I HAVE A NEW FRIEND IN ME:

THE EFFECT OF A MULTICULTURAL / ANTI-BIAS CURRICULUM

ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL COGNITION

IN PRESCHOOLERS

By

Jill Ellen Rosenzweig

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

In Partial fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION
With a Major in Educational Leadership

In the Graduate College

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA ®
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As members of the Final Examination Committee, we certify that we have read the dissertation prepared by Jill Rosenzweig

entitled "I Have a New Friend in Me." The Effect of a Multicultural/ Anti-bias Curriculum on the Development of Social Cognition in Preschoolers.

and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Education

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Dr. Paul Heckman — Date 10/22/98

Date

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Final approval and acceptance of this dissertation is contingent upon the candidate's submission of the final copy of the dissertation to the Graduate College.

I hereby certify that I have read this dissertation prepared under my direction and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the early childhood program at the Tucson Jewish Community Center in order to discover the program's role in reproducing or restructuring the social order existing in the wider society. The study examined events in which issues of race, gender, class, and physical or mental disabilities arose in centers, during teacher guided group activities, at lunch, on the playground, and during other special activities among the groups of three and four year old children in the Center's preschool.

The research then reviewed how young children develop social cognition and how they construct an understanding of their identity while developing expectations about individual and group behavior. It went on to investigate the manner in which race, gender, class, and disabilities issues were expressed and lived out by the children and staff. The data indicated that all four topics had meaning for the children, but issues involving race and gender arose more frequently than issues involving class and disabilities.

The main source of information for this study were vignettes recorded in the three and four year old classrooms. The vignettes revealed the extent of the anti-bias perspective guiding the actions of both the staff and children and provided the data to evaluate the effect of the anti-bias curriculum presently in use at the preschool.

The findings indicated that while an anti-bias perspective guided the resolution of many issues, it was not pervasive among all the children and staff. The findings also illustrated when an anti-bias perspective was guiding the formal curriculum.

The major focus of the research questions was to determine the need for further staff training in order to develop a pervasive anti-bias perspective among the staff and children. The data indicated that additional staff training would be beneficial. Additional staff training should address the anti-bias perspective of the participants and the children. It should also explore ways to expand this perspective within the formal curriculum so that the curriculum stresses a democratic multicultural perspective.

THE RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

Introduction

In the 1990s, children as young as six weeks old from all social and economic classes, are entering early childhood programs. In the past, these programs have served many functions such as freeing mothers to enter the labor market (Haskins, 1992, p. 272) and providing medical and dental care to impoverished children (Goodlad, 1973, p. 5). They have also had a long history of educating children in academic subject matter, technical skills, and the ideas, values and norms of the adult society (Carnoy & Levin, 1985, p. 3).

Child care by non-custodial parents has existed in the United States since the seventeenth century. Its primary purpose has been to provide care while its secondary purpose has fluctuated among religious, academic and social instruction. Getis and Vinovskis cite evidence that perhaps forty percent of three year olds in Massachusetts were attending infant schools in the 1840s, at least in part because middle-class mothers were interested in the educational benefits their children would receive (Getis & Vinovskis, 1992, p. 190).

The concept of educational benefits has embedded within it the concept of change (Spodek, 1973, p. 10). Children are expected to be different as a result of the education they have experienced in schools. However, within the last forty to fifty years, the degree of change and the nature of the differences recognized and encouraged by schooling have been challenged (Vallance, 1983, p. 9). There is controversy surrounding the effect the socialization process has on individual and groups of students and the role schools play in the social, moral and economic reproduction or restructuring of the existing social order (Giroux & Purple, 1983, p. 1X). Many scholars argue that the educational experience and knowledge gained from schooling perpetuates stereotypes which carry derogatory implications. They also argue that the educational experience differs for children according to their race, gender, and social class (Anyon, 1983; Apple, 1982; Vallance, 1983; Weber, 1984).

The Purpose

The purpose of this study is to investigate the early childhood program at the Tucson Jewish Community Center in order to discover the program's role in reproducing or restructuring the social order existing in the wider society. The study uncovers how the program perpetuates or eradicates

social inequality by examining events in which issues of race, gender, class, and physical or mental disabilities arise in centers, during teacher guided small and large group activities, at lunch, on the playground, and during other special activities.

The research then reviews how young children develop social cognition and how they construct an understanding of their identity while developing expectations of how individuals and groups know, feel, and behave (Ramsey, 1987, p. 12). It then investigates the manner in which race, gender, class, and disabilities issues are expressed and lived out by the three and four year old groups of children and their staff. Its purpose is to review the events in order to determine if the end result reproduces, challenges or restructures social inequities associated with race, gender, class, and disabilities.

The study then reveals whether or not a multicultural, anti-bias perspective is guiding both the formal and informal curriculum. Its final purpose is to determine whether or not a need exists for additional staff training. Since the need was found, the data will be incorporated into plans for staff development in order to assure that an anti-bias multicultural ideology and curriculum are guiding the program.

The Significance of the Study

Today it is recognized that educational programs shape students by the selection of the material in the formal curriculum which openly states what is to be learned. It is also recognized that much is learned through routines, plans and activities which may not be openly intended. These unintentional learning conditions (Martin, 1983, p. 122) which include rules of conduct, classroom organization, informal pedagogical procedures, and messages that are transmitted to the student by the total physical and instructional environment (McLaren, 1989, p. 183) are all part of what Philip Jackson labeled the "informal", "hidden" or "unstudied" curriculum (Jackson, 1968). Kohlberg (1983, p. 61) states they refer to ninety percent of what goes on in classrooms.

According to Apple and King (1983, p. 83), educational knowledge, what is learned from both the formal and informal curriculum is, in fact, a selection and distribution of information from a much larger body of knowledge and therefore entails evaluative selections. As evaluative selections, school knowledge must be viewed as supporting a specific ideology (McLaren, 1989, p. 1X). Ideology encompasses the production and representation of ideas, values, and beliefs and the manner in which they are

expressed and lived out by both individuals and groups (McLaren, 1989, p. 176). The study of school knowledge becomes a study in ideology- an investigation of what is considered legitimate knowledge by specific social groups and classes, in specific institutions at specific historical moments (Apple & King, 1983, p. 83).

Since schools can either prepare children to conform to an existing social order or help them prepare for a new social organization (Spodek, 1973, p. 9), the goal of school practices will be determined by whose ideology dominates the selection of educational knowledge (Apple & King, 1983, p. 84). Educational programs have been accused of developing individuals who sustain and perpetuate the status quo (McLaren, 1989, p. 1; Weber, 1984, p. 193), and research has indicated that teachers are often agents for the reproduction and legitimization of a society which is characterized by social and economic inequality (Giroux, 1983, p. 403).

It has also been argued that when educational programs fail to challenge the ways in which schooling reproduces existing class, race, and gender relationships, and when teachers and administrators fail to analyze and remediate existing societal and institutional practices, schools fail to demonstrate a commitment to the ideal of democracy as an organizing principle of society (Scheffler, 1983, p. 309). According to McLaren, many inner-city schools become prisons

for students who do not have the opportunity to attend schools for the more socially privileged, and more affluent schools become educational enclaves for the guardians of the status quo (McLaren, 1989, p. 2).

Most of the research has focused on elementary or secondary school practices since in the past, the majority of children entered schools at these levels (Spodek, 1991, p. 6). Early childhood programs have received limited attention by researchers. At the same time, as Maxine Greene has indicated, once children leave the intimacies of family life and move into the impersonality and organization of classroom life, they are subjected to the pressures of the prevailing ideology and to the socialization process of that particular educational program (Greene, 1983, p. 4). In order to understand the social knowledge gained by participating in these programs, it is necessary to first understand how social cognition develops. It is then necessary to investigate the program's ideology which drives both the formal curriculum and the ideas, norms and values which may not be overtly stated.

Theoretical Framework

Critical Theory

Critical theory and social cognitive theory form the framework for this research. Critical theory provides an

historical, cultural, political, economic and ethical direction to the study of education (McLaren, 1989, p. 160). It therefore provides a framework for investigating the events, practices, and conversations which occur during the course of the day in the three and four year old groups of children in the early childhood program at the Tucson Jewish Community Center. It provides a framework for uncovering how the informal curricula or unintentional learning states (Martin, 1983, p. 122) reproduce or challenge and restructure social inequities associated with gender, ethnic, class and disabilities. It also supplies a structure for uncovering how the teachers view their role in the reproducing or restructuring process.

Critical theory proposes answers to the following questions: Why do some children fail in school? Why are others unmotivated and difficult in classrooms? Why do we teach the way we do? Why are schools organized the way they are? (Gibson, 1986, p. 2). By asking such questions, critical theory provides the framework for investigating the biases which have been attributed to all educational programs including those in early childhood settings.

Critical theory is a particularly appropriate framework for investigating early childhood programs since it provides the means of analyzing how individual identity is formed by the relationships between individual, family, school, and the

wider society (Gibson, 1986, p. 10). While attempts at evaluating the long term effects of early education have raised more questions than answers (Bereiter, 1986), it is now widely recognized that the child's identity, or sense of self in relation to others, is influenced, perhaps even determined, by participating in early childhood programs (Katz, 1987; Kozel, 1991; Spodek, 1991). The crucial importance of the child's early contact with other human beings has also been documented by Brazelton (1966) Fraiberg (1959), Isaacs (1972).

Additionally, while there has been considerable research attempting to analyze the effects of class size, teacher/child ratios (Rutter, 1983; Howes, & Rubenstein, 1985), and the effects of teacher characteristics (Clark, & Gruber, 1984; Kaplan, & Conn, 1984), the effects of the ideology of the early childhood setting have not received equal attention. Apple points out that ideologies are filled with contradictions. He states: "They are not coherent sets of beliefs. ... They are instead sets of lived meanings, practices and social relations that are often internally inconsistent." (Apple, 1982, p. 15). Yet, ideologies serve several purposes. They tend to reproduce the relationships that maintain the power of the dominant class (Apple, 1982, p. 15), and they tend to protect myths in spite of contradictory evidence (Spodek, 1991, p. X1). Early

childhood programs may have an expressed ideology in their philosophy and goal statements, and it is often assumed that it is incorporated into daily activities. However, the degree of correspondence between written statements and daily implementation may not be consistent. Critical theory investigates the relationships of the individual and society through the concept of ideology and shows how ideology forms the basis of what happens in schools (Gibson, 1986, p. 10). It thus provides a means of investigating the effects of the ideology in daily events which drive the early childhood program at the Tucson Jewish Community Center.

Critical theorists begin with the assumption that there is an underlying theory embedded in every school practice (Gibson, 1986, p. 4.). They reject the notion that there is a scientific or factual basis to these theories (Gibson, 1986, p. 4). Critical theorists argue that school knowledge, like all knowledge about human affairs, is a socially constructed agreement (McLaren, 1989, p. 169). The concept of knowledge as socially constructed implies the possibility of change through human means (Gibson, 1986, p. 4) and thus provides an optimistic framework for investigating educational settings. One of the predominant themes found in the curriculum at the Community Center is "Tikkun Olam", a Hebrew phrase and important Jewish concept meaning to repair the world. According to McLaren (1989, p. 160) and Gibson

(1986, p. 10), critical theory also embraces this concept and develops an understanding of how such aims can be realized.

Critical theorists point out that there are inequities in education caused by educational practices which require repair (Gibson, 1986, p. 45). While the American educational system is expected to "equalize the condition of men" and provide a "social balance wheel" (Greene, 1983, p. 2), the research has explored how the curricula, teachers, and the administration within schools unwittingly confine students to social classes and perpetuate class and gender inequality (Apple, 1982, p. 13; MacLeod, 1987, p. 153). Although for the last fifty years the assumption has been that education is not only a good thing in itself, but that it also equalizes opportunity and acts as an agent of social improvement and reform (Greene, 1983, p. 2), critical theorists challenge this claim. They argue that the persistence of social class constraints indicate that education has not succeeded equally well for all classes and that it has not been able to remediate injustices (Gibson, 1986, p. 45; Weber, 1984, p. 195). Problems are viewed as multifaceted, often linked to gender, race and class interests which limit the potential development of men and women (McLaren, 1989, p. 160). As critical theorists investigate education, they point out that children from

certain minority groups and children from working class families perform less well on measures of educational achievement than children from mainstream groups or from middle class families (Weber, 1984, p. 195). McLaren (1989, p. 162) adds that the economic returns from schooling are far greater for the affluent than for the disadvantaged. In order to understand how schooling differentiates among students and how this differentiation affects children, Apple states that three basic elements of schooling need to be examined: the formal curriculum, the daily routines and conversations which are not part of the written curriculum, and the ideological perspectives that teachers use to plan, organize and evaluate what happens in the classroom (Apple, 1982, p. 21). The investigation of these elements within the program at the Tucson Jewish Community Center reveals the role this program has in perpetuating or eradicating social inequality and in reproducing or restructuring society. It also uncovers the presence, absence, and effectiveness of the multicultural, anti-bias perspective and curriculum guiding the program.

In their attempt to reform educational programs, critical theorists reject the claim that schooling is an apolitical, value-neutral process. They argue that no educational practice whether concerned with achievement, evaluation, or excellence is ever free of the social or

institutional contexts in which schooling takes place. Therefore schooling must be investigated as a cultural and historical process (McLaren, 1989, p. 163). The inequalities which result from schooling are said to be the result of the social structure and educational practices rather than the result of individual success or failure (Gibson, 1986, p. 46).

Although the dominant ideology in the United States asserts that personal rather than social constraints stand in the way of individual success, according to McLaren (1987, p. 2) and MacLeod (1987, p. 153), sociological research has demonstrated that the achievement ideology is a myth. The majority of men and women live their entire lives within their inherited social class. Theories of cultural reproduction point out that while there is some mobility between classes, the overall structure of class relations remains unchanged from one generation to the next (MacLeod, 1987, p. 2).

The tenants of critical theory provide a framework for uncovering the ways in which educational programs favor the culture capital of the dominant culture by confirming, legitimizing and reproducing the language, meanings, behavioral styles, thoughts and values of the dominant class. Studies have indicated that the curriculum is geared to children who begin schooling with the linguistic and cultural

capital of the upper classes. Children from minority cultures are at a disadvantage because of their speech, behaviors, attitudes and beliefs (McLaren, 1989, p. 2). Uncovering the ways in which cultural capital is rewarded in the early childhood program at the Center will reveal whether or not this program perpetuates the inequalities critical theorists have found reproduced in other educational programs.

The dialectical nature of critical theories will also assist in understanding the early childhood program. The theories encourage the researcher to attempt to tease out the inconsistencies of accepted practices and beliefs. By investigating the histories and relationships of accepted meanings, both sides of a social contradiction, such as gender bias in an educational setting which aspires to help all students attain their full potential, can be investigated.

The discrepancy between terminology and practice becomes apparent when the reality of everyday concepts such as "free play" are understood. "Free play" is in fact controlled by the materials the teacher selects and the behavior she rewards. The materials chosen and behaviors allowed are determined by the teacher's ideology and the ideology of the program (Gibson, 1986, p. 27). The dialectical nature of critical theory allows the researcher to view the educational

setting as a site of both domination and liberation where contradictions can be resolved. It discloses the contradictions in settings which unconsciously reproduce class relations. (McLaren, 1989, p. 167).

As Giroux (1983, p. 324) and other critical theorist have indicated, educational programs operate with a specific set of assumptions and social practices that dictate how an individual or group relates within the educational setting and within the wider society. These assumptions and practices reflect the ideology which dominates the particular institution at a specific time. The ideology in turn, determines the choice of particular curriculum content, classroom strategies and evaluation in both the overt and hidden curricula, all of which determine what happens in classroom. Critical theory provides a framework for understanding how early education categorizes children according to race, class, gender, and disabilities and, at the same time, acts as an agency for self and social empowerment (McLaren, 1989, p. 160).

During the last decade, critical theory has become the agency for self and social empowerment by providing a connection between knowledge and ethics (Endres, 1997, p. 1) and by emphasizing that men and women can at least partly

determine their own existence (Kincheloe & McLaren, 1994, p. 138). Unlike positivism which has been criticized by critical theorists, Jurgen Habermas' theory of "communicative action" provides standards for the critique of values and norms as well as facts (Alexander, 1985, pp. 401-403; Ingram, 1990, pp. 138-155). As Apple (1990) indicates, traditional science links knowledge and validity with empirical verification. It can not take into account the actual interests that are being served and how they remain hidden. Additionally, Giroux states that an infatuation with positivism in education has led to a failure by educators to acknowledge the relationship of knowledge to power (Giroux, 1981, pp. 42-3). Critical theory is able to take into account whose special interests are being served because it operates under three basic assumptions: that all thought is mediated by power relations that are socially and historically composed, that facts can never be isolated from values or ideological underpinnings, and that language is central to the formation of relationships (Kincheloe & McLaren, 1994, pp. 138-139).

As a critical theorist, Habermas presents the ethical criteria for a constructive revision of educational practices. He describes his approach as "universal pragmatics" which is a means of identifying and reconstructing the universal conditions of possible

understanding (Habermas, 1987, p. 124). According to Endres (1997, pp. 5-6), Habermas' conception of universal pragmatics changes the way we think about truth. By focusing not only on the phonetic, syntactic and semantic features of language, but also on the social context of speech, Habermas has moved from the study of linguistic competence to the study of "communicative competence " or genuine communication. "Communicative competence " is defined as an ideal speech situation where there are no conscious or unconscious limitations to participation, where the search for truth takes place through critical discussion in a context that makes consensus possible (Endres, 1997, p. 7). While Kincheloe and McLaren (1994, pp. 153-154) state that absolute truth can not be known, questioning "how what is has come to be, whose interests are being served by particular arrangements, and where our own frames of reference come from" will enable critical theory to accomplish meaningful social action and educational reform. Additionally, by including feminists' claims that traditional notions of community are politically disabling because these notions suppress race and gender differences when appraising unity over diversity, critical theory will lead to new understandings of how power operates when incorporating groups who have be previously excluded (Kincheloe & McLaren, 1994, p. 145).

However, as Hutchinson (1997, p. 3) points out, there is a tendency to believe that discourse has been inclusive simply because the presence of the 'other' has been noted. She concludes that since each person comes to any human activity with a set of pre-understandings that will influence communication, these biases must be open to discussion before the understandings of the "other" can be heard.

In spite of this limitation, critical theory will become one of the paradigms through which the vignettes presented in Chapter four are analyzed. It will provide the framework which investigates whether or not the staff responses perpetuate or eradicate inequalities associated with gender, ethnicity, class, and physical challenges when vignettes embodying these issues are initiated by the children or the staff in the preschool.

Social Cognitive Theory

While critical theory provides the framework for investigating the activities, practices, and conversations in an early childhood setting such as the one at the Tucson Jewish Community Center, social cognitive theory allows the researcher to investigate and understand children's construction of knowledge about self, others, social and moral relationships, and societal institutions (Edwards & Ramsey, 1986, p. 3). Social cognitive theory is defined by Ramsey as "the study of how children and adults construct

their understanding and expectations of how individuals and groups know, feel, and behave" (Ramsey, 1987, p. 12). It is based on Piaget's cognitive developmental model. This model views social concepts as developing in a sequential pattern so that conceptions developed later are more general and abstract and may require knowledge from earlier levels (Leahy, 1983, p. 86). Two common assumptions of cognitive developmental theory are that change comes about through experiences that are challenging and that these experiences challenge existing beliefs. The individual's cognitive level limits the effect of experience since the individual will integrate the experience into his/her framework of earlier experiences (Leahy, 1983, p. 86).

Both critical theory and social cognitive theory support the propositions that context has a significant impact upon development and that the social knowledge which is gained in an early childhood setting affects future behavior (Weber, 1984, p. 176). Unlike other philosophies which describe maturation as a biological process or as a result of direct learning of external givens, social cognitive theory is in agreement with critical theory's supposition that development is a dialectic process. Knowledge is constructed through interaction with the physical and social environment, and it is reconstructed as the child reflects upon new information

gained from later experiences (DeVries & Kohlberg, 1987, p. 7).

Additionally, both theories support the implementation of an anti-bias multicultural perspective and curriculum by valuing diversity and the intrinsic worth of individuals (Spodek, 1991). Social cognitive theory also provides the means for developing multiculturally appropriate teaching strategies which help children understand their respective backgrounds and an appreciation of other lifestyles (Ramsey, 1987, p. 92). Furthermore, it enables the researcher to uncover the problems critical theorists find in many educational institutions.

Social cognitive theory developed from the educational theories of Dewey and Piaget. Dewey envisioned the classroom as the setting which relayed a democratic ideology and set the stage for social change. His educational program implemented at the University of Chicago laboratory school had a dual purpose. It helped the child form values by experiencing democratic social relationships, and it improved society by developing the child's potential to make social contributions through the continual reconstruction of experiences on a higher level. Dewey expected his curriculum to lead to intellectual and social self-realization which in turn would lead to social reform and the betterment of a democratic society. This expectation is also held by

critical theorists who emphasize the school's role in laying the foundation for social reform.

Dewey defined learning as a deliberate and continuous reconstruction of experience. As the child actively participates in experiences and reorganizes knowledge based on a personal interpretation of these experiences, learning takes place (Dewey, 1938, pp. 16-17). Dewey believed that cognitive, social and moral development occurred through integrated successive experiences. Positive experiences led to the child's ability to undergo changes in thinking and the ability to solve problems with greater insight.

Piagetian Influence

Dewey's educational philosophy was expanded and systematized into the present day American theory of social cognitive theory by Piaget (DeVries & Kohlberg, 1987, p. 8). While Piaget is most often recognized for his theory of cognitive growth from birth to maturity, he stated on several occasions that affective and social development follow the same general process as cognitive growth. He determined that cognitive, affective and social behavior are inseparable (Piaget & Inhelder, 1969, p. 114, p. 158). He also found that the conditions for cognitive growth and the conditions for social and moral growth relate to each other in a consistent and positive fashion.

Social cognitive theory incorporated and expanded Piaget's four major assumptions about development. The first assumption is that development occurs in definite stages, and these stages occur in fixed sequence. The sequence is the same for all children though some may move through one stage faster than others. Piaget enumerated four interrelated factors which help a child move from one stage to the next- a) maturation, b) experience gained from acting on and thinking about concrete objects, c) social interaction, and d) equilibration, the process of bringing the first three factors together to build systems for thinking about the world.

The second assumption is that social and moral knowledge are organized and structured. Each stage has its own structure for organizing perceptions, actions, and representations which follows a predictable sequence from simpler to more complex. (Piaget & Inhelder, 1969, p. 129). Social development involves a spiraling increase of knowledge about self and others. New information about others leads to insight about oneself, and knowledge about oneself is used to gain an understanding of others. While the process of change is gradual and continuous, later notions are different from earlier ones. For example, children below the age of five typically think things should be divided equally in order to be fair, while children over five are able to consider merit

and special needs (Piaget, 1965, p. 265; Piaget & Inhelder, 1969, p. 153; Edwards & Ramsey, 1986, p. 8).

Thirdly, social and moral development take place through interaction with the environment. Children empirically abstract social knowledge through observing objects, events and people and by interacting and communicating. They notice or hear selectively based on their current state of knowledge and merge new information with prior knowledge (Piaget & Inhelder, 1969, p. 155).

Finally, social knowledge is also gained through intellectual reflection which leads to the coordination of social perspectives. In order to understand how something is understood by another person, the child must infer what the other person is thinking, feeling, or intending (Piaget & Inhelder, 1969, p. 159).

Additional Piagetian conclusions form the basis of the assumptions of both social cognitive theory and critical theory. The constructivist notion which underlies Piaget's principal ideas is an important tenant. Constructivist theory views the child as an active builder of knowledge rather than as a passive recipient. As Piaget studied the nature of the child's mind, he concluded that children build an increasingly complex body of knowledge and a system of morality by developing mental structures or cognitive skills called schemata which enable them to mentally adapt to and

organize the environment. He wrote that just as there are biological structures such as the stomach which enable the body to adapt to the environment, there are mental structures or cognitive skills called schemata which enable individuals to mentally adapt to and organize the environment. In the newborn, the schemata which are used to process and identify incoming stimuli are sensory and determined by motor activity such as sucking. As the child develops, the schemata become more differentiated, less sensory and increasingly complex. Piaget labeled the processes responsible for the change from sensory-motor schemata to cognitive schemata and from child to adult schemata assimilation and accommodation.

