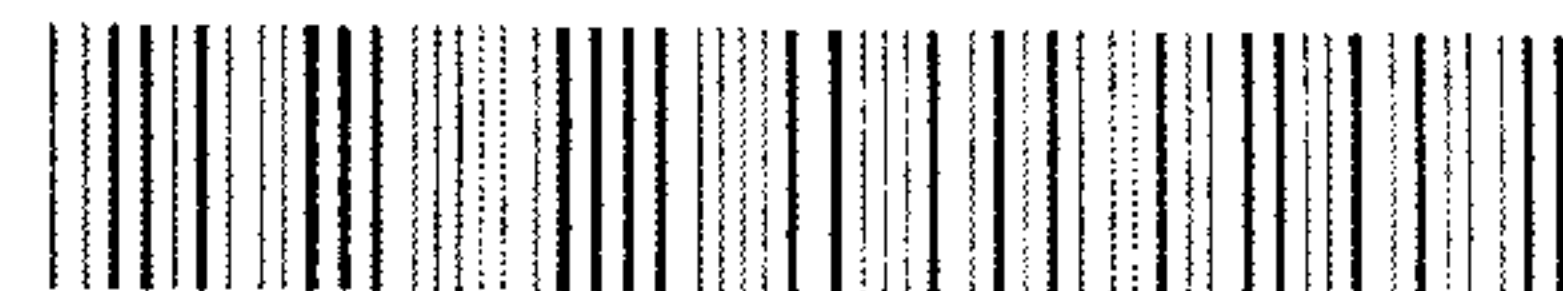


STATUS  
Submitted 20141118  
SOURCE  
ILLiad  
BORROWER  
OLP  
LENDERS  
NCJ, \*MNY, MNM, LMR, LEV, LCY

TYPE  
Copy  
REQUEST DATE  
11/14/2014  
RECEIVE DATE

OCLC #  
468857747  
NEED BEFORE  
12/14/2014



137369109

DUE DATE

**BIBLIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

**LOCAL ID**

**AUTHOR** Gay, Geneva.

**ARTICLE AUTHOR** Gay

**TITLE** Culturally responsive teaching : theory, research,  
and practice /

**ARTICLE TITLE** Chapter five, Curriculum

**IMPRINT** New York : Teachers College, ©2010.

**FORMAT** Book

**EDITION**

**VOLUME**

**NUMBER**

**DATE** 2010

**PAGES** 127-171

**ISBN** 9780807750780 (pbk.)

**SERIES NOTE** Multicultural education series (New York, N.Y.)

370.117 G28  
2010

**INTERLIBRARY LOAN INFORMATION**

**ALERT**

**VERIFIED** <TN:68084><ODYSSEY:206.107.44.52/ILL> OCLC

**MAX COST** OCLC IFM - 30.00 USD

**LEND CHARGES**

**LEND RESTRICTIONS**

**AFFILIATION** Member of LVIS.\*\*\*

**COPYRIGHT** US.CCG

**SHIPPED DATE**

**FAX NUMBER** (503) 768-7282 (as last resort please)

**EMAIL** ill@lclark.edu

**BORROWER NOTES** Please use Odyssey, Article Exchange or email. Thank  
you! (maxCost: \$30.00)

**ODYSSEY** 206.107.44.52/ILL

**ARIEL FTP**

**ARIEL EMAIL**

**BILL TO**

same

**BILLING NOTES** \*\*OLP is a free supplier\*\*

**SHIPPING INFORMATION**

**SHIP VIA** Courier/Library Rate/Odyssey/Article Exchange

**SHIP TO**

Lewis & Clark College/Library ILL  
0615 SW Palatine Hill Road  
Portland, OR, US 97219-7899

**RETURN VIA**

**RETURN TO**

course features of ethnically diverse students; (2) conflictual and complementary points among these discourse styles; (3) how, or whether, conflictual points are negotiated by students; and (4) features of the students' discourse patterns that are problematic for the teacher. The results can be used to pinpoint and prioritize specific places to begin interventions for change.

Whether conceived narrowly or broadly, and expressed formally or informally, communication is the quintessential medium of teaching and learning. It also is inextricably linked to culture and cognition. Therefore, if teachers are to better serve the school achievement needs of ethnically diverse students by implementing culturally responsive teaching, they must learn how to communicate differently with them. To the extent they succeed in doing this, achievement problems could be reduced significantly.

## Ethnic and Cultural Diversity in Curriculum Content

"Content about the histories, heritages, contributions, perspectives, and experiences of different ethnic groups and individuals, taught in diverse ways, is essential to culturally responsive teaching."

THE FUNDAMENTAL AIM of culturally responsive pedagogy is to *empower* ethnically diverse students through academic success, cultural affiliation, and personal efficacy. Knowledge in the form of curriculum content is central to this empowerment. To be effective, this knowledge must be accessible to students and connected to their lives and experiences outside of school. Sleeter and Grant (1991a) explain that knowledge has no intrinsic power. Information and skills that are potentially powerful become so only through interaction with the interests, aspirations, desires, needs, and purposes of students. Almost 90 years earlier Dewey (1902) made essentially the same case in disavowing the notion of an inherent dichotomy between the child and the curriculum, meaning teachers must prioritize one or the other, but not both. He suggested that this is an artificial division detrimental to quality teaching. Curriculum content should be seen as a tool to help students assert and accentuate their present and future powers, capabilities, attitudes, and experiences.

These explanations emphasize the importance of "student relevance and participation" in curriculum decision making. Because of the dialectic relationship between knowledge and the knower, interest and motivation, relevance and mastery, Native Americans, Latino Americans, African Americans, and Asian Americans must be seen as co-originators, co-designers, and co-directors (along with professional educators) of their education. If the "creator, producer, and director" roles of students of color are circumscribed and they are seen as only "consumers," then the levels of their learning also will be restricted. This is too often true of present educational conditions. To reverse these trends, ethnically diverse students and their cultural heritages must be the sources and centers of

educational programs. In the words of Dewey (1902), their curriculum must be "psychologized" if it is to be relevant, interesting, and effective to their learning. This does not mean students should be taught only those things in which they have a personal interest. Nor should they be involved directly in every decision made about curriculum. Rather, culturally relevant curriculum content should be chosen and delivered in ways that are meaningful to the students for whom it is intended. In some instances, this means validating their personal experiences and cultural heritages; in others, it means teaching content entirely new to ethnically and culturally diverse students but in ways that make it easy for them to comprehend.

### INTRODUCTION

Discussions in this chapter elaborate this line of thinking as it relates to the importance of multicultural curriculum content in improving the school achievement of marginalized ethnic students. Six key observations provide the conceptual contours and organizational directions for these discussions:

- Curriculum content is crucial to academic performance and is an essential component of culturally responsive pedagogy.
- The most common source of curriculum content used in classrooms is textbooks. Therefore, the quality of textbooks is an important factor in student achievement and culturally responsive teaching.
- Curriculum content that is meaningful to students improves their learning.
- Relevant curriculum content for teaching African American, Latino American, Asian American, and Native American students includes information about the histories, cultures, contributions, experiences, perspectives, and issues of their respective ethnic groups.
- Curriculum content is derived from various sources, many of which exist outside the formal boundaries of schooling.
- There are many different kinds of curricula; they offer different, but important, challenges, opportunities, and entrees for doing culturally responsive teaching

The chapter is divided into seven sections. The first five examine important sources of curriculum content for culturally responsive teaching.

These include textbooks, standards, literary and trade books, and mass media. In the sixth section of the chapter some documented effects of ethnic content on student achievement are presented. Some suggestions for improving the quality of multicultural curriculum content are presented in the last section of the chapter. Achievement is conceived broadly to include indicators of performance other than scores on standardized tests and grades. As is the case elsewhere in this book, descriptions, principles, and proposals derived from theory, research, and practice are woven throughout the discussions.

### IMPORTANCE OF TEXTBOOKS AS CURRICULUM CONTENT

Research in the 1980s and 1990s revealed that textbooks are the basis of 70% to 95% of all classroom instruction (Apple, 1985; O. Davis, Ponder, Burlbaw, Garza-Lubeck, & Moss, 1986; Tyson-Bernstein & Woodward, 1991; Wade, 1993). Although the rate has lowered somewhat because of the advent of computer-based technologies and multimedia instructional resources, textbooks continue to be the most prominent teaching tool. As levels of education advance from kindergarten through high school, this dominance increases. Another testament to the power of textbooks is the fact that most students consider their authority to be incontestable and the information they present always to be accurate, authentic, and absolute truth (Gordy & Pritchard, 1995; Gullicks, Pearson, Child, & Schwab, 2005). School level has little if any effect on these perceptions. When called upon to defend the validity of their explanations and understandings of issues, students often respond, "Because the book said so."

While the dominance of textbooks is apparent in all subject areas, it is even more so in some than in others (Tyson-Bernstein & Woodward, 1991). Teaching kindergarten without textbooks is far more possible than teaching third, seventh, or twelfth grade; and art, music, and physical education are more easily taught without textbooks than is math, science, or social studies. Textbooks often are thought to be a foolproof means of guaranteeing successful teaching and learning. These practices and associated attitudes are so strongly entrenched in the minds of students that the value of courses without textbooks is sometimes suspect.

Furthermore, most textbooks used in schools are controlled by the dominant group (European Americans) and confirm its status, culture, and contributions. European American subjective experiences and interpretations of reality are presented as objective truth. These representations are entrenched further by the exclusion of certain information about the various racial minorities and social classes in the United States (Sleeter &

Grant, 1991b). Bryne (2001) describes textbooks as "cultural artifacts" (p. 299) that reflect the values, norms, and biases of disciplines and societies; convey professionally and politically approved knowledge; and construct images and impressions that become explanations and understandings for students. Their largely uncontested authority and pervasiveness are important reasons why understanding how they treat ethnic and cultural diversity and the effects on student learning are fundamental to culturally responsive teaching.

### ETHNIC AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN TEXTBOOKS

Over the years a great deal of research has been done to determine whether textbooks are dealing adequately with groups of color and cultural diversity issues. The variables studied include narrative text, visuals, language, student activities and discussion prompts, and overall tone. These have been filtered through different assessment criteria such as quantitative inclusion, accuracy of information, placement of diversity features, authenticity, and significance (AAUW, 1995; O. Davis et al., 1986; Gay, 2003b; Loewen, 1995; Sadker & Sadker, 1982; T. Sanchez, 2007; Tetreault, 1985).

#### Progress but Some Problems Remain

Blatant ethnic stereotypes, culturally diverse exclusions, and racist depictions have been eliminated from textbooks (Anyon, 1988; Byrne, 2001; Davis et al., 1986; Deane, 1989; Gordy & Pritchard, 1995; Hogben & Waterman, 1997; T. Sanchez, 2007; Wade, 1993), but the overall quality continues to be inadequate. Textbooks still give too little attention to different groups of color interacting with each other and members of their own ethnic groups; to race, racism, and other forms of oppression; to conflict; and to experiences and interactions that are different from mainstream norms and standards. Sleeter and Grant (1991b) found these patterns of treatment of diversity to be the case with 47 textbooks used in Grades 1–8 to teach social studies, mathematics, reading, language arts, and science that they examined. All the books were published between 1980 and 1988. A six-part analysis was applied that included visuals, topics and issues discussed, "people to study," language, portrayals and role functions of characters, and miscellaneous features unique to particular books. Sleeter and Grant were particularly interested in how these books treated different racial groups, gender, social class, and people with disabilities.

Textbooks continue to be flawed with respect to their treatment of ethnic and cultural diversity for several reasons. First, there is an imbal-

ance across ethnic groups of color, with most attention given to African Americans and their experiences. This disparity is consistent across types of instructional materials, subjects, and grade levels. Second, the content included about ethnic issues is rather bland, conservative, conformist, and "safe." It tends to emphasize harmonious relations among racial groups, and is too often a "weapon of deculturalization" (Gullicks et al., 2005) for the heritages and experiences of groups of color. Contentious issues and individuals are avoided, and the unpleasant sides of society and cultural diversity are either sanitized or bypassed entirely. Third, gender and social-class disparities prevail within the representations of ethnic groups, with preference given to males, the middle class, and events and experiences that are closely aligned with mainstream European American values, beliefs, and standards of behavior. Fourth, textbook discussions about ethnic groups and their concerns are not consistent across time, with contemporary issues being overshadowed by historical ones.

