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## UNLV College of Education Multicultural & Diversity Newsletter

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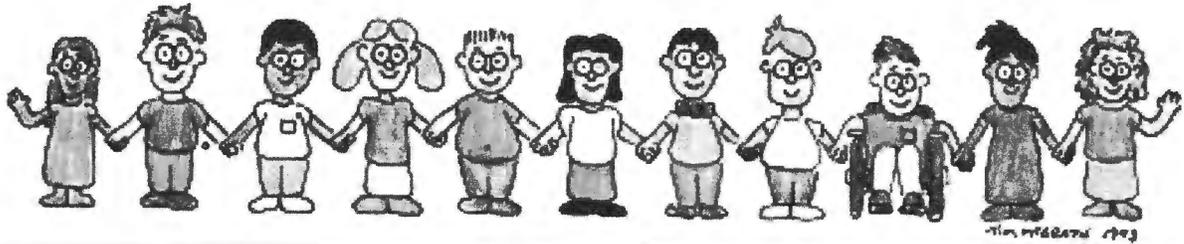
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# UNLV COLLEGE OF EDUCATION Multicultural & Diversity Newsletter

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## **Members of the Multicultural & Diversity Committee:**

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Kyle Higgins, Editor

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*Article por Dr. Rudolfo Chávez Chávez  
By Susan Marie Rumann*

The Diversity Committee, in collaboration with Dean Teresa Jordan, sponsored a roundtable discussion with Dr. Rudolfo Chávez Chávez in November. Dr. Chávez is a professor in the area of Multicultural Education at New Mexico State University located in Las Cruces, New Mexico. He is a nationally and internationally known expert in the areas of multicultural education, social justice, and working with "at-risk" populations.

In his roundtable discussion with a diverse representation of faculty and graduate students from the College of Education, Dr. Chávez highlighted his critical reflexive practice in the development of his syllabus for multicultural education. In an attempt to codify the need for authenticity, Dr. Chávez presented his "self." In so sharing, he illuminated the struggle for transformative intellectuals to facilitate the construction of equitable curricular practices "to realize new ways of being, knowing, and acting morally and ethically."

Through the curricular constructs of *ser* ("to be"), *saber* ("to know"), and *saber hacer* ("to know how") to do the right thing, the dialogue centered on a need for a liberatory curriculum discourse with our colleagues throughout the entire enterprise of teaching/learning (i.e., beyond the walls of academia). As a cultural worker with a transformative vision for the education of all children, Dr. Chávez provided the roundtable participants much to ponder.

## INVITED GUEST COLUMN

### **DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE**

by Sterling J. Saddler,

Assistant Professor

and

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Historically, the majority of American organizational values were patterned after the epitomized Western European male—white, heterosexual, and physically able-bodied. The Western European male values established the norms and traditions that are still embraced by some organizations in the United States today. These established cultures were expected to be conformed to and were supported by the organization. Diversity was discouraged while conformity was expected.

As society evolves, changes within the workforce become apparent. Characteristics that make up the working world are quickly becoming much more diverse. With this metamorphosis, it becomes crucial for organizations to take notice. Raising awareness in regards to workforce diversity is imperative for employers of tomorrow.

Future predictions concerning the manner in which the American workforce will change help support this awareness in regards to the importance of workforce diversity. By the year 2000, women will account for more than 47 percent of the total workforce in the United States. Sixty-one percent of all American women will be employed. By the end of the 1990s the total labor force will be comprised of 12 percent African Americans, 10 percent Hispanic workers, and 4 percent Asian workers. These percentages, when aggregated, indicate that 80 percent of those entering the workforce in the late 1990s will be women and minorities. In this decade, we are also seeing the maturing of the American workforce. Workers in the 35 to 54 age group has increased by more than 25

million—from 38 percent of the workforce in 1985 to 51 percent by the year 2000.

This change in the statistics is often attributed to the fact that modern society is undergoing a transition from a predominantly white society to a more diverse global society. As society transforms, it will continue to affect the workforce. It will become increasingly important for organizations to accept and incorporate values, experiences, and goals of a diverse workplace into the establishment's structure.

The issue of diversity will be of particular importance to the Management and Human Resource Departments of all organizations. Hiring practices and employee training as well as continuing education are the areas where the diversity values of an organization are the most obvious. Management must provide the direction to the organization for acceptance of diversity. With this in mind, workforce leaders must develop skills that reflect the change in society's labor force such as:

- Hire based on ability vs. similarity.
- Recognize that different does not equal substandard.
- Communicate effectively with employees from diverse backgrounds.
- Coach and develop people who are diverse along many dimensions.
- Provide objective performance feedback that is based on substance rather than style.
- Help create organizational climates that nurture and utilize the rich array of talents and perspectives that diversity can offer.

In addition, organizations who are committed to diversity will experience benefits and success such as:

- Full utilization of human capital.
- Reduced interpersonal conflict.
- Enhanced work relationships.

- Shared organizational vision and increased commitment among diverse employees.
- Greater innovation and flexibility.

During the next 10 years, the demographics within the American workplace will continue to undergo dramatic shifts. The transition of the traditional European-American male majority is becoming more obsolete as we approach the end of the 1990s. Society is becoming an increasingly aware, diverse, and segmented populace. Organizations are involving more women and men of all races, ethnic backgrounds, ages, and lifestyles in their present and future organizational planning. These individuals will need to work together effectively. Loden and Rosener (1991) describe a culture of workforce diversity as an "institutional environment built on the values of fairness, diversity, mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation; where shared goals, rewards, performance standards, operating norms, and a common vision of the future guide the efforts of every employee and manager."