Piaget went on to define assimilation as the process by which new information is integrated into existing schemata or patterns of behavior. Assimilation allows for growth of schemata but not change. He defined accommodation as providing for the creation of a new schema or the modification of existing schemata when a new stimulus couldn't be assimilated. According to Piaget, assimilation accounts for quantitative change within a schemata while accommodation accounts for qualitative change. Piaget called the balance between assimilation and accommodation equilibrium or the self-regulatory mechanism which ensures efficient interaction with the environment (Edwards, 1986, p. 6.; Wadsworth, 1989, pp. 10-21).

While Piaget concluded that all knowledge whether physical, logical-mathematical, or social is constructed through the processes of assimilation and accommodation, social cognitive theory and critical theory have further emphasized that and constant construction and assimilation and accommodation account for the growth and development of children's social knowledge. Both theories have also emphasized that unintentional learning opportunities (Martin, 1983, p. 122) as well as planned happenings form the child's personal knowledge structure of social cognition. Social cognitive theorists and critical theorists view the child as an active participant who incorporates both types of events from her experiences into a personal knowledge structure of social cognition.

Both theories are also in agreement with Piaget's conception of the role of motivation. While Piaget asserts that organic maturation plays an indispensable role in the succession of stages in the child's development, he also states, "There is no behavior pattern, however intellectual, which does not involve affective factors such as motives." (Piaget & Inhelder, 1969, p. 158). Critical theorists view motivation as a major factor in determining school success or failure and add that a program's ideology has a strong influence on an individual's motivation.

Additionally, critical and social cognitive theorists are in agreement with Piaget's theory that social knowledge, knowledge about society, social relationships, and morality, gained as a young child affects future development (Piaget & Inhelder, 1969, p. 6; Piaget, 1965, p. 404).

Democratic Standards

Finally, as critical theory and social cognitive theory developed, they both grew to include the expectation that development is the aim of education (Vallance, 1986, p. 15). This concept, originally developed by Kohlberg and Meyer assumes that development is a growth in one's ability to understand and apply moral values which include standards of truth based on impartial evidence. It also assumes that development embodies democratic standards of justice based on a concern for human well-being and respect for the rights of individuals. Both critical and social cognitive theory expect education in America to be committed to the ideal of democracy as the organizing principle of society (Scheffler, 1983, p. 309). Both theories argue that to achieve this goal, the tenets which lead to a truly democratic society should structure the ideology of the educational program and become the foundation of the ideology transmitted to the program's participants. Additionally, it is argued by educational reformers such as Apple (1982), Giroux (1983),

Purpel (1983), Scheffler (1983) that this ideology must guide the enactment of events throughout the day.

Multicultural Educational Program

The tenets of the democratic ideology encompass moral values which include "justice- the principle of treating each person equally, liberty- the principle that individual freedom of action should be limited only where necessary to protect individual rights or the group welfare, and avoidance of harm - the principle that unnecessary harm or suffering to living beings should be avoided"(Edwards, 1986, pp. 149-150).

In order to transmit this ideology, it has been proposed that educational programs, including those located in early childhood settings, develop multicultural, anti-bias educational programs. Multicultural educational programs as defined by Derman-Sparks (1989) and Ramsey (1987) are framed by theoretical principles which include assumptions about the purpose of education and the practice of teaching. They include a multicultural anti-bias educational philosophy which embodies democratic values as well as specific teaching strategies and subject matter which inform the multicultural curriculum. Education that is truly multicultural includes dimensions of human differences such as culture, race, occupation, socioeconomic class, gender, age, and various physical traits and needs (Ramsey, 1987, p. 3). It includes a perspective which values diversity, equality, and

individual freedom and is reflected in all aspects of teaching and learning throughout the day (Ramsey, 1987, p. 6). It is value based stating that differences are good, while oppressive ideas and behaviors are not good (Derman-Sparks, 1989, p. X). Finally, it is based on the notion that social cognition, knowledge about society, social relationships and morality, is constructed as children interact with their environment and organize information into systems of meaning or belief (Edwards, 1986, p. 5).

The goals of a multicultural educational program are:

1. To help children develop positive racial, gender, cultural, class and individual identities and to recognize and accept their membership in many different groups.

2. To enable children to see themselves as part of the larger society; to identify, empathize, and relate with individuals from other groups.

3. To foster respect and appreciation for the diverse ways in which other people live.

4. To encourage in young children's earliest social relationships an openness and interest in others, a willingness to include others, and a desire to cooperate.

5. To promote the development of a realistic awareness of contemporary society, a sense of social

responsibility, and an active concern that extend beyond one's immediate family or group.

6. To empower children to become autonomous and critical analysts and activists in their social environment.

7. To support the development of educational and social skills that are needed for children to become full participants in the larger society in ways that are most appropriate to individual styles, cultural orientations, and linguistic backgrounds. (Ramsey, 1987, pp. 3-5).

It has been suggested that achieving these goals will lead children to the "practice of freedom: the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world" (Freire, 1970, p. 15). These goals have also become the stated mission of schooling. In 1961, the Educational Policy Commission stated that American education should "foster that development of individual capacities which will enable each human being to become the best person he is capable of becoming" by achieving the goals of "self-realization, human relationship, economic efficiency, and civic responsibility" (Vallance, 1983, p. 24).

If an anti-bias, multicultural world view is to become a reality, it is first necessary to understand how and what

children presently learn from the experience of schooling. This study investigates one program by addressing the following research questions.

Research Questions:

1. Are there issues involving race, gender, class, and disabilities in the three and four year old groups of children at the Tucson Jewish Community Center?

2. Do issues originate from teacher initiated practices, from the children's spontaneous activity or both?

3. When issues arise, what does the staff's response reveal about their understanding of an anti-bias environment?

4. Do the responses of the children to issues of race, gender, class, and disabilities reflect positive or negative biases toward individuals?

5. Is there evidence that the current multicultural curriculum is creating an anti-bias environment?

6. Is there a need for additional staff training in order to improve the anti-bias environment?

Both critical theory and social cognitive theory provide the framework for answering these questions which are addressed in the vignettes presented in Chapter four (Findings). By taking an in depth look at an early childhood program, our understanding of the function of schooling and

its effects upon children will be increased. Uncovering the ideology of the Tucson Jewish Community Center early childhood program and investigating the daily enactment of activities and routines in the setting begins the process of discovering whether or not such programs continue to perpetuate discrimination in situations involving race, gender, class or disabilities. The investigation will contribute to our understanding of why critics are accusing such programs of sustaining and legitimizing the status quo at the expense of other groups (McLaren, 1989, p. 1; Weber, 1984, p. 193). Finally, it enables us to see if the classroom environment mirrors an anti-bias multicultural ideology. It lays the foundation for developing an anti-bias multicultural perspective and curriculum if they are not presently in place.

REVIEW OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IDEOLOGIES

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review the history of early childhood education in America in order to explain by example how programs are influenced by the controlling ideology of the times. The review uncovers the ideologies that have affected early educational programs and illustrates that when the beliefs of the dominant community shift, programs are constructed to support the new ideology.

The theory that early childhood education, like all education, is a form of deliberate social control has been developed by Spodek (1973, p. 9). Giroux (1983, p. 326) has also stated that social control evolves from the ability of the dominant class to impose its ideology through the selection, organization, and distribution of school knowledge. Additionally, the merit of this review is supported by Purple's and Ryan's theory that all educational programs including early childhood programs, engage in moral education in which the norms and values are determined by the dominant community (1983, p. 267). Finally, McLaren's argument that no educational practice whether concerned with achievement, evaluation, or excellence is ever free of the social or institutional

contexts in which schooling takes place, necessitates the investigation of schooling as a cultural and historical process (McLaren, 1989, p. 163).

The cultural and historical course outlined in this review supports the need for research which uncovers the ideology controlling early childhood education today. If a democratic ideology is to become the dominant ideology controlling schooling, studies such as this study which examines whether or not a particular program reproduces, challenges, or restructures social inequities associated with race, gender, class and disabilities are necessary. Additionally, illustrating how a multicultural/anti-bias perspective influences the resolution of issues involving race, gender, class and disabilities will help determine the value of implementing an anti-bias curriculum.

Historical Development

Puritan Influence

The seventeenth century New England Puritans had very definite ideas about what young children should know. Spodek (1991) and Monighan-Nourot (1990) point out that a religious paradigm influenced education. The family was assigned the task of instructing and socializing children, but if the Puritan standards were not met, church authorities placed the children with other families.

of the household, the father had the responsibility for educating and catechizing the children. According to Morgan and Vinovskis (1986, p. 186), the belief that mothers have always been the primary socializers of children is not historically accurate. When fathers stopped attending the Puritan church in the second half of the seventeenth century, church authorities first turned to the minister or the local schoolmaster and eventually, although reluctantly, to mothers because they continued to patronize the church (Getis & Vinovskis, 1992, p. 188). It was then that women came to be viewed as the "natural" socializers of children.

Dame Schools

The Puritans believed young children were capable of learning to read, and programs of instruction were built around the belief that hope for salvation centered on being able to read and study the bible. "Dame Schools" usually held by an older women in her kitchen, supplemented parental instruction (Braun & Edwards, 1972, p. 81). The curriculum centered on learning the sounds of the letters so that short prayers and excerpts from the bible could be read independently. Children as young as three and four years old were taught to read so that they could begin to lead a proper religious life (Spodek, 1991, p. 2). The most frequently used text was the New England Primer,

published in 1690. The primer contained the theological ABCs, the catechism, questions about salvation, and a woodcut of the Reverend Mr. Rogers being burned at the stake while his family looked on (Braun & Edwards, 1972, p. 86).

Dame schools had a brief history. They declined along with the religious zeal which had created them as attention was directed toward exploring the frontiers of America and trading with the rest of the world (Braun & Edwards, 1972, p. 84). Education of young children moved back into the home until an interest was sparked by the scientific rationalism of the eighteenth century period of Enlightenment. As belief in man's capacity to build an ideal society replaced theological concerns and fears of damnation, and as beliefs in the inherently evil nature of mankind and of children in particular were replaced by beliefs in innate human goodness, there was a revival of interest in formal early childhood programs (Braun & Edwards, 1972, p. 86; Spodek, 1991, p. 3). Although the revival was brief, it was significant because it began a trend, which continues today, of developing compensatory programs for children the dominant class considers disadvantaged by their socioeconomic background (Getis & Vinovskis, 1992, p. 190). These programs have been most

often designed to ensure that the values and norms of the economically elite become part of the minority culture.

Robert Owen's Infant Schools

The revival, in the mid 1820s, was based on the philosophy of Robert Owen's infant schools. Like their earlier counterparts in Europe, these schools served children between the ages of two and four and were originally intended to enable poor children to overcome their family histories and become "productive citizens". However, middle class mothers soon insisted that the same educational programs be offered to their children. As a result, infant schools spread rapidly throughout the United States and Getis and Vinovski estimated that forty percent of all three year olds in Massachusetts were attending one of these schools by 1840 (Getis & Vinovskis, 1992, p. 190).

Owen believed that early education was needed to prepare children to live in an ideal society. His curriculum provided opportunities for motor play, music, dance and other sensory experiences, and utilized the child's past experiences as the basis for teaching. In accordance with the belief that human beings were innately good rather than evil, children were expected to learn right from wrong by becoming aware of the natural consequences of actions rather than through rewards and punishments (Spodek, 1991, p. 4). Owen's infant schools

and early thirties while there were still a significant number of adherents to the belief that young children should receive a formal education in order to become productive citizens.

Amariah Brigham's Influence

However, there was another significant paradigm shift in the 1830s when Amariah Brigham claimed that early intellectual activity diverted energy from the physical development of the brain and eventually resulted in adult insanity (Getis & Vinovskis, 1992, p. 190). His well publicized views led to a national movement against early childhood programs, and once again there was an emphasis on the importance of the mother in the socialization and education of young children. Infant schools were replaced by a home schooling program which was idyllically represented as taking place in front of the hearth at the mother's knee. The movement, known as "Fireside Education", grew from the belief that mothers were best suited to build the type of character needed to build a strong nation (Spodek, 1991). Monighan-Nourot (1990) questioned whether the ideal conditions of home instruction described by the advocates of fireside education actually existed for most children, but the belief that young children and women belonged at home led to the closure of most of the infant schools.

Friedrich Froebel's Model

A new effort to establish formal early childhood programs began in the latter half of the eighteenth century when private kindergartens based on models developed by the German educator Friedrich Froebel were introduced in America. According to Weber (1984, p. 33), Froebel was greatly influenced by the writings of Comenius, Locke, Rouseau and Pestalozzi. Reacting against the scientific rationalism of the eighteenth century, he developed a curriculum for young children which responded to the romanticism and idealism of the first half of the nineteenth century. The curriculum had strong religious overtones filled with mysticism and was designed to guide the children into a life of harmony and unity with god. It also contained a great deal of structure and teacher direction. However, it was the first curriculum planned specifically for young children and Froebel's influence was pervasive throughout the beginning of the kindergarten movement which spread across America during the nineteenth century (Braun & Edwards, 1972, p. 45; Weber, 1984, p. 33).

Froebel's desire for the unity of man, god, and nature was reflected throughout the curriculum. He viewed child development as a process of unfolding and felt his methodology guided the unfolding by exposing the child to specific materials and carefully orchestrated activities.

Balls, cubes, and cylinders which he called gifts, were designed to be handled by children in a prescribed sequence in order to teach form, numbers and measurement. Activities such as coloring, drawing, and sewing called "occupations" were designed to develop hand-eye coordination. Songs, stories and poetry were read to introduce the ideal of good behavior (Braun & Edwards, 1972, pp. 64-5). Proper use of the gifts and activities was expected to reveal universal truths which would develop the innate ability of the child to reach an ideal state of being. While the term self-activity was frequently used, Froebel's curriculum required little initiation on the part of the child who was expected to respond passively as his inner nature unfolded (Weber, 1984, p. 37). Froebel considered play the perfect activity to release the child's inner powers. However, it was teacher mediated play which, according to Monighan-Nourot (1990, p. 64), became the vehicle through which the child was manipulated to learn the patterns of civic morality and social behavior Froebel and his supporters thought appropriate.

The Kindergarten Movement

The kindergartens, designed for three to seven year olds, quickly gained popularity within the United States. Harvey Barnard and William T. Harris, both United States Commissioners of Education, Elizabeth Peabody and Mary

Mann, who wrote manuals on child care emphasizing social harmony by developing self-control in young children, and Susan Blow were all ardent supporters. They believed the curriculum would instill a moral foundation in preparation for attendance in the public school system (Getis & Vinovskis, 1992, p. 192, Weber, 1984, p. 44). In 1885, a separate department on kindergarten instruction was established within the National Education Association to facilitate the spread of the curriculum.

Unlike the infant schools, the kindergartens did not separate education from family life. Many encouraged teachers to make home visits in order to show parents how to raise their children and general meetings were held in an effort to have parents become involved in their children's education. At first, the majority of children attending these programs were from middle or upper class families, but as the movement gained in popularity, social reformers again viewed kindergartens as a way to correct the deficiencies produced by the "disadvantaged background" of the vast numbers of new immigrants. According to Monighan-Nourot (1990), the kindergartens soon took on the role of the "Americanization" of immigrant children who were growing up in the urban slums produced by the industrial revolution. When the move from farm to factory left no one at home to care for the children, reformers saw

the kindergartens as a way to start the child on the "right path" (Weber, 1984, p. 44). Public schools, and philanthropic and religious organizations opened kindergartens all over America, and they soon added physicians, nurses and social workers to their staffs. Settlement houses, churches, labor unions, businesses and the Women's Christian Temperance Union also established programs which, according to Spodek (1991, p. 5), reflected the concerns of the particular program's sponsors as much as they did Froebel's philosophy.

The kindergartens were the first comprehensive attempt by a group of lay people, with supporters across the country, to establish a national early childhood curriculum. The curriculum was also the first one which fostered a nurturing attitude toward child rearing and the first to emphasize the developmental level of the child rather than the teaching of reading (Weber, 1984, p. 38). However, the idea of human perfectibility inspired its formulation, and perfectibility was defined by a group of people who clung to the religious and moral principles inherited from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Weber, 1984, p. 47). Although humanitarian concerns guided their efforts, the curriculum was implemented without consideration of the beliefs or desires of the families whose children who attended the programs. It was,

therefore, an example of the deliberate social control Spodek (1973, p. 9), and Giroux (1983, p. 326) accused early childhood programs of perpetuating.

Darwin and Natural Selection

In the early decades of the twentieth century, there was a significant change in thought about working with young children. Darwin's theory of natural selection replaced the earlier metaphysical, deductive thinking that had guided educators. There was also a shift from a religious to a scientific paradigm, and the field of psychology began to influence and eventually control early childhood curricula (Weber, 1984, p. 103). By 1920, two theoretical formulations dominated thinking in the field of early childhood education. The first was that development unfolded with age so that both physical and behavioral changes followed an orderly maturational process. The second, developing from Darwin's theory of natural selection, was that intelligence was inherited and immutable (Condry, 1983, p. 5). These theories provided the basis for a variety of studies concerning the nature of human growth and learning which resulted in new curricula for early childhood programs. The kindergarten movement gained momentum and there was a rapid expansion of private nursery programs designed to provide "educational advantages" rather than custodial care (Condry, 1983,

p. 3).

Child Study Institutes

Within the same decade, the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Foundation administered by Lawrence Frank began to fund several university based research projects in child development and early education (Braun & Edwards, 1972, p. 156). The child study institutes, which established laboratory schools, often incorporated professional training and parent education. Frank was originally inspired by the work of Lucy Sprague Mitchell and Harriet Johnson. The two women had combined research and experimental education within the Bureau of Educational Experiments, which later became the Bank Street College of Education (Weber, 1984, p. 121). Frank's ability to organize and generalize the concepts of others and incorporate new knowledge as it became available, led him to sponsor five year renewable grants supporting a number of theoretical positions including the views of Hall, Gesell, Dewey and Freud (Weber, 1984, p. 122). Consequently, the curricula of the laboratory schools evolved throughout the twentieth century often incorporating various strands of psychological research with unrelated concepts. Weber used the analogy of a patchwork quilt and commented that programs were able to develop practices based on a variety of psychological

theories because there were few issues on which any two theories confronted one another (Weber, 1984, p. 178). During the first half of the century, objective child study, maturational theory, behaviorism, Dewey's democratic conception of education and psychoanalytic theory all contributed to the formation of new practices in both the kindergartens and nursery schools.

The child study movement's mission to make psychology and education scientific was originally led by G. Stanley Hall. Hall established child study centers with the purpose of uncovering the nature of the child through scientific observation rather than through the intuitive awareness Froebel had utilized (Weber, 1984, p. 48). Hall believed that educational programs should be based on the natural growth of children which could be understood through observation. He devised more than a hundred studies which used questionnaires to record observations of a particular aspect of children's behavior such as play with dolls. Additionally, he advocated a multidisciplinary approach to early education which took into account all aspects of development (Simmons, Whitfield, & Layton, 1989, p. 12). Hall also believed that child development retraced the stages through which the human race had passed and that heredity exerted a stronger influence than the environment on the final outcome. He therefore concluded that optimal

development would take place if free play programs without adult interference replaced Froebel's teacher directed curriculum (Weber, 1984, p. 50). Although his doctrine of evolutionary development was criticized as unscientific because it wasn't subject to direct observation, early childhood educators modified practices to emphasize free play and physiological development.

Hall's influence was extended through the first half of the twentieth century by Arnold Gesell whose laboratory school at Yale University was designed to observe the same children over an extended period of time. Gesell perfected Hall's data collecting methods. Gesell spoke convincingly about genetic predetermination which made the innate process of growth beyond control, although he acknowledged a reciprocal relationship between heredity and environment (Weber, 1984, p. 54). His observational studies led to the publication of norms of physical, emotional, and intellectual growth. While he pointed out the inevitability of individual differences, the norms were largely interpreted as indications of normal behavior for all children (Weber, 1984, p. 60).

Early childhood educators embraced Gesell's maturational data because it meshed with their basic framework of thinking. Froebel's analogy of development as similar to the growth of a plant made it easy to think of

growth patterns as a gradual unfolding and Gesell's work provided the satisfaction of operating within the realm of scientific thought (Weber, 1984, p. 59). Laboratory schools, similar to Gesell's, grew up in several other universities.

Additional research also contributed to a general acceptance of the idea that education should guide the unfolding of innate characteristics rather than attempt to mold children's behavior to a predetermined image. As private kindergartens and nursery programs became more common, there were increasing arguments over philosophical differences. Those who agreed with Susan Blow continued to support Froebel's rigid teacher directed curriculum, while Patty Smith Hill and others developed programs incorporating Thorndike's habit training. Other educators agreed with Alice Temple, Anna Bryan, Lucy Sprague Mitchell, and Harriet Johnson. These women felt the curriculum should be reconstructed to include Dewey's belief that the classroom should resemble a small community which would prepare children to participate in a democratic society. Although educators were also influenced by the work of Maria Montessori and the McMillan sisters whose programs were popular in Europe, the influence of these programs was not significant until later in the century.

The Influence of Behaviorism

Attempts to resolve the philosophical differences led to increasingly detailed record keeping, and in 1923, Thorndike published the Habit Inventory which explained learning in terms of stimulus-response bonds. The teacher was given the responsibility of reinforcing the desired responses which would eventually become habits by connecting the desired response to a pleasurable outcome. A new curriculum, based on Thorndike's Connectionism, was adopted by Patty Smith Hill in the kindergarten of the Horace Mann School, the laboratory school of Teachers College, Columbia University. The curriculum was soon adopted by many private nursery schools whose clientele felt the public schools were too lenient. These middle-class parents hoped that if their children learned to be compliant before they were exposed to public schooling, they would not be affected by the overly permissive kindergartens (Monighan-Nourot,1990, p. 72).

National Association for The Education of Young Children.

Patty Smith Hill's influence extended beyond the kindergarten. She founded the National Committee on Nursery Schools which eventually became the National Association for The Education of Young Children. The agency has developed a list of appropriate practices for early

childhood curricula and offers national accreditation of early childhood programs today.

According to Weber, (1984), Thorndike's influence was also extensive. It extended well into the sixties when early education was once more viewed as a way to improve society. Behavior modification, behavioral objectives and teaching machines were incorporated into many programs. However, while Thorndike felt education meant helping children fit the environment by strengthening or weakening innate tendencies, he did not believe that all behavior was completely modifiable. Thorndike agreed with Gesell's theory that intellectual ability depended to a great extent on heredity, and he urged different curricula for different classes and individuals based on ability (Weber, 1984, p. 72). He encouraged measuring both intelligence and achievement in young children and the readiness tests devised by his students were used in many kindergartens.

While the major focus of the laboratory schools, during the first half of the twentieth century, was to understand the nature of children's behavior, the schools were regarded as models and their materials, equipment, teaching practices and standards for evaluation were emulated in other programs. Hundreds of other children were studied and growth curves charted. While most of the observed children were from the mainstream families of

professors and students, the norms were generalized to all children. The belief in normal maturation led to an acceptance of limits set by genes and a disregard for environmental influences (Weber, 1984, p. 61). Measures were constructed to determine a child's stage of development; the concept of readiness became popular, and the terms maturation and readiness guided early childhood education.

Dewey's Influence

During the same era that behaviorism was emerging, John Dewey purposed that concrete, meaningful experiences formed and shaped intelligence. Neither behaviorism nor the introspection of Froebel were adequate to support the type of education he advocated. Another curriculum emphasizing learning by active participation was proposed (Weber, 1984, p. 95). Dewey rejected Hall's theory of fixed intelligence. However, he believed there was an optimal period of readiness based on chronological age when specific tasks such as reading should be incorporated into the curricula (Day, 1980, p. 50). Play became the task of early education. It was considered the natural activity of childhood, and also thought to be the self motivating, dynamic process which stimulated growth. Furthermore, the social nature of play was seen as an opportunity to encourage group cooperation skills, and Dewey and his

supporters saw the classroom community as a training ground for life in a democratic society. The materials, developed by Alice Temple and Anna Bryan at the laboratory school in the University of Chicago, were designed to help the children become self-directed critical thinkers (Weber, 1984, p.102). Dewey believed that these skills would enable the children to control their own destiny and become effective social reformers.