A study conducted by Gordy and Pritchard (1995) illustrates how these general trends were demonstrated in a specific sample of textbooks. They analyzed 17 fifth-grade social studies textbooks used in Connecticut schools to determine how they represented the perspectives of diverse women and men during slavery and Reconstruction. None of the authors provided thorough critiques of the slave trade, the reduction of Africans to commodities for that trade, or the values and beliefs used to justify slavery. All the texts discussed the living conditions under enslavement, but they excluded the sexual exploitation of female slaves, made no connections between slavery and the present living conditions of African and European Americans, and ignored the role that other ethnic groups, such as Native Americans and Mexicans, played in slavery.

A similar emphasis on description instead of interpretative and critical analysis characterized the treatment of Emancipation and Reconstruction. Because the perspectives of diverse groups were not presented, these textbooks gave partial and incomplete analyses of these critical events in U.S. history and their effects. They continued the long-established tradition of giving mostly European American and male perspectives on sociopolitical issues. Consequently, students using them "will not be given a full understanding of the racial and gender discrimination inherent in the slave system and the consequences of this discrimination on generations of Americans, both African American and White" (Gordy & Pritchard, 1995, p. 213).

Gwen, who is a veteran second-grade teacher, draws attention to another major inconsistency in the quality of many contemporary textbooks. She works in a large urban school district (32,000 students) and has taught many different types of students—African and European Ameri-

can, center-city and suburban, middle and lower class, academically able and intellectually challenged—in her career. Her district uses a literature approach to teaching reading. The second-grade text is rich in ethnic and cultural diversity. Its content represents a wide variety of literary genres (poetry, short stories, fiction, realistic descriptions, mythology), cultural themes, and ethnic male and female authors and illustrators.

Unfortunately, these strengths are compromised by repeated inappropriateness in the substantive content of the text for second graders. Gwen explains that many of the stories are simply too complex for 7-year-olds. The vocabulary is often too advanced, as are many of the literary techniques (such as simile, metaphor, analogy) used in the narrative text. The topics of the stories are often irrelevant to the experiences and perspectives of the urban students she teaches. Gwen bemoans these dilemmas by observing that “much age-appropriate and good ethnic children’s literature already exists that will be interesting to students like mine. Why aren’t we allowed to use it to teach reading?” One indeed wonders why not, especially when her school district and others throughout the United States claim to be searching for ways to improve reading achievement by using instructional materials that have high interest appeal and cultural relevance to students.

Analyses of how gender issues are addressed in textbooks, such as those conducted by Powell and Garcia (1985), the American Association of University Women (AAUW, 1995), Gullicks and associates (2005), and others reviewed by Grossman and Grossman (1994), reveal patterns of progress similar to those of ethnic diversity. Blatant gender biases have been eliminated, and females are depicted in less traditional roles and relationships. But males still appear more frequently than females. Men continue to dominate careers, positions, and images of action, power, leadership, and decision making. Although they are now portrayed in a wider variety of activities, females continue to be overrepresented in supportive and caregiving roles, suggesting that those who behave closer to traditional expectations are preferred.

The extent to which progress has been made in achieving gender equity in instructional materials is a function of subject areas, ethnic groups, and type of resource. The presentation of females in social studies, language arts, and literature instructional materials comes closer to being egalitarian than in math, science, and computer education. More gender balance exists in supplementary materials—especially those of a literary nature, such as children’s picture books—than in required textbooks. As is the case with ethnic group representation in textbooks, there are major imbalances in the treatment of women from different ethnic groups and sociocultural backgrounds. The progress tends to be much better for mid-

dle-class and European American females than for those who are poor and from different groups of color. Obviously, then, improvements are still needed in how males and females from different ethnic groups are presented in curriculum content resources routinely used by students.

### Effects of Multicultural Textbook Content

Little systematic empirical research is currently available on how biased textbooks affect the achievement of ethnically diverse students. But personal stories from students of various ages and circumstances abound. Students, like Amy and Aaron from Chapter 1, tell of being insulted, embarrassed, ashamed, and angered when reading and hearing negative portrayals of their ethnic groups or not hearing anything at all. Some challenge these inaccuracies and exclusions, and intimidate teachers by doing so. Others recall being put on the spot when isolated events and individuals from their ethnic groups are singled out for special attention. On other occasions students are excited and amazed to learn new information about different ethnic groups, to discover what they have endured and accomplished, even though it is introduced in the classroom sporadically. This was the reaction of Amy and Aaron when they first watched *Roots* (Margulies & Wolper, 1977, 1978) the televised series of Alex Haley’s (1976) book of the same title, and read *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (Malcolm X & Haley, 1966). A group of European American college students were rendered speechless after viewing *Something Strong Within* (Nakamura, 1994), a film composite of home movies taken by Japanese Americans in internment camps during World War II. Finally, after a long silence, one student said, “I never even thought of the people having regular lives in the camps. The video made me see them as human beings.” This reaction represented the sentiments of many others in the class, and it was echoed in comments to the effect that the students felt their education had shortchanged them through information voids, thereby further dehumanizing and marginalizing Japanese Americans.

The observations Chun-Hoon (1973) made more than 35 years ago about the effects of these textbook inadequacies on the perceptions of ethnic groups are still applicable today. Omissions and myopic analyses of ethnically diverse peoples, issues, cultures, and experiences imply that they are irrelevant and even expendable. Although Chun-Hoon was concerned specifically about Asian Americans, his observations can be easily extended to other groups of color, as Sleeter and Grant (1991b) have done. They recommended that authors and publishers reorient their focus to deal with more authentic and substantial human experiences and contextualize specific subject matter skills in more meaningful multicult-

tural content. This is a better route to improving student achievement than using bland and fictitious stories, teaching decontextualized skills, and repeating excessive numbers of adventure stories about European American males.

The inadequacies of textbook coverage of cultural diversity can be avoided by including accurate, wide-ranging, and appropriately contextualized content about different ethnic groups' histories, cultures, and experiences in classroom instruction on a regular basis. The efforts need not be constrained by lack of information and materials. Plenty of resources exist about most ethnic groups and in such variety that all subjects and grades taught in schools can be served adequately. Since this information is not always in textbooks, teachers need to develop the habit of using other resources to complement or even replace them. Students also should be taught how to critique textbooks for the accuracy of their multicultural content and how to compensate for the voids these analyses reveal.

### STANDARDS, TESTING, AND DIVERSITY

Curricular forms and resources other than textbooks have powerful (and sometimes constraining) consequences for culturally responsive teaching. Prominent among them are recent emphases on achievement standards and standardized testing. Some scholars attribute their emergence to the *Nation at Risk* federal educational policy released in 1983, and their elevation to the forefront of national attention to the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). Yet concerns about what students should know and be able to do at what levels of acceptability, and according to what evidence or measures of success (i.e., "standards"), existed long before then. They are recurrent throughout the history of U.S. education (Meier & Wood, 2004; Oliva, 2009; Sleeter, 2005; Tucker & Coddling, 1998), although they were called something else, such as goals, objectives, outcomes, and basics. Mandated expectations for student learning, like other kinds of curriculum priorities, are strongly influenced by the social, cultural, political, and economic tenor and demands of the times of their creation.

Content standards, performance standardization, and testing have become inseparably linked. Content standards are what students are supposed to know and understand after specified units of instruction. These units of instruction may be courses (algebra, U.S. history, English, biology, etc.), grades (4, 8, 10), or levels of schooling (elementary, middle, high). Performance standards indicate what students should be able to do in association with selected content, and at what level of acceptability (basic, proficient, advanced). Some states call these indicators "benchmarks."

Standardization means using the same measures for all students to determine mastery of content and performance standards (Sleeter, 2005). In almost every instance the measure used is standardized testing. A guide for parents to the Ohio testing system issued by the Business Roundtable in 2004 explains the relationship between content standards and testing that is representative of the situation in most states. It declares that achievement measures are standardized tests, which means that they are

the same for all students . . . based on the same materials . . . and all students take the tests based on the same guidelines and at approximately the same times. The statewide achievement tests . . . provide important results that are used to measure and compare student performance and progress across classrooms, schools, and districts, and across various student groups, such as racial and ethnic groups, gender groups, income status, disability status, or English language proficiency. (www.testingguideFINAL.pdf)

Additionally, standardized test results are used by governmental agencies and policymakers to determine school funding and other resource allocations. So far Nebraska is the only exception to this pattern. It, too, mandates content standards, but not standardized testing, and endorses local portfolio evaluations of student achievement through its School-based Teacher-led Assessment and Reporting System (STARS) (n.d.).

Most contemporary state achievement standards for students follow the lead and example of various national subject area professional organizations that issue content standards for their particular disciplines. They include organizations inside and outside the educational profession (Kendall & Marzano, 1997). All of them are very powerful within, and frequently beyond, their respective arenas of influence on shaping the thoughts and actions of K-12 educators and policymakers about what students should know and be able to do. Among these organizations are the

- National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
- National Council of Teachers of English, and the International Reading Association
- National Geographic Society
- National Council for the Social Studies
- National Academy of Sciences
- Consortium of National Arts Education Associations
- International Society for Technology in Education

In most instances these two levels of standards are so similar that it appears as if the states merely adopted the organizations' versions with minor editorial modifications. As a result, a close reading of the content

standards of one state provides a strong and dependable indication of standards of all states. This is especially the case for those areas of study often identified as "the academic core," "high-status knowledge and skills," and "high-stakes" content because of the consequences associated with students and schools that reach acceptable levels of achievement in them, or fail to do so. For all states these are reading and writing (which are treated separately or combined), mathematics, and science. Social studies is usually considered part of the "academic core" for secondary students as well, but is not assigned nearly the status and significance attributed to math, science, and English (or reading and writing). Nor is it tested as regularly or its performance levels considered as consequential for students. Somewhat more variance exists in the performance indicators and benchmarks associated with high-stakes content standards, and in other areas of expected student achievement (such as technology, fine arts, physical education, and health), but even then there is not a whole lot of real difference among states.

Two examples will suffice to illustrate this similarity of standards among states and professional organizations. The first is some variation of the same four common learning goals, applicable across subjects and grades, that are the foundation for the development of more specific content area standards. The 1993 Basic Education Act that created the Washington state "Essential Academic Learning Requirements" (EALRs) and the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) identified these goals as

- Reading with comprehension, writing with skill, and communicating effectively and responsively in a variety of ways and settings
- Knowing and applying the core concepts and principles of different subjects, including mathematics; social, life, and physical sciences; civics, geography, and history; arts; and health, wellness, and fitness
- Thinking analytically, logically, and creatively, and integrating knowledge and experience in forming reasoned judgments and solving problems
- Understanding the importance of work, and how performance, effort, and decisions affect future career and educational opportunities

The policy document gives credit to the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) as one of the primary source of these priorities.

The second example of the consensus of content standards across states and professional organizations is a sample of those for mathematics

and reading. *The Connecticut Framework*, issued by the Connecticut Department of Education (1998), identified 10 categories of content standards for mathematics. They are number sense; operations; estimation and approximation; ratios, proportions, and percents; measurement; spatial relationships and geometry; probability and statistics; patterns; algebra and functions; and discrete mathematics. Each of these content standards has several related performance standards of increasing complexity that are parallel but age appropriate across school levels. For instance, one for Grades K-4 students is, "describe simple ratios when comparing quantities." For Grades 5-8, the same standard is, "understand and use ratios, proportions, and percentages in a wide variety of situations." Its equivalent for students in Grades 9-12 is, "use ratios, proportions, and percents to solve real life problems" (Connecticut Department of Education, 1998, p. 92). All states endorse the same four broad reading content goals, with each having multiple levels of the same kinds of specificity. They are

- Understand and use different strategies to read (such as developing vocabulary and fluency)
- Understand the meaning of what is read (i.e., comprehension, prediction, making inferences, analysis, synthesis, interpretation)
- Read different materials for a variety of purposes (to gain information, perform a task, have a literary experience)
- Set goals and evaluate own progress to improve reading proficiency (for self-improvement and to share reading interests and experiences with others)

Colorado deviates somewhat structurally from this trend by not separating reading from writing, but the substantive content of the combined standards is the same as that of the states that separate them.

