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UNLV College of Education Multicultural & Diversity Newsletter

Porter Troutman

University of Nevada, Las Vegas, porter@unlv.nevada.edu

Steven Grubaugh

University of Nevada, Las Vegas, grubaugh@unlv.nevada.edu

Jian Wang

Randall L. Astramovich

University of Nevada, Las Vegas, randy.astramovich@unlv.edu

Jennifer L. Fabbi

University of Nevada, Las Vegas, jennifer.fabbi@unlv.edu

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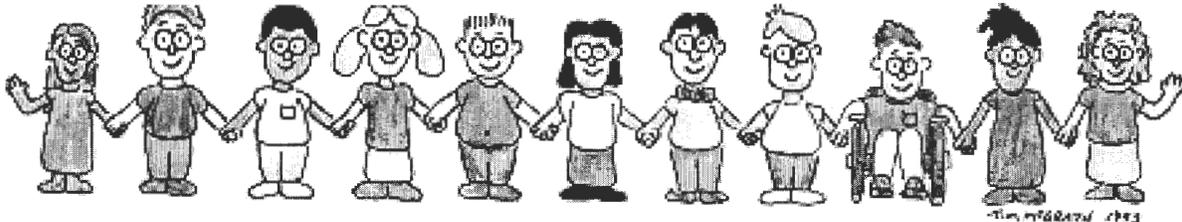
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Authors

Porter Troutman, Steven Grubaugh, Jian Wang, Randall L. Astramovich, Jennifer L. Fabbi, Kyle Higgins, Lori Navarrete, Jean Henry, Lisa Bendixen, Carli Kyles, Cecilia Maldonado-Daniels, R. R. Apache, Chizu Jaret, Karla V. Kingsley, and Nancy Sileo



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Members of the Multicultural & Diversity Committee:

Porter Troutman (Chair), Steven Grubaugh, Jian Wang, Randall Astramovich,
Jennifer Fabbi, Kyle Higgins, Lori Navarrete, Jean Henry, Lisa Bendixen, Carli Kyles,
Cecilia Maldonado, R. R. Apache, Chizu Jaret, Karla Kingsley, and Nancy Sileo

Cecilia Maldonado, Lori Navarrete, & Nancy Sileo Editors

*** This newsletter is published each semester. The articles that appear in the newsletter
are based on author interest and consist of both scholarly work and opinion pieces.

For further information regarding submissions contact Cecilia Maldonado (ceciliam@unlv.nevada.edu).

Lori Navarrete (navarret@unlv.nevada.edu), or Nancy Sileo (sileo@unlv.nevada.edu). ***

Small as a peanut,
Big as a giant,
We're all the same size
When we turn off the light.

Rich as a sultan,
Poor as a mite,
We're all worth the same
When we turn off the light.

Red, Black, or Orange,
Yellow, or White
We all look the Same
When we turn off the light.

So maybe the way
To make everything right
Is for someone to reach out
And turn off the light.

Shel Silverstein
from *Where the Sidewalk Ends*

**INVITED GUEST COLUMN
AND THE ADVENTURE
CONTINUES: CROSS-CULTURAL
EXPERIENCES IN THE OZARKS
By Nancy Gallavan**

Rolling green hills lined with towering forests appearing to have no end; gently falling rain showers refreshing the fields during the night; lengthy, yet caring conversations exchanging news of family and friends; meticulously planned days ensuring time to shop prior to the hardware store's 5:00 closure...these scenes only begin to describe some of the new sensations we have encountered in our recent move to the Ozarks. It has been an exciting time as my husband and I relocated this summer to the small town in Missouri where I was raised. It has been 32 years since I lived here. Some things seem very, very different; other things seem much the same. Of course, I am not the same, and it is fascinating to re-enter this culture after a long journey experiencing many other cultures.

To no one's surprise, I encourage you to find a U. S. map and unfold it to the central part of the United States. Along the southern edge of Missouri, just north of Arkansas, toward the center, you *might* find a small dot labeled West Plains--we're not on every map. If you do find us, don't blink or you'll miss us.] West Plains is a town of approximately 10,000 people with an additional 25,000 people living throughout the county. The county is quite small; in fact, there are 114 similarly-sized counties across Missouri with many people living along every country road (both paved and unpaved)...all of whom come into the local towns to conduct business daily.

West Plains is the largest town for 120 miles in any direction as well as the county seat, so our town is quite active during the week. We are located approximately halfway between Springfield, MO, and Memphis, TN. A four-lane highway conveniently connects us with Springfield to the northwest, but suddenly ends southeast of town. We have most goods and services, although we may have only one or two choices. If we find what we're seeking, we buy it immediately; quite likely, that particular item won't be there the next day. We can order just

about anything needed; however, it may take awhile for things to arrive. It also can take awhile for people to get back to you or to take care of things for you. Like many other cultures, there definitely is an Ozark sense of time along with an Ozark way of living. Folks here are concerned about family, religion, sports, education, and weather; and everyone has a big ol' tractor to mow their acreage!

I am now the coordinator of Teacher Education and Development with Southwest Missouri State University (SMSU) in West Plains. SMSU is located in Springfield; it is a 98-year-old university with approximately 25,000 students situated on three different campuses spread across the Ozarks. The West Plains campus is 40 years old and is a two-year degree granting institution. However, there are several four-year programs housed on our local campus; teacher education is one of these programs and has been in operation for four years. We have approximately 300 students enrolled in our undergraduate and graduate programs. We offer an entire elementary education preservice teacher program (undergrad and post bac) along with a complete master's degree program; we are the fastest growing segment of SMSU's College of Education, and, fortunately, everyone wants to contribute to its long-term success.

Our office consists of the coordinator, two full-time instructors, an advisor, a secretary, and a slate of "per course instructors." We operate from an old house (about 120 years-old); I think my office is the former parlor, and it is imperative to prop moving chairs, pen, and pencils strategically to prevent them from rolling away. The rest of the campus is quite modern with state of the art technology, and the university is in the process of remodeling an adjacent house (a rather stately manor) to serve as our future teacher education offices and classrooms. Impressively, we accomplish much with few resources!

Almost everything I have learned about living in various large cities in Colorado, Nevada, and California during my time away from the Ozarks is different here. For example, in big cities it may take an hour to get somewhere and five minutes to conduct business; here it takes five minutes to get somewhere and an hour to conduct business.

Importantly, one must engage in extensive conversations checking on family members and local activities. These wonderful interactions serve as our daily news. (Although a local paper is published five evenings a week, we learn much more through our personal encounters.)

Life may be different, but teaching and learning are very much the same here and quite exhilarating. SMSU organizes their teacher education courses into cohorts and the methods courses into a single integrated block. The block consists of four content courses, one classroom management course, one assessment course, and a field placement assignment. This block is taught by a team of professors who supervises a group of four or five preservice teachers placed in one elementary and/or middle school. Missouri licenses grades 1-6, but we encourage a middle school endorsement in our teacher education program. (Since in most rural areas, the schools are zoned into K-8 configurations.)

The methods block courses are held on campus for two weeks; then preservice teachers are placed in the field for two or three weeks. This alternating sequence continues throughout the semester allowing professors to guide preservice teachers sequentially in their growth and development. Coursework is maintained throughout the field placement experience through team-managed conversations conducted electronically using Blackboard. We also use ITV, Instructional Television, to teach most of our courses when learners are grouped far from our campus.

One of the most advanced aspects of the program features the electronic portfolio. A series of assignments and checkpoints has been established throughout the teacher education program (including student teaching). Preservice teachers enter their artifacts into an electronic portfolio that is monitored by each semester's team of professors. Upon the completion of their entire program, the preservice teachers use their electronic portfolios as an interview mechanism to showcase their highlighted products accumulated throughout their teaching preparation. Currently, we are applying for a grant to create a work station in our "house," to support preservice teachers as they prepare their electronic portfolios with the assistance of an on-site tutor and to provide a place where they can share their artifacts with school

administrators as well as their peers.

Returning to the Ozarks has brought two significant cross-cultural challenges to the forefront; the first challenge focuses on communicating clearly. Some of my students and colleagues speak with rather thick southern drawls. Although I grew up in this town, my former Ozark ear is unable to understand all of the dialects and phrases quickly. On occasion, I simply have to ask people to repeat their statements while I listen more attentively; meanwhile my imagination has run wild, and I'm sure I have not heard the words correctly or have any idea what is being said. My husband also has experienced many similar exchanges, and we chuckle privately at our presumptions and miscommunications.

The second challenge centers on reorganizing priorities. Our new lifestyle revolves around family and togetherness. We moved here to assist my aging mother, who we see or talk to every day. Experiencing the world through the eyes of an (almost) 80-year-old highly respected by everyone in town brings an abundance of new encounters and unanticipated expectations. Additionally, I work closely with four other people in a house where no one closes their office doors...we don't even have locks on our office doors. It takes every member of our office family to make this program operate smoothly every day. In general, everyone knows everyone else, is related, or will start making connections when names come up in conversation; one must be extremely thoughtful and sensitive in every conversation and interaction.