Following Dewey's philosophy, early childhood programs were designed to develop activities based on the child's interest and ideas. These activities were to create meaningful experiences that aroused curiosity, stimulated initiative, and developed problem solving abilities. New experiences added to previous ones were expected to lead to a growth in ability to deal with reality and undergo changes in thinking. As the reconstruction of experience became the goal of many early education programs, family life appeared to be the natural starting point, and the housekeeping center became a permanent fixture in many early childhood settings.

Freud's Influence

During this same period, the work of Sigmund Freud had a significant effect upon early education. Whereas Freud's position regarding nature or nurture was not clear (Weber, 1984, p. 119), he proclaimed that the first five

years of life were the single most important influence on personal development. Consequently, many early childhood educators incorporated his beliefs into the curricula (Weber, 1984, p. 111.). The psychic conflicts of childhood described by Freud became of concern to teachers, and play, discipline and creative expression were given added attention (Weber, 1984, p. 117). It became important for children to engage in individual play or loosely organized group play in order to express emotional needs and in order to enable the teacher to recognize signs of stress. Efforts to prevent adult neurosis led to the creation of extremely permissive environments where children were encouraged to express natural instincts. Free expression was determined to be the best means of reducing inner conflict. Play materials provided an outlet for feelings, and painting and drawing revealed unconscious urges (Weber, 1984, p. 118).

Dewey's and Freud's views moved early education in the direction Frank had felt appropriate. In 1937, in a speech to the National Conference for Nursery Education, Frank protested that previous curricula had ignored consideration of the child's needs and contributed to high levels of frustration and anxiety. He concluded that if the nursery school provided a nurturing, stable environment and if the adults responded with tolerance and patience to individual

needs, the children would become well- adjusted adults (Weber, 1984, p. 123). By the middle decades of the twentieth century, individual affective development became a priority (Weber, 1984, p. 120) and the concept of fixed intelligence was openly challenged.

Doubts concerning the validity of fixed intelligence had arisen by the third decade of the twentieth century (Condry, 1983, p. 5). Researchers such as Skeels and Dye had shown that enriching the environment had positive effects upon development (Condry, 1983, p. 6). There was also evidence that preschool experiences had a measurable effect on intelligence (Condry, 1983, p. 6). However, according to Goodlad, (1973, p. 4), the bias in an ideology of fixed intelligence and predetermined development was not seriously questioned by most educators during the first half of the century. As long as early childhood programs were meeting the needs of their vocal clients who were middle and upper class parents and children, the ideology was not challenged. Most of the programs were privately run and charged a fee which only middle and upper class families could afford. The few publicly funded programs had limited spaces and those were usually secured by parents, who by virtue of their own education, understood the system. More importantly, these programs often had admission tests which evaluated the "readiness" of the

child, and readiness was most likely achieved by previous exposure to the type of stimulation provided by middle and upper class families.

Day Care

While private kindergartens and nursery programs were serving middle class families during the first half of the twentieth century, an alternative system of full time custodial care was also developing. The preschool system had been formed in order to study child development, and it served primarily as an enrichment endeavor. Programs often operated on partial day schedules (Rosenthal, 1992, p. 317). Moreover, although many public schools had established kindergartens, in order to curtail expenses, and to serve large numbers of children, double sessions were introduced. This plan eliminated all the welfare work formally done by the kindergarten teacher and auxiliary staff (Braun & Edwards, 1972, p. 76). Furthermore, as the graded classrooms replaced the old ungraded village school, the opportunity for children under five to attend with older siblings was eliminated (Braun & Edwards, 1972, p. 77). Social service advocates began to develop new programs to serve their clients, and care and education appeared as separate institutions by the end of the nineteenth century. The institutions focusing on full day care continued to provide limited opportunities for social,

physical and cognitive growth. However, their primary purpose was to ease public conscience by providing a safe, nurturing environment for indigent children and children of working mothers.

Programs for those of lower economic status had begun to expand during the last decade of the nineteenth century. Settlement houses had been instrumental in establishing day nurseries in large cities so that working mothers had a place to leave their children while they received vocational training or found employment. The first day-care centers or day nurseries were usually supported by parents' fees or private charities, although state aid was obtained occasionally. The centers provided all day care from 6:30 AM until 9 PM, and the settlement workers tried to create a comprehensive day-care program including medical care. There was a temporary decline in service when Jane Adams successfully argued that day nurseries tempted woman to neglect children as they found employment outside the home, and many settlement houses stopped offering day care (Getis & Vinovskis, 1992, p. 196). Additionally by 1910, most states had adopted mothers' pension laws which provided a small stipend for impoverished mothers. Although the pension was not sufficient to support a family, full day nurseries lost

popular.

The controversy about breast versus bottle feeding also contributed to the temporary decline. Nurseries had accepted infants a few days old, but around 1912, the entrance age was raised to three year olds. Run by social workers who believed young children belonged at home, the nurseries were no longer a service for working mothers. They became stigmatized as a welfare service for poverty stricken families.

The belief that mothers should not work was overshadowed by the depression and World War Two. The depression created a need for women to help support the family, and the war created a need for women in the labor force.

During the depression, there was an unprecedented response by the federal government which led to the creation of emergency day care programs first under the Federal Emergency Relief Administration and later under the Federal Works Agency (Getis & Vinovskis, 1992, p. 198). Before the New Deal, there were five hundred daycare programs nationwide serving ten to fourteen thousand children. By 1937, there were nineteen hundred serving forty thousand children (Getis & Vinovskis, 1992, p. 198). According to Getis and Vinovskis, commentators on the federal day care system emphasized that the programs were not established

for the good of children but rather to provide jobs for unemployed teachers, nurses, cooks, etc. (Getis & Vinovskis, 1992, p. 198).

Day-care programs were recreated under the Lanham Act when women were again needed to support the war effort. Goodlad (1973) points out that these programs which were made available to children living near war related industries, met the immediate needs of the war industry rather than the children or their families. When the war mobilization efforts created full employment, the WPA disbanded the programs. Child-care centers were actually considered public works in war-impacted areas, but the programs were limited and the government stressed their temporary nature in order to encourage women to leave the labor market after the war. As service men returned from the war, women left the labor force. According to Lamb, Sternberg and Ketterlinus, (1992, p. 208), the "redomestication" of women was reinforced by the myth that traditional fathers supported their families, while traditional mothers devoted their time to their husbands and children. In families where this did not occur, experts warned that the children would suffer. While few families had been able to afford this life style, restoration of the traditional family became a national obsession in the forties and fifties. The dominant

ideology was so strong that according to Lamb, Sternberg, & Ketterlinus (1992, p. 208), no research was needed to document the harmful effects of non-maternal care. The majority of Caucasian children under the age of six years, spent most of their day at home. While minority children were probably placed in a variety of informal out of home situations, the prevailing racism eliminated documentation (Lamb, Sternberg, & Ketterlinus, 1992, p. 208)

Early Intervention and Compensatory Programs

However, concern about minority children and their families once again arose in the late fifties and early sixties when the Civil Rights Movement and the Woman's Liberation Movement helped focus attention on the extent and effects of poverty (Braun & Edwards, 1972, p. 176). As minority leaders became outspoken and inner cities became explosive, there was a growing belief that early childhood provided an opportune time to break the poverty cycle (Condry, 1983, p. 7). The effects of environmental factors upon the intelligence of young children were taken under consideration once again.

Environmental effects were uncovered by Piaget's research into children's cognitive development. His study implied that intelligence was not determined solely by heredity but rather that development, both intellectual and physical, depended at least in part upon experience

(Condry, 1983, p. 8). Furthermore, his research indicated that cognitive growth began in infancy and both the rate and direction of development were influenced by the environment (Weber, 1984, p. 154).

The possibility of environmental influences was also supported by the fact that research had shown the IQ scores of young children tended to be more variable than the scores of older children (Condry, 1983, p. 9). Although the variability was at first attributed to errors in test reliability of young children, Benjamin Bloom proposed that the effect of the environment was greatest during this period of rapid development (Condry, 1983, p. 8). Just as people achieved half of their adult height by age two and a half, half of an adult's intelligence was acquired by age four. The argument that environmental changes early in life were more effective than changes in later life popularized the idea of early intervention and compensatory education.

Efforts toward establishing early intervention and compensatory programs were also supported by the social-class differences research in the fifties and sixties. Evidence had been found in the beginning of the century that certain groups of Americans performed poorly on intelligence tests (Condry, 1983, p. 8). By the 1950s there was additional evidence that children from low income

families tended to perform poorly on many kinds of achievement tests (Condry, 1983, p. 8). Research on social-class comparisons expanded rapidly in the sixties and children from lower class families were found to be at a disadvantage in language and number skills as well as social skills (Condry, 1983, p. 10).

As a result of this research, in the early sixties, several projects such as The Tucson Early Education Model, the Perry Preschool Project and Gray's Early Training Project were designed to improve the socio-emotional and cognitive development of lower socioeconomic class children . Although the specific strategies for remediating deficiencies most effectively had not been determined, support from government and private funding encouraged a variety of programs differing in the age of the child served, the length of the intervention, the composition of the group, and the type of curricula. Programs were developed that served various aged children from birth through five years. Some provided intervention for a few months, while others were designed to continue for several years. Programs were devised for individual children, children and parents, and groups of children. Some emphasized free play and child centered activities while others stressed academic skills, especially reading readiness skills (Condry, 1983, p. 12). Early reports of

the success of these programs indicated significant gains in IQ scores, as well as positive effects on social and emotional behavior (Condry, 1983, p. 14).

By the mid-sixties, according to Goodlad (1973, p. 4), there was an active commitment to compensatory education for disadvantaged preschool age children. The migration of poor Black and Caucasian families from the South to the cities of the North and West and the migration of the middle and upper socioeconomic classes to the suburbs drew public and government attention to the vast numbers of children living in poverty. The civil rights movement coalesced demands for racial and economic equality, and President Kennedy promised federal involvement in aiding the poor (Condry, 1983, p. 17).

Head Start

When President Johnson declared a "war on poverty", the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 led to the creation of Head Start, the largest project for young children ever backed by the federal government. According to Condry, during the summer of 1965, more than half a million children were enrolled in more than thirteen thousand centers. The program involved forty-one thousand teachers, forty-six thousand nonprofessional aides and two hundred and fifty-six thousand volunteers (Condry, 1983, p. 19). In the fall of 1965, Head Start programs were continued on

a smaller scale as year-round programs. By 1967, two hundred thousand children were enrolled in full-year programs and by 1968, the percentage of children from low socioeconomic groups who were enrolled in preschool programs exceeded the number of children from the upper classes (Condry, 1983, p. 19).

While the quality of the Head Start programs varied, most contained an educational component designed to develop readiness skills, language skills and self-esteem, a health component including immunizations, medical and dental examinations, social and psychological services, and a nutrition program including a hot meal. Parent involvement as teacher aides and as participants in English and parenting classes was also part of a typical program (Condry, 1983, p. 19).

Early evaluations of the project indicated that the expected gains in academic achievement had not been realized. There were immediate but not lasting gains on aptitude and achievement tests. The widely publicized Westinghouse Report of 1969 indicated that children in full year programs scored higher on the Metropolitan Readiness Tests administered in first grade than did children from the summer only programs, but the evaluators did not feel the gains were significant. Gains in affective development were also insignificant by first grade (Condry, 1983,

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the gains were significant. Gains in affective development were also insignificant by first grade (Condry, 1983, p. 21).

During the same year, Jensen reviewed the findings of intervention programs for young children from low income families and concluded that compensatory education had failed to erase achievement variance among economic classes (Condry, 1983, p. 22). Additionally, the Coleman Report on Equality of Educational Opportunity, completed in 1966, had concluded that academic achievement was more related to family variables such as socioeconomic status and parent education than to measures of school quality. However, according to Spodek (1973, p. 17), the origin and continuation of Head Start was motivated as much by political considerations as by a genuine concern over poverty. The rising pressure from minority leaders and parents involved in Head Start programs and the enthusiastic reports about improved community resources and positive effects upon children and their families insured the continuation of Head Start as a government funded project. However, it became an experimental rather than an inclusive program, serving a smaller proportion of eligible children (Condry, 1983, p. 23).

Private Programs

While Head Start programs were serving impoverished children, there was once again a growing demand for early education programs from middle and upper-class parents. Research such as Piaget's study of early development and Benjamin Bloom's thesis that the first five years of life were the period of greatest rapid intellectual development, drew public attention to the importance of early childhood. Parents sought better ways to educate young children (Day, 1980, p. 50). Additionally, social and economic changes contributed to a need for early childhood programs. The feminist movement inspired young women to seek fulfillment through employment as well as through parenthood, and the rising divorce rate created an expanding number of single mothers who had to work outside the home. Furthermore, after several decades of rising standards of living, living expenses began to rise faster than wages and married women entered the work force to help support their families. During the seventies, nearly a third of the infants and preschoolers in the United States had mothers employed outside the home, and there was an increasing the demand for out of home care (Lamb, Sternberg, & Ketterlinus, 1992, p. 212). By the mid 1980s, more than half the mothers of infants and an even greater proportion of the mothers of preschoolers were employed outside the home. However,

Head Start was not designed for children whose mothers needed to find paid employment (Lamb, Sternberg, & Ketterlinus, 1992, p. 213), and the dominant ideology remained opposed to government assistance except in situations considered extreme. Therefore, as the demand for both educational and custodial programs grew, care and education were merged by private institutions offering full day programs for children ages six weeks old through kindergarten.

Curricula Changes

The curricula of both Head Start and private early childhood programs were gradually influenced by the assumption that a child's intellectual achievement and social development could be affected by the nature of his or her experiences (Weber, 1984, p. 154). The first Head Start programs had focused on developing academic skills through teacher directed activities, but as the idea of children constructing their own knowledge became more popular, the curricula changed. Intellectual growth as a constructive process had been proposed by Dewey when he defined learning as the interaction between the child and the environment. According to Dewey, the actively engaged child learned by physical and intellectual involvement with materials and situations in his/her immediate environment (Weber, 1984, p. 93).

Piaget's study supported Dewey's theory that growth occurred as the child interacted with the immediate environment. Piaget added that cognitive, emotional, and social growth began in infancy. Both the rate and direction of that growth was influenced by the infant's environment. As a result of his work, early childhood educators began to look at infant programs as an opportunity to assist infant development (Weber, 1984, p. 170).

Developmentally Appropriate Practices

As the concept of education influencing rather than merely supporting development became accepted, early childhood curricula began to reflect a child centered environment incorporating a developmental-interaction point of view (Weber, 1984, p. 170.) This trend has continued throughout the second half of the twentieth century. The interaction between the child and the classroom environment has become the accepted key to learning in early childhood programs. The developmental-interaction point of view has also become the standard the National Association for the Education of Young Children which has become the major accrediting agency of early childhood programs.

The Association can be traced back to the National Committee on Nursery Schools. It first met in 1925 when Patty Smith Hill invited twenty-five early childhood educators with various backgrounds to meet at Columbia

Teachers College. In 1926, the group became the nucleus of the National Committee on Nursery Schools which was renamed the National Association for the Education of Young Children in 1929 (Braun & Edwards, 1972, p. 149). Over the years, the association has become accepted as the authority on early childhood education in the United States, and its philosophy has reflected both developmental and environmental influences. Rather than specifying a specific curriculum, the association has outlined a detailed list of "developmentally appropriate practices" based on the premise that intellectual and socio-emotional growth are constructive processes (National Academy of Early Childhood Programs, 1991). Play, within a teacher constructed environment, has continued as the practice which enables the child to integrate new understandings with prior knowledge and to construct new meanings (Weber, 1984, p. 183). Play, as the primary mode of learning, had been advocated by Froebel. Dewey had stated that it provided opportunity for the child to reconstruct experience, and Piaget had added that play was the child's way of making sense out of the world. Today, the association advocates play as the vehicle through which the child develops linguistically, socially, physically, analytically, creatively and emotionally (Dimidjian, 1992, p. 13).

Jewish Early Childhood Education

The twentieth century also found the Jewish community immersed in the same problems the wider community was facing. The increasing number of single parents, and the rise of the dual career family created a growing need for child care among Jewish families, and the Centers became a logical choice. Originally created as social and intellectual meeting places for Jews in the mid-nineteenth century, Centers played an important role in the integration of the huge waves of Jewish immigrants who came to America in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Eventually the Centers moved to the suburbs following the migration of their upwardly mobile membership.

Child care had always been offered in some form at Jewish Community Centers. In the first half of the twentieth century, care was usually offered between 8:15 and 3:30 to correspond with the hours older children were attending school. By the second half of the century, care had been extended from 7AM to 6PM, and younger children, including infants were being accepted. In 1987, the Jewish Welfare Board reported that there were more than three hundred early childhood programs located in Jewish Community Centers across the country.

These programs were generally considered high quality programs (Livingston, 1989, p. 23). They tended to have low teacher-student ratios, significant parental involvement and innovative curricula. The daily routines were enriched with field trips to the police and fire stations, hospitals and museums. The programs also offered extended services including social welfare services and occupational therapy, as well as consultation with specialists in learning disabilities, speech, hearing, and vision. Screenings and referrals were available for developmental as well as psychological concerns.

However, the focus of these programs was not particularly Jewish. American Jews were preoccupied with becoming assimilated, and according to "The Best Practices Project" report, a report published by the Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education, boards of some Centers were "lukewarm if not hostile to establishing programs with a Jewish emphasis" (Cohen & Holtz, 1996, p. 7).

In 1984, the Commission on Maximizing Jewish Educational Effectiveness of Jewish Community Centers published a second report which stated that many Centers continued to emphasize nonsectarian rather than Jewish programs. The Commission argued that Jewish education should become the mission of Jewish Community Centers and asserted that the Centers had the opportunity to play a lifelong role in Jewish learning. The potential role of

Jewish Community Centers as places for Jewish education received further impetus because of the new concerns in the Jewish community about intermarriage, the success of assimilation and the future of the Jews as a viable community in North America.

In a 1995 follow-up report, the Commission stated that the ability to draw young families into a Jewish program through early childhood Jewish education was one of the most important roles of the Jewish Community Centers. The preschools offered the possibility of influencing both very young children and equally as important their parents. The report concluded that parents of preschoolers were especially amenable to advice from educational experts, were often immersed in a period of transition as Jews themselves, and with two or more children, were likely to spend close to ten years in direct contact with the Center's early childhood program.

The Commission's efforts led to a dramatic shift in the priorities of Jewish Community Centers. According to Cohen and Holtz, Jewish education became a major component in the mission statement of many Centers and there was a rapid growth in Jewish educational programs (Cohen & Holtz, 1996, p. 8).

Early childhood programs have continued to receive increased support from both parents and Jewish leadership.

While still supported by the general community, most register a majority of Jewish clientele. There appears to be a desire to provide a positive Jewish experience for Jewish children and the Commission's report appears to have made accurate predictions. Jewish leadership has found that quality Jewish child care can help affiliate marginally committed as well as observant families with the organized Jewish community. The involvement in Jewish day care has not only been found to have a positive impact on parents' Jewish identity and level of observance, but also to promote a lasting interest in Judaism in children (Holtz, 1996, p. 5-9). In a speech to a group of early childhood educators, Barry Cazan stated that early childhood is now recognized as the critical developmental point of Jewish identity and has become the most promising area of Jewish education.

However, Jewish early childhood programs face real challenges. Generally most Community Center based early childhood programs have a double curriculum. The Jewish component emphasizes the annual major Jewish holidays, Shabbat, and some Hebrew language. It suggests that the classrooms be decorated with Hebrew letters, holiday displays, pictures of Israel, and ritual objects. At the same time, a full secular curriculum based on appropriate practices, as defined by The National Association For The

Education Of Young Children, is expected to be in place. Finding staff who are knowledgeable in both early childhood practices and Judaica is extremely difficult. Usually, the director or a specialist must spend considerable time working with the teachers to help them prepare lessons that are Judaic in content and developmentally appropriate.

Continuing Issues

Unfortunately The National Association For The Education Of Young Children has not been able to eliminate the issues raised by critical theorists. In 1965, when federal money began flowing into all levels of schooling through Head Start and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, there was an expectation that educational institutions would compensate for deprivation, alleviate poverty, and end discrimination (Greene, 1983, p. 2). Head Start succeeded in focusing efforts on providing an enriched environment for impoverished children. However, the programs were criticized not only by those who doubted that preschool intervention could offset the effects of poverty but also by those who felt such programs interfered with parental rights and responsibilities (Lamb, Sternberg, & Ketterlinus, 1992, p. 212). They were also criticized by numerous critics who disclosed the ways in which schooling in general was controlled by a capitalist ideology which legitimized class distinctions.

As socioeconomic status and race became lumped together and minority children growing up in poor families were labeled "culturally deprived", objections were raised by minority leaders and critical theorists (Condry, 1983, p. 11). The cultural deprivation model had been accepted by social scientists and educators throughout the early sixties. Nevertheless, as the role environment played in early development was uncovered, and as critical theorists disclosed the role educational programs played in legitimizing class distinctions, the terms cultural deprivation and cultural deficit came under attack.

Programs were criticized for deifying the behaviors and values of white, middle class children and for implying that these behaviors and values should become the goals of other ethnic groups (Condry, 1983, p. 10). It was argued by researchers such as Paulo Freire (1983), Michael Katz (1975) Herbert Ginsburg (1972), that children from minority groups were not culturally deprived, but were growing up in a culture different from the dominant white middle-class culture. It was also claimed that the cultural deprivation model blamed the child who became the source of the problem rather than the victim of a society that had perpetuated inequality and racism (Condry, 1983, p. 11).

Furthermore, it was stated that programs designed to fix the child represented the dominant class's efforts to

encourage the child to adapt to his subordinate status rather than to attempt to change or improve his condition. Such programs were also accused of being a form of paternalistic social action which allowed minority groups to be controlled (Freire, 1983, p. 285). The criticism led to a flurry of attempts to develop multi-cultural curricula, but according to the critics, the problem was not solved.

In his 1937 speech to the National Conference for Nursery Education, Frank had protested that for centuries educators had attempted to mold children. The molds were designed to create children in the image prescribed by the dominant culture's religious, ethical, political, and economic ideas and to recognize social class lines (Weber, 1984, p. 123). This accusation, voiced more frequently as the century progressed, continues today. Kohlberg's conclusion that no matter what rationale is used to justify schooling, it has both explicit and implicit value laden objectives which reflect a particular ideology, continues to receive support from critical theorists (Kohlberg, p. 64). Spodek (1991, p. X1), Vallence (1983, p. 17), Purple & Ryan (1983, p. 267), and Apple & King (1983, p. 95) maintain that the teaching of norms and values has always been the function of schooling. McLaren (1989, p. 1X), Apple (1982, p. 17), Apple & King (1983, p. 95),

and others argue that the well entrenched values and norms of schooling continue to mirror the ideology of the dominant class and create the conditions which maintain social and economic classes.

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Chapter 3 explains the rationale for the selection of children and staff involved in this study. It also explains the rationale for the choice of methods and vignettes used in exploring the research questions.

The meaning of classroom events is formed through social interaction. Therefore in order to understand the social reality of schooling, it is necessary to study it in actual classroom settings (Apple & King, 1983, p. 90). By observing and interviewing the participants in classrooms and by exposing the ideological underpinnings which are embedded in both planned and spontaneous activities, the children's and staff's understanding of social reality is revealed. Examining situations which reflect issues of race, class, gender, and disabilities uncovers whether or not the resolution of these issues serves to compromise certain groups of children. It also reveals if a multicultural anti-bias perspective is in place and helps to clarify its effect.

One goal of this inquiry from a critical theory perspective is to understand the role an early childhood setting plays in creating or eliminating bias in the areas of race, gender, class and disabilities. A second goal is to determine if a multicultural perspective is successfully guiding the program and informing the ideology of the

children and staff. The data will be used to develop staff workshops which will increase the likelihood that a multicultural perspective is successfully guiding the informal curriculum. Both goals are achieved by answering the research questions asked in chapter one.