Whatever the prior status of state standards, related assessments, and accountability expectations, NCLB embellished and expanded them through some of its regulations. A very powerful one was imposing fiscal sanctions on states whose students failed to achieve proficiency on their self-declared achievement expectations, and where there were significant disparities in the performance of students from different ethnic, racial, cultural, social, and linguistic groups. This could have been a viable entree into culturally responsive teaching but it has not materialized in actual practice. Many teachers are so preoccupied with teaching tested content that they have little time or motivation to do much else. They feel they cannot afford to risk teaching content about cultural diversity for fear that their students' performance on tests will be compromised and the consequences will be extreme for themselves and their students. Commercial

publishers of textbooks and other instructional materials are responding to test-driven curricula in similar ways. State standards largely determine what content is included in many textbooks and how it is organized. Most state and national standardized tests seem to ascribe to a colorblind philosophy, as evident by avoiding any specific references to culture diversity, social class, race, and ethnicity beyond the superficial, such as names of characters (Maria, Abdullah, Wei-ying, Ganaraj) in scenarios and prompts for test items. Therefore, the standards initiative that is supposed to be a major step forward in improving the academic achievement of low-performing ethnically and culturally diverse students actually is restricting rather than enhancing their learning opportunities.

The few explicit inclusions of content about cultural diversity in most state standards are restricted mostly to social studies, reading, English, and/or language arts. One example of this trend is the Connecticut language arts standards. They include several references to specific kinds and dimensions of ethnic and cultural diversity in the performance standards related to each of the four content standards. One of the 12 performance standards for mastering "reading and responding" requires students to "demonstrate literacy and aesthetic appreciation for the text, awareness of the author's style, understanding of textual features, and ability to challenge the text and think divergently." A suggestion for these skills to be actualized in high school practice is, "Students read Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*, then engage in a discussion of . . . questions based on the text about its literary merit" (Connecticut Department of Education, 1998, p. 55). Culturally diverse examples used to illustrate what students can do to meet the standard of recognizing literary conventions and understanding how they convey meaning are *Hailstone and Halibut Bones*, Langston Hughes's poem "Mother to Son," and Wadsworth's sonnets in elementary, middle, and high school, respectively. Although these examples are intended only to suggest the diversity of learning possibilities and are not mandatory teaching strategies, they are instructive about how cultural diversity can be woven into learning standards. The National Council for the Social Studies (1994) includes a separate content standard on culture, as well as making frequent references to cultural diversity in its other nine standards.

Another illustration of the unfulfilled potential for incorporating cultural diversity into content and performance standards is apparent in the Washington state EALRs. In the introduction to the writing standards, an explicit commitment is made to culturally responsive teaching. Using ideas adapted from the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards, the declaration states:

Writing, by its nature, encompasses diverse subject matter and builds on the unique characteristics and cultures of each student writer. Accomplished teachers are aware of the unique role that language plays in dealing with cultural diversity, and they capitalize on the richness of languages that students bring to their learning and their writing to raise cultural awareness and to enrich the study of languages.

Writing teachers infuse their teaching with literature as examples and perspectives representing a broad range of cultures. They teach students to be aware of the cultural diversity of their audiences. Teachers appreciate and build on the diversity and commonalities they find in their classes so that those diverse and common elements become integral parts of their students' exploration of the world and human experience. ("K-10 grade level expectations," p. 5)

Unfortunately, these general commitments are not evident in the specific writing standards.

Despite these oversights, many of the states' standards, as well as those of professional organizations, could be extended to accommodate cultural diversity. Among these are reading standards such as "reading different materials for a variety of purposes," and "understanding the meaning of what is read." In both instances, reading materials could include a variety of genres of writings by different ethnic authors, and about different ethnic groups' cultures, heritages, experiences, and contributions. Comprehension of these materials could be assessed by asking students to decipher or interpret culturally encoded messages, and convert them from one expressive form to another, such as from poetry to explanatory essays, and from narrative autobiography to conversational dialogue. Similar extensions of standards in other subject areas are possible as well. For instance, ethnically and culturally specific contexts, events, and situations (i.e., performance standards or benchmarks) could be used for students to demonstrate math standards like "using algebraic skills to describe real-world phenomena symbolically and graphically," and "using concepts of statistics and probability to collect and analyze data and test hypotheses."

The Alaska Assembly of Native Educators used another approach to accommodate cultural diversity in standards that could be replicated in other states as well. In 1998 it created a set of Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools to complement the state's subject-based content standards. They are based on the belief that a firm grounding in heritage language and indigenous culture of a particular place and group is fundamental to producing well-educated, healthy, responsible, and vibrant individuals and communities. They foster strong connections between students'

lives in and out of school; teaching and learning through local cultures; and viewing different forms of knowledge and ways of knowing as being equally valid, adaptable, and complementary. Although the content and focus are different, the culturally responsive standards are organized in ways similar to the state standards. They address five areas (students, educators, curriculum, schools, and communities), each one has five or six standards, and several performance indicators accompany each standard. Some of the ones for learners declare that culturally responsive students

- are well grounded in the cultural heritages and traditions of their local communities
- build on local cultural knowledge and skills to achieve academic and personal success
- actively participate in various cultural environments
- engage effectively in learning activities based on traditional ways of knowing and learning (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006)

Thus, the rhetoric of state standards and the No Child Left Behind Act is enticing, but their actual practice is problematic for culturally responsive teaching. Too often standards-based curriculum reforms ignore the fact that students learn differently due in significant part to their cultural socialization, and that using this diversity as a resource in the educational process is fundamental to providing genuine educational equity and excellence for ethnically, racially, socially, and linguistically diverse students. There also is increasing evidence that the students who are supposed to be served most by NCLB and the standards movement—that is, underachieving children of color and poverty—are suffering more than they are benefiting. Their achievement levels are not increasing by leaps and bounds; the overall quality of their educational opportunities continues to be substandard; they do not have highly qualified teachers in all of their classrooms; uniform curriculum content is not tweaking their interest, developing their intellect, or enticing them to remain in school; the curriculum scope is narrowing; and the underresourced schools they attend are further compromised because they are sanctioned and penalized by losing funds for not reaching the levels of yearly average progress mandated by NCLB and state regulations (Darling-Hammond, 2007; Meier & Wood, 2004; Montaña & Metcalfe, 2003; Reyhner, 2006; Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006). The National Indian Education Association (NIEA) (2005) conducted a study on the effects of NCLB on Native American, Alaskan Native, and Native Hawaiian students. It applauded the policy for promoting equity and making schools accountable to indigenous students, but concluded that any success accomplished has been at the expense of

Native languages and cultures, and the exclusion of Native voices in decision making. Skerrett and Hargreaves (2008) found the same results in a comparative study of 4 decades of secondary school reform in the United States and Canada. They concluded that “standardization has become the enemy of diversity” (p. 913), because the “increasing trend toward curriculum standardization and high-stakes testing has significantly reduced teachers’ flexibility in incorporating more culturally responsive practices into their classrooms” (p. 916).

Despite the pressures of standards and increasing standardization in assessing student achievement, the best pedagogical response for ethnically diverse students is not to concede to them. There is no *one right* curriculum design, teaching style, and assessment procedure for all students. A better strategy is to understand how the encroachment of standardization confounds, erodes, and configures diversity in learning conditions and contexts, and develop culturally responsive instructional strategies in the midst of, and as alternatives to, it (Skerrett & Hargreaves, 2008). Rather than looking for silver bullets and magical answers, classroom teachers and school leaders should realize that achieving equity of educational opportunities, and higher levels of academic achievement for ethnically diverse students, resides in using a variety of curriculum content and designs, instructional materials and resources, teaching techniques, and assessment procedures that are responsive to their cultural heritages and personal experiences.

### ETHNIC DIVERSITY IN LITERARY AND TRADE BOOKS

The inclusion of information about ethnic and cultural diversity in supplementary instructional materials, such as children’s picture books, biographies and autobiographies, short stories, novels, and song lyrics, written by ethnic authors about ethnic groups, is both encouraging and discouraging. Six studies are presented here to explain why. They deal with portrayals of African Americans, Asian Americans, Native Americans, Mexican Americans, and multiethnic groups in child and adolescent literature.

The importance of including ethnic literature as curriculum content has been recognized by E. Kim (1976). She says fiction can provide valuable and otherwise unavailable insights into the social consciousness, cultural identity, and historical experiences of ethnic groups. Ramírez and Dowd (1997) add that high-quality authentic multicultural literature can help children “make connections to their personal experiences, provide role models, and expand their horizons” (p. 20). It also is a powerful way

to expose students to ethnic groups, cultures, and experiences different from their own to which they may not have access in their daily lives. Multicultural literature can help students cross cultural borders and improve understanding of insider and outsider perspectives on cultural, ethnic, and racial diversity. It can "speak" thoughts, feelings, and beliefs about a wide variety of multicultural issues that people are unable or are not yet ready to do for themselves. Literature also is a "window of opportunity" for authors, teachers, and students to contemplate what is and what can be regarding racially and culturally diverse attitudes and actions (Cai, 2002).

Thus, multicultural literature and trade books are valuable content resources for culturally responsive teaching even if they are not always bias-free and culturally affirming for different ethnic groups. Teachers need to know how to assess the cultural accuracy and authenticity of these books, essays, poems, and short stories; correct their fallacies; and build upon their strengths in teaching. Some useful assistance in developing these skills is available from prior research studies and text analyses such as those summarized by Mendoza and Reese (2001) and the ones described below. For example, many techniques and criteria for evaluating child, adolescent, and young adult literature are easily accessible. One set that is easy to understand and use is provided by M. Perkins (2009) in the form of critical questions to ask about the realism of the characters; how race and ethnicity are addressed; congruity between narrative text and illustrations; who are the agents of change; and how beauty and aestheticism are portrayed.

### Biases Persist in Child and Adolescent Literature

A study conducted by Deane (1989) of approximately 300 popular children's fiction books poses some serious questions about progress in including ethnically diverse content and characters. He concentrated on how African American characters are depicted in series written by European Americans that have dominated the fiction market for young readers from Grades 2 through 6 for generations. These are books "which involve the same major characters . . . in a successive series of actions, scenes, and situations" (p. 153), such as the Nancy Drew, Hardy Boys, Bobbsey Twins, Woodland Gang, and Sweet Valley Twins series. Deane concluded that most of the blatantly derogatory depictions of African Americans have vanished from these books, but so have many African American characters. Closer scrutiny of this "progress" revealed that extreme stereotypical images have been eliminated and more realistic portrayals of African American characters are presented. There also has been a tendency to overcorrect for stereotypes by not assigning any differentiating character-

istics to the speech and actions of the African American characters (and other individuals of color in the storylines), or to eliminate them from the storyline entirely or make characters of color superhumanly good and supremely capable, while European Americans become the new-bred "bad guys" (Cai, 2002; Mendoza & Reese, 2001; M. Perkins, 2009).

J. Garcia, Hadaway, and Beal (1988) examined 33 trade books (16 fiction and 17 nonfiction) to determine whether the ethnic topics, themes, and personalities treated were "typical" or "new." "Typical" referred to topics, issues, and individuals that gained prominence in the civil rights movement and cultural/ethnic revolutions of the 1960s. "New" trade books were those that emphasized issues, themes, topics, and ideas that were identifiable in multicultural literature in the 1970s and early 1980s (such as cultural affirmation, unique ethnic identities, and political activism) but not necessarily included in works designed for children. The books were competitors for the 1986 Carter G. Woodson Award, sponsored by the National Council for the Social Studies. Since 1973 this award has been given to outstanding nonfiction trade books for their sensitive and accurate treatment of a topic related to ethnic minorities and race relations. J. Garcia and associates (1988) concluded:

While stereotypic portrayals of ethnic and minority groups in children's trade-books are no longer prevalent, contemporary writers continue to treat over-used themes, topics, and personalities that, while providing some perspectives on ethnic and minority life, do little to expand into areas that would provide young learners with more creative interpretations of America's cultural diversity. (p. 71)

In a relatively rare research occurrence, Harada (1994) analyzed adolescent fiction books about Asian Americans and found characteristics that paralleled those identified by Garcia and associates. Twenty-four books published between 1988 and 1993, and targeted for 11- to 17-year-olds, were examined to determine how Asian characters from 11 countries of origin were treated. The countries were China, Japan, Taiwan, Korea, Laos, Cambodia, Burma, India, Thailand, Vietnam, and the Philippines. The books were analyzed for character portrayals, story development, language usage, historical authenticity, and cultural accuracy. Only 6 of the 11 Asian American groups were represented in the books. The largest numbers were Chinese Americans (32%), followed sequentially by Japanese Americans (20%), Korean and Vietnamese Americans (16% each), and Cambodian and Taiwanese Americans (8% each).