## LANGUAGE FAUX PAS

by María G. Ramírez

Language mistakes are common, particularly for those learning English as their second language. However, even neophyte English speakers must grapple to master a language fraught with inconsistencies. It should come as no surprise to parents of preschoolers that the English language poses one of the greatest challenges of the early learning years. Misunderstandings with language typical among young children are best illustrated in the comic strips *Marvin* and *One Big Happy*. Not only do the youngsters commit language blunders, but they also ignore the social rules of conduct that are interwoven in the language.

As the English language and its speakers attempt to embrace and reflect the true diversity of the American people, new language faux pas will occur and, thus, can be predicted to increase. Most language faux pas are innocent and are never meant to insult or belittle anyone. However, intent doesn't minimize the embarrassment or emotional pain they may

cause. References to one's religion, ethnicity, or culture are extremely personal and even causal or innocent reference can be quite hurtful.

Consider the following examples which, at first glance, may appear trivial or insignificant. The examples are presented without full contextual reference since the intent is to examine the words or expressions used without embarrassing the writers. The examples are as follows:

"If our journals end up on the low end of the totem pole, they may get axed (no pun intended)."

"UNLV's 2nd Annual Welcoming Reception for New Multicultural Faculty and Professional Staff."

"It has come to my attention that some faculty have scheduled examinations for Wednesday, September 30, which is Yom Kipper, a major holiday for our Jewish students, and have refused to make other arrangements for students who will be observing that holiday. This is a reminder that it is University policy to make alternative arrangements for students observing this and other religious holidays."

"Teacher materials available for Days of the Dead."

What words or expressions in the examples were offensive?

The language faux pas illustrated are innocent, similar to the language misuse of young children, but they need to be acknowledged in order for us to learn from them. We, just like young children, need to monitor our language and make a conscious commitment to minimizing the use of words or expressions that can be offensive to others. A simple, "I'm very sorry" is a good start at correcting a language faux pas and truly embracing a philosophy of cultural consciousness rooted in understanding and appreciation of others.

## SECOND LANGUAGE MEDIATION

by Steve McCafferty

Those of us interested in Sociocultural Theory tend to keep a sharp eye out for the work of James V. Wertsch who is perhaps the leading person in this area with regard to Education in the country. In his most recent offering, *Mind as Action* (Oxford University Press, 1998), he writes of the use of cultural tools and the "irreducible tension" that exists between agents (people) and the use of these tools. With regard to the learning of a second language and its cognitive implications, this is a particularly interesting topic. Indeed the most powerful of all mental tools is language, so the notion of how mediation changes with the use of a second language in a second culture is of real interest, and something that a good many of the students in Clark County experience.

If we view second language learners as "consumers" of language (Wertsch suggests that people are consumers of cultural tools), we gain, I think, important insights into the overall nature of this process. First of all, learners, if they are middle school age or older, may very well not want to consume all of the social dimensions that are reflected in a new language, or from a Bakhtinian perspective, there are likely to be limitations on just how much of a second language learners may want to "rent". Wertsch also points out that sometimes people end up not only "renting" but also "internalizing" new ways of being human and that this can be subtle and even contrary to their desires. The example he provides, although not dealing directly with second language learners, is applicable to that population and also, deals with African Americans in this country, a population that is important to the concerns of this newsletter as well.

Wertsch cites a study by Steele and Aronson (1995) who found that despite their statements of not being affected by cultural stereotypes, Black undergraduate students at Stanford University nonetheless did poorly on tests when they were told that the scores would reflect their "intellectual abilities". Other Black students with similar SAT scores did significantly better on the same test when told that it was simply a "laboratory problem-

solving task that was nondiagnostic of ability" (p. 171). This finding did not hold for the white students in the study. The researchers claim is that there is a "stereotype threat" that is imposed by contexts despite agents' resistance to it. This, along with other evidence, indicates that immigrant learners of English could experience this same effect, that is, despite their attempts to retain their conceptual and social world as formulated in their country of origin and resistance to the new language and culture, that they change. This does not necessarily mean that there will be negative consequences, it could be quite the opposite I suppose; in either case, this does indicate the dramatic reconfigurations, cognitively, that a person may undergo, a point of view that is supported by research that shows that "language shock" (the difficulty of "finding yourself" in a new language) is ultimately "stronger" than the experience of "culture shock" for immigrants.

## CONNECTING CULTURES THROUGH STORIES: A CELEBRATION OF MUSIC AND STORY

by Cyndi Giorgis

Over the past few publishing seasons, numerous books have featured illustrated versions of songs or have chronicled music over a period of history. Stories are contained within the lyrics and melody of the song and, of course, we create our own music in the way in which we read aloud a book to others. What better way to bring people from all cultures together than through the celebration of music.

Places within our hearts and our minds are filled with sights and sounds of music. *Mysterious Thelonious* is a weaving of color, music, and text. Chris Raschka has created a visual masterpiece by matching the tones of the chromatic scale to the values of the color wheel. Through Raschka's efforts we gain a musical portrait of Thelonious Monk, an African-American jazz musician and composer. Somewhere on each two-page spread, Monk and his piano appear amidst the colors. At first, the text appears to be placed randomly on a page, but with closer study each syllable has been placed within a color block on the grid. Readers

must sing the book to appreciate the sound and color of freedom. This offering by Raschka complements an earlier work on a jazz master, *Charlie Parker Played Be Bop*. As you read and share both of these books be sure you have a selection of Monk's music or Parker's "Night in Tunisia" to accompany the fluid text and dynamic illustrations.