All six questions flow from both critical theory's and social cognitive theory's premise that social cognition is an interactive developmental process dependent upon experience. The questions are also based on the premise that context has a significant impact upon children's development, future expectations, and aspirations (Weber, 1984, p. 176). The first research question locates the data and identifies potential problems. The data obtained from the second and third questions provides a starting point for developing, implementing, and evaluating the multicultural curriculum. The fourth and fifth questions provide information about the effects of the multiculural curriculum which is currently in place. When a multicultural perspective is successfully guiding the program, the responses of the children will reflect an acceptance and appreciation of diversity. The sixth question provides a practical use for the data obtained in this study.

Both critical theory and social cognitive theory support developing a multicultural perspective by valuing the intrinsic worth of individuals (Spodek, 1991). The theories

also support the notion that the mission of educational programs should be based on democratic values (Edwards, 1986, pp. 149-150). Additionally critical theory and social cognitive theory postulate that children construct knowledge about self, others, social and moral relationships, and societal institutions based on their experience (Edwards, 1986, p. 3; Gibson, 1986, p. 10).

Sample of Children

The six classrooms of three and four year old children were chosen for several reasons. According to Derman-Sparks (1989), during the third year of life, children begin to notice ethnic and gender differences. They are learning color names and beginning to apply them to skin color. They also tend to begin to notice individual differences associated with physical disabilities. Derman-Sparks has found that by three years of age, children show signs of being influenced by societal norms and biases. They may exhibit prejudice toward others on the basis of gender, race, class, and disabilities.

By age four or five, Honig (1983) and Roopnarine (1984) have reported that most children engage in gender appropriate behavior as defined by prevailing social norms. They have also found that four and five year olds use racial reasons for rejecting children different from themselves and show discomfort when meeting or interacting with differently abled

peers. Assuming that these findings would apply to the children at the Center, I felt that multicultural issues were likely to arise with three and four year olds and that the resolution of the issues would reveal the nature of the multicultural perspective guiding the thinking and actions of the staff and children.

Secondly, children younger than three are unlikely to have developed the verbal skills necessary to express their feelings and perceptions. Most three and four year olds have developed a level of verbal skill which is easily and accurately understood.

Table 1 describes the characteristics of the children in the study.

Sample of Children

	3 year old males	3 yr.old Females	4 yr. old males	4 yr.old females	Total
White	23	27	25	23	98
Black	3	1	0	1	5
Hispanic	3	0	4	2	9
Asian	1	0	0	0	1
Native Am.	0	0	0	2	2
Receiving welfare	0	0	3	2	5
Receiving Center scholarship	6	7	11	6	30
Listed as Jewish by parents	20	16	17	18	71
First language other than English	1	1	2	2	6
Disabilities	0	1	6	0	7

Table 2 describes the characteristics of the staff in the six classrooms involved in the study.

Sample of Twelve Staff

	Lead Teachers	Assistant Teachers	Totals
Male	0	0	0
Female	6	6	12
Caucasian	4	5	9
Black	1	0	1
Hispanic	1	1	2
Asian	0	0	0
Native Am.	0	0	0
Jewish	3	3	6
First language other than English	2	1	3
Disabilities	0	0	0

Anti-Bias Curriculum

The anti-bias curriculum presently in place in the early childhood program at the Tucson Jewish Community Center is not a separate document. Instead, it is, as Gomez suggested (1891, p. 2) a perspective which is interwoven throughout the secular and Jewish curricula. (The secular and Jewish

curricula are written in notebooks located in each classroom.) The anti-bias curriculum has three components. The first is an educational philosophy which affirms that differences among people are to be respected and celebrated rather than feared; all people are to be treated fairly, and every person should have the ability to stand up for herself or himself, and for others, in the face of bias. This philosophy was formulated by the staff after reading Derman-Sparks (1989; 1992) and Hohensee (1992).

The second area encompasses broad themes such as celebrating diversity, developing positive self-esteem, family compositions, and confronting issues. The themes are woven throughout the four major units of the secular curriculum, "Me, Myself and I", "Me and My Family", "Me and My Community" and "Me and My Environment". These units are repeated in a prescribed sequence throughout the preschool, while the themes are chosen by the staff to meet the needs of their children. For example, family composition might become a theme if there is a divorce, death, adoption, or birth within a classroom.

The third component is comprised of teaching strategies which include suggestions about developing active participation, involving families, and using community resources.

Early Childhood Curriculum

The early childhood curriculum is reviewed at the beginning of the year with the entire staff. Once a month the lead teachers meet in small groups using the curricula to develop monthly plans. Throughout the year there are scheduled workshops to discuss and develop the curricula. Topics for these workshops are selected by the staff at staff meetings. Additionally, there is a curriculum committee composed of parents and staff. This committee chooses a yearly focus and helps to develop curriculum in that area. Over the past two years, this committee has put together a Jewish curriculum which adds a Jewish component to the themes in the secular curriculum. For example, there is a unit on the calendar in the secular curriculum book. There is also a calendar unit in the Jewish curriculum book which discusses Shabbat, the Jewish Holidays, and presents the days of the week and months of the year in Hebrew. Additionally, there is a unit on doing Mitzvot (good deeds) and Takun Olum (taking care of the world) which is used in conjunction with the secular themes of recycling and stopping pollution.

Yearly staff evaluations consist in part of a questionnaire filled out by staff. The questionnaire contains items which appraise the staff's appreciation of diversity, sensitivity to individual needs, and the ability to help children appreciate diversity.

Research Design

The research uncovers events in which issues of race, gender, class, and disabilities arise during scheduled activities including centers, teacher guided small and large groups, lunch, outside play and other special activities taking place in the three and four year old groups of children in the early childhood program at the Tucson Jewish Community Center.

In order to learn about the children's experiences involving race, gender, class, and disabilities, an ethnographic approach with the researcher as participant observer is used. According to Merriam an ethnography is a set of methods used to collect data. It reconstructs the participants' symbolic meanings and patterns of social interaction (Merriam, 1988, p. 23).

Both Spradley and Merriam state that observation is one of the legitimate methods for uncovering patterns of social interaction. The observations should serve a formulated research purpose, be planned deliberately, be recorded systematically, and be subjected to checks and controls (Merriam, 1988, p. 183). Thirty-six observations provided information about race, gender, class, and physical or mental disabilities. (Material which did not yield information about race, gender, class, and physical or mental disabilities was discarded.) These observations lasted

approximately thirty minutes. Out of the thirty-six observations, sixteen involved gender issues, ten included issues involving race, six encompassed class issues, and four involved physically challenged individuals. All thirty-six vignettes are reported in this study.

Interviewing is also a major source of qualitative data needed for understanding the phenomenon under study (Merriam, 1988, p. 86). Informal interviews as defined by Spradley (1980, pp. 123-124) are used in this study. Spradley defines informal interviews as occurring whenever someone is asked a question during a participant observation (Spradley, 1980, p. 123) Informal brief interviews with the staff usually took place during and immediately after an observed activity when it was felt conversation would not disrupt the class. The informal interviews were recorded as part of the observation and later transcribed. Since the staff knew the purpose of the research, they often discussed the issues which had occurred from a multiculural perspective. If I noted multicultural issues and the staff did not comment on them, I asked the question "Were you aware of any multicultural issues that arose while I was in the room?". This often stimulated additional comments from the staff. If it did not, I described the multicultural issue I had observed, and asked the staff to comment.

These brief interviews helped me to begin to answer research question three which asked about the staff responses and what they revealed about the staff's understanding of an anti-bias multicultural environment. Additionally the brief interviews provided access to the staffs' understanding of an multicultural, anti-bias perspective.

The study meets the four characteristics which Merriam listed as essential properties of a qualitative case study: It focuses on particular phenomena which arises in everyday practices. It is descriptive; the end product is a description of instances when issues involving race, class, gender, and disabilities appear in the three and four year old groups at the Tucson Jewish Community Center early childhood program. It is heuristic by providing insight into what is being transmitted as legitimate knowledge concerning racial, gender, class, and disabilities. It also reveals whether this knowledge serves to reproduce or restructure the prejudices that exist in society, and whether it might lead to the oppression of groups or individuals because of their identity. Finally, this study relies on inductive reasoning leading to generalizations formed by examining the data in context (Merriam, 1988, p. 13).

According to Spradley, ethnographic studies allow the researcher to investigate the acquired knowledge people use to interpret experience and generate behavior (Spradley,

1980, p. 6). This knowledge is both explicit and implicit and was uncovered by investigating the knowledge children and staff use to express their values, sanctions and expectations in circle time, in the centers, and on the playground.

The research is the first step in the process of insuring that a multicultural perspective is challenging and expanding how children interpret and participate in social relationships while attending the Tucson Jewish Community Center's early childhood program. The importance of developing a multicultural perspective in programs such as the Tucson Jewish Community Center early childhood program was articulated by Ramsey (1987a, P. 5) who found that the majority of early childhood programs are racially, culturally, and socio-economically homogeneous. According to Ramsey, classroom experiences must compensate for the social isolation of children who are growing up without the opportunity to have contact with people who are different from themselves. While there is a conscious effort to include children and hire staff with diverse backgrounds, approximately 70% of the children and 78% of the staff are Caucasian (Data obtained from January 1998 early childhood enrollment list and early childhood staff list.), and 70% of the children and 40% of the staff list Judaism as their religion on the Center Personal Information Inquiry.

Analysis of Observations

Analysis of the observations followed the process of qualitative analysis suggested by Merriam (1988). The observations were taped and the tapes were transcribed. The information in the transcriptions was then sorted and organized by topics according to vignettes containing issues of race, class, gender or disabilities. The resulting "case record" was then expanded to include my comments, questions, and observations. Merriam states that at this stage the researcher is holding a conversation with the data. This conversation served to isolate the data's most striking and important aspects.

The vignettes containing issues of race, class, gender or disabilities are retold in my findings. As patterns and regularities became apparent throughout the vignettes, categories were developed into which subsequent units of information were sorted. The categories included planned and spontaneous events, stereotypes, misconceptions, influence of past experience, willingness to include others, and self-concept. According to Merriam, these initial categories derived directly from observable data are used to organize the material (Merriam, 1988, p. 133). Once in place, concepts indicated by the data, but not the data itself, form additional categories (Merriam, 1988, p. 133). One new category in this study was the children's and staff's

positive or negative racial, gender, class and individual self identities. Another category became the presence or absence of a multicultural perspective indicated by a willingness to include or desire to exclude others when issues arose in activities. The final category was the presence or absence of a multicultural perspective indicated by the children's and staff's response to multicultural issues when they arose in class discussions or individual communications.

Merriam suggests a third level of analysis which involves making inferences and developing theory. The data in the final categories illustrated the effectiveness of the multicultural perspective which is presently guiding the program and informing the ideology of the children and staff. The data will enabled me to formulate staff development plans for the future with the goal of improving the educational program so that it encompasses a more effective anti-bias multicultural ideology and curriculum.

Researcher's Role_

I functioned as both participant observer and director of the program while collecting data for this study. Spradley defines the role of the participant observer as having a dual purpose: to engage in activities appropriate to the situation and to observe activities, people and the physical aspects of the situation (Spradley, 1980, p. 54). Previous to my

undertaking this research, I had often joined in activities in the classrooms so my role as participant was not new. My additional role as observer did not affect the behavior of the children since my behavior did not change. I did not take notes, but rather recorded the activities.

The staff knew about my research and agreed to participate in the study. Merriam (1988, p. 93) cautions that while informing the participants about the research reveals a wide range of information, the level of information is then controlled by the group members. Since it is also recognized that staff behavior was most likely affected by my presence because of my role as director, and because I felt it would be unethical to do otherwise, I decided to inform the staff about the study at its outset despite Merriam's forewarning. The issue of feeling the need to control information was discussed with the staff and everyone seemed comfortable with the notion that we shared a common goal of continuing to develop and improve our multicultural program. In fact, several staff made a point of letting me know when they were planning to discuss pertinent issues with their class so that they could be recorded.

While my position as director provided the motivation for this study, it also increased the likelihood of compromising internal validity. However, one of the assumptions of ethnographic research is that the reporting

and interpreting of data can never be completely objective. Internal validity is always limited by the researcher's theoretical position and biases (Merriam, 1988, p. 167). Merriam (1988, p. 170) suggests several strategies which increase validity and the following were incorporated into this study. My biases and theoretical orientation were clarified at the outset of the study. Multiple sources were observed and repeated observations of the same phenomenon took place. (Six classrooms involving one hundred and ten children and twelve staff were observed during circle time, on the playground and in the centers. Observations lasted approximately half an hour.) The staff was asked if the interpretations were plausible.

As director of the early childhood program, I have a vested interest in assuring that a multicultural perspective guides the program for three reasons. Foremost is my belief, supported by the research of Apple & King (1983, p. 89), that the first school experience has a significant influence on the attitudes and behavior of children because the social definitions internalized during initial school life are lasting. Adults are more likely to be committed to creating a better society for all people if they are encouraged to appreciate and embrace diversity when they are young. Spodek states that schools can either prepare children to conform to an existing social order or help them prepare for

a new social organization (Spodek, 1973, p. 9). I would like the program at the Tucson Jewish Community Center to help children prepare for a new social organization which welcomes diversity.

Secondly, as director of a program within the Center, I am expected to adhere to the mission of the Center. The mission statement includes the declaration that its programs will value diversity while promoting the continuity of Judaism.

Thirdly, in order to comply with the standards of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the early childhood curriculum must include practices which value diversity.

FINDINGS AND SUPPORTING LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This literature review examines the research studies relevant to my study. While critical theory and social cognitive theory provide the conceptual framework which drives this study, the review furnishes the knowledge base which supports the study's findings. This includes the research relating to the development of social cognition, the ways in which children construct an understanding of their identity and construct expectations of how individuals and groups know, feel, and behave (Ramsey, 1987a, p. 12). Furthermore, this review looks at the emergence of children's ability to identify with a particular group and to develop attitudes toward members of that group and other groups.

While a number of theoretical approaches have been used to study the emergence of children's attitudes, such as psychoanalytic or socialization theory, the scholarship which supports this study is grounded in a cognitive developmental perspective. This viewpoint regards knowledge as evolving through interaction with the physical and social environment rather than by direct biological maturation or direct learning of external givens from the environment (Kohlberg, 1987, p. 7). It assumes that development follows a predictable sequence, that knowledge is organized into units or stages which become more

abstract and complex over time, and that development takes place through interaction between the child and the environment (Edwards & Ramsey, 1986, pp. 8-14). It developed from the work of Piaget and incorporates social cognitive theory.

In addition to explaining how children and adults construct their understanding and expectations of how individuals and groups know, feel, and behave, social cognitive theory considers social development as evolving through a spiraling increase of knowledge about oneself and others (Ramsey, 1987a, p.12). As stated in chapter one, the rationale for choosing social cognitive theory is based upon the fact that it allows the researcher to investigate and understand children's construction of knowledge about self, others, social and moral relationships, and societal institutions (Edwards & Ramsey, 1986, p. 3). This research is based on Piaget's assumptions that affective and social development engage the same general processes as cognitive growth, and that cognitive, affective and social behavior are inseparable (Piaget & Inhelder, 1969, p. 158).

Much of Piaget's perspective on the development of social cognition has been adopted by social cognitive theorists (Leahy, 1983, p. XlV). Some researchers, such as Kolhberg, recognize social cognition as developing from a wide range of nonsocial cognitive skills including

classification, understanding of relationships such as more/less, equality/inequality, and role-taking skills. Others claim that the development of social and nonsocial cognitive skills are parallel (Leahy, 1983, p. 312). However, both groups of cognitive theorists are in agreement with Piaget's conclusion that all knowledge whether physical, logical-mathematical, or social is constructed through the processes of assimilation and accommodation (Ramsey, 1987a, p. 54). Additionally the researchers attribute primary importance to the cognitive capacity for categorization which enables children to make sense out of their environment (Brown, 1995, p. 154.). The theorists are also in agreement that the child plays an active role in the constant construction and reconstruction of social knowledge (Brown, 1995, p. 154.).

After discussing the research which uncovers the ways young children develop social cognition, this literature review examines children's responses to specific issues which involve race, gender, class, and disabilities. The findings from the study of the Tucson Jewish Community Center early childhood program are intertwined with this research in order to tell the story of life in the preschool. ___

Development of Social Cognition

Human beings have the capacity and need to simplify the amount and complexity of information available in both the physical and social world (Brown, 1995, p. 153) Simplification is accomplished through categorization which clarifies information by organizing a wide variety of facts into a limited number of classifications (Ramsey, 1987a, p. 57). Because of the vast amount of information available, social cognition, like other forms of cognition, is dependent upon the cognitive capacity for categorization (Brown, 1995, p. 154). Leahy and others have found that the development of social cognition is also contingent upon interactive experiences as well as levels of cognitive understanding. It is often tied to age related qualitative changes in thinking (Leahy, 1983, p. 311). As information is processed in new ways, changes also occur in the kinds of information viewed as relevant by the child.

According to Fischer, children's understanding of social categories grows slowly and gradually with important developments appearing in infancy (Fischer, 1984, p. 31). As Katz pointed out, before the child is able to define a social group, s/he must be able to discriminate between groups and learn which cues are relevant for group inclusion or exclusion (Katz, 1983, p. 43).

Fischer found that the ability to recognize at least two distinct groups begins in infancy with turn-taking, a skill that entails categorizing. He discovered that turn-taking occurs as infants respond by sucking when jiggled if they pause during nursing (Fischer, 1984, p. 28). By the end of the first year, infants have established turn-taking as a basic type of social interaction. They often try to feed whomever is feeding them in response to being fed (Fischer, 1984, p. 28), and often reply to an adult initiated conversation by using expressive jargon without actually saying words (Fischer, 1984, p. 29).

Katz (1987) also determined that children under ten months of age could distinguish between groups. She, like Ramsey (1987b, p. 61-62,) and Fischer, found that young children's initial classifications are based on those cues that are easily discernible. This led to her conclusion that because gender and race are visible, both are recognized by very young children, while religion and nationality remain vague until children are older. Katz's trip to China supported Fischer's finding that very young children do distinguish between groups. She found many of the infants made a distinction between racial groups showing stranger anxiety only to Caucasian not to Chinese strangers (Katz, 1987, p. 96).

By age two most children have developed the type of intelligence labeled representational intelligence by Piaget (1951, p. 53). They are able to construct conceivable solutions to problems mentally by carrying out possible action sequences in their heads (Wodsworth, 1989, pp. 51-52). Fischer reported that this cognitive ability enables preschoolers to consider others as independent agents and to use this knowledge to build categories which make sense out of people's actions or appearance (Fischer, 1984, pp. 28-30). Doctors, gardeners, and teachers are recognized as separate groups because of the work they do, or the way they dress. Social peer groups which define babies, girls, boys, and friends are also created.

However, studies involving two, three, and four year olds have confirmed that young children tend to sort in highly idiosyncratic ways often based upon personal preference (Shultz, 1983, p. 30). Shultz reported on early studies in which children two, three and four years old were able to sort thirty two cardboard figures which included four different shapes, two different sizes, and four different colors. The results indicated that 50% of the two year olds and 89% of the three and four year olds constructed classifications based on some sort of similarity, although they often changed criteria from one trial to the next. He also noted that children as young as

three had developed a beginning understanding of relationships. They were able to identify the plate which held the greatest number of toys no matter how the toys were arranged. These same children were able to make the plates equal by adding or subtracting toys (Shultz, 1983, p. 31).

These early attempts at categorization are often more inconsistent, undifferentiated, concrete, and idiosyncratic than adult classification schemes. They are formed on the basis of immediate information usually gathered from a single perspective (Ramsey, 1987b, p. 57-63; Phenny, 1987, p. 275). For example, Ramsey (1987b, p. 62) reported that after an altercation with one of his two Black classmates, a Caucasian child told his mother that "brown people always fight." He had linked two concrete pieces of information, the fight and his opponent's skin color, and assumed people alike in one respect must be similar in all respects. However, he was unable to consider that there was another Black child in his classroom with whom he didn't fight and that he also had fights with Caucasian children.

Another example occurred at the Tucson Jewish Community Center when two year old Rachel joined her age mates in a preschool class about two weeks after she was adopted from China. Sarah, a child in the class, immediately began referring to Rachel as "the baby". When

asked why, Sarah responded, "because she can't talk". Other children quickly picked up on this, and Rachel became known as "the baby" despite the teacher's efforts to convince the children that Rachel was their age. The children often tried to carry her and help her with many tasks she could do independently. Rachel never objected to her status and ended that school year known as "the baby". The class seemed to have reached an agreement that the category of babies included all children who didn't talk despite their age. Piaget and Inhelder (1969, p. 131) attributed this type of over generalization to the fact that two and three year olds are unable to categorize by two variables simultaneously. Instead, the children linked two concrete pieces of information, babies don't talk and Rachel didn't talk and therefore concluded that Rachel must be a baby.

Ramsey's and Katz's finding that non-tangible differences, such as language or minor age differences, are often too abstract for young children to comprehend also helps to explain why Rachel was considered a baby rather than a child who didn't understand English. While there were bilingual children in the classroom who may have been in a situation similar to Rachel's at one time, no child ever recognized that Rachel spoke another language. Ramsey also reported that when she interviewed preschoolers in

multilingual classrooms, no one mentioned language differences when describing classmates although the children consistently chose playmates who spoke their language (Ramsey 1987b, p. 30).

Aboud (1986) and Ramsey also found that two and three year old children have less of a need to adhere to consistent rules for inclusion than adults (Ramsey 1987b, p. 69). Aboud (1986) reported that when children dressed in Eskimo clothing, they assumed that they became Eskimos. Ramsey (1987a, p. 14) reported that her interviews with three to five year olds indicated most children believed everyone was inherently white and that brown people had been painted, sunburned, or dirtied. The children believed people would become white again once the problem had been solved. (Alex, a three year old at the Center also stated that people with dark skin were dirty. However, he did not seem to believe washing would remove the color.) (Alex's story is told on page 150 of this chapter.)

Another example of inconsistent categorization among young children involved Ezra, a three year old boy at the Center. While waiting in line to use the bathroom, Ezra correctly informed each child to use either the boys' or girls' room. Although he stated that mommies used the girls' room and that he would be a man when he grew up, he

also insisted that he would be a mommy some day when he was bigger.

While the research verifies that social cognition develops from a wide range of nonsocial cognitive skills including classification, it also indicates that in most societies, children are born into a situation where the significant cues for classifying and conferring status upon individuals has already been determined (Katz, 1983, p. 69). Therefore, children must learn those categories and rules prescribed by their society. For example, children in all cultures must learn in what ways girls in their society are expected to act differently than boys, and how the roles of teachers and students are defined. Thus, an important component of early learning is first to develop the ability to recognize which perceptually distinctive cues, such as age and gender, have social significance (Katz, 1983, p 42). The second step is to understand and evaluate how these attributes are connected to privilege and power (Derman-Sparks, 1989, p. 1X).

Leahy pointed out that the ways in which attributes are utilized in the stratification system- for example, adults have more privilege and power than children although the elderly normally lose power, is often recognized by three year olds. They frequently reflect in their conversation and play society's stereotypical biases

(Leahy, 1983, p. 322). One particular vignette recorded at the Center for this study supports Leahy finding and also illustrated how children actively come together to create and challenge gender meanings. On this occasion, the children were engaged in centers around the room. Anne, age three, was overheard saying "Yes we can!" as she left the pretend center and found the teacher. Anne stood in front of the teacher, hands on her hips and stamped her foot as she said: "We girls have been tryin' to be doctors for years and the boys keep telling us 'no no no', and we're not going to let them tell us that no more. We have just as much right to be doctors as they do. We girls have worked too long to be treated like this." The teacher asked Anne if she could use her words to tell the boys how she felt. Anne went back to the pretend center and said: "We girls can be anything we want. We can be doctors and nurses." The boys looked up and Arum handed her the stethoscope. The children went on playing without further conversation about gender.