Biases and stereotypes were found in each of the five categories of analyses for 23 of the 24 books. Samples of these included presenting

Asian Americans as being mysterious, inscrutable foreigners; all Asian ethnic groups as having the same physical traits; and both males and females as being exotic, alluring sex objects. In addition, Asians were presented as desiring and striving to be like European Americans, as model minorities, and as dependent on Whites for the resolution of conflicts. Speech behavior was parodied; token or superficial historical references that had little to do with the development of character or plot were included; and there was inaccurate or restricted mention of cultural details. These results caused Harada (1994) to suggest that the potential of fiction as a "powerful and natural vehicle for providing a thoughtful reflection of the values and beliefs of a culture" (p. 55) is not being realized in adolescent literature about Asian Americans. If this is to happen, authors must stop "recycling the super achiever and China doll images" (p. 55) and become much more responsible about "weaving authentic details and accurate cultural information into quality works for all young readers" (p. 56). Harada's admonishments and advice can be easily extended to all types of instructional materials and curriculum designs about all ethnic groups and for all levels of learners.

How Mexican American girls and women are portrayed in realistic fiction books for K-3 students was the focus of analysis in studies conducted by Rocha and Dowd (1993) and Ramírez and Dowd (1997). In the first study, two sets of realistic fiction books featuring female characters were examined. Nine of these were published between 1950 and 1969, and 20 between 1970 and 1990. Those in the Ramírez and Dowd study (a total of 21) were published between 1990 and 1997. Seven criteria were used to analyze the content of these books: characterization, plot, theme, point of view, setting, style of writing, and special features.

The findings of both studies are similar to those of research on the portrayal of other ethnic groups. Improvements have occurred across time in how Mexican American females are portrayed in books for young children. There are fewer stereotypes; a greater variety of roles, settings, and activities; and more modernity in profiling Mexican American people and culture. Yet the major story themes of the 1990-1997 books are similar to those of the 1970-1990 period, with heavy emphasis on acculturation, satisfaction with self, Mexican heritage, privacy, goals and dreams, and the resolution of dilemmas. The recent books include more generic themes, such as relationships, individualism, and family. Ramírez and Dowd (1997) consider this an asset because universal experiences can make these books more readily understood by readers from other ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Increasingly, recent publications also are including special features that indicate the authors' cultural knowledge, Spanish language skills, and affiliation with Mexican American culture.

Despite these improvements, realistic fiction books about Mexican American females for young children are not as good as they need to be. The authors of both studies found that some significant stereotyping and traditional ethnic "typecasting" remain. Mexican American females too frequently are depicted in traditional hairstyles and clothing, and engaged in music, dancing, fiestas, and other celebrations. The characters are rarely shown participating in school activities or employment outside of the home. The story settings are more rural than urban (a reversal from books published in the 1970-1990 period); located away from permanent residences, such as at vacation sites; depict old-fashioned dwellings more than modern, contemporary ones; and never use an upper class milieu (Ramírez & Dowd, 1997; Rocha & Dowd, 1993).

What accounts for these seemingly mixed results in how ethnic groups are portrayed in literary sources and textbooks? Ramírez and Dowd (1997) think they are a normal result of the developmental process of creating a rich body of multiethnic literature. They contend that

With a proliferation of books comes more diversity in the literature as a whole. No one book has to present all of a culture—nor should it. For example, when so many books about Mexican Americans present facets of religion and religious practice, a book that seems to focus on what many see as superstition does not carry the negative weight it would if it were one of only two or three. In fact, its existence may very well enrich our understanding of diverse religious practices when read alongside other books. (p. 54)

Implicit in this explanation is some important advice for teachers. It is quite unlikely that any one author, book, or other reference is ever capable of providing a complete profile of ethnic groups and their cultures, contributions, and experiences. Therefore, teachers routinely should use a combination of resources and genres of various types to teach ethnic and cultural diversity.

### Some Improvements Are Evident

Other authors also have found positive results in how literary resources written for school-aged students portray cultural diversity. Two of these are Heller (1997) and Hafen (1997). Heller reviewed more than 50 children's picture books to determine how African American fathers were portrayed. Several themes emerged that conveyed positive characterizations. These include the role of the father in nurturing and child rearing; recreational activities with children; discipline; household maintenance and management; occupational and economic activities; and visits with

children after absences caused by some crisis. Males in the extended family and community also were depicted in positive fathering roles and relationships. These findings are particularly noteworthy because of popular conceptions about the absence of fathers from African American families and the potential negative effects this can have on children's identity, self-concept, and various aspects of school achievement. Resources like the books on Heller's list can be used in classroom instruction to dispel myths and compensate for voids in Black father-child relationships.

The books cited in a study conducted by Hafen (1997) on popular images of Native Americans in contemporary literature were published between 1985 and 1996. The authors were successful in combining traditional tribal heritages with mainstream and contemporary cultures. They demonstrate how Native Americans are engaged in the reinterpretation and self-creation of a contemporary identity without forsaking traditional cultural values. These books also show how ethnic minority literature can be simultaneously particular and universal. Their positive portrayals are a welcome relief to the way Native Americans too often are presented in textbooks—as one-dimensional, exotic figures frozen in historical times, invisible in contemporary society, or restricted to statistical listings in the demographics of social problems such as crime, poverty, and unemployment. Resources such as these and the information they present are invaluable to culturally responsive teaching. They should be particularly comforting and helpful to teachers who are concerned about whether teaching multicultural education will create irresolvable tensions between unity and diversity, similarities and differences among the people of the United States.

However, Mihesuah (1996) warns against being overly optimistic about how Native Americans are portrayed in media readily accessible to children and youth, especially those produced from outside the ethnic communities. She suggests that distortions of Native Americans and their cultural identities can still be found "in every possible medium—from scholarly publications and textbooks, movies, TV shows, literature, cartoons, commercials, comic books, and fanciful paintings, to the gamut of commercial logos, insignia and imagery that pervade tourist locales throughout the Southwest and elsewhere" (p. 9). High school and college mascots can be added to this list of media that perpetuate stereotypes of Native Americans (Pewewardy, 1991, 1998). The stereotypes transmitted vary in range and intensity "from the extremely pejorative to the artificially idealistic, from historic depictions of Indians as uncivilized primal men and winsome women belonging to a savage culture, to present day . . . mystical environmentalists, or uneducated, alcoholic bingo-players confined to reservations" (Mihesuah, 1996, p. 9).

The quantity and variety of culturally validating books, written in authentic cultural voices and providing insider perspectives, are numerous for African, Asian, Native, and Latino Americans, as well as European Americans. But they are not of equal quality across all specific ethnic groups within these general categories. The *Multicultural Review* is a useful resource for some of these. It regularly publishes lists of recommended books, films, videotapes, and microfilm collections on a wide variety of ethnic groups, such as Southeast Asian Americans, Filipino Americans, Native Americans, Puerto Ricans, African Americans, Mexican Americans, Chinese Americans, Japanese Americans, Jewish Americans, Caribbean Americans, Arab Americans, biracial Americans, and immigrants from different countries. The topics examined vary widely, too. Among them are male and female characters and concerns; historical and contemporary issues, events, and perspectives; biographies, autobiographies, and picture books; short stories; fiction and nonfiction; myths and folklore; rhymes and poetry; literary critiques and scholarly treatises. These resources are valuable complements to textbooks, and have the potential to profoundly enrich learning experiences about the cultures, histories, heritages, and life experiences of ethnically diverse groups. But multicultural literature must be taught thoughtfully and critically, not merely as a form of cultural tourism in which it is showcased to students without any interpretative and reflective engagement. As M. Perkins (2009) explains:

Our calling as educators and authors is to pay attention, both to the young people we serve, and to the books they're reading, and ask questions with them. Great stories, like their human counterparts, are beautiful, yet flawed, and discussing them in community can strengthen their power to enlighten, inspire, and let justice roll down.

### MASS MEDIA AS CULTURAL CURRICULUM CONTENT

Mass media are powerful sources of curriculum content about ethnic and cultural diversity. Frequently the images and information they convey are contradictory to what is desirable and need to be corrected or countered by classroom instruction. Occasionally the reverse is true; some media presentations of ethnic peoples and experiences are positive and even complementary to school instruction. Either way, the images are too easily accessible and their influence too powerful for teachers to ignore how ethnic groups and issues are presented in television programming, films, newspapers, magazines, and music videos. Students bring this informa-

tion and its effects to the classroom with them. Therefore, ethnic diversity in mass media should be part of the curriculum content of culturally responsive teaching.

The role that television alone plays is very extensive, with millions of viewers tuning in several hours each day. Because of its pervasiveness, K. Perkins (1996) calls television "omnipresent." This omnipresence is both quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative impact is indicated by the sheer number of hours children spend watching television daily. Common estimates are that they spend an average of 20–25 hours per week watching television. The programs they view include a wide range of cartoons, movies, music videos, news reports, documentaries, prime-time series, syndicated "family classics," and an avalanche of advertisements. At this rate, by the time students graduate from high school they will have spent more time viewing television than in formal classrooms (K. Perkins, 1996). Qualitatively, television programming is always involved in constructing knowledge, creating images, cultivating consumer markets, shaping opinions, and manipulating values and ideas about ethnic and cultural diversity. Nadel (2005) notes that "television has contributed profoundly to solidifying what we could call a 'national imagining'" (p. 6). This is a set of common images that people share when they think of the United States as a nation, and themselves as its citizens. The imaginary America constructed by television (and other forms of mass media) is very distrustful of ethnic, linguistic, racial, and cultural plurality. It is a place where diverse individuals and groups exchange (voluntarily or through coercion) their heterogeneity for the opportunity to be part of an idealized homogeneous nation.

Although individual exceptions exist, as collectives ethnic American and immigrant groups of color are still stereotyped, exoticized, marginalized, homogenized, and made invisible in mass media. For example, too few distinctions are made among various social, cultural, linguistic, gender, and achievement variations within ethnic clusters. Latino and Asian Americans often are treated as "perpetual foreigners, or outsiders" regardless of how long they have lived in the United States, or the fact that many are indigenous citizens (Montaño & Metcalfe, 2003; Pang, Kiang, & Pak, 2004; Tuan, 1998). African American males are perceived as violent and economically and socially irresponsible, while females are considered to "always have attitude"—that is, being angry, mean, domineering, hostile, demanding, volatile, and unattractive. Native Americans are the most often "forgotten minority" in conversations about contemporary issues. What little consideration they receive frequently freezes them in historical time warps, dwells on the social problems they encounter, or treats them as "symbolized conquest" (defeated warriors, vanishing people, spiritual

pacifists) (Harvey, 1994; Pewewardy, 1998). Individuals of Asian ancestry are thought to be "the model minority" who accomplish exemplary educational, professional, and economic success, without enough attention given to the wide diversity of cultures, ethnicities, social classes, and achievement levels that exist among and within the groups that constitute this ethnic category (S. Lee, 1996; Pang & Cheng, 1998; Pang et al., 2004; Park, Goodwin, & Lee, 2003). European Americans are presented as being responsible, dependable, and ingenious, and as succeeding in school and life because of their individual efforts and merits.

C. Jones and Shorter-Gooden (2003) point out some of the effects that coping with these "image myths" has on groups targeted by them. Even though their conclusions derive from a study of the effects of racism and sexism on African American women, they are applicable to other ethnic groups and men as well. The participants in their study were 333 women, ages 18–88, in 24 states and Washington, DC, and from a variety of educational, social class, and marital status backgrounds. Ninety percent of the women surveyed said they had been victimized personally by racism and sexism. They have to spend inordinate amounts of time, thought, and emotional and intellectual energy monitoring themselves, managing an array of feelings, and altering their behavior. The consequences of this vigilant self-editing were often ethnic shame, feelings of low self-esteem, lack of confidence and efficacy for success, and doubts, fears, and anxieties about whether they would ever be accepted unconditionally by their middle-class European American peers. They developed a coping strategy Jones and Shorter-Gooden called "shifting"—that is, altering expectations, ways of thinking, outward appearances, speech, and behaviors to accommodate situations and audiences dominated by privileged European Americans.