A visual delight that can be coupled with Louis Armstrong's incredible voice is, *What a Wonderful World* by George David Weiss and Bob Thiele with illustrations by Ashley Bryan. This vibrantly colored book features illustrations of children of all races as they put on puppet shows with Louis Armstrong. Smiling children, glowing yellows and pinks, and brilliantly colored pastoral settings make this more than a tribute to Armstrong, to whom the book is dedicated. Bryan's artistic interpretation of the song is a tribute to the lyricists who wrote it and the man who sang it.

*I See the Rhythm* by Toyomi Igus and illustrated by Michele Wood takes readers on a musical journey through time. Beginning with the roots of Black music in Africa and continuing through contemporary hip hop, each page reflects the music's rhythm and time period when it was popularized. Igus's prose poems provide the rhythm of work songs on a plantation, the rhythm of jazz in the streets of New Orleans, and the rhythm and spirit of gospel in the church pews. Wood's evocative paintings mix both modern and primitive styles and communicate the coolness of jazz or the sounds of swing. A timeline appears for each double-page spread and provides readers with both historical and social contexts of African-American music. Text and illustrations resonant with emotion of the blues, ragtime, jazz, gospel, rhythm & blues, rock, funk, rap, and hip hop. This book provides an unique way to share the power and the joy of African-American music with us all.

Picture book biographies provide another way to not only learn about great musicians and composers but also invite the reader to "swing to the beat." *Duke Ellington: The Piano Prince and His Orchestra* by Andrea Davis Pinkney follows the journey of the "smooth-talkin', slick-steppin', piano-playin' kid" considered one of twentieth century's greatest composers. Forced to take piano

lessons when he was young, Ellington returned to playing the piano years later when he heard ragtime music. At nineteen, he entertained folks in pool halls, country clubs, and cabarets. Soon after, he formed his own small band called the Washingtonians and performed in various New York City honky-tonks and later at the famous Cotton Club. Andrea Pinkney's prose is as smooth and flowing as Ellington's music. Brian Pinkney's scratchboard renderings are enhanced with luma dyes, gouache, and oil paints and visually interpret Ellington's music through the use of swirling colors and fluid lines crating a sense of movement. In his career, Duke Ellington wrote more than 1000 compositions which included ballet and film scores, orchestral suites, musical and choral works. The "King of Keys" lives on through his musical legacy.

In *Simple Gifts*, Chris Raschka again provides his own interpretation of the traditional Shaker hymn. Utilizing oil crayon on pastel paper, Raschka creates visual harmony through the interaction of representational and abstract forms such as a cat, bluebird, squirrel, turtle and rabbit. Evoking the Shakers' whirling dances in circles or "turning", the double-page spreads are filled with the colors typical of autumn. Raschka hand-lettered the song's lyrics which also take on a swirling effect. At the book's conclusion, Raschka provides a brief history of the song, its words and melody. This unique blending of culture, song, and art illustrates Raschka's exploration of visualizing music through his artist's palette.

Leo and Diane Dillon have created another beautifully illustrated book using verses from "Ecclesiastes" in, *To Every Thing There is a Season*. The text is a reminder that all people share certain attributes regardless of varying beliefs and cultures. A stanza from each verse accompanies an illustration from a different time period and culture. The illustrations are unique art styles from around the world offering a view from past to present which provides an international flavor. Illustrator notes at the end describe each time period, artistic style, and technique. Extending the context of this book with the classic Byrd's song by the same name will enable teachers to focus on the meaning that is derived from both text and illustrations rather than its original source, the Bible.

Several books such as *No Mirrors in my Nana's House* by Ysaye M. Barnwell, contain a CD which eliminates having to seek out the music on your own. "There were no mirrors in my Nana's house/no mirrors in my Nana's house/So the beauty that I saw in everything/the beauty of everything/was in her eyes/like the rising of the sun." A young Black girl is inspired by her life in which no mirrors constrict her view of herself and where she is intrigued by the cracks on the walls and "tastes with joy that dust that would fall." The message that children can rise above their environment is reassuring and uplifting. Synthia Saint James illustrates the text in acrylics with the effect of collage. Every scene embraces the exultation of the text while every page is an affectionate study in color communicating plenty of emotion.

Create your own music with *Diez Deditos: 10 Little Fingers & Other Play Rhymes and Action Songs from Latin America* translated by Jose-Luis Orozco. This wonderful compilation of Latin American songs and finger rhymes are presented with musical notation, background notes, Spanish/English lyrics, and small pictographs. The 34 selections are developmentally appropriate for younger children, but some can also be used with older students. Elisa Kleven's rich and vibrant collage illustrations are wonderfully engaging. Kleven has added visual prompts to cue readers to the appropriate body movements to accompany the songs and rhymes. A publisher's note indicates that the songs have been record by Orozco and are available on CD or cassette.

Music crosses all cultures and all disciplines. It touches our hearts and weaves the threads of harmony within us all. We often forget to share the rich history of music within this country and around the world with our students, yet for many of us music is a part of our everyday life. So, get those toes tapping and your body swaying to the rhythm of the words and the beat of the music. And, as Louis Armstrong always said, "Oh, yeah!"