While Anne easily rejected the attempt to limit her behavior because of her gender, another Center vignette involving Ben and Gabe, members of one of the four year old classrooms, illustrated the dilemma children face when the social pressure is too great to defy. The children were sitting around a table eating lunch when Rebecca took a

Barbie doll out of her backpack. Gabe reached for it, but was quickly reprimanded by Ben who informed Gabe that he shouldn't play with Barbie dolls because "Barbies are nasty." Ben went on to say that he hated girl Barbies because he didn't like girls. Gabe handed Barbie back to Rebecca and sat quietly waiting for Ben's approval. When Rebecca chimed in with the fact that she had a Ken doll, Ben was asked if girls could play with Ken. Ben replied "No.", but Rebecca answered "Yes, yes I can. I have a Ken doll at home." Rebecca continued to sit at the table playing with Barbie while Gabe watched. The teacher asked if boys could play with Ken. Gabe appeared to be nodding when Ben replied: "No, boys don't play with dolls." Gabe looked away and didn't respond. The teacher later reported that she felt Gabe recognized that he was caught in a dilemma. He could play with dolls like Barbie or Ken or be befriended by Ben, but he couldn't do both. She felt he was close to tears so she changed the nature of the conversation. The event, however, demonstrates the effect of social pressure.

In conclusion, researchers have shown that children age three years and older are able to form their own social categories, usually based on tangible visual cues. They are also able to learn those categories and rules prescribed by their society. While children show evidence

of beginning to learn common assumptions about groups within the social environment, they are more attentive to situational information (Ramsey, 1987a, p. 15, Ross, 1981).

However, there does not seem to be consistency about which attributes are most salient for young children. Brown (1995, p. 122) found ethnicity dominated over gender and class, Edwards & Ramsey (1986, p. 37) reported that age/size and gender appeared most significant, while Katz (1987b, p. 43) found gender and race most meaningful. Thorne's experience led to the conclusion that age and then gender were the social categories most highlighted in a child's day (Thorne, 1995, p. 34). Nonetheless, there does seem to be agreement that beginning at age three, children are able to categorize according to ethnic and gender attributes. Class and disabilities, while less familiar, are also used as social groupings.

Gender Issues

The majority of vignettes recorded at the Center were concerned with gender. They seemed to fall into two categories comprised of events involving gender identity of self and the labeling of others, or events involving socially constructed meanings of appropriate behavior, dress, choice of activities and toys. Gender identity as defined by Edwards and Ramsey refers to an individual's biological sex (1986, p. 59). It is central to children's

self-definition because it allows them to classify themselves and everyone else into two basic groups. According to Edwards and Ramsey, children have acquired gender identity when they understand that they will always be male or female. Edwards and Ramsey enumerated three stages all children go through before they are able to construct gender identity in full. The first is learning to label people by gender. Katz (1983, p. 48) listed two interrelated cognitive aspects of this stage. The first involves the application of the correct gender label to oneself and the second concerns the ability to differentiate other persons according to their gender. While the two components probably develop concurrently, Katz concluded that differentiation of others is observable at an earlier maturational level. According to Thorne (1995, p. 60) and Katz (1983, p. 48), the knowledge that someone is a boy or a girl is often articulated around the age of two, but gender is attributed to irrelevant factors. Both the factors and the gender label itself may change. Edwards, Ramsey and Katz found that hair length and clothing were the features used most often by two and three year olds to determine the gender of others. Even when looking at anatomically correct dolls, children under four tended to ignore genitalia.

Edwards' and Ramsey's conclusions were supported by the following observation conducted for this study. It was center time and David, a three year old, was wearing a cape while he built with blocks. He ran around the structure he had built, pretending each block was flying before adding it to the others. The following conversation took place:

Teacher: "David, who are you?"

David: "Superman".

Teacher: "How did you get to be Superman?"

David: "Because I am a boy."

Teacher: "Can girls be Superman?".

David "No." while continuing running.

Teacher: " Are there other differences between boys and girls?"

David: "Boys wear capes."

Teacher: "Anything else?"

David: "Boys have noses."

Teacher: "I can see that you're being careful not to bump into anyone. Please continue to be careful when you run."

This vignette followed a staff workshop about gender bias. During a brief interview, the teacher reported that she wanted to explore her children's understanding of gender. She felt that David's response was typical of most of the children at the beginning of the year. While they were

able to identify themselves and their friends as girls or boys, they used dress, names, and hair as criteria rather than genitalia. She felt they were aware of male and female anatomy since they all used the same bathroom which was open to the classroom. She then recalled an earlier incident when a staff who had always worn her hair in a bun, took out the bun during nap time. Her hair was shoulder length. Mike had been watching and proclaimed that Nancy looked like a girl. Nancy had been surprised by his comment and had asked what he meant when he said she looked like a girl? She recalled saying that she was girl. Mike had disagreed and repeated that Nancy was a boy adding that he knew she was a boy because she had short hair and was taller than his other teacher. The teacher did not recall any further conversation. Edwards and Ramsey report that children under four label the gender of paper dolls more easily when the dolls are clothed than when the dolls are naked because they focus on only one dimension of a problem at a time and clothing and hair length are more visible than genitals in our society. Similar conclusions were reached by Shultz (1983), Ramsey, (1987b, p. 57-63), and Phenny (1987, p. 276) when they investigated children's first attempts at categorizing.

I asked the teacher if the workshop on gender bias that she had referred to influenced her thinking. She

stated that it had increased her awareness of gender bias in children's books and television. She planned to include songs and stories such as "Free to be You and Me" because she was sure attitudes were formed at this age and that she could influence how children viewed themselves and others. Her story not only provided an example of gender identity development, but also provided further evidence of the importance of having a multicultural curriculum which provided strategies for managing gender issues among young children.

Edwards' and Ramsey's (1986, p. 60) second stage in construction of gender identity is gender permanence-knowing that people remain male or female throughout their lives. Kohlberg, along with other cognitive-development theorists, postulates that gender constancy is not fully developed until children reach the age of five or six. Ezra's story told on page 109 supports the theory that even though three year old children may use the correct gender label, gender constancy may not develop until they are older.

The third stage in constructing gender identity involves understanding that gender is defined by anatomy, not hair or clothes. According to Edwards and Ramsey four year olds know about the anatomical differences between the sexes, but they do not understand that genitalia are the

one consistent defining feature of gender. Mike's story about Nancy on page 115 provides an example of children relying on non-critical attributes to define gender, while the following vignette supports Edwards' and Ramsey's claim that four year olds may not grasp that genitals define males and females. A group of four year olds were sitting in circle discussing a story they had read when Nathan used 'he' instead of 'she' as he talked about one of the characters. He was quickly corrected by Justin, and the following discussion took place.

Teacher: "What is the difference between boys and girls?"

Nathan: "Boys have short hair."

Drew: "Boys don't wear dresses. They wear pants."

Abby: "Girls wear lipstick."

Brandon: "But boys wear lipstick too- to keep their lips soft."

Justin: "No, that's called chapstick."

Betsy: "Girls wear earrings and necklaces."

Teacher: "Anything else?"

Michelle: "I'm going to sleep over Abby's house."

The teacher called the discussion back to the book and there was no further talk of gender. When I met with the teacher later in the day, she said that she had asked about the difference between boys and girls to relieve Nathan of the pressure of not knowing the correct pronoun. She said

she was surprised the children hadn't mentioned genitals because earlier in the year they had all gone to see the urinal in the boys' room and had discussed why boys used one and girls didn't. She said she planned to follow up with more discussion.

The next vignette indicated that at least some of the four year olds were aware and curious about genital differences, but still may not consider genitalia the critical characteristic of gender. In another group of four year olds the teacher had chosen to read a book about body parts during circle after several girls returned from the bathroom with wet clothes. They told her their clothes became wet when they had tried to urinate standing up. She introduced the book by asking: "If your male raise hand", and then "If your female raise hand". The children responded quickly and accurately. She then said "I'm going to trick you. How many of you pee?" There was a lot of laughing as the children raised their hands. She then asked if lions peed and everyone said "yeah". The conversation continued:

Teacher: "The scientific word for that is urinate. Let me hear you say that."

Children: "urinate"

Teacher: "Girls urinate from little tiny hole inside their vagina; boys urinate from a little hole inside their penis."

There was lots of laughing and Kevin asked if boys were born with little balls.

Teacher: "Yes, and those are called testicles."

Adam: pointing to his throat, "Boys have a ball here."

Teacher: "That's called an Adam's apple. Why do you think just boys have them?"

Adam: "Because when Shai sings it goes up and down."

Teacher: "Boys and girls have Adam's apples. See, here's mine. When boys have to pee they stand up, and when they have to poop they sit down."

Wes: "And every time girls sit."

Teacher: "That's right. How come?"

Jake: "Because boys have something that sticks out."

Teacher: "That's right, boys have penises, and if you have something that sticks out, your pee won't get on you, but if you don't, it will."

Sofia: "Girls get breasts."

Teacher: "That right."

Adam: "My daddy has a beard."

Teacher: "What makes us go to the bathroom?"

Kids: "Food, when you drink it turn into pee."

Teacher: "Urine"

Ben: "And when you eat it turns into poop."

Teacher: "Feces, we'll talk more about our bodies tomorrow. I can see that you are very interested."

A brief interview took place during lunch. The teacher reiterated that she had planned this event because the girls had come back from the bathroom with wet clothes. She added that she had noticed that the children were curious about anatomical differences and spent a lot of time giggling over words connected to genitalia and bodily functions. She also noted that it was only recently that words like penis-head and butt-head seemed to become part of the children's vocabulary. She hoped that the class discussions would satisfy their curiosity as well as increase their knowledge. She planned to continue the discussion by introducing Mr. Roger's song "Boys are fancy on the outside". I started to suggest that next time she might let the discussion flow from the children's comments rather than direct it herself, but she interrupted and said that she wanted to end the wet clothes. On the one hand, this teacher took advantage of a teachable moment and allowed the children to dictate the curriculum. On the other hand, she redirected the discussion to suit her agenda rather than allow the curriculum to emerge from the children's interests in the difference between males and females. In any cases this vignette shows that four year

olds are able to recognize anatomical differences and that the teacher's multicultural perspective will influence how she handles situations involving gender.

At the Center, the younger children are downstairs while the four and five year olds are upstairs. Although the staff consistently reported that the flight of stairs became the dividing point those who were aware of anatomical differences and those who seemed oblivious, the accuracy and range of knowledge among the four year olds varied greatly as the next vignette illustrates. The teacher had decided to use circle time to tell the children that she was pregnant. She began by telling them that something special was going to happen in her family. One of the girls quickly guessed that she was going to have a baby. The teacher said, "Yes", she had a baby growing inside her. Lindsay raised her hand and stated that she knew how babies were made. She then went into an elaborate description about fish swimming to eggs inside a mom's tummy. Jessica added that she too knew where babies came from; mommies and daddies made them when they were "sexing". The teacher explained that the baby wasn't really in her tummy, but growing in something called her uterus. Mikey raised his hand and said, "I didn't grow inside my mommy's tummy. I came out and then I got a mommy." The teacher commented that there were different

kinds of mommies. Katie raised her hand and said that she was Indian. The teacher responded: "Yes you are." Amanda added: "I know how babies are made but mommy said it's something we only talk about at home. She then asked if the teacher's baby was a girl or boy? Roman said they would have to wait until the baby was born to find out. Richard joined the conversation and stated that it would depend on whether the X or Y chromosome was in the baby. The teacher asked him if he'd like to explain chromosomes to the class; he shrugged "No.", and the teacher ended the circle.

I met with the teacher during lunch and we discussed the children's comments. It was clear that the children had had previous discussions about having babies and that the knowledge they each had constructed was very different. We talked about how the teacher might try to affect Jessica's knowledge about "sexing", Amanda's belief that "It is something we only talk about at home.", Richard's interest in X and Y chromosomes, and Mikey's feelings about adoption. The teacher added that this was the first time Katie had mentioned her race. She felt it was a positive comment and was glad Katie had the opportunity to tell the class. We both agreed that there was a wide range of knowledge among the four year olds. We also agreed that their curiosity and openness provided the teacher with the

opportunity to influence their thinking about gender, adoption, and racial issue. By age four, they are better able to engage in representational thought and may be able to better focus on characteristics which are not always visible. At this time, there is also a wide variety of interest and knowledge surrounding gender issues and birth issues.

Researchers report a high frequency of gender issues among young children. According to Maccoby (1988) this is to be expected considering its predominance as a social category in just about every language and culture. As children master gender identity, they also acquire information about what things constitute gender appropriate behavior. Katz lists three possible causes for this acquisition (a) the salience of gender for adults; (b) the redundancy of sex-typed cues; and (c) the differential social and physical environments of male and female infants (Katz, 1983, p. 50). Katz (1979) found that information relevant to gender is first shared at birth and is enormously redundant and over determined throughout one's life span (1979). As she points out, the first words a baby hears are "It's a boy." or "It's a girl." and from that time on, adults respond differently to the child as a function of gender.

In one of her studies, the same 3-month-old infant was introduced to non-parent adults with either a girl's name, a boy's name or no name and therefore, no gender information. In subsequent play activity, the adults used a doll more frequently when they thought the child was a girl. They also exhibited considerable discomfort when they were given no gender information. The adults later said they assigned a gender to the infants in this last group using such cues as firm grip and absence of hair for boys, and cuddliness and soft skin for girls.

Katz found that the frequency of encounters having gender related expectations increased as the child grew older. Both direct adult input and treatment as well as the child's repeated observations of adults and children in his or her social environment became increasingly pervasive. (Katz, 1983).

Observations at the Center revealed that issues involving 'appropriate' gender related behavior were plentiful. They occurred as a result of both adult input during teacher directed activities and children's comments and observations during child centered activities. Additionally there were three vignettes where the adult's response revealed that the adult had adopted gender stereotypes. Two of these vignettes were initiated by parents. In the first vignette, Cassie, a four year old

who generally enticed her parents to comply with her wishes reported to her father that Rob, a boy in her class, had hit her. She showed him the "ouwie" as evidence. The next morning dad appeared in my office. He began by stating that he knew children had disagreements and that they often didn't mean very much. However, he questioned whether or not I thought it was time the boys and girls were encouraged not to play with each other? He went on to say: "After all, boys liked to play rough and girls should learn how to play like young ladies." When the staff in Cassie's room were told about this conversation, they said they were annoyed and not surprised. They were annoyed because they felt Cassie was manipulating this situation as she had many others and that she, rather than Rob, had started the altercation. They felt this was a case of a parent trying to protect his child without expecting her to take any responsibility for her actions. However, they were also upset because they didn't feel it appropriate to separate the children by gender, but weren't sure how they could influence dad's thinking. They were intimidated because he was a powerful religious leader in the community.

The second event initiated by a parent presented even greater conflict for a different group of staff. The parents of Matthew, a four year old, were concerned that he was spending too much time involved in "feminine"

activities. They asked the staff to keep him out of the pretend center and to make sure he didn't dress up in girls' clothing. The staff came to me to report that they did not feel they could comply with the request without compromising their belief that children should be allowed to make choices. They were in agreement with Edwards and Ramsey that the task of constructing gender awareness and sex-role knowledge belongs to the child, not the adults who care for him (Edwards & Ramsey, 1986, p. 59). They felt that experimenting with gender roles and dress was age appropriate for their children. However, they were intimidated because Matthew's parents were relying on the advice a psychologist whom they had consulted.

After much discussion in both cases the staff opted to comply with the parents' requests, at least in part. In Cassie's case they encouraged her to sit next to girls, but said nothing if she interacted with a boy. They did however, continue to try to help her take appropriate responsibility when conflicts with other children arose. In Matthew's case, the staff tried to offer alternatives whenever he gravitated to the pretend center and attempted to shorten the time he dressed in feminine clothing. However, they were unwilling to make an issue of his choices. This was okayed by his parents, and no further action was taken. In both cases the situations came to an

end with the end of the school year. Both children went on to other school settings, Cassie to first grade, skipping kindergarten and Matthew to kindergarten in his local public school.

The staff involved in these two vignettes reported that they felt parent assumptions about gender roles, rather than particular interests or needs of the individual child, were the issue. At this point, they did not feel they were in a position to change parental expectations. However, in a group discussion they commented that the vignettes bolstered the need for a strong muticultural program which challenged stereotypes and which supported staff decisions even though they might be unpopular with the parents. Without this type of program, they felt they might have acquiesced to the parents' requests and kept Cassie away from boys and Matthew out of the pretend center entirely. They felt that there were other instances where they would be comfortable challenging parental requests.

The third story is an example of staff bias influencing a decision involving gender. It illustrates how an adult bias may be so strong that it overrides all other considerations. In this vignette, a mom had brought in gifts for the children. She brought in enough Frisbees for all the boys, and shoe bows for the girls. Sara reached for a Frisbee and the teacher told her: "No, they are for the

boys. You get to have the bows." Sara started crying and put the bows back in the box. Later in the day the teacher was in my office to ask about something else, and I asked her to recall the Frisbee incident. She said she felt badly for Sara but wasn't sure what she could have done. I asked her what would have happened if she had let Sara have the Frisbee. She replied that then one of the boys would have gotten bows and would have been unhappy, and she was worried about what his parents would think when he brought them home. I asked if she were sure all the boys would choose Frisbees. She said she supposed it was possible that one of the boys with a sister might have been happy with the bows but she doubted it. I asked if she were uncomfortable with her decision. She said that she felt she was in an awkward position because the mom was in the room, and she didn't want to appear ungrateful. I asked her about the message Sara got from this event. She replied that Sara would unfortunately learn that boys got to play with active toys like Frisbees while girls were supposed to look pretty. On the other hand, she felt Sara would also learn you couldn't always have what you wanted. The teacher recognized this event as a gender bias issue and was feeling uncomfortable talking about it. I asked her if there was anything we could do to prevent a reoccurrence of this type of incident. She volunteered

that she'd check with parents before hand and inform them that gifts should not be brought in exclusively for boys or girls.

These three vignettes are probably representative of many others which took place at the Center. They confirm Katz's findings that children are bombarded with direct adult input and treatment which often perpetuates gender stereotypes.

There were also vignettes initiated by the staff which illustrated the staff's attempt to broaden the children's perception of gender roles and to eradicate stereotypes. One example occurred after a staff meeting during which the staff had been discussing the research which showed that the block center was a good place to build logical thinking skills. The research also indicated that in preschools and kindergartens, boys gravitated to the block center while girls tended to be attracted to housekeeping corners and doll areas (Thorne, 1995, p. 57), and the staff concurred. The next morning, when the teacher noticed that there were only boys in block center, she requested that her assistant ask all the boys if they'd like to go outside and color with chalk. They left eagerly, leaving only girls in the room. The teacher then asked all the girls to join her sitting on the rug. She announced that all centers except the block center were closed. Libby said: "Let's go to

pretend center." The teacher said: "No, only block center is open." The girls remained where they were, looking at the teacher with puzzled expressions since she had never done this before. The teacher then went over to the blocks, sat down on the rug and began to move them about. She invited the girls to join her. All five came over to the blocks. Libby suggested to Corrie once more that they go the pretend center, but the teacher repeated that only the blocks were open. The following conversation took place:

Libby- Let's make a house.

Sarah- This can be the bedroom.

Libby- Here is the kitchen.

Corrie glanced over at the girls but continued to build her own tower with the blocks. Libby then got round cylinder blocks.

Libby- Here is the mommy and daddy.

The girls stopped building and began playing house. Libby was the mother and moved the "mommy" block as she spoke. Sarah was the daddy and controlled the daddy cylinder.

Teacher - What happens if it rains?

Sarah- We need a roof.

Miranda used three blocks to build a roof and said it was a sukkah. (A sukkah is temporary structure used during the Jewish holiday of Sukkot to commemorate the shelters the

Jews built in the desert during their treck from Egypt to Israel.) Libby then found tissues, removed the blocks and covered the "rooms". The girls continued to play house until the boys came back.

Once everyone was settled in the classroom, I asked the teacher to step outside and we briefly discussed what had happened. The teacher felt that Libby had set the tone and the others had followed. She felt that she wanted to expose the girls to block building but wasn't willing to force them to build anything in particular. She supposed that if they chose to play house with the blocks that she should accept their choice, at least they built rooms with the blocks. However, she did find it interesting that they turned the block center into a pretend center, and as had been noted in the literature, the girls tended to build out, making rooms and roads while the boys tended to build up turning blocks into towers, and roads with bridges, etc.

In the following vignette, the teacher made a conscious decision not to attempt to change the child's perception. Richard and several other children were building in the block center. Richard announced he had built Noah's ark and he would be Noah. He looked around at the others in the block center and said that God had to be a boy and Mrs. Noah was a girl. The teacher asked Richard if God had to be male. Richard said "Yes" and added a

block. The children continued to construct the ark until they were told it was time to go outside. No one was ever picked to be God or Mrs. Noah and there was no further discussion.

When the class was walking to the playground, I asked the teacher to talk about Richard's comments. She responded that she had found it amusing and that Richard obviously felt God was male. She added that since it was his belief and it didn't affect anyone else, she didn't feel that she should question him. On the one hand, the teacher's response indicates a respect for Richard's beliefs. However, her response may indicate a need for additional staff training if a multicultural perspective is expected to guide the program and become adopted by the children.

In conclusion, events involving gender self-identity and gender labeling of others occurred among the three and four year olds at The Tucson Jewish Community Center preschool. Events involving socially constructed meanings of gender which included appropriate behavior, dress, choice of activities and toys were also recorded. The events were initiated by both the children and the staff and reflected both positive and negative biases. Some of the events such as the one involving David and the cape

(p. 115) and the one involving Libby (p. 130) and the blocks indicated that the staff involved in the vignette were expressing an anti-bias, multicultural perspective as defined by Derman-Sparks (1989), Ramsey, (1987a, p. 3). Other vignettes such as the one involving the Frisbees (p. 128) and the one involving Richard (p. 132) revealed a need for additional staff training if an anti-bias, multicultural perspective is to guide daily actions.

Ethnic Issues

While the sixteen gender stories dominated the vignettes, there were ten vignettes involving ethnicity. Ethnic awareness as defined by Aboud refers to a conscious recognition of ethnicity (race, religion, skin color, language) in individuals and groups. For example, if a North American child is able to correctly identify a photo when given the labels Black, American Indian, Chinese or White, he or she has developed ethnic awareness (Aboud, 1988, p.6). Ethnic self identification as defined by Aboud is the description of oneself in terms of a critical ethnic attribute such as language, skin color, or religion (Aboud, 1987, p. 32).

While membership in the Community Center and preschool is open to all people of all faiths, ethnic awareness and identification with Judaism are stated goals in the mission of the Community Center. (About seventy percent of the

parents of the children in the early childhood program list Judaism as their religion on the membership application. Approximately forty percent of the full time staff consider themselves Jewish.) Jewish symbols such as the Star of David and maps of Israel are part of the decor in the preschool and the Center in general. Mazzuzot, small cases containing a prayer which blesses each room, are found on all the doors. The preschool is known as a Jewish preschool and there is a Jewish curriculum written by the parents and staff and revised each year by the curriculum committee which is composed of parents and staff. All children take part in the activities described in the curriculum, and the entire staff is expected to be comfortable teaching the curriculum.

The curriculum focuses on holiday celebrations, and values. (There is a unit on doing Mitzvot which are good deeds.) It also presents old testament stories, prayers said before eating, and Sabbath or Shabbat traditions.

Of the ten vignettes involving ethnicity, only one pertained to Jewish ethnicity. However, it revealed an unusual dilemma for a Jewish preschool. There is a small group of ultra orthodox children who attend the preschool. Sandra, a three year old from an ultra orthodox family had attended the school for the past two years. Although on occasion her mother would stop in the office to complain

that she had heard a child singing a Christmas Carol or that during lunch, children eating meat were sitting next to children eating dairy, there were no major problems or issues. However, as three year olds, the children were for the first time, inviting each other to their homes and deciding who they wanted to invite to their birthday parties. It became apparent to another child, Susan, that Sandra never played at other children's homes and never attended parties. Susan asked her mother why and was told that it was because of Sandra's religious beliefs. Susan's mother who said she knew little about Judaism, later told me she did not feel she could explain Sandra's situation in any more detail to her daughter. (Sandra's mother told me it was too difficult to explain to others why Sandra couldn't eat in their homes, so she decided to avoid visits.)