There is nothing inherently wrong with style-shifting as a strategy for facilitating qualitative human interactions. The problem occurs when the demands for and choices of style are always imposed by someone other than self. The other message of this mandate is the negative effects it has on the "shifting" individuals, and their implications for teaching and learning. Some of these are symbolized by the women in Jones and Shorter-Gooden's (2003) study. They felt

pressured to present a face to the world that is acceptable to others even though it may be completely at odds with their true selves. . . . They try to cover up their intelligence with one group of friends and do everything possible to prove it with another. . . . They shift inward, internalizing the searing pain of going out into the world day after day and hitting one wall after the next solely because they are Black and female. . . . They become hyperalert, endlessly on patrol, scanning the environment for danger and ever prepared to respond. (pp. 61–63)

These reactions bring to mind, on a less graphic but nonetheless significant level, two other examples of the negative effects shifting has on ethnically diverse students. One is the strong resistance of some Asian-ancestry female students to being stereotyped as passive, quiet, cute, and accommodating—that is, the “China and Japanese doll” image. The other is Steele’s (1997; Steele & Aronson, 1995) and Aronson’s (2004) analyses of how prejudices and stereotypes attributed to an ethnic group can derail the academic performance of individuals within the group, even though they do not believe the perceptions apply to them personally. Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, and Doucet (2004) highlight the psychological effects of what they call “social mirroring” (p. 428) on immigrant Latino students, and Nieto (2004) presents similar analyses for Puerto Ricans. People’s sense of self is affected profoundly by significant others in their lives, including caretakers, teachers, peers, and media portrayals. Reflected images that are positive generate feelings of worth, dignity, competence, and confidence that can facilitate academic, personal, social, and professional achievement. Negative ones lead to self-denigration, doubt, uncertainty, and feelings of unworthiness that can be impenetrable barriers to school success. These are powerful challenges and invitations for culturally responsive curricula and instruction. Pewewardy (1998) makes a poignant statement in support of cultural respect and responsiveness in educating Native Americans that puts these needs in graphic perspective. He associates disrespect for the cultures, heritages, and experiences of indigenous peoples in mainstream U.S. society and schools with genocide, and warns that this “may prove to be one of the most destructive forces of oppression yet, as American racism steals precious mental and physical treasures of the soul. . . . Unless interrupted by healing grace, the atrocities of the past become ghosts within the cultural memory of . . . people crying out for justice” (p. 73). There is no doubt that negative images of ethnic groups in society and schools interfere with students’ abilities to focus on academic tasks and cultural understanding as constructively as they should, and their achievement in both areas is negatively affected.

### **Creating Images and Constructing Knowledge About Ethnic Diversity**

The images entertainment and news mass media convey about ethnic groups and issues are not always accurate, complimentary, malicious, or overt, but they are always powerful and have a strong influence on students’ perceptions of different ethnic groups. A compelling example of these effects are the results of a study entitled “A Different World: Children’s Perceptions of Race and Class in the Media.” This survey was

conducted by Lake Sosin Snell Perry and Associates, and involved 1,200 children between 10 and 17 years old, with equal representation of European, Asian, Latino, and African Americans. The important general findings indicated that children in all four ethnic groups (1) are not always encouraged by the ethnic images they see on television; (2) perceive that Latinos and African Americans are depicted more negatively than European and Asian Americans; (3) are aware of media stereotypes at an early age; and (4) understand the power of television to shape opinions. As one African American child stated, “People are inspired by what they see on television. If they do not see themselves on TV, they want to be someone else” (J. Allen, 1998, p. A8).

The Roper Organization (1993) found that most people in the United States depend on television for their news and consider it more credible than newspapers reporting. The portrayals TV presents about individuals easily become *uncontested* truth that is generalized to entire groups. But much of the information and many of the images about individuals and groups of color presented in news reporting are distorted, negative, and stereotypical. Research conducted by C. Campbell (1995) provides specific illustrations of these general tendencies. He did textual analyses of 39 hours of local newscasts from 29 cities to determine the symbolic and connotative cultural meanings they transmitted about racially and ethnically related issues. Campbell concluded that television journalism perpetuates invisibility, marginality, and erroneous conceptions, as well as a “myth of assimilation” about people of color. This is done by overemphasizing the success of a few prominent ethnic individuals to show that racial inequalities, social injustices, and power differentials no longer exist, or are exceptions to the norm, or can be easily overcome by personal initiative. This kind of “ethnic type-casting” in mass media is reminiscent of the tendencies of textbooks to inflate the level of racial harmony, downplay conflicts between minority groups and mainstream society, and offer one-dimensional explanations of ethnic individuals, events, and experiences. They constitute a major challenge for culturally responsive teaching. While classroom teachers may not be in a position to transform mass media, they can teach students how to analyze them for racial and cultural stereotyping, as knowledge constructors and image-makers, and to be critical consumers of what they see, hear, and read. According to Cortés (1995):

The issue of media as multicultural information source goes well beyond the question of accuracy. In news, the constant reiteration of certain themes, even when each story is accurate in and of itself, may unjustifiably emphasize limited information about an ethnic group. . . . Similarly, the repetition of ethnic

images by the entertainment media add to viewer's pools of "knowledge," particularly if news and entertainment coincide and mutually reinforce each other in theme, approach, content, perspective, and frequency. (p. 172)

These actions of entertainment and news mass media constitute a kind of *ideological management* (Spring, 1992). This is the deliberate exclusion or addition of information to create certain images, to shield consumers from particular ideas and information, and to teach specific moral, political, and social values. Two examples demonstrate the workings of ideological management in media. The first is the Public Broadcasting Station (PBS) production of *Ethnic Notions* (Biggs, 1987). It presents a poignant historical analysis of how stereotypical characterizations of African Americans were created and institutionalized by television and movies. The second example is *Killing Us Softly* (Lazarus, 1979) and its sequels, *Still Killing Us Softly* (Lazarus, 1987) and *Beyond Killing Us Softly* (Lazarus & Wunderlich, 2000), produced by Cambridge Documentary Films. They demonstrate how sexist, exploitative, and degrading images, as well as suggested violence against women, are portrayed, cultivated, and disseminated through televised and print advertising. The first two films focus almost exclusively on European American women and girls, but the third one includes a broader and more balanced representation of ethnic diversity. It also presents on-camera analyses, commentaries, and recommendations of several gender-equity scholars and activists about the negative effects of media portrayals of women and how to resist them. It is a good instructional tool for teaching students critical consciousness and selective consumption of media materials and messages about ethnic, cultural, social, and gender diversity in advertising as well as prime-time programming, music videos, and the fashion industry.

K. Perkins (1996) provides another illustration of how television constructs knowledge that is important to culturally responsive teaching. She reviewed research on the influence of television on African American females' perceptions of their physical attractiveness. The conception of beauty presented in the mass media is based on Eurocentric standards—albeit idealized, sexist, and unrealistic ones. The ideal beauty is a tall, slim, lithe, debonair blue-eyed blonde with flawless hair, teeth, and skin, who radiates confidence, sexuality, and desirability on all fronts—intimately, socially, economically. The immutable racial characteristics (e.g., skin color, hair texture, bone structure, body type) of African American females make it impossible for them ever to achieve these ideals. Too frequently they are presented as large, nonsexual, overbearing, assertive, bold, and argumentative. These portrayals help to shape public opinion about what constitutes beauty and can negatively affect the social self-esteem of those deemed unattractive (Dates & Barlow, 1990).

Ideological management is not restricted to the mass media and popular culture. Educational media, including textbooks, films, and videos, do this, too. Their tone, topic, text, setting, format, and character development create a "viewing experience" that invites audiences to engage in particular kinds of social, political, and ideological involvements as the story, action, and discourse unfold (Ellsworth, 1990). Research in media studies over the past 35 years or so presents compelling evidence that educational film, video, and photographic representations are not neutral carriers of content. Instead, content reflects particular cultural, social, and political meanings (Ellsworth & Whatley, 1990).

Some media programs are genuine advancements in making society more ethnically inclusive and egalitarian, as is evident in the increasing numbers of men and women from different ethnic groups involved in more aspects of media programming—writing, producing, directing, and performing. Other programs are ambiguous and convey conflicting information about ethnic diversity. For example, why can Japanese, Chinese, and Filipino Americans participate in local and national news broadcasting but be virtually invisible in prime-time entertainment programs? Why can Native Americans be present in documentaries dealing with conflicts among ecology, traditional ethnic economies (such as fishing rights), and industrial development but otherwise be excluded from mainstream news and entertainment programs?

Subtle racial stereotypes transmitted through films, television, videotapes, and other popular media can leave deep emotional and psychological scars on children of the targeted ethnic groups, and on others as well (Pewewardy, 1996/1997). Mihesuah (1996) offers some alternative explanations and helpful advice for counterbalancing 24 commonly held stereotypes about Native Americans that are transmitted through mass media. Among them are that all Native Americans are alike; they were conquered because they were inferior; they were warlike and treacherous; they get a free ride from the government; they are stoic and have no sense of humor; and they contribute nothing of worth to U.S. society and culture.

Debunking these kinds of myths and other ethnic biases in mass media should be a central feature of culturally responsive teaching. It is also important for students and teachers to understand that curriculum content is not just the information taught in schools. The experiences students have outside of school, such as those provided by all forms of mass media, are also powerful influences on learning. These often are overlooked in schools because they do not have the official designation of "curriculum." Yet the only contact many students have with ethnically diverse people is through mass media. For others, media images are important gauges for how society views and values their ethnic groups. Either way, the

"societal curriculum" (Cortés, 1991) comes to school with students, and teachers must contend with it as they struggle to make education more culturally responsive for diverse ethnic groups.

### Uneven Progress in Treatment of Ethnic Diversity

For the most part, the numerical and qualitative presentation of groups of color in mass media follows trends in textbooks and literary materials. Portrayals of ethnic and cultural diversity are more numerous, positive, and varied now than in the past, but not without some remaining problems. Disparities exist among ethnic groups in favor of African Americans, and groups of color appear most frequently in programs with specific ethnic themes. Surfing national network, local, and syndicated television channels at any time of any day of the week produces many African Americans. In some cases, the entire cast and the setting of the programs are Black; in others, Blacks have recurrent supporting roles. African Americans also are highly visible in news programs—as reporters and subjects—on national networks and local affiliates. There is a growing presence of African Americans in the movie industry, both in front of and behind the cameras—as stars and in supporting roles; as writers, producers, directors, and technicians; in both all-Black and predominantly White productions.

The kind of treatment that African Americans are receiving in mass media does not exist to the same extent for Latinos, Native Americans, and Asian Americans. Individuals from these ethnic groups appear only occasionally as guest performers in entertainment television programs and movies dealing with specific ethnic-related topics. Asian American and Latino newscasters are more commonly found on local rather than national newscasts. Thus, Mexican Americans are familiar faces on local news programs in the southwest, and Japanese and Chinese Americans (especially females) are visible in such states as California, Hawaii, and Washington. Puerto Ricans may be on the air frequently in New York, but not elsewhere. In comparison to African Americans, the numerical representation of these ethnic groups is minuscule. Except for the exceptional individual actor here and there, selective historical documentaries, and special events, Native Americans are virtually invisible in these media.

### Changes Are Not Always Improvements

Numerical ethnic representations in media do not ensure content quality. Ethnic groups may appear to be validated while simultaneously

being subtly stereotyped. This can be done in many ways, including topic, focus, dialogue, personal image, and characterization. The recurrent plot of situation comedies in which the female character inevitably is the voice of resolution in family conflicts perpetuates traditional views of women as emotional anchors, peacekeepers, nurturers, and moral monitors in families. Slapstick comedy, gangs, crime fighting, and in-vogue urban young adult and teen life are the themes of most television programs and movies in which African Americans are prominent. Violent crimes, more than any other single category, is what makes African Americans and Latinos subjects of the news. Some daytime talk shows are notorious for enticing African American, Latino, and European American teens and young adults to be guests on programs dealing with gangs, violence, and emotionally abusive, unstable male-female intimate relationships. Reality shows equate rudeness, insult, and crudeness with entertainment, and these depictions are not restricted to any one ethnic or racial group.

Even when mass media are used to offset negative stereotypes of ethnic groups, the results can be counterproductive, perpetuating that which they claim to dispel. A case in point is the 1995 Disney animated production of *Pocahontas*. In an instructive critique, Pewewardy (1996/1997) explains how this movie perpetuates some longstanding stereotypes about Native Americans. Pocahontas is portrayed as maidenly, demure, and so deeply committed to a White man that she violates the cultural rules of her own ethnic community. According to Pewewardy, this image of a young Native American woman was created to serve the purposes of European American mythology. For example, he suggests that the concept of "celestial princess" was probably an English, not a Native American, creation. Other stereotypes and racism in *Pocahontas* are transmitted through the language used to refer to Native peoples (e.g., "savages," "heathens," "devils," "pagans," "primitive") and the lyrics of the movie's song "Savages, Savages." Pewewardy (1996/1997) proposes that instead of countering a stereotype, Disney created "a marketable 'New Age' Pocahontas to embody our millennial dreams for wholeness and harmony, while banishing our nightmares of savagery and emptiness" (p. 22). Like textbooks, this movie avoids dealing with the uglier side of the English encounter with the indigenous peoples, such as their greed, dishonesty, and hegemony. The stereotypes embedded in *Pocahontas* are not overt or blatant. They can be undetected by people who do not thoroughly understand Native American cultures or their historical experiences with mainstream European American society.