#### Books Reviewed:

Barnwell, Y. M. (1998). *No mirrors in my Nana's house*. Ill. S. Saint James. San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace. Unpaged. ISBN 0-15-201825-5.

Dillon, L. & D. (1998). *To every thing there is a season*. New York: Scholastic. Unpaged. ISBN 0-590-47887-7.

Igus, T. (1998). *I see the rhythm*. Ill. M. Wood. San Francisco, CA: Children's Book Press. 32 pp. ISBN 0-89239-151-0.

Orozco, J. (1997). *Diez Deditos: 10 little fingers & other play rhymes and action songs from Latin America*. Ill. E. Kleven. New York: Dutton. 56 pp. ISBN 0-525-45736-4.

Pinkney, A. D. (1998). *Duke Ellington: The Piano Prince and his orchestra*. Ill. by B. Pinkney. New York: Hyperion. Unpaged. ISBN 0-7868-0178-6.

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Raschka, C. (1992). *Charlie Parker played be-bop*. New York: Orchard. Unpaged. ISBN 0-531-05999-5.

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### "MY SON WANTS A BARBIE....."

by Joyce Nelson-Leaf

All right, now they've done it. They've made girls' toys so attractive that now my son wants one. He stopped his cartoon watching long enough one day to inform me that he could probably have a Barbie now. So what are my choices?

A. I buy him a Barbie and let it go at that. He will have Barbie involved in some inter-galactic war anyway.

B. Schedule a counseling appointment for my son.

C. Explain to him that Barbies are for girls, not for boys, and then buy him a Small Soldiers Talking Archer doll.

D. Fret about my son becoming Gay or ostracized by his friends.

E. Pat myself on the back for raising my son to be androgynous and not identifying with rigid gender roles.

F. Tell him that I hate Barbies but I'll buy him a Cabbage Patch doll instead.

G. Tell him that Santa must have forgotten.

H. What else can I do?

The list could go on and on, but the point is that 'freedom of toy choice' does not exist for boys in our society. The consequences may be too great. This issue does not relate solely to toy choice, but the fact that the definition of a "real man" has not evolved over the years. The four themes that underlie the male role as outlined by Deborah S. David and Robert Brannon in their book *The Forty-Nine Percent Majority: The Male Sex Role* (1976) still fit as a definition for male role conditioning. These themes are: (1) No "Sissy Stuff": The Stigma of Anything Vaguely Feminine; (2) The Big Wheel: Success, Status, and the Need to Be Looked Up To; (3) The Sturdy Oak: A Manly Air of Toughness, Confidence, and Self-Reliance; and, (4) Give 'Em Hell': The Aura of Aggression, Violence, and Daring. Times have changed so little for men that William Pollack uses these same injunctions in his 1998 publication, *Real Boys: Rescuing Our Sons from the Myths of Boyhood*.

Now one might ask why these injunctions or themes would need to evolve anyway, but the truth is that these rigid definitions can have negative consequences for boys and men. In the first theme, "No Sissy Stuff" is the injunction that underlies homophobia. You can do most anything as long as it is not like a woman. This leads to shame, which Pollack describes as such a fear of humiliation and embarrassment that males tend to disconnect emotionally from others. For boys, the behaviors can range from avoidance of dependency to impulsive action, from bravado and rage filled outbursts to intense violence (Pollack, 1998). One can see that the avoidance of this type of shame caused by the injunction, "No Sissy Stuff," when taken to the extreme, can result in the violent act upon the young

homosexual college student in Wyoming. The extremes of this behavior may also explain the predominance of males conducting acts of rape, sexual harassment, and domestic abuse. On the milder side, this fear of shame effects choice (the choice of a nontraditional career, the choice of toy) along with the right of self-acceptance.

The second theme, "The Big Wheel" also affects choice. With careers, it refers to choosing the 'right one' and making sure that it leads to power and prestige. This has been intensified by the fact that females were traditionally raised to achieve status through the man they married. Men receive a great deal of encouragement to pursue prestigious careers that will make their families proud and show a steady movement up the so-called ladder of success. But what happens if the career choice does not reflect socially acceptable aspirations? What happens if there is a career swing, downsizing, bypassed for promotion, loss of tenure, threat of promotion loss due to affirmative action initiatives and others. This can also result in feelings of shame, repressed feelings from fear of vulnerability, sense of failure, and unhappiness. Men have typically been raised to meet their esteem needs through their jobs.

The "Sturdy Oak" is one that most men can relate to when one suggests that they go see a doctor. One is met with an overwhelming, "What do I need a doctor for?" Men will typically tough it out waiting until it is too late to do anything about their illness. "Sturdy Oak" ties in with the back injuries men acquire because they lift things much beyond their ability, ignoring the technology invented thousands of years ago, the block and tackle. The "Sturdy Oak" is also an injunction that implies that it is not okay for males to show feelings or to cry. Feelings and vulnerabilities must be repressed. One of the few times it is okay for men to show their feelings is while watching sports. This leads to the fourth and final theme of the male role, "Give 'em Hell."