The move back to the Ozarks has brought many changes, challenges, and rewards; my husband and I know we have gained much from our lifelong journeys and are here to help others. Our cross-cultural experiences have expanded both our awareness of the world and our appreciation for many different kinds of people. Gary R. Howard (1999) writes that "we can't teach what we don't know." At times, the learning curve has been rather steep lately; yet, I realize I have much to learn as I continue my quest in becoming a transformational teacher educator and a more insightful scholar. My husband and I are told we have many gifts to share, and we hope we can give back as much as we are receiving. We both believe that

reciprocity is key to mindful cross-cultural exchanges, and thus *the adventure continues...*

I miss many people and parts of UNLV. Frequently I wonder..."what would LeAnn say?...what would Porter think?...what would Jane do?...what would Sandra recommend?" These voices, among countless others, guide me daily as I begin my new work with Southwest Missouri State University. It would be great to hear from you! You can find me at:

Dr. Nancy P. Gallavan
Coordinator, Teacher Education and
Development-West Plains Southwest Missouri
State University
128 Garfield Avenue
West Plains, MO 65775
417.255.7932
nancygallavan@smsu.edu

FEATURED GUEST COLUMN **SO, WHAT'S FOR SUPPER?**

By Kyle Higgins

"I still have the audacity to believe that people everywhere can have three meals a day...I still believe that what self-centered men have torn down, other centered men can build up...I still believe that we shall overcome." (Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., *Nobel Prize acceptance speech*)

At the beginning of her book, *Growing Up Empty* (2002), Loretta Schwartz-Nobel tells of her experience driving home in Philadelphia. She is at a stop light in a poor neighborhood, she locks her doors, and she glances over to see two young girls and a boy standing next to a trash dumpster. She watches as the oldest girl, around the age of six, climbs on the boy's shoulders and leans into the trash dumpster. Ignoring the flies, the young girl digs around, emerges, and raises her arm triumphantly in the air. She jumps down from her friend's shoulders and all three children tear into a bag of partly eaten chicken. Each child gets one piece of the already eaten chicken. The young children, eating their chicken, meander over to Schwartz-Nobel's car.

The youngest girl, around three-years-old, walks

up to the car and presses her little hand on the window. Holding the precious drumstick in one hand, she opens her mouth and smiles. Schwartz-Nobel smiles back and notices something black moving across the young child's tongue. Ants, hundreds of ants, on the chicken leg and in the child's mouth.

A Definition of Terms

Food insecurity results when a household has limited or uncertain access to enough safe, nutritious food for an active and healthy life. These households have reduced financial means and may have irregular food intake. Typically, food insecure families run out of food by the end of the month and adults skip meals on a regular basis so the children can eat. The variety and quality of food consumed in these households is substandard (USDA, 2002).

Hunger is the more severe level of food insecurity. It involves insufficient or irregular food intake that results in periods of hunger for at least some family members. Households classified as hungry are those in which adults have decreased the quality and quantity of food they consume because of lack of money. These adults are hungry on a frequent basis. The food intake of the children in these homes also has been severely reduced to the point that they experience hunger on a frequent basis.

It All Comes Down To Food

There is a hidden epidemic in the United States. Sometimes it strikes children and their families without warning...for some it begins before birth and lasts an entire lifetime. Regardless of its duration, this epidemic always damages the spirits of its young victims, affects their immune systems, saps their physical strength, and over time can impact their intelligence.

This epidemic is hunger. A virus or bacteria does not cause hunger. We have caused this epidemic---the citizens of the United States by our silence and our government by its indifference. We live in a nation in which politicians propose ever-larger tax cuts for the rich while families struggle to feed their children. We live in a country in which corporate executives go free after squandering worker pensions while mothers cut whole milk with water to make it last longer. We live in a country that proposes to spend \$87 billion to rebuild another country while children have

access to food only at school (free breakfast and lunch programs). We live in a country that denies food assistance to legal immigrants while those fortunate enough to receive food stamps find that the \$72 a person they receive monthly (\$288 for a family of four) does not last the entire month. In 2001, 33.6 million Americans lived in hungry or food insecure households---this is 2.6 million more than 1999.

Hunger in America is unacknowledged--even at the highest political levels. In fact, in President Bush's inaugural address in 2001, the word "hunger" was never spoken. Yet, the number of people hungry in America is growing larger. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2000), 11% of all U.S. households, representing 20 million adults and 13 million children, were "food insecure" because of lack of resources. Of these households, 5.6 million adults and 2.7 million children suffered from food insecurity so severe that the USDA's very conservative measure classified them as severely "hungry."

These numbers do not include American citizens who regularly make use of food banks and emergency feeding programs and who have not applied for food stamps (or, in many cases do not qualify, but still are in need of supplemental food). In the publication *Hunger in America 2001*, America's Second Harvest found that food bank and emergency food providers serve 23 million people a year on top of those receiving food stamps (9% more than were served in 1997). Nearly two-thirds of these recipients were women with children and approximately 66% of those seeking help from these programs were working.

So, How Bad Is It Really?

The U.S. Conference of Mayors collects data each year on requests for emergency food assistance in the nation's major cities. From November 2000 to November 2001, requests for emergency food assistance increased in these cities by 23%. Only one third of the cities surveyed reported that they were able to provide an adequate quantity of food to those requesting it. Eighty-five percent of the cities reported that emergency food assistance facilities had to decrease the quantity of food provided and/or the number of times families or individuals can get food. In Ohio, requests for help from food banks is up 125% since 1999; in Missouri the

demand is up 45% over last year; in Chicago demand rose 37% in the last year; and in New York City demand rose 45% in the last year.

In the State of Nevada, 9-10% of our population lives in food insecure households. Three to four percent of the population lives in food insecure households with hunger. Over the last five years, the number of people seeking emergency food assistance in the State of Nevada has increased by 72.9%. Over the last year, this number has increased by 18.5%.

So, Just Who Are These People?

According to the U.S. Census (2000), those who are at the greatest risk of experiencing hunger live in households headed by a single woman and in which the family income is below the poverty level. The poverty level in the United States is currently defined as a yearly income of \$18,100.00 for a family of four. Overall, households with children are more likely to experience food insecurity than households without children.

Food insecurity occurs more often in central-city households located in the Southern or Western regions of the United States. The incidence of food insecurity and hunger is significantly above the national average in eleven states: Arizona, Arkansas, California, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas, Washington, and the District of Columbia. Nevada is higher than the national average for households experiencing hunger, but below the national average in food insecure households---this indicates that the households in Nevada without adequate food supplies are in the direst of situations---they are without food for a large portion of the month.

So, What About Federal Programs?

Nationally the number of people receiving food stamps for the month of June 2003 was 21,782,834. This represents an increase of 2,468,605 people compared to June 2002, and an increase of 4,325,639 people over June 2001. Participation in the Food Stamp Program has increased for 31 out of the last 35 months. The number of participants continues to increase even though the best estimate is that four out of ten of those eligible for Food Stamps nationally are not receiving benefits (USDA, 2001) and that many families denied Food Stamps really are eligible (Urban Institute, 1999).

The food stamp program is targeted toward those most in need. Of households currently receiving food stamps: (a) 54.1% contain children (b) 18.8% contain a senior citizen, and (c) 27% contain a person with a disability. Eight-eight percent of food stamp households have gross incomes at or below the poverty level (\$18,100 for a family of four). Approximately 36% of food stamp households have gross incomes below half of the poverty level or \$9,050 a year. Typically, the average monthly gross income of food stamp households is \$633 or \$7,596 a year and over 28% are families in which the adults in the household are working.

Food stamps provide approximately \$72 per person, per month, per household (e.g., for a family of four this is \$288). This averages to approximately 78¢ a meal per person—thus, a family of four has \$3.12 to spend on each daily meal---\$9.36 a day for food.

The typical length of participation in the Food Stamp Program is less than two years for 71% of the participants. Half of all new recipients stay on the program for no more than six months, and 57% end participation within one year.

Approximately 33% of all children receiving food stamps are under the age of four, and 66% of children receiving food stamps are school age. The majority of adult participants are women (68%) while the typical household is comprised of 2.3 people. Forty-one percent of food stamp recipients are white; 40% are African American; and 18% are Hispanic.

The large number of children receiving food stamps is reflective of the fact that 17% of all children in the United States live in poverty. That is a total of 12,169,000 children. As educators, we see this in our schools with the number children participating in the national school breakfast and lunch program and the summer nutrition program. The number of children participating in the free and reduced breakfast programs has increased 93.9% since 1990 (FRAC, 2003). Each day in America, 6,519,793 children participate in the free and reduced breakfast program and 15,249,652 children participate in the free and reduced lunch program. For many of these children, these meals will be the only food they eat all day (Children's Defense Fund, 2002). In the summer months, federal summer nutrition

programs reach 2,070,464 children.

So, How Do These Folks Qualify For Assistance?

Eligibility for the Food Stamp Program is based on financial and non-financial factors. The application process includes completing and filing an application, being interviewed, and verifying facts crucial to determining eligibility. Most legal immigrants who were in the United States **prior to August 22, 1996** and/or who are children, elderly, or have a disability will be found eligible. However, undocumented immigrants and **legal** immigrants who entered the country after August 22, 1996 are ineligible for benefits. Also, able bodied, childless, and unemployed adults may be found ineligible or have their benefits severely limited.

So, What About Pregnant Women and Babies?

The Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) was established by Congress to provide assistance for women and children in 1974. It is designed as a preventive nutrition program to provide nutritious foods, nutrition education, and access to health care to low-income pregnant women, new mothers, and infants/children at nutritional risk. In 2000, WIC provided nutritional foods and services to approximately 7.2 million women, infants, and children monthly.

The estimate is that every dollar spent on WIC results in Medicaid savings of between \$1.77 and \$3.13 for infants and their mothers. The program: (a) increases the number of women receiving prenatal care, (b) reduces the incidence of low birth weight babies, (c) reduces infant mortality, (d) reduces anemia in mothers, and (d) enhances the nutritional quality of the daily diet of participants (FRAC, 2003).

Participation in WIC is limited to pregnant, postpartum, or breast-feeding women, infants, or children under the age of five. The income of the participating household must be below 185% of the federal poverty level (for a family of four this would be \$3,348 a year). Participants in WIC must be certified by a health care professional to be at nutritional risk (e.g., problems with diet, abnormal weight gain during pregnancy, a history of high-risk pregnancy). Congress allocates approximately \$4 billion a year to WIC.

So, How Does Hunger Impact on Education?

As educators we deal daily with children/youth who come to school hungry. Ponder the following:

- Hungry children/youth suffer from two to four times as many health problems as children who eat regularly. These problems range from unwanted weight loss, fatigue, headache, irritability, lack of concentration, and frequent colds.
- Hungry children/youth are more likely to be ill and absent from school.
- Infant mortality is closely linked to inadequate quantity or quality in the diet of the infant's mother.
- Inadequate nutrition results in the stunting of growth in children.
- Iron-deficiency anemia in children can lead to adverse health effects such as developmental and behavioral disturbances that can affect a child's ability to learn to read or do math. It can also lead to an increased susceptibility to lead poisoning.
- Pregnant women who are undernourished are more likely to have low-birth weight babies.
- Low-birth weight babies are more likely to suffer delays in their development and are more likely to have behavior and learning problems later in life.
- Hungry children are less likely to interact with other people or explore and learn from their surroundings.
- Hunger and insecurity about whether there will be food to eat has an emotional impact on children and youth. Anxiety and negative feelings about self-worth as well as hostility towards the outside world are often seen in children and youth who live in food insecure households.

Ending Thought

It is time to step forward and act. We have the ability to eradicate hunger in America. Our country has the money and the food---we are a nation of riches. As citizens, we must demand of the President and Congress that they do something about the millions of adults and children for whom the answer to the question, "What's for supper?" is "Nothing."

"I want to tell every well-fed and optimistic American that it is intolerable that so many millions should be maimed in body and spirit when it is not necessary that they should be.

My standard of comparison is not how much worse things used to be, it is how much better they could be if only we were stirred to action."
(Michael Harrington, *The Other America*)

Sources To Help You Become Part of the Solution

World Hunger Year

www.worldhungeryear.org

World Hunger Year is dedicated to telling the story of hunger to the public, the media, and policy makers. They document grassroots organizations around the nation.

America's Second Harvest
www.secondharvet.org

America's Second Harvest is the nation's largest domestic hunger-relief organization.

Bread for the World www.bread.org

Bread for the World has educational activities and resources for learning about hunger.

Congressional Hunger Center
www.hungercenter.org

The purpose of the CHC is to ensure that the issues of domestic and international hunger remain at the forefront of the national debate.

Institute for Food and Development
www.foodfirst.org

This is a hunger research and educational center. Their work highlights the causes and value-based solutions to hunger and poverty.

Kids Can Make a Difference
www.kids.maine.org

This is a program of World Hunger Year that provides educational programs for middle and high school students.

National Student Campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness www.nscanh.org

This is the largest student network fighting hunger and homelessness in the United States. More than 600 campuses in 45 states participate.

OXFAM www.oxfamamerica.org

Oxfam America invest privately raised funds and technical expertise in local organizations around the world that hold promise to help people living in poverty move out of poverty.

RESULTS www.action.org

This is a nonprofit, grassroots, citizens' lobby that identifies sustainable solutions to the problems of hunger and poverty. This organization advocates for increased funding and replication of the programs.

Share Our Strength (SOS) www.strength.org

SOS is the nation's leading anti-hunger organization. It supports food assistance programs, malnutrition programs, and programs that develop economic independence among people in need.

Food Research and Action Center

www.frac.org

FRAC is a leading national organization working to improve public policies to eradicate hunger and under nutrition in the United States.

MEETING THE NEEDS OF ALL CHILDREN: IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT FOR TEACHER EDUCATORS

By Jane M. Williams

As teachers, administrators, teacher educators, parents, and other stakeholders are grappling with the requirements and implications of P.L. 107-110, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, for all students, including those with disabilities and limited English proficiency, Congress is currently reauthorizing the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1997. The purpose of this article is to briefly outline the proposed amendments to this piece of legislation and indicate potential implications for teacher educators.

At present, both the House and Senate have introduced bills to reauthorize IDEA. H.B. 1350, Improving Education Results for Children

with Disabilities Act of 2003, has been approved by the full House. S.1248, The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2003, has been approved by the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) committee. As teacher educators, it is important to note the titles of both bills; both strongly convey the intent of Congress to hold teachers, related services personnel, and administrators accountable for the educational results of students with disabilities. These titles convey that it is no longer sufficient to ensure access of students with disabilities to the general education program, as P.L. 94-142, Education of the Handicapped Act, accomplished in 1975, nor to ensure their equitable participation, as P.L. 101-476, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, did in 1990. Rather, accountability, student outcomes, and improved educational results for all students, including those with disabilities, are the ultimate goals.

It is also important that this call for accountability and results is not new. Beginning in 1983, with the issuance of *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983), policymakers and others have been calling upon educators to ensure that all students achieve high academic standards and are prepared for employment, further education, and independent living upon exiting the school setting. This demand for educational reform is evident ten years later in Goals 2000: Educate America Act and Title I of the Improving America's Schools Act, both passed in 1994, the previous reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. Legislators have included students with disabilities in these educational reform initiatives, requiring attainment of high academic standards. With the passage of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1997, all students were required to participate in state and district-mandated tests, just as they are required to participate in the testing required by NCLB. Very few students with disabilities, according to the National Center on Educational Outcomes, will participate in a State's alternate assessment (National Center on Educational Outcomes, 2003).

As we look at the proposed amendments to IDEA, it is also important that more students with disabilities than ever, approximately 96%,

are served in regular school buildings, with the majority of students with learning disabilities and speech language impairments served in the regular classroom (U.S. Department of Education, 2002c). Hence, ensuring teacher candidates and future administrators possess the knowledge, skills, competencies, and dispositions to work with students with diverse backgrounds, since approximately 38% of students with disabilities represent racial/ethnic groups other than white (U.S. Department of Education, 2002c).

Pertinent Proposals for Teacher Educators

The following highlight several proposals in both bills which may require reviewing, and perhaps revising, the content of our pre-service personnel preparation programs for general and special education teachers, school psychologists, and administrators:

Early Intervening Pre-Referral Services. Both bills allow local education agencies (LEAs) to use at least 15% of Part B funds (less any amount treated as local funds) to develop and implement comprehensive, coordinated, early intervening educational services for students not yet identified as needing special education or related services, but who require additional academic and behavioral support to succeed in the general education environment. This proposal reflects the concern of Congress that the number of students receiving special education and related services continues to escalate, and that many of these students may be considered as "instructional casualties" rather than students with disabilities according to *A new era: Revitalizing special education for children and their families*, the report of the President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education (2002). The implications are clear for teacher educators: all teachers must be competent in adapting the content, methodology, and delivery of instruction to meet the learning and behavioral needs of all students within the general education classrooms. Active participation in pre-referral activities, including Student Intervention Programs through School Improvement Teams, by all service providers is a necessary component of educators. In addition, administrators, as instructional leaders of their buildings, region, and/or district, must provide the financial and human support for their

teachers to accomplish this task (U.S. Department of Education, 2002b).

Eligibility Determinations. Two major proposals within this area are significant for teacher educators. First, IDEA currently provides that a student may not be found eligible for special education and related services if "the determinant factor for that eligibility determination is lack of instruction in reading" (34 C.F.R. 300.534(b)(2)).

H.R.1350 amends that language to "lack of scientifically based instruction in reading;" S. 1248 proposes to amend the language to "lack of scientifically based instructional practices and programs that contain the essential components of reading instruction as defined by ESEA." Clearly, special and general educators must be knowledgeable regarding curricula that have demonstrated effective gains in reading for all students, and they must possess the pedagogical skills to teach all students. Collaboration between general and special teacher educators and teacher candidates at the pre-service level will be necessary to meet this proposed requirement.

Second, both H.R.1350 and S.1248 propose to change the eligibility requirements for students with specific learning disabilities. In order for a student to be found eligible for special education and related services as a student with a specific learning disability, federal and Nevada state regulations require that a severe discrepancy exist between achievement and intellectual ability in one or more of the following areas: oral expression, listening comprehension, written expression, basic reading skill, reading comprehension, mathematics calculation, and mathematics reasoning. Both bills propose to permit LEAs to use a process to determine if a student responds to scientific, research-based intervention, rather than require the current discrepancy model. To date, the primary way in which this discrepancy has been determined is by comparing results between intelligence and achievement tests. If the proposals become law, the role of school psychologists, and the way we train them, will be significantly altered. Specifically, for us in Nevada, where a significant discrepancy is required, this change will be significant. (See NAC 388.345, Assessment of Cognitive Abilities, and NAC 388.420, Eligibility of Pupil with Specific

Learning Disabilities.) Moreover, our teacher candidates will need to possess a repertoire of research-based strategies and the skills to implement, document, and interpret student response to interventions.

Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). Proposed language in both bills suggests implications for preparing teachers, school psychologists, and administrators. First, both bills replace the requirement that the IEP contain a statement of the student's present levels of educational performance with a statement of "academic achievement and functional performance" (S.1248) or "'academic achievement and developmental needs" (H.B.1350). For special educators, this change necessitates knowledge of the state's academic standards; for general educators, this change requires more attention to, data collection of, and accountability regarding the attainment of the academic standards for students with disabilities. This change reflects the goal of Congress that students with disabilities receive specially designed instruction that will "ensure access to the general education curriculum so that he or she can meet the educational standards ...that apply to all children"(34 CFR 300.26(b)(3)(ii)). Research, however, indicates that special educators do not possess the skills needed to align goals and objectives on a student's IEP with state standards (Daily & Zantal-Weiner, 2000). In addition, results of a recent national study indicate that fewer than half of general educators who had been teaching 6 years or fewer reported receiving any coursework during their pre-service preparation in instructional adaptations and accommodations (U.S. Department of Education, 2002b). Continuing collaboration between the Departments of Special Education and Curriculum and Instruction must ensure that our graduates are proficient in identifying, providing, and evaluating the efficacy of the wide array of supplementary aids and services, instructional adaptations, accommodations, and program modifications to ensure all students attain Nevada's standards.

A second proposal for IEPs that will require changes in our training involves the proposals for multi-year IEPs. H.B.1350 will allow LEAs to offer parents a multi-year IEP designed to cover the period between natural transition

points for the child, not to exceed 3 years. S.1248 proposes that IEPs may be offered to a student with a disability who has reached age 18. This IEP option would be available to student during his or her final three year period. For teachers, such a change will require significant data collection and reporting requirements, both to ourselves and to parents, on the academic achievement of students. In addition, collaboration skills will be essential between and among teachers and schools. For administrators, who serve as LEA representatives during the IEP meeting, the responsibility for committing agency resources for a 3-year period, will require more oversight than currently is provided in many instances.

For middle and secondary educators and administrators, transition components of the IEP become applicable beginning at age 14 according to both H.B. 1350 and S. 1248. For students with disabilities, appropriate measurable postsecondary goals must be based on age appropriate transition assessments. For many educators, school psychologists, and administrators, this will mean providing career awareness and exploration activities earlier to students; ensuring meaningful contextual learning opportunities, including job shadowing, internships, and work experiences; designing courses of study that match the student's needs, preferences, and abilities; connecting with adult and community agencies, and possessing skills in selecting, administering, and interpreting age appropriate transition assessments.

Finally, for students whose behavior impedes his or her learning, or the learning of others, S.1248 increases the need for educators and administrators to be knowledgeable regarding positive behavioral supports and interventions. Currently, during the design of an IEP for these students, the IEP team must "consider, when appropriate," positive behavioral supports and interventions. The Senate bill changes this language to "*requires* that the IEP team *provide for*" positive behavioral interventions and supports for these students. Consistent with this requirement, the Senate bill requires the schools "provide for a behavioral assessment and appropriate behavioral interventions to those children who receive a disciplinary action." Though both bills eliminate a functional behavioral assessment and behavior intervention

plan, language in S.1248 suggests that the practice will continue without the titles. It is also relatively safe to hypothesize that there will be students whose behavior necessitates these strategies. Hence, general and special education classes, as well as those in Educational Leadership, must include classroom, and school-wide behavior management strategies, as well as those dealing with peer mediation, bullying, anger management, and conflict resolution. Similarly, school psychologists must be prepared to administer, interpret, and apply appropriate assessments for students.

Discipline. There are 3 areas in which the bills propose substantive changes. In the first area, Interim Alternative Educational Setting (IAES), S.1248 adds authority for school personnel to remove a student who (1) has committed bodily injury to another; or (2) possesses drugs or weapons, or inflicts serious bodily injury "without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability" to an IAES for not more than 45 school days. In addition, both bills provide authority to school personnel to remove a student to an IAES for not more than 10 days for a violation of the student code of conduct. Previously, school personnel could exercise this option for possession of drugs or weapons. This is a significant change and will require educators to ensure that students, and their families, are aware of its ramifications.

This change, however, is consistent with the language in 34 CFR 300.527(a), Protections for Students Not Yet Eligible for Special Education and Related Services, which provides the following:

A child who has not been determined eligible for special education and related services ...and who has engaged in behavior that violated any *rule or code of conduct* [Emphasis added] of the local educational agency...may assert any of the protections provided for in this part if the LEA had knowledge ...that the child was a child with a disability before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred.

Both bills amend the responsibilities of school personnel with regard to the "basis of knowledge" requirements. S.1248 clarifies that in order for school personnel to have had knowledge, the student must have "engaged in a pattern of behavior that should have alerted

personnel;" H.B.1350 specifies that concerns of school personnel must have been expressed in writing. Both bills still provide relatively vague requirements, and both teachers and administrators must remain vigilant to this provision and their concomitant responsibilities.

Procedural Safeguards.

Responsibilities of both teachers and administrators in this area involve the times at which the procedural safeguards notice must be given to parents. H.B.1350 specifies that the procedural safeguards notice must be given (1) when parents request an evaluation; (2) at the beginning of the school year; and (3) upon written request. S.1248 proposes that the procedural safeguards notice be given one time per year, *except* [Emphasis added] a copy shall be given (1) upon initial referral or parental request; (2) upon registration of a complaint; (3) at any IEP meeting required under discipline; and (4) upon request. The Senate's intent for one time per year, except the other times, remains unclear at this time.

Highly qualified personnel. Finally, this area continues to be of utmost importance to us as teacher educators, and perhaps the most unclear. H.B.1350 requires that special education teachers who teach in core academic subjects meet the requirements of highly qualified under NCLB. S.1248 indicates that special education teachers will have to be highly qualified, but only in special education, and not until school year 2005-2006. Dialog on local, state, and national levels continues to attempt to sort out this requirement. As teacher educators, much hinges on the final decision.

Next Steps

At present, Congress has indicated that the full Senate may not address S.1248 until the beginning of next year, when it resumes in January, 2004. After the full Senate agrees on a bill, both houses will draft a compromise for President Bush's signature. Regardless of the Congressional timetable, however, given the commonalities between much of the language in the House and Senate bills, it would be wise for us to discuss the collaboration needed among departments to ensure that our graduates, general and special educators, school psychologists, and administrators, are knowledgeable and possess the required knowledge, skills, and competencies to address

potential changes. One of these changes is already in process – namely, the decision of Educational Leadership to require ESP 753, Administration and Supervision of Special Education Programs, to its master's level students beginning during summer, 2004, a change that began with the cohort during the summer, 2003. Continuing dialog and collaborative practices of this nature among all departments will ensure that our graduates will meet the needs of all students, including those with disabilities, in their educational settings.

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Finding Multicultural and Diversity Materials in the Curriculum Materials Library

By Jennifer L. Fabbi

Many of you may be aware that the Curriculum Materials Library (CML), located in CEB 101, is a resource for children's and young adult literature written on multicultural subjects. We also have a variety of formats—from media to manipulatives—to accommodate diverse learning styles and serve your multicultural needs.

The **Professional Materials Collection** (PMC) contains resources for teachers including standards, strategies, and activities. Some sample titles from this area include:

Ryan, Mark. *Ask the Teacher: A Practitioner's Guide to Teaching and Learning in the Diverse Classroom*. Allyn and Bacon (2003).

Darby, Mary Ann & Miki Pryne. *Hearing All the Voices: Multicultural Books for Adolescents*. Scarecrow Press (2002).

Sadler, Norma. *Multicultural Connections: Creative Writing, Literature, and Assessment in the Elementary School*. Scarecrow Press (2002).

Jacqueline Jordan Irvine, et al. *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Lesson Planning for Elementary and Middle Grades*. McGraw-Hill

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Merryl Ruth Goldberg. *Arts and Learning : An Integrated Approach to Teaching and Learning in Multicultural and Multilingual Settings*. Longman (2001).

The "**Bi Li**" collection contains children's literature titles written in a language other than English, titles written in both English and another language, and those with several languages represented within one book. We also have approximately 30 children's literature titles in **Braille** and approximately 100 **audio books**.

The **Video** collection contains both works of children's literature and informational topics for children and professionals. Some sample titles from this area include:

Adapting Curriculum and Instruction in Inclusive Classrooms. The Forum on Education (1999).

Critical Issues in Multicultural Education / ABC Multimedia; ABC News. Prentice-Hall Media (1998).

"American Cultures for Children" series (12-volume set). Schlessinger Video Productions (1997).

The **Kit** collection contains teaching materials in a variety of formats, including "big books," educational games, posters and maps, culture bags, math manipulatives, and storytelling kits. Some sample items from this section include:

World Playground: Multicultural Activity Kit. Putumayo World Music (2001). Includes music CD, activity book, 2 passport journals, 1 map and a teacher's guide.