Another example of attempts to compensate for damages inflicted by stereotyping Native Americans was the decision to place Sacagawea on

a new \$1 coin minted in 2000. U.S. Mint Director Philip Diehl saw this selection as bestowing honor specifically on Sacagawea, a Shoshone teenager, for her physical courage, generosity, hospitality, and interpreter skills in assisting Lewis and Clark in 1804 on their explorations of the western frontier, and more generally on Native Americans. The Assistant Director of the Bureau of Indian Affairs thought the coin would shape how future generations of young people viewed Native Americans. Some Native Americans agreed with these assessments, and were pleased with the choice, while others probably considered it an act of tokenism and misplaced significance. Negative sentiments might have been prompted by questions about the merits of giving this "distinction" to a teenager (Sacagawea was thought to be 16 years old at the time she traveled with Lewis and Clark), and someone whose claim to fame was based on her service to European Americans, not contributions to her own ethnic community. Even her physical characteristics were unknown and could not be described with certainty, thereby making her visibility "opaque." Diehl initially thought this uncertainty could be countered by having the coin carry a design of "Liberty" as a Native American woman to represent Sacagawea (Figlar, 1998). The final image was selected from designs created by New Mexico sculptor Glenna Goodacre, who used a college student of Shoshone-Bannock heritage as a model (Axtman, 1999; Sonneborn, 2000). The production of the Sacagawea dollar for general circulation stopped in 2002 due to low demand. However, it is still minted for special purposes, and its reverse side is being redesigned for the Native American Dollar Series that will be produced between 2009 and 2012. The design for each year will commemorate a different contribution of Native Americans to the development of U.S. society and history. The first, in 2009, symbolizes agriculture ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sacagawea\\_dollar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sacagawea_dollar)).

Undoubtedly, people questioned the reality of Sacagawea's significance (and by whose standards) and wondered whether the only way Native Americans can gain recognition is by *serving* mainstream European American individuals, culture, society, and ideology. What progress toward accomplishing cultural equity is there in honoring the contributions of individuals with ambiguous identity and limiting significance to servitude? This scenario and the questions it brings to mind about "dubious distinctions" also apply to other groups of color. One example is the ironic and conflicting messages conveyed by the 1990 Academy Award nomination of Morgan Freeman (an African American male) as best supporting actor for his performance in *Driving Miss Daisy*, in which he played the chauffeur for a European American matriarch.

### CULTURALLY DIVERSE CURRICULUM CONTENT EFFECTS

Discussion of the effects of culturally diverse or multicultural curriculum content on the performance of underachieving students of color is limited here to reading, writing, math, and science. These subjects and skills are selected for emphasis for five reasons. First, it is both politically expedient and pedagogically valid for the implementation and effects of culturally responsive teaching to be located in areas of school curricula generally considered most significant. Second, math, science, reading, and writing constitute the academic core in most educational settings and usually are used to assess student achievement. Third, reading abilities strongly influence performance in other academic tasks and subjects. Fourth, math and science (especially advanced-level courses) have high stakes and high status attached to them. They are considered the "gateways" to academic development and career opportunities beyond K-12 schooling for those students who have access to and high levels of performance in them. Fifth, more research and practice guidelines are available on multicultural curriculum content for reading and writing than for other school subjects, and more curriculum reforms have been undertaken to increase the participation of students of color (particularly Latinos and African Americans) and females in math and science than in other school subjects. As explained in Chapter 1, achievement is conceived broadly to include academics, standardized test scores, course grades, and other performance indicators and measures. Among these are increased enrollment in advanced-level, high-status courses; the quantity and quality of participation in instructional discourse; improved interest in and motivation for learning; feelings of efficacy among students; and meeting the criteria and expectations of specific programs of study.

Most information about culturally diverse curriculum and its effects on student achievement published in books and articles derives from "experimental" and "special" projects instead of regularly taught content, topics, skills, and courses. Although the number of programs on which research information is available is rather small, their results are consistently supportive of the theoretical claims about the pedagogical potential of culturally responsive teaching. A few of these are discussed here to demonstrate how they translate culturally responsive teaching principles into practice, and to illustrate their effects on student achievement. Unfortunately, many of these projects are no longer functioning, having closed down after funding ended. The current climate of standardization is not very amenable to extensive culturally diverse curricular and instructional programs, despite the fact that there appears to be increasing recognition

(at least ideologically) of the expanding presence of ethnic, racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity in U.S. society, and the need for its inclusion in educational practice. It is still important for teachers to be familiar with culturally specific curricular projects and programs even if they no longer exist, because they provide insights that can be used to develop current and future culturally responsive curriculum and instruction. Hopefully, some of the principles and strategies of the special projects have been incorporated into regular classroom procedures, but it is difficult to determine with certainty. If they have not, this lack of normalization is a major problem in sustaining and extending efforts to provide culturally responsive education for ethnically diverse students.

### Reading and Writing Achievement

One of the "special projects" that used culturally pluralistic content to teach reading and writing is the Multicultural Literacy Program (MLP) (Diamond & Moore, 1995). It was implemented in the Ann Arbor, Inkster, and Ypsilanti, Michigan, school districts over a 4-year period, with a multiethnic student population in Grades K-8. The program included multiethnic literature, with whole-language approaches, and a socioculturally sensitive learning environment. The literature highlighted contributions of Asian Americans, Latino Americans, Native Americans, African Americans, and Native Hawaiians in a variety of traditional folktales, song lyrics, poems, fiction, essays, biographies, and autobiographies.

The program designers decided to use multicultural literature to teach reading and writing because it resonates with students' creative ways of thinking and illuminates common human connections among ethnically different people. Literature also is a powerful medium through which students can confront social injustices, visualize racial inequities, find solutions to personal and political problems, and vicariously experience the issues, emotions, thoughts, and lives of people otherwise inaccessible to them. These literary encounters help students "become critical readers, who learn to view the world from multiple perspectives as they construct their versions of the truth, . . . [and] make informed and rational decisions about the most effective ways to correct injustices in their community" (Diamond & Moore, 1995, p. 14).

The MLP provided a variety of group arrangements and social settings for learning. Among them were learning centers, peer interactions, multiple reality-based reading opportunities, different types of cooperative learning groups, and emotionally and academically supportive communities of learners. More specific teaching strategies included incorporating multicultural story features into read- and think-alouds, sustained silent

reading (SSR), directed reading-listening-thinking activity (DRLTA), readers' theater, choral reading, personal response to literature, and dramatic interpretation (Diamond & Moore, 1995). Teachers in the Multicultural Literacy Program acted as:

- (1) cultural organizers who facilitate strategic ways of accomplishing tasks so that the learning process involves varied ways of knowing, experiencing, thinking, and behaving;
- (2) cultural mediators who create opportunities for critical dialogue and expression among all students as they pursue knowledge and understanding; and
- (3) orchestrators of social contexts who provide several learning configurations that include interpersonal *and* intrapersonal opportunities for seeking, accessing, and evaluating knowledge. (Diamond & Moore, 1995, p. 35, emphasis in original)

No quantifiable data (such as increased standardized test scores and grade point averages) are available on how the MLP affected student achievement, but other powerful indicators of its success do exist. Its creators and facilitators cited classroom observations and analysis of samples of student work to indicate that the program had positive effects. On these measures of achievement students exhibited:

- More interest and enjoyment in reading multicultural books
- More positive attitudes toward reading and writing in general
- Increased knowledge about various forms, structures, functions, and uses of written language
- Expanded vocabularies, sentence patterns, and decoding abilities
- Better reading comprehension and writing performance
- Longer written stories that reflect more clarity and cohesiveness
- Enhanced reading rate and fluency
- Improved self-confidence and self-esteem
- Greater appreciation of their own and others' cultures (Diamond & Moore, 1995)

These achievements were evident across groups of students who differed by ethnicity, cultural background, and intellectual ability. The results are consistent with the findings of other researchers, such as Mason and Au (1991), Bishop (1992), and Norton (1992). They, too, found that exposing children to literature that includes characters, settings, and events similar to their lived experiences produces positive academic, personal, and social results virtually identical to those generated by the Multicultural Literacy Program.

Another literature-based literacy program that produced many different kinds of academic improvements for the students involved is the

Webster Groves Writing Project (WGWP). It included several different components of culturally responsive pedagogy, but only its curriculum content is examined here. This project was located in a small, suburban, economically diverse school district of approximately 4,400 students (three-fourths European American and one-fourth African American) that included five municipalities in Missouri: Webster Groves, Rock Hill, Warson Woods, Glendale, and parts of Shrewsbury (Krater et al., 1994). At its peak, 14 English teachers and 293 students in Grades 6–12 were involved. Initially African Americans were targeted, but after the first 2 years the project was extended to all students in the participating teachers' classes who were performing below grade level.

The WGWP was organized around eight key principles and strategies that combined African American cultural characteristics and contributions with process and literature approaches to writing. The principles were: building on students' strengths; individualizing and personalizing instruction; encouraging cooperative learning; increasing control of language; using computers; enhancing personal involvement with reading and writing; building cultural bridges; and expanding personal horizons. Among the specific elements of African American culture woven into the curriculum content were short stories and personal narratives written in conversational styles; oral language interpretations; storytelling, script reading, and play writing; memorizing poetry, proverbs, and quotations; call-response and dramatic performance; language variation as demonstrated by a variety of literary forms; and factual information about African American history. Samples of literature produced by such distinguished authors as Langston Hughes, Virginia Hamilton, Alice Walker, Richard Wright, Paul Lawrence Dunbar, Gwendolyn Brooks, Toni Morrison, Sterling Brown, and Nikki Giovanni were used to teach these cultural features.

Effects of the WGWP on student achievement were determined by performance on standardized tests, analysis of student writing samples, and teacher observations of student behaviors. Significant improvements occurred on all these measures. At the end of its first year, the scores of the participating students on the district's writing assessment increased by an average of 2.0 points compared with a mean increase of 1.6 for all students. The scores for the African American students in the project increased by 2.3 points in middle schools and 1.7 points in high schools. Past writing assessments in the district had shown increases of 1.0 point from grade to grade over an academic year.

In the subsequent years of the project, all the participating students continued to make greater improvements in their writing skills than their counterparts. The performance of African Americans was comparable to

that of other project students. Increases in their scores on the writing assessments ranged from 0.7 to 4.0 points across the first 4 years of the project. This achievement was equal to the improvement of other participating students, but slightly lower than the average growth for all students in the district, which ranged from 1.0 to 4.6 points. There was one deviation from these improvement trends. This occurred for grades 9 and 10 in the second year of the project, when the achievement of all targeted and African American students declined. Despite these improvements, the total writing scores of the African American students continued to be significantly lower than those of other students in the entire district (Krater et al., 1994).

During the fifth year of its existence, the Webster Groves Writing Project shifted from local district measures to the Missouri state writing test to assess student performance. Again, the results were positive. Sixty-seven percent of the eighth graders (215) in the project scored above the state mean, and 14% (45) scored below the mean. Only 6% of all students taking the Missouri writing test scored 5 or 5.5 out of a possible score of 6 points; 20% of them were participants in the Webster Groves Writing Project (Krater et al., 1994). In addition to these test scores, there were other indicators of the positive effects of this project on student achievement. The writing samples demonstrated improvements in the development and organization of ideas, specific word choices, introductions and endings, and focused thinking and clarity of expression. The students themselves expressed greater confidence in and satisfaction with their writing. This was particularly true of the African Americans. The overall success of the Webster Groves Writing Project led the school district to adapt its principles and methods to K–9 mathematics, and two other districts to adopt the model for their writing programs.