Sandra's parents had also requested that she not be given any Center food. Although our food is kosher, it is not "frum" or kosher enough for ultra orthodox Jews. Sandra, always brought her own snacks to school, and her mother provided special treats that were to replace the food prepared in cooking classes and almost all food served at birthday parties. This did not appear to be a problem for Sandra who by the age of three would often remind the teachers that she wasn't able to eat certain foods. It had

never appeared to be a problem for the staff or the other children. In fact, it was treated in the same manner food allergies were treated. Her special food was served to her and the staff conferred with her parents if they had any questions.

However, when Susan realized that Sandra's religious beliefs made her different from the others in many areas, Susan began to project Sandra's "specialness" to other areas. She told Sandra that she couldn't go down the stairs because she was Jewish, and that she couldn't go to the park and had to go to jail because she was Jewish. Before long Sandra was in tears.

I met with Sandra's teacher that same afternoon. The teacher said she was aware of Susan's remarks and had addressed them with all the children. She had asked Susan why she thought Sandra couldn't go down the stairs. When Susan responded "because she is Jewish", the teacher had explained that there were certain things that Sandra didn't do because of her religious beliefs just as there were things that Susan didn't do because of her age or her parents wishes. A discussion about same and different, and different not necessarily being right or wrong followed. The teacher had hoped she had taken care of the situation. We decided to continue the discussion with the children over the next few days and to invite Sandra's mother to

speak with the class. Sandra's mother refused. She felt Susan should be removed from the classroom permanently.

Later that day I received a phone call from Susan's mother who had been told about Susan's comments by a third parent. Susan's mother was upset and wanted to assure me that she did not condone Susan's comments. She and her husband had decided to keep Susan home the next day so that Susan could have a "thinking day" to decide if she could say "nice" things about people. I was not successful in assuring mom that this was not necessary. I also heard from Sandra's mom several more times during the day.

By the end of the day, it was clear to the teacher that the parents were forming two groups. The first expressed an allegiance with Sandra and her parents and recalled other times Jewish children had faced discrimination. The other supported Susan's parents, and while in agreement that Susan's remarks were inappropriate, felt they were childish comments with no great significance. However, this second group felt they had found a way to soothe everyone's feelings. They decided to have a picnic in the park. Everyone would be invited to bring a brown bag lunch so that Sandra's dietary laws would not be an issue and the parents would organize games. Although there was lots of discussion, the picnic never actually took place. It appeared that finding an

acceptable date and time was impossible because of work schedules, naps, Saturday and Sunday obligations, and Sandra's mom's unwillingness to commit to attending because she was pregnant and was very uncomfortable outside in the heat. Further discussion among the parents did not take place at school and the teacher continued discussions with the children as situations arose.

In subsequent discussions with the teacher, the teacher stated that she felt knowing the goals of the anti-bias curriculum which were stated in chapter one and being familiar with the anti-bias philosophy and teaching strategies stated in chapter three had been helpful throughout this situation. She felt that she had been able to see the issue from each parent's perspective and to facilitate discussion among the parents. We agreed that both groups of parents would benefit from further discussions concerning helping children to appreciate diversity and helping children to stand up for themselves and others in the face of bias. The teacher also felt that by eliciting active participation from the children, she was helping them develop a greater appreciation of diversity.

The above vignette supports the research which found that ethnic identification like gender identification by young children is based on concrete visual attributes

(Aboud, 1988, p. 5; Ramsey, 1987a, p.15; Ross, 1981; Katz, 1983, p. 43). This also became evident during the following observation. A three year old class was in the hallway returning from a special activity. Hanaku and her mother, both Japanese, walked by. Rachel, a Chinese three year old girl noticed them, pointed her finger at them, and repeated "Hey, Hey" several times. Alyssa said: "Oh look, a little and big Rachel.", referring to Hanaku and her mother. The teacher asked Hanaku's mom if she could wait a moment so she could bring Rachel back to meet them. The class went into the room and the teacher told Rachel there was someone she thought Rachel would like to meet. They went back to the hall. Rachel was asked if she'd like to tell Hanaku her name. When she didn't respond, Hanaku's mom introduced the children. Neither child said anything and after a brief conversation between Hanaku's mom and the teacher, Rachel and her teacher went back to class. The rest of the class were already sitting in circle, and the children asked Rachel where she had been. Rachel replied: "I have a new friend in me." The children then asked the teacher where Rachel had gone, and she reminded them that Rachel had seen someone in the hall who looked like her. Nathan stated that the child in the hall had eyes and hair like Rachel's. David added that the teacher's hair was

like Rachel's but not her eyes and cheeks. Several children began talking about the color of their own eyes.

Clearly visual clues were meaningful for these children, although it is apparent that they used broad categories and did not distinguish between Japanese and Chinese ethnicity. It is also evident that the children were not sure which attributes were most significant. For example, it appears as if David was wondering if the teacher's hair placed her in the same racial category as Rachel even though the shape of their eyes were dissimilar.

During my brief interview with the teacher, she stated that this was the first time anything had come up concerning Rachel's race, and she felt both Rachel's and the other children's comments were interesting. When I asked her why she had responded as she did, she stated that it had just come naturally and wondered if she had done something wrong. I reassured her that I felt her actions were very appropriate. I then asked if she would reflect on the meaning of multicultural perspective. She commented: "Well, it's part of our curriculum and it means including all children. I wanted Rachel to feel comfortable with who she is and thought it was neat that she had noticed Hanaku." We spoke briefly about which attributes Rachel and the other children had noticed.

We also discussed some of Aboud's findings. Aboud noted that mature ethnic identity is based on the same criteria as gender identity. The first criterion involves being able to describe oneself in terms of a critical attribute. The second is that this attribute be perceived as distinguishing oneself from members of other groups. The third criterion is that membership in the group is consistent across changes in context and continuous over time (Aboud, 1987, p. 33). By age three, the majority of children have mastered the first two criteria and are able to categorize by race as well as gender (Aboud, 1988, p. 29; Brown, 1995, p.158.).

In addition to having difficulty identifying the significant attributes which define ethnicity and gender, young children develop ideas about racial identity which are as contradictory and inconsistent as some of their ideas about gender identity (Edwards & Ramsey, 1986, p. 81). Ramsey reported that Danny, an Afro-American four year old described a photograph of a Korean-American child as white but with "hair that was real flat while his own hair was standing up hair" (Edwards & Ramsey, 1986, p. 80). She also recounted how Tommy, a Caucasian four year old described a Black child in a photograph as having stayed in the sun too long and forgotten to use sunscreen. When

asked if he would change like that if he stayed out in the sun, Tommy replied "No!" (Edwards & Ramsey, 1986, p. 80).

The most frequently cited difference between the development of gender and racial awareness appears to be that gender awareness is both inevitable and pervasive, while racial awareness seems to be dependent upon the child's environment (Katz, 1983, p. 54). Children who live in multi-ethnic neighborhoods and who are exposed to ethnic heterogeneity in their daily activities develop racial awareness at an earlier age than children who live in a segregated environment (Katz, 1983, p. 54; Rotheram & Phinney, 1987, p. 16; Ramsey, 1987b, p. 59). How children categorize others may in part depend on the amount of contact they have had with other groups. For example, Ramsey found that children who lived in virtually all Caucasian communities often put Afro-American and Asian-American people into the same category, although they seemed to realize that the two groups where not exactly the same (Edwards & Ramsey, 1986, p. 80). Caucasian children with little cross-race social experience frequently confused the gender of Chinese American children. Facial expressions of cross-race peers were often also misinterpreted (Edwards & Ramsey, 1986, p. 83).

While children may initially learn from others which racial group they belong to (Rotheram & Phinney, 1987,

p. 14.), young children's identification with a particular group is influenced by the degree of homogeneity or heterogeneity in their daily activities. For example, Rotheram and Phinney reported that ethnicity is likely to be more salient for a black child in a classroom of twenty white children than for the same child in a classroom of twenty black children (Rotheram & Phinney, 1987, p. 16).

Two vignettes recorded at the Tucson Jewish Community Center preschool support the importance of racial identity for children who find themselves in the minority. They also illustrate different staff reactions when ethnic issues are brought up by the children and very different comfort levels among four year olds when ethnicity becomes an issue. The first story, presented below, is an example of a child initiated event during which the teacher, Lilly, took advantage of "the teachable moment". Katie, a four year old, was playing near the pretend center with Devie when she spontaneously said: "There are three brown people in the class, Lilly, Devie and me." Pete, playing nearby, excitedly added: "I'm brown too, and I have lots of hair." Lilly, who was working at a nearby table with a group of children, noted: "That's right. How many brown people are there in here?" Katie counted adding Pete and said "four". Adam, a blond, blue eyed Caucasian child playing near Pete chimed in with "And I have lots of hair too!" Lilly

remarked "Yes, lots of us have lots of hair." Katie, apparently determined to retain the exclusivity of her group said: "But you don't have dark hair and dark skin like Lilly, Devie, Pete and me." Pete's smile indicated that he was very proud to be counted in the group of brown skin people. The children went on playing.

Later during the day, when I had a chance to speak with Lilly, she recalled the incident and said she was particularly happy that Pete had joined the girls. She hoped that similar events would arise spontaneously since that was a more natural way of developing positive attitudes than teacher planned activities. She felt her stating "Me too." showed the children that she was aware of their conversation and that she was pleased to be able to be included in their group. Lilly's recognition of Adam's comment also implied that she was concerned with the identity of all children.

The next event also supports the notion that ethnicity is likely to be an important issue for a child of color in a predominantly white classroom. Katie in the above vignette, and Mikey in the following vignette have both developed ethnic identity according to Aboud's criteria. However, Katie appears to have developed a much more positive self identity than Mikey. The theme in the four year old classrooms was "We're all the same; we're all

different". The class had devoted previous circle times to charting hair and eye color, counting limbs, and talking about families. At the time of the observation, the children were engaged in circle time and the teacher was reviewing the likeness and differences they had discovered. A child commented that everyone's skin was a different color, and the teacher asked if they'd like to put their arms in the circle and compare skin color. All arms shot toward the center of the circle except Mikey's, a Hawaiian child of color. The teacher asked if he'd like to put his arm into the circle. He nodded "No," and she went on with the comparison as he sat in the circle, hunched over with his arms in his lap. She later reported that she had told Mikey's mother about the incident when she had picked him up. The following morning mom recalled that she had asked Mikey about the incident. He said he didn't want to talk about it, so she didn't pursue it.

While reviewing this event, the teacher stated that she felt Mikey's response implied that he was uncomfortable with his skin color. She went on to say that she intended to provide other opportunities which might help him to become comfortable. However, she wasn't sure what these activities might be. She felt that making an issue of Mikey's response at this time, would have only made him more uncomfortable.

Both vignettes indicate that the teachers were willing to allow the children to construct their own knowledge about racial characteristics. While both teachers felt that it was their role to encourage an interest in others and to encourage individual positive racial identity, Lilly was able to initiate a group discussion and appeared more comfortable in this situation perhaps because of her personal experiences as a person of color. Both teachers appeared to understand that a multicultural curriculum entails sensitivity to children's feelings about their race as well as an interest in other races (Ramsey, 1987a, pp. 3-4).

In the above vignettes, the children were appraising the worth of white skin color. While it appeared to be important for both of the children, Katie ranked brown skin more positively than Mikey. By age three, Katz found that children recognized both race and gender as significant classifications within our society and that preschool children were using them in evaluative ways leading to the formation of attitudes (Katz, 1983, p. 67). Aboud also found that by three or four, ethnic attitudes were acquired although they usually changed during the following 8 years (Aboud, 1988, p.28).

Racial and gender attitudes in children have been assessed primarily using dolls or pictures with questions

such as: "Which would you like to be?" "Which one would you like to play with?" According to Katz, research has shown that in cases involving gender, each gender preferred their own. However, Maccoby and Jacklin (1987) reported that while same gender play preferences were widespread, the degree of own gender favoritism shown by one child varied considerably from one week to the next (Brown, 1995, p. 152).

In terms of ethnic attitudes, beginning with the original Clark and Clark study in 1947, numerous investigators have shown that most children between ages three and four notice skin color differences (Edwards & Ramsey, 1986, p. 78). It has also been noted that most children between ages three and six can correctly categorize themselves as a racial group (Katz, 1983, p. 61; Aboud, 1987, p. 37.). Moreover, children show a marked preference for certain skin colors over others (Katz, 1983, p. 61). Katz found that Caucasian children preferred the color white in both human and non-human pictures, and until fairly recently preschool children of all races evaluated white skinned individuals more positively than dark skinned people (Katz, 1983, p. 52). In most studies prior to 1972, both white and minority preschoolers preferred white skinned dolls, pictures, and playmates. Studies after 1972 indicate that this might be changing and that children are

now choosing their own race. The most common explanation for this change seems to be attributed to the improving status of minority groups with the advent of political movements such as Black Power (Brown, 1995, p. 158).

However, Aboud noted that Caucasian children as young as three years have expressed negative attitudes toward Blacks, and that when shown pictures of individuals, most White children between the ages of three and five chose a Black person as looking bad, or as being least preferred as a playmate (Aboud, 1988, p. 29). Katz offered two explanations for this phenomena. The first was Allport's (1954) suggestion that fear of the unfamiliar underlies much of a child's response to people of other races. The second was Williams' and Morland's belief that all children begin life with a preference for light colors and an aversion to darkness (Katz, 1983, p. 54). This is accentuated by children's social experiences in American society where dark colors are associated with fearful and bad events (Edwards & Ramsey, 1986, p. 83). It is interesting to note that while Black children form attitudes around the same age as Caucasian children, Black children appear to be heterogeneous in their ethnic group preferences with some being pro Black and others pro White (Aboud, 1988, p. 37).

A poignant example occurred in the preschool when Alex, a three year old Caucasian boy, was running ahead of the class. Yvette, the assistant teacher in class who is African American, asked him to stop. He kept on running. When she caught up with him, she asked him to sit down next to her in the hallway so they could talk. He said "No" and stood as she sat. When asked why he wouldn't sit down, he responded that she was dirty and he didn't want to sit next to her. Yvette asked why he thought that she was dirty. Alex didn't respond. She asked if her brown skin was the reason, and he nodded in agreement. She asked if he thought her skin would turn white like his if she washed and he said "No". Yvette told him God made people's skin different colors so that they would be more interesting. She drew a comparison with different colored flowers and asked him to sit down. He complied. When asked if he'd like to touch her arm he nodded "No". Yvette then asked Alex why he thought she had asked him to sit in the first place. A discussion took place about staying with the class so that the teacher could keep everyone safe and no one would get lost. Yvette also talked about having "listening ears". Alex put on his listening ears and they both went back to class.

Later in the morning, when the class was on the playground, I met with Yvette and asked her how she felt

about Alex's remark. She replied: "I certainly didn't like it, but what do you expect from kids like Alex?" I asked how she defined "kids like Alex" and she replied: "rich kids from the Foothills". She went on to add that she felt beliefs such as Alex had expressed came from parents and that his parents were probably prejudiced. When asked if she thought she could influence Alex's beliefs about skin color. She responded: "Perhaps- if kids like Alex get to know enough Black people. All you can do is try." Her response to me indicates that she is not sure she can influence Alex's thinking, however, her drawing of a comparison of skin color to flowers indicates that she feels it is worth trying. When Yvette did not pursue the subject of skin color after drawing her comparison, she allowed Alex to construct his own knowledge from the new information she had supplied, perhaps indicating her understanding that an anti-bias environment is not a set curriculum, but a perspective which must be individually constructed (Ramsey, 1991, p. 76).

According to Katz there is less known about the development of racial awareness then gender awareness during the first three years of life. However, she found that contrary to previous assumptions, three day old infants are not color blind. In her study, infants were able to distinguish color hues, preferred high-contrast

stimuli, and were sensitive to figure ground contrast (Katz, 1983, p. 50).

By age three, when color awareness is very much in place, children have experienced a great amount of cognitive training around recognizing colors and using color as a classification device. Consequently, as Katz and Ramsey noted, children use skin color hues as a basis for person classification (Katz, 1983, p. 50; Ramsey, 1995, p. 18).

The following vignettes provides evidence that although three and four year olds may have developed an awareness of racial categories and may use color as a primary attribute, it is not always used accurately or consistently. The children were on the way to the playground when they passed Mikey's sister. She'd been to the class on many occasions and knew most of the children and the staff. There were several "Hi Violets", and she responded enthusiastically. Scott, who had seen her on many occasions in the classroom and also met Mikey's parents who are both Caucasian, turned to Mikey and said "Hey Mikey" everyone in your family has brown skin." Neither Mikey nor the teacher commented, and the class went on to the playground. When I asked the teacher why she chose to let the event pass without comment, she replied that she was in a hurry to get to the playground and

perhaps would bring it up later. She added that she felt Mikey would have been uncomfortable if she had initiated a discussion at that moment.

Although I would have expected color to have been the significant attribute in the next vignette, it was not. A class of four year olds was walking by the gym on their way to the playground. As often happened when they took this route, they stopped to peer through the gym windows. A tall Black man was shooting baskets. Steven said: "Hey, there's Michael Jordan." Several other children agreed that it was indeed Michael Jordan and the class became excited. The teacher asked why they thought the basketball player was Michael Jordan, and Steven responded "because he is so tall". She asked others what they thought and everyone was in agreement that he was definitely Michael Jordan because of his height. (On this occasion the group was made up of Caucasian children. Height was the only attribute mentioned.) The teacher didn't comment and the class went on to the playground. Later she reported that she had been surprised by the fact that none of the children had chosen skin color as the attribute which identified the man with Michael Jordan. She added that she told the basketball player that the children thought he was Michael Jordan. When he asked why, she told him that his height was the deciding factor and he commented that he

also thought it would have been his skin color. The unexpected response of the children, and the teacher's willingness to accept their rationale make this conversation particularly interesting. It also supports the research which found that children often categorize in highly idiosyncratic ways often based upon personal preference (Phinney, 1987, p. 275; Ramsey, 1987b, pp. 57-63; Shultz, 1983, p. 30).

The following vignette provides an additional example of the staff taking advantage of the teachable moment to help a child develop positive racial attitudes. It is presented here as an example of racial awareness in a young child. It also serves as an example of the staff's multicultural perspective.

Jonathan, a three year old Korean male adopted by Caucasian parents was working on a floor puzzle which depicted children from around the world dressed in native costume. He was working alone, although occasionally Betsy skipped by and inserted a piece of the puzzle. Jonathan had completed approximately 3/4 of the puzzle. As he placed the piece which completed an Asian child, he looked up and commented to no one in particular "That's a pretty doll." He then quickly left the puzzle and went into the block center. The teacher walked over, commented that it was a pretty doll and asked if he wanted to complete the

puzzle. He said "no" and she "fine" reminding him that he should help put it away during clean up time.

I asked the teacher if she could take a moment to comment on what had just occurred. She responded that she had purposely put out the puzzle after Jonathan had asked her to read a book he had brought from home about a Korean child adopted by Caucasian parents. She commented that Jonathan seemed aware and proud of his race and culture. She added that having the puzzle in the classroom indicated that the school community valued children of all races and therefore reinforced positive identification.

The following vignette also provides insight into a child's perceptions of his or her own culture. All the children at the Center sing Hamotzi before eating. Josh's first lunch period in a three year old class followed the normal routine. However, the teachers were momentarily baffled when at the conclusion of Hamotzi, Josh stood up and began singing The Star Spangled Banner. Their confusion was abated as soon as someone recalled that Josh's dad had been a college basketball player. He was now a professional player and Josh had sat through the opening of many games. Josh apparently agreed that a song signaled the beginning of important events such as games or lunch, but in his culture that song was The Star Spangled Banner.

In addition to illustrating how a child's culture may affect daily life, these last two vignettes portray two goals of a multicultural curriculum: (a) Staff will have sensitivity to children's feelings about their race., and (b) Staff will show interest in other races. (Ramsey, 1987a, pp. 3-4). The responses of the staff indicate that they have incorporated these goals into their multicultural cultural perspective.

Economic Class Issues

Research has shown that children's initial classifications are based on those cues that are most easily discernible (Katz, 1987, Ramsey, 1987b & Fischer, 1984). The attributes associated with both gender and race are more visible than those associated with economic class and many disabilities such as intellectual and emotional development. Therefore in this study there were more instances illustrating the children grouping by gender and racial attributes than samples illustrating class or disability grouping.

Children's initial classifications are also based on personal experience, and young children are not usually exposed to situations that draw their attention to economic differences or stimulate social comparisons. For most children, their immediate social environment of family and neighborhood and school is socio-economically homogeneous

(Ramsey, 1991, p. 72). In her study conducted in 1991 Ramsey found that preschoolers did not spontaneously mention social class in their description of others when they were shown photographs. Her findings supported early research which found that children tended to interpret pictures in terms of their own experience which may not include any immediate contact with others from different socio-economic groups. However, even though the majority of the children attending the preschool at The Tucson Jewish Center are Caucasian middle class children, it was apparent that they had some understanding of class and challenged groups. There were six vignettes reporting class issues and four vignettes reporting disability issues.

Young children's conception of economic class, defined as the socioeconomic status of an individual (Ramsey, 1987a, p. 32) is based on observable qualities of poverty or wealth such as clothes, food, possessions, and living quarters. Although preschoolers would not be expected to have an abstract understanding of social class, there are salient clues which are often noted (Ramsey, 1991, p. 72). For example, preschoolers in consumer-orientated societies have experience with stores and shopping. They are exposed to the availability of goods through television, magazines

and advertisements and somewhat knowledgeable about the role of money in obtaining goods (Ramsey, 1991, p. 72).

Ramsey found that preschool children assumed that money came from the concrete transactions with which they were familiar. Young children believed their parents obtained money from the store or got as much money as they liked from the bank (Ramsey, 1987a, p. 32). The following conversation in a four year old classroom supported this finding.

Teacher: "How do you get rich?"

Robin: "You get lots of money from the bank."

Davis: "You get lots of money from your house and friends, and you go to a grocery store, and they pay you, and they give you checks."

Teacher: "Do you just ask for money?"

Davis: "No. You can't ask them. They just give it you."

Teacher: "Where do they get it from?"

Abby: "The grocery store- they give you the food, and they give you the money."

Teacher: "Where do they get it?"

Michelle: "From the bank."

Teacher: "Does anybody know someone who is poor? Davis, do you know anyone who is poor?"

Davis: "Grammies are poor because they are old and don't have any money."

Teacher: "Do you have a grandma?"

Davis: "Yes."

Teacher: "Is she poor?"

Davis: "No, she gets things from Circle K."

The above vignette also supports Edwards (1986, p. 127) findings that three to five year olds may not have a clear understanding of the function of money. Three year olds often ignore the fact that money is part of an exchange. While four and five year olds understand that money has to do with buying, they lack the mathematical concepts to make sense of its value, and often equate the size of the coin with worth.

While the above vignette indicates that young children are not sure how or why some people are poor, the staff at the preschool reported that the children were quite clear about the status connected with owning certain items. Certain toys from home could increase ones' popularity and increase ones' power to such an extent that several teachers requested that they not be brought to school. Many of the most prestigious items were brought for the infamous "Show and Tell". In order to control competition, "Show and Tell" became theme driven, and children were asked to bring in an item which related to a particular theme rather than something which was popular at the moment. This type of staff action showed that the staff

were aware that the self-esteem of children who didn't own these items might be adversely affected. and that encouraging popularity based on material possessions was not considered healthy, both tenets of a multicultural perspective.

Ramsey too found that preschool children remark about their peers' possessions and often describe their peers within this frame of reference. They are beginning to develop a sense of fairness and to notice inequities, although their reasoning is often self-serving in order to satisfy their own material desires (Damon, 1980). Additionally Ramsey noted that preschoolers are able to differentiate rich from poor and assume that rich people are happier and more likable than poor people. The children Ramsey interviewed also predicted that the rich would help the poor (Ramsey, 1987a, pp. 32-33). The next vignette also supports Ramsey's findings and illustrates the staffs' attempt to help children develop a sense of social sensitivity.