Cinco de Mayo Celebration Box. Lakeshore Learning Materials (1993). Designed to provide a sensory approach to learning about the holiday Cinco de Mayo, celebrated by the people of Mexico and by Mexican-Americans.

The Games of Africa. Harper Festival (1994). Includes one book and the games Mancala, Yote, Sey, Achi, and a Guinean string puzzle.

The **CD-Rom** collection includes approximately 300 CD-Roms organized by major curriculum area. For a full list, go to the Library catalog: <http://webpac.library.unlv.edu/>

and click on "Course Reserves" (either Professor/Instructor name or Course name). Type in "cml cd" and you will get a comprehensive list.

The **Reference** collection contains many books to be used with the juvenile literature collection. Several of these titles may be used to access books by subject, including:

Thomas, Rebecca L. *Connecting Cultures: A Guide to Multicultural Literature for Children*. Bowker (1996).

Odean, Kathleen. *Great Books for Girls: More than 600 Recommended Books for Girls Ages 3-14*. Ballantine Books (2002).

Rand, Donna, et al. *Black Books Galore!: A Guide to Great African American Children's Books*. Wiley (1998).

Slapin, Beverly & Seale, Doris. *Through Indian Eyes: The Native Experience in Books for Children*. Oyate (1998).

The CML's website at <http://www.library.unlv.edu/cml> also provides links to **Web Resources** relating to multiculturalism and diversity. To access these, click on "Web Resources" and then "Multicultural/Diversity Resources." Try this one:

International Children's Digital Library
(<http://www.icdlbooks.org>)

The International Children's Digital Library (ICDL) is a five-year project funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to create a digital library of international children's books.

If you need assistance in finding any of the above resources or similar ones, please visit the CML and ask a staff member, call the front desk (895-3593) or myself (Jen Fabbi 895-3884), or email me at jfabbi@ccmail.nevada.edu. I am always willing to consider requests for new resources!

THIS CLASS IS ABOUT US **By Carli R. Kyles**

The beginning of this semester marked the start of my tenure as a multicultural teacher educator. As with the beginning of many new endeavors and goals to achieve, I was excited about my opportunity, especially teaching at the collegiate level. All summer long, I read textbooks, watched videos, read extra articles, I was preparing myself and carefully constructing course contents to provide a fulfilling, challenging, and effective course for our preservice teachers. This course would be the first for many of our students to openly discuss their beliefs, values, and personal life experiences about cultural diversity. More importantly, I have the one-time chance to assist the students to gain knowledge about their own and others' cultural diversity, to use this knowledge effectively to address the educational needs of every learner, and hopefully instill the willingness to do so. This is certainly a tall order to fill in a sixteen-week course.

Now that I am past the mid-semester point of my first semester teaching, I have sent the tall order back to the kitchen and have placed a new order. Truly, understanding and appreciating cultural diversity cannot happen if every individual does not value cultural diversity for her/himself. How can I possibly instill willingness to use this knowledge base if the students have not realized the importance and role of cultural diversity in their own lives? Now that's a tall order. Teaching introductory multicultural courses is much more than learning the definitions of every oppressive "ism", facts and truth-telling of marginalization, discrimination, and underprivilege, and much more than the celebrations of international holidays, native costumes, food fairs, and the correcting of historical events we learned inaccurately in primary grades. This class is about us!

The impact of our individual cultural identities makes distinctive contributions to the life experiences and opportunities we are afforded here in America. If we as teacher

educators, and even as we impart this on to our preservice students, overlook or ignore these factors, we risk overlooking the uniqueness of the whole individual. Valuing cultural diversity is a necessity in all our classes and lives for that matter, not an afterthought, and certainly not a body of knowledge to be acquired in a sixteen-week course. It is a something we experience everyday in our lives, even when we leave the classroom, it is a learning process that never ends, valuing cultural diversity challenges us to question our beliefs, values, and assumptions in a way that no other class can prescribe.

"WHO AM I?" : EXCERPTS FROM A MY CULTURAL IDENTITY PAPER **By DeGlorias Bass**

Let me begin by introducing myself. My name is DeGlorias Bass. My race is African American. I was born on December 1940 from the union of Willie and Willie H. Brooks. My birthplace was a small, rural community called Tendal, Louisiana. I am the fourth of eight living siblings. My mother actually gave birth to eleven children. Of the eleven children, three children either died at childbirth or lived for only a short time after birth.

My father believed he came from somewhere in Georgia; however, he did not know exactly which city or town in Georgia. He thought he was eight or nine years of age when his parent either gave or sold him to a Caucasian family. This family did not educate him so he did not learn how to read and write. They did not teach him his birth date either. He was allowed access only to the fields for a hard days work. He thought his birth date was given to him when he joined the United State Army in World War I. After the war, he worked in various places doing mostly construction work.

My grandmother died when my mother was seven years old. My mother told us our grandfather was a Choctaw Indian and my grandmother was Creole. After my grandmother died, my mother was raised by her mother's aunt and later by her dad's sister. My mother was 16-years-old at the time she married my father who was 44-years-old. My dad was

illiterate; however, he was a hard worker and a great provider for our family. My father moved to Las Vegas, Nevada in 1943. He brought our entire family out to Las Vegas later that year. He worked for the sulfur plant in Henderson and helped build Hoover dam. After two years of residing in Las Vegas, my father decided to move the family to Los Angeles, California. I started public school in Los Angeles. My mother always told me that due to our relationship with our many Hispanic neighbors, I actually learned to speak Spanish, fluently. However, I do not recall having such knowledge.

Shortly after World War II, there was an influx of Japanese immigrants in the Los Angeles area. Out of fear, my father sent us back to Louisiana by train. He remained in Los Angeles for a short time and then moved back to Las Vegas. We never knew where my father was except from the postmark on the letters he sent us. He could not read or write and did not trust many people to write letters for him. He did, however, trust the postal worker. The postal worker would write out the money order and envelope for my father and that is how we knew his whereabouts. We arrived in Tallulah, Louisiana, which is the county seat for the surrounding rural communities in Louisiana but we did not stay there for too long. After two years, we moved back to Tendam, Louisiana, where I was born.

I attended elementary and middle school in a church house. Children in grades 1 through 7 were in the same room with only one teacher. When we were not in school, my siblings and I worked in the fields. I actually began working in the cotton fields at the age of eight. I worked in the fields until I was 15-years-old. During this time, I experienced many occasions of prejudice and racism from the Caucasians in the community and town. These experiences included, but were not limited to, sitting in the back of the bus, not being allowed to go into restaurants and enjoy a meal, and drinking from separate water fountains. We never had new books at school; all of our books came used from the Caucasian schools. We had to walk miles to get to school.

During the time my father worked in the western United States, the raising of the children fell into my mother's hands. She was small in stature but large in spirit and heart. She made

sure we had a solid foundation in church and in school. Church and school were never optional! Although she only completed the 8th grade, she was smart! She was the church secretary and helped us with our homework. My mother taught us to respect people of all ethnicities, including Caucasians. There was an unspoken fear regarding Caucasians that many of us had. We knew the respect we had for them came from a place of inferiority on our part.

There was one experience, in particular, that changed the lives of my family members forever. I was probably nine or 10-years-old. It was a Sunday morning. We were all preparing to go to church when there was a loud pounding on our front door. Several Caucasian men were yelling saying, "Open this door, Willie, and send that boy of yours out!" My mother opened the door as instructed. Each man had either a rifle or a shotgun. We were all fearful of what might happen. We did not know what was going to happen. My mother repeatedly asked, "What has he done...What has he done?" The men would not answer her or tell her anything. One of the men came in and grabbed my brother by the arm. He put my brother into their car and drove off. My mother was frantic. She went to the owners of the country store to see if they could help. They were Caucasian. They told her to wait until the next day, Monday, and then go to the county seat to report the taking of my brother. She found out the men took my brother to jail. The alleged charge was making inappropriate statements to one of the Caucasian men's wives. My brother stayed in jail for a whole month. At his trial, none of the Caucasian men showed up. My brother was then released.

This tragedy changed my brother forever. He had been a smart young man with unlimited potential. After this event, he could no longer function in school. He quit school and began working long hours at the local mill. He has never talked about this incident with any of our siblings. This happened during the time of the Emmitt Till murder. I knew the story could have been the same. My brother could have been killed and there would have been nothing we could do.

Christmas was always a big occasion in our house. My mother would stay up late on Christmas Eve sorting gifts, fruit, and candy for the children. These items would be placed in a

corner, possibly on a chair for we did not have a Christmas tree. We lived in a four-room house with an outhouse. The rooms consisted of two bedrooms, a kitchen, and a living room that also had a bed in it. We often had to sleep two or four to a bed.

My oldest sister moved to Las Vegas after graduating from high school to live with my father. I came to Las Vegas in 1954 and attended Rancho High School, which was then located at what is now Fifth Street Elementary School. I joined the choir at Rancho. I remember there was a Caucasian girl, in the choir, who was giving a swimming party. She invited the entire choir. Before the day of the party, our choir teacher came to me and another African American girl and informed us that the Caucasian girl's parents asked that we not attend the party. I was hurt. I cried all night. It hurt our choir teacher to tell us but there was no other way. I did, however, have a great experience while being a member of the choir. During this time, African Americans could not go to properties on the strip except as employees. Our choir was invited to sing at the Sahara Hotel. We dressed in our white blouses and black skirts. The hotel gave us a dinner and show. It was a great experience.