"Give 'em Hell" can best be described by the adage that 'might makes right' (David & Brannon, 1976). This theme has evolved out of our need to prepare men for war. Competition is one of its roots and is taught through contact sports such as football and eventually ascends to the boardroom of our major corporations. This

is an analogy that Betty Lehan Harragan makes in her book, *Games Mother Never Taught You*, ---"To be a successful player at corporate policies, it is essential to remember that business plays by the venerated football rules." Due to the "Give 'em Hell" theme, boys are led to 'dare' each other to engage in risky behaviors and this causes some parents to simply shrug their shoulders if their sons injure themselves or others (Pollack, 1998). David and Brannon (1976) stat that, "fathers do not openly condone 'violence' to their sons in so many words, but they don't totally condemn and abhor it either...When handling bullies father may state, "Never *start* fights, boys...but always *finish* them!" The extremes of this behavior are especially apparent with young men as in alcohol poisoning, reckless driving, and gang crimes. The gang is based upon the same 'team' principals as taught through contact sports like football---"The exigencies of team play mandate a higher god than the individual--the good of the team, the success of the common effort." (Harragan, 1977). Modern day examples of "Give 'em Hell" philosophy ranges from toy guns, toy soldiers, and war games to automatic weapons, gangs, and drive-by shootings.

Knowing all of this, I am faced with many dilemmas. How can I allow my son to freely make choices based upon his wants, needs, and interests rather than based upon rigid gender roles? How do I protect him from social ostracism when he makes unpopular choices? How can I help him develop valuable relationships with his own and the other gender? How do I protect him from feeling shame about those things that are a natural part of life? How do I help him to be strong and to make choices that match his beliefs? How do I teach him to take care of himself and to freely seek help and support when he needs it? All of these questions lead to the many things that I fear for him. So do I buy him a Barbie or a Small Soldiers Talking Archer Doll? I don't like Barbies and I don't like Small Soldiers. I will buy him neither, however, robots are nice.

Joyce Nelson Leaf, Director of the Educational Equity Resource Center at UNLV, is the proud mother of a six-year old boy.

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## **PREPARING TEACHERS TO IMPROVE HOME-SCHOOL RELATIONS WITH MINORITY PARENTS**

by Stanley Zehm

Research focusing on home-school partnerships reveals significant gains in the academic and social growth of children when parents are genuinely involved in the education of their children. If we expect minority children to meet high academic and social standards, we must involve their parents from the beginning in on-going home-school partnerships. In a recent study conducted by a doctoral student from the Curriculum and Instruction Department, Dr. Donna Mahler, the perceptions of parents of high achieving African American students were examined. The findings of her dissertation, *Having their say: Parents of high-achieving African American students talk about the home-school relationship*, shed light on ways that teacher educators can help prepare their students to establish and maintain more effective home-school partnerships with parents from culturally diverse backgrounds. Let me share a few of the suggestions from her study that Dr. Mahler specifically recommends for teacher educators.

The first recommendation Dr. Mahler makes to teacher educators is to provide their students with a strong background in multicultural education. This recommendation is based on the facts that teacher candidates bring little cross-cultural understanding and experience to their teacher preparation and have rarely been instructed in anything but an Anglo-centric curriculum. She documents current demographic trends which indicate that the K-12 student population will become more

culturally diverse while the teaching population will remain predominantly Anglo. She maintains that if this population of teachers is to be effective in working with diverse student populations, they will need to be prepared to teach children of color and to work effectively with their parents. She believes that a strong background in multicultural education will prove effective in enabling future teachers to understand the role culture plays in the teaching-learning process.

Dr. Mahler's second recommendation to teacher educators is to provide a sequence of courses that support the understanding of a theoretical knowledge base for multicultural education. When students understand and appreciate the theories and philosophical underpinnings of multicultural education, they can better select for their students appropriate classroom experiences that will enhance their development as culturally sensitive individuals. In particular, she recommends that teacher educators integrate emphases on knowledge construction, multicultural content, and an equity pedagogy into their methods courses.

The final recommendation that grew out of Dr. Mahler's research is that teacher educators need to provide future teachers with knowledge and skills to support the racial identity development of their students. She suggests that helping students understand and apply developmental theories such as James Banks' emerging stage of ethnicity could be an initial step in meeting this need.

This need was identified in Mahler's study when African American participants shared their concerns that schools were not doing enough to help Black students develop positive self-images and skills for coping in a racist society. These parents felt that the racial identity of their children could be supported by the inclusion of more African American history into their classroom learning experiences. They wanted to see this happen on a regular basis, not just during Black History Month. Finally, these parents recommended that another excellent way to support the racial identity development of their children in the public schools was to recruit and retain more African American teachers to serve as role models.

These are a few of the snapshots revealed in Mahler's study. Her study adds to our knowledge-base about the important topic of parent involvement—a topic that we need to attend to in the preparation of teachers for a culturally diverse world. I will invite her to share other implications from her excellent study in a future column of this newsletter.

## **EDUCATING OURSELVES AND OTHERS ABOUT HIV / AIDS**

by Nancy Sileo

Each year, for the past decade, December 1<sup>st</sup> has been designated as World AIDS Day. It is a day for remembering those we've lost to AIDS, a day to reflect on the medical advancements that have taken place since the first decade of the pandemic, and a day to look to the future and believe there will someday be a cure or a vaccine for HIV/AIDS. World AIDS Day is a day to be grateful that specific drug combinations are allowing persons with HIV/AIDS to live longer more productive lives without the negative affects of AIDS. It is also a day for major fund raising activities and galas in honor of those who have died from AIDS, a day for a national media blitz on HIV/AIDS, and a day to reflect on how much more socially conscious we, the public, have become since the initial days of the disease.

