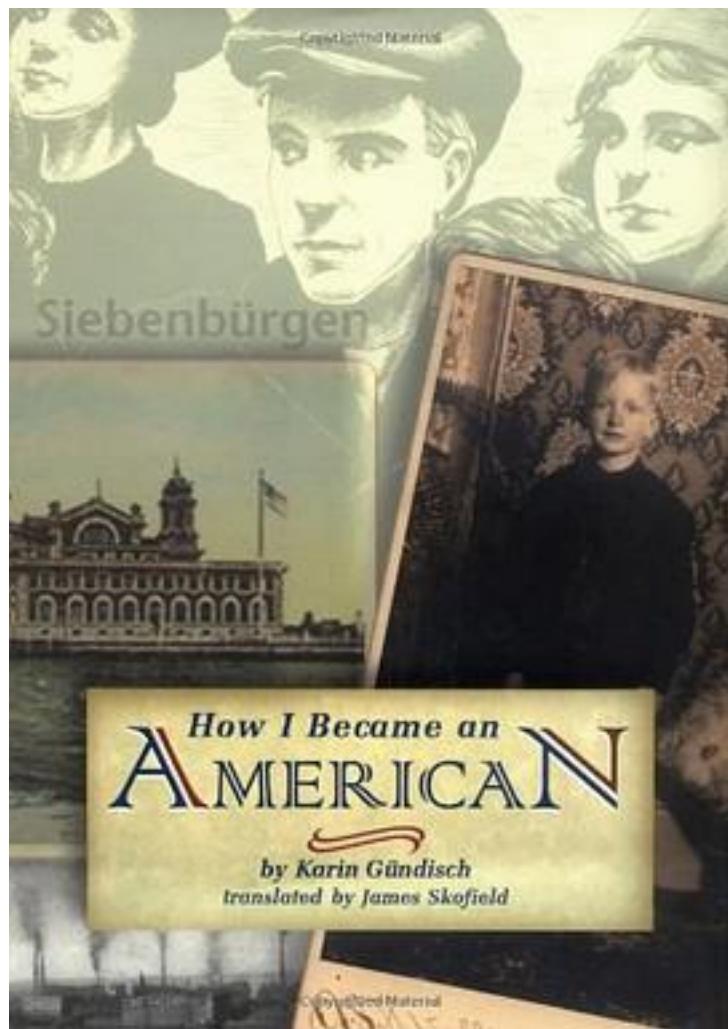


# How I Became an American



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In 1902 in a small German town a traveler turns up spouting catchy songs about

adventures in America. To the townspeople, the land sounds like paradise, and ten-year-old Johann Bonfert is excited when his own family begins planning a life overseas. His father and brother leave early to find jobs in the steel mills of Ohio, and the rest of the family follows later in a long, miserable sea journey. Johann soon discovers, however, that it's not easy to start life from scratch. America's not paradise, and assimilation can be difficult, especially for grown-ups. Author Karin Gundisch's American debut is a heartwarming and finely observed book that speaks to the enduring struggles all immigrants face, whether in 1902 or 2002.

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