I went back to Louisiana after that year. I became pregnant in the 11th grade. I was 16-years-old when my oldest daughter was born. I was married three days after turning seventeen. My mother and my younger siblings moved to Las Vegas to join my dad and sister two weeks after I was married. I did not want to get married. However, because my husband had a good job working on a garbage truck, my mother thought it best I was married because she was moving to Las Vegas and my husband wanted to get married. My husband and I fought a lot. He did not want me to finish school. I was determined to go back and finish. Thus, we separated. After graduating from high school, I moved to Las Vegas and reconciled with my husband.

I started working at the hotels as a maid. My marriage was not a good marriage. There were many separations and reconciliations. We were separated when my fourth daughter was born. Shortly thereafter, we were divorced. I was saved before my youngest daughter was two. During these years I worked for the post office.

There were times I worked two jobs because my ex-husband would not provide support for the children.

With God's help, as a single parent, I was able to raise my four daughters. They all have graduated from high school. The oldest three daughters have blessed me with six grandchildren. I have five grandsons and one granddaughter who is my name sake. Her name is DeGlorias Blisse. We call her Ms. Blisse. My oldest daughter lives in Maryland and is married to a minister. They have two sons. My second daughter teaches at Desert Pines High School. Her husband is a school policeman. They have two sons. My third daughter lives in Las Vegas also. She is a Commissioner on the Nevada State Board of Parole. She is also a Professor with the Community College of Southern Nevada. She has one son, who is a freshman in college, and my only granddaughter. My fourth and youngest daughter is an Assistant Principal at Advanced Technologies Academy. Her husband is a dealer at the Bellagio. They raise his son.

I praise GOD that all of my children love GOD! I am passing the values of family and love of GOD that I received from my mother, to my children and my grandchildren. Next to GOD, my children and my grandchildren are my life! Now, teaching will be a part of that! I will graduate with my B.S. in Special Education in summer 2004.

ENCOURAGING CRITICAL DIALOGUE ABOUT CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

By Karla V. Kingsley

The September 29, 2003 issue of the *Rebel Yell* featured *Christopher Columbus, We Salute You*, an article by staff writer Alexander Marriott paying homage to the 'true' legacy of Columbus: what Marriott calls a 'new start' and 'the replacement of tribal primitivism and a mystical world view by the budding fruits of human reason'. The New world, according to Marriott, was devoid of reason, based instead on irrationality, brutal primitivism, and human

sacrifice, a situation which Marriott terms 'inexcusable' and 'barely better than death'. Thankfully, Columbus brought reason, Christianity, and ideas to the New World, and should therefore be thanked not only by us, but by the descendents of the Indians who, courtesy of Columbus, were elevated to a higher standard of living from the 'largely primitive Stone Age level of savages' they once were.

My initial response to the article was to presume that the author was exhibiting either a severe case of naiveté or was attempting to pen a humorous, tongue-in-cheek commentary intended to incite furor over his lopsided analysis of Columbus' legacy. On its own merit, Marriott's article can hardly be regarded as an informed scholarly work to be taken seriously. What is worrisome, however, is that this one-sided, strictly heroic viewpoint of Columbus' legacy is precisely what is taught in American history classrooms across the United States.

This article is not an invective against Christopher Columbus, nor is it intended to contribute to the acrimonious debate over whether Columbus was hero or villain. Rather, the objective is to clarify some popular assumptions about Columbus' legacy, and to foster reflection about how educators might become more conscious of the need to question information that is presented as historical fact in textbooks and other media.

The arrival of Columbus in the Americas is celebrated by some groups and is mourned by others. While Columbus is portrayed by Eurocentric American history texts as an exemplary explorer and adventurer, he is viewed by many Latino Americans, Native Americans, and African Americans as an exploitive invader who plundered the Americas and the Caribbean islands and enslaved the native people already living there. But according to Loewen (1995) and Gonzales (1999), Columbus was no greedier than the Spanish, English, Dutch, or French explorers. What Loewen and others (Bigelow, 1991; Fletcher, 1991; Marciano, 1997; Takaki, 1993) find troubling is that history textbooks de-emphasize the pursuit of wealth as a motive for Columbus and other European explorers and colonists. The books also gloss over Columbus' clearly stated intentions to enslave the indigenous people he encountered in

the Western Hemisphere. In a letter to the Spanish monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella (Fletcher, 1991), Columbus wrote "Should your majesties command it, all the inhabitants could be taken away to Castile, or made slaves on the island. With 50 men we could subjugate them all and make them do whatever we want (p. 68).

History textbooks, as well as biographies written for younger children focus instead on Columbus' desire to discover faraway places, to spread Christianity, and to prove he could sail west to get to the Indies. Columbus is depicted as courageous and clever, a pious and devout Christian wishing to serve his country while sharing the word of God and disseminating ideas of freedom and democracy. Why aren't both sides of Columbus' legacy discussed in history textbooks? It seems that authors (and educators) prefer to avoid the conflicts that might occur when the predominant viewpoint of Columbus solely as a hero is challenged.

When he introduced the bill in 1963 that made Columbus Day a national holiday, Ronald Libonati stated that 'we owe to this great emancipator and nobleman of the seas a signal of national debt of gratitude' (Loewen, 1992). Loewen points out the irony of referring to Columbus as an emancipator, since Columbus helped to found the Atlantic slave trade. According to Bigelow (1991), "children's biographies of Christopher Columbus function as primers on racism and colonialism" (p. 23). It seems reasonable that history materials designed for schools could explore the viewpoints promulgated by both Libonati and Bigelow; however, critical debate on this issue is rarely encouraged in American history textbooks or in classrooms.

Teachers who challenge traditional images and beliefs of patriotism, freedom, and democracy taught in school inevitably face fierce opposition from dissenters, including parents, administrators, and policy-makers. But in failing to question what is presented as ultimate truth in history textbooks, are we not teaching young learners that European colonists such as Christopher Columbus had every right to take possession of the Americas from the Indians because they were stronger, more civilized, or had a superior religion? Lorde (1992) defines

racism as "the belief in the inherent superiority of one race over all others and thereby the right to dominance" (p. 496). If we reflect on Lorde's definition of racism, framing Columbus and other European colonists as explorers who were smarter, more civilized, and more enlightened than the indigenous people of the Americas could indeed be categorized as a racist perspective.

In addition to recognizing racial undertones of the traditional view of Christopher Columbus, is it not our responsibility as educators to present both sides of what was until recently was presented as the 'discovery' of the new, unsettled lands known as America? Loewen (1992) wonders "how can one person 'discover' what another already knows and owns?" (p. 5). Scholars estimate that between sixty million and one hundred twenty five million people lived in the Americas in 1492 (Churchill, 1997; Loewen, 1995; Meyer & Sherman, 1979), suggesting that North America was not a virgin wilderness with only a few primitive peoples waiting to be discovered and civilized. Still, the assumption continues that Columbus' legacy was the discovery and civilization of the Americas, despite considerable evidence that his legacy also includes racism, slavery, death and destruction.

As educators, it is essential that we question what is presented in textbooks as truth in order to guide our students and prospective classroom teachers in learning to evaluate information through a multicultural lens, particularly when the material is presented as historical fact. Like multicultural education, teaching dissenting views of American history can evoke vitriolic responses from those claiming that these 'revisionist' perspectives are inflammatory, confusing, unpatriotic, or contrary to long-held American ideals. And like multicultural education, critical dialogue about historical assumptions needs to be an essential component of the curriculum despite pedagogical orientations that view opportunities for these types of critical reflection as distractions from 'real' classroom learning.

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THE DREAM ACT By Chelsie Campbell

You've spent the last thirteen years of your life safely tucked away in the rolling hills of Santiago de Chile. Your parents rip you from your home and you are forced to go along on a "journey;" one that will take you to a new

country where you don't know anything or anyone. You arrive in this new country and begin high school. You adjust well to the hustle and bustle of lockers, backpacks and social groups. Flash forward four years and you are proudly standing amongst your peers, graduating top of your class and well on your way to Harvard University with a scholarship that covers all expenses. A letter soon arrives in the mail asking for your Alien identification number. What do you do? Falsify a number and hope no one figures it out or lose the scholarship and your dream to attend Harvard?

Many students, although we rarely hear about it, are faced with this situation every year around the time of graduation. The unfortunate part is that most undocumented students will be unable to attend college because they cannot afford out-of-state tuition (undocumented students are classified as non-residents and are therefore required out-of-state tuition rates). They also do not qualify for any financial aide.

Many of these students have lived in this country for more than half of their lives and consider themselves "American", and oftentimes not able to speak their native tongue anymore. They usually only get to experience and practice traditions from their home country during family gatherings or when they travel back with their parents. For them, *Tommy Hilfiger Jeans*, *Britney Spears* and car magazines dominate their daily lives. However, when reality hits their young lives, they are far from being "Americans," because to the United States government, they are undocumented, and therefore not citizens of this country. For example, a 24-year-old Guatemalan man who is ineligible to adjust his legal status was deported even though he had lived in the United States since his mother

smuggled him into the country when he was less than a year old. This is not an isolated case, it happens more frequently than many of us realize and it is prevalent throughout this country. A situation such as the one described above necessitates a solution to this crisis.