Unfortunately, what seems to get lost in all of the hoopla is the fact that the number of persons living with AIDS in the United States continues to rise. The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, 1997) identified the cumulative number of reported AIDS cases as 641,086. Males accounted for 534,532 cases and females accounted for 98,468 cases. During the same time period, 8,086 AIDS cases were reported in children (birth to 13 years of age). Approximately 61% (390,692) of adults and adolescents who reported their AIDS status have died and approximately 58% (4,724) of children who reported their AIDS status have died (CDC, 1997). The number of persons infected with HIV is estimated to be five (5) to seven (7) times higher than the number of persons reported to have AIDS.

Although the number of newly reported HIV/AIDS cases in the United States declined

for the first time during 1997, the overall number of persons with HIV/AIDS continues to increase. Most of the new diagnoses occur among persons of African American descent, women, persons infected through heterosexual intercourse, and an increased number has been observed among persons of Hispanic descent. In addition, although the greatest number of new HIV/AIDS diagnoses occurs among persons 25 to 44 years of age, the number of new HIV/AIDS cases reported among persons 13 to 24 years of age is growing at a disproportionate rate when compared to all other age categories. In the United States, CDC estimates that at least one person 24 years of age or younger contracts HIV every 30 minutes (CDC, 1997).

In the past, the major focus of HIV prevention programs has been on men who have sex with men. Traditional HIV prevention and education programs have not targeted women, persons who have heterosexual intercourse, persons from traditional minority groups, or youth. There is a critical need to educate these populations about HIV prevention.

In 1995, the American Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) and CDC developed a cooperative agreement to "Build a Future Without AIDS." The major purposes of this project were to promote standards for teaching about HIV/AIDS prevention in teacher preparation programs, increase the comfort and expertise of teacher education faculty about HIV/AIDS education, and provide HIV/AIDS education methods and materials for teacher education students (AACTE, 1998).

As teacher educators we must accept that HIV/AIDS education is not just a concern of the medical community or university health sciences faculty. HIV prevention activities require the efforts of the community at-large. We must be aware that the fastest growing group, by age, of persons contracting HIV are those in our university classrooms and those in the classrooms in which our students teach. AACTE (Gingiss, 1997) stated that to meet the educational needs of children with and without HIV/AIDS, professionals working in the education field must themselves be educated about HIV/AIDS. Teacher educators can help prevent the spread of HIV infection by integrating HIV prevention and education materials throughout their courses.

Specific materials and programs related to HIV/AIDS education and prevention programs are available through the following on-line sources:

- Alan Guttmacher Institute - human sexuality information and statistics ([www.agi-usa.org](http://www.agi-usa.org))

- American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) - teacher education HIV/AIDS education and prevention facts and resources ([www.aacte.org/about/cdcmenu.html](http://www.aacte.org/about/cdcmenu.html))

- Busy Teachers Web Page - teacher resources([www.ceismc.gatech.edu/BusyT](http://www.ceismc.gatech.edu/BusyT))

- Health Explorer - database of over 3,000 health-related websites, website descriptions, and "best site" reviews ([www.healthexplorer.com](http://www.healthexplorer.com))

- National Center for Health Statistics - vital records, statistics, and NCHS publications on-line ([www.cdc.gov/nchswww/nchshome.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchswww/nchshome.htm))

- National Health Information Center - health information referral service ([nhic-nt.health.org](http://nhic-nt.health.org))

- National Institute of Health (NIH) - health resources such as Cancernet, AIDS Information, Clinical Alerts, and the Women's Health Initiative ([www.nih.gov/index.html](http://www.nih.gov/index.html))

- National Parent Information Network - parent resources ([ericps.ed.uiuc.edu/npin/npinhome.html](http://ericps.ed.uiuc.edu/npin/npinhome.html))

- Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS) - statistics, guidelines, and information concerning human sexuality ([www.siecus.org](http://www.siecus.org))

- University of California-San Francisco and San Francisco General Hospital - center for HIV/AIDS education and prevention studies and research institute ([hivinsite.ucsf.edu](http://hivinsite.ucsf.edu))

•Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) - current statistics and facts about HIV/AIDS, information, and networking ([www.cdc.gov/nchstp/hiv\\_aids/dhap.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchstp/hiv_aids/dhap.htm)).

Persons living with HIV/AIDS live with the culture of disease. The culture of disease is pervasive and affects everyone who knows someone with HIV/AIDS. As educators, it is our responsibility to help prevent the spread of HIV and to educate ourselves and the public about HIV/AIDS.

### References

American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) (1998.) *Teacher educator's guide to HIV/AIDS prevention: An annotated bibliography (January 1994 - August 1996)*. Washington, DC: Author.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC]. (1997, December). HIV/AIDS. *Surveillance Report*, 9 (2), Atlanta, GA: Author.

Gingiss, P. (1997). *Building a future without HIV/AIDS: What do educators have to do with it?* Washington, DC: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE).

## **SUGGESTED MULTICULTURAL INFUSION ACTIVITIES**

by Porter Lee Troutman, Jr. and Nancy P. Gallavan

During the past three years, Dr. Troutman has conducted ethnographic research at Brown Barge Middle School in Pensacola, Florida. Troutman has been interested in the best school in the United States that reflected total school transformative teaching based on James Banks' work in curriculum reform and James Beanes' work concerning integrative curriculum. From his initial work, Dr. Troutman identified Brown Barge Middle School with the assistance of the National Middle School Association.

Troutman visited the school many times and spent months gathering data. Teachers, parents, community representatives, students,

school board members, school staff were interviewed. All educational aspects of Brown Barge Middle School were examined. In this column we will share one of his findings. This finding concerns *Instructional Racism*.