"Project Isaiah" is the Jewish community's food drive to feed the hungry. In the following teacher directed vignette, one class of four year olds was viewing the table. The display included several large grocery bags marked 'Project Isaiah' and samples of the groceries people were being asked to donate in order to fill the bags. The

teacher opened the discussion by telling the children that the display represented Project Isaiah. When she went on to ask what they thought Project Isaiah was about. Michael responded: "Giving poor people food so they can get it free." The discussion continued with the teacher asking the children why they thought Project Isaiah took place during the celebration of the Jewish high holidays. They talked about eating apples and honey to ensure a sweet new year and looking at past misdeeds to decide how one could do better during the coming year. They quickly moved to the topic of mitzvahs- good deeds, and made the connection between doing good deeds and helping people. When asked why it was important to give to poor people, Hannah responded: "Because they don't have any clothes or toys, we should give ones we don't want. In winter it will be cold, and if they have no food to eat, they can die." The conversation continued

Teacher: "What can we do?"

Marsha: "Get them an apple."

Teacher: "Once I found someone with a leaky roof. I took the time to fix it for them. Is there anything like that that you could do?"

Jackie: "One day someone fell and I helped them get up. That's a good thing to do."

Hannah Rose: "One day my mom and dad found a man on the street, and they took him to our house and gave him food."

Michael: "You could make picture or sing a song for a little baby."

Sonia: "I gave my shoes to Ola."

Hannah: "I made Max a picture."

Teacher: "I see you know lots of ways to help people. During Project Isaiah you can also bring in a can of food. Let's see if we can all bring in one can of food this week, and on Friday we'll also talk about all the Mitzvahs you've done this week. How many do you think you can do?"

Children shouted many different responses.

Teacher: "Let's all try to do two before Friday."

The class returned to their room.

There were other activities designed by the staff to help the children develop a sense of social responsibility. Often these activities were planned to help someone obtain needed items which most of the children already owned or could easily obtain. As these activities pointed out the differences between the children and people called "poor", they clarified the meaning of economic class for the children. For example, one Friday, the four year olds made peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and brought them to a homeless shelter. On another occasion, the children

collected tooth brushes, tooth paste and combs for a men's shelter. In the latter instance, supporting the shelter became the theme across the curriculum. The math lesson entailed graphing the number of tooth brushes which were donated each day. Language was developed through writing letters to various shelters asking what they needed. Developing a sense of compassion was promoted when a representative from the shelter spoke to the children about the people who used the facility.

Another vignette illustrating the staff's attempt to understand how children think about economic class was discussed earlier when gender issues were presented. It involved Gabe, Ben, and Rebecca all of whom had just finished eating lunch in a four year old classroom. As was the custom, those finished were playing with toys they had brought from home. Ken and Barbie dolls were on the table and the children had been discussing whether or not girls could play with Ken. Once that issue was resolved,(page 112.) the teacher extended the conversation.

Teacher to Gabe: "Is Ken rich or poor?"

Gabe: "Poor, he doesn't have a house."

Rebecca: "Barbie is rich. She has a house."

Teacher: "How do you get rich?"

Ben: "You move into a house."

Rebecca: "You get lots of money from the bank."

Gabe: "Ken can live in Barbie's house and then he will be rich."

When Ben finished eating, Gabe and Ben began wrestling. They were asked to leave the table, and the discussion ended.

The above vignettes support Ramsey's (1991) findings that spontaneous references to social class occur rarely among preschoolers. However, the vignettes also indicate that three and four year olds have the ability to distinguish between groups on the basis of external concrete criteria such as property or dress and that they can often determine which individuals are included in each economic level. Houses and food both seem to be primary attributes of class when the children categorize others. However, the possession of popular toys seems to create a hierarchy of the wealthy among the preschoolers themselves.

Following the cognitive developmental model, Leahy (1983) stated that the development of class awareness is dependent upon sequential cognitive development and experience (Leahy, 1983, p. 86). This development first entails the ability to distinguish between groups on the basis of external criteria such as property or dress. The next stage consists of attributing characteristics to these groups that account for the above criteria such as education or motivation. The final stage encompasses the

ability to understand how these groups relate to one another within society (Leahy, 1983, p. 86). The first two tasks are often mastered to some degree by four year olds. Leahy found that preschoolers assumed that rich and poor people were more dissimilar than similar. However, despite this assumption, the children concluded that the rich and poor could be friends. According to Leahy, this suggested that the children had not yet learned about the impact of economic differences on social relationships (Leahy, 1983, p. 90). Additionally, Leahy found that girls appeared to be more aware of social class cues than boys because girls are socialized to be more concerned about appearances than boys and clothing is a highly visible cue.

Events involving the children's recognition of economic class distinctions did not come up often during observations at The Tucson Jewish Community preschool. One explanation for this occurrence was voiced by Ramsey who stated that the children in her study were unaware of class differences because even the poorest had minimally adequate food and shelter. Awareness of economic status may be more salient for children who face a daily struggle for survival (Ramsey, 1991, pp. 80-81). Another explanation which was discussed earlier is that the clues defining class status among preschoolers may not include enough concrete material to make the groupings clear to the children.

Half of the instances involving class were brought up by the staff in an attempt to teach the children compassion and a sense of social sensitivity. The efforts of the staff are supported by the anti-bias curriculum which has teaching compassion and a sense of social sensitivity as a goal. Ramsey also found that social class may be a factor in the early development of identity and attitudes toward other groups and is therefore an appropriate for preschool discussions (Ramsey, 1991, pp. 80-81).

Disability Issues

Issues surrounding disabilities, both physical and developmental also arose less frequently than gender or racial issues. However, when they did arise, they usually originated with the children when they noticed an adult or child who looked or acted differently then the child had anticipated. Children's awareness of physical and developmental disabilities has been reported to develop at about the same age as recognition of gender and racial differences develops. According to Derman-Sparks as two year olds develop their sense of self as both interconnected and separate from others, they develop a beginning awareness of physical abilities. By age two, children are aware of and curious about differences and similarities among people. They ask questions, and construct "theories'. However, Derman-Sparks also noted

that two and three year olds may not have the vocabulary to express their concern or curiosity. They may just stare or make comments which adults feel are inappropriate. (Derman-Sparks, 1989, p. 41). Research conducted through the Southern Poverty Law Center revealed that preschoolers also lack a firm grasp of concepts such as permanence and change. They often wonder why a person who has lost a hand doesn't just grow a new one. At the same time, they may worry about "catching" someone's disability (Dunlop, Stoneman, & Cantrell, 1980). This appeared to be the case in the following vignette when four year old Ruth voiced her opinion that 'Wheelchair kids belonged in their own school.'

Circle had already begun in Ruth's room which housed the inclusion program, a special summer program enabling special education children to attend the preschool. Ruth was crying when she entered with her mother and saying she didn't want to stay in the class. The teacher tried to help her separate, but Ruth refused to let go of her mom. Her mom stated that Ruth had told her she didn't want to be in class with "wheel chair kids". Ruth, her mom and I left the room together. Ruth continued to cry and her mom explained that she was very embarrassed by Ruth's behavior. She went on to add that Ruth's sister had a friend who used a wheel chair, and Ruth had played with her. She added that Ruth's brother

had used crutches at one time. I asked Ruth why she didn't want to be in class with "wheel chair kids" and she responded: "They should go to a school for wheel chair kids. They don't belong here. They can't do the things I do." I told Ruth it sounded to me as if she were uncomfortable sharing her room with Eric, Neil, and Chris. She replied that she didn't like to look at the boys and was afraid the chairs would run over her foot. I stated that it sounded as if Ruth were afraid of the chairs and perhaps even the boys. Both her mother and I explained that the boys were born with muscles that weren't strong enough to support them and that Ruth's muscles were strong and would not be affected by her playing with the boys. I reminded her of the circle time when the teacher from the boys' school had come to the class with dolls who needed to use feeding tubes, chairs and special seats. Ruth recalled that she had played with the dolls, had sat in the wheel chair and tried out the other equipment, but she concluded that the boys should still go to their own school and that she didn't want to go back to class if they were going to be there. Her mom said that the boys were going to stay and asked Ruth what she wanted to do, adding that she could not take her home. I asked Ruth if she wanted to stay with me. She said she wanted to go to another four year old class which happened to be led by her teacher from the previous year. I agreed to this, but added that she

would be with the boys when the classes joined later in the day for swimming and music. She said that would be okay. Her mother left the building, and we went into the room Ruth had requested. After briefly explaining to the teacher what had transpired, I left Ruth.

Later that day I met with the teachers from both rooms. They reported that they had tried to talk with Ruth but that she had volunteered no new information and had repeated that the boys should be sent to a wheelchair school. In fact, Ruth had been so vocal that several other children had begun expressing fear of being run over by the wheelchairs and were agreeing with Ruth that the boys should go to another school. The staff shared that they planned to hold a class discussion with both classes when the boys were engaged in a special activity in another setting. They wanted to explore the feelings of all the children. (This discussion is reported as a separate vignette.) The staff had also developed the following plan with Ruth. When she arrived in the morning she would spend the first hour in the classroom without the boys. She would then join them since both classes were scheduled to swim at the same time. After swimming, she agreed to remain in the classroom with the boys. The teachers made plans to encourage Ruth to help push the wheelchairs and interact with the boys as much as possible. They also made plans to

help Ruth reintegrate into her room full time by shortening the time she remained in the second classroom by fifteen minutes every other day.

Ruth's behavior had a powerful effect upon the staff. They knew her family well and felt her mother was being truthful when she stated that Ruth was not expressing family beliefs. Yet Ruth was expressing the common stereotypes about disabled people which adults often used. During our discussion it became apparent that this was the staffs' first experience with a child expressing discriminatory ideas which the staff felt were not learned in the home. It seemed as if Ruth's comments and reactions grew out of her fear of the boys' disabilities and her fear of the wheelchair. The four staff assigned to Ruth's original room and the three staff assigned to the other four year old room where she would begin her day were in agreement that Ruth's plan was a good one, and all agreed to implement it.

In a discussion which took place the next day before school, the staff talked about a study they had all read in preparation for the inclusion program. The study by Peck, Carlson, & Helmstetter (1992) found that preschool children were more accepting of human differences, aware of others' needs, and more comfortable with people who had disabilities when they were participants in an inclusion

program. It was apparent to me that the staff was encouraged by the conclusions of the article. They felt their plan would help Ruth become comfortable having the boys in her classroom as long as they were consistent in encouraging her to become involved with the boys. In fact, their enthusiasm and determination to help Ruth accept the boys was impressive.

Within three weeks Ruth was back in her original classroom full time. When Ruth demonstrated that she was becoming comfortable with the boys by voluntarily interacting with them, the staff felt they had succeeded on two levels. They had played an active role in changing Ruth's attitude and had met an important goal of the anti-bias curriculum by helping Ruth and the others become more accepting of human differences. They discussed feeling proud of these accomplishments. By the end of June, approximately one month later, Ruth appeared to be enjoying the boys' company. She helped serve them snack and helped push the wheelchairs. When asked, she stated that it would be better for the boys to stay at the preschool rather than go to a different school because they were having fun. She said she thought they should return next summer.

The discussion with the rest of the children took place the same day Ruth expressed her fear of the boys. Ruth was in the other classroom and the boys were working

with another teacher. The children sat down for circle time and the teacher asked them how they felt about having the boys in their classroom. Monica began by repeating Ruth's words that the boys should go to their own school because they couldn't do the things the others could do. Claire agreed and added she didn't want to the boys to run over her toes. Hannah added that she was afraid and kept repeating that the boys should be sent away. Although their were several boys in the group, none of them chose to speak. Several children began talking at once and kept repeating that they were afraid the chairs would run over their toes. When someone started hopping on one foot, others started giggling. The teacher reviewed the class discussion rules and asked Anne how she felt about the boys. Anne replied that Ruth was afraid of the boys' chairs, but she was not. She felt she could help the boys and she wanted them in her class. Once Anne set the tone, the following conversation took place.

Betsy: "I don't want then to run over my toes, but I can jump out of the way. I think they should stay because it wouldn't be nice to make them leave."

Michael: "Yea- they would think we didn't like them."

Davie: "They should stay. Yup, they should stay."

Hannah: "No, I don't want them to."

Betsy: "Hannah, You don't have to be scared."

Monica: "I don't think they should stay."

Teacher: "Why not?"

Monica: "Because they can't do what I can do. They should go to their own school."

Teacher: "I want to tell you something. The boys are going to spend the summer with us. Their leaving is not a choice. The choice we have is how we treat them and how you feel about them. Does anyone have any ideas?"

Steven: "I can push Nick's chair and pull the wagon. I'm strong."

Teacher: "Yes you are strong and you have strong muscles. Nick was born without strong muscles so he needs our help with walking kinds of things. Is there a way Nick can help you?"

Betsy: "I can help feed Chris and change his diaper."

Teacher: "Do you think Chris or Nick would like you to change their diaper?"

Betsy: "No."

Teacher: "Why not?"

Betsy: "Because they're not babies."

Teacher: "That's right. The boys have muscles that don't work, but they are all four and five years old- just like you. What will you do to make sure the wheelchairs don't run over your toes?"

Davie: "Jump real fast."

Teacher: "We will talk more about the boys whenever you like, and remember you can ask them or ask your teachers if you think of any more questions."

I met with the staff who had facilitated the discussion. They thought that the girls were reacting to Ruth's comments rather than a fear of their own. They felt that they were in a good position to help the children develop a respect and appreciation for human differences. Additionally, they felt that the anti-bias curriculum framed obtainable goals by which they could measure their success. Diane, a special education teacher, talked about how at age four, the children were learning about differences and were developing attitudes about disabled people. She commented that the inclusion program provided the opportunity for the children to work and play with other children who had a wide range of abilities. She added that the program hopefully encouraged the children to develop empathy for others. I commented that if our children developed empathy, we would also be meeting a goal of the multicultural curriculum which is to help the children develop compassion. As stated above, there is evidence that empathy develops when children work and play with children with disabilities. A study by Giangreco, Dennis, Coninger, Edelman, & Schattman, 1993, supported the findings of Peck, Carlson, & Helmstetter (1992) mentioned

earlier. The study reported that children without disabilities became increasingly aware of the needs of others when they were enrolled in a class including a child with a severe disability.

At times, exposure to people with severe disabilities can evoke negative feelings or stereotypical responses rather than empathy. This was illustrated during two observations of the four year olds. In the first event, a four year old class was observed attempting to form a line in order to leave the classroom. The children kept going to the end of the line instead of standing next to one of the challenged children. When the line was finally moving out the door, I asked the staff if she had observed what had happened. She had and replied that the special child, Carlos, often pulled hair and had a difficult time keeping his hands to himself. She added that when the children were engaged in floor activities or art projects, they didn't make an issue of being next to Carlos and in fact often chose to help him. She felt the avoidance of Carlos in lines was due to the children's recognition that there was an expectation for line behavior which Carlos couldn't meet, and the others felt they were expected to meet. In order to avoid failure, they avoided Carlos. She added that this was something she could discuss with the class and that they would find a solution.

A similar experience was reported by Swadener (1991) who found that four year olds made a conscious decision to include or exclude challenged peers. For example, in one preschool group she observed, developmentally delayed children were excluded during free choice and large group activities when the other children tended to seek out special friends. However, during project time, when everyone was busily completing a task, the children appeared to enjoy helping developmentally delayed peers. She also noted a not so positive tendency for the children to encourage the challenged children to engage in inappropriate behavior such as making "car" noises during group activities. There was also a tendency to make comments such as "Oh no Marita's here" anticipating problems when the challenged child attempted to join their group.

The second vignette supports Derman-Sparks observations that by age three and a half, children are likely to adopt the negative or positive socially prevailing stereotypes (Derman-Sparks, 1993, p. 117). The event occurred as another four year old class was walking by the gym. They stopped to watch the basket ball game which was being played by people in wheelchairs. At first the children watched quietly. The teacher opened the discussion with the following question:

Teacher- "How is this game different than the ones we usually watch?"

Jason- "They can't use their legs. They're all in wheelchairs."

Mario- "Look at the man on the floor. He doesn't have any legs."

Jessica- "Where are his legs? Why isn't he playing in a wheelchair?"

Kathy - "They'll never get married."

Several children look at Kathy.

Kathy- "Who would marry them? How could they walk down the aisle?"

Teacher- "Let's go to the playground now and we'll talk about this when we get back to class." The children followed the teacher to playground.

I met the teacher on the playground, and we were able to talk while the assistant teacher interacted with the children. The teacher mentioned that they had a volunteer who had cerebral policy and wore leg braces. One day, she had heard Kathy comment to a friend that no one would marry Rebecca because she wore braces. The teacher had decided not to comment. Now that the issue had come up again, she thought she would try to have a discussion with the class about physical disabilities and why people get married. She expressed concern that some of the parents might feel

that the latter topic was not appropriate for four year olds, but she felt that Kathy and some of the other children might be forming values which she could influence.

Children's expression of negative feelings toward challenged peers was also reported in Weinberg's study (1978) in which children were shown a picture of a child in a wheelchair and a child in a preschool chair. The children were then asked to choose a playmate. The three year olds chose the child in the wheelchair as often as they chose the child without a disability. The fours and fives chose the child without the disability. Weinberg's observation that when young children become aware of disabilities, they prefer playmates who are not disabled is corroborated in two British studies. Brown (1995, p. 145) reported that young British children who were not obviously physically challenged in any way tended to devalue children with disabilities. When asked how much they would like to play with different children, boys chose boys and girls chose girls until disabled peers were added. At that point, both groups ignored gender and preferred to play with non disabled peers. In the second study which asked children to rank order, according to likability, black and white children without disabilities and white children with disabilities, Brown reported that physical disfigurement

was liked less than minority group membership (Brown, 1995, p 129).

In discussing the negative feelings and stereotypical responses which had emerged at the preschool, especially with regard to physical handicaps, the staff seemed relieved to learn that research indicated the children's feeling were not unusual. They remained optimistic in their belief that they could help the children develop more positive attitudes toward their special peers and agreed that the anti-bias curriculum provided helpful strategies . In light of recent research, this was not unrealistic. While it appears that by the age of four, children prefer non disabled peers as playmates, there is also evidence that attitudes can be influenced by teachers. Swadener (1991, p. 116) found that the teachers' consistent interventions to correct or redirect stereotypical assumptions had an impact on children's attitudes.

The next vignette illustrates the teachers' attempt to influence the children's attitudes. It's purpose, to help the children develop compassion, is similar to the purpose of Project Isaiah related on page 160. Both events also illustrate how the children are introduced to Takun Olum, the Jewish value about caring for or repairing the world.

In this event the teachers of the four and five year olds decided to have the children enter the muscular

dystrophy Hop-a-Thon, a fundraising event for muscular dystrophy. The children collected pledges based on the length of time they hopped during a specific time period in the Center's gym. Before the Hop-a-thon, the children were shown a cartoon which explained the illness and a video which showed the lives of children who had the disease. The video also explained how the children's efforts to raise money paid for research to prevent M.D. A representative from the M.D. foundation brought over wheelchairs, crutches, braces and other equipment children afflicted with M.D. might use, and the children at the Center had the opportunity to try the various equipment. The Hop-A-Thon lasted less than five minutes and the length of time each child hopped was recorded.

When I met with the staff after the event, there was a discussion about whether or not children should be asked to raise money. This was never resolved, but the staff agreed to discuss what they thought the experience meant to the children. There was a consensus that in the children's minds how long one hopped was much more important than how much money one raised, and most of the children were not interested in the connection between the two. The staff also stated that they felt the children had a greater understanding of what it meant to be physically handicapped as a result of participating in the Hop-A-Thon. While they

had enjoyed trying out the equipment, when asked, no one wanted to have to use it the next day. One teacher stated that it was not clear how significantly the Hop-A-Thon increased the children's empathy toward physically challenged people and the other staff agreed. They did feel they might be in a better position to answer that question after the children had participated in the summer inclusion program. However, the staff were certain that projects such as Project Isaiah and the Hop-A-Thon were events which influenced children's attitudes positively and fit with the anti-bias curriculum.

In summary, in the course of observing the six groups of three and four year old children in the early childhood program at the Tucson Jewish Community Center, it became apparent that children as young as three years old were beginning to sort and categorize. They were able to distinguish between groups and to construct groups based on discernible cues although they frequently did this in highly idiosyncratic ways, often based upon situational information (Shultz, 1983, p. 30).

The three and four year old children at the Center used gender, race, physical attributes, and class to identify themselves and define inclusion in a particular group. Gender and race were used more frequently than physical attributes and class. Several vignettes were recorded, such

as the vignettes involving Katie (p. 144), David, (p. 115), Steven (p. 152), and Josh (p. 155) where the children developed their own rules for inclusion. Research has shown that as young children begin to categorize, they often develop their own rules for inclusion. These rules often change as cognitive capacity grows and additional experiences Gabe are added to the child's repertoire. There were other vignettes such as the ones reported above involving Anne (p. 111), Gabe (p. 111), and Kathy (p. 177), which included decisions for inclusion or exclusion based on stereotypical definitions held by the larger community. These stories suggested that the children were able to learn those categories and rules prescribed by their society.

Finally there were several vignettes which illustrated how the staff attempted to influence the children's attitudes about gender, race, class and disabilities. Although it is not possible to know the extent of the staff's influence, it does appear as if they felt they were in a position to influence attitudes. It also seems as if the staff felt the anti-bias curriculum gave them useful strategies.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study was first to investigate the early childhood program at the Tucson Jewish Community Center in order to discover the program's role in reproducing or restructuring the social order existing in the wider society. The study looked into the emergence of issues involving gender, ethnicity, class, and disabilities among the three and four year old groups of children and their staff. Socially constructed negative and positive biases were found during the observations and are recorded in chapter four.

The study went on to review how young children develop social cognition and how they construct an understanding of their identity. It was found that early attempts at categorization are often more inconsistent, concrete, and idiosyncratic than adult classification schemes. It was also found that adults were able to influence the children's choice of attributes used in classifying.

The study then looked at how the program's multicultural/anti-bias curriculum affected the children's and staff's efforts to perpetuate or eradicate social inequality. The study revealed that an anti-bias multicultural perspective guided the resolution of many of the issues. However, there were times when the responses of the staff served to reproduce the biases existing in the

wider society. It was determined that additional staff training would be necessary if an anti-bias perspective were to become pervasive throughout the program.

The data was collected from classroom observations and informal interviews with the staff at the preschool. It will contribute to the development of future staff workshops which explore and develop the staff's multicultural perspective.

Conclusions

The culture of the school is developed and refined by all the participants. While biases are socially constructed within the school setting, it is also apparent that the children come to school with a cultural heritage which affects their social relationships. In this particular setting, the child's home exerts a strong influence on the school culture because the children are young and have not had a great deal of experience outside of their home. Television, radio and movies which they do experience, are a second influence and help determine how the children view themselves and others. In this study, Josh's singing of the Star Spangled Banner (p. 155) and Anne's declaration that girls can be anything they want to be (p. 111) both reflect the influence of their home life.

According to Kaplan and Evans (1997) schools create the culture they desire when administration, staff and students agree on a common purpose, when there is a safe physical plant, when comprehensive professional development takes

place, and when the opportunity to enhance social relationships exists. Maintaining The National Association for the Education of Young Children accreditation was an agreed upon common purpose at the Center's preschool. Maintaining a safe environment had always been a priority, and comprehensive staff development was taking place through child development training offered at the school by The National Association for the Education of Young Children. Therefore the staff was ready to bolster a multicultural, anti-bias environment when this study was proposed. In an attempt to create a school culture with a strong anti-bias perspective, the following research questions were proposed.

Research Questions

1. Are there issues involving race, gender, class, and disabilities in the three and four year old groups of children at the Tucson Jewish Community Center?
2. Do issues originate from teacher initiated practices, from the children's spontaneous activity or both?
3. When issues arise, what does the staff's response reveal about their understanding of an anti-bias environment?
4. Do the responses of the children to issues of race, gender, class, and disabilities reflect positive or negative biases toward individuals?

5. Is there evidence that the current multicultural curriculum is contributing to an anti-bias environment?
6. Is there a need for additional staff training in order to improve the anti-bias environment?

In response to research question one, (Are there issues involving race, gender, class, and disabilities in the three and four year old groups of children at the Tucson Jewish Community Center?), out of thirty-six observations, sixteen involved gender issues, ten included issues involving race, six encompassed class issues, and four involved physically challenged individuals. It therefore seems reasonable to conclude that there are issues involving race, gender, class, and disabilities which arise in the three and four year old groups of children.