The DREAM Act, is a highly contested and controversial legislation that is being debated in Washington, D.C. It is a legislative act that undocumented students hope will pass because this is the opportunity they need to live the American Dream that most immigrants come to this great country for. Specifically, under the DREAM Act, (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors), a student who has been in this country for at least five years, graduates from high school, and maintains good moral character qualifies for protection under the act. Upon graduation, the student has to enroll in either a two or four year institution and graduate within 6 years. Students also have the option of enlisting in the Armed Forces for two years or completing 910 hours of community service. During the six-year time period, the student is considered a "Conditional Permanent Resident," meaning that they cannot be deported if they abide by the requirements. Upon completion of any of the three requirements, the student becomes eligible to receive Legal Permanent Residency in this country.

As it stands right now, in order to comply with federal law, states are urged to follow the provision that "if you provide in-state tuition rates to undocumented students, you must do the same for out of state residents." The law was created with the passage of *the Illegal Immigrant Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996*. The DREAM Act would repeal that provision. Under that same current law, nearly 70,000 students graduate from American high schools

each year that have lived in this country for at least 5 years. These students, however, face limited prospects for continuing with their education or working legally in the US because they were brought to this country as small children by their parents. If enacted, the DREAM Act would have a life changing impact on the students who qualify, dramatically increasing their average future earnings, and consequently, the amount of taxes they would pay, while significantly reducing criminal and social costs to taxpayers.

Locally, various groups have sponsored events in Las Vegas to bring attention to this issue. Most recently, a campaign called "La educación es nuestro futuro," translated to English means "Education is our Future" was launched. The campaign ran for five weeks and featured several Public Service Announcements, which ran on the local Spanish television. Additionally, students went to local Hispanic areas and asked approximately 500 people various questions regarding their educational levels, their children's educational levels, and their resident status, among other things. The findings from the surveys will be correlated with information from the Clark County School District and presented to local leaders. The goal of the report is to show the community members the impact that a bill such as the DREAM Act would have in this community. Currently, students who graduate from Nevada high schools are eligible for in-state tuition, but it is a policy that is not widely publicized. Moreover, it is not state law, but a procedure enacted by the Board of Regents.

United States Senator John Ensign (R-NV), United States Senator Harry Reid (D-NV), Congresswoman Shelley Berkley, and Congressman Jim Gibbons have all pledged their support to the bill. The bill is expected to

pass this legislative session and will be up for a vote on the 16th of October. We must keep in mind that the DREAM Act is a recognition of the fact that young people that arrived in this country did not come here by choice, however now that they are here, they deserve the same opportunities available to the average American.

RACISM IS ALIVE AND WELL IN SCHOOLS

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

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION By Hiawatha Givens

If you want to be better than average, you must work harder than the average person. If you want to be the best, you must work harder than all the rest. Today is the first day of the rest of your life. What you do today can directly affect how you live. Take advantage of this opportunity. Work hard! Do well! Be successful! (Givens, 1994)

How would the world be if American citizens did not have the opportunity to work toward success? People around the world identify America as the land of opportunity. America's basic theme is if you work hard you can be whatever you want to be. It is assumed that the playing field is level. It is assumed that everyone has opportunity. It is assumed that everyone can be successful with hard work. These assumptions are bad assumptions. That is why we have affirmative action.

Affirmative action can be defined in many ways; however, many people think of affirmative action as minorities receiving positions in education and in employment for which some whites are better qualified. This definition is not entirely accurate. Affirmative action is a policy or program that recognized present day systematic discrimination of people of color, women, or people with disabilities, and works to ensure equal opportunity in education, employment, and contracting through proactive

efforts. (Campus Diversity Project) This article discusses the views of the opponents of affirmative action, discusses the views of the proponents of affirmative action, and provides a summary of the affirmative action forum held by the S.O.L. organization at UNLV on October 10, 2003.

The opponents of affirmative action sing one song—when there is limited opportunity the most qualified person should get that opportunity. In colleges and universities where the admission policies allow race to be a factor, opponents of affirmative action state and restate that these policies reject a certain number of more academically qualified white applicants. (Parks) Opponents point out discrimination against citizens because of race is unconstitutional. Opponents also point out that there are plenty of other less selective institutions of higher education that minorities can attend. Most undergraduate institutions accept all qualified candidates and thus do not award special status to any group of applicants. (Hall) Finally opponents of affirmative action believe that no discrimination can be tolerated conceding that blacks and other minorities have been and still are victims of discrimination. However, taking into consideration the race of an applicant in admission policies and in employment is unconstitutional. (Heriot) Opponents make the assumption that the assessment tools used for entrance to colleges and universities are accurate. Imbedded in this assumption is the idea that whites are superior. Otherwise, how would there be so many whites doing so much better than other minorities? White students do better on entrance exams, have better GPA's and therefore, should be first in line to receive the opportunities before an obviously less qualified minority.

Minorities on the other hand believe that affirmative action to be the one opportunity to get closer to receiving some the benefits that are guaranteed to all citizens but for the most part have been reserved for the white majority. In reality affirmative action does not take away opportunities from whites. No laws have been passed that say whites can not live near the railroad tracks. No laws have been passed that say that whites have to sit on the front of the bus. No law suits have been filed where all white students qualified or not qualified were turned

away from universities because they were white. These things describe past and present discrimination and are exactly the kind of things affirmative action attempts to remedy. These things are exactly the kind of things that affirmative action was created to destroy.

On October 2, 2003 the S.O.L. organization at UNLV held an affirmative action forum. The panel consisted of five minority community leaders. The panelist were asked the following questions about affirmative action and given an opportunity to respond.

What is affirmative action?

What is the Michigan case and what does it mean?

How does affirmative action affect minorities?

How does UNLV apply affirmative action?

What are some of the problems concerning affirmative action?

What are some the pros and cons of affirmative action?

What alternatives are there to affirmative action?

Not all panelists answered all questions but the panelists came to a general consensus that affirmative action has been and needs to continue to be an important avenue of success for minorities. After the panel discussion the panel fielded questions from the audience.

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FROM RHETORIC TO REALITY: STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IN SOCIETIES

An Overview from the National
Association For Multicultural
Education Thirteenth Annual
International Conference
November 5- November 9, 2003
Sheraton Seattle Hotel &
Towers Seattle, Washington
By Porter Lee Troutman, Jr.

Approximately 1500 persons were in attendance at the 13th Annual International Conference. Over 300 sessions were offered in MCE. Many researchers and scholars including James Banks author of over 30 book in MCE and the recently 2004 2nd edition of Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education. Professors Carl Grant, Geneva Gay, Phil Chinn, Donna Gollnick Sonja Neito, Christine Sleeter, Pamela, Tiedt, Gary Howard and many others scholars contributed to the success of the conference.

This year's theme, **FROM RHETORIC TO REALITY: Student Achievement in**

Multicultural Societies, focus on three overarching areas in education today:

1. **From Rhetoric to Reality** – Educational regulations, public policy and discussions among educators, parents, students, policy makers, community and business leaders – and in the media – are filled with rhetoric about educational inequities and the growing diversity in our schools and societies How do we move from overabundant and often meaningless Rhetoric – to a Reality where the education that we provide, from early childhood through post-secondary

education, includes research, pedagogy and practice which fosters academic and personal success for every student and family?

2. **Student Achievement** – Virtually every school system, college and university, community, news-paper, and educational organization has "closing the achievement gap" at the top of their list. Few, however, realize that Multicultural Education is the primary, comprehensive vehicle for doing so. If we can create programs and classrooms that are culturally aware, respectful and responsive in their policies, funding, curriculum and practices, the playing field will become

more level and we will move toward actually leaving no child behind. Many presenters at this NAME conference demonstrated ways that this can happen – conferees shared their challenges and barriers they encounter - as well as the successful strategies and resources that they have developed and utilized.

3. **Multicultural Societies** – Education, in the United States and in countries throughout the world, is being challenged – as it often has in the past – to address societal issues that are unresolved in the larger society. Fifty years ago in the United States, our schools were mandated to "desegregate" at a time when our neighborhoods were generally unwilling to do so. Today, in communities throughout the world, schools are required to – and care about – successfully educating a diverse student body. Schools not only work on student achievement, but work on respect for cultural diversity, inclusion of people with varying abilities and disabilities, violence and conflict resolution,

decreasing prejudice and hate, and a plethora of other societal challenges. Multicultural education is the umbrella that asks us to create school communities that reflect and value diversity, - but also to tackle the broader issues of social justice and student voice. The conference provided an opportunity to learn, share, network and grow. NAME is a vision of what is possible. It is a powerful force to make a difference!

COMPARING CHINESE AND AMERICAN CHILDREN'S REACTION TO SEPARATION FROM PRIMARY CAREGIVERS

By Yaoying Xu

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine young children's emotional reaction to separation from their primary caregivers by comparing children from two cultural settings: American and Chinese preschools. Compared to North American Children, Chinese children are sometimes considered more anxious, passive, and reserved (Chen, Hastings, & Rubin, 1999). Some investigators believe that this difference is related to the attitudes and practices of their parents.