Giroux (1996) states: *The resurgence of racist culture poses a special challenge to educators for redefining the politics of transformative teaching through a broader notion of what it means critically to engage various sites of learning through which youth learn about knowledge, values, and social identities* (p. 69).

### **Teacher's Role in Overcoming Instructional Racism**

Racism, as a way of understanding and interpreting "otherness," as a way of maintaining the categories of "us" and "them," and as a way of marginalizing and excluding certain societal groups from engaging in specifics context (including schools), remains a pervasive element in society and schools. This pervasiveness has caused racism, in its various forms, to become institutionalized. One form of institutionalized racism, although at times subtle and perhaps even unintentional (Ballenger, 1992; Contreras & Lee), is school-based instructional racism. That is the downplaying, if not complete removal, of cultural as an organizing principle for school and classroom instruction.

An essential element for making anti-racist instruction functional is teacher commitment to the curriculum ideology of school and commitment to curriculum reform. This means that teachers at the school must not only know theoretically and philosophically about the kind of integrative curriculum that they have implemented and sustained, but they must also be able to demonstrate the kind of learning and the kind of social relations with peers and students that they expect students to demonstrate after engaging in the curricula and instruction.

Teachers must not only be competent classroom managers, but more importantly they must be committed to the idea of multicultural education and committed to making the background of the students central to classroom instruction. They must also be aware of how their own backgrounds, as a classroom teacher and as a functioning member of society, influence their ability to implement instruction

that is clearly multicultural and that explicitly reflects the aforementioned ideals. These teachers must be capable of becoming role models concerning the search for and operationalization of nonviolent alternatives to conflict—including interpersonal, intergroup, and international conflicts.

Teachers must rise to the special challenge of meaningfully engaging students in the overarching aim of curricula. They must function as a teacher role model and demonstrate the overarching aims. They must be willing to organize content to be learned around these aims.

This is very different from thinking first about the structure of the content as has been the case traditionally in most subject-centered schools. Teachers in traditional schools often have their classroom curricula and instruction governed by the structure of the content they are teaching. This often results in constrained efforts and a hindering of the desires of these teachers to implement alternative curricular frameworks for learning.

The integrative curriculum allows teachers to transform their vision of integrative theory into practice and allows teachers to implement an alternative curricular framework. Consistent with this framework are alternative types of subject matter. Such alternatives create a teaching environment that enables teachers to address instructional racism. The mere presence of alternatives creates a situation in which teachers and students can work together as co-learners on themes and issues that often have profound social implications.

Successfully engaging students in meaningful learning about issues that have social implications means that the teacher is also engaging the students in learning about the deepest problems common to humanity (Dewey, 1916). This, according to Dewey (1916), should be one of the aims of a democratic education. However, as Dewey argues, students and teachers cannot achieve this aim with highly traditional, subject-centered curriculum in that it rarely, if ever, engages students in thinking outside the traditional subject matter boundaries (e.g. outside the boundaries of algebra, or outside the boundaries of life sciences). This creates a learning situation in which learning is decontextualized from the reality outside of

school.

Teachers must move away from the notion that the three Rs are the only essentials needed for realization of social justice. The curriculum must present situations where problems are relevant to living together. That is to say, a curriculum that acknowledges the social responsibilities of education. Schools must enable students to deal with their societal responsibilities by engaging them in learning experiences that openly focus upon issues, challenges, problems, and successes of living together in a pluralistic society.

### **WHO WILL MIND THE CHILDREN AND YOUTH: HOMELESS AND ALONE IN THE UNITED STATES**

by Kyle Higgins, Barbara Yamaguchi, and Sherri Strawser

A very cold wind blew off of the Mississippi River—we pulled our jackets around our chests and walked faster. Soon we would be at the Café du Monde enjoying a hot cup of café au lait and beignets and we would be warm and comfortable. We laughed as we walked—talking about the conference, dinner last night, where we would eat tonight, the funky hotel where we were staying—and, then, we saw him.

He was sitting on the sidewalk with his back up against the building. It was very cold and he had no jacket—he had a light green windbreaker, but it was laying across from him on the sidewalk. He sat there in his t-shirt, with his head half resting on his bare arms. He was nodding slowly. We hurried by him quickly—perhaps, afraid he would ask for money; perhaps, thinking that he was a fool for not wearing his jacket; perhaps, wondering what a boy his age was doing out so early on a Sunday morning alone; or, perhaps, we did not even see him.

We enjoyed our café au lait and the beignets. We ate leisurely and decided that we would head over to the conference after one more hot café—after all, it was cold and it was early.

We retraced our steps---exactly the way we had walked from the hotel. We were warm from the café and very full from the beignets. We laughed, we joked, we talked---and, then, we saw him.

This time he was laying on the sidewalk--sprawled out. He was on his stomach with his arms and legs twisted. His face was flat on the sidewalk and his eyes, his eyes...One arm was twisted out in front of him so that we could see his wrist and his other arm was twisted upright at his side. Time slowed and we stopped talking---it was as if everything was in slow motion. The face of every child and youth I have ever worked with flashed in front of my mind's eye. We approached him at the same time that the two policemen arrived.

"Well, it looks like it's over for street boy this time," said the first policeman.

"Yeah, it doesn't look good, does it?" his partner replied.

"Well, let's get the gloves---I'll go get them and make the call," the first one said as he walked off.

"Yeah, hurry---it's cold out here," said the partner.