In response to research question two, (Do issues originate from teacher initiated practices, from the children's spontaneous activity or both?), thirteen vignettes were captured during teacher planned activities, twenty were recorded while observing the children's spontaneous activity, and three appear to be initiated by a parent. This led to the conclusion that issues involving race, gender, class, and disabilities arose in both the staff planned activities and the spontaneous children activities. The significance of this finding related to research question six. (Is there a need for additional staff training in order to improve the

anti-bias environment?) Because issues are constantly arising, new staff as well as the present staff will most likely benefit from additional training.

The responses of the staff provide the data for research question three. (When issues arise, what does the staff's response reveal about their understanding of an anti-bias environment?) Initially the investigation revealed that a multicultural perspective was guiding both the intentional and unintentional learning opportunities. According to Martin, this contributes to the ideology of the classroom community (Martin, 1983, p. 122). Anne's (p. 111), Katie's (p. 144), Hanaku's (p. 140) and Jason's (p. 189) stories all indicate that a multicultural perspective was in place. Furthermore these vignettes indicate that the children as well as the staff are using a multicultural perspective to guide their interactions with others.

However, further investigation revealed that a multicultural perspective was not always guiding staff actions. For example, the staff's response when Sara (p. 128) reached for a Frisbee and the response when Andrew (p. 187) appeared in a tutu for Purim indicate an unwillingness to allow children to step outside society's prescribed dress code. These responses were quite different from the staff response when Jason (p. 189), a Chinese-American boy whose parents were both born in China, dressed in an embroidered robe, cap, and slippers in honor of the

Chinese New Year. The difference in responses is most likely the result of different staff perspectives. The vignettes involving Sara and Andrew indicate a need for additional staff training if the entire staff is to demonstrate a respect for diversity which permeates the ideology of the classroom community.

The vignette involving Andrew occurred when the children had come to school dressed in costumes in celebration of Purim. The children were preparing for the Purim parade and several classes were in the hall. Andrew was dressed in a pink tutu and red boots. Staff A. walked over to Andrew's teacher and asked "What's with Andrew?" Staff B. overheard her comment and said he dressed like that last year too. His teacher said the tutu probably belonged to his big sister. Staff A. said that his mother shouldn't let dress him like that and walked away. Everyone become busy getting ready for the parade and there were no further comments.

Later at the staff meeting, I asked the three staff who had been involved in the earlier discussion how they felt about Andrew dressing in a tutu. Staff A. replied again that Andrew's mother shouldn't let him dress like a girl because the other kids would tease him. Andrew's teacher said that no one had said anything about it. In fact, the other children had admired the tutu. His teacher added: "It's our bias, not theirs." Staff B. added: "Yeah, don't forget they're from Israel and Israelis are a lot more liberal. His

mother probably thought he looked cute. If his sister had dressed like a boy, you wouldn't have said anything." Staff A. ended the conversation with: "You're probably right, but I wouldn't have let him dress like that." This response implied that at least one staff felt that limiting choices because of gender was appropriate. While the staff involved with Sara felt she would respond differently if the same situation arose again, the staff involved with Andrew suggested that she would have the same response.

The vignette involving Jason and the Chinese new year implies a very different staff perspective. This story occurred in a threes' classroom. Jason's dad had been invited to talk about the Chinese New Year during circle. Jason, a Chinese-American boy whose parents were both born in China, was dressed in an embroidered robe, cap, and slippers. He stood silently in the front of the circle as his dad showed slides and talked about the new year celebrations. When the children were asked if they had any questions, they asked where Jason had gotten the robe? They also asked if Jason wore the robe at home, if his dad liked Chinese food, and if they ate with chopsticks? Jason answered all their questions with a yes or no. Someone asked if they could try on Jason's outfit and most of the children eagerly tried on the clothes and looked at themselves in the mirror. When everyone was finished, the teacher thanked Jason's dad and asked the class to thank Jason and his dad. They responded

in unison and busily put on their own shoes to go to the playground. Jason's dad and the assistant teacher walked the children to the playground and the teacher remained with me to discuss the event.

The teacher explained that she had planned a week's activities centering around the Chinese New Year. The class had located China on the globe and compared size and location with the United States. They had also read several children's stories set in China and had cooked a vegetable stir fry for lunch which they had tried to eat with chop-sticks. The teacher said that she had always celebrated the Chinese New Year with her class in an attempt to expose the children to other cultures. She mentioned other holidays such as Kawanza day which were celebrated for the same reason. She added that this year the celebration of the Chinese New Year had added significance for the children since Jason was in the class, although Jason's ethnicity had not been previously mentioned by any of the children. When she had told the children that Jason's dad would come to help them celebrate the Chinese New Year, they had asked if he were Chinese, but had not asked about Jason. She felt that the children accepted Jason as they knew him, and there would be no reason to point out his race. She also mentioned that Jason was very shy and would have been uncomfortable having attention brought to himself. She added that all the children loved having their parents talk to the class and

that Jason seemed equally pleased to have his dad at school. She commented "Jason knows he is Chinese on some level, but I can't explain it. He seems to be comfortable knowing this and is proud of his parents. I think he was very pleased to be in front of the class and enjoyed showing off his outfit."

Examining events such as Jason's dad's visit helped to identify the formal or intentional anti-bias curriculum which the teachers were actually implementing. Project Isaiah (p. 160) and the Hop-A-Thon (p. 180) also clarified the formal anti-bias curriculum. In summarizing the data collected in order to answer question three, (When issues arise, what does the staff's response reveal about their understanding of an anti-bias environment?), it appeared that the planned events were guided by a multicultural perspective, while some of the spontaneous events such as the Purim parade and the Frisbee incident were not. The latter vignettes indicated a need for additional staff training if an anti-bias perspective is to consistently guide the program.

As stated earlier, an anti-bias staff perspective encompasses helping the children develop positive attitudes toward race, gender, class, and handicapping conditions and helping them to recognize and accept their membership in many different groups. It also includes enabling children to see themselves as part of the larger society- to identify, empathize, and relate with individuals from other groups.

Additionally, implementing a multicultural perspective means fostering respect and appreciation for the diverse ways in which other people live, and encouraging in young children's earliest social relationships an openness and interest in others, a willingness to include others, and a desire to cooperate. Finally, it entails fostering the development of a realistic awareness of contemporary society, a sense of social responsibility, and an active concern that extend beyond one's immediate family or group (Ramsey, 1987a, pp. 3-5). If a multicultural perspective is to guide the children's interactions, it must first be adopted by the staff.

The data collected to respond to question four, (Do the responses of the children to issues of race, gender, class, and disabilities reflect positive or negative biases toward individuals?) reflects both positive and negative biases. For example, the vignette involving Alex and Yvette (p. 150) indicates that Alex has negative feelings toward people of color. Gabe's (p. 111) and Anne's (p. 111) stories indicate that several children feel females are limited by their gender, and Ruth's (p. 167) and Kathy's (p. 177) stories indicate that the children involved have negative feelings about people with physical disabilities. However, Anne's response to her friends (p. 111), Rachel's classmates' response when Rachel met Hanaku (p. 140), Jonathan's response to the puzzle (p. 154), Katie's and Pete's story (p. 144),

Katie's response to her race (p. 123) and Josh's singing of the Star Spangled Banner (p. 155) all reflect positive attitudes toward one's own gender and ethnicity.

Three of the vignettes, Jonathan's response when he found a child who looked like him in the puzzle (p. 154), Rachel's response when she met Hanaku (p. 140), and Katie's expression of pleasure when she saw that her skin color matched Lilly's (p. 144) indicate that several of the children show an interest and perhaps a preference for people like themselves. While this observation might appear obvious, the data is useful for staff training. It provides concrete evidence that children respond positively when their ethnicity is recognized by people who are important to them.

The fact that the children's responses reflect both positive and negative biases toward their peers and the staff, also support the idea that additional staff training will be beneficial. It implies that the children's biases might not be firmly set and that they might be influenced by a staff who consistently support an anti-bias perspective. According to the authors of Starting Small, a school environment where diversity is a given allows children to see beyond their differences to their common concerns. A school where emotional as well as physical safety is a priority enables the children to respect and trust. Therefore, the children would benefit in two ways from additional staff

training. First of all an anti-bias environment would enable all children to development a pride in their identity, and secondly an anti-bias environment would help all children develop a empathy toward others (Teaching Tolerance Project, 1997, pp. 4-5).

Question five (Is there evidence that the current multicultural curriculum is contributing to an anti-bias environment?) was answered by the staff during the brief interviews. Several staff commented that they were aware of the anti-bias curriculum and that the curriculum is helpful in providing strategies they can use to help the children develop an anti-bias perspective.

Question six (Is there a need for additional staff training in order to improve the anti-bias environment?) has been answered in the affirmative. Stories like Andrew's (p. 187) and Sara's (p. 128) as well as the following vignette which took place in one of the four year old groups support the need for additional training. The children were told it was time to clean up centers and wash hands for lunch. As children began to sit at the tables, Scott told Amanda she could not sit at his table since it was only for boys. The staff said: "Scott, that isn't nice! Amanda can sit any where she wants!". Scott made a face, and Amanda sat down.

Once all the children were eating, I asked the staff to step outside since there was another teacher in the room. I

then asked her if she could recall what had transpired when Amanda had first tried to sit down. She recalled Scott's remark and added laughing: "Amanda just blows things like that off. Some people are better at things like that. Sara and Bonnie would have cried. I treat gender issues like a bad word. It comes from home. There's nothing we can do about it." I asked her if she thought she could influence or change children's thinking. She replied: "Well sure, but not about things like that." The conversation ended and she went back to class.

This event illustrates that even when the staff recognize intolerance in the children, they may not feel they have the ability to influence the children's biases. Research has shown it is possible to positively influence children's thinking. Additional staff training might empower the staff with effective strategies.

Staff Development Issues

According to Durkewitz and Gowin (1996), successful staff development cultivates common beliefs and attitudes which transform the school's culture. Additionally, successful staff development empowers the staff and provides feedback to the staff. As a result of this study, it appears as if the following questions should be addressed in future staff development workshops at the Center if these workshops

are to accomplish the above. These questions were developed by the staff at the conclusion of this study.

1. What is the multicultural perspective the participants bring to the staff development process?

2. In what ways might these beliefs be elicited and reconstructed, publicly and privately, throughout the staff development process? (Options include role playing by staff, dramatization presenting diverse responses to a situation followed by a discussion, discussions about situations that occurred in the preschool, discussions about selected topics)

3. In what ways can the multicultural perspective which is embedded in the recommended practices emphasized during the staff development process be made explicit?

4. Is this perspective influencing the perspective of the participants and how can its effect be evaluated?

5. How can the effects of the teaching strategies which come out of the staff development workshops be evaluated?

6. How and how often do the participants feel the program should be evaluated to assure that a multicultural perspective is continually guiding both the formal and informal curricula?

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of this study fall into two general categories: limitations based on differences between the qualitative paradigm and the more traditional quantitative

paradigm, and the specific limitations of this study based on design, resources, and the researcher's skill.

The first category of limitations concerns issues of reliability and validity. Reliability refers to the extent the findings in this study can be replicated (Merriam, 1988, p. 170). External validity address the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to other situations (Merriam, 1988, p. 166), while internal validity asks if the findings reflect what is really there and if the investigator is observing what she/he thinks she/he is observing (Merriam, 1988, p. 166). According to Schloss and Smith (1998, p. 94) these traditional measures of reliability and validity do not apply because qualitative research involves written descriptions rather than numerical data. In order to increase reliability in a qualitative study, Schloss and Smith recommend maintaining very detailed field notes which describe everything that occurred in an observation. Additionally, they suggest that data be collected by teams whenever possible and that a third participant review the final report and provide feedback.

Kincheloe and McLaren (1994, p. 151) also state that the traditional measures of reliability and validity are not appropriate measures from the perspective of a critical theorist. In fact they challenge the concept of methodological correctness as guaranteeing the accuracy of the data (Kincheloe & McLaren, 1994, p. 151). They accuse

social research of becoming a technology which reduces human beings to "taken-for-granted social outcomes" because these traditional measures do not reveal power interests and neglect both the dynamics and the pursuit of justice in the lived world (Kincheloe & McLaren, 1994, p. 151). Their solution is to avoid the terms reliability and validity and to accept the fallibility of their conclusions. At the same time, they emphasize that it is possible to claim credibility when conditions of rational and non-coerced discussion have taken place among the participants of the study and when the constructions which came out of the discussions are plausible to those who constructed them.

In this study all observations were first recorded and then transcribed word for word. This enabled me to review the material as often as necessary and to present my observations to the staff for their confirmation, comments and opinions. Although my material was not collected by a team, the informal interviews with the staff provided an opportunity for discussion as well as a check on my observations and conclusions.

Schloss and Smith point out that the unique features of settings and individuals make it nearly impossible to replicate a study and therefore traditional reliability is not a standard by which qualitative research should be judged (Schloss and Smith, 1998, p. 94). Mirriam (1988, pp. 170-1) and Kincheloe & McLaren (1994, p.151) are in agreement with

this conclusion and suggest that since qualitative research seeks to describe and explain the world from the participants perspective, rather than to establish laws, traditional reliability is unobtainable. Mirriam goes on to state that qualitative research is highly contextual, and human behavior never static. Rather than claim that reproduction of a study would result in the same conclusions, a review of the data and assumptions drawn from the research should indicate that the conclusions make sense (Merriam, 1988, p. 172). Reliability will be increased by the researcher explaining the assumptions and theory underlying the study, by triangulating data, and by describing in detail how the study was conducted and how the findings were derived from the data (Merriam, 1988, p. 183).

In this study, the underlying theory is explained and the assumptions are supported by other research and verified by the staff to insure that the conclusions make sense. The findings are drawn from the data and explained in detail.

The issue of external validity is handled in a similar manner. Merriam states that a case study approach is selected because there is a wish to understand the particular in depth rather than what is true of many, and therefore traditional measures do not apply. However, she states that the generalizability of qualitative research can be improved by providing a rich, thick description so that those interested in transferability have a base of information

(Merriam, 1988, p. 173). Generalizability can also be increased by describing how typical the study is compared with others in the same class, or by conducting a cross case analysis (Merriam, 1988, p. 177).

Kincheloe & McLaren suggest that trustworthiness may be a better term to use than either external or internal validity. They ascribe two criteria for critical trustworthiness which they state define a different set of assumptions about the purpose of research. The first criteria has already been mentioned and involves the credibility of the outcomes for those who constructed them. The second criteria involves Piaget's notion of accommodation which contends that people reshape cognitive structures to take into account additional information perceived in new contexts. In the same manner, as researchers have the opportunity to compare different contexts, they will learn about their similarities and differences (Kincheloe & McLaren, 1994, pp. 151-152).

In this study, detailed description is used when reporting the vignettes. It is difficult to describe how typical the study is in relationship to others because as Kincheloe and McLaren stated, the vignettes will never be perfectly replicated in another setting. However, the research reviewed and presented along with the vignettes indicates that the findings of this study are similar to findings in other studies. Additionally, the brief

interviews with the staff confirmed that the outcome of the observations were credible to the staff who constructed the vignettes or who observed their constructed by the children.

Schloss and Smith (1998, p. 94) and Merriam (1988, p. 166) also address trustworthiness and credibility. They maintain that credibility is increased under the following conditions. Since the researcher is attempting to measure perceptions and event as they occur in a natural environment, disruptions should be minimized. In order to accomplish this, the researcher should arrange to be in the setting before hand so that the participants can resume a typical pattern of behavior before the actual data is collected. The researcher should establish a rapport with the participants so they feel that they can act naturally. Furthermore, unobtrusive methods of collecting data should be used, and triangulation, or confirming conclusions through more than one source, should take place.

In this case, I was a familiar figure in the classrooms before the study began. However, my role as administrator more than likely made my presence somewhat intimidating. In order to lessen the effect of my role as administrator, I presented the study as a team approach to developing and implementing an anti/bias curriculum which would be helpful to the staff. This not only increased rapport, but also provided the opportunity for the staff to confirm the conclusions I had reached during my observations.

In addition to issues of reliability and validity, another limitation of this study was pointed out by Schloss and Smith (1998, p. 94). As researcher, I had control over both the research design and data analysis. This increases the likelihood that the study was influenced by my perceptions. Merriam also comments on this limitation and suggests that since one of the assumptions of ethnographic research is that the reporting and interpreting of data can never be completely objective, the credibility of the study will be limited by the researcher's theoretical position and biases (Merriam, 1988, p. 167).

In addition to the above limitations, there are other areas in which this study is limited. One area is the limitation caused by the population served in The Tucson Jewish Community Center's early childhood program. Since the majority of the children are Caucasian, middle or upper middle class children, their responses to issues of race, gender, class, and disabilities does not include the voices of minority children who might have responded differently.

Another limitation of this study is that the ideology of the staff may not have been uncovered during the informal interviews. Formal interviews may have revealed more about their way of thinking, and this additional information may have been helpful when planning staff development workshops.

A final limitation of this study is that it does not evaluate the effectiveness of the staff development

workshops. This shortcoming leads to a sense of lack of closure. Both the amount of follow-up time required to evaluate accurately and the fact that staff turn over makes it difficult if not impossible to evaluate the affect of the workshops on the anti-bias perspective of individual staff members contribute to this limitation. However, although no formal evaluation was conducted, it appeared as if significant staff development took place during the course of this study as staff became more aware of diversity issues, and that a multicultural/anti-bias perspective became more pervasive throughout the program as a result of the study.

Contributions to Research

While the vignettes in this study will never be exactly replicated in another environment, the issues and the process of uncovering them are reproducible. For example, the process of recording vignettes in the classroom and interviewing staff who are present during the observations in order to understand their perspective and to confirm or dispute the researcher's conclusions are procedures which others might find useful when studying children's social cognition. Additionally, the finding that both children and staff expressed negative biases which were uncovered in the informal curriculum may encourage other programs to go beyond the formal curriculum when developing and evaluating a multi-cultural curriculum. Furthermore, the questions which are

proposed on page 187 for future staff development workshops at the Tucson Jewish Community Center preschool are questions others might find useful when beginning the staff development process. Finally, staff development projects like the one that ran throughout this study may present some unique opportunities for other centers. The concept of an ongoing staff development project to evaluate or create an anti-bias environment whenever the staff is with the children, and the idea of having a project that lasts the entire school year may be new concepts for many centers but ones that some would be willing to try.

Final Remarks

In spite of its limitations, this study provided a valuable in-depth look at the early childhood program at the Tucson Jewish Community Center. If catalytic validity, which is defined as a measure of "the degree to which research moves those it studies to understand the world and the way it is shaped in order for them to transform it (Kincheloe & McLaren, 1994, p. 152), is used as a measure of credibility and worth, the study can be considered successful. The process of collecting and discussing the data led the staff and me to a better understanding of how young children view themselves and others and to a greater appreciation of our ability to help children respect and appreciate diversity. It also helped some staff to recognize personal biases and to

reconsider how they view and group children especially when gender issues arose. According to the authors of Starting Small, the most effective staff development programs go beyond developing a caring teacher and beyond developing content knowledge. The most effective inservices instill "the habit of continual reflection- on themselves, on the children and on the curriculum" (Teaching Tolerance Project, 1997, p. 195). Finally, this study helped the children gain an appreciation for diversity, and appreciation of themselves.

While the goal of the study was to determine the need for future staff development to develop an anti-bias perspective and create an anti-bias environment, in reality staff development was continuous throughout the study as staff discussed the vignettes and their own observations. The study itself was actually a staff development 'workshop' which helped both staff and children develop an anti-bias, multicultural perspective.

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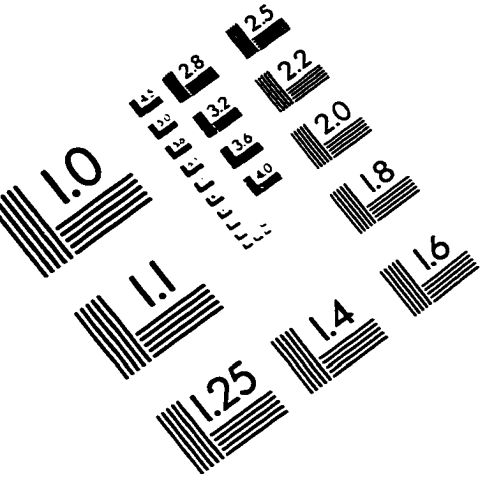
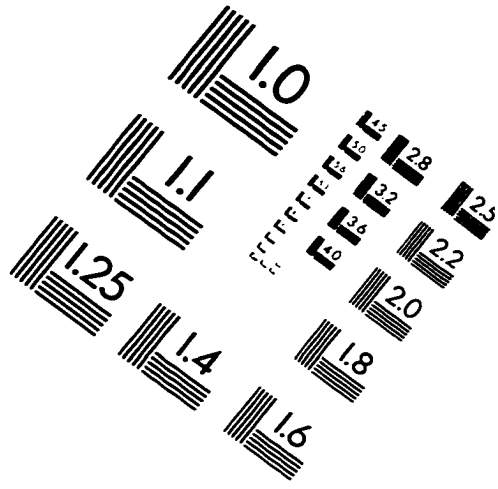
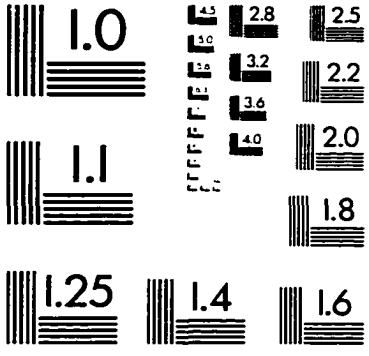
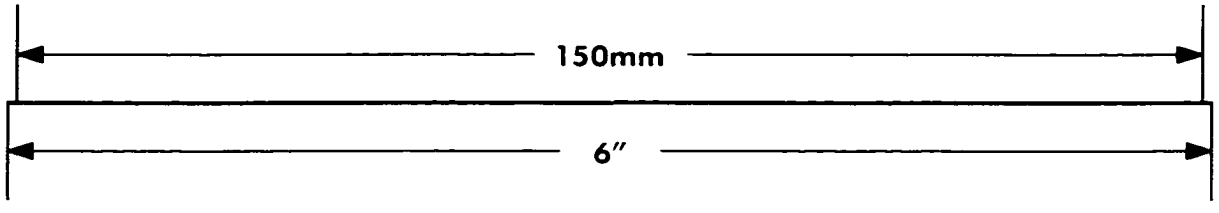
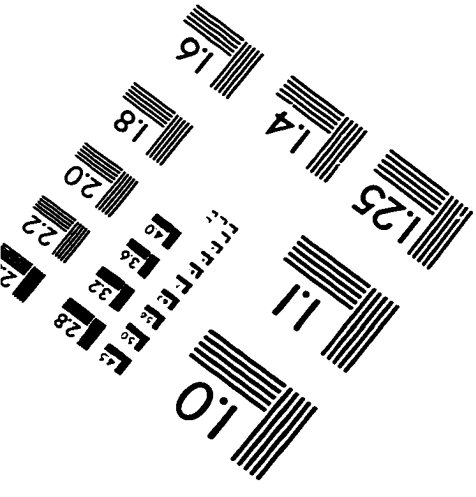
IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (QA-3)

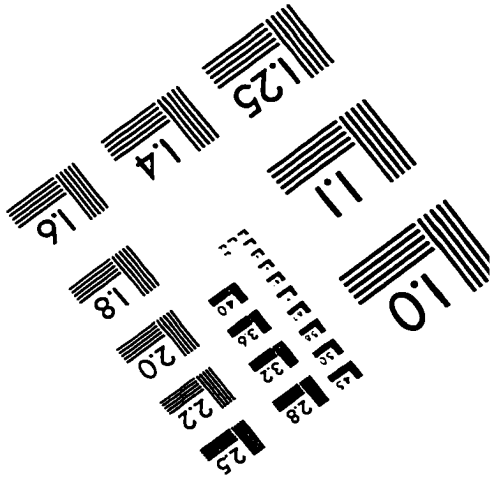












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