's emotions I showed the end times of his life. How he just walked off one day and didn't come back. It was better that way, although I wish it had never happened.

4. I chose to illustrate a short synopsis of my life to capture two main points that mean a lot to me. Demonstrating (sic!) my past as being a volleyball player, I then decided that the sport wasn't for me and that I'd focus on school. This is important because volleyball was a huge part of my life, but school means a lot to me. I also drew my parents saying that they were proud of me which also means a lot. My family's support brings me to where I am today. I chose this depiction to demonstrate my sense of morale through finding my intellectual path and what I want to do in life. This can evoke a reader's inspiration to find what they enjoy doing in life.

5. In my two drawings I decided the symbols of both my life timeline and all the shows that I had been in needed something special to make them come to life. I decided to color my images because studies have shown that people would more likely read a sign that is in color rather than one in black and white. In my comic book strip, I show the timeline of my life. This includes where I was born, all the places I have lived, my interests, and my education. The second page is an array of symbols that represent all the

musicals and shows I have done and on the top is the word "Broadway" which represents my love of performing and the stage.

Funny in Farsi was a successful introduction into my class on rhetoric which emphasizes the significance of combining written, oral and visual elements in today's communication.

I hoped to demonstrate with the description above that if the integration of the Common Reader in the curriculum is successful, it may go beyond the goal of creating a sense of belonging in freshmen; it may help introduce them to the intellectual life of the academy by demonstrating its interdisciplinarity (e.g., written text – visuals) and critical thinking.

Common reading programs, just like the four popular novels discussed in this paper, help bridge different kinds of divides: between different populations of students, including foreign and domestic ones, between high school and college, and between faculty and students. They can both enhance the freshman year and offer ways of bringing life experiences closer to the intellectual endeavors of college. Popular books discussing the interactions between international and American students could be a perfect fit for Freshman Reader Programs.

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