As we passed him this time, I glanced down to see a youthful and clear profile (fourteen or fifteen maybe), a thin white t-shirt, torn blue jeans, and that damn light green wind breaker still laying on the other side of the sidewalk. And, as I glanced back one last time, trying to make sense of the scene I was witnessing, I saw clearly the many scars on his exposed wrist where he had slashed himself many times in the past.

I do not know what killed this young man on that cold New Orleans morning last December, but I do know that he died alone on that street. I do not know what drove him to the street---what demons he was escaping or what demons he lived with---but I do know that when he died, he was alone. I do not know his history, I do not know his name, I know absolutely nothing about him---except that he died alone---another statistic of the New Orleans Police Department and of United States of America.

### Homelessness in the United States

No one knows exactly how many people are homeless in the United States. The

difficulties encountered in getting an accurate count are endemic to the homeless population itself. People who are homeless may move from place to place or live in multiple family situations, which complicates the recording process. Reported numbers vary widely, from a low of 400,000 to 600,000 (Burt & Cohen, 1989; Jencks, 1994) to a high of 3,000,000 to 4,000,000 people (Rafferty & Rollins, 1990). Regardless of the exact number, there is no agency that reports fewer than hundreds of thousands of persons who are homeless on any one night in the United States (Rossi, 1990). Rossi (1990) states that the number of persons who are homeless on any one night is equal to the population of a middle-sized American city. It is less important that we are able to identify an exact number of people who are homeless than we, as Americans, recognize that homelessness exists in our country.

The stereotype of people who are homeless as primarily males with alcoholism, drug dependence, or mental illness no longer holds true. Families with children are the fastest growing group, comprising approximately 30% of the people who are homeless (U.S. Conference of Mayors, 1994); and most of these families are headed by a single female parent (Linehan, 1992). Today, low income and lack of affordable housing are the primary causes of homelessness. Many people have lost their permanent residence because of buildings being condemned, improper evictions, or crowded living conditions (Rafferty & Rollins, 1990). The current population of people who are homeless is diverse and includes men and women of all ages and ethnic groups, people with disabilities, people who are chronically ill, people who are jobless, or victims of domestic violence at the hands of a spouse or a parent (Heflin & Rudy, 1991; Marin, 1988; Rossi, 1990).

The changing composition of the population of people who are homeless is reflected in the new definition of homelessness which emphasizes the inability to afford adequate housing rather than unemployed persons who are not living with their families (Heflin & Rudy, 1991). The Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act of 1987 defines 'the homeless' as people who: (a) lack a regular and adequate nighttime residence;

(b) have a nighttime residence that is a supervised public/private shelter; (c) sleep in an institution that provides temporary residence; or, (d) sleep in a public/private place not ordinarily used as sleeping accommodations for humans.

In the 1995 report to Congress, the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) reported that of the school-age children and youth (7-17) who were homeless, 57% were elementary students, 22% were junior high school students, 19% were high school students, and 2% were of unspecified grade level. Thirty-four percent of these children and youth live with family or friends. The remainder were reported to live in privately funded shelters (21%); publicly funded shelters (22%); or other locations (24%) that included welfare hotels, runaway shelters, shelters for battered women, campgrounds, parks, and abandoned buildings.

In order to address the needs of children and youth who are homeless, educators must be aware of: (a) legal mandates ensuring the education of children and youth who are homeless; (b) barriers to education presented by school requirements that exist for children and youth who are homeless; (c) effects of homelessness on the health and development of children and youth who are homeless; and, (d) the role of the educator in the provision of services for these children and youth. Knowledge in these areas will help the educator learn about the heterogeneous nature of this group of students and provide them with the information and skills to be effective with these children and youth. Educators must be aware that they need to extend themselves beyond the traditional school practices and procedures so that these students feel accepted for who they are, rather than judged for who they are not or what they do not have. These are children and youth who, in addition to their problems, have dreams, fantasies, and hopes for the future.

#### Recommended Reading:

Berck, J. (1992). *No place to be: Voices of homeless children.*

Binford, S.M. *Homeless: Struggling to survive.*

Chalofsky, M., Finland, G., Wallace, J., & Klass, I. (1992). *Changing places: A kid's view of shelter living.*

Croth, B.L., Hertensten, J., & Krogh, K. (1995). *Home is where we live: Life at a shelter through a young girl's eyes.*

Hubbard, J. *Lives turned upside down: Homeless children in their own words and photographs.*

Kevin, M.D. *Knowing where the fountains are: Stories and stark realities of homeless youth.*

Pugh, D., & Tietjen, J. *I have arrived before my words: Autobiographical writings of homeless women.*

Switzer, E. (1992). *Anyplace but here: Young, alone, and homeless--what to do.*

Quint, S. (1994). *Schooling homeless children: A working model for America's public schools.*

#### A Poem To Ponder:

##### *In the Homeless Motel* by Maria P.

Homeless we are called without a place to live,  
Somewhere you can call a home,  
A place where we can give.

We are not pigs,

We're human beings with a race and creed.

We are not animals that just mate and breed.

Once we were strong...But now in a way  
stronger.

Your pity not needed because we're poor;  
Our pride supports us and helps us endure.

Your pity not needed, but your  
understanding, yes.

Being homeless is the saddest thing,

Because good people are suffering.

The banging on doors,  
The screams in the night,  
Even shootings on ground floors,  
The pushers in flight.

The homeless scum is what we are called...

But what about me?

Like you, I once had hopes and dreams.

But they're growing dim

...And I'm only sixteen.