

ious to noise and would only remark on the lack of it. I live in New York City, and I often hear from outsiders that all New Yorkers are in a hurry and unfriendly.

Erkhssous

I, too, sent a photographer into the street of Cairo for photos of the *erkhssous*. I had no idea what they looked like, and the author had no photos. She sent an Egyptian friend to photograph them for me.

A reflection on all of this – on a visit to Cairo as a presenter at a NESAs conference hosted by the Cairo American College, I found, to my delight, that Cairenes have truly embraced the book, warts and all. They seem to be touched and pleased that a heart-felt book has been published in the United States about them and their culture. As an illustrator of multicultural books, I work very hard to get it right. If occasionally I miss my mark, it is not for lack of trying.

While in Cairo, I was interviewed by a young Egyptian woman for a magazine article about “Ahmed.” She gushed about the book, then proceeded to point out that the bean cart man’s cap is wrong. It’s Tunisian. I bought the clothes I used for my models in a store in a large, Arab neighborhood in Brooklyn. The Arab owner assured me they were exactly what Cairenes wear.

“To discern the true from the false, the real from the unreal, and the facts from fiction” is exactly what I spend my life trying very hard to do. Thank you for a thoughtful exploration of the book and, to the editors, for the opportunity to respond. It’s been extremely helpful to me.

Sincerely,

Ted Lewin