Additional evidence of the successful use of ethnic literature to improve the literacy achievement of students is provided by Grice and Vaughn (1992). They studied the responses of African and European American third graders to African American culturally conscious literature; that is, picture books, novels, biographies, and poetry with African American topics, storylines, characters, and settings. These resources were selected to stimulate pride in cultural heritage; celebrate the triumphs of notable African Americans; develop commitment to community; value family life; and empower young readers by enhancing their self-confidence and decision-making skills. Four *qualitative* indicators were used to assess the effects of this curriculum on student achievement. They were (1) *comprehension* (did the students understand what the books were about?); (2) *authenticity* (did the students think the story and characters could be real?); (3) *identity* and *involvement* (could the students personally relate to

and see themselves in the story?); and (4) *evaluation* (did the students like or dislike the books, and why?).

Twenty-one of the twenty-six books used in the project were categorized as "culturally conscious" and three were "melting pot" (the characters were middle class and no explicit references were made to their racial identity). Of these, twenty were picture books, two were juvenile biographies, and four were realistic fiction works with characters close in age to third graders. They were varied across situation, textual focus, and genre to include African American heritage, biography, community, family ties, friendship, poetic verse, and male and female characters. The students who were selected to participate in the program read 2 years below grade level and had scored below the 25th percentile on the MAT-6 achievement test. Before the research began, they had demonstrated the ability to follow storylines, form opinions about the realism of characters and story plots, project themselves into stories, and explain their evaluation of books comparable in difficulty to the ones used in the study.

Regardless of ethnicity and gender, the students preferred books about family, community, and friends. The level of acceptance and identification was higher for African Americans (especially females) than European Americans. Both European and African Americans found the books about African heritage and those in poetic verse more difficult to understand and accept, but they were somewhat less problematic for the African American students. The contextual knowledge, prior experiences, and cultural background of students either facilitated or interfered with their ability to receive the messages from the books (Grice & Vaughn, 1992).

These findings support some general claims frequently made about culturally responsive pedagogy. Students from one ethnic group can learn and appreciate the cultures and contributions of other groups, and teaching students' their own cultural heritages is personally enriching. Without adequate background knowledge and contextual orientations, multicultural content can have negative effects. This was apparent in the reactions of the students in the Grice and Vaughn study to the books about African heritage. Both the European Americans and the African Americans rejected the stories about Africa because they did not have sufficient background knowledge to understand or appreciate them (Grice & Vaughn, 1992). Reactions such as these support L. Crawford's (1993) assertion that a mismatch between the intellectual, cultural, and experiential schemata of students and those represented in topics and texts of instructional materials impedes comprehension. Conversely, when academic and experiential schemata match, students find reading materials easier to understand and more useful in increasing mastery of other literacy skills. The results of Carol Lee's (2001, 2007, 2009) cultural modeling projects

and use of cultural data sets to teach African American high school students literary interpretation skills and writing skills (described in detail in Chapter 4) substantiate Crawford's claims.

Since 1987, the Rough Rock Demonstration School on the Navajo Reservation in Arizona has used cultural content to increase the academic achievement of its students. The program designed for this purpose is the Rough Rock English-Navajo Language Arts Program (RREN LAP). This is a bilingual/bicultural initiative to improve students' language, literacy, and biliteracy skills (Dick, Estell, & McCarty, 1994; McCarty, 2002). The program began as an experiment with kindergartners and first graders, eventually expanding to include Grades K-6. Its mission was to modify "cutting-edge" pedagogies, such as whole-language approaches, cooperative learning, and literature-based literacy instruction, to fit the linguistic and cultural contexts of students at the Rough Rock Demonstration School. An example of this adaptation was a third-grade unit on wind that included the study of local and regional climatology, Navajo directional symbols and oral narratives, and journal writing in Navajo and English. Over time, less reliance was placed on commercially published reading and language arts materials, and more on ones written by the students and teachers themselves that reflected local community culture (Dick et al., 1994).

RREN LAP produced significant improvements in student achievement. On locally developed criterion-referenced measures of reading comprehension, the K-3 students showed a gain of 12 percentage points, and their median percentile rank scores on the CTBS reading vocabulary test doubled, although they still remained below the national average. The first group of students who spent 4 years in the program made an average gain of 60 percentage points in their Navajo and English listening comprehension scores over 3 years. Teachers' qualitative assessments indicated consistent improvement and control of vocabulary, grammar, social uses of writing, and content area knowledge for the RREN LAP students (Dick et al., 1994; Lipka & McCarty, 1994; McCarty, 2002). This project illustrated another important principle of culturally responsive teaching. That is, *sustained collaboration* among school staff with different capabilities, and between schools and community members, is a useful way to develop relevant curriculum content and instructional programs for ethnically diverse students.

The Kickapoo Nation in Kansas has tried to make the education available to children and youth of its tribal community more academically successful by instituting a reform plan called the "Circle of Learning" (Dupuis & Walker, 1988). Begun in 1985, it was designed to incorporate Kickapoo cultural characteristics into the educational process. Specific goals of the

program included improving academic achievement; developing positive self-images; teaching competitive skills tempered with cooperation and sharing of resources; facilitating cultural maintenance and adaptation; and increasing participation of Kickapoo families and community in the educational process. Students learned their cultural values, native languages, histories, and contributions along with academic subject matter content and skills. Some of the values taught included respect for the wisdom and dignity of elders, fortitude, community allegiance, bravery, caring and mutual assistance, generosity, and self-determination. In fact, "Kickapoo culture is woven into the total fabric of the curriculum" (Dupuis & Walker, 1988, p. 31). The only evidence of the effects of the Circle of Learning on student achievement comes from an attitude survey administered to the students 2 years after the program began. All the respondents felt that it had increased their interest and participation in school, self-confidence, feeling of efficacy in dealing with the non-Indian world, understanding of the importance of honoring their own cultural values, and pride in their ethnic identity (Dupuis & Walker, 1988).

### Math and Science Achievement

The contributing authors to *New Directions for Equity in Mathematics Education* (Secada, Fennema, & Adajian, 1995) and *Culturally Responsive Mathematics Education* (Greer et al., 2009), as well as Moll and González (2004), O. Lee and Luykx (2006), and Leonard (2008), describe many short-term math and science projects, courses, units, and lessons that include elements of culturally responsive teaching. These tend to focus on mathematics but often include elements of science as well as other areas of learning, such as communication literacies, social studies, and technology. A common feature across the efforts is that student achievement across subjects, grades, and ethnic groups is improved by accepting the fact that mathematical and scientific knowledge is present in all cultural groups, extracting math and science knowledge and skills embedded in the everyday activities and cultural heritages of different ethnic groups, using these as resources and leverages to teach school-based mathematics and science, and connecting school knowledge with the funds of knowledge present in different cultural communities. As O. Lee and Luykx (2006) explain, while it may not be true in every ethnic group, for most the ways of knowing and talking students learn at home and in cultural communities are "continuous with these of scientific communities. . . . These students deploy sense-making practices—deep questions, vigorous augmentation, situated guesswork, embedded imagining, multiple perspectives, and innovative uses of everyday words to construct new mean-

ings—that serve as intellectual resources in science learning" (p. 47). Yet, less progress has occurred in making science curriculum and instruction culturally responsive than in most other school subjects.

The cultural sites and sources used for teaching mathematical knowledge, concepts, and skills cover a wide range of imaginative and frequently untapped possibilities. Among these are the construction crafts; using urban transportation; taking trips; hair braiding; shopping; star navigation; pattern designs in clothing, pottery, jewelry, blankets, quilts, and basket weaving; music and art; cooking; and games. Two long-term programs are presented here to illustrate how some of the tenets of culturally responsive teaching are operationalized in mathematics curriculum and pedagogy. One of them involves Alaskan Natives, and the other African Americans. A culturally based science project for Native Americans is described as well.

Math in a Cultural Context (MCC) is a 20-year collaborative initiative for Alaskan Natives that was developed by mathematicians, math educators, Yup'ik community elders, Yup'ik teachers, and Alaskan school district officials (Lipka, 1994, 1998; Lipka & McCarty, 1994; Lipka, Yanez, Andrew-Ihrke, & Adam, 2009). This integrated supplementary curriculum for elementary students was designed to incorporate indigenous cultural knowledge into the content and processes of reform-oriented mathematics teaching and to improve math achievement. It includes cultural content and contextual knowledge about Yup'ik patterns of communicating, relating, and teaching. The curriculum comprises seven modules about everyday activities in Yup'ik culture. They are Fish Racks, Berry Picking, Drying Salmon, Star Navigation, Parka Designs, Egg Island, and Smokehouse Construction. Information for the modules was collected by teams of classroom teachers and university-based teacher educators who observed demonstrations and listened to explanations presented by Yup'ik elders; participated in star navigations, building fish racks, and making model smokehouses; and collected traditional stories and games. As trust and equal-status engagements evolved between educators and community members, the project design team came to better understand the historical and cultural contexts of elders' knowledge; elders revealed more practices and procedures that previously were "hidden" from outsiders; and the mathematics embedded in everyday activities became more apparent, such as ways of measuring, numerating, estimating, designing, patterning, locating, and navigating. Cultural ways of communicating and teaching also emerged that subsequently were incorporated into MCC, such as storytelling, using symbols to represent ideas, expert-apprentice modeling, joint production activities, and cognitive apprenticeship. The program does not try to replicate indigenous knowledge in school con-

texts. Instead, it integrates Yup'ik everyday mathematical knowledge and teaching styles with Western math content and forms of pedagogy. This is done by situating school math teaching in cultural contexts familiar to Alaskan Native students, and using enough novelty to capture their interest and involvement in learning (Lipka, 1994, 1998; Lipka & McCarty, 1994; Lipka et al., 2009). Thus, "issues of culture, power, and creativity are [woven] together to form a third space—the newly recontextualized content and an environment that surrounds learning that content—without losing sight of the critical importance of improving student math learning" (Lipka et al., 2009, p. 266).

MCC is based on several assumptions that underlie culturally responsive teaching. Two of these are (1) greater access to and achievement in high-quality learning are possible when culturally diverse students identify on multiple levels with what is being taught, and have multiple ways of engaging with the content; and (2) using the knowledge, language, and culture of different ethnic groups in teaching has positive effects on students' identities that, in turn, improve academic achievement. These assertions have been confirmed by MCC and other culturally responsive curricula for Alaskan Natives (Demmert & Towner, 2003; Lipka, 1998; Lipka et al., 2009; Sternberg, 2006). Students in both rural and urban schools who learn the materials with cultural teaching techniques consistently outperform those who use conventional curricula of standard math concepts and skills.

Over the past 30 years or so Bob Moses (Moses & Cobb, 2001; Moses, West, & Davis, 2009) has been directing the Algebra Project, designed to improve the participation and performance of middle school African American students in Algebra I, and their enrollment in advanced math classes in high school. It is a complement to rather than a replacement for other possible forms of math curriculum and instruction. Moses initiated the Algebra Project in Cambridge, Massachusetts, out of concern for the math learning opportunities of his own children, but it has since relocated to Jackson, Mississippi, with extensions in several other cities throughout the United States, including Chicago, San Francisco, Miami, and New York. By the late 1990s the project involved teachers in Grades 4–8 in 18 school sites in 12 states (Moses et al., 2009). Moses used his involvement in community political activism during the civil rights movement of the 1960s as the ideological grounding and methodological emphases to guide content selection and instructional practices. The goal of the Algebra Project is to use math embedded in the everyday knowledge and activities of marginalized students and communities of color, including African, Latino, and Native Americans, as well as some poor, underachieving European Americans, as bridges and conduits for teaching school-based

mathematics. This development is facilitated through using transitional curriculum materials to help students move from arithmetic to algebraic thinking; placing a high value on student peer culture and collaborations; and connecting math literacy to social justice by having students actively engage in sociopolitical activism through the youth leadership development aspects of the program.

The Algebra Project curriculum materials and instruction are organized according to a five-step process for helping students move between their experiential worlds and social language, and the mathematization of their cultural experiences, or the creation of what Lipka and associates (2009) call a "third space" of intellectual engagement, and others have named crossing cultural borders in thought and action, scaffolding, and demystifying mathematics (Ernest, 2009; Gay 2009; Giroux, 1992). The five steps have students (1) engage in a physical experience; (2) represent it in their own words and visual images; (3) use everyday language in describing the experience; (4) translate these descriptions into more regimented language called "feature talk" that is amenable to mathematical expressions; and (5) convert feature talk to the symbolic representations of conventional mathematics (Moses & Cobb, 2001). A combination of specific cultural references from different ethnic-group experiences, local knowledge, and the universal human experience are woven throughout all of these procedures. Adaptations are made frequently to customize reference materials to local situations. For example, using the frequency and speed of subway train travel between different stations to teach algebraic concepts and skills is very appropriate for students in large urban areas who are familiar with this mode of transportation, but is meaningless and inappropriate for students in small rural communities (Moses & Cobb, 2001). The Algebra Project curriculum also uses dialogue scripts in almost all modules for secondary students that model mathematical discourse, and allows them to have conversations with mathematicians and to practice appropriate technical mathematical talk. Thus, experiential, culturally based learning occurs within a context of peer collaboration and classroom communities of mathematical practice.