In the experiment conducted by Chen, Hastings, and Rubin (1999), about 150 Chinese and 108 Canadian two-year-olds were compared in an experiment known as the "strange situation." The results indicate that Chinese children's more inhibition in the strange situation was associated with the mother's acceptance, protection, concern, and even encouragement of independence. Chinese mothers were both more punitive and more concerned about achievement; they were also more protective but show less apparent warmth.

Studies have been conducted about

parent preschool involvement and mother's role during the transitional year in children's lives, through children's behavior and interaction patterns (Petrie & Davidson, 1995). Petrie and Davidson (1995) used Bowlby's (1973) attachment theory to analyze children's behavior during home-school transition year in order to search out primary attachment problems underlying children's manifest behavior in the preschool setting and their implications for parent involvement. Their study indicates that it took much longer time for the insecure child to adapt to the nursery school and that the struggle to achieve emotional equilibrium would have consumed much of his energy. He needed the extra maternal attention and support at the transition year.

Bradbard, Endsley, and Mize (1992) studied parent-child communication patterns and they found that parents and children communicated most frequently on weekdays, particularly when the parents dropped their children at school and picked them up from school. Their study results show that parent-child conversations often occurred during routine and transitional activities, and the more parents observe their children's activities, the more effective they were in the communication with their children.

Although studies on children's separation anxiety frequently have been done in the home-school transition process (e.g., Petrie & Davidson, 1995), few studies have been done to compare the emotional reaction of preschoolers from different cultures. In the present study, two groups of children from two university preschools in the U.S. and China were observed respectively when their primary caregivers dropped them off in the classroom. The researcher also interviewed the classroom teacher and parents/grandparents

who were directly involved in the observed setting from each culture.

The settings being observed were classrooms from a U.S. preschool and a Chinese preschool, respectively. The age of the observed children was 3 to 4 years old. Interviews with the two parents from the U.S. preschool were done in their work site. Two parents from the Chinese preschool were interviewed via telephone. One U.S. grandmother was interviewed on the site of preschool playground and two grandparents (one grandmother, one grandfather) in China were interviewed out of the classroom.

In the U.S. preschool classroom, about 12-15 children attended the morning session. During the researcher's observation time between 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. in the U.S. preschool, most parents who came with their children were mothers, as well as a few fathers and one grandmother. Many parents seemed to be in a hurry and just exchanged greetings with the staff and left. Some parents stayed a few minutes to make sure the child was doing fine in the class. A few parents didn't interact at all with staff, nor did they say anything to the child.

In the Chinese preschool, about 20 children attended class every morning. Like the U.S. preschool, most primary caregivers accompanying the children were mothers. Different from the U.S. preschool, more grandparents were involved in the Chinese preschool (7 out of 20 caregivers). Only one father was present during the observation.

The nonverbal communication in each setting was different. For example, the kiss, hug, waving, holding hands between parents and children were more frequently observed in the U.S. preschool. Chinese parents were more conserved with their way in expressing affections. They were smiling or waving their

hands more than giving hugs or kisses. The verbal communication was also different. U.S. parents were using "I love you. Honey" much more frequently than Chinese parents. However, Chinese parents expressed more concerns about the child's safety, health, and ability to follow the teacher's directions. They said more expressions such as "Listen to the teacher," "Don't run around," or "Watch your steps."

Through the observation and especially the interviews with the teacher, the researcher didn't find any children who had an extremely hard time with separation, but they did show different patterns of emotional reaction to separation. Several factors are related to children's emotional reaction to separation in two cultures.

The first factor that affects children's emotional reaction is parent's attitude and behavior. Some parents always stayed a few minutes and talked to the teacher (at least exchange greetings) before they left. Children from these parents seemed to be more easily engaged in an activity. This was observed in both settings.

The second factor is the teacher's attitude and behavior towards child and parent. One reason that children were easily dropped off might be that they enjoyed the school experience with adults and peers, so they were expecting another pleasant day when they came in the morning. The interaction between parent and teacher helped a child understand that this is an environment like home because the teacher loves and cares him/her as parents do.

Another factor is the different roles between mom, dad, and grandparents. Some children seemed to be closer to one parent than to the other (or the grandparent). So on days when the less close parent came to drop the

child off, he seemed to be even more attached to that parent. It is so may be because this caregiver usually didn't have conversation with the teacher and was less involved in the activities in the class to prepare the child for his day.

On one hand, parents in two cultures believe that the strong emotional connection between the parent and child is the most important part in the child's life. Actually it helps the child deal with separation more easily. All the parents who were interviewed agreed that parents' staying in the classroom for at least a few minutes would help the child transition from home to school setting. This is an important message because it differs from what the teacher believes (the shorter the parent stays, the easier for the child to adjust, see Table 1). On the other hand, When grandparents did spend more time with the child in both settings, the child seemed to be more attached with the grandparent (but this didn't happen to the parent).

Table 1: Perceptions about separation from the teacher, parents, and the researcher

Participants Parents' staying in classroom
Parents' interactions with the child or others Effect on the child
 U.S. teacher

Chinese Teacher Short, quick coming and going

Not in the classroom Quick greetings and good bye

Quick goodbye at the doorway Easier for transition

Easier for transition
 Chinese parents

Chinese grandparents 5 or less minutes

As long as needed Quick leave

Playing or watching the child playing with others Feel secure and comfortable

More attached
 U.S. parents

U.S. grandparent 5-10 minutes

As long as needed Stay long enough to make sure the child is doing fine.

Stay and find playmates for the child or watch the child play with peers Feel secure and comfortable

More attached

Most parts of the interviews turned out to be consistent with what the researcher observed in the setting. In spite of some different perceptions, the commonalities between the two preschool classes include: all parents interviewed from the two cultures agreed that children were secure and comfortable in the school setting. Both teachers believed that the shorter parents stayed, the easier for the child to adjust. Interestingly, in both cultures, the child seemed to be more

attached with grandparents than with parents. Grandparents in China and the U.S. (although fewer grandparents were involved in the U.S. preschool) shared one more commonality: they stayed much longer than parents in the class and often watched for a while outside of the class before they actually left.

In both cultures from the head teacher's perspective, the key word was responsibility. It was her responsibility to provide an appropriate environment for children and her responsibility to keep each part of the system (including parents, children, other staff, administrators, or other specialists) working in harmony. In other words, her role in the setting was like the CPU in a computer. In order to keep the system working well, she needed to be efficient or quick. Just as no one wants a computer with a slow CPU, no parent or administrator wants to see a class full of children's cries, screams, fights, and any other misbehavior because of the teacher's inefficiency. This might explain why the teacher thought it was easier for children to adjust if parents quickly came and left. From the teacher's perspective, it was the whole group that she needed to focus on. Even though she believed it necessary to interact with individual parents and children when they came in, she wanted to do her job in efficiency by keeping everything in order in the class.

From the parents' perspective, however, the focus was on the child (See Table 2). A mother might watch her child playing together with other peers, but her focus was mostly on her own child rather than the whole group. The key word for the parent was affection instead of efficiency. It was hard for a mother to leave her crying or sad child even though she understood it might work better or easier if she left quickly. Affection or emotion was involved here. In addition to the duty or

responsibility to be a mother, she might feel what the child felt and that feeling was usually stronger than regular rules or policies. For many mothers or fathers (at least one father of a little girl according to the researcher's observation), emotion overcome efficiency. The teacher wants to do the right thing for the child and the parent; the mother wants to do the good thing for the child and the parent. "I feel good because I see my child is happy there," one parent told the researcher.

Table 2: Norms and expectations from different participants for children

Expectations	U.S Teacher/Chinese teacher	U.S. Parents/ grandparents	C	h	i	n	e	s	e
Secure, comfortable	X			X				X	
Happy	X	X		X					
Being Good	X			X					
Following rules	X							X	
Efficiency	X								
Affective			X		X				
Being right	X								

Some other differences were also observed. First, more interactions were observed between the teacher and parents in the U.S. preschool than in the Chinese preschool. Generally parents in Chinese preschool asked fewer questions and stayed shorter. They usually said goodbye at the doorway instead of going inside. The U.S. teacher believed that parents' involvement was critical for the child to get used to school life; the Chinese teacher focused more on the child and encouraged less parental interaction in school activities. Second, more grandparents were involved in observed Chinese preschool. In the U.S. preschool, one out of twelve children were dropped off by a grandparent (Grandmother); in the Chinese preschool, seven out of twenty children were

brought in by grandparents. Third, more organized large-group, teacher-directed activities were observed in the Chinese preschool and more individual or small-group activities (according to the child's choice) and free play were observed in the U.S. preschool. The observation on children and the interviews with the informants have supported most previous studies that interactions between children and parents and between parents and teachers are helpful in children's transition from home to school. However, few studies have been done on the different focus in these interactions. Although teachers and parents are not different in opposite directions, they may differ in their focus or attention (Table 2).

Further studies should be conducted to observe and interview more parent-teacher interaction in a closer way to find out not only what they do, but also how they feel. In addition, patterns of children at different age levels should also be identified because more and more younger children (under the age of 3) start their life in preschool. Although this study shows that parents interact differently with their children and with the teacher in two different cultures, they are more similar than different regarding the fundamental goals. Further information on parent-teacher communication will help teachers and parents work together as a team to provide a healthy, happy environment for all children.

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