The Algebra Project has had positive effects on student achievement consistently from its inception. More students of color who experience the project enroll in pre-algebra and algebra classes, pass the state-mandated tests the first time they are taken, and become activists for social justice than those who do not. Moreover, the cultural references incorporated in the program provide affirmation for disenfranchised students and increase their sense of academic efficacy, cultural identity, and ethnic pride (Moses & Cobb, 2001; Moses et al., 2009). Other non-math academic benefits are evident as well, such as those typically associated with

literacy, for example, making inferences, comprehension, clarity and coherency of articulation, and audience-appropriate communication. The project exemplifies the culturally responsive principle of starting teaching with where students are, what they bring to the classroom, and their encounters with formal subjects taught; accepting that there is worth and value in this social and cultural capital; and using it as a bridge for making what is encoded in textbooks and classroom instruction more meaningful for ethnically diverse children and youth.

Matthews and Smith (1994) studied the effects of culturally relevant instructional materials on the interests, attitudes, and performance of Native American students in science and language arts. The participants in the study were 203 fourth through eighth graders, 10 teachers, and 17 classes in 10 schools from eight Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) agencies. The students were distributed among 11 tribal affiliations: Navajo, Sioux, Tohono Odham (Pagago), Hopi, Kiowa, Cheyenne/Arapaho, Yakima, Comanche, Wichita, Caddo, and Ponca. The project covered a 10-week period during which teachers of the experimental group used Native American cultural content to teach 25 hours of science and 25 hours of language arts. Teachers in the control group taught the same number of hours and skills, but without the specifically designed materials. The culturally relevant content included biographical profiles of Native Americans in different careers who use science in their daily lives; math- and science-related activities developed by the Math and Science Teachers for Reservation Schools (MASTERS) Project; science activities from the Career Oriented Materials to Explore Topics in Science (COMETS) and the Outside World Science Projects (OWSP); and 12 sketches from the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) publications.

Achievement data were collected, using a pretest-posttest design, on students' attitudes toward Native Americans in science-related fields (measured by an Attitude Toward Indians in Science scale) and knowledge of science concepts (assessed by the Science Concept Questionnaire). The results indicated that students taught with Native American cultural materials had more positive attitudes and higher levels of achievement than those who were taught similar skills without the culturally relevant inclusions. No differences were apparent in these effects by the gender of students. More than two thirds of the students taught with cultural materials said they learned more about science and that their teachers made science interesting to learn. There also was a positive, but low, correlation between attitude toward and achievement in science. The effects of the culturally relevant materials varied by ethnic groups, with non-Navajo students having higher achievement than Navajos but no significant differences in attitudes. These results prompted Matthews and Smith (1994) to suggest that

curriculum content on Native Americans should deal explicitly with the cultural characteristics and contributions of specific tribal groups.

### IMPROVING CULTURALLY DIVERSE CURRICULUM CONTENT

Much more cultural content is needed in all school curricula about all ethnic groups of color. The need is especially apparent in math and science and for ethnic groups other than African Americans. Also needed are multicultural literacy programs in secondary schools; more math and science programs at all grade levels; teaching explicit information about gender contributions, issues, experiences, and achievement effects *within ethnic groups*; and pursuing more sustained efforts to incorporate content about ethnic and cultural diversity in regular school subjects and skills taught on a routine basis.

Educators should be diligent in ensuring that curriculum content about ethnically diverse groups is accurate, authentic, and comprehensive. This goal can be accomplished by working in collaboration with ethnic scholars, community leaders, and "cultural brokers," as well as combining information from many disciplines to generate culturally relevant curriculum content for diverse ethnic groups. Culturally responsive curriculum content also should deal simultaneously with concepts, principles, and ideas (such as oppression, identity, powerlessness and privilege, culture, and struggle) generalizable across ethnic groups and knowledge about the particular lives, experiences, and contributions of specific groups (Banks, 1991, 2003; Gay, 1988, 1995, 2002). For example, students need to learn about Asian Americans in general and the many different ethnic groups usually included in this category, such as Chinese, Vietnamese, Filipino, Cambodian, Korean, Japanese, and East Indian Americans.

Several other important implications for culturally responsive pedagogical practices are embedded in the nature and effects of culturally diverse curriculum content examined thus far. One is the need to *regularly* provide students with more accurate cultural information about groups of color in order to fill knowledge voids and correct existing distortions. This information needs to be capable of facilitating many different kinds of learning—cognitive, affective, social, political, personal, and moral. It should be multiethnic, cover a wide range of perspectives and experiences, and encompass both tangible (artifacts) and intangible (values, beliefs) aspects of culture (Banks & Banks, 2010; Hilliard, 1991/1992; J. King, 1994; Nieto, 1999). No single content source is capable of doing all of this alone. Therefore, curriculum designers should always use a variety of resources from different genres and disciplines, including textbooks,

literature, mass media, music, personal experiences, and social science research. Information derived from new and emerging ethnic-centered and feminist literary and social science scholarship also should be included.

Students should learn how to conduct ideological and content analyses of various sources of curriculum content about ethnic and cultural diversity. These learning experiences involve revealing implicit values and biases, modifying attitudes and perceptions, developing different evaluation criteria, and acting deliberately to first deconstruct and then reconstruct common ethnic and gender typecastings. Students can begin by compiling background information on the ethnicity, gender, expertise, experience, and motivation of textbook authors and media programmers. Then, they might search for evidence of how these "positionality factors" affect the presentations writers and directors make about ethnic issues and groups. Phrases and words in dialogues of characters in TV programs and movies, themes, topics and scenarios depicted, and stories in textbooks that are age-, gender-, and ethnic-group-specific can be analyzed in search of this evidence. The students can compare different versions and interpretations of the same issues, such as African, Chinese, Latino, and Filipino American approaches to women's liberation.

These learning activities make manifest what is meant by knowledge being a social and situated construction, not a universal and absolute reality, and the influence of *contextuality* in meaning making. They will be useful in counteracting the negative emotional and academic effects of the racism and sexism that continue to be embedded in both formal and informal curriculum content. The skills that students apply in these analyses, such as inquiry, critical thinking, collecting data, verifying evidence, perspective taking, and comprehending and communicating information, represent significant academic achievement in and of themselves.

Teachers and students should conduct their own research on how textbooks, mass media, trade books, and other curriculum content sources affect knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors toward ethnic and cultural diversity and mastery of various academic skills. Many assertions exist about what these effects are, but too little actual data are available to substantiate them. Operating in the traditions of participatory observations, narratives, and collaborative action research, students and teachers should study themselves in their own classrooms on a routine basis. They might explore questions such as: What issues about ethnic groups and aspects of cultural diversity are most palpable, stress-provoking, difficult, and easy to master? How are receptivity and resistance to cultural diversity manifested by students, and how are these mediated? How are these reactions distributed by gender within ethnic groups and among different ethnic groups? What kinds of instructional materials work best for which

students? What constitutes mastery of multicultural curriculum content and its associated evidence?

Shor and Freire (1987) speak convincingly about the educational values of these kinds of learning experiences. They see these experiences as foundations for high-quality, liberatory teaching. The critical reflection, uncertainty, curiosity, demanding inquiry, and action they demand and cultivate are indispensable to effective learning. This "research-teaching" also has practical value for improving student achievement. It helps teachers to develop curriculum content that is intrinsically motivating; places students and teachers in closer interaction with each other and facilitates better collaboration between them; and produces grassroots knowledge and perspectives that challenge the official ideologies marketed by schools (Shor & Freire, 1987).

Finally, students and teachers should become scholars of ethnic and cultural diversity, and generate their own curriculum content. They can do library research; conduct interviews and oral histories; participate in shadow studies; organize cultural exchanges; do site observations of ethnic communities and institutions; and collect personal stories covering a wide spectrum of individuals according to ethnicity, gender, age, generation, educational level, career, country of origin, and residential location. The information these inquiries produce can be used to contest, correct, supplement, and/or replace existing textbook and mass media content.

## CONCLUSION

Students are exposed to a wide variety and quality of content about ethnic and cultural diversity. This exposure is both formal and informal, direct and tacit; it encompasses what is officially delivered in schools as well as what is offered through "societal curricula," especially as conveyed through mass media and tradebooks. Whether the images of ethnic diversity these content sources convey are positive or negative, they have powerful influences on students, including self-perceptions, attitudes toward others, what is considered "truth" and knowledge worth knowing, and how they respond to classroom instruction. Students who see their ethnic groups portrayed negatively in literary and trade books, television programs, movies, newspapers, and advertising may not value themselves or trust that schools will do anything differently. Unfortunately, their suspicions too often have been confirmed by racially biased instructional materials. Ethnically diverse students who feel invalidated in society and school are not likely to perform as well as they might on academic tasks, if for no other reason than that these prejudices interfere

with their motivation to learn, time-on-task, and persistence in learning engagements. Consequently, all sources of curriculum content, both within and outside of schools, should be revised to be more accurate and inclusive in their representations of cultural diversity. Good information is a necessary element of culturally responsive teaching and the improvement in student achievement.

Some notable progress has been made over the past few decades in how the histories, lives, cultures, and contributions of African, Asian, Native, Latino, and European Americans are portrayed in textbooks, literary books, and mass media. The most blatant stereotypical characterizations have been eliminated. Yet these frequently used sources of curriculum content are not as good as they should be. Their flaws demand continuous improvements from all sectors of society and the educational profession. Teachers and students can and should be active participants in improving the quality of these instructional materials. Being directly involved in the construction of knowledge about ethnic and cultural diversity is an important way to practice culturally responsive pedagogy.

Curriculum sources and content that provide accurate presentations of ethnic and cultural diversity offer several other benefits for improving student achievement. First, they provide those who have never had close personal contact with members of ethnic groups other than their own with opportunities to communicate and engage with diverse people as well as to confront themselves. This experience alone will calm some fears, dispel some myths, and produce some learning that cannot be obtained from books and other media sources. Removing the threat and intimidation from new knowledge enhances receptivity toward and mastery of it. Second, students are actively involved in their own learning. Participatory engagement tends to have positive effects on achievement. Third, students have real power to help structure their own learning. They thus have some real control over their own academic destinies. Surely students will learn better that which is of their own creation.

Theory about the potential of multicultural curriculum content for improving the achievement of ethnically diverse students is rich and extensive, but supportive research is still rather sparse. My guess is many teachers are doing culturally responsive teaching to some degree but these practices are not recorded systematically or reported regularly in educational scholarship. Much more empirical research, observational studies, and documentation of practice are needed to support theoretical claims. In compiling this evidence, emphasis should be on specifying curriculum content effects on different types of achievements, such as grade point averages, test scores, participation in classroom discourse, and students' self-esteem and feelings of efficacy; how these effects are distributed

within and across ethnic groups; and achievement effects derived from the incorporation of multicultural content into the curricula of all subjects and skills taught in school. Beyond the early elementary grades (K-2), students, along with their teachers, can contribute to the development of this fund of knowledge by "telling their own stories" about how exposure to multicultural curriculum content has affected them personally. Student commentaries are powerful evidence for determining the effectiveness of educational reforms, but they too often are overlooked. Culturally responsive teaching corrects this oversight by including the needs, knowledge, and participation of students in all aspects of the educational enterprise, including the selection, design, and analysis of curriculum content and the determination of its effects on achievement.

Several important messages for the future implementation of culturally responsive teaching can be derived from the curricular programs, practices, and research discussed in this chapter. To begin with, even curricula with minimum cultural content improve student achievement, according to a variety of indicators, across ethnic groups, grade levels, and subject or skill areas. The multiple achievement effects include higher scores on standardized tests, higher grade point averages, improved student self-concepts and self-confidence, and greater varieties and levels of student engagement with subject matter. The range of these effects is very encouraging, and it indicates that there are many ways in which teachers can design culturally responsive curricula for African, Asian, Native, and Latino American students. However, more evidence is needed to document the effects of multicultural content on student achievement in all subjects taught in schools, at all grade levels, and for all ethnic groups.